

GOT TRAFFIC!

**THE VENTURA CAHUENGA
BLVD. SPECIFIC PLAN
MUST BE REVISED**

ENCINO NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
September 2017

DRAFT 9/22/2017

Plan adopted in 1991

In the 1980's, existing building regulations allowed the construction of a massive six-story building at Ventura and Gloria. This over-scale building caused an enormous public outcry. The Ventura Cahuenga Blvd. Specific Plan was approved in February 1991. It was designed to control traffic and growth for the 17 mile stretch of Ventura Blvd.

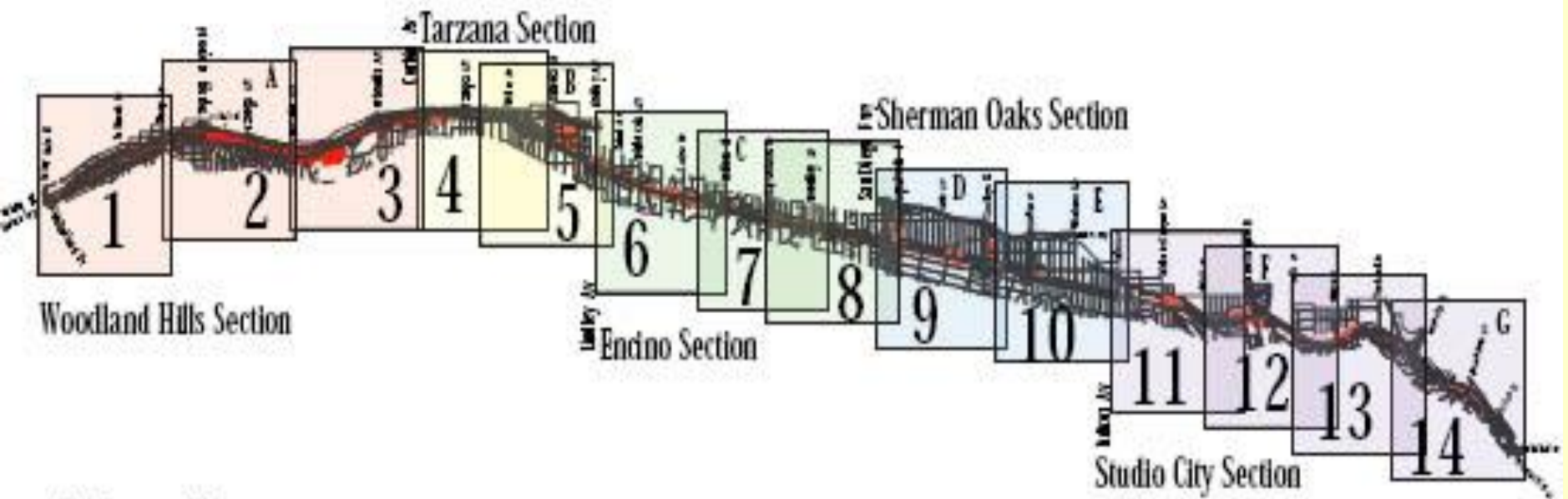
Massive Encino Terrace building at Ventura and Gloria proved need for a new Ventura Blvd. plan



What the Plan controls

The Ventura Cahuenga Blvd. Specific Plan, is sometimes just called the Ventura Blvd. Specific Plan. It controls development on Ventura Blvd. from Cahuenga Pass, through Studio City, Sherman Oaks and Tarzana through to Woodland Hills. It has undergone few revisions since its inception.

Ventura Specific Plan



Plan Designation Maps 1-14

The plan established controls on building size and height



Maximum building height, bulk (FAR) and setbacks were established

The Plan established basic development rights and maximums (varies by community):

- . Maximum floor area ratio (FAR) 1.25:1**
- . Front and side yard minimums were established**
- . Maximum lot coverage was set at 60% or 70%, depending up location.**
- . 15% of parking lots must be landscaped**
- . Maximum building height was set at 30 or 45 feet, depending upon location (except near Sepulveda set at maximum 75 feet)**
- . Minimum parking requirements were set**

Intent of the Plan

The intent and goal of the original Plan was to keep traffic flowing, while still allowing a reasonable amount of development to take place along Ventura Blvd. Over 4.1 million sq. ft. of new development was envisioned by the Plan in its first phase. The second phase envisioned an additional 4.4 million sq. ft. of new development.

The Plan regulates properties on and near Ventura Blvd.



Buildings constructed before the plan approval were exempted from the new height limits



PIA fees were to go for street improvements

The Plan initially proposed many intersection widenings to be paid for by Project Impact Assessment (PIA) fees, collected from new developers. Only the new development paid PIA fees, while existing buildings were exempt.

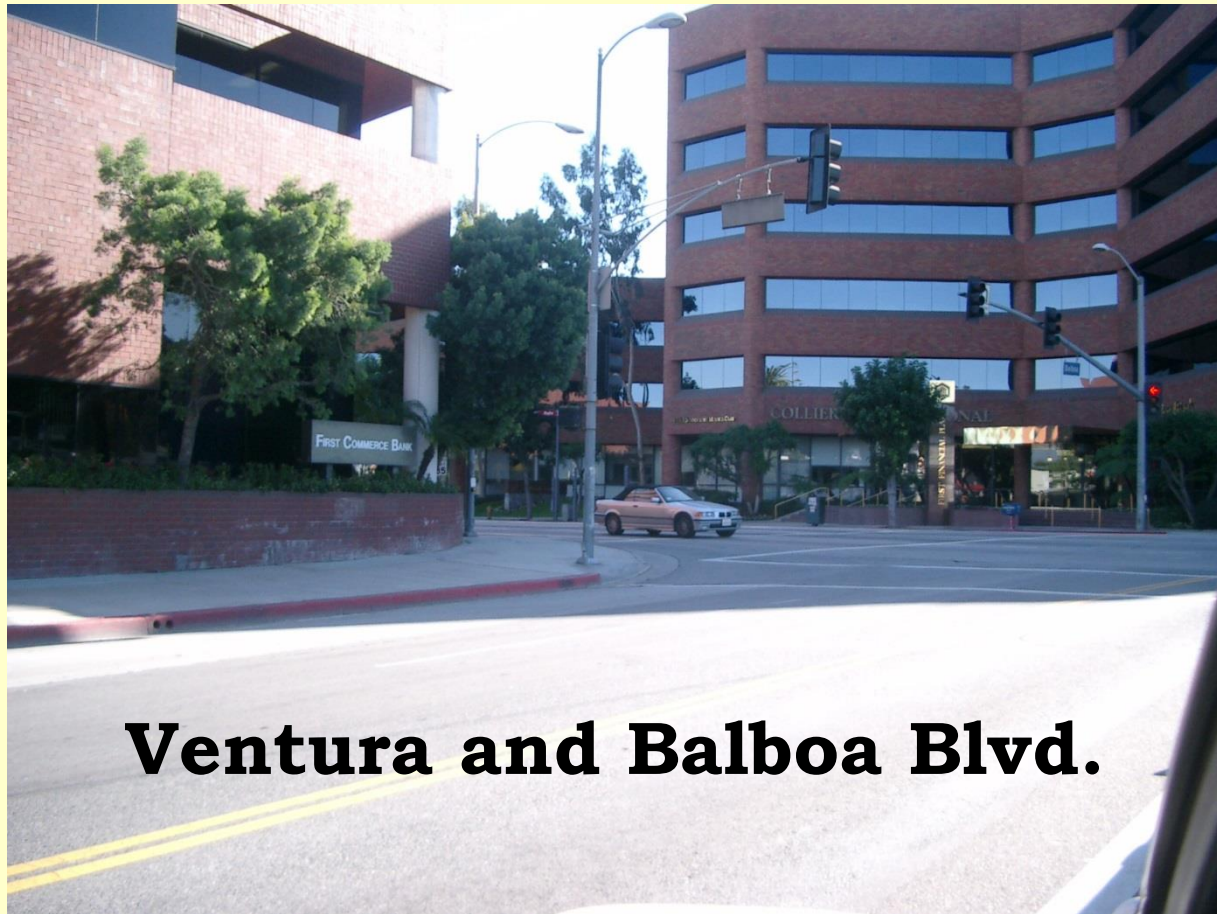
Existing high rises generate much traffic, but pay no traffic mitigation fees



Necessary intersection improvements

The Plan originally anticipated making major intersection improvements at 30 key intersections. The idea was to flare, or widen Ventura Blvd. 370 feet on both sides of the intersections. But business owners who stood to lose a few feet of sidewalk frontage to help traffic flow, soon objected. The City then reduced the number of intersection improvements from 30 to only 19. And most of these street improvements have never been made because of lack of money.

Many intersections can not be widened



Ventura and Balboa Blvd.

Project Impact Assessment (PIA) fees

The Plan collects Project Impact Assessment (PIA) fees on the basis of *square footage* as a measure of determining how much new developers must pay into the Plan, not on the amount of new *traffic each project actually generates*. Thus there will never be an adequate amount of money generated for the required traffic improvements.

Each new project brings more traffic to Ventura Blvd.



Without needed street improvements, building density must be reduced

If a major cutback in the number, length, or width of intersection improvements was allowed, then a commensurate cutback in allowable development should have been made. New development was allowed without the necessary street improvements.

Many exceptions to the Plan were granted to build over-scale projects



Fewer and fewer shops remained to serve the needs of local residents



Conflicting goals...

The Plan originators saw Ventura Blvd. as primarily a local retail-serving street, and secondarily as a regional transportation artery. Thus, they expected a large portion of the funding for street improvements to come from local sources. This was unrealistic because it placed the major burden too heavily on new development while allowing regional sources, and the State to pay little. A lot of Ventura Blvd. traffic is regional, not just local.

Shared Parking

Another problem with the Plan is the lack of adequate parking along Ventura Blvd. City planners rely on “shared parking” as a basis for determining parking requirements. Shared parking is accomplished by cutting back on the number of parking spaces required because of complementary uses.

Sherman Oaks Galleria was granted shared parking



Parking problems remain

For example, an office building with restaurants and theaters would supposedly share spaces by using them at different times of the day or evening. The offices would use the parking spaces during the day, and the theatres and restaurants at night. But the reality is that uses overlap and create significant parking problems. In worse case, the restaurant, theaters, and office uses might well be conducted simultaneously, creating parking shortages.

Many office buildings and restaurants have too little on-site parking



Condos and apartments are a major Plan weakness

Another major weakness in the Plan is the new apartments and condos sprouting up along the boulevard. These will generate a lot of the traffic but do not pay their fair share toward street improvements. The residential units now built on the boulevard pay lower PIA fees than commercial development.

121 unit Avalon Bay apartment Ventura & Noeline



Residential not counted

There are no limits on the number of apartments and condos that can be built on Ventura Blvd. And worst of all, the square footage of apartments and condos added to the boulevard are not even counted in reaching the maximum build-out that is allowed.

51 unit apartment at Woodley & Ventura Blvd.



**Out of scale by-right project -- 49 unit
apartment, 16300 Ventura Blvd. -
mixed use (Encino Car Wash property)**



Projects planned on or near Ventura Blvd.

- 114 apartments (live/work, affordable units) 7 stories 16161-63 Ventura Blvd.
- 312 apartments/commercial units 14801-14827 Ventura Blvd. two 5 story
- Multipurpose 3-story commercial building 15739 Ventura, Valley Beth Shalom
- 33 unit condominium, 4741 N. Libbit Avenue (just off of Ventura Blvd.)
- 42 unit condominium, 5015 - 5041 Balboa Blvd.
- 66 unit apartment, (IMT) 4940 Paso Robles
- 131 unit apartment (Avalon Bay), Ventura Blvd. near Noeline
- 51 unit apartment, (Woodrise), Ventura Blvd. at Woodley
- 51 unit condominium, 15222 Ventura Blvd., just east of Sepulveda
- 325 unit apartment complex, Sepulveda Blvd. and Camarillo
- 125 unit apartment (Gold Mountain) 16704 Ventura Blvd.
- 58 unit condominium, 5239-5305 Lindley Ave. (replaces 39 apartments)
- 31 unit condominium, 4410 Sepulveda Blvd. (near Greenleaf off-ramp)
- 43 unit condominium, 5168 Yarmouth Ave. (replaces 29 apartments)
- 70 unit condominium, 5130 Yarmouth Ave. (replaces 53 apartments)
- 120 unit apartment, 5501 Newcastle Ave. (replaces 71 apart.) incl. 9 low income units
- 43 unit condominium, 5445 Lindley Ave. (replaces 44 apartments)
- 112 unit apartment, 18301 Ventura Blvd., at Etiwanda
- 12 row houses, 4726 Petit (between Petit and Rubio) (sub standard lots, no side yards)
- 20 unit condominium, 16671 Oak View Dr.
- 50 unit apartment, 17720 Magnolia Bl.
- 49 unit apartment, 16300 Ventura Blvd. - mixed use (Encino Car Wash property)
- 138,714 sq. ft. medical building, 18131 Ventura Blvd. at Lindley (replaces Michaels)

New billboards are prohibited, but existing billboards may remain



The owner of this billboard sought to convert it to a brightly lit digital billboard



The Plan does not explicitly ban digital billboards



The Planning Director approved the digital “modernization”

Director’s Determination Letter: DIR 2007-5540

“Recognizing the design concerns raised for the area, staff has paid special consideration to enhancing the visual character of the Boulevard, while trying to maintain the applicant's use of the billboard. Currently, new billboards are prohibited by the Specific Plan; *however, the maintenance and replacement of existing billboards is permitted as long as they are not larger in area or greater in height.*”

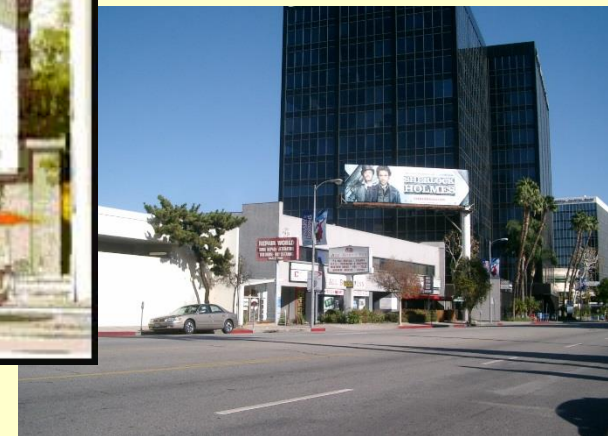
The Plan has many flaws

The Plan contains many weaknesses. Digital billboards are not specifically prohibited. Unsavory business establishments such as marijuana dispensaries, late night cafe/entertainment and night clubs proliferate. There continues to be an excessive number of alcohol outlets. More mixed use projects will be built, bringing more residents to the boulevard. Lack of funds will limit traffic improvements.

Mixed use projects receive a 20% density bonus

The Plan gives a new developer of a mixed-use project a 20% density bonus. This provision encourages large, over-scale projects with hundreds of apartments over commercial on the ground floor. Low-rise buildings are converting to massive multi-story, high density apartment buildings.

A 7-story, 86' high rise mixed-use 114 unit apartment building at 16161 Ventura Blvd. is replacing a small 2-story building



Got traffic! Is this the future of Ventura Blvd. that residents seek?



Will the needs of local residents be overlooked?



The Plan must be revised

Revising the Plan would encourage developers to return Ventura Blvd. to a convenient retail shopping facility serving the local community, rather than a high-density commercial corridor, or freeway by-pass route.

Ventura Blvd. cannot be all things to all people!

Here is what must be done...

- 1. No additional residential units, such as condos, or apartments be permitted on Ventura Blvd.**
- 2. No mixed-use projects should be permitted, and no mixed-use density bonuses be allowed.**
- 3. New signage rules must be put in place to prevent sign “modernizations”, including digital billboards.**

Here is what must be done...

- 4. Maximum allowable build-out should be reduced, until traffic problems are resolved.**
- 5. PIA fees should be adjusted upwards to generate needed funds for street improvements.**
- 6. Planned street and intersection improvements must be implemented before any new construction is permitted.**

Here is what must be done...

7. New uses along Ventura Blvd. should primarily serve local residents, not add more residents.

8. Building height and bulk should be reduced and building setback requirements increased.

9. Exceptions, variances or other deviations from the Plan should not be permitted.

10. No more density bonus incentives for new development should be issued

Here is what must be done...

11. Honest, reliable and complete traffic studies must be conducted before any new project is approved.

12. Shared parking arrangements should not be permitted.

Thank you for watching...

Please contact your Councilmember, the Mayor, the Planning Director and your neighbors. Demand that the Ventura Specific Plan be amended immediately.

**To learn more about the Plan, go to:
<http://cityplanning.lacity.org/>**

Encino Neighborhood Council

The Encino Neighborhood Council (ENC), is a Certified Neighborhood Council of the City of Los Angeles which ADVISES City, other Governmental Officials' and the Community on issues or concerns that are affecting the community of ENCINO. The ENC is made up of volunteers who are ELECTED by the community who live, work or otherwise are involved in the community of ENCINO. The ENC also makes appropriations of City Funds for Community Projects and needs as requested and approved by various committees and the general board.

For more information, contact:

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