



**CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA
REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

AGENDA ITEM

Report: Wireless Telecommunications Facility

Action: Motion to Approve Wireless Telecommunications Facility Permit No. PWTF1910341

Location: 250 Mesa Lila Road / APN 5630-029-002

Legal Description: A Portion of J.G. Hendrickson 332.91 acres and John Turner 303.61 acres allotments of V. Beaudry's Mountains in Section 5, Township 1 North, Range 13 West in Sections 31 and 32, Township 2 North, Range 13 West.

Case Number: PWTF1910341

Applicant: Justin Robertson, MMI Titan Inc. for Crown Castle

Owner: Mark S. & Emily G. Collins Family Trust

Approved for April 17, 2024

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

Prepared by:
Cassandra Pruettt, AICP, Senior Planner

Reviewed by:
Erik Krause, Deputy Director of Community Development

SUMMARY

The applicant is proposing to continue operating an existing Wireless Telecommunications Facility that was constructed on the site in 1990 and 2006. The

facility consists of one 140-foot-tall self-support lattice tower with a 540 SF equipment building, one 120-foot-high guy-wired lattice tower with a 312 SF, 12-foot high equipment building, a third equipment building (that belonged to a tower which is no longer on the site), and a 500-gallon propane tank for the emergency generator. The site is located on an approximately 12.5-acre (544,500 SF) site in the ROS-III Zone (Residential Open Space, Floor Area Ratio District III). Both towers are categorized as Class 4 Antennas, which require review by the Planning Commission when located in a residential zone.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The project is exempt from environmental review as a Class 1 “Existing Facility” exemption pursuant to section 15301 of the State CEQA Guidelines, because the project involves no changes to an existing facility on the subject site.

Note: Pursuant to Section 704(a), Title 7 of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996, only the Federal Government may regulate the environmental effects of radio frequency emissions from wireless telecommunications facilities.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Comments were received from the City’s Wireless Systems Manager recommending an electrical and structural inspection of the site, a structural analysis of the antenna support structures (towers), and confirmation of the ground system efficacy (see Exhibit 1 for further details). A condition of approval is included to address this comment. An additional condition of approval requires the facility to obtain any other required City permits (e.g., from Building, Fire, Public Works Engineering, Glendale Water and Power, etc.) and to comply with their regulations in terms of ongoing site maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Division staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the Motion to approve PWTF1910341 subject to the following conditions:

1. That the development shall be in substantial accord with the plans submitted with the application except for any modifications as may be required to meet specific Code standards or other conditions stipulated herein to the satisfaction of the Director of Community Development.
2. That all necessary permits (i.e., Building, Fire, Public Works Engineering, Glendale Water and Power, etc.) shall be obtained from the City and all construction shall be in compliance with the Glendale Building Code and all other applicable regulations.

3. The facility shall comply with all applicable City regulations (e.g., Building, Fire, Public Works Engineering, Glendale Water and Power, etc.) regarding maintenance of the site.
4. That all licenses, permits as required or approvals from Federal, State, County or City authorities, including the City Clerk, shall be obtained and kept current at all times.
5. That an electrical and structural inspection shall be conducted, and a structural analysis of the antenna support structures (towers) shall be submitted to the satisfaction of the City's Wireless Systems Manager, by October 17, 2024, demonstrating compliance with the National Electrical Code and the guidelines of the TIA-222 covering structural standard for antenna supporting structure, and demonstrating the efficacy of the ground system.
6. That the premises shall be made available and accessible to any authorized City personnel (e.g., Building, Fire, Police, Planning and Neighborhood Services, etc.) for inspection to ascertain that all conditions of approval are in compliance.
7. That any modification to these plans must be approved by the Planning Division staff prior to the changes on the working drawings or in the field. Changes considered substantial by Planning staff must be returned for review by the Planning Commission. The determination of whether a change is substantial shall be made by the Director of Community Development.
8. That any transmissions shall not produce noise or other disturbances, which would interfere with normal activities in the area. The opinion of the Director of Community Development shall determine or settle disputes concerning this condition.
9. That the facility must comply with the noise standards in the Glendale Noise Ordinance (Glendale Municipal Code Section 8.36) of a maximum 60 dBA at any time. Documentation of maximum noise levels for all equipment must be provided that demonstrate compliance.
10. That any equipment service lighting shall be directed into the work area and shielded away from adjacent properties.
11. That the premises be maintained in a clean and orderly condition.
12. That the authorization granted herein shall be valid for a period of 10 years until **April 17, 2034**, until at which time, a reapplication must be made prior to the expiration date.

SITE CONTEXT

General Plan: Very Low Density/Open Space Residential

Zone: Residential Open Space, Floor Area Ratio District III

Description of Existing Properties and Uses: The approximately 12.5-acre site is located within the Verdugo Mountains, on a protected ridgeline, and features two lattice towers, three associated equipment buildings, and a propane tank, in the ROS-III (Residential Open Space, Floor Area Ratio District III Zone).

Neighboring Zones and Uses:

	Zoning	Existing Uses
North	Special Recreation (SR)	Vacant City-owned land
South	SR	Vacant City-owned land
East	SR	Vacant City-owned land
West	SR	Vacant land at the north portion, Vacant City-owned land at the south portion
Project Site	ROS-III	Wireless Telecommunications Facility

Previous Permits/Entitlements for the Site:

April 8, 2014 – Building permit number BB1407588 for removal of 140' lattice tower (foundation to remain)

November 6, 2013 – Building permit number BB1324634 for installation of six antennas and coax on an existing lattice tower.

January 17, 2010 – Building permit number BB20090625 for installation of Tower A-3

July 21, 2009 – Building permit number BB20090626 for installation of Tower A-1, and building permit number BB20090624 for installation of Tower A-2

June 8, 2009 – Conditional Use Permit Case Number PCUP 2008-050 to co-locate wireless communication equipment onto an existing 140' tower, install two ground mounted satellite dishes, and mount two global positioning antennas onto the existing equipment shelter.

Feb 13, 2006 – Building permit number BB20060135 for a new radio tower and BB20060134 for a new 18'x30' shelter.

Aug 10, 2004 – Building permit number BB20041314 for installation of a cellular site (replace existing tower with 140' tower).

May 18, 2004 – Conditional Use Permit No. 10628-CU to install telecommunications equipment on existing infrastructure, including a radio tower and equipment building. Telecommunications equipment is already located on or within the existing infrastructure. Expired May 31, 2011.

December 8, 2002 – Conditional Use Permit No. 10408-CU to permit the maintenance and operation of two radio towers, two shelters, numerous antennae, and related cables and infrastructure. Expired October 15, 2009.

January 11, 2000 – Conditional Use Permit No. 9939-CU to authorize maintenance of 12 antennae attached to an existing radio tower and 13 equipment cabinets located within the existing communications equipment building.

October 27, 1999 – Building permit number BB19990621 for 11 paging antennas and 13 equipment cabinets.

March 2, 1999 – Building permit number B10069110 for the installation of a propane tank.

December 14, 1992 – Conditional Use Permit No. 9026-CU to allow the addition of a sector antenna containing four directional antennas that will be mounted to the side of an existing building which includes the installation of communication equipment that will be housed inside the existing equipment building.

September 11, 1990 – Variance Case No. 8345-S to permit the addition of four unscreened dish antennas to an existing 140' radio tower.

September 11, 1990 – Conditional Use Permit No. 8344-CU (revised) to permit the addition of four microwave dishes to an existing radio tower.

February 27, 1990 – Building permit number 4567B012 for a 140' free-standing tower.

February 27, 1990 – Building permit number 4568B012 for an 826 SF one-story cement block communication building.

August 16, 1988 – Conditional Use Permit No. 8344-CU to permit a radio communications facility including a new 1,000 square-foot building and a new radio tower.

April 28, 1986 – Variance Case No. 7951-U to permit the continued operation of an existing radio transmission facility.

May 24, 1979 – Variance Case No. 6775-U to establish a radio repeater relay station in the R1R (Restricted One-Family) Zone.

September 7, 1973 – Building permit number 95955 for a standby generating plant.

June 8 – 1973 – Variance Case No. 5548-U to erect a standby generator room and to maintain existing radio facilities.

January 2, 1964 – Variance Case No. 2883-U to modify and reposition existing radio telephone tower.

December 2, 1958 – Conditional Use Permit to permit relay stations.

Files Available for Review:

All files and exhibits relative to the subject Case have been available for review in the Community Development Department – Planning Division, are available at this hearing, and by reference are hereby made part of the record.

BACKGROUND

The applicant is proposing to continue operating an existing Wireless Telecommunications Facility that was constructed on the site in 1990 and 2006. The facility consists of one 140-foot-tall self-support lattice tower with a 540 SF equipment building, one 120-foot-tall guy-wired lattice tower with a 312 SF, 12-foot-high equipment building, a third equipment building (that belonged to a tower which is no longer on the site), and a 500-gallon propane tank for the emergency generator. The site is located on an approximately 12.5-acre (544,500 SF) site located in the ROS-III Zone (Residential Open Space, Floor Area Ratio District III). Both towers are categorized as Class 4 Antennas, which require review by the Planning Commission when located in a residential zone.

A detailed list of equipment located on the two towers and within the three equipment buildings is provided on page C3.1 and C3.2 of the architectural plan set submitted with the application (see Exhibit 5).

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The required findings of fact and analysis are described below pursuant to GMC Section 30.48.040.

To the maximum extent reasonably feasible, and with the recommended conditions of approval, the proposed wireless telecommunications facility has been designed to achieve compatibility with the community.

The subject lot is an irregularly shaped property located on a primary ridgeline in the Verdugo Mountains, located in the ROS-III Zone (Residential Open Space Floor Area

Ratio District III) and surrounded by SR (Special Recreation) zoned, open space properties. The existing land use is Wireless Telecommunications Facility. The site has been used continuously as a wireless facility for over 30 years, with the existing towers being installed in 1990 and 2006.

The existing 140' self-support tower and the 120' tall, guyed lattice tower are currently outfitted with equipment and antennas from multiple users. Users include cellular phone telecommunication, radio broadcasting, first responders, 9-1-1 response services, ambulance transport, private taxi, paging, and nonprofit media. Community compatibility does not appear to be an issue as the use has existed for decades without any camouflaging techniques. There are no residential land uses within 1,000 feet of the subject property. Given the extensive height of the subject towers, screening the facility is not available option as there are no other natural features, structures, or buildings with the same stature.

Alternative configurations will not increase community compatibility or are not reasonably feasible. Each individual user's equipment on the tower has been placed with respect to specific coverage or line-of-sight requirements. Reconfiguring the equipment on the tower will not increase community compatibility, as appearance of the tower will not substantially change, or achieve a more compatible aesthetic. There are no modifications requested by this application that will alter the appearance of the wireless telecommunications facility as it currently exists.

Alternative locations on the site will not increase community compatibility or are not reasonably feasible. The existing location of the towers are at the highest grade on the subject site. Alternative locations on the site will not increase community compatibility as the tower was constructed at the furthest point from residential uses. The entire facility is located at the northern-most portion of the lot to take advantage of and maximize the property's physical characteristics and its ability to meet generalized coverage and line-of-sight goals for the users and/or tenants.

The location of the wireless telecommunications facility on alternative sites will not increase community compatibility or is not reasonably feasible. Crown Castle had previously identified and evaluated two alternative sites, Flint Peak and Mount Lukens. Both were reviewed but subsequently disqualified due to capacity and coverage limitations. Because the subject facility is existing, the continued operation of the existing facility will make the least impact to the scenic vista. Relocating the facility will require modification to undisturbed areas and cause unnecessary clearing and grading to the ridgelines in the area.

The facility is necessary to close a significant gap in coverage. While the 140'-tall tower has nine individual user's equipment attached and the 120'-tall tower has three tenants, only one of the user's, T-Mobile, has equipment on the 120'-tall tower that provides conventional wireless telecommunication services for cellular phone purposes. Due to the location and physical characteristics of the property, without the T-Mobile antenna, there would be a significant gap in coverage (see Exhibit 5). The remaining eleven

users provide radio and nonprofit media broadcasting, and land mobile radio functions such as 9-1-1 response services, ambulance transport, private taxi, and paging.

The applicant has submitted a statement of its willingness to allow other carriers to co-locate on the existing wireless telecommunications facility wherever technically and economically feasible and where co-location would not harm community compatibility. Further, as evidenced by the twelve existing tenants on the existing towers, Crown Castle's core business is to maximize the number of co-locators and tenants on the towers to minimize the need for additional sites. This facility is actively marketed to all conventional and nonconventional users of vertical real estate as a location available to serve the needs of the industry.

Noise generated by equipment will not be unnecessary, excessive, annoying nor be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare. There are no buildings, structures, or residential land uses within 1,000 feet of the Crown Castle Wireless Telecommunications Facility. The existing wireless telecommunications facility noise level is minimal and cannot be heard from the surrounding areas. A condition of approval requires the facility to remain in compliance with the City's Noise Ordinance (Glendale Municipal Code Section 8.36).

The facility complies with all of the requirements of state and federal laws, regulations and orders. The existing site complies with all requirements of the state and federal regulations. Included with the application are Site Compliance Report generated by Site Safe, certifying its compliance to FCC rules and regulations, as described in OET Bulletin 62.

EXHIBITS

1. Department Responses to Request for Comments
2. Location Map
3. Photos
4. Colored Site Plan
5. Architectural Plans
6. Coverage Map