

MOTION

The *Westwood Village Specific Plan* governs the size, height, setbacks, intensity, uses, parking, historic and cultural resources, signs, and other development standards within the Village. Although well intentioned, the Plan, which was initially adopted thirty-one years ago on January 30, 1989 (Ordinance No. 164305), and was most recently updated in 2004 (Ordinance No. 176177), has not kept up with the rapidly evolving retail landscape and changing consumer preferences that are altering restaurant/food and commercial/retail uses or the ever-changing transportation modes of today and the future.

In addition, on September 11, 2019, the Council adopted a Motion (Koretz-Harris Dawson), Council File No. 18-1101, instructing the Planning Department, with the assistance of the City Attorney, to prepare and present an ordinance to amend the *Westwood Specific Plan*.

While Westwood Village was once a busy and thriving commercial and retail area, it now suffers from crippling retail vacancy rates. According to March 2021 Costar data, Westwood Village retail vacancy is over 31% and the availability rate, which includes sublease and known move-outs, is 42%. In comparison, the Los Angeles retail vacancy rate is 21% and the availability rate is 27%. In addition, a parking study prepared by the Westwood Village Improvement Association, in September 2013, found approximately 6,200 parking spaces accessible to visitors within the Village, and approximately 1,000 available spaces, at all times of the day, even during peak hours.

The stated purpose of the *Westwood Village Specific Plan* is to, "...encourage and facilitate a balanced mix of uses and an environment attractive to a cross-section [of] the community." To better serve the surrounding communities as well as regional and global visitors, provisions of the Specific Plan that contribute to chronic retail vacancy need to be amended, and specifically those that are overly prescriptive for uses and/or parking or time consuming and hinder the placement of on-site signage.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council instruct the Planning Department, with the assistance of the City Attorney, to prepare and present an ordinance to amend the *Westwood Village Specific Plan* (Ordinance No. 176177), as requested on September 11, 2019 (Council File No. 18-1101), and include the following additional land use regulatory controls:

- *Change of Use and Review of Signage*: amend project review process for changes of use and signs to Administrative clearances (sign-offs) so as to assure consistency with the intent of Specific Plan in a more streamlined manner that ensures predictability and a clear process for applicants and the community at large.
- *Parking exceptions for Changes of Use*: amend parking requirements and consider measures that enable new businesses without triggering parking regulations that function as a barrier.
- *New construction*: default to citywide parking requirements, and explore a shared parking program, inasmuch as there is an existing Department of Transportation parking structure located in the Westwood Village.
- *Food Uses*. Revise definitions of food related establishments; the restrictions on the types and number of such establishments.

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- *Location Restrictions*: analyze and explore revising or removing restrictions on caps for establishments, such as food uses and financial services.
- *Policy*: changes and amendments shall preserve the pedestrian scale of the Village, ensuring it continues to be oriented to the pedestrian and not the vehicle.

PRESENTED BY: Paul Koretz
PAUL KORETZ
Councilmember, 5th District

SECONDED BY: 