



REPORT

To: Chair and Directors

Report Number: DS-BRD-345

From: Ashley Murphey RPP, MCIP, GM of Development Services

Date: October 26, 2023

Subject: Telecommunications Tower Siting Application, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM

RECOMMENDATION: [Corporate Unweighted]

That the Regional Board authorize the issuance of a concurrence letter for the proposed 62 multi-height Shell Canada Limited telecommunication towers, on a variety of parcels located in Electoral Area E and identified in Attachment No. 2 - Telecommunications Tower Locations, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM, attached to and forming part of Report DS-BRD-345, as the proposal has met all requirements of Telecommunications Tower Siting Policy No. 0340-74.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

Proposal

The proposal is to construct 62 telecommunication towers within Electoral Area E of the Peace River Regional District to support SCADA communications for Shell's existing oil and gas activities. This application is for multiple sites in different locations with varying height telecommunication towers, all of which are proposed to be located on existing Shell oil and gas sites. Thirty (30) towers are to be located on private land, and thirty-two (32) are to be located on crown land. The towers range from a height of 15m to 45m. The sites of each tower are listed in attachment No. 2 - Telecommunications Tower Locations, PRRD File No. 23-072 attached to and forming part of this report.

File Details

Owner: Shell Canada Limited
Agent: Petron Canada
Area: Electoral Area E
Location: Groundbirch, South Taylor
Legal: Refer to Attachment No. 2 - Telecommunications Tower Locations, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM.
PID: Refer to Attachment No. 2 - Telecommunications Tower Locations, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM.
Lot Size: Refer to Attachment No. 2 - Telecommunications Tower Locations, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM.

Rationale

The applicant has submitted all required documents and completed all requirements of the Peace River Regional District Telecommunications Tower Siting Policy No. 0340-74 for the 62 proposed telecommunications towers, as outlined in this report. Therefore, the issuance of a concurrence letter is recommended.

The Area Director has noted outstanding concerns with the proposal, therefore pursuant to Section 4.29 of the Policy, staff are required to prepare this report for the Regional Board's consideration.

Summary of Compliance with the Policy:

For the 30 towers on private land the proponent has met the conditions outlined in Section 4.25 of the Telecommunications Tower Siting Policy, shown below, with the exception of c) as the Area Director has concerns:

- a) The proponent completed the requirements of this policy.
- b) The proposal conforms to all Regional District Bylaws.
- c) *The Area Director has no concerns.*
- d) Public comments received were:
 - i. Minor concerns that the proponent was able to address or mitigate; or
 - ii. In support of the proposal.

For the 32 towers on crown land the proponent has met the conditions outlined in Section 4.26 of the Telecommunications Tower Siting Policy, with the exception of d) as the Area Director has concerns:

- a) The proponent completed the requirements of this policy.
- b) The proposal conforms to all Regional District Bylaws.
- c) The proposed TAS is located more than 1.5 km away from residential dwellings.
- d) *The Area Director has no concerns.*
- e) Public comments received were:
 - i. Minor concerns that the proponent was able to address or mitigate; or
 - ii. In support of the proposal.

As the Area Director has outstanding concerns in accordance with Section 4.29 of the Telecommunications Tower Siting Policy, this report is required in order for the Board to make a final decision on the application.

Site Context

The proposed multi-site telecommunication towers are to be installed at existing oil and gas sites. Thirty (30) towers are proposed to be built on private properties, most of which are agricultural in nature, and thirty-two (32) towers are proposed to be built crown land.

Compliance with Telecommunications Tower Siting Policy No. 0340-74

Tower Location and Siting

The proposed towers are not located near any existing towers therefore co-location was not possible.

The proposed tower locations distance from residential dwellings varies by site, from 0.3 km to 1.8 km. Please see Attachment No. 2 - Telecommunications Tower Locations, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM, for exact distances from residential dwellings.

The locations selected have been identified to support oil and gas activity. The towers are not proposed to be located on any prominent natural and cultural features, environmentally sensitive areas or in an area with historical significance. All the towers are proposed to be located on existing oil and gas sites and the proposed towers are support structures for this activity.

Tower Design and Landscaping

The proposed towers are located on existing oil and gas sites and therefore are not required to be designed to accommodate additional users.

Public Information Meeting

Thirty-six (36) of the proposed towers are located on private land or within 1.5 km of residential dwellings, therefore a public information meeting was required.

Prior to the public meeting held by Shell, a comment was received from a member of the public regarding the installation of 5G towers near private residences, voicing concerns of potential individual and/or livestock health side effects from the proposed towers. Shell mitigated this concern during the public meeting by explaining that 5G technology is not being installed, and that the towers will follow Canadian health standards. This letter can be viewed in Attachment No. 5 - Public Letter of Concern, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM, forming part of this report.

The public information meeting was held on August 17, 2023, and all applicable requirements were met. A summary of the public information meeting was provided by the applicant and is attached to this report as Attachment No. 4 - Summary of Public Consultation, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM. Concerns from the public raised at the public meeting, and responses provided by Shell Canada, are noted in Attachment No. 4 - Summary of Public Consultation – PRRD File No. 23.702-COMM.

Comments & Observations

Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)

Some of the subject properties are within the Agricultural Land Reserve, and therefore the provisions of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* apply. As the structures are associated with an Oil and Gas Activity the ALC/OGC delegation agreement is applicable.

Official Community Plan (OCP)

Pursuant to the Rural Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1940, 2011, the towers located within the Official Community Plan boundaries are proposed to be built on parcels designated Agriculture-Rural (Ag-Rural). Oil and gas activities are permitted within the Ag-Rural designation.

Therefore, the proposal is consistent with the Official Community Plan.

Land Use Zoning

Pursuant to Zoning Bylaw No. 479, 1986, the parcels of private land where the towers are proposed to be located are zoned Large Agricultural Holdings Zone (A-2). Oil and gas activity is permitted on A-2 parcels.

Therefore, the proposal is consistent with the zoning bylaw.

Fire Protection Area

The subject properties are outside all fire protection areas.

Mandatory Building Permit Area

The subject parcels are outside the Mandatory Building Permit Area. Building permits are not required for telecommunications towers.

Development Permit Area

The subject parcels are outside all Development Permit Areas.

Comments Received from Internal Departments**Bylaw Enforcement Officer, Building Inspector, GIS Department**

Interests unaffected/No concerns.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Regional Board respectfully refuse the issuance of the concurrence letter for the proposed 62 multi-height Shell Canada Limited telecommunication towers, on the parcels identified in attachment No. 2 (Telecommunications Tower Locations, PRRD File No. 23-097 COMM), attached to and forming part of this report.
2. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- Not Applicable to Strategic Plan

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

None at this time.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):

The decision will be communicated to the applicant.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

None at this time.

Attachments:

1. Application, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM
2. Telecommunication Tower Locations, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM
3. Overview Map of Tower Locations, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM
4. Summary of Public Consultation, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM
5. Public Letter of Concern, PRRD File No. 23-072 COMM

External Links:

1. [Telecommunications Tower Siting Policy 0340-74](#)