

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



Agenda of: April 11, 2024

Staff: Matt Aselage

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REVISION

FILE NUMBER: CUP-R22-0031/Alhambra Drive Monopine

APPLICANT/AGENT: T-Mobile c/o Nancy Garera

OWNER: Crown Castle

REQUEST: Conditional Use Permit Revision to allow the construction and operation of a 10-foot-tall extension to an existing 40-foot-tall monopole along with six (6) antennas and supporting radios along with a total of four (4) equipment cabinets within the existing telecommunication facility lease area.

LOCATION: West side of Cameron Park Drive, approximately 50 feet south of the intersection with Camerado Drive, in the Cameron Park Community Region, Supervisorial District 2 (Exhibit A).

APN: 083-111-006 (Exhibit B)

ACREAGE: 0.25 acre

GENERAL PLAN: Commercial (C) (Exhibit C)

ZONING: General Commercial – Community Design Review (CG - DC) (Exhibit D)

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT: Categorically Exempt pursuant to Section 15303 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures).

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

1. Find the project exempt under Section 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines; and
2. Approve Conditional Use Permit Revision CUP-R22-0031 based on the Findings and subject to the Conditions of Approval as presented.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conditional Use Permit Revision to allow the construction and operation of a 10-foot-tall extension on an existing 40-foot-tall monopole along with six (6) antennas and supporting radios along with a total of four (4) equipment cabinets within the existing lease area.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Tolling Timeframe: CUP-R22-0031 was submitted on July 29, 2022. Pursuant to El Dorado County Title 130.40.130(B.6), this project is considered a new telecommunications facility due to a greater than ten percent height increase. New facilities are afforded a maximum of 150 days of review time. A determination of application incompleteness was made on August 5, 2022. Several submissions of requested documents occurred, with the last batch of documents having been received on August 12, 2022. Staff followed-up with the project proponents regarding inconsistencies with project documents and reports on August 19, 2022. The final required document for application completeness was received on October 6, 2022. Upon application completeness determination, there were 136 days left of tolling time. Planning staff received comments from the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Cameron Park Airport on the project during Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) review comment period. Comments as provided were determined to have potential CEQA impacts and/or conflicts with federal requirements. On November 9, 2022, staff sent an email regarding a potential CEQA impact per a potential conflict with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements. As the issues raised require the project proponents provide additional documentation per federal agency review, tolling time had been paused until receipt of the requested documentation. As of November 9, 2022, 48 days had tolled, leaving a total of 102 days left to toll. Staff received an email on January 18, 2024 which included confirmation of FAA review. The project is scheduled for a Planning Commission hearing on April 11, 2024. Upon the April 11, 2024 hearing date, the project would have tolled a total of 131 days. The project would have 19 days of tolling time left available on April 11, 2024. The project does not include a tolling agreement which would extend the project review time beyond April 29, 2024. If the project should be moved to the next available hearing date, April 25, 2024, then there would be five (5) days left to toll. No later hearing date would meet the tolling date requirement.

Background: The project site includes the current telecommunications facility as approved by the Planning Commission on May 9, 2002 under Special Use Permit S02-0007. Since the date of this approval, the site has received an eligibility review approval under Conditional Use Permit Revision CUP-R20-0011. This approval, approved on May 15, 2020, allowed for the installation of an emergency back-up generator. There have been no additional approvals since the May 2020 approval.

Site Description: The subject parcel, addressed as 3027 Alhambra Drive, is located on the west side of Cameron Park Drive, approximately 50 feet south of the intersection with Camerado Drive, in the Cameron Park Community Region. The proposed cellular facility will be located within the prior approved lease area (Exhibit F). The parcel of concern borders similarly zoned CG parcels on all sides. There are residentially zoned and developed lands within 500 feet of, but not directly adjacent to, the project site (Exhibit D).

Project Description: A Conditional Use Permit Revision to allow the construction and operation of a 10-foot-tall extension on an existing 40-foot-tall monopole along with six (6) antennas and supporting radios along with a total of four (4) equipment cabinets within the existing lease area. The proposed monopole would result in the removal of the existing concealment canister attached to the top 10 feet of the existing monopole. This removal would be replaced with a new 20-foot extension, allowing the monopole to host a total of six (6) new antennas and mounted support equipment. The total height of the structure, including this height extension request, would be 50 feet. Supporting ground equipment would result in a total of four (4) equipment cabinets. There would be no increase in the overall lease area, nor any additional development activity in any other areas of the subject property.

Given the antennae included with this proposed monopole extension surround the upper 15 feet of the monopole, it is assumed unlikely that any future co-location could overcome this structural impediment without additional height (Exhibit F).

The project applicant reviewed four (4) other sites that had potential to provide coverage in this area's service gap.

- 2995 Alhambra Drive was considered, but not pursued due to the requirement to develop a new site in proximity to residential uses.
- 970 Camerado Drive was considered, but the project could not meet setback requirements.
- 3051 Alhambra Drive was considered, but could not gain landlord interest.
- A fourth undeveloped parcel was considered but ruled out in favor of this co-location proposal.

The applicant states that the existing canister on the tower has become obsolete and unusable with current technology. For the service provider to meet current demands and improve capacity and services in the area, they need to replace the existing antennas and ancillary equipment. This equipment, however, does not fit within a monopole canister; thus, the need to remove the canister and increase the height of the tower by 10 feet so that they can flush mount the antennas and ancillary equipment radios and paint them to match the existing building so that the tower still blends in with the surroundings.

The proposed facility does not exceed Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requirements for radio frequency (RF), as analyzed with the RF Report (Exhibit H).

STAFF ANALYSIS

Environmental Review: Conditional Use Permit Revision CUP-R22-0031 has been found Categorically Exempt pursuant to Section 15303, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, of the CEQA Guidelines. The proposed use would result in a 10-foot height increase to the currently existing 40-foot-tall monopole facility. This minor new construction is consistent with the allowances pursuant to Section 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines. Filing of a Notice of Exemption is required in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15062 to initiate a 35-day statute of limitations on legal challenges to the County's decision that the project is exempt from CEQA. The applicant shall submit a \$50.00 recording fee to the Planning Division in order for the County Recorder to file the Notice of Exemption.

Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC)/Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Review: The project was reviewed by the Cameron Park Airport during Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) review comment period. The Cameron Park Airport found that the monopole extension would conflict with height requirements for developments in proximity to the Cameron Park Airport. More specifically, the monopole extension would exceed a 7:1 transition slope as identified in Exhibit I. The Cameron Park Airport requested the project submit an FAA request form 7460-1 (Notice or Proposed Construction or Alteration) be filed with the FAA. The project proponents submitted the requested documentation to the FAA. The FAA issued a determination of no hazard to air navigation on November 13, 2023 (Exhibit J). Although the FAA found no hazard resulting from the project as proposed, the ALUC finds that the project would conflict with the height requirements imposed per the 7:1 transition slope. Given the competing findings, the Cameron Park Airport has requested that conditions of approval require notice directly to the Cameron Park Airport when construction activities (including the use of cranes or other construction equipment) should exceed the height of the monopole.

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 5.0, Zoning, Conditional Use, and Design Review Findings.

SUPPORT INFORMATION

Attachments to Staff Report:

Findings
Conditions of Approval

Exhibit A.....Location Map
Exhibit B.....Assessor’s Parcel Map
Exhibit C.....Land Use Designation Map
Exhibit D.....Zoning Designation Map
Exhibit E.....Aerial Site Map
Exhibit F.....Site Plan
Exhibit G.....Elevations
Exhibit H.....Radio Frequency (RF) Report
Exhibit I.....Cameron Park Airport Review Findings
Exhibit J.....Federal Aviation Administration Determination

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