



Planning, Land Use and Mobility Committee Case Report

PLUM Meetings: March 3, 2022, March 17, 2022, April 7, 2022

Case Nos: ZA-2021-8374
ENV- 2021-8375

Site Location: 5700 N. Rudnick Ave., Woodland Hills, 91367

Project: The applicant is seeking a new Conditional Use Permit for a church that includes construction of a 6,646 sf, 1-story new building for the expansion of existing Food Pantry kitchen/food storage, offices, multi-purpose rooms, & vehicular food distribution.

Owner: The Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Los Angeles
5700 Rudnick Ave.
Woodland Hills, CA 91367
Phone: 818-346-6968
E-Mail: office@popwh.org

Applicant Prince of Peace West Valley Food Pantry
5700 Rudnick Ave.
Woodland Hills, CA 91367
Phone: 818-346-5554
E-Mail: seniormanager@westvalleyfoodpantry.org

Applicant's Representative: Stacey Brenner
Brenner Consulting Group
4774 Park Granada – Unit 9379
Calabasas, CA 91372
Phone: 818-970-5710
E-Mail: Stacey@brennerconsultinggroup.com

City Planner: More Song
Phone: 213-978-2319
E-Mail: more.song@lacity.org

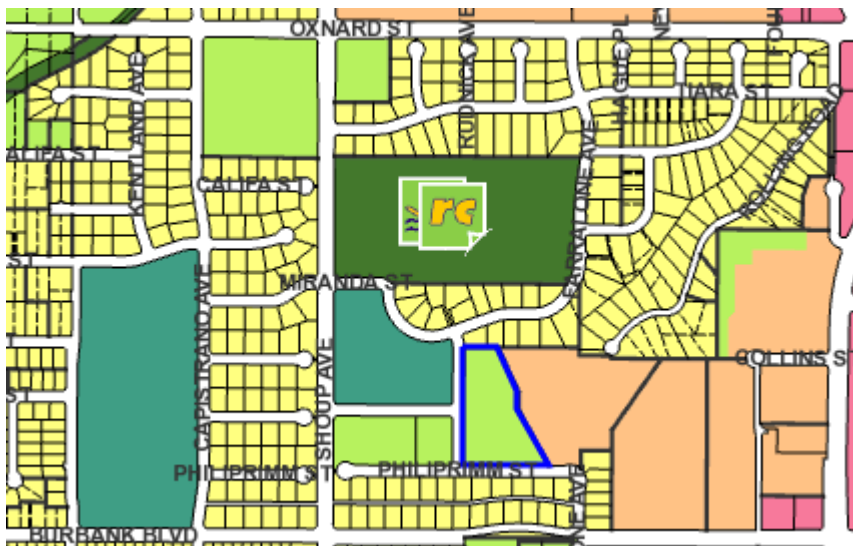
Submitted By: Henry Rice, WHWCNC PLUM Case Leader

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Food Pantry Site and Operation

The proposed project is co-located on an A1-1 low residential zoned 185,027.1 sqft lot with Prince of Peace church and associated buildings on Rudnick Ave. in Woodland Hills. The project is bounded by Rudnick Avenue to the west, Miranda Street to the north, Philiprimm Street to the south and single-family residential homes to the east.

The proposed project is surrounded to the southwest by Woodland Hills Private School, a now vacant parcel due to demolition of a school to the west and single family residences to the north and east.



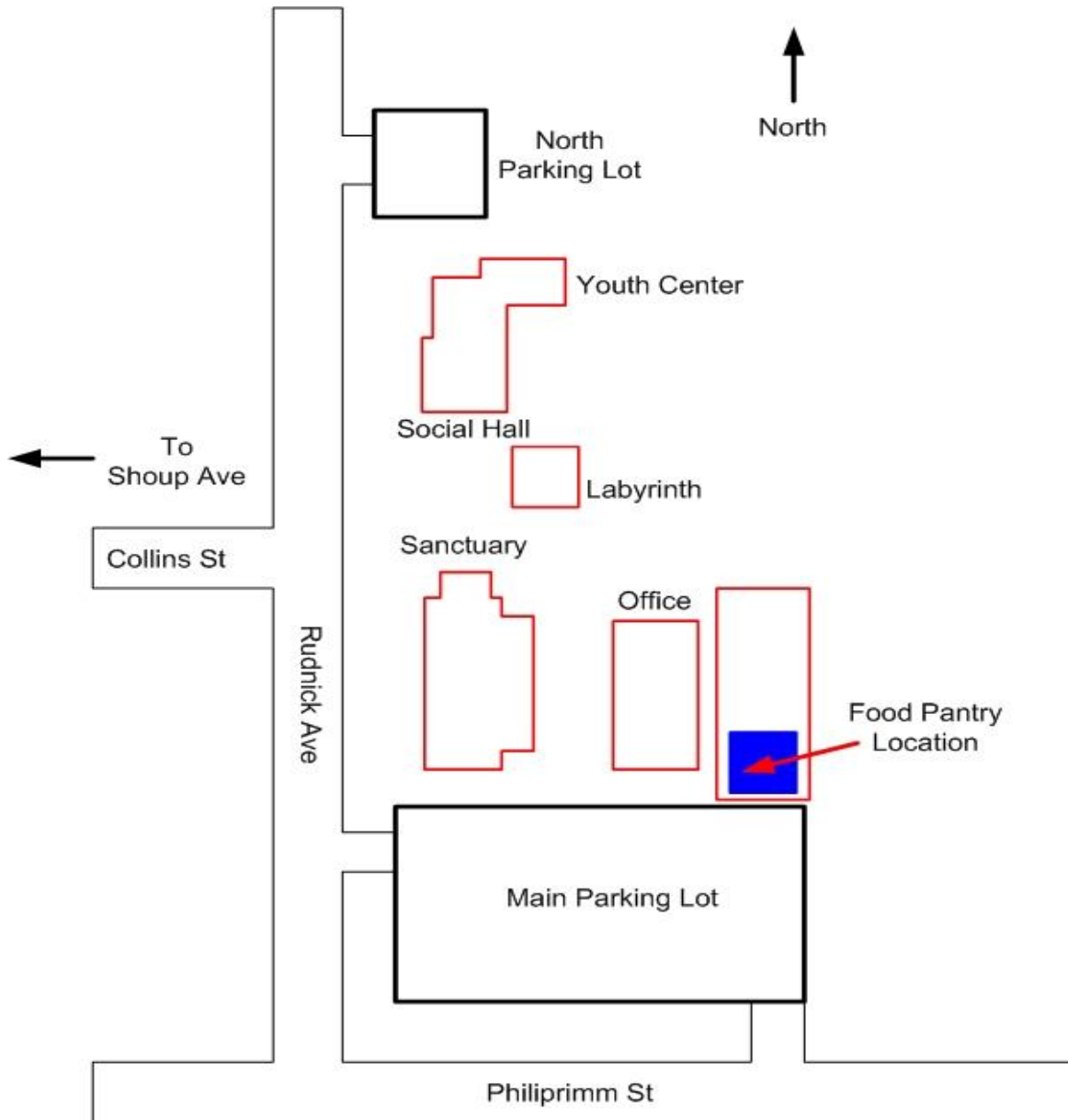
Site Location of 5700 Rudnick Avenue

The West Valley Food Pantry began in 1975 as a small closet located in the kitchen of Prince of Peace Episcopal Church (POP). The Rector at the time began the program by asking the POP parishioners to supply the pantry with canned goods. The small pantry and small staff provided food to three to five families a week over the course of several years. According to the Applicant, the current and permitted use is the operation of the Prince of Peace Church and the West Valley Food Pantry, which operates under the 501(c) of the Church, and is a coalition of six other contributing church organizations.

Today the food pantry facility has approximately seven employees and approximately 33 volunteers each day, 5 days per week. They purchase or take delivery of food shipments, stock shelves, validate client eligibility, maintain distribution records, shop for specials, buy and pick up food as well as assist in the daily distribution. There are more than 200 active volunteers. Most on-site volunteer shifts are three hours.

The Food Pantry is open to the public for food distribution from 9:30 am. to 2:00 pm. Monday thru Thursday and closes at noon on Fridays. It remains open for an additional 30

minutes through the week to ensure all those in line are served and the volunteers can prepare to close the daily activities.
For food distribution the approximate service area boundaries are the 118 Freeway to the north, Mulholland Drive to the south, the Ventura County Line on the west and Reseda Boulevard on the east.



Prince of Peace Campus Including Existing West Valley Food Pantry

The existing Food Pantry activities are conducted using a church building for food storage and kitchen facilities, and three accessory structures on the church main parking lot. In

addition, queuing of autos waiting to be checked in and receive food distribution takes place on Rudnick Avenue and in the church main parking lot.

Proposed Project

The applicant is proposing 2 phased construction of a new 6,646 sqft. 1 story building to consolidate and relocate the existing West Valley Food Pantry kitchen and food storage facilities for improved efficiency of the operations while maintaining the same level of service. Expansion of the existing north parking lot is planned to accommodate relocation of auto queuing and food distribution activities.



**PROPOSED WEST VALLEY FOOD PANTRY COMMUNITY CENTER
5700 Rudnick Avenue**

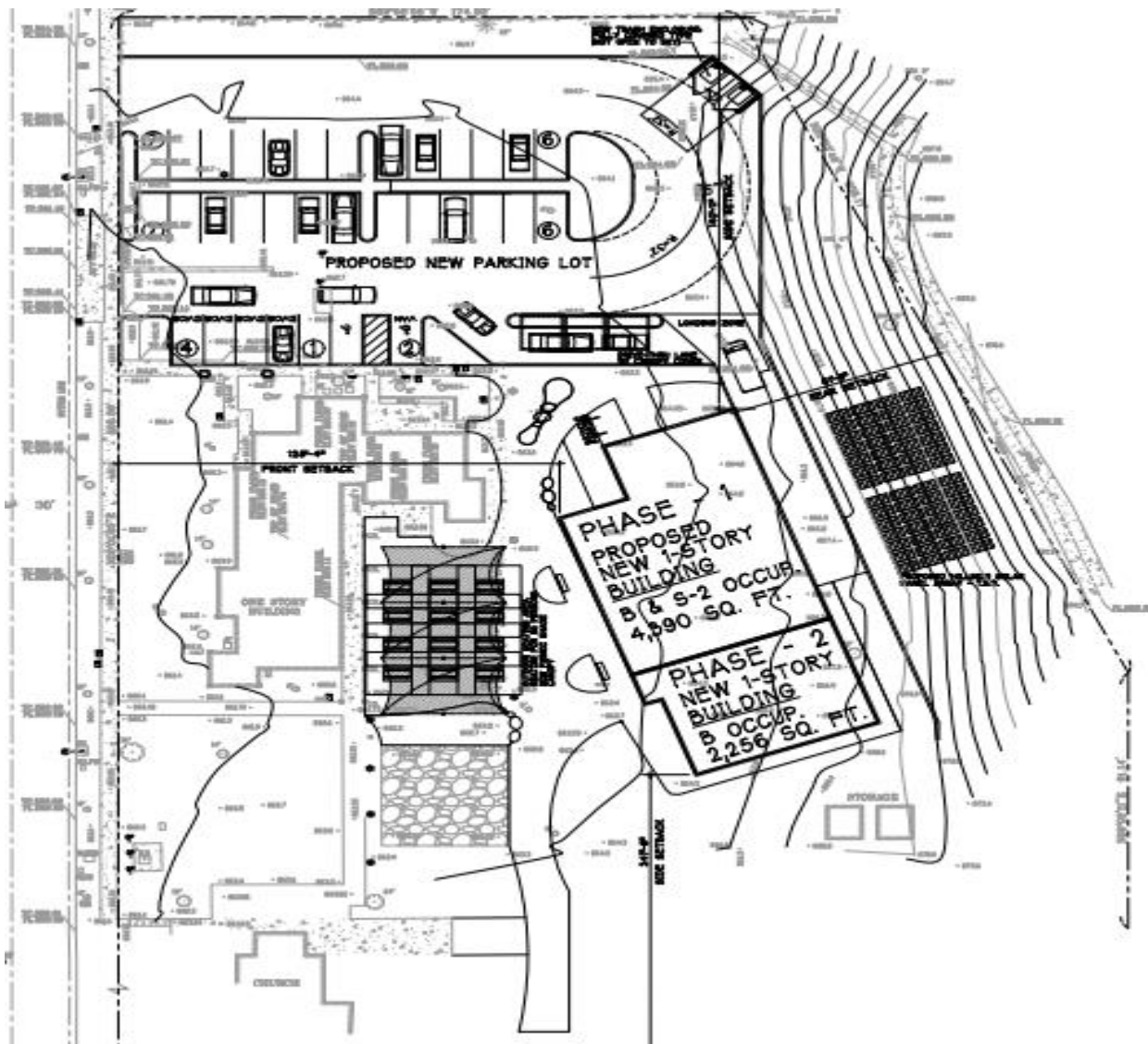
The new building also includes offices, community multi-purpose rooms, and vehicular drop-off and pick-up of food distribution. The building height will be approximately 32 ft. The project will add to the existing on-site structures for a total of 30,065 sqft. The existing FAR is approximately 12% and the proposed project will increase the FAR to approximately 16%. The allowed FAR for the site is 3:1.

The proposed project includes the expansion of the existing parking from 101 parking stalls to approximately 135 parking stalls and a vehicular queuing for nine cars, with a canopy for pick-up and drop-off of the existing food distribution services. The existing required

parking spaces is 101, and with the new building the required parking is 119. Three of the new parking spaces will be for disabled access parking for a total of eight. Approximately 30% of the parking stalls will be for compact use, which totals 40 stalls. Approximately 10% of the parking spaces will be allocated towards EV, which 4 spaces for EV have been provided.



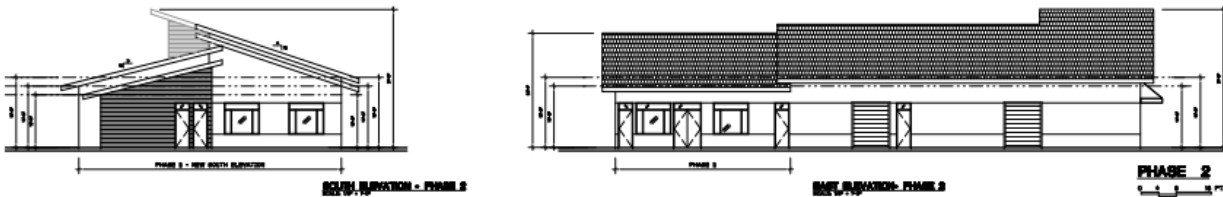
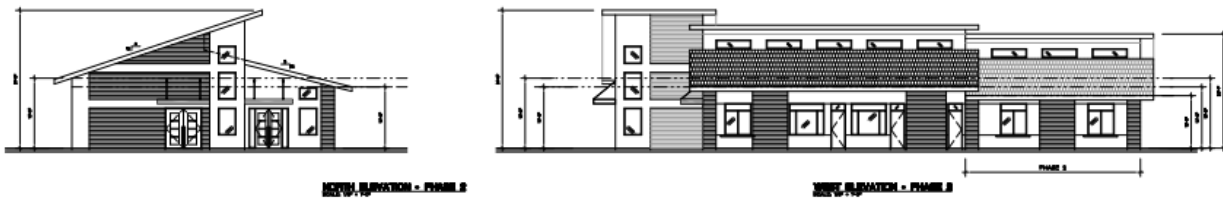
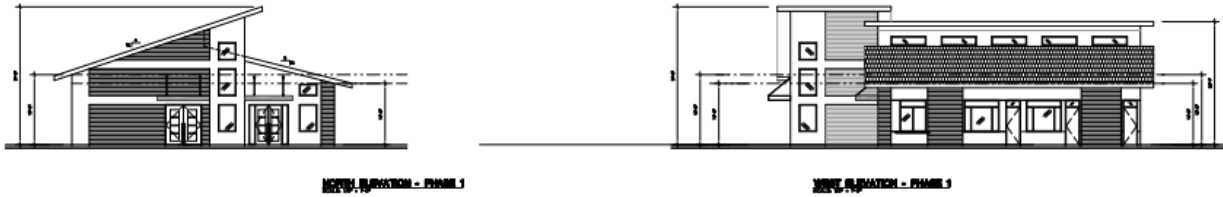
Prince of Peace Campus with New Food Pantry Building and Parking Lot



Proposed New Development for Food Pantry on Prince of Peace Campus

The proposed project will not include any demolition of existing building footprints. In addition, a 1,756 sqft. solar panel array will be installed along the hillside.

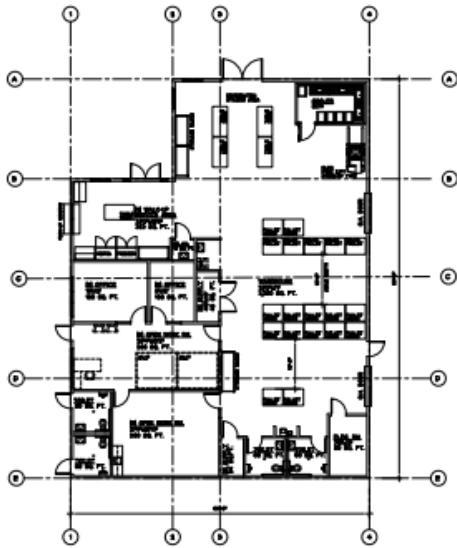
The site will have approximately 708 cubic yards of on-site grading and export of approximately 850 cubic yards of earth-material from the site.



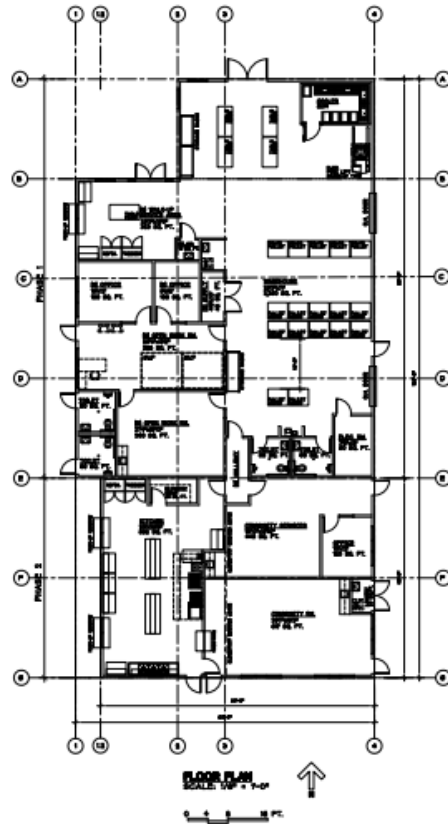
Elevations of the Proposed Food Pantry Community Center

The new building will have upgraded exterior elevations to resemble a single-family residence and Church building to enhance the pedestrian friendly environment and experience as well as enhance the neighborhood. In addition, the building will have the following up to date features:

- 1, Security will be state-of-the-art and well-lit facilities, video surveillance, and door access to deter the likelihood of crime occurring near the property.
2. Additional exterior cameras and lighting along the building and perimeter of the building.
3. Anti-graffiti paint to maintain aesthetics and visual appearance.



Phase 1 Floor Plan

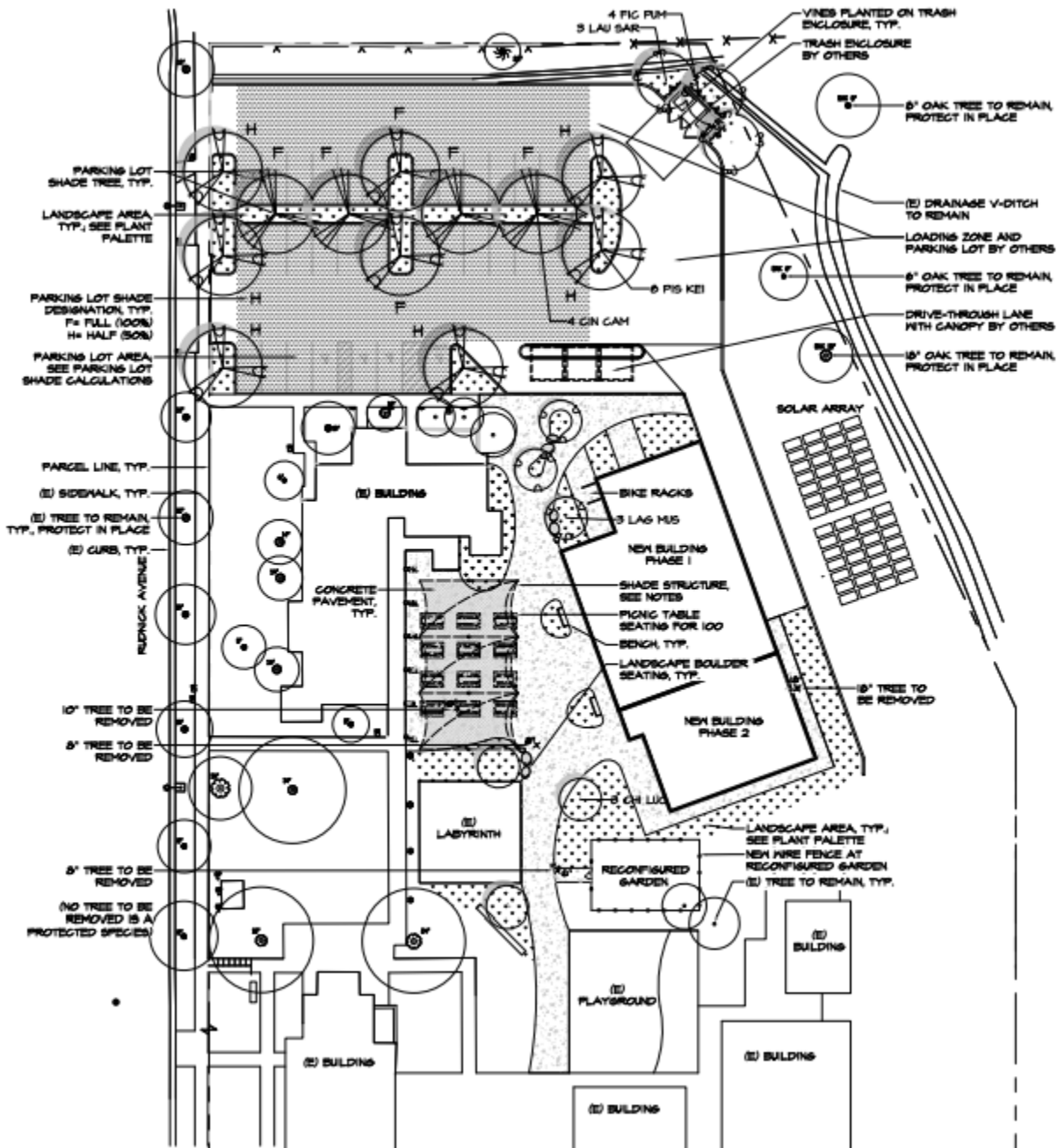


Phase 2 Floor Plan

Floor Plans of the Proposed Food Pantry Community Center

The new building will total 6,646 sqft., in phase 1 consisting of 4,390 sqft. and in phase 2 adding another 2,256 sqft. to include a commercial kitchen and 2 community rooms.

At the completion of phase 2, the new building will include 852 sqft. for the kitchen, three office spaces totaling 408 sqft., a service area of 352 sqft., warehouse of 2,390 sqft. , two open workrooms totaling 746 sqft., two community rooms totaling 1062 sqft. and various rooms, which include, but are not limited to restrooms, electric room, storage/supply, and janitorial rooms.



Proposed Landscape Plan for Prince of Peace Campus

On-site landscape will have approximately 2,737 sqft. of permeable paving area. Two trees will be removed as a result of the development of the Church and Food Pantry use. Three Oak trees on the site will remain. Approximately 21 new trees as well as various shrubs will be planted throughout the site, as shown in the landscape plan. The site will have approximately 7,200 sqft, of landscape area or .04%, which does not include the on-site undisturbed area

OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The West Valley Food Pantry began operation in 1975 in a small closet in the Prince of Peace Episcopal Church and has continued to evolve over the years. Today the Food Pantry operates under the 501 (c) of the Church, but also functions independently as a coalition of six other contributing religious organizations. The Food Pantry receives donated food and purchases food supplies and distributes approximately 14 pallets of shelf stable food weekly (3,000 to 5,000 lbs. daily) to local residents and surrounding communities facing food insecurity. The Food Pantry uses a Prince of Peace church building, and accessory structures and space in the church main parking lot to perform their activities. A homeless encampment nearby that created undesirable conditions for the Food Pantry and surrounding residents has been removed.

Recently the Food Pantry received public grant funds from the State that they intend to use to construct a new 6,646 sqft. building, and enlarge and improve the church north parking lot to relocate and consolidate their operations. The intent is not to expand operations but to improve the efficiency of the operations while maintaining the same level of service. Also, as stated in the application, "the church will have access and use of the building on weekends when the Pantry is not in use". Church use of the building and expanded north parking lot constructed with State funds is a violation the constitutional requirement of Separation of Church and State.

The proposed new building and parking lot expansion project is being designed to comply with all applicable City code regulations. Below is summary of some existing and proposed characteristics of the project:

Characteristic	Existing	Proposed
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	12%	15%
Building Height	0 ft.	32 ft.
Front Yard Setback	0	125' 4"
Rear Yard Setback	0	61' 6"
Side Yard Setback	0	140' 11" & 347' 11"
Lot Coverage	21,619 sqft. 12%	28,265 sqft. 15%
Undeveloped Land	115,919 sqft. 63%	81,649 sqft. 44%
Parking Spaces	101	135
Handicapped Parking	5	8
Bicycle Parking	5	8

PLUM MOTION

Prince of Peace Church/West Valley Food Pantry, located at 5700 Rudnick Street in Woodland Hills, submitted a Conditional Use Permit application to construct a 1-story 6,646 sq. ft. building in 2 phases to house a commercial-size kitchen, food storage, offices, multipurpose rooms, and vehicular food distribution. Phase 1 will consist of a 4,390 sq. ft. building to contain a warehouse, two open work rooms and three office spaces, restrooms, and various associated utility rooms and a new north parking lot. Phase 2 will add an additional 2,256 sq. ft. to the building which will contain two community rooms, a small office and an 852 sq. ft. commercial-size kitchen. After holding three (3) virtual public teleconference meetings, including committee discussion, regarding *City Planning Case ZA-2021-8374 and ENV-2021-8375*, the Planning, Land Use, and Mobility Committee [PLUM] finds that:

WHEREAS, the existing Conditional Use Permits issued for the church property do not authorize use of the property for Food Pantry activities; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed project site is zoned A1, which prohibits any use that disrupts and is inconsistent with the neighborhood's residential character; and,

WHEREAS, the current and proposed food distribution hours are 9:30 am. to 2:00 pm Monday thru Thursday and 9:30 am. to noon on Friday. The applicant states, in the application, that the primary purpose of the expansion is for the continued existing social services that occur from 7:00 am. to 2:30 pm. Monday thru Thursday and 7:00 am. to 12:30 pm. on Fridays for volunteers, clients and staff; and,

WHEREAS, the applicant claims inefficiency of existing Food Pantry operations occupying a church building and the main church parking lot; and,

WHEREAS, the current CUP does not put any limits on growth of the Food Pantry; and,

WHEREAS, The Food Pantry's observed distribution of food to approximately 35 vehicles (or 70 trips) per hour does not fit expectations for a residential collector street like Rudnick Avenue; and,

WHEREAS, the application is for permission for two or more uses beyond the existing religious use. These include a receiving/repacking/distribution warehouse of food goods and packing materials, and a kitchen; and,

WHEREAS, the onsite distribution of groceries and the associated problems of traffic, noise, and litter in the neighborhood are inconsistent with the residential character of the neighborhood; and,

WHEREAS, the Food Pantry provides a valuable charitable service for the distribution of donated and purchased food to the residents of Woodland Hills and surrounding communities who are in need and suffering from food insecurity; and

WHEREAS, the community supports the mission of providing services to insecure populations, the Food Pantry's operations outgrew the existing site's allowable uses and activity levels.

WHEREAS, the food distribution portion of the Food Pantry process creates the majority of issues that disrupt and are inconsistent with the residential neighborhood, other alternative methods for food distribution must be found;

THEREFORE IT IS RESOLVED, for the findings stated hereinabove, the Board of the Woodland Hills – Warner Center Neighborhood Council receives and adopts the Planning, Land Use and Mobility Committee's recommendation as its own.

The Board Multipart Resolution is:

- 1) To **support** a Conditional Use Permit for **Phase 1 construction**, using State funds, and use of a 1-story Food Pantry building limited to operation as a warehouse and associated workspaces, to be used solely by the Food Pantry, plus an additional parking lot on the Prince of Peace property at 5700 Rudnick Street in Woodland Hills; and,
- 2) To **not support** a Conditional Use Permit for **Phase 1 operation** of an on-site distribution of food. PLUM recommends that Food Pantry find another suitable location or method for distribution; and,
- 3) To **support** a Conditional Use Permit for **Phase 2 construction and operation** of a building addition to the Phase 1 building, paid for by Prince of Peace Church, to include a small commercial-size kitchen, two community rooms, and a small office that the Food Pantry can use with the permission of Prince of Peace Church on weekdays when the Food Pantry is operating.

Contingent upon the following:

Conditions:

- 1) The use of the State Grant funds shall be limited to Phase 1 of the development.
- 2) The Conditional Use Permit must specifically address all allowed Food Pantry activities.
- 3) Ongoing use of the Church's facility by the Food Pantry outside of the proposed new facility shall require a new conditional use permit for review of operations and community impact.
- 4) The applicant shall terminate the on-site food distribution process and find alternate methods for food distribution such as, but not limited to:

- a) Transfer food distribution to sites one or more coalition members
 - b) Develop a mobile distribution system that reaches selected locations in the community.
- 5) The applicant shall establish a prominently posted hotline, or similar means, for nearby residents to report complaints and receive responses, supported by a joint homeowners and Food Pantry committee to ensure prompt and equitable resolution.
 - 6) A tall landscape buffer shall be planted along the north edge of the north parking lot.
 - 7) A review of Food Pantry operations and neighborhood impacts shall be conducted by the Zoning Administrator after five (5) years.

FURTHERMORE, the Planning, Land Use, and Mobility Committee 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 its subsequent decision to **partially support Phase 1** only for operation of warehousing groceries and **not for on-site distribution of groceries** to recipients, and **support the Phase 2** actions requested in the CUP application, **ZA-2021-8374, and ZA-2021-8375**, as presented to the WHWCNC Board on April 13, 2022.

Motion: Henry Rice

Second: Sean McCarthy

Vote:	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>	<u>Absent</u>
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