

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT
STAFF ANALYSIS
ADMINISTRATIVE SITE PLAN REVIEW**

DATE: July 18, 2019

CASE NUMBER: 2019-0094

APPLICANT: Municipal Light and Power "ML&P"

REPRESENTATIVE: David Searls

REQUEST: Administrative Site Plan Review for a Utility Substation in the Public Lands and Institutions, park (PLI-p) District.

LOCATION: 2801 Career Center Drive, Anchorage, AK 99508

COMMUNITY COUNCIL: University Area

SITE: 361,858 square feet

CURRENT LAND USE: Utility

UTILITIES: No public water or sewer available

TOPO: Relatively flat site with gradual slope from the west to the east

VEGETATION: Vegetation with cleared driveway to the site

**COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN**

**2040
Classification:
UMED District
Plan:** Park or Natural Area
Natural Area

SURROUNDING AREA

Zoning:	North PLI-p	East PLI-p, R-2M	South PLI	West PLI
Land Use:	Vacant	Vacant, Multi-Family Residential	Vacant	Educational

REQUEST

This is a request for an administrative site plan review for expansion of an existing Municipal Light and Power (ML&P) utility substation (Substation #8) in the PLI-p Public Lands and Institutions (park) District. The petition site has an existing utility substation, originally constructed in 1984, which provides power to the University-Medical (U-MED) District. The proposed addition will add a new transformer to the site and upgrade older equipment. The property is 631,858 square feet, and the proposed utility substation expansion area will be 21,449 square feet.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The Traffic Department provided a comment ensuring that all driveways to the existing right of way are paved for a minimum of 50 feet onto the property for access to the existing substation.

All other agencies either had no objection or no comments on this site plan review.

FINDINGS

AMC 21.03.180. Site Plan Review Standards - Approval Criteria. The Planning Director may only approve a site plan if the director finds that all of the following standards are satisfied. Each standard must have a response in as much detail as it takes to explain how your project satisfies the standard.

- 1. The proposed use is consistent with any previously approved subdivision plat, planned development master plan, or any other precedent plan or land use approval;**

The standard is met.

The proposed site plan is consistent with the previously approved plat 93-44. Parks and Recreation Resolution No. 2017-18 provided ML&P management authority for additional land required for this proposed expansion.

- 2. This site plan complies with all applicable development and design standards set forth in this title, including but not limited to the provisions in 21.04, *Zoning Districts*, chapter 21.05, *Use Regulations*, 21.06, *Dimensional Standards and Measurements*, and chapter 21.07, *Development and Design Standards*;**

21.04 Zoning District

This standard is met.

The PLI District is intended for "public and quasi-public civil, administrative, and institutional uses and activities". Expansion of the existing electrical utility substation is in the public interest for current and future needs, and will double the system capacity and increase reliability.

A utility substation in the PLI District is permitted with an approved administrative site plan review per AMC 21.05.010.

The PLI District does not have any district-specific standards.

21.05 Use Regulations

21.05.040J.3.b Use-Specific Standards, Utility Substation

The facility shall be designed and constructed to ensure visual and aesthetic compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. Compatibility may be achieved either by using similar architectural design and materials as building(s) in the surrounding neighborhood, or by screening the facility with L2 buffer landscaping.

This standard may be met.

The provided narrative states the intent to provide L2 buffer landscaping to screen the facility. However, the provided landscape plan does not detail planting bed dimensions. Staff has requested a condition of approval to provide a dimensioned landscape plan in accordance with AMC 21.07.080, or provide a nonconforming determination for the lack of L2 buffer landscaping.

21.06 Dimensional Standards and Measurements

This standard is met.

The minimum lot size in the PLI District is 6,000 square feet, and this property is 361,858 square feet, satisfying the minimum requirement.

The minimum lot width in the PLI District is 50 feet, and this property exceeds the minimum lot width.

The maximum coverage in the PLI District is 45 percent, and the proposed substation expansion will result in approximately 6 percent lot coverage, not exceeding the maximum lot coverage.

The front, rear, and side setbacks in the PLI District are 25 feet, and the proposed site plan meets the minimum requirements.

The maximum height in the U-MED District is 75 feet. The utility substation will be approximately 35 feet tall, not exceeding the maximum height.

21.07 Development and Design Standards

21.07.020 Natural Resource Protection

This standard is met.

South Fork Chester Creek is east of the existing utility substation, and the proposed expansion does not disturb the platted 25-foot stream protection easement. ML&P has obtained a required wetland permits.

21.07.040 Drainage, Storm Water Treatment, Erosion Control, and Prohibited Discharges

This standard is not met.

A drainage plan is required for all applications that require a site plan review. Staff has requested a condition of approval to provide a drainage plan in accordance with AMC 21.07.040D.

21.07.080 Landscaping, Screening, and Fences

21.07.080E.1 Site Perimeter Landscaping

This standard may be met.

Buffer landscaping (L2) is required per AMC 21.05.040J.3.b. The provided narrative states the intent to provide L2 buffer landscaping to screen the facility. However, the provided landscape plan does not detail planting bed dimensions. Staff has requested a condition of approval to provide a dimensioned landscape plan in accordance with AMC 21.07.080

21.07.080H. Fences

The provided elevation details a 10-foot tall fence, however, AMC 21.07.080H.3 determines that no fence shall exceed 8 feet in height. Staff has requested a condition of approval to provide a revised fence plan in accordance with AMC 21.07.080H.3.

21.07.090 Off-Street Parking and Loading

Utility substations do not have a designated parking requirement, and shall be determined by the Planning Director and the Traffic Engineer. This existing utility substation will remain unmanned, except for occasional planned and emergency maintenance. The narrative states that there will be five parking spaces provided on-site, however these parking spaces are not detailed on the site plan. Staff has requested a conditional of approval to resolve with the Traffic Department and Planning Director the need to provide parking in accordance with AMC 21.07.090.

21.07.090H.12 Paving

All parking spaces, loading berths, driveways, and motor vehicle driving surfaces are required to be paved. Staff has requested a condition approval is to provide the Traffic Department a site plan ensuring that all driveways to the existing right of way are paved for a minimum of 50 feet onto the property for access to the existing substation in accordance with AMC 21.07.090H.12.

3. The site plan addresses any significant adverse impacts that can reasonably be anticipated to result from the use, by mitigating or offsetting those impacts to the maximum extent feasible; and

The standard is met.

This is an existing electrical utility substation, and is unmanned. No adverse impacts from this site are anticipated to affect neighboring parties.

4. The development proposed in the site plan is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the comprehensive plan.

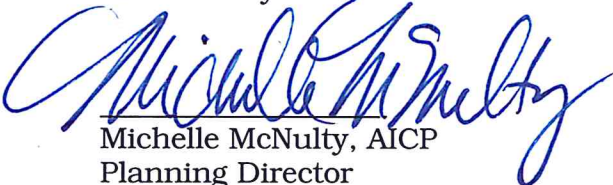
The standard is met.

DEPARTMENT DECISION- AMMENDED MAY 12, 2020

The Department APPROVES the administrative site plan review for a utility substation in the PLI District, subject to the following conditions:

1. This approval is subject to the petitioner's application, narrative, and the following plans on file at the Planning Department, except as modified by these conditions of approval:
2. A notice of zoning action and a final approved site plan shall be filed with the State Recorder's Office. Proof of such shall be submitted to the Planning Department.
3. Provide to the Planning Department for review and approval:
 - a. A dimensioned landscape plan detailing required L2 buffer landscaping in accordance with AMC 21.07.080, prepared by a licensed landscape architect in the State of Alaska, or provide a nonconforming determination for the lack of L2 buffer landscaping.
 - b. A drainage plan in accordance with AMC 21.07.040D.
 - c. A plan detail for a fence in accordance with AMC 21.07.080H.3.
 - d. A parking detail in accordance with AMC 21.07.090.
4. Resolve with the Traffic Department the requirement to pave a minimum of 50 feet onto the property for access to the existing substation in accordance with 21.07.090H.12.
5. Resolve with the Traffic Department and Planning Director the need to provide parking in accordance with AMC 21.07.090.

Reviewed by:


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Prepared by:


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