



Conditional Use Permit – Proposed Findings and Proposed Conditions

Date: May 13, 2026
File: CUP 26-01
To: Planning & Zoning Commission
From: Bruce Wall, Senior Planner
Conditional Use: Well House (Utility, Class I)

General Information

Applicant: City of Valdez
Property Owner: City of Valdez
Street Address: TBD Whalen Avenue
Legal Description: Lot 7, Evergreen Vista Addition No. 1, Plat 80-12
Zoning District: Public Lands (P)
Existing Land Use: Elementary School and School District Offices
Access: Whalen Drive

VMC 17.08

“Conditional use” means a provision which allows for flexibility within this chapter by permitting certain specified uses in zoning districts where such uses are generally considered appropriate, but only after additional conditions and safeguards are applied to ensure their compatibility with permitted principal uses.

“Utility, Class I” means utility installations including substations and indoor processing that do not create noise, odor, or vibration impacts that negatively affect surrounding properties.

Project Description

The City of Valdez is proposing a new well house on the elementary school / school district offices parcel. The applicant states in their narrative the following.

The new well house is needed as well #4 cannot keep up with water demand during the summer when the canneries are running at full capacity during the

summer month. The new well #5 will provide a back up to well #4 and eventually allow for well #4 to be rehabilitated without creating a break in service. The new well #5 will be used in a lead/lag configuration with well #4.

Proposed Findings

Procedural Findings

- a) On March 31, 2026, the Community Development Department received a conditional use permit application from the City of Valdez.
 - b) The applicant supplemented the narrative and snow storage plan on April 3, 2026.
 - c) The Community Development Department reviewed the application and determined that it was complete, in accordance with VMC 17.12.090(E)(1).
 - d) A public hearing was scheduled for May 13, 2026, to consider the Conditional Use Permit.
 - e) Notice of the publication was published in KVAK's e-blast newspaper on April 27, 2026 and May 4, 2026.
 - f) Notice of the meeting was published on the City of Valdez website on April 27, 2026, in accordance with VMC 17.12.090(E)(5) and 17.12.160(C)(1).
 - g) Notice of the meeting was mailed on April 29, 2026, to the 78 property owners within 300 feet of the parcel where the well house is proposed, in accordance with VMC 17.12.090(E)(5) and, 17.12.160(C)(2).
 - h) A document holder with public notice flyers was posted on Whalen Drive on April 29, 2026, in accordance with VMC 17.12.090(E)(5) and 17.12.160(C)(3).
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. VMC 17.12.090(C)(1)
- a) The narrative submitted by the applicant states, *"The existing location for well #5 was chosen after exhaustive study by the design team. The site is located near the water tank on Meals Hill and will tie into existing water piping that was installed during the Whalen Ave construction project. The site is owned by the City of Valdez and has proven to have adequate capacity in the aquifer to support the water demand needs of the new well."*
 - b) The proposed well house site has less than a 1% slope to the south.
 - c) There are not any known geophysical hazards on the property.
 - d) It is not anticipated that the proposed use will have any affect on drainage or water quality.
 - e) The geography of the site is suitable for the proposed use.

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. VMC 17.12.090(C)(2)

- a) The narrative submitted by the applicant states, *“The new well directly improves sanitation by providing another source of potable water for use by the public. The new well adds much needed redundancy to the existing water system and will mediate a water supply problem that has been getting worse over the past 15 years. Adequate electrical power is available to power the facility from the existing grid. This facility does not include an onsite restroom. The interior of the facility is not open to the public. Fire protection for the new facility complies with current building codes.”*
- b) Notice of the application was provided to the following city departments: Fire, Police, Public Works, and the Building Official.
- c) The application materials demonstrate that the utility, sanitation, and public service needs will be met.

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. VMC 17.12.090 (C)(3)

- a) The narrative submitted by the applicant states, *“The design has properly addressed the required setbacks, existing underground utilities, vehicle and pedestrian traffic and snow storage.”*
- b) The subject property is in the Public Lands (P) district.
- c) The proposed building setbacks 30 feet from the closest property line. The proposed building height is 20’-4”.
- d) The proposed building meets the dimensional standards of the Public Lands district.

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. VMC 17.12.090(C)(4)

- There are not any specific use standards for Class I Utilities.

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.
VMC 17.12.090(C)(5)

- a) The Future Land Use Map in Plan Valdez, the comprehensive plan for the City of Valdez designates the place type for the site as New Townsite Neighborhood.
- b) Staff's review of the comprehensive plan did not find any inconsistencies of the proposed use with comprehensive plan.

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. VMC 17.12.090(C)(6)

- a) The narrative submitted by the applicant states, "*The well house will not create excessive noise as the pump is located underground inside the well case and the other equipment is inside the building. The backup generator will only run during routine testing times during daylight hours or when there is a power outage. The lighting on the well house is limited to exterior doors and light fixtures are not placed at an excessive height. Vibration is not an issue. Traffic to the well house will be limited to maintenance personnel.*"
- b) It is not anticipated that the proposed use will create any nuisances related to excessive noise, lighting, vibration, traffic, debris and litter, or outdoor material storage beyond what can be expected by similar operations operating in the community.

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. VMC 17.12.090(C)(7)

- a) The narrative submitted by the applicant states, "*This facility will see limited automobile traffic. Impact to pedestrian or cycling traffic is nonissue.*"
- b) The proposed well house will be located adjacent and will be served by Whalen Avenue.
- c) Due to the limited use of the proposed facility, it is not anticipated that it will create undue traffic congestion or pose a safety hazard to motorists, pedestrians, and/or cyclists.

8. **Snow Storage:**

- a) The narrative submitted by the applicant states, "*We've had multiple meetings with Public Works and moved the well house to the north and west on the lot to accommodate their snow storage needs. Snow will be stored on the south side of the lot next to W. Pioneer Street.*"

- b) The applicant has submitted a snow storage plan as required by VMC 17.88.030(C).
- c) The snow storage plan was provided to various city departments and other agencies along with other application materials.
- d) The snow storage plan indicates that there will not be a reduction in the available parking spaces for snow storage.
- e) The snow storage plan has been reviewed by Community Development staff, and they have determined that the plan provides adequate space to reasonably handle expected snow storage needs on the site.
- f) Snow will shed into the side yard of the lot.
- g) Shedding snow will not block the ingress or egress of the structure.
- h) Condition of Approval Number 3 requires that the intersection visibility triangle be maintained as required by VMC 17.88.050.

VMC 17.12.090(E)(7)

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall conduct a public hearing to review the conditional use application, review the staff report, hear staff, applicant, and public testimony, discuss the proposal, adopt findings of fact (from staff or establishing their own), and take action on the application. The Commission may approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application.

Conditions

1. The conditional use permit is for a portion of Lot 7, Evergreen Vista Addition No. 1, Plat 80-12 to be used as a well house (Utility, Class I).
2. The conditional use permit is effective upon approval.
3. The permittee shall maintain the intersection visibility triangle as required by VMC 17.88.050.
4. The conditional use permit must be utilized within twelve months after the effective date of approval. In the event construction work is involved, it must commence within the stated period and must be diligently prosecuted to completion.
5. The use must be consistent with the submitted application, narrative, and site plan. Any substantial change to the use requires approval pursuant to VMC 17.12.090(F).

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that CUP 26-01 be approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission with the conditions recommended by staff.