

GUIDELINES FOR PLAN CHECK AND PERMIT REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERIM MOTEL (HOTEL) CONVERSION PROJECTS

On April 20th, 2018, Ordinance 185489 became effective amending Sections 12.03, 14.00 and 151.02 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) and established regulations to facilitate the use of existing hotels and motels for Supportive Housing or Transitional Housing for persons experiencing homelessness or those at risk of homelessness.

The purpose of this Information Bulletin is to provide guidance for the plan check and permitting process of the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) for any proposed Interim Motel Housing Project pursuant to Ordinance 185489.

LAMC Section 14.00.A.12 facilitates the interim use of existing transient residential structures, such as Motels, Hotels, Apartment Hotels, Transient Occupancy Residential Structures and Hostels as Supportive Housing or Transitional Housing for persons experiencing homelessness or those at risk of homelessness. Under this subdivision, the structure may return to its previous use, or any use consistent with the underlying zone, upon termination of the interim Supportive Housing or Transitional Housing use.

All Interim Motel Housing Projects shall meet the zoning compliance and performance standards as described in the ordinance and this information bulletin. Interim Motel Housing Projects shall not be considered an increase in density or other change which requires any corresponding discretionary action.

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. **INTERIM MOTEL HOUSING PROJECT.** The physical re-purposing or adaptation of an existing transient residential structure, such as a Motel, Hotel, Apartment Hotel, Transient Occupancy Residential Structure, or Hostel, for use as Supportive Housing or Transitional Housing for persons experiencing homelessness or those at risk of homelessness.
- B. **LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY.** An agency, identified on a list maintained by the Department of City Planning, that funds Supportive Housing and Transitional Housing for persons experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.
- C. **SUPPORTIVE HOUSING:** Housing with no limit on length of stay for persons with low incomes who have one or more disabilities and may include, among other populations, adults, emancipated minors, families with children, elderly persons, young adults aging out of the foster care system, individuals exiting from institutional settings, veterans, and homeless people. The housing is linked to

onsite or offsite Supportive Services, and any Floor Area used for the delivery of Supportive Services shall be considered accessory to the residential use.

- D. **TRANSITIONAL HOUSING:** A building where housing linked to Supportive Services is offered, usually for a period of up to 24 months, to facilitate movement to permanent housing for persons with low incomes who may have one or more disabilities, and may include adults, emancipated minors, families with children, elderly persons, young adults aging out of the foster care system, individuals exiting from institutional settings, veterans, and homeless people.
- E. **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES:** Services that are provided on a voluntary basis to residents of Supportive Housing and Transitional Housing, including, but not limited to, a combination of subsidized, permanent housing, intensive case management, medical and mental health care, substance abuse treatment, employment services, benefits advocacy, and other services or service referrals necessary to obtain and maintain housing.

II. **PLAN CHECK PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS.** A building permit is required for the conversion. Should the scope of work include mechanical, electrical and plumbing, a separate permit shall be required for each.

A. **SUBMITTAL** - documents needed for plan check are as follows:

- 1. **Current Certificate of Occupancy** as a Motel, Hotel, Apartment Hotel, Transient Occupancy Residential Structure, or Hostel to qualify for the conversion
- 2. **Submittal Package** as required for a Change of Use as per Information Bulletin [P/GI 2014-021](#)
- 3. A copy of the executed **contract agreement** between Local Public Agency, the provider of the Supportive or Transitional Housing, and Interim Motel Project applicant for the provision of onsite Supportive Housing and/or Transitional Housing which must include all the following:
 - a. Effective date of the contract which must be prior to the building permit issuance date
 - b. Initial contract term
 - c. Number of units and/or guests rooms covered by the agreement, for which Supportive Services will be provided to residents.
 - d. Purpose of contract to provide Supportive Housing for persons with low incomes who have one or more disabilities, or Transitional Housing for persons with low incomes
 - e. Signatures of authorized representatives of the Interim Motel Housing Project applicant and owner, the provider of the Supportive

Housing and Transitional Housing, and a Local Public Agency listed with the Department of City Planning:

https://planning.lacity.org/ordinances/docs/InterimMotelConversion/Adopted/Local_Public_Agency_List_IMC.pdf

- B. **CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS.** After the submitted documents have been reviewed, the applicant will be instructed to obtain approval from various agencies noted in the [Clearance Summary Handbook](#). To avoid any time delay, it is recommended that the applicant contact the applicable departments. Each Department will require time for their review and approval. Clearances, but not limited to, are as follows:

1. **Housing and Community Investment Department (HCIDLA).**

- a. Residential Hotel Division – to determine whether the Motel, Hotel, Apartment Hotel, Transient Occupancy Residential Structure, or Hostel has been previously determined to be a Residential Hotel and therefore subject to all requirements (including those pertaining to remodeling/repair work to be performed at the property that might result in the reduction or conversion of units) under LAMC 47.70, et seq.
- b. Rent Division – to determine whether the Motel, Hotel, Apartment Hotel, Transient Occupancy Residential Structure, or Hostel is subject to the Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO) pursuant to LAMC 151.00, et seq. regardless of Residential or Transient Hotel status

If the property is subject to the RSO – existing tenants would continue to receive protections under the RSO for the duration of their tenancy. Irrespective of these ongoing protections to existing tenants, the following will need to be provided in order to obtain an RSO exemption:

- i. executed contract agreement between the Local Public Agency, the provider of the Supportive or Transitional Housing, and the Interim Motel Housing Project applicant for the property where the Interim Motel Housing Project is located, or a combination of both;
 - ii. proof that the applicant has received funding from a Local Public Agency; and
 - iii. proof that the Supportive Housing or Transitional Housing contract is in effect pursuant to LAMC 14.00 A12(b)(2).
- c. Tenant Habitability Plan Division – if remodeling/repair work is to be performed and there are existing tenants at the property, a Tenant Habitability Plan will need to be submitted and approved by the Department.

2. **City of Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD)** Separate submittal will be required to LAFD for fire life safety plan review. **Note:** If not already installed, new sprinkler system shall be required for buildings that do not have direct egress from each unit and/or guestroom to an exterior egress balcony that is at least 50% open on the long side of the balcony and the opening are distributed as to minimize the accumulation of smoke or toxic gases.
- C. **ZONING COMPLIANCE.** An Interim Motel Housing Project shall not be subject to any otherwise applicable zoning ordinance, specific plan or other overlay district regulations other than those stated under LAMC Section 14.00 A12 (d). These regulations include, but are not limited to the following:
1. **Area and Density Regulations**, provided the conversion does not create any additional total combined number of Dwelling Units or Guest Rooms
 2. **Off-Street Automobile Parking Provisions** per LAMC Section 12.21 A.4(a) and Section 12.21 A.4(b) for the provided supportive services and conversion, provided the scope does not reduce the number of provided onsite parking spaces
 3. **Use** in any zone
 4. **Minor Interior Alterations for Cooking Facilities.** In the event a structure is returned to the motel or hotel use in accordance with LAMC Section 14.00.A.12(c)(1), the motel or hotel may maintain any guest rooms with added cooking facilities.
 - a. A sink
 - b. A refrigerator not exceeding 10 cubic feet
 - c. Counter space not exceeding 10 square feet
 - d. A hotplate or microwave
- D. **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.** An Interim Motel Housing Project shall meet the performance standards as described in LAMC Section 14.00 A.12 (e). These performance standards include:
1. **Supportive Service Area**
 - a. For every 20 Dwelling Units or Guest Rooms, a minimum of one dedicated office space shall be provided for the provision of on-site Supportive Services, including case management.
 - b. A minimum of one dedicated office space shall be provided for Interim Motel Housing Projects with fewer than 20 total combined Dwelling Units or Guest Rooms.
 - c. Any Floor Area dedicated to Supportive Services may be provided

on-site within an existing building, but shall not exceed 10% of the total Floor Area of the building.

2. **Lighting and Security Lighting** shall be
 - a. Shielded so that the light source cannot be seen from adjacent residential properties
 - b. Provided in parking areas, alleys and any unenclosed spaces under or within the first floor of the building(s), with illumination of not less than 0.2 foot-candles
 3. **Recycling and Trash Facilities** shall be secured and completely enclosed by a solid wall or fence not less than six feet in height.
 4. **Historic Buildings.** Alteration is prohibited, unless the Director in consultation with the Office of Historic Resources determines the proposed alteration will not adversely impact the property's historic eligibility.
- E. **BUILDING CODE.** The building shall meet the applicable provisions in the Los Angeles Building Code (LABC) and the Los Angeles Existing Building Code (LAEBC) related to Group R-2 Occupancies.

III. VERIFICATION AND PERMIT ISSUANCE

- A. **VERIFICATION PROCESS.** After the initial plan check is complete, the applicant shall review each item on plan review list and address them. When the applicant is ready, the applicant must contact the plan check engineer to set up an appointment for plan check verification. Once all the items on the plan review list have been addressed, and the clearances obtained, the permit can be issued.
- B. **PERMIT ISSUANCE.** The permits can only be signed by either of the following:
1. **Property Owner** as owner-builder, having the following:
 - a. Completed [Owner-Builder Declaration form](#)
 - b. Notarized letters of authorization for the agents
 - c. Solid Waste Hauler Permit Information.
 2. **Licensed Contractor**, having the following
 - a. Copy of contractor's license pocket ID card.
 - b. Copy of certificate of workers' compensation insurance made out to the contractor's state license board.
 - c. Copy of contractor's LA City business tax registration certificate (BTRC) or a newly paid receipt for one.
 - d. Notarized letters of authorization for your agents.

e. Solid Waste Hauler Permit Information.

C. **Approved Plans:** The final set of plans will be stamped approved. The plans must be readily available at the job site during construction.

IV. INSPECTION PROCESS

All construction work shall follow the approved set of plans and shall be subject to inspection by LADBS inspectors. It is the applicant's responsibility to notify the inspector when the work is ready for inspection. Work is generally inspected and approved in succession and no work may continue beyond the point indicated in each successive inspection without first obtaining the approval of the inspector. The approved set of plans must be available at the job site.

LADBS will issue a **Certificate of Completion** that will remain valid for the duration of the Supportive Housing or Transitional Housing Use once all inspections have been completed.

V. CONTRACT TERMINATION OR RENEWAL

Upon any termination of the Supportive Housing or Transitional Housing contract, the Interim Motel Housing Project applicant shall, within 90 days,

- A. **SUBMIT** notification to LADBS and HCIDLA that the building shall return to the use, authorized by a Certificate of Occupancy, existing on the date of the Interim Motel Housing Project application, **or**
- B. **RENEW OR ESTABLISH A NEW CONTRACT** with a [Local Public Agency](#) and subsequently, submit a permit application to LADBS for a new building permit to re-establish the effective date of the new contract in accordance with the requirements in Section II Subsection E, being a new contract term for provision of Supportive Housing or Transitional Housing. The extension shall go through the approval process as described in the above sections II – IV.

VI. CONTACT INFORMATION

A. CITY OF LOS ANGELES, BUILDING AND SAFETY (LADBS)

1. Development Services Case Management

- a. **Feasibility Study** – to determine if the subject property can possibly meet the criteria for Interim Motel Conversion. Call 213 482-6805.
- b. **Preliminary Plan Check** – to predetermine if any additional documents or information may be needed to streamline plan check process. To schedule for an appointment, complete [Service Request Form](#) and email DevelopmentServices.CM@lacity.org.

2. **Development Service Centers**
Submittal – to apply and initiate permitting process, visit
201 N. Figueroa St. 4th floor Counter
 3. **Inspection** – to schedule inspection
Call (888) 524-2845 or [request for inspection online](http://ladbs.org) (ladbs.org).
- B. HOUSING AND COMMUNITY INVESTMENT DEPARTMENT (HCID)**
1. **Interim Motel (Hotel) Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO)**
(213) 847-3875
 2. **Residential Hotel Information**
1200 W. 7th St, 1st floor
(213) 252-2892
 3. **Tenant Habitability Plan**
3550 Wilshire Blvd, #1500
201 N. Figueroa St, 4th
(213) 252-1464
hcidla.code.thp@lacity.org
- C. CITY OF LOS ANGELES, FIRE DEPARTMENT (LAFD)**
- Fire Prevention and Public Safety Bureau,**
Fire Development Services Section
201 N. Figueroa St, 3rd floor
(213) 482-6900
lafddss@lacity.org