

**COUNTY OF EL DORADO  
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT**



**Agenda of:**

December 14, 2023

**Staff:**

Benjamin Koff

**CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT**

**FILE NUMBER:** CUP23-0010/EDH Verizon Wireless Telecommunications Facility

**APPLICANT/AGENT:** Melissa Vios / Verizon Agent/Epic Wireless

**OWNER:** Gold Rush Hill, LLC.

**REQUEST:** A request for a Conditional Use Permit for the construction and ongoing operation of an unmanned, 97-foot-tall faux pine tree (monopine) wireless telecommunications facility and accessory items within an approximate 40-foot by 33-foot lease area. The telecommunications facility is proposed to include one (1) 97-foot tall monopine tower, nine (9) antennas (with three [3] future antennas proposed), six (6) remote radio units (with three [3] future remote radio units proposed), four (4) surge suppressors, one (1) 30-kilowatt (kW) diesel standby generator attached to a 300-gallon capacity tank, and three (3) equipment cabinets. No water or sewer service would be required for the proposed project as it is an unmanned facility.

**LOCATION:** The project is located on the west side of Hillsdale Circle, approximately 925 feet to the southwest of Robert J. Mathews Parkway, in the El Dorado Hills area, Supervisorial District 2 (Exhibits A and B).

**APN:** 117-084-005 (Exhibit C)

**ACREAGE:** 2 acres

**GENERAL PLAN:** Research & Development (R&D) (Exhibit D)

**ZONING:** Research & Development – Design Review Community Combining Zone (R&D-DC) (Exhibit E)

**ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT:** Negative Declaration prepared based on an Initial Study in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Exhibit G).

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the Planning Commission take the following actions:

1. Adopt the Negative Declaration based on the Initial Study prepared by staff in accordance with CEQA Guidelines; and
2. Approve Conditional Use Permit CUP23-0010 based on the Findings and subject to the Conditions of Approval as presented.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the construction and ongoing operation of an unmanned, 97-foot-tall faux pine tree (monopine) wireless telecommunications facility and accessory items within an approximate 40-foot by 33-foot lease area. The telecommunications facility is proposed to include one (1) 97-foot-tall monopine tower, nine (9) antennas (with three [3] future antennas proposed), six (6) remote radio units (with three [3] future remote radio units proposed), four (4) surge suppressors, one (1) 30kW diesel standby generator attached to a 300-gallon capacity tank, and three (3) equipment cabinets.

## **PROJECT INFORMATION**

**Tolling Timeframe:** CUP23-0010 was submitted on March 31, 2023. A determination of application incompleteness was made on April 11, 2023. Staff sent a second incomplete letter on May 10, 2023, informing the applicant that several items remained outstanding. The second round of incomplete submittal items was received on June 8, 2023. Staff reviewed these materials and on June 8, 2023 sent a follow-up completeness letter. Tolling time of 150 days is complete as of November 6, 2023. The County and the applicant executed a tolling agreement to extend the tolling timeframe to the regularly scheduled Planning Commission hearing of December 14, 2023. The tolling agreement was signed by the applicant and received on October 31, 2023. The executed agreement between Verizon Wireless and the County has extended the period for review of the application under the federal Telecommunications Act to January 2, 2024.

**Background:** The subject parcel has been developed by Tri-Square Construction, Inc. (Tri-Square), a company specializing in wireless infrastructure services. Tri-Square received a building permit approval for the current use on June 21, 2022. There was no discretionary submittal as the parcel allowed for the current warehouse and office uses by-right. This site has never included a cellular facility.

**Site Description and Location:** The project parcel, consisting of two (2) acres and situated 550 feet above mean sea level, is located on the west side of Hillsdale Circle, approximately 925 feet

southwest of Robert J. Mathews Parkway, in the El Dorado Hills area. The existing structure on the project parcel consists of a professional office and warehouse building. Access is provided via Hillsdale Circle, which enters and exits the parcel at the northeastern and southeastern corners. The proposed cellular facility will be located adjacent to the existing access points, in a flat area currently used for vehicle parking (Exhibit A). The sited lease area is surrounded by cleared, flat lands which does not include tree canopy or other landscaping which could aid in the concealment of the cellular facility. The parcel of concern borders similarly zoned R&D parcels to the south, north, and east. Carson Creek residential subdivision is to the west of the proposed project location, separated by Carson Crossing Road (Exhibits D and E). Outside of landscaped areas, the subject parcel is entirely paved with asphalt/concrete; there are no oak trees or native grasses present.

**Project Description:** A request for a CUP for the construction and ongoing operation of an unmanned, 97-foot-tall faux pine tree (monopine) wireless telecommunications facility and accessory items within an approximate 40-foot by 33-foot lease area. The telecommunications facility is proposed to include one (1) 97-foot tall monopine tower, nine (9) antennas (with three [3] future antennas proposed), six (6) remote radio units (with three [3] future remote radio units proposed), four (4) surge suppressors, one (1) 30kW diesel standby generator attached to a 300-gallon capacity tank, and three (3) equipment cabinets.

The proposed monopole will include three (3) sets of antennas and associated mounting equipment. The first set of antennas will be mounted at a centerline of 94 feet and will include nine (9) antennas; with three (3) future antennas anticipated. Mounted supporting equipment for the first set of antennas includes two (2) surge suppressors and six (6) remote radio units. The second and third set of antennas, mounted at centerlines of 76 feet and 63 feet, will allow for collocation of up to 12 antennas by other carriers.

The three (3) equipment cabinets will be set on a 13-foot by 8-foot concrete slab, positioned in the southern portion of the proposed lease area. A Verizon Wireless Global Positioning System (GPS) antenna is also proposed at this location. The concrete slab hosting the equipment will be setback from the adjacent property boundary lines by 12 feet.

The Unistrut frame will be located immediately south of the proposed monopine. Mounted on the frame will be two (2) surge suppressors and two (2) pull cans. Cables running between the monopine and the frame will be concealed from the elements within a proposed ice bridge. The Unistrut frame will be fed by underground conduits.

The 30kW standby back-up generator will be set on a 5-foot by 10-foot concrete slab positioned in the southwest corner of the proposed lease area. The generator will be setback from the adjacent property boundary lines by 12 feet. No supporting equipment will be mounted on the generator.

To aid in concealment of the proposed wireless facility, the proposed tower will be concealed as a monopine. All antennas, antenna mounts, antenna equipment, and fully exposed cables will be painted to match the proposed monopine and placed fully within the monopine branch radius. All antennas will also be covered with monopine socks. In addition to the concealment/stealth

taking place on the tower, a chain link fence with privacy slats will be installed around the lease area. A 40-foot by 10-foot landscape screening buffer is also proposed.

The project location was selected to provide coverage in this area's service gap. The proposed facility will service the gap that exists within the El Dorado Hills area and surrounding vicinity south of U.S. Highway 50.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

**Environmental Review:** Staff has prepared an Initial Study (Exhibit G). No mitigation measures have been applied to the project as the project has been found to have a less than significant impact to environmental resources.

According to the CEQA Guidelines Section 15075, filing a Notice of Determination (NOD) is required to initiate a 30-day statute of limitations on legal challenges to the County's environmental determination. The filing of the NOD is optional; however, not filing the NOD extends the statute of limitations for legal challenges to the project from 35 days to 180 days. Should the applicant choose to have the NOD filed and recorded, the applicant shall submit to Planning Services a recording fee of \$50.00 as required by the County Recorder, as well as the current 2023 California Department of Fish and Wildlife CEQA review fee for a Negative Declaration, \$2,764.00. This fee is used to help defray the cost of managing and protecting the State's fish and wildlife resources.

**General Plan Consistency:** Staff has determined that the proposed project is consistent with the applicable policies and requirements in the El Dorado County General Plan, as discussed below in Section 2.0, General Plan Findings.

**Zoning Ordinance Consistency:** Staff has determined that the proposed project is consistent with the applicable regulations and requirements in Title 130 of the El Dorado County Code, as discussed below in Sections 3.0 through 4.0, Zoning and Conditional Use Permit Findings.

## **AGENCY/PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The project was distributed for review to affected/interested agencies and departments, including the El Dorado County Air Quality Management District (AQMD), El Dorado County Department of Transportation (DOT), El Dorado County Environmental Management Department (EMD), CAL FIRE, El Dorado County Stormwater Division, El Dorado County Surveyor's Office, El Dorado Irrigation District (EID), Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), State of CA – Public Utilities Commission, and El Dorado County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). Comments were received from the AQMD, El Dorado County Surveyor's Office, El Dorado County Stormwater Division, and PG&E. These comments have been included in the Conditions of Approval section.

SUPPORT INFORMATION

Attachments to Staff Report:

- Findings
- Conditions of Approval
- Exhibit A.....Location/Vicinity Map
- Exhibit B .....Aerial Map
- Exhibit C .....Assessor’s Parcel Map
- Exhibit D.....General Plan Land Use Map
- Exhibit E .....Zoning Map
- Exhibit F.....Site Plan
- Exhibit G.....Proposed Negative Declaration and Initial Study
- Exhibit H.....Tolling Agreement
- Exhibit I .....Photosimulations
- Exhibit J .....Radio Frequency Report