

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	March 18, 2024
Action Required:	Approve Resolution
Presenter:	Chris Engel, Director of Economic Development
Staff Contacts:	Rob Hubbard
Title:	Public hearing and resolution for lease renewal for communications equipment at Market Street Parking Garage

Background

The City owns the Market Street Parking Garage located in the 500 block of East Market Street. The garage provides public parking and has a number of retail and office tenants located in the commercial space.

Discussion

The City was recently approached by Celco Partnership, trading as Verizon Wireless ("Verizon"), to renew its current lease of space for antennas and associated radio equipment for a third five-year term. The existing antennas consist of two omnidirectional antennas approximately 20 inches in height and 2.5 inches in diameter. The antennas are concealed within the existing light fixtures on the side of the building. Radio equipment cabinets are located interior to the building; they are not visible from the Downtown Mall or from Market or Water Street. The purpose of this wireless facility within the Verizon Wireless network is to provide additional wireless capacity, sometimes referred to as "densification," on the Mall and at the Pavilion for the high levels of data usage from foot traffic concentrated downtown, especially during events when the data demands for calling/texting and photo and video transmission spike. Adding targeted small cell facilities in areas of high data usage not only satisfy data demand from nearby users but relieve the network traffic on "macro" sites (e.g. cell towers and large building rooftop installations) serving large areas of the City.

The Board of Architectural reviewed and approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for this installation in 2013. City Council approved the original lease in 2014 and a renewal in 2019.

The renewal amendment has been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office. The term is for an additional 5 years and includes a 5% rent increase.

All costs to install, operate and maintain the equipment are the sole responsibility of Verizon Wireless.

Alignment with City Council's Vision and Strategic Plan

Community Engagement

VA Code Sec. 15.2-1800(B) requires that any time the City leases public property to a private party, the City must hold a public hearing prior to entering into the lease.

Budgetary Impact

This facility provides wireless communications services to residents and visitors on the Downtown Mall at no cost to the City. The antennas are located between the light fixtures' glass panes, and the equipment is wall-mounted beside the elevator, so the facility does not use any space that would be leasable to another tenant or that could be used for parking. As the equipment is located in a city-owned parking facility, the rent accrued from the lease helps support the Parking Enterprise Fund.

Recommendation

City Staff recommends approval of the lease renewal as presented.

Alternatives

City Council may adopt the Resolution or decline to do so.

Attachments

1. RESOLUTION APPROVING LEASE OF PROPERTY TO VERIZON
2. SC Charlottesville Mall - 2nd Amendment to Ground Lease
3. Verizon Wireless MSPG Amendment 2019
4. Verizon Wireless MSPG Lease 2014