

Exhibit A

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EXHIBIT A DISCUSSION

Project Description and Setting

AT&T proposes minor equipment additions and upgrades, including replacement of existing equipment and installation of an equipment enclosure with a 6-foot high wood fence, to an existing wireless communications facility. As proposed, the two 4-foot panel antennas on the utility pole would be replaced with two 6-foot panel antennas. The project also includes replacement of 1 conduit riser, and installation of 1 pole riser, H-Frame brackets, Remote Radio Units, cabinet, and an equipment enclosure with a 6-foot high wood fence. The existing wireless facility/project site is located within the Caltrans right-of-way on State Route 1 (Highway 1) across from Riley Ranch Road, Carmel Area Land Use Plan, Coastal Zone. The project site area does not have a zoning classification (i.e., unclassified). The County approved the existing wireless communications facility in 2003 (Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 03-179; RMA-Planning File No. DA020480), and the County has approved subsequent modifications to the site (RMA-Planning File No. DA080285).

Request for Public Hearing

Due to the minor nature of the project, it was initially scheduled and duly-noticed for administrative processing and review. Pursuant to Monterey County Code (MCC), administrative Design Approvals are considered and determined by the RMA Chief of Planning, unless an interested party requests a public hearing for the proposed project. After noticing for administrative review, the County received two requests for public hearing (**Exhibit D**). Therefore, this item was set for public hearing and consideration before the Zoning Administrator.

The concerns expressed by the public involve possible impacts to visual resources, safety, and noise. These concerns are addressed below:

Noise. The commenter expressed concern regarding existing and potential noise from the proposed development. County staff conducted a site inspection on March 30, 2017, to evaluate the noise impacts of the existing development. The existing ground equipment does generate a “buzzing” sound that remains audible up to approximately 15 feet from the equipment. Beyond 15 feet, the sound generated from the ground equipment is obscured by wind and vehicle traffic on Highway 1. The facility is surrounded by open space parkland and rural residential uses, and the nearest residence is over 200 feet from the facility. County staff concludes the noise from the existing ground equipment is minimal, and does not produce noise levels that exceed Monterey County noise exposure limits. In addition, the proposed enclosure would further attenuate any noise generated from the existing or proposed ground equipment.

Safety. The commenter expressed concern regarding radiation levels from the facility, and stated the posted signs warn of “...unacceptable levels of (FCC) non-compliant radiation.” The project planner conducted a site inspection on March 30, 2017, and determined the facility signage regarding emissions are precautionary warning signs posted as required by federal law. The Applicant submitted an Electromagnetic Energy

Exposure Report (LIB170125), which indicated that this facility is compliant with applicable requirements and guidelines of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Regarding lateral access, the subject utility pole and equipment are approximately 14 to 17 feet from the edge of pavement, and approximately 17 to 20 feet from the southbound lane of travel on Highway 1; therefore, adequate space remains for bicycle and pedestrian access and travel along the highway without risking radiation exposure from the facility.

Visual Resources/Viewshed. The commenter expressed concern regarding potential visual impacts to the surrounding viewshed, and recommended the distribution poles be removed and transmission cables be buried from Monastery Beach to Riley Ranch Road to improve the viewshed. The commenter asserted this is a “long-standing community request”.

The project would involve minor equipment changes to an existing facility visible within the viewshed and common public viewing area of Highway 1. The site’s existing ground equipment consists of several cabinets mounted on a large H-Frame bracket which is unscreened from the traveling public on Highway 1. The proposed 6-foot high fence enclosure would screen both existing and new ground equipment from view, and the natural wood material would blend with the surrounding environment of trees and vegetation. The project planner conducted a site inspection on March 30, 2017, to evaluate the visual impacts of the existing development, and to verify that the proposed project minimizes development within the public viewshed when viewed from a common public viewing area. The Applicant proposes to paint the pole-mounted equipment dark brown to match the existing equipment and blend with the utility pole. The ground equipment would be screened by natural wood fencing that would blend with background trees and vegetation. The proposed natural exterior finish would blend with the surrounding environment. The proposed natural wood enclosure would improve the visual setting, and the replaced and new pole-mounted equipment would not create a significant adverse visual impact. County staff’s determination is that the project, as proposed, is consistent with applicable policies of the Carmel Area LUP regarding Visual Resources, minimizes visual impacts, and assures protection of the public viewshed.

Although the County encourages re-routing and/or undergrounding of transmission lines (Carmel Area LUP Policy 2.2.4.11), the comment regarding removal of distribution poles and burying of transmission lines from Monastery Beach to Riley Ranch Road is outside the scope of the subject project and the immediate purview of Monterey County. Removal of distribution poles and burying of transmission lines would need to be addressed by PG&E, Caltrans, and affected wireless service providers. The County’s participation would involve processing of entitlements for any required coastal development permits.

Carmel Unincorporated/Highlands Land Use Advisory Committee

Pursuant to the LUAC Procedure Guidelines adopted by the Monterey County Board of Supervisors, administrative (i.e., projects not requiring a public hearing) design approvals are not normally sent to the LUACs for review. However, due to the requests for a public hearing (**Exhibit D**), the project was referred to the Carmel Unincorporated/Highlands Land Use

Advisory Committee (LUAC) for review. The LUAC reviewed the proposed project at a duly-noticed public meeting on April 17, 2017, and voted 3 – 0 to recommend approval provided the enclosure fence be natural wood and no more than 6 feet in height. Both these recommendations have been proposed by the Applicant.

Environmental Review

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15301 categorically exempts the minor alteration of existing public or private structures and facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination. The proposed project consists of the replacement of existing equipment, and installation of new equipment and enclosure, to an existing wireless communications facility. Therefore, the proposed development is consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15301. Although the proposed project involves development located near or within view of a designated scenic highway (State Route 1/Highway 1), as proposed the project would not result in damage to scenic resources such as trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources as described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. Furthermore, the proposed installation of wood fencing would screen the facility equipment, thereby improving the scenic quality of the vicinity surrounding the facility. No further environmental review is required.

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