



City of Needles, California Request for City Council Action

☐ CITY COUNCIL ☒ PLANNING COMMISSION ☒ Regular ☐ Special

MEETING DATE: March 5, 2025

TITLE: Planning Commission Resolution No. 03-05-2025-PC recommending City Council approval of a Conditional Use Permit for the construction of a new 185-foot wireless telecommunication facility (monopole) including associated equipment within a 50' x 50' enclosed lease area for Verizon Wireless, located south of National Old Trails Highway and north of I-40 (APN: 0660-162-07-0000), within the Highway Commercial (C-3) Land Use Zoning Designation.

APPLICANT: Jeremy Siegel, on behalf of APC Towers, 8601 Six Forks Road, Suite 250, Raleigh, NC 27615

LOCATION: The project site is located south of National Old Trails Highway and north of I-40, Needles Ca 92363 (APN 0660-162-07-0000).

BACKGROUND: A Special Use Permit (Resolution No. 01-03-2024-PC) for a 160-foot wireless communications facility (monopole) was approved by the Planning Commission of the City of Needles on January 3, 2024. APC Towers has submitted a Conditional Use Permit application to request an amendment to the approved project to support an increase in height of the monopole by 25'. The additional height is necessary to enhance wireless coverage, improve network reliability, and accommodate future co-location of multiple carriers, thereby reducing the need for additional towers in the vicinity.

The applicant, Jeremy Siegel with APC Towers, is proposing a 185-foot wireless telecommunication tower (monopole) with cabinets, associated equipment, within a 50' x 50' enclosed lease area at a parcel located south of National Old Trails Highway and north of I-40 (APN: 0660-162-07-0000). The lease area for the proposed tower is approximately 24 feet from the existing 102-foot AT&T wireless communications facility at the site. The proposed monopole would have the capacity to accommodate five additional wireless carriers. Spike's Old 66 Storage facility is located south of the project site, while vacant land is to the north. Further north, beyond the vacant land, there is an existing lattice wireless communications facility. National Old Trails Highway is situated north of the project site. The new installation would significantly enhance wireless coverage in both the local and surrounding areas without introducing major or intrusive aesthetic changes.

As shown in the plan set, the project includes the installation of a new 185-foot monopole, which can accommodate five additional wireless carriers, along with the construction of 8-foot chain-link fence enclosure with privacy slats around the 50' x 50' lease area. Additionally, the project involves the installation of multiple Verizon antennas and associated equipment. Access to the facility will be by means of a 10-foot-wide access easement and driveway from National Old Trails Highway. The plan set also includes elevations of the proposed tower.

The design and configuration of the wireless telecommunication facility aim to minimize adverse aesthetic, health, safety, and economic impacts by being located in a non-residential area, resulting in minimal impact on the City. According to the Table of Permissible Uses (City Code Section 96.01), cell towers exceeding 50 feet are permitted in the C-3 Highway Commercial Zone, subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Attachment 3 includes photographs taken from various locations surrounding the project site, showing the proposed tower in relation to the existing surroundings, including

nearby wireless communication facilities. The proposed tower would be 65 feet taller than the existing tower at the site.

The project site is physically suitable in size and shape to accommodate the proposed wireless telecommunication facility. The project is required to maintain compliance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations in addition to applicable building codes, zoning codes, fire codes, and standards, ensuring a safe, well-designed, and visually appropriate development.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) FINDINGS: In accordance with Section 94.06, the Planning Commission must make the following findings to recommend approval of a conditional use permit:

1. The requested permit is conditionally within its jurisdiction according to the table of permissible uses.
2. The application is complete
3. The use will not endanger public health or safety.
4. The development will be in conformity with the Needles General Plan.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION: A public hearing notice was published in the Needles Desert Star on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, and posted in two conspicuous locations. Notices were sent to property owners within 300' of the proposed project site.

ENVIRONMENTAL: CEQA Compliance – Categorical Exemption (Section 15303, Class 3): The proposed project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption 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 Conditional Use Permit for the construction of 185-foot wireless telecommunication tower (monopole) and associated equipment within a 50' x 50' enclosed lease area.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of Planning Commission Resolution No. 03-05-2025-PC recommending City Council approval of a Conditional Use Permit, for the construction of a new 185-foot wireless telecommunication facility (monopole) for Verizon Wireless, located south of National Old Trails Highway and north of I-40 (APN: 0660-162-07-0000), within the Highway Commercial (C-3) Land Use Zoning Designation.

SUBMITTED BY: Irene Romero, City Planner

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Project Plans
3. Photo Simulations
4. Planning Commission Resolution, Findings, and Conditions of Approval
5. CUP Application

City Manager Approval: Patrick J. Martinez

Date: 2/27/2025

Other Department Approval (when required): _____

Date: _____

Approved: ☐

Not Approved: ☐

Tabled: ☐

Other: ☐