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Project Description/Justification

Verizon Site: Lost Hills
Address: 26791 Agoura Road
APN: 2064-021-012
Zoning: CR – Commercial Retail

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Site History
This existing Verizon unmanned wireless facility is located on the rooftop of a shopping center. The antennas and associated equipment cabinets and cables are completely screened from view behind a combination of FRP screening and existing roof lines. There are currently 12 antennas and 4 equipment cabinets installed on this roof. The project was originally approved under Resolution 2011-508 on April 21, 2011. The site provides wireless telecommunications coverage to residential and commercial properties in the vicinity of Agoura Road and Lost Hills Road as well as commuters along the 101 Freeway.

General Project Information
The Verizon Wireless 4G LTE network is the largest in the United States and offers speeds up to ten times faster than 3G. 4G LTE technology has created new possibilities for the wireless environment, such as live streaming, seamless web surfing, video sharing, and downloads in seconds. The benefits of 4G LTE technology have enabled customers to use their wireless devices to remotely control temperatures in their homes, make and accept credit card payments, monitor fitness levels, and so much more. But, these new capabilities are putting a strain on the network.

4G LTE customers make up one third of Verizon Wireless' customer base, yet they use roughly double the data of 3G customers and consume more than 66 percent of the data traffic. In some areas, the strain on the LTE network has brought the network down to 3G because of capacity constraints. The user experience is impacted when a site reaches capacity – calls might not be connected and data throughout may be significantly reduced or interrupted.

To combat this issue, Verizon Wireless is deploying the Advanced Wireless Services (AWS) spectrum to increase LTE capacity. The goal is to increase network efficiency and enhance coverage, call quality and data speeds for customers across the United States. The proposed antenna modification will increase LTE capacity primarily by enabling the site to run on the AWS spectrum.

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Project Proposal and Purpose
Verizon Wireless is proposing to do the following: replace six (6) existing 4' tall panel antennas with six (6) new 6' tall panel antennas, install six (6) radio remote units (RRUs) behind the antennas, install three (3) fiber demarcation boxes, add hybrid cables inside the existing cable tray, and replace one (1) equipment cabinet. The current height and appearance of the facility remain unchanged. The lease area will not be expanded nor will the number of antennas be increased.

Remote radio units (RRUs) enable antennas to run off fiber cables instead of coax cables. Fiber cables transmit data via pulses of light, which makes them immune to the kind of interference that coax cables are vulnerable to. The immunity to interference also means that the signal does not degrade over time and distance, making it faster and more reliable. This improves speed and reliability is especially important for 4G LTE technology. The AWS spectrum can only function via fiber feed, which necessitates the use of RRUs. The Raycap fiber junction boxes distribute the fiber cables to the antennas and serve as surge protectors.

The proposed use is conditionally permitted within the CR zone, complies with all applicable provisions of the zoning code, and is consistent with the General Plan. The approval of the permit for this project is in compliance with CEQA and should be categorically exempt. The location and operations of the use are compatible with the existing uses on-site and in the vicinity. The use is existing and the proposal is only a modification to provide better service to Verizon customers. The height and appearance of the facility will remain unchanged. The project will not result in any circumstances or conditions contrary to the public health, safety, and general welfare. The existing wireless facility will continue to operate 24 hours a day. The facility will not generate any hazardous materials, waste, odor, light, or glare, and will continue to be unmanned. There will be no increase in traffic or circulation in the area.

Verizon Wireless is able to meet network capacity objectives by adding the antenna to the existing facility, swapping out antennas and adding remote radio units at the current site, which avoids the need to build a new wireless facility to service the surrounding area. Modifying the existing infrastructure is the least obtrusive way to maintain coverage objectives.

Safety – RF is Radio
The FCC regulates RF emissions to ensure public safety. Standards have been set based on peer-reviewed scientific studies and recommendations from a variety of oversight organizations. Although the purview of the public safety of RF emissions by the FCC was established by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, these standards remain under constant scrutiny. All Verizon Wireless cell sites operate well below these standards, and the typical urban cell site operates hundreds or even thousands of times below the FCC's limits for safe exposure. Refer to the enclosed RF emissions report by Hammett & Edison for specific RF emission levels.