



Legislation Text

File #: 22-5375, **Version:** 1

ITEM: CELLULAR SERVICE IMPROVEMENT - UPDATE

REQUEST: Discussion and Direction.

EXPLANATION: One of the action items from the 2022 Village Council Directions meeting was identifying and implementing ways to improve cellular and internet (or broadband) infrastructure in Wellington with an emphasis on cellular service. Since the meeting, Wellington staff has been focused on the following to support improving cellular service:

Land Development Regulations

- o Researching and drafting proposed changes to the tower regulations for properties to modify the regulations and process in support of expanding the cellular infrastructure; the draft amendments are tentatively scheduled for consideration by the Planning, Zoning and Adjustment Board in October.
- o Identifying Wellington/Acme-owned properties which may be “pre-approved” by the Council for potential tower locations; these properties would be included in the LDR amendments.

Cellular Providers (in Wellington) - The “Big 3” cellular providers (AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile) have been contacted regarding ways the companies can improve cellular service immediately.

- o AT&T stated their coverage is adequate. IT proved to them with several sites and equipment that they were in fact subpar performance and usage as well as locations where issues exist. AT&T stated they would send IT AT&T Equipment to use and perform testing so they could verify. Have not yet received any equipment and have followed up with AT&T but have not received a response.
- o Verizon stated their coverage is fine, but admitted their bandwidth and throughput is overcommitted. Verizon stated that they have invested millions in procuring additional equipment to correct the bandwidth and tower overcommitment issues but have no ETA when and if they will address the Wellington area.
- o T-MOBILE acknowledged issues with coverage and has plans to improve in the near term. T-Mobile stated it would be helpful to have a partnership with Wellington to execute the plan either by identifying locations or addressing some of the challenges created with the land development regulations for tower placement.

Tower Development Companies

- o Several companies have contacted Wellington regarding opportunities to construct towers. One company is preparing a proposal for a potential public-private partnership for tower development on Wellington/Acme-owned properties.
- o Once submitted, the proposal will be reviewed and the next steps will be identified. The proposal is anticipated before the end of August.

Wellington/Acme-owned Properties

- o Based on the assumptions presented at the Directions meeting, the Wellington-owned properties which may be suitable for cellular towers or similar infrastructure are being identified.

- o If the pending proposal from the tower development company does not produce the intended results, a proposal for the development of cellular infrastructure on certain Wellington properties will be prepared and released. This will include macro towers as well as the 5G micro towers.

BUDGET AMENDMENT REQUIRED: NO

PUBLIC HEARING: NO

QUASI-JUDICIAL:

FIRST READING:

SECOND READING:

LEGAL SUFFICIENCY: N/A

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

WELLINGTON FUNDAMENTAL: Protecting Our Investment

RECOMMENDATION: Discuss and provide direction, as appropriate.