



**Marion County
Board of County Commissioners**

Growth Services

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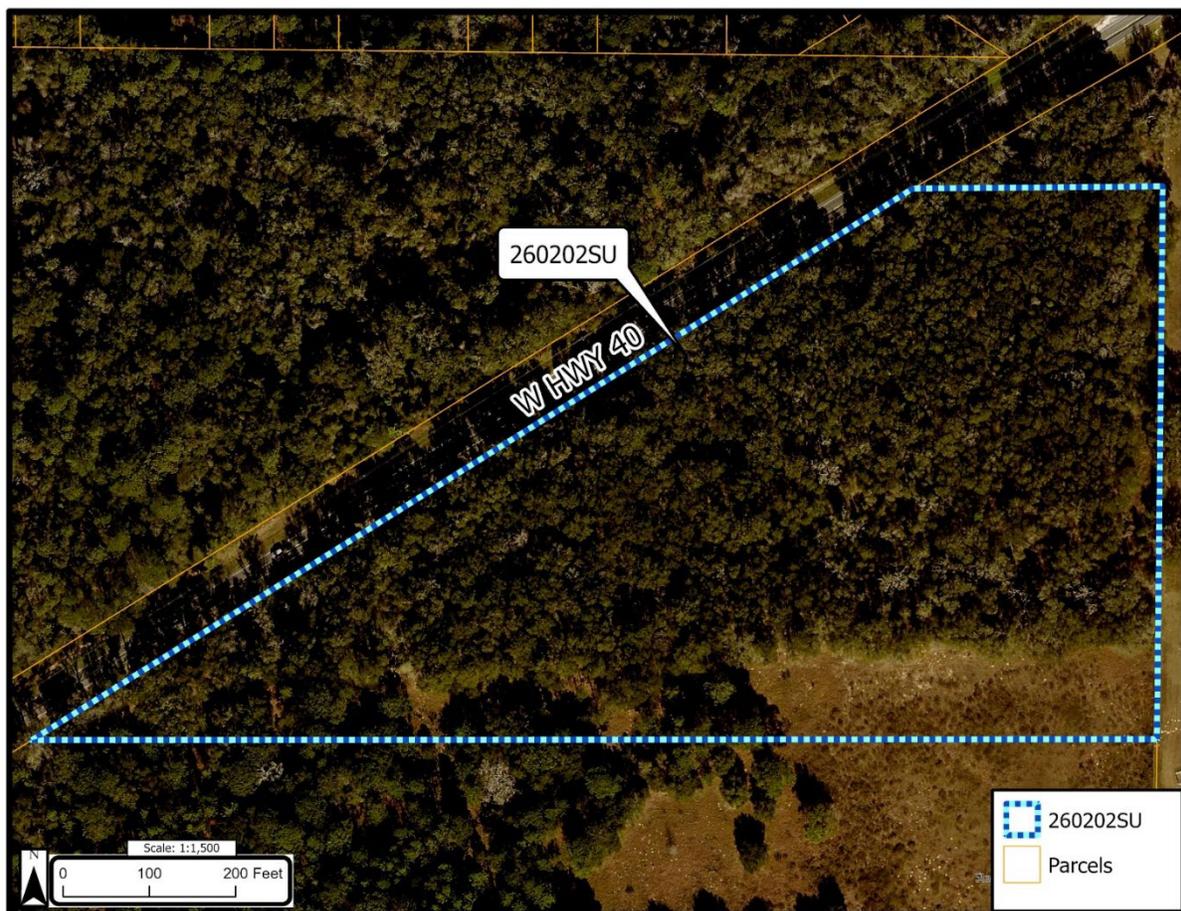
**PLANNING & ZONING SECTION
STAFF REPORT**

P&ZC Date: 01/26/2026	BCC Date: 2/17/2026
Case Number:	260202SU
CDP-AR:	PL SUP-000014-2025
Type of Case:	Special Use Permit for a 225' telecommunication tower
Owner	Estate of Dawn Elizabeth Meredith (Michael Bartlett as personal representative of the estate)
Applicant	Blue-Sky Towers IV LLC, Mary D. Solik (Agent)
Street Address	No Site Address Assigned
Parcel Number	20909-022-01
Property Size	±10.00-acres (Leased space for cell tower, 3,600 sq. ft.)
Future Land Use	Rural Land (RL)
Zoning Classification	General Agriculture (A-1)
Overlay Zone/Scenic Area	Primary Springs Protection Overlay Zone (PSPOZ)
Staff Recommendation	Approval with Conditions
P&ZC Recommendation	Approval with Conditions (5-0)
Project Planner	Sarah Wells, Planner II
Related Case(s)	None

I. ITEM SUMMARY

Mary D. Solik, on behalf of Blue-Sky Towers IV LLC, has filed an application for a special use permit to allow for a new 225' telecommunication tower (see Attachment A), on property owned by the Estate of Dawn Elizabeth Meredith. Figure 1 is an aerial photograph showing the location of the subject property. The Property Identification Number associated with the property is 20909-022-01, the site currently has no address, and the legal description is displayed on the deed included as part of the application. The subject property is located within the Primary Springs Protection Overlay Zone (P-SPOZ) and is outside of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

Figure 1
Aerial Photograph of Subject Property



II. STAFF SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS** due to the request being consistent with the Marion County Comprehensive Plan, compatible with the surrounding area, and will not adversely affect the public interest specified in Section VI.B. of this Staff Report. The recommended conditions are being imposed to address compliance with the requirements in LDC Sections 2.8.2.D and 2.8.3.B.

III. NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

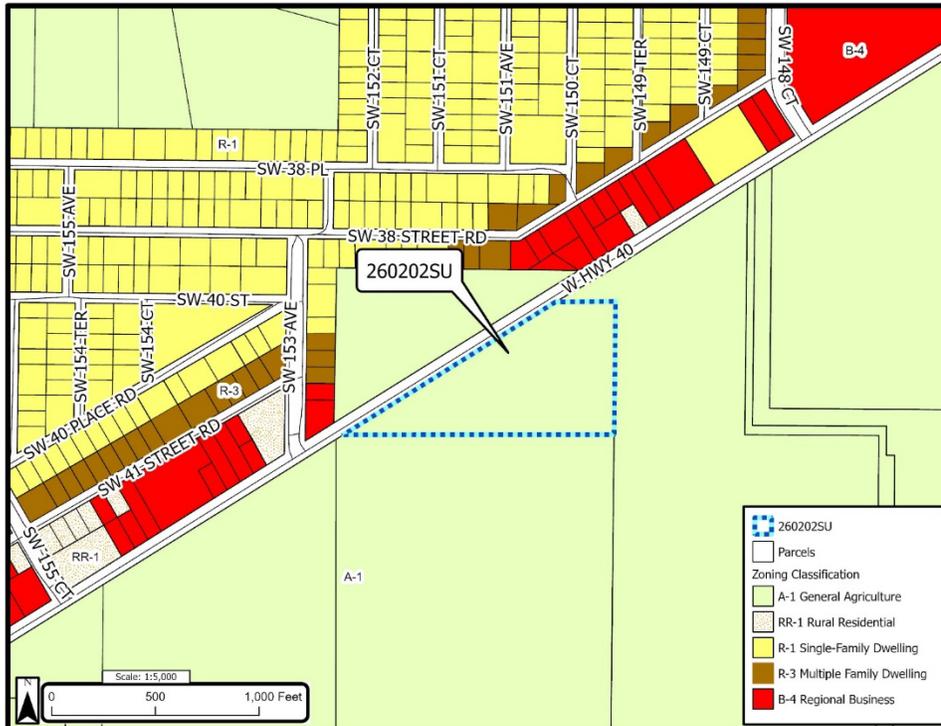
The Growth Services Director has interpreted the requirements of Land Development Code (LDC) Sections 2.7.3.C and 2.7.3.B to apply to SUP applications. LDC Section 2.7.3.C requires notice of public hearing to be mailed to all property owners within 300 feet of the subject property and notice was mailed to (35) property owners on January 9, 2026. As of the date of the initial distribution of this staff report, one letter of opposition and no letters of support have been received. Consistent with LDC Section 2.7.3.B., public notice was posted on the subject property on January 14th, 2026, and consistent with LDC Section 2.8.3.E. due public notice was published in the Ocala Star-Banner on January 12, 2026. Evidence of the above-described public notices are on file with the Growth Services Department and is incorporated herein by reference.

IV. BACKGROUND/CHARACTER OF THE AREA

- A. *Existing site conditions.* Figure 2 provides zoning classification information while Figure 3 shows the FLUMS designation for the area. Table 1 outlines the existing uses of the surrounding area, while Figure 4 illustrates those uses in relation to the subject property. The surrounding area is a mix of vacant residential and improved residential uses to the north and to the west and agricultural uses to the south and to the east. The Rainbow Park subdivision lies to the north and west. The site is listed as Timber Class IV use by the Marion County Property Appraiser and is heavily wooded currently.

- B. *Zoning district map.* Figure 2 shows the subject property designated as General Agriculture (A-1). All properties adjacent to the parcel share this designation, with Regional Business (B-4), Rural Residential (RR-1), Single-Family Dwelling (R-1), and Multiple-Family Dwelling (R-3) to the north, east, and northwest along HWY 40.

Figure 2
Zoning Classification



C. *FLUMS designation.* Figure 3 is the FLUMS and shows the subject property as Rural Land (RL). This land use designation is intended to be used primarily for agricultural uses, associated housing related to farms and agricultural-related commercial and industrial uses. All parcels in the area share this RL land use designation.

Figure 3
Future Land Use Map Series

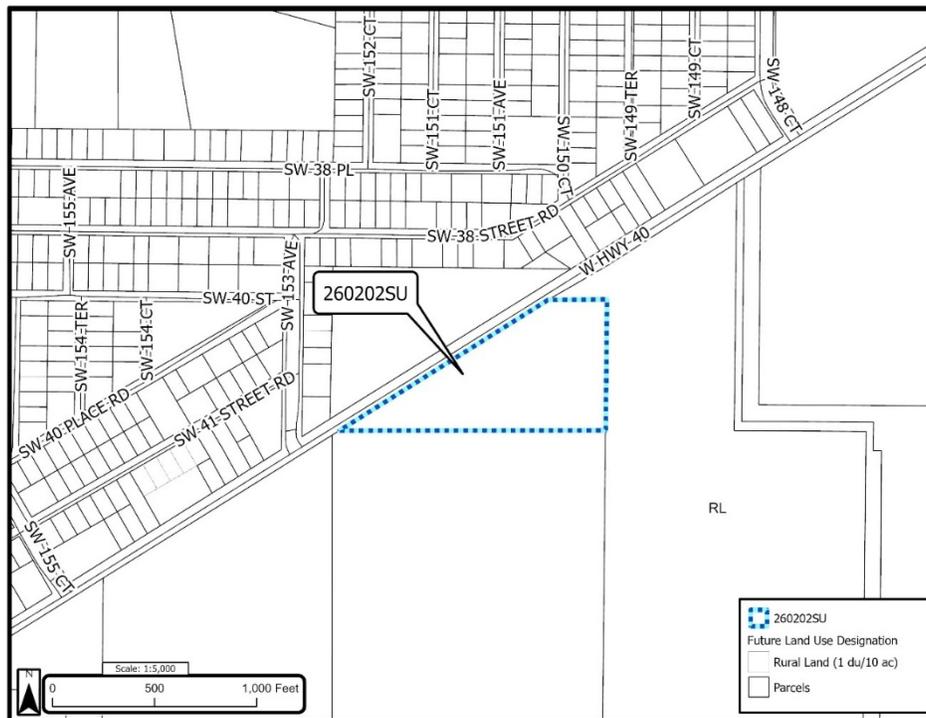


TABLE 1. ADJACENT PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS			
Direction	FLUMS	Zoning	Existing Use
Site	Rural Land (RL)	General Agriculture (A-1)	Ag Production
North	Rural Land (RL)	General Agriculture (A-1)	Ag Production
South	Rural Land (RL)	General Agriculture (A-1)	Ag Production
East	Rural Land (RL)	General Agriculture (A-1)	Ag Production
West	Rural Land (RL)	General Agriculture (A-1)	Ag Production

Figure 4
MCPA Property Uses

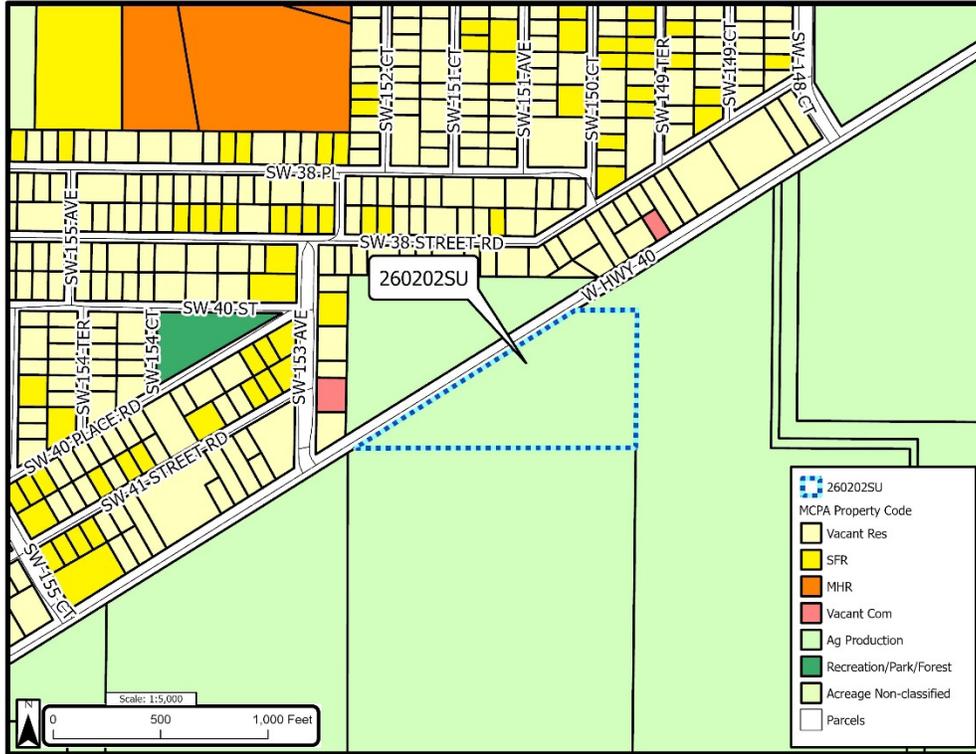


Figure 5 Conceptual Plan

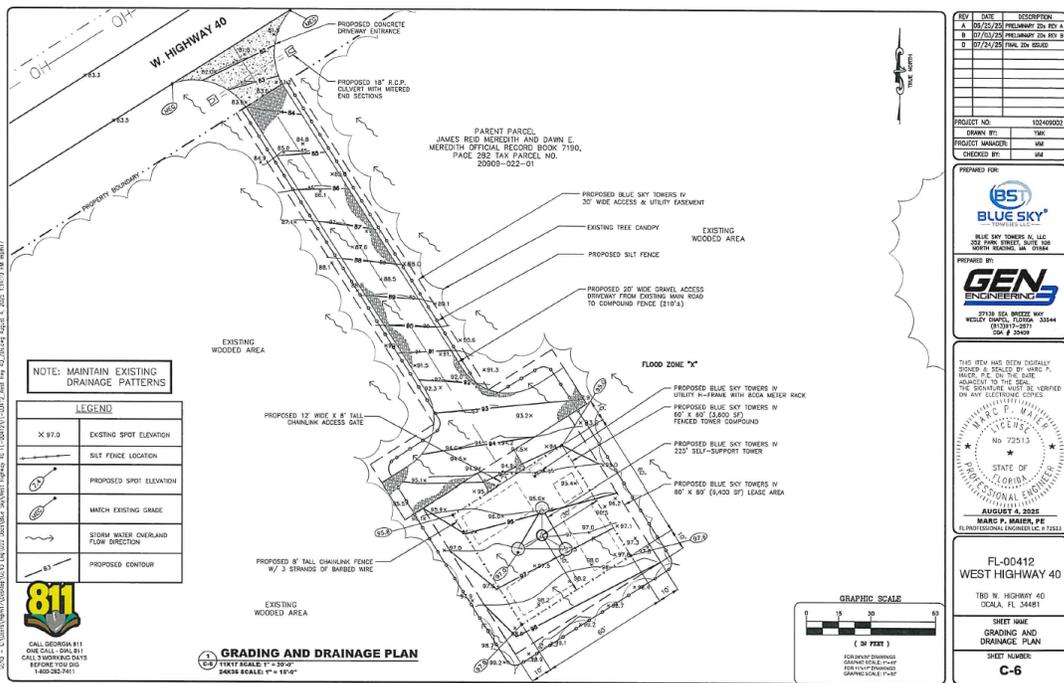


Figure 5A

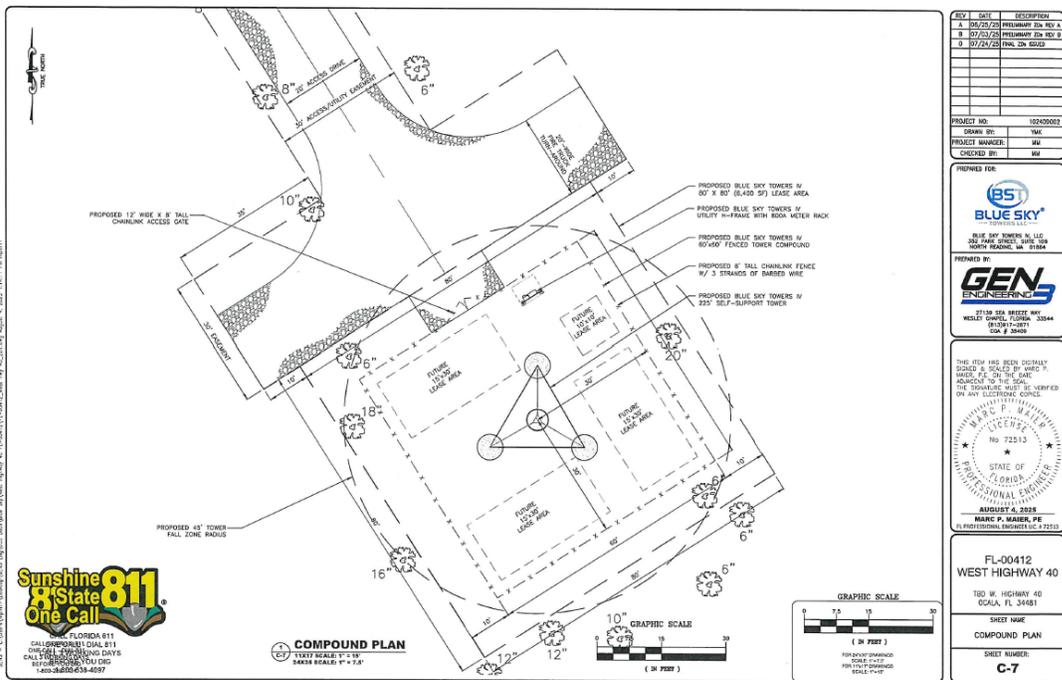


Figure 5B

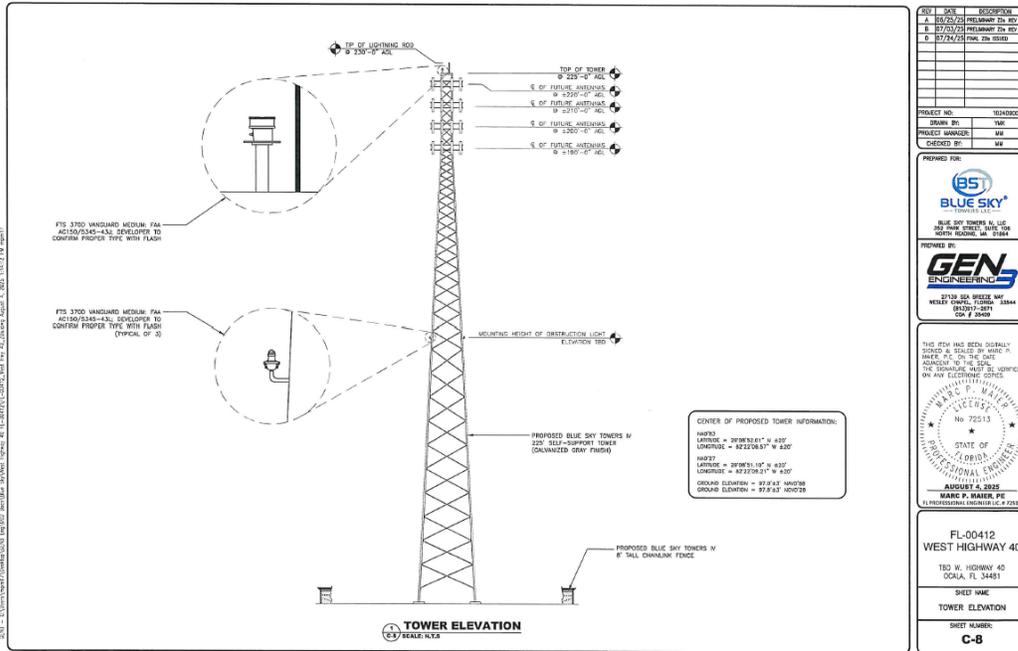


Figure 6
Current Coverage Map

Current AT&T Coverage

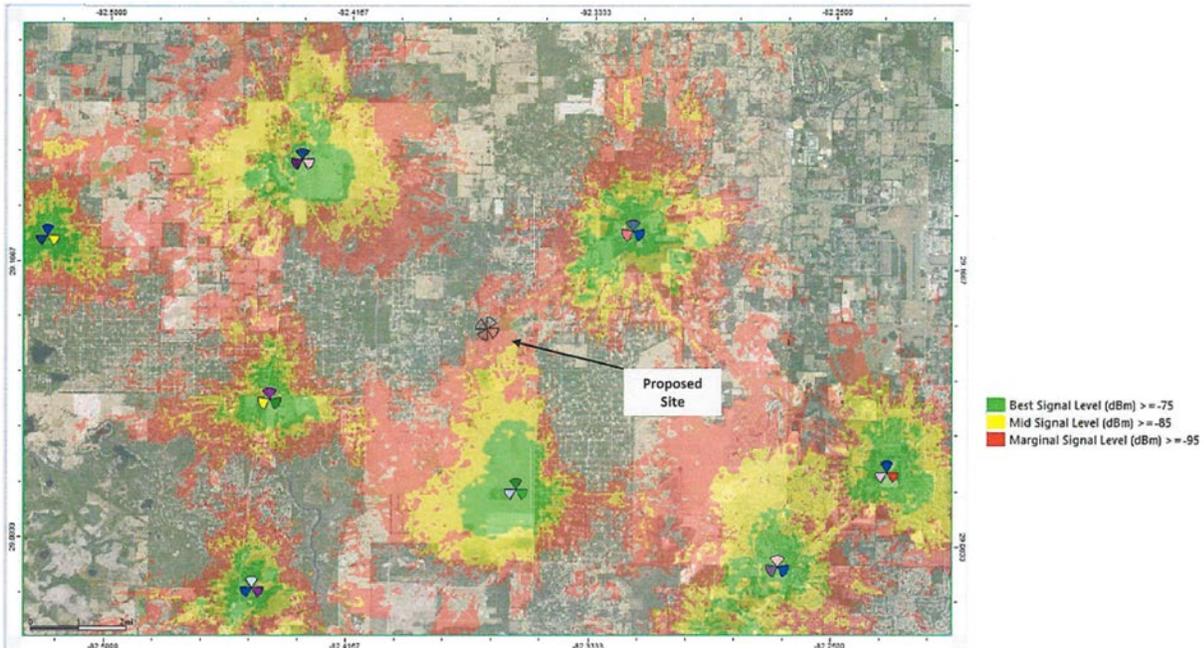


Figure 6A
Proposed Coverage Map
Planned Coverage

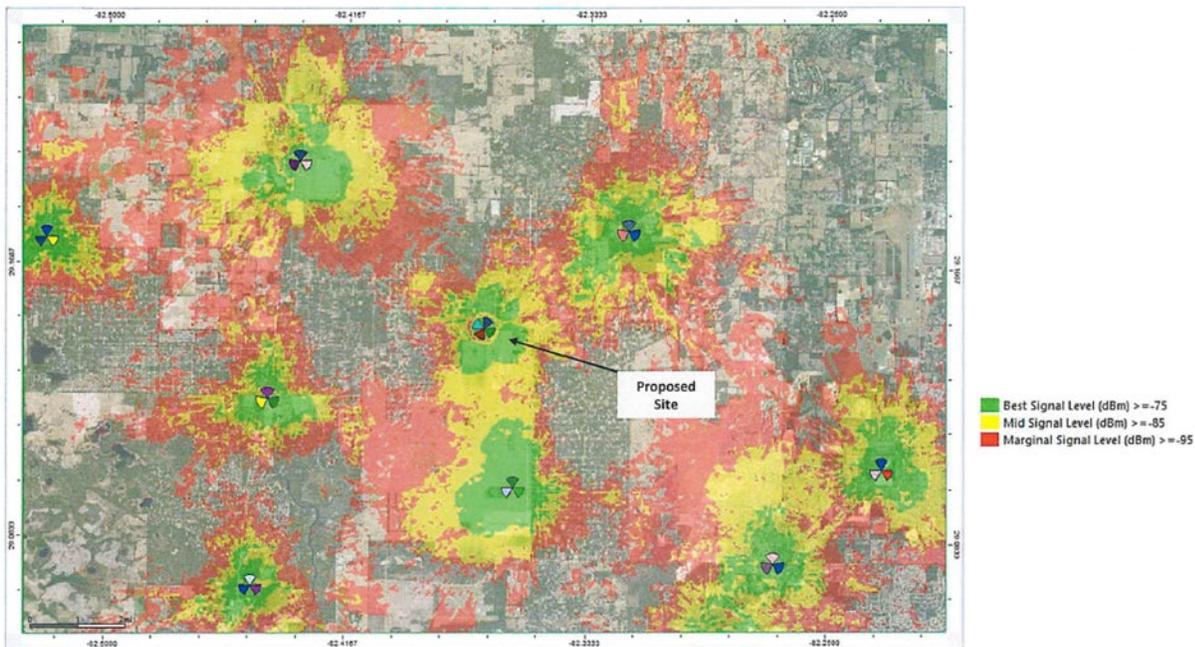
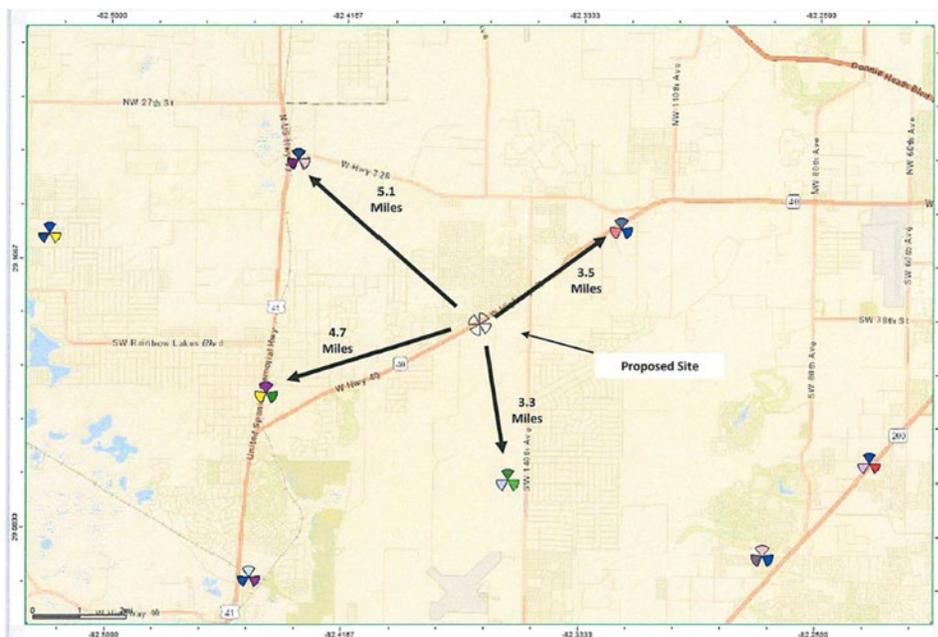


Figure 6B
Distance to Existing AT&T Towers from Proposed Site

Area of Interest

Distances to existing AT&T network sites



V. ANALYSIS

LDC Section 2.8.2.D provides that in making a recommendation to the Board, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall make a written finding that the SUP addresses nine (9) specific requirements. LDC Section 2.8.3.B requires consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Staff's analysis of compliance with these ten (10) requirements is addressed below.

- A. *Provision for **ingress and egress** to property and proposed structures thereon with particular reference to automotive and pedestrian safety and convenience, traffic flow and control, and access in case of fire or catastrophe.*

Analysis: Access to the proposed tower compound will be via a 30-foot non-exclusive ingress, egress, and utility easement originating from W HWY 40. access drive will be improved with a stabilized surface and a turning radius sufficient to accommodate emergency vehicles, including fire apparatus, in accordance with Marion County Fire Rescue standards. The easement will be maintained year-round to ensure reliable access for maintenance personnel and emergency responders. No pedestrian traffic is expected beyond authorized personnel. A driveway apron on the property that meets the Office of the County Engineer's (OCE) standards of development shall be required. Staff concludes that the application **is consistent** with provisions for ingress and egress.

- A driveway apron onto the property that meets the Office of the County Engineer's (OCE) standards of development shall be required.

- B. *Provision for **off-street parking and loading areas**, where required, with particular attention to the items in (1) above and the economic, noise, glare, or odor effects of the SUP on adjoining properties and properties generally in the surrounding area.*

A stabilized parking area will be utilized at the entrance of the fenced compound. Because the site is unmanned, traffic is limited to periodic maintenance visits. All construction activity will occur during daylight hours and comply with Marion County's noise control regulations. After construction, the facility will generate no noise, glare, or odor. The tower is above FAA lighting thresholds and is to be marked/lighted in accordance with FAA standards. No exterior lighting is proposed other than that required by applicable codes.

- C. *Provisions for **refuse and service area**, with particular reference to the items in (1) and (2) above.*

Analysis: This facility is an unmanned site and will not generate solid waste. Routine maintenance does not require on-site storage of refuse or hazardous materials. Any temporary construction debris will be removed upon project completion. The application is **consistent** with this provision.

D. *Provision for **utilities**, with reference to locations, availability, and compatibility.*

Analysis: Electric services will be provided by SECO Electric. The tower will remain unmanned; therefore no water or sewage connection is proposed.

Staff concludes the application is **consistent** with the provision of utilities.

E. *Provision for **screening and buffering** of dissimilar uses and of adjacent properties where necessary.*

Analysis: The compound will be enclosed by an 8-foot chain-link fence for security. The site is heavily wooded; the applicant intends to leave the remainder of the parcel untouched. As such, the thick vegetation shall provide a sufficient buffer. The monopole will be finished in a galvanized or neutral color to minimize visual contrast with the sky. The following condition is also imposed.

F. *Provision for **signs**, if any, and **exterior lighting** with consideration given to glare, traffic safety, economic effects, and compatibility and harmony with properties in the surrounding area.*

Analysis: Only regulatory signage as required by Marion County, the FAA, and the FCC will be posted at the compound gate. No advertising signage is proposed. No exterior lighting is planned except for code-required security lighting, which will be motion-activated and downward-directed to avoid light spillovers to adjacent properties. It is concluded that the application is **consistent** with the signs and exterior lighting requirements of this section.

- A photometric plan shall be provided during the Development Review Phase if additional lighting is proposed to be added to the site.
- The light at the top of the tower shall be shielded from view from the ground directly below the tower.

G. *Provision for **required yards and other green space**.*

Analysis: The facility is designed to meet or exceed all required setbacks for the A-1 district. The monopole is engineered with an intentional break-point design such that, in the highly unlikely event of a structural failure, the monopole will collapse within the leased compound area. This ensures the "fall zone" remains entirely contained on site and does not encroach on adjacent properties. Green space around the compound will remain vegetated, and the surrounding property will otherwise be undisturbed.

H. *Provision for general **compatibility** with adjacent properties and other properties in the surrounding area.*

Analysis: Compatibility is defined in Chapter 163.3164(9) of the Florida Statutes, under the Community Planning Act, as “a condition in which land uses or conditions can coexist in relative proximity to each other in a stable fashion over time such that no use or condition is unduly negatively impacted directly or indirectly by another use or condition.”

Figure 1 is an aerial photograph displaying existing and surrounding properties. Figure 4 displays the same properties based on their use code per the Marion County Property Appraiser. The lot includes both the necessary fall radius and heavy vegetation to screen the site from neighboring properties. If approved, a minor site plan review will be required through the Development Review Committee (DRC) to ensure compatibility is being met by the proposed development. To assist in mitigating any sort of incompatibility, staff recommends the following conditions

- This communications tower site shall be developed consistent with the proposed conceptual plan.
- The Special Use Permit runs with the Blue-Sky Towers IV, LLC and not the property.

Additionally, Table 2 below shows the required separations as provided in LDC Sec. 4.3.25. Separations from the cell tower relative to the surrounding area are all being met.

TABLE 2. CELL TOWER SEPARATIONS				
Separation Type	North	South	East	West
Required (Property Lines)	225'	225'	225'	225'
Required (Residences)	338'	338'	338'	338'
Provided	227'	233'	230'	666'

- I. *Provision for meeting any **special requirements** required by the site analysis for the particular use involved.*

Analysis: Staff notes that unlike a variance which runs with the land and is recorded in the public records, a special use permit is not recorded. As a result, a subsequent owner will not notice the requirements. The subject property will require a site plan review before additional development commences. The site plan will ensure that the development is consistent with the Land Development Code.

Staff concludes that no special requirements are needed beyond the conditions provided in this report.

J. *Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.*

1. Policy 2.1.5: **Permitted & Special Uses** – The county shall identify permitted and special uses for each land use designation and zoning classification, as further defined in the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning, and LDC.

Analysis: LDC Section 4.3.25(D) allows for Special Use Permits for telecommunication towers. Within section 4.3.25(C) towers exceeding 150' in height must apply for a special use permit. Thus, the application is **consistent** with FLUE Policy 2.1.5.

Based on the above findings, staff concludes the SUP is consistent with LDC Sections 2.8.2.D and 2.8.3.B, even with the conditions provided to attempt to address the ten (10) requirements imposed.

VI. ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Enter into the record the Staff Report and all other competent substantial evidence presented at the hearing and make a recommendation to the Commission to adopt a proposed Ordinance to **DENY** the special use permit.
- B. Enter into the record the Staff Report and all other competent substantial evidence presented at the hearing, amend the findings and conclusions contained herein so as to support the approval of the Ordinance with amended conditions, and make a recommendation to the Commission to adopt a proposed Ordinance to **APPROVE WITH AMENDED CONDITIONS** the special use permit.
- C. Enter into the record the Staff Report and all other competent substantial evidence presented at the hearing, identify any additional data and analysis needed to support a recommendation on the proposed Ordinance, and make a recommendation to the Commission to **TABLE** the application for up to two months in order to provide the identified data and analysis needed to make an informed recommendation on the proposed Ordinance.

VII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- A. Staff recommends the Board enter into the record the Staff Report and all other competent substantial evidence presented at the hearing and make a recommendation to adopt a proposed Ordinance to **APPROVE AS CONDITIONED** the special use permit based on compatibility in the area, compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, and a lack of adverse impacts to the surrounding area.

- B. To address compliance with LDC Sections 2.8.2.D and 2.8.3.B, the following conditions are imposed in the event that the Board chooses to agree with staff recommendation and approve the special use with conditions:
1. A driveway apron onto the property that meets the Office of the County Engineer's (OCE) standards of development shall be required.
 2. A photometric plan shall be provided during the Development Review Phase if additional lighting is proposed to be added to the site.
 3. The light at the top of the tower shall be shielded from view from the ground directly below the tower.
 4. This communications tower site shall be developed consistent with the proposed conceptual plan.
 5. The Special Use Permit runs with the Blue-Sky Towers IV, LLC and not the property.

VIII. PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Approval as conditioned. (5-0)

IX. BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ACTION

To be determined.

X. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

- A. SUP application.
- B. Site Photos.
- C. DRC Comments