

STAFF REPORT

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 26-02

VARIANCE NO. 26-01

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Community Development Department

DATE: July 15, 2026 (Regular Meeting)

CASE NO.: Conditional Use Permit No. 26-02 and
Variance No. 26-01
(CEQA Exemption Section 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of
Small Structures))

REQUEST:

The applicant requests approval of Conditional Use Permit ("CUP") No. 26-02 and Variance ("VA") No. 26-01 to allow the new construction and operation of a 75-foot tall monopine wireless telecommunications facility and associated ground equipment enclosure at 5521 Telegraph Road within the M-2 (Heavy Industrial) zoning district.

Approval of a CUP is required pursuant to the Commerce Municipal Code ("CMC") for the installation and operation of a wireless telecommunications facility. The proposed facility will consist of a 75-foot tall monopine and a 396 square foot equipment enclosure located within a 518 square foot lease area.

The applicant is also requesting a VA from the minimum 500-foot separation requirement between wireless telecommunications facilities and residential uses established in CMC Section 19.27.050. The proposed facility is located approximately 453 feet from the nearest residential zone.

LOCATION: 5521 Telegraph Road
Commerce, CA 90040
APNs: 6336-022-018

APPLICANT: John McDonald
EukonGroup
65 Post Suite 1000
Irvine, CA 92618

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission of the City of Commerce (“Planning Commission”) take the following actions:

- 1) Adopt Resolution No. 26-05 approving Variance No. 26-01 granting relief from the 500 foot residential setback requirement for wireless telecommunications facilities pursuant to CMC Section 19.27.050 and CUP No. 26-02 to allow the construction and operation of a 75-foot-tall unmanned wireless telecommunications facility designed as a monopine (pine tree disguise), together with a 396-square-foot equipment enclosure and associated improvements, located at 5521 Telegraph Road, subject to Conditions of Approval, and finding the Project consistent with the CMC, General Plan, and compatible with surrounding uses; and
- 2) Direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”).

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE:

Public Hearing Notice was published in the Los Cerritos News on June 5, 2026, and mailed to property owners within 500 feet of the project site.

CONTINUANCE SUMMARY

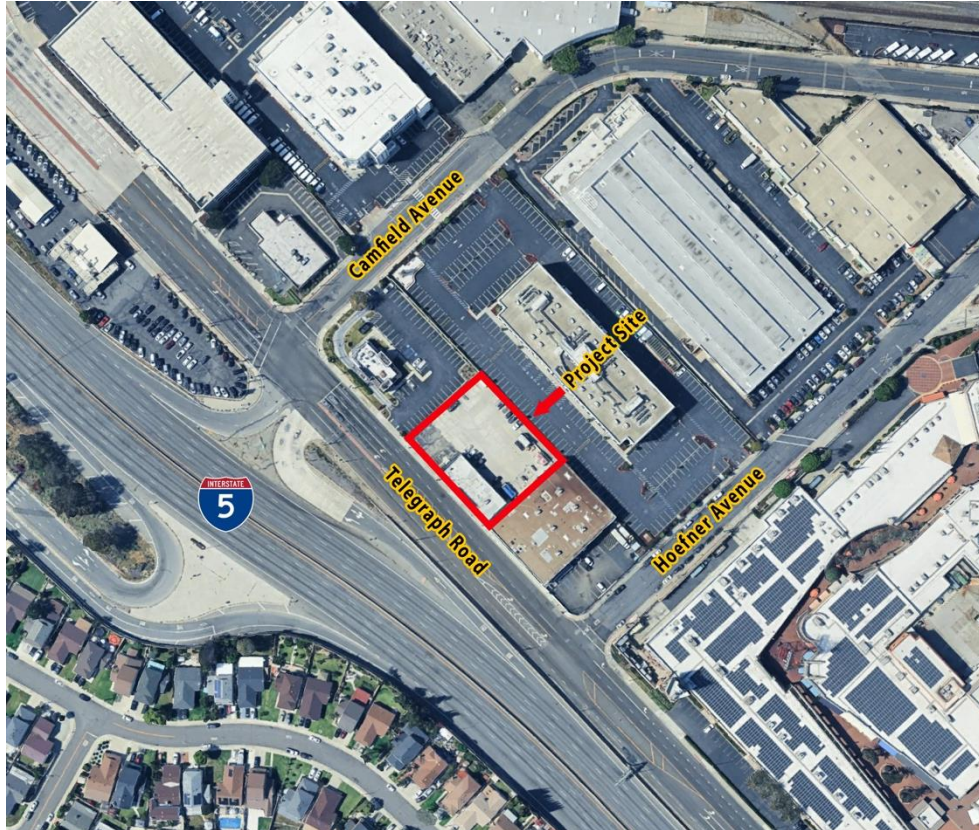
The public hearing was originally scheduled for the June 17, 2026, Planning Commission meeting. Following the cancellation of that meeting, the public hearing was rescheduled for July 15, 2026.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY AND IMPROVEMENTS

The Project site is a regular-shaped parcel containing approximately 25,456 square feet (0.58 acres), located north of Telegraph Road between Camfield Avenue and Hoefner Avenue (see Exhibit A – Location Map). The site is developed with an existing one-story, 4,206 square foot industrial warehouse constructed in 1940. The building is currently occupied by retail use.

The property is served by an existing driveway along Telegraph Road and is fully improved with curb, gutter, and sidewalk along the adjacent street frontages. Surrounding uses consist of a mix of commercial and industrial development, including office uses to the north, retail and commercial uses to the east and west, and the I-5 freeway to the south, with residential uses located beyond the freeway.

Exhibit A - Location Map



SURROUNDING ZONES AND LAND USES

Direction	Existing Zoning	Land Use
Subject Property	M-2	Industrial
North	M-2	Industrial
South	R-1	Low Density Residential
East	M-2	Industrial
West	M-2	Industrial

PROPOSED PROJECT

The applicant proposes to construct a new 75'-0" tall monopine wireless telecommunications facility within a 518 square foot lease area, of which approximately 396 square feet will be allocated for the Project. The site is located within an established industrial area surrounded primarily by industrial and commercial uses, and the facility is designed to be compatible with the existing development pattern and consistent with the M-2 zoning district.

The Project will enhance wireless service in the surrounding area by expanding coverage, improving network reliability, and addressing existing coverage gaps for residents, businesses, and visitors. Overall, the proposed development is consistent with the intent and purpose of the M-2 zone by supporting industrial reinvestment while improving telecommunications infrastructure and connectivity in the area.

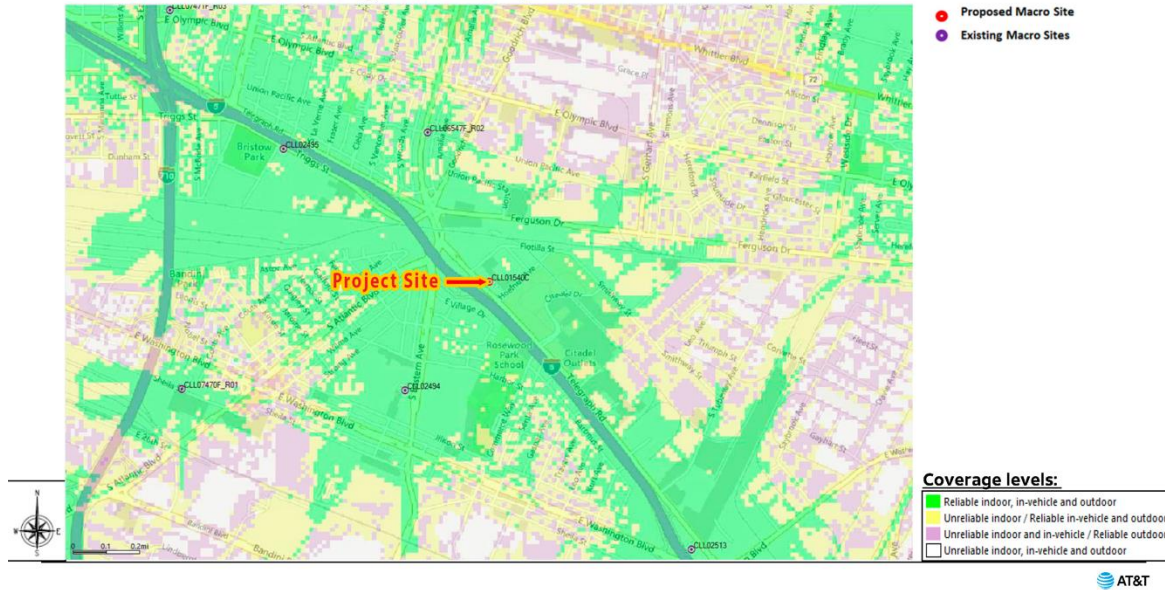
DESIGN AND MATERIALS

The proposed Project consists of a monopine wireless telecommunications facility designed to resemble a mature pine tree. The monopine design is intended to visually screen and camouflage the facility, reducing its visual prominence and minimizing aesthetic impacts. Unlike a traditional monopole, the structure incorporates simulated branches and other features to better integrate it into the surrounding environment.

A condition of approval included in Planning Commission Resolution No. 26-05 requires the operator to maintain the monopine in good condition at all times, including the repair or replacement of damaged or missing branches and other camouflage elements, to preserve its intended appearance (see Attachment B). Below is a photo simulation of the proposed monopine:



Planned 4G-LTE Coverage With Proposed Site CLL01540 On Air



BACKGROUND

The site has been continuously used for industrial and retail purposes since approximately 1940 and is developed with an existing 4,206 square foot industrial warehouse on a 25,456 square foot lot. The property is located within an established industrial area characterized by similar industrial and retail uses and is within an area identified as having gaps in wireless coverage. The applicant is requesting approval of a VA and CUP to allow the construction and operation of a wireless telecommunications facility on the property.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The proposed Project complies with the M-2 development and design standards outlined in CMC Section 19.27.050, *Antenna Regulations*, including, but not limited to, setbacks, building height, and maximum number of antennas with the exception of the requested VA to deviate from the minimum 500-foot separation requirement between wireless telecommunications facilities and residential uses. The following table summarizes the Project's compliance with these standards.

TABLE 1: DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

M-2 Development Standards	Required	Proposed	Compliance
Building Height	75'-0" Maximum	75'-0"	Yes
Distance from Property Lines	0'-0"	2'-0"	Yes
Distance from Other Structures	5'-0"	37'-6"	Yes
Yard Location	Rear or side yard, except street side	Rear yard	Yes
Maximum Number of Antennas per Lot	6	1	Yes
Distance from any Residential Use	500'-0"	453'-0"	No

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTANCY

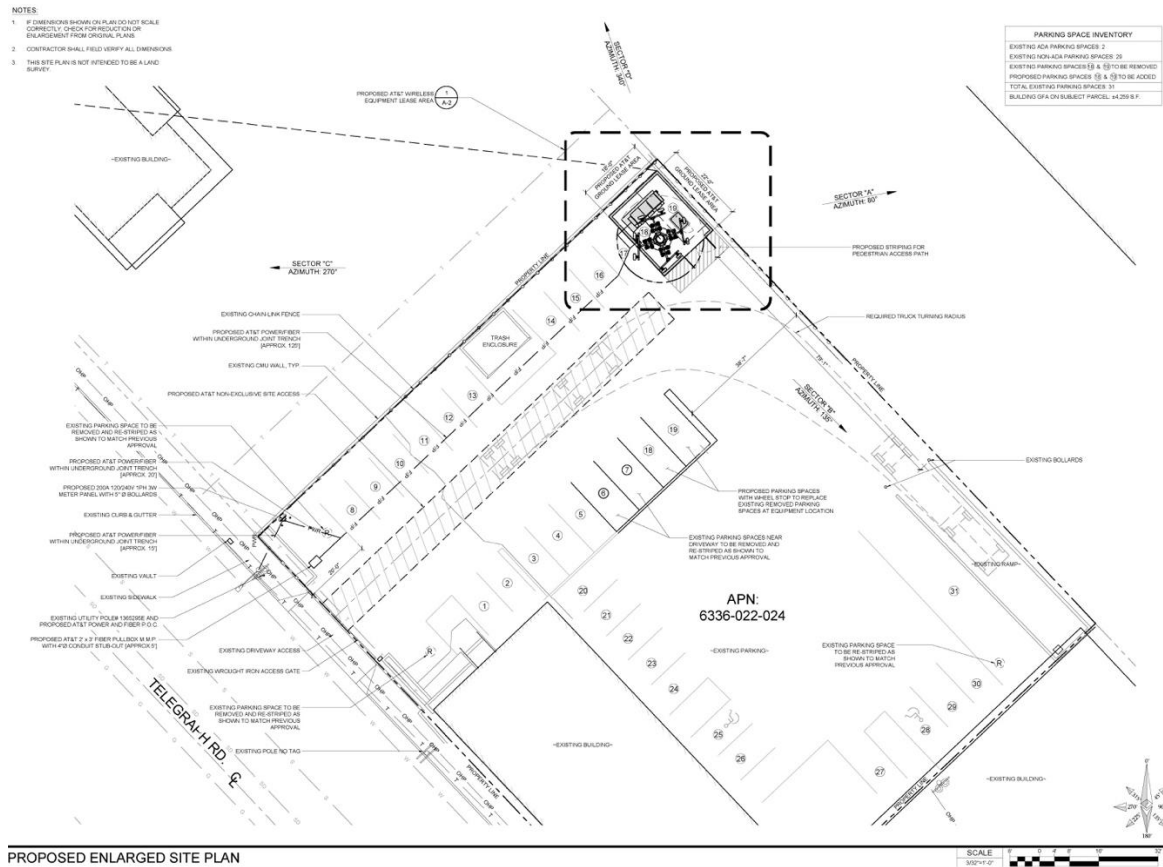
The City's Zoning Ordinance regulates land use and development within zoning districts that correspond to the land use designation established by the General Plan. The Project site is zoned M-2, consistent with the General Plan's Industrial designation.

The proposed wireless telecommunications facility is a permitted use in the zone, subject to approval of a CUP, and is consistent with the General Plan. The Project supports Goal LU-3, Policy LU-3.3 by modernizing existing industrial areas, promoting economic development, and enhancing the long-term viability of the City's industrial districts, while remaining compatible with surrounding land uses.

PARKING

The proposed wireless telecommunications facility is unmanned and will not generate regular parking demand. Occasional maintenance and service visits will be accommodated on-site. The location of the proposed facility has been designed to avoid impacts to existing parking spaces serving the on-site tenant and vehicle access. No existing required parking spaces will be removed or displaced as a result of the Project (see Exhibit C).

Exhibit C – Site Plan



CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

A CUP is required for uses that may exhibit unique operational characteristics or potential impacts necessitating discretionary review to evaluate compatibility with surrounding properties and uses. Pursuant to Section 19.11.030 of the CMC, the installation and operation of a wireless telecommunications facility require approval of a CUP.

Accordingly, the proposed Project is subject to discretionary review by the Planning Commission to determine whether the use is appropriate for the proposed location and whether it can be operated in a manner consistent with surrounding development and applicable development standards.

VARIANCE

The applicant is requesting a VA from Section 19.27.050 of the CMC to deviate from the minimum 500-foot separation requirement between wireless telecommunications facilities and residential uses. The proposed facility is located approximately 453 feet from the nearest residential zone.

Pursuant to Section 19.39.480(A) of the CMC, a VA may be approved when strict application of the zoning regulations would create a hardship due to site specific conditions. Approval of a VA cannot result in a special privilege that is granted to a particular project compared to other properties in the same zone.

The site is constrained by surrounding industrial development and existing land use patterns. These conditions limit where wireless facilities can reasonably be located. The nearest residential uses are located south of the Project site across the I-5 freeway. The 1-5 freeway corridor provides additional physical separation from the facility. The proposed location still allows the facility to function as intended while remaining compatible with the surrounding area.

The VA is needed to allow the project to move forward. It supports improved wireless service in the area while minimizing potential impacts to nearby properties.

ENVIRONMENTAL:

The proposed Project is subject to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Project has been evaluated in accordance with CEQA and the City's environmental review procedures. Based on the nature and scope of the proposed development, the Project has been determined to be exempt from further environmental review pursuant to Section 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) of the CEQA Guidelines, which applies to the installation of small new facilities or structures, including utility extensions and related improvements.

The Project consists of the installation and operation of a wireless telecommunications facility within an existing developed industrial area. The proposed facility will be located on a previously developed site and will not result in significant environmental impacts, including impacts related to aesthetics, traffic, noise, or utilities. Therefore, no further environmental documentation is required, and the Project is exempt from CEQA.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed Project includes the construction and operation of a 75'-0" tall monopine wireless telecommunications facility within an established industrial area. The Project has been designed to comply with applicable development standards and to be compatible with surrounding industrial and commercial uses. The Project requires approval of a CUP and a VA to allow a deviation from the minimum 500-foot separation requirement between wireless telecommunications facilities and residential uses. As discussed in the staff report, the Project site is constrained by existing development patterns and infrastructure, and the nearest residential uses are located across the I-5 freeway corridor, providing additional separation. The Project will enhance wireless coverage and network reliability within this portion of the City, addressing existing service gaps while supporting the orderly development and modernization of the industrial area. Based on the analysis provided, staff recommends approval of the Project, subject to the attached conditions of approval.

Prepared by: Juan Galvan, MPA
Contract Planner

Reviewed by: Jessica Serrano
Director of Community Development

Reviewed by: Araceli Almazan
Deputy City Attorney

ATTACHMENTS: A) Architectural Plans.
B) PC Resolution No. 26-05 – Variance & CUP No. 26-02.