

A Resolution in Support of Proposed Changes in the Westwood Village Specific Plan

WHEREAS, UCLA has approximately 46,000¹ undergraduate and graduate students, as well as an additional 46,130² staff and faculty members, who are all stakeholders of Westwood and Westwood Village; and

WHEREAS, Westwood Village was developed in conjunction with UCLA and was designed to be a thriving retail destination for students and other residents; and

WHEREAS, the Westwood Village Specific Plan was established in 1989, with amendments in 1991, and 2004, is the guiding document for all urban planning and business development in the Village; and

WHEREAS, the Specific Plan currently contains many prohibitive definitions and restrictions that are outdated and have resulted in a crippling 32% vacancy rate in Westwood Village; and

WHEREAS, the Los Angeles Department of City Planning has released a draft ordinance³ to amend the Westwood Village Specific Plan, referred to the Planning and Land Use Management Committee by Los Angeles Fifth District City Councilmember Paul Koretz⁴; and

WHEREAS, significant amendments include eliminating ratios for fast food versus restaurant land uses in the Village. The current language classifies almost all food uses, particularly popular and affordable fast-casual concepts, as “fast food” and subsequently restricts the amount of these restaurants that can be established on each block of the Village. Therefore, this change would allow more affordable and popular restaurants to enter the Village; and

WHEREAS, significant amendments include administrative approval for signage that complies with existing Westwood Village Specific Plan regulations. Signage that deviates from the plan will still go through the current Design Review Board Process. The current process disincentivizes business development by slowing down the approval of signage projects and increasing costs for small business owners; and

WHEREAS, significant amendments include returning parking requirements to those in the General Zoning Code. The current Specific Plan requires more parking than the General Zoning

¹ [Fast Facts about UCLA](#)

² [Faculty & Staff](#) (headcount as of October 2020)

³ [Ordinance FAQ](#)

⁴ [LA City Clerk Council File: 18-1101 \(Koretz Support\)](#)

Code for many land uses, creating an overabundance of unnecessary parking which increases costs on developers, thereby disincentivizing investment in the Village; and

WHEREAS, on and off-street parking requirements in the Village and elsewhere impose an enormous cost on developers and businesses by requiring them to develop or purchase parking instead of letting them decide the amount that is necessary for their land use. This cost is passed on to residents and consumers in the form of higher rents and more expensive goods; and

WHEREAS, Old City Pasadena effectively removed off-street parking requirements and replacement requirements, which along with other parking reforms significantly changed its status as a deteriorating downtown to a thriving retail, dining, and performance destination; and

WHEREAS, Westwood Village requires significant parking reform beyond returning to General Zoning Code to support its return to a thriving business district; and

WHEREAS, the Westwood Village Improvement Association (WVIA) is asking for two additional amendments to the Specific Plan regarding parking. First, they are calling to eliminate parking requirements for business change of use. Second, they are asking that off-site parking requirements are allowed to be met by lease in lieu of covenants, which would allow more property owners to lease their parking property and thereby allow more businesses to meet the requirements to establish themselves in the Village; and

WHEREAS, undergraduate students are directly impacted by the proposed amendments as the Specific Plan controls the ability of the Village to thrive; and

WHEREAS, students and the Undergraduate Students Association have consistently been allies and activists in the fight to reclaim Westwood Village to improve affordability, accessibility, and prosperity for local businesses and residents alike.

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the UCLA USAC supports the proposed amendments to the Westwood Village Specific Plan in the Draft Westwood Ordinance⁵; and

LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the UCLA USAC supports the additional amendments proposed by the WVIA to reduce parking requirements; and

LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the UCLA USAC emphasizes the importance of undergraduate students as stakeholders in the Village and affirms to LA City Planning the importance of including student input equally as stakeholders in Westwood and the Village.

⁵ [Draft Ordinance](#)