



PRESS RELEASE

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Los Angeles Unveils New Proposal for Westwood Village That Offers Economic Relief to Biz Owners

LOS ANGELES—Today, the Los Angeles City Council’s Planning and Land Use Management Committee advanced recommendations that would amend the Westwood Village Specific Plan, promoting economic relief measures that aim to create investment opportunities in the aftermath of the pandemic. Requested by Councilmember Paul Koretz of Council District 5 and developed by City Planning, the proposed changes to the Specific Plan’s existing zoning rules would expedite permit review and clearances to address the neighborhood’s high storefront vacancy rates.

Westwood Village has seen an economic decline over the past 15 years. Once a vibrant commercial corridor full of retail shops, restaurants, and entertainment facilities, many local storefronts now stand empty, with vacancy rates approaching nearly 40%. The Department’s proposal would eliminate burdensome and outdated development restrictions, ease parking requirements, and provide a streamlined alternative (ministerial approval) for qualifying projects.

The revised zoning rules that the CPC endorsed seek to allow more food establishments—ranging from “fast casual” to formal sit-down restaurants—to open their doors in Westwood Village and to make the area even more of a destination for food, in addition to securing jobs for UCLA students and young professionals who reside within the general area.

“We want Westwood Village to function as a retail center for the community and, secondarily, the broader regional and tourist market,” said Deputy Director of Community Planning Shana Bonstin. “Our proposal supports local job growth. In short, it is responsive to the present and future needs of the community that it serves.”

Currently, businesses exploring whether to seek City approvals to open a restaurant in the Westwood Village are subject to overly prescriptive location ratios that have limited the number



of food and dining establishments that could locate within the boundaries of the Specific Plan. City Planning’s proposal would strike any mention of these location restrictions for food-related uses, in addition to modifying the onerous parking regulations to align with citywide strategies that support a pedestrian oriented environment.

The Department’s proposal would rightsize the parking requirements to default to the standard parking requirements outlined under the City’s Zoning Code, without triggering excessive obligations that would impair a business owner’s ability to repurpose an existing space. It offers relief to businesses that would otherwise be unable to identify on- or off-site parking by relaxing parking regulations and providing relief for certain change of use projects.

Lastly, City Planning’s proposal would create an administrative review process to streamline the permitting process that would allow signage and change of use projects that do not require facade alteration, construction, and/or expansion to avoid waiting at the end of the line for planning sign-offs. This change will make the process less costly and time consuming.

The proposed amendments to the Westwood Village Specific Plan will advance to the full City Council, where the matter will be voted on prior to taking effect. Visit Planning4LA.org for more information, including the [Staff Recommendation Report](#), [Draft Ordinance](#), and [Fact Sheet](#).

About Specific Plans

A specific plan is a common form of a land use overlay or zoning district. As a planning document that implements the goals and policies of the General Plan, it details development standards that are mandatory for projects located within a specified geography.

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