

Summary of Key Issues and Review of Alternatives

Chapter 6 Telecommunications

This Element covers telecommunications infrastructure including broadband internet and telephone service.


Below in red are comments from the **Humboldt County Broadband Working Group**—an ad hoc group of community members who have been working to promote broadband access and reliability to every community in the county!

Plan Alternatives Comparison Chart

Chapter 6 Telecommunications Element


Plan Alternative				Chapter 6. Telecommunications Element	Staff Remarks/ Implementation	Position R,M,D
				6.4 Goals		
A	B	C		T-G1. Availability. Communications available to every resident, business, and institution in Humboldt County at a level of service and price comparable to statewide availability and standards.		
				COMMENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-G1 Deployment and Availability: Communications, including high speed broadband, shall be available to every resident, business and institution in Humboldt County and a price comparable to urban communities. 		
A	B	C		T-G2. Broadband Access. A broadband internet infrastructure that reliably connects Humboldt to national networks and extends throughout urbanized areas to our most rural communities.		
				COMMENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-G2 Broadband Access and Reliability: A broadband infrastructure that offers redundancy to all communities. All residents, business and institutions should have a minimum speed of broadband, even at time of peak usage, of comparable to urban available speeds for upload or the community should be considered underserved. 		
A	B	C		T-G3. New Construction. Broadband service capability integrated into new buildings and developments.		

Plan Alternative				Chapter 6. Telecommunications Element	Staff Remarks/ Implementation	Position R,M,D
				COMMENTS:		
A	B	C		T-G4. Communication Facilities. Orderly and appropriate development of wireless communication facilities within the county to achieve reliable access in a manner that will protect and promote public health and safety; prevent visual blight; preserve the county's rural character; and protect scenic, natural, and cultural resources.		
				COMMENTS: T-G4. Communication Facilities: Orderly planning and appropriate development of communication facilities within the county to achieve reliable access while protecting public health and safety; minimizing visual blight; preserving the county's rural character including scenic, natural, and cultural resources.		
				T-G5. Telecommuniting and Workforce Development. Promoting and seeking resources to ensure that the county has a broadband infrastructure that encourages economic and workforce development and promotes telecommuniting.		
				COMMENTS:		
				T-G6. Embraces new communication technology. Assure that we are a county that welcomes new technology advancements put resources into assuring that broadband infrastructure keeps up with the capacity and demand needs of new technologies.		
				COMMENTS:		
				6.4 Policies		
A	B	C		T-P1. Development of Communications Infrastructure and Services. Advocate for development of communications infrastructure and services to facilitate the use of the	Iss, IM6, IM8	

Plan Alternative			Chapter 6. Telecommunications Element	Staff Remarks/ Implementation	Position R,M,D
			best available technology for business, households, and government.		
			<p>COMMENTS:</p> <p>T-P1. Development of Communications Infrastructure and Services. Advocate for development of communications infrastructure and services to facilitate the use of the best available technology for business, households, and government.</p>		
A	B	C	<p>T-P2. Broadband Service Reliability. Support efforts to increase reliability and continuity of service by broadband communications providers through market development, installation of redundant infrastructure, diversification of providers, and system modernization.</p>	Iss	
			<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-P2. Broadband Service Reliability: Support efforts to increase reliability and continuity of service by broadband media and communications providers through market development, installation of redundant infrastructure, diversification of providers, and system modernization. 		
A	B		<p>T-P3. Communications Facility Siting. Design and site all facilities to minimize their visibility, prevent visual clutter, and reduce conflicts with surrounding land uses</p>	Leg, Prog, QJ, Min, S1, IM1, IM6-7 	
			<p>COMMENTS:</p> <p>T-P3. Communications Facility Siting. Design and site all facilities to minimize their visibility, minimize visual clutter, and reduce conflicts with surrounding land uses while recognizing that all communities in Humboldt County need access to broadband and communication infrastructure.</p>		
A	B	C	<p>T-P4. e-Government Infrastructure. Continue to expand the County's website and communications capabilities, including the use of geographic information system resources, as a source of public information and as an aid in the delivery of public services.</p>	Iss, Prog, IM10	

Plan Alternative				Chapter 6. Telecommunications Element	Staff Remarks/ Implementation	Position R,M,D
				<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-P4 e-government infrastructure—Continue to expand the County's website and communications to deliver online as many public services as possible to decrease trips and reduce impacts on the environment. The County shall work towards providing online all policies, plans, ordinances, and information about the jurisdiction. 		
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-P? PEG Access. Work to expand PEG access in all communities in the county. 		
				<p>COMMENTS:</p>		
A	B	C		<p>T-P5. Communications Facilities Within County Rights of Way. Encourage communications service providers to size underground and overhead facilities to accommodate future expansion, changes in technology, and, where possible, the facilities of other communications providers.</p>	Iss, Prog, IM3	
				<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-P5 Communications Facilities within the County Right-of-Way— Communications installers shall size underground and overhead facilities to accommodate future expansion, changes in technology. 		
A	B			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-P? Use of County Right-of-Way. The County shall not give right-of-way access to providers that pass through underserved communities without providing services. 		
				<p>COMMENTS:</p>		

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A	B	C		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-P? County Right-Of-Way and Net Neutrality. The County shall require providers using its right-of-ways to agree to adhere to the principal of net neutrality or unfiltered access to internet information. 		
				COMMENTS:		
A	B	C		<p>T-P6. Telecommuting. Telecommuting and home-based businesses that use internet shall be considered principally permitted accessories to residential uses when operated in compliance with cottage industry performance standards.</p>	Iss	
				<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-P6 Telecommuting— upgrading of internet communications inside a residence or business shall be considered principally permitted 		
A	B	C		<p>T-P7. Broadband Internet. Promote the provision of broadband infrastructure in all communities.</p>	Iss, Prog, IM4-9	
				<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-P7 Broadband Deployment—Work regionally to promote provisions of broadband infrastructure in all communities. Work the other jurisdictions to adopt countywide installation guidelines and a "one stop" permit. 		
A				<p>T-PX. Local Government Broadband Communications Services. Encourage and support the efforts of community based organizations or community services districts to construct, own, improve, maintain, and operate broadband facilities and to provide broadband services within communities where communications service providers are unwilling or unable to so do.</p>		
				COMMENTS:		

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A	B	C	<p>T-P8. Broadband Internet. Support the development and management of an alternative fiber optic line that connects to the fiber backbone running along the U.S. 5 corridor. The County shall support the expansion and delivery of broadband internet in the rural or remote communities in the county through all appropriate technologies.</p>	Iss, Prog, IM9	
			<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-P8. Open Broadband Internet: The County shall support the expansion and delivery of redundant, open broadband internet service in every community, and support the use of public resources to serve community anchors such as court houses, schools, libraries, civic and media access centers, public safety and health care facilities. 		
A	B	C	<p>T-P9. Workforce Development. Continue to work with local businesses to identify special communications needs, and to ensure that there are a variety of service providers available to address those needs.</p>	Iss	
			<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-P9. Workforce Development: Continue to work with local businesses to identify special communications needs, and to ensure that there are a variety of service providers and training opportunities available to address those needs. 		
A	B		<p>T-P10. Subdivision Improvement Requirements. New residential and commercial development projects shall include the infrastructure components necessary to support modern communication technologies, such as conduit space within joint utility trenches for future high-speed data equipment, and flexible telephone conduit to allow for easy retrofit for high-speed data systems.</p>	Leg, Prog, QJ, Min, IM2 	
			<p>COMMENTS:</p>		
A	B	C	<p>T-P11. Joint Telecom Planning. Work with local governments, utilities, schools, medical service providers, and neighboring counties to unify communication infrastructure planning on a regional basis.</p>	Iss	

Plan Alternative				Chapter 6. Telecommunications Element	Staff Remarks/ Implementation	Position R,M,D
				<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-P11. Joint Telecom Planning: Work with local governments, utilities, schools, medical service providers, neighboring counties, tribes, state and federal entities to unify and coordinate communications infrastructure planning on local, regional and global bases. 		
A	B	C		<p>T-P12. E-911. Ensure that the county's radio, communications, and internet services are capable of providing timely emergency information and facilitating rapid and reliable emergency response.</p>	Iss, Prog	
				<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-P12 E-911. Public Safety: Ensure that the county's broadcast and broadband media using wireless and wireline communications are capable of providing timely emergency information to facilitate rapid and reliable emergency response and recovery services. 		
A	B	C		<p>T-P13. Cable Franchise Ordinance. Ensure that the county's cable franchise ordinance is kept up-to-date to deal with the changing nature of federal and state law, as well as the changing nature of communications technology so that the best possible services are available to residents</p>	Prog, Iss	
				<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-P13. Cable Franchise Ordinance: Ensure that the county's cable franchise ordinance is kept up-to-date to deal with the changing nature of federal and state law, as well as the changing nature of communications technology so that the best possible services are available to residents, businesses, community based organizations, educational institutions and other public agencies. 	Local to local channels	
A	B	C		<p>T-P14. Wireless "Hot Spots". Encourage the installation of public-use wireless broadband antennas at every County-owned building.</p>	Iss	

Plan Alternative				Chapter 6. Telecommunications Element	Staff Remarks/ Implementation	Position R,M,D
				COMMENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-P14. Free Wireless “Hot Spots: Encourage the installation and availability at no cost of public-use wireless broadband services at every County-owned building, and other community anchor facilities. 		
A	B	C		T-P15. Trip Reduction. Encourage communications infrastructure improvements as a means to reduce transportation impacts and improve air quality	Iss	
				COMMENTS:		
A	B			T-P16. Public Broadband Communications Service Providers. Support the provision of broadband communications services by public agencies.	Iss, Prog, IM8	
				COMMENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-P16. Public Communications Service Providers: Support the provision of broadband communications services by public agencies and community based organizations. 		
A	B	C		T-P17. Technology Awareness. Promote awareness of broadband communications technology by businesses and residents.	Iss	
				COMMENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-P17. Technology Awareness: Promote awareness, innovation and sustainable adoption of broadband communications technology by businesses and residents, especially for least served people and places. 		
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-P18. Localism: Promote development of locally owned networks through deployment and sustainable adoption of broadband media and communications services in all communities 		
				COMMENTS:		

Plan Alternative	Chapter 6. Telecommunications Element	Staff Remarks/ Implementation	Position R,M,D
	6.5 Standards ---Broadband Working Group recommends removing ABC&E		
B	<p>T-S1. Communications Siting Standard. Siting of new communications facilities shall comply with standards contained in a Communications Facilities Ordinance that incorporates the following: certain protections for public health and safety, with priority consideration for the goals and policies put forth in the Chapter. The Ordinance may also consider: Community Benefits, Site Co-location, Performance Standards, Tiered Permitting and other issues to be addressed. (A,B,C, and E removed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Tiered Permitting. Utilize permit processes that vary depending upon the physical characteristics of the facility, its location, and its compliance with specific development and performance standards. B. Performance Standards. Standards for siting design, visibility, construction impacts, on-going operation, and other characteristics that affect the compatibility and environmental and safety impacts of proposed facilities. C. Site Co-location. When feasible, communications facilities shall be located adjacent to, on, or incorporated into existing or proposed buildings, towers, or other structures. The County shall require new facilities to accommodate future co-location to the maximum extent feasible. D. Public Health and Safety. Applicants shall demonstrate that proposed facilities operate within Federal Communications Commission (FCC) emission regulations and guidelines. E. Location and Siting. 1) When designing and siting towers screening should be used if possible to reduce visual impacts. 	This standard is consistent with a draft version of a proposed communications ordinance.	

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	<p>2) Stealth siting methods should be used if possible within views of scenic highways, public parks, cultural facilities and coastal scenic areas.</p> <p>3) Stealthing or setbacks shall be used when near residential dwelling units, public or private schools, and child daycare facilities.</p> <p>4) An alternatives analysis may be required at the time of application that documents why the project as proposed is the best way to accomplish project alternatives while minimizing project impacts.</p> <p>F. Design and Screening.</p> <p>1) Support structures shall be designed and painted to minimize visibility with a preference towards each of the following in the order so listed: 1) use of existing structures, 2) stealth designs for concealment, and 3) monopoles.</p> <p>2) Component parts, equipment cabinets, buildings, and security fencing shall be designed to achieve a minimum profile through painting, screening, landscaping, and architectural compatibility with surrounding structures.</p> <p>3) Photosimulations or balloon tests with views from various vantage points may be required to show visual impact of the proposed facility.</p> <p>G. Removal of Un-used Facilities. Require the timely removal of communications towers and equipment when they are no longer needed as a condition of approval.</p> <p>H. Independent Review. Applicants may be required to pay the cost of independent review to evaluate siting alternatives, necessity based on adequacy of coverage or evaluation of radio frequency emissions in relation to FCC Maximum Permissible Exposure Limits</p> <p>I. Waiver or Modification of Standards. Allow for a waiver or modification to standards and requirements based on specific findings showing non-</p>		

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	detriment and necessity or that strict compliance would result in noncompliance with applicable federal or state law.		
	COMMENTS:		
A	<p>T-S1. Communications Siting Standard. Siting of new communications facilities shall comply with standards contained in a Communications Facilities Ordinance that incorporates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Tiered Permitting. Utilize permit processes that vary depending upon the physical characteristics of the facility, its location, and its compliance with specific development and performance standards. B. Performance Standards. Standards for siting design, visibility, construction impacts, on-going operation, and other characteristics that affect the compatibility and environmental and safety impacts of proposed facilities. C. Site Co-location. When feasible, Communications facilities shall be located adjacent to, on, or incorporated into existing or proposed buildings, towers, or other structures. The County shall require new facilities to accommodate future co-location to the maximum extent feasible. D. Public Health and Safety. Applicants shall demonstrate that proposed facilities operate within Federal Communications Commission (FCC) emission regulations and guidelines. E. Location and Siting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Avoid Prohibit siting along ridgelines unless screened from public view <u>unless stealth design techniques are utilized.</u> 	See <u>underline</u> and strike through text for differences with Alternative B.	

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	<p>2) Avoid <u>Prohibit</u> siting within views of scenic highways, public parks, recreation or cultural facilities or other public lands and coastal scenic or view areas <u>unless stealth design techniques are utilized</u></p> <p>3) Setbacks shall be required between communication facilities and residential dwelling units, public or private schools, and child daycare facilities.</p> <p>4) An alternatives analysis shall be provided at the time of application that documents why the project as proposed is the best way to accomplish project alternatives while minimizing project impacts.</p> <p>F. Design and Screening.</p> <p>1) Support structures shall be designed and painted to minimize visibility <u>to the maximum extent</u> with a preference towards each of the following in the order so listed: 1) use of existing structures, 2) stealth designs for concealment, and 3) monopoles.</p> <p>2) Component parts, equipment cabinets, buildings, and security fencing shall be designed to achieve a minimum profile through painting, screening, landscaping, and architectural compatibility with surrounding structures.</p> <p>3) Photosimulations or balloon tests with views from various vantage points shall be used to show visual impact of the proposed facility.</p> <p>G. Removal of Un-used Facilities. Require the timely removal of communications towers and equipment when they are no longer needed as a condition of approval.</p> <p>H. Independent Review. Applicants may be required to pay the cost of independent review to evaluate siting alternatives, necessity based on adequacy of coverage or evaluation of radio frequency emissions in relation to FCC Maximum Permissible Exposure Limits.</p>		

Plan Alternative				Chapter 6. Telecommunications Element	Staff Remarks/ Implementation	Position R,M,D
				I. Waiver or Modification of Standards. Allow for a waiver or modification to standards and requirements based on specific findings showing non-detriment and necessity or that strict compliance would result in noncompliance with applicable federal or state law.		
				COMMENTS:		
				6.6 Implementation Measures		
A	B			T-IM1. Communications Facilities Ordinance. Adopt a Communications Facilities Ordinance that: ensures compatibility of communications facilities with nearby land uses, is proactive in the design and siting of wireless communications facilities, provides incentives for unobtrusive and compatible wireless antennas, and establish clear standards for such facilities.		
				COMMENTS:		
A	B			T-IM2. Broadband Deployment. Revise subdivision regulations to require the provision, where feasible, of infrastructure for broadband internet.		
				COMMENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-IM2. Broadband Communication Deployments; Revise subdivision regulations of structures and facilities for broadband communications network deployment. 		
A	B	C		T-IM3. Improvement Specifications within Road Rights-of-Way. Review the Standard Improvement Specifications for Public Improvements to determine if a location for the placement of conduit for communications use can be designated and to develop safe zones for installing new communications infrastructure.		
				COMMENTS:		

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A	B			T-IM4. Communications Infrastructure Inventory. Create and maintain an inventory of communications infrastructure located within and outside public rights-of-way and all existing and proposed communications facilities and their locations in the county, including all available tall structures that could be used for communications antennas.		
				COMMENTS:		
A	B			T-IM5. Public Conduit. Work with other local and state jurisdictions to evaluate the feasibility of installing publicly owned communications conduit as part of capital construction projects such as water, wastewater, power, roads, and sidewalks.		
				COMMENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-IM5 Public Conduit—Work with other local, state and tribal jurisdictions to develop a standard for installing publicly owned communications conduit as part of every capital construction project. 		
A	B			T- IM6. Ongoing Communications Planning. Prepare and periodically update a communications improvement program based on existing local, countywide, and regional communications planning studies that identifies existing conditions, needed improvements, and funding programs and that establishes criteria for prioritizing projects.		
				COMMENTS:		
A	B			T- IM7. Pre-planning Facility Locations. Establish and utilize wireless and wireline communications siting standards, in coordination with other jurisdictions, to pre-identify areas where future commercial or public communications facilities can be located.		
				COMMENTS:		
A	B	C		T- IM8. Communications for Rural Communities. Advocate for and seek grant funding to deliver improved communications to outlying rural communities. Provide technical		

Plan Alternative				Chapter 6. Telecommunications Element	Staff Remarks/ Implementation	Position R,M,D
				assistance to community service districts interested in offering broadband communications.		
				<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T- IM8. Communications for Least Served Communities: Advocate for and seek grant funding to deliver improved communications to outlying rural areas and other least served communities. Provide technical assistance to community service districts, other local government jurisdictions and community based organizations interested in offering broadband communications services for public, education and government purposes. 		
A	B	C		T- IM9. Broadband Reliability. Advocate for and seek grant funding to support broadband service diversity and redundant fiber optic service to the county.		
				<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T- IM9. Broadband Reliability: Advocate for and seek grant funding to support broadband service diversity and redundant network capacity to and from the county. 		
A	B	C		T- IM10. e-Government. Continuously improve County government's use of communications and digital technology to educate and provide public services with a focus on internet services, geographic information systems, and public safety and emergency communications.		
				<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T- IM10. e- Government: Continuously improve County government's use of broadband communications and digital media technology to educate and provide public services with a focus on internet services, geographic information systems, public safety and emergency communications. 		
A	B	C		T-IM11 Remote Deployment Planning. The County should seek funding to undertake a study and environmental review to determine appropriate places to deploy wireless communication facilities that would provide reliable coverage to every community within the county. Areas approved in the report should receive expedited and streamlined permitting.		

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				COMMENTS:		
				T-IM12 Increasing PEG Access. The County of Humboldt will engage with local, state, tribal and federal governments; community based organizations and private sector entities to develop, improve, and maintain high quality communications service providing increased community access to affordable, broadband media services for public, education and government (PEG) purposes.		
				COMMENTS:		
A	B	C		T-IM13 Communication Marketing. Market the County to the outside world as a tech-aware place to live and work.		
				COMMENTS:		
				T-IM14. Live remote of public meetings. The County will seek funding and deploy live remote coverage of public meetings in public spaces in communities without access to PEG channels		
				COMMENTS:		
				T-IM15. Research Possible Monitoring Policy. Host community workshops to discuss the issue of monitoring radiation outputs from wireless equipment.		
				COMMENTS:		

