

Additional information about the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and how it affects the Town's ability to evaluate antenna sites can be found at http://wireless.fcc.gov/siting/FCC_LSGAC_RF_Guide.doc.

Can radio frequency (RF) emissions cause long-term health problems?

In the instance of wireless antennas, the Town is specifically barred by Federal law from making decisions regarding the safety of antennas or using community concerns about RF safety as criteria for prohibiting cell sites.

There are numerous studies of RF emissions, but no conclusive evidence that RF emissions do or do not cause health problems. The Town cited similar concerns about RF emissions when it presented a protest to California Public Utilities Commission to support the undergrounding of the Jefferson Martin 230 kV Power lines in 2005.

Additional information about RF Emissions and safety can be found at <http://www.fcc.gov/oet/rfsafety/rf-faqs.html> and <http://www.fda.gov/cellphones>

How many antenna locations are in Town?

Cell companies have towers and antennas at several locations in Town. Photos of the antennas are on the Town's website under "What's New":

- 3 Towers and ancillary equipment for a 4th set of antennas mounted on a PG&E tower near the water tank site. (All are visible from Skyline Boulevard.)
- 3 towers located at the corner of Skyline Boulevard and Summit Drive
- 1 microcell on a telephone pole at 870 Longview
- 1 microcell on a telephone pole at 1325 Avondale Road
- 1 microcell on a telephone pole at 1120 Crystal Springs Road
- 1 microcell freestanding on Pullman Road near Pinehill.

Why not place the antenna on commercial sites at the edges of Town in other jurisdictions?

There are antennas placed on commercial sites at the edges of Town in San Mateo and Burlingame. Photos of nearby sites have been posted on the Town's website under "What's New". For example if you are on Burlingame Avenue you can see at least 3 separate antenna arrays at the AT&T building, Anne Taylor Loft building, First National Bank (which faces Primrose). Cell antenna are mounted on an apartment building at El Camino and DeSabra, Mid Peninsula Bank, Caldwell Banker, and 400 El Camino. Similarly, College of San Mateo hosts at least 3 separate antenna arrays. Additional information about locations of antennas registered with the FCC can be found at antennasearch.com.

What is the cell company proposing to build?

T-mobile has presented applications that include the construction of "Monopines." These cell towers are disguised to look like pine trees. They have branches starting at the base and a bark-like coating on the pole base.

In addition to the Monopines, some ancillary equipment will be installed to connect the antenna with a power source and telecommunications lines.

What is a wireless facility permit and how is it approved?

In accordance with the Municipal Code, wireless companies including providers of cell phone services must obtain a permit to install antenna. The City Engineer evaluates the site and placement of the antenna, the demonstrated need for the antenna to benefit the Hillsborough area, and reviews studies regarding Federal Communications Commission (FCC) compliance. Per a recent State law, a permit must have a minimum term of 10 years.

Once a completed application is received a notice is sent to residents within 500 feet of the installation to invite comment on the application. If the City Engineer approves the application, anyone may appeal the application within 15 days. The appeal is a public hearing at the next regularly scheduled Council meeting. Council has final authority to approve or disapprove a permit, and should make findings based on facts when disapproving a permit.

What kind of facilities can a private company build?

Town ordinance provides direction to private companies to first evaluate public properties, then private properties. A tree pole, like a monopine, is preferred over a standard pole with antenna arms or lattice tower. Town ordinance specifically states the installation of antenna on an existing telephone pole as a least preferred option. This order of priorities was established by the Council to encourage companies to place these facilities as far away from residences as possible.

Can a city prohibit the placement of antenna on specific sites?

No. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 and numerous legal precedents has preempted local authority to place these facilities into specific locations or zones.

Can the Town require ancillary equipment be placed in a vault of building?

Yes, it is possible as a condition of the wireless permit or the lease agreement. Town ordinances already require screening of such facilities in the right of way.

Does the State of California prohibit the placement of cell antenna near schools or parks?

No, the State of California is preempted by Federal law from creating such a regulation.

What has been the process for evaluating the use of Vista Park?

T-mobile originally considered the use of Vista Park in late 2005. A public meeting was held on January 4, 2006 to ask residents for comment on the proposal. At that time the Town's ordinance was relatively new, and the Town was gathering a list of names of residents who would be interested in hosting cell sites.

Over the past 18 months T-mobile has considered many properties as potential sites and T-mobile has either determined the site unsuitable or the residents declined to host the facility. Vista Park is being considered as potential location for the monopine.

What about structural safety?

The cell company has prepared computations of wind loads, and will engineer the tower to stand in the worst of wind events. It should be noted that the tower represents an investment of over a \$100,000 and it is in the company's interest to ensure its viability. The lease agreement between the Town and private company requires that the Town be indemnified and held harmless for any damages or injuries it may cause.