



CITY of CALABASAS

WIRELESS FACILITY DESIGN GUIDELINES

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INTRODUCTION

The City's current Wireless Ordinance was adopted on March XX, 2021. The current ordinance establishes a tiered permit process for wireless facilities, categorizing facilities (both existing and proposed) that meet the definition of a 'Stealth Facility' as a Tier 1 Facility, subject to a streamlined permit process, and categorizing existing and proposed facilities that do not meet this definition as a Tier 2 facility. Additional information on the criteria that determines if a facility is Tier 1 can be found within these design guidelines, as well as examples from both within Calabasas and outside Calabasas of designs that would be considered a Tier 1 Facility.

INTENT

This document serves as a visual aide to supplement the requirements outlined in Chapter 17.31 of the Calabasas Municipal Code. As specified in Section 17.31.040, all Tier 1 Wireless Facilities located in the City of Calabasas must adhere to these guidelines to ensure the facility is designed as a Stealth Facility to the maximum extent feasible. These guidelines are designed to preserve the aesthetic quality of the City of Calabasas, and to protect the character of the community by minimizing adverse visual impacts of wireless telecommunication facilities, in accordance with the goals of the General Plan, while also addressing the clear need for upgrades to the City's existing wireless network to improve communications within the City. Each specific project is subject to review by staff, and acceptability is dependent upon siting, surrounding context, and compliance with the requirements of the ordinance. The requirements of the municipal code will ensure a degree of uniformity and consistency within the Tier 1 wireless telecommunications facility review process, and will provide direction to applicants and carriers in regard to the type of facilities that the City encourages, as well as to provide examples of the types of facilities that are not supported by the City.

REVIEW CRITERIA

The goals of the municipal code are to ensure aesthetically acceptable wireless telecommunications facility designs for Tier 1 facilities, to encourage the collocation of facilities, to minimize the visual impact on the surrounding area, and to create a guide outlining acceptable and preferred facility designs.

Criteria:

- 1) The proposal minimizes visual impact to the maximum extent feasible through considerate design, screening, and siting.
- 2) The proposal integrates with and/or is camouflaged by the existing color, design, massing, and/or architectural style of the surrounding context, whether a natural backdrop, building, utility/light pole, or existing facility, to the maximum extent feasible.
- 3) For sites located on private property, the proposal minimizes the removal or modification of any site landscaping or parking and provides appropriate replacement landscaping or parking if necessary.
- 4) The proposal complies with all requirements of the Calabasas Municipal Code.

STEALTH FACILITIES

Per Section 17.31.100 of the Calabasas Municipal Code, a ‘Stealth Facility’ is defined as any personal wireless telecommunication facility which is designed to blend into the surrounding environment by, among other things, architecturally integrating into a structure or otherwise using design elements to conceal antennas, antenna supports, poles, equipment, cabinets, equipment housing and enclosure; and related above-ground accessory equipment. All equipment shall be placed underground to the maximum extent feasible. All wires, cables, and any other connections shall be completely concealed from public view to the maximum extent feasible. Only non-functional, screening material equivalent in appearance to the existing, underlying building, light standard, or other structure may be visible.

Additional information on both private property & Public Right-Of-Way facilities’ requirements to be considered a Tier 1 facility are expanded upon in greater detail in the below sections. Tier 1 wireless facilities, whether located on private property or within the Public Right-of-Way, must be designed as stealth facilities and must meet the review criteria identified above as well as all the requirements of the Calabasas Municipal Code. If the review criteria above cannot be met, the facility will then be considered a ‘Tier 2’ facility and must follow the requirements set forth in Section 17.31.050 of the Municipal Code. In all cases, facilities are subject to review by the appropriate City review authority.



Figure 1: Example of stealth facility in Calabasas, mounted to light pole in Public Right-of-Way.

(Image Source: City staff)

NON RIGHT-OF-WAY FACILITIES

Tier 1 facilities not located within the Public Right-of-Way shall be designed and constructed in a scale substantially in conformity with and/or architecturally integrated with surrounding building designs or natural settings, in order to minimize the adverse visual impact and to ensure the facility is compatible with the surrounding context in which it is located. Tier 1 facilities not within the right-of-way must have all equipment fully screened from public view. Examples of facilities located on private property include façade-mounted facilities, architectural elements/towers, and faux trees.

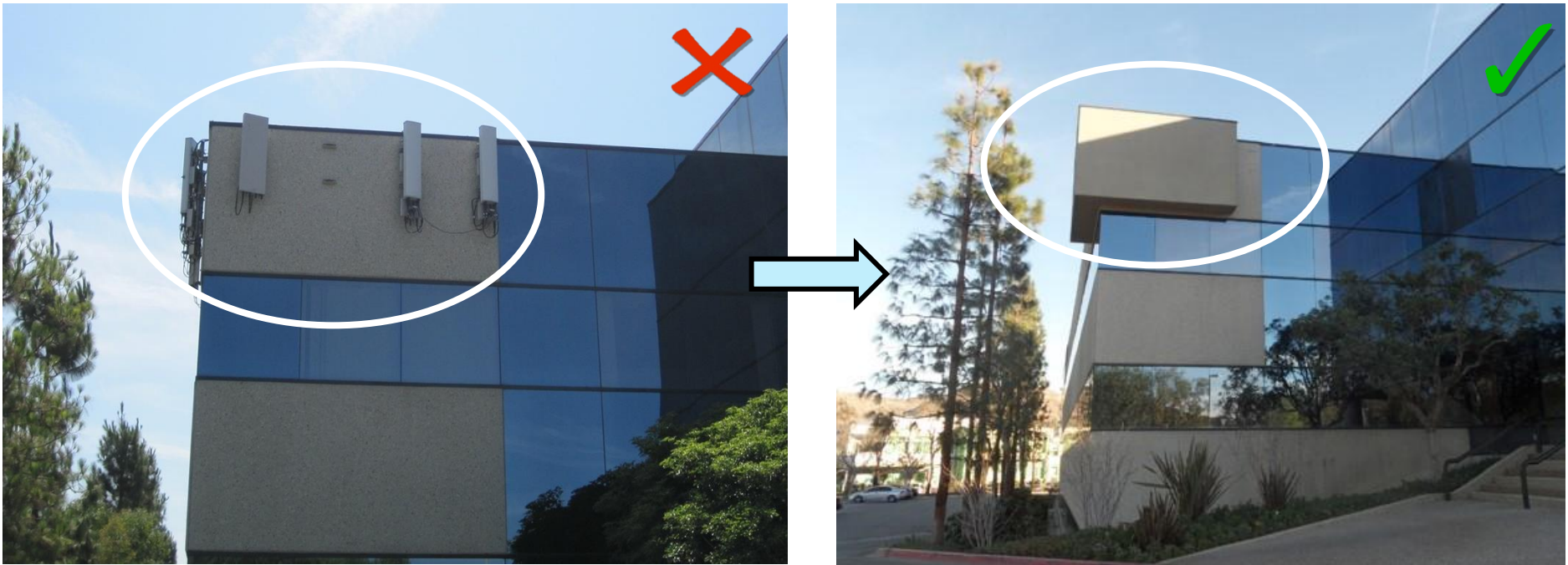
FAÇADE-MOUNTED FACILITIES

Façade mounted facilities are facilities which include antennas mounted, attached, or affixed to any façade of a building. Successful stealth façade-mounted facilities shall have all antennas and equipment screened from public view, through the use of fiberglass panels or other elements that blend in with the existing façade. The examples below illustrate successful and unsuccessful façade-mounted facility designs.



Figures 2 & 3: Before-and-after images showing successful faux façade element constructed out of fiberglass to screen existing antennas.

(Image Sources: Google Streetview)



Figures 4 & 5: Before-and-after image showing successful faux façade element constructed out of fiberglass to screen existing antennas.

(Image Sources: City Staff)



Figure 6: Unsuccessful example outside Calabasas; antennas are painted to match building elements but are not fully screened/camouflaged. Would not be considered a stealth facility.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 7: Successful example in Calabasas; faux roof tile element screening facility located on top of the building. Design closely matches surrounding tiles.

(Image Source: Google Streetview)

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS AND TOWERS

Architectural elements/Tower facilities are stealth facilities enclosed entirely within a feature that is proposed to be fully integrated and architecturally compatible with the surrounding context at the site. These facilities include clock towers, bell towers, steeples, art in public places, or similar features. Successful facilities shall locate all antennas and equipment entirely within these features (not mounted to the outside), and the feature shall be compatible in size, scale, and architectural style with the structure it is mounted to as well as its surroundings.



Figure 8: Unsuccessful example outside Calabasas; antennas mounted on the facade of the tower feature rather than inside the feature, and the tower feature itself is not compatible in scale or design with surrounding context.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 9: Successful example outside Calabasas; all equipment concealed within feature and is architecturally compatible with existing roof.

(Image Source: TLF)

FAUX TREES

Faux trees are effectively a tower facility designed to closely and naturally resemble a tree. Design of these facilities should include an assessment of the appropriate tree species based on the surrounding area, shape, and size, as well as the quality and longevity of materials (branches & bark), color, and finish in consideration of the facilities' surroundings. Detailed specifications must be provided during plan review. Both tree design and placement (e.g., surrounding context) will be taken into consideration when reviewing faux tree facilities.



Figure 10: Unsuccessful example outside Calabasas; does not blend in with surroundings and poor tree design.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 11: Unsuccessful example outside Calabasas; tree design adequately screens antennas, but the facility does not blend in with surrounding environment.

(Image Source: City staff)



Figure 12: Unsuccessful example outside Calabasas; faux tree species is not compatible with surrounding trees, and equipment is not properly camouflaged—antennas still visible.

(Image Source: City staff)



Figure 13: Successful example in Calabasas; faux tree species is compatible with surroundings and antennas are properly camouflaged.

(Image Source: City staff)

POLE-MOUNTED FACILITIES

Pole-mounted facilities not located in the Right-of-Way can take many forms, but the most commonly observed are facilities mounted to light standards and flag poles. Design of these facilities should take into consideration the surrounding context to determine what type of pole-mounted facility design would be best suited for a particular location. All pole-mounted facilities shall be compatible in size, scale, and style with the surrounding area—especially for facilities located among other poles (multiple flag poles, light standards in a parking lot) the wireless facility shall be designed to be relatively consistent with other poles in the vicinity in order to be properly camouflaged. Facilities and associated pole shall be kept in good condition.



Figure 14: Unsuccessful example outside Calabasas; although facility is camouflaged, pole is not compatible in size (both height and diameter) or scale with surroundings.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 15: Successful example outside Calabasas; pole is compatible with surroundings in scale and design, and facility is properly camouflaged.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 16: Unsuccessful example outside Calabasas; facility not camouflaged, pole not compatible in size or scale with surroundings.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 17: Successful example outside Calabasas; all antennas contained within radome and ground mounted equipment is screened (see red arrow), compatible in scale with surroundings.

(Image Source: TLF)

PUBLIC AGENCY FACILITIES

Facilities located on public agency's properties include but aren't limited to: water tanks facilities, park facilities, and fire station facilities. Public agency facilities might also fall under previously mentioned categories (such as a flag pole in front of a fire station), but these facilities can also include collocated facilities around a water tank or a standalone structure at a park. As with previously mentioned Non Public Right-of-Way facilities, all antennas and equipment must be screened from public view in order to be considered a Tier 1 facility, and must also be compatible with design and scale of surrounding area.



Figure 18: Unsuccessful example outside Calabasas; equipment not screened. For non Right-of-Way sites, all equipment shall be screened from view in order to be considered a Tier 1 facility.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 19: Successful rendering from project outside Calabasas; all equipment screened within faux water tank.

(Image Source: Inside Towers)



Figure 20: Unsuccessful example at a park outside Calabasas; equipment not fully screened, antennas still visible. Does not meet the classification of a stealth facility not located in the Right-of-Way.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 21: Successful example from facility at Calabasas High School; all equipment screened, and radome camouflaged to match pole.

(Image Source: City staff)

RIGHT-OF-WAY FACILITIES

Stealth facilities located within the Public Right-of-Way must be designed to minimize visual impact to the right-of-way to the maximum extent feasible. Tier 1 facilities located in the public right-of-way shall contain the minimum amount of pole-mounted equipment possible; a maximum of 6 cubic feet, a maximum of 1 piece of equipment mounted to the pole, and all antennas screened when feasible. When screening is not feasible, antennas must be a minimal size, unobtrusive, with concealed wiring, utilizing camouflage techniques such as paint for any visible equipment.

LIGHT STANDARDS



Figure 22: Unsuccessful example outside Calabasas; not concealed, wiring and antennas still visible.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 23: Successful example in Calabasas; equipment concealed within radome ground mounted equipment screened behind rock wall enclosure.

(Image Source: City staff)



Figure 24: Successful example outside Calabasas; equipment and antennas concealed.

(Image Source: City staff)



Figure 25: Successful example outside Calabasas; equipment and antennas concealed, no ground mounted equipment.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 26 Successful example outside Calabasas; minimal pole mounted equipment, no ground mounted equipment.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 27: Successful example outside Calabasas; equipment and antennas concealed, no ground mounted equipment.

(Image Source: City staff)

UTILITY POLES



Figure 28: Unsuccessful example from outside Calabasas; equipment/antennas not screened to the maximum extent feasible, visible wiring.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 29: Successful example from outside Calabasas; all equipment and antennas concealed and painted to match pole.

(Image Source: City staff)



Figure 30: Unsuccessful example outside Calabasas; equipment and visible antennas too large, and not painted to match pole.

(Image Source: City staff)



Figure 31: Unsuccessful example outside Calabasas; antennas and ground mounted equipment are not camouflaged through use of paint to match pole.

(Image Source: TLF)



Figure 32: Successful example outside Calabasas; equipment is minimal, and painted to match pole.

(Image Source: City staff)