

# STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

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**DATE:** September 25, 2019

**TO:** **MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

**NAME AND TITLE:** Ian Wells, General Manager of Planning and Development

**SUBJECT:** Request for Concurrence – Proposed TELUS Wireless Communications Facility

Applicant: Cypress Land Services for TELUS  
Location: 7307 Giscome Road

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

- Location and Existing Zoning Map
- Public Consultation Summary Package

## RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. THAT Council instruct the Corporate Officer to advise Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada in writing that:
  - a. TELUS has satisfactorily completed its consultation with the City of Prince George;
  - b. The City of Prince George is satisfied with TELUS' public consultation process and does not require any further consultation with the public; and,
  - c. The City of Prince George concurs with TELUS' proposal to construct a wireless communications facility provided it is constructed substantially in accordance with the plans submitted to the City of Prince George for a 60.0 m tall tower and ancillary equipment at 7307 Giscome Road (The North East ¼ of District Lot 634, Cariboo District Except: Parcel A (D2212), and Plans 8488, 8956, 12915, 13121, 16233, 26295, PGP35818, BCP26911, and EPP22433).

## PURPOSE:

The City has received a Public Consultation Package from Cypress Land Services who is representing TELUS in identifying a suitable site for the installation and operation of a wireless communication facility. The proposed wireless communication facility will improve coverage and network quality.

The applicant is proposing to erect a 60.0 m tall tower with a 4.0 m tall lightning rod and ancillary equipment on the subject property. The applicant has proposed to place the facility on the north east portion corner of the subject property. The proposed tower and ancillary equipment will be securely fenced within a 20.0 m by 15.0 m compound. A preliminary site plan, layout and photo rendering are included in the attached Public Consultation Package.

Through consultation with Transport Canada, the applicant has confirmed the requirement for marking and lighting on the tower due to its proximity to the Prince George Airport. The applicant is proposing a single red and white flashing beacon light be installed on the tower.

The applicant is requesting that Council, through resolution or a letter, confirm that the City has been consulted, and concurs with the design and location of the proposed wireless communications facility.

## Background

### Site Characteristics

Location	7307 Giscome Road
Current Use	Vacant
Property Size	27 ha
Zoning	AF: Agriculture and Forestry

### Official Community Plan

Future Land Use	Rural B and Neighbourhood Residential
Growth Management	Rural Areas

### Surrounding Land Use Table

North	Rural Residential
South	Regional District of Fraser Fort George, Agriculture
East	Agriculture
West	Rural Residential

## POLICY/REGULATORY ANALYSIS:

### Radiocommunication Act

Wireless communications are federally regulated by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), formerly Industry Canada, under the *Radiocommunication Act*. Provincial and municipal governments lack constitutional jurisdiction to interfere with or impair communication facilities licensed under federal legislation.

The Federal government recognizes that municipal governments should be informed and consulted with when ISED uses its authority to locate radiocommunications facilities and ancillary structures. Therefore, ISED has instituted a consultation policy. Since the City of Prince George does not have policy addressing land use consultation for the siting of antenna systems, ISED's default public consultation process is followed. The policy requires that the proponent provide written notification of the proposal to the public, land use authority, and ISED. The municipality then has the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed antenna structure and location. The proponent would respond in an attempt to address any reasonable and relevant comments provided. The submissions would be reviewed by ISED who would then determine whether or not a license, with or without conditions, should be granted. ISED's default public consultation process requires the City of Prince George's concurrence with the tower proposal.

Although the City of Prince George has regulatory requirements (i.e., zoning) on the subject property, ISED's Federal policies and regulations supersede municipal regulatory requirements. It is ultimately ISED's decision to move forward with the installation of a radiocommunication facility and does not require City approval.

### **Official Community Plan**

The Official Community Plan contains no specific guidance with respect to the location of wireless communications facilities.

### **Zoning Bylaw**

The subject property is zoned AF: Agriculture and Forestry. The purpose of the AF zone is to conserve and manage agricultural and forestry land by providing a compatible range of uses with regulations that maintain parcels of at least 15.0 ha. The AF zone limits the height of development to 20.0 m. However, Section 4.3 of the Zoning Bylaw outlines that antenna structures are not subject to the maximum height limits of a zone, provided that no such structure shall cover more than 20% of the site area. The proposed tower and ancillary equipment covers less than 1% of the subject property; therefore, the proposal is consistent with the Zoning Bylaw.

The purpose of zoning is to create areas where compatible uses can co-exist while excluding uses that may not be compatible. From a land use perspective, wireless communications facilities do not raise compatibility issues such as hours of operation, noise, traffic generation, or intensity of the use. The main area of concern is the visual impact of such a structure, particularly in regards to height. Although the tower will be 60.0 m in height, the site is heavily treed and the location of the tower is set back from Giscome Road, limiting direct visual sightlines to the structure. The location of the tower on a large (27 ha) rural property limits the potential visual impact of the development.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

### **Public Consultation**

The proponent followed ISED's default public consultation process for this proposal as the City of Prince George does not have policy addressing land use consultation for the siting of wireless communications facilities. Public consultation was carried out through written notification to adjacent landowners and stakeholders. Property owners within 90 m and less from the proposed installation site received a copy of the attached consultation package and were provided 30 days to respond. The applicant has indicated that 2 (two) written comments were received regarding the proposed facility. The comments received requested additional information about the proposal and any health risks associated with it, which the applicant provided. Additionally, the comments indicated the following concerns:

- The proposal is too close to residential properties and that other sites would be better suited for the development;
- There will be a negative visual impact due to the tower's size and requirements for aeronautical lighting; and,
- That the development will negatively impact property values.

Please see that attached Public Consultation Summary Package for a summary of comments received and the applicant's responses.

The applicant is requesting that Council, through resolution or a letter, confirm that the City has been consulted and that Council concurs with the design and location of the proposed tower. Staff believes that any impacts associated with this proposal will be minor and not cause any undue concerns and recommend that Council concur with the proposal.

### **Health and Safety**

There are often concerns about potential health risks related to the placement of wireless communications facilities. ISED requires that such systems are operated in accordance with the safety guidelines established by Health Canada's publication "Limits of Human Exposure to Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Energy in the Frequency Range from 3Hz – 300 GHz". This is referred to as Safety Code Six. Prior to receiving a license from ISED, the operator must submit the calculations of the intensity of the radiofrequency fields to ensure that this installation does not exceed the maximum levels established by Safety Code Six requirements. This proposal indicates no concerns with respect to Safety Code Six.

## ALTERNATIVES:

THAT Council instruct the Corporate Officer to advise ISED in writing that the City of Prince George does not support the TELUS' proposal to construct a wireless communications facility described as a 60.0 m tall tower and ancillary equipment on the subject property.

Should Council object to the proposed antenna there must be reasonable and relevant concerns identified and recorded in the minutes of the relevant Council Meeting. The City of Prince George is to provide written notice to the local ISED office who would initiate a dispute resolution process. The submission would be reviewed by ISED, who would then make a final decision on the issue(s) in question.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

The applicant is requesting that Council, through resolution or a letter, confirm that the City of Prince George has been consulted and that Council concurs with the design and location of the proposed tower. Administration recommends that Council concur with the proposal as per the information provided in this report.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:**

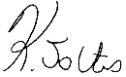


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Fred Critten, Manager of Bylaw Services/  
Acting General Manager of Planning and Development

**PREPARED BY:** Tristin Deveau, Planner

**APPROVED:**



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Kathleen Soltis, City Manager  
Meeting date: October 7, 2019