

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

SAN DIEGO AREA  
7575 METROPOLITAN DRIVE, SUITE 103  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92108-4421  
(619) 767-2370



# F10b

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180th Day: 7/5/16  
Staff: M. Lasiter-SD  
Staff Report: 3/15/16  
Hearing Date: 4/15/16

## STAFF REPORT: CONSENT CALENDAR

**Application No.:** 6-16-0020

**Applicant:** Verizon Wireless

**Agent:** Kerrigan Diehl

**Location:** 2639 Grand Avenue, Mission Bay Park, San Diego, San Diego County (APN 424-460-05)

**Project Description:** Installation of a wireless communications facility consisting of a 30 foot-high monopine with 15 antennas, a 13 foot-high 288 square foot equipment building, a 122 square foot equipment enclosure, and landscaping.

**Staff Recommendation:** Approval with Conditions

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### SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The proposed site is in the athletic field area of Mission Bay Park. The primary issue raised with this type of project is relates to protection of visual resources. The applicant has indicated the facility is necessary to provide additional communications capacity, as the surrounding area is high traffic and existing service levels are at times compromised. The applicant has provided evidence that an adequate co-location facility does not exist in the target coverage area. In this case, staff has concluded that impacts to the public viewshed will be minimal and will largely be addressed by the project design. The monopine itself is designed to resemble a pine tree and will blend into the surrounding

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park and the equipment area will be screened by four new canary pines. The site has no ocean or bay views associated with it.

To limit the potential adverse visual impacts associated with future multiple communication structures in an area, **Special Condition 1** requires the applicant to cooperate with any companies looking to co-locate on this facility in the future. **Special Condition 2** requires the applicant to redesign the facility should future technological advances allow for reduced visual impacts.

With the proposed conditions, impacts associated with the proposed development will be reduced to the maximum extent feasible, consistent with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act.

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### **EXHIBITS**

[Exhibit 1 – Vicinity Map](#)

[Exhibit 2 – Aerial View](#)

[Exhibit 3 – Site Plan](#)

## I. MOTION AND RESOLUTION

### Motion:

*I move that the Commission **approve** the coastal development permit applications included on the consent calendar in accordance with the staff recommendations.*

Staff recommends a **YES** vote. Passage of this motion will result in approval of all the permits included on the consent calendar. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

## II. STANDARD CONDITIONS

This permit is granted subject to the following standard conditions:

1. **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 Commission office.
2. **Expiration.** If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date on which the Commission voted on the application. 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.
3. **Interpretation.** Any questions of intent of interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
4. **Assignment.** The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission 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 Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

## III. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

This permit is granted subject to the following special conditions:

1. **Co-Location of Future Antennae.** PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall agree in writing to cooperate with other communication companies in co-locating additional antennae and/or equipment on the project site in the future, providing such shared use does not impair the operation of the approved facility. Upon the Commission's request, the permittee shall

provide an independently prepared technical analysis to substantiate the existence of any practical technical prohibitions against the operation of a co-use facility.

2. **Future Redesign.** PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall agree in writing that where future technological advances would allow for reduced visual impacts resulting from the proposed antennas and associated equipment, the applicant agrees to make those modifications which would reduce the visual impact of the proposed facility. In addition, if in the future the antennas and associated equipment are no longer needed, the applicant agrees to be responsible for removal of them. Before performing any work in response to the requirements of this condition, the applicant shall contact the Executive Director of the California Coastal Commission to determine if an amendment to this coastal development permit is necessary.

3. **Final Plans.** PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THIS COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit to the Executive Director for review and written approval final project plans. Said plans shall first be stamped approved by the City of San Diego and be in substantial conformance with the plans submitted by Booth & Suarez and dated 4/04/2012.

The applicant shall undertake the development in accordance with the approved plans. Any proposed changes to the approved plans shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the plans shall occur without a Coastal Commission-approved amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is legally required.

## **IV. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS**

### **A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed project is a wireless communication facility consisting of a 30 foot-tall monopine (a monopole designed to resemble a pine tree in appearance) supporting 12 panel antennas, one microwave dish antenna, and two GPS antennas; a 13 foot-tall, 288 square foot equipment building containing five equipment cabinets and two air conditioning units; a coaxial cable in a coax cable trench running between the monopine and the equipment building; a 200 amp electrical meter pedestal with an underground electrical conduit feed running from an existing SDG&E transformer to the proposed equipment building with step-up and step-down transformers; an underground telco service connection from an existing Time Warner cable pull box; and landscape screening and irrigation [Exhibit 3]. Four new 24 foot-tall Canary Island pine trees will be planted to the northeast of the monopine to screen views of the facility.

The proposed project is located in the Mission Bay Athletic Area of Mission Bay Park approximately 0.75 miles from the bay [Exhibit 1]. The proposed site is currently developed with park athletic amenities that include basketball and tennis courts, baseball and soccer fields, and the Mission Bay Golf Course and Practice Center. Grand Avenue,

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a major thoroughfare, runs to the north of the project site, and athletic fields are to the south and east. The border of Rose Creek, designated as a Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) is located about 145 feet west of the site with an existing bike trail and basketball court between the proposed project and the creek. There are no sensitive biological resources at the project site itself, which currently consists of non-native vegetation and eucalyptus trees [Exhibit 2].

The applicant has stated that the proposed project is necessary to increase capacity and enhance the overall network in the area, and off-load existing sectors at existing telecommunications sites nearby. As increased demand for voice and data services is already outstripping the capacity of the adjacent sites, not having the proposed facility would cause the surrounding sites to achieve capacity exhaustion, thus compromising the network in the area, which can lead to failed call attempts, dropped calls, poor call quality and /or slow data speeds.

### **B. VISUAL RESOURCES**

Section 30251 of the Coastal Act requires that the scenic and visual qualities of this coastal area shall be protected. The proposed project site is not located adjacent to the bayfront, and the facility will be designed to resemble a pine tree and will be screened by four new pine trees. Thus, the facility will not have a significant impact on public views to or along the coast. Nevertheless, on similar wireless telecommunication facility sites, the Commission has been concerned that the proliferation of antennas could have an adverse cumulative impacts on visual resources [Coastal Development Permits: 5-07-375(T-Mobile); 5-92-415(Los Angeles Cellular Telephone Co.); 5-97-130(Los Angeles Cellular); 4-08-035(AT&T Mobility; 5-09-103(Verizon)]. As demand for wireless communication facilities increases and service providers continue to try to cover every area with signal coverage, it is likely that other service providers will be interested in placing additional structures, antennas, and equipment in the project area and other surrounding areas. The Commission is concerned that individually and cumulatively, installation of additional similar projects in the area could have adverse impacts on visual resources and detract from the public's enjoyment of those resources.

Co-location is the preferred way to provide future telecommunication services. If co-location is not possible, then the visual impacts of such structures must be mitigated either through project design or siting so as not to result in adverse cumulative visual impacts. As such, Special Condition No. 1 requires that the applicant submit a written statement agreeing to cooperate with other communication facilities in co-locating additional antenna on the proposed development, unless the applicant can demonstrate a substantial technical conflict in doing so. Special Condition No. 2 requires the applicant to submit a written statement agreeing to modify the facility if new technological advances would reduce the visual impact of the equipment or remove the facility and restore this site in the future should technological advances make this facility obsolete. In this way, it can be assured that the proliferation of these types of facilities can be limited to appropriate locations, and that the area will not be littered with outdated and obsolete facilities in the future. Therefore, as conditioned, the Commission finds the project is consistent with the certified LUP and with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act with respect to protecting visual resources.

**B. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Coastal Act policies 30240 and 30251 restrict the alteration of natural landforms and protect sensitive habitats. Section 30231 of the Coastal Act requires that coastal waters are protected and runoff minimized.

As such, the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on any sensitive habitat and will not result in erosion or adverse impacts to water quality. Thus, the project is consistent with the resource protection policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act.

**D. PUBLIC ACCESS**

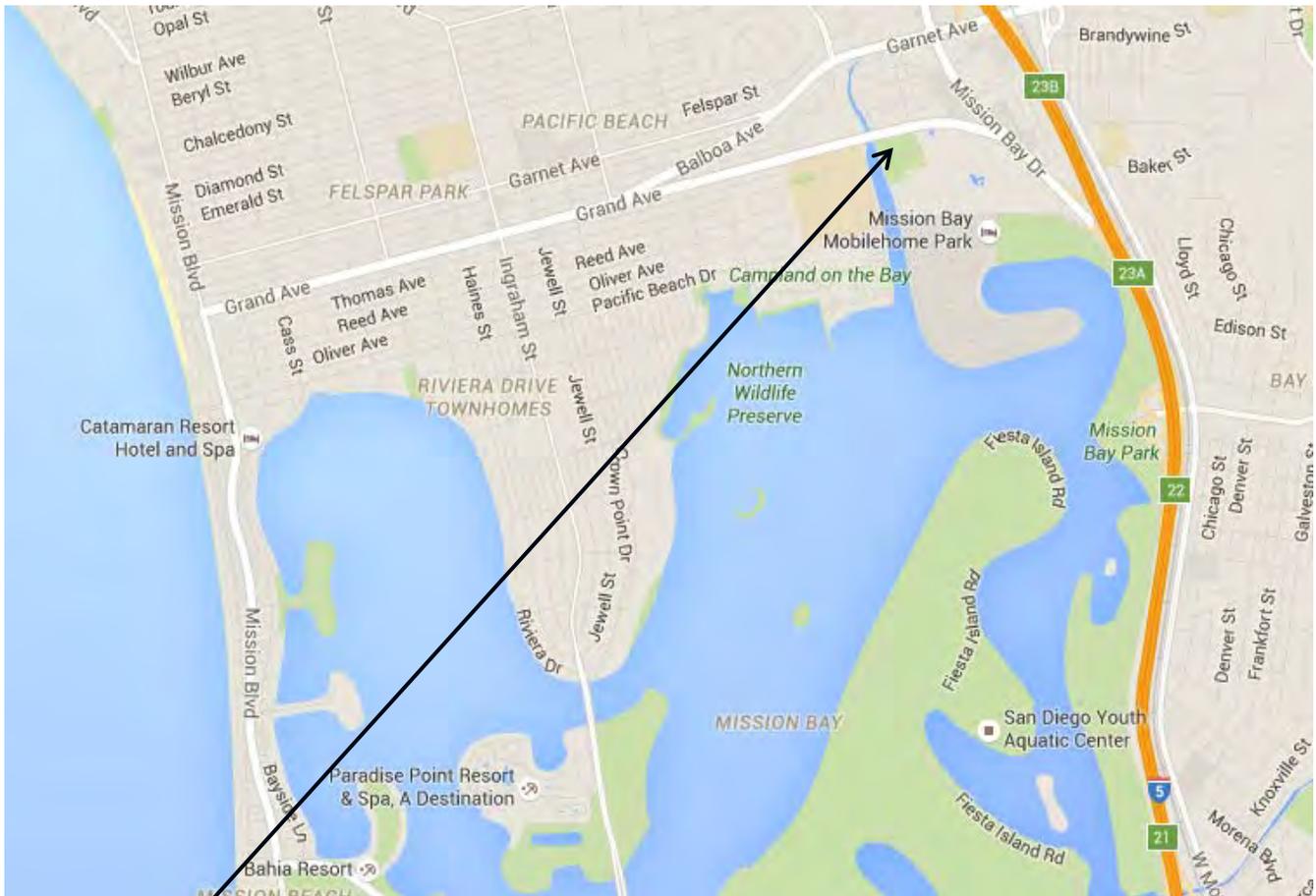
One of the basic goals stated in the Coastal Act is to maximize public access and recreation along the coast. The public access and recreation policies of the Coastal Act require that maximum access and recreational opportunities be provided and that development shall not interfere with public access. The proposed project does not block physical or visual access to or along the coast. Therefore, the proposed development will not have any new adverse impact on public access to the coast or to nearby recreational facilities. Thus, the proposed development conforms with Sections 30210 through 30214, Sections 30220 through 30224, and 30252 of the Coastal Act.

**F. LOCAL COASTAL PLANNING**

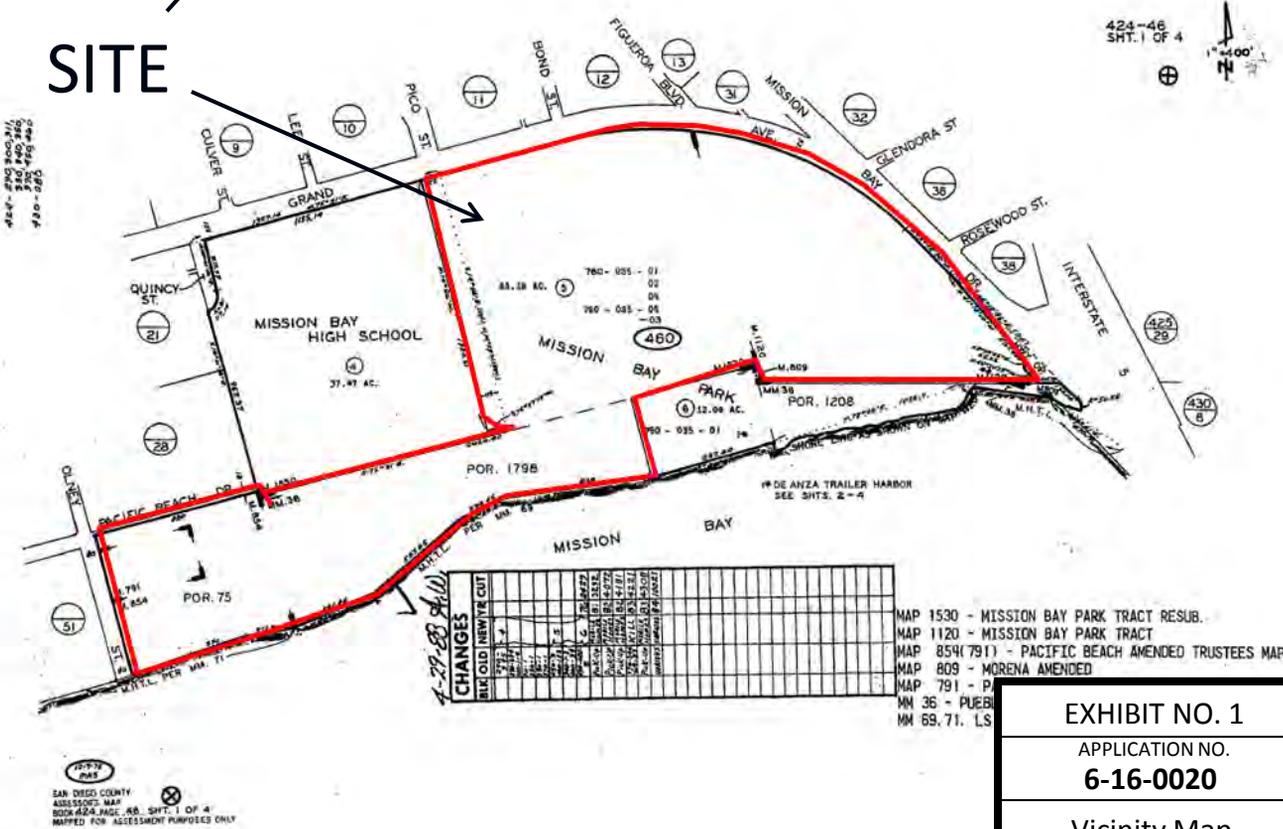
The LUP for the Mission Bay Park LUP segment of the City of San Diego LCP was certified on May 11, 1995, but no implementation plan has been developed as yet, and Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act remains the legal standard of review. As conditioned, the proposed development is consistent with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and with the certified Land Use Plan for the area. Approval of the project, as conditioned, will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a Local Coastal Program that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3.

**G. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT**

As conditioned, there are no feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect which the activity may have on the environment. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned to mitigate the identified impacts, is the least environmentally damaging feasible alternative and is consistent with the requirements of the Coastal Act to conform to CEQA.



**SITE**



**EXHIBIT NO. 1**  
 APPLICATION NO.  
**6-16-0020**  
 Vicinity Map

Project Site

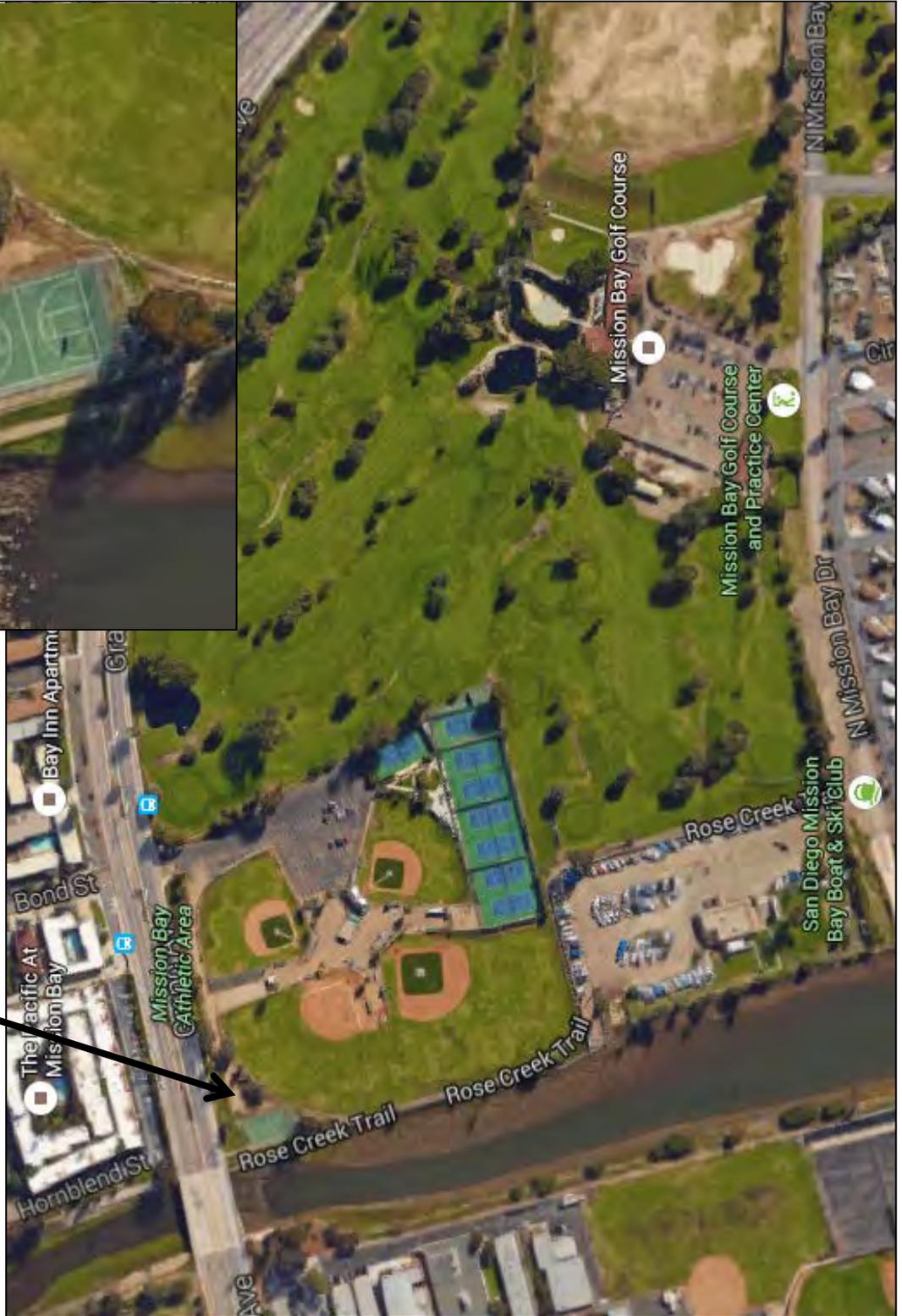


EXHIBIT NO. 2
APPLICATION NO. <b>6-16-0020</b>
Aerial Photo
 California Coastal Commission

