STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT:
The City Council will consider an Ordinance amending the regulations governing contributions to Municipal Election campaigns for City Council offices and amending the West Hollywood Municipal Code.

RECOMMENDATION:
Introduce on first reading Ordinance No. 20-______, “AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD AMENDING THE REGULATIONS GOVERNING CONTRIBUTIONS TO MUNICIPAL ELECTION CAMPAIGNS FOR CITY COUNCIL OFFICES AND AMENDING THE WEST HOLLYWOOD MUNICIPAL CODE.”

BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS:
At its February 3, 2020 meeting, the City Council approved recommendations from the Ethics Reform Task Force relating to the City laws and regulations, government ethics, campaign finance, and enforcement. One of the recommendations from the Task Force was to increase the City’s campaign contribution limit from $500 to $1,000 per election.

The Ethics Reform Task Force considered this, and other topics, during its term of May 2018 through January 2020. Specifically, the Task Force discussed the efficacy of the City’s campaign contribution limit of $500 per person to candidates for City Council in any single election.

For a historical perspective, the City lowered its campaign contribution limit from $1000 to $500 in 2009. The Ethics Reform Task Force and City Council considered a similar increase back to $1000 in 2016; however, at the time, that change was not adopted.

During the current Task Force consideration of this matter, the Task Force members agreed that the lower contribution limit can encourage Independent Expenditure
Committees and require more fundraising activities by the candidates. For these reasons, the Task Force recommended that the contribution limit be increased to $1,000 and increased each election cycle by the cumulative Consumer Price Index (CPI). On February 3, 2020, the City Council received and considered the recommendation, and directed staff to return with an ordinance approving the increase; however, they did not approve increasing the limit each election cycle by the CPI.

The attached Ordinance amends Section 2.76.030 Contribution Limits, in Chapter 2.76 of Article 4 of Title 2 of the West Hollywood Municipal Code, consistent with the above direction. If approved, this ordinance shall apply prospectively only, for any contribution to any candidate for City Council in an election that occurs after the effective date of the ordinance.

CONFORMANCE WITH VISION 2020 AND THE GOALS OF THE WEST HOLLYWOOD GENERAL PLAN:
- OSP-2: Institutional Integrity.

In addition, this item is compliant with the following goal(s) of the West Hollywood General Plan:
- G-2: Maintain transparency and integrity in West Hollywood’s decision-making process.

EVALUATION PROCESSES:
N/A

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTH:
N/A

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:
N/A

OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY:
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT / CITY CLERK DIVISION

FISCAL IMPACT:
There is no Fiscal Impact associated with this amendment to the Municipal Code.

ATTACHMENT:
Attachment A – Draft Ordinance