

STAFF REPORT
August 5, 2010

No. 100A003 - Ordinance Amendment amending the criteria for microcell wireless communications facilities allowed on the top of existing buildings and allowing variances through the Zoning Board of Adjustment by amending Section 17.50.400A of the Rapid City Municipal Code

ITEM 7

GENERAL INFORMATION:

APPLICANT/AGENT	City of Rapid City
REQUEST	No. 100A003 - Ordinance Amendment amending the criteria for microcell wireless communications facilities allowed on the top of existing buildings and allowing variances through the Zoning Board of Adjustment by amending Section 17.50.400A of the Rapid City Municipal Code
DATE OF APPLICATION	7/9/2010
REVIEWED BY	Karen Bulman

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Ordinance Amendment amending the criteria for microcell wireless communications facilities allowed on the top of existing buildings and allowing variances through the Zoning Board of Adjustment by amending Section 17.50.400A of the Rapid City Municipal Code be approved.

GENERAL COMMENTS: Chapter 17.50.400A of the Rapid City Municipal Code currently includes language that addresses the size of an antenna and the associated equipment, the number of antennas that can be located on a roof top, and the distance and the size of the equipment shelter associated with a wireless site. The Ordinance Amendment will be revised to remove portions of the current ordinance and to change portions of the language of the current ordinance.

STAFF REVIEW: The current language in Chapter 17.50.400A Microcell wireless communications facilities can be restrictive for businesses currently placing microcell wireless communications on the top of existing buildings. The intent of the current ordinance was to allow the microcell facilities on the top of the buildings as long as they would be compatible to the adjacent structures and would not be in conflict with the surroundings. Staff has researched several surrounding communities including, Sioux Falls, Ft. Collins, Billings, and Minneapolis. Their ordinances allow for more flexibility in the number and size of the antennas and equipment, and stress the use of materials, colors, textures, mass, and scale to be compatible with the surrounding environment. The Ordinance Amendment will change the language to remove the square footage for the antennas and equipment shelters, and to remove the number of antennas allowed. The Ordinance Amendment clarifies the location of the antennas and equipment shelters to be located as far back from the edge of the roof as possible or to be as flush to the wall as technically possible. The Ordinance Amendment also puts a height of the

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antennas to be no higher than 12 feet, comparable to the ordinances for microcell communications on buildings in Sioux Falls.

The current ordinance does not allow for the submittal of a variance if the applicant cannot meet the current code requirements for microcell facilities. The Ordinance Amendment will allow variances through the Zoning Board of Adjustment as per Chapter 17.54.020 or through a Planned Development as per Chapter 17.50 of the Rapid City Municipal Code.

Staff recommends approval of the Ordinance Amendment to revise the criteria for microcell wireless communications facilities allowed on the top of existing buildings and allowing variances through the Zoning Board of Adjustment or through a Planned Development by amending Section 17.50.400A of the Rapid City Municipal Code as attached.