



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT
NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Sonoma County Clerk
2300 County Center Drive, Suite B-177
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

From: City of Healdsburg
Community Development Department
401 Grove Street
Healdsburg, CA 95448
Planning 707-431-3346

Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento CA 95812-3044

Project Title: Verizon Telecommunications Facility
Project Applicant: GTE Mobilenet dba as Verizon Wireless c/o Complete Wireless Consulting
Project Location: 923 S. Fitch Mountain Road, Healdsburg, CA 95448 (APN 002-361-003)

Description of nature, purpose and beneficiaries of project:

Major Conditional Use Permit, Minor Conditional Use Permit, Major Design Review and Major Variance applications for a new unmanned telecommunications facility on a city-owned parcel, adjacent to Tayman Park and the Healdsburg Golf Club. The project consists of a 76-foot-tall monopole tower supporting 9 wireless antenna panels, one microwave dish, and related equipment. The monopole would be designed to resemble a faux broadleaf tree, with 8-foot to 14-foot-long faux branches and leaf socks covering the antenna and dish. The pole would be painted brown. The project will fill a significant gap in Verizon's cellular phone coverage within the City of Healdsburg.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: City of Healdsburg

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Scott M. Duiven, Community Development Dir.

Exempt Status Check One

- Ministerial (Sec 21080(b)(1); 15268)
 Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))
 Categorical Exemption: Type and Section Number: Section 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structure), Section 15300.2 (Exceptions)
 Statutory Exemption. Code Number: _____

Reasons project is exempt:

See Explanation on next page.

Lead Agency Contact: Scott M. Duiven **Area**
Code/Telephone: 707-431-4463
Signature: Scott M. Duiven **Date:** 4/14/2022 **Title:** Community Development Dir.
 Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

If filed by applicant:

- 1 Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has NOE been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Reasons project is exempt:

The California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) Guidelines identify classes of projects that have been determined not to have a significant impact on the environment and as a result are exempt from review. The City contracted with First Carbon Solutions, a qualified CEQA consulting firm, to prepare the environmental analysis. The analysis concluded, based on the proposed design, location, and standard conditions of approval, that the project would be exempt pursuant to CEQA Section 15303(c) New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, including evaluation of the project in light of CEQA Section 15300.2 Exceptions as described below. The Notice of Exemption analysis prepared by First Carbon Solutions is included as Exhibit E.

CEQA Section 15303 – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures

Class 3 consists of construction and locations 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.

c) A store, motel, office, restaurant or similar commercial or institutional 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.

Analysis

The proposed project involves the installation of nine Andrew Model SBNHH-1D65B directional panel antennas on a new 76-foot-tall faux tree on land that is designated as Public/Quasi Public. The proposed facility height complies with the City’s development standards and 100-foot height limit for wireless facilities. All new project construction would occur within the 30-foot by 50-foot lease area, approximately 1,500 square feet, and would not exceed 2,500 square feet in floor area. The proposed project would not involve the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances, as it would consist of standard cell tower communications panels that are regulated by federal and State agencies, including the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

CEQA Section 15300.2 – Exceptions

a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located—a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, State, or local agencies.

Analysis

The project site is located in a predominantly urbanized setting and is generally bound by roadways and existing development. The project site does not occur on lists of known hazardous materials contamination or storage and has not been designated, precisely mapped, or officially adopted as an area of critical concern. Therefore, there is no evidence that the project may impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern

where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, State, or local agencies.

b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

Analysis

The proposed project involves the installation of cellular communication panels that would have no impacts beyond the footprint of the tower itself. No cumulatively considerable effects would occur. Therefore, there is no evidence cumulative impacts of successive projects of the same type in the same place.

c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

Analysis

The site is not subject to any unusual circumstances that could lead to a significant effect. The tower would be located on a site that was previously developed with water tanks. The project involves the installation of nine Andrew Model SBNHH-1D65B directional panel antennas on a new 76-foot-tall faux tree on land that is designated as Public/Quasi Public. Thus, there is no evidence of any unusual circumstances.

d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a State Scenic Highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted Negative Declaration or certified EIR.

Analysis

According to the California Scenic Highway Mapping System for Sonoma County, the proposed project is not located within the viewshed of a scenic highway. The nearest officially designated State Scenic Highway is State Route 116 (located approximately 19 miles south of the project site). Distance to the project site precludes impacts to scenic resources within a designated State Scenic Highway. As such, there is no evidence that the Project will result in damage to scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a State Scenic Highway.

e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

Analysis

According to a records search using the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database, the project site is not identified as a hazardous materials site.¹ Additionally, no such site is located adjacent to the project site or within the general project area. Therefore, no impacts associated with hazardous materials sites would occur.

f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Analysis

The project site is located in a predominantly developed setting and currently contains sparse vegetation and trees, although it is adjacent to a more heavily wooded portion of the park. There are no known historical resources on-site. Review of the project site shows that the modern ground surface has been previously disturbed because of prior development activity, such as the nearby golf course and the construction of water tanks. Review of the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) files, cultural resources survey at the site, public involvement, and Local Government and OHP consultation as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review, conducted by the applicant and reviewed by the City of Healdsburg, determined no impacts would occur to historical resources.