



# REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION City of Sacramento

# 7

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2671

**PUBLIC HEARING**  
**October 28, 2010**

To: Members of the Planning Commission

**Subject** Clearwire on Auburn Boulevard – PG&E (P10-056)

A request to add three panel antennas, three microwave dishes, one GPS antenna, and an equipment cabinet to an existing telecommunication facility on an existing PG&E lattice tower in the Light Industrial (M-1) zone.

- A. **Environmental Determination:** Categorical Exemption per CEQA Guidelines Section 15301;
- B. **Special Permit Major Modification** to add three panel antennas three microwave dishes, one GPS antenna, and an equipment cabinet on an existing PG&E lattice tower.

### **Location/Council District**

NW Corner of Auburn Boulevard & Connie Drive, Sacramento

Assessor's Parcel Number: 266-0111-009-0000

Council District 2

### **Recommendation**

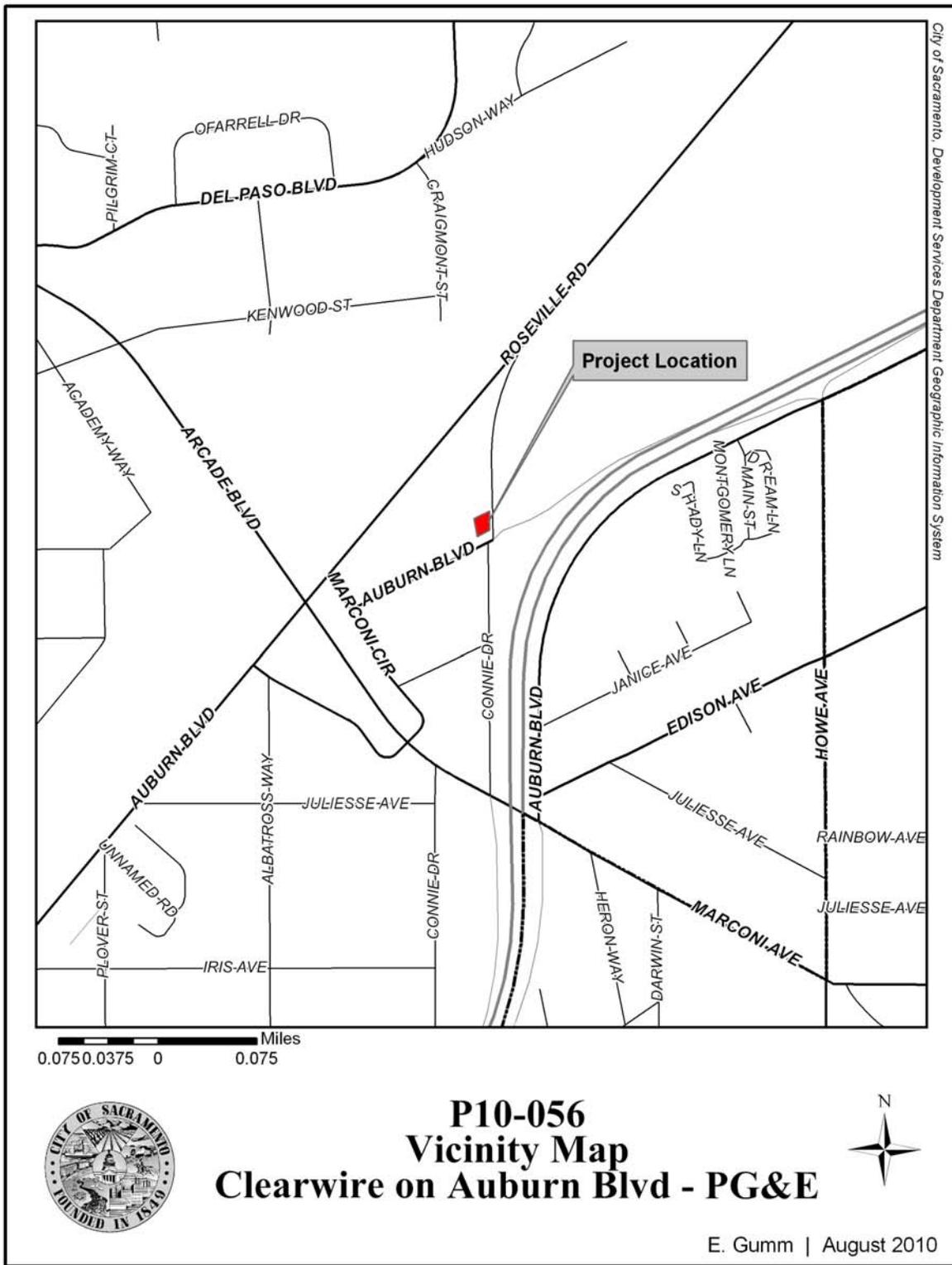
Staff recommends the Planning Commission approve the Special Permit Major Modification request based on the findings and subject to the conditions listed in Attachment 1. The Planning Commission has final approval authority over items A-B above, and its decision is appealable to City Council. **Staff is not aware of any issues and the project is considered non-controversial.**

Staff Contact Elise Gumm, LEED AP, Associate Planner, (916) 808-1927;  
Lindsey Alagozian, Senior Planner, (916) 808-2659

Applicant Bell & Associates, c/o: Gordon Bell, (530) 647-1932  
4020 Sierra Springs Drive, Pollock Pines, CA 95726

Owner Pacific Gas & Electric Co.  
P O Box 770000, San Francisco, CA 94177

Vicinity Map



## Summary

The applicant is proposing to install three (3) panel antennas, up to three (3) parabolic antennas (microwave dishes), one GPS antenna, and an equipment cabinet on an existing PG&E transmission tower in the Light Industrial (M-1) zone. A Special Permit and numerous Special Permit modifications were approved previously to allow panel antennas on this 133 foot lattice tower. The proposed project will increase the existing tower by approximately twelve feet to an overall height of 145 feet. All related equipment to the antennas and dishes, including cabinet and GPS antenna, will be constructed on the existing concrete pad under the tower.

Staff notified all property owners within 500 feet of the site for this public hearing and received no opposition at the time of writing of this report. Staff finds that the proposal is consistent with the applicable policies of the General Plan and the City's Guidelines for Telecommunications Facilities.

<b>Table 1: Project Information</b>	
<b>General Plan designation:</b>	Employment Center Low Rise
<b>Existing zoning of site:</b>	M-1 (Light Industrial zone)
<b>Existing use of site</b>	Vacant / PG&E Transmission Tower
<b>Property area:</b>	0.95± acres

## Background Information

A Special Permit for a telecommunication facility was approved to allow three panel antennas on the PG&E tower at the centerline of 70 feet in 1999 (Z99-136). Two Special Permit Modifications to add 6 panel antennas at the centerline of 83 feet and 6 panel antennas at the center line of 142 feet were approved in 2001 (Z01-046 & Z01-076). The tower currently has total of 9 panel antennas, operated by two wireless carriers. The current height of the tower is 133 feet.

## Public/Neighborhood Outreach and Comments

The project was routed to the Ben Ali Community Association and staff has not received any comments from this neighborhood association. The Planning Commission meeting was also noticed to the property owners within a 500 foot radius of the subject site. At the time of writing of this report, staff has not received any comments, and staff is not aware of any opposition to the project.

## Environmental Considerations

The Community Development Department, Environmental Planning Services Division has reviewed this project and determined that this is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 15301, Existing Facilities. The project consists of the minor alteration of an existing private structure, involving negligible expansion of use beyond that existing.

## **Policy Considerations**

### **General Plan**

The subject site is designated Employment Center Low Rise on the 2030 General Plan Land Use and Urban Form Diagram. The proposal is located on a parcel with an existing transmission tower and has been designed and conditioned so that it will have a minimal visual impact on the surrounding area. The proposal is consistent with the General Plan Policy which encourages cooperation with service providers to ensure access to and availability of a wide range of state-of-the-art telecommunication systems and services for households, businesses, institutions, and public agencies throughout the city (Policies U 7.1.1). The project will improve wireless network capacity and coverage for both residential and business customers in the area.

### **Guidelines for Telecommunications Facilities**

The Guidelines for Telecommunication Facilities, adopted by the City Council on April 29, 1997, emphasize minimizing the visibility of new telecommunication facilities through construction and design techniques. The proposed antennas and associated equipment, collocating on an existing transmission tower, are consistent with the applicable policies as described in the Guidelines for Telecommunications Facilities. Key objectives for the City were outlined to maximize the number of “invisible” telecommunication facility sites. The proposed antennas located on top of an existing structure represent a preferred siting location as the new antennas do not require the construction of a new monopole.

### **Project Design**

The applicant is proposing to utilize an existing transmission tower north of Auburn Boulevard at a vacant parcel zoned Light Industrial (M-1) to collocate telecommunication antennas. The project requires a Special Permit Major Modification based on the fact that the proposed parabolic antennas (microwave dishes) are not considered to be exempt per the Zoning Code, Land Use Regulation (Section 17.24), footnote 58, and the increasing of the overall height by 12 feet would require a Planning Commission level approval. The project includes three panels and three parabolic antennas to be mounted at the new “top hat” that will be added to the top of the tower. As a result, the overall height of the tower will increase from 133 feet to 145 feet. The antennas will be conditioned to be painted with a non-reflective paint to match the existing PG&E tower, and the related equipment will be installed within the tower footprint on an existing concrete pad. Lighting at the equipment area is conditioned to be activated only when the facility is being serviced by the representative of Clearwire. Staff has no issues with the proposed antennas and the proposed height of the tower.

### **Land Use**

The City of Sacramento encourages the placement of wireless facilities with minimal visual impacts and provides guidelines for the design of wireless facilities. The current Zoning Code, Chapter 17.24, footnote 58, c, viii, allows panel antennas placed on transmission towers as a matter of right and they are exempted from planning entitlements if the proposal does not increase the existing structure 12 feet

or more in height. However, the proposed parabolic antennas are not the exempted panel antennas and the overall height is increased by 12 feet; thus, the project requires a Special Permit Major Modification, subject to Zoning Code, Chapter 17.24, footnote 58, d, v, (B). City staff encourages carriers to consider siting on existing infrastructure, such as transmission towers. Staff supports the proposed project based on its design, location, and its consistency with the City's Guidelines for Telecommunications Facilities.

The Zoning Code allows telecommunication facilities in industrial zones, and collocation of telecommunication antennas on an existing transmission tower is a preferred siting option. Staff is in support of the project because it is consistent with the General Plan Policy of promoting and supporting communications facilities within the City as well as the Guidelines for Telecommunication Facilities.

**Access, Circulation and Parking**

The applicant proposes to use the existing access to the wireless internet facility equipment for regular maintenance and repairs.

Respectfully submitted by:



ELISE GUMM, LEED AP  
Associate Planner

Approved by:



LINDSEY ALAGOZIAN  
Senior Planner

Recommendation Approved:



GREG BITTER, AICP  
Principal Planner

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**Attachment 1 Recommended Findings of Fact and Conditions of Approval****Findings of Fact****A. Environmental Determination: Exemption**

Based on the determination and recommendation of the City's Environmental Planning Services Manager and the oral and documentary evidence received at the hearing on the Project, the Planning Commission finds that the Project is exempt from review under Section **15301, Existing Facilities** of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines as follows:

The project consists of the minor alteration of an existing private structure, involving negligible expansion of use beyond that existing.

**B. The **Special Permit Major Modification** to install three panels antennas, up to three parabolic antennas, one GPS antennas, and its related equipment to the top of an existing PG&E transmission tower, is approved subject to the following Findings of Fact:**

1. The project, as conditioned, is based upon sound principles of land use in that:
  - a. The project will utilize an existing transmission tower;
  - b. The proposed telecommunication antennas, dish and equipment meet all development standards for the site including Title 17 zoning Code requirement and are consistent with the City's Guidelines for Telecommunication Facilities; and
  - c. The project will not adversely affect the surrounding land uses in that the visual impacts are nominal and the wireless network capabilities for South Sacramento are enhanced greatly.
2. The project, as conditioned, will not be detrimental to the public welfare, safety, or result in the creation of a public nuisance in that:
  - a. The antennas are proposed in a location that will not interfere with existing land uses or future uses on the subject parcel and the surrounding area; and
  - b. The proposed telecommunications equipment will be required to comply with building codes and safety standards in its construction through the building permit process.

3. The project is consistent with the General Plan Suburban Low Density Residential Land Use Designation as well as the General plan Land Use and Utilities policies. The project is also consistent with the telecommunication policy of siting telecommunication facilities on existing transmission towers.

### **Conditions of Approval**

- B.** The **Special Permit Major Modification** to install three panel antennas, up to three parabolic antennas, one GPS antennas, and its related equipment to the top of an existing PG&E transmission tower, is hereby approved subject to the following conditions of approval:

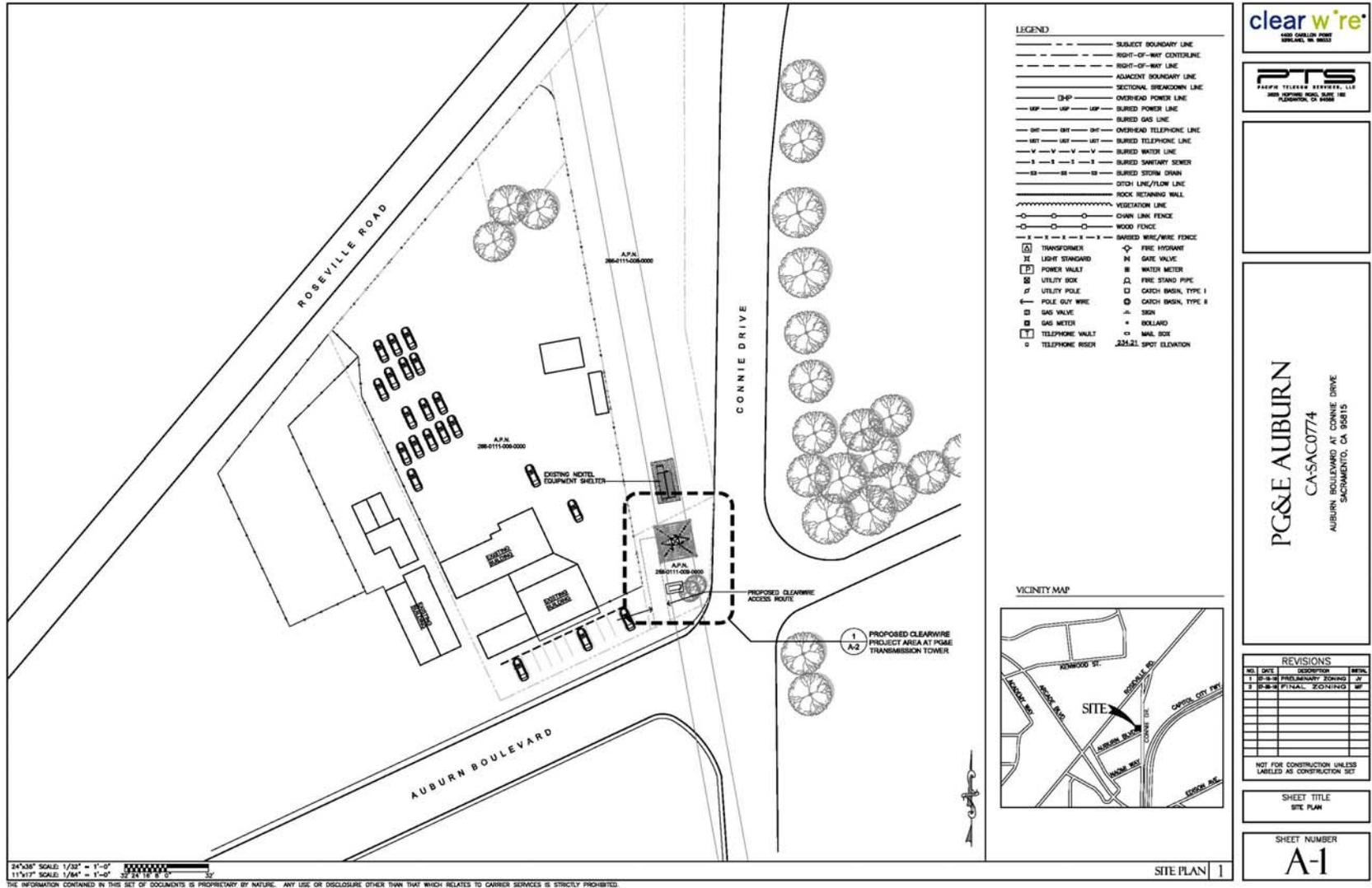
### **PLANNING**

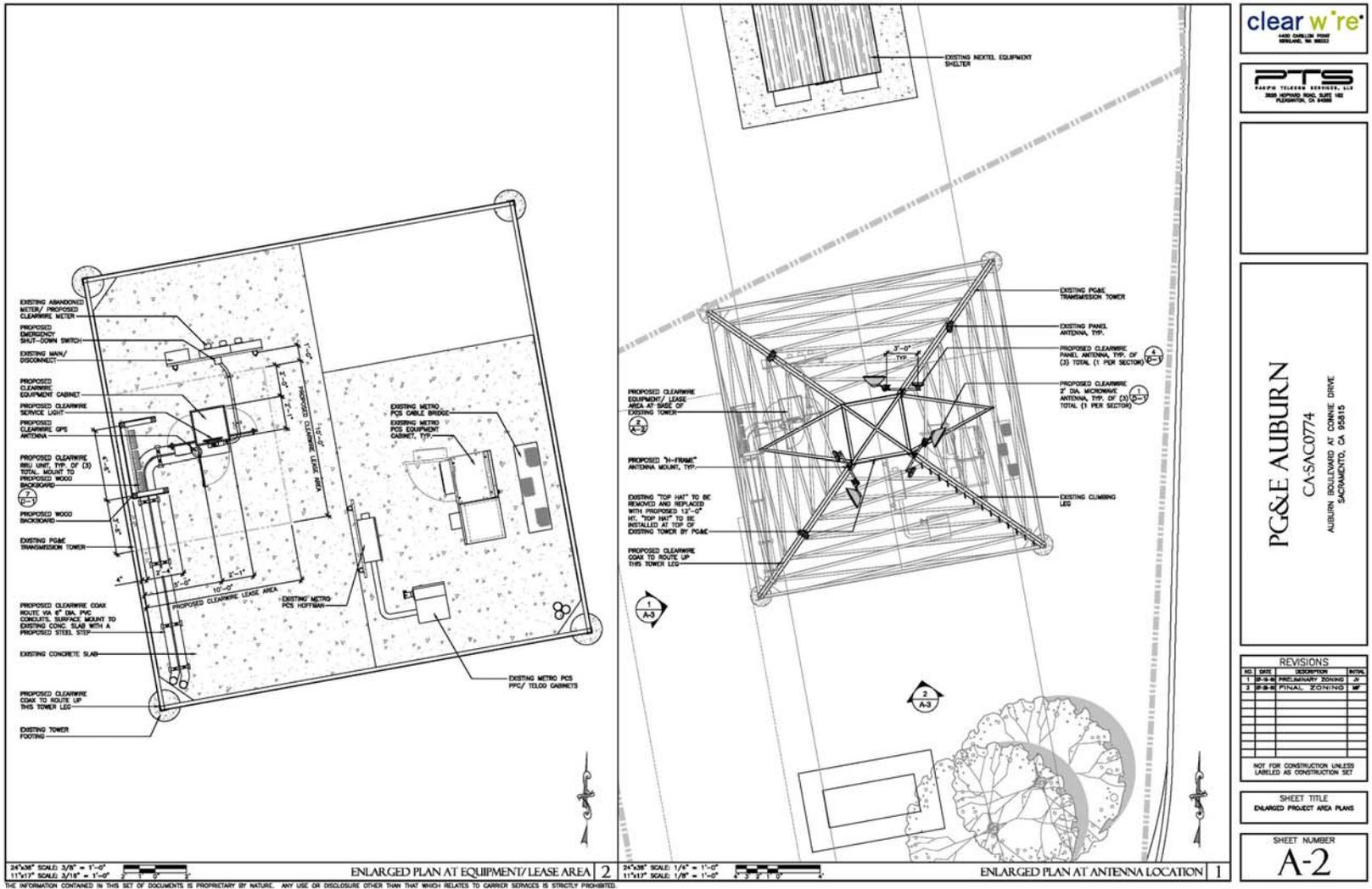
- B1. The applicant shall obtain all necessary building permits prior to commencing construction.
- B2. The applicant shall obtain all necessary federal telecommunications permits prior to commencing construction.
- B3. Size and location of antennas shall conform to the approved plans as shown on the attached exhibits and as conditioned to revise. Any modification to the project shall be subject to review and approval by Planning staff (and may require additional entitlements) prior to the issuance of building permits. A total of six telecommunications antennas (three panel antennas and three microwave dishes) and three BTS units are approved.
- B4. The applicant shall use non-reflective paint and materials to match the transmission tower at the point of attachment and connection points on all sides and on all equipment, cables, connections, panels and any other appurtenance.
- B5. Should the operation of this telecommunications facility be discontinued, the applicant(s) shall be responsible for the removal of all equipment, including, but not limited to the: top hat array, antennas, equipment and cabinet(s), cable(s) and conduit, concrete pad(s), foundation, telephone and power lines to the facility, access gates, and fencing materials, within six (6) months of the cessation of facility operations.
- B6. All cable runs shall be in weather–proof conduit or shall run underground;
- B7. No barbed, razor, or other prohibited wire material shall be used in or on this site.
- B8. All graffiti and trash/garbage shall be removed in a timely manner.

- B9. Lighting shall affect only the lease area and the light standard shall not exceed 15 feet in height, shall be vandal resistant and shall be shielded from the adjacent properties and roadways so as not to create glare for the adjacent properties. The lighting shall also reflect away from City streets. A maximum lighting of 1.5 foot-candles per square foot of lease area is allowed for the site.

Exhibit A

Site Plan





**clearw're**  
4800 SHILOH BLVD  
 SUITE 100  
 SACRAMENTO, CA 95815

**PTS**  
PACIFIC TELECOM SERVICES, LLC  
 3800 ARDEN BOULEVARD, SUITE 100  
 SACRAMENTO, CA 95815

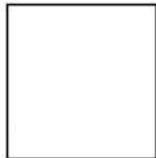
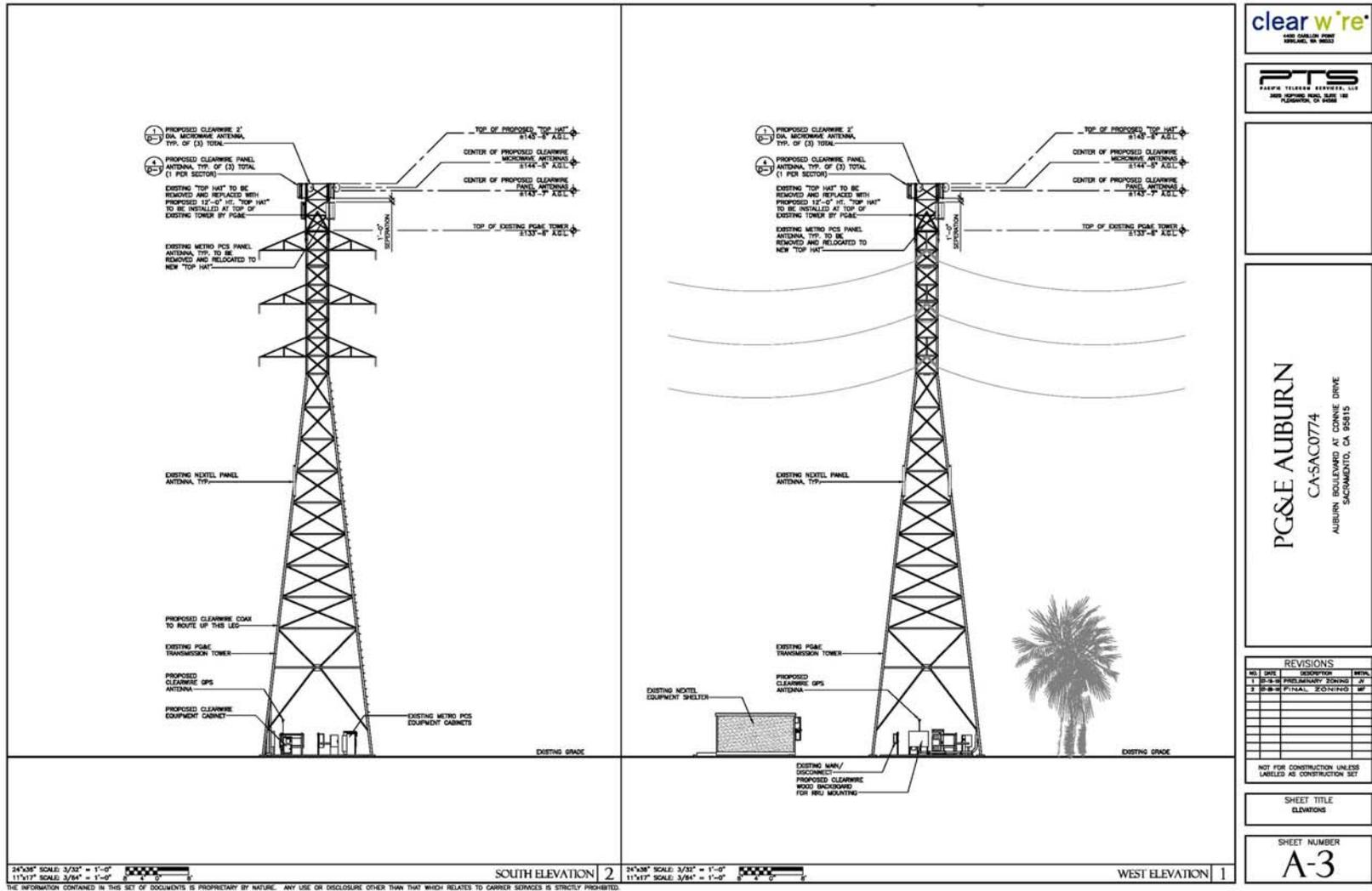
**PG&E AUBURN**  
 CASAC0774  
 AUBURN BOULEVARD AT CONNIE DRIVE  
 SACRAMENTO, CA 95815

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	INITIALS
1	8-2-10	PRELIMINARY ZONING	JF
2	8-2-10	FINAL ZONING	JF

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION UNLESS LABELED AS CONSTRUCTION SET

SHEET TITLE  
 ENLARGED PROJECT AREA PLANS

SHEET NUMBER  
**A-2**



PG&E AUBURN  
 CASAC0774  
 AUBURN BOULEVARD AT CONNIE DRIVE  
 SACRAMENTO, CA 95815

REVISIONS			
NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY
1	8-18-10	PRELIMINARY ZONING	JF
2	8-18-10	FINAL ZONING	JF

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION UNLESS LABELED AS CONSTRUCTION SET

SHEET TITLE  
 ELEVATIONS

SHEET NUMBER  
 A-3

24"x36" SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"  
 11"x17" SCALE: 3/64" = 1'-0"  
 SOUTH ELEVATION 2

24"x36" SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"  
 11"x17" SCALE: 3/64" = 1'-0"  
 WEST ELEVATION 1

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS SET OF DOCUMENTS IS PROPRIETARY BY NATURE. ANY USE OR DISCLOSURE OTHER THAN THAT WHICH RELATES TO CARRIER SERVICES IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

**Photosimulation of view looking north from the Marconi Ave offramp.**



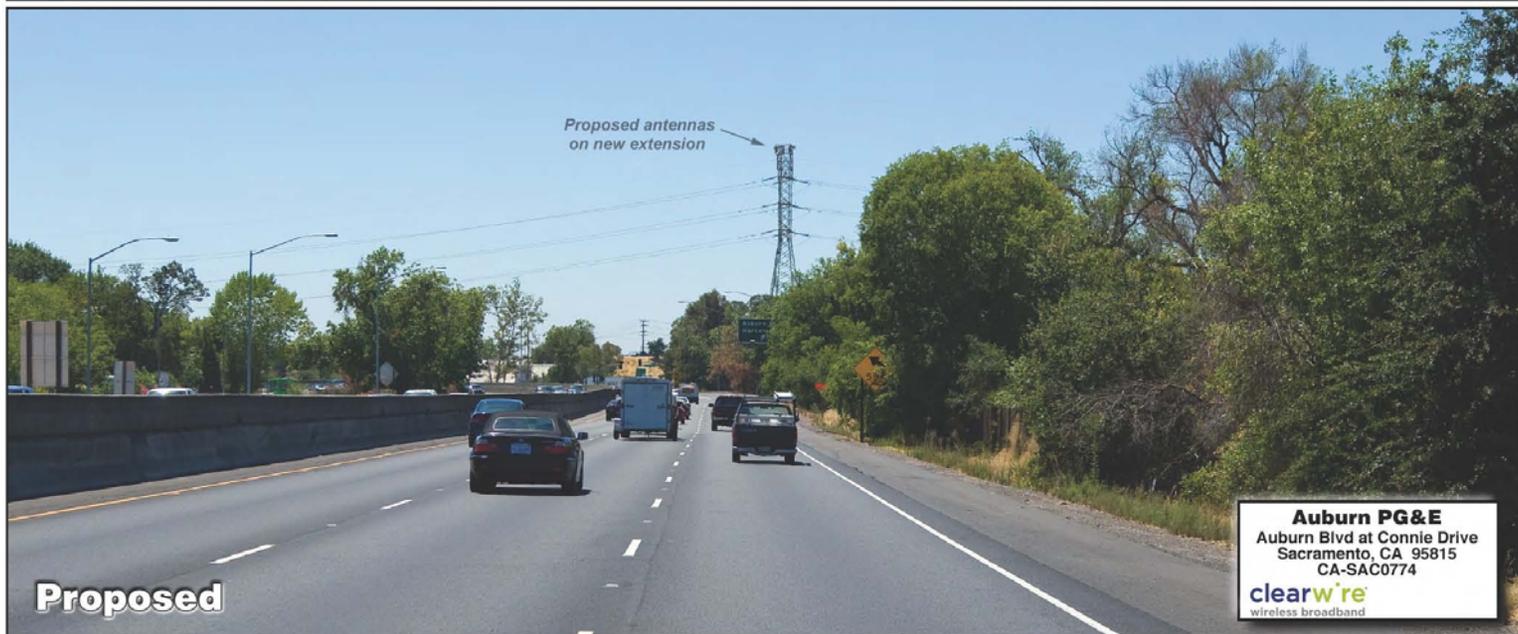
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**Photosimulation of view looking northeast from Auburn Blvd, just west of Connie Drive.**

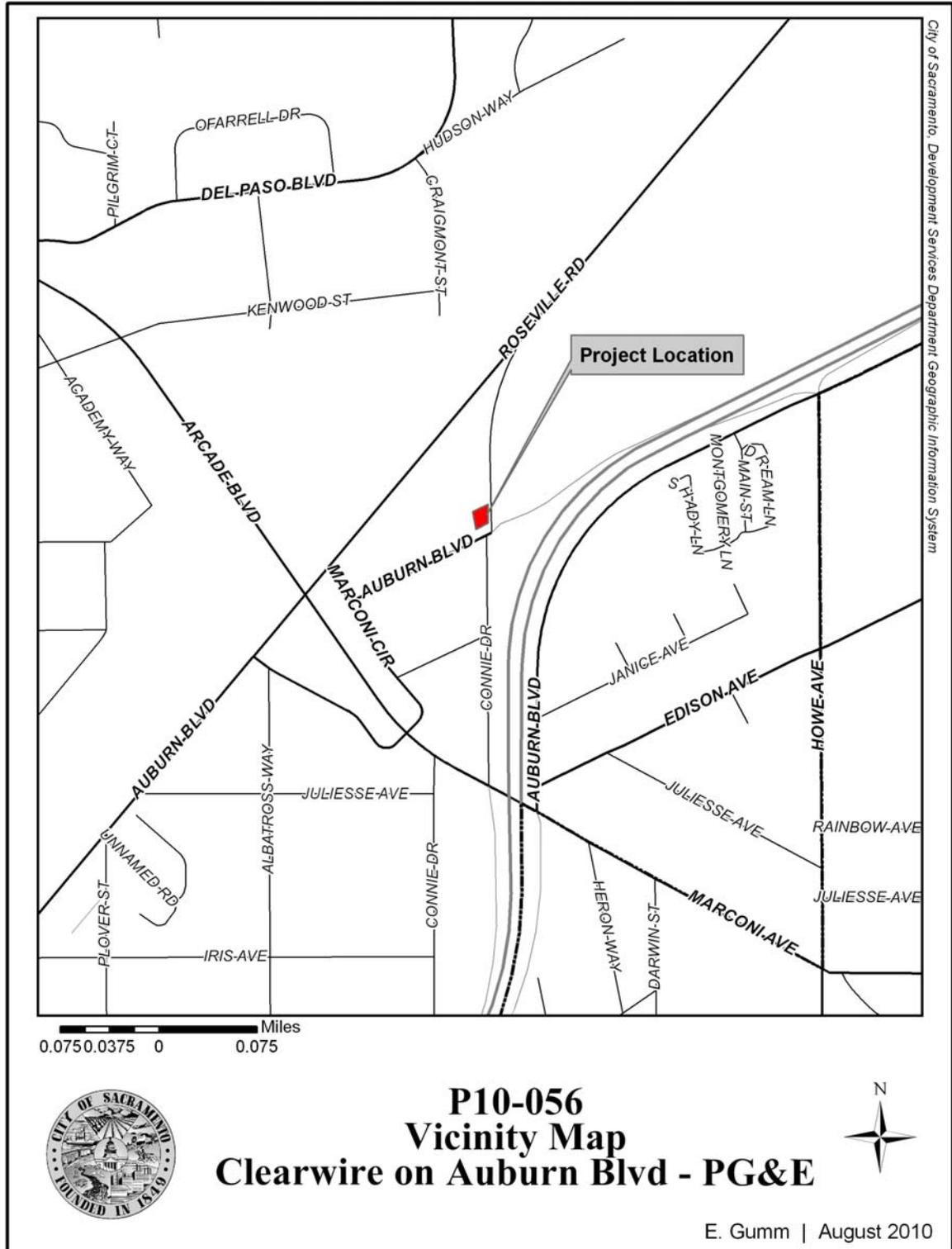


July 31, 2010

**Photosimulation of view looking southwest from westbound Cap City Freeway.**



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Attachment 3 Land Use and Zoning Map

