



*"Great Apartments Start Here!"*

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October 17, 2019  
**Via Electronic Mail**

Hon. Mayor D'Amico and Members of City Council  
West Hollywood City Hall  
8300 Santa Monica Boulevard  
West Hollywood, California 90069

**Re: Zone Text Amendment: Dwelling Unit Clarification (Agenda Item 3.A.)**

Dear Hon. Mayor D'Amico and Members of the West Hollywood City Council:

The Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles wishes to express its deep concern about the proposed Zone Text Amendment (ZTA) requiring dwelling units in West Hollywood be leased for an initial term of at least one year. While the initial proposed ordinance was limited to dwelling units built on or after May 1, 2001, the current draft ordinance would have broad applicability to all dwelling units on leases signed after January 1, 2020. The proposed ordinance will most certainly negatively impact both West Hollywood's housing providers and renters alike by eliminating any flexibility to determine the tenancy duration that best suits the housing provider's and renter's circumstances. For various reasons, renters may not wish or be able to commit to one-year or longer lease terms due to anticipated employment, temporary relocation or other life changes.

Our Apartment Association represents hundreds of small rental housing providers owning or managing rental properties in West Hollywood, the majority of whom are often characterized as "mom and pop" owners that own 5 or fewer rental units. Our members recognize that individuals seeking rental housing do so for a variety of reasons and work to provide tenancy options based on a renter's expressed needs.

While we appreciate the exemption allowing for sale and lease backs, where the seller of a dwelling leases the dwelling from the buyer for an interim period, the proposed ordinance remains problematic as it fails to account for a multitude of reasons why individuals may require a shorter-term lease duration. Moreover, while the Staff Report sets forth additional alternatives recommended by the Planning Commission, including allowing for a certain number of units within a building to be rented for six months to a year, exempting single family homes and accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and establishing a new land use to address 31-364 day stays, these alternatives do not entirely address the core concern which is renter flexibility in tenancy options. Nevertheless, if the Council decides to adopt the proposed ordinance, we urge the Council to



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incorporate the additional alternatives set forth in the Staff Report and exempt single-family homes and ADU’s and allow buildings to lease a percentage of units under shorter term leases.

The ordinance is exclusionary and would serve to preclude West Hollywood as an option for many individuals in need of shorter-term living arrangements. Renters seeking short-term (less than one year) housing options do so for several reasons, among them, as a result of temporary employment, active military duty, to temporarily relocate in order to care for loved ones, and temporary displacement from primary home following a natural disaster. An example that illustrates the importance of shorter-term tenancy options is the recent Saddle Ridge fire. Recently, the Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles launched a campaign to assist displaced victims of the Saddle Ridge fire by establishing a hotline and web page to link housing providers with available rental units and displaced individuals and families in need of immediate, temporary housing. If the proposed ordinance is adopted, rental housing providers in West Hollywood would be unable to assist fire victims with temporary housing options.

Regardless of the underlying reason, often renters do not desire to or simply cannot afford to rent an apartment for an extended period, and would be forced to seek temporary shelter in a hotel which is far more expensive and offers limited amenities in comparison to an apartment or other rental housing options. In addition, as the ZTA is applicable to all dwelling units, it would make it difficult for individuals to rent their homes for a period of less than one-year while, for example, they are on a short-term sabbatical, caring for a sick relative or on military duty.

Flexible lease terms are also vital for so many renters who are working in the entertainment, construction, sales, and medical professions, and for individuals going through a transitional period. City Council must give renters an option to accept a shorter than one-year lease term that suits their particular set of circumstances. While the underlying purpose of the ordinance may be to regulate corporate housing and Air BnB, the City is effectively criminalizing month-to-month tenancies, the most common form of tenancy in the City. It is also important to consider that the recent enactment of statewide rent control and tenant protection measures under Assembly Bill 1482 provides substantially broad protections for renters facing eviction. **We urge the Council to amend the ordinance to merely require that rental housing providers “offer” renters a one-year minimum lease term and allow the City’s renters the option to accept either the one-year lease or a shorter term lease period based on their specific needs and circumstances.**

Thank you for your time and consideration of these matters. If you have any questions, please call me at (213) 384-4131; Ext. 309 or contact me via electronic mail at [danielle@aagla.org](mailto:danielle@aagla.org).

Very truly yours,

Danielle Leidner-Peretz