



**UNION COUNTY
RESOLUTION No. 2025-45**

**A RESOLUTION SETTING THE DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SMALL
WIRELESS FACILITY**

WHEREAS, The Board of County Commissioners has adopted the Ordinance Regulating the Siting and Permitting of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities (Ordinance 2025-48) which directs that a resolution be adopted providing Small Wireless Facilities Design Guidelines, and allows that resolution to be changed from time to time; and,

WHEREAS, The Board of County Commissioners desires to exercise its authority to establish Small Wireless Facility Design Guidelines; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

Background

On September 27, 2018, the FCC released a Declaratory Ruling and Third Report and Order (hereinafter "Small Cell Order" or "FCC Order") that significantly limits local authority over small wireless infrastructure deployment and fees for use of the rights-of-way ("ROW"). The FCC Order took effect on January 14, 2019. However, the requirements regarding aesthetics did not take effect until April 15, 2019. Under the FCC Order, aesthetic or "design standards" must be: (1) reasonable; (2) no more burdensome than those applied to other types of infrastructure deployments; (3) objective; and (4) published in advance. The FCC Order also defines the size limitations for small wireless facilities (allowing antennas of up to 3 cubic feet each, with additional equipment not to exceed 28 cubic feet) and specifies that such facilities may not result in human exposure to radiofrequency radiation in excess of applicable standards in the FCC's rules (federal law preempts local regulation of RF emissions the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, in *City of Portland v. FCC*, No. 18-72689 (9th Cir. 2020). Invalidated the Small Cell Order's specific requirements for design standards. However, to manage the deployment of small wireless facilities more efficiently (commonly referred to as "small cells") in the ROW, it is recommended that municipalities adopt some form of written design standards.

Small Wireless Facilities Design Standard

The Wireless Facilities Ordinance and these "SWF Design Standards" are intended to be paired together.

There is no single design standard that will work for every situation. As such, the design standard is intended as a roadmap to assist local governments and wireless carriers deploying small wireless facilities to use optimal designs that preserve the nature and character of the community being served.

Additional Considerations

Design standards only applies to small wireless facilities. A utility-neutral standard covering all utilities and communications providers provides one set of “rules” for the design of the public rights-of-way.

Definitions: These definitions are applicable to all applications filed and qualifying as a Small Wireless Facility.

“Antenna” means the same as defined in 47 C.F.R. § 1.6002(b), as may be amended or superseded. The term includes an apparatus designed for the purpose of emitting radio frequencies (RF) to be operated or operating from a fixed location pursuant to Federal Communications Commission authorization, for the provision of personal wireless service and any commingled information services.

“Antenna Equipment” means the same as defined 47 C.F.R. § 1.6002(c), as may be amended or superseded, which defines the term to mean equipment, switches, wiring, cabling, power sources, shelters or cabinets associated with an antenna, located at the same fixed location as the antenna, and when collocated on a structure, is mounted or installed at the same time as such antenna.

“Antenna Facility” means the same as defined in 47 C.F.R. § 1.6002(d), as may be amended or superseded, which defines the term to mean an antenna and associated antenna equipment.

“Applicable codes” means uniform building, fire, safety, electrical, plumbing, or mechanical codes adopted by a recognized national code organization or state or local amendments to those codes that are of general application and consistent with state and federal law.

“Applicant” means any person who submits an application as, or on behalf of, a wireless provider.

“Application” means requests submitted by an applicant (1) for permission to collocate small wireless facilities; or (2) to approve the installation, modification or replacement of a structure on which to collocate a small wireless facility in the rights-of-way, where required.

“Collocate” means the same as defined in 47 C.F.R. § 1.6002(g), as may be amended or superseded, which defines that term to mean (1) mounting or installing an antenna facility on a preexisting structure, and/or (2) modifying a structure for the purpose of mounting or installing an antenna facility on that structure. “Collocation” has a corresponding meaning.

“Day” means calendar day. For purposes of the FCC shot clock, a terminal day that falls on a holiday or weekend shall be deemed to be the next immediate business day.

“Historic District” means a group of buildings, properties, or sites that are either: (1) listed in the National Register of Historic Places or formally determined eligible for listing by the Keeper of the National Register in accordance with Section VI.D.1a.i-v of the Nationwide Programmatic Agreement codified or (2) a locally designated historic districts effective at the date of this or in a locally designated historic district existing when an application is submitted.

“Person” means an individual, corporation, limited liability company, partnership, association, trust, or other entity or organization, including the Jurisdiction.

“Pole” means a type of structure in the rights-of-way that is or may be used in whole or in

part by or for wireline communications, electric distribution, lighting, traffic control, signage, or similar function, or for collocation of small wireless facilities; provided, such term does not include a tower, building or electric transmission structures.

“Rights-of-Way” or “ROW” means examples: “Right-of-way,” “rights-of-way,” “public right-of-way,” or “ROW” means and includes, but is not limited to, the space in, upon, above, along, across, over or under the public streets, roads, highways, lanes, courts, ways, alleys, boulevards, bridges, trails, paths, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, public utility easements and all other public ways or areas, including the subsurface under and air space over these areas, but does not include parks, parkland, or other Jurisdiction property not generally open to the public for travel.

“Small wireless facility” means a facility that meets each of the following conditions per 47 C.F.R § 1.6002(h), as may be amended or superseded:

1. The proposed facilities meet one of the following height parameters:
 - a. are mounted on structures 50 feet or less in height including their antennas as defined in 47 C.F.R. Section 1.1320(d), or
 - b. are mounted on structures no more than 10 percent taller than other adjacent structures, or
 - c. do not extend existing structures on which they are located to a height of more than 50 feet or by more than 10 percent, whichever is greater.
2. Each antenna or antenna enclosure shall not exceed three cubic feet in volume.
3. The total volume of installed equipment external to the pole (including, but not limited to cabinets, vaults, boxes) shall not exceed twenty-eight (28) cubic feet. This maximum applies to all equipment installed at the time of original application and includes any equipment to be installed at a future date. Antennas and antenna enclosures are excluded. If equipment exceeds this maximum, the installation will be redefined as a Macro site installation and all the associated standards and rates for Macro installations will be applied.
4. The facilities do not result in human exposure to radio frequency radiation in excess of the applicable safety standards specified in the FCC’s Rules and Regulations [47 C.F.R. section 1.1307(b)].

“Structure” means the same as provided in 47 C.F.R. § 1.6002(m), as may be superseded or amended, which defines the term as a pole, tower, base station, or structure, whether or not it has an existing antenna facility, that is used or to be used for the provision of personal wireless service (whether on its own or comingled with other types of service).

A. General Requirements.

1. Ground-mounted equipment in the right-of-way is discouraged, unless the applicant can demonstrate that pole-mounted equipment is not technically feasible, or the electric utility requires placement of equipment on the ground (such as an electric meter). If ground-mounted equipment is necessary, then the applicant shall conceal the equipment in a cabinet, in street furniture or with landscaping.
2. Replacement poles, new poles and all antenna equipment shall comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), city construction and sidewalk clearance standards and the

Union County, New Mexico and federal laws and regulations in order to provide a clear and safe passage within, through and across the right-of-way. Further, the location of any replacement pole, new pole, and/or antenna equipment must comply with applicable traffic requirements, not interfere with utility or safety fixtures (e.g., fire hydrants, traffic control devices), and not adversely affect public health, safety or welfare.

3. Replacement poles shall be located as near as feasible to the existing pole. The abandoned pole must be removed within 90 days.
4. Any replacement pole shall substantially conform to the material and design of the existing pole or adjacent poles located within the contiguous right-of-way unless a different design is requested and approved pursuant to Section I.
5. No advertising, branding or other signage is allowed unless approved by the Union County Administrator as a concealment technique or as follows:
 - a. Safety signage as required by applicable laws, regulations, and standards; and,
 - b. Identifying information and 24-hour emergency telephone number (such as the telephone number for the carrier's network operations center) on wireless equipment in an area that is visible.
6. The total volume of multiple antennas on one structure shall not exceed fifteen (15) cubic feet, unless additional antenna volume is requested and approved pursuant to Section I.
7. Antennas and antenna equipment shall not be illuminated except as required by municipal, federal or state authority, provided this shall not preclude deployment on a new or replacement streetlight.
8. Small wireless facilities may not displace any existing street tree or landscape features unless:
 - a. such displaced street tree or landscaping is replaced with native and/or drought-resistant trees, plants or other landscape features approved by the Jurisdiction, and
 - b. the applicant submits and adheres to a landscape maintenance plan or agrees to pay an appropriate in-lieu fee for the maintenance costs.

B. Small Wireless Facilities Attached to Wooden Poles and Non-Wooden Poles with Overhead Lines. Small wireless facilities located on wooden utility poles and non-wooden utility poles with overhead lines shall conform to the following design criteria unless a deviation is requested and approved pursuant to Section I:

1. Proposed antenna and related equipment shall meet:
 - a. The Jurisdiction's design standards for small wireless facilities.
 - b. The pole owner's requirements; and
 - c. National Electric Safety Code ("NESC") and National Electric Code ("NEC") standards.
2. The pole at the proposed location may be replaced with a taller pole or extended for the purpose of accommodating a small wireless facility; provided that the replacement or extended pole, together with any small wireless facility, does not exceed 40 feet in height or 10 percent taller than the tallest pole in a 1000ft radius, whichever is shorter. The replacement or extended pole height may be increased if required by the pole owner, and such height increase is the minimum necessary to provide sufficient separation and/or

clearance from electrical and wireline facilities. Such replacement poles must either match the approximate color and materials of the replaced pole or shall be the standard new pole used by the pole owner in the Jurisdiction.

3. To the extent technically feasible, antennas, equipment enclosures, and all ancillary equipment, boxes, and conduit shall match the approximate material and design of the surface of the pole or existing equipment on which they are attached or adjacent poles located within the contiguous right-of-way. Near matches may be permitted by the Jurisdiction when options are limited by technical feasibility considerations, such as when high-frequency antennas cannot be placed within an opaque shroud but could be wrapped with a tinted film.
4. Antennas that are mounted on poles shall be mounted as close to the pole as technically feasible and allowed by the pole owner.
5. No antenna shall extend horizontally more than 20 inches past the outermost mounting point (where the mounting hardware connects to the antenna), unless additional antenna space is requested and approved pursuant to Section I.
6. Antenna equipment, including but not limited to radios, cables, associated shrouding, disconnect boxes, meters, microwaves and conduit, which is mounted on poles shall be mounted as close to the pole as technically feasible and as permitted by the pole owner.
7. Antenna equipment for small wireless facilities must be attached to the pole, unless otherwise required by the pole owner or permitted to be ground-mounted [pursuant to subsection (B)(1) above]. The equipment must be placed in an enclosure reasonably related in size to the intended purpose of the facility.
8. All cables and wiring shall be covered by conduits and cabinets to the extent that it is technically feasible, if allowed by pole owner. The number of conduits shall be minimized to the extent technically feasible.

C. Small Wireless Facilities Attached to Non-Wooden Light Poles and Non-Wooden Utility Poles without Overhead Utility Lines. Small wireless facilities attached to existing or replacement non-wooden light poles and non-wooden utility poles without overhead lines shall conform to the following design criteria unless a deviation is requested and approved pursuant to Section I:

1. **External Equipment.** The antennas and associated equipment enclosures must be camouflaged to appear as an integral part of the pole or be mounted as close to the pole as feasible and must be reasonably related in size to the intended purpose of the facility and reasonable expansion for future frequencies and/or technologies, not to exceed the volumetric requirements described in Section A. If the equipment enclosure(s) is mounted on the exterior of the pole, the applicant is encouraged to place the equipment enclosure(s) behind any decorations, banners or signs that may be on the pole. Conduit and fiber must be fully concealed within the pole.
2. **Concealed Equipment.** All equipment (excluding disconnect switches), conduit and fiber must be fully concealed within the pole. The antennas must be camouflaged to appear as an integral part of the pole or be mounted as close to the pole as feasible.
3. Any replacement pole shall substantially conform to the material and design of the existing pole or adjacent poles located within the contiguous right-of-way unless a different design

is requested and approved pursuant to Section I.

4. The height of any replacement pole may not extend more than 10 feet above the height of the existing pole unless such further height increase is required in writing by the pole owner.

D. New Poles. Small wireless facilities may be attached to new poles that are not replacement poles under sections C or D, installed by the wireless provider, subject to the following criteria:

1. Antennas, antenna equipment and associated equipment enclosures (excluding disconnect switches), conduit and fiber shall be fully concealed within the structure. If such concealment is not technically feasible, or is incompatible with the pole design,
2. then the antennas and associated equipment enclosures must be camouflaged to appear as an integral part of the structure or mounted as close to the pole as feasible and must be reasonably related in size to the intended purpose of the facility, not to exceed the volumetric requirements in Section (A)(3).
3. To the extent technically feasible, all new poles and pole-mounted antennas and equipment shall substantially conform to the material and design of adjacent poles located within the contiguous right-of-way unless a different design is requested and approved pursuant to Section I.
4. New poles shall be no more than forty (40) feet in height unless additional height is requested and approved pursuant to Section I.
5. The Jurisdiction prefers that wireless providers install small wireless facilities on existing or replacement poles instead of installing new poles, unless the wireless provider can document that installation on an existing or replacement pole is not technically feasible or otherwise not possible (due to a lack of owner authorization, safety considerations, or other reasons acceptable to the Union County Administrator).

E. Undergrounding Requirements.

This Section intentionally left blank.

F. Historic District Requirements.

Small wireless facilities or poles to support collocation of small wireless facilities located in Historic Districts shall be designed to have a similar appearance, including material and design elements, if technically feasible, of other poles in the rights-of-way within 500 feet of the proposed installation. Any such design or concealment measures may not be considered part of the small wireless facility for purpose of the size restrictions in the definition of small wireless facility.

G. Strand Mounted Equipment. Strand mounted small wireless facilities are permitted, subject to the following criteria:

1. Each strand mounted antenna shall not exceed 3 cubic feet in volume, unless a deviation is requested and approved pursuant to Section I.
2. Only 2 strand mounted antennas are permitted between any two existing poles.
3. Strand mounted devices shall be placed as close as possible to the nearest pole and in no event more than five feet from the pole unless a greater distance is required by the pole

owner.

4. No strand mounted device will be located in or above the portion of the roadway open to vehicular traffic.
5. Strand mounted devices must be installed with the minimum excess exterior cabling or wires (other than original strand) to meet the technological needs of the facility.

H. Deviation from Design Standards.

1. An applicant may obtain a deviation from these design standards if compliance with the standard: (a) is not technically feasible; (b) impedes the effective operation of the small wireless facility; (c) impairs a desired network performance objective; (d) conflicts with pole owner requirements; or (e) otherwise materially inhibits or limits the provision of wireless service.
 2. When requests for deviation are sought under subsections (I)(1)(a)-(e), the request must be narrowly tailored to minimize deviation from the requirements of these design standards, and the Union County Administrator must find the applicant's proposed design provides similar aesthetic value when compared to strict compliance with these standards.
 3. The Union County Administrator may also allow for a deviation from these standards when it finds the applicant's proposed design provides equivalent or superior aesthetic value when compared to strict compliance with these standards.
 4. The small wireless facility design approved under this Section I must meet the conditions of 47 C.F.R. Sec. 1.6002(j).
 5. The Union County Administrator (or designee) will review and may approve a request for deviation to the minimum extent required to address the applicant's needs or facilitate a superior design.
- I.** An on-line application process enables applicants to submit up to twenty-five (25) small wireless facility locations, sites or nodes in one (1) application if qualifying criterion is followed during the application process. The qualifying requirements for multiple sites (up to 25) is for all the locations, sites or nodes must have a common design, rights-of-way Agreements, pole attachments Agreements, or other agreements that authorize the carrier to use (rent, lease or purchase) the rights to place their equipment/poles within/on specific lands or rights-of-way. The only variable allowed will be the specific locations for each of the sites or nodes. Each applicant is required at the outset to attest to the fact that the application will adhere to the specific requirements.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED this 11th day of March, 2025.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF UNION COUNTY, NEW MEXICO



Clay Kiesling, Chairman

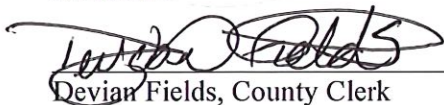


Justin Bennett, Member



Lloyd Miller, Member

ATTEST:


Devian Fields, County Clerk