



BONNER COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

1500 HIGHWAY 2, SUITE 208, SANDPOINT, ID 83864 (208) 265-1458 (208) 265-1463 (FAX)
planning@co.bonner.id.us (e-mail) <http://www.co.bonner.id.us/planning/index.html> (web page)

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

FILE # CUP0012-24

RECEIVED:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Describe the proposed use:

We are proposing an unmanned wireless telecommunications facility, consisting of a 125' AGL monopole, sited inside a 50'x50' (2500 sq ft) fenced compound. The monopole and attached antennas will be painted to match and blend with the surrounding landscape, and there will be landscaping planted around the fenced compound to help conceal the ground based equipment.

The use is conditionally provided for at Bonner County Revised Code, Section(s): **12.335 – Public Uses**

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Landowner's name: **Robert C. Custer**

Mailing address: [REDACTED]

City: [REDACTED]

State: **ID**

Zip code: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Fax: **None**

E-mail: [REDACTED]

REPRESENTATIVE'S INFORMATION:

Representative's name: **Andreson B. Hambright**

Company name: **The Smartlink Group**

Mailing address: **621 114th Avenue East**

City: **Edgewood**

State: **WA**

Zip code: **98372**

Telephone: **253-347-7234**

Fax: **None**

E-mail: **andy.hambright@smartlinkgroup.com**

ADDITIONAL APPLICANT/REPRESENTATIVE INFORMATION:

Name/Relationship to project: **Kevin Foy / Site Development Manager**

Company name: Vertical Bridge REIT, LLC dba The Towers, LLC (The Towers, LLC has a ground Lease with the parcel owner, Robert Custer for the proposed site. A copy of the Memorandum of Lease is enclosed with this application).

Mailing address: **750 Park of Commerce Drive; Suite 200**

City: **Boca Raton**

State: **FL**

Zip code: **33487**

Telephone: **206-427-5856**

Fax: **None**

E-mail: **kevin.foy@verticalbridge.com**

PARCEL INFORMATION:

Section #: 12	Township: 55N	Range: 6W	Parcel acreage: 9.794
Parcel # (s): RP55N06W127280A			
Legal description: <u>The South Half of the North Half of the Northeast Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 12, Township 55 North, Range 6 West, Boise Meridian, Bonner County, Idaho.</u>			
Current zoning: Rural 5 (R-5)		Current use: Rural Residential (5-10 AC)	
What zoning districts border the project site?			
North: Rural 5 (R-5)		East: Agriculture/Forestry 10 (A/F-10)	
South: Rural 5 (R-5)		West: Rural 10 (R-10)	
Comprehensive plan designation: Rural Residential			
Uses of the surrounding land(describe lot sizes, structures, uses):			
North: Rural homestead with a dwelling and multiple outbuildings			
South: Rural homestead with a dwelling and multiple outbuildings			
East: Rawland/Forestry			
West: Rawland/Forestry			
Nearest city: Oldtown, ID		Distance to the nearest city: Approx. 3.04 miles	
Detailed directions to site: <u>From Oldtown, Idaho: Head South on Highway 41 for approximately 3.04 miles to 34754 State Highway 41, Oldtown, ID 83822. Turn right onto drive and follow due West for approximately 760 feet past dwelling. Turn left and proceed for approximately 180 feet. End, Site area will be on your right.</u>			

ADDITIONAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Please describe in detail all applicable uses/plans for subject property, including:
1) Size of buildings: <u>No buildings to be constructed as part of this proposal.</u>
2) Type of unit: <u>No Units. This will be an unmanned wireless telecommunications facility (as described above).</u>
3) # of Units: <u>No Units as part of this proposal.</u>
4) Any machinery to be located on the site: <u>There will be outdoor, pad mounted, radio equipment cabinets, and an emergency backup power generator. The generator will be powered by diesel fuel.</u>
5) Any storage area, etc.: <u>No storage.</u>
6) Phasing plans, expected start-up and completion dates: <u>We expect to start building shortly after being issued all necessary permits from Bonner County. Construction will take approximately 3-4 weeks to complete.</u>
7) # of people on site (employees, visitors, etc.): <u>This will be an unmanned facility. The site will be visited by a maintenance tech approximately 1-2 times a month to inspect the site and perform preventative maintenance. Said maintenance visits will last approximately 1 hour.</u>
8) Hours of operation: <u>The site will run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and will be unmanned.</u>
9) Traffic to be generated (vehicles per day or week): <u>The site will be visited by a maintenance tech approximately 1-2 times a month to inspect the site and perform preventative maintenance. Said maintenance visits will last approximately 1 hour, and will be scheduled during normal working hours, Monday - Friday.</u>
10) Associated functions (receptions, outdoor activities, additional processes, etc.): <u>None.</u>
11) Parking, loading areas: <u>We are proposing a hammerhead turnabout/parking area in front of the access gates for access, loading and parking. Please see attached plans for reference.</u>

12) Advertising sign, size and location: **No advertising needed or proposed.**

13) Lighting plans: **There will be no lighting associated with this tower. The tower is under 200' AGL in height, and will not require illumination by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).**

14) Solid waste management plan: **N/A. This will be an unmanned facility and will not produce waste.**

15) Complete detail of scope/process: **We are proposing an unmanned wireless telecommunications facility, consisting of a 125' AGL monopole, sited inside a 50'x50' (2500 sq ft) fenced compound. The monopole and attached antennas will be painted to match and blend with the surrounding landscape, and there will be landscaping planted around the fenced compound to help conceal the equipment. Construction will last approximately 3-4 weeks to completion. During construction there will be a full crew onsite 8 hours a day, Monday – Friday, during normal working hours. After the site is on-air, it will require a visit 1-2 times a month by a maintenance tech to inspect and perform preventative maintenance.**

16) If required, are landscaping plans attached? ☒ Yes ☐ No

NARRATIVE STATEMENT:

How will the conditional use be designed to avoid creating hazards or dangers to persons on or adjacent to the property? **This site will operate in conformance with all Federal, Local and State laws and regulations pertaining to facilities of this nature. Additionally, a 6' tall security fence will be constructed around the monopole and equipment to prevent unwarranted entry by unauthorized personnel. Safety signs and notifications will also be posted on and about the premises (as required by the FCC and any other agency requiring such signs and/or notifications). This site will be 100% compliant, and safe for operation.**

Explain the effects of elements such as noise, light glare, odor, fumes and vibrations on adjoining property: **There will be no light, glare, odor, fumes or vibrations that will be detectable by any adjoining properties. The emergency backup power generator will be diesel powered, and will conform with all local, state and/or federal safety and noise regulations.**

How is the proposed use compatible with the adjoining land uses: **The proposed facility is compatible with the adjoining land uses as a communications site. This site will provide needed coverage in the area for communication and internet services by and between the local citizens of the community, those passing through on State Highway 41, and E911 services personnel. There is a big drop in coverage in the area, and this site will help to fill in that gap. Calls to E911 services are transmitted from any tower receiving such a signal/request, regardless of which cellular carrier the person making the call is subscribed with. This is an important point to make, as currently there are many locations within the service area from which a person would not be able to receive/transmit a call to E911 in the event of a medical or safety emergency. This site will absolutely improve the health and safety of those living in, working from, or traveling through the service area of the proposed new tower.**

ACCESS INFORMATION:

Please check the appropriate boxes:

X Private Easement ☐ Existing ☐ Proposed
Describe travel surface (e.g., gravel, dirt, paved, etc.), travel way width, road grade and easement width. Include recorded instrument number for existing easements & name, if existing: **Access to the proposed site will utilize the existing Idaho Transportation Department (IDT) Right-of-Way (ROW) Encroachment Permit No. 1-07-187, which serves as access to the homes at 34756 and 34754 State Highway 41, Oldtown, ID 83822. The existing is a dirt and gravel shared access drive that comes off of State Highway 41 heading due West. This road will be improved with the addition of more gravel. We will continue to improve the existing access road that turns South behind the home at**

	34754 State Highway 41, and construct a small length of new road (approx. 160') running to the West. The road will end at a hammerhead turnabout and parking area in front of the compound access gates. Please see proposed site plans, and copy of IDT ROW Encroachment Permit (enclosed with this application) for further details.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Public Road</u> <u>Existing</u> <u>Proposed</u> Describe travel surface (e.g., gravel, dirt, paved, etc.), travel way width, road grade right-of-way width and name, if existing: N/A. The proposed site will be on private property, accessed by the private road as referenced above.

SITE INFORMATION:

Please provide a detailed description of the following land features:			
Topography (lay of the land), including estimated maximum slope, rock outcroppings, benches, etc: The proposed site pareel is relatively flat throughout with relatively little slope, if any. No rock outcroppings or benches. Approximately 1% - 2% grade across the entire parcel.			
Water courses (lakes, streams, rivers & other bodies of water): No surface water on subject parcel.			
Is site within a flood plain?	Yes	X No	Firm Panel #: _____ Map designation: _____
Springs & wells: There is an existing well on the parcel for potable water.			
Existing structures (size & use): Home/dwelling (approx. 14' x 68'); workshop (approx. 40' x 50'); 2 storage sheds, & 1 carport (each under 200 sq ft).			
Land cover (timber, pastures, etc): The Eastern 1/3rd of the parcel is pasture, the center 1/3 has the home & outbuildings referenced above, and the Western 1/3 is timberland.			
Are wetlands present on site?	Yes	No X	Source of information: Bonner County GIS and discussion with parcel owner.
Other pertinent information (attach additional pages if needed): None.			

SERVICES:

Sewage disposal will be provided by: N/A. This will be an unmanned facility and will not require a sewage system.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Existing Community System - List name of sewer district or provider and type of system: N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Proposed Community System</u> – List type & proposed ownership: N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Individual system</u> – List type: N/A
Explain the type of sewage system, capacity, maintenance plan, location of facilities, if applicable and other details: N/A	
Water will be supplied by: N/A. This will be an unmanned facility which will not utilize water.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Existing public or community system</u> - List name of provider: N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Proposed Community System</u> – List type & proposed ownership: N/A



Individual well: **N/A**

Please explain the water source, capacity, system maintenance plan, storage and delivery system and other details: **N/A. This will be an unmanned facility which will not utilize water.**

Distance (in miles) to the nearest:

Public/Community Sewer System:

Approx. 3.16 miles

Solid Waste Collection Facility:

Approx. 3.7 miles

Public/Community Water System:

Approx. 3.16 miles

Fire Station:

Approx. 6.39 miles

Elementary School: **Approx. 3.46 miles**

Secondary Schools: **3.5 miles**

County Road: **Approx. 1.29 miles**

County Road Name: **Womack Road**

Which fire district will serve the project site? **Spirit Lake Fire Protection District**

Which power company will serve the project site? **Inland Power and Light Company**

How is the use/plan in accordance with the general and specific objectives of the Comprehensive Plan? (Copy of goals and objectives attached)

Property Rights:

The Towers, LLC, is leasing, at fair market value, a small amount of space on the parcel, on which to site the proposed telecommunications facility. They are paying fair market rentals for, and any personal property taxes assessed on, or attributable to, the proposed facility. The Towers, LLC will be occupying the minimal space needed to operate a facility of this nature, and they are funding all development and permitting costs for the same. The proposed site will be providing an essential public E911 service for the community, and general communications and internet services for those who wish to utilize them, at an affordable, economical price. The installation of the site is desired and wanted by the parcel owners.

Population:

The population in the area of the proposed facility is sparse but growing rapidly, and the pass-through traffic, especially in the summer months, drastically increases the population in the area. There is currently a significant gap in the wireless service in the area of the proposed project where subscribers may not be able to complete a call, call quality will suffer, and/or users will experience dropped calls. Statistics show that 57% of American homes rely exclusively on cellular phones for their communications needs, and that 84% or more of E911 calls are made from wireless devices. The proposed site will help to improve communications abilities in the area, both generally speaking, and with regard to E911 services drastically. The proposed communications facility is essential to the continued improvement of reliable communications in the area as the population continues to rise.

School facilities & Transportation:

The proposed communications facility will improve the ability of parents to keep in contact with their children while away from home at school, and while in transport between the two. It will also drastically improve the E911 capabilities in the area in the event of an emergency. E911 calls are transmitted by any communications tower that receives such a call/signal, regardless with which wireless carrier the caller is subscribed. New developments are no longer installing hard line telephone systems as a standard, thus making reliable, seamless wireless coverage an essential utility for parents and children of school age, and everyone else.

Economic Development:

Bonner County is a very rural area. Only approximately 28% of Bonner County residents live within an incorporated city, and only half of all jobs are located in one those cities. The other half are located in unincorporated Bonner County. More and more people are now working from home. The internet has opened a whole new world for online business and other opportunities to make money online. Additionally, more and more workplaces are offering the opportunity to work from home, as the ability to do so effectively increases. The proposed facility will not only provide telecommunications services, but also wireless internet services, greatly increasing the ability of people in the area to develop their own way of working from home and making money online. The proposed facility will also help to improve the safety of those working in outdoor based carriers (farming, logging, mining, etc.), and their ability to keep in communication with their families while at work.

Land Use:

Regardless of what any given property is being used for, the ability to communicate from that property is essential. With less and less land-based telecommunications infrastructure being installed and kept up with, the ability to communicate wirelessly is more essential than ever and will be for the foreseeable future. The proposed site is yet another step toward seamless wireless coverage, enabling communications when needed, and ensuring the ability to reach E911 services wherever you are.

Natural Resources:

Natural resources are plentiful in remote Idaho, and protecting those natural resources is essential. The proposed facility will be unmanned, and will not produce any waste, or utilize any natural resources. The site will; however, greatly improve the ability of those working remotely in natural resource-based jobs to communicate with their families, and with E911 services in the event of an emergency. Once in operation, the proposed site will undoubtedly help to save lives and increase safety in the area.

Hazardous Areas:

The proposed site was intentionally sited in an area of no Hazardous Areas. The ground is extremely flat (approximately 1% slope), and with relatively stable soils (100% Bonner Gravelly ashy silt loam).

Public Services:

Although the Comprehensive Plan does not directly address telecommunications and internet, these are, in today's world, essential public utilities. 57% of homes currently rely exclusively on cellular phones for their communications needs, and in the next 10 years, that number is expected to increase to closer to 80% of all homes. This site will be essential in the ongoing objective to provide seamless coverage regardless of where someone is located. This site will enable a quick call to E911 services in the event of an emergency for all those living in and around the area, as well as those commuting along State Highway 41.

Transportation:

The proposed facility will greatly increase the safety and ability to contact E911 service while traversing State Highway 41. The area where the proposed facility is being sited, is currently an area of poor coverage for all cellular users/carriers. In the event of an emergency along this section of the Highway, the proposed site will be essential for contacting E911 services and getting them dispatched quickly.

Recreation:

Bonner County is rich in all types of recreation, particularly outdoor recreation. Cellular service in the vicinity of the proposed site is poor, and in some areas non-existent. As the saying goes, "safety first". The proposed facility is yet another step in increasing the safety of those recreating outdoors, enabling calls to E911 services from areas where it is currently not feasible to do so, greatly improving the health and safety of those recreating in the area in the event of an injury, a safety issue or threat, or in the event someone becomes lost. The site is being located on private property, so as to not develop public lands used for recreational purposes, and it is being designed in an area so as to require the least amount of development possible (i.e. on already developed property, utilizing existing access roads, etc.).

Special Areas or Sites:

The proposed site is intentionally being developed in an area of no Special Areas or Sites, so as to have no effect on said areas. We will be painting the tower and ancillary equipment to match and blend with the surrounding landscape, so as to have as little effect on viewsheds from the surrounding properties as possible. Additionally, we will be landscaping around the compound fence to help hide the ground-based equipment and blend with the surroundings.

Housing:

The current increase in population and growth in Bonner County, combined with the increase in home-based jobs and businesses is causing a lot of people to seek to live in more rural settings, as they can now make an economical living doing so. Almost all new housing developments, from apartments, to conventional homes, to manufactured and/or mobile homes, are not installing hard line telephone as a standard. The trend is toward wireless communications. This facility is directly in-line with the Comprehensive Plan to provide affordable housing opportunities in Bonner County. The increased service in the area, will be essential to those looking to move to a more rural setting, while still maintaining a high standard of living, and being able to communicate amongst one another, in business, and with E911 services should the need arise.

Community Design:


Communication is an essential part of life, both in rural settings and otherwise. The Bonner County Comprehensive Plan does not have a Community Design Component and chooses instead to focus on the preservation of the natural features and rural atmosphere of the community. As such, the proposed facility is directly in line with this goal. The facility will be sited in a forested area of the parcel, and painted to match the surrounding trees, so as to be as least visually intrusive as possible, while still servicing the communications needs of the community. The alternative is to run hard line telephone to the new housing being developed, which would require infinitely more wires & infrastructure strewn about, causing the once natural setting of the area to become much more confined and industrial in appearance.

Agriculture:

The proposed facility has been sited on lands not used for agriculture, so as to have no effect on agricultural lands. At the same time, the site will greatly improve the ability of those working on agricultural lands in the vicinity, or commuting State Highway 41 for agricultural purposes, to stay in contact with each other, their business partners, families, friends and E911 services should the need arise.

Implementation: (Not required to complete this element)

I hereby certify that all the information, statements, attachments and exhibits submitted herewith are true to the best of my knowledge. I further grant permission to Bonner County employees and representatives, elected or appointed officials to enter upon the subject land to make examinations, post the property or review the premises relative to the processing of this application.

Landowner's signature:  Date: 10/16/2024
Robert C. Custer

Landowner's signature: _____ Date: _____