



## **GUIDE TO THE MARIN COUNTY TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES POLICY PLAN APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST**

Telecommunications facilities are typically permitted subject to Design Review and Use Permit approvals. The administrative process for securing such approvals can be complex and time consuming. To facilitate preparation and review of telecommunications applications, the Community Development Agency has prepared this guide to provide industry representatives, community members, and County decision makers with an understanding of the issues, policies, and criteria which will be evaluated during review of telecommunications facilities.

The attached checklist must be completed and submitted with an application for a new or changes to an existing telecommunications facility.

### **ISSUES**

The County has a long tradition of protecting the important natural and built environments which define Marin. To this end, the County has adopted a comprehensive Countywide Plan and specific community plans which provide for housing and economic development for County residents while also protecting ridgelines, open space and sensitive environmental areas, the unique aesthetic qualities of the Marin communities, and the health and safety of its citizens. In 1990, the County adopted the Marin County Telecommunications Facilities Policy Plan (Telecommunications Plan) to identify potential impacts arising from the growth of major telecommunications facilities and to establish appropriate policies, standards, and guidelines that implement the overall goals and objectives of the Countywide Plan. The 1990 Telecommunications Plan was prepared prior to the advent of commercial wireless communications and thus focuses primarily on the anticipated expansion of major telecommunication facilities located in ridgeline areas.

The recent proliferation of commercial wireless facilities and other telecommunications technologies facilities has prompted the County to update the Telecommunications Plan. The update of the Telecommunications Plan sets forth policies and programs that respond to the land use issues and community concerns relating to the commercial wireless networks currently being developed in Marin County.

The basic administrative and land use elements addressed by the Telecommunications Plan include:

- Requirements for materials accompanying permit applications
- Location preferences for telecommunications facilities
- Co-location and clustering of telecommunications facilities
- Electromagnetic frequency radiation
- Lighting, Noise, and traffic
- Roads and accessways
- Vegetation
- Public safety
- Visual Compatibility and facility site design
- Removal of abandoned telecommunications facilities

## PRUDENT AVOIDANCE

The County has experienced a growing community awareness about the perceived health effects from human exposure to electromagnetic frequency radiation (EMF) emitted by the operation of wireless communications facilities. The Telecommunications Plan addresses the potential health effects from EMF radiation by requiring new or expanded wireless communications facilities to meet standards for permissible exposure to EMF as adopted by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). These requirements are consistent with the Federal Communications Facilities Act of 1996 which stipulates that permitting agencies cannot deny or require relocation of a proposed wireless communications facility on the basis of health effects if the facility meets EMF exposure standards adopted by the FCC.

Notwithstanding the County's adoption of federal standards that minimize exposure to EMF, there is continued interest and debate in Marin County about the potential health effects of such exposure. In response to this concern, the County regularly advises service providers that it is prudent to avoid locating new wireless communication facilities in areas that will result in prolonged human exposure to EMF. This advisory policy of "prudent avoidance" is intended to avoid or minimize, where possible, community conflicts over EMF exposure from new or modified telecommunications facilities. The policy is not intended to regulate the location of new wireless communications facilities or otherwise replace or supplement the standards for permissible human exposure to EMF as adopted by the FCC and the County.

## APPLICATION INFORMATION

To facilitate application preparation and review, each telecommunications provider shall complete the attached checklists and submit them with their applications. These checklists require applicants to clearly indicate whether they have submitted information which responds to each of the land use elements described above, and where that information may be found.

## GENERAL STANDARDS - APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Development application shall be accompanied by the following:

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- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. A written description of the technology proposed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. A written description of the type of consumer services to be provided.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. A list of applicant's facilities sites, including location, type, number of antennae, and base transceiver stations for:
- \_\_\_\_\_ Existing Sites
- \_\_\_\_\_ Approved sites not yet constructed
- \_\_\_\_\_ Proposed sites (applications filed and pending) in all County jurisdictions
- \_\_\_\_\_ Anticipated planned sites for new, upgraded and abandoned facilities (applications not yet filed)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. A map (or maps) depicting:
- \_\_\_\_\_ The geographic location and boundaries of all coverage areas (search rings) planned by applicant in all of the County's jurisdictions. (10 copies)
- \_\_\_\_\_ The location of applicant's facilities sites within each coverage area (map symbols and numbers correspond to Item 3). (10 copies)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. A map depicting the coverage area of proposed facility, including all information required by Item 3. (USGS topographic base maps are suggested.) (10 copies)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. As determined by the Director of Community Development, payment, in full, for all costs associated with the peer review of any technical information submitted by applicant, or
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. As determined by the Director of Community Development, payment, in full, for all costs associated with the independent preparation of such information prepared by the County, or consultants to the County.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Graphic and technical information including the following for all submittals:
- \_\_\_\_\_ Site plan, architectural plan, landscape plan and other information as required by Design Review Supplemental Checklist (10 copies)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Radio frequency radiation reports
- \_\_\_\_\_ Visual analysis
- \_\_\_\_\_ Alternative sites analysis, including co-location and shared-location
- \_\_\_\_\_ Additional information which may be required based upon preliminary review of the initial submittal:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Traffic analysis
- \_\_\_\_\_ Noise analysis
- \_\_\_\_\_ Biological assessment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Independent peer review of information submitted by the applicant

**The graphic and technical information listed above shall be prepared by qualified professionals acceptable to the Director of Community Development.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Copies of land use easements or restrictions (including open space and scenic) that encumber the proposed facility site.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Ten (10) copies of any photographs, maps, photosimulations, graphs and charts included as part of the application.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. In addition to the information listed above, the County will require the applicant to enter into a performance agreement(s) as a condition of permit approval for the following:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ a. Removal of the approved facility should it be abandoned
  - \_\_\_\_\_ b. Maintenance of required landscaping
  - \_\_\_\_\_ c. Periodic independent monitoring of EMF emissions from the approved facility by County, paid for by provider \_\_\_\_\_.

LOCATION OF WIRELESS COMMUNICATION FACILITIES

Checklist

All wireless telecommunications facilities shall satisfy, or answer, the conditions or questions listed below. If answering “Yes” refer to appropriate submittal information (e.g., project plans, technical report, etc.). If answering “No” provide explanation as to why the information is not submitted or relevant.

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
1.	Will the proposed facility be sited in a location where it unreasonably interferes with the operation of the Marin County Airport?				
2.	Can the proposed facility be located on:				
	A publicly used structure?				
	A co-location site?				
	A shared location?				
	An industrial site?				
	A commercial site?				
3.	Does the proposed location avoid:				
	Residential areas?				
	Demonstrate prudent avoidance of sensitive receptor sites?				
	Schools and other sensitive receptors relative to EMF issue? (e.g., daycare, hospitals, elderly care, etc.)				
4.	Can the proposed facility be attached or sited adjacent to existing structures?				
5.	Is the proposed facility a monopole?				
6.	Is the proposed monopole facility to be located in:				
	A residential area?				
	An agricultural area?				
	A commercial area?				
	Next to public lands? (e.g., GGNRA, MCOSD, etc.)				

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
	Other areas?				
7.	Have all feasible alternatives to a separate monopole facility been considered?				

#### CO-LOCATION AND SHARED-LOCATION STANDARDS

In order to be considered for approval as a co-location or shared-location site, the application for a proposed wireless communication facility must include, or answer, the following:

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
1.	A graphic and written analysis that identifies all technically feasible sites within the coverage area that would accommodate the proposed service.				
	This analysis shall include information regarding technically feasible alternative sites and/or facility designs that would avoid or minimize adverse effects related to:				
	Land use compatibility				
	Visual resources				
	Public safety				
	Other factors address by CEQA				
2.	A written analysis of the specific factors resulting in selection of the preferred site over the alternatives, including the reasons for not selecting co-location or shared-location sites.				
3.	Are there other existing or planned facilities in the coverage area of the proposed project? (Either owned/operated by applicant or other providers/carriers)				
4.	Are the facilities leases exclusive? Describe.				
5.	Does the design of the co-location or shared-location site promote shared use by different carriers?				

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
6.	Does the design of the co-location or shared-location facilities consolidate future planned facilities?				
7.	Does the application include a request for multiple antenna support structures?				
8.	Does the application include facilities with unutilized space for co-location of other antennas and equipment?				
	For competing carriers?				

#### RADIO FREQUENCY RADIATION

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
1.	Does the proposed facility, operating alone or in conjunction with other telecommunication facilities, exceed the standards established by the Federal Communications Commission for permissible human exposure to radio frequency radiation (RFR)?				
2.	Does the application include an "RFR" report?				
3.	Does the "RFR" report measure the predicted and actual levels of "RFR" radiation emitted by the proposed facility?				

#### LIGHTING

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
1.	Does the application include a detailed lighting plan?				
2.	Is the proposed lighting manually operated, low wattage, hooded and directed downward?				
3.	Is the tower lighting shielded or otherwise directed to minimize light and glare impacts of nearby properties and residents?				

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
4.	Are warning signs lighted by low-wattage fixtures, directed downward and hooded?				

#### ROAD AND ACCESSWAYS

The application must include a description of the facility's access roads and parking areas and must answer the following:

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
1.	Are existing roads and parking areas used to access and service the proposed facilities?				
	If not, why not? _____ _____ _____				
2.	Will any new roads or parking areas be capable of being shared with subsequent telecommunication facilities and/or other permitted uses?				
3.	If any new access roads are to be constructed in agricultural or open space areas, will such road meet the minimum width and surface standards necessary to conform to fire safety and emergency access requirements?				
4.	What is the size of the proposed parking area? _____				
	Is the size of the parking area limited to minimum necessary to accommodate maintenance vehicles?				



VEGETATION

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
1.	Does the application include a landscape plan?				
2.	Does the landscape plan indicate all existing vegetation?				
3.	Does the landscape plan indicate vegetation to be removed or trimmed?				
4.	Does the landscape plan identify proposed plantings by type, size and location?				
5.	Will the proposed landscape screen the proposed facility?				
6.	Will the proposed landscaping contribute to the stabilization of the soils on sloping sites?				
7.	Are the proposed landscape materials native, drought tolerant species compatible with the natural setting of the facility site?				
8.	Is there a plan to protect the existing trees and screening vegetation from damage during construction and operation?				
9.	Is there a revegetation plan?				
10.	Is there an erosion control plan?				
11.	Does the application include a landscape performance and maintenance agreement between the applicant and the County?				

NOISE AND TRAFFIC

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
1.	Does the application identify the location and type of noise generating equipment (generators, air conditioning units, etc.)?				
2.	Does the application include an operation plan that complies with the noise exposure standards of the Marin Countywide Plan (maximum allowable exterior noise level of 60 dB at the property line, maximum interior noise level of 45 dB)?				
3.	Does the application specify the maximum number of vehicle trips required for maintenance and testing?				

VISUAL COMPATIBILITY AND FACILITY SITE DESIGN

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
1.	Does the application include a visual analysis of the proposed facility at full buildout?				
	Does the application describe anticipated future expansion of the proposed facility?				
2.	Does the visual analysis include:				
	A photo montage of the proposed facility?				
	A computer based simulation of the proposed facility?				
	Story poles (or similar techniques) erected on the proposed site?				
3.	Can the proposed facilities be sited or designed to appear as an integral part of the support structure?				
4.	If wall-mounted, can the proposed facilities be integrated with the architectural style and character of the supporting structure?				
5.	Can the proposed facilities be completely screened from view?				

6.	Are the proposed facilities to be located on the front, or most prominent, facade of a structure?				
7.	Are the proposed facilities to be located above the pedestrian line of sight?				
8.	If roof mounted, can the proposed facilities be seen from the street?				
9.	If constructed, would a parapet conceal a roof mounted facility?				
10.	Can support facilities (base stations, equipment cabinets, back-up generators) for building mounted facilities be installed within the existing building envelope?				
	Underground?				
11.	Are the proposed support facilities compatible with the architectural style and construction materials of the surrounding development and/or land use setting?				
12.	If necessary, can the proposed support equipment be painted, screened/fenced, landscaped, or otherwise treated to minimize its visual impact?				
13.	If the proposed facility is to be sited in open space or undeveloped hillside areas that are highly visible, can the facility be designed to resemble natural landscape elements such as rock outcroppings or trees?				
14.	Can the proposed facility be designed as a piece of public area?				
15.	Is the proposed facility to be located on, or near, a historic or architecturally significant structure?				
	If so, can the proposed facility be visually integrated with the architecture of the existing structure?				
16.	Do the proposed facilities interfere with prominent vistas or significant public view corridors?				

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
17.	Do the proposed facilities interfere with views from surrounding residences?				
18.	Do the proposed facilities display any advertising signage or identifying logos?				
19.	Are the proposed facilities to be located adjacent to existing rooftop equipment to avoid visual clutter?				
20.	Does the application demonstrate that the proposed facility has been designed to attain the minimum height from a technical point of view?				
21.	Will the proposed facilities be painted to blend with the structures, vegetation, sky, or landscape against which they will be viewed?				

#### INDEMNIFICATION

		Yes	Page No./ Document No.	No	Explanation
1.	Has the applicant agreed to defend, indemnify, hold harmless the County from any claims, actions, or proceedings?				