

DATE OF MEETING | September 19, 2022 |

AUTHORED BY | KRISTINE MAYES, PLANNER, CURRENT PLANNING |

SUBJECT | **PROPOSED TELECOMMUNICATIONS TOWER - 2365 NORTHFIELD ROAD** |

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present Council with information regarding a request from Cypress Land Services Inc. (TELUS) for land use concurrence for a proposed telecommunications tower at 2365 Northfield Road. |

Recommendation

That Council direct Staff to provide a letter of concurrence to Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada in response to a proposed 48m telecommunications facility at 2365 Northfield Road. |

BACKGROUND

Cypress Land Services Inc., on behalf of Telus Communications Inc. (TELUS), has requested concurrence in writing from the City of Nanaimo (the “land-use authority”) for a new telecommunications facility. The regulation of telecommunication facilities is the exclusive jurisdiction of the Federal Government, specifically Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) – formerly Industry Canada. Proposals for telecommunications facilities are subject to a Federal approval process, which includes consultation with the local land-use authority. Subsection 6.1.1(c) of the “City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500” (the “Zoning Bylaw”) permits utilities, such as telecommunication towers, in all zones and these structures are exempt from height restrictions (Subsection 6.8.1.1). The City’s practice to date is to encourage proponents to co-locate such infrastructure in industrial and/or commercial areas.

The City of Nanaimo does not have an established siting protocol or public consultation process for the siting of telecommunications facilities, thus Cypress Land Services Inc. has utilized ISED’s Default Public Consultation Process in accordance with CPC-2-0-03: *Radiocommunication and Broadcasting Antenna Systems*¹. The ISED process requires, at a minimum, that the proponents provide a notification package to the local public (including nearby residences, community gathering areas, public institutions, and schools), neighbouring land-use authorities, businesses, and property owners, located within an area three times the tower height. |

DISCUSSION

The proposed facility is to consist of a 48m high monopole structure, with a small utility building for equipment enclosed by a secure chain-link fence, which measures 10m by 10m, and would be located on private property at 2365 Northfield Road (Inland Truck & Equipment). The property

¹ CPC-2-0-03: [https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/smt-gst.nsf/vwapi/cpc-2-0-03-i5.pdf/\\$file/cpc-2-0-03-i5.pdf](https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/smt-gst.nsf/vwapi/cpc-2-0-03-i5.pdf/$file/cpc-2-0-03-i5.pdf)

is zoned Light Industrial (I2) and falls on industrial land bounded by the Nanaimo Parkway and Northfield Road. The neighbourhood contains a mix of highway industrial and institutional uses.

The proposed facility will be located adjacent to the site entrance, off Northfield Road, and is comprised of the following:

- A 48m high structure (45m tower and 3m lighting rod), steel monopole with antenna panels, painted grey;
- A compound that is approximately 10m x 10m in size, enclosed with black chain-link fencing, located between Northfield Road and the commercial building on the subject property;
- A 10m by 10m turnaround area for vehicle access accessed from the subject property;
- No trees are proposed to be removed to facilitate the development. Adjacent mature trees will be retained to help screen the facility; and,
- Siting that would respect City and BC Hydro utilities located in the area.

A development permit is not required for the proposed telecommunications facility and improvements. The base of the facility is screened by existing vegetation, and the visibility of the proposed telecommunications facility from the Nanaimo Parkway is mitigated as the tower is partially screened by existing trees (Attachment C).

The proponent conducted pre-consultation with Staff in spring 2022 and has corresponded with the City to address relevant questions, comments and concerns. The proponent distributed an information package on 2022-MAR-16 to property owners and tenants of properties within 144m of the telecommunications facility. The public consultation process concluded on 2022-APR-25 and no comments from the public or businesses were received regarding the proposed telecommunications facility.

TELUS is seeking to improve 4G and 5G wireless service in the immediate area, which includes residents of the City of Nanaimo, the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) and the travelling public. Existing buildings and structures in the surrounding area were assessed to determine whether roof or existing towers could be utilized; however, none were of adequate height to meet the service requirements of TELUS. The proposed telecommunications facility is intended to improve wireless service coverage and fill in the gap between existing towers where TELUS has unreliable service to meet the personal, business and emergency needs of the community and travelling public. Additionally, the applicant has noted there may be sufficient space and loading capacity on the proposed tower for future co-location opportunities. The applicant has noted a shorter tower would not result in sought after service improvements and would ultimately require an additional tower in the future. In the City of Nanaimo, industrial lands are generally preferred sites for telecommunication facilities and the proposed site is within an industrial area. Following the conclusion of the ISED default public consultation process, the proponent has requested a letter of concurrence for the proposed telecommunications facility at 2365 Northfield Road.

OPTIONS

1. That Council direct Staff to provide a letter of concurrence to Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada in response to a proposed 48m telecommunications facility at 2365 Northfield Road.
 - Advantages: The TELUS mobile network in Nanaimo would be enhanced.
 - Disadvantages: None identified.
 - Financial Implications: None identified.

2. That Council direct Staff to provide a letter of non-concurrence to Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada indicating the reasons and/or concerns regarding a proposed telecommunications facility at 2365 Northfield Road.
 - Advantages: This option would allow Council an additional opportunity to identify any concerns for ISED's consideration.
 - Disadvantages: Non-concurrence could cause a delay to improvements to the TELUS mobile network. Provided the technical requirements are met and if the land use authority and proponent cannot come to an agreement, ISED may make the final decision.
 - Financial Implications: None Identified.

3. That Council direct Staff to provide a letter to Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada advising that the City has no comment regarding the proposed telecommunications facility at 2365 Northfield Road.
 - Advantages: None identified.
 - Disadvantages: No comment could cause a delay to improvements to the TELUS mobile network or the telecommunications facility could be installed without consideration for the City's comments.
 - Financial Implications: None identified.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The City has received a request for a letter of concurrence for a proposed 48m telecommunications facility at 2365 Northfield Road.
- The proponent concluded the required ISED default public consultation process on 2022-APR-25.
- The proposed tower location is within existing industrial land, and the visibility of the proposed telecommunications facility from the Nanaimo Parkway is mitigated as the tower is partially screened by existing trees.

ATTACHMENTS

- ATTACHMENT A: Context Map
ATTACHMENT B: Location Plan
ATTACHMENT C: Public Consultation Summary & Land Use Concurrence Request (Telus)
ATTACHMENT D: Aerial Photo

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