

City concerned about safety of old motel

■ Far south building at old Hiawatha Lodge, which the city has deemed as unsafe /Credit: Greg Bebermeyer/MSC News

(KNZA)--Hiawatha city officials are concerned about the safety of the old Hiawatha Lodge and want the owner to present a plan to address those concerns.

Mary Ananzeh, who owns the Sunflower Motel, recently acquired the old Lodge motel and adjacent Gateway Inn Motel on the south end of town.

She appeared before the Hiawatha City Commission Monday evening to request more time to come up with a plan.

The motel, which has been closed for some time, has fallen into a state of disrepair over the years.

Police Chief John Defore said of primary concern is the far south building, which has been deemed unsafe.

The Police Department sent a letter to Ananzeh late last month giving her 45 days to come up with plan for either demolition or renovation of the building.

Ananzeh said she had contacted 16 companies seeking estimates, but had only received 3 estimates so far and was waiting to hear back from others.

She said, if possible, she wants to save the structure and has been told by some it's worth saving.

The Commission directed Ananzeh to return in two weeks with a specific plan for bring the building into compliance with city code.

In the meantime, Defore asked that barricades be installed around the building for the public's safety.