



SANDY SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**APPLICATION GUIDE
STREAM BUFFER VARIANCE**

Application Checklist:

Item
Discussion:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Detailed Process and Instructions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fee Schedule
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meeting Schedule
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Notice Requirements
Required Documents:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Authorization Forms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Letter of Intent
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stream Buffer Variance Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Chattahoochee River Corridor Certificate
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stormwater Management Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) Approval
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Scaled digital copy of Survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Scaled digital copy of Site Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">copy of Legal Description
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mitigation Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">copy of Elevations and/or Sections
All documents in electronic form (email)

The Director reserves the right to request additional information deemed necessary to analyze the request. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.



SANDY SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DETAILED PROCESS & INSTRUCTIONS

Legend: and o: Action required by Applicant
•: For information

Before the Pre-Application Meeting:

- Read this Application packet in its entirety.
- Consult the Sandy Springs Development Code (available online at https://library.municode.com/ga/sandy_springs/codes/development_code).
- Discuss process, documents and notice requirements

Filing:

- Submit a complete application to the on the online portal.
- Provide payment (verify the amount with the Lead Planner beforehand)
- Applications are due by **2:00 pm**. No more than five (5) Applications, all types included, will be accepted each month
- Staff will initiate review, ask for more information if needed (at which point the Application may be placed on administrative hold and be moved to a later date), and send an Initiation Letter.

Before the Board of Appeals (BOA) Meeting:

- Submit any revision to the Application at least thirty **(30) days** prior to a scheduled Public Meeting or Public Hearing to allow time for proper revision by Staff and legal advertisement.
- The Staff Report, including the recommendation, will be posted on the City website.
- Staff will publish a legal ad in the newspaper.
- Order and post signage using Staff's sign template on the subject property (see p. 12) at least **fifteen (15) calendar days** prior to the BOA Meeting before **8:30 AM**. Send date-stamped pictures of the signage once in place to the Lead Planner.
- Mail written notice to property owners within 500' at least **fifteen (15) calendar days but not more than 45 calendar days** prior to the BOA Meeting; use Staff's mailing template. *Obtain a Certificate of Mailing from the Post Office and keep for your records; Applicant must produce a Certificate of Mailing upon request from Staff.*

Board of Appeals (BOA) Meeting:

- Staff will briefly introduce your request and present its recommendation.
- You will have ten (10) minutes to present your case to BOA, including any supporters speaking in favor of your request. You may save any remaining time for rebuttal to the opposition.
- The opposition will also have ten (10) minutes to speak.
- BOA will discuss and render its decision. BOA may approve, approve with conditions, or deny the request. BOA may also defer the case to another regularly scheduled Meeting.
- Remove signage within 48 hours of final action on the petition.

Failure to complete any of these events may result in an administrative hold, and the case will be rescheduled to a future filing cycle.



SANDY SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

AUTHORIZATION FORM – PART I

A- The property owner must fill out the following section and have it notarized. If a property has multiple owners, each owner must separately fill out a copy of the Authorization Form.

Owner states under oath that he/she is the owner of the property described in the attached legal description, which is made part of this Application.	
Owner's name:	Sworn and subscribed before me this _____ th day of _____ 20 _____ Notary public: Seal: Commission expires:
Address:	
City, State, Zip Code:	
Email address:	
Phone number:	
Owner's signature:	

B- If the Applicant is *not* the owner of the subject property:
Fill out the following section, check the appropriate statement and have it notarized.

Applicant states under oath that:	
<input type="checkbox"/> He/she is the executor or Attorney-in-Fact under a Power-of-Attorney for the owner (<i>attach a copy of the contract</i>); or <input type="checkbox"/> He/she has an option to purchase the subject property (<i>attach a copy of the contract</i>); or <input type="checkbox"/> He/she has an estate of years which permits the Applicant to apply (<i>attach a copy of the lease</i>)	
Applicant's name:	Sworn and subscribed before me this _____ th day of _____ 20 _____ Notary public: Seal: Commission expires:
Company name:	
Address:	
City, State, Zip Code:	
Email address:	
Phone number:	
Applicant's signature:	



SANDY SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

AUTHORIZATION FORM – PART II

A- If an agent or attorney will represent the owner and/or the Applicant:
Fill out the following section and have it notarized.

Agent's name:
Company:
Address:
City, State, Zip Code:
Email address:
Phone number:
Agent's signature:
Applicant's signature:

Sworn and subscribed before me this _____ th day of _____ 20 _____
Notary public:
Seal:
Commission expires:



SANDY SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Letter of Intent

Required for **all** cases

Address the following in detail, on a separate sheet:

1. Requested Stream Buffer Variance
2. Factual details about the proposal:
 - Number and size of buildings
 - Square footage of gross floor area of nonresidential uses
 - Type and number of residential units
 - Number of employees and customers, number of classrooms, hours of operation, etc.
3. Factual details about the site: shape, topography, slope, vegetation, soils, and other physical characteristics of the property
4. Mitigation and restoration strategy: phasing and timeline, construction methodology, equipment used, calculations, etc.
5. Alternative designs explored:
 - a. Provide details of alternative design(s) that could reduce the need for a Stream Buffer Variance
 - b. Explain why the alternatives were not selected

Stream Buffer Variance Analysis (Sec. 11.6.4.)

Required for **all** cases

Explain in detail, on a separate sheet, and for each Stream Buffer Variance requested how:

- a. The property's shape, topography or other physical conditions existing on December 12, 2005, prevent land development unless a Stream Buffer Variance is granted.
- b. Unusual circumstances when strict adherence to the minimal buffer and setback requirements would create an extreme hardship.

Notes:

- Stream Buffer Variances will not be considered when actions of any property owner of a given property after December 12, 2005, have created conditions of a hardship on that property.

At a minimum, a variance request must include the following information:

- A site map that includes locations of all state water, wetlands, boundaries, and other natural features, as determined by field survey;
- A description of the shape, size, topography, slope, soils, vegetation and other physical characteristics of the property;
- A detailed site plan that shows the locations of all existing and proposed structure and other impervious cover, the limits of all existing and proposed land disturbance, both inside and outside the buffer and setback. The exact area of the buffer and setback to be affected is accurately and clearly indicated;



SANDY SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Documentation of unusual hardship should the buffer and setback be maintained;
- At least one alternative plan that does not include a buffer or setback intrusion, or an explanation of why such a site plan is not possible;
- A calculation of the total area and length, of the proposed intrusion
- A stormwater management site plan, if applicable; and
- Proposed mitigation, if any, for the intrusion. If no mitigation is proposed, the request must include an explanation of why none is being proposed.

The following factors will be considered by the BOA in determining whether to issue a Stream Buffer Variance:

- a. The shape, size, topography, slope, soils, vegetation and other physical characteristics of the property;
- b. The locations of all state waters, wetlands, floodplain boundaries and other natural features on the property, including along property boundaries, as determined by field survey;
- c. The location and extent of the proposed buffer or setback intrusion;
- d. Whether alternative designs are possible which require less intrusion or no intrusion;
- e. The long-term and water quality impacts of the proposed Variance; and
- f. Whether issuance of the Stream Buffer Variance is at least as protective of natural resources and the environment.

Chattahoochee River Corridor Certificate

Required for properties located within the Chattahoochee River Corridor (within 2,000' of the Chattahoochee River). Contact Helen Owens, Zoning Administrator at (770) 206-1358 or howens@sandyspringsga.gov. Also refer to section 9.2.5.B. of the Development Code.

Stormwater Management Plan

Contact Jon Amsberry, City Engineer, at (770) 206-1514 or jamsberry@sandyspringsga.gov

Also refer to section 9.6.8. Stormwater Management Plan.

Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) Approval

Required for Stream Buffer Variance petitions to encroach into the 25' State undisturbed natural vegetative buffer

- Variance Application
- Approval letter from EPD

Survey and Site Plan

Required for **all** cases in digital format (PDF)



SANDY SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Provide a survey and site plan to scale. The Survey and Site Plan must include, at a minimum, the following:

Basic Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Legal description (metes and bounds; should also be submitted as a separate document)<input type="checkbox"/> Key and/or legend, site location map with North arrow, and scale<input type="checkbox"/> Boundary survey of the subject property, which includes dimensions along property lines that match the metes and bounds of the subject property's written legal description, and clearly indicate the point of beginning<input type="checkbox"/> Acreage of the subject property<input type="checkbox"/> Location of the subject property's land lot lines and identification of land lots<input type="checkbox"/> Current zoning district of the subject and adjacent properties<input type="checkbox"/> Layout and minimum lot size of proposed single unit detached residential lots<input type="checkbox"/> Topography on the subject and adjacent properties within 200' to assess runoff effects<input type="checkbox"/> Location of overhead and underground electrical and pipeline transmission/conveyance lines<input type="checkbox"/> Building setback lines and build-to zones, transitions, buffers, etc.
Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Existing and proposed dedicated and reserved rights-of-way of all streets on and adjacent to the subject property<input type="checkbox"/> Posted speeds of existing streets<input type="checkbox"/> Proposed streets on the subject property
Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Existing buildings with square footages and heights (stories), wells, driveways, fences, cell towers, and any other structures or improvements on the subject property<input type="checkbox"/> Existing buildings with square footages and heights (stories), wells, driveways, fences, cell towers, and any other structures or improvements on adjacent properties within 400' of the subject property<input type="checkbox"/> Location of proposed buildings with total square footage<input type="checkbox"/> Required and proposed parking spaces, loading areas, service areas, etc.<input type="checkbox"/> Development Statistics Summary Chart with % of total lot coverage:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Total area of site (acres and sq. ft.)○ Building footprints (sq. ft. and %)○ Parking spaces (number and %)○ Lot coverage (sq. ft. and %)



SANDY SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Environmental

- 100-year floodplain horizontal limits and flood zone designations as shown on survey or Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Maps
- State waters and associated buffers
- Existing and proposed stormwater management facilities
- Community wastewater facilities, including preliminary areas reserved for septic drain fields and points of access
- Availability of water and sanitary sewer systems
- Trees and open space on the subject property
- Wetlands
- State Waters Buffer Encroachment Chart (*example* below):

Buffer/Impervious Setback	Existing	Proposed	Difference
0'-25' State undisturbed natural vegetative buffer	22 sq. ft.	35 sq. ft.	+13 sq. ft. +59%
25'-50' City undisturbed natural vegetative buffer	100 sq. ft.	80 sq. ft.	-20 sq. ft. -20%
50'-75' City additional impervious surface setback	2 sq. ft.	10 sq. ft.	+8 sq. ft. +400%
<i>Total</i>	<i>134 sq. ft.</i>	<i>125 sq. ft.</i>	<i>-9 sq. ft.</i> <i>-6.7%</i>



SANDY SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Mitigation Plan (Sec. 9.2.4.B)

Required for **all** cases

Provide one (1) copy on 11" x 17" paper, and two (2) copies to scale no larger than 30" x 42"; also include in the electronic package. The mitigation plan must include, at a minimum, the following:

E&SC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Area proposed to be disturbed<input type="checkbox"/> Location and width of construction entrance<input type="checkbox"/> Location and type of E&SC and pollution control measures (temporary and permanent)
Planting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Chart of plants to be removed chart (common and botanical names, quantity and size)<input type="checkbox"/> Planting plan (must include multiple strata, i.e. grasses, forbs, shrubs, and trees)<input type="checkbox"/> Planting chart (common and botanical names, quantity and size, native/non-native)

The Director reserves the right to request additional information deemed necessary to analyze the request.



SANDY SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2025 BOARD OF APPEALS SCHEDULE

Pre-App Meeting Deadline	Application Filing Deadline	Revision Deadline	Posting Deadline	Board of Appeals Meeting
10/30/2024	11/18/2024	12/9/2024	12/24/2024	1/8/2025
12/4/2024	12/16/2024	1/6/2025	1/21/2025	2/5/2025
12/31/2024	1/13/2025	2/3/2025	2/18/2025	3/5/2025
1/29/2025	2/10/2025	3/3/2025	3/18/2025	4/2/2025
3/4/2025	3/17/2025	4/7/2025	4/22/2025	5/7/2025
4/1/2025	4/14/2025	5/5/2025	5/20/2025	6/4/2025
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
6/3/2025	6/17/2025	7/8/2025	7/22/2025	8/6/2025
7/1/2025	7/14/2025	8/4/2025	8/19/2025	9/3/2025
7/29/2025	8/18/2025	9/8/2025	9/23/2025	10/8/2025
9/1/2025	9/15/2025	10/6/2025	10/21/2025	11/5/2025
9/30/2025	10/13/2025	11/3/2025	11/18/2025	12/3/2025

NOTE

- No meeting due to the week of Independence Day holiday.
- All meetings will have a virtual option available for attendees.
- The deadlines for the Pre-Application Meetings are flexible at the discretion of the Director.



SANDY SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

FEE SCHEDULE

Type	Adopted Fee	
Stream Buffer Variance	For property zoned:	
	RE-, RD-	\$750 + \$100/each additional request
	RU-, RT-, RM-, RX- ON-, OX-, CX-, SX-, TX-, CS-, IX-, CC-, PR-, PX-, PM- PK, CON	\$850 + \$100/each additional request
Revisions to a filed Application	Stream Buffer Variance	\$250
BOA Meeting Signage (min. one (1) sign/street frontage)	Applicant handles	
Newspaper Advertisement and Readvertisement fee	\$250	
Administrative Fee	\$25	
Technology Fee	\$5	
Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Payments may be made via online CSS Portal or at the Revenue Desk</i> • <i>Debit and credit card transactions are subject to a 5% surcharge</i> • <i>All fees are based on each request</i> 		



SANDY SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

SIGN SPECIFICATIONS

For Board of Appeals:

- At least one (1) sign on each public or private street frontage at a point visible from the nearest public or private street, installed parallel to the roadway; in the case of multiple lots, sufficient signs must be posted to provide reasonable notice to interested persons
- Printed on durable material; 8’ wide x 4’ tall in dimension
- Example sign template:

- Signage must be removed within 48 hours of final action on the petition