

DATE OF MEETING July 28, 2025

AUTHORED BY PAYTON CARTER, PLANNER, CURRENT PLANNING

**SUBJECT PROPOSED TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES –
SHEPHERD AVENUE**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present Council with information regarding a request from Telus Communications Inc. for land use concurrence for two proposed telecommunications streetlight/antenna poles along Shepherd Avenue, within the City right-of-way.

Recommendation

That Council direct Staff to provide a letter of concurrence to Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada in response to two proposed 15.7m telecommunications streetlight/antenna poles along Shepherd Avenue, within the City right-of-way.

BACKGROUND

Cypress Land Services Inc., on behalf of Telus Communications Inc. (Telus), has requested concurrence from the City of Nanaimo (the “land use authority”) for two proposed telecommunications streetlight/antenna poles along the east portion of the Shepherd Avenue within the City right-of-way. Telus is seeking to enter into an agreement with the City to allow the placement, construction, and operation of the facility at the proposed location, as discussed in the accompanying Staff Report dated 2025-JUL-28, prepared by the Real Estate section.

The regulation of telecommunication facilities is within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada (ISED). 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 of Nanaimo does not have an established siting protocol or public consultation process for the siting of telecommunications facilities; therefore, Cypress Land Services Inc. has utilized ISED’s Default Public Consultation Process in accordance with CPC-2-0-03: Radiocommunication and Broadcasting Antenna Systems. The ISED process requires, at a minimum, that the proponents provide a notification package to the local public (including nearby residences, community gathering spaces, public institutions, and schools), neighbouring land-use authorities, businesses, and property owners, located within an area three times the tower height (48m radius).

DISCUSSION

The proposed streetlight/antenna poles will be constructed within the City right-of-way along the eastern portion of Shepherd Avenue, abutting a commercially zoned property at 601 Bruce Avenue. The proposal includes two 15.7m tall streetlight/antenna poles, with projecting streetlights approximately 9.0m above grade, and two equipment cabinets located at-grade adjacent to the streetlight/antenna poles. The existing streetlights at this location will be removed and replaced with the monopole streetlights/antenna poles. The surrounding neighbourhood is developed as low-density residential with local-serving commercial uses within the University Village Shopping Centre and Village Centre.

The proposed improvements are intended to enhance existing wireless service to meet the growing personal, business, and emergency demands of the neighbourhood. A development permit is not required for the proposed streetlight/antenna poles and no tree removal is required. The proposed siting avoids conflict with sightlines and existing City utilities, easements, and pedestrian areas.

It was confirmed by Telus and Cypress Land Services Inc. that the telecommunications facilities will meet the requirements of Safety Code 6, which provides the safety requirements for the installation and use of the facility, as well as the recommended limits for exposure to radiofrequency electromagnetic fields (EMF).

A number of existing buildings and sites in the surrounding area were considered by the applicant to determine whether they could be utilized. The applicant advised that none of the existing structures were adequate to support the operations of the proposed telecommunications facilities. The co-location of services will not be permitted on the streetlight/antenna poles.

The City's practice is to encourage telecommunications facilities within existing commercial and industrial sites. The improvements would enhance existing wireless service in the commercial and residential area; be located to avoid any functional impacts; and be designed in a manner that is complementary to the streetscape and compatible with the surrounding residential context.

The proponent conducted pre-consultation with City Staff beginning in January 2025 and the public consultation period concluded on 2025-JUN-08. One response was received, signed by six members of the adjacent residential neighbourhood citing general concerns regarding health and safety of residents and proximity to single-family dwellings.

Following the conclusion of the ISED default public consultation process, the proponent has requested a letter of concurrence from the City for the proposed telecommunications streetlight/antenna poles along Shepherd Avenue, within the City right-of-way. |

OPTIONS

1. | That Council direct Staff to provide a letter of concurrence to Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada in response to two proposed 15.7m telecommunications streetlight/antenna poles within the Shepherd Road City right-of-way.
 - The advantages of this option: The existing Telus wireless services would be enhanced.
 - The disadvantages of this option: 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 two proposed 15.7m telecommunications streetlight/antenna poles the Shepherd Road City right-of-way.
- The advantages of this option: This option would allow Council additional opportunity to identify any concerns for ISED's consideration.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Non-concurrence could delay improvement to the Telus wireless services.
 - 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 two proposed 15.7m telecommunications streetlight/antenna poles the Shepherd Road City right-of-way.
- The advantages of this option: None identified.
 - The disadvantages of this option: ISED is the approving authority, thus the Telus telecommunications facility may be approved by ISED, provided the technical requirements are met.
 - Financial Implications: None identified.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The City has received a request for a letter of concurrence for two proposed 15.7m telecommunications streetlight/antenna poles the Shepherd Road City right-of-way.
- The proponent concluded the required ISED default public consultation process on 2025-JUN-08 and one response was received, signed by six members of the neighbourhood.
- The improvements would enhance existing wireless service in the commercial and residential area; be located to avoid any functional impacts; and be designed in a manner that is complementary to the streetscape and compatible with the surrounding residential context.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Aerial Photo
ATTACHMENT B: Location Map
ATTACHMENT C: Public Consultation Summary & Land Use Concurrence Request
ATTACHMENT D: Tower Elevations
ATTACHMENT E: Compound Details
ATTACHMENT F: Tower Renderings

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