

Special Instructions for:

**EXCEPTION FROM GEOGRAPHICALLY SPECIFIC PLAN
AS PRESCRIBED BY THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

ZONE CODE SECTION: 11.5.7 D

The **MASTER LAND USE APPLICATION INSTRUCTION SHEET-500' RADIUS** should also be followed, with the following exceptions.

1. **PROPERTY OWNERS' AND OCCUPANTS' LABELS and LIST**, corresponding to the radius map. List of adjacent owners are not required.
2. **PLANS REQUIRED:** Each Exception to a Geographically Specific Plan application must be accompanied by two prints of an accurate **PLOT PLAN** and one 8½" by 11" transparency drawn to scale of at least 1 inch = 16 feet. The plan shall show a north arrow, the location, size, shape, height and use of all existing buildings (if any) and all proposed buildings, and width and depth of existing or proposed yards and courts on the property involved. Where possible the plan should show the location and height of buildings and width of yards on adjoining properties having a bearing on the requested exception. If a building is involved, a sketch, plan, or accurate description of same must accompany this application. When the application is for exception from floor area or parking requirements of the geographically specific plan, floor plans and parking area plans for all existing and proposed development shall be submitted. If **floor plans** and **elevation plans** have been completed, one print should also be submitted. When the application is for exception from the height regulations of the geographically specific plan, drawings must be to scale of at least 1 inch = 8 feet. Where hillside or sloping conditions are involved in the requested exception, a cross section of the sloping area should accompany the plot plan.
3. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**
 - a. Date property was acquired February 15, 2016 (Month/Day/Year)
 - b. Applicant requests an exception from provisions of the Ventura/Cahuenga
Specific Plan (State name of geographically specific plan)
 - c. _____
(State the provision of the geographically specific plan from which the exception is being requested)
4. **FINDINGS:** Explain in detail how your case conforms to the following requirements.
 - a. That the strict application of the policies, standards and regulations of the geographically specific plan to the subject property would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose and intent of such specific plan.
 - b. That there are exceptional circumstances or conditions applicable to the subject property involved or to the intended use or development of the subject property that do not apply generally to other property in the specific plan area.
 - c. That the exception from the geographically specific plan is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use generally possessed by other property within the geographically specific plan in the same zone and vicinity, but which because of such special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships is denied to the property in question.
 - d. That the granting of the exception will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements adjacent to or in the same vicinity of the subject property.
 - e. That the granting of the exception will be consistent with the principles, intent and goals of the geographically specific plan and any applicable element of the General Plan.
5. **SIGNATURES** of property owners within 500 feet of the boundaries of the area who concur with this application is suggested.

4. **FINDINGS:** Explain in detail how your case conforms to the following requirements.

- a. That the strict application of the policies, standards and regulations of the geographically specific plan to the subject property would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose and intent of such specific plan.**

The proposed project consisting of new office and retail areas is consistent with the purpose of the Ventura/Cahuenga specific in ensuring that equilibrium is maintained between the existing community and infrastructure and the proposed development

The current specific plan was written in the late 1980, came in effect in 1991 and it is over 25 years old. It does not reflect the changes in land use and trends of the current urban development. The specific plan, which runs East-West, is bisected by the 405 Freeway (San Diego Freeway). The West Side section of the specific plan is very similar in demographics to the East Side section. However, there is a specific plan unbalance in master planning for future development. The East Side section of the plan in reality is very similar, and some may argue, more desirable for future development.

A more detrimental effect of the strict application of the specific plan in this area is the piecemeal effect it has caused in the development character of this area. As one travels Ventura Boulevard from the corner of Beverly Glen Boulevard to Hazeltine Avenue, it is evident that the area exhibits a very irregular and uneven character. Many structures look dilapidated, out of place, deleterious and not contributing to well being of the community.

- b. That there are exceptional circumstances or conditions applicable to the subject property involved or to the intended use or development of the subject property that do not apply generally to other property in the specific plan area.**

The subject site is large, over 10,000 square feet, much larger than many properties in the vicinity. However, the proposed floor area ratio 1.0 to 0.96 is less than the specific plan maximum 1.00 to 1.00. The average floor area ratio for the highly developed properties in the area is 1.00 to 1.40.

The proposed lot coverage ratio for the subject property is 100%. The average lot coverage ratio for the properties in the area is 72%.

As mentioned in the description of the project, the owner/applicant owns four lots. Two of them, lots 251 and 252 are contiguous, contain the existing building, and will be the site of the addition and alteration project in this application. The other two lots are across the existing alley and are the ones that contain the existing parking stalls. The four lots combined together add to 17,512 square feet. The total gross area of the proposed project is 15,200 square feet, which yields a 0.86 to 1.00 floor area ratio

(project area divided by land property area). This is less than what the specific plan allows (1.00 to 1.00). The owner/applicant is also asking for an exception to allow 100% coverage in lieu of the allowed maximum of 60%. Again, when the four lots are combined the coverage is 57%.

However, due to existing geographical, physical and actual site conditions, the total land property area is not contiguous. This barrier does not apply to other properties in the vicinity.

In addition, the owner/applicant seeks to obtain an exception to the height limit of 30' feet. There are at least seven (7) other properties in the 500' foot radius area higher than 45' feet. Many of them were built before the ordinance went in effect in 1991. However, there is a project at 14141 Ventura Boulevard, a 113-unit apartment with commercial retail, which was permitted and built in 2011, which is higher than 45' feet.

- c. That the exception from the geographically specific plan is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use generally possessed by other property within the geographically specific plan in the same zone and vicinity, but which because of such special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships is denied to the property in question.**

Many existing properties in the vicinity area have been developed with high floor area ratios, building lot footprint coverages and building heights. The strict applicability of the specific plan on the proposed project at 14241 will be detrimental to the right of development of this property which has been made available to other properties in the vicinity. Enclosed, please refer to a neighborhood compatibility chart in which a comparison of existing development metrics are analyzed for several properties in the vicinity of the proposed project.

For example, the building located at 14242 Ventura has a lot size of 14,986 square feet and a building floor area of 21,618 square feet, which represents a 1.0 to 1.44 lot area to floor area ratio. That same building is three stories high and an overall height of 50 feet with no front yard nor side yard setbacks. Its building to lot coverage is 62%. This building was built in 1989.

Another example, the building located at 14245 Ventura, to the right of the subject property, has a lot size of 5,049 square feet and a building floor area of 7,326 square feet, which represents a 1.0 to 1.46 lot area to floor area ratio. That same building is three stories high and an overall height of 40 feet with no front yard nor side yard setbacks. Its building to lot coverage is 95%. This building was built in 1985.

A third example is the building located at 14260 Ventura. It has a lot size of 7,488 square feet and a building floor area of 9,640 square feet, which represents a 1.0 to 1.29 lot area to floor area ratio. That same building is three stories high and an overall

height of 38 feet with some front yard setback at the third floor but no side yard setbacks. Its building to lot coverage is 75%. This building was built in 1985.

- d. That the granting of the exception will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements adjacent to or in the same vicinity of the subject property.**

Since there are so many examples of very attractive and well developed properties, above the maximum allowed by the current specific plan, it is expected that the granting of the exceptions to the proposed project will not be detrimental or injurious to the public welfare or other properties. It is in fact the opposite. Allowing this project will bring a newer and more attractive replacement to the dilapidated and unsightly structure now occupying the property.

- e. That the granting of the exception will be consistent with the principles, intent and goals of the geographically specific plan and any applicable element of the General Plan.**

As mentioned previously, the proposed project with new office and retail areas is consistent with the purpose of the Ventura/Cahuenga specific in fostering a desirable and contributing development.

The current specific plan needs review. Demographics and urban needs have changed considerably. The East Side section of the current specific plan calls for a less dense and more neighborhood-oriented character than the West Side section. In reality they are very similar, and treated as such, will bring better development to the Sherman Oaks area.

Again, a more detrimental effect of the strict application of the specific plan in this area is the disjointed effect it has caused in the development character along the Ventura Boulevard at this Sherman Oaks area. To repeat, a large number of properties look dilapidated, out of place, deleterious and not contributing to well been of the community.