

City of Coronado
Administrative Procedures

Subject: WIRELESS COMMUNICATION FACILITIES	<i>Number:</i>	29
	<i>Date:</i>	Aug. 21, 2018
	<i>Revised:</i>	October 8, 2019
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POLICY

Wireless communication facilities, or WCFs, refer to the many facilities with antennas and supporting equipment that receive and transmit signals and together enable mobile or other “wire-free” communication and information services. Unlike ground-wired telecommunications, such as the land-based telephone system, wireless communication technologies, by their operational nature, require a network of antennas mounted at various heights and attached typically to buildings, structures and poles. Common names for a WCF are a “cell site” or “small cell site” or “micro cell site.” As the popularity and variety of wireless services grow, providers are expected to install more facilities to improve coverage and gain user capacity. This policy’s purpose is to guide the public, applicants, and staff in reviewing the placement, construction, and modification of WCFs.

This policy may be amended by the City Manager as necessary to respond to technological changes and to carry out the City’s objective to maintain high quality aesthetic standards for WCFs.

The goal is to ensure WCFs in Coronado:

- Provide residents, visitors, and emergency responders with access to a modern and reliable high-speed wireless network.
- Are reviewed and provided within the parameters of the law.
- Provide residents with advance notification of pending WCF applications.
- Are encouraged to locate in preferred locations and away from residential and other sensitive areas, except as allowed by this policy.
- Represent the fewest possible facilities necessary to complete a network without discriminating against providers of functionally equivalent services or materially limiting or inhibiting the ability of any competitor or potential competitor in the provision of wireless services to compete in a fair and balanced legal and regulatory environment.
- Maintain the City of Coronado’s unique community character and distinctive high-quality aesthetics through concealment and “stealth” techniques to the maximum extent feasible.
- Maintain the community of Coronado’s quality of life.
- Provide wireless service providers with advance notice of the City’s standards.

This policy applies to all commercial providers of wireless communication services. It does not apply to amateur (HAM) radio antennas, dish and other antennas installed on a residence for an individual’s private use, or noncommercial wireless communications facilities owned and operated by a public agency.

DEFINITIONS

1. “**Antenna**” means a device or system of wires, poles, rods, dishes, or similar devices used to transmit and/or receive radio or electromagnetic waves.

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2. “**Collocation**” means the same as defined by the FCC in 47 C.F.R. Section 1.40001(b)(2), as may be amended, which defines that term as “[t]he mounting or installation of transmission equipment on an eligible support structure for the purpose of transmitting and/or receiving radio frequency signals for communications purposes.” As an illustration and not a limitation, the FCC’s definition effectively means “to add” new equipment to an existing facility and does not necessarily refer to more than one wireless facility installed at a single site.
3. “**Eligible facilities request**” means the same as defined by the FCC in 47 C.F.R. Section 1.40001(b)(3), as may be amended, which defines that term as “[a]ny request for modification of an existing tower or base station that does not substantially change the physical dimensions of such tower or base station, involving: (i) Collocation of new transmission equipment; (ii) Removal of transmission equipment; or (iii) Replacement of transmission equipment.”
4. “**FCC**” means the Federal Communications Commission or its successor agency.
5. “**Lattice tower**” is defined as a free-standing framework tower, typically 3 or 4 sided.
6. “**Section 6409(a)**” means Section 6409(a) of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, Pub. L. No. 112-96, 126 Stat. 156, codified as 47 U.S.C. Section 1455(a), as may be amended.
7. “**Significant gap**” is a gap in the service provider’s own wireless telecommunications facilities, as defined in federal case law interpretations of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996.
8. “**Site**” means the same as defined by the FCC in 47 C.F.R. Section 1.40001(b)(6), as may be amended, which provides that “[f]or towers other than towers in the public rights-of-way, the current boundaries of the leased or owned property surrounding the tower and any access or utility easements currently related to the site, and, for other eligible support structures, further restricted to that area in proximity to the structure and to other transmission equipment already deployed on the ground.”
9. “**Stealth Facility**” is any facility designed in accordance with technology that makes visual detection of wireless communication equipment difficult. Stealth facilities will have no visible radios, cabling, wires or antennas and blend into the surrounding environment. Examples of stealth facilities may include technology completely integrated into the internal structure of a light pole, sign, or signal, architecturally screened roof-mounted antennas, facade-mounted antennas painted and treated as architectural elements to blend with the existing building, or elements designed to appear as vegetation or trees.
10. “**Temporary wireless communications facility**” means a wireless communications facility consisting of a vehicle-mounted facility, a building-mounted antenna, or a similar facility, and associated equipment, that is used to provide temporary coverage for an event, an emergency, or to provide temporary replacement coverage due to the removal of an existing permitted, permanent wireless communications facility.

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11. **“Tower”** means the same as defined by the FCC in 47 C.F.R. Section 1.40001(b)(9), as may be amended, which defines that term as “[a]ny structure built for the sole or primary purpose of supporting any [FCC]-licensed or authorized antennas and their associated facilities, including structures that are constructed for wireless communications services including, but not limited to, private, broadcast, and public safety services, as well as unlicensed wireless services and fixed wireless services such as microwave backhaul, and the associated site.” Examples include, but are not limited to, monopoles, mono-trees, and lattice towers.
12. **“Transmission equipment”** means the same as defined by the FCC in 47 C.F.R. Section 140001(b)(8), as may be amended, which defines that term as “[e]quipment that facilitates transmission for any [FCC]-licensed or authorized wireless communication service including, but not limited to, radio transceivers, antennas, coaxial or fiber-optic cable, and regular and backup power supply. The term includes equipment associated with wireless communications services including, but not limited to, private, broadcast, and public safety services, as well as unlicensed wireless services and fixed wireless services such as microwave backhaul.” (Also referred to as “equipment”.)
13. **“Wireless communications facility”** is a facility that sends and/or receives radio frequency signals, AM/FM, microwave, and/or electromagnetic waves for the purpose of providing voice, data, images or other information, including, but not limited to, cellular and/or digital telephone service, personal communications services, and paging services. Wireless communications facilities include antennas and all other types of equipment for the transmission or receipt of such signals; towers or similar structures built to support such equipment; equipment cabinets, base stations, and other accessory development; and screening and concealment elements. (Also referred to as “facility.”)
14. **“Wireless communications provider”** is any company or organization that provides or who represents a company or organization that provides wireless communications services. (Also referred to as “service provider” or “carrier”.)

POLICY PROCEDURES

1. **Application Requirements.** All requests for a WCF shall be accompanied by a Special Use Permit application as outlined in Coronado Municipal Code (CMC) Chapter 86.55.030 and required fees/deposits. In addition, the following information shall be submitted before or with the application unless waived by the Director of Community Development:
 - a. Full sets of plans, including site plan, elevations, landscape details, and color and material samples;
 - b. Full color, scaled photo-simulations of the proposed WCF from publicly visible viewpoints;
 - c. Coverage maps which shows existing and proposed coverage;

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- d. A map of the carrier’s other existing and proposed sites and a description of how the proposed WCF fits into the overall, long-term network coverage plans;
 - e. Applications for a Tier III or IV facility shall be required to submit an alternative sites analysis which includes all other sites and facilities considered and a description of why more preferred sites/facilities were not selected;
 - f. Verification that the proposed WCF will either comply with the FCC’s guidelines for human exposure to radio frequency (RF) electromagnetic fields or will be categorically excluded from having to determine compliance with the guidelines per 47 CFR §1.1307(b)(1). If WCFs are proposed for collocation, the verification must show the total exposure from all facilities taken together meets the FCC guidelines.
 - g. At the discretion of the Director of Community Development, the applicant may be required to submit an additional deposit to cover the City’s costs to hire an independent, qualified consultant to evaluate any technical aspect of the proposed use including, but not limited to, issues involving radio frequency emission, alternative designs, and alternative sites.
- 2. Regulatory Compliance.** WCFs shall comply with all FCC, Federal Aviation Administration, and local zoning and building code requirements.
- 3. Location Standards.** To the extent feasible, all proposed facilities shall be sited according to the following preferences, ordered from the most to least preferred:
- a. Collocations in alley rights-of-way within or abutting non-residential zones;
 - b. New facilities in alley rights-of-way within or abutting non-residential zones;
 - c. Collocations on City owned parcels or alley rights-of-way (including alleys in residential zones);
 - d. New facilities on City owned parcels or alley rights-of-way (including alleys in residential zones);
 - e. Collocation inside non-alley rights-of-way in residential zones;
 - f. New facilities inside non-alley rights-of-way in residential zones;
 - g. Collocations outside public rights-of-way in non-residential zones;
 - h. New facilities outside public rights-of-way in non-residential zones;
 - i. Collocations in residential zones;
 - j. New facilities in residential zones.
- 4. Discouraged Locations.** WCFs shall not be permitted on or within the rights-of-ways of Ocean Boulevard, Glorietta Boulevard, Silver Strand, Coronado Cays Boulevard, or within the Orange Avenue Specific Plan area unless the applicant demonstrates to the City Council’s

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satisfaction that no other location is feasible and the facility is the least intrusive means possible to close an identified significant gap in coverage or to prevent materially limiting or inhibiting the ability of the wireless service provider to compete in a fair and balanced legal and regulatory environment.

- 5. Required Permits.** WCFs are grouped into four tiers, each with its own permit requirements as shown in Table 1:

Table 1. WCF Tiers and Required Permits

Tier	Types of Facilities	Location	Permit Required
I	Modifications to an existing facility per 47 C.F.R. Section 1.40001(b)(3)	All	Section 6409(a) Permit
II	Strand-mounted facilities	All ²	Administrative Special Use Permit
	Pole-mounted facilities	Alleys	
	Stealth pole-mounted facilities in ROW	Non-residentially zoned properties ^{2 3}	
	Stealth building- or façade-mounted facilities		
A collocation or modification that is not a Tier I facility			
III	Stealth pole-mounted facilities in ROW	Residentially zoned properties, ROWs	Minor Special Use Permit
	Stealth building- and façade-mounted facilities		
IV	Non-stealth facilities not in alleys and all towers	All	Major Special Use Permit
	Any facility	Orange Avenue Specific Plan Area, Ocean Blvd, Glorietta Blvd, Centennial Park, Silver Strand ROW, Coronado Cays Blvd	

¹ Alleys which divide a non-residential and a residential zone are considered non-residential for the purposes of this policy.

² Does not include Orange Avenue SPA, Ocean Blvd, or Glorietta Blvd, Silver Strand, or Coronado Cays Blvd unless the WCF is a fully concealed roof-mounted facility which is invisible from the ground and ROW.

³ Does not include bay, beach, or parks.

- 6. Design Standards.** To the extent feasible, all WCFs shall be designed in accordance with the following standards:

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- a. **Public Visibility.** In all areas, WCFs shall be designed and located where least visible to the public and least disruptive to the appearance of the host property. No WCF shall be installed in a location readily visible from a public vantage point, recreation area, scenic area, or residential area unless it is satisfactorily located and/or concealed or disguised to fit with the surrounding visual environment.
 - i. **Stealth Design Required.** All aspects of a WCF, including antennas, supports, equipment, wiring, and screening materials shall exhibit stealth design techniques to visually blend into the background of where they are mounted or be fully integrated into the supporting structure, unless they are pole-mounted facilities located in alleys. Subject to City approval, applicants may use faux architectural elements (e.g., cupolas, bell towners, dormers, and chimneys), architectural treatments (e.g., colors and materials), elements replicating natural features (e.g., trees and rocks), landscaping, and other creative means to hide or disguise WCFs. Stealth facilities may also refer to those completely hidden by existing improvements, such as parapet walls as well as equipment (e.g. wires, cables, radios, antennas) located within supporting structures like light poles, signals, signage, street furniture or decorative elements.
 - ii. **Equipment.** All equipment and utilities shall be undergrounded or located within existing structures unless it can be demonstrated that full concealment is physically or technologically infeasible. If equipment must be located outside, it shall be fully screened with landscaping, walls, architectural elements, or other screening device. If small outbuildings are constructed specifically to house equipment, they shall be designed and treated to match nearby architecture or the surrounding landscape. Any equipment that cannot be screened and is not required to be located at height shall be located underground in a vault.
 - iii. **Height.** WCFs shall adhere to the existing height limitations of the underlying zone unless a height exception is granted pursuant to section 6(g).
 - iv. **Setbacks.** WCFs and associated equipment should adhere to building setbacks of the underlying zone. The following considerations and exceptions apply to WCF setback requirements:
 - a) WCFs mounted to a utility pole are exempt from setback requirements, except that they shall not be sited in an unsafe manner as determined by the City Engineer.
 - b) The City Council or Planning Commission, as applicable, may decrease or increase required setbacks.
- b. **Collocation.** Collocating with existing or other planned wireless communication facilities is required whenever feasible. Service providers are encouraged to collocate with major power transmission and distribution towers and other utility structures when in compliance with this policy.

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c. Building or Structure-Mounted WCFs.

- i. Antenna and associated mountings shall not project outward more than 24 inches from the face of a building unless concealed behind a faux architectural feature or other concealment method.
- ii. Roof-mounted antennae shall not be placed on roof peaks unless concealed with a faux chimney or other concealment method.
- iii. If permitted, WCFs on residential buildings shall only be allowed if disguised as a typical residential feature (e.g., chimney, dormer, etc.) and if all equipment is located inside the building.

d. Ground Mounted Monopoles.

- i. No new ground-mounted monopoles shall be permitted unless the applicant demonstrates that no other existing WCF can accommodate the proposed antenna and close an identified significant coverage gap. Cables and antennae for any non-stealth new monopoles shall be contained within the monopole or on top of the pole if the antennae width does not exceed the width of the pole.
- ii. If permitted, all antennas shall be located inside the ground-mounted monopole, or on top of the monopole within the diameter of the natural slope of the top of the pole, or as close as possible to the monopole to disguise antenna to the maximum extent feasible.
- iii. The placement, screening, and disguise of the monopole shall fit with the surrounding site design, architecture, and landscaping. Faux trees may be acceptable depending on their appearance, quality, and compatibility with existing nearby vegetation.
- iv. When feasible and in compliance with this policy, monopoles shall be placed next to tall buildings, structures, or trees.

e. Lattice Towers. New lattice towers shall not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that there is no other facility or group of facilities wherever located that comply with this policy and a new lattice tower in the proposed location is the least intrusive facility that can close an identified significant coverage gap or prevent materially limiting or inhibiting the ability of the wireless service provider to compete in a fair and balanced legal and regulatory environment.

f. WCFs in Public Rights-of-Way (ROW).

- i. WCFs located within an alley right-of-way with any above ground equipment shall be sited away from residential windows and balconies. “Within an alley” does not include poles at the end of an alley which intersects with a street.
- ii. Antennas shall be attached to existing poles (e.g., utility poles), substantially similar replacement poles in the same location, or vertical structures already located in the

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ROW, or in different alternative preferred locations, depending on which solution provides the greatest stealth. The installation of new poles or vertical structures may be permitted if it can be demonstrated that such new installation is the least intrusive and facilities mounted to an existing pole(s) or other stealth facilities could not close a significant coverage gap or would materially limit or inhibit the ability of the wireless service provider to compete in a fair and balanced legal and regulatory environment.

- iii. New metal poles which can house wiring and small equipment inside the pole shall be used if mounting a WCF to an existing pole would create a greater visual impact.
- iv. Antenna assembly may not exceed the height of an existing pole unless it extends no more than 10% of the height of the pole and is within the diameter of the natural slope of the pole.
- v. The use of an existing pole, replacement pole, or other existing vertical structure shall require the authorization of the owner. If a City street light or structure is proposed, compensation shall be paid to the City pursuant to CMC Chapter 52.40. If a private pole or structure is proposed, a ROW permit shall be obtained from the City.
- vi. Panel antennas shall be vertically mounted to a pole or structure in compliance with any applicable separation requirements and shall not exceed eight-inches in distance from the pole to the front side of the panel.
- vii. No more than four panel antennas or two omni-directional antennas shall be mounted on any utility pole or structure by any one provider.
- viii. Antennas shall be painted to match the surface of the pole on which they are attached or shall otherwise be screened to reduce visibility.
- ix. All other equipment associated with the facility shall be placed underground. If undergrounding is determined to be infeasible, all equipment should be setback at least 2.5 feet from the back of the curb and within the parkway or greenway or 2.5 feet back from the edge of sidewalk when it is contiguous to the curb.
- x. All equipment shall be located to prevent impacts to pedestrian access and provide adequate vehicular sight distance and safety.
- xi. New WCFs shall be discouraged from being placed on utility poles which are included in a planned utility undergrounding project.

g. Design Exceptions.

- i. An exception to one or more of the above design standards may be granted by the Planning Commission (Tier II and III facilities) or the City Council (Tier IV facilities) if a finding is made that the design standards are physically or technologically infeasible, no alternative location or design that would comply with this policy is feasible and/or the facility would be the least intrusive means possible to close an

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identified significant gap in coverage or prevent materially limiting or inhibiting the ability of the wireless service provider to compete in a fair and balanced legal and regulatory environment.

- ii. An exception to dimensional standards may be granted at any Tier if applicant provides sufficient documentation from San Diego Gas & Electric, or other applicable utility, indicating utility statutory or legal compliance standards make it impossible for the submitted WCF design to comply with dimensional standards.

7. Temporary Wireless Communications Facility.

- a. Temporary WCF, such as “cell on wheels” (COW) may be used for a maximum of 90 calendar days to replace permanent WCFs during the relocation or rebuilding process of an existing facility, during temporary events, and during emergencies through the issuance of a non-discretionary building permit and right-of-way permit, as applicable.
- b. A temporary WCF may be used for more than 90 calendar days through approval of an Administrative Special Use Permit.

8. Decision-Making Authority. Applications for WCF permits are considered in accordance with Table 2:

Table 2: Permit Decision-Making Matrix

Permit Type	Role of Authority			
	Community Development Director	Design Review Commission	Planning Commission	City Council
6409(a)	Decision	-	-	-
Administrative Special Use Permit ¹	Decision/Recommendation	-	Appeal/Decision	Appeal
Minor Special Use	Recommendation	Recommendation	Decision	Appeal
Major Special Use	Recommendation	Recommendation	Recommendation	Decision

¹A Tier II Administrative Special Use Permit may require Planning Commission approval if the carrier requests an exception to a design or performance standard as described in this policy or if a request for a public hearing is requested as outlined in this policy.

9. Permit and Public Noticing Procedures.

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- a. In addition to the procedures for Special Use Permits found in CMC 86.55, the Design Review Commission shall consider all Minor and Major Special Use Permits and provide a recommendation to the Planning Commission and City Council, as applicable.
- b. Administrative Wireless Communications Facility (WCF) Permits shall be issued by the Director of Community Development unless a property owner or resident who received a mailed public notice files a request for a public hearing within ten calendar days of the notice being mailed. If a request for hearing is received, the Planning Commission shall render a decision at a noticed public hearing and the applicant shall submit fees for a Minor Special Use Permit and any required deposit for an independent consultant review as determined by the Director.
- c. Notices shall be mailed to all property owners within 300 feet of a proposed facility which requires an Administrative WCF Permit or a Minor or Major Special Use Permit.
- d. Other permits including, but not limited to, a coastal development permit, right-of-way permit, building permit, etc. may be required in addition to any wireless communication permits outlined in this policy.

10. Performance Standards.

- a. **Noise.** All equipment, such as emergency generators and air conditioners, shall be designed and operated consistent with City noise standards.
- b. **Maintenance.** All facilities, related equipment, and landscaping shall be maintained in good condition and free from trash, graffiti, and any form of vandalism throughout the life of the facility. Routine maintenance of equipment in residential zones or within 100 feet of a residential zone shall be conducted only during the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays. No maintenance may be performed on weekends or holidays observed by the City of Coronado. In other zones, maintenance may occur anytime.
- c. **Emergency Repairs.** Emergency repairs and maintenance shall be conducted within a reasonable length of time to be determined by the City Manager or their designee.
- d. **Lighting.** Security lighting shall be kept to a minimum and shall only be triggered by a motion detector unless an exception is granted by the applicable decision-maker.
- e. **Compliance with FCC RF Exposure Guidelines.** Within six months after final permit sign-off, and with each time extension or amendment request, the developer/operator shall submit to the Director of Community Development either verification that the WCF is categorically excluded from having to determine compliance with the guidelines per 47 CFR §1.1307(b)(1) or a project implementation report that provides cumulative field measurements of radio frequency (RF) electromagnetic fields of all antennas installed at the subject site. The report shall quantify the RF emissions and compare the results with currently accepted ANSI/IEEE standards as specified by the FCC. The Director of Community Development shall review the report for consistency with the project's preliminary proposal report submitted with the initial project application and the accepted

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ANSI/IEEE standards. If, on review, the Director of Community Development finds the project does not meet ANSI/IEEE standards, the City may take any action necessary, as provided by law, to require compliance including, but not limited to, permit revocation.

- f. **Abandonment.** Any WCF that is not operated for a continuous period of 90 days will be considered abandoned. Within 90 days of receipt of notice from the City notifying the owner of such abandonment, the WCF owner must remove the facility and restore the site, as much as is reasonable and practical, to its prior condition. If such WCF is not removed within 90 days, the WCF will be considered a nuisance and in addition to any other available remedy, will be subject to abatement under Chapter 86.50 of the Coronado Municipal Code. If there are two or more users of a single WCF, then this provision will not become effective until all users stop using the WCF. The provider or owner must give notice to the City of the intent to discontinue use of any facility before discontinuing the use.
- g. **Removal as Part of Utility Undergrounding Project.** Any WCF mounted to a utility pole which is included in a utility undergrounding project shall be removed at the carrier's expense at least 60 calendar days prior to the initiation of the undergrounding project.

Permit Findings. To approve a permit for a WCF, the decision-maker shall make all the findings below. No permit decision shall constitute an effective prohibition of service and local requirements as applied shall not materially limit or inhibit the ability of any competitor or potential competitor to compete in a fair and balanced legal and regulatory environment.

The proposed facility must:

- a. Comply with the location, design, and performance standards of this policy;
- b. Be consistent with the general plan, local coastal program, zoning ordinance, and any other applicable specific plan, ordinance, or policy adopted by the City Council;
- c. Not be detrimental to public health, safety, and welfare; and
- d. Address an identified significant coverage gap in the least visually intrusive means possible.

11. Permit Term. Permits for WCFs shall be granted for a period not to exceed ten years. Upon a request for either a permit extension or an amendment, the WCF should be reevaluated to assess the impact of the facility on adjacent properties, the record of maintenance and performance with reference to the conditions of approval, and consistency with these guidelines. Additionally, the City may review the appropriateness of the existing facility's technology and may require the applicant to document that the WCF maintains the technology that is the smallest, most efficient, and least visible and that there are not more appropriate and

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available locations for the facility, such as the opportunity to collocate or relocate to an existing building.

12. Appeals. Appeals of a WCF permit shall be processed in accordance with CMC §1.12.