



Rapid City Planning Commission

Planned Development Project Report

June 25, 2015

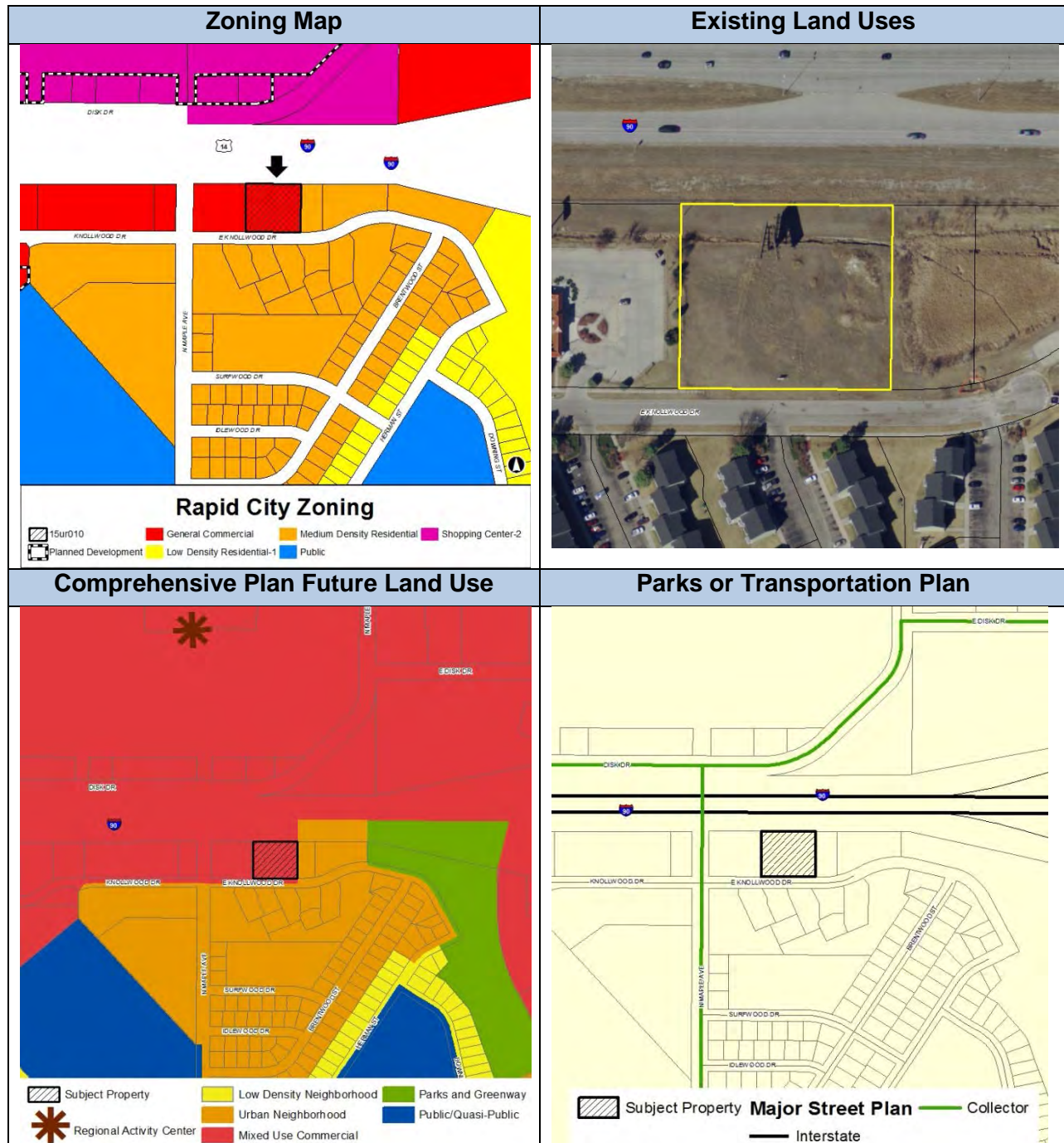
Applicant Request(s)
Case #15UR010- A Conditional Use Permit to allow a communications tower in the General Commercial District
Companion Case(s) #: N/A

Development Review Team Recommendation(s)
The Development Review Team recommends that this application be approved with the stipulations noted below.

Project Summary Brief	
The applicant has requested a Conditional Use Permit to allow construction of a 125 foot tall monopole communications tower with accessory structure to be located on an approximately 3,500 square foot portion of an existing 1.39 acre lot zoned General Commercial District. Submitted plans show that two parking spaces are being provided, the facility will be protected by a 7 foot tall chain link fence topped with barbed wire, and the entire facility will be screened with landscaping. The applicant has also submitted coverage area maps showing the existing coverage and signal strength map as well as the coverage and signal strength map resulting from the construction of this proposed communications tower.	
Applicant Information	Development Review Team Contacts
Applicant: SBA Communications and Verizon Wireless	Planner: Robert Laroco
Property Owner: Christopher Holding Company, Incorporated	Engineer: Dan Kools
Architect: Widseth, Smith, Nolting	Fire District: Tim Behlings
Engineer: Terra Consulting Group, Ltd.	School District: Janet Kaiser
Surveyor: Widseth, Smith, Nolting	Water/Sewer:
Other: Project Planner; Alex Novak, Novation Group Consulting	DOT: Stacy Bartlett

Subject Property Information	
Address/Location	Approximately 275 feet east of the intersection of North Maple Avenue and East Knollwood Drive
Neighborhood	North Rapid Neighborhood
Subdivision	Marshall Heights
Land Area	1.39 acres (approximately 60,549 square feet)
Existing Buildings	Existing billboard located on the northern portion of the property adjacent to Interstate 90
Topography	Lot is level and grass covered
Access	East Knollwood Drive
Water Provider	Rapid City
Sewer Provider	Rapid City
Electric/Gas Provider	Black Hills Power/ Montana Dakota Utilities
Floodplain	None identified
Other	N/A

Subject Property and Adjacent Property Designations			
	Existing Zoning	Comprehensive Plan	Existing Land Use(s)
Subject Property	GC	MUC	Existing billboard
Adjacent North	SC-2/ PDO	MUC	Shopping center
Adjacent South	MDR	UN	Multifamily housing
Adjacent East	MDR	UN	No structural development
Adjacent West	GC	MUC	Restaurant with on-sale liquor










Relevant Case History			
Case/File#	Date	Request	Action
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Relevant Zoning District Regulations			
General Commercial District	Required	Proposed	
Lot Area	No minimum required	1.39 ac (appx 60,549 sq ft)	
Lot Frontage	No minimum required	Appx 270 feet	
Maximum Building Heights	4 stories/ 45 feet	9 ft 6 in	
Maximum Density	75%	5.9%	
Minimum Building Setback:			
• Front	25 ft	Appx 28 ft	
• Rear	0 ft	Appx 122 ft	
• Side	0 ft west/25 feet east	Appx 8 ft west/ Appx 178 ft east	
• Street Side	25	N/A	
Minimum Landscape Requirements:			
• # of landscape points	3,260 points	31,500 points	
• # of landscape islands	0	0	
Minimum Parking Requirements:			
• # of parking spaces	2	2	
• # of ADA spaces	1 van accessible	1 van accessible	
Signage	Pursuant to RCMC	None proposed.	
Fencing	Pursuant to RCMC	7 foot chain link fence around equipment area, topped with 1 foot barbed wire, meeting all	

Planning Commission Criteria and Findings for Approval or Denial	
Pursuant to Section 17.52.030.E of the Rapid City Municipal Code the Planning Commission shall consider the following criteria in a request for a Conditional Use Permit:	
	Findings
1. The location, character, and natural features of the property;	The property is a level, grass-covered lot with an existing billboard located adjacent to the Interstate 90 right-of-way.
2. The location, character, and design of adjacent buildings;	The Coco Palace restaurant is located on property to the west. Multifamily housing located on property on the south side of East Knollwood Drive
3. Proposed fencing, screening, and landscaping;	The applicant is proposing to fence the facility with a 7 foot tall chain link fence topped with 1 foot of barbed wire. Submitted plans also show a vegetative screening being provided on all sides of the facility. Vegetation on the south side of the facility will be low enough for law enforcement patrols and/or facility maintenance staff to identify if anyone is inside the fenced area.
4. Proposed vegetations, topography, and natural drainage;	No substantial changes to the existing topography are being proposed. The submitted drainage plan identifies that all storm water runoff is being accommodated.
5. Proposed pedestrian and vehicular access, circulation and parking, including that related to bicycles and other unpowered vehicles and provisions for handicapped persons;	Plans show two parking spaces are being provided, including 1 van accessible handicap parking space. Property line sidewalk is also being provided.

6. Existing traffic and traffic to be generated by the proposed use;	Once constructed, the proposed communications tower is not anticipated to generate much traffic beyond standard maintenance crews and facility management. A Traffic Impact Study is not required.
7. Proposed signs and lighting;	No signage is being proposed. The facility is not proposed to be lit at night, with the exception of the required Federal Aviation Administration indicator light on the top of the tower.
8. The availability of public utilities and services;	The property is serviced by Rapid City water and sewer. No plumbing or restrooms are being proposed as a part of this Conditional Use Permit.
9. The objectives of the adopted comprehensive plan and the purpose of the ordinance codified herein;	The Future Land Use Plan identifies the area as appropriate for mixed use commercial development and is adjacent to urban neighborhood. Interstate 90 located to the north is a major regional commercial and transit corridor. Property north of the Interstate is part of a major regional activity center. Improvements in communications infrastructure are vital in these corridors and centers. However, the proposed tower is adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods and may have an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding neighborhood.
10. The overall density, yard, height, and other requirements of the zone in which it is located;	The proposed facility meets all the density, setback, height, and other land area regulations of the General Commercial District. The proposed 120 foot tall communications tower is topped with a five foot tall antenna. Communications towers are exempt from the height requirements of the General Commercial District.
11. The effects of noise, odor, smoke, dust, air, and water pollution and the degree of control through the use of clarifiers, screening, setbacks, and orientation;	It is not anticipated that the proposed use will generate undue amounts of noise, odor, smoke, dust, air, and water pollution. The proposed landscape screening will minimize the visual impact of the equipment shelter. However, no additional measures are being taken to minimize the visual impact of the tower on the surrounding neighborhood and viewsheds.
12. The degree to which conditions imposed will mitigate any probable adverse impacts of the proposed use on existing adjacent uses.	The submitted landscaping plan will screen the existing facility from the equipment shelter and proposed 7 foot tall, barb wire-topped fence. The proposed parking will be landscaped as well. The location of the proposed facility adjacent to the Interstate 90 corridor, as well as the marked improvement in signal coverage and strength demonstrate that the proposed communication tower will improve mobile device services in this area. It appears that concerns regarding the visual impact of the communications tower and facility are being mitigated to the greatest extent possible.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Policy Guidance for Approval or Denial	
In considering an application for approval or denial the Planning Commission finds that the application either complies or does not comply with the following values, principles, goals, and policies within the Rapid City Comprehensive Plan:	

Comprehensive Plan Conformance – Core Values Chapters	
 A Balanced Pattern of Growth	
BPG-1.2A	Priority Infill Areas: The proposed communications tower will improve the overall cellular signal coverage and strength through an infill of existing coverage and strength. The resulting increase in cellular signal coverage and strength benefits the businesses and individual across Rapid City.
 A Vibrant, Livable Community	
LC-1.3B	Entrance Corridor Coordination: Interstate 90 is identified as an entrance corridor to the City with objectives including the conservation of views within the corridor as well as the use of landscaping, screening, and buffering of development along the corridor. The equipment facilities and parking area of the proposed tower are being screened through a landscaping buffer on all sides of the development, in compliance with the Core Values of the City. However, the tower itself totals 125 feet in height and no screening or landscaping can be provided to minimize the impact of the tower on surrounding views.
 A Safe, Healthy, Inclusive, and Skilled Community	
N/A	N/A
 Efficient Transportation and Infrastructure Systems	
TI-2.4E	Pedestrian Links to Activity Centers: Rushmore Mall, located to the north of Interstate 90, is identified as a Regional Activity Center on the Future Land Use Map. The proposed communication tower will provide sidewalk connectivity from the property to North Maple Avenue located to the west of the property and then to Rushmore Mall via North Maple Avenue. The proposed development further improved sidewalk connectivity in the City.
 Economic Stability and Growth	
EC-1.3	Support the growth and creation of local, small businesses: The proposed communications tower is one step toward improving the cellular service area and strength within the community. Stable and robust communications services are critical in the support and promotion of business, especially local businesses reliant on local communications services in order to provide customer service. The proposed communications tower supports the continued success and expansion of local businesses.
 Outstanding Recreational and Cultural Opportunities	
N/A	N/A
 Responsive, Accessible, and Effective Governance	
GOV-2.1A	Public Input Opportunities: The Conditional Use Permit requires publication of hearing in the Rapid City Journal, notification of neighbors within 250 feet of the

	property, and hearing before the Planning Commission. This process promotes input from the public regarding the development of the surrounding neighborhoods. As of this writing, there have been no inquiries into the proposed communications tower.
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Comprehensive Plan Conformance – Growth and Reinvestment Chapter	
Future Land Use Plan Designation(s):	Mixed Use Commercial
Design Standards:	
GDP-MU1	Relationship of Uses: The proposed communications tower promotes the concentration of activity-generating uses at key locations. In particular, the communications tower will improve the communications services available in the nearby Rushmore Mall Regional Activity Center as well as along the Interstate 90 corridor. This, in turn, will promote the concentration of uses at these locations.

Comprehensive Plan Conformance – Neighborhood Area Policies Chapter	
Neighborhood:	North Rapid
Neighborhood Goal/Policy:	
NR-NA1.1A	Reinvestment Areas: The proposed development can service as a catalyst for desired reinvestment in this area and along the Interstate 90 corridor.
NR-1.1D	Gateways: Interstate 90 is identified as a Gateway Corridor on the Neighborhood Area Future Land Use Plan. Gateway Corridor design principles include the incorporation of unique and attractive design elements to enhance the sense of arrival and a positive, welcoming community image. While the leasing space and equipment shelter for the facility are being screened to the greatest extent feasible, the tower will remain a visible fixture in area viewsheds and in the aesthetic character of the Interstate 90 corridor.

Summary	
Staff has reviewed the requested Conditional Use Permit and has noted the following considerations:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant is proposing a 125 foot tall communications tower located within a 3,600 square foot enclosure with an equipment shelter and room for future expansions. It appears all landscaping and parking complies with the requirements of the code. The facility is not proposed to be lit and no signage is proposed. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has submitted cellular coverage/cellular strength maps demonstrating that the proposed communications tower will increase both the area of coverage and the strength of existing coverage in the area. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitted plans show that the equipment located at ground level will be screened with a landscaping buffer on the north, west, and east sides of the enclosure. Landscaping is being provided on the south side which will help screen the proposed parking and the front of the facility while still allowing facility maintenance staff and law enforcement to see the interior of the complex. However, the proposed tower is 125 feet in total height and will have an impact on area viewsheds as well as the character of the Interstate 90 Gateway Corridor. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The continued improvement of communications systems and other privately held infrastructure-type uses will provide a healthy climate for economic growth, promote local businesses, and specifically encourage growth in and around the Interstate 90 Gateway Corridor and the Rushmore Mall Regional Activity Center. 	

Recommendation and stipulations:	
Staff has reviewed the requested Conditional Use Permit and recommends that the application be approved with the following stipulations:	
1.	Prior to issuance of a building permit revised plans signed and sealed by a registered professional pursuant to SDCL 36-18A shall be submitted. Plans shall verify the size and dimension of all proposed development, including the dimensions for the proposed antenna arrays, the proposed setbacks, and the proposed dimensions of the parking area.
2.	This Conditional Use Permit shall allow for a communications tower to be located on property zoned General Commercial District. All the requirements of the General Commercial District shall be continually maintained. Changes to the area utilized as a part of the communications tower which comply with the requirements of the Rapid City Municipal Code shall be permitted. Conditional uses shall require a Major Amendment to the Conditional Use Permit.