

FINDINGS

CHARTER AND GENERAL PLAN FINDINGS

City Charter Section 556 and 558

Pursuant to City Charter Sections 556 and 558, as described below, the proposed ordinance is in substantial conformance with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, as well as in conformance with the public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice. Specifically, the action is consistent with the following goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan Framework Element, Westwood Community Plan, applicable specific plans, and the Mobility Plan.

General Plan Framework Element

The Framework Element for the General Plan (Framework Element) was adopted by the City of Los Angeles in December 1996 and re-adopted in August 2001. The Framework Element also sets forth a Citywide comprehensive long-range growth strategy and broadly defines Citywide policies regarding such issues as land use, housing, urban form, neighborhood design, open space, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, and public services. The Framework Element includes guiding principles that support the proposed amendments to the Westwood Village Specific Plan and the Westwood Community Design Review Board Specific Plan. The proposed ordinance is consistent with the following Framework Element policies:

GOAL 3D: Pedestrian-oriented districts that provide local identity, commercial activity, and support Los Angeles' neighborhoods.

Objective 3.8: Reinforce existing and establish new neighborhood districts which accommodate a broad range of uses that serve the needs of adjacent residents, promote neighborhood activity, are compatible with adjacent neighborhoods, and are developed as desirable places to work and visit.

GOAL 3F: Mixed-use centers that provide jobs, entertainment, culture, and serve the region.

Objective 3.10: Reinforce existing and encourage the development of new regional centers that accommodate a broad range of uses that serve, provide job opportunities, and are accessible to the region, are compatible with adjacent land uses, and are developed to enhance urban lifestyles.

GOAL 7B: A City with land appropriately and sufficiently designated to sustain a robust commercial and industrial base.

Objective 7.2: Establish a balance of land uses that provides for commercial and industrial development which meets the needs of local residents, sustains economic growth, and assures maximum feasible environmental quality.

Policy 7.2.4: Ensure that the City has enough capacity to accommodate the development of general commercial uses which support community needs in all parts of Los Angeles.

GOAL 7C: A City with thriving and expanding businesses.

Objective 7.3: Maintain and enhance the existing businesses in the City.

Policy 7.3.2: Retain existing neighborhood commercial activities within walking distance of residential areas.

Policy 7.3.3: Retain the City's existing employment base through an outreach program to existing businesses and an ongoing assessment of their specific land use requirements.

GOAL 7D: A City able to attract and maintain new land uses and businesses.

Objective 7.4: Improve the provision of governmental services, expedite the administrative processing of development applications, and minimize public and private development application costs.

Policy 7.4.1: Develop and maintain a streamlined development review process to assure the City's competitiveness within the Southern California region.

Policy 7.4.2: Maximize opportunities for "by-right" development.

Policy 7.4.3: Maintain development fee structures that do not unreasonably burden specific industry groups, are financially competitive with other cities in the region, and reduce uncertainty to the development community.

Objective 7.6: Maintain a viable retail base in the City to address changing resident and business shopping needs.

Policy 7.6.2: Reuse deteriorating community or regional centers for wholesale or outlet centers when the newly emerging retail trend requires larger sites not otherwise available to the City.

The proposed ordinance aligns with the goals and objectives of the General Plan Framework Element by introducing policies that help reduce commercial vacancies and facilitate business retention and job growth. The amendments proposed emphasize the need to accommodate future commercial growth by streamlining the City's permitting processes and attracting development to commercial districts such as Westwood Village. The proposed ordinance meets the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan Framework Element by encouraging the growth of a

regional center that can accommodate a broad range of uses that serve the needs of residents while providing job opportunities accessible to the region.

Westwood Community Plan

The City of Los Angeles maintains 35 Community Plans, one for each of its Community Plan Areas. Together, the 35 Community Plans make up the General Plan's Land Use Element, which plays an important role in bolstering housing and job opportunities, conserving open space and natural resources, and balancing different neighborhoods' needs. The Westwood Community Plan establishes specific goals and implementation strategies to achieve the broad objectives laid out in the City's General Plan. The proposed ordinance will be in substantial conformance with the following goals, objectives, and policies:

GOAL 2: A strong and competitive commercial sector which promotes economic vitality, and serves the needs of the community through well designed, safe and accessible areas while preserving the community's unique commercial, historic and cultural character.

Objective 2-1: To conserve and strengthen viable commercial development in the community and to provide opportunities for new, compatible commercial development and services within existing commercial areas.

Policy 2-1.1: New commercial uses should be located in existing established commercial areas or shopping centers

Policy 2-1.3: Ensure the viability of existing stores and businesses which support the needs of local residents and are compatible with the neighborhood.

The ordinance meets the goals, objectives, and policies of the Westwood Community Plan by utilizing land use tools to enhance business opportunities in the Community Plan area, with specific emphasis on the Westwood Village neighborhood. The proposed ordinance would amend existing regulations to facilitate a mix of uses and reduce commercial vacancies, allowing Westwood Village to function as a retail center for the surrounding community and the broader region of Los Angeles.

Westwood Village Specific Plan

Section 2 of the Westwood Village Specific Plan outlines the purposes of the Specific Plan. The proposed ordinance will be in substantial conformance with the following purposes:

Purpose A. To permit, encourage and facilitate a balanced mix of uses and an environment attractive to a cross-section of the community (in particular, nearby residents, office employees and U.C.L.A. students and staff), so that Westwood Village continues to function as a retail center that primarily serves the surrounding community and secondarily serves the broader regional and tourist market.

Purpose F. To encourage and facilitate non-automobile access to the Village by:

1. facilitating pedestrian and shuttle access from U.C.L.A., Wilshire Boulevard offices and surrounding residential areas;
2. providing sufficient parking to serve the Village without encouraging excessive automobile trips to the Village; and
3. developing programs to encourage car pooling and the use of public transit.

The proposed ordinance is consistent with the overall purposes of the Westwood Village Specific Plan by amending outdated policies to provide regulatory relief for businesses and retailers. These changes will help address rising commercial vacancy rate and remove restrictive regulations that make it difficult for businesses to open and operate in the Village. The proposed ordinance also highlights the pending updates to the TDM Program which will soon be implemented citywide. The City's new TDM Program will include a menu of strategies to reduce vehicle miles travelled.

Mobility Plan 2035

Mobility Plan 2035 provides the policy foundation for achieving a transportation system that balances the needs of all road users. Mobility Plan 2035 includes goals that are equal in weight and define the City's high-level mobility priorities. The proposed ordinances will be in substantial conformance with the following goals, objectives, and policies:

GOAL 3: Access for All Angelenos

Objective: Increase the combined mode split of persons who travel by walking, bicycling or transit to 50% by 2035.

Policy 3.3 Promote equitable land use decisions that result in fewer vehicle trips by providing greater proximity and access to jobs, destinations, and other neighborhood services.

GOAL 5: Clean Environments and Healthy Communities

Objective: Decrease VMT per capita by 5% every five years, to 20% by 2035.

Policy 5.2: Support ways to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita.

The proposed ordinance supports the goals, objectives, and policies of the Mobility Plan 2035 by amending area-specific parking regulations to align with Citywide requirements to meet the broader goals of reducing vehicle miles traveled. The amendments proposed aim to reduce parking requirements in Westwood Village, an area that already has an adequate supply of parking, to increase the utilization of active transportation modes and spur community interaction, which in turn can improve the health of an area's residents and increase economic activity.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION FINDINGS**Public Necessity, Convenience, General Welfare, and Good Zoning**

Los Angeles City Charter Section 558 and LAMC Section 12.32(C)(7) require that prior to adopting a land use ordinance, the City Council make findings that the ordinance conforms with public necessity, convenience, general welfare, and good zoning practice. The proposed ordinance is in conformity with the aforementioned as follows:

The proposed ordinance is in conformity with public necessity because it will promote economic opportunity by introducing policies that help maintain a viable retail base in Westwood Village. Economic opportunity in all communities is essential to improve social equity and maintain the quality of life. A business-friendly environment is a requirement for protecting current jobs and developing new ones. The proposed ordinance addresses changing consumer needs and concerns raised by local business leaders. Significant public input has been received in support of the Specific Plan amendment. The proposed amendments will reduce blight from vacant properties by decreasing unattainable barriers that keep the properties unoccupied.

The proposed ordinance is in conformity with public convenience because it will allow for more restaurants and fast-food establishments to operate in Westwood Village. These commercial amenities are necessary for the well-being of residents, students, and visitors. The proposed Specific Plan amendment provides for all emerging businesses to compete at the same level as other businesses in the City that do not have the same regulatory environment. Additionally, the business-friendly goals of this amendment create opportunities for new establishments to serve nearby residents. For those residing within the Westwood Village, this would reduce the need to drive to other communities, or cities outside Los Angeles, to dine, shop, or receive commercial services.

The proposed ordinance is in conformity with the general welfare because the amendment will not change the range of neighborhood-serving land uses that are allowed by the Westwood Village Specific Plan. The Office of Zoning Administration will continue to review projects that may impact adjacent residential neighborhoods (generally establishments that sell or serve alcohol, provide live entertainment, etc.) on a case-by-case basis through an existing Conditional Use process pursuant to LAMC 12.24. Future development will still be required to undergo an environmental review process to ensure that impacts to health and safety are analyzed before permits are issued.

The proposed ordinance is in conformity with good zoning practice because its policies aim to support Citywide and community goals. The proposed ordinance will align existing parking regulations with General Code requirements. The amendment will bring the Westwood Village Specific Plan into consistency with the rest of the City of Los Angeles where there are no other similar limitations for Fast Food and Restaurant uses or no other similar additional requirements for parking. The amendment will leave intact the range of neighborhood serving land uses that are allowed by the C4 zone.

CEQA FINDINGS

The City determined that the Project would not have a significant impact on the environment. The Project involve a code amendment and does not propose or approve any development or construction and would not authorize any new or existing land uses. Negative Declaration ENV-2021-815-ND (Exhibit G) was prepared to identify any potential impacts on the physical environment and reflects the interdependent judgement and analysis of the City. On the basis of the whole of the administrative record before the lead agency, including any comments received, the lead agency finds that there is no substantial evidence that the proposed Project will have a significant effect on the environment