City of Mountain View

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
500 Castro Street, P.O. Box 7540
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540
650-903-6311 | MountainView.gov

APPLICATION PROCESS AND DESIGN AND LOCATION STANDARDS FOR SMALL CELL FACILITIES WITHIN PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY

May 2026

The City of Mountain View regulates the encroachment of structures and objects within the public right-of-way and easements pursuant to Sections 27.17, 27.19, 27.22, and 27.43 of the Municipal Code. Telecommunications companies ("applicant") may apply to construct, install, and maintain small cell antenna and other associated small facilities ("small cell facilities") in the public right-of-way by completing the City excavation permit application and approval process. The City does not regulate the technologies used by telecommunications companies but does have authority to regulate the placement and aesthetics of wireless facilities.

The applicant shall be required to obtain an **excavation permit** from the City to construct and install the small cell facilities and execute an encroachment agreement or **a master license agreement** and site license authorization with the City for the use of the public right-of-way and City-owned structures located in the public right-of-way, such as streetlights. The purpose of the excavation permit and respective agreement is to allow telecommunications companies to install wireless facilities within the public right-of-way and to provide wireless services throughout the City while ensuring that the facilities are well-maintained and do not significantly detract from City streetscapes. This document, the Public Works Master Fee Schedule, the reservation application, and the excavation permit forms are issued by the City and may be updated from time to time. The most recent version will always be posted at www.mountainview.gov/our-city/departments/public-works/land-development or can be obtained by contacting the City during regular business hours. It is the applicant's responsibility for ensuring that submitted applications are consistent with the most recent version posted by the City.

An additional **building permit** is required on small cell facilities on City-owned structures for electrical meter release.

Installation Locations

1. The City has the following order of preference for the location of small cell wireless facilities within the public right-of-way.

    a. Equipment is fully enclosed within an integrated City streetlight pole that conceals the equipment and is capable of serving the dual purpose of a streetlight, in accordance with City Standard Details. The new integrated pole may be installed at an existing streetlight location (replacement) or at a new location that complies with City standards for streetlight spacing and conforms to the appearance of streetlights in the surrounding neighborhood.

b. Equipment is placed on existing utility poles in *nonresidential* areas.

c. Equipment is placed on existing utility poles in *residential* areas.

2. The City is not supportive of new utility poles installed in the public right-of-way to support small cell wireless facilities.

Design Requirements

1. General Guidelines

a. Avoid the installation of aboveground cabinets and riser poles. Install wireless "puck"-style electric smart meters. Meter pedestals may only be allowed subject to the approval of the Public Works Director and only after written verification from PG&E or the applicable power utility provider has been submitted confirming that other underground options for providing power to small cell facilities are infeasible.

b. Maximize the placement of equipment in underground vaults. Underground vaults may be allowed in the existing street landscape strip or public utility easement if the vault does not encroach into the public sidewalk area.

c. Minimize the quantity and size of equipment placed on poles.

d. Conceal wires within the pole to the extent feasible.

e. Equipment on poles shall be installed to allow concealment behind signs or banners to the extent feasible without negatively impacting the operation of the small cell facilities.

f. Avoid wide offset placement of equipment on poles.

g. Paint equipment with the matching pole color.

h. Flashing lights are not permitted.

i. Warning stickers shall be placed in appropriate locations as required by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) or other regulatory agencies.

j. Manufacturer decals are not permitted.

k. Avoid placements in front of windows of living areas of residential units.

l. Equipment shall not cause harmful interference with existing City facilities.

m. Noise from proposed equipment shall comply with the City's Noise Ordinance.

n. Equipment shall not block the sidewalk or create a condition that is inconsistent with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements for the public right-of-way.

o. The City requires a 4' minimum clearance for sidewalks.

p. Installed equipment shall comply with the City's sight distance requirements for vehicular and pedestrian traffic per City Standard Details A-22 and A-23.

q. Equipment shall be located to maintain the required horizontal and vertical clearances (as determined by the City) from curbs, driveways, utility laterals and boxes, fire hydrants, street trees, and other utilities in the public right-of-way.

2. Small Cell Wireless Facilities on Existing City Streetlight Poles

Installation of small cell facilities on an existing City streetlight pole will only be permitted under the following conditions:

a. Master License Agreement to install small cell facilities on City-owned streetlight poles has been executed.

b. Structural calculations, prepared and stamped "approved" by a licensed professional engineer, confirm the existing pole can accommodate the installation of small cell facilities reviewed and approved by the City.

c. The installation complies with the City's design standards (this document) or an exception has been granted for any noncompliance.

d. The design is the same or substantially similar as shown in Exhibits 1 or 2 for standard poles, where applicable.

3. Small Cell Wireless Facilities on City Replacement Streetlight Poles

a. The replacement pole design shall be used when the existing City pole cannot accommodate the installation of small cell facilities.

b. The replacement pole shall serve the dual purpose of a streetlight and accommodating small cell wireless facilities. The new replacement pole shall be constructed in accordance with City Standard Details.

c. Replacement streetlight poles are allowed to be installed at existing streetlight locations or at new locations that comply with City standards for streetlight spacing. New locations should be positioned at property corners or shared property lines where feasible.

d. Replacement streetlight poles shall include only new equipment, including a new foundation.

e. The replacement pole design is the same or substantially similar as shown in Exhibits 1 or 2, where applicable. Alternate designs may be submitted to the City for consideration.

4. Small Cell Wireless Facilities on Existing Utility Poles

a. Encroachment Agreement to install small cell facilities on non-City-owned utility poles has been executed.

b. Place equipment as close to each other and as close to the pole as feasible.

c. Long and narrow equipment design shall be preferred over large and bulky designs.

d. The pole top antenna should avoid exceeding the height limit of the applicable zoning district.

e. Comply with all applicable California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) General Orders, including, but not limited to, GO 95.

5. Exceptions

a. An exception may be granted to one or more requirements of these standards in the following circumstances:

(1) If an applicant demonstrates that compliance with a requirement of the policy would be technically infeasible and the proposed wireless facility complies with the requirements of these standards to the greatest extent technically feasible; or

(2) If an applicant demonstrates that the particular design or location proposed involves only minor noncompliance with a requirement of these standards, but such noncompliance either results in no increase in aesthetic harms to the community or provides other benefits; or

(3) If an applicant demonstrates that denial of an application would, within the meaning of Federal law, prohibit or effectively prohibit the provision of personal wireless services or otherwise violate applicable laws or regulations.

b. Exceptions must be requested the time an application is initially submitted for a permit. The request must include both the specific provision(s) from which exception is sought and the basis of the request, including all supporting evidence on which the applicant relies. A request for exception from one or more requirements does not relieve the applicant from compliance with all other applicable provisions of law or of these standards.

Equipment Maintenance

1. The applicant shall be responsible for all costs associated with the operation and maintenance of the applicant's small cell wireless facilities.

2. The applicant shall maintain the applicant's small cell wireless facilities (equipment) in good condition and appearance, including, but not limited to, graffiti removal. Upon request, the City shall be provided with the applicant's maintenance logs or reports. Graffiti removal shall be completed within 48 hours of receipt of notice regarding the tagging or notification from the City.

3. Similar to provisions applied to other private utility or telecommunications facilities located within the public right-of-way, the City may at any time request the removal or relocation of small cell facilities within the public right-of-way pursuant to permit issuance due to conflicts with future City right-of way improvement projects. Removal and/or relocations of the applicant's small cell facilities shall be completed at no cost to the City and within a reasonable time, as determined by the City.

Excavation Permit Application Process

Step 1: City Streetlight Pole Reservation Request (voluntary, but recommended)

Some City poles are available for a 180-day reservation period, which do not include poles that have an active excavation permit application. City poles may, in the applicant's discretion, be reserved prior to submitting a formal small cell wireless facility site license agreement or excavation permit application. Each reservation application is limited to only one City pole. If a

single reservation application seeks to reserve more than one City pole, the application will be denied.

The City must have a minimum of 10 working days to provide written approval or denial of each reserved pole. There shall be no more than 25 poles that may be requested or reserved at any given time per applicant. Additional reservation requests will not be allowed until:

1. Previously requested reservations have been processed or withdrawn; and

2. Installation of the small cell facilities, completed on previously granted reserved poles, results in fewer than 25 poles being subject to pending reservation requests or approved reservations without facilities installed.

An excavation permit application and site license agreement submission must be submitted within the 180-day reservation period. Failure to do so will result in the cancellation of the reservation.

Step 2: Submit Excavation Permit Application

The applicant must submit a complete excavation permit application to the City for each proposed small cell wireless facility location. The complete application must include the following standard excavation permit requirements and additional supporting materials specified below or in the application forms and must be accompanied by applicable fees.

Based on existing Public Works staffing capacity, the applicant shall submit an application for no more than five locations at one time. For applications to more than five locations, the applicant shall arrange with Public Works to determine a submittal and processing schedule. Additional resources, at the applicant's sole cost, may be required to address the applicant's request for additional applications.

Applications may only be submitted by appointment. Public Works will provide applicants with an appointment after receipt of a written request.

Standard Excavation Permit Requirements

Please refer to the Excavation Permit Application on the City of Mountain View website for more information on the following standard permit requirements:

1. Completed excavation permit application form, including the USA identification number and contractor's State license number and City business license number;

2. Plans of work showing each proposed small cell facility location and proposed equipment to be installed (see Excavation Permit Application for work plan requirements);

3. Traffic control plan for all work that will impact pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicular traffic on City streets;

4. Contractor's insurance certificate and endorsement; and

5. A deposit of Two Thousand Dollars ($2,000) is required at the initial submittal of the Excavation Permit Application. Fees will be assessed based on time spent processing the permit in accordance with Section II.B [Excavation Permit Fee-Utilities (Cost Recovery)] and Section 27.43 of the Municipal Code. The balance of the excavation permit fees must be paid prior to the issuance of the excavation permit. Any refund will be issued in accordance with City policy.

Additional Excavation Permit Supporting Materials

1. Photo simulation depicting the existing and proposed conditions;

2. Documentation on the power consumption of the small cell wireless facilities;

3. Documentation on any fans or cooling equipment proposed;

4. Documentation on the anticipated decibel levels of the proposed equipment and documentation confirming compliance with the City's Noise Ordinance;

5. Documentation on the proposed support, protection, screening, and other equipment (not applicable if integrated City streetlight pole);

6. Documentation on the color and/or type of paint to be used (not applicable if integrated City streetlight pole);

7. Approval letter from the utility pole owner(s) for placement of the small cell wireless facilities (not applicable if integrated City streetlight pole);

8. Proof of the applicant's Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) from the CPUC; and

9. List of property owners and residents located within 300' of each proposed small cell wireless facility location.

Site License Agreement Materials Pursuant to Master License Agreement (if proposing to use City streetlights); Encroachment Agreement (if proposing to use non-City owned utility poles)

1. Telecommunication carrier's insurance certificate and endorsements;

2. Written proof of the signature authority of the person(s) authorized to sign the encroachment agreement or master license agreement; and

3. An exhibit showing the small cell facility's location. This exhibit will be included as an attachment to the encroachment agreement, site license agreement, or excavation permit.

Step 3: Preliminary Review and Site Selection by City

The City will endeavor to review the excavation permit application materials and provide comments on the consistency of the application with City requirements according to the timelines established by State and Federal Laws. For subsequent reviews, the City will endeavor to provide comments within timelines established by State and Federal laws.

Step 4: Neighborhood Notification of Application

After the application is submitted, the applicant shall provide notification to nearby property owners, residents, and tenants as outlined below and in good faith address and mitigate the concerns:

1. Notifications shall be sent within two business days of submittal of the application to the City. A copy of the notification letter shall be submitted to the City.

2. The applicant shall provide written notice by mail to property owners, residents, and tenants within 300' of each proposed small cell wireless facility location.

3. If an installation is located in a public utility easement outside of the public right-of-way, the applicant shall send a registered letter to the owner of the property on which the public utility easement is located. The applicant shall provide a copy of said registered letter to the City.

4. Notifications shall include the following information:

    a. Name of telecommunications carrier;

    b. Applicant's contact information for inquiries (telephone number and email address);

c. Description of the location, project, and purpose of the proposed small cell wireless facility;

d. A copy of the proposed plans (as requested) and photo simulation of the proposed small cell wireless facility; and

e. Anticipated installation date.

5. Property owners and residents/tenants shall be given twenty one calendar days to respond to the notification with any questions or concerns.

6. The applicant shall endeavor to respond within two business days of all inquiries.

7. The applicant shall log all inquiries and at the end of twenty one calendar days, the applicant shall submit a summary report detailing all inquiries received during the notification period. The report shall include:

   a. Date of receipt, response, and resolution;

   b. Property owner's/resident's/tenant's name, address, and contact information;

   c. Specific questions and/or concerns; and

   d. Resolution.

8. The City will review the report and provide recommended actions. These actions may consist of revising the proposed wireless communications facility location or scope, and/or requesting installation of additional screening for facilities.

9. No permit will be approved or issued during the noticing period unless required by state or federal law.

Step 5: Permit Issuance

The excavation permit may be issued once the following requirements are met:

1. The master license agreement or an encroachment agreement is executed between the City and the telecommunications carrier for the encroachments into the public right-of-way;

2. The seven-calendar-day waiting period for the first notification to property owners is completed, and the City has confirmed that all comments have been satisfactorily addressed; and

3. Excavation permit requirements are deemed satisfied by the City.

    a. Site license agreement to be countersigned within 45 days of issuance.

4. In addition, small cell facilities installed on City-owned structures require a building permit from the City's Building Inspection Division for electrical meter release. This permit is required prior to activation of the small cell facility.

All construction shall be completed within one year of issuance by the City of the excavation permit.

Step 6: Preconstruction Notice to Property Owners

Once the excavation permit is issued, the applicant shall provide the notification of intent to begin construction to property owners and residents within 300' of each proposed small cell wireless facility location at least 14 calendar days prior to the start of construction. The notification shall include the following information:

1. Name of telecommunications carrier;

2. Applicant's contact information for inquiries (telephone number and email address);

3. Description of the location, project, what property owners can expect during construction, such as equipment noise and traffic impacts; and

4. Anticipated construction dates, duration of work, and work hours.

Step 7: Postconstruction Activation Report

The applicant shall monitor the emissions of thermal/heat, radio frequency electromagnetic radiation (RF-EMR), and noise for each small cell facility location and provide to the City an Activation Report summarizing the results within 14 calendar days of activation for review and approval. The Activation Report must meet the following requirements:

1. The Activation Report must be prepared by a licensed professional engineer or other technical expert approved by the City;

2. Testing shall be conducted in compliance with FCC regulations governing the measurement of RF-EMR emissions and shall be conducted during normal business hours on a nonholiday weekday with the small cell wireless facility operating at maximum power;

3. For all measurements collected, evidence shall be submitted confirming that testing instrument(s) used were calibrated within their manufacturers' suggested periodic calibration interval and that the calibration method complies with the National Bureau of Standards;

4. At the City's sole discretion, an agent of the City may monitor the performance of testing required for preparation of the Activation Report;

5. The Activation Report shall provide confirming information that the facility will not cause any potential exposure to RF-EMR emissions that exceed the adopted FCC standard for human exposure and that noise emissions comply with City requirements; and

6. Any sites with noncompliant test results shall be immediately turned off (shut down) or removed. Within seven calendar days of shutdown, the applicant shall submit a plan indicating strategies on how the noncompliant facility will be mitigated.

Step 8: As-Builts

Upon completion of the work, the application shall submit as-built plans. Plans shall comply with standards identified in Section R of the Excavation Permit Application.

Exhibits: 1. Pole Design 1
2. Pole Design 2