

Communication from Public

Name: Westwood Specific Plan

Date Submitted: 09/11/2019 10:45 AM

Council File No: 18-1101

Comments for Public Posting: A letter of support is being submitted on behalf of UCLA and Vice Chancellor Michael Beck. Marco Perez UCLA Government and Community Relations



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August 11, 2019

Planning and Land Use Management Committee
c/o City of Los Angeles City Clerk
Room 395
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Westwood Village Specific Plan / 2028 Summer Olympics / Revised Definitions / Food Related Establishments / Parking Requirements (Council File: 18-1101)

Dear Committee Members:

The Westwood Village (Village) area in Los Angeles is a unique place with a rich history. The Village is surrounded by a residential population of over 227,000 residents within a 3-mile radius, and tens of thousands of employees along the Wilshire corridor and at UCLA. Unfortunately, and somewhat surprisingly, the Village is not thriving as a vibrant shopping, dining and entertainment district to the extent it previously did or still could.

It is hard to know the exact reason for why the Village is underperforming, but one clear limitation is the overly restrictive Specific Plan. UCLA supports amending the Specific Plan to create a more flexible and inviting environment for success. In reviewing the proposed Specific Plan Amendment options being considered by PLUM, I encourage the following:

Revise definition of food-related uses.

The Village does not need additional fast food establishments, but would benefit from additional restaurants, including fast casual concepts. If an acceptable definition of fast casual can be developed, this might be the right option. If agreement on such a definition becomes too elusive or restrictive, eliminating the definition of restaurant should be given serious consideration.

Reconsider concentration ratios for food-related establishments.

Each street within the Village has its own vibe, so restaurant-type limits should either be eliminated or based Village-wide.

Revise Parking Requirements.

This should be the easiest Amendment issue to consider. Option 2 is preferable as there should not be additional parking requirements on historic buildings or those that have a change of use. Studies have shown there is ample parking available in the village and with the availability of Lyft/Uber, e-scooters, and other forms of alternative transportation, and the future the Purple Line subway, reduced demand for parking is inevitable.

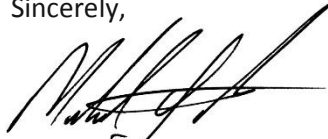
Revise Location of Parking

My preference would be to see a third alternative to the two options being considered. Larger parcels should be responsible for including code required parking, but smaller parcels should be

allowed some flexibility. Covenant restrictions or leases should not be required on smaller parcels that cannot accommodate parking, but absent such an alternative, allowing the flexibility of leases is preferable to the more cumbersome covenant-based requirement.

We appreciate that the City of LA and PLUM are considering amendments to the Westwood Village Specific Plan to support a more vibrant and successful Village.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Beck", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael J. Beck
Administrative Vice Chancellor

cc: Paul Koretz, Councilman District 5
Andrew Thomas, Westwood Village Improvement Association