



Legislation Text

File #: 22-1445, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to request City Manager to work with the Director of Development Services to provide a presentation to the City Council on current Code Enforcement policies and processes for addressing residential neighborhood code violations.

The presentation should also include opportunities to increase the city's attention to and enforcement of code violations, including policy changes to improve quality of life for residents.

On August 17, 2021 the Long Beach City Council directed the City Manager to work with the City Attorney's Office, the City Prosecutor's Office, and the Code Enforcement Bureau, to provide a report on the current nuisance violation fine structures and the feasibility of increasing penalties and/or fines or fees on property owners/managers or tenants depending on staff's recommendations, to allow for more effective enforcement tools and resources to address nuisance activities. This should also include evaluating options for fines or fees to be based on income qualifications, and if community service was feasible in place of fines where appropriate. This report will also include evaluating opportunities and the feasibility of bolstering the Code Enforcement ordinances and relevant provisions of the Municipal Code and aligning with best practices.

This request by the City Council was made because, in recent years there have been significant changes made by the State of California that are designed to assist with the overall creation of additional housing as a response to the state's well documented housing crisis. Housing is certainly a priority throughout the state and unlike many cities throughout California, Long Beach is making meaningful progress in proactively creating housing development opportunities. However, with some of the state's recent housing policies, such as the opportunity to create large-scale ADUs within residential neighborhoods, several unintended consequences have been identified. The unintended consequence that are likely to arise from allowing a 3-bedroom 2-bathroom home to now include an ADU that totals 11 bedrooms and 11 bathrooms, for example include potential parking impacts, noise impacts, trash accumulation and other concerns.

With these changes in zoning in mind, the City Council felt it necessary to receive a report on existing nuisance violation policies and regulations, enforcement, and fine structures, as well as recommendations on the feasibility of amending such policies/regulation to allow for meaningful enforcement of municipal code violations that commonly impact quality of life for the surrounding community.

On September 26, 2022 multiple city departments completed the requested report. As a result of the report however, further consideration is needed to ensure that changes to state and local housing policies do not lead to negative community impacts. An important step in improving our Code Enforcement efforts throughout the city would be to receive a thorough presentation to the City Council explaining Code Enforcement's roles, practices and policies. As outlined in the recent report, the reallocation of Code Enforcement staffing during the height of COVID-19 restrictions as well as vacant positions, have led to priority shifts on some areas of Code Enforcement responsibilities. Yet, now we see many COVID-19 restrictions discontinued and staffing positions refilled, making it a useful time to receive a presentation educating the City Council more fully on Code Enforcement and giving the Council an opportunity to provide direct feedback and input on this important city responsibility. Also, the City Council would benefit from proactive proposals from city staff specific to residential neighborhoods that can help communities feel confident that they will retain their quality of life while new housing policies arise, and that the city and our Code Enforcement teams can be depended on to be a partner to communities in maintaining the livability of neighborhoods all across Long Beach. As policies change regarding single family neighborhoods and multi-family constructions the expectations of residents and the need for an active Code Enforcement effort must also change.

Addressing community concerns around quality of life is an important priority.

No fiscal impact report has been completed on this item due to the urgency of the item.

Approve recommendation.

SUZIE PRICE, COUNCILWOMAN
THIRD DISTRICT