



STAFF REPORT

DATE: 06/18/2025
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
FROM: Planning and Development Department

2025-244

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBJECT:

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT MODIFICATION 2024-0002 ESTABLISHING A NEW 67-FOOT-TALL WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS, MONO-EUCALYPTUS TREE, LOCATED AT 1660 LEESON LANE IN THE M-3 (HEAVY MANUFACTURING) ZONE (APPLICANT: KERRIGAN DIEHL, PLANCOM INC.)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks the City Council to affirm the decision by the Planning and Housing Commission in granting Conditional Use Permit Modification 2024-0002 (CUPM2024-0002) to establish a new 67-foot tall wireless telecommunications, mono-eucalyptus tree. The project is located at 1660 Lesson Lane in the M-3, Heavy Manufacturing zone. The new mono-eucalyptus tree will replace an existing 62-foot tall wireless telecommunications, monopole located on the project site.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council:

- a. Take no action, thereby affirming the Planning and Housing Commission's action granting CUPM2024-0002, based on the findings contained in the staff report and conditions of approval.

OR

- b. Set the item for review at a subsequent meeting.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

Project Background

The proposal submitted by Plancom Inc. on behalf of Verizon Wireless proposes to demolish an existing 62-foot tall wireless telecommunications monopole and associated ground equipment and construct a new 67-foot tall mono-eucalyptus tree in conjunction with new ground equipment. The project site is currently developed with an industrial building owned and operated by the Mission Rubber Company.

The property's existing monopole was approved in 1992 by CUP92-02, with the tower portion of the structure owned by American Tower Company (ATC). The mounted antennas and associated ground equipment are owned and operated by Verizon Wireless. The new mono-eucalyptus tree will be located just slightly to the east of the existing tower, generally in the same location.

ANALYSIS:

Site Plan

The proposed mono-eucalyptus tree is located on the southeastern corner of the project site, which is also the rear of the property. A 271-square-foot enclosure containing accessory equipment and surrounded by an eight-foot-tall block wall is also proposed and would be located adjacent to the new tower. More broadly, all proposed development would be located approximately 680 feet south of Leeson Lane, 330 feet west of South Temescal Street, and 1,000 feet from (street) All American Way.

The property's M-3 zoning prescribes no minimum side or rear yard setback requirements, and a maximum height of 40 feet. However, the height may be increased by one foot for every one foot of setback from the property line not exceeding 55 feet. An even greater height may be permitted by the Planning Commission subject to approval of a CUP (CMC Section 17.65.060 [a]). The centerline of the mono-eucalyptus pole would be located 15 feet from the side and 34 feet from the rear property lines and exceed the maximum height of the zone by 12 feet.

Before and during construction of the new 67-foot tall mono-eucalyptus tree, a 62-foot-tall temporary monopole intended to maintain Verizon's provision of service is proposed adjacent to the location of the permanent facility. The temporary tower and associated equipment would be surrounded by a temporary eight-foot-tall chain-link enclosure.

Antennas and Screening

The mono-eucalyptus tree is comprised of a support pole, serving as the "trunk" of the faux tree, supporting three separate, mounted antenna sectors. There will be a total of 12 antenna panels, six Remote Radio Units (RRU), and three Raycap surge suppressor units mounted onto the antenna sectors, all at a height of 62 feet above grade level. Additionally, a microwave antenna measuring a four-feet in diameter will be mounted onto the support pole at a height of approximately 48 feet. Numerous faux branches will be mounted to the tower's support pole, projecting outward to a minimum of one foot, six

inches beyond the extent of all antennas. The antenna panels, RRUs, Raycap units and microwave antenna are required to be painted green to match the color of the branches. Additionally, the antennas are required to be covered with “socks” that are textured to match the tree’s foliage. The screening elements are standard requirements for faux tree designs.

While Verizon is currently the only cellular carrier proposed to operate from the tower, the structure can accommodate a second set of antennas should another wireless carrier wish to collocate in the future.

Access and Maintenance

Access to the project site will remain unchanged from Leeson Lane. Internal access through the site will be on existing asphalt and will accommodate a service technical vehicle onsite when periodic maintenance is conducted. Typical maintenance occurs remotely, and an on-site inspection anticipated to occur every three months.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The applicant paid the application processing fee of \$13,828.14 to cover the cost of the Conditional Use Permit.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

Per Section 15302(c) (Replacement or Reconstruction) of the State Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Section 3.31 of the City’s Local CEQA Guidelines, a Notice of Exemption has been prepared for the project as the project qualifies as a Class 2 (Replacement or Reconstruction) categorical exemption. The project proposes the replacement of an existing wireless facility with a new facility of substantially the same size, purpose and capacity.

PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION ACTION:

At its meeting of May 28, 2025, the Planning and Housing Commission considered the subject matter and took the following action:

Motion was made, seconded (Siqueland/Vernon) and carried with Vice Chair Alexander absent, that the Planning and Housing Commission find the project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15302(c), adopt Resolution No. 2667 granting CUPM2024-0002, based on the findings contained in the staff report and conditions of approval. The minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission meeting are included as Exhibit 4.

PREPARED BY: JOANNE COLETTA, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Exhibit 1 – Locational and zoning map
2. Exhibit 2 – Site plan for Conditional Use Permit Modification 2024-0002
3. Exhibit 3 – Planning and Housing Commission staff report
4. Exhibit 4 – Draft minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission meeting of May 28, 2025