

Across Los Angeles, neighborhoods face ongoing public safety and quality-of-life disruptions caused by the proliferation of residential properties being used for large-scale commercial events, otherwise known as “Party Houses.” These gatherings routinely draw hundreds of attendees and demand late-night repeated responses from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and follow-ups from the Department of Building and Safety (LADBS). Issues include excessive noise, disruptive behavior, and obstruction of the public right-of-way.

Although the City has adopted ordinances that authorize administrative penalties to address this issue, the current flat-rate fine structure is insufficient to effectively deter Party House violators. This is evidenced by ongoing community complaints as well as recent City Attorney litigation. Furthermore, limited City staffing capacity at LAPD and LADBS often results in delayed or unaddressed reports.

The City's current penalty structure begins with an administrative fine of \$100 for a first violation, and gradually escalates to \$8,000 for a sixth and all subsequent violations. The violation count then resets after a period of 12 consecutive months without a violation. These fine amounts are woefully inadequate to deter repeat violators who enjoy lucrative financial returns from the rental, lease, and/or ownership of Party Houses and calculate the City's fines as a minor business cost.

A fundamental purpose of the assessment of administrative fines and penalties is to serve as a deterrent against unlawful conduct and to encourage compliance with the Los Angeles Municipal Code. To meet this objective as it relates to Party Houses, the City must explore stronger penalties and more substantial fines.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the City Administrative Officer (CAO), with assistance from the City Attorney, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), the Department of Building and Safety (LADBS), Office of Finance, and the Department of City Planning, to report back on options for increasing fines and penalties for repeat “party house” violations, including but not limited to:

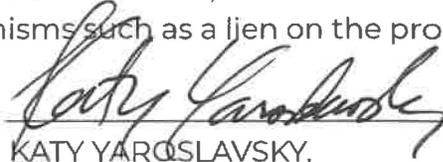
1. Establish an updated fine structure and formula that takes into account the assessed market value of the subject property, the scale and impact of the violation, the commercial nature of the violation, land use designation, geographic location (e.g., increased if in higher fire severity zones), and/or the cumulative number of party house-related violations;
2. Establish penalties that eliminate the hosting capacity of the subject property, including, but not limited to, coordination with the Department of Water and Power to disconnect or restrict service, and action by LADBS to board and


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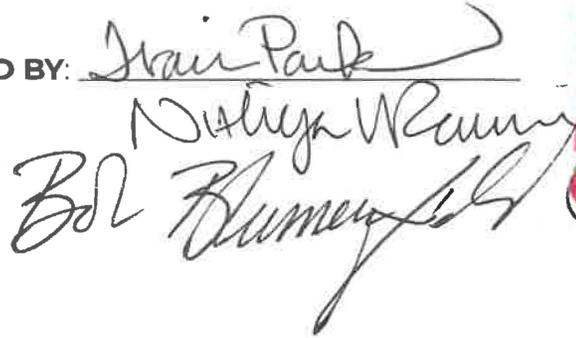
- secure the property, when there is evidence of chronic, unpermitted commercial use in a residential zone;
3. Establish a process for investigating and making an administrative determination of whether a subject residential property is being used for a revenue generating purpose; and
 4. Implement a cost recovery mechanism, based on a percentage of the property's assessed market value or a multiple of an event host's estimated net revenue, to fully recoup all costs associated with City intervention, including, but not limited to, LAPD and LADBS overtime, and ensure effective enforcement of collection through mechanisms such as a lien on the property.

PRESENTED BY:



KATY YAROSLAVSKY,
Councilwoman, 5th District

SECONDED BY:



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