



CITY OF MENIFEE

SUBJECT: Rockport Verizon Wireless Mono-Eucalyptus

MEETING DATE: April 9, 2025

TO: Planning Commission

PREPARED BY: Desiree McGriff, Associate Planner

REVIEWED BY: Orlando Hernandez, Acting Community Development Director

APPROVED BY: Orlando Hernandez, Acting Community Development Director

APPLICANT: Jeremy Siegel, Verizon Wireless

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Determine the project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15303 (“New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures”) and direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption; and
2. Adopt a resolution approving Conditional Use Permit No. PLN24-0071 for Rockport Verizon Wireless Mono-eucalyptus located near the northeast corner of Meniffee Lakes Drive and Camino Cristal.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

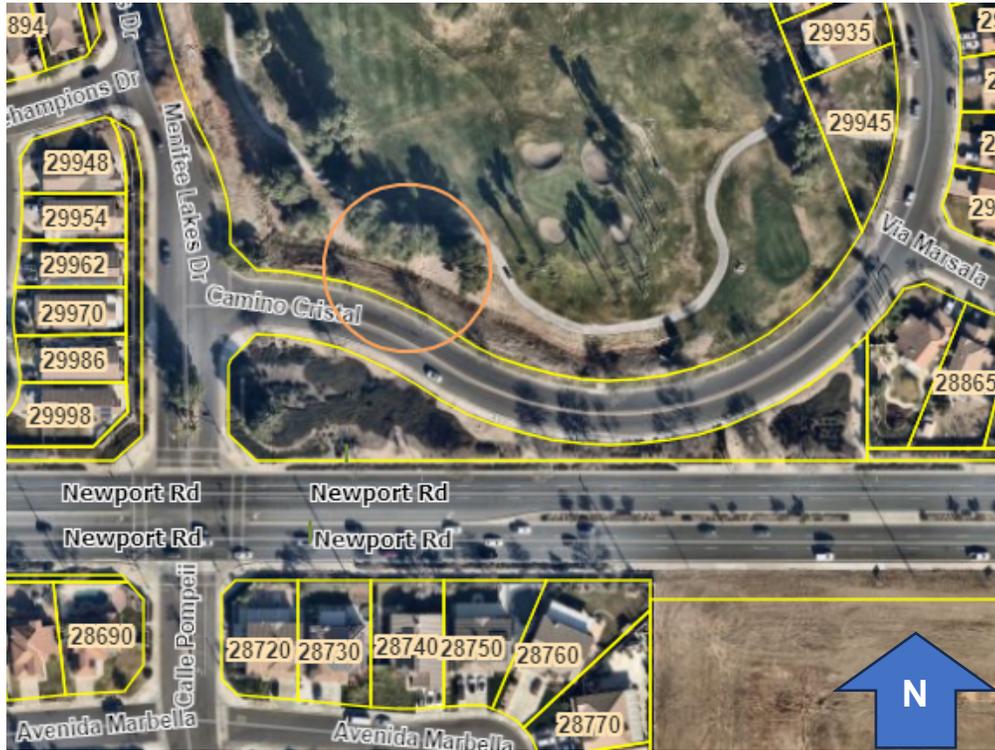
Conditional Use Permit (CUP) PLN24-0071 proposes the development of a new 70-foot-tall mono-eucalyptus wireless unmanned cell site including an equipment enclosure and 347.5 square-foot lease area enclosed by an eight-foot-tall decorative precision block wall with cap. Additionally, faux ivy is proposed around the block wall to hide it from public view. The proposed new cellular mono-eucalyptus facility will be required to meet all Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulatory requirements.

LOCATION

The Project site is located north of Newport Road, and east of Meniffee Lakes Drive, at 29875 Meniffee Lakes Drive (APN: 340-030-003). The Project is proposed to be located on the existing Meniffee Lakes Golf Course near the northeast corner of Meniffee Lakes Drive and Camino Cristal

as a disguised mono-eucalyptus tree. The site is bound by developed single-family residential parcels and the golf course.

PROJECT LOCATION



GENERAL PLAN/ZONING

The zoning and General Plan land use designation for the subject parcel is classified as Specific Plan (Menifee Village SP, Planning Area No. 1-10). The existing use of this 327.5-acre parcel is a golf course for the community. The proposed construction and operation of the unmanned telecommunications facility is federally regulated and is allowed with approval of a CUP and is consistent with the existing land use designation of Specific Plan as this use is intended to support the surrounding residential land uses.

GENERAL PLAN LAND USE AND ZONING MAP



A CUP under the zoning code requires Planning Commission approval. The surrounding zoning classifications are the same as the subject site under the SP. Wireless communication facilities are not allowed in residential zones when a residence exists on-site. They may be permitted on property containing churches or other non-residential uses, such as a golf course, when concealed and disguised to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director and Planning Commission.

DISCUSSION

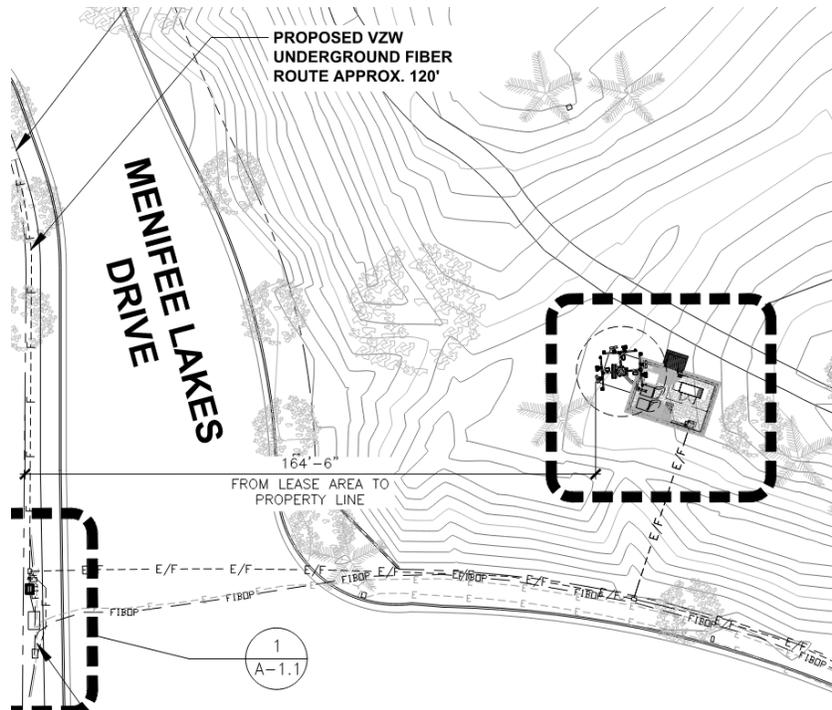
Background

The Menifee Village Specific Plan Amendment No. 5 was adopted by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors in January 2005. The surrounding “uses” are primarily single-family residences. A major feature to the community is a centrally located 36-hole golf course, on 327.5 acres, which is the proposed location of the 70-foot-tall mono-eucalyptus cell site. The proposed facility will be approximately 250-feet from the residences located west of Menifee Lakes Drive.

Proposed Project

The applicant has proposed the Project at this location to eliminate a Verizon wireless service gap. The installation of the proposed cell site will substantially boost wireless coverage in the area. The Project proposes a 70-foot-tall mono-eucalyptus wireless communication facility, and 347.5 square-foot lease equipment enclosure comprised of an eight-foot-tall decorative block wall covered in faux ivy to minimize the appearance of the wall. The Project meets/exceeds the minimum development standards for Wireless Communication Facilities (Chapter 9.290), including but not limited to, minimum setbacks, maximum height, and landscape screening.

PROPOSED SITE PLAN



As shown on the site plan, the proposed wireless communication facility is set back approximately 108 feet from the nearest property line, approximately 250 feet from the nearest residential dwelling to the west, 460 feet from the nearest residential dwelling to the east, exceeding the minimum setbacks of the underlying Specific Plan.

Camino Cristal will serve as maintenance/service vehicle parking for the proposed wireless communication facility. No additional road improvements or modifications to the right-of-way are required of the Project, as existing conditions are adequate.

The proposed mono-eucalyptus is approximately 70-feet-high (67-feet top of antennas), which is the maximum height limit for a cell site. All ancillary equipment is concealed behind an eight-foot-tall decorative block wall and cap with proposed faux ivy. A summary of the applicable development standards can be found below:

SOUTHEAST ELEVATION

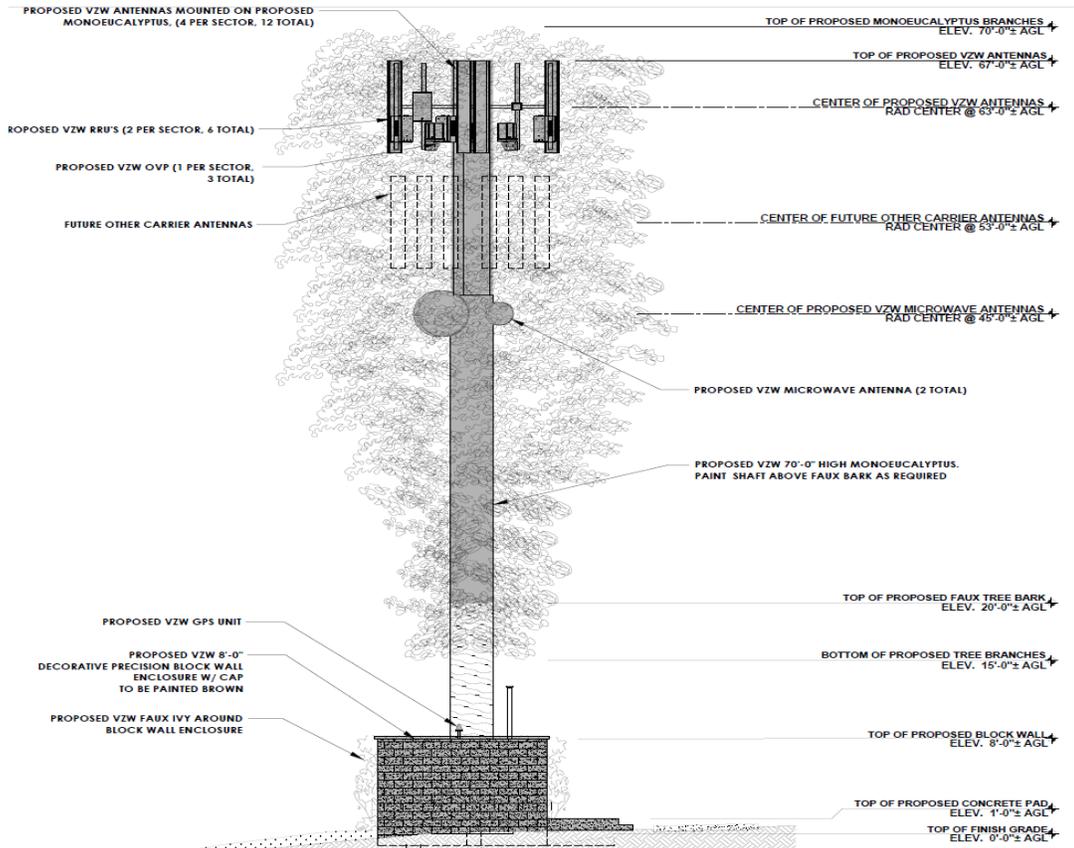


PHOTO SIMULATIONS OF MONO-EUCALYPTUS



Landscaping

The Project's landscaping is subject to the requirements of the City of Menifee Municipal Code (MMC). Section 9.290.060 requires all equipment enclosures to be installed in such a manner so

as to maintain and enhance existing native and/or landscaped vegetation to screen the facility; the level of screening shall be consistent with the type of facility proposed. The Project is located on a golf course consisting of native shrubs and trees, and will be located in a tree line to assist in screening including faux ivy on the block enclosure. In addition to the provisions for ongoing vegetation and landscape maintenance, the conditions of approval indicate that the site is to be kept free of trash and debris and any graffiti shall be removed in a timely manner by the applicant (tenant) and/or landowner. The proposed Project is consistent with the landscape standards required for wireless communication facilities as outlined in the Menifee Municipal Code (MMC).

Alternate Sites Analysis

As required by the MMC, an alternate sites analysis was conducted to support the proposed Project and to justify the proposed location. Consideration was given to the locations listed below, however; the proposed facility location is the most feasible option to close the significant Verizon wireless coverage service gap for the community due to the reasons listed below.

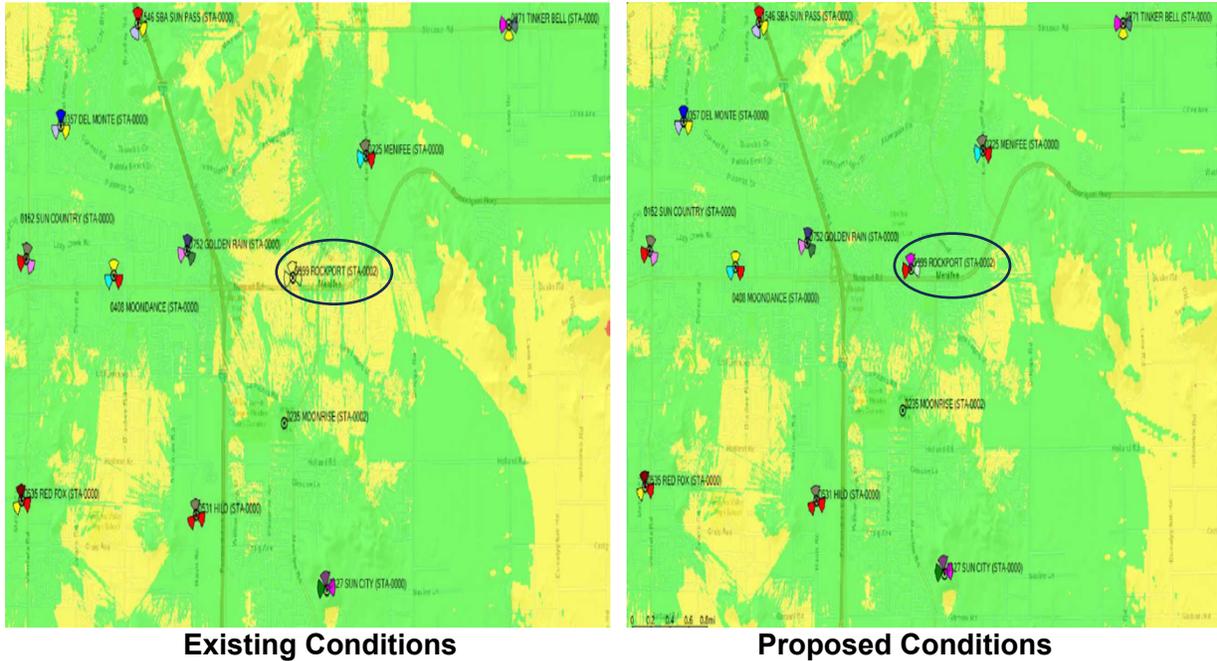
1. 29950 Menifee Road, Menifee APN: 340-040-008 – City of Menifee Fire Station
 - Although there is an existing mono-palm wireless facility located at the fire station, Verizon Wireless did not consider this location because the existing facility would not allow a colocation and would have to be removed/replaced to accommodate the new equipment and antennas.
2. 29012 Newport Road, Menifee APN: 340-040-033 – Menifee Auto Care
 - This location was not selected due to the underground fuel storage tanks, and lack of available space for the facility.
3. 29061 Newport Road, Menifee APN: 364-390-003 – Stater Bros. Market
 - Verizon Wireless explored a rooftop design at this location, but was not selected due to low building height and concerns that the rooftop would be able to achieve network coverage objectives.
4. 28881 Newport Road, Menifee, APN: 364-030-016 – Golden State Investment Properties (Afra Group)
 - Property ownership did not want to encumber land or lease to Verizon Wireless due to future development plans for the property.

ALTERNATE SITE LOCATIONS



The applicant provided propagation maps showing the level of Verizon Wireless service coverage in the area of the proposed Project. As shown in the propagation map below, the areas shown in green on the map indicate the strongest signal and is sufficient for most “in-building” coverage, which sometimes can be adversely affected by the type of construction and materials used in construction. The areas shown in yellow (less coverage) should be sufficient for “on-street” or “in-the-open” coverage, but is limited for most “in-vehicle” and “in-building” coverage. The primary goal of the Project is to increase the signal strength for “in-building” coverage within the affected area.

PROPAGATION MAP



The propagation maps show that the anticipated service coverage with the construction of the proposed Project will increase greatly for “in-building” coverage improving the general Verizon Wireless service for residents in the area as well as for emergency service personnel.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The proposed Project has been determined to be Categorical Exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines, Section 15303 (“New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures”). This section consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new small facilities or structures, installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures, and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure. The number of structures described in this section are the maximum allowable on any legal parcel. Examples of this exemption include but are not limited to:

(c) A store, motel, office, restaurant or similar structure not involving the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances, and not exceeding 2,500 square feet in floor area. In urbanized areas, the exemption also applies to up to four such commercial buildings not exceeding 10,000 square feet in floor area on sites zoned for such use if not involving the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances where all necessary public services and facilities are available and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive.

(d) Water main, sewage, electrical, gas, and other utility extensions, including street improvements, of reasonable length to serve such construction. The proposed Project is for a new wireless communication facility concealed as a 70-foot-tall mono-eucalyptus and associated mechanical equipment and equipment enclosure. The Project falls under 2,500

square feet and does not involve significant amounts of hazardous substances while all necessary public services and facilities are available, and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive. Therefore, the Project is exempt per Section 15303, "New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures," of the CEQA Guidelines and no further CEQA analysis is required.

FINDINGS

Findings for the approval of a CUP are included in the attached resolution.

PUBLIC NOTICE

A public hearing notice for the proposed Project was published in *The Press Enterprise* on March 30, 2025 for the April 9, 2025 Planning Commission hearing. All relevant public agencies, including all interested parties were also notified of the public hearing as were all property owners within a 300-foot radius of the Project site.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Project Exhibits
2. Resolution – CUP
3. Exhibit A – Conditions of Approval
4. Propagation Map
5. Public Hearing Notice