



WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES

Planning Division

City of San Rafael

Community Development
Department

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Wireless Communications Facilities

Wireless facilities must: (A) Submit all Application Submittal Materials listed in San Rafael Municipal Code Section 14.16.360.D; (B) Schedule required submittal/resubmittal meetings; (C) Comply with RF emission threshold limits, sub-sections G through M criteria and N post approval requirements; (D) a Conceptual Design review application is strongly encouraged for new facilities. The level of review and requirements for facilities are summarized as follows:

MINISTERIAL REVIEW (Planning Division Plan Check Only):

- Facilities co-located on an existing approved monopole or tower wireless facility that is *stealth design* and *does not visually change* the appearance of the facility.
- Facilities mounted within an existing building or structure, including modifications to existing permitted facilities that are *fully integrated into the existing building façade* with *no exterior changes or additions* required to conceal the equipment.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REVIEW of Use Permit (Ch. 14.22) and Environmental and Design Review Permit (Ch. 14.25) with Design Review Board Recommendation:

- New ground-mounted monopole or tower wireless facilities
- Modifications to existing monopole or tower facilities that would increase visible size or dimensions.
- New or expanded facilities on a building resulting in visible exterior changes including new stealth enclosures on the façade or rooftop.
- Any facility that would exceed FCC standards for public exposure for RFR emissions.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW of Use Permit and/or Environmental and Design Review Permit:

The Community Development Director may downgrade required use permit and design review permit review from Zoning Administrator to Administrative level review if the change is determined to be so minor that it would not result in significant change in use or design of the facility. Such change should not increase the size or height of the facility by more than 10 percent. Further, the use permit amendment requirement may be waived if the proposed change is to an existing carrier's permitted facility.

PLANNING COMMISSION referral with Design Review Board Recommendation:

The Community Development Director may refer a project to the Planning Commission if it causes RFR emissions thresholds to be exceeded, or in a less desirable location deemed sensitive, or considered to not adequately respond to other design and development standards.

EXEMPT facilities: Non-commercial facilities installed and operated by public agencies, or facilities installed entirely inside an existing building and intended only to serve that building.

Post-Approval Requirements

- ✓ Within forty-five (45) days of commencement of operations, the wireless facility operator shall provide a report prepared by a qualified expert indicating the actual RFR levels of the operating facility is in compliance with the standards established by the FCC for RFR.
- ✓ Every five (5) years wireless communication facilities shall participate in the measurement of the facility RFR by the City.
- ✓ The operator of an approved facility shall remove any abandoned facilities or restore the existing approved use of a facility within ninety (90) days of termination of use.
- ✓ Any operational or technological changes to an approved wireless communication facility affecting RFR exposures shall be reported promptly to the city, including any change of ownership.
- ✓ The operator of an approved facility shall make necessary changes or upgrades to comply with any newly adopted FCC standards for RFR.
- ✓ Owners and operators shall agree to make their facility available for co-location.

(Updated 2014)



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Development Standards

<i>General Location</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-residential buildings and developed non-residential sites are preferred. Residential buildings, undeveloped sites, parks, open space and significant buildings or view-sheds should be avoided. Less preferred locations may require an alternative site analysis and technical information subject to peer review.
<i>Design Requirements</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities should co-locate on structures or buildings to the extent feasible, and shall be stealth designed to reduce visual impacts by blending into the existing structures or environment.
<i>Height</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The maximum height of building-mounted antennas shall be in compliance with the height limitations for the zoning district in which they are located. An exception to antenna height may be granted by the planning commission or zoning administrator if the RFR exposures and aesthetic quality of the proposed facility are found to be acceptable. Antenna structures, including towers and monopoles, and mechanical screening features related to wireless communication facilities, shall be regulated subject to Section 14.16.120 of this chapter.
<i>Setbacks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Towers, guy wires, and accessory structures, including equipment cabinets, shall comply with the setback requirements of the applicable zoning district. Towers and support structures shall be located a minimum of two hundred feet (200") or at least three (3) times the height of the tower, whichever is greater, from existing residential units or vacant residentially zoned property. Building-mounted facilities may be permitted to extend up to two feet (2") horizontally beyond the edge of the structure regardless of setback requirements through the application review process, provided that the antenna does not encroach over an adjoining parcel or public right-of-way or otherwise create a safety hazard.
<i>Lighting & Landscaping</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any exterior lighting shall be manually operated, low wattage, and used only during night maintenance or emergencies, unless otherwise required by applicable federal law or FCC rules. The lighting shall be constructed or located so that only the intended area is illuminated and off-site glare is fully controlled. Wireless communication facilities shall be installed in a manner that maintains and enhances existing vegetation and provides new landscape material to screen proposed facilities through the following measures: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The emphasis of the landscape design shall be to visually screen the proposed facility and stabilize soils on sloping sites. Introduced vegetation shall be native, drought tolerant species compatible with the predominant natural setting of the adjacent area. Existing trees and other screening vegetation in the vicinity of the proposed facility shall be protected from damage both during and after construction. Submission of a tree protection plan prepared by a certified arborist may be required. All vegetation disturbed during project construction shall be replanted with compatible vegetation and soils disturbed by development shall be reseeded to control erosion. Appropriate provisions for irrigation and maintenance shall be identified in the landscape plan. The city may impose a requirement for a landscape maintenance agreement as a condition of approval.
<i>Noise & Radio Frequency Radiation (RFR)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wireless communication facilities shall be constructed and operated in a manner that minimizes noise. Noise reduction shall be accomplished through the following measures: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Wireless communication facilities shall operate in compliance with the noise exposure standards in San Rafael Municipal Code Chapter 8.13, Noise. Normal testing and maintenance activities shall occur between eight a.m. (8:00 a.m.) and six p.m. (6:00 p.m.), Monday through Friday, excluding emergency repairs. Backup generators shall comply with the same noise standards referenced in subsection (L)(1) of this section and shall only be operated during power outages, emergency occurrences, or for testing and maintenance. Wireless communication facilities operating alone and in conjunction with other telecommunication facilities shall not produce RFR in excess of the standards for permissible human exposure as adopted by the FCC. Applications for wireless communication facilities shall include a RFR report, prepared by a qualified expert, which identifies the predicted and actual (if available) levels of RFR emitted by the proposed facility operating by itself and in combination with other existing or approved facilities which can be measured at the proposed facility site. Measurements for RFR shall be based on all proposed, approved, and existing facilities operating at maximum power densities and frequencies.