



§141.0420 Wireless Communication Facilities

Wireless communication facilities shall comply with the approval process set forth in Section 141.0420(a) through (c) as applicable to the *development*. All *wireless communication facilities* are subject to the general regulations in Section 141.0420(d), the general design requirements in Section 141.0420(e) and the *Wireless Communication Facilities* Guidelines in the Land Development Manual. Section 141.0420 does not apply to amateur (HAM) radio communication facilities.

(a) Limited Use Regulations

Wireless communication facilities are permitted as a limited use decided in accordance with Process One as follows:

- (1) In commercial and industrial zones on a *premises* that does not contain residential *development*;
- (2) For collocation of *wireless communication facilities* in any zone on existing monopoles that does not increase the area occupied by the *antennas* by more than 100 percent of the originally approved *wireless communication facilities* and does not increase the area occupied by an outdoor equipment enclosure more than 150 square feet beyond the originally approved *wireless communication facilities*;
- (3) In the *public right-of-way* provided that the *wireless communication facility* is a small cell *wireless communication facility* as defined in Section 141.0420(a)(3)(A) below.
 - (A) A small cell *wireless communication facility* is a *wireless communication facility* on or concealed within a streetlight pole with a cobra arm mounted working luminaire that meets the following requirements:
 - (i) The *wireless communication facility* is attached to an existing, replacement, or new streetlight pole that is standard for the proposed location and complies with the applicable guidelines in the Land Development Manual; the *antennas* and associated equipment do not exceed a total of 1528 cubic feet, and no part of the *wireless communication facility* extends more than 24 inches from the streetlight pole in any direction; except that if the *antenna* is top-mounted, the *antenna* or any material concealing the *antenna* may extend vertically up to 48 inches above the highest point of the cobra arm.
 - (ii) The *wireless communication facility* includes a new streetlight pole, within which all of the associated equipment is completely concealed, that is consistent with the streetlight poles located within the same block, or if there are no streetlight poles in the same block, the blocks adjacent to the proposed location; that complies with the applicable guidelines in the Land Development Manual; that has a diameter that does not exceed 18 inches at any point; and that does not include any visible *antennas* that exceed 24 inches in any dimension.
 - (B) A *wireless communication facility* that includes any ground-mounted equipment other than the pole to which the equipment is attached or is concealed within is not a small cell *wireless communication facility*.



- (4) An *eligible facilities request*, the approval of which is required by 47 U.S.C. § 1455 (2018), as may be amended, is permitted as a limited use in any zone, notwithstanding any other provision of the San Diego Municipal Code, subject to the following:
- (A) For the purposes of Section 141.0420(a)(4), italicized terms have the same meaning as in 47 C.F.R. § 1.6100(b) (2019), as may be amended.
 - (B) Failure to assert in writing at the time an application is filed that the application is an *eligible facilities request* shall result in the application being processed pursuant to the regulations that would otherwise be applicable in the absence of 47 U.S.C. § 1455 (2018).
 - (C) An application for modification of an *eligible support structure* that involves the installation of more than four additional equipment cabinets shall not be considered a *substantial change* to the physical dimensions of the *eligible support structure*, provided that all of the equipment cabinets are completely concealed within the *eligible support structure*, and there is no change to the physical dimensions of the *eligible support structure* itself.
- (5) Ground-mounted equipment required for a *wireless communication facility*, other than a pole to which *wireless communication facility* is attached, that meets the requirements in Sections 129.0710(a)(10) and 129.0710(b)(6).
- (6) A strand-mounted *wireless communication facility* is allowed only on existing utility poles and overhead utility wires. Antennas and associated equipment shall comply with the cable management design standards and be painted to match the color of the pole's surface on which they are attached.
- (7) A temporary *wireless communication facility* shall be designed to provide service during construction, an emergency event, a citywide public event, or pilot projects in accordance with the *Wireless Communication Facility Guidelines* in the *Land Development Manual*.
- (A) A *substantial conformance* review is required for a temporary *wireless communication facility*.
 - (B) A temporary *wireless communication facility* shall comply with the following requirements:
 - (i) Equipment associated with a temporary *wireless communication facility* shall be limited to three antennas and six radios, surge suppressors, rancaps, or similar equipment;
 - (ii) A temporary *wireless communication facility* shall not exceed 250 square feet;
 - (iii) No more than two cabinets shall be permitted; and
 - (iv) Generators shall not be permitted.
 - (C) An application for a temporary *wireless communication facility* shall be submitted no later than 30 days prior to the expiration of the existing *substantial conformance* review. The application shall include a construction schedule and justification for the extension of the *substantial conformance* review.
 - (D) A temporary *wireless communication facility* shall not be installed for more than 180 days. The applicant may request only one extension, provided that the total duration of the *wireless communication facility*, including the extension, does not exceed 365 days.



- (E) All temporary wireless communication facilities shall be subject to the requirements of Section 141.0420. Failure to comply with the requirements of Section 141.0420 shall be subject to the revocation of the substantial conformance review approval and require the immediate removal of the temporary wireless communication facility in accordance with Section 141.0420(d)(9).

(b) Neighborhood Use Permit Regulations

Wireless communication facilities may be permitted with a Neighborhood Use Permit decided in accordance with Process Two, as follows:

- (1) In commercial or industrial zones on a *premises* containing residential ~~or mixed-use development~~uses;
- (2) ~~With~~In a residential, agricultural, or open space zone, or on a *premises* without a zoning designation, when *antennas* are located ~~at least~~more than 100 feet from the *property line* ~~on a premises with a dwelling unit, child care center, or school with children enrolled in any grade kindergarten through grade 8 where located~~any of the following uses:
 - (A) ~~in an agricultural zone~~Residential;
 - (B) ~~On~~ dedicated parkland subject to San Diego Charter Section 55, ~~except in an open space zone; or~~
 - (C) ~~in a residential zone on a premises that does not contain residential development; Schools~~ with children enrolled in kindergarten through grade 8; or
 - (D) Child care facilities.
- (3) In the *public right-of-way* when the *wireless communication facilities* are not small cell *wireless communication facilities*, ~~provided that the wireless communication facility does not include any ground-mounted equipment other than a pole to which the wireless communication facility is attached or is concealed within.~~
- (4) Equipment associated with the *wireless communication facility* including small cell *wireless communications facilities* within the *public right-of-way*, where new ground-mounted equipment not to exceed 48 inches in height and width and no more than one cabinet per *wireless communication facilities* and small cell *wireless communication facilities* provider.
- (5) All small cell wireless communication facilities and wireless communication facilities within the public right-of-way, where new ground-mounted equipment does not exceed 48 inches in height and width.

(c) Conditional Use Permit Regulations

Wireless communication facilities may be permitted with a Conditional Use Permit as follows:

- (1) Decided in accordance with Process Three, where the *development* meets the following locational criteria:
 - (A) ~~Wireless communication facilities with~~In a residential, agricultural, or open space zone, or on a *premises* without a zoning designation, when *antennas* are located less than 100 feet from the *property line* ~~on a premises with a dwelling unit, child care center, or school with children enrolled in any grade kindergarten through grade 8 where located~~any of the following uses:



- (i) ~~in a residential zone on a premises that does not contain residential development;~~
~~or Residential;~~
 - (ii) ~~in an agricultural zone.~~ On dedicated parkland subject to San Diego Charter section 55;
 - (iii) Schools with children enrolled in kindergarten through grade 8; or
 - (iv) Child care facilities.
- (B) ~~In~~ Equipment associated with the wireless communication facility including small cell wireless communication facilities with the ~~public--right-of-way-with~~, where ground-mounted equipment ~~exceeding 3 feet~~ exceeds 48 inches in height and width above the finished ~~grade of the curb line and greater than 4 feet in diameter;~~ other than a pole to which ~~there~~ more than one cabinet per wireless communication ~~facility is attached.~~ facilities and small cell wireless communication facilities provider.
- (2) Decided in accordance with Process Four, where the ~~development~~ is a wireless communication facility that deviates from the requirements in Section 141.0420(c), and is not identified in Section 126.0402 as requiring a Neighborhood Development Permit, shall be required to obtain a Planned Development Permit in accordance with Chapter 12, Article 6, Division 6. ~~meets the following locational criteria:~~
 - (A) ~~On dedicated parkland subject to San Diego Charter Section 55 in any zone, except on public right of way within dedicated parkland, with antennas located less than 100 feet from the property line of a premises with a dwelling unit, child care center, or school with children enrolled in any grade kindergarten through grade 8.~~
 - (B) ~~In a residential zone on a premises that contains residential development.~~
 - (C) ~~In an open space zone.~~
- (d) General Regulations for Wireless Communication Facilities
 - (1) Every application shall include documentation satisfactory to the City Manager, as follows:
 - (A) Demonstrating that the *wireless communication facility* complies with federal standards for radio frequency radiation in accordance with the Telecommunication Act of 1996 and subsequent amendments and any other requirements imposed by state or federal regulatory agencies.
 - (B) Identifying the location type, capacity, field strength or power density, and calculated geographic service of the *wireless communication facility*.
 - (2) Within the Coastal Overlay Zone, the Coastal Development Permit regulations in Chapter 12, Article 6, Division 7, shall also apply.
 - (3) *Wireless communication facilities* located within or adjacent to the City's Multi-Habitat Planning Areas shall comply with the Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea Plan's Land Use Adjacency Guidelines.
 - (4) *Wireless communication facilities* located in a designated *historical district* or in a *historical district* identified in a *historical resources* survey prepared by the City, or on a *premises* with a *historical resource* on it, must comply with the Historical Resource Regulations and the U.S. Secretary of Interior Standards and Guidelines.



- (5) At least 60 days prior to an *applicant* asserting that an application for a *wireless communication facility* is deemed approved pursuant to California Government Code section 65964.1, the *applicant* shall provide public notice as follows:
 - (A) The notice shall be mailed to all persons described in Section 112.0302(b) and to the City Manager.
 - (B) The notice shall be posted in the manner prescribed by Section 112.0304.
 - (C) The notice shall include all of the information as prescribed in Section 112.0301(a)(1)(A) through (D), and the following:
 - (i) The name, address, and telephone number of the *applicant*; and
 - (ii) The following statement: “This application may be deemed approved, with no public hearing, no earlier than 60 days after this notice has been mailed and posted as required.”
- (6) The *applicant* shall obtain all necessary *construction permits* to comply with applicable building, fire, mechanical, and plumbing codes, and state and federal disability access laws.
- (7) The permittee shall provide documentation to verify that a *wireless communication facility* is operating in compliance with federal standards for radio frequency radiation in accordance with the Telecommunication Act of 1996 and subsequent amendments and any other requirements imposed by state or federal regulatory agencies within 30 calendar days of receipt of a written request for such documentation from the City Manager.
- (8) The *wireless communication facilities* shall be maintained in good working order, free from trash, debris, and graffiti, and designed to discourage vandalism. The permittee or owner shall repair or replace any damaged equipment within 30 calendar days of receipt of a written notification from the City Manager.
- (9) The permittee or owner shall remove the *wireless communication facilities* from the *premises* and restore the *premises* to the condition preceding the construction and installation of the *wireless communication facility*, at the owner’s or permittee’s sole cost and expense, if any of the following circumstances exists:
 - (A) The permit authorizing the *wireless communication facility* is expired and a new permit has not been obtained.
 - (B) If no permit was granted, it has been ten years from the date that the *wireless communication facility* was authorized by federal or state law and no new permit or legal authorization has been obtained.
 - (C) The City Manager determines that the *wireless communication facility* or components of the *wireless communication facility* are non-operational or no longer used.
- (10) Prior to January 31 of every year, each *wireless communication facility* provider shall submit documentation, satisfactory to the City Manager, identifying the location of each *wireless communication facility* in its City of San Diego network organized by community plan area. The documentation shall include *wireless communication facilities* that are approved, but not yet built, *wireless communication facilities* that are currently operating, and non-operating *wireless communication facilities*.

(e) Design Requirements

The following regulations apply to all *wireless communication facilities*:



- (1) *Wireless communication facilities* shall utilize the smallest, least visually intrusive *antennas*, components, and other necessary equipment.
- (2) The *applicant* shall use all reasonable means to conceal or minimize the visual impacts of the *wireless communication facilities* through integration and installation on existing *structures*. Integration with existing *structures* or among other existing uses shall be accomplished through the use of architecture, landscape, and siting solutions.
- (3) Equipment associated with *wireless communication facilities* shall be located within an existing *building envelope*, whenever possible. If an *exterior* equipment enclosure is necessary, it shall be of a height minimally necessary to conceal the equipment, with an area not to exceed *250300* square feet, unless a Neighborhood Development Permit is granted in accordance with Section *126.0402*.
- (4) Overhead wires are not permitted.
- (5) Equipment located on the roof of an existing *structure* shall be set back or located to minimize visibility, especially from the *public right-of-way* or public places.
- (6) Faux landscaping may be used on *premises* where natural vegetation similar in size and species exists or is proposed as part of the *development*. The *applicant* shall provide sufficient samples, models, or other means to demonstrate the quality, appearance, and durability of the faux vegetation.
- (7) If trees with a trunk width of 4 inches or more (measured by caliper, 4 feet above grade) are removed or significantly trimmed for the installation or operation of the *wireless communication facility*, then replacement trees of a similar size shall be planted to the satisfaction of the City Manager.
- (8) *Antennas* shall comply with the following design requirements:
 - (A) Each *antenna*, including any concealment measures, shall appear as an integral part of the *structure*, except for *public right-of-way* site installations as set forth in Section *141.0420(f)*.
 - (B) No portion of an *antenna*, including any concealment measures, shall be more than *1224* inches away from the *structure*, unless a Neighborhood Development Permit is granted in accordance with Section *126.0402*. Projections shall be minimally visible, unless the *applicant* provides evidence demonstrating ~~to the satisfaction of the City Manager that the *wireless communication facilities* cannot operate without exceeding 12 inches, in which case no portion of the *antenna* shall be more than 18 inches away from the *structure*~~ no other mounting apparatus or antenna(s) are available and would therefore result in significant loss in network coverage to the intended coverage area to the satisfaction of the City Engineer.
 - (C) Each *antenna*, including any concealment measures, shall fit into the design of the *structure*, shall be no longer or wider than the portion of the *structure* upon which it is mounted, and shall not interrupt the architectural lines of the *structure*.
 - (D) Associated mounting brackets and coaxial cable shall be concealed from view.
 - (E) Any pipes or similar apparatus used to attach *antennas*, including any concealment measures, to the *structure* shall not extend beyond the length or width of the *antenna*.



- (F) Any *antenna* mounted to a pole shall be completely concealed from view within a radome in accordance with the *Wireless Communication Facility* Guidelines in the Land Development Manual. If the proposed radome exceeds the design standards of Section 141.0420, a Neighborhood Development Permit is required in accordance with Section 126.0402, prior to installation.
- (G) *Antennas*, except for shrouds and skirts, shall not exceed eight feet in length or three feet in width, unless a Neighborhood Development Permit is granted in accordance with Section 126.0402.
- (9) Vertical elements, designed as flagpoles or light standards, shall replicate the design, diameter, and proportion of the vertical element they are intending to imitate. Flagpoles shall maintain a tapered design. An alternative design may be permitted with a Neighborhood Development Permit in accordance with Section 126.0402.
- (10) Use of or replacement of any *building facade* or mechanical screen with fiberglass reinforced panels or similar industry standard material for purposes of concealing *antennas* shall not result in any noticeable lines or edges in the transition to the original *structure*. All screening material shall be painted and textured to match the original *structure*.
- (11) All equipment, including transformers, emergency generators, and air conditioners, shall be designed and operated consistent with the Noise Ordinance in Chapter 5, Article 9.5 of the Municipal Code. Ventilation openings shall be baffled and directed away from residential areas. Vibration resonance of operating equipment in the equipment enclosures shall be eliminated.

(f) Public Right-of-Way Installations

Wireless communication facilities may be installed in the *public right-of-way* in the *parkway*. *Wireless communication facilities* located in the *public right-of-way* are subject to all other applicable requirements of the Municipal Code and the following additional design requirements:

- (1) *Antennas* associated with *wireless communication facilities*, other than those allowed pursuant to Section 141.0420(a)(3), shall be vertically mounted to the pole in compliance with any applicable separation requirements and shall not exceed 6 inches in distance from the pole.
- (2) No more than four panel *antennas* or two omni-directional *antennas* shall be mounted on any utility pole by any one *wireless communication facilities* provider.
- (3) *Antennas* shall be painted to match the color of the surface of the pole on which they are attached.
- (4) *Wireless communication facilities* mounted on a City street light pole or a City signalized pole shall include a turn-off switch that is mounted to the pole, unless the *applicant* provides evidence to the satisfaction of the City Engineer demonstrating an alternative design for the turn-off switch is needed.

(g) Park Site Installations

The following additional design requirements apply to *wireless communication facilities* in parks within the City of San Diego:



- (1) Where practicable, *antennas* shall be mounted on sports field light poles, security light poles, or inside foul line poles or flagpoles. *Antennas* shall not be mounted above the light source on any light poles. All *antennas* on flagpoles or foul line poles shall be concealed within the pole.
- (2) If the proposed *wireless communication facility* would be located on dedicated parkland subject to San Diego Charter Section 55, equipment enclosures shall be placed underground unless the Parks and Recreation Department Director, or their designee, determines that an above-ground equipment enclosure would not violate Charter Section 55, and a Neighborhood Development Permit is granted in accordance with Section [126.0402](#).

(“Wireless Communication Facilities” added 8-10-2004 by O-19308 N.S.; effective 4-11-2007.)

(Amended 5-3-2005 by O-19369 N.S.; effective 4-11-2007.)

(Amended 9-29-2006 by O-19545 N.S.; effective 4-11-2007.)

(Amended 6-18-2013 by O-20261 N.S.; effective 7-19-2013; certified by California Coastal Commission 6-12-2014.)

(Amended 8-9-2019 by O-21117 N.S.; effective 9-8-2019; certified by California Coastal Commission 12-11-2019.)

(Amended 4-27-2021 by Emergency Ordinance O-21315 N.S.; effective 4-27-2021.)

[Editors Note: This Ordinance is effective citywide, including inside the Coastal Overlay Zone, which is subject to California Coastal Commission jurisdiction. The Coastal Commission determined the Ordinance did not require certification on April 23, 2021. The Ordinance is effective for 45 days from the effective date, unless extended pursuant to California Government Code section 65858.]

(Amended 1-27-2022 by O-21417 N.S.; effective 2-26-2022; certified by California Coastal Commission 4-12-2024.)

(Amended 3-7-2023 by O-21618 N.S.; effective 5-6-2023; certified by California Coastal Commission 2-6-2025.)

(Amended 6-15-2026 by Ord. [O-22109](#) N.S., effective 7-15-2026)