

FACT SHEET

Westwood Village Specific Plan Amendment

CPC-2021-795-SP

CF 18-1101

January 2022

Summary

Los Angeles City Planning has released a revised draft ordinance to amend the Westwood Village Specific Plan to better support local businesses and to align parking regulations with Citywide standards and mobility goals. The proposed ordinance will revise definitions, limitations for certain uses, parking provisions, and add a ministerial approval process for eligible projects that comply with the Specific Plan regulations.

Background

On January 30, 2019, the City Council adopted a motion ([CF 18-1101](#)), which requested City Planning to amend the Westwood Village Specific Plan to help reduce commercial vacancies. On August 5, 2019, the Planning staff reported back options to amend the Westwood Village Specific Plan. These options were subsequently presented and discussed with various stakeholders to help formulate an ordinance to amend the Westwood Village Specific Plan. On June 10, 2021, a public hearing was held for the initial draft ordinance. On September 15, 2021, the City Council adopted an amended [motion](#) directing City Planning to add a ministerial review process for certain signage and change of use projects; to revise location restriction ratios for food-related uses, and to modify area-specific parking regulations to align with citywide requirements, amongst other policy changes. In response to the amended motion and subsequent community input, Planning staff has prepared a revised draft ordinance for consideration by the City Planning Commission.

Key Provisions

The draft ordinance proposes to amend regulations in the following **sections** in the Westwood Village Specific Plan: Definitions, Uses, Preservation of Cultural Resources, Parking, and Signs. Additionally, a new section will be created entitled “Review Procedures”. Use and parking regulations would still be subject to applicable provisions of the LAMC and other citywide requirements.

Definitions

- Add “Restaurant” definition
- Add “Administrative Review” definition
- Add “Facade” definition
- Add “Cabinet Sign” definition
- Add “Sign Program” definition
- Eliminate “Cafeteria” definition
- Eliminate “Fast Food Establishment” definition
- Eliminate “Food Court” definition

Uses

- Eliminate location restrictions for Fast Food Establishment use
- Eliminate location restrictions for Restaurant use

Parking and Mobility

- Eliminate parking requirements for Hotel, Theater, Nightclub, and Office uses and defer to General Zoning Code parking requirements
- Remove the 50% replacement parking provision
- Add parking relief provision for eligible change of use projects
- Add provision requiring compliance with citywide TDM Program

Signs

- Expand the list of prohibited signs to include Cabinet Signs
- Clarify that DRB review is required for Sign Programs
- Clarify that DRB review is required for signs requiring Certificate of Appropriateness (clarification will be made in the “Preservation of Cultural Resources” Section)

Review Procedures

- Add Review Procedures (Section 4) to include a new Administrative Review process for eligible signage and change of use projects

Table 1. Comparison of Current Regulations and Proposed Regulations

Category	Current Regulation	Proposed Regulation
Administrative Review	Not currently in the Specific Plan	Add a new Administrative Review definition and review process; Projects that qualify include eligible signage and Change of Use projects that do not include an expansion of use, Facade alterations, or require additional entitlements
Location Restrictions	“Restaurant” & “Fast Food” defined through Director’s Interpretation	Add “Restaurant” definition and rescind the Director’s Interpretation
	Includes definitions for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fast Food Establishments - Food Court - Cafeteria 	Remove definitions for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fast Food Establishments - Food Court - Cafeteria These definitions will no longer be regulated by the Specific Plan.
	Includes location restrictions* for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fast Food Establishment use limited at 1 per 400 feet of frontage - Restaurant use limited at 1 per 200 feet of frontage 	Remove location restrictions for the following uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fast Food Establishment - Restaurant
Parking and Mobility	Additional parking is required for Hotel, Theater, Nightclub and Office uses	Remove the additional parking requirement for Hotel, Theater, Nightclub and Office uses and defer to the General Code required parking
	Replacement parking provision which requires 50% of existing parking to be replaced	Remove 50% replacement parking provision
	Parking required for changes of use	Add new provision for parking relief for change of use projects that meet certain criteria
	No reference to TDM strategies	Add provision requiring compliance with citywide TDM Program
Signage	No restriction on Cabinet Signs	Prohibit Cabinet Signs Add “Cabinet Sign” definition
	Sign Programs not mentioned	Add “Sign Program” definition Clarify that Sign Programs are subject to DRB review Clarify that DRB review is required for signs requiring Certificate of Appropriateness

*Location restrictions for Fast Food Establishment and Restaurant uses along Broxton Avenue are less restrictive.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Why does the draft ordinance add a Restaurant definition?

The Specific Plan does not currently include a definition for Restaurant. The proposed amendment will add a definition for Restaurant to establish a term that encompasses all food-related uses. This is necessary to effectuate the current regulations of Restaurant uses that are currently mentioned throughout the Specific Plan.

Why does the draft ordinance add definitions for Facade and Sign Program?


The draft ordinance proposes to add a “Facade” definition to clarify what types of projects are subject to the Westwood Design Review Board process. Projects that include Facade alterations will not be eligible for the proposed Administrative Review process and require recommendation from the Westwood Design Review Board and approval from the Director of Planning. Likewise, “Sign Program” will also be defined, as such projects will require recommendation from the Westwood Design Review Board.

Why does the draft ordinance eliminate location restrictions for Restaurants and Fast-food Establishments?

The Westwood Village Specific Plan currently limits the number of Restaurants and Fast-Food Establishments on a given street. For example, Restaurants are only allowed at a ratio of one per 200 feet of lot frontage per the Specific Plan. The proposed amendment eliminates these ratios to create a more economically sustainable Specific Plan that may be versatile to future needs and consumer trends. These uses will continue to be regulated by the requirements set forth in the Zoning Code, Building Code, and all other applicable provisions of the LAMC.

How does the draft ordinance amend the regulations for the number of parking spaces required for certain uses?

Projects in Westwood Village currently require more parking than the General Zoning Code for the following uses: Hotel, Theater, Nightclub, and Office. The draft ordinance eliminates these area-specific parking requirements, and instead defers to the citywide requirements found in the Zoning Code (LAMC 12.21 A.4). A previous parking study indicated a surplus of available parking in the Village area. In addition, Westwood Village is a pedestrian oriented, transit-rich area served by an extensive transit network which includes several bus lines, and an existing network of micro mobility options such as rideshare, bike-share, and dockless scooters. To align with the City’s Mobility goals, the Specific Plan’s parking regulations will be amended to be consistent with Zoning



Code requirements. Projects in the Westwood Village Specific Plan will still need to meet the Citywide parking requirements as determined by the use and underlying zone.

How does the draft ordinance amend the regulations for the number of parking spaces required for Change of Use projects?


A new provision for parking relief for nonresidential change of use projects will be introduced in the Specific Plan. A change of use project can qualify for parking relief if it meets the following criteria: 1) the building wherein the change of use is occurring has a valid certificate of occupancy, 2) the change of use is limited to 5,000 square feet of floor area, 3) any additions resulting in an increase of floor area shall be within the existing walls and existing roofline of the tenant space and building, 4) tenant spaces shall not be allowed to combine spaces that would result in a floor area greater than 5,000 square feet 5) no net loss of guest rooms and/or dwelling units shall result from the change of use. This provision is consistent with similar policies introduced through the Local Emergency Ordinance (No. 187096).

What does the removal of the Replacement Parking provision mean?

The Replacement Parking provision currently requires infill projects which result in the removal of any parking spaces to replace 50% of such parking spaces, in addition to providing the spaces required per the project's underlying zone. The draft ordinance removes the Replacement Parking provision and only requires projects to meet the General Zoning Code required parking for the underlying zone. The 50% excess parking in addition to the Code required parking will no longer be required. This update to the Replacement Parking provision is consistent with the City's Mobility goals and appropriate in pedestrian-oriented, transit-rich areas like Westwood Village.

How will the Administrative Review process apply to signs and change of use projects?

The proposed ordinance introduces an Administrative Review process for certain signage and change of use projects. An Administrative Review is a ministerial approval issued by the Director of Planning pursuant to the regulations of the Specific Plan. Projects that are deemed eligible for Administrative Review and comply with the Specific Plan will no longer be required to obtain recommendation from the Westwood Community Design Review Board (DRB). The following projects are eligible for an Administrative Review:

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- Sign projects which comply with the signage regulations of the Specific Plan and do not require an adjustment, modification, exception, or a Certificate of Appropriateness
 - Change of use projects that do not propose facade alterations, new construction, expansions, or a Limited Use identified in the Specific Plan

Any project seeking to deviate from the Specific Plan regulations would not qualify for an Administrative Review and must obtain recommendation from the Westwood DRB.

Does the proposed ordinance eliminate the Design Review Board procedures?

No, the Design Review Board procedures will remain in effect for applicable projects including but not limited to new construction, additions, Facade changes, Sign Programs, and projects involving Historic Cultural Resources requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Does the proposed ordinance apply to projects that have already submitted their application to City Planning?

The policies of the proposed ordinance will apply to project applications submitted after the ordinance is adopted and becomes effective. Projects will not be subject to the provisions of this ordinance if a complete plan check is accepted by the Department of Building and Safety and a fee is paid prior to the effective date of this ordinance.

What are the next steps?

This item is tentatively scheduled for consideration by the City Planning Commission at a public meeting in February 2022. Members of the public will have an opportunity to provide public comment and testimony at the CPC hearing. There will be additional opportunity to provide public comment at each subsequent hearing held by the Planning and Land Use Management Committee and the City Council.

Who can I contact for more information or to join the interested parties list?

For any additional information or inquiries, please contact Zuriel Espinosa at zuriel.espinosa@lacity.org or (213) 978-1249.

For more information on the Westwood Specific Plan Amendment - Proposed Land Use regulations page <https://planning.lacity.org/plans-policies/proposed-land-use-regulations>