



# APPLICATION GUIDE - GENERAL VARIANCE

(Excluding Stream Buffer Variance and Administrative Variance)

**Process Checklist:**

Item
<b>Discussion:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed Process and Instructions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fee Schedule</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting Schedule</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice Requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Required Documents:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Authorization Forms</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter of Intent</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Variance Analysis</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chattahoochee River Corridor Certificate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scaled digital copy of Survey</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scaled digital copy of Site Plan</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>copy of Legal Description</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>copy of Elevations and/or Sections</li> </ul>
<b>All documents in electronic form (online portal)</b>

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

Planner's initials: \_\_\_\_\_



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**DETAILED PROCESS & INSTRUCTIONS**

Legend:  and o: Action required by Applicant

•: For information

Pre-Application Meeting:

- The Pre-Application Meeting must take place at least two (2) weeks but no more than two (2) months before the Application filing date.
- Consult the Sandy Springs Development Code (available online at [https://library.municode.com/ga/sandy\\_springs/codes/development\\_code](https://library.municode.com/ga/sandy_springs/codes/development_code)).
- Apply for a pre-application meeting on the online portal at <https://sandyspringsga.portal.opengov.com/>
- Discuss process, required 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 on or before filing deadline. 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 requirements may result in an administrative hold, and the case will be rescheduled to a future filing cycle**



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**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  _____ <sup>th</sup> 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  _____ <sup>th</sup> day of _____ 20_____  Notary public:  Seal:     Commission expires:
Company name:	
Address:	
City, State, Zip Code:	
Email address:	
Phone number:	
Applicant's signature:	



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**AUTHORIZATION FORM – PART II**

C- 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  _____ <sup>th</sup> day of _____ 20 _____
Notary public:
Seal:
Commission expires:



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**REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

<b>Letter of Intent</b>
Required for <b>all</b> cases
Address the following in detail, on a separate sheet: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Requested Variance</li><li>2. Examples of factual details about commercial proposal below:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number and size of buildings</li><li>• Square footage of gross floor area of nonresidential uses</li><li>• Type and number of residential units</li><li>• Number of employees and customers, number of classrooms, hours of operation, etc.</li></ul></li><li>3. Examples of factual details about residential proposal below:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Square footage of encroachment(s)</li><li>• Floor plan details</li><li>• Footprint of residences</li></ul></li><li>4. Factual details about the site: shape, topography, slope, vegetation, soils, and other physical characteristics of the property</li><li>5. <b>Alternative designs explored:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide details of alternative designs that could reduce the need for a Variance</li><li>• Explain why the alternatives were rejected</li></ul></li></ol>
<b>Chattahoochee River Corridor Certificate</b>
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 <a href="mailto:howens@sandyspringsga.gov">howens@sandyspringsga.gov</a>



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**Variance Analysis (Sec. 11.6.2.)**

**Required for all cases**

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

- a. The variance request would not result in negating the general intent of this Development Code or with the Comprehensive Plan policies;
- b. The variance if granted will not be detrimental to the public safety, health, or welfare of the public or injurious to other property;
- c. The conditions on which the request is based are unique to the property for which the relief is sought and are not applicable generally to other property;
- d. Because of the particular physical surroundings, shape, size, or topographical conditions of the specific property involved, an extraordinary hardship would result; as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, if the strict letter of these regulations is carried out;
- e. The variance requested is the minimum necessary to accomplish the development or building;
- f. In the case of an amendment to a buffer or setback required by this Code, the variance application shows how equal or greater protection will be achieved of the adjacent property or natural resource affected by he proposed development, should the variance be granted; and
- g. Such conditions are not the result of action or inaction of the current property owner; and

2. Failure of an applicant to obtain a land disturbance, building, or any other permit required by this Code shall not in and of itself constitute a justification for a variance absent a showing of the criteria listed under Section 1 above.

Note: The general purpose and intent of the Development Code (Sec. 1.1.5.) includes:

- Ensuring conservation of land and natural resources.
- Promoting the preservation and enhancement of tree canopy in residential areas
- Guiding reinvestment in established neighborhoods that preserves and reinforces their unique characteristics.
- Promoting development along transit corridors that enhances their function as mixed-use, walkable centers that serve surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- Providing standards for compatible transitions of use, building scale, and height between existing and new development.
- Providing clear and consistent procedures for appropriate and effective public involvement in land use and development decisions.
- Providing building and site design standards that address the public aspects of private development and how building form, placement, and uses contribute to the quality of the public realm.
- Providing parking and access standards that appropriately balance pedestrian and vehicular needs and result in safe pedestrian environments of the highest quality
- Promoting quality landscape and building design that advance the function and beauty of Sandy Springs
- Providing clear regulations and processes that result in predictable, efficient, and coordinated development review
- Promoting conservation of land, energy, and natural resources
- Promoting sustainable building and site design practices
- Promoting diverse housing options along the City's major corridors and within its nodes
- Providing standards for interconnected streets and development patterns that support all modes of travel (walking, bicycling, public transit, driving)



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Survey and Site Plan	
Required for <b>all</b> cases	
Upload copy of each document to the online portal The Survey and Site Plan must include, at a minimum, the following:	
Basic Information	<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	<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	<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"> <li>○ Total area of site (acres and sq. ft.)</li> <li>○ Building footprints (sq. ft. and %)</li> <li>○ Parking spaces (number and %)</li> <li>○ Lot coverage (sq. ft. and %)</li> </ul>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/> 100-year floodplain horizontal limits and flood zone designations as shown on survey or Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Maps <input type="checkbox"/> State waters and associated buffers <input type="checkbox"/> Existing and proposed stormwater management facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Community wastewater facilities, including preliminary areas reserved for septic drain fields and points of access <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of water and sanitary sewer systems <input type="checkbox"/> Trees and open space on the subject property <input type="checkbox"/> Wetlands

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



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**2026 BOARD OF APPEALS SCHEDULE**

<b>Pre-App Meeting Deadline</b>	<b>Application Filing Deadline</b>	<b>Revision Deadline</b>	<b>Posting Deadline</b>	<b>Board of Appeals Meeting</b>
11/5/2025	11/19/2025	12/8/2025	12/23/2025	1/7/2026
12/3/2025	12/17/2025	1/5/2026	1/20/2026	2/4/2026
12/31/2025	1/14/2026	2/2/2026	2/17/2026	3/4/2026
2/4/2026	2/18/2026	3/9/2026	3/24/2026	4/8/2026
3/4/2026	3/18/2026	4/6/2026	4/21/2026	5/6/2026
4/1/2026	4/15/2026	5/4/2026	5/19/2026	6/3/2026
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
6/3/2026	6/17/2026	7/6/2026	7/21/2026	8/5/2026
7/1/2026	7/15/2026	8/3/2026	8/18/2026	9/2/2026
8/5/2026	8/19/2026	9/7/2026	9/22/2026	10/7/2026
9/2/2026	9/16/2026	10/5/2026	10/20/2026	11/4/2026
9/30/2026	10/14/2026	11/2/2026	11/17/2026	12/2/2026

No meeting due to the week of Independence Day holiday.

The deadlines for the Pre-Application Meetings are flexible at the discretion of the Director.



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**FEE SCHEDULE**

Type	Adopted Fee	
Variance	For property zoned:	
	RE-, RD- PK, CON	\$300 + \$100/each additional request
	RU-, RT-, RM-, RX- ON-, OX-, CX-, SX-, TX-, CS-, IX-, CC-, PR-, PX-, PM-	\$600 + \$100/each additional request
Sign Variance	\$500 + \$100/each additional request	
Revisions to a filed Application	Variance, Sign 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	
<b>Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payments may be made via online CSS Portal or at the Revenue Desk</li> <li>• Debit and credit card transactions are subject to a 5% surcharge</li> <li>• All fees are based on each request</li> </ul>		



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**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
  - Construction of sign is fully the responsibility of the applicant
  - 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

**V**

**VARIANCE**  
REQUEST FOR A VARIANCE TO  
ENCROACH 2' INTO THE REAR BUILDING  
SETBACK FOR AN ADDITION  
\*Virtual Meeting Option: See Case Online\*

**BOARD OF APPEALS**  
4/7/21; 6:00 PM  
CITY HALL  
1 GALAMBOS WAY  
CITY OF SANDY SPRINGS  
PLANNING AND ZONING DIVISION, 770-730-5600

123 ADDRESS ROAD  
V21-0005

FIND THIS CASE ONLINE:  
**spr.gs/zoningcases**