

Letter of Intent  
Special Use Application  
Fidelity Towers Proposed CMRS Facility  
at Falcon Fire Station #2

**El Paso County Planning & Community Development Dept.**  
**2880 International Circle, Suite 11**  
**Colorado Springs, CO 80910-3127**

**RE: File # AL2116**

**Applicant / Tower Owner:**

Fidelity Towers Inc.  
1195 Deerfield Rd  
Templeton, CA 93465  
Contact: Neil Wisner, President  
Phone: 303-870-1461

**Property Owner:**

Falcon Fire District  
7030 Old Meridian Rd.  
Peyton , CO 80831  
Contact: Jeff Petersma, Battalion Chief  
Phone: 719-495-4050

**Proposed Site Location:** Falcon Fire Station #2  
14450 N. Meridian Rd.  
Elbert, CO 80106

**Zoning:** RR-5 "Residential Rural"

**APN:** 5136401040

**Parcel Size:** 5.68 acres

**Lease Area Size:** 3600 sq ft

**Existing Use:** Wooded lot with one structure  
(2000 sf, un-manned fire station)

**Requested Use:** Special Use for new Stealth CMRS Facility

**Proposed Improvements:** 95 ft. Telecom. Monopine (with branches)  
60 ft by 60 ft - fenced compound  
11.5 ft by 20 ft - AT&T Equipment Shelter  
6 ft by 8 ft. - Falcon FD Equipment Shelter  
50 Kilowatt Propane fed Generator (Back-up Power)  
500 gal. above ground Propane Tank (with bollards)  
Associated antennas as shown on drawings  
12 ft. wide gravel access road - 250 ft. long  
Underground power & telephone conduits

**Total Area of Disturbance:** 6600 sf, 0.15 acre

**Attachments:**

Drawing set by Zymr.co dated 8-29-21  
Photo simulations of Proposed Facility - 3 views  
Vicinity Map of adjacent properties

**Project Background:**

Fidelity Towers Inc. is an experienced tower builder and owner, specializing in multi-carrier concealed communications sites since 2002. Our company was contracted in January of 2012 to develop a new communications structure in the vicinity of N. Meridian and Murphy Rds. for use by AT&T's cellular network. After field reconnaissance of the search area, it became clear that the most appropriate location for the facility would be at Falcon Fire House #2 located at 14450 N. Meridian Road. The combination of high ground elevation, mature pine tree screening and the opportunity to upgrade the Fire District's network as part of the project made this the ideal location. Fidelity Towers was granted a Special Use permit on February 12, 2013 by El Paso County for this project that expired in 2015. AT&T placed this project on-hold later in 2013 along with hundreds of other sites across the country. In May of 2021, AT&T notified Fidelity Towers that this site had been re-authorized and to proceed with development of the communications facility.

**Project History:**

Falcon Fire District entered into a land lease with Fidelity Towers on March 16, 2012. Since that agreement expired, a new land lease was executed between Fidelity Towers and Falcon Fire District on July 12, 2021. Notifications were mailed to adjacent owners on September 28, 2021.

**Request:**

Fidelity Towers is requesting a Special Use from El Paso County for a Stealth CMRS facility in an RR-5 Zone as permitted under the Land Development Code.

**Abutting Zoning & Land Use:**

North: PUD / Vacant land / Black Forest Reserve Filing No. 3  
West: PUD / Vacant land / Black Forest Reserve Filing No. 3  
South: RR-5 / Single Family / Forest Highlands Sub. Filing No. 2  
East: RR-5 / Single Family / Woodlake Sub. Filing No. 2

**Project Justification and Benefits:**

Expansion of cellular voice, E911, and mobile data services to an unserved section of El Paso County

There are currently no cellular services provided by any carrier in this part of El Paso County. The next closest communications tower is 4.5 miles away and no tall buildings

exist in this part of the County. A multi-user antenna structure is desperately needed to provide the core infrastructure that will allow wireless carriers to serve this community. As the first cellular user, AT&T will be installing the latest mobile radio technologies including voice, enhanced 911, 4G / 5G data services, and Firstnet (1<sup>st</sup> Responder Network Equipment). Additional capacity is engineered into the facility to accommodate 3 more broadband carriers and Fidelity Towers welcomes co-location by our other customers including Verizon Wireless, T-mobile, Dish Wireless, Rise Broadband, and smaller broadband providers on this site.

Multiple Users benefit from shared facility

Falcon Fire District currently operates radio communications from Fire House #2. Current antenna heights are 40 ft. on a very lightweight tower attached to the station house. The proposed monopine support structure relocates these antennas to 90 ft. and enhances radio coverage for the Fire District's emergency communications, on a structure designed to the latest EIA/TIA structural standards, and supported by back-up power. These benefits come at zero cost to the community due to the investment by AT&T and Fidelity Towers in this project.

Low Visual impact from Stealth Monopine on heavily wooded lot

The heavily wooded pine forest in this section of the County screens the proposed facility and nearby residences from one another, as well as travelers on Meridian Rd. The mature pine forest is the ideal backdrop to blend-in a premium monopine design.

Natural High Elev. Point - Minimizes structure height

The apex of this natural ridgeline crosses Meridian Road onto the Fire Station lot and provides unique ground elevation above the surrounding terrain. This high relative elevation allows us to minimize tower height while still providing quality radio signal to the surrounding area.

Falcon Fire District receives long term, recurring revenue source

New revenue is generated for the Fire District in the form of monthly rent. The first cellular communications sites have been in operation for over 30 years providing important & reliable income to government agencies, businesses, families, & retirees who own the land underneath them.

**Special Use Review Standards:**

*Special Use is consistent with Master Plan:*

Goals of the El Paso Co. Plan include to "Reasonably accommodate unique and special uses which provide value to the greater community and which can be made consistent with surrounding uses."

The proposed communication's facility will clearly provide great value to thousands of El Paso County residents on a daily basis. The provision of E911 wireless service to this unserved section of the County is of itself, a huge benefit to the greater community. In addition, the improved coverage for the Fire District's first responders, are also a significant value to the greater community. The proposed stealth monopine will incorporate the latest "dense branch design" camouflaging to blend it with the surrounding open space & residential uses.

*Special Use is consistent with the intent and purposes of the zoning district where the use is proposed...:*

Falcon Fire District Station #2 is located in a RR-5, Residential Rural zone. The low density, single family residences that inhabit this part of the County are characterized by very mobile citizens who often make significant daily commutes. These rural residential communities are also comprised of a number of home based businesses and home office telecommuters. The benefits to all of these homeowners from state-of-the-art communications infrastructure makes this Special Use highly consistent with the purpose & lifestyles of a connected rural community.

*Special Use will be in harmony with the character of the neighborhood, and compatible with the existing and allowable land uses in the surrounding areas:*

The proposed monopine does not require FAA tower lighting, so none will be installed. The only light source on the facility is the emergency stoop light located on AT&T's shelter. These low traffic, un-manned facilities do not produce noise, trash or odors, and are completely compatible with the residential uses in the surrounding area.

*Special Use will not result in an over-intensive use of the land:*

Currently, this 5.68 acre lot has one use - the existing 2000 sf un-manned Falcon Fire Station #2. This Special Use application requests approval of a second un-manned use on this large lot. The location of the proposed monopine within the Fire District parcel exceeds the required special setback for this type of structure (height + 10 ft). This setback provides a large buffer of mature ponderosa pine trees on all sides.

*Impact of the Special Use does not overburden or exceed the capacities of public facilities and services....:*

The proposed telecom facility does not require any water, sewage or other sanitation services. Electric power is the only utility required for this Special Use and is available on the Fire District lot. Fire protection is easily provided to the facility from the Station 300 ft. away.

*Special Use will not create unmitigated traffic congestion or traffic hazards in the surrounding area, and has adequate legal access:*

Access to the Fidelity Towers lease parcel is provided via the existing access drive from Meridian Road into the Fire Station, and across a new access & utilities easement and 12 ft. wide gravel driveway to the fenced lease area. Traffic to the proposed facility is negligible and averages 10 to 12 visits per year by a radio technician.

*Special Use will comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations regarding air, water, light, or noise pollution:*

The proposed telecom facility has no impact on the quality of air or light in its vicinity. The facility neither uses water nor disposes of it. No significant audible noise will be created by this Special Use.

*Special Use will not be otherwise detrimental to the public, health, safety and welfare of the present or future residents of El Paso County:*

Many of these cellular communications facilities have been in operation since the mid-1980's. The FCC provides regulations for the safe limits of human exposure to radiofrequency fields. These limits were established by the FCC after review of the limits recommended by the ANSI, IEEE, and NCRP. Each carrier's equipment is evaluated to insure these safe exposure limits are not exceeded prior to installation of active radios.

*Special Use conforms or will conform to all other applicable County rules, regulations or ordinances:*

The proposed Fidelity Towers stealth communications facility at Falcon Fire Station #2 conforms to all of the Design Standards for Freestanding CMRS Facilities as provided in section 5.2.19 of the Land Development Code. No variances or exceptions from these standards are being requested by the applicant.

**Small Area Plan Compliance:**

The Black Forest Preservation Plan calls for locally supporting commercial development at specific nodes and the Black Forest Land Use Committee previously reviewed the proposed facility and fully supported the proposal.

**Environmental Impacts:**

Terracon Consultants Inc., a respected environmental consulting firm, completed a full NEPA Land Use analysis on this project and concluded there would be No Adverse Impacts from the proposed facility on any wilderness area, wildlife preserve, endangered species, critical habitats, historic places, wetlands, or known cultural resources. The proposed facility is not located in a designated floodplain. The proposed facility will not negatively impact drainage on the parent parcel or create stormwater run-off onto adjacent properties.

**Financial Assurance:**

Prior to construction Fidelity Towers will provide El Paso County with a Tower Structure Removal bond from an acceptable financial surety in the amount of \$50,000 as financial assurance to cover the cost of removal of the CMRS facility, if it is ever abandoned.

**Screening:**

The proposed CMRS facility's ground mounted equipment will be screened by a 6 ft. tall chain link fence with opaque privacy slats, and the numerous mature pine trees that exist on the surrounding areas of the parcel.

**Anticipated Development Schedule:**

Construction of these facilities is typically completed in 3 to 4 weeks. We anticipate obtaining a building permit and commencing construction within 90 days of Special Use approval.

**Summary:**

The availability of fast, dependable wireless communications is vital to support the economic, social, and safety needs of today's communities. Antenna support structures such as the proposed monopine at Falcon Fire Station #2 are critical to providing wide area mobile communications. The stated purposes of the El Paso County Land Development Code include facilitating "the provision of wireless telecommunication services, throughout the unincorporated area of El Paso County" and to "encourage co-location of CMRS facilities". Both of these purposes are achieved through approval of the proposed Fidelity Towers multi-user facility. The impacts of the proposed infrastructure are far outweighed by the benefits of improved emergency communications and data services to the thousands of citizens who will use it each day.