



PEOPLE FIRST

A Public Health and Safety Approach to Belmont Shore and Long Beach Alcohol Policy

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set forth the Belmont Shore Residents Association's (BSRA) policy position regarding establishments engaged in the sale of alcoholic beverages within the community in response to the City Manager's December 24, 2025 memo. The BSRA's primary objective here is to protect and promote the public health, safety, peace, comfort, and general welfare of residents and visitors alike.

We do not address peripheral issues the City has raised such as street musicians or food vendors, because those tangential concerns distract

from the core drivers of alcohol-related harm in Belmont Shore. Street peddlers seeking to earn extra cash are not the primary source of the recurring safety and quality-of-life problems and targeting these people misdirects efforts from more vital pursuits.

The focus must be on alcohol-serving establishments that act as magnets for late-night activity and contribute to an ecosystem of crowding, noise, and disorder.

With that focus, this document sets forth a people-first framework for addressing alcohol-relat-



ed harms in Belmont Shore—one grounded in public health, safety, and quality of life rather than nightlife promotion or reactive enforcement. It explains how current conditions are the predictable result of alcohol overconcentration, inadequate oversight, and a policy approach that has relied on fragmented enforcement and opaque processes.

The BSRA rejects the use of a downtown entertainment model for a residential neighborhood and instead advances a prevention-oriented alternative centered on clear standards, meaningful consequences, transparency, and dedicated enforcement capacity. It calls for a coordinated, fee-funded alcohol policy enforcement system combining civilian and targeted police resources, real accountability

for overservice and nuisance, and a regulatory framework that treats alcohol service as a conditional privilege tied to responsible operation. Throughout, the focus remains on centering resident experience, preventing harm upstream, and restoring trust through policies that are clear, enforceable, and aligned with established public health best practices.

While this policy proposal is grounded in the specific conditions of Belmont Shore, the underlying principles—resident-centered input, transparency, prevention-oriented standards, and coordinated enforcement—are equally applicable citywide. These elements align with the City Council’s expressed interest in approaches that are transferable and adaptable across Long Beach neighborhoods.

How We Got Here: Structural Failures in Alcohol Policy and Governance

The following section explains how Belmont Shore arrived at its current conditions, which includes policy choices, process failures, and governance gaps that have allowed alcohol-related harms to persist, escalate, and, in some cases, turn fatal. Together, they establish why the City’s current approach is flawed and why a fundamentally different, people-first framework is required before any meaningful solutions can be advanced.

The Human Cost: Three Homicides with Names and Families

This policy discussion is not theoretical. Belmont Shore has experienced multiple late-night homicides in a short period of time, each involv-

ing real people, real families, and irreversible loss. These deaths occurred during the same late-night hours and in the same concentrated nightlife environment that residents have been warning about for years.

- On February 18, 2024, **Johnny Santos**, age 32, was fatally shot just before 1:00 a.m. following an altercation on Second Street.
- Two weeks later, on March 3, 2024, **Adrian Hernandez**, just 20 years old, was stabbed to death at approximately 1:07 a.m. outside Dave’s Hot Chicken, in what police described as a fight between groups who had been out late at night.
- Most recently, on October 25, 2025, **Jeremy Spears**, age 32, was shot and killed at around

1:40 a.m. just off Second Street after an altercation that began at a local bar.

Behind each name is a family permanently changed by violence that was foreseeable and, with the right policies and enforcement, preventable. Any serious discussion of alcohol regulation in Belmont Shore must begin by acknowledging these lives lost and the responsibility to ensure that no more names are added to this list.

How Overconcentration Shaped Current Conditions

Belmont Shore's current conditions are the result of years of deliberate policy choices, not happenstance. Second Street is, by state definition, an area of overconcentrated alcohol service, a designation the California Department of Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) and the City itself repeatedly acknowledge in documentation whenever a new alcohol license is sought, or an existing establishment applies for an upgrade.

Under California law, a geographical area is deemed overconcentrated when alcohol license density exceeds population-based thresholds or when local crime rates exceed countywide averages, reflecting heightened risk associated with alcohol availability.

Yet even while recognizing this overconcentra-

tion, the City of Long Beach has continued to approve and tolerate intensified alcohol service without addressing its cumulative impacts. By doing so, the City has effectively normalized overconcentration rather than treating it as a known risk factor requiring intervention, a pattern that has persisted even after the October 25, 2025 homicide of Jeremy Spears.

Decades of public health research show that alcohol outlet overconcentration is associated with increased violence, impaired driving, and other serious harms. Confronting the current conditions therefore requires acknowledging these outcomes and grounding policy in the established science of alcohol harm prevention. We believe that much of the City's current proposal discounts or defers responsibility for predictable results.

Absence of a Data-Driven Policy Framework

The City's proposed policy approach suffers from a fundamental flaw: It is not grounded in a meaningful, data-driven analysis of conditions in Belmont Shore. Rather than gathering comprehensive data that reflects the full scope of resident impacts, the City has relied on aggregate crime statistics that do not and cannot capture lived neighborhood conditions. In addition:

"...the growing disorder and unsafe behavior linked to certain late-night establishments is unacceptable and will not be ignored."

**– Long Beach Mayor Rex Richardson
October 2025**

- The City did not engage independent experts in public health, alcohol policy, or prevention, relying instead on an internally driven process disconnected from established research on how alcohol availability and service practices shape behavior and harm.
- Missing from the City’s analysis are basic threshold questions, including what is driving late-night congregation outside of the businesses; whether individuals are patronizing local establishments or consuming alcohol obtained elsewhere; whether open-container activity is even driving the serious problems the area is experiencing; and how effective existing security measures are, including those funded by public parking meter revenue.
- The City has also failed to examine over-service and responsible beverage service compliance in practice: if staff are properly trained, policies enforced, patrons served while visibly intoxicated, and if any coordination exists among the alcohol outlets to mitigate cumulative late-night impacts. Without this analysis, targeted prevention-oriented policy is nearly impossible.
- A credible data-driven approach further requires identifying which specific establishments are generating the greatest harms and

making that information public. Residents have been deliberately left uninformed about the sources and nexus points of violent incidents, including the October 25 homicide, reflecting a broader lack of transparency. Without outlet-specific data and shared public understanding concerning overservice, nuisance conditions, and serious incidents, the City cannot credibly assess risk, target enforcement, or protect public safety.

- Mayor Rex Richardson has publicly acknowledged that unsafe conditions are linked to specific late-night locations. In his [statement](#) following the October 2025 homicide, he stated:

“This tragic incident has once again drawn attention to the late-night environment in Belmont Shore. Let’s be clear—the growing disorder and unsafe behavior linked to certain late-night establishments is unacceptable and will not be ignored.”

Yet despite this acknowledgment, the City has failed to identify which establishments are driving these harms or to produce outlet-level data necessary for targeted, prevention-oriented enforcement.

- The City has likewise failed to collect qualitative data from residents living closest to late-night activity or to evaluate real-world

“Belmont Shore is not designed to operate as a regional late-night entertainment district.”

**– Long Beach District 3 City Councilmember Kristina Duggan
October 2025**

policy experiments, such as whether noise and nuisance conditions abated during the recent voluntary 30-day midnight closure. Proceeding without this analysis reflects a lack of seriousness.

Barriers to Meaningful Public Participation

The City's 22-page memorandum relies heavily on internal jargon, bureaucratic shorthand, and legalistic language that residents should not be expected to interpret. Even if the document was intended for internal use, it is the sole framework residents are being asked to respond to, with the City stating that public input will be based on it. Presenting residents with a document written for insiders creates a barrier to meaningful participation and further signals that resident needs are not being taken seriously.

Notably, the City also failed in its memo-creation process to adhere to the spirit of the City Council's directive to engage the community. The BSRA, despite its preeminence as a nearly 100-year authoritative voice for residential interests, was largely sidelined in terms of meaningful input. Residents most directly affected by late-night alcohol operations were not consulted and were, in some cases, turned away, while engagement focused exclusively on businesses operating after midnight. Alcohol establishment owners were invited into and actively participated in the foundational steps; residents were not.

The process going forward raises similar concerns, relying on a tightly controlled Zoom meeting rather than a live, in-person hearing. A policy process that excludes those most affected cannot credibly claim to be responsive or aligned with the Council's stated intent.

These process failures directly shaped the substance of the City's proposal, including its reliance on an ill-suited downtown entertainment framework.

The City's "Downtown Dining and Entertainment District" as Model Is Flawed

The City's Downtown Dining and Entertainment District (DDED) framework, referenced in the City Manager's Dec. 24 memo, is not an appropriate model for Belmont Shore.

Belmont Shore is neither an entertainment district nor a downtown commercial core; it is a predominantly residential neighborhood anchored by a traditional community-serving commercial corridor. By design and community intent, the area is meant to support a balanced mix of retail, coffee shops, local services, and restaurants, not a nightlife-driven economy. Only one establishment (Shannon's) serves alcohol without food, confirming that Belmont Shore is not, and has never been, a bar district.

Indeed, per the long-established City's [Local Coastal Program](#) (LCP), the plan repeatedly and unequivocally defines Belmont Shore in terms that emphasize its residential essence:

- "The fundamental goal of this policy plan is to maintain and enhance the very special character of Belmont Shore. Aside from the existing commercial strip along Second Street and the node at Ocean and Granada, the Shore shall remain entirely residential in character. Preservation of viable neighborhoods, a principal goal of the City's General Plan, shall prevail as a policy of this LCP."
- "Belmont Shore's Second Street should be developed to serve the residents of the area."

“Belmont Shore is a residential neighborhood first, and our residents deserve peace and safety in their own community.”

– Long Beach Mayor Rex Richardson
October 2025

- “There shall be no further encroachment into residential areas for commercial development.”

Even using the DDED as a model “to adapt” specific elements or ideas risks importing assumptions and policy trajectories that are fundamentally inconsistent with the neighborhood’s character and land-use realities. This approach also conflicts directly with repeated assurances from District 3 Councilmember Kristina Duggan that Belmont Shore will not become an entertainment district. Emphasizing this point, immediately after the October 2025 fatal shooting, Councilmember Duggan [said](#), “Belmont Shore is not designed to operate as a regional late-night entertainment district.”

In his official statement, Mayor Rex Richardson also agreed with this position, stating,

“Belmont Shore is a residential neighborhood first, and our residents deserve peace and safety in their own community.”

Invoking even parts of the DDED framework creates unnecessary risk, confusion, and mistrust by opening the door to outcomes residents do not desire and have been explicitly told will not occur and are not applicable or appropriate.

Instead, Belmont Shore requires a people-first approach grounded in public health, safety, and prevention—one that prioritizes residents and visitors, addresses impacts upstream, and ensures alcohol service is compatible with a livable residential community.

Harm Prevention and Quality-of-Life Measures

This framework is intentionally prevention-focused. It recognizes that alcohol-related harms are not random or accidental; rather they are shaped by environmental conditions, operating practices, and policy choices. The sections that follow focus first on harm prevention and quality-of-life protections, and then on the accountability and enforcement structures necessary to

make those protections real and enforceable.

A. Noise Control

Any serious attempt to prevent alcohol-related problems must include clear, enforceable standards for sound encroachment and operational impacts, coupled with meaningful ways to measure them. This includes amplified sound from

music, televisions, and sports audio; noise and activity associated with open-air and patio operations; and impacts on sidewalks and the public right-of-way, particularly where late-night activity spills into residential areas.

It must also address noise generated by intoxicated patrons as they exit establishments, especially in nearby parking lots, where shouting, loitering, disorderly behavior, and motor vehicles routinely disturb surrounding homes. Standards should account for residential adjacency and proximity, be aligned with existing City noise ordinances, and vary by time of day, with heightened restrictions during late-night hours.

Noise ordinances should, optimally, be expanded and delineated to account for characteristics and needs unique to individual neighborhoods. Vehicles exiting Belmont Shore routinely create noise above acceptable limits, speeding conditions, and accidents. Critically, residents must have mechanisms by which to measure and document sound levels themselves so that enforcement is grounded in real-world conditions rather than complaints that can be dismissed or deemed unprovable.

B. Nuisance Abatement

Nuisance abatement is a core public health and safety function and must be treated as an affirmative operating obligation for establishments that sell alcohol in residentially impacted areas. Alcohol-related nuisance conditions are predictable outcomes of how an establishment operates, manages patrons, and interacts with its surrounding environment. Effective nuisance abatement requires proactive prevention, clear responsibility for impacts that extend beyond a business's four walls, and meaningful consequences.

An establishment's duty to prevent and mitigate nuisance activity must extend to areas

reasonably affected by its operation, including nearby sidewalks, parking lots, alleys, and other adjacent public or private spaces. Nuisance activities occurring on the premises, in parking areas, sidewalks, alleys, or in close proximity to the premises, include but are not limited to:

- Disturbance of the peace
- Excessive or late-night noise
- Obstruction of sidewalks by patrons
- Public drunkenness or drinking in public
- Illegal drug activity
- Harassment of passersby
- Loitering
- Excessive littering
- Graffiti or vandalism
- Public urination, defecation, or vomiting
- Theft, assault, battery, or other violent or disorderly conduct
- Sexual harassment or lewd conduct in public
- Traffic violations, illegal parking, or curfew violations
- Police detentions, arrests, or repeated calls for service.

C. Security Requirements

An effective solution must include clear, enforceable security and area-management requirements tied to the real-world impacts of late-night operations.

Establishments should be required to maintain a minimum baseline level of security staffing, with additional staffing scaled to occupancy and risk, and with clearly defined duties and authority for security personnel. These responsibilities must include active crowd management and affirmative obligations to prevent, contain, and disperse disruptive behavior, not merely react after problems arise.

D. Parking Lot and Adjacent Area Management

Operators must be explicitly accountable for managing adjacent sidewalks, walkways, and proximate parking lots—both public and private—where patrons routinely congregate before entry and after closing. In Belmont Shore, these areas have become predictable focal points for late-night noise, disorder, public intoxication, and other nuisance activity. Although some establishments claim they lack authority to manage behavior beyond their immediate premises, applicable permit conditions and nuisance laws already require operators to prevent and mitigate foreseeable impacts of their operations in areas repeatedly affected by their patrons. Disclaiming responsibility does not relieve establishments of these legal obligations.

Alcohol-serving establishments must therefore be required to actively police and manage defined adjacent areas. This includes affirmative duties to patrol, prohibit loitering and outside alcohol consumption, intervene when disruptive behavior arises, and ensure timely, orderly dispersal of patrons at closing. The current use of security—often funded through parking meter revenue or required by permit—has proven largely ineffective because it is not clearly tied to enforceable duties or outcome-based standards. Clear, enforceable requirements for parking lot and adjacent-area management are necessary to ensure that security resources are used to actually reduce harm, rather than merely create the appearance of compliance.

E. Overserving and Food Service Controls

Responsible alcohol service and bona fide dining operations are central to preventing late-night harms and ensuring compliance with State law.

Establishments must adhere to Responsible Beverage Service requirements, including prohibitions on promotions that encourage overconsumption and affirmative monitoring and intervention when patrons show signs of intoxication. The State requires server certification of Responsible Beverage Service. The City should require establishments to have evidence of certification prominently displayed onsite.

Equally important are clear dining and food service requirements where alcohol service is permitted on the basis of restaurant use. Food service must be bona fide, continuous, and available for the full duration of alcohol service. Residents have observed anecdotally that some kitchens are closing well before alcohol service ends, effectively converting restaurants into late-night bar operations. This illegal practice undermines the legal basis for alcohol service, erodes public trust, and creates precisely the problematic conditions associated with bar-only establishments.

Some establishments are currently required to provide—through audited documentation—that their food service revenues exceed their alcohol revenues by a stated ratio or percentage. This practice should also be enforced for all hours of openings, ensuring the restaurant operation does not turn into a bar or club operation. The City should ensure State laws are being followed and refer offending establishments to California ABC.

F. Entertainment Licenses Are Incompatible with a Residential Corridor

Belmont Shore residents have repeatedly observed a dangerous and predictable pattern in which certain establishments operate as one type of venue during the day, only to transform into something entirely different late at night.

These late-night “morphs”, enabled by entertainment licenses, allow restaurants to function as nightclub-style venues within a dense residential corridor. For example, Legends presents itself as an all-ages sports bar, yet its entertainment license permits a nightclub environment after hours. Similarly, Panama Joe’s operates as a family-oriented restaurant during the day, but late-night entertainment and alcohol-centric promotions attract heavy drinking and party-oriented crowds.

These transformations undermine land-use expectations, blur the distinction between restaurant, bar, and nightclub uses, and create exactly the conditions—crowding, noise, intoxication, and disorder—that residents are repeatedly forced to endure.

Given these realities, Belmont Shore is not an appropriate location for entertainment licenses. The City should cease granting or renewing entertainment licenses on Second Street altogether. The risks associated with late-night entertainment in a residential corridor are well documented and have already been manifested locally.

The history of Panama Joe’s demonstrates why adding more conditions is not only ineffective, but counterproductive. In 2012, the Long Beach Police Department explicitly recommended against renewing Panama Joe’s entertainment license due to ongoing violations. The City [disregarded](#) that recommendation and instead continued to rely on layered conditions as a substitute for meaningful accountability. More than a decade later, conditions have only deteriorated. Continuing to grant or renew entertainment licenses with additional conditions simply repeats a failed approach and perpetuates foreseeable harm. The appropriate response is a clear policy determination that en-

tertainment licenses are incompatible with Belmont Shore’s residential character and should no longer be issued or renewed.

G. Advertising and Promotion

Alcohol-related advertising and promotion must be regulated to deter and prevent the escalation of late-night, alcohol-centric activity that undermines neighborhood safety and quality of life. Restrictions (per State regulations) should prohibit advertising that emphasizes cheap, excessive, or rapid alcohol consumption, whether through signage, sidewalk-facing displays, or digital platforms.

The City’s discussion of alcohol pricing in its policy memo underscores the absence of informed alcohol-policy analysis. The suggestion that businesses merely “consider changes in pricing and offerings” minimizes what decades of public health research have made unequivocally clear: Lower alcohol prices lead to higher consumption and increased alcohol-related harm. (Source: [CDC on alcohol pricing strategies.](#))

While the City may not have direct authority to regulate drink prices, it does have both the responsibility and the platform to clearly discourage discounting practices that are known to incentivize overconsumption, intoxication, and foster conditions associated with safety and quality-of-life impacts.

In addition, social media and event promotions should be subject to clear standards that align with responsible beverage service requirements, ensuring that online marketing does not encourage overconsumption, misrepresent the nature of the establishment, or draw crowds inconsistent with a residential corridor.

Accountability and Enforcement

Ultimately, none of these standards or conditions—no matter how well drafted or legally framed—will be effective without real accountability. The City’s track record in this regard demonstrates a persistent failure to enforce existing rules, a reality that undermines confidence that simply adding more conditions will produce different outcomes.

This concern is reinforced by the City’s 22-page memo of proposed options, which is notably thin on how compliance would be monitored and enforced. In contrast, this document places accountability front and center, recognizing that without meaningful oversight, additional conditions amount to little more than words on paper.

A. Structural Accountability: Alcohol-Policy Coordinator Plus Team Approach

Effective accountability requires a single, independent point of responsibility that can ensure follow-through across departments. Currently, alcohol-related complaints are fragmented across multiple departments and reporting systems, leaving residents confused about where to report, uncertain whether anything is happening, and ultimately deterred from documenting ongoing problems.

The City should designate a single alcohol-policy coordinator to independently manage alcohol-related oversight in Belmont Shore and across Long Beach’s communities.

This role must be structurally independent from the City Manager’s office and from any individual department. The coordinator would be re-

sponsible for running the complaint-response process end-to-end: maintaining a centralized intake and tracking system, initiating reviews, coordinating interdepartmental participation, consolidating findings into a single, coherent record, ensuring timely follow-through, and communicating status and outcomes to the public. In this role, the coordinator would serve as the primary point of contact for residents, responsible for transparency, communication, and accountability throughout the process.

To operationalize this work, the City should adopt a standing complaint response framework modeled on the City of Vallejo’s approach. Under that framework, each complaint is evaluated by a three-member response team comprised of Code Enforcement, a Police Department beat officer (designated for alcohol policy enforcement) and a third member designated for public health or community impact assessment.

The alcohol-policy coordinator would convene and coordinate this team, integrate its findings, and ensure the City’s response is timely with regular public communication.

Under this framework, there should also be a formal mechanism for developing policy recommendations related to alcohol service and neighborhood impacts that centers on residents most affected by late-night activity. A standing public-interest advisory panel composed primarily of nearby residents, along with individuals with relevant public health or community-impact expertise, may review complaint trends, recurring conditions, and systemic issues revealed through enforcement and monitoring, and submit written recommendations to

the City regarding prevention strategies, operational standards, or potential amendments to municipal code provisions.

B. Transparency on Conditions

Transparency is essential to effective oversight and accountability.

All operating conditions, permit requirements, and alcohol-related compliance obligations for each establishment must be publicly accessible in a single, centralized location maintained by the City, without requiring residents to make multiple calls to different City departments, file via disparate online mechanisms, or submit Public Records Act requests. Information should be presented in clear, plain language and kept current so that residents, City staff, and operators share a common understanding of applicable rules.

Also, to ensure fairness, enforceability, and public trust, alcohol-related operating standards and enforcement mechanisms should be applied consistently across similarly situated establishments, rather than through individually negotiated conditions.

In addition, establishments must maintain visible, on-site accountability during all operating hours. Each alcohol-serving establishment should designate a compliance contact on duty for every open shift, responsible for ensuring adherence to operating conditions and responding to immediate concerns related to noise, crowd behavior, sidewalk obstruction, and other impacts.

Responsible individual names and contact information should be published in convenient locations for public and police accessibility. Compliance contacts should also be accountable for staff training and knowledge of all laws, regula-

tions, and operating conditions applicable to the business's alcohol- and safety-related protocols.

Key operating conditions that directly affect the public—such as hours of alcohol service, noise limits, security requirements, crowd management obligations, and restrictions on sidewalk or outdoor use—should be posted in a visible location at the premises, including at the entrance or in a front-facing window.

Example: Transparency on food service

Where alcohol service is permitted on the basis that an establishment operates as a bona fide restaurant, the continued operation of the kitchen during alcohol service is central to lawful compliance. Restaurants should not be morphing into nightclubs. When kitchens close before the end of alcohol service, the establishment effectively shifts into bar-only operation, undermining the legal basis for its alcohol privileges.

To ensure meaningful oversight, the City must require transparency regarding kitchen hours and the continued availability of a meaningful food menu during alcohol service, particularly late at night. This includes clear disclosure of when kitchens close relative to alcohol service, the extent of the food options available after certain hours, and how continuity of food service is monitored and verified. Without transparent, enforceable standards addressing early kitchen closures, food-based licensing distinctions are unenforceable in practice and invite de facto bar operations inconsistent with permit conditions and neighborhood expectations.

C. Resident-Focused Reporting and the GoLongBeach App

Accessible, resident-centered reporting tools are essential to any effective alcohol oversight and enforcement framework.

To that end, the GoLongBeach app—if it's to be utilized as described in the December 24 City Manager's memo—must be meaningfully aligned with the City's alcohol policies and the real-world conditions residents experience on the ground. The app should reflect all applicable operating conditions, enforcement standards, and nuisance criteria for alcohol-serving establishments, and provide residents with a clear, intuitive way to report violations tied to those specific requirements. Also, reporting should result in acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint, timely follow-up, and transparent outcomes.

While it was encouraging to see the GoLongBeach app referenced in the City's memo, there is no indication that residents are being consulted regarding possible additions related to alcohol-related impacts. An app intended for residents cannot be viable without resident input. Without clear categories, condition-based reporting options, and transparency about how complaints are reviewed and acted upon, the app expansion risks becoming a symbolic gesture rather than a meaningful accountability tool.

For residents, key components of such an expansion of the app's functionality must:

- **Be agile and easily accessible** in terms of input. QR codes assigned to each property and placed prominently on an establishment's doors, windows, patios and

parklets would provide one-click pathways to reporting.

- **Connect to a single-point online database** ("dashboard," or component of such, as described in Section D below) of complaints and related Conditions and enforcement documents, so context regarding past complaints and the user's current filing are visible, and that the compilation of such is surfaced and utilized for use in hearings and all permit renewal processes.
- **Encompass photo, video, and sound file upload mechanisms** so that complaints are documented robustly.

D. Public Dashboard for Alcohol-Related Impacts and Compliance

To ensure meaningful accountability, the City should establish a publicly accessible dashboard focused specifically on alcohol-serving establishments, modeled on the City's recently announced public crime data dashboard but tailored to alcohol-related impacts and compliance.

A public alcohol-outlet dashboard should present disaggregated, outlet-specific data—such as calls for service, nuisance complaints, noise violations, overservice-related incidents, enforcement actions, and permit conditions—updated on a regular basis and presented in a form easily accessible to the public.

Making this information public would allow residents, policymakers, and City staff to identify repeat problem locations, evaluate whether enforcement is being targeted effectively, and assess whether policy interventions are reducing harm over time. The alcohol policy

coordinator would be responsible for maintaining this tool.

E. Meaningful Consequences for Noncompliance

Effective enforcement requires meaningful consequences for noncompliance. Operating conditions, reporting requirements, and oversight mechanisms have little deterrent value if violations carry no real risk to the business itself. The City’s current proposal references a confusing tiered enforcement approach that omits the most significant and effective tool available: the loss of the privilege to operate.

Where establishments repeatedly violate conditions, contribute to chronic nuisance, or demonstrate an inability or unwillingness to operate responsibly, enforcement must escalate beyond warnings and minor penalties. Without the credible possibility of suspension, revocation, or non-renewal of local permits, enforcement frameworks become performative rather than preventive.

The City already has a proven and legally sound model for imposing meaningful consequences on alcohol outlets: the 2013 [Alcohol Nuisance Abatement Ordinance](#) governing liquor stores, which the Mayor referenced at the November 11, 2025 City Council meeting. That ordinance ties continued operation to compliance with clear nuisance and safety standards and requires outlets that repeatedly fail to comply to lose their “deemed approved” status, resulting in a Conditional Use Permit or ceasing operation altogether. This is precisely the situation the City now claims constrains its options in Belmont Shore. The four late-night alcohol establishments operate under “deemed approved” status and are

therefore not subject to the 1989 Conditional Use Permit requirements that apply to newer businesses. The 2013 ordinance was expressly designed to address this regulatory gap by imposing enforceable standards and consequences on deemed-approved outlets.

Rather than attempting to adapt an ill-suited downtown entertainment framework, the City should replace it with this proven regulatory model. Moreover, because the 2013 ordinance is already citywide, a comparable on-premise framework could be implemented citywide as well.

National public health benchmarks reinforce this point. Long Beach received only a Silver—not Gold—rating from [CityHealth](#) because its alcohol nuisance abatement law applies only to liquor stores, not on-premise alcohol establishments. CityHealth awards a Gold rating only where a city regulates all alcohol sales, authorizes closure for noncompliance, and grounds enforcement in public health and safety. Extending the existing framework to on-sale alcohol outlets would close a documented policy gap and align Long Beach with recognized best practices.

F. Funding and Capacity

Any serious alcohol policy must address how oversight and enforcement are funded.

Conditions and standards are meaningless if the City lacks the staff and capacity to enforce them, particularly in a city like Long Beach, where police resources are already stretched thin. Assessing fees on alcohol-serving establishments would serve two essential purposes: reinforcing accountability for operations that generate predictable public impacts, and providing a dedicated, sustainable funding source to pay for the civilian and law-enforcement resources required to address those impacts.

Other California jurisdictions have recognized this reality and structured alcohol-oversight systems funded directly by fees on regulated establishments, including similarly sized cities such as [Oakland](#), as well as [Rohnert Park](#) and [Ventura](#). In these models, fees are used to support dedicated staff—often combining civilian enforcement personnel with targeted police involvement—ensuring that alcohol-related nuisance, safety, and quality-of-life impacts are addressed without diverting scarce general-fund resources.

Best practices in alcohol policy rely on impact-based, tiered fees to ensure that oversight and enforcement are adequately funded and proportionate to the demands placed on public resources. Fees should be structured to recover the actual costs of monitoring, inspections, complaint response, nuisance abatement, and enforcement associated with alcohol-serving establishments, with revenues dedicated exclusively to these purposes. Effective models scale fees based on factors such as the size and capacity of the venue, alcohol-related revenue, and hours of operation—recognizing that larger venues, later hours, and more intensive alcohol service generate greater and more predictable impacts.

For example, in the city of [Ventura](#), fees are determined by a tiered category of low to high for each of four components: Potential Risk, Hours of Operation, Annual Wholesale Purchases of alcohol, and Entertainment (if applicable). A business is then assigned a value of high, medium (excluding risk), or low for each category.

Fee-funded enforcement must be designed to support proactive, routine oversight rather than reactive, complaint-driven response. Dedicated fees enable the City to conduct regular and unannounced inspections, compliance checks, and

late-night monitoring during peak risk hours—intervening before predictable problems escalate into chronic nuisance or serious harm. To this end, the City should follow the lead of Ventura, which employs a dedicated “alcohol enforcement officer” paid for with fees. Ventura helpfully maintains a [webpage](#) with contact information for this officer. Such an officer should be specifically trained on how to mitigate alcohol-related problems, working in close coordination with the California ABC.

Currently, the City relies largely on complaint-driven enforcement to address alcohol-related impacts, a model that is fundamentally and structurally inadequate in overconcentrated alcohol areas where harms are recurring and often occur late at night when residents are least able or willing to report them. Complaint-based systems shift the burden of enforcement onto residents, deter reporting, and allow known problem conditions—such as overservice, excessive noise, crowd mismanagement, and sidewalk obstruction—to persist unchecked.

By contrast, proactive, fee-supported civilian and law enforcement staffing allows the City to identify patterns, enforce conditions consistently, and prevent harm before it occurs, ensuring that enforcement is prevention-oriented, equitable, and not contingent on residents bearing the ongoing cost of reporting.

G. Meter Revenue Is Being Spent on Ineffective Security

Parking meter revenue in Belmont Shore is already being used to fund security services under the direction of the Parking Commission, yet observable conditions make clear that this spending has not meaningfully reduced late-night

alcohol-related harms. Despite ongoing expenditures, parking lots and adjacent areas remain focal points for noise, disorder, public intoxication, and post-closing congregation. This raises serious concerns about whether meter-funded security is properly scoped, deployed, or empowered to address the real impacts generated by late-night alcohol operations. Public funds collected from residents and visitors should not

be used to create the appearance of safety without producing measurable improvements. If meter revenue continues to be spent on security, it must be tied to clear duties, enforceable authority, and demonstrated outcomes—particularly during peak risk hours—rather than perpetuating ineffective practices that fail to mitigate known problems.

A People-First Way Forward

Belmont Shore and all of Long Beach’s neighborhoods need a resident-prioritized, prevention-focused approach grounded in transparency, accountability, and public health. The harms residents and visitors are experiencing are predictable outcomes of how alcohol service operates in a dense residential corridor—and of a policy process that has relied on incomplete data, limited engagement, and fragmented enforcement.

This document outlines a practical path forward **that centers residents**, addresses impacts upstream, and aligns oversight, enforcement, and funding with real-world conditions. It is broadly applicable while also transferable and customizable to individual communities’ specific needs. If the City is serious about reducing harm and restoring trust, it must move beyond procedural gestures and adopt policies that meaningfully protect the people who both visit and live in Long Beach.