



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **City of Wheat Ridge Approves New Licensing Requirement for Hotels and Motels**

**WHEAT RIDGE, Colo. Oct. 28, 2021** - Wheat Ridge City Council recently passed a new ordinance requiring hotels and motels doing business within the City of Wheat Ridge to acquire a hotel/motel license in addition to a business license.

This new ordinance was specifically enacted by Wheat Ridge City Council to protect the health and safety of the community. The new license requires hotels and motels that are providing lodging services of 29 days or less to meet certain minimum standards for public safety and health. Those businesses that are providing extended stay services of 30 days or more must meet certain minimum standards and provide certain amenities to ensure extended stay units are livable. City Council's unanimous decision to approve this new license is supported by City staff who believe requiring hotels and motels to meet these new minimum standards will decrease criminal activity and calls for service by the Wheat Ridge Police Department as well as improve the safety and living conditions of those electing longer stays in these businesses.

"The City will work closely with our hotel/motel business owners in order to decrease criminal activity through a number of crime prevention programs, and help them maintain compliance with the new limit of 1.8 Calls for Service (CFS per hotel room) by the Wheat Ridge Police Department," stated Patrick Goff, Wheat Ridge city manager. "Creating a specific licensing process for hotels and motels has been successfully implemented by neighboring communities, and we believe requiring this new license will serve to reduce crime in Wheat Ridge."

There are nine hotels/motels in Wheat Ridge with a total of approximately 972 rooms. While these nine hotels represent less than .05% of the total number of households and businesses in the City, the calls for service (CFS) from the Wheat Ridge Police Department to these establishments total approximately 10% of the total police calls. This new licensing ordinance for hotels will increase safety and create healthier environments for those relying on short-term and extended stay housing in Wheat Ridge. In addition to collaborating with owners of hotels/motels to meet the new requirements, the City will also work closely with the Homeless Navigator and other area resources to assist lodgers displaced by the new licensing requirements in order to assist them with finding more appropriate long-term housing.

The nature of calls for service at hotels is not limited to, but includes unwanted parties, disturbances, welfare checks, theft, suspicious persons and vehicles, illegal drug use, domestic violence, assaults, motor vehicle thefts, and the recovery of stolen vehicles. "Hotels with high calls for service often evolve into illegal activity, including drug dealing, prostitution and other illicit behaviors," stated Wheat Ridge Police Chief Chris Murtha. "Adopting stronger local licensing requirements provides an essential tool for the City to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of those who visit our hotels while at the same time addressing community expectations regarding the quality of life in our community."

Requirements for Hotel/Motel Licensees:

- 1) Achieve and maintain a call for service (CFS) rate of 1.8 within twelve 12 months of obtaining a hotel license (based on room number) CFS rate will be reduced to 1.5 CFS on January 2023
- 2) Participate in the City's certified crime free hotel/motel program
- 3) Corrective actions taken as identified through the City's most recent annual hotel/motel inspection program report
- 4) Compliance with the City's landscape inspection program outlined by the Community Development Department
- 5) Compliance with the applicable series of adopted international building and property codes as demonstrated by certification from the City's chief building official
- 6) Establish and maintain a security plan approved by WRPD, including crime prevention through environmental design, video surveillance, security guards, fencing, and lighting

Requirements for extended stay (30 days or more):

- 1) Minimum size for entire unit: 300 square feet
- 2) Minimum size for living room: 120 square feet
- 3) A defined bedroom, separate and apart from other portions of the unit
- 4) Minimum kitchen/cooking facilities (not located in the defined bedroom or bathroom)
  - a. Refrigerator
  - b. Cooktop
  - c. Dedicated sink
  - d. Cabinets with cooking/dining supplies
- 5) The maximum sleeping occupancy per room or unit shall be two persons
- 6) Personal possessions may not be stored within shared common areas, on exterior balconies, interior corridors with the exception on balconies for items such as bikes, strollers, and coolers
- 7) Housekeeping must be available, although an additional charge may be made
- 8) Common area amenities must be available
  - a. 24-hour desk staffing
  - b. universal wireless internet available included within room charge
  - c. In-room or common area laundry facilities adequate for number of guests
- 9) A minimum of three of the following common area amenities shall be provided:
  - a. Business center of at least 120 square feet
  - b. A fitness center of at least 350 square feet for every 200 rooms
  - c. A swimming pool at least 15 x 25 x 4 feet deep
  - d. Meeting areas or conference rooms of a size at least 150 square feet
  - e. On-site restaurant or other available food options

On June 28, 2021, unanimous consensus was received from City Council to direct staff to draft a hotel licensing and extended stay ordinance and to reach out to the Wheat Ridge business community for feedback. A copy of the draft ordinance and a frequently asked question document was sent to all motel business owners and managers in Wheat Ridge on August 13, 2021. A virtual meeting was held on August 30, 2021 to receive input from the motel industry on the draft ordinance.

The new ordinance, that passed on Oct. 25, 2021, requires all hotels and motels to apply for a hotel license with a fee of \$300. For hotels/motels wanting to offer extended stays of 30 days or more, an additional extended stay hotel license fee in the amount of \$150 is required. In addition, for anyone doing business in Wheat Ridge, a business license is required and the fee is \$20. Online applications for hotel licensing will open in mid November 2021.

### **About the City of Wheat Ridge**

The City of Wheat Ridge, located west of Denver with a population of 31,000 residents, is home to a mix of retail/commercial businesses and unique residential neighborhoods. Wheat Ridge is a vibrant community in a prime location, providing easy access to the Denver metro area and to recreation west into the mountains. The city was selected an All-America City in 2021 by the National Civic League. For more info about Wheat Ridge [ci.wheatridge.co.us](http://ci.wheatridge.co.us)