

## FINDINGS

### ZONE CHANGE AND HEIGHT DISTRICT CHANGE FINDINGS

1. **General Plan Consistency - City Charter Finding 556.** When approving any matter listed in Section 558, the City Planning Commission and the Council shall make findings showing that the action is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan. If the Council does not adopt the City Planning Commission's findings and recommendations, the Council shall make its own findings.

The Site is located within the Woodland Hills – Warner Center Neighborhood of the Canoga Park – Winnetka – Woodland Hills – West Hills Community Plan area in the City of Los Angeles and is currently designated for General Commercial land uses, with corresponding C2-1LD, C4-1LD, and P-1LD zones. The applicant is requesting a Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change from C2-1LD, C4-1LD, and P-1LD to C2-2 which would establish consistent zoning across the Site, and would allow the Project to be developed with a mixed-use building containing self-storage for household goods, office, and retail spaces.

Facilitating the development of a project consisting of 156,917 square feet of self-storage for household goods with a 1,015 square feet associated office, and 1,400 square feet of commercial/retail floor area along a major commercial thoroughfare in close proximity to other commercial uses will be in conformance with good planning and land use practices, and will be consistent with the following elements of the General Plan, including the Community Plan.

**General Plan Framework Element.** The General Plan is the City's roadmap for future growth and development. The General Plan Elements establish goals, policies, purposes, and programs that provide for the regulatory environment in managing the City, and for addressing environmental concerns and problems. The majority of the policies derived from these elements are in the form of LAMC requirements. The General Plan is comprised of the Framework Element, seven state-mandated elements, and four additional elements. The Framework Element establishes the broad overall policy and direction for the General Plan.

The Framework Element for the General Plan was adopted by the City of Los Angeles in December 1996 and re-adopted in August 2001. The Framework Element provides guidance regarding policy issues for the entire City of Los Angeles, including the project site. The Framework Element also sets forth a Citywide comprehensive long-range growth strategy and defines Citywide policies regarding such issues as land use, housing, urban form, neighborhood design, open space, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, and public services. The Framework Element includes the following goals, objectives and policies relevant to the instant request:

#### Land Use Chapter

The Framework Element's Land Use Chapter identifies General Commercial land use as including a diversity of retail sales and services, office, and auto-oriented uses comparable to those currently allowed in the C2 zone. The Site's location along Ventura Boulevard is consistent with the Framework Element's description of the General Commercial land use designation. Moreover, self-storage for household goods and commercial/retail projects are permitted within the C2 zone, and would therefore be consistent with the Framework Element's contemplated uses within the General Commercial land use designation.

Furthermore, the Project will comply with the following relevant goals, objectives, and policies set forth in the Framework Element's Land Use chapter:

*Goal 3A: A physically balanced distribution of land use that contributes towards and facilitates the City's long-term fiscal and economic viability, revitalization of economically depressed areas, conservation of existing residential neighborhoods, equitable distribution of public resources, conservation of natural resources, provision of adequate infrastructure and public services, reduction of traffic congestion and improvement of air quality, enhancement of recreation and open space opportunities, assurance of environmental justice and a healthful living environment, and achievement of the vision for a more livable city.*

*Objective 3.1: Accommodate a diversity of uses that support the needs of the City's existing and future residents, businesses, and visitors.*

*Policy 3.1.1: Identify areas on the Long-Range Land Use Diagram and in the community plans sufficient for the development of a diversity of uses that serve the needs of existing and future residents (housing, employment, retail, entertainment, cultural/institutional, educational, health, services, recreation, and similar uses), provide job opportunities, and support visitors and tourism.*

*Policy 3.1.7: Allow for development in accordance with the policies, standards, and programs of specific plans in areas in which they have been adopted.*

*Objective 3.2: Provide for the spatial distribution of development that promotes an improved quality of life by facilitating a reduction of vehicular trips, vehicle miles traveled, and air pollution.*

*Policy 3.2.1: Provide a pattern of development consisting of distinct districts, centers, boulevards, and neighborhoods that are differentiated by their functional role, scale, and character. This shall be accomplished by considering factors such as the existing concentrations of use, community-oriented activity centers that currently or potentially service adjacent neighborhoods, and existing or potential public transit corridors and stations.*

*Policy 3.2.3: Provide for the development of land use patterns that emphasize pedestrian/bicycle access and use in appropriate locations.*

*Policy 3.2.4: Provide for the siting and design of new development that maintains the prevailing scale and character of the City's stable residential neighborhoods and enhance the character of commercial and industrial districts.*

The Site is currently developed with the remnant building foundations and parking lot, which do not fully advance the Framework Element's land use goals and policies outlined above. Specifically, the Site is an optimal location for a new commercial development containing much need storage and commercial/retail uses. It is located along Ventura Boulevard, which is a significant commercial thoroughfare that offers numerous regional and neighborhood-serving retail, office, and commercial uses for nearby residents. Pursuant to the Ventura-Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan and the Woodland Hills Streetscape Plan, Ventura Boulevard is attractively landscaped, and offers a wide sidewalk, street furniture, and other amenities. The Project's proposed uses will be consistent with the existing development patterns along Ventura Boulevard, as well as the land use goals of the Framework Element.

The proposed mixed-use building will be consistent and compatible with existing development patterns in the immediate vicinity. The multi-story commercial buildings with associated parking lot are immediately east and west of the project. Abutting properties to the north are developed with US-101, which will buffer the Project from other single-family residences to the north. Abutting properties to the south across Ventura Boulevard are developed with multi-story multi-family development, a single-family dwelling, a church, and a surface parking lot. Thus, the development of the Project will place development in an appropriate, convenient, and desirable location, while promoting the protection and conservation of nearby lower-density neighborhoods. For the above reasons, the Project is consistent with and advances the land use goals, objectives, and policies of the Framework Chapter.

#### Urban Form and Neighborhood Design

*Goal 5A: A livable City for existing and future residents and one that is attractive to future investment. A City of interconnected, diverse neighborhoods that builds on the strengths of those neighborhoods and functions at both the neighborhood and citywide scales.*

*Objective 5.2: Encourage future development in centers and in nodes along corridors that are served by transit and are already functioning as centers for the surrounding neighborhoods, the community or the region.*

*Policy 5.2.2: Encourage the development of centers, districts, and selected corridor/boulevard nodes such that the land uses, scale, and built form allowed and/or encouraged within these areas allow them to function as centers and support transit use, both in daytime and nighttime. Additionally, develop these areas so that they are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.*

The Project will support the Framework Element's Urban Form and Neighborhood Design chapter by providing a new mixed-use project consisting of 156,917 square feet of self-storage for household goods with 1,015 square feet associated office, and 1,400 square feet of commercial/retail floor area along a major commercial corridor. The placement of the Project's uses on Ventura Boulevard in a new approximately 158,371-square-foot mixed-use building is consistent with existing use and development patterns along the Boulevard. The infill development of the Site with the Project's proposed uses will therefore be compatible with the uses along the Ventura Boulevard corridor, and will be appropriately buffered by the Ventura Boulevard corridor from nearby lower-density neighborhood development patterns. Therefore, for the above reasons, the Project conforms to the Framework Element's goals and policies regarding urban form and neighborhood design.

**Mobility Element.** The Mobility Element of the General Plan (Mobility Plan 2035) is likely to be affected by the recommended action herein through the imposition of street dedications and improvements surrounding the project site. Ventura Boulevard is a designated Boulevard II under Mobility Plan 2035, dedicated to a Roadway Width of 80 feet and a Right-of-Way Width of 110 feet, and is improved with a roadway, curb, gutters, and sidewalk.

The Bureau of Engineering (BOE) requires the removal of the existing sidewalk and construction of a full-width concrete sidewalk along the property frontage, the removal of the driveways and construction of ADA-compliant driveways, and the removal and replacement of any broken, off-grade existing concrete curb and gutter. BOE is also requiring installing tree wells with root barriers and plant street trees satisfactory to the City Engineer and the Urban Forestry Division of the Bureau of Street Services. Conditions for improvements have been imposed under the (T) Tentative Classification conditions in accordance with Boulevard II standards of Mobility Plan 2035.

The dedication and improvement requirement would continue to advance Mobility 2035's policies in recognizing walking as a component of every trip to ensure high-quality pedestrian access. New trees will be planted along the project's street frontage and new direct pedestrian paths of travel have been designated from the sidewalk to the entrances to the mixed-use building. The project as designed and conditioned will meet the following goals and objectives of Mobility Plan 2035:

The Project is consistent with the following Policies of the Mobility Element, Mobility Plan 2035:

*Policy 2.3: Recognize walking as a component of every trip and ensure high quality pedestrian access in all site planning and public right-of-way modifications to provide a safe and comfortable walking environment.*

*Policy 3.1: Recognize all modes of travel, including pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular modes - including goods movement - as integral components of the City's transportation system.*

*Policy 3.3: Promote equitable land use decisions that result in fewer vehicle trips by providing greater proximity and access to jobs, destinations and other neighborhood services.*

*Policy 3.8: Provide bicyclists with convenient, secure and well-maintained bicycle parking facilities.*

*Policy 5.4: Continue to encourage the adoption of low and zero emission fuel sources, new mobility technologies, and supporting infrastructure.*

The redevelopment of the Site with storage and commercial/retail uses would be consistent with the various existing uses in the surrounding neighborhood that would facilitate and encourage pedestrian travel between the uses and a broad array of nearby residential, retail, commercial and personal services along Ventura Boulevard.

The proposed project will provide a 13-foot sidewalk along Ventura Boulevard to create a quality, safe, and comfortable walking environment. The mixed-use building will benefit from this public improvement by orienting its front entrances to be in line with a direct pedestrian path of travel from the sidewalk. The project will take vehicular access from a single driveway on the north side of Ventura Boulevard. To accommodate bicycle travel, the project will provide convenient and secure bicycle parking on-site. Finally, the project has been conditioned to provide Electric Vehicle Charging Stations for at least 18 percent of the required parking spaces on the site.

**Health and Wellness Element.** The proposed project will support the policies and objectives of the Health and Wellness Element of the General Plan. The project proposes retail/commercial spaces facing Ventura Boulevard, benches, and landscaping which enhances pedestrian experience and circulation.

*Policy 2.2: Promote a healthy built environment by encouraging the design and rehabilitation of buildings and sites for healthy living and working conditions, including promoting enhanced pedestrian-oriented circulation, lighting, attractive and open stairs, healthy building materials and universal accessibility using existing tools, practices, and programs.*

*Policy 5.1: Reduce air pollution from stationary and mobile sources; protect human health and welfare and promote improved respiratory health.*

*Policy 5.7: Promote land use policies that reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions, result in improved air quality and decreased air pollution, especially for children, seniors and others susceptible to respiratory diseases.*

**Sewerage Facilities Element.** The Sewerage Facilities Element of the General Plan will not be affected by the recommended action. While the sewer system might be able to accommodate the total flows for the proposed project, further detailed gauging and evaluation may be needed as part of the permit process to identify a specific sewer connection point. If the public sewer has insufficient capacity, then the developer will be required to build sewer lines to a point in the sewer system with sufficient capacity. A final approval for sewer capacity and connection permit will be made at that time. Ultimately, this sewage flow will be conveyed to the Hyperion Treatment Plant, which has sufficient capacity for the project.

**Land Use Element.** Land Use Element of the City's General Plan divides the City into 35 Community Plan areas. The Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan designates the property for General Commercial land use with corresponding zones of C1.5, C2, C4, RAS3, and RAS4. The Zone Change and Height District Change from C2-1LD, C4-1LD, and P-1LD to C2-2 is warranted as the site's existing zoning does not allow for the necessary use and FAR to construct this project, and still corresponds to the range of zones of the General commercial land use designation. The proposed mixed-use development, containing self-storage and commercial/retail uses, is a commercial use that is consistent with the development permitted in the recommended (T)C2-2 Zone. Therefore, the project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan.

The Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan text includes the following relevant land use goals, objectives, and policies:

*Goal 2: Economically Vital Commercial Sector Offering a Diversity Of Goods And Services To Meet The Needs Of The Community Plan Area. This Means That Commercial Land Use Policies Must Support Maximum Efficiency and Accessibility Of Commercial Development While Preserving The Historic Commercial And Cultural Character Of The District.*

*Objective 2-1: Conserve and strengthen viable commercial development and encourage recycling of obsolete commercial development.*

*Policies: 2-1.1: Locate new commercial development in areas currently designated for such development.*

*Objective 2-2: Enhance the appearance of commercial districts.*

*Policies: 2-2.1: Require that any proposed development be designed to enhance and be compatible with adjacent development.*

*Policies: 2-2.5: Landscaped corridors should be created and enhanced through the planting of street trees along segments with no building setbacks and through median plantings.*

The proposed uses and height will promote a strong and competitive commercial sector by allowing for the redevelopment of a presently underutilized site. The new development and

improvements to the public right of way will substantially upgrade the aesthetic and functional qualities of the site. The project will result in the addition of a three-story 158,371 square-foot mixed-use structure. The project will add neighborhood serving uses that will promote economic well-being through the creation of jobs and public convenience through the provision of a new service at the site. The improvements will substantially upgrade the aesthetic and functional qualities of the site and will promote economic well-being and public convenience in the community.

Therefore, the use, FAR, and height of the proposed project will be in harmony with the objectives and policies of the General Plan and Community Plan.

**Charter Finding – City Charter Finding 556.** When approving any matter listed in Section 556, the City Planning Commission and the Council shall make findings showing that the action is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan. If the Council does not adopt the City Planning Commission's findings and recommendations, the Council shall make its own findings.

The project site is located within the Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan, which is one of 35 community plans comprising the Land Use Element of the General Plan. The Community Plan designates the lot for General Commercial land uses, corresponding to the C1.5, C2, C4, RAS3, and RAS4 Zones. Both the existing C2-1LD, C4-1LD, and P-1LD, and the recommended (T)C2-2 zones, are consistent with this land use designation.

The development of the project represents an opportunity to achieve the overarching goals of the Community Plan, as discussed in the Findings above. Moreover, as also noted above, the subject property is zoned C2-1LD, C4-1LD, and P-1LD in a neighborhood that contains medium-density residential and commercial zones and uses all within a 500-foot radius. The proposed project and recommended (T)C2-2 zone are consistent with the General Commercial Land Use Designation and meet several of the policies, goals, and objectives of the Community Plan.

The Community Plan designates the project site as being in a commercial area, which is to be preserved. The proposed project helps achieve several of the objectives and policies stated in the Community Plan, such as the following:

*Objective 2-1: Conserve and strengthen viable commercial development and encourage recycling of obsolete commercial development.*

The proposed mixed-use is a low-impact use that provides this buffer between US-101 and the environment.

*Policies: 2-2.1: Require that any proposed development be designed to enhance and be compatible with adjacent development.*

The low-impact nature of self-storage will provide design treatments and a buffer where the commercially zoned and land use designation meet US-101. The proposed development will demolish and remove the existing remnant building foundation and parking lot, and provides a varied building façade with visual treatments and colors that are designed to be compatible with the surrounding development and enhance the aesthetics of the area.

Therefore, the requested project with Zone Change and Height District Change request is in harmony with the objectives and policies of the General Plan and Community Plan.

**2. Public Necessity, Convenience, General Welfare, and Good Zoning Practice - Pursuant to City Charter Section 558 and LAMC Section 12.32, and based on these findings, the recommended action is deemed consistent with public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice.**

As demonstrated above, the proposed Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change is consistent with the General Plan and Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan. Further, it is in conformance with the public necessity, convenience, general welfare, and good zoning practice.

Public Necessity

The requested Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change from C2-1LD, C4-1LD, and P-1LD to C2-2 would facilitate the development of a much-needed new self-storage facility in conformance with the goals of the Framework and Community Plan Elements. As designed and conditioned, the project will enhance the neighborhood and will contribute to the revitalization of the area. The development of the project represents an opportunity to achieve the overarching goals of the Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan, which includes encouraging the maintenance of existing commercial uses in this area. As such, the proposed Zone Change and Height District Change would optimize commercial opportunities in the Community Plan area.

The project will remove the existing remnant building foundation and parking spaces and construct a new 158,371-square-foot mixed-use building. The project will establish new viable self-storage services to the site and expand the availability and location of such services for the Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills community. Thus, the proposed project optimizes the use of the subject property, introduces new employment opportunities and will generate increased tax revenues, thus providing a public necessity.

Public Convenience

The requested Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change will permit the development of a mixed-use on the project Site, which is currently improved with a remnant building foundation and parking spaces. The Project will bring a new commercial building to the Site, which will be compatible with the numerous existing office, retail, restaurant, and personal services uses along Ventura Boulevard. The Site is also served by multiple Metro bus lines, which provide transit access to and from the Site. For the above reasons, the requested Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change will be consistent with public convenience.

General Welfare

The recommended Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change to (T)C2-2 will facilitate the transformation of the currently underutilized Site into a new mixed-use development that will be compatible with existing development patterns and land uses and will enhance the urban environment by encouraging activity on an under-utilized site within the General Commercial land use designation and by improving public facilities surrounding the site to be in line with Mobility Plan 2035 street standards and ADA requirements. Given the project's proximity to existing job centers and transit services, the project will provide a desirable commercial use to serve the community, thereby advancing general welfare.

### Good Zoning Practice

The proposed Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change will facilitate the desirable redevelopment of the Site with a mixed-use building, which will create new commercial uses in close proximity to diversity of neighborhood-serving commercial retail, office, restaurant, and personal services uses. Additionally, the proposed height and bulk of the Project are consistent with both the existing commercial development patterns along Ventura Boulevard, as well as the existing multi-family development patterns immediately to the south, west, and in the general vicinity of the Site. In terms of zoning, it would result in a zoning pattern from north to south of RS, PF, C4, C2, CR, RA, or a graduated decrease in intensity. Therefore, since the Project proposes to redevelop an underutilized infill site with a new mixed-use commercial project in close proximity to other similar uses and existing transit infrastructure, the Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change that would allow the development of the Project represents good zoning practice.

Tentative "T" Classifications: The current action, as recommended, has been made contingent upon compliance with new "T" conditions of approval imposed herein for the proposed project. As recommended, the Zone Change and Height District Change have been placed in a temporary "T" Classification in order to ensure consistency with the General Plan. The "T" Conditions are necessary to ensure the identified dedications, improvements, and actions are undertaken to meet the public's needs, convenience, and general welfare served by the actions required. These actions and improvements will provide the necessary infrastructure to serve the proposed community at this site. Therefore, the imposition of the included "T" Conditions herein are in conformance with the public necessity, convenience, general welfare, and good zoning practice.

For the reasons stated above, the Zone Change and Height District Change request is beneficial in terms of public necessity, convenience, general welfare, and good zoning practice, and is consistent with the General Plan.

### **BASIS FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS (12.24 E)**

The applicant is requesting a Conditional Use pursuant to LAMC Section 12.24.W.50, for a storage building for household goods, located in the C2-2 Zone, within 500 feet of an R zone or residential use as measured from the external lot line closest to the R zone.

Required Findings 3 through 6 below are analyzed to determine whether some or all of the requested deviations should be granted. Based on this analysis, the staff recommends that only some of the deviations should be granted.

**3. That the project will enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood or will perform a function or provide a service that is essential or beneficial to the community, city, or region;**

The subject site is comprised of one lot with approximately 53,529 square feet (1.2 acres) of lot area. The site has a frontage of approximately 300 feet along the north side of Ventura Boulevard. The site is currently improved with the remnant building foundation and parking lot. The site is currently zoned C4-1LD, C2-1LD, and P-1LD with a General Commercial land use designation within the Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan area.

The proposed project will provide a service to the area while it also functions as an important buffer between the US-101, and residential uses along the south side of the Ventura Boulevard. The proposed project is requesting a Conditional Use Permit to allow a mixed-



use building that contains a self-storage facility within 500 feet of an A or R Zone, or a residential use. The project is located in a commercially zoned area and will replace an underutilized commercial and parking uses on the subject site.

Similar uses are currently present in the area; self-storage facilities are located at the northwest corner of Ventura Boulevard and Winnetka Avenue and the southwest corner of Ventura Boulevard and San Feliciano Drive, which supports the proposed project as an appropriate use for the area. The project's design will enhance the area by improving the existing underutilized commercial lot. The project site is located adjacent to the US-101 and will be considered a beneficial use in the area. The site is in close proximity to the communities of Canoga Park, Winnetka, Woodland Hills, and West Hills, which have a mix of single-family and multi-family residential uses. These communities include a large number of multi-family units, thus creating the demand for self-storage. As such, the project will be a conveniently located alternative for residents in the area and will provide needed storage facilities for the area.

The proposed self-storage use is not an intensive use. It does not generate many trips, and those trips tend to be of short duration. Additionally, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation determined that the project will not result in significant traffic impacts. The development and operations of the proposed project will be substantially similar to the current development and operations of the existing self-storage facilities within close proximity of the project site and with the existing commercial uses surrounding the project site. The proposed project will provide the surrounding community with a new 156,917 square-foot self-storage facility with street front activating ground floor retail/commercial and office space and will continue to provide a service that is beneficial to the community.

**4. That the project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare, and safety; and**

The subject site is comprised of one lot with approximately 53,529 square feet (1.2 acres) of lot area. The site has a frontage of approximately 300 feet along the north side of Ventura Boulevard. The site is currently improved with the remnant building foundation and parking lot. The site is currently zoned C4-1LD, C2-1LD, and P-1LD with a General commercial land use designation within the Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan area.

The project will remove the existing remnant building foundation and parking lot for the construction of a new 158,371-square-foot mixed-use building containing self-storage uses. With the concurrent Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change request, the project will be located on a site zoned (T)C2-2, which permits self-storage uses through the granting of a conditional use permit when located within 500 feet of an A or R zone, or residential use. The (T)C2-2 zone permits a FAR of 6 to 1 and an unlimited maximum height. However, the project site is located within the Ventura-Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan which limits the FAR to 1.0 to 1 and a maximum height of 30 feet. As part of the Specific Plan Exception request, the Project requests a deviation to allow 158,371 square feet of floor area in lieu of 53,529 square feet for a 2.96:1 FAR in lieu of a 1.0:1 FAR, a deviation to allow a 37-foot 7½-inch-high building in lieu of 30 feet permitted under the Specific Plan, and a deviation to allow no stepback from the roof perimeter for a building abutting a major or secondary highway for each 15-foot increment, or portion of that increment, above 25 feet.

The proposed self-storage use is not intensive use. It does not generate many trips, and those trips tend to be of a short duration. Whereas some uses such as restaurants or shopping centers can sometimes extend the duration of trips, trips to a self-storage facility tend to be short and purposeful (with the exception of moving in or moving out). This means high turnover in the parking lot. A self-storage demand is more consistent throughout the day which means there is not much overlap in trips that the project generates. Additionally, the project will serve as a buffer between US-101 and neighboring properties to the south of the subject site. The design of the building, which includes articulation, plane variation, and contrasting complementary colors, will create stronger visual enhancement for residents and visitors traveling in the area.

The proposed project will provide the surrounding community with a new 156,917-square-foot self-storage facility and will continue to provide a service that is beneficial to the community. Surrounding properties are generally developed with single- and multi-story commercial and industrial uses within the P-1LD, (Q)P-1LD, (Q)C4-1LD, (Q)A1-1VLD, (Q)C1-1VLD, RA-1VL, (Q)CR-1, (Q)P-1 and PF-1XL zones.

Abutting properties to the north are planned for Public Facilities and Public Facilities-Freeway land uses, zoned PF-1XL, and developed with US-101. Abutting properties to the west and east are planned for General Commercial land uses, zoned P-1LD, (Q)P-1LD, and (Q)C4-1LD, developed with a surface parking lot and a multi-story commercial building with a sociated parking lot. Abutting properties to the south across Ventura Boulevard are planned for Limited Commercial and Minimum Residential land uses, zoned (Q)A1-1VLD, (Q)C1-1VLD, RA-1VL, (Q)CR-1, and (Q)P-1, and developed with multi-story multi-family development, a single-family dwelling, a church and surface parking lot.

Adjacent properties to the north are planned for Low Residential land uses, predominantly zoned RS-1, and developed with single-family dwellings. Properties to the east and west are planned for General Commercial land uses, zoned (Q)C4-1LD, (Q)P-1LD, and [Q]C4-1L, and developed with multi-story office and commercial buildings with associated parking lots, vacant lot, and Homes for aged and others. Adjacent properties to the south across Ventura Boulevard are planned for Very Low Residential and Public Facilities land uses, zoned RA-1 and PF-1XL, and developed with single-family dwellings and school.

The proposed structure will be compatible with the surrounding land uses. While immediately adjacent properties to the east, west, and south are improved with three-story office and four-story multi-family buildings, there are multi-story buildings within the close proximity to the project site including the hotel structure and Woodland Hills corporate center that are six to 13 stories. Additionally, US-101 abuts the subject site to the north. Therefore, the project's location, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare and safety.

**5. That the project substantially conforms with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan.**

The Site is located within the Woodland Hills – Warner Center Neighborhood of the Canoga Park – Winnetka – Woodland Hills – West Hills Community Plan area in the City of Los Angeles and is currently designated for General Commercial land uses, with corresponding C2-1LD, C4-1LD, and P-1LD zones. The applicant is requesting a Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change from C2-1LD, C4-1LD, and P-1LD to C2-2 which would establish consistent zoning across the Site, and would allow the Project to be developed with a mixed-use building containing self-storage for household goods, office, and retail spaces.

Facilitating the development of a project consisting of 156,917 square feet of self-storage for household goods with a 1,015-square-foot associated office, and 1,400 square feet of commercial/retail floor area along a major commercial thoroughfare in close proximity to other commercial uses will be in conformance with good planning and land use practices, and will be consistent with the following elements of the General Plan, including the Community Plan.

**General Plan Framework Element.** The General Plan is the City's roadmap for future growth and development. The General Plan Elements establish goals, policies, purposes, and programs that provide for the regulatory environment in managing the City, and for addressing environmental concerns and problems. The majority of the policies derived from these elements are in the form of LAMC requirements. The General Plan is comprised of the Framework Element, seven state-mandated elements, and four additional elements. The Framework Element establishes the broad overall policy and direction for the General Plan.

The Framework Element for the General Plan was adopted by the City of Los Angeles in December 1996 and re-adopted in August 2001. The Framework Element provides guidance regarding policy issues for the entire City of Los Angeles, including the project site. The Framework Element also sets forth a Citywide comprehensive long-range growth strategy and defines Citywide policies regarding such issues as land use, housing, urban form, neighborhood design, open space, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, and public services. The Framework Element includes the following goals, objectives and policies relevant to the instant request:

#### Land Use Chapter

The Framework Element's Land Use Chapter identifies General Commercial land use as including a diversity of retail sales and services, office, and auto-oriented uses comparable to those currently allowed in the C2 zone. The Site's location along Ventura Boulevard is consistent with the Framework Element's description of the General Commercial land use designation. Moreover, self-storage for household goods and commercial/retail projects are permitted within the C2 zone, and would therefore be consistent with the Framework Element's contemplated uses within the General Commercial land use designation. Furthermore, the Project will comply with the following relevant goals, objectives, and policies set forth in the Framework Element's Land Use chapter:

*Goal 3A: A physically balanced distribution of land use that contributes towards and facilitates the City's long-term fiscal and economic viability, revitalization of economically depressed areas, conservation of existing residential neighborhoods, equitable distribution of public resources, conservation of natural resources, provision of adequate infrastructure and public services, reduction of traffic congestion and improvement of air quality, enhancement of recreation and open space opportunities, assurance of environmental justice and a healthful living environment, and achievement of the vision for a more livable city.*

*Objective 3.1: Accommodate a diversity of uses that support the needs of the City's existing and future residents, businesses, and visitors.*

*Policy 3.1.1: Identify areas on the Long-Range Land Use Diagram and in the community plans sufficient for the development of a diversity of uses that serve the needs of existing and future residents (housing, employment, retail, entertainment, cultural/institutional, educational, health, services, recreation, and similar uses), provide job opportunities, and support visitors and tourism.*

*Policy 3.1.7: Allow for development in accordance with the policies, standards, and programs of specific plans in areas in which they have been adopted.*

*Objective 3.2: Provide for the spatial distribution of development that promotes an improved quality of life by facilitating a reduction of vehicular trips, vehicle miles traveled, and air pollution.*

*Policy 3.2.1: Provide a pattern of development consisting of distinct districts, centers, boulevards, and neighborhoods that are differentiated by their functional role, scale, and character. This shall be accomplished by considering factors such as the existing concentrations of use, community-oriented activity centers that currently or potentially service adjacent neighborhoods, and existing or potential public transit corridors and stations.*

*Policy 3.2.3: Provide for the development of land use patterns that emphasize pedestrian/bicycle access and use in appropriate locations.*

*Policy 3.2.4: Provide for the siting and design of new development that maintains the prevailing scale and character of the City's stable residential neighborhoods and enhance the character of commercial and industrial districts.*

The Site is currently developed with the remnant building foundations and parking lot, which do not fully advance the Framework Element's land use goals and policies outlined above. Specifically, the Site is an optimal location for a new commercial development containing much need storage and commercial/retail uses. It is located along Ventura Boulevard, which is a significant commercial thoroughfare that offers numerous regional and neighborhood-serving retail, office, and commercial uses for nearby residents. Pursuant to the Ventura-Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan and the Woodland Hills Streetscape Plan, Ventura Boulevard is attractively landscaped, and offers a wide sidewalk, street furniture, and other amenities. The Project's proposed uses will be consistent with the existing development patterns along Ventura Boulevard, as well as the land use goals of the Framework Element.

The proposed mixed-use building will be consistent and compatible with existing development patterns in the immediate vicinity. The multi-story commercial buildings with associated parking lot are immediately east and west of the project. The Project will be buffered from the single-family residences to the north by the US-101. Abutting properties to the south across Ventura Boulevard are developed with multi-story multi-family development, a single-family dwelling, a church, and a surface parking lot. Thus, the development of the Project will place development in an appropriate, convenient, and desirable location, while promoting the protection and conservation of nearby lower-density neighborhoods. For the above reasons, the Project is consistent with and advances the land use goals, objectives, and policies of the Framework Chapter.

#### Urban Form and Neighborhood Design

*Goal 5A: A livable City for existing and future residents and one that is attractive to future investment. A City of interconnected, diverse neighborhoods that builds on the strengths of those neighborhoods and functions at both the neighborhood and citywide scales.*

*Objective 5.2: Encourage future development in centers and in nodes along corridors that are served by transit and are already functioning as centers for the surrounding neighborhoods, the community or the region.*

*Policy 5.2.2: Encourage the development of centers, districts, and selected corridor/boulevard nodes such that the land uses, scale, and built form allowed and/or encouraged within these areas allow them to function as centers and support transit use, both in daytime and nighttime. Additionally, develop these areas so that they are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.*

The Project will support the Framework Element's Urban Form and Neighborhood Design chapter by providing a new mixed-use project consisting of 156,917 square feet of self-storage for household goods with 1,015 square feet associated office, and 1,400 square feet of commercial/retail floor area along a major commercial corridor. The placement of the Project's uses on Ventura Boulevard in a new approximately 158,371-square-foot mixed-use building is consistent with existing use and development patterns along the Boulevard. The infill development of the Site with the Project's proposed uses will therefore be compatible with the uses along the Ventura Boulevard corridor, and will be appropriately buffered from nearby lower-density neighborhood development patterns. Therefore, for the above reasons, the Project conforms to the Framework Element's goals and policies regarding urban form and neighborhood design.

**Mobility Element.** The Mobility Element of the General Plan (Mobility Plan 2035) is likely to be affected by the recommended action herein through the imposition of street dedications and improvements surrounding the project site. Ventura Boulevard is a designated Boulevard II under Mobility Plan 2035, dedicated to a Roadway Width of 80 feet and a Right-of-Way Width of 110 feet, and is improved with a roadway, curb, gutters, and sidewalk.

The Bureau of Engineering (BOE) requires the removal of the existing sidewalk and construction of a full-width concrete sidewalk along the property frontage, the removal of the driveways and construction of ADA-compliant driveways, and the removal and replacement of any broken, off-grade existing concrete curb and gutter. BOE is also requiring installing tree wells with root barriers and planting street trees satisfactory to the City Engineer and the Urban Forestry Division of the Bureau of Street Services. Conditions for improvements have been imposed under the (T) Tentative Classification conditions in accordance with Boulevard II standards of Mobility Plan 2035.

The dedication and improvement requirement would continue to advance Mobility 2035's policies in recognizing walking as a component of every trip to ensure high-quality pedestrian access. New trees will be planted along the project's street frontage and new direct pedestrian paths of travel have been designated from the sidewalk to the entrances to the mixed-use building. The project as designed and conditioned will meet the following goals and objectives of Mobility Plan 2035:

The Project is consistent with the following Policies of the Mobility Element, Mobility Plan 2035:

*Policy 2.3: Recognize walking as a component of every trip and ensure high quality pedestrian access in all site planning and public right-of-way modifications to provide a safe and comfortable walking environment.*

*Policy 3.1: Recognize all modes of travel, including pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular modes - including goods movement - as integral components of the City's transportation system.*

*Policy 3.3: Promote equitable land use decisions that result in fewer vehicle trips by providing greater proximity and access to jobs, destinations and other neighborhood services.*

*Policy 3.8: Provide bicyclists with convenient, secure and well-maintained bicycle parking facilities.*

*Policy 5.4: Continue to encourage the adoption of low and zero emission fuel sources, new mobility technologies, and supporting infrastructure.*

The redevelopment of the Site with storage and commercial/retail uses would be consistent with the various existing uses in the surrounding neighborhood that would facilitate and encourage pedestrian travel between the uses and a broad array of nearby residential, retail, commercial and personal services along Ventura Boulevard.

The proposed project will provide a 13-foot sidewalk along Ventura Boulevard to create a quality, safe, and comfortable walking environment. The mixed-use building will benefit from this public improvement by orienting its front entrances to be in line with a direct pedestrian path of travel from the sidewalk. The project will take vehicular access from a single driveway on the north side of Ventura Boulevard. To accommodate bicycle travel, the project will provide convenient and secure bicycle parking on-site. Finally, the project has been conditioned to provide Electric Vehicle Charging Stations for at least 18 percent of the required parking spaces on the site.

**Health and Wellness Element.** The proposed project will support the policies and objectives of the Health and Wellness Element of the General Plan. The project proposes retail/commercial spaces facing Ventura Boulevard, benches, and landscaping which enhances pedestrian experience and circulation.

*Policy 2.2: Promote a healthy built environment by encouraging the design and rehabilitation of buildings and sites for healthy living and working conditions, including promoting enhanced pedestrian-oriented circulation, lighting, attractive and open stairs, healthy building materials and universal accessibility using existing tools, practices, and programs.*

*Policy 5.1: Reduce air pollution from stationary and mobile sources; protect human health and welfare and promote improved respiratory health.*

*Policy 5.7: Promote land use policies that reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions, result in improved air quality and decreased air pollution, especially for children, seniors and others susceptible to respiratory diseases.*

**Sewerage Facilities Element.** The Sewerage Facilities Element of the General Plan will not be affected by the recommended action. While the sewer system might be able to accommodate the total flows for the proposed project, further detailed gauging and evaluation may be needed as part of the permit process to identify a specific sewer connection point. If the public sewer has insufficient capacity, then the developer will be required to build sewer lines to a point in the sewer system with sufficient capacity. A final approval for sewer capacity and connection permit will be made at that time. Ultimately, this sewage flow will be conveyed to the Hyperion Treatment Plant, which has sufficient capacity for the project.

**Land Use Element.** Land Use Element of the City's General Plan divides the City into 35 Community Plan areas. The Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community

Plan designates the property for General Commercial land use with corresponding zones of C1.5, C2, C4, RAS3, and RAS4. The Zone Change and Height District Change from C2-1LD, C4-1LD, and P-1LD to C2-2LD is warranted as the site's existing zoning does not allow for the necessary use and FAR to construct this project, and still corresponds to the range of zones of the General commercial land use designation. The proposed mixed-use development, containing self-storage and commercial/retail uses, is a commercial use that is consistent with the development permitted in the proposed (T)C2-2 Zone. Therefore, the project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan.

The Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills Community Plan text includes the following relevant land use goals, objectives, and policies:

*Goal 2: Economically Vital Commercial Sector Offering a Diversity Of Goods And Services To Meet The Needs Of The Community Plan Area. This Means That Commercial Land Use Policies Must Support Maximum Efficiency and Accessibility Of Commercial Development While Preserving The Historic Commercial And Cultural Character Of The District.*

*Objective 2-1: Conserve and strengthen viable commercial development and encourage recycling of obsolete commercial development.*

*Policies: 2-1.1: Locate new commercial development in areas currently designated for such development.*

*Objective 2-2: Enhance the appearance of commercial districts.*

*Policies: 2-2.1: Require that any proposed development be designed to enhance and be compatible with adjacent development.*

*Policies: 2-2.5: Landscaped corridors should be created and enhanced through the planting of street trees along segments with no building setbacks and through median plantings.*

The proposed uses and height will promote a strong and competitive commercial sector by allowing for the redevelopment of a presently underutilized site. The new development and improvements to the public right of way will substantially upgrade the aesthetic and functional qualities of the site. The project will result in the addition of a three-story 158,371 square-foot mixed-use structure. The project will add neighborhood serving uses that will promote economic well-being through the creation of jobs and public convenience through the provision of a new service at the site. The improvements will substantially upgrade the aesthetic and functional qualities of the site and will promote economic well-being and public convenience in the community.

Therefore, the use, FAR, and height of the proposed project will be in harmony with the objectives and policies of the General Plan and Community Plan.

### **SELF-STORAGE CONDITIONAL USE ADDITIONAL FINDING**

- 6. That the project provides for an arrangement of uses, buildings, structures, open spaces and other improvements that are compatible with the scale and character of the adjacent properties and surrounding neighborhood.**

The project consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk, and setbacks), loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collection, and other such

pertinent improvements, that will be compatible with existing and future development on adjacent and neighboring properties. In addition, the project design will produce an aesthetic enhancement to the site.

Immediately surrounding the project site are residential and commercial buildings at approximately one to four stories in height above grade. The massing and height of the proposed building will be similar to the existing structures in the area, the project will remain compatible with the height of structures as a buffer from the US-101. Within a half-mile radius of the project site, there are commercial, retail, office, restaurant, parking, industrial, and residential land uses ranging in height from one to multi-story above grade. Therefore, the project's scale and mass at three stories and approximately 37-foot 7½-inch in height will be consistent with the surrounding urban form. Similar to the project site, the neighboring properties are commercially zoned, which will allow the project site to be compatible with existing and future developments on neighboring properties.

The primary vehicular access will be provided from Ventura Boulevard. Landscaping will be provided along all sides and the surface parking lot, which will further enhance the street experience. A trash collection area will be located in the parking lot. Lighting will be positioned downward and will be shielded to reduce off-site spills to neighboring properties.

As such, the project provides for an arrangement of uses, buildings, structures, open spaces, and other improvements that are compatible with the scale and character of the adjacent properties and surrounding neighborhoods.

### **SPECIFIC PLAN EXCEPTION FINDINGS**

- 7. 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 strict application of the Ventura-Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific would result in practical difficulties and unnecessary hardships that are inconsistent with the general purpose and intent of the Specific Plan. The proposed Project is substantially consistent with the purposes and intents of the Specific Plan and underlying Zoning regulations with regard to the use and type of development and would not be feasible without the granting of the instant exception request.

The Community Plan designates the Site for General Commercial land uses with corresponding zones of C1.5, C2, C4, RAS3, and RAS4. The Site is zoned C2-1LD, C4-1LD (Commercial, Height District 1L), and P-1LD (Parking, Height District 1L). The C2 and C4 zones permit a wide array of land uses including retail, office, medical office, and multifamily residential uses. The "1L" Height District 1L designation allows unlimited stories, and a maximum floor area ratio ("FAR") of 1.5:1. The P zone only allows parking and parking-related uses. Therefore, to permit the Project's proposed uses, the Project has requested a Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change from C2-1LD, C4-1LD, and P-1LD to (T)C2-2. The subject property is located within the Ventura-Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan which contains limitations on development regulations that are more restrictive than the underlying zoning. As defined with the Specific Plan, a "Project", would be subject to the provisions of the Specific Plan if located on a lot in "whole or in part within the Specific Plan."

The Applicant proposes to demolish and remove the Site's existing remnant building foundation and surface parking lot improvements and develop the Project. The Project will



contain a 156,917-square-foot storage facility with two (2) subterranean levels and 1,015 square feet of associated office, and 1,400 square feet of commercial/retail spaces. The building will contain three (3) stories, 37-foot, 7½-inch-high with zero stepback, which will be compatible with the existing residential and other commercial uses located along Ventura Boulevard, as well as the existing development patterns in the vicinity. The building will be set back 15 feet 10 inches from the existing sidewalk along Ventura Boulevard and will provide pedestrian entrances from this sidewalk, both in conformance with the Code and Specific Plan's requirements. Parking will be provided within 22 dedicated spaces located within a surface parking lot.

The proposed Project, compliant with the use regulations of the Specific Plan and underlying zone, is also compliant with the site planning and design regulations of the Specific Plan aside from the requested Exceptions for FAR, height, and stepback. The purpose and intent of the Specific Plan is to provide a compatible and harmonious relationship between residential and commercial development where commercial areas are contiguous to residential neighborhoods. The project is consistent with the Specific Plan's Neighborhood and Commercial Plan designation as a focal point for surrounding residential neighborhoods containing a diversity of land uses. The proposed development also furthers a number of objectives of the Specific Plan, including providing building and site design guidelines to promote attractive and harmonious with the surrounding multi-family and commercial developments, assuring a balance of commercial land uses that will address the needs of the surrounding communities and greater regional area, providing a compatible and harmonious relationship between residential and commercial development where commercial areas are contiguous to residential neighborhoods, and preserving and enhancing community aesthetics by establishing coordinated and comprehensive standards for signs, buffering, setbacks, lot coverage, and landscaping.

While the proposed project complies with the purpose and intent of the Specific Plan, the subject property is unique in its shape and size. The subject property is an irregularly shaped approximately 1.2-acre lot with approximately 300 feet of frontage along Ventura Boulevard as well as direct adjacency to the 101 Freeway. The subject property has an average depth of approximately 177 feet, making it a long, narrow parcel. Further, the subject property has an elevation change of approximately 11 feet from the east sloping upward to the west and an elevation change of approximately three (3) feet from the south sloping downward to the north.

The site has been blighted and vacant since 2015, when the former on-site restaurant permanently closed. Since that time, there was a proposal to develop the site into a hotel and banquet hall which required so many deviations from the Specific Plan due to the site's constraints that a Specific Plan Amendment was required. Despite receiving approval to significantly deviate from the Specific Plan, this project was ultimately withdrawn and did not proceed. Given the site's location, adjacent to the 101 Freeway and along a portion of Ventura Boulevard that lacks pedestrian activation, the site has proven to be difficult to develop for the last nine years. This has resulted in an unnecessary hardship inconsistent with the Specific Plan, which seeks to assure a balance of commercial uses to address the needs of the surrounding communities. A blighted, vacant site does not address community needs. Therefore, 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 a specific plan as it would not further the above goals and permit redevelopment of the site.

### **Floor Area Ratio (FAR)**

The Specific Plan designates the site as "Neighborhood and General Commercial." As such the Site is governed by a FAR of 1.0:1. The applicant seeks an exception authorizing an increase above the Specific Plan limit to an FAR of 2.96:1 which results in 158,371 square feet of floor area. Self-storage is a unique commercial land use in that it does not generate a high number of trips and is generally less intense per square foot compared to retail or restaurant use. The Project utilizes the specific plan's Shared Parking Agreement as part of a Project Permit Compliance determination that the application meets all of the requirements of LAMC Section 12.24 X 20 (a), which permits two or more uses to share their parking spaces and provide a lower total number of parking spaces than would otherwise be required. The provided parking analysis prepared by CR Associates, dated May 3, 2023, showed that a reduced total parking requirement can be granted to the greatest parking requirement of the shared uses. To ensure that the Project would have enough parking spaces for its intended purposes, an analysis of parking generation was carried out using the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineers Parking Generation Manual. The results indicate that the Project's peak parking demand would be 20 spaces, while the Project would provide 22 parking spaces, demonstrating that it has enough parking for the proposed uses. The additional floor area is almost passive in nature as it is primarily used for storage of goods that are not actively being used/withdrawn. Nearby projects have been developed with similar massing to the proposed storage project. To the west of the project site, a car dealership was recently developed that has similar massing with the proposed project; however, because that project involves vehicle storage, those storage areas were not counted towards FAR. The general purpose and intent of the specific plan is to ensure an equilibrium is maintained between the transportation infrastructure and land use development. Limitations on the floor area are placed to ensure that the transportation infrastructure can support the proposed uses. However, because the proposed use is not intense, the transportation network can support the project. Thus, the 1.0:1 floor area limitation would result in an unnecessary hardship that is inconsistent with the intent of the Specific Plan as it would not allow redevelopment of the site with a building of appropriate floor area that will further the goals of the Plan.

Due to site constraints mentioned above, there are practical difficulties that necessitate a FAR increase for the proposed Project. Between De Soto and Winnetka Avenues, many of the properties on the north side of Ventura Boulevard face similar geographic difficulties, as they front Ventura Boulevard with the US-101 abutting in the rear. Many of the parcels, the subject parcel included, are wider than they are deep, causing atypically shallow lot configurations that push for wider and taller buildings. While the site is a prime location for a self-storage given its proximity to single and multi-family residential uses and US-101, a Specific Plan-compliant Project cannot be developed given the nature of the use as a newly-developed self-storage building and the need to achieve a certain size and scale to serve users. Therefore, to offset the impacts of the FAR increase, the building will include substantial building articulation and use high-quality building materials. The mass of the building will be softened by an attractive and varied building facade that would incorporate transparency.

### **Height and Stepback**

The Specific Plan requires that buildings and structures developed in the Neighborhood & General Commercial Plan designated areas not exceed more than 30 feet from the intersection of Wilbur Avenue and Ventura Boulevard to the intersection of De Soto Avenue and Ventura Boulevard on both sides of the Ventura Boulevard. In addition, in the Neighborhood and General Commercial Plan Designation Areas, buildings abutting a major or secondary highway may only exceed 30 feet in height, if, for each 15-foot increment, or

portion of that increment, above 25 feet, at least a 10-foot setback from the roof perimeter is provided. The proposed Project would be 37 feet 7½ inches from the grade to the top of the roof structure with zero setback from the roof perimeter. In order to remain feasible, the Project requires an increase from the Specific Plan's maximum height and setback standards. The purpose of the height and setback limitations is to prevent out-of-scale developments and to encourage compatible developments with the surrounding area.

The subject site slopes significantly from west to east along Ventura Boulevard, with a nearly 11 feet grade differential. This topographical oddity means the proposed building will appear to be 26 feet tall at its westerly front corner and will maintain an approximately 27 feet average above grade height. The 11-foot grade differential is the driving factor leading to the 37 feet 7½ inches above grade height at its easterly corner. Due to the unique physical characteristics of the subject property with the slope upward from the east to the west, the difference in height from the west end of the building to the east end, approximately 11 feet, will be hidden by the site's topography. This results in a portion of the west end of the building being below street level, which will not negatively affect views from Ventura Boulevard given the boulevard's width in this area. In addition to the west-to-east slope on the property, there is a rear-to-front slope causing an additional three (3) feet of topographical differences. This necessitates the request for a height increase and zero setback requests. These mandatory design features preclude the development of a viable self-storage use at the site without relief from the Specific Plan limit.

The nature of the storage use building is to be vertically efficient with floor plates stacked on top of each other. Requiring setbacks would minimize floor area on upper floors and would result in the applicant needing to add additional height to the structure, which is contrary to the intent of the plan. In lieu of providing setbacks, the applicant has included a well-designed project with façade articulations that help break massing, so the project will be harmonious with surrounding developments including nearby developments that are taller in height and also observe no setbacks. For example, the development on 20501 Ventura Boulevard exceeds height with a height of 54 feet while does not comply with the setback requirements. At 20121 Ventura Boulevard, the office building reaches a height of approximately 50 feet and 20239 Ventura Boulevard exceeds 50 feet in height per their corresponding building permits, while neither of the development complies with the setback requirements. The mixed-use development located at 20600 Ventura was recently approved for a height of 110 feet. Additionally, the proposed project has been thoughtfully designed to incorporate elements of the Woodland Hills Streetscape Plan, including landscape buffers, landscaping materials, street trees, and lighting, which will also serve to minimize the scale and mass of the building.

It is the purpose of the Specific Plan to "assure a balance of commercial land uses in the Specific Plan area that will address the needs of the surrounding communities and greater regional area." A self-storage use is highly desirable at the site given its proximity to multi-family residential uses. The site is one of the few commercial locations within the vicinity that could accommodate this much-needed storage use.

**8. 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 size and configuration of the Subject Property, in combination with the practical physical requirements for the operations and functions of the proposed use, and the desire for placement of storage uses are exceptional circumstances and conditions applicable to the Subject Property and the proposed use that do not apply to other properties within the Specific Plan area. The subject property is unique in its shape and size as it is an irregularly

shaped approximately 1.2-acre lot with approximately 300 feet of frontage along Ventura Boulevard. The subject property has a depth of approximately 177 feet, making it a long, narrow parcel. Further, the subject property has an elevation change of approximately 11 feet from the east sloping upward to the west and an elevation change of approximately three (3) feet from the south sloping downward to the north. If the site was deeper the floor area could be spread out over a greater space, so an exception would not be needed. The proposed new building would represent an increase in floor area and height above what already exists with zero setback. As a result, there are exceptional circumstances or conditions applicable to the subject property and with regard to the proposed use that do not apply generally to other property in the Specific Plan Area.

The applicant is cognizant of requesting the exception for the height. The project includes two floors of subterranean storage to further minimize the project's intrusion of height and not propose a project that is out of scale in comparison to the surrounding developments. The intent of the height and setback provisions of the Specific Plan is to protect adjacent sensitive uses from development that is too tall and out of scale with the surrounding area. However, the subject property is adjacent to apartment complexes and commercial office buildings, all of which are approximately three- to ten stories high. With a maximum height of 37 7½ feet, the proposed project will be substantially similar or shorter in height to the existing surrounding improvements; thus, the requested height exception is appropriate because the existing adjacent developments are all already enjoying a greater development right than what would otherwise be afforded to the proposed project. The sloping conditions of the lot also represent a unique circumstance; although the building height is measured from the lowest adjacent grade point, a portion of the building is located below-grade and buffered by the site's topography.

While the site is a prime location for commercial uses given its proximity to residential uses, a Specific Plan-compliant Project cannot be developed given the nature of the use as a newly-developed mixed-use building and the need to achieve a certain size and scale to serve the end-users. The demand for climate-controlled storage has significantly increased over the past several years. No self-storage facilities exist within a one-mile radius and only five (5) exist within two (2) miles, of which only two (2) facilities offer climate control. Additionally, according to the applicant, the existing square footage per capita for storage is 3.5 square feet. The average square footage per capita for storage is 7.5 square feet, which shows the market is under-supplied. The specific plan does not have specific regulations for storage uses and does not factor in their unique operating demands.

In order to address the impacts of the height and bulk increases, the building will include substantial building articulation and use the highest quality building materials. The incorporated design features will address the additional building mass allowed by approval of the requested Exceptions.

The Specific Plan encourages compatible and harmonious relationships between residential and commercial development where commercial areas are contiguous to residential neighborhoods. The proposed Project adjacent to a residential neighborhood provides a compatible and harmonious commercial development that complies with all relevant Zone and Specific Plan requirements aside from the three (3) requested exceptions recommended for approval. The physical configuration of the site and nature of the proposed main use are unique circumstances particular to the Subject Property and necessitate the instant request for the Specific Plan Exceptions.

- 9. 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 special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships, is denied to the property in question.**

The Applicant proposes to remove the site's existing remnant building foundation and parking lot to develop the Project. The Project will contain 156,917 square feet, storage facility with two (2) subterranean levels and 1,015 square feet of associated office, 1,400 square feet of commercial/retail spaces, and a total of 22 parking spaces.

The Project will contain three (3) stories of storage facility uses in a 37-foot 7½-inch-high building, which will be similar in use to the existing commercial offices, multi-family and other commercial uses located along Ventura Boulevard, as well as the existing development patterns/standards in the vicinity. The Project will be set back 15 feet 10 inches from the existing sidewalk along Ventura Boulevard. The Project design reduces massing from Ventura Boulevard, including the articulations and transparency features. Additional landscaping would be provided in front of the building along Ventura Boulevard.

Development of this type of use, while useful to the community and consistent with the goals of the Specific Plan overall, is not possible within the building envelope created by the limitations on FAR, height, and setback. It should be noted that to address the impacts of the area, height, and bulk increase, the building will include substantial building articulation and the use of high quality building materials. The incorporated design features will address the additional building mass allowed by approval of the requested Exceptions. The substantial property right to develop a commercially designated property with a permitted use would be denied to the Subject Property without the granting of the Specific Plan Exceptions.

### **Floor Area Ratio (FAR)**

The increase in FAR proposed as part of the project results in a 2.96:1 FAR in lieu of the required 1.0:1. There are multiple projects within the proximity of the project site that requested relief from the FAR. For example, less than 120 feet to the west is a multi-story multi-family development with approximately 1.4:1 FAR based on ZIMAS and Assessor records. To the south of the project site across Ventura Boulevard, there are mixed-use developments with approximately 1.52:1 FAR. Because of the configuration of the site, the unique demands of the self-storage use, and sensitive site plan and building design, special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships weigh in favor of granting the requested FAR increase. Storages require more space than typical commercial uses but do not add intensity, traffic, noise, and other issues associated with a typical commercial development. Older storage projects were single-story and spread out over a large area versus the newer projects such as the proposed storage project are more space efficient, proposed in the infill development areas that preserve other sites for other commercial and residential projects.

### **Height and Setback**

The proposed project complies with the purpose and intent of the Specific Plan. However, the subject property is unique in its shape and size given it is an irregularly shaped approximately 1.2-acre lot with approximately 300 feet of frontage along Ventura Boulevard and abutting the 101 Freeway to the rear. The subject property has a depth of approximately 177 feet, making it a long, narrow parcel. Further, the subject property has an elevation change of approximately 11 feet from the east sloping upward to the west and an elevation change of approximately three (3) feet from the south sloping downward to the north. If the site was deeper the floor area could be spread out over a greater space, so an exception would not be needed. The increase in height as part of the Project exceeds the Specific

Plan limit by 7 feet and 7½ inches. There are multiple projects within the proximity of the project site that requested relief from the height limitation and setback requirements. For example, the development on 20501 Ventura Boulevard exceeds height with a height of 54 feet. At 20121 Ventura Boulevard, the office building reaches a height of approximately 50 feet, while 20239 Ventura Boulevard exceeds 50 feet in height per their corresponding building permits. The mixed-use development located at 20600 Ventura was recently approved for a height of 110 feet. To successfully reduce the amount of additional lot coverage for the building, the applicant needed to slightly exceed the building height beyond the maximum 30-foot height limit allowed by the Specific Plan.

Thus, the development of the Site Plan was a carefully balanced effort to ensure the viability of a self-storage building at this desired location, while at the same time attempting to minimize building height and massing impacts. Given that other projects are developed in excess of Specific Plan limits for certain uses, the requested height and setback exceptions are deemed necessary to ensure the Applicant may similarly develop the mixed-use project at the site. Approval of the height and setback exceptions will therefore enable the Applicant similar rights as other property owners in the same zone or vicinity.

**10. 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.**

The granting of the Specific Plan Exceptions for additional FAR, height, and to not comply with setback requirements will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the properties adjacent to or in the same vicinity of the Subject Property because the proposed use of a mixed-use is consistent with the intent of the Specific Plan, is in harmony with the underlying zoning on the property and has been designed to be compatible with the surrounding properties. As detailed above in the previous Finding, the Exceptions required to develop the Project are in keeping with height, FAR, and massing of several nearby projects and existing improvements.

Development of this type of use, while useful to the community and consistent with the overall goals of the Specific Plan, is not possible within the building envelope created by the limitations on FAR, height, and setback of the Specific Plan. It should be noted that in order to address the impacts of additional floor area, height, and building massing, the building's design features differing building materials including metal panels, cement, and metal shingles, combined with an articulated façade that is intended to reduce the overall appearance of mass to ensure that the project will not be detrimental to surrounding properties. While the project's Ventura Boulevard frontage does not include the required setback at 25 feet, the project instead includes several projecting features that are intended to frame ground-floor retail entrances while breaking up the overall massing of the structure to improve its overall pedestrian orientation. With regards to additional floor area, a majority of the project's floor area is reserved for the storage of household goods, which is a use that does not generate significant traffic or any other impacts that may be detrimental to nearby improvements. Finally, with regards to height, the project's overall height increase is mostly the result of topographical challenges at the site.

As such, the instant request will enhance the public welfare with a new mixed-use building that provides an economically viable commercial use; and a building that is compatible with and in harmony with improvements in the vicinity because the proposed Project has been designed to mitigate any potential negative impacts with the proposed site layout, building orientation and landscaping. The proposed Project will be compatible with adjacent uses and will overall improve the material aesthetics of the Subject Property.

**11. 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.**

Granting the requested Specific Plan Exceptions will not adversely affect any element of the General Plan inasmuch as the proposed use of the property is consistent and compatible with the uses in the adjacent and surrounding area. The project site is zoned C2-1LD and C4-1LD (Commercial, Height District 1L) and P-1LD (Parking, Height District 1L). The C2 and C4 zone permits a wide array of land uses including retail, office, and other commercial uses. The "1L" Height District 1L designation allows a maximum height of 75 feet and six (6) stories, and a maximum floor area ratio ("FAR") of 1.5:1. The proposed 2 Height District allows unlimited height and an FAR of 6:1. The P zone only allows parking and parking-related uses. The subject property is located within the Ventura / Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan which contains limitations on development regulations that are more restrictive than the underlying zoning. As defined with the Specific Plan, a "Project", would be subject to the provisions of the Specific Plan if located on a lot in "whole or in part within the Specific Plan."

The Applicant proposes to demolish and remove the existing remnant building foundation and parking lot improvements and develop the Project. The Project will contain 156,917 square feet, a storage facility with two subterranean levels and 1,015 square feet of associated office, 1,400 square feet of commercial/retail spaces, and a total of 22 parking spaces.

As detailed in Finding Number 1 above, the development of a new mixed-use project comprising approximately 158,371 square feet of floor area along a commercial and residential thoroughfare in close proximity to other neighborhood-serving commercial uses and existing transit infrastructure will be in conformance with good planning and land use practices and will be consistent with the following elements of the General Plan, Including the Community Plan.

The applicable purposes of the Specific Plan, and the requested exception's consistency with each, is indicated below:

*A. To assure that an equilibrium is maintained between the transportation infrastructure and land use development in the Corridor and within each separate community of the Ventura-Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan area.*

It is not anticipated that the proposed Project would include any traffic impacts to the surrounding intersections and the Project will serve nearby residential uses and will be accessible by foot and bicycle, and the Project will be located near the major thoroughfare of Ventura Boulevard accessible by several Metro lines. The requested exception maintains the equilibrium between transportation infrastructure and land use development along the Corridor.

*B. To provide for an effective local circulation system of streets and alleys which is minimally impacted by the regional circulation system and reduces conflicts among motorists, pedestrians, and transit riders.*

The requested Exceptions are anticipated to result in no adverse impacts to surrounding intersections and the Project will serve nearby residential uses and will be accessible by foot and bicycle, and the Project will be located near the major thoroughfare of Ventura Boulevard accessible by several Metro lines. The requested exception will reduce conflicts among motorists and pedestrians and

encourage alternative forms of transportation such as public transit and bicycle use.

*C. To provide building and site design guidelines to promote attractive and harmonious multi-family and commercial development.*

The requested Exceptions will promote attractive and harmonious commercial development by allowing for a site plan with a well-landscaped entry plaza with benches and public pedestrian access along the Ventura Boulevard frontage, activating the pedestrian experience along the street and also providing an “outdoor” lobby to greet guests, and parking and car interaction in the property. The requested exemption will provide and promote attractive and harmonious commercial development.

*D. To assure a balance of commercial land uses in the Specific Plan area that will address the needs of the surrounding communities and greater regional area.*

The requested exceptions will facilitate the development of a much-needed self-storage uses for home goods, retail and office uses in the Southwestern San Fernando Valley. The site is an ideal location for these uses given its proximity to residential and commercial uses. The requested Exceptions will allow for the development of a balanced commercial Project that will support local and regional needs.

*E. To provide a compatible and harmonious relationship between residential and commercial development where commercial areas are contiguous to residential neighborhoods.*

The requested Exceptions will facilitate and provide a compatible and harmonious relationship between residential and commercial development in the area by allowing for a new building that accomplishes the goal of a viable mixed-use while respecting surrounding residences.

*F. To preserve and enhance community aesthetics by establishing coordinated and comprehensive standards for signs, buffering, setbacks, lot coverage, and landscaping.*

The requested Exceptions will preserve and enhance community aesthetics by adhering to existing requirements for signs, buffering, setbacks, and landscaping. The requested exception is consistent with the goals of the Specific Plan to ensure an attractive streetscape that is consistent with surrounding uses and that limits conflicts between residential and commercial uses. Community aesthetics will be enhanced by the development of an attractive building with substantial articulation and the addition of complementary landscaping.

*G. To enhance the plan area landscaping by providing guidelines and process for a coordinated landscaping program of public and private property for the Specific Plan's communities.*

The requested Exceptions will not affect any landscaping requirements of the Specific Plan area and the Project will be landscaped in compliance with the applicable landscaping plans from the Specific Plan.



*H. To promote an attractive pedestrian environment which will encourage pedestrian activity and reduce traffic congestion.*

The requested exceptions will result in a Project that produces no significant impacts within the vicinity of the Site as demonstrated in its environmental clearance ENV-2022-8821-MND.

*I. To promote a high level of pedestrian activity in the Pedestrian Oriented Areas by regulating the placement of buildings and structures to accommodate outdoor dining and other ground level retail activity, as well as provide for attractive landscaping.*

Although the Project Site is not located in a designated "Pedestrian Oriented Area" the exceptions will allow for a site plan that will promote a high level of pedestrian activity by allowing for the placement of the attractively designed building along the streetscape.

*J. To provide community development limitations based on the community infrastructure's transportation capacity.*

The requested exceptions will result in a Project that produces no significant impacts at surrounding intersections. The Project will be located along the major thoroughfare of Ventura Boulevard accessible by several Metro lines. The requested exceptions maintain the equilibrium between transportation infrastructure and land use development along the Corridor.

### **PROJECT PERMIT COMPLIANCE FINDINGS**

The Ventura / Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan designates the subject property for Neighborhood and general Commercial land uses which are a "focal point for surrounding residential neighborhoods and containing a diversity of land uses, such as small offices and overnight accommodations, cultural facilities, schools and libraries, in addition to neighborhood-oriented services."

The proposed project, a mixed-use development, substantially complies with the site's zoning and the Community Plan land use designation. As enumerated below, the proposed project has been conditioned to comply with all applicable regulations, findings, standards, and provisions of the Ventura/Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan. The three (3) Specific Plan Exceptions and Conditional Use Permit are warranted based on the findings separately enumerated and the conditions applied.

#### **12. The project substantially complies with the applicable regulations, findings, standards, and provisions of the specific plan.**

The proposed project complies with all applicable development requirements of the Ventura-Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan, as follows:

- a. Section 5.C: Uses.** The proposed uses of self-storage for home goods and commercial/retail are not restricted in this area of the Specific Plan, and thus are allowed.
- b. Section 6B: Floor Area Ratio (FAR).** A total of 53,529 square feet of floor area is permitted. The Project requests a Specific Plan Exception to allow 158,317 square feet of floor area in lieu of 53,529 square feet permitted for a 2.96:1 FAR in lieu of a 1.0:1 FAR permitted.

Because the project meets the intent of the Specific Plan and General Plan, as detailed in Specific Plan Exception and Conditional Use Findings, the required relief have been recommended for approval.

- c. **Section 7A: Yards.** For lots wider than 200 feet in the Neighborhood and General Commercial designation, the front yard setback requirement is an 18-inch minimum and 20-foot maximum for a minimum of 50 percent of the length of the front lot line. The Building will provide a minimum landscaped front yard setback of 15 feet 10 inches.

A side yard setback of 10 feet may be permitted, with allowances for auto and pedestrian movements. The building will provide a 10-foot westerly side yard setback, to accommodate the construction of a concrete gutter. The easterly side yard setback will be 74 feet 11 inches to accommodate the access/driveway, vehicular parking lot, and bicycle parking spaces.

Because the project does not meet any of the rear yard criteria, it is required to comply with the LAMC Section 12.14 C.2 setback requirements for the proposed C2 zone. The rear yard is not required for buildings erected and used exclusively for commercial purposes. The Building will provide a 10-foot rear yard, measured to the property line.

As such, the project complies with the setback requirements.

- d. **Section 7B: Lot Coverage.** The Specific Plan limits lot coverage to 60 percent. The Building has a 59.7 percent lot coverage which compiles with the Specific Plan. As such, the project complies with the lot coverage requirements.
- e. **Section 7D: Landscaping.** The project includes 12,750 square feet of surface parking area, of which 3,000 square feet is landscaped. The project provides approximately 23.5 percent landscaped area in the surface parking area; therefore, meets the 15 percent minimum for landscaping. The landscaped area also includes the proposed 15 feet 10 inches landscaped buffer along Ventura Boulevard, easterly side yard setback, and rear yard setback. The Project will provide eight (8) 30-inch box-size trees for the surface parking lot that totals 22 car parking spaces, 16 short-term bicycle parking spaces, and 24 long-term bicycle parking space, in conformance with the landscaping requirements for surface parking lots, which has a one (1) tree for every four (4) parking space ratio. The project is conditioned to provide a minimum buffer zone of 30 inches for portions of parking lots not facing a street, alley, residentially zoned lot, and existing residential use. The project's front yard setback includes 7,583 square feet, of which 5,035 square feet is landscaped. The project provides approximately 66 percent landscaped front yard setback; therefore, meets the 60 percent minimum landscaped front yard landscape requirement. The applicant is conditioned to install an automatic irrigation system to maintain all required landscaping. As such, the project complies with the landscaping requirements.
- f. **Section 7E: Height.** The Specific Plan allows a maximum height of 30 feet. The Project requests a Specific Plan Exception to allow a height of 37 feet, 7½ inches in lieu of 30 feet. In addition, in the Neighborhood and General Commercial Plan Designation Areas, buildings abutting a major or secondary highway may only exceed 30 feet in height, if, for each 15-foot increment, or portion of that increment, above 25 feet, at least a ten-foot setback from the roof perimeter is provided. The project does not propose a 10-foot stepback above 25 feet; therefore, an Exception is required and has been applied for. Because the project meets the intent of the Specific Plan and General Plan, as detailed in Specific Plan Exception Findings, the Exceptions have been recommended for approval.

- g. Section 7F: Parking.** Pursuant to LAMC Section 12.21 A.4.(c)(1), where a building or portion thereof is designed, arranged or used as a warehouse including storage buildings for household goods and has a gross floor area in excess of 10,000 square feet, in addition to the one automobile parking space for each 500 square feet of floor area for the first 10,000 square feet, only one parking space need be provided for each 5,000 square feet of floor area in excess of the first 10,000 square feet contained in such warehouse. The 156,917 square foot self-storage for home goods use would require 47 parking spaces.

Parking for commercial/retail uses are set forth in the specific plan which requires one (1) parking space for each 250 square feet of commercial/retail floor area. The 1,400 square feet of commercial/retail use would require six (6) parking spaces.

In lieu of ten (10) of the required automobile parking spots, the applicant is providing 40 bicycle parking spots (16 of which will be short-term, and 24 of which will be long-term bicycle parking spots) pursuant to LAMC Ordinance 182,386 (Bike Parking Ordinance). The Project would require to provide 15 short-term and 15 long-term bicycle spaces at a ratio of one (1) space per 10,000 square feet for short-term bicycle parking space for all proposed uses. The Project would require providing one (1) short and one (1) term bicycle parking space per 2,000 square feet of general retail uses or a minimum of two (2) short and two (2) long-term bicycle parking spaces.

The Project utilizes the specific plan's Shared Parking Agreement as part of a Project Permit Compliance determination that the application meets all of the requirements of LAMC Section 12.24 X 20 (a), which permits two or more uses to share their parking spaces and provide a lower total number of parking spaces than would otherwise be required. The provided parking analysis prepared by CR Associates, dated May 3, 2023, showed that a reduced total parking requirement can be granted to the greatest parking requirement of the shared uses. To ensure that the Project would have enough parking spaces for its intended purposes, an analysis of parking generation was carried out using the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineers Parking Generation Manual. The results indicate that the Project's peak parking demand would be 20 spaces, while the Project would provide 22 parking spaces, demonstrating that it has enough parking for the proposed uses.

Therefore, the Project satisfies Code and specific plan parking requirements.

- h. Section 8: Signs.** Pursuant to Section 5.A.2 of the Ventura/Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan, the proposed sign project must comply with the applicable development requirements of Section 8 of the Plan, as it relates to the sign regulations.

*Wall Signs:* Per section 8.B.1.a of the Ventura/Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan, a maximum of one (1) wall sign per tenant on a building's street frontage and a second sign facing a parking lot, secondary street, or alley is permitted. The total sign area permitted is two square feet per one lineal foot of lot frontage. The site has a frontage of 300 feet; therefore, a maximum signage area of 600 square feet would be permitted for the site. However, the project has been approved for a total of 161 square feet of Wall Sign area facing Ventura Boulevard and 141 square feet facing parking lot. The proposed four (4) Wall Sign, further enforced through Condition of Approval Numbered 7, will not exceed the maximum signage area, and thus complies with the Specific Plan regulations.

*Monument Signs:* Per Section 8.B.1.b of the Ventura/Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan, monument signs are permitted at a rate no more than one sign per 200 feet of linear lot frontage, no taller than six feet in height or greater than 60 square feet in area. The proposed monument sign is approximately 49 square feet on a lot of 300 linear frontage and 340 square feet of landscaped area, further enforced through Conditions of Approval Numbered 7 to 9, therefore complies with the Specific Plan regulations.

*Window Signs:* The Ventura/Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan permits window signs if they are for the store name, store hours, and security signs. These permitted signs may not occupy more than ten percent of any window in area. As conditioned herein, the proposed two (2) window signs will not exceed more than 10 percent of the window they occupy. Therefore, the proposed signs, further enforced through Conditions of Approval Numbered 7 to 8, complies with the Specific Plan regulations.

- 13. The project incorporates mitigation measures, monitoring measures when necessary, or alternatives identified in the environmental review, which would mitigate the negative environmental effects of the project, to the extent physically feasible.**

Based on the whole of the administrative record, the Project has been adequately assessed in ENV-2022-8821-MND and mitigation measures have incorporated as conditions of approval herein; therefore, negative environmental effects have been mitigated to the extent feasible.

#### **SITE PLAN REVIEW FINDINGS**

- 14. The project is in substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan, applicable community plan, and with any applicable specific plan.**

See Findings 1 and 11 above.

- 15. That the project consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk and setbacks), off-street parking facilities, loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collection, and other such pertinent improvements, that is or will be compatible with existing and future development on adjacent properties and neighboring properties.**

The Project will be consistent with the existing development within close proximity of the project site and will be buffered from nearby single-family residential uses by US-101 to the north, and public street to the south. In addition, the Project will provide front, side, and rear yard setbacks in compliance with the Specific Plan's minimum requirements, which will further reduce the bulk and massing of the Project in relation to adjacent lower-density and lower-height development. Furthermore, the Project's Building height will be largely consistent with other multi-story residential and commercial developments along Ventura Boulevard, including the multi-story building to the east and west and across Ventura to the south, and will provide setbacks in conformance with the Specific Plan's requirements.

Vehicular access to the Site's parking areas would be provided via a single driveway on Ventura Boulevard. Pedestrian access within and around the Site will be enhanced via sidewalk improvements and the development of short-term bike parking infrastructure. A well-landscaped entry plaza with benches and public pedestrian access is provided along the Ventura Boulevard frontage, activating the pedestrian experience along the street and

also providing an “outdoor” lobby to greet guests.

### Height

The site is located within proposed Height District No. 2, which offers unlimited height and a maximum FAR of 6:1. However, the Specific Plan limits the height to 30 feet. The applicant seeks a Specific Plan Exception deviating from the specific plan regulations to construct a mixed-use building on a site with a maximum building height of 37 feet, 7½ inches in lieu of the otherwise permitted 45 feet pursuant to LAMC and 30 feet pursuant to the specific plan Section 7.E.1.e.2. As mentioned above, the neighboring property are developed with a multi-story office development. The abutting property to the west is a four-story building. The abutting property to the south is a development with multi-story residential development. Although the project is not within the allowable maximum height, it is compatible with existing and future developments on abutting, adjacent properties and neighboring properties.

### Bulk/Massing

The project site is zoned C2-1LD, C4-1LD, and P-1LD and the Specific Plan further restricts maximum FAR to 1.0:1. To permit the project's proposed uses, the applicant has requested, and has been recommended for approval for a Vesting Zone Change and Height District Change from C2-1LD, C4-1LD, and P-1LD to (T)C2-2. The applicant seeks Specific Plan Exceptions deviating from the specific plan regulations to construct a mixed-use building with 158,371 square feet of floor area in lieu of 53,529 square feet on a site with a maximum FAR of 2.96:1 in lieu of the otherwise permitted 1.0:1 pursuant to Specific Plan Section 6.B.3. The project has been designed with articulation and variation consistent with applicable City design guidance. Parking spaces within the project site's parking lot have been integrated into the overall architectural theme of the Project. Modulations and break-in-planes are some of the architectural elements that seek to achieve this comprehensive vision of modern buildings. The massing of the building features varied architectural treatments and materials that accentuate the building form. The design integrates ash, old town, and old zinc grey metal panels, vintage wood cedar fiber cement panels, and lead grey prefinished metal shingle sidings, and windows and doors, which are incorporated throughout the buildings' exteriors effectively breaking up the massing of the street walls. Parts of facades are treated with materials to differentiate them from the rest of the building and break up the massing and enhance the overall aesthetic, both from a pedestrian standpoint and the overall building design. The landscaped area along front, rear, and side frontages of the building serves to reduce the looming effect of the buildings on the street while providing a pleasant pedestrian experience. The variety of building materials and articulation as shown on the stamped “Exhibit A” is consistent with the Citywide Design Guidelines. A variety of building materials, finishes, and design features in the facade, as well as landscape and hardscape materials, will result in a design that is complementary to the neighborhood.

### Setbacks

The proposed Building will provide a landscaped front yard setback of 15 feet 10 inches. The required side yard setback is a maximum of 10 feet, with allowances for auto and pedestrian movements. The building will provide a 10-foot westerly side yard setback, to accommodate the construction of a concrete gutter. The easterly side yard setback will be 74 feet 11 inches to accommodate the access/driveway, vehicular parking lot, and bicycle parking spaces. Because the project does not meet any of the rear yard criteria, it is required to comply with the LAMC Section 12.14 C.2 setbacks requirements for the proposed C2 zone. The rear yard is not required for buildings erected and used exclusively for commercial purposes. The building will provide a 10-foot rear yard, measured to the property line.

### Parking/Loading

Vehicular access to the Site's parking areas would be provided via one (1) driveway on Ventura Boulevard away from the main pedestrian entrance to the buildings. This driveway provides access to the surface parking lot. Pedestrian access within the Site will be enhanced via sidewalk improvements and the development of short and long-term bike parking infrastructure. Public pedestrian accesses to the building would be provided from entrances on Ventura Boulevard.

Pursuant to LAMC Section 12.21 A.4.(c)(1), where a building or portion thereof is designed, arranged or used as a warehouse including storage buildings for household goods and has a gross floor area in excess of 10,000 square feet, in addition to the one automobile parking space for each 500 square feet of floor area for the first 10,000 square feet, only one parking space need be provided for each 5,000 square feet of floor area in excess of the first 10,000 square feet contained in such warehouse. The 157,932 square foot self-storage for home goods use would require 47 parking spaces. Parking for commercial/retail uses are set forth in the specific plan which requires one (1) parking space for each 250 square feet of retail floor area. The 1,400 square feet of retail use would require six (6) parking spaces. In lieu of ten (10) of the required automobile parking spots, the applicant is providing 40 bicycle parking spots (16 of which will be short-term, and 24 of which will be long-term bicycle parking spots) pursuant to LAMC Ordinance 182,386 (Bike Parking Ordinance). The Project would require and provide 15 short-term and 15 long-term bicycle spaces at a ratio of one (1) space per 10,000 square feet for short-term bicycle parking space for all proposed uses. The Project would require providing one (1) short and one (1) term bicycle parking space per 2,000 square feet of general retail uses or a minimum of two (2) short and two (2) long-term bicycle parking spaces. However, the Project utilizes the specific plan's Shared Parking Agreement as part of a Project Permit Compliance determination that the application meets all of the requirements of LAMC Section 12.24 X 20 (a). Compliance determination that the application meets all of the requirements of LAMC Section 12.24 X 20 (a), which permits two or more uses to share their parking spaces and provide a lower total number of parking spaces than would otherwise be required. The provided parking analysis prepared by CR Associates, dated May 3, 2023, showed that a reduced total parking requirement can be granted to the greatest parking requirement of the shared uses. To ensure that the Project would have enough parking spaces for its intended purposes, an analysis of parking generation was carried out using the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineers Parking Generation Manual. The results indicate that the Project's peak parking demand would be 20 spaces, while the Project would provide 22 parking spaces, demonstrating that it has enough parking for the proposed uses.

### Lighting

The project is conditioned so that all pedestrian walkways and vehicle access points will be well-lit with lighting fixtures that are harmonious with the building design. As conditioned, all outdoor lighting provided on-site will be shielded to prevent excessive illumination and spillage onto adjacent public rights-of-way, adjacent properties, and the night sky.

### Landscaping

The project will provide landscaping on the ground and adjacent to the public right of way. The project proposes a mix of plants and trees which includes Glendora White, African Sumac, and California Sycamore trees. The project also provides a variety of shrubs, midgrounds and backgrounds. The project site will be enhanced with hardscape material including, concrete paving. The area will be landscaped with 13 (36)-inch box trees on the

site, and one (1) tree in the public right-of-way along Ventura Boulevard. The project is conditioned to landscape all open areas not used for buildings, driveways, parking areas, recreational facilities or pedestrian pathways shall be attractively landscaped, including an automatic irrigation system, and maintained in accordance with a landscape plan prepared by a licensed landscape architect or architect and submitted for approval to the Department of City Planning, Development Services Center. Additionally, the landscape plan must indicate landscape points for the project equivalent to 10 percent more than otherwise required by LAMC 12.40 and Landscape Ordinance Guidelines.

#### Trash Collection

Trash storage and collections are proposed to be enclosed in the parking lot site and not visible from the drive aisle or public view. Trash collection shall not interfere with traffic to avoid effects to circulation, as conditioned.

#### Building Materials

The mixed-use building facades consist of ash, old town, and old zinc grey metal panels, vintage wood cedar fiber cement panels, and lead grey prefinished metal shingle sidings. The building is designed in clean and consistent lines. The façade treatment wraps around the building to all sides. The variety of building materials and articulation as shown on the stamped "Exhibit A" is consistent with the Citywide Design Guidelines.

#### Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

The project is conditioned to provide electric vehicle charging spaces (EV Spaces) and electric vehicle charging stations (EVCS) per the regulations outlined in Sections 99.04.106 and 99.05.106 of Article 9, Chapter IX of the LAMC, to the satisfaction of the Department of Building and Safety.

#### Mechanical Room

The mechanical rooms are isolated and enclosed on the second floor. This hidden design serves to eliminate the bulky, noise-generating cabling and transformers and protects the equipment from unauthorized entry.

**16. That any residential project provides recreational and service amenities to improve habitability for its residents and minimize impacts on neighboring properties.**

The project is not a residential project and is thus not required to provide any recreational or service amenities for residents. The project includes a mixed-use development containing 156,917 square feet of self-storage facility with two subterranean levels and 1,015 square feet of associated office, and 1,400 square feet of commercial/retail space.