

Narrative Criteria for New Childcare Facility

VMC 17.12.090

C. Approval Criteria. The planning and zoning commission shall evaluate whether the conditional use permit application complies with the criteria established in this section in determining to approve, approve with conditions, or deny the request. The planning and zoning commission may require the applicant to submit whatever reasonable evidence may be needed to protect the public interest.

1. Criterion 1: Site Suitability. The subject site shall be suitable to support the proposed conditional use and its associated structure(s) and site improvements. The planning and zoning commission shall consider topography, slope and soil stability, geophysical hazards, surface and subsurface drainage, and water quality conditions on and around the subject site and the probable effects of the proposed conditional use upon these factors.

The site for the new Childcare Facility was found suitable to be located within the existing VCS District Offices building after a long review process by the City of Valdez and VCS School Board. All civil, architectural, and geotech consultants have evaluated all items listed within this “Criterion 1” and have addressed all these factors within the renovation design.

2. Criterion 2: Utility, Sanitation, and Public Service Needs. The conditional use and the associated site improvements shall be adequately served by utilities, emergency responders, and a sanitation facility to ensure long-term safety for its occupants and surrounding populations. The planning and zoning commission shall consider whether adequate sewer/sanitation, storm drainage, potable water, fire protection, public safety, access, and electrical power exist to serve the proposed use and associated structures/site improvements.

All items included within “Criterion 2” are being addressed by the project’s design consultants, including the State Fire Marshal, to meet these “Utility, Sanitation, and Public Service Needs” requirements.

3. Criterion 3: Zoning District Standards. With the exception of planned unit developments (PUDs), the proposed conditional use and its associated site improvement(s) shall comply with the dimensional standards of the zone in which it is located. Notwithstanding, those zoning standards may be adjusted pursuant to a separate variance and/or administrative adjustment application.

The use of the new Childcare Facility being placed within the existing building location at 1112 W. Klutina St. meets the future land use requirements for being located within the “New Townsite Neighborhood” as it is classified as a school/ institutional building occupancy. All site improvements made within this project by the design consultants will comply with the dimensional standards set forth within the existing building location of “New Townsite Neighborhood” zone.

4. Criterion 4: Specific Use Standards. The proposed conditional use and its associated site improvement(s) shall comply with the applicable specific use standards pursuant to Chapter 17.80.

The new Childcare Facility design complies with the “Specific Use Standards” as it meets all current State of Alaska day care facilities license requirements for this specific occupancy classification. The future childcare operator for this site currently holds a current State of Alaska childcare center license and will be required to always maintain a valid current state license while operating as a childcare at this site.

5. Criterion 5: Comprehensive Plan Consistency. The proposed conditional use and its associated site improvement(s) shall be consistent with the comprehensive plan's goals, policies, and maps in terms of land uses, development character, and scale.

The exterior of the existing building site which is to be used as a childcare facility will not have any major exterior renovations to the existing building envelope which maintains the character of the adjacent HHES school building. The required playground site for the childcare facility was thoughtfully located on the west exterior side of Hermon Hutchens Elementary school to align with and be consistent with the "Comprehensive Plan". The design consultants have designed any project site improvements to be consistent with the comprehensive plan's goals, policies, and maps in terms of land uses, development character, and scale

6. Criterion 6: Nuisance Mitigation. The proposed conditional use and its associated site improvement(s) shall provide mitigation measures to address potential nuisances relating to excessive noise, lighting, vibration, traffic, debris and litter, and outdoor material storage.

The city has employed civil, architectural, and traffic control experts as part of the design team on this project to mitigate and address within the design of this project any potential nuisances related to excessive noise, lighting, vibration, traffic, debris, litter, and outdoor material storage.

7. Criterion 7: Access and Circulation. The proposed conditional use and its associated site improvement(s) shall provide adequate site access for motor vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists. Applications shall not be approved where the proposed use would create undue traffic congestion or pose a safety hazard to motorists, pedestrians, and/or cyclists.

The childcare design team is analyzing and implementing improvements within the project site to accommodate adequate access for all motor vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists entering and exiting the site to ensure undue traffic congestion and to avoid any potential safety hazards to motorists, pedestrians, and/or cyclists.