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**Staff Report & Notice of Decision**  
**CRAFTON Communications – Wireless Facility Expansion**  
**Type I Site Plan Review**

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**PROPOSAL:** The applicant requests a Type I Site Plan review approval for the purpose of expanding the existing wireless facility located on the subject property by 170 square feet to include a new concrete pad with a new backup generator. Within the boundaries of the existing fenced wireless facility, the applicant proposes to place an automatic transfer switch, generator auxiliary power distribution, and remote monitoring communications circuitry.

**LOCATION:** 30901 NE Timmen Road, Ridgefield, WA 98642; Parcel No.: 211465000.

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** #32 SEC 10 T4N R1EWM5.10 acres

**SITE PLAN REVIEW (TYPE I)**

*A change in use to an existing structure or site that is consistent with underlying zoning and surrounding uses. Type I reviews are typically relatively minor in nature, consistent with the zoning of surrounding land uses and do not have a substantial impact on the natural and built environment. LCMC 18.215.040(1)(b)(i).*

Approval Criteria – LCMC 18.215.060(2)

*(2) In reviewing a site plan for approval, the director shall find that all of the following are met:*

*(a) The proposed plan shall meet all applicable provisions of this title and other appropriate provisions of the La Center Municipal Code; the following are enumerated to indicate the various requirements under which a plan must be found consistent. Failure to meet any one of these, and other requirements not necessarily specified here, shall be grounds for denial of site plan approval.*

Findings: The proposal satisfies the applicable requirements of the La Center Municipal Code as enumerated below. A condition of approval will require that the applicant obtain building permits for the proposed expansion, as applicable, prior to construction.

As a **condition of approval**, prior to construction, the applicant shall obtain a building permit for the proposed development, as applicable.

*(b) The proposed use is permitted within the district in which it is located.*

Findings: The property is zoned LDR-7.5, Low Density Residential. Wireless telecommunication facilities are permitted as a conditional use. This is an expansion of an existing facility, not a new facility. Therefore, this requirement is met.

*(c) The proposal meets the lot, yard, building, height and other dimensional requirements of the district within which it is located.*

Findings: The area proposed to be used for the new generator is approximately 170 square feet. and the generator will be placed on an 8-foot by 6-foot concrete pad in this area adjacent to the existing wireless facility.

Since the existing wireless facility is located on in the LDR-7.5 zone, the following standards apply:

- Lot size: Minimum lot size is 7,500 square feet. The existing lot is 222,156 square feet and meets this requirement.
- Lot coverage: maximum lot coverage is limited to 35 percent. The proposed lot coverage will be far less than 35 percent.
- Setbacks: Minimum required setbacks are 20 feet (front), 7.5 feet (side setback), 10 feet (minimum street side setback), and 20 feet rear setback. The applicant's plans show that the proposed setbacks will 65 feet (front), 179 feet and 195 feet from the sides and 602 feet (rear) meeting the minimum requirements of the zone.
- Height: Building height is limited to 35 feet. The applicant's plans show that the tallest proposed facility will be the new fence at a height of 10 feet which meets the height requirements of the zone. Fence heights in residential zones are limited to six feet under LCMC 18.245.020; however, the applicant is proposing to match the existing fencing on the site.

Therefore, the lot, yard, building, height, and dimensional requirements of the district are met.

*(d) The proposal meets the screening, buffering and landscape strip requirements, as set forth in LCMC 18.245.060.*

Findings: Surrounding properties are zoned LDR-7.5 to the west, north, and east. To the south are properties zoned Rural Estate (R-5) in Clark County. LCMC 18.245.060 does not require buffering between LDR-zoned properties or between LDR properties and Clark County properties. Therefore, no screening and buffering is required.

Staff note that the proposed location for the generator is surrounded by natural vegetation. The site is essentially screened at ground level from the public-right-of-way and from the existing nearby residences.

*(e) Minimum parking and loading space requirements are met, as required by Chapter 18.280 LCMC.*

Findings: LCMC 18.280 does not have a listed requirement for parking or loading spaces for a wireless facility. The proposal includes an existing driveway, and the applicant is not proposing

any changes to the existing access and parking configuration. Staff find that the wireless facility expansion does not warrant additional parking or loading areas. This requirement is met.

*(f) All applicable conditions and criteria contained in other titles of the La Center Municipal Code are met.*

Findings: See discussion below regarding LCMC 18.285, Telecommunications Standards.

*(g) Improvement requirements are provided in accordance with the applicable sections of the La Center development code.*

Findings: The proposal will add a standby generator system, automatic transfer switch, generator auxiliary power distribution, and remote monitoring communications circuitry for the existing wireless telecommunication facility at the site located at 30400 NE Timmen Road, Ridgefield, WA. Staff find that there are no other improvement requirements applicable to the proposal. This requirement is met.

*(h) All conditions of any applicable previous approvals (i.e., CUP) have been met.*

Findings: There is no prior approval on record for the wireless facility which was originally constructed under Clark County's jurisdiction. Therefore, this requirement is not applicable.

*(i) Development subject to site plan review has provided underground public and private utility lines including but not limited to those for electricity and communication.*

Findings: The existing site has electric service. The proposed expansion area and new equipment will be served by new underground electrical service (see Sheet C-101 of the applicant's plans) and does not require any other utilities. This requirement is met.

*(j) Public water, sewer and stormwater lines have been installed in conformance with the standards of the city code. Public water, sewer and stormwater lines within or along the frontage of a development have been extended to the extreme property lines of that development unless it can be demonstrated to the city engineer that such extensions are impractical, infeasible or inappropriate.*

Findings: No sanitary sewer, potable water, or stormwater utilities are required; therefore, this requirement is inapplicable to the proposal.

*(k) Proposed phasing plans do not exceed six years and all required public infrastructure is installed in the first phase of the development. [Ord. 2010-05 § 6, 2010; Ord. 2006-17 § 1, 2006.]*

Findings: The proposal is for a single phase of development. Therefore, this requirement is inapplicable.

**Additional Standards LCMC 18.285.010 (Telecommunications Facilities Additional Standards)**  
*In addition to complying with other applicable standards, a telecommunications facility shall comply with the following siting and design standards:*

*(1) A telecommunications facility may exceed the height limit of the underlying zone, if any.*

Findings: The applicant is not requesting additional antenna or tower height. All proposed improvements will comply with the 35-foot height limit of the LDR-7.5 zone.

*(2) The base of the tower for a telecommunications facility shall be set back from property lines a distance equal to or greater than one-half the height of the tower. All other structures and improvements associated with a telecommunications facility shall comply with applicable dimensional standards of the base zone or as otherwise provided by the approval authority.*

Findings: The applicant is not requesting to erect a new tower nor proposes new tower height. The proposed expansion facilities will comply with the LDR-7.5 setbacks. This requirement is met.

*(3) The setback of a telecommunications facility shall include landscaping to at least an L3 level and a fence to at least an F1 level as provided in LCMC 18.245.060.*

Findings: The proposed location for the generator and other facilities is surrounded by natural vegetation and is not visible from surrounding residential properties or Timmen Road. The site is screened at ground level from the public-right-of-way and from the existing nearby residences. LCMC 18.245.060(3) allows that existing vegetation may fulfill landscape and screening requirements. In addition, the applicant is proposing a 10-foot chain link security fence to match the existing fence. The F1 standard requires that fence be at least 50 percent sight obscuring. However, staff find that the sight obscuring screening requirements are met with existing vegetation as permitted under LCMC 18.245.060(3). Therefore, this requirement is met.

*(4) Generators and other equipment associated with a telecommunications facility shall not cause noise in excess of limits permitted by Chapter 173-60 WAC.*

Findings: WAC 173-60-040 requires that noise limits not exceed 55 decibels (dBA) during the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and 45 decibels from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. in a Class A Environmental Designation for Noise Abatement (EDNA) adjacent to another Class A EDNA. Class A EDNAs are properties primarily used for residential purposes. The wireless facility and adjacent residential uses are located in a Class A EDNA and are subject to these noise limitations.

The applicants submitted information on noise for the backup generator showing that it will produce an average of 81.4 dBAs, exceeding the requirements of the Class A EDNA. While WAC 173-60-050(4)(f) exempts emergency equipment from the standards of WAC 173-60-040 used for the health, safety, and welfare of the community, the applicant has stated that the generator will be regularly tested during daytime hours. In compliance with the above code standard, a condition of approval will require that the generator not exceed the daytime noise limits of 55 dBA. Given that the backup generator would be used only during an emergency between 10pm and 7 am, and the wireless services are critical during an emergency, staff find that the requirements of WAC 173-60 are met if the generator produces less than 55 decibels.

As a condition of approval, the back-up generator shall not exceed a noise limit of 55 dBA at the limits of the wireless facility lease or easement area.

*(5) Lights associated with a telecommunications facility shall be the minimum necessary to provide for security and safety. Advertising or signage of any kind is prohibited on a telecommunications facility tower except for a sign identifying safety and emergency information. [Ord. 2006-17 § 1, 2006.]*

Findings: The applicant is not proposing additional lighting associated with the wireless facility expansion. If lighting is proposed, it shall meet the requirements of LCMC 18.245.040 and 18.282 as conditioned.

As a **condition of approval**, any lighting proposed shall meet the requirements of LCMC 18.245.040 and 18.282.

**LCMC 18.245.060(3)**

*(3) Existing vegetation may fulfill landscaping and screening requirements of this chapter if that existing landscaping provides at least an equivalent level of screening as the standard required for the development in question.*

Findings: The proposed location for the generator is surrounded by natural vegetation. The site is essentially screened at ground level from the public-right-of-way and from the existing nearby residences.

**LCMC 18.310 (Environmental Policy)**

Finding(s): The subject lots do not impact regulated Critical Areas and it does not exceed the allowable SEPA categorical exemptions provided in WAC 197-11-800. Therefore, a SEPA threshold determination is not required.

**II. CONCLUSIONS & DECISION**

The review authority finds the applicant has sustained the burden of proving the application complies with the applicable provisions of La Center's Municipal Code. The subject application should be **APPROVED, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS.**

**I. General**

1. Prior to construction, the applicant shall obtain a building permit for the proposed development, as applicable.
2. As a condition of approval, any lighting proposed shall meet the requirements of LCMC 18.245.040 and 18.282.
3. The back-up generator shall not exceed a noise limit of 55 dBA at the limits of the wireless facility lease or easement area.
4. The applicant shall obtain all required federal, state, and local permits prior to construction.

**IV. APPEALS**

Pursuant to LCMC 18.030.130, a final decision regarding a Type IF application may be appealed by the applicant or applicant's representative. An appeal together with the requisite fee and information must be received by the Finance Director/City Clerk within seven (7) calendar days of the date of the decision being appealed. For an appeal regarding a decision subject to a Type I process, the Finance Director/City Clerk shall send the hearings examiner a copy of the appeal and the case file together with any new evidence submitted with the appeal. The hearings examiner shall conduct a *de novo* review and issue a decision within 21 days of a timely complete appeal being filed.



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Bryan Kast, P.E.  
Public Works Director