



**P.I.C.O. Neighborhood Council
Community Impact Statement regarding
proposed Amendments to the
Baseline Mansionization Ordinance**

December 10, 2015

Re: **Council File 14-0656**



Dear Members of the Los Angeles City Council,

At its regular meeting on December 9, 2015, the P.I.C.O. Neighborhood Council Board passed Motion 2015.12.09.12b: **The PICO Neighborhood Council Board supports meaningful reform of the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (BMO) and proposes modifications to the 10/27/2015 draft amendments.**

Mansionization is one of the top concerns of P.I.C.O. Neighborhood Council stakeholders. We are grateful to Councilmember Koretz for sponsoring the motion to amend the BMO, to Planning staff for drafting amendments, and to Council President Wesson for sponsoring the first of the public outreach meetings.

The draft amendments look positive overall. While we support its reasonable floor-area-ratios (FAR), counting attached garage space, and the elimination of some counterproductive bonuses and exemptions, we urge you to correct some loopholes that weaken the amendments proposed by Councilmember Koretz.

1. The draft still excludes from the FAR calculation lattice-roofed porches, patios, and breezeways, and sets no limit on this uncounted space. This is just the kind of loophole that can turn houses into McMansions. With or without a solid roof, these spaces add bulk and should be counted.
This unlimited exemption for patios, breezeways, and balconies with open or lattice roofs should be eliminated.
2. The draft retains the proportional stories bonus and sets a tighter proportion (60%, which we support).
The second floor calculation should be based on the net square footage of the first floor, not including any exempted space. And as with other "discretionary" matters, the planning department should handle bonuses in a properly-noticed public hearing, which would provide transparency our stakeholders seek.
3. The draft keeps the Zoning Administrator's discretionary 10 percent "adjustment."
Given community concerns re: lack of transparency, we don't need yet another adjustment that gets approved behind closed doors. As the city has existing processes for seeking variances and a wealth of flexible zoning tools currently in development, this provision should be eliminated.

We believe these changes respect the intent of Councilmember Koretz's original motion, and ensure that the ordinance does not retain harmful loopholes – or worse yet, create new ones. We ask you to make these changes to the draft amendments. A stronger BMO will encourage responsible development compatible with the scale and character of existing neighborhoods; allow spacious homes that easily accommodate modern families; preserve existing affordable single family homes; foster environmental and economic sustainability; and nurture residential communities that are critical to the vitality of our great city.

This motion should be submitted as a Community Impact Statement to Council File 14-0656.

Sincerely yours,

Brad S. Kane
Brad S. Kane

President, P.I.C.O. Neighborhood Council