

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN
BOARD POLICY**

POLICY: **Communication Towers / Antenna Systems Approval Process and Location & Design Guidelines**

AUTHORITY: Board Resolution dated May 7, 2015,
 Amended by Board Resolution dated October 4, 2018.

POLICY STATEMENT

The policy establishes the preferences of the Board of Directors for enhanced public consultation and locational & design guidelines in the Antenna System approval process.

PURPOSE

Overall the purpose of the Antenna approval process is to:

1. Consider co-locations and optimal site selection prior to the submission of site proposal.
2. Provide that telecommunications structures required with the RDOS are located and designed in a manner that is sensitive to potential impacts on the surrounding community.
3. Ensure that adequate public consultation is carried out by proponents with all property owners and residents affected by the proposed towers.
4. Establish a process for the RDOS to gather adequate information to provide a “letter of concurrence or non-concurrence” to Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (formally Industry Canada) at the end of the process

RESPONSIBILITIES

Development Services Department – Planning Services.

PROCEDURES

The Board of Directors, at the April 16, 2015 meeting, acknowledged the Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (formally Industry Canada) Public Consultation Process for processing of referrals by proponents seeking to install or modify Antenna Systems. A number of preferences for expanded public consultation in the RDOS are provided in this Board Policy as follows:

NOTIFICATION:

1. Prior to submitting an Antenna System proposal, the Proponent is requested to undertake Pre-Consultation with the RDOS Planning Department. This will include a review of:
 - a) Co-location opportunities in the area of the proposed new Antenna;
 - b) RDOS public consultation preferences; and
 - c) Location and Design Guidelines.

2. Submission of an Antenna System siting proposal shall be accompanied by a processing fee, as per the Fees and Charges Bylaw, information on co-location opportunities/use of other existing structures and plans indicating the location and design of the structure and other relevant information.
3. Prior to submitting a 'Letter of Concurrence' request, the proponent, at his or her cost, must erect a notice of development sign at the location proposed for the Antenna System. Proof of the sign installation must be provided to the Regional District by the proponent in the form of photographs of the sign(s) located on the property, including a close-up photograph sufficient to read sign details, and a distant photograph of the sign(s) in order to verify the location.
4. The development sign must adhere to the following requirements:
 - a) Not less than 1.2 metres x 1.8 metres in area;
 - b) Constructed of 1.3 centimetre plywood or other durable material;
 - c) Comprised of black letters on a white background;
 - d) Securely fixed in order to withstand wind and weather;
 - e) Clearly visible from the road;
 - f) Not create a hazard or interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic, or obstruct visibility from roads, walkways or driveways.
 - g) Information on the proposed Antenna System must be clearly shown and contact information shown.
5. Upon receipt of the submission, RDOS staff will notify the Electoral Area Director (s) and the adjacent municipality (s) if in close proximity to the proposed Antenna.
6. Public Notification Area is requested to include all properties within a minimum of 1000 m from the Antenna system. A greater Notification Area may be requested by the RDOS.
7. The proponent is requested to hold a public meeting and to include the details of the public meeting in the written notice to properties. In addition 2 newspaper advertisements is requested to be placed in separate editions.
8. Throughout the Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada Public Consultation process, the proponent will keep the RDOS informed of significant public concerns. During the consultation process or upon completion of the Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada Process, the RDOS may request additional public engagement opportunities including a second public meeting.

LOCATION AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

9. **Preferred Locations:**
 - a) Every effort to locate on existing structures, including antenna systems, transmission towers, utility poles, roof tops and similar structures.
 - b) Areas that maximize the distance from Residential zoned areas and dwellings in Small and Large Holdings zoned areas.

- c) Industrial and commercial areas, including on buildings and structures within a downtown commercial area.
- d) Areas that minimize the impact on public views and vistas of important natural or manmade features.
- e) Agricultural and Rural areas.
- f) Transportation and utility corridors.
- g) Institutional areas, including but limited to those institutions that require telecommunications technology, such hospitals, colleges, research centres and public works facilities, but excluding schools.
- h) Adjacent to parks, green spaces and golf courses and sites and sites with mature trees.
- i) Other non-residential areas where appropriate.

10. **Discouraged Locations:**

- a) Residential areas and locations directly in front of dwellings and their view scape.
- b) Lakeshore and riverbank lands.
- c) Inappropriate sites within parks and green spaces.
- d) Sites of topographic prominence.
- e) Heritage areas or sites, unless integrated into the structure in a compatible manner
- f) Locations that impact community view corridors from trail and road systems and other public lands.

11. **Environmentally Sensitive Areas:**

- a) Where a proposed Antenna is on a site indicated as “Environmentally Sensitive” in a Community Plan, an Environmental Impact Assessment shall be prepared and recommendations incorporated into the Antenna site design.

12. **Design, Style and Colour:**

- a) Architectural style of Antenna system should be compatible with the surrounding area and adjacent uses (i.e. monopole near residential area or lattice-style in industrial areas.
- b) The proponent should mitigate negative visual impacts through use of appropriate landscaping, screening, stealth design techniques and similar approaches.
- c) An Antenna System may be designed or combined as a landmark feature to resemble features found in the area, such as a flagpole or clock tower, where appropriate.
- d) In commercial areas and Downtowns, and in parks, public spaces or heritage areas, the design of the Antenna system should generally be unobtrusive and consider special design treatments. Cable trays should generally not be run up the exterior faces of buildings.
- e) Towers and communication equipment should have a non-reflective surface and colours that blend into the surroundings.
- f) Antennas that extend above the top of a supporting utility pole or light standard should appear in terms of colour, shape and size, to be a natural extension of the pole.

13. **Buffering and Screening**

- a) Antenna Systems and associated equipment shelters should be attractively designed or screened and concealed from ground level or other public views to mitigate visual impacts. Screening could include existing vegetation, landscaping, fencing or other means in order to blend with the built and natural environment.
- b) A mix of deciduous and coniferous trees is preferred to provide year round coverage. Irrigation should be provided if available alternatively low water requirements plants be selected.

14. **Security**

- a) The RDOS may request the posting of security for the construction of any proposed fencing, screening or landscaping.