



TOWN OF
VIENNA
since 1890

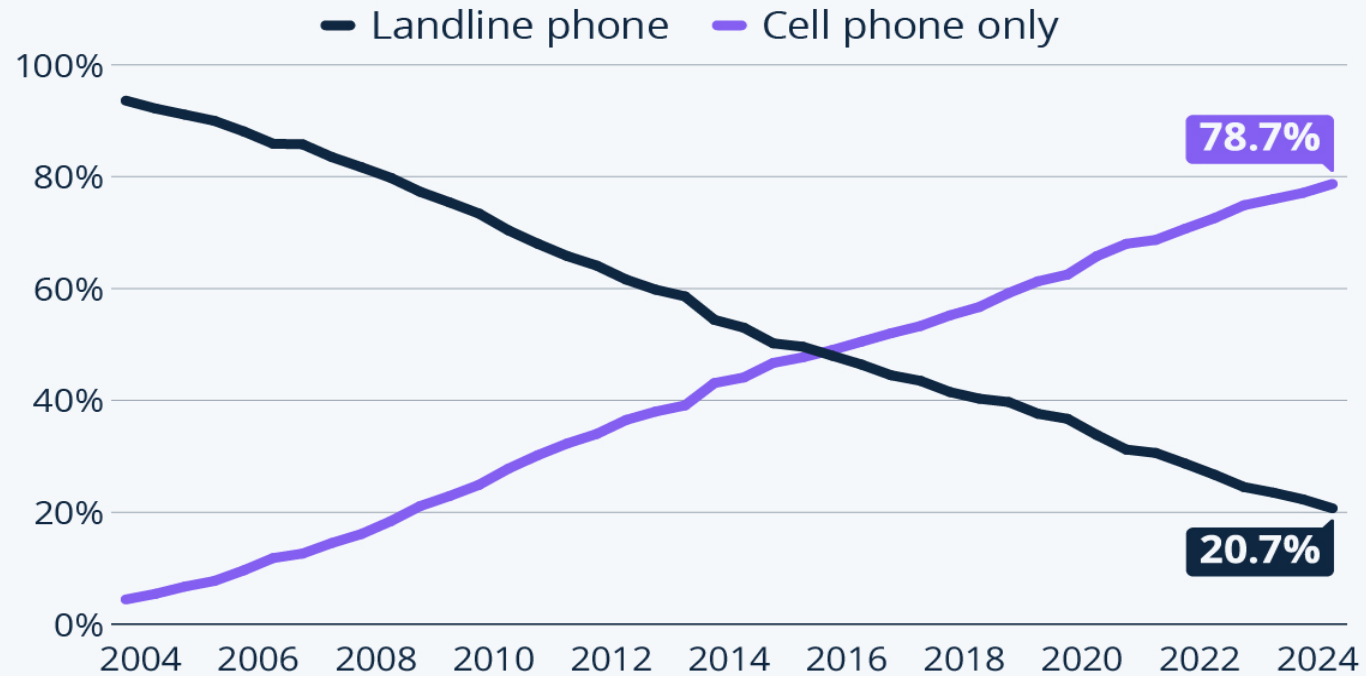
Improving Wireless Communications in Vienna

Town Council
Work Session

May 11, 2026

Landline Phones Are a Dying Breed

Share of U.S. adults living in households with/without a working landline telephone*



* Based on the CDC's biannual National Health Interview Survey of 15,000+ U.S. households
Source: CDC

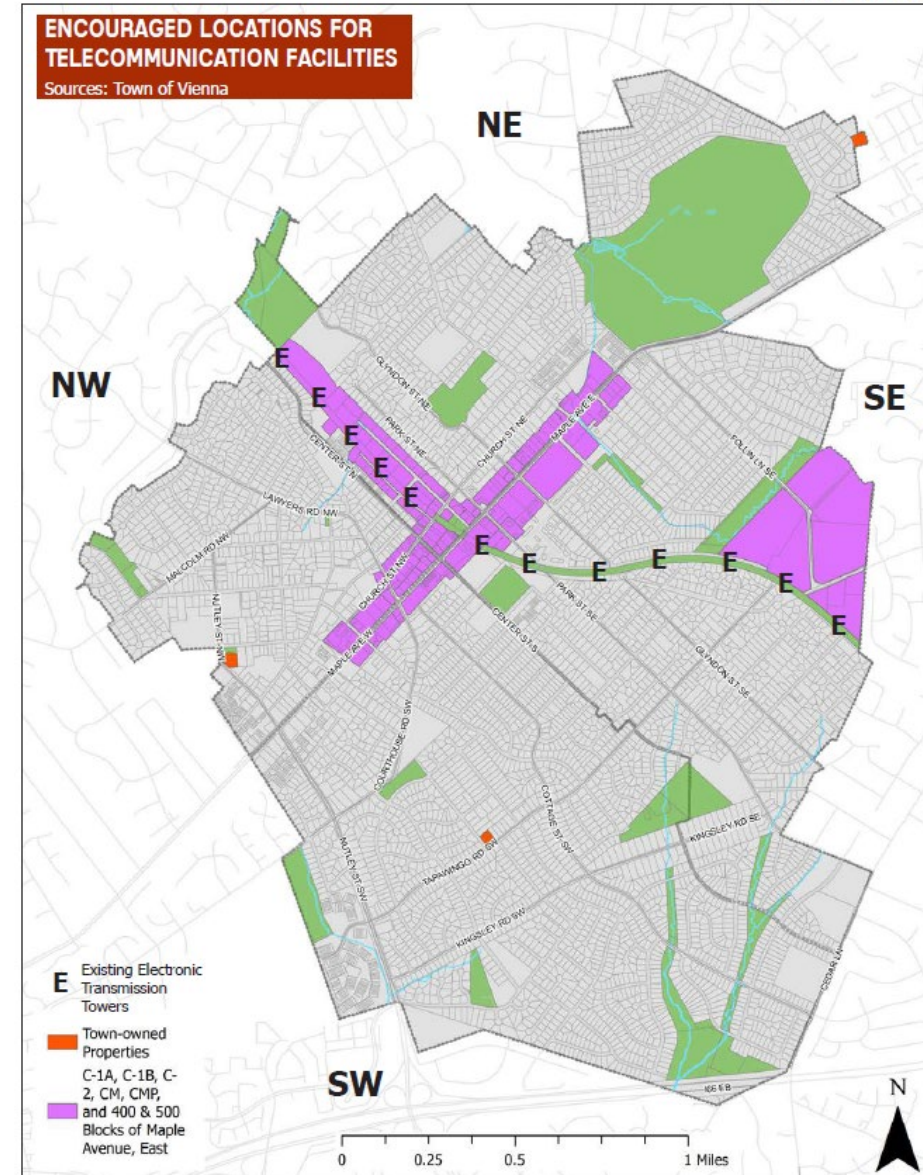


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2015 Comprehensive Plan

Encouraged Locations for Telecommunications Facilities.

Note: This map was also in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan.



Vienna Regulations: Wireless Infrastructure

- All installations are Conditional Use Permits, except in the rights-of-way.
 - Review/approval by BZA and BAR.
- Maximum height of free-standing structures (e.g., towers) are the same as maximum heights of buildings per zone.
 - 35-45 feet, depending on zone.
- The Town has historically allowed antennae on rooftops to exceed the maximum building height.
 - Under Current Code - 9 extra feet.
- Town has allowed co-locations on tall structures, e.g., Water Tower.
 - Town would permit installation on transmission towers along W&OD Trail, but there have been no proposals.



Vienna Compared to Other Local Governments

- Attachment 2 includes chart comparing nearby localities.
- Vienna, Falls Church and Herndon treat all installations as special exceptions (CUPs).
- Fairfax County, Fairfax City, Arlington, Alexandria and Leesburg all have some installations to be administrative (by-right, if it meets all zoning), but taller ones (e.g., towers) to be special exceptions.
- Vienna has the lowest maximum heights. Second lowest is Falls Church. Others allow much higher, permitting towers in at least some zones.
- All jurisdictions require architectural review for some installations, though some require it only for designated districts.



Code of Virginia – Article 7.2 (Attachment 3)

- Requires all installations 50 feet or less in height (with a few exceptions) to be administratively reviewed.
- 2026 bill (HB 277) narrowed the scope of when a local government may reject an application – special focus on co-located facilities and proposals within 30 feet of an approved facility.

U.S. Federal Communications Commission

- September 26, 2018: Declaratory Ruling and Third Report and Order, 18-133.
- Urges/requires rapid review and, in most cases, approval of proposals for investments in wireless infrastructure.
- The Town has never been challenged using FCC rulings.

Options for Town Council

- Amend code to permit applications to be reviewed administratively if no higher than 50 feet (per Code of Virginia), and all other provisions of Article 7.2, including newly adopted ones.
- Consider height limits for installations and locations for those height limits.
- Consider whether to make Town-owned land available for wireless infrastructure.
- Consider the role of the Board of Architectural Review in the process.

