

City of Needles, California

Employee Report

☒ PLANNING COMMISSION

☒ Regular

Meeting Date: January 3, 2024

Title: Planning Commission Resolution No. 01-03-2024-PC approving a Special Use Permit, for a new 160-foot-high wireless telecommunication facility (monopole) for Verizon Wireless located on APN: 0660-162-07-0000 on National Old Trails Highway (Zoning Designation C-3 Highway Commercial).

Background: The Applicant, Jeremy Siegel with APC Towers, is proposing a 160-high wireless telecommunication tower (monopole) with cabinets, associated equipment and a 50'x50' lease area at the parcel known as APN 0660-162-07. The lease area of the proposed tower is located approximately 24-feet from the existing 102-foot AT&T wireless communications facility located at the subject site and the proposed monopole would have the capacity to accommodate four additional wireless carriers. Spike's Old 66 Storage facility is located to the south of the project site, while vacant land is located to the north and a parcel with an existing lattice wireless communications facility beyond with National Old Trails Highway being located to the west of the project site. The new installation would substantially boost wireless coverage to both the local and surrounding area(s) without implementing significant or invasive aesthetic alterations.

As shown in the plan set, the project would involve the installation of new 160' -0" Monopole that can accommodate four additional wireless carriers along with the installation of a chain link fence enclosure w/ privacy slats around the proposed 50' x 50' lease area, and installation of multiple Verizon Antennas and associated equipment. Access to the facility will be provided via a 10' wide easement from National Old Trails Highway. The plan set also includes elevations of the proposed tower.

The Table of Permissible Uses, City Code Section 96.01, allows cell towers in excess of 50 feet in the C-3 Highway Commercial Zone with a masking requirement. Masking options typically include fencing with privacy slats, and landscaping with trees and bushes. Photos taken in various locations surrounding the project site are included as "Exhibit A", showing the proposed tower in relation to the existing surrounding area, including the nearby existing wireless communication facilities. The proposed tower would be 40' higher than the existing tower at the subject site.

For security purposes, chain link fencing with privacy slats and installation of anti-climbing devices are conditioned on the project. A driveway to the cell tower location is also a condition of the project as the applicant is proposing a 10' wide access easement at the subject site for access to the tower.

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Special Use Permit Findings.

In accordance with Section 94.07, the Planning Commission must make the following findings for a Special Use Permit:

- A. That the requested permit is within its jurisdiction according to the table of permissible uses.
- B. The application is complete.
- C. The development is in general conformity with the Needles General Plan
- D. The use will not materially endanger the public health or safety.
- E. That the project overall is consistent with the preceding findings.

Public Notification: A public hearing notice was published in the Needles Desert Star on Wednesday, December 20, 2023. Notices were sent to property owners within 300 feet of the proposed project and posted in two conspicuous locations.

Critical Timeline: The applicant's anticipated timeline is to begin installation as soon as possible.

Fiscal Impact: None.

Environmental: This project is categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act, CEQA Guidelines, Section 15303, (new construction or conversion of small structures) of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (State CEQA Guidelines). The project consists of a CUP to construct and operate a wireless communications facility that includes a 160' high tower and a 50'x50' area for associated equipment.

Recommendation: Approve Resolution No. 01-03-2024-PC approving a Special Use Permit for a 160 ft. high Wireless Communications Facility, at the parcel known as APN 0660-162-07-0000, located off National Old Trails Highway, North of I-40, in the vicinity of Spikes Old 66 Storage

Submitted By: Tamara Harrison, Contract Planner

City Management Review: _____ **Date:** _____

Approved: ☐

Not Approved: ☐

Tabled: ☐

Other: ☐

Agenda Item: _____