

EXTERNAL CORRESPONDENCE

The City Clerk's Office received
the attached correspondence regarding
**the Wireless Telecommunications
Facility Design Review on the
5-19-15 City Council Agenda**

Updated Alternative Sites Analysis



AT&T Mobility

Wireless Communications Facility
at
1777 Shoreline Drive
Alameda, CA

Site ID: CCU3969

Introduction

New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC d/b/a AT&T Mobility (“AT&T”) needs to remove its existing site at Wood Middle School in Alameda. As a result, AT&T will have a significant gap in its service coverage in this portion of Alameda. AT&T proposes to install a stealth wireless communications facility (“WCF”) on the roof of this apartment building (“Proposed Facility”) as a means to fill this gap in coverage. The Proposed Facility consists of twelve panel antennas (three sectors of four antennas) mounted around an existing elevator shaft and surrounded by a stealth enclosure designed to match the character of the existing structure, with the related equipment to be housed in cabinets at ground level concealed behind a CMU wall designed to match the building. The Proposed Facility is designed to minimize visual impacts, blend within the existing environment, and obscure the antennas. The Proposed Facility is the least intrusive means to fill the significant gap of the alternatives investigated by AT&T as explained below.

Objective

Once AT&T’s site at Wood Middle School is taken off air, AT&T will have a significant gap in its service coverage in Alameda, in an area roughly bordered by Dayton Avenue to the north, Willow Street to the east, the Pacific Ocean to the south, and Shell Gate Road to the west. The Proposed Facility will improve coverage to the surrounding residential neighborhoods with over 380 homes, a park, schools and various other points of interest in the immediate vicinity. The service coverage in this portion of Alameda is described in the accompanying Radio Frequency Statement. The most recent traffic data available from Google Earth Pro for this area indicates that the average traffic along Otis Drive near Grand Street was 7,156 vehicles per day in 2012.

Methodology and Zoning Criteria

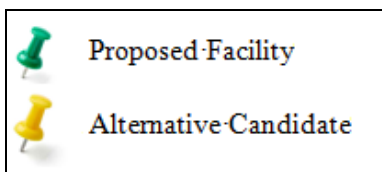
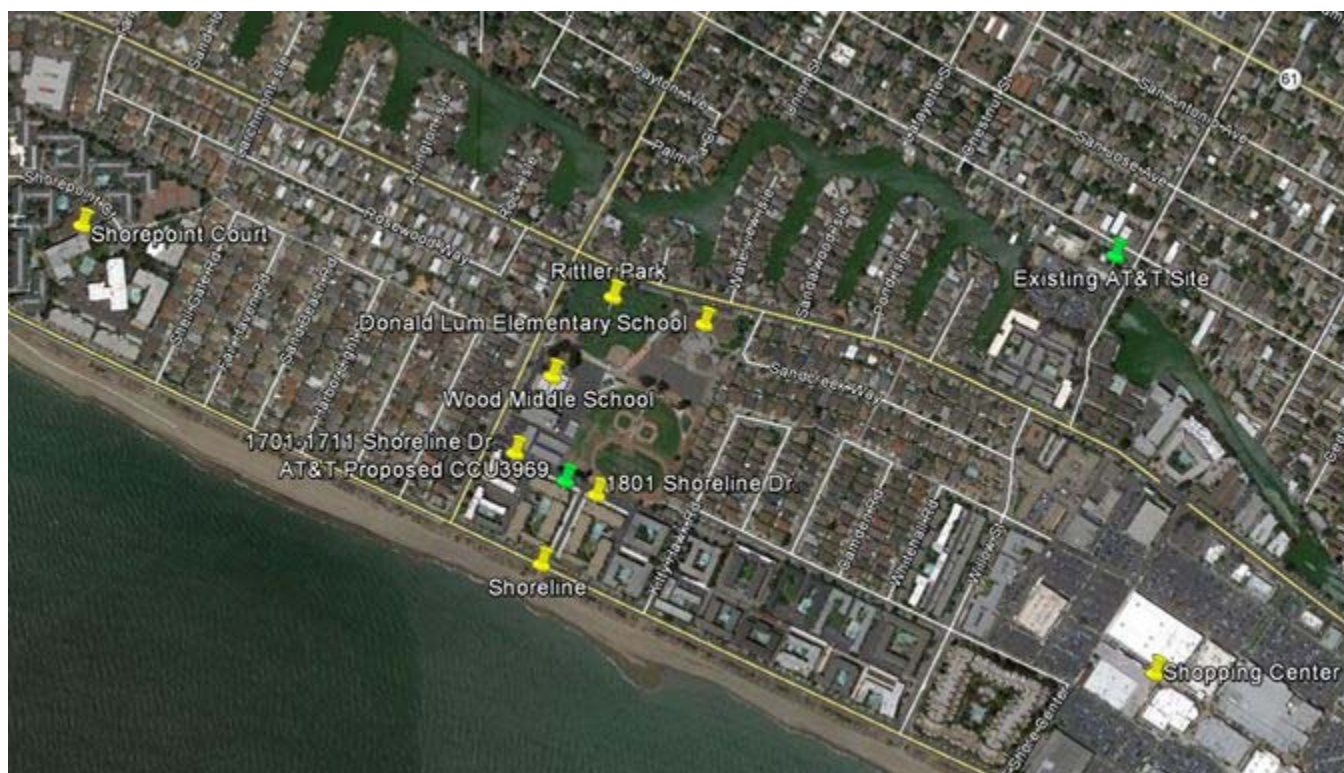
The location of a WCF to fill a significant gap in coverage is dependent upon topography, zoning, existing structures, collocation opportunities, available utilities, access, and a willing landlord. Wireless communication is line-of-sight technology that requires WCFs to be in relatively close proximity to the wireless handsets to be served.

AT&T seeks to replace the existing facility to avoid a significant gap in service coverage by using the least intrusive means under the values of the community as expressed in the Alameda Municipal Code (“Code”). Thus, AT&T is guided by Chapter 30-21 of the Code regarding use permits. AT&T also looks to the city’s prior approvals of WCFs as guidance for acceptable installations. For example, there is an existing T-Mobile WCF on the rooftop of the adjacent building from the Proposed Facility. Finally, AT&T recently was required to vacate its existing site on the nearby school that serves this area. The gap in coverage results from the need to decommission that site. Thus, AT&T has sought non-school sites in the area to replace the necessary service coverage.

Analysis

AT&T investigated potential alternative designs of and alternative sites for facilities to avoid a coverage gap in this portion of Alameda. There are very few available alternatives in this portion of the city due to the number of single-family homes and lack of commercial properties. Based on comments during and after the Planning Board's April 13, 2015 public meeting, AT&T analyzed additional alternative sites. The following map shows the locations of the Proposed Facility and the alternative sites that AT&T investigated. The alternatives are discussed in the analysis that follows.

Location of Candidate Sites



Proposed Facility – 1777 Shoreline Drive

Existing:



Proposed:



Conclusion: Based upon location, a willing landlord and the superior coverage as shown in the proposed coverage map included in AT&T's Radio Frequency Statement, the Proposed Facility is the least intrusive means for AT&T to meet its service coverage objective.

This apartment building is located along Shoreline Drive. The adjacent building in the same complex houses an approved T-Mobile WCF. AT&T proposes to locate its Proposed Facility on this rooftop by installing a wall around the existing elevator shaft to completely screen its antennas. The result will be an unnoticeable WCF with a very minor change to the appearance of the rooftop. The related equipment will be located at ground level and it will also be unnoticeable behind a CMU wall designed and painted to match the building. The Proposed Facility will be completely screened and the faux penthouse will blend in with the building and surroundings. The location and appearance of the Proposed Facility complies with the Code and meets city design criteria. The Proposed Facility is the least intrusive means to fill the significant gap of the alternatives investigated by AT&T.

Alternative No. 1 – 1701, 1705, 1711 Shoreline Drive



Conclusion: More intrusive than Proposed Facility

This set of apartment buildings is located adjacent to Wood Middle School. AT&T selected the Proposed Facility as less intrusive because it is adjacent to an existing approved WCF on the same property and it is further from the school than these buildings.

Alternative No. 2 – Wood Middle School



Conclusion: Unavailable

This school recently terminated the lease allowing AT&T to operate its WCF here. Last year, the Alameda Unified School District Board adopted a resolution to formally oppose WCFs on school property. This site is no longer available to AT&T, which is the reason AT&T is now seeking to relocate to the Proposed Facility.

Alternative No. 3 – Donald Lum Elementary School



Conclusion: Unavailable

This school is located adjacent to Wood Elementary School. Given the new policy of the Alameda Unified School District prohibiting WCFs on school property, and direction from the school district to remove WCFs from schools in Alameda, this site is not available.

Alternative No. 4 – Rittler Park



Conclusion: More intrusive than Proposed Facility

This city park is located along Grand Street and Otis Drive, and it consists of baseball and soccer fields between Wood Middle School and Donald Lum Elementary School. There is no significant structure on which to locate a WCF. A WCF here would need to be a freestanding structure, which would be more intrusive than the proposed stealth rooftop installation.

Alternative No. 5 – Shoreline



Conclusion: More intrusive than Proposed Facility

The shoreline offers no opportunity to conceal a WCF. A WCF here would be much more visible and intrusive than the Proposed Facility.

Alternative No. 6 – Shopping Center Southeast of Willow Street



Conclusion: Not feasible

This shopping center is located over half a mile to the southeast from AT&T existing facility at Wood Middle School, and it is roughly the same distance from the Proposed Facility. Although this commercial district is well outside of the coverage objective, AT&T analyzed it based on comments made during the April 13, 2015 Planning Board public meeting. However, this location is too far from the coverage objective and a new site here would not close AT&T's significant service coverage gap that will exist once the site at Wood Middle School is taken off air. In addition, this location is just south of another existing AT&T facility that also does not provide service to the subject coverage objective.

Alternative No. 7 – Buildings Along Shorepoint Court



Conclusion: Not feasible

There are multiple four-story buildings along and near Shorepoint Court, approximately 0.4 to 0.5 mile to the northwest from Wood Middle School. Although this residential district is well outside of the coverage objective, AT&T analyzed it based on comments made during the April 13, 2015 Planning Board public meeting. However, this location is too far from the coverage objective and a new site here would not close AT&T's significant service coverage gap that will exist once the site at Wood Middle School is taken off air. In addition, due to the orientation of the shoreline in this portion of Alameda, there is less than 180 degrees of land to provide service from this location. As a result, AT&T could not install three sectors of antennas at this location to serve the coverage objective, which would further reduce service coverage in the area.

Alternative No. 8 – 1801 Shoreline Drive



Conclusion: Not feasible; not available

This building is adjacent to the building on which the Proposed Facility will be installed, and there is a T-Mobile facility on the roof of this building, with its associated equipment at ground level. The same property owner owns this building and the building on which the Proposed Facility will be installed. When AT&T discussed options with the property owner, the property owner directed AT&T to the primary site at 1777 Shoreline Drive rather than a collocation here. As a result, this alternative is not available to AT&T. In addition, due to the placement of T-Mobile's ground equipment, it would not be feasible for AT&T to collocate here because there is not sufficient remaining space for AT&T's equipment. For this reason, the property owner directed AT&T to propose a similar facility as T-Mobile's facility on the neighboring building, where there is enough ground space to accommodate AT&T's equipment.

Conclusion

The Proposed Facility is the least intrusive means by which AT&T can avoid a significant service coverage objective in this portion of Alameda once its existing site is taken off air.

Updated Alternative Sites Analysis



AT&T Mobility

Wireless Communications Facility
at
1538 Saint Charles Street
Alameda, CA

Site ID: CCU3085

Introduction

New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC d/b/a AT&T Mobility (“AT&T”) needs to remove its existing site at the Maya Lin School in Alameda. As a result, AT&T will have a significant gap in its service coverage in this portion of Alameda. AT&T proposes to collocate a stealth wireless communications facility (“WCF”) on the roof of this apartment building property (“Proposed Facility”) as a means to fill this gap in coverage. The Proposed Facility consists of nine panel antennas (three sectors of three antennas) mounted on the roof and fully concealed behind a 10’ tall stealth enclosure designed as a faux penthouse to match the building’s existing penthouse, with the related equipment to be housed within a 102.7 square foot enclosure adjacent to T-Mobile’s existing wireless telecommunication equipment in the garage. The Proposed Facility will be located about 25-26 feet from T-Mobile’s existing WCF on this roof. The Proposed Facility is designed to minimize visual impacts, blend within the existing environment, and obscure the antennas. The Proposed Facility is the least intrusive means to fill the significant gap of the alternatives investigated by AT&T as explained below.

Objective

Once AT&T’s site at the Maya Lin School is taken off air, AT&T will have a significant gap in its service coverage in Alameda, in an area roughly bordered by Buena Vista Avenue to the north, Benton Street to the east, Central Avenue to the south, and Wood Street to the west. The Proposed Facility will replace coverage to the surrounding residential neighborhoods with over 400 homes and a significant commercial area along Lincoln Avenue and vicinity, a park, schools, places of worship and various other points of interest in the immediate vicinity. The service coverage in this portion of Alameda is described in the accompanying Radio Frequency Statement. The most recent traffic data available from Google Earth Pro for this area indicates that the average traffic along Central Avenue near Bay Street was 10,100 vehicles per day in 2012.

Methodology and Zoning Criteria

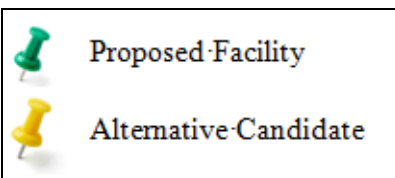
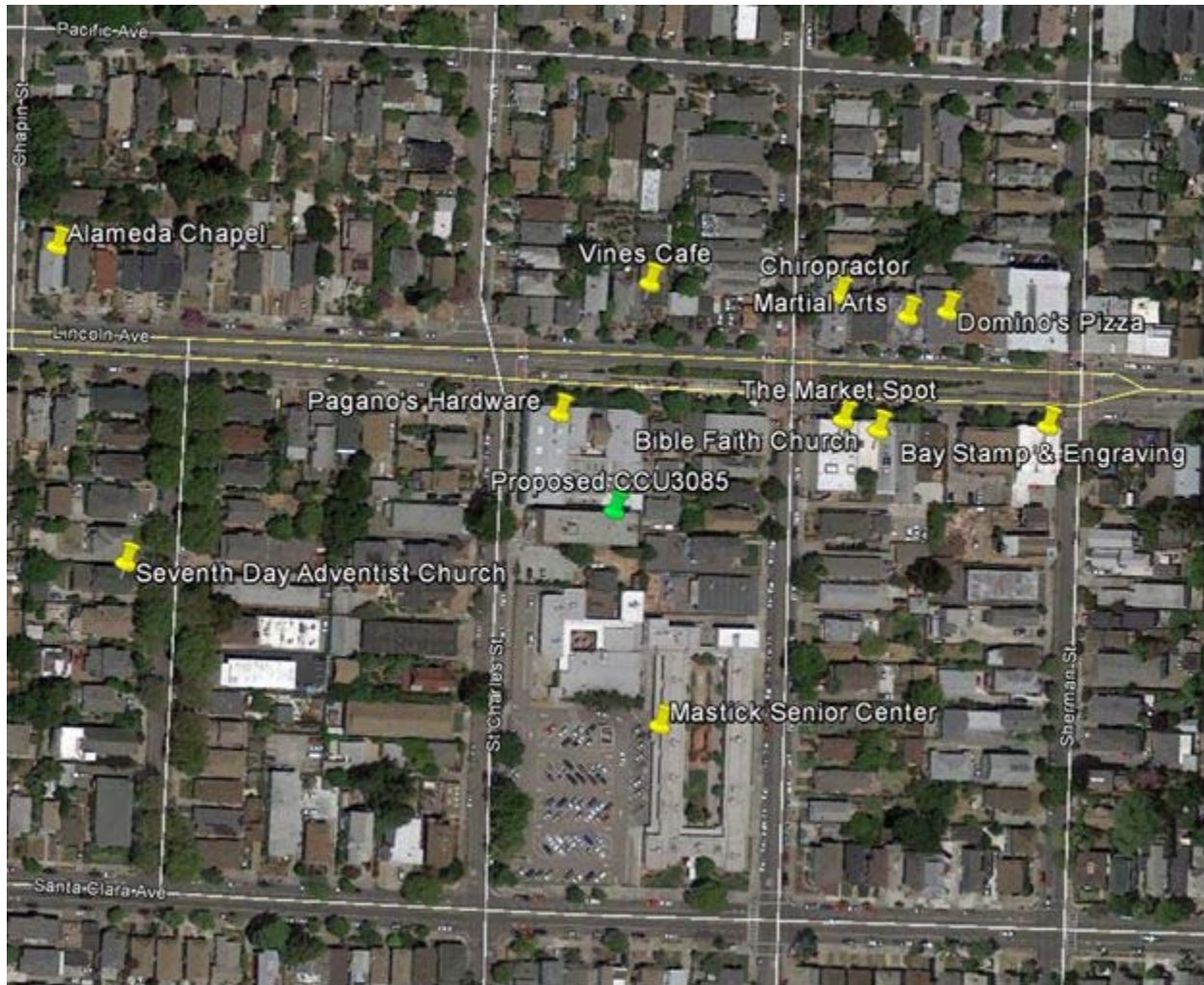
The location of a WCF to fill a significant gap in coverage is dependent upon topography, zoning, existing structures, collocation opportunities, available utilities, access, and a willing landlord. Wireless communication is line-of-sight technology that requires WCFs to be in relatively close proximity to the wireless handsets to be served.

AT&T seeks to replace the existing facility to avoid a significant gap in service coverage by using the least intrusive means under the values of the community as expressed in the Alameda Municipal Code (“Code”). Thus, AT&T is guided by Chapter 30-21 of the Code regarding use permits. AT&T also looks to the city’s prior approvals of WCFs as guidance for acceptable installations. For example, there is an existing T-Mobile WCF on this same rooftop as the Proposed Facility. Finally, AT&T recently was required to vacate its existing site on the nearby school that serves this area. The gap in coverage results from the need to decommission that site. Thus, AT&T has sought non-school sites in the area to replace the necessary service coverage.

Analysis

AT&T investigated potential alternative designs of and alternative sites for facilities to avoid a coverage gap in this portion of Alameda. Based on comments during and after the Planning Board's April 13, 2015 public meeting, AT&T again analyzed Alternative 1, the Mastick Senior Center. The following is a map showing the locations of the Proposed Facility and the alternative sites that AT&T investigated. The alternatives are discussed in the analysis that follows.

Location of Candidate Sites



Proposed Facility – 1538 Saint Charles Street

Existing:



Proposed:



Conclusion: Based upon location, a willing landlord and the superior coverage as shown in the proposed coverage map included in AT&T's Radio Frequency Statement, the Proposed Facility is the least intrusive means for AT&T to meet its service coverage objective.

This four-story apartment building just south of Lincoln Avenue currently houses an approved T-Mobile WCF that consists of visible antennas on the side of a rooftop penthouse. AT&T proposes to collocate the Proposed Facility on this rooftop by installing a faux penthouse to completely screen its antennas, with equipment located in a garage adjacent to T-Mobile's equipment. The Proposed Facility will be completely screened and the faux penthouse will blend in with the building and surroundings. The Proposed Facility is the least intrusive means to fill the significant gap of the alternatives investigated by AT&T.

Alternative No. 1 – Mastick Senior Center, 1155 Santa Clara Avenue



Conclusion: More intrusive than Proposed Facility

This senior center is located on City property and houses a Sprint monopole. This is a feasible option in that AT&T can build a site at this property that would address its coverage gap. But due to the type of facility that is needed here to close the gap, the Proposed Facility offers a better opportunity for minimal stealth construction and design consistent with the city Code. Although the City initially did not want AT&T to place wireless telecommunications facilities on City-owned property, AT&T reanalyzed this property based on questions recently posed by City Staff seeking additional information about this alternative.

As you can see from the photo above and to the right, the existing Sprint monopole is a fairly small structure that does not extend beyond the trees in the area. In contrast, in order to close its significant service coverage gap, AT&T would need to place its antennas at 60', much taller than the Sprint facility and well above any tree cover in the area. AT&T requires that height in order to attain replacement coverage for the existing site at a nearby school that must be taken off air. Specifically, this height is needed because AT&T's signal must clear the adjacent building to the north that has a roof pitch height of 42' 3" and an existing penthouse that is 47' 10" (this building is 1538 St. Charles Street, and these heights are depicted in the zoning drawings that are on file with AT&T's application). In addition, the existing Sprint monopole could not support AT&T's facility, so a larger monopole would need to be constructed, with an additional equipment area, which would also take up parking spaces.

Alternative No. 2 – Pagano’s Hardware, 1100 Lincoln Avenue



Conclusion: Not feasible; more intrusive than Proposed Facility

This store is a relatively short building. A WCF here would not close AT&T's significant service coverage gap due to the low height and because the adjacent four-story apartment building (where the Proposed Facility is to be located) would block radio frequency signals. In addition, this building does not offer a collocation opportunity.

Alternative No. 3 – Vines Cafe & Gallery, 1113 Lincoln Avenue



Conclusion: Not feasible; more intrusive than Proposed Facility

This commercial building is relatively short and the roof would not accommodate a WCF. A rooftop WCF here would not be high enough to close AT&T's significant service coverage gap. In addition, a WCF here would be more intrusive than a fully concealed rooftop collocation such as the Proposed Facility.

Alternative No. 4 – Lee Chiropractic, 1204 Lincoln Avenue



Conclusion: Not feasible; more intrusive than Proposed Facility

This two-story office building is relatively short, and it does not present a collocation opportunity. A rooftop WCF here would not be high enough to close AT&T's significant service coverage gap. In addition, a WCF here would be more intrusive than a fully concealed rooftop collocation such as the Proposed Facility.

Alternative No. 5 – Intensity Martial Arts, 1209 Lincoln Avenue



Conclusion: Not feasible; more intrusive than Proposed Facility

This two-story commercial use does not present a collocation opportunity. A rooftop WCF here would not be high enough to close AT&T's significant service coverage gap. In addition, a WCF here would be more intrusive than a fully concealed rooftop collocation such as the Proposed Facility.

Alternative No. 6 – Domino's Pizza, 1215 Lincoln Avenue



Conclusion: Not feasible; more intrusive than Proposed Facility

This two-story commercial use does not present a collocation opportunity. A rooftop WCF here would not be high enough to close AT&T's significant service coverage gap. In addition, a WCF here would be more intrusive than a fully concealed rooftop collocation such as the Proposed Facility.

Alternative No. 7 – The Market Spot, 1200 Lincoln Avenue



Conclusion: Not feasible; more intrusive than Proposed Facility

This two-story market does not present a collocation opportunity. A rooftop WCF here would not be high enough to close AT&T's significant service coverage gap. In addition, a WCF here would be more intrusive than a fully concealed rooftop collocation such as the Proposed Facility.

Alternative No. 8 –Faith Bible Church, 1206 Lincoln Avenue



Conclusion: Not feasible; more intrusive than Proposed Facility

This short church does not present a collocation opportunity. A rooftop WCF here would not be high enough to close AT&T's significant service coverage gap. In addition, a WCF here would be more intrusive than a fully concealed rooftop collocation such as the Proposed Facility.

Alternative No. 9 – Bay Stamp & Engraving, 1222 Lincoln Avenue



Conclusion: Not feasible; more intrusive than Proposed Facility

This two-story building does not present a collocation opportunity. A rooftop WCF here would not be high enough to close AT&T's significant service coverage gap. In addition, a rooftop WCF on this property would be more intrusive than a fully concealed rooftop collocation such as the Proposed Facility.

Alternative No. 10 – Alameda Chapel, 1001 Lincoln Avenue



Conclusion: Not feasible; more intrusive than Proposed Facility

This is a very short church building. A rooftop WCF here would not be high enough to close AT&T's significant service coverage gap. In addition, a WCF here would be more intrusive than a fully concealed rooftop collocation such as the Proposed Facility.

Alternative No. 11 – Seventh Day Adventist Church, 1515 Verdi Street



Conclusion: Not available; more intrusive than Proposed Facility

This church is located near the edge of the service coverage objective to the southwest of the Proposed Facility. This property is not available because Seventh Day Adventists churches do not lease space for WCFs. In addition, a WCF here would be more intrusive than a fully concealed rooftop collocation such as the Proposed Facility.

Conclusion

The Proposed Facility is the least intrusive means by which AT&T can avoid a significant service coverage objective in this portion of Alameda once its existing site is taken off air.