INTRODUCTION & FACILITY DESCRIPTION

The demand for wireless communication continues to grow across California. Access to the wireless network has become vital as individuals increasingly rely on handheld and mobile devices as their primary method of communication. Verizon Wireless constantly seeks to improve its wireless network through industry-leading techniques and innovative solutions in order to respond to high levels of wireless network traffic and increased user demand. This proposal for a new wireless telecommunications facility is an essential part of the effort to continuously improve the Verizon Wireless network for future and potential customers. The facility proposal is designed to comply with all applicable standards set forth in the City of Berkeley Municipal Code. The proposed facility is the least intrusive means for Verizon Wireless to close a significant gap in network coverage.

This proposal is for a new wireless telecommunications facility at 1615 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. The subject property is zoned R-2A (Restricted Multiple Family Residential). The proposed facility consists of the installation of four (4) antenna sectors with two (2) antennas per sector, a 25 kw standby natural gas generator, and associated outdoor equipment cabinets and cabling.
NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF FACILITY SITING GUIDELINES

The proposed facility is located in an area zoned R-2A (Restricted Multiple Family Residential). The facility has been designed to conform to all applicable requirements set forth in Chapter 23C.17 of the Berkeley Municipal Code. Chapter 23C.17 governs the development and installation of wireless telecommunications facilities in the City of Berkeley. The equipment lease area and antenna lease area will be fully contained on the roof of the existing building located at 1615 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. The antennas and equipment will be constructed within screening material that will be finished to match the architecture of the existing building. The location of the facility and the screening methods during construction will render the facility effectively unnoticeable from public view.

DESIGN CRITERIA

SECTION 23C.17.070

(A). Based on potential aesthetic impact, the order of preference for facility type is: microcell, façade-mounted, roof-mounted, ground-mounted, and freestanding tower.

The proposed facility is a roof-mounted facility. The antennas will be located on the rooftop and will be located inside screened structure in order to conceal the antennas from view. The equipment will be placed within a screen wall that will be constructed to match the existing architecture of the building.

(B). All facilities shall be designed and located to minimize their visibility to the greatest extent feasible, considering technological requirements, by means of placement, screening, and camouflage.

The proposed facility is specifically located and designed to minimize visibility to the greatest extent technically possible. Existing trees on Martin Luther King Boulevard will serve as screening and will conceal the facility from public view. The antennas will be contained inside a “stealth” screen box in order to minimize visibility. The screen will match the existing building architecture and will be fully integrated with the existing building. The equipment will be located on the rooftop and will be contained within a screen wall. The screen wall will be constructed to match the architecture of the existing building.

(C). No readily visible antenna shall be placed at a location where it would impair a significant or sensitive view corridor.

The facility will not impair a significant or sensitive view corridor.

(D). Colors and materials for facilities shall be chosen to minimize their visibility. All visible exterior surfaces shall be constructed of non-reflective materials. Facilities shall be painted or textured using colors to match or blend with the primary background.

The design of the project involves a screen box that will be constructed to identically match the architecture of the existing building. The antennas will be placed inside the screen box and will be effectively screened from view. The equipment will be contained within a screen wall on the rear section of the roof in order to minimize visibility to the greatest extent possible. The wall will be constructed to identically match the architecture of the existing building.
(E). Facility lighting shall be designed to meet but not exceed minimum requirements for security, safety or FAA regulations, and in all instances shall be designed to avoid glare and minimize illumination on adjacent properties.

No lighting is proposed in conjunction with this project.

(F). No advertising shall be placed on telecommunications antennas or other equipment.

The proposed facility conforms to this requirement.

(G). All facilities shall be designed to be resistant to and minimize opportunities for unauthorized access, climbing, vandalism, graffiti, and other conditions that would result in hazardous conditions, visual blight, or attractive nuisances.

The proposed facility is located on the roof top of the existing building located at 1615 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Access to the building is limited to residents and occupants of the building. The facility equipment will be located within a screen wall that will only be accessible to authorized Verizon personnel.

(H). Where appropriate and directly related to the applicant’s placement, construction, or modification of wireless telecommunications facilities, the applicant shall maintain and enhance existing landscaping on the site, including trees, foliage, and shrubs, when used for screening unless the Design Review Planner or Design Review Committee approves appropriate replacement landscaping.

Existing landscaping in the immediate area will not be affected in relation to the installation and development of the proposed facility. No new landscaping is proposed in accordance with this project.

(I). Façade-mounted equipment, not including any required screening, shall not project more than 18 inches from the face of the building or other support structure unless specifically authorized by the Zoning Officer or the Zoning Adjustments Board.

The proposed facility is not a façade-mounted facility.

(J). In order of preference, ancillary support equipment for facilities shall be located either within a building or structure, on a screened roof top area or structure, or in a rear yard if not readily visible from surrounding properties and the public right of way, unless the Zoning Officer or Zoning Adjustments Board finds that another location is preferable under the circumstances of the application.

The support equipment will be located on a screened roof top area on the rear section of the roof in order to minimize visibility to the greatest possible extent.

(K). Above ground and partially buried ancillary equipment, including support pads, cabinets, shelters, and buildings, shall be located where they will be the least visible from surrounding properties and the public right of way and shall be designed to be architecturally compatible with surrounding structures and/or screened using appropriate techniques to camouflage, disguise, and/or blend into the environment including landscaping, color, and other techniques to minimize their visual impact.

The support equipment will be located on the rear section of the rooftop in order minimize visibility from public view. All ancillary equipment associated with the facility will be contained within the equipment lease area. The equipment lease area will be surrounded by a screen wall that will be constructed to identically match the architecture of the existing building.
(L). No telecommunications antenna or ancillary support equipment shall be located within any setback or between the face of a building and a public right of way without approval of a Use Permit except for facilities that are completely subterranean or Microcell facilities, the latter of which may be approved with an Administrative Use Permit.

The proposed facility complies with all applicable height and setback requirements.

(M). When antennas are co-located, the City may limit the number of antennas with related equipment and providers to be located at any site and adjacent sites in order to prevent negative visual impacts associated with multiple facilities.

The proposed facility is not a co-location.

(N). At the time of modification or upgrade of the facilities, existing equipment shall, to the extent feasible, be replaced with equipment that reduces visual and noise impacts as feasible.

The Applicant will make all good-faith attempts to comply with this requirement.

(O). Proposed facilities shall not reduce the number of available parking spaces below the amount required pursuant to the Zoning Ordinance.

No existing parking spaces will be affected in association with the installation and development phase of this project.

Description of Coverage Area

Statements Related to Need

Description of Services

The rapid increase of mobile handheld usage has created an increase in mobile data traffic across the entire Verizon Wireless network. Certain areas of the network are currently functioning at limited capacity due to the strain placed on the network from increased data traffic. Areas that are affected by an overload in data traffic usage may experience poor network performance such as dropped calls, poor call quality, timeouts, or inability to access the wireless network.

The proposed facility is needed to offload capacity from surrounding Verizon Wireless facilities in the immediate area. The proposed facility location in relation to existing Verizon Wireless telecommunications facilities is depicted in the map. See also coverage maps included.
Although the proposed facility is primarily a capacity-driven site, the site will also offer enhanced PCS (cellular coverage) as well as enhanced LTE and AWS (data) coverage to the immediate area depicted in the coverage maps.
Alternative Sites Considered

1. Cavalry Church 1940 Virginia Street, Berkeley, CA 94709: The North Berkeley search area is extremely difficult to find feasible locations and landlords because of: the financial demographics of landlords in the area, limited useable space, and topography. The aforementioned are contributing factors to why this candidate has been excluded. Challenges in the lease negotiation process prevented this location from becoming a viable candidate.

The site selection process for a wireless telecommunications facility is dependent upon many factors including local zoning requirements, topography, landlord considerations, and the Verizon Wireless network demands. The immediate area identified by Verizon Wireless approximately bordered by Rose St to the North, Sacramento Street to the East, Shattuck Ave to the West, and Berkeley Way to the South is predominantly residential.

The proposed facility is the least intrusive means to close a significant gap in Verizon Wireless service coverage. The search area presented many challenges in terms of designing a facility that is in conformance with the Berkeley Municipal Code and creating a facility that generates minimal community impact. This proposal is a reflection of a thorough site selection process in which all viable locations were investigated. The proposed location and facility design is the least intrusive means possible to achieve Verizon’s Network objective.

Third Party Evaluation Statement

Verizon consents to pay the reasonable cost and administrative fees for the hiring of an independent qualified engineering consultant to evaluate any technical aspect of the proposed site, and that Verizon will provide to the engineer any information necessary to perform the evaluation.

Noise Data

See attached Noise Analysis

Assurance of Removal

Verizon consents to either secure a bond or provide financial assurance prior to obtaining a building permit, for the removal of the facility in the event that it is abandoned or the approval is otherwise terminated.
STANDY GENERATOR TESTING: Verizon Wireless installs a standby generator and batteries at all of its cell sites. The generator and batteries serve a vital role in Verizon Wireless’ emergency and disaster preparedness plan. In the event of a power outage, Verizon Wireless’ communications equipment will first transition over to the backup batteries. The batteries can run the site for approximately 8 hours, depending upon the demand placed upon the equipment. Should the power outage extend beyond the capacity of the batteries, the backup generator will automatically start and recharge the batteries. This two state backup plan is an extremely important component of every Verizon Wireless communications site.

As one of the nation’s largest wireless companies, Verizon Wireless is the mobile phone service of choice to many Federal, State, and Local public safety agencies. While many public safety agencies employ their own two-way radio systems for intra-agency communications, Verizon Wireless phones are often the link to other agencies and the outside world. Backup batteries and generators allow Verizon Wireless’ communications sites to continue providing valuable communications services in the event of a power outage, natural disaster or other emergency.

NOISE: The standby generator is operated for approximately 10-15 minutes per week for maintenance purposes. During construction of the facility, which typically lasts around two months, acceptable noise levels will not be exceeded.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: A Hazardous Material Business Plan was submitted upon project completion, and it is stored on site for reference.

COMPLIANCE WITH FCC STANDARDS: Verizon Wireless complies with all FCC rules governing construction requirements, technical standards, interference protection, power and height limitations and radio frequency standards. In addition, VZW complies with all FAA rules on site location and operation.

This project will not interfere with any TV, radio, telephone, satellite, or any other signals. Any interference would be against the Federal Law and would be a violation Verizon Wireless’ FCC License.

NOTICE OF ACTIONS AFFECTING THIS DEVELOPMENT PERMIT: In accordance with California Government Code Section 65945(a), Verizon Wireless requests notice of any proposal to adopt or amend the: general plan, specific plan, zoning ordinance, ordinance(s) affecting building or grading permits that would in any manner affect this development permit. Any such notice may be sent to 2009 V Street, Sacramento, CA 95818.
October 24, 2016

City of Berkeley Planning
2120 Milvia Street
Berkeley, CA 94704
Attn: Fatema Crane, FCrane@ci.berkeley.ca.us

Via E-Mail & Overnight Mail

Re: Supplemental Maintenance and Operation Statement (ZP 2014-0025)
1615 MLK Jr. Way, Berkeley, CA; Verizon Site: North Berkeley.

MAINTENANCE

The facility is electronically monitored remotely, allowing for quick reaction times, and to limit any physical visits required by a site technician. The general maintenance needs for the facility requires a site technician to visit approximately once every month for about 30 minutes. Verizon Wireless requires 24/7 emergency access in case of catastrophic failures, public emergencies, and natural disasters, with no notice required to the property owner. The site technician would gain access with a key through the locked front odor of the building, and would gain access to the rooftop via locked doors, leading to the rooftop access stairwell. The site technician visiting the facility would be clearly identified in Verizon gear.

OPERATION

When the site is on-air and operational, Verizon Wireless will provide appropriate signage at three locations leading up to the facility:
1. at the locked door before the staircase, leading up to the roof;
2. at the locked door at the top of the existing stairwell, before stepping out onto the roof; and
3. at the ingress area for the equipment area on the actual rooftop, which is not publicly accessible.

This signage will have Verizon’s 24/7 Network Operations Command Center number, which is (800) 264-6620. The signage with this number will be posted on all three locations identified above. Additionally, the property owner will have this contact information on-hand for tenants.
Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Maria Kim