

HEALTH-ORIENTED STUDENT HOUSING PROJECT DOUBLES BED COUNT

Additional Housing Comes in Response to Stakeholder Demand for More Housing

Westwood, CA – In response to extensive feedback and input from community members, student housing and affordable housing advocates, The Agora (<https://agorawestwood.com/>) announced today that it plans to double the number of student residents in its state of the art co-living housing project without increasing the height or size of the proposed project.

“Our original program proposed having one student in each bedroom” commented Dr. Ted Khalili, co-principal developer of The Agora. “But after hearing from a large number of stakeholders, student advocates and colleagues in the medical field, we learned that we could increase the availability of housing, including affordable housing, without sacrificing the foundations of our health and wellness programming.”

The Agora, a proposed student housing project located along the high-density housing corridor of Hilgard Avenue in Westwood, will include unique co-living programming and facilities focused on student health, wellness and personal development.

“We heard from a few of our closer neighbors who told us that we did not have enough housing to make an impact on the student housing crisis,” said Dr. Eraj Basseri, a UCLA graduate and co-principal developer of The Agora. “So we decided to open The Agora to more students and will now be able to house 462 students, which we are really excited about.”

Westwood has the most expensive rental rates of any community in the State of California, and a lack of housing inventory is a major driver of the problem, forcing students to make hard choices they shouldn’t have to. The University of California reported in 2016 that 48% of its students were “food insecure” and had to skip meals. Multiple news outlets have reported on UCLA undergraduate and graduate students suffering from homelessness, often due to untenable housing costs. In response to the student crisis, in 2016 UCLA students and alumni opened Bruin Shelter, a homeless shelter for UCLA students and other homeless college students.

The Agora plans to rent beds to students at a rate of \$1,000-\$1,200 per month, with additional accommodations made for lower-income students. At the planned rate, The Agora will be significantly less expensive than most other private student housing options, and less expensive than some of UCLA’s own student housing. In just the last week, more than 300 local residents have signed a petition (www.Bit.ly/studenthousingwestwood) calling for more student housing in Westwood.
