

TO: Mayor Craft & Members of the City Council

FROM: Andy Bauer, Zoning Administrator

CC: Lee Jones, Director of Planning & Community Development

SUBJECT: New Small Cell Facility Approval

DATE: February 17, 2020

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

Southern Light, dba Unity Fiber, seeks approval to construct a new 36'7" small cell facility located in a City-owned parking lot at 238 East Beach Boulevard.

Section 15, *Erection, Removal and Common Use of Poles*, of Southern Light LLC's franchise agreement requires City approval prior to the erection of any pole on City-owned property.

LOCATION

The proposed site is located on a City-owned parking lot directly east of Gulf Island Grill between East Beach Boulevard and East 1st Avenue.



BACKGROUND:

September 2018 - The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted a report and order to streamline the rollout of infrastructure for broadband services, including small cells for 4G and 5G wireless services. The Order provides guidance on fees local governments may charge and on how they may regulate ancillary rollout issues such as small cell pole spacing, equipment design and other aesthetic concerns.

April 2019 - The City amended Chapter 7, Article 9 of the Wireless Telecommunications regulations to add standards for the siting, erection and approval of small cell facilities. The city's regulations, fees and review process were adopted based on the FCC Order. The new

regulations indicate small cell facilities shall be reviewed and approved administratively if the facilities are within a public right-of-way or on private property.

PROPOSAL:

The applicant seeks City Council approval to construct a 36'7" small cell pole in a City parking lot at 238 East Beach Boulevard. The pole is proposed to be located in a landscape island.

ANALYSIS:

A primary consideration of the City of Gulf Shores regulations when locating a new small cell facility is co-location on an existing structure. Unity Fiber has confirmed there are no existing structures in the nearby area for co-location of the small cell facility. Staff has worked with the applicant to site the small cell pole midblock to camouflage the pole and have it blend in with the surrounding environment. The pole is galvanized aluminum in color and designed to match the existing galvanized aluminum light poles in the beach area. All wiring and conduit will be inside the pole and all connecting utilities are underground.

The proposed small cell facility complies with the Small Cell regulations of Section 7-179 Special Use Permit Application Requirements for Small Wireless Facilities of the Code of Ordinances.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council approve the small cell facility at 238 East Beach Boulevard.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS: A onetime payment of \$1,000.00 will be assessed with a \$270.00 recurring annual fee.

ATTACHMENTS: Plans

DEPARTMENT: Planning & Zoning

STAFF CONTACT: Andy Bauer, Zoning Administrator