



DATE: November 20, 2025

TO: Orange County Zoning Administrator

FROM: OC Development Services/Planning

SUBJECT: Costal Development Permit PA25-0048 to expand an existing maintenance yard in Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park

PROPOSAL: Coastal Development Permit to expand an existing maintenance yard, remove the existing eight-foot-tall perimeter chain-link fence currently enclosing a smaller portion of the yard, install a new eight-foot-high chain-link fence, approximately 560-foot-long with privacy screening to create a larger storage area, and add a vehicular access gate to the expanded maintenance area.

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: Open Space

ZONING DISTRICT: 5.3 "Recreation" - Aliso Creek Planning Unit Local Coastal Program (Excluding Aliso Viejo Segment), Narland Business Center Planned Community, Planning Unit 3

LOCATION: 28373 Alicia Parkway, Laguna Niguel, California 92677 (APN: 639-011-08) within the Fifth Supervisorial District

APPLICANT: OC Parks, County of Orange

STAFF CONTACT: Scarlet Duggan, Land Use Manager
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RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

OC Development Services/Planning recommends the Zoning Administrator:

1. Receive staff report and public testimony.
2. Adopt Zoning Administrator Resolution No. 2025-01 (Attachment 1) to:
 - a. Find that the project is a necessarily included element of the project considered in Mitigated Negative Declaration No. IP 08-269, approved by the Board on August 4, 2009, for the Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park Resource Management Plan which adequately addressed the effects of the proposed project. No substantial changes have been made in the project, no substantial changes have occurred in the circumstances under which the project is being undertaken and no new information of substantial importance to the project which was not known or could not have been known when the Mitigated Negative Declaration No. IP 08-269 was approved has become known; therefore no further environmental review is required; and

- b. Approve Planning Application PA25-0048 for a Coastal Development Permit to expand an existing maintenance yard, remove the existing eight-foot-tall perimeter chain-link fence currently enclosing a smaller portion of the yard, install a new eight-foot-high chain-link fence, approximately 560-foot-long with privacy screening to create a larger storage area, and add a vehicular access gate to the expanded maintenance area subject to the Findings and Conditions of Approval contained within the Resolution.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The County of Orange (County) holds regulatory permit authority over the park area through the Aliso Creek Planning Unit Local Coastal Program (Excluding Aliso Viejo segment) (LCP), which was certified by the Coastal Commission on February 5, 1986. Under this program, the project site is zoned “Recreation” and is situated within the Narland Business Center Planned Community of Planning Unit 3.

On April 10, 2014, Coastal Development Permit (CDP) PA130035 was approved by the Director of OC Planning Services to upgrade the existing park entrance to the park by enhancing park entrance amenities, constructing new administrative, maintenance, and recreational buildings, and improving existing recreational trail connections.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park (AWCWP), located within unincorporated Orange County, is owned and operated by the County through OC Parks since 1980. AWCWP encompasses approximately 3,873 acres of preserved open space, including hills, canyons, and floodplains surrounding Aliso and Wood Canyons, as well as portions of Laguna Canyon.

The existing project site is located off Alicia Parkway and is relatively flat and situated adjacent to a 2,600-square-foot visitor center featuring a wraparound deck, vehicle parking areas, accessory structures, with areas cleared of vegetation that are used for meetings and assemblies.

SURROUNDING LAND USES

The vicinity is surrounded by mostly open space and a church facility located to the north, across Awma Road.

Direction	Zoning Designation	Existing Land Use
Project Site	Recreation (LCP)	Visitor Center
North	Recreation (LCP)	Church facility
South	Open Space	Open Space
West	Open Space	Open Space
East	Open Space	Open Space

Approximately one-quarter mile northwest of the site, beyond Aliso Canyon Community Park, are an elementary school and residential neighborhoods within the City of Aliso Viejo. A suburban residential development is located within the City of Laguna Niguel, approximately one-half mile to the southeast.

To the east, across Alicia Parkway, lies the Laguna Niguel Regional Park. To the west, the Aliso & Wood Canyons Wilderness Park continues uninterrupted.

A vicinity map (Attachment 2) and project map (Attachment 3) are included, illustrating the project site in context with surrounding areas.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The applicant submitted a request for a CDP to expand the existing maintenance yard at the entry point of AWCWP, located at 28373 Alicia Parkway, Laguna Niguel. The scope of work includes removing and relocating existing eight-foot tall fence sections as needed to construct approximately 560 feet of new eight-foot-high, chain-link fencing with privacy screening along a revised boundary, closer to the property line, and adding one new vehicle access gate at the rear of the maintenance yard to allow efficient operational access to the expanded maintenance yard area. The fence will be securely anchored and properly aligned for durability and safety. No grading will take place as part of this project. Existing maintenance operations will continue from this site with no public access to the area.

The expanded yard is designed to support a variety of operational needs, including temporary storage of green waste and debris such as branches and vegetation removed from the park prior to off-site disposal, stockpiling limited quantities of materials like decomposed granite and other surface materials used for trail and park improvements, staging of heavy equipment with secondary containment systems to protect water quality, and placement of a 40-yard dumpster to support ongoing maintenance operations. Access to the expanded yard will be from the adjacent driveway and parking area. The site plan (Attachment 4) outlines the general layout of the site and its access point.

The surface will either remain undisturbed soil or be covered with gravel, consistent with existing conditions at the site. OC Parks will ensure the yard is properly bermed to contain runoff during typical storm events, with a permeable subbase designed to promote infiltration and reduce runoff. As the yard is intended to serve as a flexible operations area, the exact locations for storage and staging within the expanded space are approximate and may vary over time to accommodate evolving operational needs. This expansion will allow for better support of OC Parks' operational and maintenance activities by providing a multi-functional storage space area.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

The proposed project is consistent with the objectives, policies, and general land uses and programs specified in the General Plan. Specifically, the proposed project supports the Recreation Element Goal 1 to provide a regional recreation network to meet the regional recreation needs of existing and future residents of the entire County as well as Goal 3 to operate and maintain regional recreation facilities providing operation programs designed for the most effective use of each site at a minimum cost.

LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM AND ZONING CODE CONSISTENCY

The proposed project is consistent with the Coastal Zone development standards pursuant to Zoning Code Section 7-9-40 and the certified LCP, which permits accessory structures and uses that are necessary or customarily incidental to permitted recreational uses. The maintenance yard expansion, including new fencing and operational support uses, is an allowable and compatible use involving minor alterations to an existing facility. Located within a previously disturbed area adjacent to the visitor center and surrounded by park-compatible uses, the project supports continued recreational use and park maintenance operations.

The project does not involve grading, alter land use designations, or introduce new development inconsistent with LCP policies. It will not impact public access, recreational amenities, or existing trail networks, and will not create land use conflicts with nearby residential or institutional areas. No infrastructure expansion is required, and existing public services are adequate. The project is expected to enhance OC Parks' ability to provide maintenance services and support public health, safety, and welfare.

FINDINGS

Proposed CDP Permit PA25-0048 is consistent with:

1. General Plan – The proposed project is consistent with the objectives, policies, and general land uses and programs specified in the General Plan adopted pursuant to the State Planning and Zoning Law.
2. Zoning Code – The use, activity or improvement(s) proposed, subject to the specified conditions, is consistent with the provisions of the Zoning Code, or specific plan regulations applicable to the property.
3. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) – This project is a necessarily included element of the project considered in Mitigated Negative Declaration No. IP 08-269, approved by the Board on August 4, 2009, for the Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park Resource Management Plan which adequately addressed the effects of the proposed project. No substantial changes have been made in the project, no substantial changes have occurred in the circumstances under which the project is being undertaken and no new information of substantial importance to the project which was not known or could not have been known when the Mitigated Negative Declaration No. IP 08-269 was approved has become known; therefore, no further environmental review is required.
4. Compatibility – The location, size, design and operating characteristics of the proposed use will not create unusual conditions or situations that may be incompatible with other permitted uses in the vicinity.
5. General Welfare – The application will not result in conditions or circumstances contrary to the public health and safety and the general welfare.
6. Public Facilities – The approval of the permit application is in compliance with Codified Ordinance Section 7-9-711 regarding public facilities (fire station, library, sheriff, etc.).
7. Local Coastal Program – The proposed project conforms to the certified Aliso Creek Planning Unit Local Coastal Program (Excluding Aliso Viejo Segment) and with the public access and public recreation policies of the California Coastal Act, and the approval of the application will result in a project that is in full compliance with the requirements of the certified land use plan.

Therefore, the findings required under Zoning Code Sections 7-9-125.6 and 7-9-127.1 can be made in support of this request for a CDP to expand the existing maintenance yard at the entry point of the AWCWP.

REFERRAL FOR COMMENT

A copy of the planning application and the proposed site plan were distributed for review and comment to the Orange County Fire Authority and the appropriate County divisions - Building and Safety, Traffic,

and Environmental Planning. Staff has reviewed all comments received, and where appropriate, has addressed the comments through recommended Conditions of Approval.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notices were mailed to all owners of record within 300 feet of the subject property, all occupants of dwelling units within 100 feet of the subject site per CDP Requirement, posted at the project site, published in a local newspaper, and posted at the posting kiosk the County Administration building located in Santa Ana, CA at least ten days prior to this public hearing, as required by established public hearing posting procedures.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA

This project is a necessarily included element of the project considered in Mitigated Negative Declaration No. IP 08-269, approved by the Board on August 4, 2009, for the Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park Resource Management Plan which adequately addressed the effects of the proposed project. No substantial changes have been made in the project, no substantial changes have occurred in the circumstances under which the project is being undertaken and no new information of substantial importance to the project which was not known or could not have been known when the Mitigated Negative Declaration No. IP 08-269 was approved has become known; therefore, no further environmental review is required.

CONCLUSION

Staff has reviewed the applicant's request for a CDP and finds the proposed project to be consistent with the County of Orange General Plan and the certified Aliso Creek Planning Unit Local Coastal Program (Excluding Aliso Viejo Segment).

As outlined in the Aliso Creek Planning Unit Local Coastal Program (Excluding Aliso Viejo Segment), accessory structures and uses that are necessary or customarily incidental to permitted uses are allowed within areas designated as "Recreation." The proposed project supports continued recreational use and park maintenance operations within this open space designation with no public access to the area, and is compatible with the adjacent open space areas, and does not involve grading, new development, or changes to existing land use designations, nor does it pose potential for significant impacts. The project does not impact public access or recreational services.

Staff recommends approval of Planning Application PA25-0048, subject to the required Findings and Conditions of Approval within Resolution No. 2025-01.

APPEAL PROCEDURE

Any interested person may appeal the decision of the Zoning Administrator on this permit to the Planning Commission within 15 calendar days of the decision upon submittal of required documents filed online at myoceservices.ocgov.com or in person at the County Service Center, located at 601 N. Ross St., Santa Ana. If you challenge the action taken on this proposal in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this report, or in written correspondence delivered to OC Development Services.

Submitted by:

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Scarlet Duggan, Land Use Manager
OC Development Services/Planning

Concurred by:

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ATTACHMENTS:

1. Zoning Administrator Resolution No. 2025-01
2. Vicinity Map
3. Project Map
4. Site Plan