Department of Development Services

Paula Daneluk, AICP, Director
Curtis Johnson, Assistant Director

7 County Center Drive
Oroville, California 95965

T: 530.552.3700
F: 530.538.7785

buttecounty.net/dds

BUTTE COUNTY
NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION
KEEFER ROAD WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITY
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA25-0002)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Butte County has prepared an Initial Study in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is considering the adoption of a Negative Declaration for the project described below. The County has prepared this Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration to provide an opportunity for input from public agencies, organizations, and interested parties on the environmental analysis addressing the potential effects of the proposed project. The IS/ND is available for review on the County's website at https://www.buttecounty.net/363/California-Environmental-Quality-Act-CEQ.

Project Information

Project: Keefer Road Wireless Telecommunication Facility (CEQA25-0002)

Location: The project site is at 4007 Keefer Road, on the southwest corner of Keefer Road and Garner Lane, north of Chico; Assessor Parcel Number: 047-600-005

Project Description: Proposal to establish a lease agreement between Butte County and Verizon Wireless for a 50 x 50-foot (2,500 square feet) lease area within a vacant 6.19-acre County-owned property to develop a new wireless communication facility Upon execution of the lease, the applicant, Epic Wireless Group LLC (on behalf of Verizon Wireless), will seek approval of a Conditional Use Permit to construct a wireless telecommunications tower. The proposed tower would be up to 100 feet in height and designed as a monopole, monopine, or faux water tank. The facility would include an equipment shelter to support Verizon Wireless communication systems and allow for future co-location by other wireless carriers. The final tower design will be determined during the review of the Conditional Use Permit.

The Initial Study/Negative Declaration (IS/ND) is on file for public review and comment starting **October 1, 2025,** to **October 30, 2025**. All comments for the IS/ND must be submitted in writing and received by **5:00 pm, Thursday, October 30, 2025**. Written comments may be submitted to the project planner, Rowland Hickel, Senior Planner, Butte County Development Services Department, Planning Division, 7 County Center Drive, Oroville, CA 95965. Phone: (530) 552-3684 Email: rhickel@buttecounty.net. The Butte County Planning Commission will consider the proposed project at a public hearing on a future date to be determined.

PAULA DANELUK, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

INITIAL STUDY AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Title: Keefer Road Wireless Telecommunications Facility Environmental Review (CEQA25-0002)

2. Lead Agency Name and Address: Butte County – Department of Development Services
   Planning Division
   7 County Center Drive
   Oroville, CA 95965

3. Contact Person and Phone Number: Rowland Hickel, Senior Planner
   530.552.3684
   rhickel@buttecounty.net

4. Project Location: The project site is a 2,500 square foot lease area within a 6.19-acre vacant site at 4007 Keefer Road, Chico, California. APN 047-600-005. The site is located at the southwest corner of Keefer Road and Garner Lane, north of Chico.

5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address: Epic Wireless
   c/o Dena Manas
   605 Coolidge Drive
   Folsom, CA 95630

6. General Plan Designation: Public

7. Zoning: Public

8. Description of Project: (Describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

   Project Background

   The applicant had previously applied for a use permit for a telecommunications tower on another property in the area. During the review of that entitlement, the Butte County Board of Supervisors determined it was not an appropriate location. The County hired a consultant to determine whether a tower was needed in the area, and the consultant concluded that it was. Because of the prior denial, the County assisted the applicant in finding an alternative location. After reviewing several possible locations, the Keefer site owned by the County was determined as the most feasible and available. The site is located at the intersection of two arterials on land planned for a future Butte County fire station. The tower may be up to 100' in height to allow for at least three colocations, one of which may be for fire and/or other public/emergency services. The tower would be located on the southern part of the property, with the northern part reserved for the future fire station. Several tower design types are discussed to enable the decision-maker to select the most suitable option. The initial action to be taken on this project is the adoption of a lease to identify the rights of the parties regarding the

placement and use of a tower on the property. Upon adoption of the lease, a use permit and later building permits will be processed.

Project Description

The proposal involves establishing a lease agreement between Butte County and Verizon Wireless for a 50-by-50-foot (2,500 square feet) lease area within a vacant 6.19-acre County-owned property located at 4007 Keefer Road, approximately ¾ mile west of the Chico city limits in unincorporated Butte County. The lease area would be developed as a new wireless telecommunication facility.

Upon execution of the lease, the applicant, Epic Wireless Group LLC (on behalf of Verizon Wireless), will seek approval of a Conditional Use Permit to construct a wireless telecommunications tower. The proposed tower would be up to 100 feet in height and designed as a monopole, monopine, or faux water tank (see photo simulations in Appendix A). The facility would include an equipment shelter to support Verizon Wireless communication systems and allow for future co-location by other wireless carriers. The final tower design will be determined during the Conditional Use Permit review process.

Verizon Wireless plans to install 12 eight-foot antennas, four remote radio units, surge suppressors, and two two-foot microwave dishes on the tower. Ground-mounted equipment would include two radio cabinets on a reinforced concrete pad, a fiber vault, and a multi-meter utility service mounted on an H-frame. A six-foot-high chain-link fence with a 12-foot-wide access gate would enclose the lease area.

A 30 kW standby generator with a 210-gallon diesel fuel tank would be installed on a 5-by-10-foot raised concrete pad. All pervious surfaces within the lease area would be covered with gravel over a weed barrier.

Access to the site would be via Garner Lane, using a new gravel driveway along the property's eastern boundary. Electricity and fiber optic lines would be extended to the facility within the driveway corridor. The facility would be unstaffed and, once operational, would generate approximately one vehicle trip per quarter for routine inspections and maintenance. The generator would be tested for about one hour each month.

Construction is anticipated to begin in late 2025. The facility will operate as part of Verizon Wireless's existing network, with no additional activities proposed under this application. In accordance with Butte County Code Section 24-183(D)(2), new monopoles or towers must be designed to accommodate at least two additional wireless service providers. Under the proposed lease agreement with the County, the project would provide capacity for up to three colocations with associated ground equipment, in addition to Verizon's facilities. The faux water tank design, however, could only accommodate one additional provider within the tank structure without compromising its aesthetics. While equipment for additional carriers could be attached externally, this may affect the visual screening that the faux tank is intended to provide. Ground space associated with the faux tank would be sufficient to accommodate equipment for up to four providers. Any future colocations would be subject to carrier demand and require separate County permits.

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting: (Briefly describe the project's surroundings)

The project site is a 2,500 square foot portion of a vacant 6.19-acre Public parcel. The site is located within the North Chico Specific Plan Overlay Zone (Suburban Residential [SR-1]) and the Airport Overlay Zone (B2 / C). The proposed lease area is located in the southern portion of the parcel and entirely within the Airport Overlay Zone C. The nearest off-site residence is located approximately 220 feet south of the lease area at 14701 Garner Lane.

Direction	General Plan Designation	Zoning	Existing Land Use(s)
North	Very Low Density Residential	VLDR	Single-Family Residential
South	Very Low Density Residential	VLDR	Single-Family Residential
East	Very Low Density Residential	VLDR	Single-Family Residential
West	Very Low Density Residential	VLDR	Single-Family Residential

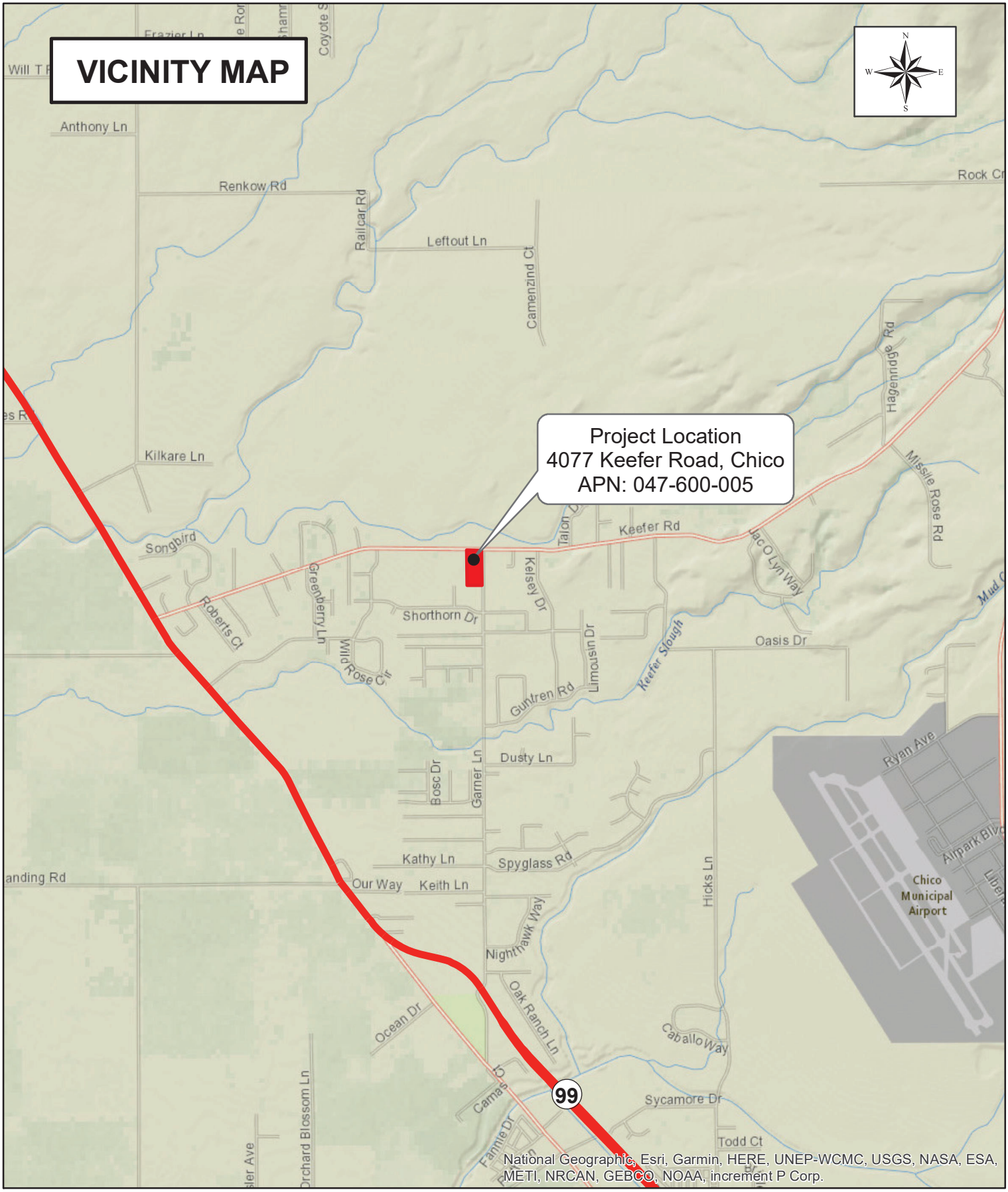
The project would not require municipal services. The site would be accessed via Garner Lane, a two-lane paved street. Site access would require an extension of an unpaved driveway west, then south to the lease area via a 15-foot wide non-exclusive easement.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required: (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement)

    - Federal Communications Commission operating license.
    - Federal Aviation Administration Part 77 approval.

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

    See Discussion 1.18



Legend

- Railroad
- Roads
- Lakes
- Streams

1:35,000

0 1,125 2,250 4,500 6,750 Feet

Verizon Wireless

CEQA25-0002

Lease Area Description

All that certain lease area being a portion of Lot 5, Rancho De Thunder Unit No. 4 as is shown on that certain Subdivision Map filed for record in Book 95 of Maps at Page 80, Official Records of Butte County, being located in the County of Butte, State of California, and being more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at a standard monument in box set at the centerline intersection of Shorthorn Drive and Simmental Drive as is shown on that certain Subdivision Map filed for record at Book 85 of Maps at Page 64, Official Records, from which a similar monument bears North 89°25'12" East 205.78 feet; thence from said point of commencement North 33°25'19" East 680.90 feet to the True Point of Beginning; thence from said point of beginning North 50.00 feet; thence East 50.00 feet; thence South 50.00 feet; thence West 50.00 feet to the point of beginning.

Together with an easement for ingress, egress and utility purposes fifteen feet in width, the centerline of which is described as follows: Beginning at a point which bears East 7.50 feet from the Southeast corner of the above described lease area and running thence North 58.13 feet; thence through a tangent curve to the right having a central radius of 20.00 feet and running through an arc distance of 31.42 feet; thence tangent to the last curve East 177.4 feet more or less to the public right of way.

BOUNDARY SHOWN IS BASED ON MONUMENTATION FOUND AND RECORD INFORMATION. THIS IS NOT A BOUNDARY SURVEY. THIS IS A SPECIALIZED TOPOGRAPHIC MAP WITH PROPERTY LINES AND EASEMENTS BEING A GRAPHIC DEPICTION BASED ON INFORMATION GATHERED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES OF RECORD AND AVAILABLE MONUMENTATION FOUND DURING THE FIELD SURVEY. NO EASEMENTS WERE RESEARCHED OR PLOTTED. PROPERTY LINES AND LINES OF TITLE WERE NOT INVESTIGATED NOR SURVEYED. NO PROPERTY MONUMENTS WERE SET.

THESE DRAWINGS AND/OR THE ACCOMPANYING SPECIFICATION AS INSTRUMENTS OF SERVICE, ARE THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF GEIL ENGINEERING AND THEIR USE AND PUBLICATION SHALL BE RESTRICTED TO THE ORIGINAL SITE AND CARRIER FOR WHICH THEY ARE PREPARED. REUSE, REPRODUCTION OR PUBLICATION BY ANY METHOD, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, IS PROHIBITED EXCEPT BY WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM GEIL ENGINEERING TITLE TO THESE PLANS AND/OR SPECIFICATIONS SHALL REMAIN WITH GEIL ENGINEERING WITHOUT PREJUDICE AND VISUAL CONTACT WITH THEM SHALL CONSTITUTE PRIMA FACIE EVIDENCE OF ACCEPTANCE OF THESE RESTRICTIONS.

Geil Engineering
Engineering * Surveying * Planning
1226 High Street
Auburn, California 95603-5015
Phone: (530) 885-0426 * Fax: (530) 823-1309

VERIZON WIRELESS

Project Name: KEEFER

Project Site Location: 4007 Keefer Road
Oroville, CA 95965
Butte County

Date of Observation: 05-22-24

Equipment/Procedure Used to Obtain Coordinates: Trimble Pathfinder Pro XL post processed with Pathfinder Office software.

Type of Antenna Mount: Proposed Monopole Tower

Coordinates : (NAD83)
Latitude: N 39° 48' 57.34" N 39.815928°
Longitude: W 121° 53' 31.74" W 121.892150°

ELEVATION of Ground at Structure (NAVD88) 205' AMSL

CERTIFICATION: I, the undersigned, do hereby certify elevation listed above is based on a field survey done under my supervision and that the accuracy of those elevations meet or exceed 1-A Standards as defined in the FAA ASAC Information Sheet 91:003, and that they are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Kenneth D. Geil California RCE 14803

DATE OF SURVEY: 05-22-24

SURVEYED BY OR UNDER DIRECTION OF: KENNETH D. GEIL, R.C.E. 14803

LOCATED IN THE COUNTY OF BUTTE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

BEARINGS SHOWN ARE BASED UPON MONUMENTS FOUND AND RECORD INFORMATION. THIS IS NOT A BOUNDARY SURVEY.

ELEVATIONS SHOWN ON THIS PLAN ARE BASED UPON U.S.G.S. N.A.V.D. 88 DATUM. ABOVE MEAN SEA LEVEL.

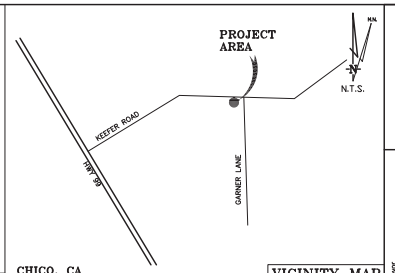
N.G.V.D. 1929 CORRECTION: SUBTRACT XXX' FROM ELEVATIONS SHOWN.

CONTOUR INTERVAL: 1'

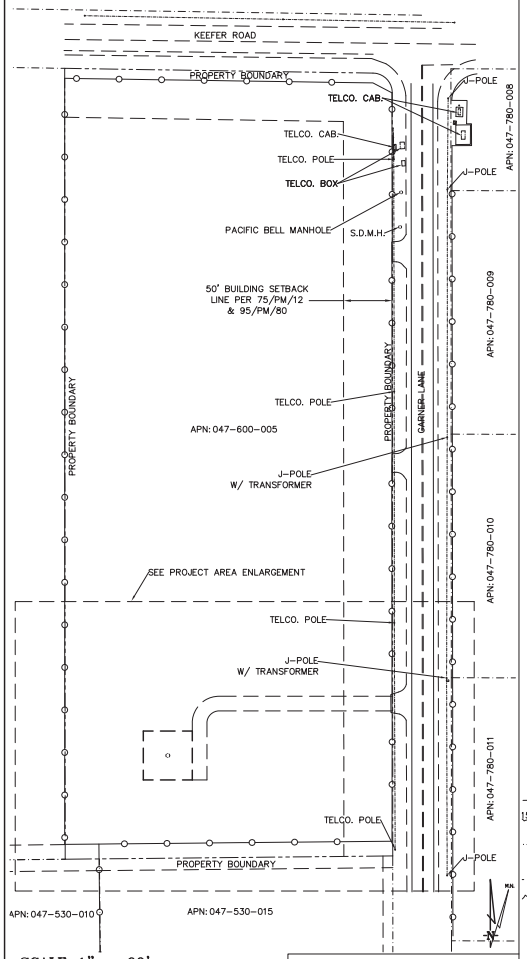
CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE TO VERIFY LEASE AREA PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION.

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER: 047-600-005

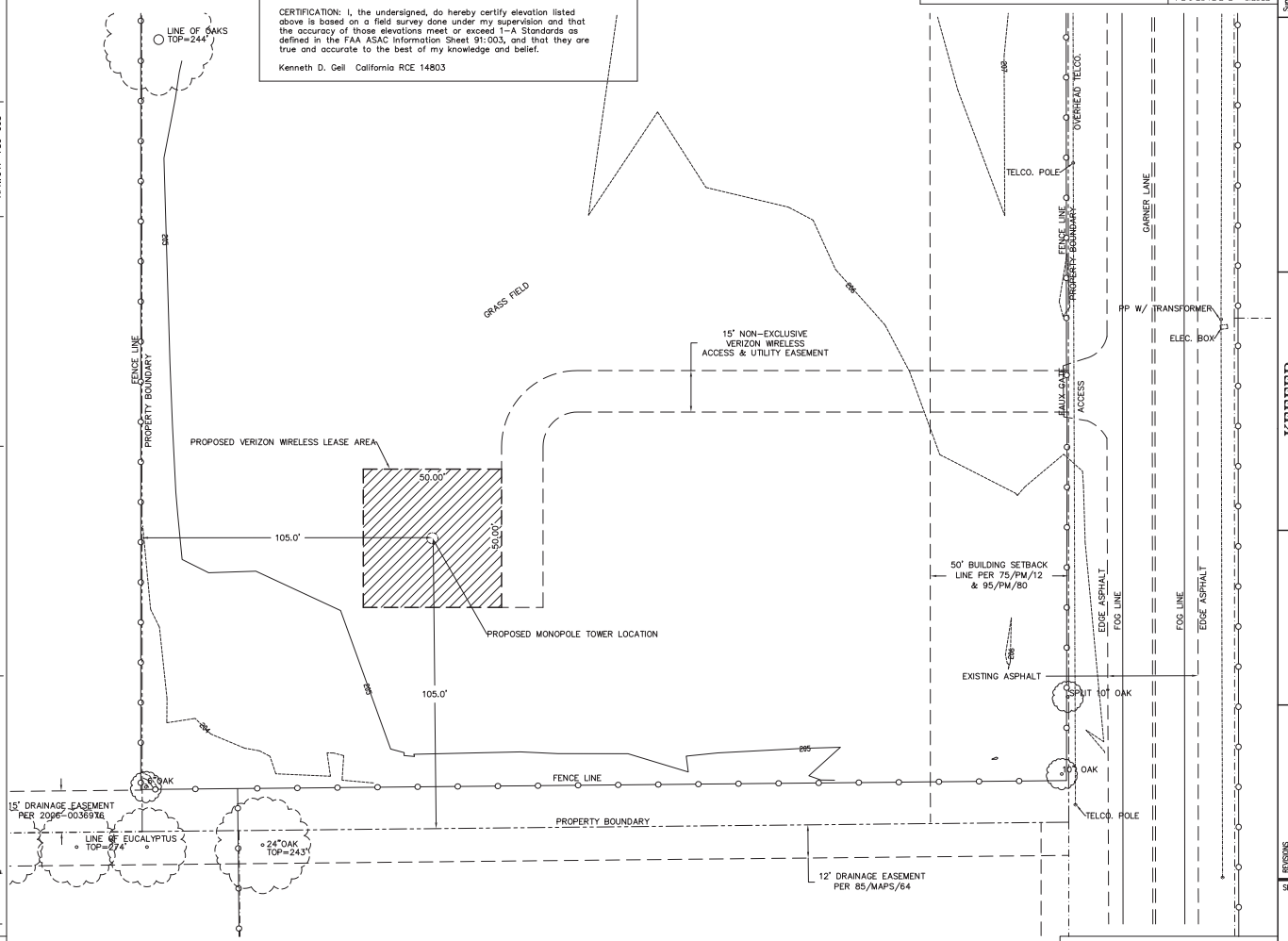
OWNER(S): COUNTY OF BUTTE
25 COUNTY CENTER DRIVE
OROVILLE, CA 95965



VICINITY MAP



OVERALL SITE PLAN



TOWER DIAGRAM

DEPT	APPROVED	DATE
A&C		
RE		
RF		
INT		
EE\IN		
OPS		
EE\OUT		

GEIL ENGINEERING
ENGINEERING * SURVEYING * PLANNING
1226 HIGH STREET
AUBURN, CALIFORNIA 95603
Phone (530) 885-0426
Fax (530) 823-1309

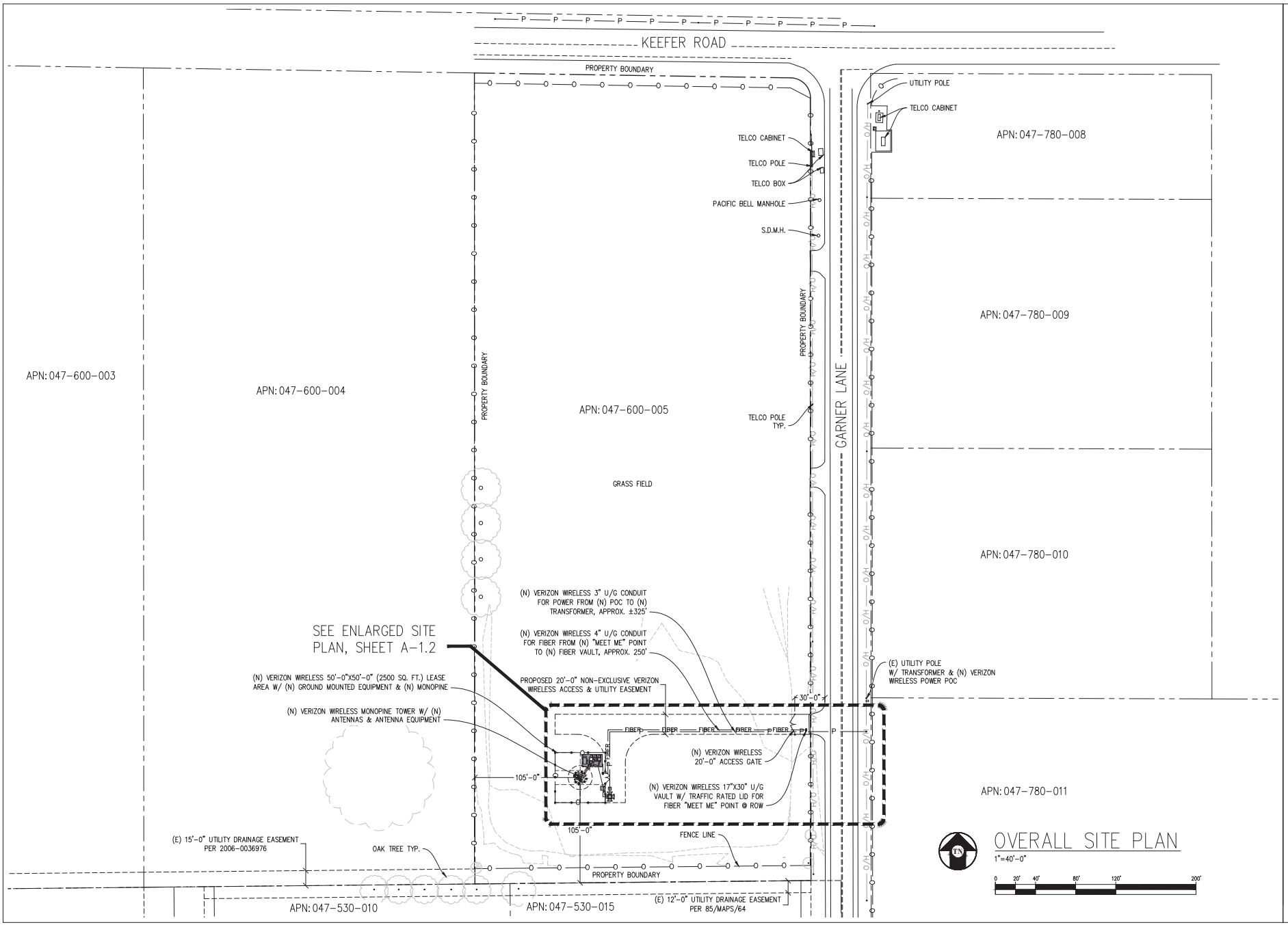
Surveyor

verizon

KEEFER
4007 KEEFER ROAD
OROVILLE, CA 95965
PLOT PLAN AND
SITE TOPOGRAPHY

REVISIONS		
REV	05-23-24 N. ROHDE	DRAWING SUBMITTAL
REV	07-12-24 N. ROHDE	TITLE WORK
REV	08-06-25 N. ROHDE	CITY CHANGE
REV		
REV		

Sheet
C-1



OVERALL SITE PLAN

1"=40'-0"

0 20' 40' 80' 120' 200'

Issued For:

KEEFER

4007 KEEFER ROAD
OROVILLE, CA 95965

PREPARED FOR

verizon

2770 SHADELANDS DR, BLDG 11
WALNUT CREEK, CA 94598

Vendor:

EPIC WIRELESS GROUP LLC
Connecting a Wireless World

MDG LOCATION ID:	5000350230
PROJECT ID:	1724189
DRAWN BY:	SEAD
CHECKED BY:	S. SAVIG
APPROVED BY:	-

ISSUE STATUS

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	CAD
3	05/05/25	CLIENT REV	S.V.
2	08/23/24	ZD 100%	C.T.C
1	08/02/24	CLIENT REV	C.T.C
0	06/05/24	ZD 90%	-

Licensee:

PRELIMINARY: NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

KEVIN R. SORENSEN
S4469

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ENGINEER:

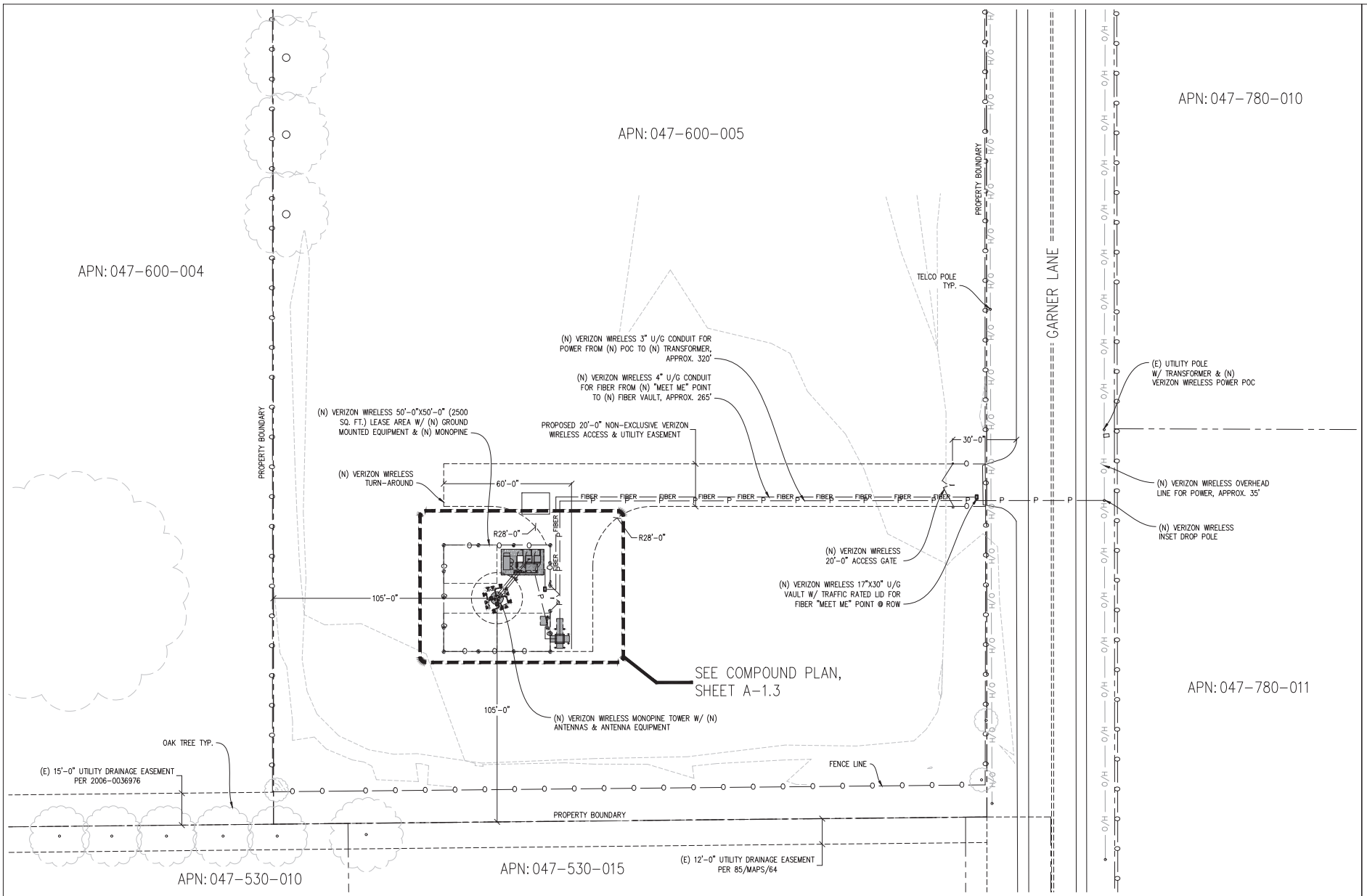
Streamline Engineering and Design, Inc.
8445 Sierra College Blvd, Suite E Granite Bay, CA 95746
Contact: Kevin Sorensen Phone: 916-660-1930
E-Mail: kevin@streamlineeng.com Fax: 916-660-1941

SHEET TITLE:

OVERALL SITE PLAN

SHEET NUMBER:

A-1.1



ENLARGED SITE PLAN

1/8"=1'-0"

0 2' 4' 8' 12' 20' 28' 50'

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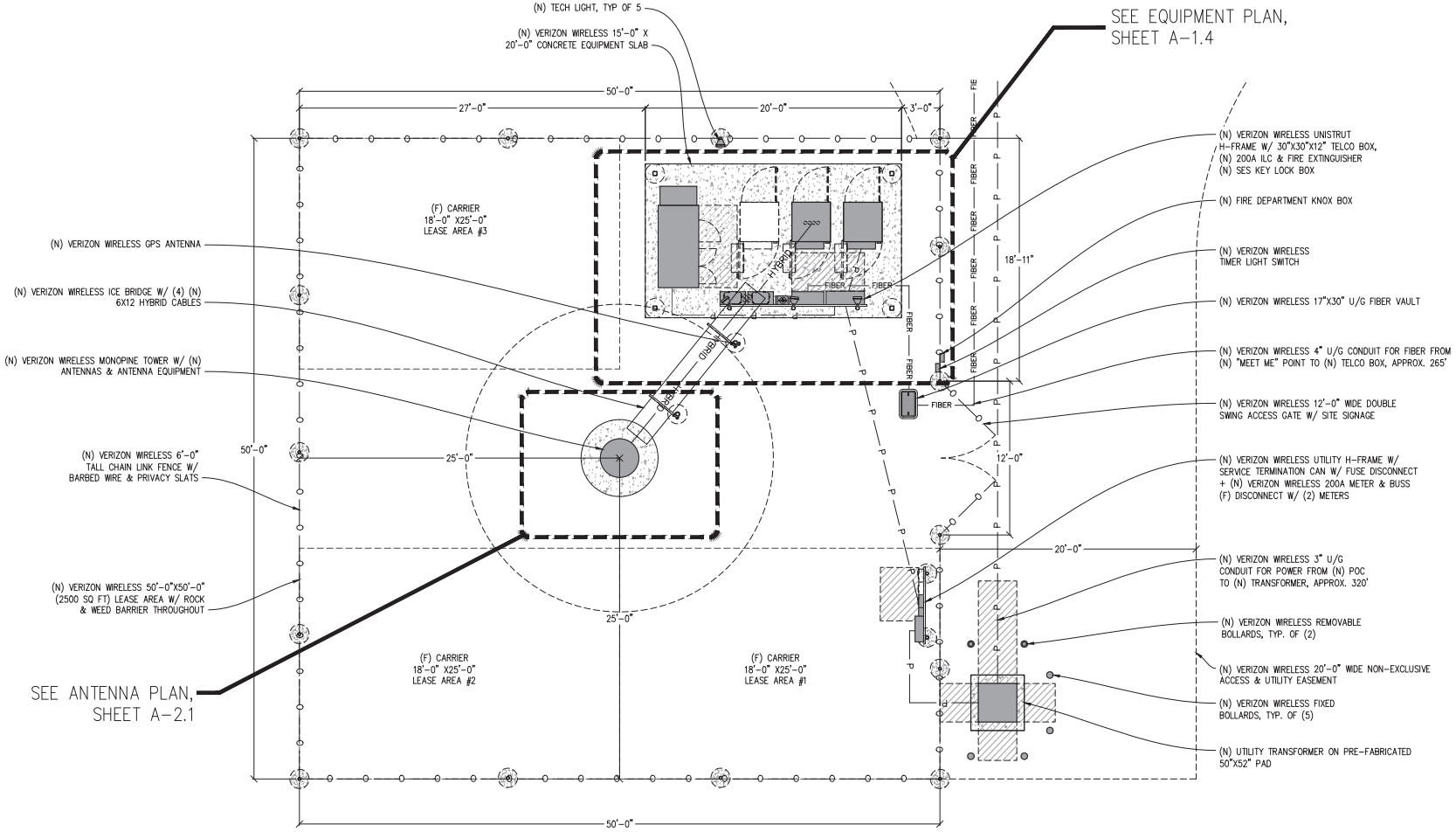

COMPOUND PLAN

1/4"=1'-0"

0 1' 2' 4' 6' 10' 14' 20'

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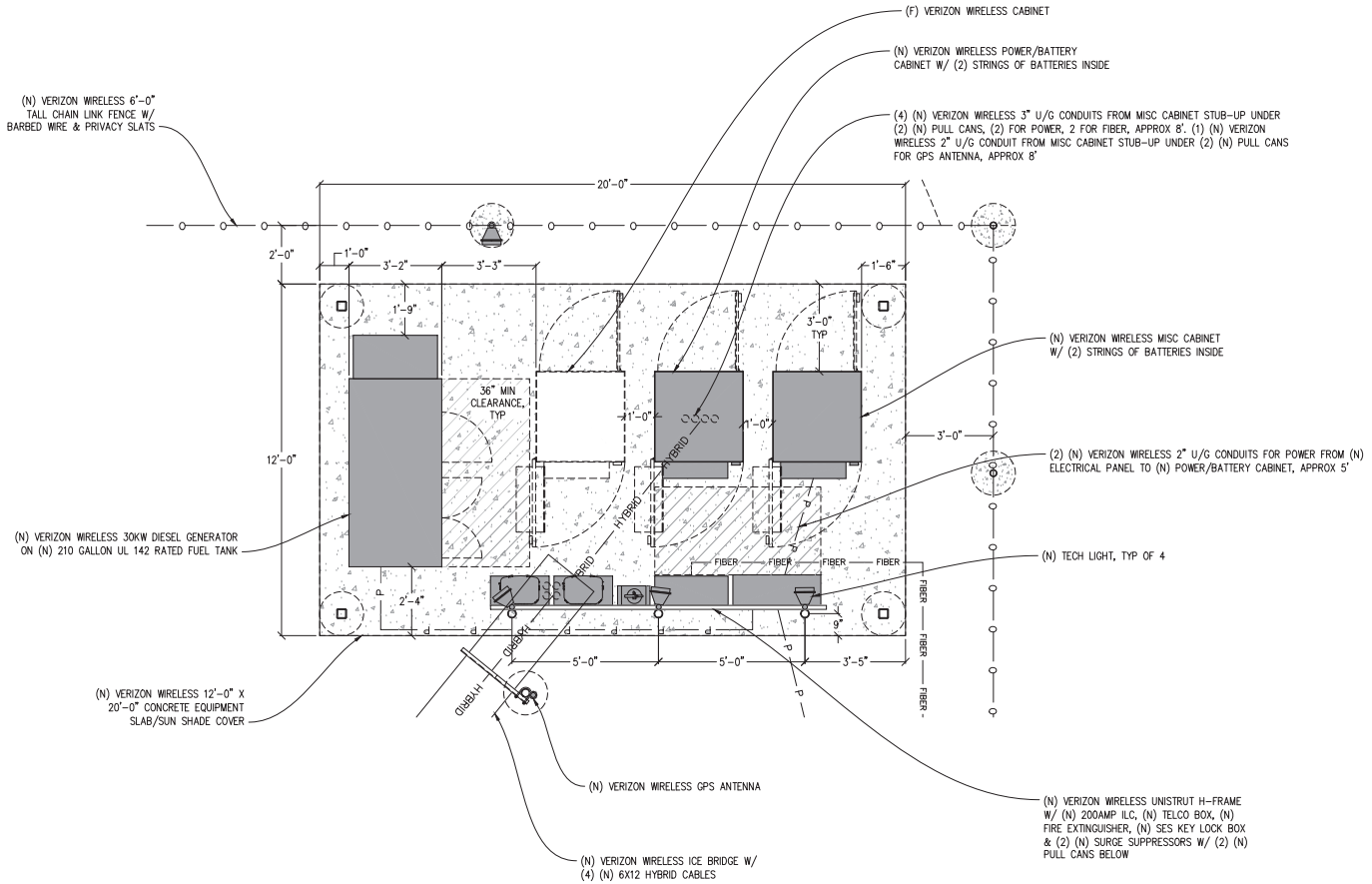
SHEET TITLE:

COMPOUND PLAN

SHEET NUMBER:

A-1.3



EQUIPMENT PLAN

½"=1'-0"

0 6" 1' 2' 3' 5' 7' 10'

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Connecting a Wireless World

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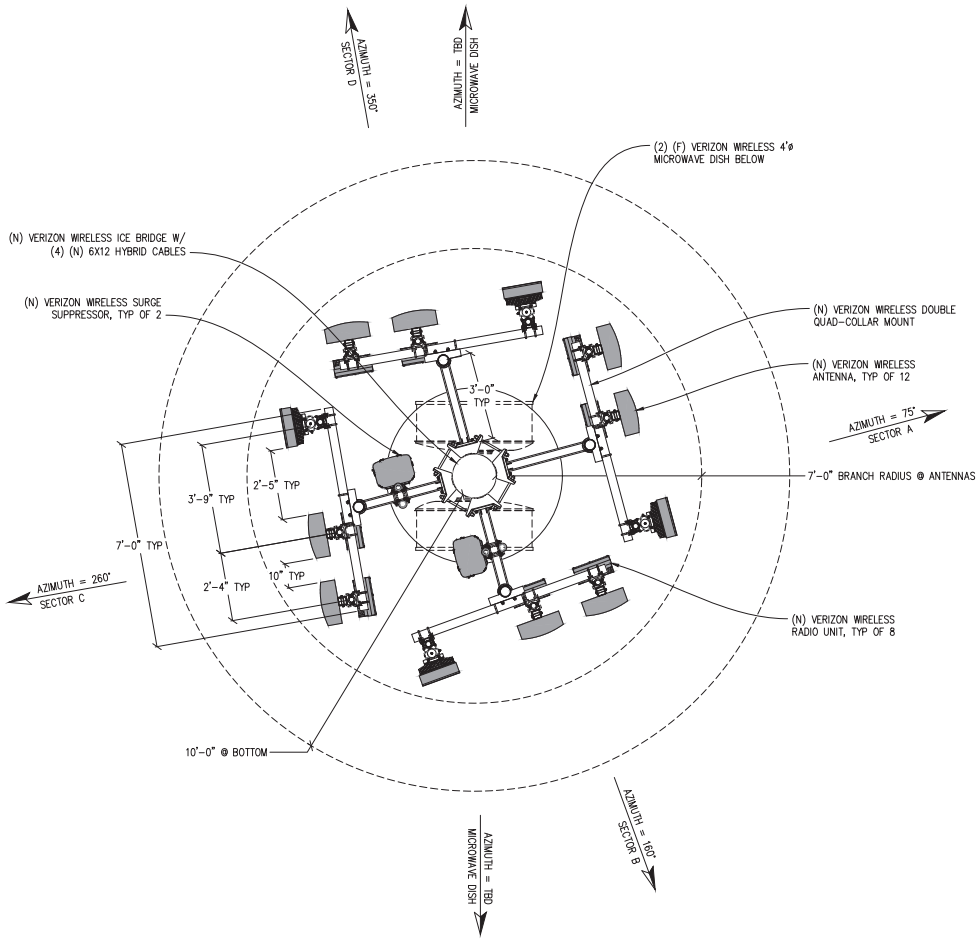
SHEET NUMBER:

A-1.3



(N) ANTENNA PLAN

½"=1'-0"

0 6" 1' 2' 3' 5' 7' 10'

NOTES:

1. ALL (N) ANTENNAS, ANTENNA MOUNTS, ANTENNA EQUIPMENT, & EXPOSED CABLES TO BE PAINTED TO MATCH (N) MONOPINE & BE FULLY WITHIN MONOPINE BRANCH RADIUS.
2. ALL (N) ANTENNAS TO BE COVERED IN MONOPINE SOCKS OR RF APPROVED FILM.

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KEEFER

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OROVILLE, CA 95965

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verizon

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WALNUT CREEK, CA 94598

Vendor:

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Connecting a Wireless World

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DRAWN BY:	SEAD
CHECKED BY:	S. SAVIG
APPROVED BY:	-

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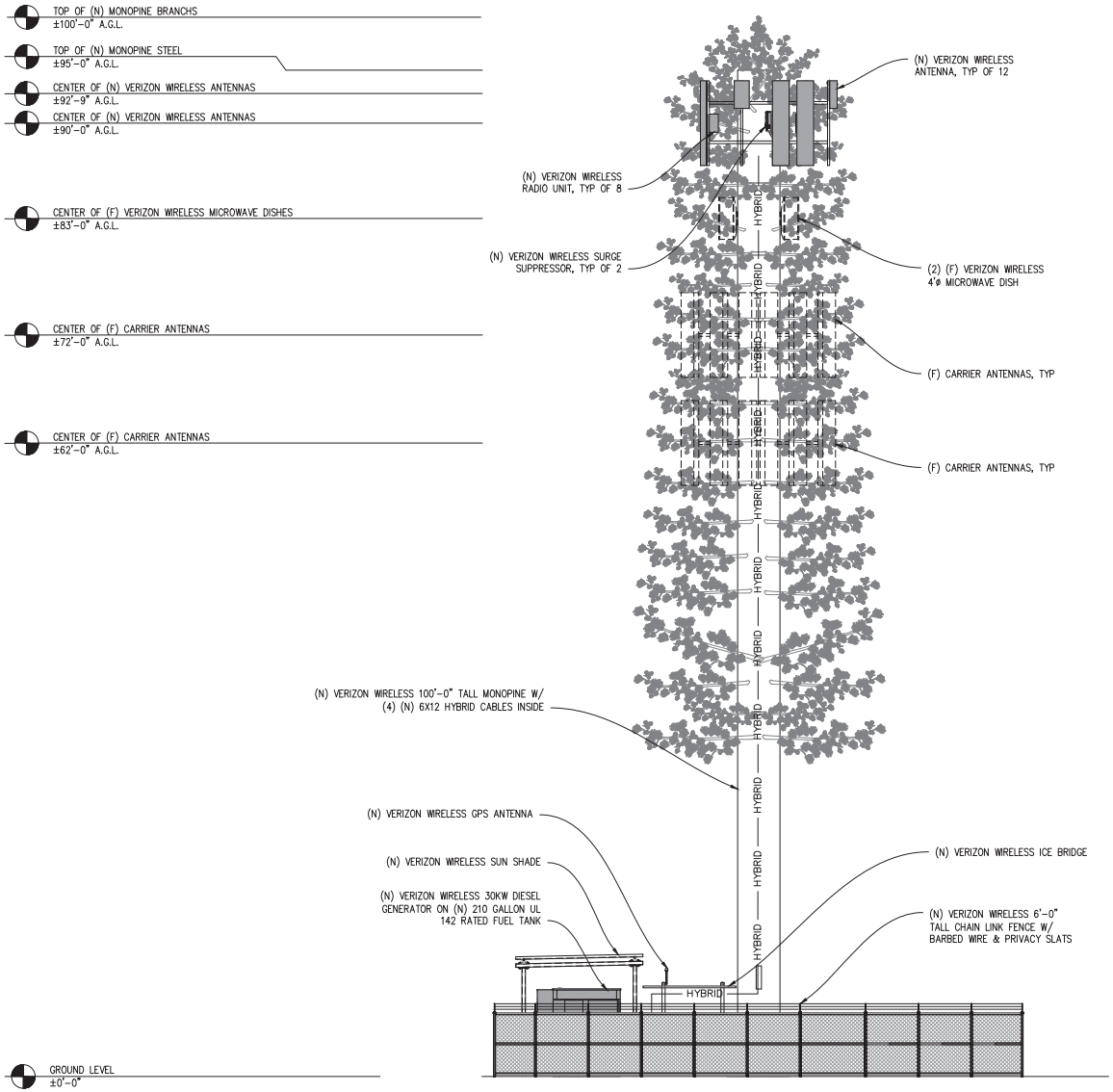
ANTENNA PLAN

SHEET NUMBER:

A-2.1



(N) WEST ELEVATION

3/16"=1'-0"

NOTES:

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2. ALL (N) ANTENNAS TO BE COVERED IN MONOPINE SOCKS OR RF APPROVED FILM.

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Vendor:

EPIC WIRELESS GROUP LLC
Connecting a Wireless World

MDG LOCATION ID:	5000350230
PROJECT ID:	1724189
DRAWN BY:	SEAD
CHECKED BY:	S. SAVIG
APPROVED BY:	-

ISSUE STATUS

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	CAD
3	05/05/25	CLIENT REV	S.V.
2	08/23/24	ZD 100%	C.T.C
1	08/02/24	CLIENT REV	C.T.C
0	06/05/24	ZD 90%	-

Licensee:

PRELIMINARY: NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

KEVIN R. SORENSEN
S4469

IT IS A VIOLATION OF LAW FOR ANY PERSON, UNLESS THEY ARE ACTING UNDER THE DIRECTION OF A LICENSED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER, TO ALTER THIS DOCUMENT.

ENGINEER:

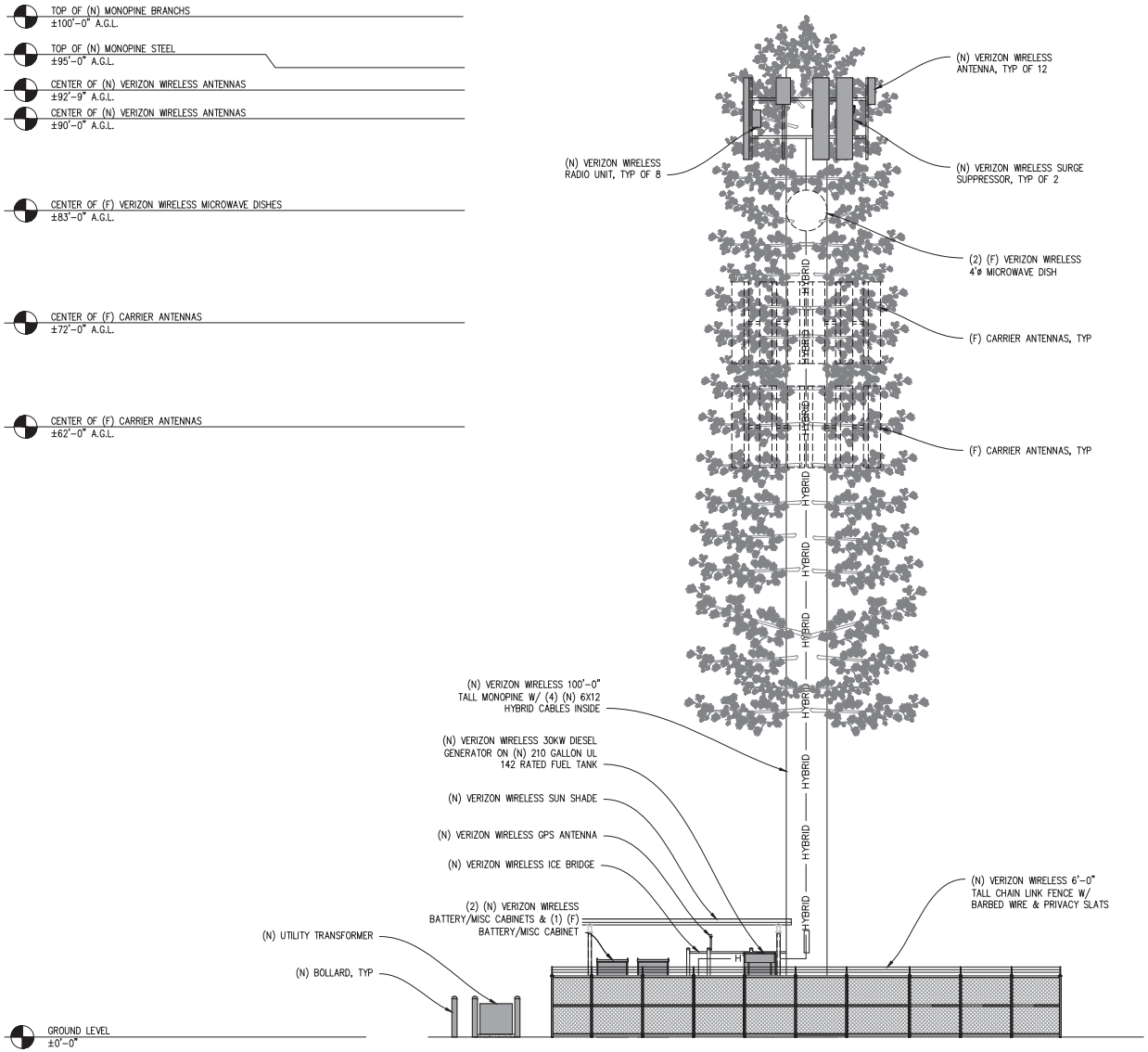
Streamline Engineering and Design, Inc.
8445 Sierra College Blvd, Suite E Granite Bay, CA 95746
Contact: Kevin Sorensen Phone: 916-660-1930
E-Mail: kevin@streamlineeng.com Fax: 916-660-1941

SHEET TITLE:

ELEVATIONS

SHEET NUMBER:

A-3.1



(N) NORTH ELEVATION

3/16"=1'-0"

0 6" 1' 2' 3' 5' 7' 11' 15'

NOTES:

1. ALL (N) ANTENNAS, ANTENNA MOUNTS, ANTENNA EQUIPMENT, & EXPOSED CABLES TO BE PAINTED TO MATCH (N) MONOPINE & BE FULLY WITHIN MONOPINE BRANCH RADIUS.
2. ALL (N) ANTENNAS TO BE COVERED IN MONOPINE SOCKS OR RF APPROVED FILM.

Issued For:

KEEFER

4007 KEEFER ROAD
OROVILLE, CA 95965

PREPARED FOR

verizon

2770 SHADELANDS DR, BLDG 11
WALNUT CREEK, CA 94598

Vendor:

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SHEET TITLE:

ELEVATIONS

SHEET NUMBER:

A-3.2

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages. Where checked below, the topic with a potentially significant impact will be addressed in an environmental impact report.

☐	Aesthetics	☐	Agriculture and Forest Resources	☐	Air Quality
☐	Biological Resources	☐	Cultural Resources	☐	Energy
☐	Geology / Soils	☐	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐	Hazards / Hazardous Materials
☐	Hydrology / Water Quality	☐	Land Use / Planning	☐	Mineral Resources
☐	Noise	☐	Population / Housing	☐	Public Services
☐	Recreation	☐	Transportation	☐	Tribal Cultural Resources
☐	Utilities / Service Systems	☐	Wildfire	☐	Mandatory Findings of Significance
		☒	None	☐	None with Mitigation Incorporated

DETERMINATION (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☒ I find that the proposed project could not have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

☐ I find that although the proposed project COULD have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

☐ I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Rowland Hickel AICP — 9/24/2025

Prepared by Rowland Hickel, Senior Planner — Date

Dan Breedon — 9/24/2025

Reviewed by: Dan Breedon, Planning Manager — Date

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4. "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).

5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
   a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
   b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
   c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
   a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
   b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

1.1 AESTHETICS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. Aesthetics.				
Except as provided in Public Resources Code section 21099 (where aesthetic impacts shall not be considered significant for qualifying residential, mixed-use residential, and employment centers), would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less than Significant. The area comprising the project site contains existing single-family residences and outbuildings. The lease area is located on the southern portion of the site and is vacant. The site is surrounded by rural single-family residential. Views from surrounding properties are of residences and open space. There are no unique visual features or scenic vistas in the project area. The applicant has furnished three alternative designs for the tower, including a monopole (Exhibit 1), faux water tank (Exhibit 2), and faux pine tree (Exhibit 3) which are provided in Appendix A for reference. The proposed tower, regardless of the ultimate design, would be visible from Keefer Road, Garner Lane, and surrounding properties. The proposed equipment cabinets and security fence would be visible from adjacent parcels. While views would change, the project will not substantially interfere with any scenic views or otherwise have a substantive negative aesthetic impact.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

No impact. The proposed project does not include new construction that would disturb features such as trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. Further, the project site is not adjacent to a state scenic highway, and there are no scenic resources on the project site.

c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Less than significant impact. The nearest publicly accessible area to the project site is Garner Lane to the east; however, Keefer Road also provides access to the single-family residence located adjacent to and north of the subject property. The tower would be visible from adjacent roadways. The proposed equipment cabinet and security fence would be visible from Garner Lane. The tower would change existing views into the site; however, it would not substantively change the character of the existing 6.19-acre parcel or surrounding uses.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less than significant impact. The tower and antennas will be a non-reflective, matte finish, earth-tone colors . The equipment area will be screened by a chain link fence containing privacy slats. The project would provide two 100-watt security lights; however, the lights would be shielded, directed downward within the lease area, and have motion-sensing technology. Thus, lighting would not adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Impacts would be less than significant.

1.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. Agriculture and Forest Resources.				
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997, as updated) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland.				
In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.				
Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Regulatory Setting

Williamson Act/Land Conservation Act (LCA) Contracts

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly known as the Williamson Act, was established based on numerous State legislative findings regarding the importance of agricultural lands in an urbanizing society. Policies emanating from those findings include those that discourage premature and unnecessary conversion of agricultural land to urban uses and discourage discontinuous urban development patterns, which unnecessarily increase the costs of community services to community residents. The Williamson Act authorizes each County to establish an agricultural preserve. Land that is within the agricultural preserve is eligible to be placed under a contract between the property owner and County that would restrict the use of the land to agriculture in exchange for a tax assessment that is based on the yearly production yield. The contracts have a 9-year term that is automatically renewed each year unless the property owner or county requests a non-renewal or the contract is canceled.

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) develops statistical data for analyzing impacts on California's agricultural resources. The FMMP program characterizes "Prime Farmland" as land with the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics that are able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. "Farmland of Statewide Importance" is characterized as land with a good combination of physical and chemical characteristics for agricultural production, but with less ability to store soil moisture than prime farmland. "Unique Farmland" is used for the production of the state's major crops on soils not qualifying as prime farmland or of statewide importance. The FMMP also identifies "Grazing Land", "Urban and Built-up Land", "Other Land", and "Water" that is not included in any other mapping category.

California Public Resources Code Section 4526

"Timberland" means land, other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the board as experimental forest land, which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees. Commercial species shall be determined by the board on a district basis.

California Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)

"Forest land" is land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits.

Discussion

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No impact. The California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program designates the site as "Urban Built Up Land". Project improvements would not impact prime, unique, or farmland of statewide importance.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

No impact. The project site is zoned Public (P) and is not under an existing Williamson Act Contract. All actions associated with the project would be confined to the project site. The project will not conflict with existing zoning or agricultural use of a parcel under a Williamson Act contract.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

No impact. The project site is zoned Public and is not classified as forestland, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g), or as timberland, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 4526. The project site is not zoned or designated for forest or timber resource uses.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No impact. The project site is a vacant property. There are no trees or timber resources classified as forestland, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g), or as timberland, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 4526. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land to a non-forest use.

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No impact. The project site is designated as "Urban Built Up Land" under the California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. All proposed development and subsequent use of the site would occur within the areas of the property that are designated as "Urban Built Up Land" and are currently developed. Therefore, the project would not result in the conversion of Farmland to a non-agricultural use.

1.3 AIR QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. Air Quality.				
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied on to make the following determinations.				
Are significance criteria established by the applicable air district available to rely on for significance determinations?		☒ Yes		☐ No
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Environmental Setting

Butte County is located within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB), comprising the northern half of California's 400-mile long Great Central Valley. The SVAB encompasses approximately 14,994 square miles with a largely flat valley floor (excepting the Sutter Buttes) about 200 miles long and up to 150 miles wide, bordered on its east, north, and west by the Sierra Nevada, Cascade and Coast mountain ranges, respectively.

The SVAB, containing 11 counties and some two million people, is divided into two air quality planning areas based on the amount of pollutant transport from one area to the other and the level of emissions within each. Butte County is within the Northern Sacramento Valley Air Basin (NSVAB), which is composed of Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Shasta, Sutter, Tehama, and Yuba Counties.

Emissions from the urbanized portion of the basin (Sacramento, Yolo, Solano, and Placer Counties) dominate the emission inventory for the Sacramento Valley Air Basin, and on-road motor vehicles are the primary source of emissions in the Sacramento metropolitan area. While pollutant concentrations have generally declined over the years, additional emission reductions will be needed to attain the State and national ambient air quality standards in the SVAB.

Seasonal weather patterns have a significant effect on regional and local air quality. The Sacramento Valley and Butte County have a Mediterranean climate, characterized by hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters. Winter weather is governed by cyclonic storms from the North Pacific, while summer weather is typically subject to a high-pressure cell that deflects storms from the region.

In Butte County, winters are generally mild with daytime average temperatures in the low 50s°F and nighttime temperatures in the upper 30s°F. Temperatures range from an average January low of approximately 36°F to an average July high of approximately 96°F, although periodic lower and higher temperatures are common. Rainfall between

October and May averages about 26 inches but varies considerably year to year. Heavy snowfall often occurs in the northeastern mountainous portion of the County. Periodic rainstorms contrast with occasional stagnant weather and thick ground or "tule" fog in the moister, flatter parts of the valley. Winter winds generally come from the south, although north winds also occur.

Diminished air quality within Butte County largely results from local air pollution sources, transport of pollutants into the area from the south, the NSVAB topography, prevailing wind patterns, and certain inversion conditions that differ with the season. During the summer, sinking air forms a "lid" over the region, confining pollution within a shallow layer near the ground that leads to photochemical smog and visibility problems. During winter nights, air near the ground cools while the air above remains relatively warm, resulting in little air movement and localized pollution "hot spots" near emission sources. Carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter and lead particulate concentrations tend to elevate during winter inversion conditions when little air movement may persist for weeks.

As a result, high levels of particulate matter (primarily fine particulates or PM2.5) and ground-level ozone are the pollutants of most concern to the NSVAB Districts. Ground-level ozone, the principal component of smog, forms when reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) – together known as ozone precursor pollutants – react in strong sunlight. Ozone levels tend to be highest in Butte County during late spring through early fall, when sunlight is strong and constant, and emissions of the precursor pollutants are highest (Butte County CEQA Air Quality Handbook 2014).

Air Quality Attainment Status

Local monitoring data from the BCAQMD is used to designate areas as nonattainment, maintenance, attainment, or unclassified for the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS). The four designations are further defined as follows:

Nonattainment – assigned to areas where monitored pollutant concentrations consistently violate the standard in question.

Maintenance – assigned to areas where monitored pollutant concentrations exceeded the standard in question in the past but are no longer in violation of that standard.

Attainment – assigned to areas where pollutant concentrations meet the standard in question over a designated period of time.

Unclassified – assigned to areas where data are insufficient to determine whether a pollutant is violating the standard in question.

Table 1.3-1. Federal and State Attainment Status of Butte County

POLLUTANT	STATE DESIGNATION	FEDERAL DESIGNATION
1-hour ozone	Nonattainment	-
8-hour ozone	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
Carbon monoxide	Attainment	Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide	Attainment	Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide	Attainment	Attainment
24-Hour PM10	Nonattainment	Attainment
24-Hour PM2.5	No Standard	Attainment
Annual PM10	Attainment	No Standard
Annual PM2.5	Nonattainment	Attainment

Source: Butte County AQMD, 2018

Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive receptors are frequently occupied locations where people who might be especially sensitive to air pollution are expected to live, work, or recreate. These types of receptors include residences, schools, churches, health care facilities, convalescent homes, and daycare centers. The project is located on a residential site surrounded by a single-family residential and vacant land. Table 1.3-2 lists sensitive receptors that were identified in the project vicinity and the distances from the project site.

Table 1.3-2. Sensitive Receptors in the Project Vicinity

SENSITIVE RECEPTORS	DISTANCE FROM PROJECT SITE TO RECEPTOR
Residence (14107 Garner Lane)	200 feet to the south
Residence (14114 Garner Lane)	450 feet to the east
Residence (4047 Keefer Road)	580 feet to the northwest
Source: Butte County Geographical Information System/Google Earth imagery	

Butte County Air Quality Management District

The Butte County Air Quality Management District (BCAQMD) is the local agency with primary responsibility for compliance with both the federal and state standards and for ensuring that air quality conditions are maintained. They do this through a comprehensive program of planning, regulation, enforcement, technical innovation, and promotion of the understanding of air quality issues.

Activities of the BCAQMD include the preparation of plans for the attainment of ambient air quality standards, adoption and enforcement of rules and regulations concerning sources of air pollution, issuance of permits for stationary sources of air pollution, inspection of stationary sources of air pollution and response to citizen complaints, monitoring of ambient air quality and meteorological conditions, and implementation of programs and regulations required by the FCAA and CCAA.

According to the State CEQA Guidelines, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied on to make significance determinations for potential impacts on environmental resources. BCAQMD is responsible for ensuring that state and federal ambient air quality standards are not violated within Butte County. Analysis requirements for construction and operation-related pollutant emissions are contained in BCAQMD's *CEQA Air Quality Handbook: Guidelines for Assessing Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Impacts for Projects Subject to CEQA Review*. Established with these guidelines are screening criteria to determine whether or not additional modeling for criteria air pollutants is necessary for a project. The CEQA Air Quality Handbook also contains thresholds of significance for construction-related and operation-related emissions: ROG, NOx and PM10. The screening criteria listed in Table 1.3-4 were created using CalEEMod version 2013.2.2 for the given land use types. To determine if a proposed project meets the screening criteria, the size and metric for the land use type (units or square footage) should be compared with that of the proposed project. If a project is less than the applicable screening criteria, then further quantification of criteria air pollutants is not necessary, and it may be assumed that the project would have a less than significant impact on criteria air pollutants. If a project exceeds the size provided by the screening criteria for a given land use type then additional modeling and quantification of criteria air pollutants should be performed (Butte County Air Quality Management District 2014).

Table 1.3-4. Screening Criteria for Criteria Air Pollutants

LAND USE TYPE	MAXIMUM SCREENING LEVELS FOR PROJECTS
Single-Family Residential	30 Units
Multi-Family (Low Rise) Residential	75 Units
Commercial	15,000 square feet
Educational	24,000 square feet
Industrial	59,000 square feet
Recreational	5,500 square feet
Retail	11,000 square feet
Source: Butte County AQMD, CEQA Air Quality Handbook, 2014	

Discussion

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

No impact. A project is deemed inconsistent with an air quality plan if it would result in population or employment growth that exceeds the growth estimates in the applicable air quality plan (i.e., generating emissions not accounted for in the applicable air quality plan emissions budget). Therefore, proposed projects need to be evaluated to determine whether they would generate population and employment growth and, if so, whether that growth would exceed the growth rate included in the applicable air quality plan.

The proposed project would not result in population growth in the County. No additional employees would be required to operate the facility. As stated, quarterly inspection/maintenance trips would be required. Further, the project would not result in a substantial increase in criteria air pollutants that would cause significant impacts to regional air quality.

b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

No impact. The proposed monopine would be on a 2,500 square foot leased site. The project size would not exceed the Industrial land-use type screening criteria listed above in Table 1.3-3. Thus, the project would not exceed the significance thresholds established in the BCAQMD, CEQA Air Quality Handbook.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

No impact. Sensitive receptors in the project area and their distances from the project site area are contained in Table 1.3-2. Based on the information provided in section b.) above, the proposed project would not result in the violation of any air quality standards or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

No impact. The project will not create a new source of objectionable odors, nor would odors be detectable at off-site properties. The tower and related equipment would not generate odors that would impact a substantial number of people for an extended time.

1.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. Biological Resources.				
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Environmental Setting

<u>Vegetation Communities</u>

The site is zoned Public. The project would be constructed on a 2,500 square foot lease area and gravel access driveway on the 6.19-acre parcel. Land surrounding the site is zoned VLDR. As stated, uses are single-family residential and open space. Common species observed within this community type includes mourning dove, American crow, Brewer's blackbird, sandhill crane, various raptor species, egrets, and many species of rodents. Special-status wildlife species associated with agricultural lands, such as the northern harrier and giant garter snake, may use adjacent irrigation canals and freshwater marsh vegetation for foraging or breeding. Giant garter snakes have the potential to occur in irrigation canals and can use the adjacent agricultural lands as foraging and basking habitat. Swainson's hawks also will

forage in agricultural lands. Irrigated pastures may provide suitable nesting habitat for the northern harrier and short-eared owl.

Special-Status Species

Many species of plants and animals within the State of California have low populations, limited distributions, or both. Such species may be considered "rare" and are vulnerable to extirpation as the state's human population grows and the habitats these species occupy are converted to agricultural and urban uses. A sizable number of native species and animals have been formally designated as threatened or endangered under State and Federal endangered species legislation. Others have been designated as "Candidates" for such listing and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) have designated others as "Species of Special Concern". The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) has developed its own lists of native plants considered rare, threatened or endangered. Collectively, these plants and animals are referred to as "special status species."

Various direct and indirect impacts to biological resources may result from the small amount of development enabled by the project, including the loss and/or alteration of existing undeveloped open space that may serve as habitat. Increased vehicle trips to and from the project site can result in wildlife mortality and disruption of movement patterns within and through the project vicinity. Disturbances such as predation by pets (e.g., cats and dogs) and human residents may also occur at the human/open space interface, while conversion of land from lower to higher density residential use can lead to a predominance of various urban-adapted wildlife species (e.g., coyotes, raccoons, ravens and blackbirds) that have been observed to displace more sensitive species.

California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15065 requires a mandatory finding of significance for projects that have the potential to substantially degrade or reduce the habitat of a threatened or endangered species, and to fully disclose and mitigate impacts to special status resources. For the purposes of this Initial Study, the California Environmental Quality Act (Sections 21083 and 21087, Public Resources Code) defines mitigation as measure(s) that:

- Avoids the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action.
- Minimizes impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation.
- Rectifies the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the impacted environment.
- Reduces or eliminates the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the project.
- Compensates for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) was reviewed to determine if any special-status species have the potential to occur on the project site or its vicinity. Table 1.4-1 lists each special-status species identified within a two-mile radius of the project site, along with regulatory status and habitat requirements for each special-status species. A total of two special-status species are known to inhabit areas within the vicinity of the project site.

Table 4.4-1. Special-Status Species in the vicinity of the project site

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CNPS/DFG List	Habitat
PLANTS					
Fritillaria pluriflora	Adobe lilly	None	None	1B.2	Mainly limited to northern California. It grows in adobe clay soils of the Coast Ranges and low hills in the Central Valley.
Castilleja rubicundula var. rubicundula	Pink creamsacs	None	None	1B.2	It is found in coastal and inland grasslands.

Limnanthes floccosa ssp. californica	Butte County meadowfoam	Endangered	Endangered	1B.1	Plants are sometimes found at the edges of vernal pools, but they are primarily found in the deepest parts of vernal swales that connect vernal pools.
Tuctoria greenei	Greene's tuctoria	Endangered	Rare		Greene's tuctoria is a rare grass that is endemic to California's Central Valley and found in vernal pool habitat.
CRUSTACEANS					
Lepidurus packardi	vernal pool tadpole shrimp	Endangered	None		Vernal pool type of habitat, and other freshwater aquatic habitats including ponds, reservoirs, ditches, road ruts, and other natural and artificial temporary water bodies.
Branchinecta lynchi	vernal pool fairy shrimp	Threatened	None		Same as above
Branchinecta conservatio	Conservancy fairy shrimp	None	None		Same as above

Source: California Natural Diversity Database, Version 5, February 2021

Discussion

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No impact. The site is vacant and located within a pasture area. Vegetation is comprised of non-native grasses and ruderal weed species. No sensitive vegetation or tree species would be removed to develop a new monopole telecommunication facility. No impact to habitat would occur as a result of the project.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No impact. As stated, the site is vacant. Vegetation on-site is comprised of ruderal weed species and ornamental trees along the western boundary. There are no areas of native vegetation, including riparian woodland vegetation or oak trees. Thus, no riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities would be affected by the construction of the project.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

No impact. No natural drainage features occur on or proximal to the area proposed for the construction of the monopole. The project action would have no effect on any state or federally protected wetlands, marsh areas, or vernal pool resources.

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

No impact. The project site is developed and not located within the Butte County migratory deer corridors. Per the Butte County General Plan Update 2040, Figure COS-3, no migratory routes or corridors have been designated through the project site. Further, the existing developed components of the project area preclude the use of the area as a migratory wildlife corridor for large mammals. The proposed monopole would not interfere with existing migratory wildlife populations that may use land adjacent to the site.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

No impact. No native oak trees are known to occur on the portion of the site affected by the project, and no trees would be removed to accommodate the project. No trees are subject to tree preservation policies or ordinances.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No impact. The Butte Regional Conservation Plan (BRCP) is a joint Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)/National Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) that is currently being prepared for the western half of Butte County. In the event the BRCP is adopted, individual projects and development that occur in the BRCP planning area would need to be coordinated with the Butte County Association of Governments to ensure that the project does not conflict with the BRCP. No resources affected by the plan occur on-site. Further, because the plan has not been adopted, the proposed project will not conflict with or interfere with the attainment of the goals of the proposed plan.

1.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. Cultural Resources.				
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

No impact. The project site is vacant. New construction would be required to install the tower and associated equipment. Ground disturbing activities would be confined to the 2,500 square foot lease area and unpaved road extension. No new construction or ground-disturbing activities are proposed that would result in impacts to historic resources. No features exist on the property, including objects, sites, or landscapes, that could be considered as having historic value to California Native American tribes, or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources Places.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

No impact. No new construction or ground-disturbing activities are proposed that would result in impacts to known historic or cultural resources. No features exist on the property, including objects, sites, or landscapes, that could be considered as having cultural value to California Native American tribes, or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources.

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

No impact. No new construction or ground-disturbing activities are proposed that would result in impacts to unknown human remains. The tower, equipment cabinets, and fencing would have no effect on previously undiscovered human remains.

1.6 ENERGY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. Energy.				
Would the project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

No impact. Project development consumes energy primarily in two ways: (1) construction activities consume energy through the operation of heavy off-road equipment, trucks, and worker traffic, and (2) operation of new facilities would consume energy from electricity and propane gas consumption, energy used for water conveyance, and vehicle operations to and from the project site.

In this case, the project would construct a new tower, equipment pad and cabinets, install a diesel generator and security fence. Energy consumption would be limited to what is required to assemble and erect the tower, install electrical service and equipment cabinets, and security fence. Operation of the facility would require electricity like other similar telecommunication facilities. Thus, no impact on energy consumption would occur.

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency

No impact. Many of the state and federal regulations regarding energy efficiency are focused on increasing building efficiency and renewable energy generation, as well as reducing water consumption and Vehicle Miles Traveled. The proposed project would increase electrical demand; however, the site is not used for or proposed for use as a site for renewable energy generation, nor would energy be used inefficiently. No impact would occur under this threshold.

1.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. Geology and Soils.				
Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)

Less than significant impact. No known active faults are underlying or adjacent to the project site. The Cleveland Hill fault is the only active fault zone in Butte County identified in the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map. The Cleveland Hill fault is located east of Dunstone Drive and Miners Ranch Road, between North Honcut Creek and Mt. Ida Road, approximately 4± miles southeast of the City of Oroville and 31 miles southeast of the site. While a fault is located in the general project area, it does not traverse the project site. The likelihood of a surface rupture at the project site is very low and would not be a design or operational consideration for the project.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less than significant impact. Ground shaking at the project site could occur due to the earthquake potential of the region's active faults. Based on the proximity of the Cleveland fault, seismic ground shaking would likely be perceptible at the site.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less than significant impact. According to Butte County General Plan 2040, areas that are at risk for liquefaction can be found on the valley floor, especially near the Sacramento and Feather Rivers, and their tributaries, which have a higher potential to contain sandy and silty soils. According to Butte County General Plan 2040 (Figure HS-10), the project area is within a subsidence area, and thus may be subject to liquefaction. Regardless, the tower foundation would be designed consistent with Butte County standards to ensure that potential effects of liquefaction are less than significant.

iv) Landslides?

No impact. The project site is flat and no steep slopes are located on the site. As a result, there is no potential for a landslide on the project site. No impact would occur under this threshold.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

No impact. According to Figure HS-8 of Butte County General Plan 2040, the project site has a slight to moderate potential for soil erosion. Surface soil erosion and loss of topsoil have the potential to occur in any area of the county from disturbances associated with construction-related activities. The proposed action would require minimal ground disturbance to install the equipment. Thus, the project would have a less than significant impact with respect to soil erosion or loss of topsoil.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

No impact. According to Butte County General Plan 2040 (Figure HS-7), the project site is located in an area with a low to no potential for landslides. To date, there have been no documented incidents of subsidence in Butte County. Further, the project would not require new development or related soil disturbances on the site.

Future operation of the facility would not be exposed to greater potential for liquefaction, lateral spreading and subsidence with implementation of the proposed action.

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Less than significant impact. According to Figure HS-9 in the Butte County General Plan 2040, the project site is located in an area with low to very low potential for expansive soils. Expansive soils are those that have potential to undergo significant changes in volume, either shrinking or swelling, with changes in moisture content. Periodic shrinking and swelling of expansive soils can cause extensive damage to buildings, other structures and roads. Soils of high expansion potential generally occur in the level areas of the Sacramento Valley, including the City of Oroville and other population centers. The project would require isolated soil disturbances on the site for installation of the tower foundation, development pad, electrical service, equipment cabinets and fencing. Operation of the facility and related improvements are not anticipated to create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No impact. The project would not generate wastewater; thus, no septic system would be required. No impact would occur.

f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

No impact. No paleontological resources are known to occur on the project site. Excavation would be limited to what is required within the 2,500 square foot lease area to install the required equipment and driveway. No impact to paleontological resources would occur.

1.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions.				
Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Setting

Discussion

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Less than significant impact. The project would generate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions during the construction and operation of the telecommunication facility. Construction-related emissions during development may be generated from construction equipment exhaust and construction employee vehicle trips to and from the worksite. Project's construction emissions would occur over a short duration and consist primarily of equipment exhaust emissions. The long-term regional emissions associated with the project would mainly arise from the creation of one new monthly inspection and maintenance trip and indirect source emissions from electricity consumption.

The Butte County Climate Action Plan (CAP) was adopted in February 2014 and updated in December 2021. The Butte County CAP includes strategies and associated actions related to public education and outreach efforts regarding reducing GHG emissions, administrative actions to monitor progress, and encouraging participation in programs. The strategies either apply to existing buildings that have already completed the environmental analysis, address operational characteristics of the county, or encourage options for actions that would reduce GHG emissions.

The project is allowed in the Public zone with approval of a Conditional Use Permit; thus, construction activities and operations are consistent with the Butte County General Plan. GHG emissions associated with the build-out of the project site have been analyzed and mitigated with the adoption of the Butte County CAP and the continued implementation of its strategies. Electricity consumed during construction and operations is provided primarily by the area service provider regulated by state renewable energy plans. Vehicles used during construction, and generated by the project's operations, would conform to state regulations and plans regarding fuel efficiency. Therefore, the project would not generate substantial GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, significantly impacting the environment. Impacts are less than significant.

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Less than significant impact. The project's consistency with the Butte County General Plan would ensure compliance with the GHG emission reduction strategies in the Butte County CAP, which in turn, support

County-wide efforts to meet statewide GHG emission reduction goals. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

1.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials.				
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

No impact. The project would be a wireless telecommunications facility with related improvements. One 30 kW backup generator and 210-gallon diesel fuel tank would be installed with the project. The tank would be installed consistent with Butte County Department of Environmental Health standards and require preparation and approval of a Hazardous Materials Release and Response Plan (HMRRP) to address actions that would be taken to avoid environmental effects should a fuel spill occur. The fuel would not be routinely transported or used. It would only be used in emergency situations when disruptions to electrical service occur and during

periodic testing of the generator. No impact to the public would occur with storage of diesel fuel on-site in the quantities proposed and with implementation of an HMRRP if required.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Less than significant impact. The project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous materials. Publicly available hazardous materials (e.g., paint, maintenance supplies) may be required for maintenance and cleaning. These materials are not used in sufficient strength or quantity to create a substantial risk of fire or explosion, or otherwise pose a substantial risk to human or environmental health. Operation of the telecommunications facility would not create a permanent, significant hazard to the public or environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

No impact. The project would store 210 gallons of diesel fuel on-site. No existing or proposed schools have been identified within one-quarter mile of the project site.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code §65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No impact. A review of regulatory agency databases (State Water Resource Control Board *Geotracker*), which includes lists of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to California Government Code Section 65962.5, showed no contamination sites proximal to the proposed lease area.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

No impact. Chico Municipal Airport is located approximately 1.2 miles southeast of the proposed lease area. According to the Chico Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP), the subject parcel is located within Airport Compatibility Zone B2 and C. However, the lease area is located within Zone C. Per Section 3.4.8, *Risk Sensitive Land Uses*, Subsection (c)(2) of the ALUCP, the proposed project is allowed within Review Area C provided there are no alternative sites outside the review area that will serve the intended function and that the project meets height requirements set forth in Section 3.5 of the ALUCP. Further, under Policy 1.4.4, Butte County, as the lead agency, is required to refer all land use actions that involve any proposed object having a height of more than 70 feet within *Compatibility Zone C* to the Airport Land Use Commission for an ALUCP consistency determination.

The Federal Airways and Airspace Summary Report was prepared for the project on June 11, 2025. The report states that Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) review is not required based on the height and location of the proposed tower.

Airspace protection compatibility policies within the ALUCP are intended to prevent the creation of land-use features that can pose hazards to the airspace required by aircraft in flight and have the potential to cause an aircraft accident. The project is subject to the following ALUCP policies. Formal Airport Land Use Commission review would occur after submittal of the formal Conditional Use Permit application.

• Policy 3.5.2 (Object Height Criteria) states that no object, including a mobile object such as a vehicle or temporary object such as a construction crane, shall have a height that would result in penetration of an *Airspace Protection Surface*. Any object that penetrates one of these surfaces is, by FAA definition, deemed an obstruction.

• Policy 3.5.3 (Requirements for FAA Notification of Proposed Construction or Alteration) states that project proponents are responsible for notifying the FAA about proposed construction that may affect navigable airspace. The boundaries of the FAA Notification area are depicted on the respective *Airspace Protection Surfaces* map for each airport.

• Policy 3.4.8 (Critical Community Infrastructure), the creation of communication facilities, including emergency communications, broadcast, and cell phone towers, in *Compatibility Zone C* shall be allowed only if an alternative site outside of this zone would not serve the facility's intended function. Structures shall be located a maximum distance from the extended runway centerline and comply with airspace protection criteria set forth in Section 3.5 of the BCLUCP.

With respect to consistency with Policy 3.5.2, the project site elevation is 205 feet above sea level. Per Butte County ALUCP Exhibit CIC 4.2B (Airspace Protection Surfaces Map), based on Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Part 77, the Airspace Protection Area starts at 390 feet above sea level. The height of the communication facility is 100 feet; thus, the highest point would be 305 feet above sea level. This would be 85 feet below the Airspace Protection Area. The project site is located outside the Traffic Pattern Zone (Zone 6), which is outside the Runway Protection Zone, Inner Approach/Departure Zone, Inner Turning Zone, Outer Approach/Departure Zone, and Sideline Zone. The project would be consistent with ALUCP Policy 3.5.2.

With respect to Policy 3.5.3, as stated above, the Airspace Summary Report was prepared for the project on June 11, 2025. The report states that Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) review is not required based on the height and location of the proposed facility. The project would be consistent with ALUCP Policy 3.5.3.

With respect to Policy 3.4.8, the applicant submitted a study of eleven alternative sites, including the proposed site, for installing the new wireless facility. Nine sites are located in the gap area, and two sites are located outside the gap area. Of the eleven sites evaluated, the owners of six sites were either nonresponsive or objected to the tower construction. • Two sites were determined by the applicant to be unsuitable properties for this deployment. Two sites located outside of the gap area identified in public comments—Highway 99 Commercial/Industrial Zone (Wilson Landing) and North Chico (Hicks Lane) were found to be too distant from the proposed service area to address the coverage gap.

The Keefer site was selected because it should address Verizon's stated requirements for in-building coverage within the gap area bordering Keefer Road east of Highway 99. Further, the site, which is accessible via Keefer Road and Garner Lane, is currently undeveloped and is proposed to be developed with a public facility, such as a fire station. Based on the results of the Alternative Site Analysis and the unavailability of potential sites outside Chico Municipal Airport *Compatibility Zone C*, the proposed project is consistent with ALUCP safety policies and criteria.

The ALUCP contains multiple noise compatibility policies intended to avoid the development of noise-sensitive land uses in areas that are exposed to significant aircraft operation noise. The project site is located outside the CNEL 55 dB noise contour (see also Section 1.13, *Noise*, threshold (c)). Further, telecommunication facilities are not noise-sensitive land uses that would be deemed incompatible with airport-related noise exposure. As a result, the proposed project is consistent with the ALUCP's noise policies. No impact would occur under this threshold.

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No impact. The proposed project would construct a new driveway west and then south to the lease area from Garner Lane. Emergency access would not be affected. The project would not include any actions that physically interfere with emergency response or emergency evacuation plans. One new quarterly inspection/maintenance trip would be required; however, that would result in a negligible change to overall volumes on Garner Lane and Keefer Road. No impact would occur under this threshold.

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

No impact. The project is not located in a high fire hazard area as designated by the State Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The project site is not within a State Responsibility Area (SRA); thus, Butte County has fiscal responsibility for preventing and suppressing fires. The nearest staffed fire station is Butte County Fire Station #41, located at 13871 Highway 99, approximately 1.8 miles southwest of the lease area. The proposed action would not expose people or structures to a significant risk or loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. No impact would occur under this threshold.

1.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. Hydrology and Water Quality.				
Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i) Result in substantial on- or offsite erosion or siltation;	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	☐	☐	☐	☒
iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

No impact. The proposed action would not generate wastewater or otherwise change the quality or volume of water leaving the site. Thus, no impact to water quality standards and related discharge requirements would occur with the project.

b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

No impact. The Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin supplies a portion of the municipal and agricultural water demands for the City of Oroville and surrounding unincorporated areas. The project site is located over the Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin, which underlies the majority of eastern Butte County.

According to the Butte County Groundwater Management Plan (2005), groundwater supplies approximately 31% of potable water demand county-wide. Water demand for the unincorporated areas of the county was projected to grow from 8,322.3 million gallons in 2000 to 9,736.4 million gallons in 2030, an increase of 17 percent. As noted, a private well currently supplies domestic water. No additional water demand would be associated with implementation of the proposed project.

The net increase in impervious surfaces relative to existing conditions would consist of the equipment cabinets. Further, no water service would be required. The proposed action would not cause a change in surface infiltration or a decrease in the percolation of water into the underlying aquifers. As shown in Figure 2-7 of the Butte County Groundwater Plan, the project site is not located in a groundwater recharge area for the Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin. No impacts to groundwater supplies and recharge would occur.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

i) Result in substantial on- or offsite erosion or siltation;

No impact. The proposed action would have no effect on erosion or siltation occurring on- or off-site. With the exception of grading required to create the development site, no changes to the landform or drainage patterns would occur and minimal ground disturbance would be required. See response to 1.10 (a) above. The project would not alter the course of a stream or river. No impact would occur under this threshold.

ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;

No impact. The proposed action would result in a negligible increase in impervious surface area from construction of new facilities. The existing drainage patterns on-site would not be affected. Storm water would percolate into the existing soil surrounding the lease area. The project would not result in on- or off-site flooding. Impacts would be less than significant.

iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or

No impact. Stormwater drainage systems in the project area currently consist of roadside ditches and culverts that capture surface runoff, which ultimately infiltrate into the underground aquifer or are conveyed to area waterways. Precipitation that falls on vacant land percolates into the soil. The project would not increase runoff from impervious surfaces or otherwise affect the ability of existing on-site stormwater detention to accommodate stormflows. No impacts would occur under this threshold.

iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

No impact. The project site is located within Flood Zone X (FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map No. 06007C0310E, January 6, 2011). Properties within Zone X have less than a 1% chance of annual flooding.

The project would be uninhabited, and the electrical infrastructure, backup generator, and fuel tank would be elevated on concrete slabs. As referenced, the project would not redirect on-site drainage patterns or impede or redirect flood flows. All on-site drainage would be managed to ensure existing flows off-site are maintained. The project would not expose people or structures to flood hazard from severe storm events. No impact would occur under this threshold.

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Less than significant. The project site is located within Flood Zone X (FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map No. 06007C0310E, January 6, 2011). The project would not redirect on-site drainage patterns or impede or redirect flood flows on or surrounding the site. All on-site drainage would be managed to ensure pre-construction flows off-site are maintained. The project would not expose people or structures to flood hazard from severe storm events. Per the General Plan Health and Safety Element Figure HS-5, the area is located within an extremely high inundation zone. Thus, the lease area would likely be affected if a dam failure were to occur. The project site is not located in an area that would be impacted by a seiche, tsunami, or mudflows.

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

No impact. The project site is located outside the Butte County Groundwater Management Plan area. As referenced, the site is within the Sacramento River Valley Groundwater Basin; however, no water service is required for operation of the project. The project would not affect groundwater demand or recharge. No impact would occur under this threshold.

1.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. Land Use and Planning.				
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Environmental Setting

The General Plan Update represents the fundamental community values, ideals, and aspirations with respect to land use, development, transportation, public services, and conservation policy that will govern Butte County through 2040. The land use element of the general plan designates the land use of areas within the County and includes a description of the characteristics and intensity of each land use category. The land use designation for the project site is R*ural Residential* (RR).

Butte County Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance implements the goals and policies of the Butte County General Plan by regulating the uses of the land and structures within the County. The zoning designations of the project site and their intended use are as follows:

Public

The purpose of the PB zone is to allow for public and quasi-public facilities that serve Butte County residents and visitors and enhance the quality of life within the county. Permitted uses in the PB zone include public and private schools; parks and playgrounds; community centers; interpretive facilities; public libraries; governmental offices; and police and fire stations. Uses permitted with the approval of a Conditional Use Permit include hospitals, cultural institutions, religious facilities, and large scale facilities such as dams and reservoirs, landfills, cemeteries and mausoleums, correctional institutions, major utilities, and other similar public works projects. The maximum FAR in the PB zone is one-half (0.5). The PB zone implements the Public land use designation in the General Plan.

The findings associated with the approval of a Conditional Use Permit application are as follows:

Butte County Code §24-217 (Conditional Use Permit - Findings)

A. The proposed use is allowed in the applicable zone and consistent with the General Plan.

B. The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed use will be compatible with the existing and future land uses in the vicinity of the subject property.

C. The proposed use will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare of the County.

D. The proposed use is properly located within the County and adequately served by existing or planned services and infrastructure.

E. The size, shape, and other physical characteristics of the subject property are adequate to ensure compatibility of the proposed use with the existing and future land uses in the vicinity of the subject property.

F. The proposed project would have no significant or adverse environmental impacts.

Discussion

a) Physically divide an established community?

No impact. The subject property is a 2,500 square foot lease area within a 6.19-acre parcel. The proposed action would allow the installation of a wireless telecommunications facility, elevated development pad, equipment cabinet, emergency generator, and related improvements to enhance the telecommunication infrastructure within the area. The project would not require any changes to an existing facility. No structures would be removed, nor would neighboring parcels be affected by the project.

b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No impact. The project is deemed consistent if the proposed use is consistent with the applicable General Plan designation and text, the applicable General Plan is legally adequate and internally consistent, and the anticipated types of activities are appropriate to the land use designated for the area. The proposed project does not include an amendment to the existing land use designation and would be consistent with the zoning designation, provided a UP is approved. The proposed project is a request for a UP, consistent with Section 24-217 of the Butte County Zoning Ordinance. Implementation of the project would not result in a conflict with zoning ordinances because the project is conditionally allowed in the General Rural Residential zone with the approval of a UP. The project will not generate any inconsistencies with applicable zoning standards and General Plan policies.

1.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. Mineral Resources.				
Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

No impact. The majority of Butte County's sand and gravel deposits occur in two regions, along the Sacramento River and within a band running from north to south down the center of the county. There are no known economically viable sources of rock materials in the immediate vicinity of the project site and no mining has occurred on the project site or surrounding area. Approval of the proposed action would not preclude future extraction of available mineral resources. No impact would occur under this threshold.

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

No impact. The project site is not within or near any designated locally-important mineral resource recovery site. Further, construction of the facility and related improvements would not require the use of mineral resources. No impact would occur under this threshold.

1.13 NOISE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII.Noise.				
Would the project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Environmental Setting

According to the Butte County General Plan 2040, noise is a concern throughout Butte County, but especially in rural areas and in the vicinity of noise-sensitive uses such as residences, schools, and churches. Noise is discussed in the Health and Safety Chapter of the Butte County General Plan 2040. Tables HS-2 and HS-3 in the County General Plan (included as Tables 1.13-1 and 1.13-2 below) outline the maximum allowable noise levels at sensitive receptor land uses.

Table 1.13-1. Maximum Allowable Noise Exposure: Transportation Noise Sources

	Exterior Noise Level Standard for Outdoor Activity Areasa		Interior Noise Level Standard	
LAND USE	Ldn/CNEL, dB	Leq, dBAb	Ldn/CNEL, dB	Leq, dBAb
Residential	60c	-	45	-
Transient Lodging	60c	-	45	-
Hospitals, nursing homes	60c	-	45	-
Theaters, auditoriums, music halls	-	-	-	35
Churches, meeting halls	60c	-	-	40
Office Buildings	-	-	-	45
Schools, libraries, museums	-	70	-	45
Playgrounds, neighborhood parks	-	70	-	-

Source: Table HS-2, Butte County General Plan 2030

[a] Where the location of outdoor activity areas is unknown, the exterior noise-level standard shall be applied to the property line of the receiving land use.

[b] As determined for a typical worst-case hour during periods of use.

[c] Where it is not possible to reduce noise in outdoor activity areas to 60 dB Ldn/CNEL or less using a practical application of the best-available noise reduction measures, an exterior noise level of up to 65 dB Ldn/CNEL may be allowed, provided that available exterior noise-level reduction measures have been implemented and interior noise levels are in compliance with this table.

Table 1.13-2. Maximum Allowable Noise Exposure Non-Transportation Noise Sources

	Daytime 7 am - 7 pm		Evening 7 pm - 10 pm		Night 10 pm - 7 am	
NOISE LEVEL DESCRIPTION	Urban	Non-Urban	Urban	Non-Urban	Urban	Non-Urban
Hourly Leq (dB)	55	50	50	45	45	40
Maximum Level (dB)	70	60	60	55	55	50

Source: Table HS-3, Butte County General Plan 2040

Notes:

1. "Non-Urban designations" are Agriculture, Timber Mountain, Resource Conservation, Foothill Residential and Rural Residential. All other designations are considered "urban designations" for the purposes of regulating noise exposure.

2. Each of the noise levels specified above shall be lowered by 5 dB for simple tone noises, noises consisting primarily of speech or music, or for recurring impulsive noises. These noise level standards do not apply to residential units established in conjunction with industrial or commercial uses (e.g. caretaker dwellings).

3. The County can impose noise level standards which are up to 5 dB less than those specified above based upon determination of existing low ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project site.

4. In urban areas, the exterior noise level standard shall be applied to the property line of the receiving property. In rural areas, the exterior noise level standard shall be applied at a point 100 feet away from the residence. The above standards shall be measured only on property containing a noise sensitive land use. This measurement standard may be amended to provide for measurement at the boundary of a recorded noise easement between all affected property owners and approved by the County.

	Daytime 7 am - 7 pm		Evening 7 pm - 10 pm		Night 10 pm - 7 am	
NOISE LEVEL DESCRIPTION	Urban	Non-Urban	Urban	Non-Urban	Urban	Non-Urban
Hourly Leq (dB)	55	50	50	45	45	40
Maximum Level (dB)	70	60	60	55	55	50

Source: Table HS-3, Butte County General Plan 2030

Notes:

1. "Non-Urban designations" are Agriculture, Timber Mountain, Resource Conservation, Foothill Residential and Rural Residential. All other designations are considered "urban designations" for the purposes of regulating noise exposure.

2. Each of the noise levels specified above shall be lowered by 5 dB for simple tone noises, noises consisting primarily of speech or music, or for recurring impulsive noises. These noise level standards do not apply to residential units established in conjunction with industrial or commercial uses (e.g. caretaker dwellings).

3. The County can impose noise level standards which are up to 5 dB less than those specified above based upon determination of existing low ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project site.

4. In urban areas, the exterior noise level standard shall be applied to the property line of the receiving property. In rural areas, the exterior noise level standard shall be applied at a point 100 feet away from the residence. The above standards shall be measured only on property containing a noise sensitive land use. This measurement standard may be amended to provide for measurement at the boundary of a recorded noise easement between all affected property owners and approved by the County.

Table 1.13.1, above, identifies the maximum allowable noise exposure to a variety of land uses from transportation sources, including roadways, rail and airports. Table 1.13-2 identifies the maximum allowable noise exposure from non-transportation sources. In the case of transportation noise sources, exterior noise level standards for residential outdoor activity areas are 60 dB (Ldn/CNEL). However, where it is not possible to reduce noise in an outdoor activity area to 60 dB Ldn /CNEL or less using a practical application of the best-available noise-reduction measures, an exterior noise level of up to 65 dB may be allowed, provided that available exterior noise-level reduction measures have been implemented and interior noise levels are in compliance with applicable standards.

Butte County Noise Ordinance

Chapter 41A, Noise Control, of the Butte County Code of Ordinance applies to the regulation of noise. The purpose of the noise ordinance is to protect the public welfare by limiting unnecessary, excessive, and unreasonable noise. Section 41A-7 specifies the exterior noise limits that apply to land use zones within the County, which are provided in Table 1.13-2.

The Butte County Noise Ordinance provides the County with a means of assessing complaints of alleged noise violations and to address noise level violations from stationary sources. The ordinance includes a list of activities that are exempt from the provisions of the ordinance. Relevant information related to the exterior and interior noise limits set out by the Butte County Noise Ordinance is included below.

Chapter 41A-9 Exemptions

The following are exempted activities identified in Chapter 41A-9 that are applicable to the proposed project:

(f) Noise sources associated with construction, repair, remodeling, demolition, paving or grading of any real property or public works project located within one thousand (1,000) feet of residential uses, provided said activities do not take place between the following hours:

- Sunset to sunrise on weekdays and non-holidays;
- Friday commencing at 6:00 p.m. through and including 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, as well as not before 8:00 a.m. on holidays;
- Saturday commencing at 6:00 p.m. through and including 10:00 a.m. on Sunday; and,
- Sunday after the hour of 6:00 p.m.

Provided, however, when an unforeseen or unavoidable condition occurs during a construction project and the nature of the project necessitates that work in process be continued until a specific phase is completed, the contractor or owner shall be allowed to continue work into the hours delineated above and to operate machinery and equipment necessary to complete the specific work in progress until that specific work can be brought to conclusion under conditions which will not jeopardize inspection acceptance or create undue financial hardships for the contractor or owner;

(g) Noise sources associated with agricultural and timber management operations in zones permitting agricultural and timber management uses;

(h) All mechanical devices, apparatus or equipment which are utilized for the protection or salvage of agricultural crops during periods of adverse weather conditions or when the use of mobile noise sources is necessary for pest control;

(i) Noise sources associated with maintenance of residential area property, provided said activities take place between 7:00 a.m. to sunset on any day except Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday, or between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday; and, provided machinery is fitted with correctly functioning sound suppression equipment;

Chapter 41A-8 Butte County Interior Noise Standards

Interior noise standards discussed in Chapter 41A apply to all noise sensitive interior area within Butte County. The maximum allowable interior noise level standards for residential uses is 45 dB Ldn/CNEL, which is designed for sleep

and speech protection. The typical structural attenuation of a residence from an exterior noise is 15 dBA when windows facing the noise source is open. When windows in good condition are closed, the noise attenuation factor is around 20 dBA for an older structure and 25 dBA for a newer dwelling constructed consistent with Title 24 of the California Energy Code.

Table 1.13-3. Maximum Allowable Interior Noise Standards

NOISE LEVEL DESCRIPTION	Daytime 7 am - 7 pm	Evening 7 pm - 10 pm	Nighttime 10 pm - 7 am
Hourly Leq (dB)	45	40	35
Maximum Level (dB)	60	55	50
Source: Butte County Code Chapt. 41A-8, Interior Noise Standards			

Discussion

a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?

Less than significant impact. Post-construction, with the exception of periodic emergency generator operation, the project would not generate noise. The lease area is approximately 200 feet north of the nearest residence to the south. Noise emissions from the generator are anticipated to meet the non-urban maximum noise level of 60 A-weighted decibels at 100 feet from the generator unit. As stated, the closest residence is approximately 200 feet from the lease area. Assuming a 6 dBA reduction per doubling of distance, noise levels at 200 feet would be approximately 54 dBA. The quarterly inspection and maintenance trips, including generator testing, will have no effect on existing noise levels.

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

No impact. The proposed action would require minor grading and excavation to accommodate installation of the equipment. The nearest sensitive property is located on-site and approximately 200 feet south of the site. No temporary or permanent sources of groundborne vibration proximal to an existing receiver would occur. Post-construction, the project would not generate vibration.

c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No impact. The Chico Municipal Airport is located approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the site. As referenced, the project site is within the Airport Influence Area; however, per Exhibit 5-4 of the ALUCP, the site is outside the 55 dB CNEL contour line. Thus, while aircraft overflights would be audible at the project site, the project would not expose people to excessive noise levels from a public use airport or private airstrip. No impact would occur under this threshold.

1.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. Population and Housing.				
Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

No impact. The project would construct a new facility and related equipment on a 2,500 square foot leased area within an existing 6.19-acre Public parcel. No new jobs would be generated, nor would the action induce population growth in the County.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No impact. The proposed tower and equipment would not result in the loss of existing housing or cause an increase in the local population that would displace existing residents, necessitating the construction of additional housing.

1.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. Public Services.				
Would the project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?

No impact. The project is not located in a fire hazard area as designated by the State Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The project site is within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA), which means that the Butte County has fiscal responsibility for preventing and suppressing fires. The nearest staffed fire station is Butte County Fire Station #41, located at 13871 Highway 99 approximately 1.2 miles southwest of the lease area. The proposed project would be an unmanned telecommunication facility. It would not increase demand for fire protection.

Police protection?

No impact. The Butte County Sheriff's Office (BCSO) provides law enforcement service to the site from the headquarters located in the City of Oroville. The BCSO also maintains a mutual aid agreement with the Chico and Oroville Police Departments. Implementation of the proposed project is unlikely to increase service calls when development occurs. The project would not require any new law enforcement facilities or the alteration of existing facilities to maintain acceptable performance objectives. No increase in demand for law enforcement is anticipated. No impact would occur under this threshold.

Schools?

No impact. The proposed action would allow construction of a new tower and related equipment. It would not affect demand for school facilities in the area. No impact would occur under this threshold.

Parks?

No impact. The project would not affect demand for existing local and regional park facilities. Approval of the project would allow construction of a new tower and related equipment. No impact would occur under this threshold.

Other public facilities?

Less than significant impact. Development of the project would require electrical service. These site-specific improvements would not cause any adverse project impacts or otherwise increase demand for County services such as fire protection, road maintenance, law enforcement, schools, recreation, and libraries.

1.16 RECREATION

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. Recreation.				
Would the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

No impact. The proposed project would allow construction of a new tower and related equipment on a 2,500 square foot lease site located within a Public-zoned property. The project would not affect recreational resources. No impact would occur under this threshold.

b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

No impact. The project would not include recreational facilities, nor would the tower and related equipment require the expansion of existing recreational facilities. The project would not result in any adverse physical effects on the environment from construction or expansion of recreational facilities. No impact would occur under this threshold.

1.17 TRANSPORTATION

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII. Transportation.				
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision b?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

No impact. The proposed project would allow construction of a new telecommunications facility and related equipment. One quarterly inspection and maintenance trip would be required during operation of the project. Operation of Garner Lane would not be affected by the project. No impact would occur under this threshold.

There are no designated pedestrian or bicycle transportation facilities located near the project site. However, Garner. Lane, from Esplanade north to Keffer Road, is a planned Class II bicycle route in the adopted *2011 Butte County Bicycle Plan*. Development of the project would not impact use of Garner Lane by bicycles nor would the project impact alternative transportation facilities.

b) Conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision b?

No impact. The proposed project would generate one quarterly inspection and maintenance trip. According to the Butte County Association of Governments *SB 743 Implementation – VMT Impact Significance Thresholds*, projects that generate less than 110 vehicle trips per day is exempted from CEQA review. Trips generated by the project would be less than the threshold; therefore, VMT impacts would be less than significant.

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No impact. The proposed project would use the existing access driveway located along the eastern property boundary with an extension south to the lease area. However, it would not change the configuration (alignment) of area roadways and would not introduce types of vehicles that would result in dangerous conditions on area roads.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

No impact. The project site would be accessed via Garner Lane via a new gravel driveway. As stated, one quarterly maintenance trip would occur and, if needed, emergency vehicles. No impact to emergency access would occur with approval of the proposed action.

1.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources.				
Has a California Native American Tribe requested consultation in accordance with Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1(b)?	☐ Yes			☒ No
Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Environmental Setting

Tribal Cultural Resources are defined as a site feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place or object, which is of cultural value to a Tribe and is either on or eligible for the California Historic Register, a local register, or a resource that the lead agency, at its discretion, chooses to treat as such (Public Resources Code Section 21074 (a)(1)).

Butte County contains a rich diversity of archaeological, prehistoric and historical resources. The General Plan 2040 EIR observes that the "archaeological sensitivity of Butte County is generally considered high, particularly in areas near water sources or on terraces along water courses" (Butte County General Plan EIR, 2010, p. 4.5-7).

A substantial adverse change upon a historically significant resource would be one wherein the resource is demolished or materially altered so that it no longer conveys its historic or cultural significance in such a way that justifies its inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources or such a local register (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, sub. (b)(2)). Cultural resources include prehistoric and historic period archaeological sites; historical features, such as rock walls, water ditches and flumes, and cemeteries; and architectural features. Cultural resources consist of any human-made site, object (i.e., artifact), or feature that defines and illuminates our past. Often such sites are found in foothill areas, areas with high bluffs, rock outcroppings, areas overlooking deer migratory corridors, or near bodies of water.

Per Assembly Bill AB 52 (Statutes of 2014) letters were sent to the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians, the Mooretown Rancheria, Konkow Valley Band of Maidu, United Auburn Indian Community of Auburn Rancheria, and the Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria. A response letter dated July 1, 2025 was received from the Mooretown Rancheria. The

Tribal Historic Preservation Officer stated that he is not aware of any tribal cultural resources occurring on the project site. No further responses were received.

Discussion

Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

a) **Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?**

No impact. The proposed action would be constructed within an existing vacant site surrounded by very low-density residential development. Grading and excavation would be limited to what is needed to install the tower foundation, elevated equipment pad and related improvements. No historic resources are known to occur on-site and none would be affected by the project.

b) **A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?**

No impact. As detailed in response to Checklist Question 1.5b, no proposed construction or ground-disturbing activities are expected to result in impacts to known historic or cultural resources. No known features exist on the property, including objects, sites, or landscapes, that could be considered as having cultural value to California Native American tribes, or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources. As stated above, an AB 52 consultation response letter dated July 1, 2025, was received from the Mooretown Rancheria. The Tribal Historic Preservation Officer stated that the tribe is not aware of any tribal cultural resources occurring on the project site. It was requested that the tribe be notified if new information or questions arise as the project progresses. No further responses were received.

1.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIX. Utilities and Service Systems.				
Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Environmental Setting

Solid Waste

Most municipal waste is hauled to the Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility, which is owned by Butte County and managed by the Butte County Department of Public Works. The Neal Road Facility is located at 1023 Neal Road, one mile east from State Highway 99, and seven miles southeast of Chico, on 190 acres owned by Butte County. The Neal Road Facility is permitted to accept municipal solid waste, inert industrial waste, demolition materials, special wastes containing nonfriable asbestos, and septage. Hazardous wastes, including friable asbestos, are not accepted at the Neal Road Facility or any other Butte County disposal facility, and must be transported to a Class I landfill permitted to receive untreated hazardous waste. The landfill has a design capacity of 25,271,900 cubic yards and is permitted to accept 1,500 tons per day; however, the average daily disposal into the landfill is approximately 466 tons. As of November 2017, the remaining capacity of the Neal Road Facility is approximately 15,449,172 cubic yards, which would give the landfill a service life to the year 2048 (Neal Road Recycling & Waste Facility, 2017).

Discussion

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

No impact. The project site is currently served by electric power (PG&E) and wireless phone service. No domestic wastewater or water service is required; no septic system or water infrastructure is needed. The project would require the extension of electrical service to the lease area. The project would not result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded infrastructure including water services, wastewater treatment stormwater drainage or natural gas. The project would be a new wireless telecommunication facility.

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

No impact. No domestic water would be required for the project. No impact would occur.

c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

No impact. No domestic wastewater service would be required. No impact would occur.

d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Less than significant. Operations would not generate solid waste that would require disposal at the Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility. As stated, the Neal Road Facility has a maximum permitted throughput of 1,500 tons per day, and an estimated current daily average throughput of 466 tons per day. Facility capacity would not be affected by operation of the proposed project.

e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

No impact. The proposed project would comply with statutes and regulations related to solid waste. As stated, the project would not generate solid waste. No impact would occur.

1.20 WILDFIRE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XX. Wildfire.				
Is the project located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as high fire hazard severity zones?				
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:		☐ Yes		☒ No
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Require the installation of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Environmental Setting

The project site is not within a fire hazard area as designated by the State Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The project site is located within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA); thus, Butte County has fiscal responsibility for preventing and suppressing wildfires.

Discussion

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No impact. The project would require construction of a new facility and related equipment. Access would be provided via a new gravel driveway from Garner Lane. No lane closures or other project-related actions would create restrictions affecting emergency access or interfere with an emergency evacuation plan. No impact would occur under this threshold.

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

No impact. The project site is located on a disturbed site within an existing 6.19-acre Public-zoned property northeast of Chico. The lease area is flat. The nearest staffed fire station is Butte County Fire Station #41, located at 13871 Highway 99, approximately 1.2 miles southwest of the lease area. No conditions or factors have been identified in the project area that would exacerbate wildfire risks. No impact would occur under this threshold.

c) Require the installation of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

No impact. No off-site infrastructure improvements are needed to address fire or emergency access requirements. The driveway to the lease area would accommodate emergency vehicles. No increase in the risk of wildland fires would occur with the approval of the project. No impact would occur under this threshold.

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

No impact. According to Butte County General Plan 2040 (Figure HS-7), the project site is located in an area with a low to no potential for landslides (see discussion Section 1.7.a – Geology Soils). Based on site conditions, no impacts from post-fire instability or drainage changes have been identified. No impact would occur under this threshold.

1.21 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XX. Mandatory Findings of Significance.				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Less than significant. Potential impacts to biological resources and cultural resources associated with future project development were analyzed in this Initial Study. All direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts were determined to have no impact or a less than significant impact. No special status species or their habitat was identified on the site. Development of the project would not cause fish or wildlife populations to drop below self-sustaining levels or restrict the movement/distribution of a rare or endangered species. No mitigation would be required.

Development would not affect known significant historic resources or known archaeological or paleontological resources. There are no known unique ethnic or cultural values associated with the project site, nor are known religious or sacred uses associated with the project site. Limited excavation would be required to install the tower foundation, equipment cabinets, fencing and gravel driveway. No mitigation is required to address the potential discovery of unknown resources during excavation or other soil disturbance associated with development. No impact to cultural and paleontological resources would occur.

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)

Less than significant. The project would have no impact or a less than significant impact with respect to all environmental issues pursuant to CEQA. Due to the limited scope of direct physical impacts to the environment associated with the project, potential impacts are project-specific in nature. No mitigation measures would be required.

The cumulative effects resulting from build-out of the Butte County General Plan 2040 were previously identified in the General Plan Update Program EIR. The type, scale, and location of the activity proposed would be consistent with the County's General Plan and zoning designation, with approval of a Conditional Use Permit, and is compatible with existing surrounding residential development. Because of this consistency, the potential cumulative environmental effects of the proposed project would fall within the impacts identified in the County's General Plan EIR.

c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less than significant. There have been no impacts discovered through the review of this application demonstrating that approval of the use permit application and implementation of the proposed action would cause substantial adverse effects to human beings either directly or indirectly. No mitigation measures are required to reduce any potential impacts to less than significant.

Authority for the Environmental Checklist: Public Resources Code Sections 21083, 21083.5.

Reference: Government Code Sections 65088.4.
Public Resources Code Sections 21080, 21083.5, 21095; *Eureka Citizens for Responsible Govt. v. City of Eureka* (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; *Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; *San Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco* (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.

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Appendix A – Visual Simulations

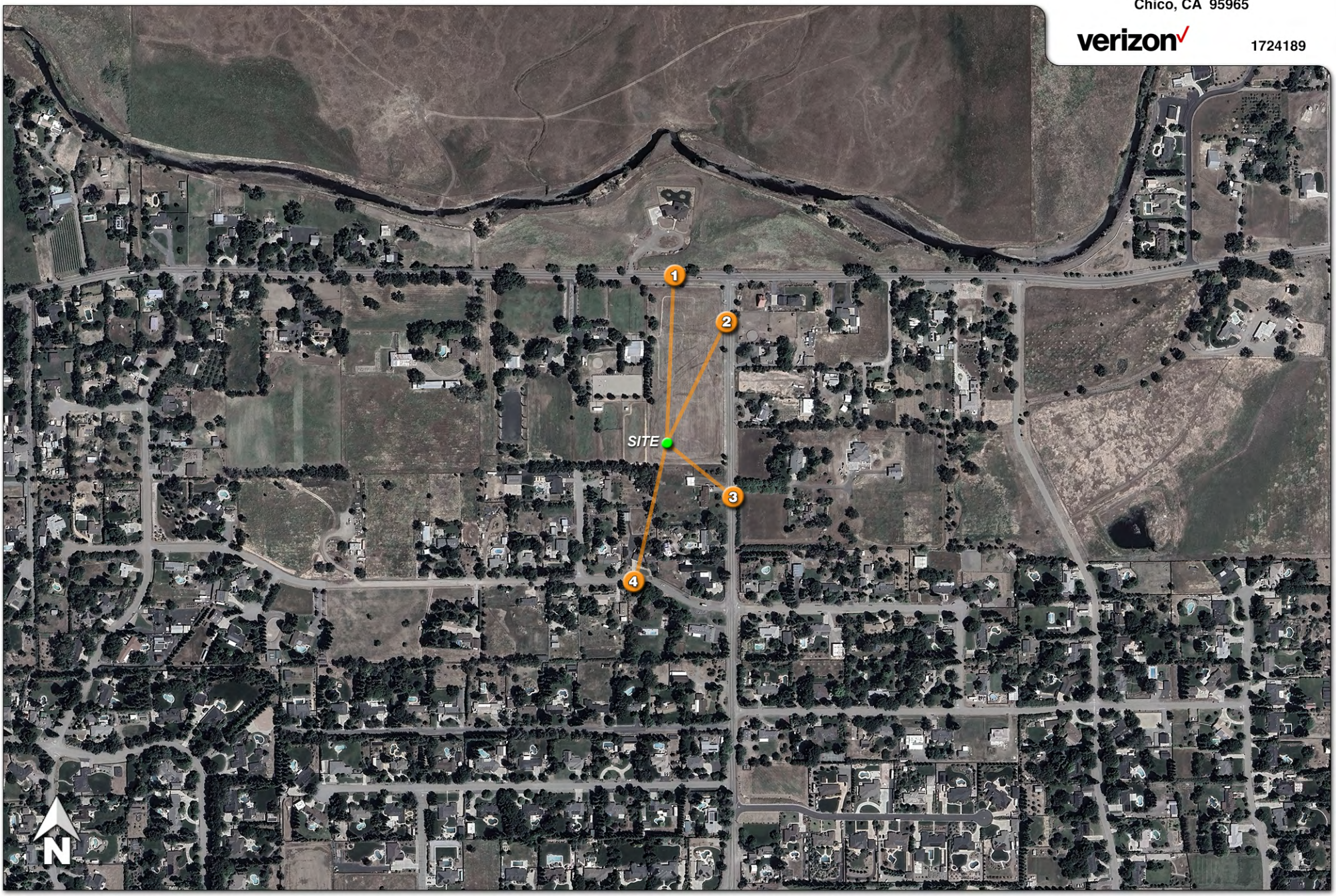
Exhibit 1 – Proposed Monopole

Keefer
4007 Keefer Road
Chico, CA 95965

verizon

1724189

Aerial photograph showing the viewpoints for the photosimulations.



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Photosimulation of the view looking due south from the nearest point along Keefer Road.

Keefer
4007 Keefer Road
Chico, CA 95965

verizon

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Photosimulation of the view looking south-southwest along Garner Lane, just south of Keefer Rd.

Keefer
4007 Keefer Road
Chico, CA 95965

verizon

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3

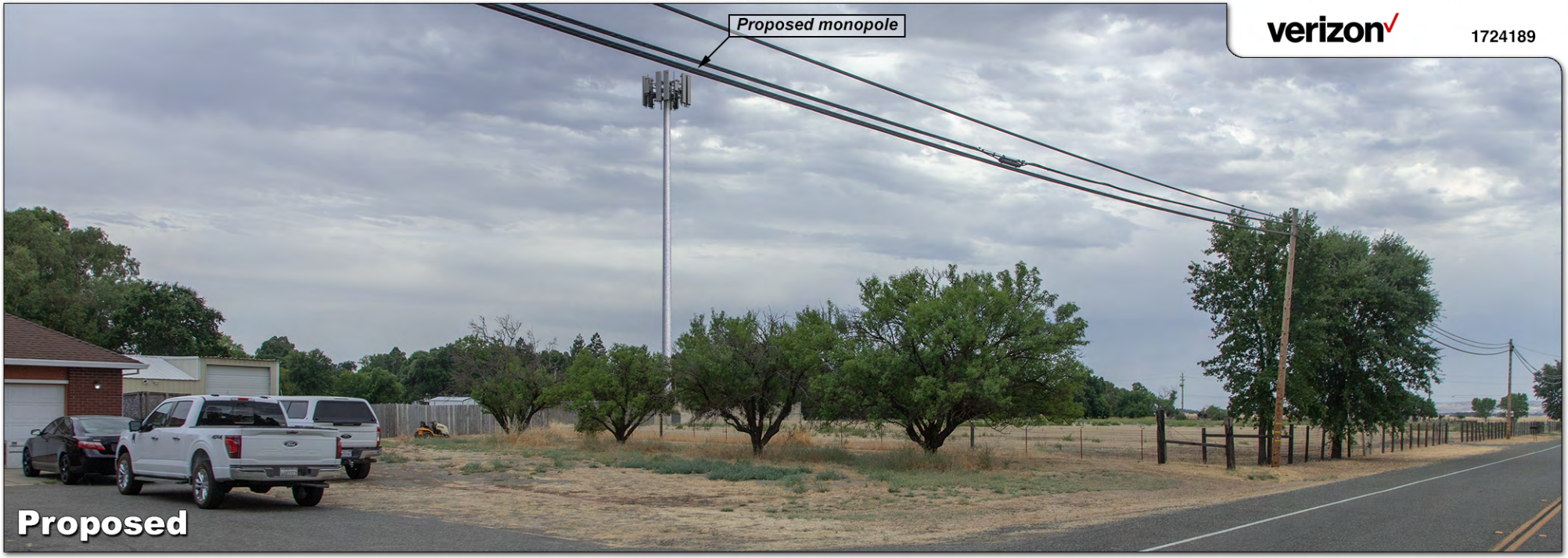


Photosimulation of the view looking northwest along Garner Lane.

Keefer
4007 Keefer Road
Chico, CA 95965

verizon

1724189



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Photosimulation of the view looking north-northeast from the nearest point along Shorthorn Drive.

Keefer
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Chico, CA 95965

verizon

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Exhibit 2 – Proposed Faux Water Tower

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Chico, CA 95965

verizon

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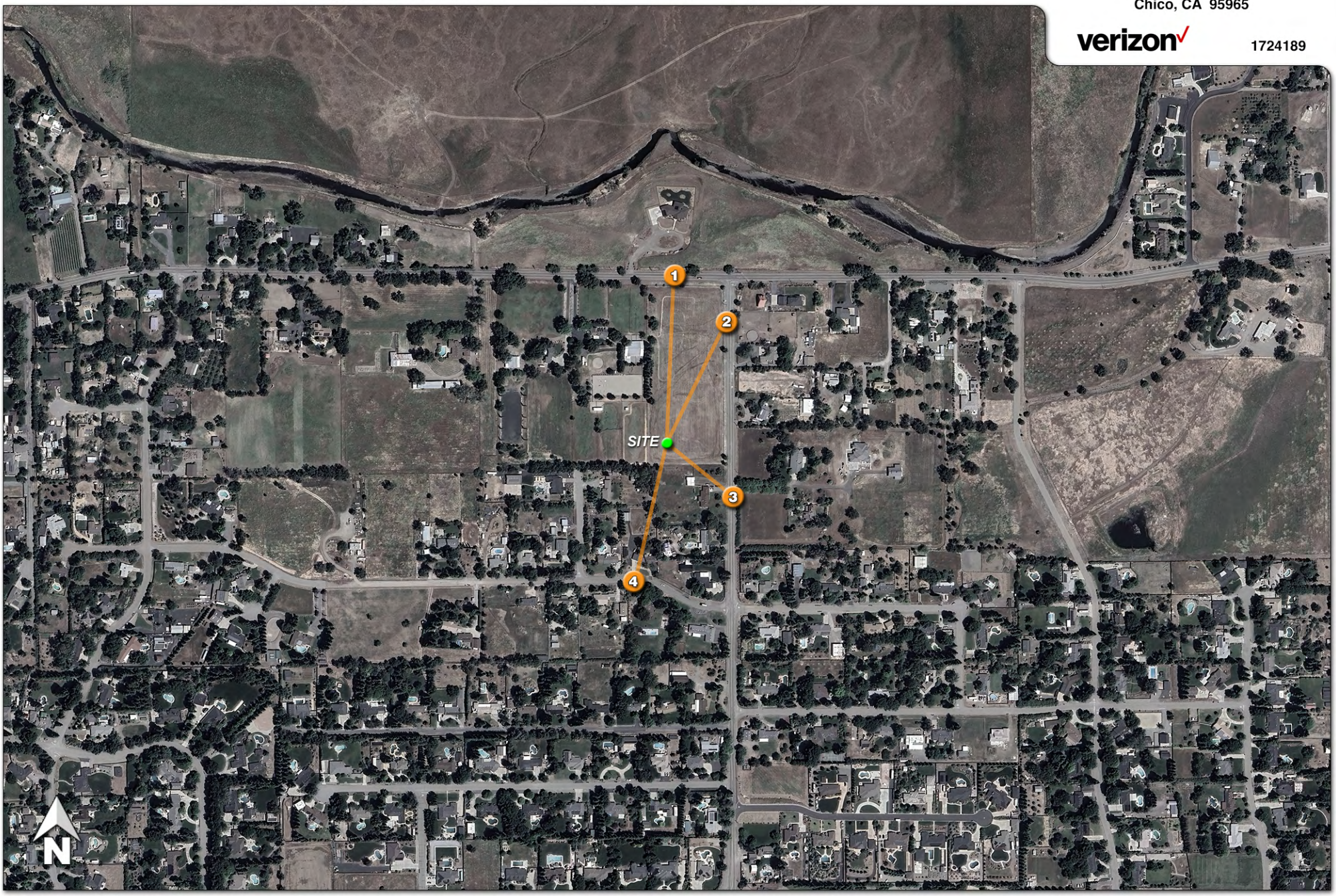
Aerial photograph showing the viewpoints for the photosimulations.



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Photosimulation of the view looking due south from the nearest point along Keefer Road.

Keefer
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Chico, CA 95965

verizon

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Photosimulation of the view looking south-southwest along Garner Lane, just south of Keefer Rd.

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verizon

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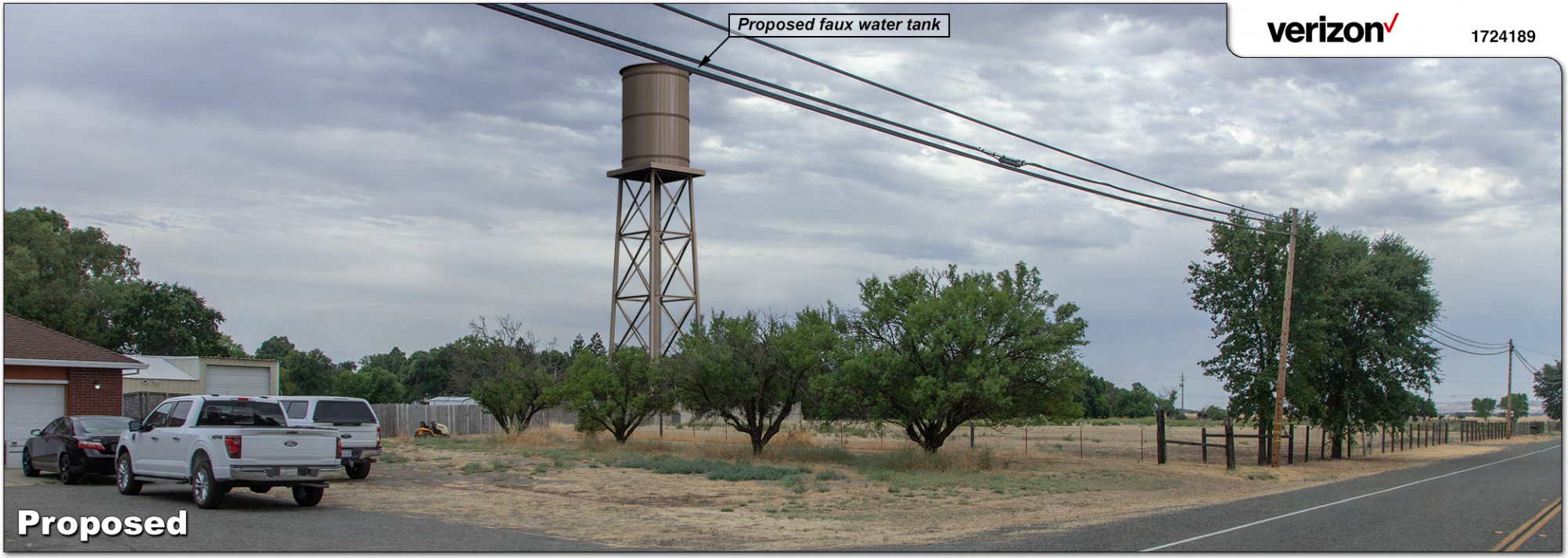
Photosimulation of the view looking northwest along Garner Lane.

Keefer
4007 Keefer Road
Chico, CA 95965

verizon

1724189



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4



Photosimulation of the view looking north-northeast from the nearest point along Shorthorn Drive.

Keefer
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Chico, CA 95965

verizon

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Exhibit 3 – Proposed Monopine

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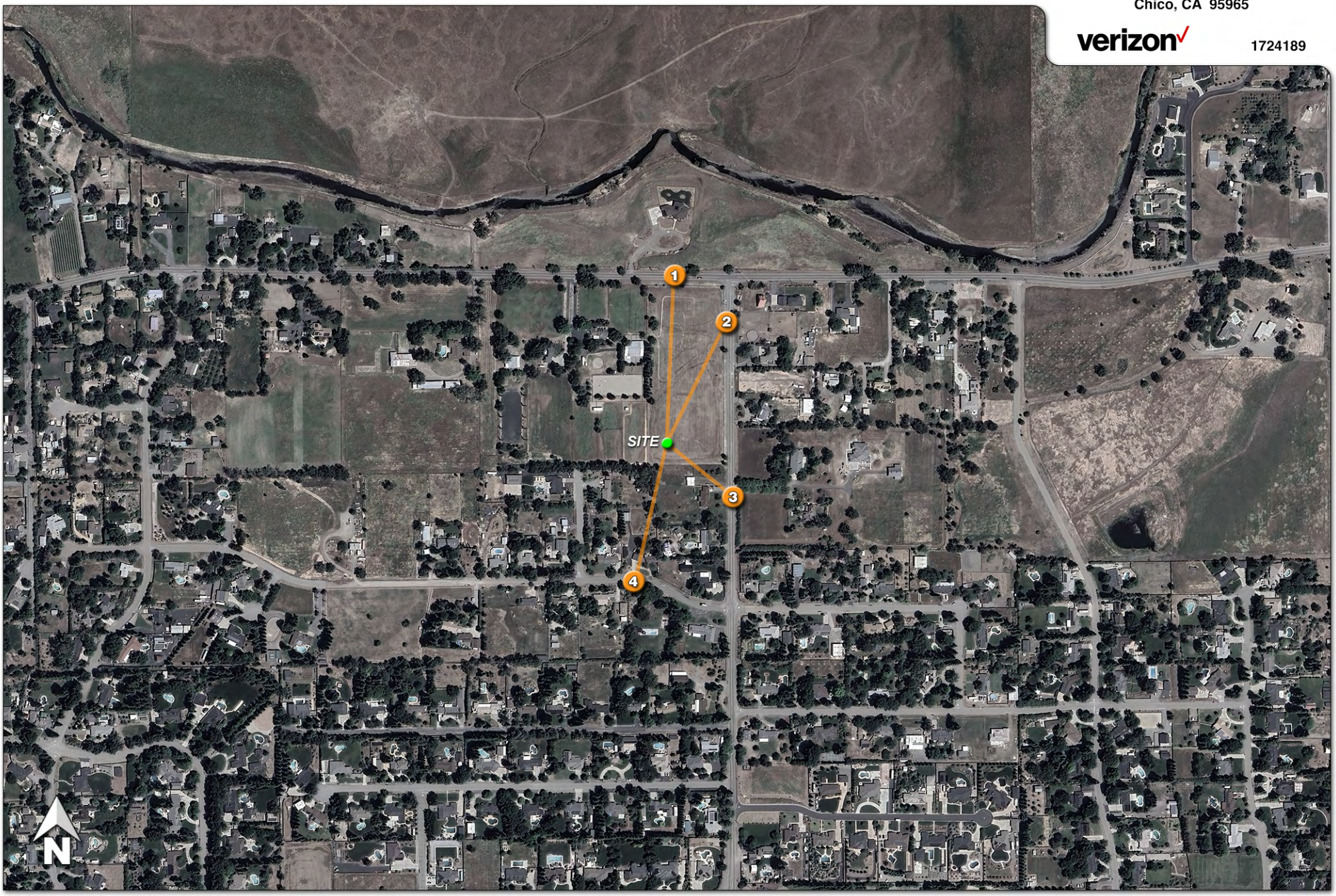
Chico, CA 95965

verizon

1724189

Aerial photograph showing the viewpoints for the photosimulations.



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Photosimulation of the view looking due south from the nearest point along Keefer Road.

Keefer
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verizon

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Photosimulation of the view looking south-southwest along Garner Lane, just south of Keefer Rd.

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verizon

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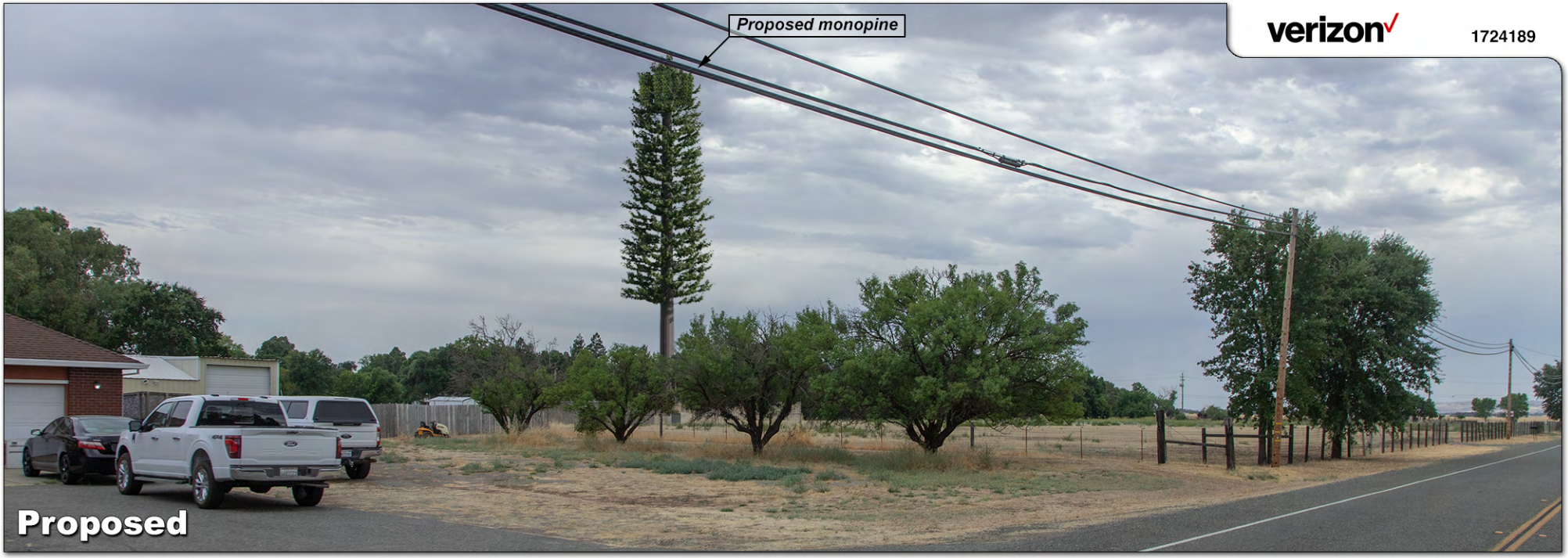
Photosimulation of the view looking northwest along Garner Lane.

Keefer
4007 Keefer Road
Chico, CA 95965

verizon

1724189



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Photosimulation of the view looking north-northeast from the nearest point along Shorthorn Drive.

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