## CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

South Coast Area Office 200 Oceangate, Suite 1000 Long Beach, CA 90802-4302 (562) 590-5071



W18.5a

 Appeal Filed:
 4/24/2014

 49<sup>th</sup> Day:
 6/12/2014

 Staff:
 M.Stone-LB

 Staff Report:
 5/2/2014

 Hearing Date:
 5/14/2014

# STAFF REPORT: APPEAL -- SUBSTANTIAL ISSUE

**Local Government:** City of Los Angeles

Local Decision: Approval

Appeal No.: A-5-DRL-14-0023

**Applicant:** Verizon Wireless

**Agent:** Rob Searcy, CES/Prescott Communications Inc.

**Location:** On Vista Del Mar between Vista Del Mar Lane and

Waterview Street, Playa del Rey, City of Los Angeles

**Project Description:** Appeal of City of Los Angeles Local Coastal Development

Permit No. 13-05, approved with conditions to permit the installation and operation of antennas and associated equipment for the Verizon Wireless telecommunications

network.

**Appellant:** Charles Lester, Executive Director of the California

**Coastal Commission** 

# SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Commission determine that <u>a substantial issue exists</u> with respect to the grounds on which appeal number A-5-DRL-14-0023 has been filed, because the location of the antennas and associated telecommunications equipment could adversely affect public views to the shoreline by restricting those views and compounding visual clutter in the area. **See Page Two for the motion to make the substantial issue determination**.

At this time, all that is before the Commission is the question of substantial issue. The Commission's role at the "substantial issue" phase of an appeal is to decide whether the appeal of the local

government action raises a substantial issue as to conformity with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act.

The Commission will not take public testimony during this phase of the appeal hearing unless at least three commissioners request it. If the Commission finds that the appeal raises a substantial issue, it will schedule the de novo phase of the hearing for a future meeting, during which it will take public testimony. Written comments may be submitted to the Commission during either phase of the hearing.

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#### **EXHIBITS**

Exhibit 1—Project Vicinity Map

Exhibit 2—Project Site Plan

Exhibit 3—City of Los Angeles Notice of Decision on Local Coastal Development Permit 13-05

#### I. MOTION AND RESOLUTION

Staff recommends a **NO** vote on the following motion:

**MOTION:** "I move that the Commission determine that Appeal No. A-5-DLR-14-0023 raises no substantial issue with respect to conformity of the local approval with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act."

Failure of the motion will result in a de novo hearing on the application and adoption of the following resolution and findings. A majority of the Commissioners present is required to pass the motion.

**RESOLUTION:** "The Commission hereby finds that Appeal No. A-5-DLR-14-0023 presents a substantial issue with respect to the grounds on which the appeal has been filed under § 30603 of the Coastal Act regarding consistency with the visual resource policies of the Coastal Act."

#### II. APPELLANT'S CONTENTIONS

On March 12, 2014 the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works approved Local Coastal Development Permit No. 13-05 to allow the installation and operation of antennas and associated equipment for the Verizon Wireless telecommunications network. The grounds for the appeal filed by the Executive Director of the California Coastal Commission on April 24, 2014 are:

• Scenic and Visual Quality of Coastal Areas. Section 30251 of the Coastal Act protects the scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas. The project site, Vista Del Mar, is a scenic highway that provides public views of the shoreline. The Cityapproved development may adversely affect public views and could prejudice the City's ability to prepare a Local Coastal Program (LCP):

#### III. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTION

On March 12, 2014, after a public hearing on February 25, 2014, the City of Los Angeles approved Local Coastal Development Permit No. 13-05.

The City's Notice of Final Local Action for the approval of the Local Coastal Development Permit No. 13-05 was received in the South Coast District Office in Long Beach on March 26, 2014, and the Commission's required twenty working-day appeal period commenced. The appeal by the Executive Director was filed on April 24, 2014 in the South Coast District Office. The Commission's twenty working-day appeal period ended on April 24, 2014, with no other appeals filed.

#### IV. APPEAL PROCEDURES

Section 30600(b) of the Coastal Act provides that prior to certification of its Local Coastal Program (LCP), a local jurisdiction may, with respect to development within its area of jurisdiction in the coastal zone and consistent with the provisions of Sections 30604, 30620 and 30620.5, establish procedures for the filing, processing, review, modification, approval or denial of a coastal development permit. Pursuant to this provision, the City of Los Angeles developed a permit program in 1978 to exercise its option to issue local coastal development permits. Sections 13301-13325 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations provide procedures for issuance and appeals of locally issued coastal development permits. Section 30602 of the Coastal Act allows *any* action by a local government on a coastal development permit application evaluated under Section 30600(b) to be appealed to the Commission. The standard of review for such an appeal is the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. [Cal. Pub. Res. Code §§ 30200 and 30604.]

After a final local action on a local coastal development permit application, the Coastal Commission must be noticed within five days of the decision. After receipt of such a notice which contains all the required information, a twenty working-day appeal period begins during which any person, including the applicant, the Executive Director, or any two members of the

Commission, may appeal the local decision to the Coastal Commission. [Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 30602.] As provided under section 13318 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, the appellant must conform to the procedures for filing an appeal as required under section 13111 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, including the specific grounds for appeal and a summary of the significant question raised by the appeal.

The action currently before the Commission is to find whether there is a "substantial issue" or "no substantial issue" raised by the appeal of the local approval of the proposed project. Sections 30621 and 30625(b)(1) of the Coastal Act require a de novo hearing of the appealed project unless the Commission determines that no substantial issue exists with respect to the grounds for appeal.

Commission staff recommends a finding of substantial issue. If the Commission decides that the appellants' contentions raise no substantial issue as to conformity with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, the action of the local government becomes final. Alternatively, if the Commission finds that a substantial issue exists with respect to the conformity of the action of the local government with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act, the local coastal development permit is voided and the Commission typically continues the public hearing to a later date in order to review the coastal development permit as a de novo matter. [Cal. Pub. Res. Code §§ 30621 and 30625.] Section 13321 of the Coastal Commission regulations specifies that de novo actions will be heard according to the procedures outlined in Sections 13114 and 13057-13096 of the Commission's regulations.

If there is no motion from the Commission to find no substantial issue, it will be presumed that the appeal raises a substantial issue and the Commission will schedule the de novo phase of the public hearing on the merits of the application at a subsequent Commission hearing (concurrently with the dual permit application no. 5-14-0628). A de novo public hearing on the merits of the application uses the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. Sections 13110-13120 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations further explain the appeal hearing process.

If the Commission decides to hear arguments and vote on the substantial issue question, proponents and opponents will have three minutes per side to address whether the appeal raises a substantial issue. The only persons qualified to testify before the Commission at the substantial issue portion of the appeal process are the applicant, persons who opposed the application before the local government (or their representatives), and the local government. Testimony from other persons must be submitted in writing. The Commission will then vote on the substantial issue matter. It takes a majority of Commissioners present to find that the grounds for the appeal raise no substantial issue.

#### V. DUAL PERMIT JURISDICTION AREA

Within the areas specified in Section 30601, which is known in the City of Los Angeles permit program as the *Dual Permit Jurisdiction* area, the Coastal Act requires that any development which receives a local coastal development permit also obtain a second (or "dual") coastal development permit from the Coastal Commission. The Commission's standard of review for the proposed development in the *Dual Permit Jurisdiction* area is the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. For projects located inland of the areas identified in Section 30601 (i.e., projects in

the *Single Permit Jurisdiction*), the City of Los Angeles local coastal development permit is the only coastal development permit required.

As a result of the project site being located within three hundred feet of the beach, the proposed development is located within the *Dual Permit Jurisdiction*. On April 8, 2014, the applicant submitted the required "dual" Coastal Commission coastal development permit application (Application No. 5-14-0628) for Commission review and action.

In regards to this appeal, if the Commission finds that a substantial issue exists in regards to the City's approval of the Local Coastal Development Permit No. 13-05, the subsequent <u>de novo</u> action on the local coastal development permit will be combined with the required "dual" Coastal Commission coastal development permit application. The matter will not be referred back to the local government.

On the other hand, if the Commission finds that no substantial issue exists in regards to the City's approval of the local coastal development permit, then the local coastal development permit approved by the City will be final, and the Commission will act on the required "dual" Coastal Commission coastal development permit as a separate agenda item at a future meeting.

In order to minimize duplication, Commission staff intends to combine the de novo permit action for this appeal (if the Commission finds that a substantial issue exists) and required "dual" Coastal Commission coastal development permit application into one staff report and one hearing for concurrent Commission action at a future Commission meeting.

### VI. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS

#### A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

The proposed project site is located within a utility easement in the public right-of-way, on the seaward (west) side of Vista Del Mar, near the three-way intersection of Vista Del Mar, Vista Del Mar Lane, and Waterview Street in the community of Playa del Rey, Los Angeles. This location is within the Dual Permit Jurisdiction of the Coastal Zone.

According to the City's staff report, Vista Del Mar, in the vicinity of the proposed project site, is designated as a Scenic Highway in the Transportation Element of the General Plan for the City of Los Angeles. The area to the east of the proposed project site is a developed residential area, and the area to the West of Vista Del Mar is a vegetated slope which leads down to the beach and the ocean. The slope is within the public right-of-way and the beach is zoned as an open space area. The slope below the proposed project site is developed with an approximately 50-unit, two-story condominium complex. The three-way intersection of Vista Del Mar, Vista Del Mar Lane, and Waterview Street contains four existing street lights, each supporting a traffic signal.

City of Los Angeles Local Coastal Development Permit No. 13-05 permits the replacement of an existing 27-foot light pole with a new light pole of the same height; addition of two (57" X 17" X 7") panel antennas, which will be flush-mounted to the pole; installation of a 4'(D) X 3' (L) X 2' (W) underground splice vault approximately 10 feet south of the new pole; construction of a 20'(D)

X 18'(L) X 8" (W) underground vault with a three square foot access hatch at ground level; construction of two 42" high ventilation stacks north of the new vault that will connect to the underground vault; and construction of a 48" high electrical meter pedestal south of the vault. The pole and both underground vaults would be connected by wiring housed in an underground conduit. Native, drought-tolerant shrubs would be planted to shield the ventilation stacks and the electrical meter pedestal from view.

#### B. FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN SUBSTANTIAL ISSUE ANALYSIS

Section 30625(b)(1) of the Coastal Act states that the Commission shall hear an appeal of a local government action carried out pursuant to Section 30600(b) unless it finds that no substantial issue exists as to conformity with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. The term "substantial issue" is not defined in the Coastal Act or its implementing regulations. Section 13115(b) of the Commission's regulations simply indicates that the Commission will hear an appeal unless it "finds that the appeal raises no significant question." In previous decisions on appeals, the Commission has been guided by the following factors:

- 1. The degree of factual and legal support for the local government's decision that the development is consistent or inconsistent with the relevant provisions of the Coastal Act;
- 2. The extent and scope of the development as approved or denied by the local government;
- 3. The significance of the coastal resources affected by the decision;
- 4. The precedential value of the local government's decision for future interpretations of its LCP; and,
- 5. Whether the appeal raises local issues, or those of regional or statewide significance.

Even when the Commission chooses not to hear an appeal, appellants nevertheless may obtain judicial review of the local government's coastal permit decision by filing petition for a writ of mandate pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure, Section 1094.5.

Staff is recommending that the Commission find that a substantial issue exists with respect to whether the local government action conforms with the provisions of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act for the reasons set forth below.

#### C. SUBSTANTIAL ISSUE ANALYSIS

As stated in Section III of this report, the grounds for an appeal of a coastal development permit application acted on by the local government prior to certification of its Local Coastal Program (LCP) are the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. Any such local government coastal development permit may be appealed to the Commission. The Commission shall hear an appeal unless it determines that no substantial issue exists as to conformity with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. In this case, staff has recommended that the Commission concur with staff's conclusion that a substantial issue exists.

The grounds for this appeal relate primarily to the proposed project's potential adverse impacts to visual resources. The project, as approved by the City, will be located on the seaward (west) side of Vista Del Mar, directly within public views of the coast.

Only with careful review of the proposed project can the Commission ensure that the proposed project will not adversely affect views of the coast. If it finds that a substantial issue exits, the Commission will have the opportunity to review and act on the proposed project at the subsequent de novo hearing.

The Commission's standard of review for determining whether to hear the appeal is only whether the appeal raises a substantial issue as to conformity with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act (hereinafter "Chapter 3"). Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 30625(b)(1); 14 C.C.R. § 13321. The Commission's decision will be guided by the factors listed in the previous section of this report (B. Factors to be Considered in Substantial Issue Analysis).

This appeal raises a substantial issue as to conformity with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act (Cal. Pub. Res. Code §§ 30200-30265.5). The Notice of Decision on Local Coastal Development Permit 13-05 and accompanying Final Staff Report issued by the City of Los Angeles states that the City applied the policies of Chapter 3 and concluded, in part, that the development, as proposed, would be consistent with Section 30251 of the Coastal Act. Section 30251 states:

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas such as those designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.

Commission staff, however, asserts that by finding that no adverse impacts to scenic and visual qualities of the coastal area are expected, the City failed to appropriately interpret Section 30251. In addition, the City's approval deviates from Commission precedent on this issue. The Commission has been concerned with the cumulative impacts on visual resources created by the proliferation of telecommunications equipment as indicated by Coastal Development Permits: 1) 5-07-375 (T-Mobile); 2) 5-92-415 (Los Angeles Cellular Telephone Co.); 3) 5-97-130 (Los Angeles Cellular); and 4) 4-08-035 (AT&T Mobility). And, as demand for wireless communications facilities increases, it is likely that other service providers will be interested in placing additional telecommunications structures or equipment in the area. Accordingly, the Commission has required similar facilities to be the least visually intrusive alternative, and has permitted such proposed development only if those facilities cannot otherwise be co-located on an existing site or placed at an alternative location.

Applying the five factors listed in the prior section clarifies that the appeal raises a "substantial" issue with respect to Chapter 3, and therefore, meets the substantiality standard of Section 30265(b)(1),

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all subsequent statutory references are to sections within the Coastal Act. Cal. Pub. Res. Code §§ 30000 *et seq.* 

because the nature of the proposed project and the local government action are potentially inconsistent with the Chapter 3 policies.

The first factor is the <u>degree of factual and legal support for the local government's decision</u> that the development is consistent or inconsistent with the relevant provisions of the Coastal Act. As indicated above, the City's conclusion was not supported by substantial evidence. The proposed development could potentially obstruct views of the coast and degrade visual resources along Vista Del Mar, because the antennas and additional equipment adds to, and therefore, compounds the existing clutter in the viewshed. In order to adequately address the impacts on visual resources presented here, additional information should be provided, which justifies the need to locate Verizon's telecommunications equipment in this particular location. Such additional information should include, but is not limited to, a signal coverage map which indicates wireless signal strength in the area, as well as an alternative site analysis. The requested information is essential in order to properly determine the appropriate location for Verizon's telecommunications equipment so as to avoid adverse impacts to visual resources.

The second factor is the <u>extent and scope of the development</u> as approved or denied by the local government. Here, the proposed development approved by the local government is installation and operation of antennas and associated equipment for the Verizon Wireless telecommunications network. Telecommunications equipment is not a type of development that is prioritized by the policies of Chapter 3. Since the scope or extent of the development is limited to the antennas and associated equipment, a finding that a substantial issue exists – and possible denial of a Coastal Development Permit – would not impact any facilities otherwise promoted by Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act.

The third factor is the <u>significance of the coastal resources affected</u> by the decision. Again, because the City – as the local decision-making authority – approved a local coastal development permit, declining to accept this appeal could result in adverse impacts to coastal views.

The fourth factor is the <u>precedential value of the local government's decision</u> for future interpretations of its LCP. Although the City does not currently have a certified LCP, as previously discussed, this decision could nevertheless have a precedential impact on future decisions under this governing standard. The City's approval of the proposed project is inconsistent with established precedent regarding location of the development as it relates to Coastal Act policies pertaining to the minimization of impacts to visual resources. Approval of the proposed project without proper review of impacts would not only set a bad precedent, but would also likely prejudice the ability of the City to prepare a local coastal program that is in conformity with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act.

The final factor is whether the appeal raises local issues, or those of regional or statewide significance. Proper siting of development along coastal bluffs and minimizing impacts to visual resources are important statewide issues. Accordingly, the appeal of the City's approval does raise issues of regional or statewide significance because, as previously stated, the City's approval is inconsistent with Commission precedent concerning the potential impact to visual resources created by similar development proposals.

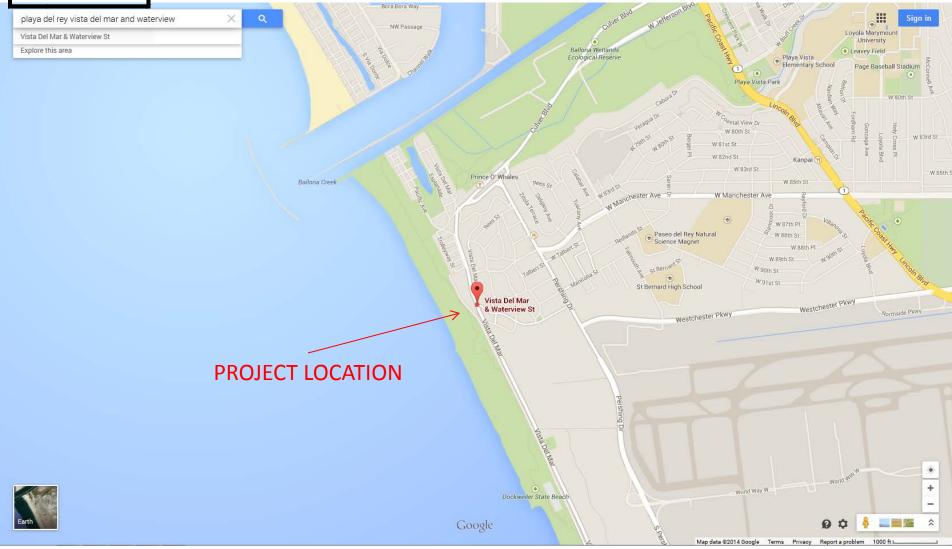
In conclusion, based on the City's staff report, Commission staff recommends that a substantial issue exists as to the City's finding that the proposed development complies with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, and subsequent approval of the local coastal development permit for Verizon's telecommunications

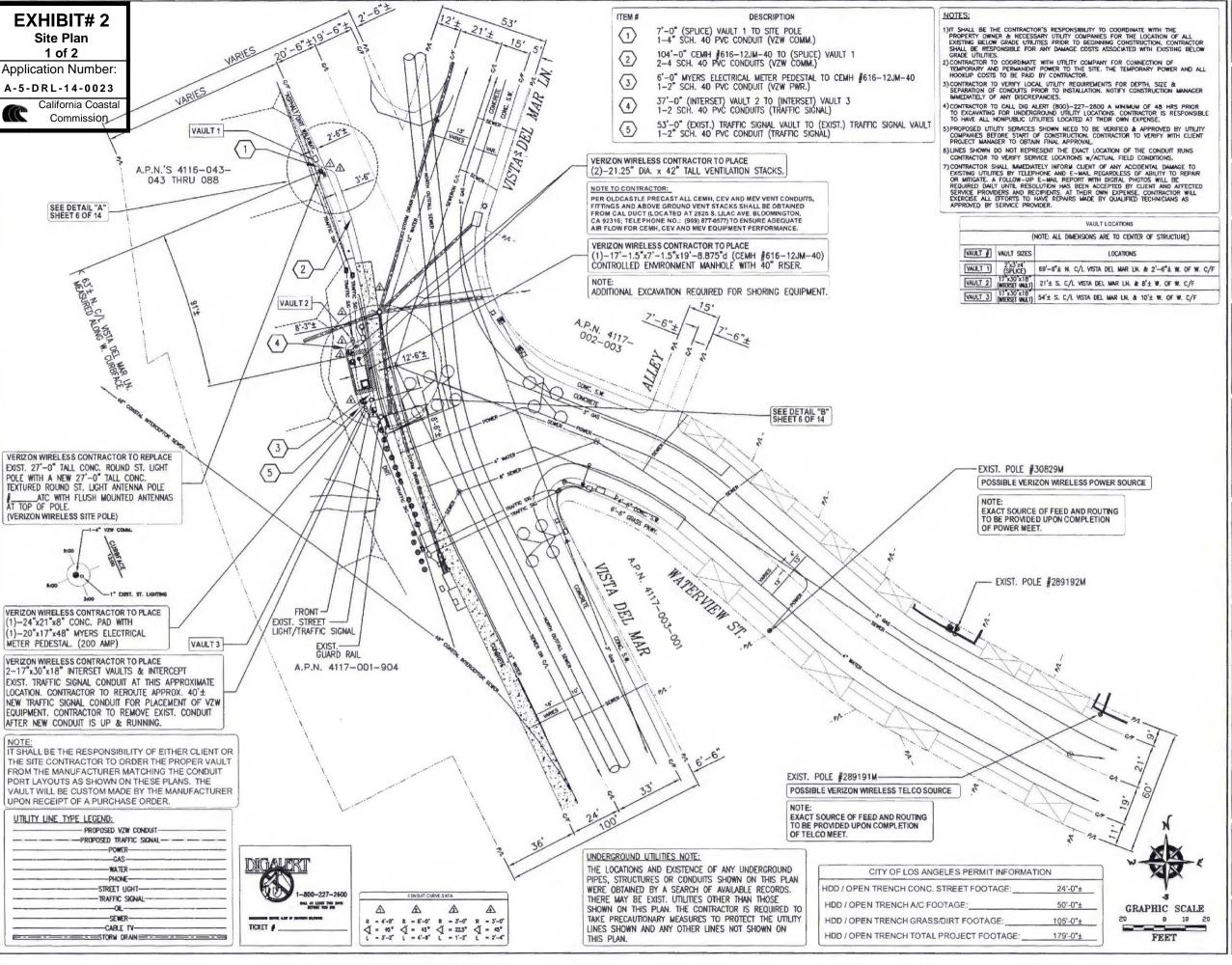
equipment. Therefore, Commission staff recommends that the Commission find that the appeal raises a substantial issue as to conformity with Chapter 3 policies.

# **APPENDIX A**

**Substantive File Documents:** City of Los Angeles Notice of Decision on Local Coastal Development Permit No. 13-05; Coastal Development Permit Application File No. 5-14-0628.







PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS SET OF CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS IS PROPRIETARY BY NATURE ANY USE OR DISCLOSURE OTHER THAN THAT WHICH RELATES TO VERIZON WIRELESS IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

SITE NAME: -

# **VISTA DEL MAR**

(ADDRESS PENDING) W/S VISTA DEL MAR, 63'± N/O VISTA DEL MAR LN. LOS ANGELES, CA 90293

- C.E.S. PROJECT NO : -

10010380-15

- STAMP: -

SITE INFORMATION:

ISSUE DATE:

01-07-13

ENGINEERED BY:

C.E.S.

DRAFTED BY:

C.E.S.



PLANS PREPARED BY: -



cable engineering services

PRESCOTT COMMUNICATIONS INC.

10640 Sepulveda Blvd. Suite 1, Mission Hills, CA 91345 Phone No.: (818)898-2352 Fax No.: (818)898-9186

REVISIONS

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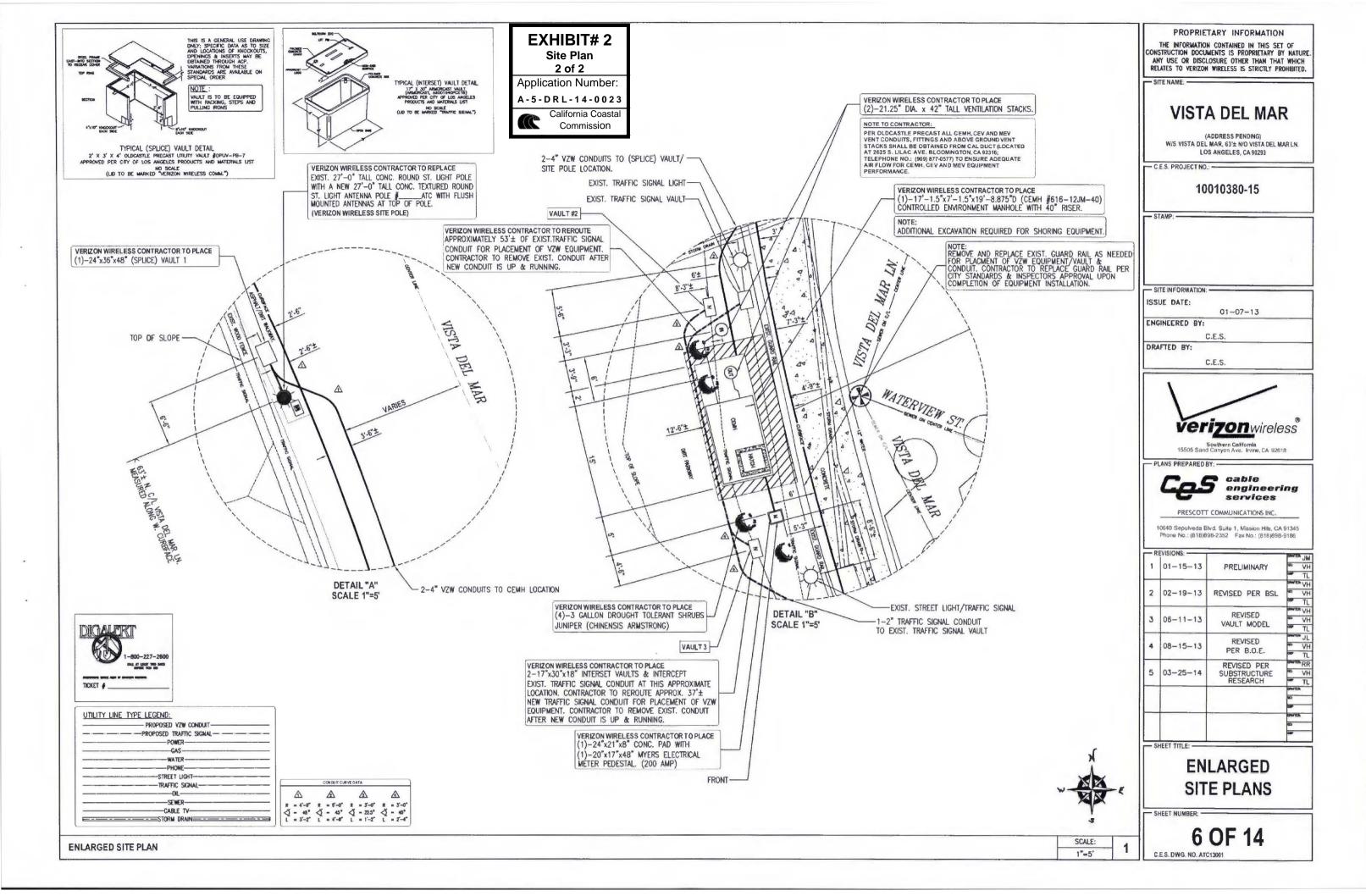
- SHEET TITLE:

SITE PLAN

- SHEET NUMBER

5 OF 14

CES DWG NO ATC1300



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1149 S. BROADWAY, SUITE 700 LOS ANGELES, CA 90015-2213

RECEIVED
South Coast Region

APR 8 2014

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

March 12, 2014

To All Interested Parties:

NOTICE OF DECISION ON LOCAL COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT 13-05 Installation of Telecommunications Equipment on Vista Del Mar (W.O. UR400316)

The above referenced Coastal Development Permit was approved with conditions.

Provided no appeal is filed\*, the permit will be issued, along with a Notice of Permit Issuance, to the applicant and a copy will be sent to the California Coastal Commission, South Coast Area Office, Filing a Notice of Permit Issuance or Denial with the Coastal Commission starts a 20 working day period during which an appeal may be made to or by the Commission. The proposed development is within the dual jurisdiction of the City of Los Angeles and the California Coastal Commission.

If you have any questions, or require an appeal form, please contact Norman Mundy of my staff at (213) 485-5737, or <a href="mailto:Norman.Mundy@lacity.org">Norman.Mundy@lacity.org</a>.

Sincerely,

Deborah Weintraub, AIA, LEED<sub>AP</sub> Interim City Engineer

By: James E. Doty

Manager

Environmental Management Group

\* If you wish to appeal this decision, notice in writing of the appeal must be received by the Bureau of Engineering, ATTN: Norman Mundy, 1149 S. Broadway, Suite 600, Los Angeles, CA 90015 by 5:00 p.m. on or before the 10th calendar day following the decision being appealed. Such written notice may be submitted either by: (a) delivery of a completed Notice of Appeal, or (b) by other communication in writing, such as a fax or e-mail, stating the name, address and telephone number of the appellant, the date and nature of the decision being appealed, the Coastal Development case number and identification of the proposed development. Faxes should be sent to (213) 847-0656 and e-mails to Norman.Mundy@lacity.org. When the appellant utilizes procedure (b) above, he/she must subsequently transmit a completed Notice of Appeal within five calendar days of the initial filing of the appeal.

EXHIBIT# 3
Local Approval
1 of 15

Application Number:

A-5-DRL-14-0023

California Coastal Commission AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



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#### COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. 13-05 FINAL STAFF REPORT

(Under authority of the California Coastal Act, § 30600(b) of the California Public Resources Code, and Chapter 1, Article 2, § 12.20.2 of the Los Angeles City Municipal Code)

#### I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Title: Installation of Telecommunications Equipment on Vista Del Mar Near Vista Del Mar Lane and Waterview Street

Applicant: Verizon Wireless

#### **Project Location:**

Council District: 11

Community: Westchester-Playa Del Rey

District: West Los Angeles

#### A. Project Description:

The proposed project consists of the installation and operation of antennas and associated equipment for the Verizon Wireless telecommunications network. The project would be located within a utility easement in the public right-of way near the threeway intersection of Vista Del Mar, Vista Del Mar Lane and Waterview Street in the community of Playa Del Rey. (See Figure 1: Project Location.) The project would: (a) replace an existing 27-foot light pole (on the west side of Vista Del Mar just north of its intersection with Vista Del Mar Ln./Waterview St.) with a new light pole of the same height to which two panel antennas (57" X 17" X 7") will be flush-mounted; (b) place a 4'(D) X 3' (L) X 2' (W) underground splice vault located 10 feet south of the new pole and approximately one

foot behind (west of) the existing wood fence; (c) construct a larger underground vault with approximate dimensions of 20' (D) X 18' (L) X 8" (W) and a 3-foot square access hatch at ground level in an unpaved area that is immediately west of the guard rail on the west side of Vista Del Mar near the Vista Del Mar Ln./Waterview St. intersection: (d) construct two 42-inch tall (above ground level) ventilation stacks north of the new vault that will connect to the vault underground; and (e) construct a 48-inch tall (above ground level) electrical meter pedestal south of the vault. (See Figure 2: Aerial Overview.) The pole and both underground vaults would be connected by wiring housed in underground conduit. Native, drought-tolerant shrubs would be planted to shield the ventilation stacks and the electrical meter pedestal from view. All structures would be required to participate in anti-graffiti measures as required by the Above Ground Facility (AGF) permit.

The proposed equipment would use only minimal electrical services, which would be separately metered. The equipment would be unstaffed and, upon completion, would require only infrequent maintenance visits (approximately once a month).

The proposed project site is located within the dual jurisdiction coastal zone and must be authorized by a coastal development permit processed pursuant to the Coastal Act. The proposed project is considered

EXHIBIT# 3

Local Approval 2 of 15

Application Number:

A-5-DRL-14-0023

California Coastal Commission AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



"development" as defined in Section 30106 of the Coastal Act and therefore requires a coastal development permit. (See Section II. A. below for the definition of "development".)

### B. Project Background:

The project proposes to replace an existing 27-foot tall concrete round street light pole with a new 27foot tall concrete textured round street light antenna pole with two flush mounted antennas at the top of the pole. Each of the antennas would extend 57" down the pole and would be 17" wide and 7" deep. A small splice vault and a larger vault would be placed underground at a distance of approximately 10-feet and approximately 100-feet south of the pole, respectively. Two ventilation stacks would be constructed just north of the larger vault and an electrical meter pedestal would be placed south of the larger vault to measure electricity usage.

Wireless telecommunication antennas operate on line-of-site technology and must therefore be placed at certain heights above ground level in order to function properly and meet coverage objectives. The proposed location for the wireless installation was selected because it provides local coverage within the wireless network. The antennas cannot operate underground, but the supporting equipment can (if properly ventilated).

Pursuant to Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 62.08, an Above Ground Facility Permit was issued by the Bureau of Engineering for the project (Case Reference No. 2013000412). This section of the Municipal Code establishes conditions and standards for the placement of wireless equipment in the public right-of-way.

#### C. Project Cost:

The proposed project cost is approximately \$150,000.

#### D. Previous Coastal Commission Actions:

None.

#### II. REGULATORY BASIS FOR REVIEW

#### A. Local Coastal Program

PRC § 3600(b) allows local governments to assume authority to issue coastal development permits within its jurisdiction before certification of its local coastal program and the proposed project is within the City Engineer's jurisdiction (LACMC § 12.20.2 et seq.). The application filed with the City Engineer was deemed adequate.

The proposed project is within portion of the California Coastal Zone which is considered 'dual coastal jurisdiction'. In order to proceed, this project must obtain two Coastal Development Permits (CDPs) – one from the City of Los Angeles and one from the Coastal Commission. The project must be authorized by a coastal development permit processed pursuant to the requirements of the Coastal Act. The proposed project would be constructed in the coastal zone and is considered development, as defined in Section 30106 of the Coastal Act. Section 30106 of the Coastal Act states:

"Development" means, on land, in or under water, the placement or erection of any solid material or structure; discharge or disposal of any dredged material or of any gaseous, liquid, solid, or thermal waste; grading, removing, dredging, mining, or extraction of any materials; change in the density or intensity of use of land, including, but not limited to, subdivision pursuant to the Subdivision Map Act (commencing with Section 66410 of the Government Code), and any other division of land, including lot splits, except where the land division is brought about in connection with the purchase of such land by a public agency for public recreational use; change in the intensity of use of water, or of access thereto; construction, reconstruction, demolition, alteration of the size of any structure, including any facility of any private, public, or municipal utility; and the removal or harvesting of major vegetation other than agricultural purposes, kelp harvesting, and timber operations which are in accordance with a timber harvesting plan submitted pursuant to the provision of the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act of 1973 (commencing with Section 4511).

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#### B. Coastal Guidelines

In accordance with the provisions of Section 30620 of the Public Resources Code; and, in order to sustain the findings contained in Section 12.20.2-G(c) of the Municipal Code which requires a review and consideration of "...Interpretative Guidelines for Coastal Planning and Permits...", the State Coastal Commission has issued Interpretative Guidelines for the South Coast Region of Los Angeles including certain subareas of the City of Los Angeles. These subareas are defined as Pacific Palisades, Venice, Playa Del Rey, San Pedro and Wilmington. However, following prevailing case law (e.g., Pacific Legal Foundation v. Coastal Commission (1982) 33 Cal.3d 158), the City Engineer's determination is based on the cited provisions of the California Coastal Act and other legally established laws and regulations.

#### C. Issues of Legal Adequacy of the Application

None.

#### III. STAFF FINDINGS

Six findings are required in order for a Coastal Development Permit to be issued. The six findings are:

- (1) That the development is in conformity with Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976 (commencing with Section 30200 of the California Public Resources Code).
- (2) That the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the City of Los Angeles to prepare a Local Coastal Program that is in conformity with Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976.
- (3) That the Interpretative Guidelines for Coastal Planning and Permits as established by the California Coastal Commission dated February 11, 1977 and any subsequent amendments thereto have been reviewed, analyzed, and considered in the light of the individual project in making its determination.
- (4) That the decision of the permit granting authority has been guided by any applicable decision of the California Coastal Commission

pursuant to Section 30625(c) of the Public Resources Code.

- (5) If the development is located between the nearest public road and the sea or shoreline of any body of water located within the coastal zone, that the development is in conformity with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976.
- (6) Any other finding or findings as may be required for the development by the California Environmental Quality Act.

Staff finds as follows:

1. The development is in conformity with Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976 (commencing with Section 30200 of the California Public Resources Code).

Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976 provides:

a) MARINE ENVIRONMENT (Article 4, of Chapter 3 of Public Resources Code, Sections 30230 through 30237)

Sections 30230 and 30231 state:

Section 30230. Marine resources shall be maintained, enhanced, and where feasible, restored. Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance. Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and that will maintain healthy populations of all species of marine organisms adequate for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes.

Section 30231. The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining

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natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams.

The proposed project is not expected to impact any coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries or lakes. All project activities construction would occur at the top-of-slope (approximate elevation of 53 feet) of a hillside that slopes down to the beach. The distance from the top-of-slope to the edge of the sand is approximately 175 feet. From the edge of the sand to the ocean it is approximately another 500 feet. Once project construction is completed, a new light pole will be located where an existing pole is now, two underground vaults will lie below the surface, and two ventilation stacks and one electrical meter pedestal will be at grade.

Project construction will not involve transport of hazardous substances and, thus, there will be no spillage of crude oil, gas, petroleum products, or hazardous substances as prohibited by PRC Section 30232. The project will not involve the diking, filling, or dredging of open coastal waters (PRC commercial Section 30233). fishing recreational boating facilities (PRC Sections 30234 30234.5), constructing revetments. breakwaters, or other construction altering the natural shoreline (PRC Section 30235). The project does not alter rivers or streams and, therefore, does not affect water supply and flood control (PRC Section 30236). PRC Section 30237 relates to Orange County wetlands and therefore does not apply.

b) LAND RESOURCES (Article 5 of Chapter 3 of Public Resources Code, Sections 30240 through 30244)

Sections 30240 and 30244 state:

Section 30240.

- (a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on those resources shall be allowed within those areas.
- (b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade

those areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreation areas.

The project is not located in an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA), defined by the Coastal Act as "Any area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily disturbed by human activities and developments" (Section 301067.5).

The ESHAs nearest the project site are the coastal aquatic zone which begins at the ocean waters and is approximately 600 feet west of the project site. The ESHA which includes the habitat of the El Segundo Blue butterfly lies at the western end of the runways of the Los Angeles International Airport; the edge of this ESHA is approximately 0.4 miles south the project site.

As shown in Figure 2, the project would occur on in an area adjacent to Vista Del Mar. The project area is currently disturbed due to pedestrian traffic and asphalt surfacing and is unlikely to contain either sensitive plant species or to provide suitable habitat for such species.

Section 30244. Where development would adversely impact archeological or paleontological resources as identified by the State Historic Preservation Officer, reasonable mitigation measures shall be required.

There are no known archaeological or paleontological resources at the project site. The project site is on the edge of a four lane roadway. Part of this area is surfaced with asphalt and the entire area has been disturbed by construction of the roadway bed itself and by placement of existing underground utility facilities, including sewers that run both under Vista Del Mar and also under the slope that extends from the project site to the beach.

c) DEVELOPMENT (Article 6 of Chapter 3 of Public Resources Code, Sections 30250 through 30255)

Coastal Act Sections 30251, 30252, 30253 and 30254 state:

Section 30251. The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as

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a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas such as those designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.

Vista Del Mar in the vicinity of the project area is designated as a Scenic Highway in the Transportation Element of the General Plan for the City of Los Angeles. The project will take place in the public right-of-way. The area to the east of Vista Del Mar in the project area is a developed residential area; to the west of Vista Del Mar is a vegetated slope leading down to the beach and the ocean. The slope is within the public right-of-way and the beach is zoned as an open space area. However, the slope below the light pole on which the antenna will be placed is developed with an approximately 50-unit two story condominium development.

The three-way intersection of Vista Del Mar, Vista Del Mar Lane and Waterview Street is the location of four existing street lights; each of these lights supports a traffic signal. There is also one standalone traffic signal at the intersection. (There is one much smaller and older sidewalk light on Vista Del Mar Lane across from the project site.)

All of the existing street lights on Vista Del Mar between the proposed antenna location and Culver Boulevard to the north are on the west (seaward) side of the street. To the south of the proposed antenna location, the street lights on Vista Del Mar are on the east (landward) side of the street.

The project would place two flush mounted antennas (57" (H) X 17" (L) and 7" (W). The antennas will be placed on a light pole just north of the three-way intersection; this light pole will replace and be of the same height and in the same location as an existing light pole. Placement of the antennas on an existing (or, in this case,

replacement) structure is preferable to construction a new pole to support the antennas. Once placed, the antennas would not be inconsistent with the existing visual character of the project area.

As described above, to the west of the replacement light pole site, at the bottom of the slope that runs from Vista Del Mar down to the beach area, there is a condominium complex. Viewers standing on Vista Del Mar and looking toward the ocean currently see this complex below them.

Placement of the antennas on the top of the light pole will lessen the visibility of the antennas to viewers at street level as their view toward the ocean would be horizontal.

Native, drought-resistant bushes will be planted on the behind the ventilation stacks and electric meter pedestal to diminish visibility of these structures.

Because of these project components, no adverse impacts to scenic and visual qualities of the coastal area are expected.

Section 30252. The location and amount of new development should maintain and enhance public access to the coast by (1) facilitating the provision or extension of transit service, (2) providing commercial facilities within or adjoining residential development or in other areas that will minimize the use of coastal access roads, (3) providing non-automobile circulation within the development, (4) providing adequate parking facilities or providing substitute means of serving the development with public transportation, (5) assuring the potential for public transit for high intensity uses such as high-rise office buildings, and by (6) assuring that the recreational needs of new residents will not overload nearby coastal recreation areas by correlating the amount of development with local park acquisition and development plans with the provision of onsite recreational facilities to serve the new development.

The project does not interfere with any existing coastal access roadways, bikeways, pedestrian paths, wheelchair paths or walkways. The placement of the splice vault, larger vault, ventilation stacks, and electric meter pedestal would not impede passage on any of the several

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trails that have been created by pedestrian activity and currently provide access between Vista Del Mar and the beach area. Additional access to the beach is provided by a paved walkway which extends from Vista Del Mar to the beach area in a southward direction.

Section 30253. New development shall:

(1) Minimize risks to life and property in areas of high geologic, flood, and fire hazard.

(2) Assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create not contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area or in any way require the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural land forms along the bluffs and cliffs.

(3) Be consistent with requirements imposed by an air pollution control district or the State Air Resources Control Board as to each particular development.

(4) Minimize energy consumption and vehicle miles traveled.

(5) Where appropriate, protect special communities and neighborhoods which, because of their unique characteristics, are popular visitor destination points for recreational uses.

The project would not affect geologic, flood or fire risks (30253(1) (2)), would not conflict with any requirements of the State Air Resources Control Board or South Coast Air Quality District (30253(3)), would not affect energy consumption and vehicle miles traveled (30253(4)), and would not permanently affect the local community (30253(5)).

Prior to any project construction, the applicant would have to submit plans demonstrating that project activities would not interfere with the stability of the roadway bed. During construction, measures would be implemented to control any erosion from construction activities.

d) INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Public Resources Code, Sections 30260 through 30265.5)

The proposed project does not involve the development or expansion of industrial developments as addressed in Article 7, and as

such, Section 30260 through 30265.5 are not applicable to the proposed project.

2. The permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the City of Los Angeles to prepare a Local Coastal Program that is in conformity with Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976.

The project conforms to relevant provisions and policies of the Coastal Act and the applicable Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community Plan. The Community Plan recognizes the need to "coordinate new development with the availability of public infrastructure" in residential areas. One of the objectives of the Community Plan is to "protect the public views and scenic quality of the highly unique residential areas in this community, including along to coast..." The Plan identifies two programs to be used to implement this objective: (1) implementation of the Coastal Development Permit process by the City of Los Angeles; and (2) adherence to the measure in the Coastal Bluffs Specific Plan to protect public views.

The project area is located within the area included in the Coastal Bluffs Specific Plan. As relevant to the proposed project, this Specific Plan expresses the strong preference that any new utilities be undergrounded whenever possible. Undergrounding would prevent the proper functioning of the antennas and ventilation stacks. The ventilation stacks and electric meter pedestal will be shielded from view by plantings. The two vaults will be placed underground.

The City of Los Angeles Citywide General Plan Framework Element establishes the broad overall policy and direction for the entire General Plan. It provides a citywide context and a comprehensive long-range strategy to guide the comprehensive update of the General Plan's other elements. It includes and goal objective telecommunications: "Goal 90: A networked. integrated telecommunications system capitalizes on the region's potential as an information - telecommunications hub and is capable of providing advanced information services, which are produced by public and private providers located within the City, to all members of the public." "Objective 9.37 - Encourage the development of a wide variety of public and private

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telecommunications services available to all City residents and businesses."

The proposed project does not conflict with any of these plans and would not prejudice the ability of the City to prepare a Local Coastal Plan in conformity with the Coastal Act and amendments.

3. The Interpretative Guidelines for Coastal Planning and Permits as established by the California Coastal Commission dated February 11, 1977 and any subsequent amendments thereto have been reviewed, analyzed, and considered in the light of the individual project in making the City Engineer's determination.

As noted above (Section II.B.), the California Coastal Commission's interpretive guidelines (State and Regional) for the Playa Del Rey area have been reviewed and considered in preparation of these findings and recommendations. However, following prevailing case law (e.g., Pacific Legal Foundation v. Coastal Commission (1982) 33 Cal.3d 158), the City Engineer's determination is based on the cited provisions of the California Coastal Act and other legally established laws and regulations.

4. The decision of the permit granting authority has been guided by any applicable decision of the California Coastal Commission pursuant to Section 30625(c) of the Public Resources Code.

The decision of the permit granting authority, as evidenced in the staff report of this project, has been guided by any applicable decision of the California Coastal Commission pursuant to Section 30625(c) of the Public Resources Code.

- 5. If the development is located between the nearest public road and the sea or shoreline of any body of water located within the coastal zone, the development is in conformity with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976.
- a) PUBLIC ACCESS (Article 2, of Chapter 3 of the Public Resources Code, Sections 30210 30214).

This project is located between the nearest public road (Vista Del Mar) and the sea or shoreline of a

body of water located within the coastal zone (the Pacific Ocean).

The project does not interfere with any existing coastal access roadways, bikeways, pedestrian paths, walkways, or wheelchair access. The placement of the splice vault, larger vault, ventilation stacks, and electric meter pedestal would not impede passage on any of the numerous trails that currently provide access between Vista Del Mar and the beach area.

Thus, the proposed project will not interfere with coastal access and will not impair any existing access to the coast and is therefore consistent with the public access policies of Chapter 3.

b) RECREATION (Article 3, of Chapter 3 of Public Resources Code, Sections 30220 through 30224)

Section 30220. Coastal areas suited for wateroriented recreational activities that cannot readily be provided at inland water areas shall be protected for such uses.

The project will not interfere with or impair any oceanfront or other land suitable for water-oriented recreational activities.

Section 30223. Upland areas necessary to support coastal recreational uses shall be reserved for such uses, where feasible.

The proposed project will not affect any currently undeveloped upland areas that might be approved for coastal recreation uses. There are no existing coastal-dependent recreational uses at the project site.

The project is therefore consistent with the public recreation policies of Chapter 3.

6. Any other finding or findings as may be required for the development by the California Environmental Quality Act.

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the project is categorically exempt from CEQA under the Class 3, Item 4 exemption.



There are no additional evaluations required by the California Environmental Quality Act in connection with the approval of this permit.

#### III. PUBLIC COMMENT

A public hearing was held on February 25, 2014, from 1 to 2 p.m. at the First Floor Conference Room in the Public Works Building, 1149 S. Broadway, Los Angeles, 90015. The hearing was attended by Norman Mundy of the Bureau of Engineering and by one member of the public, David Brady of Del Rey Vacations, LLC, the owner of property at 7360 Vista Del Mar. Mr. Brady provided oral comments at the hearing. comments addressed several issues relating to the project, including the reason for selection of the project site, the visual impact of the proposed antenna in an area with open space zoning, the Above Ground Facility Permit process, slope stability, and potential impact of the proposed project on wheelchair access along Vista Del Mar to the beach.

#### IV. STANDARD CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

- Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment. The
  permit is not valid and development shall not
  commence until a copy of the permit, signed
  by the permittee or authorized agent,
  acknowledging receipt of the permit and
  acceptance of the terms and conditions, is
  returned to the City Engineer's Office.
- Expiration. If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the permit date as reported from the Coastal Commission. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
- Interpretation. Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the City Engineer.

 Assignment. The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the City Engineer an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.

- 5. Terms and Conditions Run with the Land. These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the City Engineer and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.
- Other approvals. Obtain permit from the State Coastal Commission.

# V. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the preceding analysis and the comments received, we recommend that the City Engineer issue a Coastal Development Permit for this project.

James E. Doty

Date

Manager

**Environmental Management Group** 

**DOCUMENT PREPARED BY:** 

Norman Mundy

Date

Environmental Specialist II

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#### VI. REFERENCES

California Coastal Act -- Public Resources Code Division 20, Section 30000 et seq.

California Coastal Commission, October 14, 1980. Regional Interpretive Guidelines. South Coast Region. Los Angeles County.

California Coastal Commission, December 16, 1981. *Statewide Interpretive Guidelines*.

City of Los Angeles, CEQA Guidelines.

City of Los Angeles, Coastal Bluffs Specific Plan.

City of Los Angeles, Framework Element of the Los Angeles General Plan.

City of Los Angeles, Municipal Code, Chapter I, Article 2, Section 12.20.2, et seq., and Chapter VI, Article 2, Section 62.08.

City of Los Angeles, Transportation Element of the Los Angeles General Plan.

City of Los Angeles. Westchester-Playa Del Rey Community Plan.

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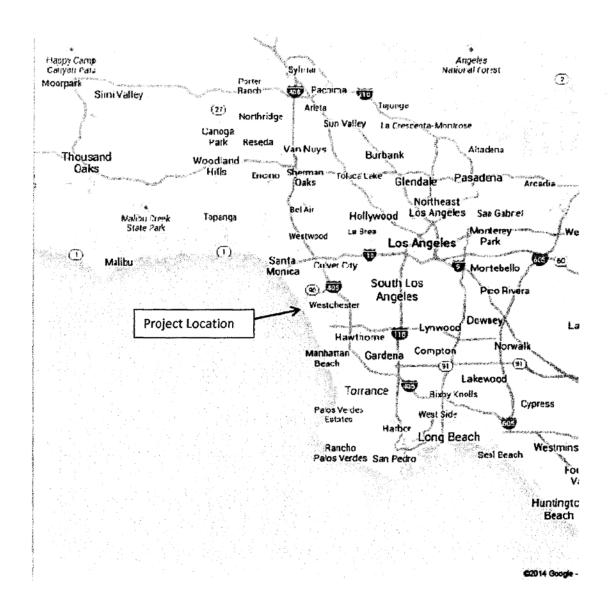
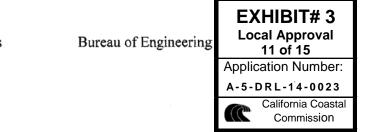
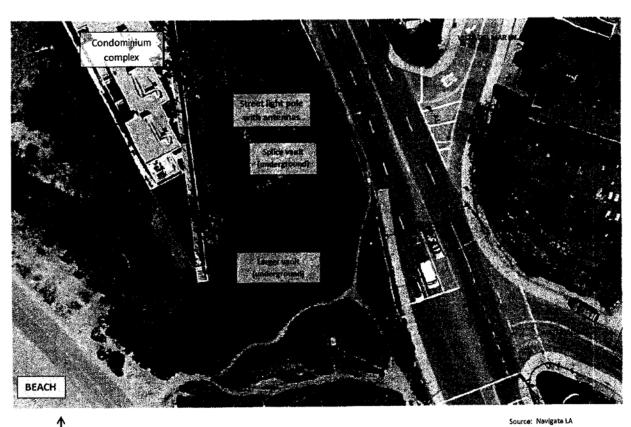


Figure 1: Project Location





↑ North

Figure 2: Aerial Overview

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#### **COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT 13-05**

(under authority of Sec. 30600(b) of the California Coastal Act of 1976)

PROJECT TYPE:

( ) Public (X) Private

APPLICATION NUMBER:

13-05 Installation of Telecommunications Equipment on

Vista Del Mar (W.O. UR400316)

NAME OF APPLICANT:

Verizon Wireless

PROJECT LOCATION:

The project is located in the community of Playa Del Rey,

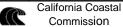
Los Angeles, California.

DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION: The project is the installation and operation of antennas and associated equipment for the Verizon Wireless telecommunications network on Vista Del Mar, in the community of Playa Del Rey.

- 1. The proposed development is subject to the following conditions imposed pursuant to the California Coastal Act of 1976:
  - The permit is not valid and (a) Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment: development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the City Engineer's office.
  - (b) Expiration: If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the permit date as reported from the Coastal Commission. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.

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- (c) Interpretation: Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the City Engineer.
- (d) Assignment: The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the City Engineer an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.
- (e) Terms and Conditions Run with the Land: These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the City Engineer and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.
- (f) Other approvals: Obtain permit form the State Coastal Commission.
- II. FINDINGS: In keeping with the findings and recommendations set forth in the adopted staff report incorporated herein by reference, the City of Los Angeles finds that:
  - (a) The development is in conformity with Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976, and will not prejudice the ability of the City of Los Angeles to prepare a Local Coastal Program in conformity with said Chapter 3.
  - (b) The Interpretative Guidelines established by the Coastal Commission dated August 14, 1978 and any subsequent amendments thereto have been reviewed, analyzed, and considered in the light of the individual project in making this determination, and the decision of the permit granting authority has been guided by any applicable decision of the Coastal Commission.
  - (c) If the development is located between the nearest public road and the sea or shoreline of any body of water located within the Coastal Zone, the development is in conformity with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act.
  - (d) There are no feasible alternatives, or feasible mitigation measures, as provided in the California Environmental Quality Act, available for imposition by this authority under the power granted to it which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact that the development, as finally permitted, may have on the environment.
  - Pursuant to the public hearing held on February 25, 2014, a Notice of Decision on March 12, 2014, permit application number 13-05 is hereby approved.

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- IV. This permit may not be assigned to another person except as provided in Section 13170, Coastal Commission Rules and Regulations.
- V. This permit shall not become effective until the expiration of 20 working days after a <u>COPY</u> of this permit has been received by the Regional Commission, upon which copy all permittees or agent(s) authorized in the permit application have acknowledged that they have received a copy of the permit and have accepted its contents, unless a valid appeal is filed within that time. The acknowledgement should be returned within ten (10) working days following issuance of the permit but in any case prior to commencement of construction. If the acknowledgement has not been returned within the time for commencement of construction under Section 13156(g), the executive director shall not accept any application for the extension of the permit.
- VI. Work authorized by this permit must commence within <u>two</u> years from the effective date of this permit. Any extension of time of said commencement date must be applied for prior to expiration of the permit.

VII.	Issued:	, pursuant to local government authority as provided in Chapt	e
	7 of the	California Coastal Act of 1976.	

VIII.	I,,	permittee/agent,	hereby
	acknowledge receipt of permit number 13-05 and h	ave accepted its conte	nt.



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