

From: [Andi callahan](#)
To: [Planning and Zoning Main](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 1:37:56 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

Last week, I stopped by Homestead Plaza to enjoy dinner with friends. While sitting outside, I couldn't help but notice how vital that space has become for our community, a hub where we gather for meals, art, and outdoor concerts. However, with the proposed 75-foot tower looming directly above where we dine, I worry it will transform our welcoming atmosphere into something industrial and out of character with the surrounding desert landscape I've cherished for over 30 years.

The visual impact of this tower cannot be understated; it would dominate sightlines and disrupt the serene nature of Placitas, a community that has worked hard to preserve its low skyline and natural beauty. The applicant's choice of this site, right next to Homestead Plaza — a cornerstone of our community — overlooks the area's character that draws us all here. Once this tower is approved, the decisions made today will follow us for generations, as federal regulations limit the oversight we'll have for future modifications.

Moreover, the proposed site is part of a residentially-zoned area but is being treated as a last resort. The applicant began with the County Fire Station — a top priority site — yet pivoted quickly to this residential area, the lowest on the county's priority list, without clearly documenting what other sites were evaluated in between. This lack of transparency raises serious questions about whether this was genuinely the best decision for our community.

Additionally, there's a notable absence of analysis regarding alternative options. The carrier with the best service in Placitas employs small antennas on existing infrastructure, which provide effective coverage without disrupting the natural landscape or imposing tall structures. The application appears to have disregarded this alternative entirely.

As I look to the future of Placitas, I respectfully ask that you consider the lasting implications of this proposal on our community's character, property values, and the environment we've all sought to protect. For these reasons, I ask that the Commission deny this application.

Sincerely,

ADRIANNE CALLAHAN
4 CALLE ROSA
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Barbara Rosner](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 7:02:29 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

I have lived in Placitas for over 15 years, and every time I drive past the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165, I think about what that gateway says about this place. A 75-foot industrial monopole at that entrance — in open desert terrain where everything around it is single-story — becomes the first thing every visitor sees and the last thing every resident sees coming home. There are no before-and-after images in the application showing what this looks like from nearby homes. The applicant carries the burden of demonstrating this fits the place. That demonstration isn't there.

The gathering that happens at Homestead Plaza concerns me just as much. The restaurant's outdoor patio would sit directly underneath the proposed structure. On evenings when neighbors come out for dinner or a concert, they would be doing it under a 75-foot tower with cooling equipment running at its base. That is not a minor change to the character of that block — it is the most visible thing there, and its presence is not something the application has genuinely reckoned with.

The site-selection record compounds both of those concerns. The applicant tried the County Fire Station — County-owned, a higher-priority location under the County's own rules — and when lease terms couldn't be worked out, ended up at a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area, the lowest priority on the County's siting list, without any apparent review of the commercial, industrial, or agricultural options that sit between those two. The rules are explicit that "this was the only site we could lease" is not a sufficient reason to skip over higher-priority categories. Separately, the rules require the applicant to inventory existing towers and other suitable structures within four miles and conclusively show none of them can be used. That plainly reaches small-cell-capable infrastructure — utility poles, building facades, rooftops — which is exactly how the carrier with the best service in Placitas already delivers that service, without any new tower. The application does not look at any of that.

On property values: the homes near this site were bought partly because of what this gateway looks like. Documented research shows that visible tower exposure reduces home values. Future buyers will factor that in, and current owners will bear the cost.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Barbara Rosner
4 Calle Flores W
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: bboudro@nmia.com
To: [Planning and Zoning Main](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 6:05:38 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

Eight years ago, my husband and I chose Placitas specifically for what it looks and feels like — the open desert, the unobstructed sightlines, the semi-rural character that no other place in the region quite replicates. Part of what drew us here was Homestead Plaza, the gateway to Placitas: the summer Farmer's Market, the outdoor music, the restaurant patio where you run into your neighbors on a Friday evening. The proposed tower would stand directly over that patio, as a monstrous eyesore. Whatever the applicant means by a "stealth design," a 75-foot structure rising above the place where our community gathers for dinner and concerts changes what it feels like to be there — and changes it permanently.

An alternative exists for Verizon to cover its spotty cell phone signals, something the carrier with the best service in Placitas has already proven works: small antennas mounted on existing utility poles, building facades, and other structures, delivering neighborhood-scale coverage without a new tower.

When I think about selling my home someday, I think about what buyers will see. A 75-foot structure at the entrance to Placitas, visible from the streets and lots surrounding it, will matter to them — and not in a favorable direction. We moved here for what this place looks like. We should not be asked to absorb the permanent visual cost of a tower that is definitely in the wrong place, destroying the beautiful nature views of semi-rural aesthetics.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Beate Boudro
10 Tierra Madre Ct., Placitas
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Bob Burnett](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 8:28:59 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

Every day I see the electrical transmission towers on the western horizon, a blemish on an otherwise clear horizon. Those towers have been there for decades — grandfathered in, permanent, and impossible to unsee from much of Placitas. I wish the original planners would have considered alternate solutions which didn't compromise the beauty of our community. This application gives us the chance to make a more careful decision while it still matters. I am asking the Commission to be more thoughtful rather than accepting a shortsighted plan today that we will regret and live with for years in the future.

A 75-foot industrial monopole at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 — the gateway to Placitas — would stand taller than everything around it in an open desert landscape of single-story homes on large lots. The tower's shroud is brown and copper-toned, but concealment only works at a scale where something can plausibly blend in. At six to seven stories in a place where almost nothing exceeds one, there is nothing to blend into. I have to believe there are alternate technical solutions for providing cell coverage. Admittedly such alternate solutions may not be the fastest/easiest/cheapest option, but in my experience fast, easy and cheap as the foundation criteria for making a long-term decision often results in future regret by the decision maker as well as those impacted.

Once a tower is approved, my understanding is federal rules can require the County to approve certain future changes — adding carriers, swapping equipment, incremental modifications within defined limits — without the kind of review we're going through now. Larger changes might still require County process, but the conditions written into any approval at this hearing are the conditions that stay attached to the tower for its lifetime. The lease on this parcel runs 99 years. Whatever standards the Commission decides to write into an approval — on design, screening, visual mitigation, or anything else — this is when they get written. Which makes the adequacy of what has been filed right now especially important to get right.

The transmission towers to the west are a reminder of what it costs to let something become permanent before the community fully weighs in. Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Bob Burnett
27 Calle Corvo
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Brian Pendley](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 10:20:27 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

From the front of my house on Apache Mesa Road, the proposed tower would be visible every day. I have lived in Placitas for more than 10 years and know exactly what I'm looking at when I look toward that corner — single-story homes, open desert, the foothills behind them. A 75-foot industrial structure at that location becomes the tallest thing in that view, permanently.

The research on what that kind of exposure does to property values is not reassuring. Homes with direct sightlines to a tower like this lose real value, and my house faces one. That loss lands on me and on my neighbors — not on the applicant, who is based in Arizona and will be long gone once the permit is issued.

What makes this harder to accept is that the application doesn't demonstrate it was carefully prepared for this site. The RF compliance report references a California project, California rooftop-analysis software, and a "ROOF Area" — language that has no apparent connection to a ground-mounted monopole in Placitas, New Mexico. The County zoned this parcel for a shopping center and attached binding conditions to any future development on it: a Site Development Plan separately approved by Planning and Zoning, mechanical-equipment screening from NM-165 and from neighboring residential properties, and ten percent landscaping with automatic watering. None of that is addressed in the materials filed. There is also no FAA evaluation showing whether any lighting is required at the proposed height, and no setback diagram demonstrating the tower placement meets the County's height-plus-ten-percent clearance from each abutting property line and right-of-way. The burden of proof for this permit sits with the applicant, and these are the applicant's gaps to close.

There is also a path that avoids all of this. T-Mobile already delivers noticeably better service across Placitas by mounting small transmitters on existing infrastructure — utility poles, building facades — rather than building new towers. Verizon has access to the same technology. The application does not explain why that approach is unavailable here, and the County's rules expressly require the applicant to inventory existing towers and other suitable structures within four miles before proposing a new tower. A slide deck of other carriers' locations is not that inventory.

Whatever conditions the County writes into an approval travel with this tower under federal rules, without further public process. This hearing is when those conditions get set. I do not believe the application before you justifies that commitment. Such a tower will be of no benefit to Placitas. Please deny it.

Sincerely,

Brian Pendley
19 Apache Mesa Rd

Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [B](#)
To: [Planning and Zoning Main](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 6:07:07 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

I drive past the proposed tower site nearly every day. Right now, what I see at that corner is open desert and the foothills rising behind Homestead Plaza — the same view that told me, more than 25 years ago, that this was where I wanted to live. A 75-foot structure there changes what greets me every time I come home, and every time a visitor turns off the highway into Placitas.

I do have spotty Verizon coverage in Placitas, and I want that fixed. But I keep coming back to the same question: why is a new 75-foot tower the answer when the carrier with the best service in the area is already delivering it without one? T-Mobile users around me get noticeably better service, and the technology behind it is small antennas mounted on existing utility poles, building facades, and structures — nothing that requires ground-clearing and a fenced equipment yard in a residential area. Verizon uses that same technology here already, just far less of it. The County's rules require the applicant to survey not just other carriers' towers within four miles, but all other suitable structures — utility poles, streetlights, rooftops — and conclusively show that none of them can work. What the application has is a slide deck with crowdsourced-app screenshots. That is not the survey the rules call for, and it is not a conclusive showing of anything. The application does not tell me why more small cells on existing infrastructure aren't the answer to the coverage problem I actually have.

Beyond the site-selection question, the application treats this parcel as though it sits in a standard zoning district, when the County actually adopted a more specific set of rules for this lot — zoning it for a shopping center, with binding conditions attached to any future development. The proposed measures filed with the application — an 8-foot coyote fence around the ground equipment, a landscape plan, a stealth canister design — are presented as standard wireless-application content, not as compliance with those parcel-specific conditions. And none of them address the 75-foot tower itself, which is what people driving up NM-165 and living on three sides of the parcel are actually going to see above the fence line, every day, for a very long time. The burden of showing this proposal satisfies every applicable rule rests on the applicant, and I do not see that burden carried in what has been filed.

There are existing tall power lines in the Placitas Open Space along the ridge southeast of the proposed site. I believe it may be worth evaluating whether cell infrastructure could be co-located on existing poles, which might reduce visual impacts in the area. I would encourage the applicant and the County to consider and document whether that option, along with other less visually impactful alternatives, has been fully evaluated prior to approval.

I am also concerned about the possibility that approval of this site could lead to future expansion of additional cell/comm facilities in the area over time, and I would prefer that any such potential cumulative impacts be clearly addressed in the record.

Additionally, I have concerns about potential impacts to nearby homeowners, including

possible effects on property values related to the visibility of a structure of this height in the viewshed.

I am asking the Commission to deny this proposal.

Sincerely,

Burton Schippers
192 Camino Barranca
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Charles Gray](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 5:14:11 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission:

My wife and I just moved here. We chose Placitas deliberately because of the beauty of the open desert; the way nothing built here rises above the landscape. A 75-foot monopole at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 ruins the ambiance for us and for every resident and visitor driving into this community. The proposed tower is an absolute degradation of the entire community.

The application says "this is the only site we could lease." That is not an acceptable reason to overlook other "higher-priority locations." The application says nothing about alternatives such as small cells on existing utility poles, building facades, and streetlights — the technology that already delivers quality cellular service through infrastructure that is already there.

Among the stated objectives for this site is to "offload surrounding sites in area." That is a Verizon network-management benefit— relieving pressure on towers that serve other areas — not a benefit to the people of Placitas. Why can't they upgrade their existing sites? The visual impact of the proposed tower hurts Placitas; the tower's objective does not serve our community. Why are we being asked to host an ugly - intrusive 75-foot industrial structure in the middle of our residential community so that Verizon's other towers run more efficiently?

We are concerned about what this intrusion does to community's property values. A highly visible industrial tower will impact every homeowner's future sale. We bought here in Placitas because of the atmosphere, the environment, the feeling we have driving through our community. The proposed tower will ruin that atmosphere. Ruin the reason people live here.

The County's rules say the burden of proving this application falls on the applicant. From what we have read, that burden has not been met. The applicant needs to do a better job of site selection, considering alternatives, and consider the benefit versus the degradation to the community of Placitas.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Carol & Chuck Gray
323 Purple Aster Road
Placitas, NM 87043
(916) 206-1435

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Cyndy Everest](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 12:48:40 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

I moved to Placitas more than 10 years ago for the same reason most people here did — the quiet, the open desert, the sense that this place has been allowed to stay itself. A 75-foot industrial tower planted at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 would change what this place looks like for everyone who lives here and everyone who comes through, from the first moment they turn off the highway.

The proposed site sits at the gateway to Placitas, directly beside Homestead Plaza — the community market, the restaurant with its outdoor patio, the gallery, the place where neighbors gather on summer evenings for concerts. The restaurant's outdoor seating would sit directly underneath this structure. On summer evenings I have eaten dinner on that patio. Approving this tower doesn't just change a viewshed on a map; it changes what that particular evening feels like for every person who sits there going forward. The application doesn't offer photo simulations from that vantage point or from the surrounding homes. Without them, compliance with the community's adopted standards for preserving viewsheds and character is unverified — and the rules place that burden on the applicant, not on us.

The site-selection record is thin in ways that matter. The applicant tried County-owned property first — a higher-priority category under the County's own siting rules. When the lease fell through over terms, they moved directly to a residential-zoned lot, the lowest-priority category of all, with no documented review of the commercial or industrial or agricultural sites the rules prefer over residential. The County's rules specifically say that "this was the only site we could lease" is not acceptable grounds for skipping higher-priority locations. The application also doesn't look at small cells on existing utility poles, building facades, and rooftops — exactly the "other suitable structures" the County's rules require to be inventoried within four miles. T-Mobile's coverage across Placitas, noticeably better than Verizon's, is delivered through that kind of deployment on existing infrastructure. The application doesn't explain why Verizon's answer here has to be a 75-foot tower instead.

Finally, homes that look toward this site will look toward it every day. Documented research shows visible tower exposure carries real property-value losses. Residents nearby didn't purchase their homes expecting an industrial structure at the community's front door.

I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Cyndy Everest
2 Butte View
Placitas, NM

Thanks,
Cyndy Everest
Sent from my iPhone

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Dale Ouimette](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Saturday, May 9, 2026 3:49:12 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

I have lived in Placitas for more than 15 years. I chose this place precisely because it does not have the towers and sprawling buildings that define so many surrounding communities. When I look at the proposed application, what strikes me most is not just the tower itself, but how little work the applicant appears to have done to show the County it belongs here.

Start with site selection. The applicant's own record shows they began at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, which your rules rank as much-preferred for a tower. When that lease fell through over terms, they jumped directly to a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area. That is the lowest priority on your six-rung siting ladder. I have not found in the application any documented review of industrial or commercial sites in between, and no real analysis of why the multiple existing towers already standing within a few miles — including Verizon's own sites at 3.6 and 3.74 miles away — cannot accommodate what is needed instead. Your rules actually prohibit using "this is the only site we could lease" as justification for skipping higher priorities. That language exists precisely to address this pattern. What also troubles me is that the application skips an alternative the carrier with the best service in Placitas already uses: small cells on existing utility poles and structures. T-Mobile users here have noticeably better coverage than Verizon users, and they get it through small antennas distributed across the area. Your four-mile inventory rule asks the applicant to look at "other suitable structures" — utility poles, streetlights, and rooftops where small antennas could go. The application looks at none of that.

Second, I am struck by how the application treats the zoning. The County zoned this parcel specifically for a shopping center in 2010 and attached binding conditions to this exact location. The application describes the zoning in general terms and never engages with those parcel-specific requirements. One of those conditions requires a Site Development Plan separately approved by Planning and Zoning. I do not see that in the application materials. Another requires outdoor light fixtures to be limited to sixteen feet, shielded downward, with no spill onto neighboring homes. The application does not disclose what lights, if any, will be on a 75-foot tower at night, or include the FAA evaluation the rules require to determine whether lighting is even necessary at this specific height. Without that evaluation, compliance with the lighting rules already binding this parcel is unverified. The same 2010 ordinance requires mechanical equipment to be screened from NM-165 and from abutting residential properties. The proposed compound sits right on the highway with homes on three sides.

Beyond the completeness gaps, the placement itself raises a question about how this site was chosen. The applicant's own correspondence makes clear this corner location was driven by the property owner's preference to keep the rest of the parcel available for retail development — not by any coverage need or technical reason. That is a reason the County's rules say is not good enough. When an applicant bypasses higher priorities because it could not secure a lease, and then lands on a lower-priority site for an owner's development preference, it raises doubts about whether this application has satisfied the burden of proof the County has placed on the

applicant.

A 75-foot industrial tower in the open desert landscape of West Placitas would be out of scale with everything around it — larger than the homes and structures residents see every day. The application does not include a Visual Impact Assessment or a Zone of Visibility map showing what neighborhoods would see this tower. I would want that on the record before this gets approved.

Your rules place the burden of proof on the applicant to demonstrate compliance. I do not see that burden met here — not in site selection, not in the engagement with the binding parcel-specific conditions, and not in the missing FAA evaluation and Site Development Plan that the rules require. I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Dale Ouimette
3 Aspen Court, Placitas, NM
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [David Bush](#)
To: [Planning and Zoning Main](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 7:41:33 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

Five years ago I chose to move to Placitas, and a 75-foot cell tower was not part of the calculation. Neither was watching one go up next to Homestead Plaza, where I have eaten dinner on the patio and run into neighbors at the market on a Saturday morning. The restaurant's outdoor seating sits directly beneath where this tower would stand. That patio, those evenings — that is what the Commission is being asked to weigh against this proposal.

My Verizon coverage in Placitas is spotty, and I will not pretend otherwise. But the question I keep coming back to is why a new tower is the answer when the carrier that already delivers the best service in this area does it without one. T-Mobile users around me get noticeably better coverage, and the technology behind it is small antennas mounted on existing utility poles and building facades — nothing that requires breaking ground on a fenced compound in a residential area. Verizon already uses that technology here; it just deploys less of it. The County's rules ask the applicant to inventory not only other carriers' towers within four miles, but all other suitable structures — utility poles, streetlights, rooftops — and conclusively show that none of them can do the job. What the application has is a slide deck with crowdsourced-app screenshots. That is not a comprehensive survey and it is not a conclusive showing. If Verizon wants to fix my coverage, the application owes me an explanation of why more small cells on existing infrastructure is not the answer — and that explanation is not there.

When I drive past Homestead Plaza and up into Placitas, the homes I pass are single-story. The terrain is open desert and foothills. A structure towering over all of it, visible every time a neighbor heads to the Merc or a visitor turns off the highway, changes this place in a way that does not come undone. Studies have documented what that kind of visible intrusion does to nearby home values. I know what I bought here, and I know what a buyer walking my property will see if this is approved. And once it is approved, federal rules will require the County to sign off on a defined set of future modifications — additional carriers, equipment changes, smaller add-ons — without another public hearing. The conditions written at this hearing are the conditions that travel with the tower. That makes getting them right now the only chance the community has.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

David Bush
145 Diamond Tail Rd
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [David Lisak](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 4:40:59 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

My wife and I moved to Placitas for more than 10 years ago because of the juniper-covered rolling hills and the open desert character that surrounds them. A 75-foot industrial monopole at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 — the gateway into Placitas — would be the tallest thing in this landscape by a considerable margin, visible to everyone entering the community and to the homes nearby. Nothing in the application's visual materials showed me what this tower actually looks like from the surrounding neighborhoods, and I have not found a Zone of Visibility map showing which properties would have to look at it every day.

The site-selection record gives me serious pause. The applicant tried County-owned property first — the Fire Station, which the County's own rules rank as a preferred location. When the lease fell through over terms, they went directly to a residential-zoned lot: the very bottom of the priority ladder the County's rules establish. The rules specifically say that "this is the only site we could lease" is not an acceptable reason to skip higher-priority locations. More to the point, the application treats small cells on existing utility poles, streetlights, building facades, and rooftops as if they do not exist. The County's rules ask the applicant to inventory not only existing towers within four miles but *other suitable structures* — and utility poles and building facades are exactly what small-cell deployments use. T-Mobile's coverage across Placitas, which is noticeably better than Verizon's, comes from precisely that kind of deployment on existing infrastructure, not from new towers. The application does not address why Verizon's answer here has to be different.

Then there is the 2010 ordinance that zoned this specific parcel for a shopping center. The application describes the zoning as plain CD-WP and never acknowledges the parcel-specific rules the County adopted at that time — rules that require, among other things, a Site Development Plan separately approved by Planning and Zoning, mechanical-equipment screening from NM-165 and from abutting residential properties, and ten-percent landscaping with automatic watering. The proposed fenced gravel compound in the southwest corner of the parcel does not address any of those conditions. The County put the burden of proof on the applicant, and I do not see it met here.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

David Lisak
42 Agua Sarca Road
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Diane Shepard](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Saturday, May 9, 2026 9:22:23 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

I have lived in Placitas for more than 30 years. I chose this place deliberately, for the community it is and for the landscape we have all worked to protect. What troubles me most about this application is not just the tower itself — it is that the applicant appears to have skipped the careful work the County's own rules require.

The applicant started at the County Fire Station. That is County-owned property, which ranks second on the County's site-selection ladder. When that lease fell through over terms, they moved directly to this vacant lot in a residential-zoned area — the very bottom rung. There is no record in the application of reviewing industrial or commercial sites in between, and no analysis of why the multiple existing towers already standing within a few miles cannot accommodate what is needed. The County's rules actually prohibit an applicant from bypassing higher-priority locations by claiming "this is the only site we could lease." That appears to be what happened here. The burden is on the applicant to document that they looked at the right alternatives. I do not see that work in the materials filed.

What makes this location even more problematic is what sits directly adjacent to where the tower would stand. Homestead Plaza is not a vacant lot — it is a working community gathering place. People eat dinner on the restaurant patio there. In summer, residents sit outside and listen to concerts. A 75-foot industrial tower placed directly above that space is fundamentally incompatible with what our community has built in that corner.

Beyond the immediate site, I am also concerned about what the County zoned this parcel *for* back in 2010. The Board established this as a Special Use District specifically for a shopping center, and attached binding conditions to this exact location. Those conditions require outdoor light fixtures to be limited to sixteen feet, shielded downward, with no spill onto neighboring homes. The application treats the zoning in general terms and never addresses those parcel-specific requirements. I do not see where the applicant addresses how a 75-foot tower would comply with lighting standards the County already has in place here.

I am also deeply concerned about property values. Peer-reviewed studies document that homes with visible exposure to cellular towers experience significant losses. Across the roughly 555 homes that would see this structure, the estimated aggregate impact is around \$24 million. We chose to build our lives here deliberately. That matters when it comes time for my neighbors to sell, or to pass something on.

The County's rules put the burden of proof on the applicant. The application appears incomplete on several fronts — the site selection, the parcel-specific zoning conditions, and the documentation of alternatives. That is the applicant's responsibility to address.

I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Diane Herrera Shepard
98 camino barranca
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [DiAnn Walkinshaw](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Saturday, May 9, 2026 12:19:43 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

We moved to Placitas in 2020 to enjoy nature and the views. We chose this place deliberately — to escape the city, to live in the open desert, to have quiet. A 75-foot industrial tower at the gateway to our community, directly above where neighbors gather for dinner and music on summer evenings, is the opposite of what we came here for. It would be an eyesore among other concerns.

I want to be direct about my concerns. The applicant tried the County Fire Station first — County-owned property, which your rules rank as much-preferred. When that lease fell through over terms, they jumped directly to a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area. That is the lowest priority on your six-rung siting ladder. I have not found in the application any documented review of industrial or commercial sites in between. What troubles me more is that the application skips an alternative entirely: small cells on existing utility poles and structures. I see those small antennas across Placitas — that is how T-Mobile delivers noticeably better service than Verizon in this area, using the same technology Verizon has available locally. Your four-mile inventory rule asks the applicant to look at "other suitable structures." Utility poles, streetlights, rooftops plainly fit that language. The application looks at none of them.

The County zoned this parcel specifically for a shopping center in 2010 and attached binding conditions to this exact location. The application treats the zoning in general terms and never engages with those parcel-specific requirements. One requires outdoor light fixtures limited to sixteen feet, shielded downward, with no spill onto homes. The application does not disclose what lights, if any, will be on a 75-foot tower at night, or include the FAA evaluation your rules require to determine whether lighting is necessary at this specific height. Without that evaluation, compliance with the lighting rules already binding this parcel is unverified. The 2010 ordinance also requires a Site Development Plan separately approved by Planning and Zoning. I do not see one in the application materials.

What sits directly adjacent to the proposed tower is not vacant land. It is Homestead Plaza — the community market, art gallery, restaurant with outdoor seating, speakeasy, and concert venue. The restaurant's patio, where families sit to eat dinner and listen to music, would sit directly underneath a 75-foot industrial structure. The applicant's own correspondence makes clear this placement was driven by the property owner's preference to keep the rest of the parcel available for retail development — not by coverage need or any technical reason.

I also have real concerns about health impacts. When you put people in close vicinity of RF radiation, that is an immediate concern, especially for children. The studies I have read suggest this is a serious issue. I do not want my family or my neighbors' families exposed to that risk for faster internet service we do not need.

A tower visible from homes throughout this area affects property values. Peer-reviewed

studies document significant property-value losses on homes with visible exposure to cellular towers. The aggregate impact across the homes that would see this structure is estimated at roughly \$24 million — a real cost borne by this community.

And these towers are a major fire hazard. Putting at the base of the mountains is pure insanity!

Your rules place the burden of proof on the applicant to demonstrate compliance. I do not see that burden met here — not in the site selection, not in the engagement with the binding parcel-specific conditions, not in the missing FAA evaluation, and not in addressing the alternative the carrier with the best service in Placitas already uses.

Please NO TO ANY 5G TOWERS IN PLACITAS. Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

DiAnn Walkinshaw
38 Arroyo Venada
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Don Berkman](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to cell towers—pls read!
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 9:07:26 AM

May 10, 2026

Planning & Zoning Department Attn: Assistant Director Doraida Arias Sandoval
County Administration Building 1500 Idalia Road, Building “D” 2nd floor Bernalillo
NM, 87004

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners, Every morning I leave my house on Canoncito Road and drive past the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 on my way out of Placitas. I have made that drive for over 10 years. A 75-foot monopole at that corner would be visible from my front door and my bedroom window — there is nothing between me and the proposed site that would screen it. This is the wrong place for an industrial structure of that scale, and I am asking the Commission to look carefully at how the applicant got here. The siting record is where the problems start. The applicant first approached the County Fire Station — a County-owned property that the rules the County adopted to govern tower placements rank as one of the most preferred locations. That fell through over lease terms. The applicant then jumped directly to a vacant lot in a residentially-zoned area — the very last category the rules prefer — without any documented review of the commercial or industrial sites in between. The County's own rules say that "we couldn't get a lease" is not an acceptable reason for skipping higher-priority locations. That is precisely what happened here, and the record doesn't show anything to overcome it. The application also treats small cells as if they don't exist. The rules ask the applicant to look at existing towers AND other suitable structures within four miles — utility poles, streetlights, building facades, rooftops. That language reaches exactly the kind of infrastructure small-cell antennas use. T-Mobile's coverage across Placitas, which residents and visitors observe is noticeably better than Verizon's, comes from small antennas on existing infrastructure rather than new towers. The application does not address why Verizon's answer here has to be different — why, for this community at this gateway, the solution is a 75-foot tower rather than the approach that already works locally. There is no inventory of those structures, no explanation of why they were ruled out, and no written record of requests and responses from nearby property and structure owners. The rules require all of that; what's been filed is a slide deck. There must be a less intrusive path — one that doesn't put an industrial monopole at the first thing everyone sees coming into Placitas. I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Don Berkman
11 Canoncito Road
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Donna Dowell](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 5:04:48 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

I have lived in Placitas for more than 30 years. I came here as a nurse, spent most of what I had on a home and land, and chose this place because of what it looks like — open desert, wide sky, single-story homes that sit in the landscape rather than fight it. What the County zoned this area to be, and what the people here worked to keep it, is exactly what I moved into.

The lot the applicant settled on sits at Tierra Madre and NM-165, right next to Homestead Plaza. That corner is the gateway to Placitas — it is where people coming home first recognize they are back, and where visitors first take in what this place is. On summer evenings my neighbors eat dinner on the patio there and listen to outdoor concerts. The restaurant's outdoor seating sits directly underneath where the proposed tower would stand. A 75-foot industrial structure over that patio is not compatible with what is happening on the ground there, and I do not think the County can honestly find otherwise.

When I read through the application, I notice that the parcel's zoning goes unaddressed in a specific way. The County created special-use rules for this lot to serve as a shopping center — that was the stated purpose when the Board approved those rules. A 75-foot monopole with a fenced equipment compound is not a shopping center use, and the application never engages with that mismatch. The County's rules give it a separate basis to deny a tower whose use doesn't fit the stated purpose of a lot's specific zoning, and this application walks past that basis without a word.

I also notice that the application's own RF deck lists "Offload surrounding sites in area" as one of this site's stated objectives. That is a Verizon-network purpose. Part of why this tower is being proposed is to ease traffic on Verizon's towers somewhere else. The visual cost, the noise from cooling equipment, and whatever this does to my neighbors' property values all land in Placitas — directly over a gathering place my community uses — in exchange for a benefit that, by the applicant's own description, partially serves Verizon's network rather than us.

I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Donna Dowell
81 QUAIL MEADOW RD
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Dorothy Noe](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Placitas communication tower
Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 8:41:33 AM

I am writing to oppose the construction of the proposed communication tower for the following reasons:

1. it's an eye sore in a community that prides itself on keeping structures with a low profile to not impede the views.
2. the area the tower will serve already has cell service and the tower does not provide cell service to the areas with poor service
3. One of the reasons folks live in Placitas is the view shed; the value of their homes is, in part, based on their view. This tower lowers property value.
4. The placement of the tower in a community gathering spot destroys the ambiance of that neighborhood.
5. There is no provision for the dismantling of the tower when technology moves on which it always does.
6. For those of us who hike/bike/walk dogs and ride horses in the open space area off of Rt. 165, for the solitude and vistas, the view north and west would forever be destroyed.

Dorothy Noe
38 Vista Montana Loop
Placitas

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Eli Pele](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 3:33:32 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

Eight years ago I chose Placitas knowing exactly what I was choosing: open desert, low-profile homes on large lots, dark skies at night, and a community that had done the work to stay that way. Nothing in this landscape comes close to 75 feet tall. That is what the proposed tower would be.

On summer evenings my neighbors and I wind up at Homestead Plaza — the gathering place at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165. There is a restaurant patio there, outdoor concerts, neighbors you run into over a glass of wine. The tower's proposed footprint puts it directly above that patio. I have eaten dinner there and I have no interest in sitting under an industrial monopole while I do it. The character of that corner — the reason people stop there and linger — is not compatible with what is being proposed, and I do not think the County's own rules allow approval of a structure whose use conflicts with the established character of the neighborhood.

I am also thinking about what approval means past this hearing. Federal rules require the County to approve, without a full public hearing, a defined range of future modifications to any tower it approves — collocation of additional carriers, equipment swaps, add-ons within certain size limits. Larger changes still need review. But the conditions written into an approval now are the conditions that travel with this structure for as long as it stands. That makes the conditions set at this hearing load-bearing in a way they might not be for other projects. If the Commission has doubts about whether the visual screening, the design requirements, or the use restrictions are adequately pinned down in what the applicant has filed, this is the moment to resolve those doubts — not later.

The peer-reviewed research on what visible towers do to nearby home values is not encouraging. For a community of this size, the aggregate impact across the homes that would carry a visible tower on their horizon is significant. That cost lands quietly on neighbors who made no choice to host it.

Coverage in Placitas is more than adequate. There is no gap here that requires a permanent structure of this scale. I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Eli Pele
2 Trigo Road
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Erin Reynolds](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Saturday, May 9, 2026 4:01:10 PM

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

I have lived in Placitas for 2 years. From my backyard and half the windows in my house, I can see directly toward the rise where this tower would stand. That visibility is exactly why I'm writing.

When I chose to move here, I understood what I was choosing — a place with open desert landscape, a sense of space that feels right. A 75-foot industrial tower at the gateway to Placitas would dominate that landscape in a way that fundamentally changes what this area looks like. I'm not just speaking about aesthetics. The peer-reviewed studies on property values are clear: homes with visible exposure to cellular towers experience significant losses. The aggregate impact across the homes that would see this structure is estimated at roughly \$24 million. That is a real cost borne by this community — not by Verizon, but by the people who live here.

What strikes me most, though, is how incomplete the application actually is. The applicant's RF compliance report is internally labeled "Tenaya (CA700867)" and uses language like "ROOF Area" — terms that fit a California rooftop site, not a ground-mounted monopole in Placitas. When I read materials that appear to have been adapted from a different location, I wonder whether this application was actually prepared for our site.

But there's something more fundamental. In 2010, the County zoned this parcel specifically for a shopping center and attached binding conditions to this exact location. The application I've read treats the zoning as plain CD-WP and never engages with those parcel-specific requirements at all. One of those binding conditions requires outdoor light fixtures to be limited to sixteen feet, shielded downward, with no light spilling onto neighboring homes. The application does not disclose what lights, if any, will be on a 75-foot tower at night. It does not include the FAA evaluation the County's rules require to determine whether lighting is even necessary at this height. Without that evaluation, I cannot verify compliance with the lighting rules already binding this parcel. The 2010 ordinance also requires a Site Development Plan separately approved by Planning and Zoning. I do not see one in the application materials.

The application also skips what should be obvious alternatives. The County's rules ask the applicant to inventory existing towers and other suitable structures within four miles, and to conclusively demonstrate why none of them work. What I see instead is a slide deck listing some nearby carrier towers, with crowdsourced app coverage screenshots. That isn't a real inventory, and it doesn't look at the alternative that matters most: small cells on existing utility poles and structures. I see those small antennas across Placitas — that's how T-Mobile delivers noticeably better service than Verizon in this area, using the same technology Verizon has available locally. The County's rule plainly reaches utility poles, streetlights, and rooftops where small antennas could go. The application looks at none of that.

My own Verizon coverage here is already good. The application's coverage maps show patches in this area as having no service — patches I drive through regularly with full working LTE signal. Whatever those maps are measuring, it isn't the basic cell service I have. The

applicant is asking the County to approve a 75-foot tower in our community to fix a coverage gap that does not actually exist as represented.

The County's rules place the burden of proof on the applicant to demonstrate compliance. Reading through these materials, I see gaps where the applicant's work should be: the FAA lighting analysis, the visual impact assessment, the comparative analysis of existing towers, the parcel-specific conditions from 2010. These aren't minor procedural details. They're the foundation the County's own ordinance requires before a decision can be made.

I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,
Erin Reynolds
38 Sage Hill Drive
Placitas, NM
87043

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Erin Reynolds](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 7:18:49 PM

Dear Commissioners,

My property taxes were just doubled, and now there is an application before you that could drop my home's value by fifteen percent. I moved to Placitas two years ago and chose this place deliberately — the open desert terrain, the single-story homes, the foothills. From my backyard and most of the rooms in my house, I would look at this tower every day.

Homestead Plaza is where I go on summer evenings — outdoor concerts, dinner on the patio, running into neighbors at the market. The restaurant's patio sits directly below where this tower would stand. A 75-foot industrial monopole at that corner becomes part of every meal, every concert, every evening out. The application does not address what that means for the people who use that space.

The site-selection record does not hold up. The applicant tried the County Fire Station first — County-owned property, near the top of the priority order the County's rules establish. When the lease talks fell apart, they ended up at a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area, the category listed last in the County's siting order, with no evident review of the commercial, industrial, or agricultural options that sit between them. The County's own rules say that "this was the only site we could lease" is not a sufficient reason to skip over higher-priority locations. The application also passes over a real alternative: small antennas on existing utility poles, building facades, and rooftops. The rules ask the applicant to inventory existing towers and other suitable structures within four miles and conclusively show why none of them works. That infrastructure — exactly what the County's rules mean by "other suitable structures" — is how the carrier with the best service in Placitas already delivers that coverage without any new tower. The application does not look at any of it.

The materials also treat this parcel as plain CD-WP zoning, without acknowledging that the County adopted parcel-specific rules in 2010 when it zoned this lot for a shopping center. Those rules require a Site Development Plan approved separately by Planning and Zoning, mechanical-equipment screening from NM-165 and from neighboring residential properties, and ten-percent landscaping with automatic watering. The proposed fenced gravel compound addresses none of those conditions. The burden of demonstrating compliance belongs to the applicant — and I do not see it met in what has been filed.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,
Erin Reynolds
38 Sage Hill Drive
Placitas, NM 87043

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Erin Reynolds](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#); [Planning and Zoning Main](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 7:39:58 AM

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

Every morning I take my coffee out to the patio, and for the past two years that has meant looking west toward the Sandias — the mountains that drew me to Placitas in the first place. If this tower is approved, that view is gone. In its place, a 75-foot painted-brown structure, taller than anything else for miles in any direction, standing at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 right next to Homestead Plaza, the gateway to Placitas. I do not think that trade is one I agreed to when I moved here, and I do not think the application gives the Commission the basis to impose it on this neighborhood.

The community plan this area operates under was built around protecting exactly what I see from my patio — the open desert landscape, the low profile of buildings against the foothills, the sense that nothing out here rises above the horizon line. A 75-foot tower in that setting is not a subtle addition. Verizon's own site reviewer described the chosen location as "considerably more visible" than the prior candidate. The application does not include a zone-of-visibility map or before-and-after photo simulations from nearby homes and gathering places. Without those, the Commission is being asked to approve something whose visual impact on this community has not been documented by the people proposing to build it.

The property-value concern follows directly from the visibility. I have looked at peer-reviewed research on this, and homes with clear sightlines to a cell tower consistently show measurable losses at sale. From my patio I would see this tower every day, and so would any buyer who walked through my home. That matters to what I built here, and it will matter to what I can recover from it. I am not the only homeowner affected — the tower would be visible from a wide swath of West Placitas, and the cumulative impact on homeowners across the area is real even if it is hard to calculate precisely.

I am also troubled by how the location was selected. The applicant's own emails describe the southwest-corner placement as driven by the property owner's preference to keep the rest of the parcel open for future retail development — not by any technical finding about where coverage is needed. The lot this tower would occupy was zoned by the County specifically for a shopping center. A 75-foot industrial monopole with a fenced equipment compound is not what that zoning was established for, and the application does not engage with that mismatch at all.

For these reasons, I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,
Erin Reynolds
38 Sage Hill Drive
Placitas NM
87043

This message is originated from an external organization

Brian J. Schmidly
53 Calle Chamisa
Placitas, NM, 87043
May 12th, 2026

Sandoval County Board of County Commissioners
1500 Idalia Road, Building D
Bernalillo, NM 87004

RE: Formal Objection to Proposed Verizon/Sun State Towers Telecommunications Tower

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to formally object to the proposed telecommunications tower application submitted by Sun State Towers on behalf of Verizon for construction within the Placitas community.

This proposal is inconsistent with both the letter and spirit of the adopted Placitas Area Plan, which was created specifically to preserve the scenic, rural, low-density character and environmental quality of Placitas.

Residents of Placitas are already experiencing increasing industrial encroachment through expanding gravel mining operations surrounding our community. These operations have brought substantial dust, heavy truck traffic, noise, visual degradation, and declining quality of life impacts to residents who chose Placitas precisely because of its rural and peaceful character.

The proposed telecommunications tower represents yet another industrial intrusion into the heart and gateway corridor of our community.

The cumulative impact of repeated industrial development cannot be ignored. Each additional project may appear manageable in isolation, but together they fundamentally alter the character, livability, and environmental quality of Placitas.

The County adopted the Placitas Area Plan to prevent exactly this type of incremental degradation.

Approval of a highly visible industrial telecommunications structure at a central entrance to Placitas would undermine public trust in the County's own planning process and send the message that the adopted Area Plan may simply be disregarded whenever outside commercial interests seek development opportunities.

Further, the applicant has not adequately demonstrated that less intrusive alternatives have been fully exhausted, including co-location opportunities or less visually sensitive locations.

I respectfully request that the Commission deny this application or require relocation to a substantially less intrusive site that better complies with the Placitas Area Plan and protects the long-term interests of Placitas residents.

Sincerely,



Brian J. Schmidly

Important: Please include this letter in the official public record for the Verizon/Sun State Towers application.

From: [Gail Speer](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 7:33:21 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

Every spring on Trails Road East, the quail appear — a pair in front, then eight or ten chicks scrambling through the brush behind them. Placitas is home to thousands of birds, migratory and resident, and the people who live here know it. A permanent 75-foot industrial tower at the gateway to this community is not what this landscape is for, and it is not what the rules the County adopted are supposed to allow without a thorough showing that the applicant has earned it.

I have lived here for 4 years, long enough to know that the site-selection in this application does not hold up. The applicant started at the County Fire Station — which, under the County's own priority order, is among the most preferred locations for a new tower. When the lease talks broke down, they ended up at a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area — the least preferred category on the County's list — without showing in the materials what was considered in between. The County's own rules say that "this was the only site we could lease" is not a sufficient reason to skip over higher-priority locations. That is the exact pattern on display here. Beyond the tower options, the application says nothing about small antennas on existing utility poles, building facades, or rooftops — the kind of infrastructure the County's inventory rule expressly covers under the phrase "other suitable structures." The carrier with the best service in Placitas already delivers it through small cells on existing infrastructure, not a new macro tower. The application does not explain why Verizon's answer has to be different.

The application also treats this parcel as if the County's only relevant rules are the general zoning standards. When the County specifically zoned this lot for a shopping center, it attached binding conditions that any future development has to meet: a Site Development Plan approved by Planning and Zoning, mechanical-equipment screening from the highway and from neighboring residential properties, and ten percent landscaping with automatic watering. None of that is addressed in the materials filed. Nor does the application include the FAA evaluation the rules require to establish whether any lighting is needed at the proposed height. The burden of proving compliance is on the applicant, and those gaps are the applicant's to close — not ours to excuse.

Then there is Homestead Plaza. I have been to dinners there, to the outdoor concerts, to the market on weekends. The restaurant patio sits directly underneath where the proposed tower would stand. A 75-foot structure with cooling equipment running at its base changes what that gathering place feels like — permanently. The conditions the County writes into any approval are the conditions that travel with this tower, so this hearing is the moment when those details have to be right. From what I can see in the application, they are not.

A tower visible throughout this community affects property values across it — research documents real losses on homes with this kind of exposure. More than that, it changes the open desert character of a place that was specifically planned, with significant community

effort, to stay that way. For the birds, for the quail families crossing our roads, for the people who chose this place for what it is — please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Gail Speer
17 Trails Road East
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Gary](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 1:12:03 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

Every morning I walk out onto my deck and the Sandia Mountains fill the sky in front of me. I have lived in Placitas for more than 20 years for exactly that view — the open desert, the foothills, the human-scale horizon that this community worked hard to protect. A 75-foot industrial monopole at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 would plant itself in that sightline permanently, and nothing in Placitas — no home, no business, nothing — currently stands anywhere near that height. The scale mismatch is not subtle.

The site-selection record makes this harder to accept, not easier. The County's rules rank sites in a clear preference order, with County-owned property near the top and residential-zoned areas listed last. The applicant started at the Fire Station — a higher-priority location — and when the lease couldn't be worked out, they ended up at a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area without any apparent review of the commercial, industrial, or agricultural options that sit between number 2 and number 6 on the County's list. The rules are explicit: "this is the only site we could lease" is not a legitimate reason to bypass higher-priority locations. That is precisely the path this application took. The application also says nothing about small cells — small antennas on existing utility poles, building facades, and rooftops that the County's four-mile inventory rules reach under the phrase "other suitable structures." The carrier with the strongest service in Placitas already delivers it that way. The application doesn't explain why Verizon's answer here has to be a new 75-foot tower instead.

Reading through the application, I also can't find evidence that it was fully prepared for this site. The RF compliance report carries language referencing a California location, rooftop-analysis methodology, and roof-area calculations that have nothing to do with a ground-mounted monopole in Placitas. The application also treats the zoning here as plain CD-WP, but this parcel was specifically zoned for a shopping center with binding development conditions attached — a separately-approved Site Development Plan, mechanical equipment screened from the highway and from neighboring residential properties, ten percent landscaping with automatic watering. None of that shows up in what was filed. The parcel-specific rules the County wrote for this lot are simply absent from the application. The applicant has the burden of proving compliance; that proof isn't there.

When I think about what my property is worth — and what my neighbors' properties are worth — the view from the deck and the quiet of the desert are a large part of the answer. A 75-foot tower visible from the backyard changes that for every future buyer, permanently. The Commission should deny this application.

Sincerely,

Gary Georgia
18 Tierra Madre Court
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Twist Banks](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 10:21:30 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

I have lived in Placitas for more than 30 years, and one thing that has not changed in all that time is the scale of this place — single-story homes on large lots, open desert stretching toward the Sandias, nothing industrial crowding the view. A 75-foot monopole at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 would be the tallest structure in Placitas by a wide margin, planted right at the community's gateway. Every person who lives here, visits here, or drives in would look at it every single day for 99 years.

The site-selection record is where this application falls apart. The applicant's own materials show they started at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, which the County's rules rank as strongly preferred over residential sites. When the lease fell through over terms, they went directly to a residential-zoned lot: the very bottom of the priority ladder. The County's rules say explicitly that "this is the only site we could lease" is not a sufficient reason to skip higher-priority categories — and that is precisely what happened here. There is no documented review of commercial or industrial sites in between, and no parcel-by-parcel analysis of the multiple existing towers already within a few miles of the proposed location.

The application also skips an alternative the County's rules specifically reach: small cells on existing utility poles, building facades, and rooftops. The inventory the County requires covers not just other carriers' towers but *other suitable structures* — and that language covers exactly what small-cell deployments use. T-Mobile users in Placitas have noticeably better service than Verizon users, and they get it through small antennas on existing infrastructure, without any new tower. The application says nothing about why that path is not available here.

One more thing concerns me. Once a tower is approved, federal rules require the County to approve a defined band of future modifications — collocation, equipment swaps, modest add-ons — without the kind of public review we're going through now. The conditions attached at this hearing are largely the conditions this community lives with. That makes this the moment to be careful, and the application has not given the Commission enough to be careful with.

The applicant has the burden to prove this proposal meets the County's standards. That burden is not met. Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Glen Banks
2 Butte View Rd.
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Gregory Speer](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 1:52:56 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

We live less than a mile from the proposed tower and are very concerned how this proposed monstrosity would adversely affect our quality of life, including outdoor activities at Homestead Village, and our property values. The application for a permit appears rife with deficiencies and problems.

The application puts a 75-foot industrial monopole effectively directly over that patio at the nearby restaurant where we often enjoy outdoor dining . In terrain this open, at a site this visible, a structure of that height — six or seven stories in a landscape of single-story homes — becomes a permanent landmark whether anyone wants it to be or not. There is nothing else like it in Placitas. The applicant's own consultant noted that the chosen location is considerably more visible than the site they tried first. I have not found in the application a single before-and-after photo simulation of what the tower would look like from Homestead Plaza's outdoor seating, from NM-165 approaching from the west, or from the neighborhoods on either side.

The site-selection path is, to me, the clearest problem in the record. The applicant started at the County Fire Station — County-owned, and ranked toward the top of the priority order the County's own rules established for exactly this kind of decision. When lease terms fell through, they moved directly to a residential-zoned lot, the lowest rung on a six-rung ladder, with no documented review of the commercial, industrial, or agricultural categories the rules place ahead of residential. The rules are explicit: "this was the only site we could lease" is not an acceptable reason to bypass higher-priority locations. And the inventory the rules require doesn't stop at other carriers' towers — it reaches "other suitable structures," meaning utility poles, building facades, streetlights, rooftops. Small antennas on existing infrastructure are how the carrier with the best service in Placitas already delivers that service. The application does not look at that alternative at all, and it should. Furthermore, by reliable accounts, this tower would not improve service in the surrounding area.

Once a tower is approved here, federal rules commit the County to approving a defined range of future modifications — adding carriers, swapping equipment, smaller add-ons — without the public process we have now. That makes this hearing the moment to examine the conditions of approval carefully, and this application has not made that examination easy.

This structure would be totally inappropriate for the proposed location. I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Gregory Speer
17 Trails Rd E
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Jacob Nelson](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Friday, May 8, 2026 7:12:32 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

I purchased my home at 38 Sage Hill Drive two years ago. From every corner of my property — the driveway, the patio, the back garden — I have a direct view of the rise where the proposed 75-foot tower would stand. I chose this place deliberately. The view matters; the quiet matters; the fact that I can look up at night and actually see stars matters. All of that is now at risk.

The most immediate concern is the lighting. When the County zoned this parcel specifically for a shopping center in 2010, it attached binding conditions to this exact location. One of those conditions limits outdoor light fixtures to sixteen feet, shielded and focused downward, with no light spilling onto neighboring homes. That rule exists because this community worked to protect its night sky. Aircraft warning lights on a 75-foot tower — by their design, visible from above and from the sides — cannot possibly meet that standard. The application does not tell me what lights will actually be on this tower at night, or how the applicant plans to comply with a rule that is already binding on this parcel. That gap belongs to the applicant to close, and I do not see it closed in the materials filed.

The second concern is what this will do to my property value. I paid a significant amount for this home after a substantial price increase. Peer-reviewed studies document that homes with visible exposure to cellular towers experience meaningful property-value losses. Across the roughly 555 homes in this area that would see this tower, the aggregate impact is estimated at around \$24 million. When I eventually sell, or when my neighbors sell theirs, that loss is real — and I will demand a lower tax burden to reflect it. We did not choose to live here for an industrial structure to be placed in our view.

The third concern is that this approval, once granted, becomes difficult to revisit. Federal rules require the County to approve future modifications — adding carriers, swapping equipment, smaller add-ons — without the kind of public process we are going through now. Larger changes still need County review, but the conditions attached at this hearing are the conditions that stick. If the County approves this tower, the County is also locking in what this tower will look like, sound like, and what it will be allowed to become. That makes this hearing the moment to write those conditions carefully — if the tower is approved at all.

For the reasons above, I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Jacob Nelson
38 Sage Hill Drive
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Jacob Nelson](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Friday, May 8, 2026 8:05:08 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

I moved to Placitas two years ago for the open desert and the wildlife — the things that make this place different. I came here deliberately, drawn by the natural landscape and what the community has chosen to protect. Now I am watching an application move forward that contradicts everything that brought me here.

The corner where this tower would stand is the gateway to Placitas. Every time I drive past, I see open space. A 75-foot industrial structure in that spot becomes the first thing visitors see entering the community, and the defining view from homes throughout the area. I live close enough to see the rise directly. That view is part of what I chose when I decided to live here. The tower would dominate it completely — out of scale with everything around it, out of place in the open desert landscape we have worked to keep this way.

What troubles me more, though, is how this location was actually chosen. The applicant's own record shows they started at the County Fire Station — that is County-owned property, which the County's rules rank as much-preferred for a cell tower. When that lease fell through over terms, they jumped directly to a vacant lot in a residential area, which sits at the very bottom of the County's six-rung siting priority ladder. The application contains no documented review of industrial or commercial areas in between, and no real analysis of why the multiple existing towers already standing within a few miles of here — including Verizon's own sites at 3.6 and 3.74 miles — cannot accommodate what is needed instead. The County's rules explicitly prohibit using "this is the only site we could lease" as justification for skipping higher-priority locations. The applicant has the burden to demonstrate they looked at the right alternatives, and I do not see that burden met in the materials filed.

I am also struck by how incomplete the application appears. The radio-frequency report is labeled with a California site name and uses language like "roof area" — it reads as if it was prepared for a different location entirely. More importantly, the application treats this lot as plain CD-WP zoning without addressing the specific binding conditions the County attached to this exact parcel in 2010 when it zoned it for a shopping center. One of those conditions requires outdoor light fixtures to be limited to sixteen feet, shielded downward, with no spill onto neighboring homes. The application does not tell me what lights will actually be on a 75-foot tower at night, or how aircraft warning lights — which by their nature are visible from above and the sides — could possibly comply with rules already in place. That is a gap the applicant has the burden to close, and I do not see it closed in the materials filed.

What sits directly next to where this tower would stand is not vacant land. It is a working community gathering place — Homestead Plaza, with a market, art gallery, restaurant with outdoor seating, and a venue for outdoor concerts. The restaurant's patio, where people sit to eat dinner and listen to music on summer evenings, would sit directly underneath this 75-foot industrial structure. The impact on the ecosystem and wildlife I came here to be part of is equally real — a tower and its associated infrastructure in a place where the community has deliberately chosen to keep things wild.

A tower visible from homes throughout this area would also affect what my neighbors and I can sell our homes for when the time comes. Peer-reviewed studies document significant property-value losses on homes with visible exposure to cellular towers — the aggregate impact across the homes that would see this structure is estimated at roughly \$24 million. That matters when it comes time to sell, or to pass something on to the next generation.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Jacob Nelson

38 Sage Hill Drive
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Jacob Nelson](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Saturday, May 9, 2026 12:45:17 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

I have lived in Placitas for 2 years. In that time, I chose this place deliberately — for the natural beauty, the open desert, the way the landscape feels unspoiled. A 75-foot industrial tower at the gateway to our community changes all of that.

What strikes me first is where this tower ended up. The applicant's own materials show they started at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, which your rules rank as much-preferred. When that lease fell through over terms, they jumped directly to a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area. That is the lowest priority on your six-rung siting ladder. I have not found in the application any documented review of industrial or commercial sites in between. What also troubles me is that the application skips an alternative entirely: small cells on existing utility poles and structures. I see those small antennas across Placitas — that is how T-Mobile delivers noticeably better service than Verizon in this area, using the same technology Verizon has available locally. Your four-mile inventory rule asks the applicant to look at "other suitable structures." Utility poles, streetlights, rooftops plainly fit that language. The application looks at none of them.

Second, the County zoned this parcel specifically for a shopping center in 2010 and attached binding conditions to this exact location. The application treats the zoning in general terms and never engages with those parcel-specific requirements. One requires outdoor light fixtures limited to sixteen feet, shielded downward, with no spill onto homes. The application does not disclose what lights, if any, will be on a 75-foot tower at night. Without that disclosure, compliance with the lighting rules already binding this parcel is unverified. The 2010 ordinance also requires a Site Development Plan separately approved by Planning and Zoning. I do not see one in the application materials.

What sits directly adjacent to the proposed tower is not vacant land. It is Homestead Plaza — the community market, art gallery, restaurant with outdoor seating, speakeasy, and concert venue. The restaurant's patio, where families sit to eat dinner and listen to music on summer evenings, would sit directly underneath a 75-foot industrial structure. The applicant's own correspondence makes clear this placement was driven by the property owner's preference to keep the rest of the parcel available for retail development — not by any coverage need or technical reason. An industrial tower placed directly above where our community gathers is fundamentally incompatible with what we have built in that space.

Once this tower is approved, federal rules require the County to approve some kinds of future modifications — adding carriers, swapping equipment, smaller add-ons — without the kind of public process we are in now. That is why the conditions attached at this hearing matter so much. The lighting, the screening of equipment, the limits on what this structure becomes — those conditions are what travel with the tower. Now is when they have to be written carefully.

I do not want my home and my community defined by an industrial tower. Placitas chose to be something different — and that choice should mean something when the County reviews this application.

For the reasons above, the application should be denied.

Sincerely,

Jacob Nelson
38 Sage Hill Drive
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: jfournelson@gmail.com
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Friday, May 8, 2026 9:33:22 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

We bought our home in Placitas two years ago specifically to get away from the kind of development this tower represents. We chose this place for the open desert we see from our property, for what feels like real space. Every part of our decision to live here was deliberate — we wanted to avoid obstruction, to keep the landscape as it is. A 75-foot tower visible everywhere on our property changes that completely.

But what troubles me more is that the application appears to have skipped the work the County's own rules require. The County zoned this exact parcel for a shopping center in 2010 and attached specific binding conditions: outdoor light fixtures limited to sixteen feet, shielded downward, with no spill onto neighboring homes. Aircraft warning lights on a 75-foot tower cannot meet those standards. The application does not tell me what lights will actually be on this structure at night, or how compliance with rules already in place would be achieved. That is a gap the applicant has the burden to close, and I do not see it closed in the materials filed.

What also concerns me is the site selection itself. The applicant started with the County Fire Station — that is County-owned property, which the County's rules rank as the second-highest priority for a tower. When that lease fell through over terms, they jumped directly to this residential-zoned vacant lot, which sits at the very bottom of the County's six-rung priority ladder. The application contains no documented review of industrial or commercial areas in between, and no real analysis of why multiple existing towers already within a few miles — including Verizon's own sites at 3.6 and 3.74 miles — cannot accommodate what is needed. The County's rules explicitly prohibit using "this is the only site we could lease" as justification for skipping higher-priority locations. The applicant has the burden to demonstrate they looked at the right alternatives, and that burden is not met in the materials I have reviewed.

Finally, the parcel directly adjacent to where this tower would stand is not vacant land. It is Homestead Plaza — a working community gathering place with a market, art gallery, restaurant with outdoor seating, and a venue for outdoor concerts. The restaurant's patio, where people sit to eat dinner and listen to music on summer evenings, would sit directly underneath this structure. We came to Placitas to keep it wild. An industrial tower placed above where our community gathers is not compatible with what we chose to protect by moving here.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Jamee Nelson
38 Sage Hill Dr
Placitas, NM

Sent from my iPhone

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Jamee Nelson](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 7:29:45 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

Two years ago, my family chose Placitas for one reason above all others: the view of the Sandias rising over an open desert landscape that still feels genuinely untouched. That view is visible from everywhere on our property. A 75-foot industrial tower at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 would sit directly in it, every morning and every evening, permanently.

The site-selection record in this application troubles me. The applicant's own materials show they started at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, which your rules rank as a much-preferred location. When those lease talks broke down, they settled on a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area — the lowest priority on the County's own siting list — without any apparent review of the commercial or industrial sites in between. The rules explicitly say that "this is the only site we could lease" is not a sufficient reason to skip higher-priority categories. That is precisely what happened here. The application also doesn't look at small cells on existing utility poles, building facades, and rooftops — the infrastructure the County's rules call "other suitable structures" and require applicants to evaluate within four miles. The carrier with the best service in Placitas already delivers it through small cells on existing infrastructure, not a new tower. The application is silent on that path entirely.

On top of the siting problems, the application appears to treat this parcel as plain CD-WP zoning without addressing the more specific rules the County adopted in 2010 when it zoned this lot for a shopping center. Those rules require a Site Development Plan approved by Planning and Zoning, mechanical-equipment screening from the highway and from neighboring residential properties, and ten-percent landscaping with automatic watering. None of that is addressed in the materials filed. Nor does the application include the FAA evaluation that determines whether any lighting is required at the proposed height.

As for the property impact: a tower visible from my home affects what this place is worth to me and to every neighbor who can see it. When the time comes to sell, a 75-foot structure in the sightline is something buyers will notice. That cost lands on this community, not on the applicant.

The County's rules put the burden of proof on the applicant. From what I can see in what has been filed, that burden has not been met. I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Jamee Nelson
38 Sage Hill Dr
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: jfournelson@gmail.com
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 2:18:23 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

Two years ago my family chose Placitas over every other place we could have landed — including neighborhoods where cell towers and bright lights and clashing paint colors are simply the norm. We chose here because the covenants and community standards protect the landscape. A 75-foot tower visible from every room in my house and from my patio would be the dominant structure in the entire view corridor. Nothing in this community comes close to that height, and I did not sign up to look at it.

On site selection, I can't find in the application the kind of careful work the County's rules require. The County-owned Fire Station was the right place to start — it's near the top of the priority order. When the lease fell through there, the applicant ended up at a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area, the last category on the County's list, with no evident review of what sits in between. The rules say "this was the only site we could lease" is not a sufficient reason to skip the higher-priority categories — yet that is exactly the pattern here. And the application says nothing about small cells on existing poles, streetlights, and building facades. The County's four-mile inventory rule asks for an accounting of existing towers and other suitable structures; a slide deck of coverage screenshots doesn't satisfy that.

I also want the Commission to know what Homestead Plaza is before it makes this decision. On a warm evening the restaurant patio fills up with neighbors, there are concerts on the grounds, and that corner is where Placitas residents actually gather. The tower's southwest-corner placement puts it directly above that outdoor seating. Whatever the tower looks like from the road, the experience for someone eating dinner there is sitting under an industrial structure with cooling equipment running at its base.

The application does not include the FAA evaluation that would show whether any lighting is required at this height. It does not include the Site Development Plan the County required when it zoned this parcel for a shopping center. It does not include a diagram showing the proposed tower meets the setback rules. Compliance with the specific requirements attached to this parcel is simply unverified.

My property's value is tied to the views and the character of this place. So is every neighbor's. The burden of proving this is the right site belongs to the applicant. That burden has not been met. Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Jamee Nelson
38 Sage Hill Dr
Placitas, NM

Sent from my iPhone

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [MJ Sams](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 11:42:19 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

Six years ago my spouse and I left city life behind and chose Placitas specifically for its open desert landscape, its quiet, peaceful feeling. That choice is what this application puts at risk.

The site-selection record is what I keep coming back to. The County has a priority order for where new towers should go, and residential areas sit at the bottom of that list. The applicant began at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, which your rules rank far higher — and when the lease talks broke down, they settled on a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area without showing what they looked at in the middle. More striking to me is what the application skips entirely: small cells. The County's inventory rule asks applicants to survey not just existing towers but *other suitable structures* within four miles — utility poles, streetlights, building facades, rooftops. That language plainly reaches the infrastructure small-cell antennas use. T-Mobile delivers better service across Placitas than Verizon does right now, and the technology behind that is small antennas on existing infrastructure, not new towers. Verizon has the same technology available. The application does not address why that path is not the answer here, and I think it should have to.

There is also something in the application's own RF analysis worth noting. Among the stated objectives for this site, listed in Verizon's RF deck, is "Offload surrounding sites in area." That is not a Placitas-community benefit — it is a Verizon-network purpose. The visual and property impact of a 75-foot tower lands here. The network benefit flows elsewhere. Peer-reviewed research documents meaningful property-value losses on homes with visible exposure to towers, and the aggregate estimate across the nearby homes that would see this structure runs to roughly \$24 million. That is a real cost this community is being asked to absorb in exchange for, in part, making Verizon's other sites run more efficiently.

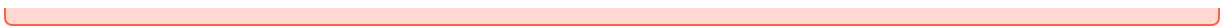
Finally, the County's own rules say that once a tower is approved, certain future modifications — adding carriers, swapping equipment, smaller add-ons — can proceed without the kind of public process we are going through now. The conditions attached at this hearing are the conditions that travel with this tower. That makes this hearing the moment to be careful. I am not persuaded the applicant has shown that a 75-foot monopole in this location, at this priority, for these purposes, is what the County's standards require it to approve.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

James & MJ Sams
121 Forest Lane
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization



May 9, 2026

Planning & Zoning Department
Attn: Assistant Director Doraida Arias
Sandoval County Administration Building
1500 Idalia Road, Building "D" 2nd floor
Bernalillo NM, 87004

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

My wife and I moved to Placitas five years ago from Albuquerque. We were explicit about our reasons: we wanted to escape the noise, the toxins, health concerns and health risks, the light pollution, the constant hum of congestion. We chose Placitas because we believed this community had made deliberate choices to keep those things out. Now I am watching an application that contradicts the very reasons we came here.

Every morning when I take my coffee onto the patio — from my kitchen, my master bedroom, my office, from outside where we entertain — I look southwest toward the rise where the proposed tower would stand. Right now I see open desert. A 75-foot industrial structure in that view is not incidental; it is a permanent transformation of what I see every day, and what drew my family here in the first place.

What troubles me more, though, is how this location was actually chosen. The applicant's own record is explicit: they first proposed the County Fire Station — that is County-owned property, which the County's rules rank as priority two, much preferred over residential areas. When that lease fell through over financial terms, they jumped directly to a vacant lot in a residential zone, which sits at the absolute bottom of the County's six-rung siting-priority ladder. The application contains no documented review of industrial or commercial areas in between, and no parcel-by-parcel analysis of why the existing towers already standing

within a few miles — including Verizon's own sites at 3.6 and 3.74 miles — cannot accommodate what is needed instead. The County's rules explicitly prohibit an applicant from bypassing higher-priority sites by saying "this is the only location we could lease." That language exists precisely because of this pattern. The applicant has the burden to show they looked at the right alternatives, and I do not see that burden met in the materials filed.

Beyond the view from my home, I am deeply troubled by what sits directly adjacent to where this tower would stand. It is not vacant land. Homestead Plaza — the gateway to Placitas — is a working community gathering place. There is a market, an art gallery, a restaurant with people sitting outside on summer evenings listening to music, a speakeasy, a venue for community events. The restaurant's outdoor seating area sits directly underneath where this tower would be placed. An industrial structure looming above where our community actually gathers is fundamentally incompatible with what we have built in that space.

I am also concerned about the permanence of this decision. Once a tower like this is approved, federal rules require the County to approve a defined band of future modifications — additional carriers, equipment upgrades, modest add-ons — without the kind of public process we are going through now. Larger expansions still require County review, but the conditions attached at this approval are conditions that travel with the tower for decades. The rules the County wrote specifically for this parcel in 2010 — when it zoned this lot for a shopping center — include binding requirements about outdoor lighting. Light fixtures must be limited to sixteen feet, shielded downward, with no spill onto neighboring homes. The application does not disclose what lights, if any, will be installed on a 75-foot tower at night, or how aircraft warning lights could possibly comply with rules already in place. That gap is the applicant's to close, and I do not see it closed in the materials filed.

Finally, peer-reviewed studies document significant property-value losses on homes with visible exposure to cellular towers. When my wife and I face the question of what this home is worth — and what we can pass on — a 75-foot tower visible from our property will matter. Our neighbors face the same. The aggregate impact across the homes that would see this structure is estimated at roughly \$24 million. That is a real cost to real people who chose to live here.

I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

James Verzi
140 Juniper Rd
Placitas, NM

From: [Janet Schmidly](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Saturday, May 9, 2026 4:20:12 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

My husband and I have lived in Placitas for more than 15 years. After his retirement from Albuquerque, we chose to stay here because this place is exactly what we wanted — the weather, the views, the people, and the community we have built. We spend our money where we live. We are invested in what Placitas is.

What I see from my master bedroom, my living room, my kitchen, my entire west porch and backyard is the rise where the proposed tower would stand. Every morning and every evening, I look at that landscape. A 75-foot industrial monopole dominates that view — not in the distance, but directly across from where we live. The stealth design does not change the basic fact: a structure that tall, in open desert with no comparable buildings around it, becomes the visual anchor of the neighborhood. It is out of scale with everything else here.

But what troubles me most is how the applicant arrived at this site. Their own materials show they began at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, which your rules rank as much-preferred for a tower. When that lease fell through over terms, they jumped directly to a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area. That is the lowest priority on your six-rung siting ladder. I have not found in the application any documented review of industrial or commercial sites in between. More importantly, the application skips an alternative entirely: small cells on existing utility poles and structures. I see those small antennas across Placitas — that is how T-Mobile delivers noticeably better service than Verizon in this area, using the same technology Verizon has available locally. Your rules ask the applicant to look at "other suitable structures" within four miles. Utility poles, streetlights, building facades plainly fit that language. The application looks at none of them.

What sits directly adjacent to the proposed tower is not vacant land. It is Homestead Plaza — the community market, the art gallery, the restaurant with outdoor seating where families and neighbors gather for dinner and music on summer evenings, the speakeasy, the concert venue. That restaurant's patio would sit directly underneath a 75-foot industrial structure. The applicant's own correspondence makes clear this placement was chosen because the property owner prefers to keep the rest of the parcel available for retail development — not because of any coverage need or technical reason. An industrial tower placed directly above where our community gathers is fundamentally incompatible with what we have built in that space.

The County zoned this parcel specifically for a shopping center in 2010 and attached binding conditions to this exact location. The application treats the zoning in general terms and never engages with those parcel-specific requirements. One condition requires outdoor light fixtures to be limited to sixteen feet, shielded downward, with no spill onto homes. The application does not disclose what lights, if any, will be on a 75-foot tower at night, or include the FAA evaluation your rules require to determine whether lighting is necessary at this specific height. Without that evaluation, compliance with the lighting rules already binding this parcel is unverified. The 2010 ordinance also requires mechanical equipment to be screened from NM-

165 and from abutting homes. The proposed compound sits right on the highway with residential properties on three sides. And the ordinance requires a Site Development Plan separately approved by Planning and Zoning. I do not see one in the application materials.

Peer-reviewed studies document significant property-value losses on homes with visible exposure to cellular towers. The aggregate impact across the homes that would see this structure from our neighborhood is estimated at roughly \$24 million — a real cost borne by this community, not offset by any local benefit.

My T Mobile coverage here is already good. The application's coverage maps show patches in this area as lacking service — patches I drive through regularly with full working LTE signal. The maps do not say what generation of coverage they are measuring, but whatever it is, it is not the basic cell service I already have. The RF analysis itself is internally labeled with a California site name and uses rooftop-analysis language — it reads as if it was adapted from a different location, not prepared for this site.

The County's rules place the burden of proof on the applicant to demonstrate compliance. I do not see that burden met here — not in the site selection, not in the engagement with the binding parcel-specific conditions, not in the missing FAA evaluation, and not in addressing the alternative the carrier with the best service in

Sincerely,

Janet and David Schmidly
60 Homesteads Rd
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Leonard Hardgrave](#)
To: [Planning and Zoning Main](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2026 7:23:14 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

My husband and I left Houston a year ago — we were done with industrial sprawl, with congestion, with a landscape that had been paved and towered over until almost nothing natural remained. We built our home in Apache Mesa specifically because we could stand in the front yard and see open desert and the foothills of Placitas. That is the view from which I am now watching a 75-foot industrial structure get proposed directly across from where we live.

The site-selection record in this application concerns me. From what I can read, the applicant started at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, near the top of the County's preferred siting order — and when the lease talks broke down, settled on a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area, the last category on the County's list. The application doesn't show me what was looked at between those two points. The County's rules say that "this was the only site we could lease" is not an acceptable reason to skip the higher-priority categories, and that is exactly the pattern here. Meanwhile, the application is silent on the alternative the carrier with the best service in Placitas already uses: small antennas on existing poles, building facades, and other structures. The County's inventory rule covers not just other towers, but other suitable structures within four miles. A slide deck with crowdsourced screenshots does not satisfy that.

One thing I noticed reading the RF analysis: a stated objective for this site is "Offload surrounding sites in area." That is a Verizon network purpose, not a community benefit. The visual burden falls on Placitas residents and on every person who drives into Placitas past Homestead Plaza — the gateway to Placitas, the patio restaurant where my new neighbors eat dinner. They would sit directly beneath this tower. That is not an abstract impact.

On property values: we left Houston to invest in this place. Research on homes with visible tower exposure documents meaningful losses in resale value. We built a home here and we intend to sell it someday. That calculation changes with a 75-foot structure visible from the front yard.

The applicant has the burden to show this proposal meets the County's standards. What I see in the application is a site chosen for the property owner's convenience, an alternatives review that skips entire categories the rules require, and a RF deck labeled for a different site in another state. That burden has not been met.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Leonard Hardgrave
6 Morning Star Ct.
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [leslie chavez](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 10:53:19 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

My address is 212 NM-165 — directly across from the proposed tower site. I have lived here for 1 year, and I can tell you that a 75-foot structure at that corner would be visible from my kitchen window, my office window, and my front door. There is no direction I look from inside my home that escapes it.

The site-selection record in this application doesn't hold up. The applicant started at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, among the most preferred locations under the County's own priority order — and when the lease talks broke down, they ended up at a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area, the last category on that list, without any apparent walk-through of the commercial, industrial, or agricultural sites in between. The County's rules say explicitly that "this is the only site we could lease" is not sufficient justification for landing at the bottom of the priority order. That is precisely the pattern here. The application also says nothing about small antennas on existing utility poles, building facades, and rooftops — infrastructure the County's rules expressly require applicants to inventory under the phrase "other suitable structures." The carrier with the best service in Placitas delivers it through exactly that infrastructure, without a new tower. The application doesn't tell me why Verizon's answer has to be different.

The application also treats this parcel as ordinary CD-WP zoning and never addresses the more specific rules the County adopted when it zoned this lot for a shopping center. The Sandoval County Comprehensive Plan likely emphasizes the "rural" and "scenic" nature of Placitas. This industrial-scale equipment is a fundamental mismatch for the existing land use. Those rules require a Site Development Plan separately approved by Planning and Zoning, mechanical-equipment screening from the highway and from neighboring residential properties, and ten-percent landscaping with automatic watering. None of that is addressed in what was filed. The County put the burden of demonstrating compliance on the applicant — and compliance with those parcel-specific conditions is simply unestablished.

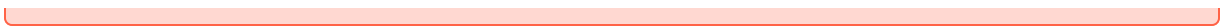
A 75-foot structure visible from 212 NM-165 affects what my property is worth, and what every neighbor's property is worth. Research documents real losses on homes with this kind of exposure. That cost lands on us, not on the applicant.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Leslie Chavez
212 hwy 165, Placitas, NM
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization



From: [leslie chavez](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 11:06:28 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

My address is 212 NM-165. The proposed tower would be visible from my rooftop deck and from the front of my home. I have lived here for 1 year — I chose this place deliberately, knowing what it looked like and what it sounded like, and both of those things are at stake with this application.

A 75-foot structure at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 would be the tallest thing in this landscape by a wide margin. Every home nearby sits low to the ground, single-story, set back on large lots against the open desert. That scale is what the people who built the plan for this area worked to protect. The proposed tower does not fit it. Verizon's own reviewer noted that the selected location is "considerably more visible" than the site previously considered — and yet the application includes no zone-of-visibility map, no before-and-after photo simulations from nearby homes, and no honest accounting of what neighbors like me would see every day. That demonstration is the applicant's to provide, and I do not find it in what was filed.

The noise concern is one I do not think the application handles honestly. The applicant's own measurements show that nighttime quiet in Placitas drops to the low thirties in decibels — genuinely silent by any standard most people live with. The study then finds that cooling equipment at the compound will reach 30 dBA at the nearest residential property line and judges this acceptable against an industry rule of thumb rather than against the County's actual standard, which asks whether the noise would be apparent from adjacent properties. At 2 AM in this neighborhood, a continuous mechanical hum from an equipment compound is apparent. The industry benchmark the applicant chose is not the same question the County's rules ask.

On property values: I bought here knowing what I was looking at. A tower visible from my rooftop deck changes that calculation for me and for everyone within sightline. Once this tower is approved, federal rules require the County to green-light certain future modifications without a full public hearing — so whatever conditions are written now are the ones this community lives with. That makes this hearing the moment those details have to be airtight. From what I have read, they are not.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Leslie Chavez
212 hwy 165, Placitas, NM
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Leslie Fox](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 5:00:05 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

My partner and I moved to Placitas a year ago so that I could retire into quiet and open sky. Our house off Placitas West looks directly toward where this tower would stand — from the living room, from the front yard. We already watch Albuquerque's glow eat into the horizon each night. A 75-foot industrial monopole at the gateway to Placitas is not something we can look past.

The site-selection record does not hold up. The applicant started at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, well up the preference order the County's own rules establish. When that lease fell through over terms, they landed in a residential-zoned area, the lowest-priority category on the six-rung siting ladder, with no documented review of the commercial, industrial, or agricultural options in between. The County's rules say explicitly that "this was the only site we could lease" is not a valid reason to skip higher-priority locations. The application also ignores a real alternative: small antennas mounted on existing utility poles, building facades, and other structures. The County's rules require an inventory of existing towers *and other suitable structures* within four miles, with a conclusive showing that none of them works. The carrier with the best service in Placitas already delivers that service through exactly this kind of infrastructure, with no new tower. The application doesn't look at any of it.

The application also bypasses the parcel-specific rules the County adopted in 2010 when it zoned this lot for a shopping center. Those rules require a Site Development Plan separately approved by Planning and Zoning, mechanical-equipment screening from NM-165 and from adjacent residential properties, and ten-percent landscaping with automatic watering. The proposed fenced gravel compound addresses none of those conditions. And the application doesn't include the FAA evaluation the rules require to establish whether any lighting is needed at this height — so compliance on that front is simply unverified.

Our home's value is bound up in what this place looks and feels like. When the time comes to sell, a 75-foot tower visible from our living room and front yard is going to matter to buyers. We chose this place carefully. The County's rules put the burden of proof on the applicant, and from what I can see, that burden has not been met. Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Leslie Fox
6 Sandy Ln
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

May 11, 2026

Planning & Zoning Department
Attn: Assistant Director Doraida Arias
Sandoval County Administration Building
1500 Idalia Road, Building "D" 2nd floor
Bernalillo NM, 87004

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

From my master bedroom and back deck, I have a clear sightline to where this tower would stand. I have lived in Placitas for over 25 years, and what I see from those windows — open desert, single-story homes, the foothills behind them — is what I chose this place for and what I expect to look at for the rest of my life. A structure taller than anything in Placitas, visible from my bedroom every morning, changes that permanently.

The property-value concern is not abstract. Research documents meaningful losses on homes with direct sightlines to cellular towers, and mine is one of them. Whatever the County estimates at a community scale, I know what buyers will see when they stand on my deck. That is a real cost the application does not address.

The site-selection record troubles me more. The applicant tried the County Fire Station first — higher on the County's own priority list — and when the lease talks broke down, the application landed on a lot in a residential area, the lowest priority the County recognizes. I don't see any walk-through of the commercial or industrial site types that rank higher in between. The County's own rules say that "this was the only site we could lease" is not sufficient to skip over higher-priority locations — that is precisely the pattern here. And the application says nothing about small cells on existing utility poles, building facades, or rooftops —

infrastructure the County's inventory rule expressly covers. The carrier with the better service across Placitas delivers it through small cells on existing structures, not a new tower. The application doesn't explain why Verizon's answer here has to be different.

Several things that should be in the application are missing. The County specifically zoned this parcel for a shopping center and attached binding conditions — a Site Development Plan approved by Planning and Zoning, mechanical-equipment screening from the highway and adjacent residential properties, and ten percent landscaping with automatic watering. None of that is addressed in the materials filed. The application also doesn't include the FAA evaluation the rules require to establish whether any lighting would be needed at this height. The burden of proving compliance sits with the applicant, and those gaps are theirs to close, not ours to overlook.

Once approved, certain future modifications to a tower go forward without the kind of public process we are going through now. This hearing is the moment when the conditions have to be right. They are not. Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Lucinda V Fairfield
4 Agua Sarca Road Placitas New Mexico 87043
Placitas, NM

May 11, 2026

Planning & Zoning Department
Attn: Assistant Director Doraida Arias
Sandoval County Administration Building
1500 Idalia Road, Building “D” 2nd floor
Bernalillo NM, 87004

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

Every morning I walk out onto my back patio, and once this tower is built I will be looking at a 75-foot industrial structure from my own bedroom window. I have lived in Placitas for over 25 years, and I cannot think of anything built here that comes close to that height. Not a home. Not a business. A tower at that scale, dropped into open desert at the gateway to Placitas, becomes the defining feature of the view — every day, from every approach.

The application doesn't show me how this site was chosen with any care. The County's rules rank existing towers as the most preferred option, County-owned properties second, and work down through industrial and commercial zones before landing on residential areas as the last resort. The applicant tried the County Fire Station first — County-owned, far up the preference order. The lease talks broke down, and they ended up at a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area, the lowest priority on the County's list. The application offers one sentence about why other sites weren't used. There is no walk-through of what was considered between the Fire Station and the lot they settled on, no written correspondence with owners of nearby existing towers showing that collocation was genuinely pursued. There's also an alternative the application doesn't address at all: small cells on existing utility poles, streetlights, and building facades — the technology that already delivers the best service in Placitas, without any

new tower. The County's rules ask for an inventory of existing towers and "other suitable structures" within four miles, and a conclusive showing that none of them work. A slide deck of coverage screenshots is not that.

The application's own RF deck lists one of this site's stated objectives as "Offload surrounding sites in area." That is a Verizon-network purpose — relieving traffic on towers elsewhere — not a Placitas-community benefit. We are being asked to absorb a permanent industrial structure so that Verizon's other cell sites run more efficiently.

Further, in the application, there is no mention of the impact of tower lights which will create additional light pollution in our residential area. If T Mobile can provide better cell service than Verizon without 75 foot towers in a residential area, than certainly, Verizon has additional options to explore if they allege their motive is to enhance cell service in Placitas.

The burden of proof belongs to the applicant. From what I have read, it has not been met — not on site selection, not on the alternatives, and not on what this tower would actually do for the people who live here. I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Lucinda V Fairfield
4 Agua Sarca Road Placitas New Mexico 87043
Placitas, NM

From: [Lynn Hartenberger](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 5:40:18 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

More than thirty years ago, my family built our home in Placitas by hand — choosing this place for its open skies and the uninterrupted landscape we could see from our yard and orchard. We raised five children here. The clouds and the rural character of this desert setting are not scenery; they are the reason we stayed. From our driveway, our garage, and our outdoor land, the proposed tower would be directly visible every day for the rest of our lives here.

A 75-foot industrial structure has nothing around it of comparable height. The applicant's own reviewer noted the chosen location is "considerably more visible" than the prior candidate site. Calling the design stealth changes the shape, not the height. And the application does not include a Zone of Visibility map or photo simulations from the vantage points residents actually use — so the Commission is being asked to approve this without a real accounting of what it would look like from our homes. When I read the application, I also notice that it describes the zoning as plain CD-WP without acknowledging the more specific set of rules the County adopted when it zoned this parcel for a shopping center. A 75-foot tower with a fenced equipment compound is not a shopping center, and the application never engages with the mismatch between the proposed use and the stated purpose of this parcel's zoning.

The site-selection record is equally thin. The applicant tried the County Fire Station — County-owned, near the top of the County's priority list for tower placement — and when the lease talks broke down, they settled on a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area, the last priority on that list. The rules explicitly say that "this is the only site we could lease" is not an acceptable reason to skip higher-priority sites. That is exactly the pattern here. The application also says nothing about small cells on existing utility poles, building facades, and streetlights — the infrastructure the County's inventory rule reaches under "other suitable structures," and the approach the carrier with the best service in Placitas already uses.

This tower would permanently change the view from a home my family spent decades building to belong in this landscape. When it comes time to sell, that visible tower will matter to every buyer who drives up. The burden of proof is on the applicant. I do not see it met in what has been filed.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Lynn Hartenberger
8 Homesteads Road
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization



From: [Lynn Hartenberger](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 5:48:07 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

My husband and I have lived in Placitas for over 30 years, and we are in the middle of building a house across the street for our daughter — roughly 700 feet from where this tower would stand. A brand-new home, and the day it is finished it will sit in the shadow of a 75-foot industrial structure. We already know what that does to a sale. No buyer drives up to a house and says the tower makes it more appealing. The 15% value reduction we are looking at is not abstract — it is a house we are building right now, for our family, in the community we chose three decades ago.

The County's own priority order for tower placement puts residential areas last — the sixth of six categories. The applicant started at the Fire Station, which is County-owned, near the top of that list. When the lease talks broke down, they ended up on a vacant lot in a residential area, the least preferred category on the list, with no evident look at anything in between. The County's rules are explicit: "this is the only site we could lease" is not a sufficient reason to skip five higher-priority categories, yet that is precisely what happened here. And nowhere in the materials does the application address small cells — small antennas mounted on existing poles, building facades, and other structures that the County's four-mile inventory rule was written to reach under the phrase "other suitable structures." The carrier with the best service in Placitas already delivers it that way, without new towers. The application does not explain why that path is not the answer here.

What concerns us every day — from our driveway, our garage, and every outdoor space on our property — is what we will see. A 75-foot structure would be taller than everything around it. Calling the design "stealth" changes the shape, not the height. And the application does not include a Zone of Visibility map or photo simulations from any of the vantage points residents actually use. The Commission is being asked to approve a permanent change to this landscape without a real picture of what it would look like from the homes it will affect.

The burden of proof belongs to the applicant. For our daughter's home, for our own, and for every neighbor whose view and property value are at stake, I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Lynn Hartenberger
8 Homesteads Road
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Lynn Hartenberger](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 6:11:13 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

I built my home in Placitas more than 30 years ago — 700 feet from where this tower would stand. I chose this place because it was outside the city, residential in character, not commercial or industrial. From my yard, my orchard, my vegetable garden, my garage, and my driveway, I would see this tower every day. The application includes no Zone of Visibility map, no before-and-after photo simulations from the vantage points residents actually use. The applicant's own reviewer noted the proposed location is "considerably more visible" than the prior candidate. Calling the design stealth changes the shape; a 75-foot structure in a landscape of single-story homes changes what everyone sees.

The site-selection record doesn't hold up. The County's rules establish a priority order: existing towers first, then County-owned land, then industrial and commercial zones, then agricultural, with residential areas listed last. The applicant started at the Fire Station — County-owned, second on that list — and when the lease talks broke down, the applicant ended up at a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area, the last entry on the list. What was considered between number two and number six is not in the materials. The rules say that "this is the only site we could lease" is not an acceptable reason to skip higher-priority locations — and that pattern is exactly what happened here. Nor does the application address small cells: small antennas on existing utility poles, building facades, and structures the County's four-mile inventory rule reaches under the words "other suitable structures." The carrier with the best service in Placitas gets it through that approach on existing infrastructure, not through new towers. The application doesn't explain why that path isn't the answer here.

The application also describes the zoning as plain CD-WP without acknowledging the more specific rules the County adopted when it zoned this parcel for a shopping center. The conditions attached to that approval are binding, and the application never frames its proposed measures as compliance with them.

I bought into this landscape and this lifestyle. So did my neighbors. A visible tower 700 feet from our homes changes what buyers see when they come to look, and peer-reviewed studies make clear that matters to property values. The burden of proof is on the applicant. I do not see it met here.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Lynn Hartenberger
8 Homesteads Road
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization



From: [Lynn Hartenberger](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 6:20:49 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

Thirty-eight years ago, my husband and I built our home in Placitas with our own hands. We planted the trees, laid out the flower beds, put in the vegetable garden and the orchard. Every inch of the outdoor space we see from our entryway, our driveway, our garage, our yard is something we made. From all of it, this tower would be visible every day.

The application's site-selection record troubles me more than almost anything else in the materials. The County adopted a clear priority order for placing towers — County-owned properties are near the top; residential areas are the very last resort. The applicant started at the Fire Station, which is County-owned property near the top of that order. When the lease talks didn't come together, they ended up at a vacant lot in a residential area — the least preferred location on the County's list — with no evident walk-through of anything in between. The County's own rules say that "this is the only site we could lease" is not an acceptable reason to skip ahead to the bottom of the list. That is exactly the path this application took. What I also cannot find in the materials is any examination of existing utility poles, building facades, streetlights, or other structures in the area where small antennas could be mounted. The County's four-mile inventory rule covers towers and other suitable structures — and the carrier with the best service in Placitas delivers it through small cells on existing infrastructure, without any new tower at all. The application is silent on why that path isn't the answer here.

The placement itself was driven by the property owner's preference to keep the rest of the parcel available for retail development — not by any technical finding that this corner, at this height, is the right answer. That concerns me deeply, because once this tower is approved, certain future modifications go forward without the kind of public process we are going through now. The conditions the County writes into any approval today are largely what this community lives with permanently. For a location chosen by the landlord's convenience rather than by the County's standards, that is a serious risk.

I have spent three decades creating something beautiful here. A 75-foot industrial structure, visible from every outdoor corner of our property, changes what we have and what every buyer after us will see. The application does not include a Zone of Visibility map or photo simulations from actual residential vantage points. The Commission is being asked to permanently alter the landscape of Placitas without a real picture of what that means for the homes around it.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Lynn Hartenberger
8 Homesteads Road
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [marilyn rohal](#)
To: [Planning and Zoning Main](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 3:49:15 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

Six years ago I chose Placitas over every other place I could have lived, and the landscape I chose — open desert, single-story homes on large lots, foothills behind everything — is exactly what this proposal would put at risk. On summer evenings my neighbors and I gather at Homestead Plaza for outdoor concerts and dinner on the patio. The proposed tower would stand directly over that patio. Whatever the applicant says about stealth design, a 75-foot structure hovering above the place where we eat and listen to music changes what that experience is. The character of that gathering place is the character of this community at its most concrete, and this proposal undoes it.

The site-selection record leaves me with real questions. The applicant started at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, one of the most preferred categories under the County's siting rules — and when the lease didn't come together, they ended up at a vacant lot in a residential area, the least preferred category the County's rules recognize. The application doesn't walk me through what was considered between those two endpoints. The County's own rules say that "this was the only site we could lease" is not an acceptable reason to skip higher-priority locations, and that is exactly the pattern here. Beyond that, the application doesn't look at small cells — antennas mounted on existing utility poles, building facades, and other structures that deliver coverage at neighborhood scale without a new tower. The County's inventory rule reaches those kinds of structures, not just other carriers' towers. The carrier with the best service in Placitas already uses that approach. I can't find any explanation in the materials for why this tower is the answer instead.

I also noticed that when the application describes the zoning for this parcel, it treats it as plain CD-WP. The County actually adopted a more specific set of rules for this lot when it zoned it for a shopping center. The application doesn't tie the proposed design back to those rules at all — it doesn't frame the proposed fence, the landscaping, or the stealth canister as compliance with those parcel-specific conditions. And the 8-foot fence around the ground equipment screens what's at the base, but nothing about it conceals the 75-foot structure rising above it, which is what everyone driving into Placitas and every neighbor on three sides will actually see every day. In my six years here, nothing in the surrounding landscape comes close to that height. The application also doesn't include the FAA evaluation that would establish whether any lighting is required at this height, so I can't tell what's planned for the tower after dark.

My own experience in Placitas is that coverage here is adequate for most people. I've heard the same from neighbors. When the time comes to sell my home, a tower visible from the surrounding streets will matter to buyers — and I believe it will matter in the way it always does: downward. The community we chose, and paid for, does not include a 75-foot industrial structure at its entrance. I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Rohal
100 Camino Barranca
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [SKoffler](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 11:54:47 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

I have lived in Placitas for more than 25 years, and the reason this place drew me here — and keeps me here — is what it looks like. Open desert. A human-scale horizon. The Sandias rising behind single-story homes on large lots. That is not an accident of geography; it is the result of choices this community made together, written into the plans and rules that govern how Placitas grows. A 75-foot tower at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165, rising roughly six or seven stories above everything around it, undoes a piece of that every day for every person who drives in or looks out a window.

On summer evenings, neighbors and I eat at Homestead Plaza, the gateway to Placitas, or gather there for outdoor concerts. The restaurant's patio would sit directly underneath the proposed structure. Whatever a brown canister shroud does for visual mitigation from a distance, it does nothing for the person sitting below it listening to cooling equipment run. The County's own rules ask whether a proposed use fits the character of the area. That gathering place is the character of this block, and a 75-foot industrial tower over the patio table is not compatible with it.

The application also doesn't engage with the specific rules that actually govern this parcel. When the County zoned this lot years ago, it did so for a specific purpose — a shopping center — and attached binding conditions to any future development: a Site Development Plan separately approved by Planning and Zoning, mechanical-equipment screening from the highway and from abutting residential properties, ten percent landscaping with automatic watering. None of that appears in the application materials. The applicant describes the zoning as plain CD-WP and moves on. The parcel-specific rules that the County wrote for this lot are simply not addressed. Compliance is something the applicant has to show, and I cannot find it in what has been filed.

Finally, when the time comes for me or my neighbors to sell, a 75-foot tower visible from the property will matter to buyers. That is not speculation — it is how markets work. The tranquility and the views are what this community is worth, and this proposal directly diminishes both.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Michele Koffler
41 agua sarca rd
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [mike elyea](#)
To: [Planning and Zoning Main](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 9:48:45 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001 Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission, Four years ago I moved to Placitas specifically to get away from cell towers and strip malls. I succeeded — until now. From my living room, dining room, and deck, I would have a direct view of the proposed 75-foot monopole at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165, and I find the application asking me to accept that outcome deeply unsatisfying. On summer evenings, my neighbors and I gather at Homestead Plaza for outdoor concerts, dinner on the patio, a drink at the end of the week. The restaurant's outdoor seating sits directly beneath where this tower would stand. Whatever the applicant says about "stealth design" and visual mitigation, the practical experience for anyone eating on that patio is sitting under a 75-foot industrial structure with cooling-equipment hum coming from its base. The County is supposed to find that a proposal like this preserves the character of the surrounding area. It is hard for me to understand how that finding can be made about the one block in Placitas where people consistently gather to be together outside. The site-selection record does not hold up to much scrutiny either. The applicant tried the County Fire Station first — County-owned, near the top of the County's preferred order of sites — and when the lease talks broke down, they settled on a vacant lot in a residential area, the very last category the County's rules list. There is no walk-through in the application of what was considered in between those two choices. The County's own rules say explicitly that "this was the only site we could lease" is not an acceptable reason to skip higher-priority locations — and that is precisely the pattern here. The materials also say nothing about small cells: small antennas mounted on existing utility poles, building facades, and other structures. The County's four-mile inventory rule asks the applicant to review existing towers AND other suitable structures — language that plainly reaches the infrastructure small cells run on. The carrier with the best service in Placitas today delivers it through exactly that kind of deployment on existing infrastructure. Why isn't that path addressed? Finally, whatever conditions the Commission attaches at this hearing are the conditions that travel with this tower. Federal rules require the County to approve a defined band of future modifications — collocation, equipment swaps, modest add-ons — without a full public hearing. This hearing is the moment to be careful. For me, a 75-foot tower visible from every room where I spend my day was never part of what I moved here to live with, and the application has not shown me why it should be. Please deny this application.
Sincerely, Michael Elyea 4 Bison Ct. Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [mike elyea](#)
To: [Planning and Zoning Main](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 9:53:00 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001 Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission, For the four years I have lived on Bison Court, the view from my living room, dining room, and deck has been the same open desert landscape that drew me here. A 75-foot structure at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 changes that — every day, for everyone who lives or gathers nearby. In open terrain with single-story homes on large lots, this is the tallest thing in any direction by a wide margin. The County zoned this area and adopted a community plan specifically to protect that character. A 75-foot industrial monopole is not what that plan envisioned for the gateway to Placitas. The County's own rules list conflict with the historic nature and character of a neighborhood as a basis for denial. The character of that block is exactly what I am describing: people gathering outside, talking, listening to music on warm evenings. A 75-foot tower with a cooling-equipment compound at the base does not belong there. The permanent nature of this approval is what gives me the most pause. Federal rules require the County to approve, without a full public hearing, a defined band of future modifications to any tower already approved — additional carriers, equipment swaps, modest add-ons within certain size limits. Larger changes still need County review. But the conditions attached at this hearing are the conditions that travel with this tower for as long as it stands. The proposed coyote fence screens the ground equipment. Nothing screens the 75-foot structure above it — and that is what every neighbor on three sides and every driver coming up NM-165 will see. The application also describes the zoning as plain CD-WP without engaging with the more specific rules the County adopted for this lot when it zoned it for a shopping center. A 75-foot industrial monopole with a fenced equipment compound is not a shopping center, and the application does not address that mismatch. These are conditions and conflicts the Commission has one opportunity to write carefully — this hearing. I am asking the Commission to deny this application. Sincerely, Michael Elyea 4 Bison Ct. Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Morgan Smith](#)
To: [Planning and Zoning Main](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 1:02:42 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

Five years ago I chose Placitas over every other place I could have lived, and I chose it in part because of what the land looks like — open desert, low skyline, homes that don't fight the horizon. The parcel at Tierra Madre and NM-165 is some of the scarcest commercially zoned land in this community. A 75-foot industrial monopole is the worst possible use of it.

The County zoned that lot specifically for a shopping center. Not for a tower. The application describes the zoning as plain CD-WP and never once engages with the more specific set of rules the County adopted for this parcel. That mismatch matters: the rules give the County independent authority to deny a tower whose use doesn't fit the stated purpose of the lot's specific zoning designation, and a 75-foot monopole with a fenced equipment compound is not a shopping center. The application doesn't address it.

The site-selection record makes things worse. The applicant started at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, high on the County's preferred siting order — and when the lease talks broke down, they landed at a vacant lot in a residential area, the lowest priority the County recognizes. The application doesn't show what was considered between those two points. The County's own rules say explicitly that failing to secure a lease elsewhere is not an acceptable reason to skip higher-priority locations. That is exactly what happened here. And the application never looks at the alternative the carrier with the best service in Placitas already uses: small antennas on existing utility poles, building facades, and other structures. The County's four-mile inventory rule asks for a survey of towers and other suitable structures — language that plainly covers the infrastructure small cells run on. None of that appears in what was filed.

Homestead Plaza is where I go to eat dinner on the patio and run into my neighbors. The restaurant's outdoor seating sits directly under where this tower would stand. The visual impact isn't abstract — it lands on that patio, on every neighbor within sight of it, and on the value of every home around it. Once an approval issues, federal rules lock in a defined band of future modifications without any public process. Whatever conditions the County writes at this hearing travel with the tower. That permanence is exactly why the siting, the use compatibility, and the alternatives need to be right before anyone signs off — and right now they are not.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Morgan Fredrick Smith
4 Calle Montoya
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Nina Amir](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 7:27:59 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

Four years ago I chose Placitas deliberately — the open desert landscape, the low-profile skyline, the quality of what is left undeveloped. A 75-foot industrial tower at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 puts an industrial structure taller than anything else in West Placitas at the community's front door. That corner is Homestead Plaza — the community market, the restaurant where people eat outside on summer evenings, the venue for outdoor concerts. The restaurant patio would sit directly below the proposed tower. I have had meals there. It is a genuine gathering place, and a 75-foot monopole with a mechanical equipment compound at its base changes what that place is — permanently.

The site-selection record does not give me confidence that this location was chosen carefully. The applicant started at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, which the County's own siting rules rank as a preferred location. When the lease talks didn't come together, they ended up at a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area, which is the last category on the County's priority list. There is no walk-through in the application of the priorities between the Fire Station and the current site. The rules explicitly say that "this is the only site we could lease" is not a sufficient basis for skipping higher-priority locations. Beyond the priority question, the County's rules ask the applicant to inventory existing towers and other suitable structures within four miles — utility poles, building facades, rooftops, anything that could host an antenna — and conclusively show none of them works. The application has a slide deck of other carriers' towers. It says nothing about small-cell-capable infrastructure, which is precisely how the carrier with the best service in Placitas already delivers that service, without any new tower.

The 2010 ordinance zoning this specific parcel for a shopping center required a Site Development Plan approved by Planning and Zoning, mechanical-equipment screening from NM-165 and from abutting residential properties, and ten-percent landscaping with automatic watering. The application addresses none of that. It also doesn't include the FAA evaluation that determines whether any lighting is required at this height. And it doesn't include a setback diagram showing the proposed tower meets the height-plus-ten-percent clearance from each abutting property line and right-of-way.

The County's rules place the burden of proof on the applicant. From what I can see in these materials, that burden has not been met. Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Ron Lacey
36 Agua Sarca Road
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization



From: [Nina Amir](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 11:04:09 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

Every time I drive past Homestead Plaza — the community market, the restaurant with its outdoor patio, the gallery, the place where Placitas gathers on summer evenings — I think about what it would mean to eat dinner on that patio underneath a 75-foot industrial monopole. The restaurant's outdoor seating sits directly below where this tower would stand. That is not a detail the application addresses; it is a real thing that would happen to a place this community depends on.

I have lived in Placitas for 4 years, and I chose this place specifically because of what it looks like and what it feels like. The proposed tower lot sits at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 — the gateway into Placitas. A 75-foot structure there becomes the new first impression of the community: taller by far than anything around it, planted in open desert terrain where single-story homes and the foothills behind them are what the eye expects. The application doesn't include a Zone of Visibility map or before-and-after photo simulations from surrounding vantage points. Without those, the Commission and the affected residents are being asked to accept, on the applicant's word, that this structure fits here. The applicant has the burden to show compliance, and I don't see it met.

The site-selection record is equally thin. The applicant tried the County Fire Station first — County-owned property, ranked high on the preference ladder the County's rules establish. When that lease fell through over terms, they jumped directly to a residential-zoned lot, the lowest-priority category of all, with no documented review of the categories in between. The rules explicitly say that "this was the only site we could lease" is not acceptable grounds for skipping higher-priority sites. The application also ignores a real alternative: small cells on existing utility poles, building facades, and rooftops — exactly what the County's rules mean when they require an inventory of "other suitable structures," and exactly how T-Mobile delivers noticeably better coverage across Placitas without a new tower. The application looks at none of that infrastructure.

The homes that look toward this site will look toward it every day. Peer-reviewed research documents that visible exposure to a cellular tower carries measurable property-value losses. Residents nearby didn't purchase their homes expecting an industrial tower at the community's front door.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Nina Lacey
36 Agua Sarca Road
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

46 Agua Sarca Road
Placitas, New Mexico 87043
May 11, 2026

Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission
c/o Doraida Arias, Interim Director
P.O. Box 40
Bernalillo, New Mexico 87004

CU-26-001

Chairman Trujillo and Commissioners:

I am writing in opposition to the request for a conditional use permit for a new communications tower for Placitas Homesteads Lot 5A-1AW in Placitas, New Mexico. I live less than a mile from the site of the proposed tower.

Application Does Not Comply With Ordinance

Sandoval County (the “*County*”) has adopted Ordinance No. 03-10-16-11A (the “*Ordinance*”; section references in this letter are to sections of the Ordinance) regarding wireless telecommunications facilities. The Ordinance requires those seeking a conditional use permit to locate telecommunications towers and related facilities to submit an application to the County. The Ordinance requires such applications to contain various elements. The proponents of the proposed tower have submitted a Development Narrative Report dated September 30, 2025 (together with accompanying materials, the “*Application*”), which appears to be intended as an application for a conditional use permit for the proposed facilities. However, the Application fails to contain even a majority of the elements required by the Ordinance.

Section 7.B requires that an application “be signed by the applicant . . . attesting to the truth and completeness of the information.” Section 7.F also requires that the application be signed by an authorized individual on behalf of the applicant. The Application is not signed and has no such attestation.

Section 7.B also requires that the owner of the subject property, if different from the applicant, “shall also sign the Application and shall agree to remove any existing violations and make all existing violations and make all telecommunications facilities compliant” with the Ordinance and applicable codes. The County’s

“Macro Wireless Facilities Guidelines – Required Materials (the “*Guidelines*”) also require written authorization from the property owner that has been executed by the property owner and notarized. The owner of the subject site has not signed the Application, does not appear to have made any such agreement with respect to such violations, and the Application does not include an executed, notarized authorization from the property owner.

Section 7.D requires that an application include a statement in writing that the proposed facilities be maintained in a safe manner and in compliance with all conditions of the conditional use permit and that the construction of the proposed facilities is legally permissible. The Application contains no such statements.

Section 7.F.7 requires that an application indicate the location of the nearest residential structure. The Application does not do so. In fact, the nearest residential structure is located in an area marked as “existing undeveloped area” in some of the diagrams included in the Application.

Section 7.F. requires that an application include “the basis for the calculations of the Tower’s capacity to accommodate multiple users.” The Application states that the proposed tower is intended for three users but contains no calculations justifying that statement. Section 7.U requires an applicant “examine the feasibility of designing a proposed Tower to accommodate future demand for at least five (5) commercial applications, for example, future co-locations. The Tower shall be structurally designed to accommodate at least five (5) additional Antenna Arrays equal to those of the Applicant.” The Application evidences no such examination, or any indication that the proposed tower would accommodate antennae of six carriers. In fact, the Application makes clear that the proposed facilities would accommodate only three carriers. The six-carrier requirement may be waived if the applicant demonstrates in writing “that the provisions of future shared usage of the Tower is not technologically feasible, is Commercially Impracticable or creates and unnecessary and unreasonable burden based on various factors.” The Application contains no such demonstration.

Sections 7.F.12, and 7.D.13-17 require that the application set out various technical data concerning the proposed tower and antenna, none of which are included in the Application.

Section 7.F.18 requires that an application contain a certification that the proposed antenna will not cause interference with other telecommunications devices. The Application does not contain any such certification.

Section 7.F.19 and the Guidelines both require that an application include a copy of the relevant FCC license. The Application does not.

Section 7.F.20 requires that an application include a certification as to the adequacy and security of the proposed facility on the proposed site. A structural analysis of proposed tower accompanies the Application, but there is no such certification and the analysis does not cover topographic and geomorphic analysis including the subsurface and substrata as required by the Ordinance. Similarly, Section 7.H requires the applicant to certify that “the proposed facility, foundation and attachments are designed and constructed to meet all local, County, State and Federal structural requirements for loads, including wind and ice loads.” The structural analysis submitted analyzes wind and ice loads, but neither that analysis nor any of the other Application materials contains such a certification.

Section 7.I requires that the applicant certify that the facilities “will be effectively grounded and bonded so as to protect persons and property and installed with appropriate surge protectors.” The Application contains no such certification.

Section 7.K.1 requires that an applicant “furnish a Visual Impact Assessment, which shall include [a] ‘Zone of Visibility Map’ which shall be provided in order to determine locations from which the Tower may be seen.” No such map is included in the Application.

Section 7.L requires that the applicant “demonstrate and provide in writing and/or by drawing how it shall effectively screen from view the base and all related facilities and structures.” Similarly, Section 7.O provides that the relevant facilities “be sited so as to be the least visually intrusive reasonably possible and thereby have the least adverse visual effect on the environment and its character.” Surely the 8’ coyote fence proposed by the applicant does not effectively screen the proposed tower and its concealment shroud from view. Indeed, the applicant’s own pictorial representations of the tower and shroud make clear that they are highly visible and have a significant adverse visual impact. That adverse impact clearly violates the Placitas Area Plan, adopted by County Resolution No. 4-16-09.8C, which notes that “A major area of concern to many Placitas residents was the protection and preservation of natural views and the cultural landscape qualities of the area” and recommends that “Zoning code should be amended . . . to preserve view-sheds.” The County’s consultant, Robert Naumann, stated in a May 31, 2024 email to the applicant’s representative, that “This site is considerable more visible and I am not sure the stealth design proposed is a good concept.”



Section 7.Z requires the applicant to “provide a written copy of an analysis, completed by a qualified individual or organization, to determine if the Tower . . . requires lighting” under Federal Aviation Administration regulations. The Application includes no such analysis.

Section 11.B requires that the applicant “submit documentation justifying the total height of any Tower, Facility and/or Antenna and the basis therefor.” No such documentation is included in the Application; the Application simply states that “The . . . height is a result of radio frequency engineer design to optimize cellular and E911 services for the area.”

The Guidelines require that an applicant “Provide a detailed written analysis that describes how the proposed [facility] complies with all the requirements in the [Ordinance], which includes without limitation the [Ordinance] location and design requirements and federal and state law, as applicable” The Application contains no such analysis.

Fall Down Zone Exceeds Required Setback

Section 15.A requires that towers be “set back from abutting parcels, recorded rights-of-way and road and street lines” by at least 110% of the height of the tower. In the case of the proposed 75’ tower, that would be 82.5’. I refer to a circle centered on the tower and having a radius of 82.5’ as the “**Fall Down Zone**.” The proposed tower would sit in the center of a 40’ by 40’ leased parcel. So, the Fall Down Zone would exceed the perimeter of the leased area in every direction. Based on a plat included in the Application, to the northwest the Fall Down Zone would encroach on a 7’ public utility easement and exceed the lessor’s property line by 40’ and to the south would also exceed the lessor’s property line. In fact, to the northwest, the Fall Down Zone not only encroaches onto Tierra Madre Road but extends all the way across the road and onto property on the other side of that road.

Alternative Site Requirements Not Met

Section 7.G requires that an applicant for a new tower “submit a written report demonstrating its meaningful efforts to secure shared use of existing Tower(s) or the use of alternative buildings or other structures within the County. Copies of written requests and responses for shared use shall be provided to the County in the Application, along with any letters of rejection stating the reason for rejection.” No such report is included in the Application.

Section 9.A of the Ordinance requires applicants to locate facilities in the following order of priority:

- Existing towers
- On County-owned properties
- In areas zoned for heavy industrial use
- In areas zoned for commercial use
- In areas zoned for agricultural use
- In areas zoned for residential use

Section 9.B provides that “If the proposed site is not proposed for the highest priority listed above, then a detailed explanation must be provided as to why a site of a higher priority was not selected. The person seeking such an exception must satisfactorily demonstrate the reason or reasons why such a permit should be granted for the proposed site, and the hardship that would be incurred by the Applicant if the permit were not granted for the proposed site.” The proposed site is zoned for commercial use. The Application gives no reasons why an existing tower, a County-owned property or an area zoned for heavy industrial use was not selected.

Section 9.C provides that “An Applicant may not by-pass sites of higher priority by stating the site proposed is the only site leased or selected. An Application shall address co-location as an option. If such option is not proposed, the applicant must explain to the reasonable satisfaction of the County why co-location is Commercially or otherwise Impracticable. Agreements between providers limiting or prohibiting co-location shall not be a valid basis for any claim of Commercial Impracticability or hardship.” The definition of Commercial Impracticability in Section 5.8 says that “The inability to achieve a satisfactory financial return on investment or profit, standing alone, shall not deem a situation to be ‘commercial[ly] impracticable’ and shall not render an act or the terms of an agreement “commercially impracticable.”” Section 10.A provides that “Locating on existing Towers or other structures without increasing height, shall be preferred by the County, as opposed to the construction of a new Tower.” The Guidelines similarly provide that an applicant “must provide a detailed written analysis that describes how the proposed [facility] complies with all the requirements in the [Ordinance] of all the alternative locations and designs considered before the applicant submits [the] application.”

The applicant here apparently considered co-location on a tower at the Placitas Fire Station on NM 165. No reasons are given in the Application why that would be commercially impracticable. There was an email from a representative of the

applicant to County staff on October 11, 2023 that states, apparently with respect to the Fire Station site, “Unfortunately, we were not able to finalize a lease agreement.” The Application states, summarily, that “Many other locations were reviewed but eliminated due to lack of property interest, ordinance limitations and line of site connectivity to surrounding sites” and that “There are no colocation opportunities that will service Verizon’s needs in the area.” No further explanation or analysis is provided.

Section 10.A further provides that “The Applicant shall submit a comprehensive report inventorying existing Towers and other suitable structures within four (4) miles of the location of any proposed new Tower, unless the Applicant can show that some other distance is more reasonable and demonstrate conclusively why an existing Tower or other suitable structure cannot be used.” Similarly, the Guidelines require that an alternatives analysis include a map showing all existing wireless facilities in the general geographic area, all locations for each alternative considered, and, for each alternative site considered, details of attempts to inquire of the property owner about interest a lease or other agreement to use the property for a wireless facility, when such attempts were made and the response, if any received from the property owner. The Guidelines go on to say that the applicant must include information about the factual reasons why the applicant considered the alternative site location unacceptable infeasible or unavailable and that the analysis must include “a meaningful comparative analysis and such technical information and other factual justification as are necessary to document the reasons why each alternative is unacceptable, infeasible [or] unavailable Conclusory statements that a particular alternative is unacceptable, infeasible [or] unavailable . . . will be deemed incomplete.” Except for the conclusory sentence noted above, the Application contains no such report or analysis as to the unacceptability, infeasibility or unavailability of the Fire Station site or any other possible alternative sites. The maps included in the Application note some but not all existing wireless transmission sites in the geographic area of the proposed site. For example, they do not include the T-Mobile transmitter at the water tank in the Ranchos de Placitas subdivision (which is easily found on internet cellular tower search websites) that is only 1.28 miles from the proposed tower site. The applicant seems also not to have considered the hilltop water tank in the Homesteads subdivision, which is even closer to the proposed tower site and whose elevation substantially exceeds that of the proposed tower.

Relief Not Justified

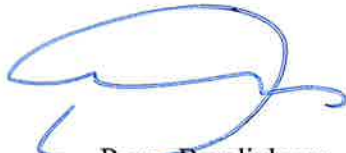
As detailed above: (i) the Application fails to address a majority of the application requirements set out in the Ordinance; (ii) the Fall Down Zone substantially

exceeds the required setbacks; (iii) the applicant has made only a cursory effort to identify alternative sites; and (iv) the applicant has provided almost no information as to why alternative sites are unsuitable.

Section 32 makes provision for relief, waiver, or exemption with respect to a new facility, but only so long as the request for relief or exemption is contained in the original application. The Application contains no such request. That Section goes on to provide that “the burden of proving the need for the requested relief, waiver or exemption is solely on the Applicant to prove. . . . No such relief or exemption shall be approved unless the Applicant demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that, if granted the relief, waiver or exemption will have no significant affect [sic] on the health, safety and welfare of the County [or] its residents.” The encroachment of the Fall Down Zone on a public road, the adverse visual impact of the proposed tower, and the adverse effect on property values on homeowners in the area are all significant adverse effects.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that you not provide any relief, waiver, or exemption in this case and that you deny the applicant’s request for a conditional use permit.

Sincerely yours,



Perry Bendicksen

From: [Pat Stanley](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Saturday, May 9, 2026 4:34:21 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

I chose Placitas more than 20 years ago for the unobstructed views, the night skies, the open spaces — the sense that this is a place where things stay at human scale. What I have watched over those two decades is a community that has worked deliberately to keep that character intact. This application asks the County to undo some of that work.

Start with where this tower landed. The applicant's own materials show they began at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, which your rules rank as much-preferred. When that lease fell through over terms, they pivoted directly to a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area. That is the lowest rung of your six-step siting ladder. I have not found any documented review of industrial or commercial sites in between, and no real analysis of why Verizon's own towers at 3.6 and 3.74 miles away cannot be upgraded or shared instead. What troubles me more is that the application skips an alternative entirely: small cells on existing utility poles and structures. I see those small antennas across Placitas — that is how T-Mobile delivers noticeably better coverage than Verizon in this area, using the same technology Verizon has available locally. Your four-mile inventory rule asks the applicant to look at "other suitable structures." Utility poles, streetlights, rooftops plainly fit that language. The application looks at none of them.

What sits directly adjacent to the proposed tower is not vacant land. It is Homestead Plaza — the community market, art gallery, restaurant with outdoor seating, speakeasy, and concert venue. The restaurant's patio, where families sit to eat dinner and listen to music on summer evenings, would sit directly underneath a 75-foot industrial structure. The applicant's own correspondence indicates this placement was driven by the property owner's preference to keep the rest of the parcel available for retail development — not by coverage need or any technical reason. That is fundamentally incompatible with what we have built in that space.

The County zoned this parcel specifically for a shopping center in 2010 and attached binding conditions to this exact location. The application treats the zoning in general terms and never engages with those parcel-specific requirements. One requires a Site Development Plan separately approved by Planning and Zoning — I do not see one in the application materials. Another requires mechanical equipment to be screened from NM-165 and from abutting residential properties; the compound sits right on the highway with homes on three sides. A third condition requires outdoor light fixtures limited to sixteen feet, shielded downward, with no spill onto neighboring homes. The application does not disclose what lights, if any, will be on a 75-foot tower at night, or include the FAA evaluation the rules require to determine whether any lighting is even necessary at this specific height. Without that evaluation, compliance with the lighting rules already binding this parcel is unverified.

A 75-foot tower visible from homes throughout this area affects property values. Peer-reviewed studies document significant losses on homes with visible exposure to cellular towers. The aggregate impact across the nearby homes that would see this structure is estimated at roughly \$24 million — a real cost borne by this community.

The County's rules place the burden of proof on the applicant to demonstrate compliance. I do not see that burden met here — not in the site selection, not in the engagement with the binding parcel-specific conditions, and not in addressing the alternative already proven to work across this area.

I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Robert P Stanley
10 TIERRA MADRE CT

Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Pat Stanley](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 9:04:12 AM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

I moved to Placitas more than 20 years ago because of what this place is — open desert, mountain air, wild horses, a sky you can actually see at night. People come here to retire specifically because it still feels like the high desert rather than the suburban edge of Albuquerque. A 75-foot industrial monopole at the gateway to Placitas contradicts everything that draws people here and everything the community has worked to protect.

The site-selection record is the thing I keep coming back to. The applicant's own materials show they started at the County Fire Station — County-owned property, which the County's rules rank as strongly preferred. When the lease fell through over terms, they landed directly on a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area — the lowest rung on the County's six-step siting ladder — with no documented review of commercial or industrial options in between. The County's own rules say "couldn't get a lease" isn't a sufficient reason to skip higher-priority categories, and yet that is precisely what happened here. Beyond the priority-ladder problem, the application skips an alternative entirely: small cells on existing utility poles, building facades, and rooftops. The County's four-mile inventory rule asks for a survey of existing towers *and other suitable structures* — that language plainly covers the infrastructure small cells use. T-Mobile delivers noticeably better service across Placitas through exactly that approach. The application says nothing about it.

Reading through the application, it also treats this parcel as plain CD-WP zoning without ever acknowledging the more specific set of rules the County adopted for it when it was zoned for a shopping center. Those rules require a separate Site Development Plan approved by Planning and Zoning, mechanical-equipment screening from the highway and from adjacent residential properties, and ten percent landscaping with automatic watering. None of those requirements are addressed in the materials filed. The parcel-specific rules exist; the application doesn't engage with them.

On property values: the homes near this site are what people bought specifically to retire into. Peer-reviewed research documents meaningful losses on homes with visible exposure to a tower. That cost lands here, on the people who chose this community precisely for what it looks like.

The County's rules place the burden of proof on the applicant. That burden is not met in these materials, and the application should be denied.

Sincerely,

Robert Stanley
10 TIERRA MADRE CT
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Russ Batchelor](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 5:51:54 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

Six years ago I bought a home in Placitas specifically to get away from industrial visual clutter — towers, billboards, the built-up skyline that follows you everywhere in a city. The open desert landscape here, with nothing breaking the horizon except rock and sky, was the reason I chose this place over every other option I had.

A 75-foot monopole changes that for the entire community. From every window facing NM-165, from every car pulling into Placitas, from the patio at Homestead Plaza where neighbors eat dinner and gather for outdoor concerts, that tower becomes the new landmark — and not by choice. The applicant's own reviewer noted the chosen location is "considerably more visible" than the earlier candidate site. Calling the design "stealth" changes the shape; it doesn't change the height, and at 75 feet it towers over everything in the area. The application doesn't include photo simulations from the vantage points residents actually use or a map showing which homes and roads would have direct sightlines to it. Without that, the Commission has no way to evaluate what the community is actually being asked to accept.

The site-selection record gives me equal concern. The applicant tried the County Fire Station first — County-owned property, a higher-priority category under the County's own rules — and when the lease talks broke down, they settled on a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area, which is the lowest priority on the County's list. The rules explicitly say that "this is the only site we could lease" is not a valid reason to skip higher-priority locations. That is exactly the pattern here. And the application never looks at small antennas on existing utility poles, building facades, or other structures already standing within four miles — the very infrastructure the County's inventory rule reaches under "other suitable structures." The carrier with the best service in Placitas already delivers it through small cells on existing infrastructure. The application doesn't tell me why the answer here has to be a new 75-foot tower instead.

One line in the applicant's RF deck also stayed with me. Among the stated objectives for this site is "Offload surrounding sites in area." That is a Verizon-network purpose — reducing load on towers elsewhere — not something Placitas asked for. The visual impact on our landscape, the effect on property values for the roughly 555 nearby homes with sightlines to the site, and the industrial structure hanging over the gathering place my neighbors use every week — all of that lands here, while part of the stated benefit goes to Verizon's network somewhere else.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Russel Batchelor
103 Diamond Tail Rd
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Sandra Randel](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 3:39:59 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

When I bought my home on Calle Cacto one year ago, I paid over three-quarters of a million dollars. I made that choice deliberately — Placitas is natural, unspoiled, and the property itself is exceptional. A tower visible from my living room windows, my terrace, and my second-floor balcony is going to be a material fact for every buyer who walks through that door when I sell.

The research on this is not ambiguous. Peer-reviewed studies consistently document meaningful losses in home value where cellular towers are visible from the property. For a home at my price point, even a modest percentage reduction runs to tens of thousands of dollars — a cost I never agreed to absorb when I purchased here. And that cost doesn't fall on Verizon or the tower company. It falls on me, and on my neighbors, quietly, without compensation.

The scale of this across our community is worth the Commission's attention. Across the homes in Placitas that would carry a visible tower on their horizon, the aggregate estimated loss runs into the tens of millions of dollars. That is not a small externality. It is a large, permanent financial burden distributed across hundreds of families who made no choice to host this structure and will receive nothing in return.

The County's rules allow the Commission to weigh unacceptable risk to residents. I would ask: what is the threshold at which a demonstrated financial harm to hundreds of homeowners becomes unacceptable? The application doesn't answer that. It doesn't engage with property values at all. The applicant has the burden to demonstrate this proposal is right for our community — not just technically permissible, but right. That case has not been made.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Sandra Ann Randel
5 Calle Cacto
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Sandra Randel](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 3:55:39 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

I bought my home in Placitas one year ago because of the views. The house sits on a hill with a two-story living room — floor-to-ceiling windows, a terrace, a balcony — all of it facing the direction where this tower would stand. Those windows are why I chose this house. They would be why any future buyer would choose it too. A 75-foot structure rising above everything in the surrounding landscape changes what those windows look at, permanently.

The plan our community helped write asks that viewsheds and the character of this area be protected. A 75-foot tower at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 — right next to Homestead Plaza, the gateway to Placitas — would be the tallest thing for miles, visible from homes on every side and from every car coming in. No visual-impact assessment is included in the application, and no Zone of Visibility map shows which neighborhoods would be affected. Those are things the County's rules require the applicant to provide. Without them, neither residents nor the Commission can evaluate what the actual visual footprint of this proposal would be.

The application also has other gaps I cannot get past. The more specific set of rules the County adopted for this parcel — when it zoned it for a shopping center — doesn't appear anywhere in the application's framing. The applicant describes the zoning as plain CD-WP and never ties the proposed design to those parcel-specific conditions. The 8-foot coyote fence around the ground equipment would screen the mechanical components, but it does not conceal a 75-foot tower above it, which is what residents on three sides and anyone driving NM-165 will actually see. Beyond that, the application doesn't include an FAA evaluation showing whether any lighting is required at this height, and there is no setback diagram demonstrating the tower meets the height-plus-ten-percent standard from each abutting property line and road. The County's own rules place the burden of demonstrating compliance on the applicant — not on residents to disprove it.

I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Sandra Ann Randel
5 Calle Cacto
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Sandra Randel](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 4:03:31 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Commissioners,

I have lived in Placitas for 1 year — long enough to know why I chose it and exactly what I would lose from my living room windows, my balcony, and the second-floor bedrooms if a 75-foot industrial monopole goes up at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165. I moved here because of what this place looks like. The tower would be the tallest structure for miles, planted at the entrance to a neighborhood of custom homes, visible from virtually every window that faces west.

Homestead Plaza sits directly adjacent to the proposed site, and it is where this community actually gathers — outdoor dinners, concerts, the market, the art gallery. The restaurant's patio would sit beneath the base of the proposed structure. Whatever the applicant says about a stealth canister design, a 75-foot painted-brown monopole is not concealed: it is just a different shape of the same height. The County is supposed to find that a proposed use preserves the character of the area. I do not see how a 75-foot industrial structure over that patio clears that bar.

On location: the County's siting rules put existing towers and structures first, County-owned property second, then industrial and commercial zones — with residential areas at the very bottom of the list. The applicant started at the Fire Station, County-owned and second on the list. When the lease talks broke down, they ended up at a vacant lot in a residential area — the last category — without showing what they considered in between. The rules also say that "this was the only site we could lease" is not an acceptable reason to skip higher-priority locations. That is precisely the pattern here. And the application is silent on the alternative the carrier with the strongest service in Placitas already uses: small antennas on existing poles, facades, and streetlights — exactly what the County's four-mile inventory rule covers under the wording "other suitable structures." None of that infrastructure appears in the application.

On property values: peer-reviewed research documents real losses to homes with direct sightline exposure to cell towers. My home has that exposure — living room, balcony, second-floor bedrooms — and so do many of my neighbors'. Once a tower like this is approved, federal rules require the County to accept certain future modifications without a public hearing. The conditions written at this approval travel with it. That is exactly why this hearing is the moment to say no.

I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Sandra Ann Randel
5 Calle Cacto
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Sandra Ryan](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Friday, May 8, 2026 6:47:09 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

We chose Placitas deliberately three years ago. We came for the open desert landscape, the sense of space, and the feeling that this community had protected something worth protecting. What troubles me about the proposed tower is not just what it would do to what we see — it is that the application appears to have bypassed the careful rules the County itself has written for this exact parcel.

When the County zoned this lot for a shopping center in 2010, it attached specific binding conditions to this location. Those conditions require outdoor light fixtures to be limited to sixteen feet, shielded so light projects downward, with no spill onto neighboring homes. They require mechanical equipment to be screened from the state highway and from abutting residential properties. The application describes the zoning in general terms and never engages with those parcel-specific conditions at all. Aircraft warning lights on a 75-foot tower cannot meet the lighting standards already in place on this parcel. The application does not tell me what lights will actually be on this structure at night, or how the applicant plans to comply with rules that are binding here. That gap is the applicant's to close, and I do not see it closed in the materials filed.

What sits directly next to where this tower would stand is not vacant land. Homestead Plaza is a working community gathering place — a market, gallery, restaurant with outdoor seating, speakeasy, and a venue for outdoor concerts. The restaurant's patio, where people sit to eat dinner and listen to music on summer evenings, would sit directly underneath a 75-foot industrial structure. An industrial tower placed above where our community gathers is simply not compatible with what we have built in that space.

I am also concerned about what a tower visible from homes throughout this area would do to property values. Peer-reviewed studies document that homes with visible exposure to cellular towers experience significant losses. Across the roughly 555 homes that would have sight lines to this tower, the aggregate estimated impact is around \$24 million. We chose to build our lives here deliberately. That matters, especially when a large portion of the Placitas community (those of us east of the S-curve) will reap no benefit to their current cell signal.

The County's job is to find that this proposal preserves the character of our community. A 75-foot industrial tower at the gateway to Placitas — dominating the open desert landscape, placed directly above the community gathering place — does not preserve that character. Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Sandra Ryan
124 Diamond Tail Rd
Placitas, NM

Sent from my iPhone

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [saraskycat](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Friday, May 8, 2026 10:29:02 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

I have lived in Placitas for more than 30 years. I came here for the open desert I see from my back deck, and I have stayed because of what this place is. When I look east from that deck, I see the rise where the proposed tower would stand. A 75-foot structure on that horizon changes what I look at every day, for the rest of my life.

But the visual impact is only part of what concerns me. The location itself reveals something troubling about how this application was built. The applicant tried the County Fire Station first — that is County-owned property, which the County's rules rank as second-highest priority for a tower. When the lease fell through over terms, they jumped directly to a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area, which sits at the very bottom of the County's six-rung priority ladder. The application contains no documented review of industrial or commercial sites in between, and no real analysis of why the multiple existing towers already within a few miles — including Verizon's own sites at 3.6 and 3.74 miles — cannot accommodate what is needed. The County's rules explicitly prohibit using "this is the only site we could lease" as justification for skipping higher-priority locations. That language exists because of exactly this pattern. The applicant has the burden to show they looked at the right alternatives, and I do not see that burden met in the materials filed.

What sits directly next to where this tower would stand is not vacant land — it is Homestead Plaza, a working community gathering place. People eat dinner on the restaurant patio there. In summer, residents sit outside and listen to concerts. A 75-foot industrial tower placed directly above that space is not compatible with what we have built in that corner. The County's rules ask whether a proposed use preserves the character and integrity of a neighborhood. An industrial structure overshadowing a community gathering place answers that question plainly.

I am also deeply concerned about what this tower would cost us. Peer-reviewed studies document that homes with visible exposure to cellular towers experience significant property-value losses. Across the roughly 555 homes that would see this tower, the aggregate estimated impact is around \$24 million. We chose to live here deliberately. When it comes time to sell, or when my neighbors sell theirs, that matters.

Beyond all this, the application appears incomplete. The County zoned this exact parcel for a shopping center in 2010 and attached specific binding conditions — outdoor light fixtures limited to sixteen feet, shielded downward, with no spill onto neighboring homes. The application does not tell me what lights will actually be on a 75-foot tower at night, or how aircraft warning lights — which by their nature are visible from above and the sides — could possibly comply with rules already in place. That is a gap the applicant has the burden to close, and I do not see it closed in the materials filed.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

SaraMills
06 Trace Ct
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Thomas Martin](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 2:55:43 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

My husband and I have owned our lot in Apache Mesa for about seven years and are now building our home there. From the north-facing side of our property, across NM-165, we would look directly at the location where this tower is proposed to stand. Nothing in the surrounding landscape comes close to 75 feet. The homes on both sides of the highway are single-story, set on large lots, with the Sandia foothills as the backdrop. That is what we bought into, and it is what this tower would permanently change.

On site selection, the record concerns me. The applicant started at the County Fire Station — which sits high on the County's own priority list for new tower locations — and when the lease talks didn't come together, they landed on a vacant lot in a residential-zoned area, the category the County lists last. I cannot find in the application any account of what was looked at between those two points: no industrial sites, no commercial properties, no walk through the priorities in the middle. The County's rules say "this was the only site we could lease" is not a sufficient reason to skip the higher-priority categories, yet that appears to be exactly the pattern here. The application also says nothing about small cells — small antennas on existing utility poles, building facades, and other structures that are already how the carrier with the best service in Placitas delivers that service. The County's four-mile inventory rule asks the applicant to account for existing towers and other suitable structures; the application doesn't look at that infrastructure at all.

Several specific things the County's rules require are absent from the materials. The application does not include the FAA evaluation that would show whether any lighting is required at this height. It does not include a setback diagram demonstrating the proposed tower meets the height-plus-ten-percent standard from each abutting property line and road. And the application describes the zoning here as plain CD-WP, without acknowledging the more specific set of rules the County adopted for this parcel when it zoned it for a shopping center — rules the proposed design never ties itself to.

We chose this place deliberately, and the view from our property will reflect this decision for as long as the tower stands. The applicant carries the burden of showing this is the right site under the County's own standards. That showing has not been made. Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Thomas Leland Martin
6 Morning Star Court
Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [tom nelson](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Friday, May 8, 2026 7:19:34 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

Two years ago, my wife and I moved to Placitas because we wanted to live somewhere different — somewhere we could step outside and actually see the land. We looked at the open desert, the scale of the landscape, the way nothing here dominates the horizon, and we decided this was where we belonged. We paid for that view. We chose it deliberately.

From everywhere on our property — the house, the patio, the driveway — I can see directly across at the rise where the proposed tower would stand. A 75-foot monopole in that location would be the tallest structure visible from our home and from dozens of others nearby. In a place where we came specifically because nothing had been carved up by industrial structures, that tower would dominate every sightline. It would be the first thing visitors see coming into Placitas at the corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 — the gateway to this community. That is not what the County's rules contemplate for a residential-zoned area, and it is not what we moved here to protect.

But what troubles me more is what the application actually contains — and what it does not. The County zoned this exact parcel in 2010 specifically for a shopping center, and it attached binding conditions to that lot: outdoor light fixtures limited to sixteen feet, shielded downward, with no spill onto neighboring homes. The application describes the zoning in general terms and never addresses those conditions at all. It does not tell me what lights will actually be on a 75-foot tower at night, or how aircraft warning lights — which by their nature are visible from above and the sides — could possibly meet a sixteen-foot shielded standard that is already binding here. That is a gap the applicant has the burden to close, and I do not see it closed in the materials filed. The same 2010 ordinance requires a Site Development Plan, approved by Planning and Zoning, before any future development on this parcel. I do not see one in the application either.

What is also striking is how this site was chosen in the first place. The applicant's own record shows they tried the County Fire Station first — that is County-owned property, which the County's rules rank as the second-highest priority for a tower. When that lease fell through, they jumped directly to this vacant lot in a residential area, which sits at the very bottom of the County's six-rung siting ladder. The rules establish clear priorities: existing towers first, then County property, then industrial zones, then commercial, then agricultural, and residential last. The applicant has skipped from second to sixth. I have not found in the application any documented review of the industrial or commercial categories that sit in between, or any analysis of why the multiple existing towers already standing within a few miles of here — including Verizon's own sites at 3.6 and 3.74 miles — cannot accommodate what is needed instead. The County's rules actually prohibit an applicant from bypassing higher-priority sites by claiming "this is the only one we could lease." The applicant carries the burden to show they looked at the right alternatives, and that burden is not met in the materials filed.

What sits directly adjacent to where this tower would stand is not empty land. It is Homestead Plaza — a working community gathering place with a market, art gallery, restaurant with outdoor seating, speakeasy, and a venue for outdoor concerts. The restaurant's patio, where people sit to eat dinner and listen to music on summer evenings, would sit directly underneath this structure. An industrial tower placed above where our community gathers is simply not compatible with what we have built in that space.

I am also concerned about what this tower would do to property values in our area. Peer-reviewed studies document that homes with visible exposure to cellular towers experience significant losses. We chose to invest here deliberately. That matters.

Please deny this application.

Sincerely,

Tom Nelson
38 Sage Hill Drive
Placitas, NM

Sent from my iPhone

This message is originated from an external organization

From: [Tony Hull](#)
To: [Doraida Arias](#)
Subject: Opposition to CU-26-001
Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026 3:01:07 PM

Re: Application CU-26-001

Dear Members of the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission,

Every day I drive past Homestead Plaza — the community market, the gallery, the restaurant where neighbors gather on the patio on summer evenings. I moved to Placitas more than 20 years ago because of the quiet mountain character of this place. The corner of Tierra Madre and NM-165 is our town's front door, and that patio sits directly below where this tower would stand. A 75-foot industrial monopole at the community's gateway is not a neutral addition — it is the first and last thing every resident and visitor sees, and it would loom over the one outdoor gathering space we have.

The site-selection record troubles me as much as the visual one. The applicant tried the County Fire Station first — County-owned property, ranked among the preferred locations under the County's own rules. When that lease fell through over terms, they went directly to a residential-zoned lot, the lowest-priority category in the County's six-rung siting order, with no documented review of the commercial, industrial, or agricultural options in between. The rules specifically say that "this was the only site we could lease" is not an acceptable reason to skip over higher-priority locations. The application also skips a real, locally-observable alternative: small cells on existing utility poles, building facades, and rooftops. The County's rules ask the applicant to inventory existing towers *and other suitable structures* within four miles and conclusively show none of them works. Small-cell infrastructure — exactly the kind of existing structure that language reaches — is how the carrier with the best service in Placitas already delivers that service, without any new tower. The application does not look at it at all.

The application also ignores the parcel-specific rules the County adopted in 2010 when it zoned this lot for a shopping center. Those rules require a Site Development Plan separately approved by Planning and Zoning, mechanical-equipment screening from NM-165 and from abutting residential properties, and ten-percent landscaping with automatic watering. The proposed fenced gravel compound in the southwest corner of the parcel does not address any of those conditions. The burden of demonstrating compliance is on the applicant, and I do not see it met.

The homes near this site — including properties that were chosen precisely because of what this gateway looks like — will look at this structure every day. I am asking the Commission to deny this application.

Sincerely,

Tony Hull
Adjunct Professor of Physics and Astronomy
University of New Mexico

21 Algodon Lane

Placitas, NM

This message is originated from an external organization