



**FILE:** PA00-0149

**DATE:** April 3, 2001

**TO:** File/Record/Applicant

**FROM:** Thomas B. Mathews, Director, Planning and Development Services Department

**SUBJECT:** Planning Application PA00-0149 for minor Area Plan Amendment to the Grading Concept for Planning Area 40, Sub-area F; and, Site Development Permit for Phase I of the "Vantis" Commercial Development, located within the Aliso Viejo Planned Community, Planning Area 40, Sub-area F – Town Center.

**APPLICANT:** Shea Properties, Property Owner

Culbertson, Adams & Associates, Edwin Hsu, Authorized Agent

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**I. NATURE OF PROJECT:**

**BACKGROUND**

An Area Plan, AP99-07, was approved by the Orange County Planning Commission on August 8, 2000, Planning Application PA 99-0195, which amended a previous Area Plan for Planning Area 40 of the Aliso Viejo Planned Community. Area Plan AP99-07 increased the development gross floor area cap for Planning Area 40 from 3.6 million square feet to 4.4 million square feet and deleted the Target Floor Area Distribution Ratios for the entire Planning Area 40, Aliso Viejo Town Center, Aliso Viejo Planned Community.

Planning Application PA 99-0195 also included a conceptual site plan approval for sub-area F to demonstrate the distribution of development potential within the sub-area. The conceptual site plan demonstrated a probable development scenario for the distribution of 1,500,000 square feet of office and office support uses on the project site. However, the conceptual plan was not at the Site Development Permit level of detail for architecture, parking and circulation. A condition of approval was imposed by the Planning Commission that required subsequent submittal of a Site Development Permit for review and approval by the Director of Planning and Development Services Department for consistency with the approved conceptual plan. Thus, the applicant has submitted this Planning Application PA00-0149 for review of Phase I to comply with this previous condition of approval.

**MINOR AREA PLAN AMENDMENT**

The Area Plan Amendment for this application (PA00-0149) proposes to revise the grading concept for Sub-area F of Planning Area 40, Town Center, to accommodate refinements to the conceptual site plan design. This grading refinement re-orientes the project entry from Enterprise to run parallel with the frontage slope area, while keeping the same connection point. The changes proposed improve the

internal circulation for the while maintaining the identical connection point to Enterprise. County Subdivision and Traffic Services Division has reviewed and approved the proposed modification on site circulation and approves of the proposed modification. An additional modification to the Area Plan that was previously approved is the addition of a new traffic signal to be installed at the project primary entrance from Laguna Hills Drive. The new traffic signal location is a component of the Phase I development Site Development Permit. Traffic Services have also commented on the proposed first phase development component and that discussion is contained within Phase I discussion.

### **PHASE I SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT**

The Site Development Permit for Phase I of the Vantis project consists of two, 5-story buildings, totaling a combined 300,000 square feet on approximately 18 gross acres. Building A is proposed as 195,500 square feet and Building B is proposed at 104,500 square feet. It is this plan that is the primary request and therefore, it is this plan that is approved by this action. The project will obtain access from Laguna Hills Drive via a full access driveway with a traffic signal approximately midway between Grand Avenue to the south and Enterprise to the north. The access at Grand Avenue will be through the design of the existing traffic signal that leads to a round-a-bout that provides access to the subject project, an adjacent existing project, and continuation of Grand to the Town Center plaza area.

As stated, Phase I development is proposed to consist of two multi-story office buildings, 5 stories each. The buildings are proposed with a maximum height of 72 feet with mechanical screen enclosures projecting an additional 8 feet above. The building height is in compliance with the Town Center land use regulations for the Aliso Viejo Planned Community requirements. The development regulations do not establish a maximum building height, although the regulations do require the buildings to be set back from adjacent residential land uses a distance equal to the building height. Building A is proposed with a setback of 37 feet from Laguna Hills Drive and Building B is proposed with a setback of 41 feet from Laguna Hills Drive. Both of the buildings are adjacent to Laguna Hills Drive, which carries a right-of-way width of approximately 95 feet. Thus, there is a separation of approximately 120 feet or more between this project site and nearby residential land uses. Further there is a large manufactured landscaped slope on the opposite side of Laguna Hills Drive that separates the project from any adjacent residential uses. A variety of soft, low-reflective building textures and neutral colors will create the building's exterior. These two buildings in Phase I illustrate building undulation at the project entry off Laguna Hills Drive to provide an inviting entry statement that will be softened by proposed landscape plantings. The corner cut-off of the buildings within Phase I soften the building mass at the street entry.

The Phase I plan described above is proposed as the current project. However, in order to permit flexibility to meet market demands and potential buyer/tenant desires, an optional plan is also part of the project proposal. The optional plan includes the development of Buildings A and B at 150,000 square feet each. In the optional plan, the building's architecture is similar to the current project description and the total gross square footage for both buildings is identical, only the distribution of the square feet within each building changes.

If prior to the issuance of building permits, the applicant options to proceed with the construction of the optional building plan, a condition of approval has been included that requires the applicant to obtain approval of a Changed Plan. The Changed Plan application will include a verification of the conformity of the Changed Plan application to the proposed building locations and related parking calculations. Additionally, the condition of approval notes that the applicant's decision to pursue

either option must be made prior to the issuance of a building permit for either building or a precise grading permit for either pad. Preliminary grading permits may be issued prior to the applicants decision of which plan will be built at the risk of the applicant regarding any necessary revisions, rechecks or new grading (or related) permits, as determined applicable by the Manager, Subdivision and Grading Services Division.

### Parking and Circulation

The Phase I circulation plan will construct the initial elements of the overall master site plan for the Aliso Viejo Planning Area 40, Subarea F project. This will include a series of local access roadways and will ultimately include access from Enterprise to the future development phases of project. The internal circulation system will provide access to temporary surface parking areas as illustrated on the site plan. Phase I will provide surface parking for 1,200 off-street parking spaces minimum. Ultimately, a series of parking structures will be provided to accommodate overall parking for the master site plan development.

Although the proposed site plan meets the Zoning Code requirement of 4 spaces per 1,000 gross square feet of building area for offices uses, a parking modification is requested from the 5 spaces per 1,000 square feet required for Town Center uses as indicated within the Aliso Viejo Planned Community Text. Therefore, this project proposes 1,200 parking spaces rather than the PC Text required 1,500. Similar modifications for office projects in Aliso Viejo Town Center have been administratively approved on several previous occasions (such as Town Center Corporate Park, Summit South and Summit projects). Specifically, where the Town Center designation envisions a 5 spaces per 1,000 parking ratio in recognition of the mixed-use concept, this and previous office developments have been approved with a parking ratio of 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet.

Both the Phase I and master site plan incorporate the potential for the use of modern roundabouts within the internal circulation system. An additional roundabout traffic intersection is proposed for the intersection of Laguna Hills Drive and Grand Avenue that will contribute to the overall traffic flow for Town Center. Roundabouts will be required to be reviewed by Traffic Services for design and construction details in compliance with the approved project traffic study submitted for this project.

### Landscaping

A preliminary landscape plan is included within the project plans. The plan for Phase I calls for perimeter plant materials consisting of groundcover, shrubs and randomly clustered trees to surround the project site. The internal drives are proposed to be lined with palms and other trees to shape the project entry and circulation system. A condition of approval is included to require the submittal of a final landscape plan prior to issuance of a precise grading permit. The final landscape plan shall be in compliance with the project's preliminary landscape plan.

### Construction Phasing and Parking

Phase I includes only surface parking for the proposed buildings. The interim parking facilities will be located in locations on the site that are planned for future buildings and parking structures within the master site plan. The applicant has submitted a construction phasing parking plan that is included within the project application file. Verification of compliance with off-street parking requirements prior to approval of each subsequent phase and its corresponding site development permit shall be required.

The master conceptual site plan proposes phased and shared parking structure facilities that will be provided in accordance with building construction phasing. Eventually, all interim surface parking will be replaced by parking structures. A condition of approval has been included that shall require that, if the parking required for the proposed use(s) exceeds available parking within a phase or phases, approval of a Site Development Permit must be obtained by approval of the Zoning Administrator, or appropriate City decision-maker, for an off-street parking modification.

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**II. REFERENCE:** (Authority for Administrative action is given by what ordinance, regulation, etc.) Orange County Zoning Code sections and 7-9-150 "Discretionary Permits and Procedures" and the Aliso Viejo Planned Community Supplemental Text, Town Center regulations. Additionally, Area Plan AP99-07 allowed administrative approval of phased development within Subarea F of the Planning Area 40.

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**III. ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION:**

The proposed project is covered by Final EIR No. 088, previously certified on October 19, 1982 and Addendum PA 00-0149. The addendum is attached for consideration as a part of the application review. Prior to project approval, the decision-maker must assert that together, they are adequate to satisfy the requirements of CEQA for the proposed project. A Finding of adequacy is included within Appendix A of this report.

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**IV. CERTIFICATION:**

I hereby certify that the subject proposal has been Conditionally Approved as noted below.

Thomas B. Mathews, Director  
Planning and Development Services Department

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chad G. Brown, Chief  
CPSD/Site Planning Section

CB FOLDER: PA00-0149.adm

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendix A - Findings

Appendix B - Conditions of Approval

**APPEAL PROCEDURE**

Any interested person may appeal the decision of the Director on this permit to the Orange County Planning Commission within 15 calendar days of the decision upon submittal of required documents and a filing fee of \$ 760, filed at the Development Processing Center, 300 N. Flower St., Santa Ana.