

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
STAFF REPORT FOR DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
**JUNE 20, 2019**

**PROJECT TITLE**

South Santa Rosa AT&T

**ADDRESS/LOCATION**

440 Hearn Avenue

**ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER**

043-101-050

**APPLICATION DATE**

December 5, 2018

**REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS**

Design Review

**PROJECT SITE ZONING**

CG (General Commercial)

**PROJECT PLANNER**

Susie Murray

**APPLICANT**

Derek Turner, on behalf of AT&T

**PROPERTY OWNER**

Mohamed and Nabid Gholami

**FILE NUMBER**

PRJ18-085

**APPLICATION COMPLETION DATE**

December 19, 2018

**FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED**

Conditional Use Permit

**GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION**

Retail & Business Services

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approval

Agenda Item #6.1  
For Design Review Board Meeting of: June 20, 2019

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

TO: CHAIR KINCAID AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

FROM: SUSIE MURRAY, SENIOR PLANNER  
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: SOUTH SANTA ROSA AT&T (TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
FACILITY)

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Design Review Board, by resolution, grant Preliminary Design Review to allow a 65-foot tall Telecommunications Facility be designed to resemble a eucalyptus tree for the property located at 440 Hearn Avenue, and delegate Final Design Review to staff.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AT&T is proposing to replace an existing 55-foot telecommunications tower (pole design) with a 65-foot tall tower designed to look like a eucalyptus tree at the southeast corner of the property located at 440 Hearn Avenue. The action before the Design Review Board is Preliminary Design Review. Other entitlements include a Conditional Use Permit, which will be considered by the Planning Commission.

BACKGROUND

1. Project Description

AT&T is proposing to install a 65-foot tall Telecommunications Facility designed to look like a eucalypts tree (mono-tree). As shown on the attached Site Plan, the mono-tree will be placed in the same location as an existing cellular tower, which is the traditional pole design, towards the southeast corner of the site. The antennas will be placed at the same elevation as the existing antennas; the additional height allows for an alternative faux tree design without impact to AT&T customers.

2. Surrounding Land Uses

North: Retail and Business Services, Medium Density Residential and Public Institutional; current developed with a Shell service station, single- and multi-family residential uses, and the Department of Motor Vehicles.

South: Retail and Business Services; currently development with an Extended Stay hotel.

East: Retail and Business Services; currently development with Highway 101, other commercial uses and vacant land.

West: Retail and Business Services; currently development with a self-storage facility.

3. Existing Land Use – Project Site

The subject site is currently developed with an ARCO service station and a 55-foot tall Telecommunications Facility (mono-pole).

4. Project History

The existing Telecommunications Facility was approved for the Cagal Cellular Telephone Company in May 1999, for a period of ten years.

On December 5, 2018 a Design Review application was submitted to Planning and Economic Development.

On December 19, 2018, the companion CUP application was submitted for the project and the application was deemed complete.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS

1. General Plan

The General Plan land use designation for the site is Retail and Business Services, which is intended for retail and service enterprises, offices, and restaurants. While there are no goals or policies that speak directly to Telecommunication Facilities, cellular phone service has become an integral part of personal and business communication. As such, installation of the proposed Telecommunications Facility implements a variety of overarching General Plan

goals by creating a functional place for those who live and work within the City. Accordingly, the proposal has been determined to be consistent with the General Plan.

2. Roseland Area/Sebastopol Avenue Specific Plan

The property is located within the Roseland Area/Sebastopol Road Specific Plan (Specific Plan) area. While there are no goals or policies that speak directly to Telecommunication Facilities, cellular phone service has become an integral part of personal and business communication. As such, installation of the proposed Telecommunications Facility implements a variety of overarching Specific Plan goals by creating a functional place for those who live and work within the Specific Plan area. Accordingly, the proposal has been determined to be consistent with the Specific Plan.

3. Zoning

The Project site is located within the CG (General Commercial) zoning district, which is consistent with the Retail and Business Services General Plan land use designation. Pursuant to Zoning Code Chapters 20-23 and 20-44, new Telecommunications Facilities are a conditionally permitted use in the CG zoning district.

Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 20-52.030(G), Final Design Review approval for uses that also require the approval of a CUP, shall be acted upon following land use approval by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission hearing is tentatively scheduled on June 13, 2016. If the DRB chooses, it may grant Preliminary Design Review and delegate Final Design Review to staff.

Zoning Code Chapter 20-44, Telecommunications Facilities, is intended to provide a uniform and comprehensive set of standards for the development of Telecommunications Facilities. The subject tower requires both a major CUP and Design Review because it is a new facility and is taller than 45 feet. Zoning Code Section 20-44.060(F) provides design guidelines for commercial telecommunication facilities and requires that these facilities be the minimum height necessary without compromising reasonable reception or transmission.

Applicable Design Guidelines for commercial facilities include:

1. Innovative design solutions that minimize visual impacts should be utilized.
2. Antennas and their support structures should be located on the rear half of property or structures when reasonable transmission and/or reception would not be impaired and when visual impacts would be reduced, unless no other feasible alternative location exists.

3. Telecommunication facilities and appurtenances should not be situated between the primary building on the parcel and any public or private street adjoining the parcel.
4. Telecommunication facilities shall be located and designed to avoid blocking and/or substantially altering scenic resources.
5. Telecommunication facilities should be designed and painted a color that blends with the surrounding natural or manmade features.
6. Telecommunication facilities and appurtenances shall be screened by existing and/or proposed structures and landscaping to the extent possible without compromising reception and/or transmission.
7. The design of fencing, landscaping, and other screening for telecommunication facilities shall be integrated and compatible with surrounding improvements.
8. All utility lines serving the facility should be undergrounded.
9. Each commercial telecommunication facility shall be installed in a manner that will maintain and enhance existing native vegetation. Suitable landscaping to screen the facility shall also be installed where necessary.

The Project has demonstrated compliance with the aesthetic requirements set forth in the Zoning Code as shown above. The mono-tree has been designed to resemble a eucalyptus tree with grey-green foliage and will replace an existing mono-pole Telecommunications Facility. The antennas will be placed at the same elevation as the existing antennas; the additional height allows for an alternative faux tree design without impact to AT&T customers. The mono-tree will be placed in the southeast corner of lot behind the existing service station structures and will be partially blocked from view by existing trees on the site.

#### 4. Design Guidelines

Design criteria for Telecommunications Towers are addressed in Zoning Code Chapter 20-44, discussed in the Zoning section of this report.

The following Design Guidelines are also applicable to the project:

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 3.3.III.A.2 | Design buildings to fit into the character and context of the surrounding area in terms of scale, style, use of materials, form, and so on. Buildings should not be stylized or ornamental in a garish and conspicuous manner. |
| 3.3.III.D.7 | Integrate or hide attached structures and equipment from view.   |

- 3.3.III.D.10            The preferred location for utility equipment, such as transformers, splice boxes, etc. is in underground vaults. If placed above ground, large equipment shall be screened from view and should be placed in prominent and highly visible locations.
- 3.4.III.D.5            Design fencing, sound-walls, trash enclosures, service areas, and similar accessory site elements to be compatible with the architecture of the main buildings.

The subject parcel is located within the CG zoning district which is intended for commercial uses and is currently developed with commercial buildings. The mono-tree is proposed in the southeast corner of the site and will be partially screened by existing trees. There are no changes proposed to the existing equipment area.

5.    Neighborhood Comments

No public comments have been received as of the date this report was written.

6.    Public Improvements/On-Site Improvements

There are no new on- or off-site improvements are required. Improvements to the existing facility may be upgraded as part of project implementation, such as:

- Replacement of broken sidewalk;
- Undergrounding electrical wires; and
- Removing unnecessary/unused equipment.

A comprehensive list of improvements may be found in the Engineering Development Services Exhibit A, prepared by Carol Clark, dated May 17, 2019, and attached to this report.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The proposed project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):

- Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15302, the Project qualifies for a Class 2 Categorical Exemption in that it involves the replacement of an existing structure in the same location as the existing structure.
- Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, the Project qualifies for a Class 3

Categorical Exemption in that it involves the construction of a small structure.

No exceptions to the exemptions apply and there is no reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances (CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2).

#### BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

#### NOTIFICATION

- In January 2019, a Notice of Application was mailed to property owners within 400 feet of the subject site.
- On April 9, 2019, the Council approved the Noticing Ordinance. Effective May 9, 2019, public hearing notices are required to be sent to property owners and occupants within 600 feet of the site.
- In May 2019, this item was noticed as a Public Hearing pursuant to Zoning Code Chapter 20-66, including a Public Hearing Notice mailed to property owners and occupants within 600 square feet of the site; two public hearing signs installed on site; a Notice of Public Hearing published in the Press Democrat; and bulletin board postings at City Hall and on the City's website.

#### ISSUES

There are no unresolved issues.

#### ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Disclosure Form
- Attachment 2: Location Map
- Attachment 3: Neighborhood Context Map
- Attachment 4: Project Plans, provided by AT&T, date stamped received on December 5, 2019
- Attachment 5: Engineering Development Services Exhibit A, prepared by Carol Clark, dated May 17, 2019
- Attachment 6: Radio Frequency Emission Compliance Report, prepared by Waterford Compliance, dated November 7, 2018
- Attachment 7: Photo Simulations, provided by AT&T, dated April 23, 2019
- Resolution 1: Preliminary Design Review (with Exhibit A)

CONTACT

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