

WESTWOOD VILLAGE ANNUAL REPORT 2020



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Executive Summary

2020 has been a tumultuous year. A global pandemic has cost our nation 250,000 lives and counting and has altered our behavior in ways not seen in 100 years. COVID-19 has leveled the global and national economy, and public health policy has been politicized amidst a contested national election. During the summer, demonstrators filled the streets to protest social injustice and some of the peaceful protests were used as cover for looters to ransack business districts.

Locally, stay-at-home orders and public health mandates have greatly impacted our city and our Westwood Village community. Limitations on how businesses can operate have led to losses in revenue and both temporary and permanent closures. A moratorium on commercial evictions has hampered property owners' ability to collect rent, which could lead to foreclosures. The pandemic and associated recession has also exacerbated our homeless crisis increasing the homeless population by over 14-percent in Los Angeles.

The Westwood Village Improvement Association (WVIA) has tried to respond to these unprecedented challenges and remain true to our mission to keep Westwood Village a clean, safe and friendly place for the community through maintenance, security and enlivening programs. To immediately assist our business community, WVIA Ambassador teams launched a cleaning and sanitizing offensive, cleaning every surface in the district multiple times a day. We continued our outreach efforts to our homeless population and worked to direct the most vulnerable individuals to safe shelters provided by the City and County. During periods of unrest, the WVIA strongly advocated for, and then secured, the resources required to protect our district from the looting and property damage that so greatly damaged neighboring districts.

WVIA staff also began an aggressive communications campaign to inform our stakeholders how they could stay safe yet still support our local businesses, plus we informed our merchants how they could take advantage of city, county, state, and federal resources. The WVIA supports Al Fresco outdoor dining, and with the help of Councilmember Paul Koretz, we successfully had the program expanded to 11 restaurants in the district even after City funding expired. We have also set up Village merchant promotion programs, and the WVIA raised \$15,000 to buy meals from district businesses to then distribute to UCLA Health front line workers. While we have had to suspend events like our Cinema Under the Stars outdoor movie series and the Westwood Village/UCLA Block Party, we were able to pivot to use some of our programming funding to buy tables and chairs to provide additional outdoor seating (which we also sanitize).

The WVIA believes regulatory relief is the key element to an expedited recovery in our district, and help is on the way. Per WVIA recommendations, Los Angeles City Planning continues its pre-pandemic efforts to amend the Westwood Village Specific Plan's outdated food use definitions and burdensome parking requirements.

While these changes remain crucial to attracting more businesses to Westwood, the WVIA believes that more drastic action is required to spur recovery in Westwood. In response to the pandemic, we voted to recommend that the Specific Plan be suspended for 36 months, with the exception of the provisions protecting cultural resources. This position was affirmed by over 2,500 Westwood stakeholders who responded to a WVIA survey by overwhelmingly stating their desire to see the Village evolve to better serve our entire community.

Executive Summary continued...

The WVIA also supports the implementation of the Restaurant Beverage Program, a city ordinance designed to make administrative approval of alcohol sales for restaurants that meet certain standards. Furthermore, Councilmember Koretz has made a motion to temporarily make the approval of signs an administrative process in Westwood Village. These two changes alone will dramatically speed the opening and lower the costs for new businesses coming to Westwood Village.

2020 has been an incredibly challenging year for all Westwood stakeholders and its impacts will be felt at least through 2021, if not beyond, as we cannot predict potential changes to consumer behavior. There are, however, hopeful signs in the district. New businesses have opened, and more are coming. Office building occupancy has gradually increased and some of our regular Village visitors are beginning to return. The public has embraced outdoor dining patios, and these may stick around after the pandemic. The announcement of several vaccines gives hope that life will begin to normalize in the second half of 2021. We also have long term investments that will help Westwood Village including new UCLA housing and the Metro Purple Line subway and First/Last Mile improvements. We are also one year closer to the 2028 Olympics!

This year has stressed us all in ways we could not have imagined and has certainly been the most intense year of the WVIA's nearly 10-year existence. However, I am confident that Westwood Village will emerge from the pandemic in an improved position to better serve the Westwood community. On behalf of WVIA staff and the WVIA Board of Directors, I thank you for your continued support and commitment through these extraordinary times as we work to deliver on the promise of this great district.



Andrew Thomas
Executive Director
Westwood Village Improvement Association

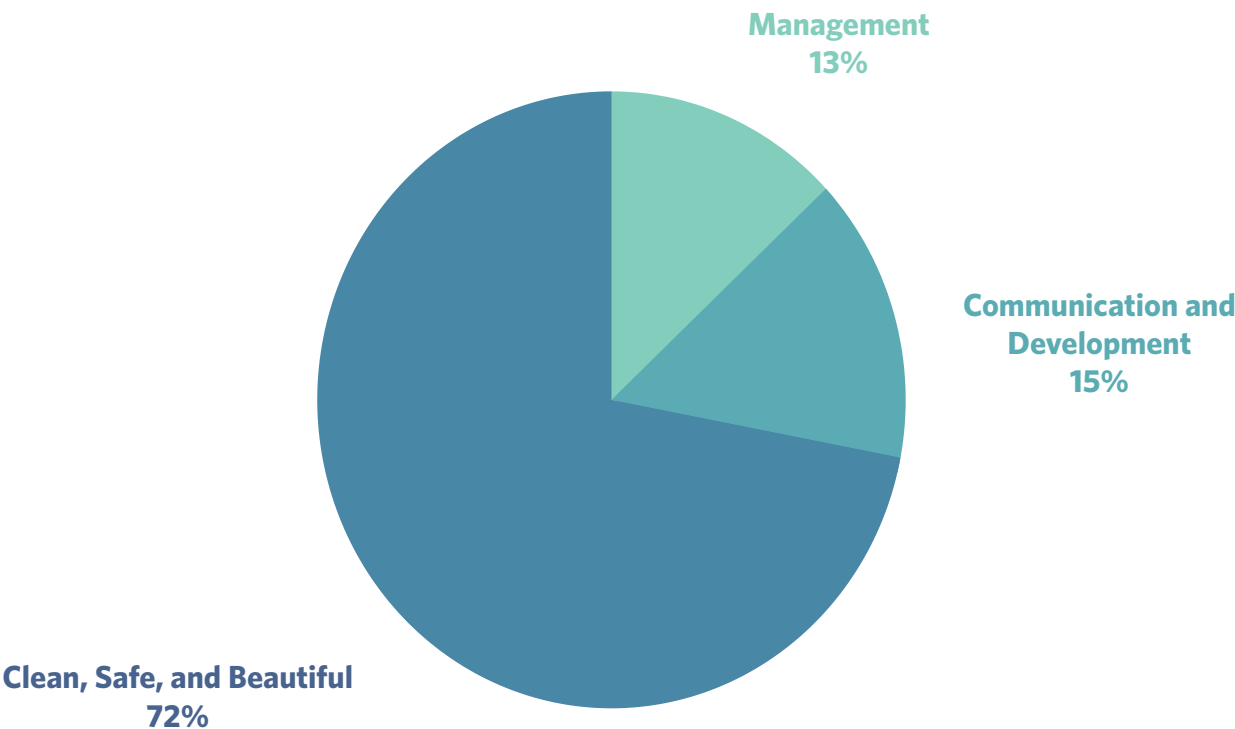


Business Improvement District

The Westwood Village Improvement Association (WVIA) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with a mission to make Westwood Village a clean, safe, and friendly place for the community through maintenance, security, and enlivening programs.

The Business Improvement District (BID) is a property-based assessment district, meaning owners of property pay assessments based on the size of their parcels, the square footage of their buildings, their street frontage, and also their zones. The 2020 Annual Budget of the WVIA is \$1,533,647.

Budget Allocation



About Westwood Village

Westwood Village is a vibrant, unique community centrally located in Los Angeles, serving the neighborhoods of Bel Air, Holmby Hills, Wilshire Corridor, Brentwood, Beverly Hills, West Hollywood, and Santa Monica.

This beautiful, pedestrian-friendly district enjoys significant foot traffic throughout the day and serves a local residential population of over 200,000 people living within a three-mile radius, plus thousands of people on the UCLA campus and working in Class A office buildings on Wilshire Boulevard.

20,000

Employees in Westwood Village*

**Pre-Pandemic Numbers*

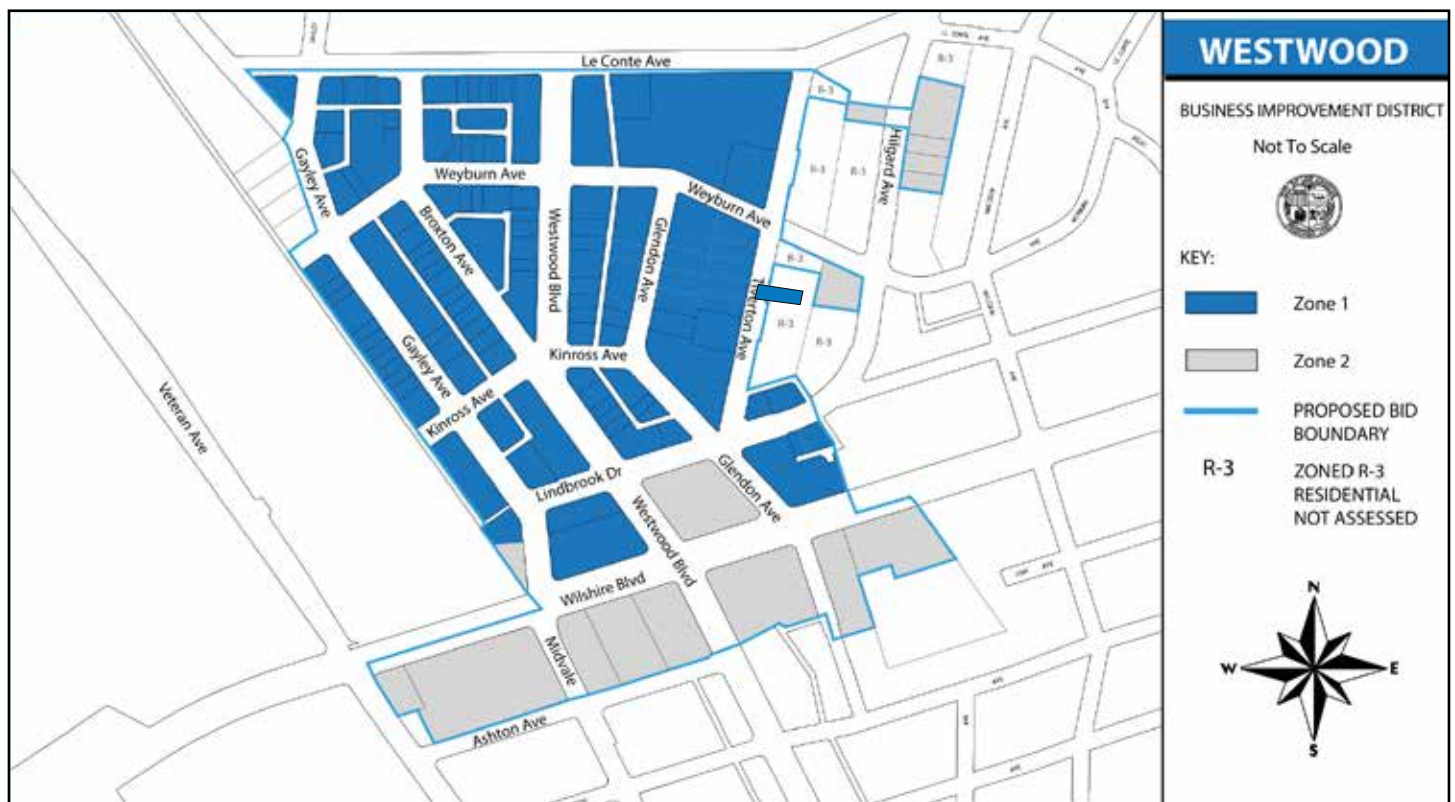
130,000

Daytime Population*

6M+

SF of Retail and Office Space

District Zones



Zone 1 primarily makes up Westwood Village and contains the higher concentration of retail uses in the district, the higher pedestrian counts, and the higher demand for clean and safe services.

Zone 2 is primarily located on the Wilshire corridor and on Hilgard Avenue. Zone 2 is made up mainly of high-rise office buildings. It has the lower pedestrian traffic of the two zones and less need for cleaning and maintenance services.

Operations

It is the mission of the WVIA to create, and maintain, a district that is clean, safe, and beautiful. To meet this goal, Ambassador teams are in the district seven days per week picking up trash, removing graffiti, pressure-washing sidewalks, and completing special projects. WVIA Ambassadors regularly engage with our merchant community and share their extensive knowledge of the district to assist Westwood visitors.



44,600

Hospitality and
Parking Assistance



51,706

Business Check-ins



10,272

Maps Distributed

1,320,900
pounds of trash removed

Our Clean Team helps maintain the cleanliness of Westwood Village by picking up the trash on a daily basis. In high-trafficked areas, the team services trash cans more frequently.

1,495
graffiti, stickers, flyers removed

Graffiti, stickers, and flyers pollute the streets. We aim to remove them within 24-hours.

7,372,410
sq ft of sidewalks pressure-washed

Clean sidewalks are important to the quality of life in Westwood Village. The Clean Team pressure-washes every area of sidewalk at least once per month.

433
hours of special projects

In addition to general cleaning tasks, the Ambassador teams complete special projects, including: painting and securing district infrastructure, assisting with WVIA events, cleaning out storm drains, tree watering, and tree well maintenance.

1,165
Outreach Contacts

The WVIA team includes a dedicated outreach coordinator who works to connect our most vulnerable population to services and housing. In 2020 our team distributed numerous hygiene kits and food kits, helped obtain identification for individuals, and also connected 11 people to housing.

Clean, Safe, & Beautiful

Westwood Ambassador services are essential in our community. The WVIA Ambassador teams provide clean and safe services while taking every precaution to ensure the teams' safety, and the safety of our residents, workers, and visitors. This year, our Ambassador Clean Team responded to COVID-19 by spending additional time disinfecting surfaces throughout the Village that regularly come into contact with people. Multiple times per day, Ambassadors sanitize all high-touch surfaces in the district.



"The Westwood Ambassadors Program is essential to the success of Broxton Brewery. We're able to provide a space for people to enjoy themselves thanks to the support and presence of the Ambassadors team. Always available, always helpful, the backbone of Westwood Village."

- Patrick Claypool, Broxton Brewery & Public House

Responding to Unrest and Calls for Social Justice

The killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis led to calls for social justice across the nation. In Los Angeles, a number of protests led to vandalism and property damage in commercial districts across the city. The WVIA advocated for a law enforcement presence to secure Westwood Village, and then regularly updated our merchant and stakeholder community with relevant information.



Additional Work in the District

The Westwood Village is a popular destination visited by thousands daily. Keeping the district beautiful is a priority of the WVIA, and we take on projects that enhance the quality of life in our district. Maintaining a beautiful district includes trimming trees, maintaining the landscaping, and keeping our sidewalks clean.

Annual Tree Trimming

In August 2020, the WVIA trimmed 442 trees in the district.



Tree Lights in the District

The WVIA maintains and operates 155 lit trees on Broxton Avenue, Gayley Avenue, and Westwood Boulevard. The lighting brightens and draws attention to our thriving commercial district, while improving public safety. Tree lights serve the WVIA's goal of creating a walkable and inviting public space.



Marketing & Communications

WVIA communications tells the story of our district and we are dedicated to sharing our message with everyone who lives, works, or plays in Westwood Village. To accomplish this goal, the WVIA uses multiple mediums to engage our community.

Website

Our website, thewestwoodvillage.com, serves as the “front door” to our district. The website includes information about district businesses, events, parking, regulations, and the WVIA.

622,849 Website Impressions

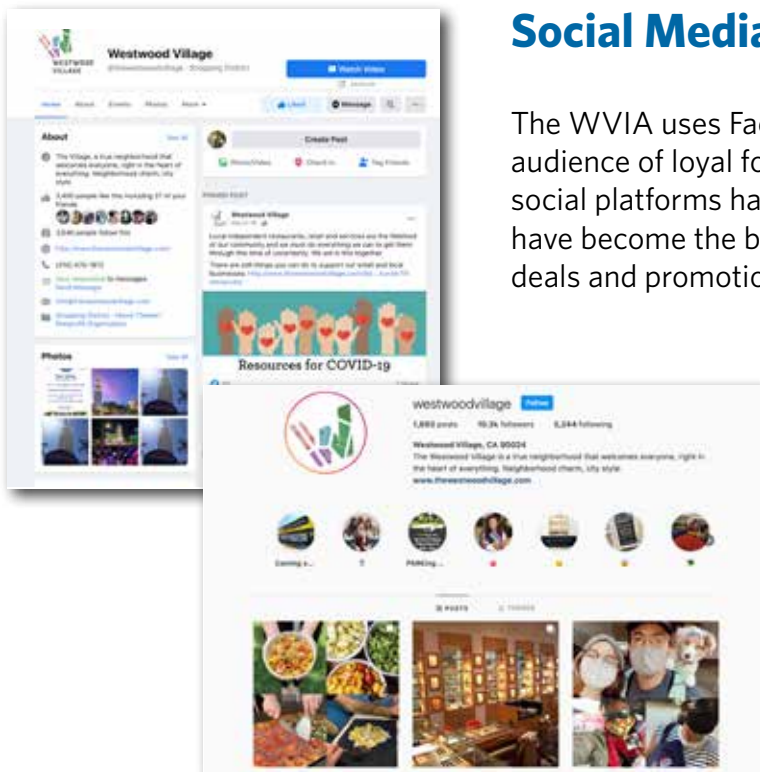
49,886 Page Views

48,221 Visits



Social Media

The WVIA uses Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to build a dedicated audience of loyal followers who frequent the district. The WVIA's social platforms have grown organically through word of mouth and have become the best way to learn about happenings in the district, deals and promotions, special events, and WVIA meetings.



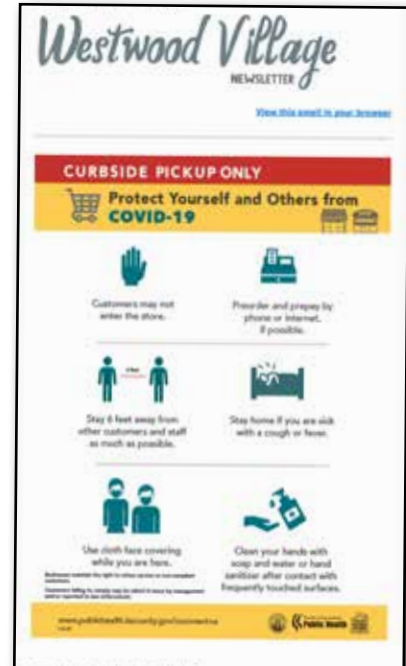
10,300+ Instagram Followers

3,600+ Facebook Followers

2,750+ Twitter Followers

Supporting Businesses

Unprecedented events led the WVIA to quickly pivot to find innovative ways to support the Westwood Village business community. In addition to our standard communications and promotions, we aggregated COVID-19 assistance grants, loan programs, and public health measures to relay directly to our merchants.



"To say that the assistance that we get from the Westwood Village Improvement Association is helpful is an understatement. We have locations in 7 different neighborhoods, no group takes ownership of helping out the local businesses like the Westwood Village Association."

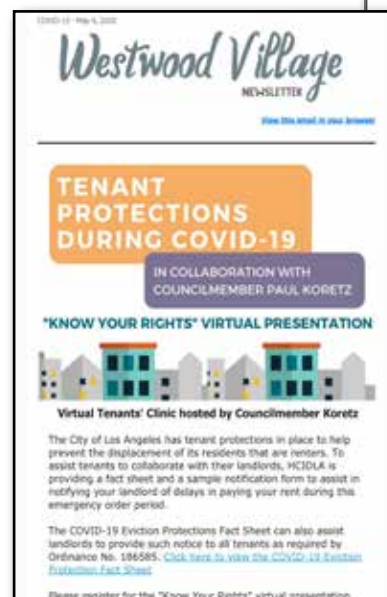
-Miguel Anaya, Pinches Tacos

Newsletters

The WVIA produces a regular e-newsletter to inform our stakeholders and visitors about what is happening in the district.

Our publication features information about district businesses, promotions, events, and all other relevant district issues we believe will interest our community.

Our e-newsletter reaches nearly 1,850 Westwood Village stakeholders every month. To subscribe to our newsletter visit: thewestwoodvillage.com/about/newsletter/



Map & Directory

The Westwood Village Map + Directory, a pamphlet printed twice a year, provides directions and advertises our businesses in the district. This year the WVIA held its second photo contest for the Winter/Spring 2020 edition's cover. The contest winner got their photo featured on the directory cover and won a dinner for two at Fellow Los Angeles and a relaxing facial at Goddess Lynne Body & Skin.



Outdoor Kiosks

The WVIA maintains three outdoor directories in the district. All directories feature a full-color walking map and a listing of every business in the district.

The WVIA received a grant from the North Westwood Neighborhood Council to design and fabricate art highlighting calls for social justice. Led by UCLA student activists, the "Hear Our Voices" design was created and is on display in three Westwood Village directories.



Weekly Farmers' Market

The Westwood Village Farmers Market takes place every Thursday on Broxton Avenue. The Farmers Market only briefly closed at the onset of the pandemic before reopening with 21 vendors. This valuable resource provides Westwood Village visitors with access to fresh, healthy food choices, at a time when this service is extremely important.



UCLA Frontline Worker Meal Fund

The WVIA created a GoFundMe effort to raise money to purchase meals from district businesses and then distribute these meals to UCLA Health frontline workers. Approximately \$15,000 was raised, and meals from 10 businesses were delivered.

"This partnership was a true "win win" in that it afforded our team members with additional hours and allowed us to provide meals to the heroes that have been battling the pandemic. We are grateful to the Westwood community for their generous support!"

-Seth Cohen, Sweetfin Poke

Al Fresco Dining

Local and state restrictions on indoor customer experiences led the WVIA to support City efforts to move business outdoors. Al Fresco dining, outdoor haircuts, dedicated parking spaces for pick-up and delivery were just some of the measures supported by the WVIA.



Fellow Los Angeles Al Fresco Dining

Mobile Dining Hubs

The WVIA has purchased tables and chairs to place around various outdoor dining hubs in the district to supplement existing dining capacity.

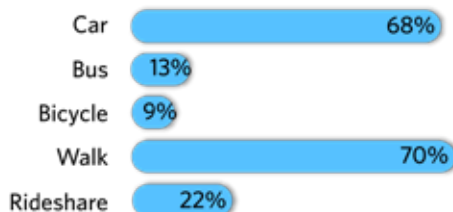


Mobile dining hubs outside Trader Joe's on Glendon Avenue.

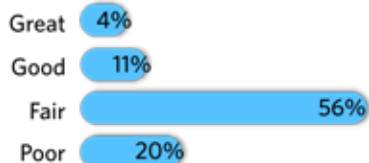
Westwood Stakeholder Survey

In response to calls to amend the unique regulations in the Westwood Village Specific Plan, the WVIA collaborated with Council District 5 to design a stakeholder survey distributed by the WVIA, CD5, and the North Westwood Neighborhood Council. Over 2,500 Westwood stakeholders responded to the survey regarding conditions and uses in Westwood Village.

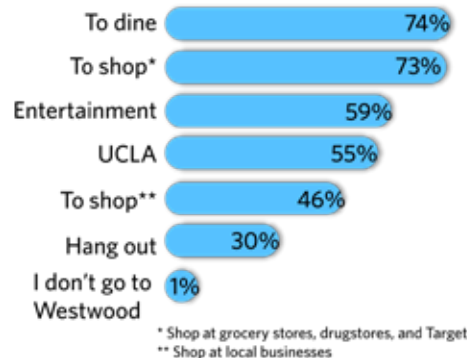
How do you travel to Westwood Village?



How is Westwood Village as a destination?



Why do you visit Westwood Village?



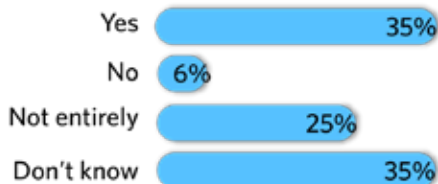
Are extra restrictions on development necessary to protect the Village's cultural/historic resources?



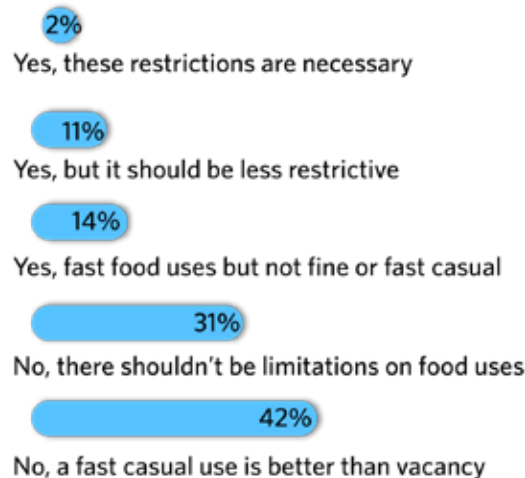
Are restrictions requiring businesses to provide dedicated parking necessary?



Should the Westwood Village Specific Plan be repealed, and revert back to C4 Zoning?



Are restrictions necessary for food uses?

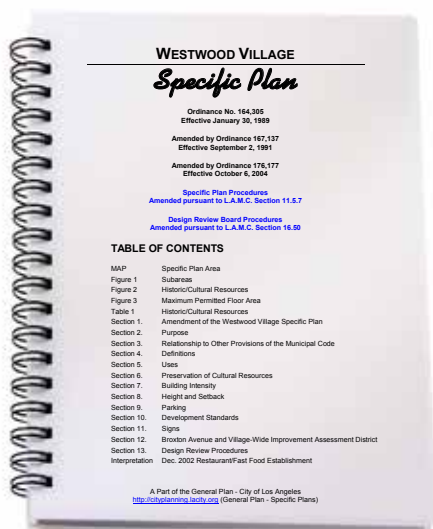


Research & Advocacy

The WVIA advocates for the Westwood Business Improvement District to ensure the voices of district property owners and merchants are heard, and so Westwood Village can reach its potential.

Westwood Village Specific Plan

Specific Plan amendments for food uses and parking are currently in process with the Department of City Planning. These amendments would eliminate restrictive food use definitions and ratios for the district and also remove parking requirements for changes in use and otherwise apply general zoning code requirements for parking. Furthermore, Councilmember Koretz has introduced a motion to temporarily make administrative the approval of signage in Westwood Village. The WVIA has asked that the Specific Plan be suspended with the exception of provisions protecting cultural resources and the district return to standard C4 Zoning regulations.



Restaurant Beverage Program

The City of Los Angeles City Council is considering adopting a city-wide ordinance called the Restaurant Beverage Program (RBP) which would make administrative the approval of alcohol sales for restaurants that meet specific standards. The WVIA supports the RBP and also enhancements to the RBP that would allow for extended operating hours and the ability to have live entertainment and dancing.



Transportation & Access

Improving how people access our district remains a priority. The WVIA has formed strategic partnerships with Metro, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation, Council District 5, the Mayor's Office, the LA County Board of Supervisors 3rd District, and the City Attorney's Office to meet our shared goals.

Metro Purple Line Extension

Metro is currently working to extend transportation options to West Los Angeles. Westwood Village, and its neighbor UCLA—the fourth largest employer in Los Angeles County—must be easily accessible to everyone.

The long-awaited Metro Purple Line Extension is now under construction. The Westwood/UCLA Station is part of Phase III of the project and is currently in the pre-construction phase with a completion date of 2027. The WVIA is in close communication with Metro regarding the direct impacts to the Village during construction. The WVIA is actively encouraging Metro to complete as much of the intense and impactful construction as possible during the pandemic and before typical transportation activity resumes.



Rendering for the Westwood/UCLA Station on the Purple Line.

Metro Sepulveda Transit Corridor

Metro is currently conducting a Feasibility Study to identify and evaluate a range of high-capacity rail transit alternatives for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor, a project that will improve travel between the San Fernando Valley and LAX. The WVIA is advocating for an underground solution that connects to UCLA and directly to the Wilshire Boulevard Purple Line Metro portals.

Metro First/Last Mile

The WVIA is working with Metro's First/Last Mile team to bring infrastructure and access improvements to Westwood to benefit subway ridership and the district. The WVIA supports the Metro First/Last Mile plan that includes sidewalk improvements, bike facilities, additional street furniture, plus trees and landscaping.



Study area for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project.

Leadership

The WVIA Staff is responsible for executing the policies and direction of the Board of Directors, and carrying out the day-to-day management of the organization. The WVIA hosts regular Board and sub-Committee meetings to discuss issues impacting our district. From October 2019 to October 2020, the WVIA hosted 30 public meetings. Monthly Committee and Board Meetings are open to the public and provide a platform in which the public can voice their opinions and participate.

WVIA Staff

Andrew Thomas
Executive Director

Megan Furey
Marketing &
Communications Manager

Michael Gonzalez
Ambassador Program Manager

WVIA Board Members

Kevin Crummy, Chair
Douglass Emmett, LLC

Renée Fortier, Vice-Chair
UCLA

Peter Clinco, Treasurer
Skylight Gardens

Matt Lavin, Secretary
TOPA Management

Dean Abell
Sarah Leonard Jewelers

Jessica Dabney
North American Realty

John Heidt
Heidt Torres Co.

Patrick Nally
Tishman Speyer

Stephen Power
W Hotel Los Angeles-
West Beverly Hills

Dana Slatkin
Violet Bistro, Shop &
Cooking School

Josh Trifunovic
Gayley Family, LLC

Bill Tucker
Tucker Investment
Group

Jeremy Wolf
Wolf Commerical

Former Board Members

Brad Erickson
UCLA

Paige Reilly
Artisanal Brewers Collective

