

Planning, Land Use and Mobility Committee



CASE REPORT(R-1.1) *(No Planning Case Number Assigned Yet)* **Toll Brothers Apartment Living** **6464 Canoga Ave.** **Woodland Hills, 91367**

The Applicant proposes to build a new mixed use 8 story building at the corner of Canoga Ave. and Victory Blvd. in the Downtown District of Warner Center with 276 residential units and 4,045 sf of retail space. There are 3 levels of concrete podium parking with five stories of wood frame construction above. The new structure will replace one of the pioneer Warner Center commercial office buildings—the brick office building that housed the former headquarters for Filmation, which produced early animated TV shows that included *Space Academy*, *Jason*, *Son of Star Command*, *Ark II*, *Shazam!*, *The Ghost Busters* and *The Secrets of Isis*. The building was closed after the 1994 earthquake, and since then has been shuttered because the necessary retrofitting was too extensive and too costly.

PLUM Presentations:

August 17, 2023 Courtesy Presentation
October 19, 2023 Live: in-person (No Zoom broadcast)
November 2, 2023 Live: in-person (No Zoom broadcast)

Applicant: Toll Brothers
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LA City Planning Assoc.: *Not Assigned in Planning at this time*

PLUM Case Leader: Martin Lipkin, martinlipkin@yahoo.com; tel: (818) 999-4340

Project Description:

The building currently occupying the site at the corner of Victory Blvd. and Canoga Ave. is the old, red-brick Filmtation headquarters that was shuttered after the 1994 Northridge earthquake and because of the lack of potential commercial tenants interested in moving into Warner Center and the high costs of necessary repairs and retrofitting, was never made safe or suitable for reuse.



The red brick Filmtation building currently occupying the Warner Center Downtown site will be raised and replaced by the proposed 6464 Canoga mixed-use project.

The proposed building would be an 8-story (approx. 100 ft. height) project with 5 stories of residential set on top of a 3-story concrete podium base that will contain the majority of required parking spaces and commercial space. Approximately 25% of the project will be non-residential.

The plans also have a central, open-air courtyard opening to Canoga. The proposal is being built under the State's AB 2097 law which has no minimum parking requirement, and plans call for 276 studio, 1 and 2 bedroom apartments—of which 10% (based on residential square footage, is estimated to be 21 units) must be offered at Very Low Income (VLI) rental rates which are set by the State. At both the Courtesy presentation and initial formal presentation, it was stated that about 20 units (a mix of all size units including 2-bedroom and larger 1-bedroom units) would be offered at the VLI rates, and the other units beyond the VLI designated units would be offered at Market Rate rental rates.

There will be 4,045 SF of commercial space incorporated at the northwest corner of the building which could conceivably house a small restaurant/coffee shop, café or services provider.

Auto access to the project will be via two street ramps—one on Victory, the other on Canoga—and will lead directly to the 3 floors of parking containing a total of 429 spaces. Only 9 spaces have been allowed for the commercial space. No number of EV charging stations has been supplied at this time, but the applicant has stated that a minimum of 30% of the parking spaces will have EV chargers, with more to be added later, and spaces shared by those who need recharging.

As far as Publically Accessible Open Space (PAOS), 11,679 SF (15% of site area) is required. And the project proposes 11,940 SF—mostly along Victory Blvd., and a meandering walkway “parklet” along Canoga. A small, enclosed pet relief area with artificial turf is currently planned along the Victory parkway, although concerns have been raised about this space being sited too close to a busy street and rules against it being enclosed.

All mature trees currently on the site have to be removed. The Specific Plan calls for 42 trees to be planted, but the developer is doubling that amount to 84 large tree species as required in the 2035 WC Specific Plan.

The 6464 Canoga project will be one of the first in Warner Center make use of the State authored density bonus incentives to exceed certain zoning limitations placed on the property. In exchange, 10 percent of the property's base density would be set aside for rent by very low-income households (VLI). The developer is requesting two (2) entitlements for the project: a Project Permit Compliance Review, and a Density Bonus with two Off-Menu Incentives.

Project Site:

Located on one of the key intersections in Warner Center, the project site was initially built to feature a 4-story brick and glass building surrounded by surface parking. The site is adjacent to a large, 12-story office tower to the east, and BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse to the south. The site is located diagonally across from the old Rocketdyne plant site which has had on-going issues with toxic chemical residuals in the soil, and has actually leaked toxic chemical substances into several parcels across Vanowen to the north. No information on soil testing has been provided for this site.

Because two large single story shopping centers are located across from the site--both to the north and to the west--the proposed project will not impact those locations with any shadow problems.

The property is served by Metro busses on both Canoga and Victory, and the Canoga Orange Line bus center is located one block north of the building site.



Site plan shows planted open space areas along Victory Blvd. (currently including a pet relief area), and a “meandering parklet” on the Canoga Ave. side with raised planting beds, benches, children’s hop-scotch area and public art. Amenities for residents will be located throughout the complex with three large amenity areas on the ground level, a pool and spa area on the 3rd floor podium, and a planted 8th floor roof deck with BBQ, fire pit and seating.

Architectural Design and Materials:

While the site is somewhat limited in size, the applicant has attempted to make an architectural statement that elevates the residential design beyond the uninspired cube or block designs that so many other Warner Center proposed residential buildings keep offering.

The architectural highlight of the project is a dramatic, angled “sheared” wing at the Victory and Canoga corner, opening up the project’s third story elevated atrium and will be clad in striking blue aluminum composite panels that significantly elevate it from the mundane architecture and materials usually presented for Warner Center projects. Echoing the “thrust” of the Victory/Canoga

corner are two building edges that are also slightly angled outward at the northeast corner (Victory) and at the southwest corner (Canoga).



Perspective of north façade along Victory Blvd. showing the “sheared” wing at the corner and the “saw-tooth ridges” in the center of the structure. The ridges along the dark brown section break up the roofline and add a needed boost to breaking up the blockiness of the structure.



The south façade (to the right) will also have three “sections” to visually break up the bulk of the structure, as well as a white saw-tooth roofline over the middle section of the building to eliminate the visual monotony of a straight roofline, and an angled edge that relates to the “sheared” wing frontage (in blue) at the corner of Victory and Canoga.

On both the north and south façades, the architect has tried to break up the straight roofline by incorporating a series of saw-tooth “ridges.” The north façade is proposed to be erected with three major color sections: A grey, ribbed metal panel section at the east end, a white/brown stucco section in the middle, and a white section at the western end. Approximately 75% of this facade will be covered in windows and transparent doors. The blue atrium/courtyard provides a colorful burst of visual excitement.

On the west façade facing Canoga, in addition to the blue aluminum composite panels on the northern-most section, there will also be a white stucco middle section, and a southern section covered in ribbed metal panels and slightly angled to mimic the “sheared” wing center point. Balconies will be on all four facades of the structure, although there will be much fewer along the east façade facing the high-rise next door.



Third floor elevated atrium showing the blue-clad aluminum panels in the architectural “V” that provides a dramatic color contrast to most of the other structures in Warner Center.

Project Landscaping Plan:

All existing trees on the property site will need to be removed and new specimens planted. The City of LA requires one tree planted for every 4 living units requiring a total of 69 trees for the project. The developer’s plans call for a total of 84 trees to be planted—most in large boxes.

The initial landscape plan shows that the bulk of the live landscaping will be mainly along Victory Blvd. and Canoga Ave. The landscape plan proposes 14 Tipu Trees (per the Specific Plan) planted in two alternating rows along Victory Blvd. That side of the project will also have 7 Saratoga laurel trees as well as 3 Marina Strawberry multi-trunked trees.

Along Canoga, the applicant proposes to create a slightly zig-zagging pathway anchored by a large planted area on the corner. Two large California Live Oak trees (60” pots) will frame the entryway

And 7 Shamel Ash trees (per the Specific Plan) will provide shade, along with several fruitless olive and Desert Willow trees. Also a “node” in the corner could have a possible water feature.

The east and south facades of the project will be planted with Sweet Bay Laurel and Dracena Dragon Trees. All of the existing trees at the site will have to be replaced due to the new footprint of the proposed building. None of the existing trees are protected species.

While at the initial formal PLUM presentation the developer stated that they plan to incorporate a dog/pet relief area with synthetic turf, clean up/bag deposit sites and some kind of fencing around the relief area, there was concern about the Victory Blvd. location since it was pointed out that it put pets in a possibly hazardous situation next to a very busy roadway with fast moving traffic if they should accidentally get loose. Additionally, that concept may be prohibited by City code.

The WHWCNC PLUM Committee has drafted a recommendation to the developer requesting that they re-think the dog relief area and move it to a safer area. One possible site seems to be at the eastern end of the south facing façade where the required Fire Department turn-around has a large space that could be covered in “grass-crete” that would allow for pet waste usage while still serving as a turn-around for LAFD vehicles.



This rendering shows the proposed landscaping for the site with the preponderance of the trees and planter beds located along both Victory and Canoga. Again, the proposed pet area would be sited near the eastern end of the Victory parkway, while the Canoga side of the building would feature the meandering path and parklet that had child-oriented play areas and benches.

Summation of PLUM and audience questions/comments on the proposed 6464 Canoga mixed-use project from October 19, 2023:

At the October 19 PLUM presentation—as well as the August Courtesy presentation—the PLUM Committee and the attending stakeholders seemed to have favorable comments about the project and the landscaping.

The area of biggest concern seemed to focus on the proposal to put the dog/pet relief area in a fenced-in area just off Victory Blvd. Concerns about the potential for pets accidentally escaping—especially during periods of heavy and fast-moving traffic. It was described as, “an accident waiting to happen.” Based on the comments, individuals are suggesting that the developer reconsider the location of the pet park. And, the PLUM Committee resolved to write a special motion concerning this and present it for a vote before the full WHWCNC Board.

A second area of concern was the mix of VLI (Very Low Income) housing and whether the mix would include two-bedroom and larger one-bedroom apartments as well as the Studio and small one-bedroom units. The Applicant stated that the VLI allocations would include all sizes of the proposed units, and that the number of VLI units was determined by the total square footage of all units in the project. Based on that, there will be at least 21 VLI units of various sizes. No sub-lets or Air B&Bs will be allowed.

Another concern was the question of EV charging stations for the proposed 429 residential spaces and 9 commercial / staff spaces. The developer stated that a final number of EV charging stations hasn’t been determined as yet, but that a minimum of 30% of all parking spaces will have EV charging with plans to increase that number as the project fills up. Also, it was stated that many of the spaces will be rotated among residents or will be set aside for short-term usage so that there will always be EV charging available. They also need to determine how they will charge for EV usage.

Signage was also discussed, and the developer shared a number of possible signage styles and locations. However, they stated these were only preliminary sketches and signage would be determined by the 2035 Specific Plan rules as well as by Planning and possibly the CD-3.

The commercial space (4,405 SF) has not been finalized as the developer is in discussions with several potential tenants and may need to customize the space. As far as the amenity areas, the developer is looking at creating something “different”—like an arts and crafts room.

PLUM Motion and Conditions/Recommendations:

Based on State ruling attached to the AB 2097 law that under which the project is being constructed under, no conditions can be attached to any motion the Woodland Hills-Warner Center Neighborhood Council PLUM Committee makes or the WHWCNC Board adopts. However, the Neighborhood Council can make recommendations which the LA Planning Department can discuss with the Applicant.

MOTION:

As pertaining to the proposed Toll Brothers apartments/mixed-use building (*No Planning Case Number assigned*) at 6464 Canoga Avenue, Woodland Hills, CA 91367, after having held three (3) live public meetings for the application filed by Toll Brothers, for mixed-use structure project in the Downtown District of the Warner Center Plan under AB 2097, the Woodland Hills-Warner Center Neighborhood Council Board hereby finds that:

WHEREAS, the proposed project is in basic compliance with the 2035 Warner Center Specific Plan; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project adheres to all of the requirements of the Downtown District of the 2035 Warner Center Specific Plan without requesting variances or exemptions except those granted under State laws; and

WHEREAS, the building will provide 276 residential units, with at least 21 units offered at Very Low Income (VLI) rental rates set by the State, as well as 4,045 SF of commercial space as required in a mixed-use structure in the WC Downtown District; and

WHEREAS, the 11,940 SF of *usable* Publicly Available Open Space (PAOS) exceeds the Specific Plan requirements; and

WHEREAS, at least 30% of the 438 vehicle parking spaces will provide EV charging with additional EV stations added in the future; and

WHEREAS, all 42 existing trees on the site will be removed and replaced with a total of 84 newly-planted *shade producing trees* in the PAOS, parklette and other areas; and

WHEREAS, the developer has modified the architecture to reflect agreements with the WHWCNC PLUM Committee; and

WHEREAS, all building materials and equipment will be stored on-site; and

WHEREAS, the issues of the dog relief area location and size are a significant question, a request/recommendation with possible solution(s) has been drafted in a letter from the Woodland Hills-Warner Center Neighborhood Council which the community hopes will be adopted and implemented by Toll Brothers for this project;

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that for the findings and recommendations stated herein, that application and plans submitted by Toll Brothers for its application for a mixed-use, VLI residential building at 6464 Canoga Avenue in Warner Center receive the support of the Board of the Woodland Hills-Warner Center Neighborhood Council (WHWCNC).

The Planning, Land Use and Mobility Committee also recommends that the Board of the Woodland Hills –Warner Center Neighborhood Council advise the City of Los Angeles Planning Department and Council District 3 Councilmember Bob Blumenfield of its findings and recommendations to

SUPPORT this motion presented on November 8, 2023.

Motion: Marty Lipkin
Second: Sean McCarthy

VOTE:	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
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