

Pacific Grove group files initiative to ban short-term rentals

By **Carly Mayberry**, *Monterey Herald*

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0 COMMENTS

Pacific Grove >> A group of Pacific Grove residents have introduced a proposed initiative measure that would prohibit [short-term rentals in the city's residential zones](#).

The measure, which seeks to “preserve and protect Pacific Grove’s residential character,” was submitted to the city clerk on Dec. 21 by Luke Coletti, Elinora Susan Mantovani and Karin T. Locke. Its purpose is to amend the Pacific Grove General Plan and Municipal Code that currently allows short-term rentals in residential zones outside the Coastal Zone, to provide an 18-month phase-out period for existing permitted short-term rentals that become nonconforming uses under the measure and require voter approval of any changes to the measure.

The filing also included an intent to circulate a petition with the goal of getting the initiative on the November 2018 ballot. In the notice, multiple reasons were stated behind the proposed actions. They included the intent to prohibit short-term rentals in most residential neighborhoods, address the city’s efforts to regulate short-term rentals as unsuccessful and insufficient to curb the negative impacts of such rentals, and to ensure that Pacific Grove has adequate housing for city residents to remain the “city of homes” as provided in the City’s Charter, General Plan and Municipal Code. It also recognized that the city may continue to regulate short-term rentals in the Coastal Zone as long as those regulations protect the community and are consistent with laws administered by the California Coastal Commission. Lastly, it proposed prohibiting short-term rentals in designated residential districts without changing existing rules that permit home-sharing.

While Coletti declined to comment on the filing, City Manager Ben Harvey acknowledged receipt of the proposed initiative by the city clerk and noted it had been sent over to the city attorney’s office.

“They have to review it for completeness,” said Harvey, noting that the proposed initiative is still in its early stages and that a petition first has to be circulated before it can become a ballot measure.

It was just last week that the City Council finally passed the city’s new short-term rental ordinance on a vote of 4-2. After months of revision, the ordinance includes the adoption of a 55-foot zone of exclusion to address density problems and a cap of 250 short-term rentals citywide. Previously, the ordinance was to include an allowance of only 15 percent of housing per block dedicated to short-term rentals but that restriction was thrown out when the incorporation of a lottery system was eliminated. Harvey said that during the long-winded debate about short-term rentals, city staff heard frequently from certain residents that there was going to be a ballot initiative, noting that Coletti had previously come to City Hall as well as to a couple council members about the potential ballot measure.

“It’s not a surprise — we certainly knew he and the others would be filing it and we’ll move it through,” said Harvey.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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