



**CITY OF
TUCSON**
ZONING
EXAMINER'S
OFFICE

Preliminary Report

June 5, 2015

Adam Brixius
Pinnacle Consulting
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Gilbert, AZ 85233

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Scottsdale, AZ 85258

**SUBJECT: SE-15-14 Verizon – Grant Road
Public Hearing: May 28, 2015**

Dear Mr. Brixius,

Pursuant to the City of Tucson Unified Development Code and the Zoning Examiner's Rules of Procedures (Resolution No. 9428), this letter constitutes written notification of the Zoning Examiner's summary of findings for rezoning case SE-15-14 Verizon – Grant Road. At the expiration of 14 days of the conclusion of the public hearing, the Zoning Examiner's Report (complete with background information, public hearing summary, findings of fact, conclusion, recommendation, and public hearing minutes) to the Mayor and Council shall be filed with the City Manager. A copy of that report can be obtained from either the Planning and Development Services Department (791-5550) or the City Clerk.

If you or any party believes that the Zoning Examiner's recommendation is based on errors of procedure or fact, a written request to the Zoning Examiner for review and reconsideration may be made within 14 days of the conclusion of the public hearing.

The public hearing held by the Zoning Examiner shall constitute the public hearing by the Mayor and Council. However, any person may request a new public hearing before the Mayor and Council. A request for a new public hearing must be filed in writing with the City Clerk within 14 days of the close of the Zoning Examiner's public hearing.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This is a request by Adam Brixius of Pinnacle Consulting, on behalf of Verizon Wireless, for approval of a wireless communication facility. The special exception site is located approximately 96 feet north of Grant Road and 67 feet west of Columbus Boulevard. The preliminary development plan proposes a wireless communication tower with twelve antenna panels concealed within an artificial palm tree (monopalm), 60 feet in height. The facility will be placed within an approximately 520 square foot lease area in the northwestern portion of the 0.23 acre site.

The special exception site is currently developed with a retail land use in the C-1 commercial zone. To the north, are retail and multi-family residential uses, zoned C-1 and R-2. To the south and east are automotive uses, zoned C-2 and C-1. To the west are office uses, zoned C-1. Vehicular access to the wireless communications facility is through the existing parking lot and curb cut from Columbus Boulevard. According to the *Major Streets and Routes Plan*, Grant Road is designated as an arterial street and Columbus is designated as a collector street. The Pima Association of Governments - Transportation Planning Division (PAG-TPD) estimates that the proposed development will not generate additional measurable vehicle trips per day. Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT) anticipates the planned Grant Road Improvement Project will only have minimal impacts at the southeast corner of the site. The cell tower should not be impacted in any way by the proposed improvements.

Land use policy direction for this area is provided by the *Grant - Alvernon Area Plan (GAAP)* and *Plan Tucson*. The rezoning site is located within a mixed-use center as identified on the Future Growth Scenario Map of *Plan Tucson*. Mixed-use centers combine a variety of housing options, retail, services, office, and public gathering places, located close to each other, providing occupants of the center and the residents and workers in the surrounding neighborhoods with local access to goods and services. *Plan Tucson* policies protect established residential neighborhoods by supporting compatible development, including non-residential uses, where the scale and intensity of use is compatible with adjacent uses. Policy LT28.1.2 requires that, if possible, wireless communication facilities be located, installed and maintained to minimize visual impacts and preserve views.

The special exception site is located within an Office, Commercial, High-Density Residential area as identified in the *GAAP*. For these areas, the plan contains guidance on wireless communication facilities in Office and Commercial Land Use Policy 6, which discourages wireless communication antenna arrays unless concealed, disguised, or collocated on existing buildings or structures. Land Use, Office and Commercial Land Use Policy 2 encourages incorporating appropriate design elements and buffering techniques during the zoning application and associated land review processes.

The proposed ground equipment is located within an area screened by an eight (8) foot tall chain link fence. A proposed diesel generator and cabinet will be located on a concrete pad. A twelve foot wide access easement for the WCF site will be provided from Columbus Boulevard. The access easement is located within an existing driveway. The nearest residential unit is located approximately 115 feet to the north of the proposed WCF site.

The proposed monopalm will include four antennas per sector with three sectors for a total of twelve antennas. The applicant has submitted a photo-simulation of the monopalm showing that the antennas concealed by the artificial fronds of the monopalm's crown. The monopalm will be set back from Columbus Boulevard by approximately 67 feet and 96 feet from Grant Road.

The monopalm will be visible from the surrounding residential neighborhoods, commercial development, as well as from the adjacent streets. The proposed monopalm stealth design reduces the visible impacts to the neighborhood, and according to the photo- simulation submitted by the applicant, the monopalm will be visible from the single-family residential neighborhood to the north. The nearest residence is north of the site in R-2 zoning approximately 115 feet from the proposed location of the monopalm. There are some desert trees and palm trees in the general area, including one tall palm tree of approximately 40 feet tall located about 350 feet to the east of the site, two to the south (approximately 40 feet tall and 500 feet away), and one to the north (approximately 30 feet tall and 260 feet away). These trees allow the monopalm to blend in when viewed from a distance. Staff recommends that any existing on-site palm tree, native tree or landscape planting disturbed during the monopalm or ground equipment installation be replaced in accordance with the UDC and heat island mitigation.

The applicant proposes to place the monopalm and ground equipment in a 520 square foot lease area in the northwest corner of the parcel, which is currently a portion of the parking lot for Arizona Economy Insurance. Ground equipment will be housed inside an equipment cabinet located next to a diesel generator, both to be located on a concrete slab. Staff recommends that WCF use an 8 foot masonry wall in place of the chain-link fence to help mitigate noise from the generator and to help mitigate the equipment's visual impact on the surrounding areas. Should the masonry wall pose traffic turning problems, as determined by staff, a chain-link enclosure will be an acceptable alternative to the proposed recommendation. Staff also recommends the 8 foot masonry wall to be painted in neutral desert colors or to match the surrounding existing buildings.

In terms of wireless communication facilities, a stealth application is one that disguises the appearance of the pole and antennas to look like an element of the built or natural landscape, which could typically occur at the chosen location. A stealth application should be as close as possible in scale and appearance to the object it is disguised as, with no obvious unnatural elements. The success of a

stealth application is dependent on the ability of the design and construction of the cellular site to fit into its surroundings to such a degree that it is not noticeable. Scale and proportion, site design, color, and materials, are particularly important in stealth applications insofar as they contribute, or do not contribute, to the ability of the facility to be as unobtrusive as possible. To ensure a successful stealth monopine at this location, the following standards are recommended:

- The monopalm shall not exceed 60 feet in height at top of fronds;
- The monopalm shall include crown and apple;
- The pole shall be covered with cladding (bark) from the pineapple to bottom of pole, and painted to resemble a live palm;
- There shall be a minimum of 65 fronds ranging in length from seven (7) feet to ten (10) feet and placed to extend above, below and between antenna panels;
- Replacement of lost/damaged fronts to be completed within ten working days of observation and fronds shall be colored to match live fronds as closely as possible;
- All cables shall be run inside the pole, with no foot pegs other visible appurtenances;
- All wire ports shall be concealed behind the antennas and all equipment shall be mounted behind the antenna panels;
- Antenna panels shall be painted with a light/shade pattern to better camouflage them;
- Ground equipment to be screened by an existing masonry wall (provide elevation of street views).
- Maximum antenna size is ninety-nine (99) inches in length, eighteen (18) inches in width, and eight (8) inches in depth,
- Antenna standoff from the pole shall not exceed thirty (30) inches.

The applicant's proposal requires approval as a Mayor and Council Special Exception and must meet the Use-Specific Standards of UDC Sections 4.9.13.0 and 4.9.4.1.2, .3, and .7. The Mayor and Council may forward the request to the Design Review Board for design review and recommendation.

4.9.4.1.7

- a. Wireless communication antennas, provided:
- (1) The tower or antennas are not permitted by other provision of this Section.
 - (2) New towers require a minimum separation of one mile from any existing tower, regardless of ownership, unless documentation establishes that no practical alternative exists.

(3) All appropriate measures shall be taken to conceal or disguise the tower and antenna from external view.

(4) All appropriate measures shall be taken to reduce the negative proliferation of visible towers and antennae by the collocation of new antennae on existing towers or with the facilities of other providers which are located or planned for development within the proposed service area.

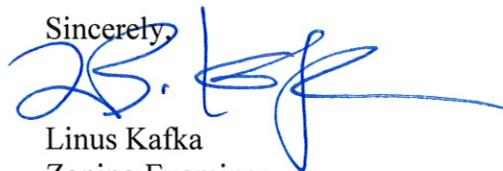
(5) Notice shall be provided to all agents designated at least 15 days prior to the date of the public hearing before the Zoning Examiner.

CONCLUSION

The proposed stealth tower is in compliance with the performance criteria for a wireless communication facility. The special exception request is consistent with the policy direction in the *Grant-Alvernon Area Plan* and *Plan Tucson*, which support development designed to be compatible with and sensitive to surrounding land uses. The proposed wireless facility has been designed to blend in with the surroundings and does not conflict with plan policies. Subject to compliance with the attached preliminary conditions, approval of the requested special exception is appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION

The Zoning Examiner recommends approval of the Special Exception request subject to the proposed preliminary conditions.

Sincerely,

Linus Kafka
Zoning Examiner

ATTACHMENTS:

Case Location Map
Rezoning Case Map

cc: City of Tucson Mayor and Council

PROCEDURAL

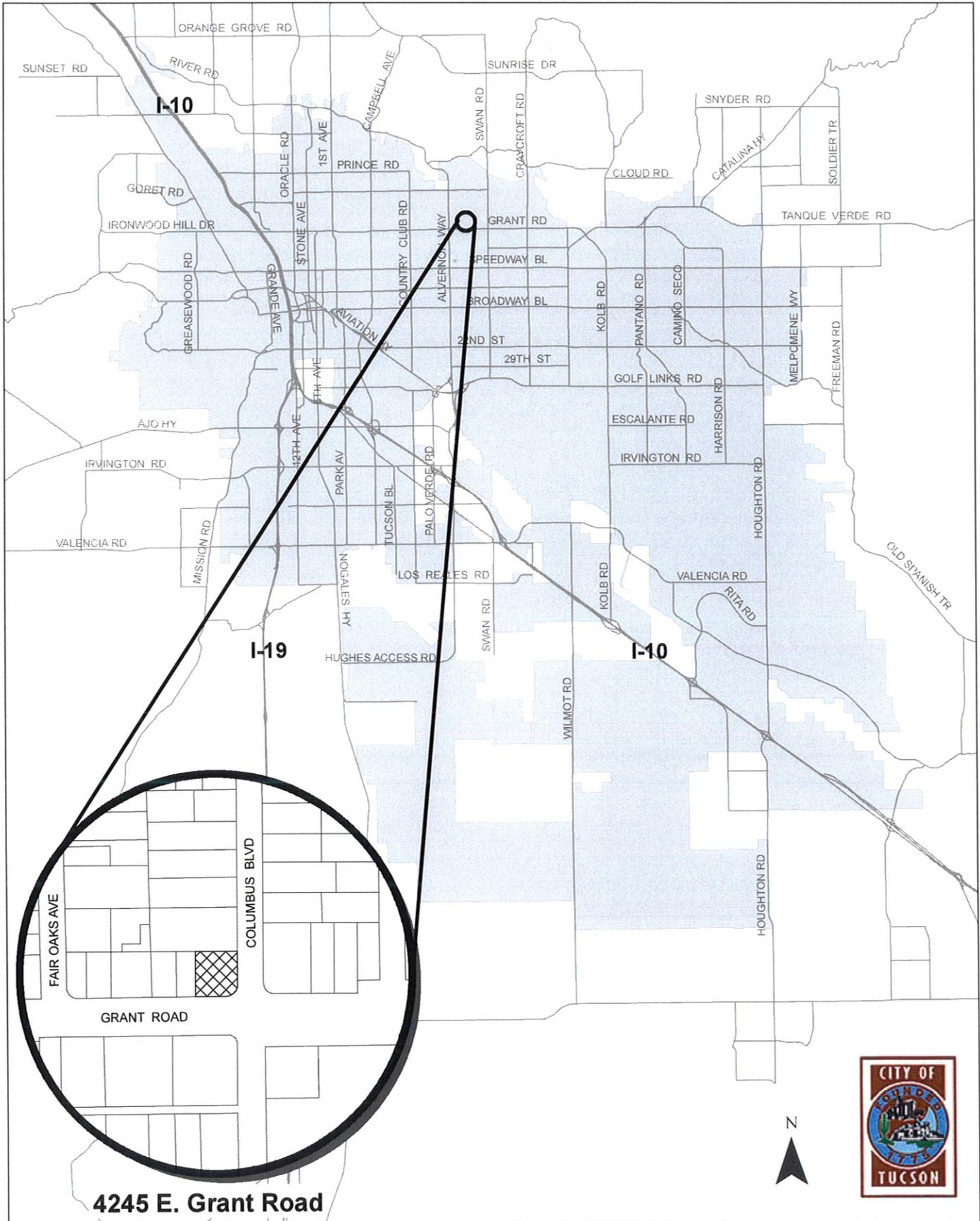
1. A site plan in substantial compliance with the preliminary development plan dated March 17, 2015, is to be submitted and approved in accordance with *Administrative Manual*, Section 2-06.
2. The property owner shall execute a waiver of potential claims under A.R.S. Sec. 12-1134 for this zoning amendment as permitted by A.R.S. Sec. 12-1134 (l) in the form approved by the City Attorney and titled "Agreement to Waive Any Claims Against the City for Special Exception Land Use".
3. Historic or prehistoric features or artifacts discovered during future ground disturbing activities should be reported to the City of Tucson Archaeologist. Pursuant to A.R.S. 41-865 the discovery of human remains and associated objects found on private lands in Arizona must be reported to the Director of Arizona State Museum.
4. Any relocation, modification, etc., of existing utilities and/or public improvements necessitated by the proposed development shall be at no expense to the public.
5. Five years are allowed from the date of initial authorization to implement and effectuate all Code requirements and conditions of the special exception land use.
6. A copy of the Special Exception decision letter shall be included with the site plan at the time of permit application submittal.

LAND USE COMPATABILITY / CONCEALMENT MEASURES

7. The wireless communication monopalm, including attachments such as antenna panels and palm fronds, shall not exceed sixty (60) feet in height from grade elevation.
8. A maximum of twelve (12) antenna panels shall be installed and painted with a light/shade pattern to blend and minimize visual impacts.
9. The monopalm shall include crown and pineapple.
10. The pole shall be covered with cladding (bark) from the pineapple to bottom of pole, and painted to resemble a live palm.
11. There shall be a minimum of 65 fronds ranging in length from seven (7) feet to ten (10) feet and placed to extend above, below and between antenna panels.
12. Replacement of lost/damaged fronds to be completed within ten working days of observation and fronds shall be colored to match live fronds as closely as possible.

13. All cables shall be run inside the pole, with no foot pegs other visible appurtenances.
14. All wire ports shall be concealed behind the antennas and all equipment shall be mounted behind the antenna panels.
15. Antenna standoff from the pole shall not exceed thirty (30) inches.
16. Ground equipment to be located within lease area as depicted on the preliminary development plan dated March 17, 2015.
17. Ground equipment to be screened by 8-foot masonry wall to be painted in neutral desert colors or to match surrounding existing buildings (provide elevation of street views).
18. Panel antenna dimensions shall not exceed ninety-nine (99) inches in length, eighteen (18) inches in width, and eight (8) inches in depth.
19. All walls visible from a public right-of-way and/or adjacent to existing residential development are to be graffiti-resistant.
20. Six-(6) inch wide fence block or greater shall be used for perimeter walls. Graffiti shall be removed from walls within seventy-two (72) hours of discovery or notification.
21. The screen wall and any paintable distribution system equipment shall be painted with neutral desert colors or to match the existing buildings. The paint on the equipment, above the height of the screen wall, should be flat, non-reflective paint. All of the equipment may be painted with the flat paint.
22. There shall be no exterior wiring, visible footpegs, portals, cabling or cable shrouds, or other unnatural appearing features on the monopole.
23. Installation of a backup generator requires evidence of compliance with the Tucson City Code, Section 16-31 Excessive Noise. The generator may be tested for up to 45 minutes per week, between the hours of 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Finish color and texture of all painted surfaces shall match existing surfaces of adjacent equipment enclosure. The generator shall include a fuel catchment feature designed to contain at least 210 gallons of fuel in the event of a leak.
24. Plans for future carriers must be approved through the special exception process.

SE-15-14 Verizon - Grant Road





LOS ROBLES STREET

BRYANT AVENUE

FAIR OAKS AVENUE

COLUMBUS BOULEVARD

ORCHARD AVENUE

GOYETTE AVENUE

GRANT ROAD

NORTH STREET

MARION AVE

FAIR OAKS AVE

CATALINA AVENUE

EDISON STREET

SE-15-14 Verizon - Grant Road
2014 Aerial

0 50 100 200
Feet
1 inch = 200 feet

