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**AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY OF LIBERTY COUNTY, FLORIDA, AMENDING LIBERTY COUNTY'S LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE BY CREATING CHAPTER 8, TITLED SITING REGULATIONS FOR WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, INCLUSION IN THE CODE, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**Section 1. Purpose and Legislative Intent.**

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 affirmed the County of Liberty's authority concerning the placement, construction and modification of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities. The County of Liberty finds that Wireless Telecommunications Facilities may pose significant concerns to the health, safety, public welfare, character and environment of the County and its inhabitants. The County also recognizes that facilitating the development of wireless service technology can be an economic development asset to the County and of significant benefit to the County and its residents. In order to insure that the placement, construction or modification of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities is consistent with the County's land use policies, the County is adopting a single, comprehensive, Wireless Telecommunications Facilities application and permit process. The intent of this Local Ordinance is to minimize the negative impact of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, establish a fair and efficient process for review and approval of applications, assure an integrated, comprehensive review of environmental impacts of such facilities, and protect the health, safety and welfare of the County of Liberty.

**Section 2. Title.**

This Ordinance shall be known and cited as the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities Siting Ordinance for the County of Liberty.

**Section 3. Severability.**

- A) If any word, phrase, sentence, part, section, subsection, or other portion of this Ordinance or any application thereof to any person or circumstance is declared void, unconstitutional, or invalid for any reason, then such word, phrase, sentence, part, section, subsection, or other portion, or the proscribed Application thereof, shall be severable, and the remaining provisions of this Ordinance, and all applications thereof, not having been declared void, unconstitutional, or invalid, shall remain in full force and effect.
- B) Any Special Use Permit issued under this Ordinance shall be comprehensive and not severable. If part of a permit is deemed or ruled to be invalid or unenforceable in any material respect, by a competent authority, or is overturned by a competent authority, the permit shall be void in total, upon determination by the County.

**Section 4. Definitions.**

For purposes of this Ordinance, and where not inconsistent with the context of a particular section, the defined terms, phrases, words, abbreviations, and their derivations shall have the meaning given in this

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section. When not inconsistent with the context, words in the present tense include the future tense, words used in the plural number include words in the singular number and words in the singular number include the plural number. The word "shall" is always mandatory, and not merely directory.

1. **"Accessory Facility or Structure"** means an accessory facility or structure serving or being used in conjunction with Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, and located on the same property or lot as the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, including but not limited to, utility or transmission equipment storage sheds or cabinets.
2. **"Applicant"** means any Wireless service provider submitting an Application for a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.
3. **"Application"** means all necessary and appropriate documentation that an Applicant submits in order to receive a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.
4. **"Antenna"** means a system of electrical conductors that transmit or receive electromagnetic waves or radio frequency or other wireless signals. Such shall include, but not be limited to radio, television, cellular, paging, personal Telecommunications services (PCS), microwave Telecommunications and services not licensed by the FCC, but not expressly exempt from the County's siting, building and permitting authority.
5. **"Co-location"** means the use of a Tower or structure to support Antennae for the provision of wireless services without increasing the height of the Tower or structure.
6. **"Commercial Impracticability" or "Commercially Impracticable"** means the inability to perform an act on terms that are reasonable in commerce, the cause or occurrence of which could not have been reasonably anticipated or foreseen and that jeopardizes the financial efficacy of the project. The inability to achieve a satisfactory financial return on investment or profit, standing alone, shall not deem a situation to be "commercially impracticable" and shall not render an act or the terms of an agreement "commercially impracticable".
7. **"Completed Application"** means an Application that contains all information and/or data necessary to enable an informed decision to be made with respect to an Application.
8. **"Commission"** means the County Commission of the County of Liberty Florida.
9. **"FAA"** means the Federal Aviation Administration, or its duly designated and authorized successor agency.
10. **"FCC"** means the Federal Communications Commission, or its duly designated and authorized successor agency.
11. **"Height"** means, when referring to a Tower or structure, the distance measured from the pre-existing grade level to the highest point on the Tower or structure, even if said highest point is an Antenna or lightening protection device.
12. **"Modification" or "Modify"** means, the addition, removal or change of any of the physical and visually discernable components or aspects of a wireless facility, such as antennas, cabling, radios, equipment shelters, landscaping, fencing, utility feeds, changing the color or materials of

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any visually discernable components, vehicular access, parking and/or an upgrade or changeout of equipment for better or more modern equipment. Adding a new wireless carrier or service provider to a Telecommunications Tower or Telecommunications Site is a modification. A Modification shall not include the replacement of any components of a wireless facility where the replacement is identical to the component being replaced or for any matters that involve the normal repair and maintenance of a wireless facility without adding, removing or changing anything.

13. **"NIER"** means Non-Ionizing Electromagnetic Radiation
14. **"Person"** means any individual, corporation, estate, trust, partnership, joint stock company, association of two (2) or more persons having a joint common interest, or any other entity.
15. **"Personal Wireless Facility"** See definition for 'Wireless Telecommunications Facilities'.
16. **"Personal Wireless Services" or "PWS" or "Personal Telecommunications Service" or "PCS"** shall have the same meaning as defined and used in the 1996 Telecommunications Act.
17. **"Telecommunication Site"** See definition for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.
18. **"Special Use Permit"** means the official document or permit by which an Applicant is allowed to construct and use Wireless Telecommunications Facilities as granted or issued by the County.
19. **"Stealth" or "Stealth Technology"** means minimize adverse aesthetic and visual impacts on the land, property, buildings, and other facilities adjacent to, surrounding, and in generally the same area as the requested location of such Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, which shall mean using the least visually and physically intrusive facility that is not technologically or commercially impracticable under the facts and circumstances,.
20. **"State"** means the State of Florida.
21. **"Telecommunications"** means the transmission and/or reception of audio, video, data, and other information by wire, radio frequency, light, and other electronic or electromagnetic systems.
22. **"Telecommunications Structure"** means a structure used in the provision of services described in the definition of 'Wireless Telecommunications Facilities'.
23. **"Temporary"** means, temporary in relation to all aspects and components of this Ordinance, something intended to, or that does, exist for fewer than ninety (90) days.
24. **"Wireless Telecommunications Facilities"** means and includes a **"Telecommunications Tower"** and **"Tower"** and **"Telecommunications Site"** and **"Personal Wireless Facility"** means a structure, facility or location designed, or intended to be used as, or used to support, Antennas or other transmitting or receiving devices. This includes without limit, Towers of all types and kinds and structures that employ camouflage technology, including, but not limited to structures such as a multi-story building, church steeple, silo, water tower, sign or other structures that can be used to mitigate the visual impact of an Antenna or the functional equivalent of such, including all related facilities such as cabling, equipment shelters and other structures associated with the site. It is a structure and facility intended for transmitting and/or receiving radio, television, cellular, paging, 911, personal Telecommunications services,

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commercial satellite services, microwave services and services not licensed by the FCC, but not expressly exempt from the County's siting, building and permitting authority, excluding those used exclusively for the County's fire, police or exclusively for private, non-commercial radio and television reception and private citizen's bands, amateur radio and other similar non-commercial Telecommunications where the height of the facility is below the height limits set forth in this ordinance.

### **Section 5. Overall Policy and Desired Goals for Special Use Permits for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.**

In order to ensure that the placement, construction, and modification of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities protects the County's health, safety, public welfare, environmental features, the nature and character of the community and neighborhood and other aspects of the quality of life specifically listed elsewhere in this Ordinance, the County hereby adopts an overall policy with respect to a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities for the express purpose of achieving the following goals:

- 1) Implementing an Application process for person(s) seeking a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities;
- 2) Establishing a policy for examining an application for and issuing a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities that is both fair and consistent.
- 3) Promoting and encouraging, wherever possible, the sharing and/or co-location of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities among service providers;
- 4) Promoting and encouraging, wherever possible, the placement, height and quantity of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities in such a manner, including but not limited to the use of stealth technology, to minimize adverse aesthetic and visual impacts on the land, property, buildings, and other facilities adjacent to, surrounding, and in generally the same area as the requested location of such Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, which shall mean using the least visually and physically intrusive facility that is not technologically or commercially impracticable under the facts and circumstances.

### **Section 6. Special Use Permit Application and Other Requirements.**

- A) All Applicants for a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities or any modification of such facility shall comply with the requirements set forth in this Ordinance. The County Commission is the officially designated agency or body of the County to whom applications for a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities must be made, and that is authorized to review, analyze, evaluate and make decisions with respect to granting or not granting, recertifying or not recertifying, or revoking special use permits for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities. The County may at its discretion delegate or designate other official agencies of the County to accept, review, analyze, evaluate and make recommendations to the County Commission with respect to the granting or not granting, recertifying or not recertifying or revoking special use permits for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.
- B) An Application for a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall be signed on behalf of the Applicant by the person preparing the same and with knowledge of the contents and representations made therein and attesting to the truth and completeness of the information. The landowner, if different than the Applicant, shall also sign the Application. At the discretion of the County, any false or misleading statement in the Application may subject the

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Applicant to denial of the Application without further consideration or opportunity for correction.

- C) Applications not meeting the requirements stated herein or which are otherwise incomplete, may be rejected by the County.
- D) The Applicant shall include a statement in writing:
  - 1) That the applicant's proposed Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall be maintained in a safe manner, and in compliance with all conditions of the Special Use Permit, without exception, unless specifically granted relief by the County in writing, as well as all applicable and permissible local codes, ordinances, and regulations, including any and all applicable County, State and Federal Laws, rules, and regulations;
  - 2) That the construction of the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities is legally permissible, including, but not limited to the fact that the Applicant is authorized to do business in the State.
- E) No Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall be installed or constructed until the Application is reviewed and approved by the County, and the Special Use Permit has been issued.
- F) All applications for the construction or installation of new Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall contain the information hereinafter set forth. Where a certification is called for in this Ordinance, such certification shall bear the signature and seal of a Professional Engineer licensed in the State. The Application shall include the following information:
  - 1) Documentation that demonstrates the need for the Wireless Telecommunications Facility to provide service primarily and essentially within the County. Such documentation shall include propagation studies of the proposed site and all adjoining planned, proposed, in-service or existing sites;
  - 2) The Name, address and phone number of the person preparing the report;
  - 3) The Name, address, and phone number of the property owner, operator, and Applicant, and to include the legal form of the Applicant;
  - 4) The Postal address and tax map parcel number of the property;
  - 5) The Zoning District or designation in which the property is situated;
  - 6) Size of the property stated both in square feet and lot line dimensions, and a diagram showing the location of all lot lines;
  - 7) The Location of nearest residential structure;
  - 8) The Location, size and height of all structures on the property which is the subject of the Application;
  - 9) The Location, size and height of all proposed and existing antennae and all appurtenant structures;
  - 10) The Type, locations and dimensions of all proposed and existing landscaping, and fencing;
  - 11) The number, type and design of the Tower(s) and Antenna(s) proposed and the basis for the calculations of the Tower's capacity to accommodate multiple users;
  - 12) The make, model and manufacturer of the Tower and Antenna(s);
  - 13) A description of the proposed Tower and Antenna(s) and all related fixtures, structures, appurtenances and apparatus, including height above pre-existing grade, materials, color and lighting;

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- 14) The frequency, modulation and class of service of radio or other transmitting equipment;
  - 15) The actual intended transmission and the maximum effective radiated power of the Antenna(s);
  - 16) Direction of maximum lobes and associated radiation of the Antenna(s);
  - 17) Certification that the NIER levels at the proposed site are within the threshold levels adopted by the FCC;
  - 18) Certification that the proposed Antenna(s) will not cause interference with other telecommunications devices;
  - 19) A copy of the FCC license applicable for the intended use of the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities;
  - 20) Certification that a topographic and geomorphologic study and analysis has been conducted, and that taking into account the subsurface and substrata, and the proposed drainage plan, that the site is adequate to assure the stability of the proposed Wireless Telecommunications Facilities on the proposed site.
- G) In the case of a new Tower, the Applicant shall be required to submit a written report demonstrating its meaningful efforts to secure shared use of existing Tower(s) or the use of alternative buildings or other structures within the County. Copies of written requests and responses for shared use shall be provided to the County in the Application, along with any letters of rejection stating the reason for rejection.
- H) The Applicant shall certify that the Telecommunication Facility, foundation and attachments are designed and will be constructed to meet all local, County, State and Federal structural requirements for loads, including wind and ice loads.
- I) The Applicant shall certify that the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities will be effectively grounded and bonded so as to protect persons and property and installed with appropriate surge protectors.
- K) The Applicant shall furnish a Visual Impact Assessment, which shall include:
- 1) A "Zone of Visibility Map" which shall be provided in order to determine locations from which the Tower may be seen.
  - 2) Pictorial representations of "before and after" views from key viewpoints both inside and outside of the County as may be appropriate, including but not limited to state highways and other major roads; state and local parks; other public lands; historic districts; preserves and historic sites normally open to the public; and from any other location where the site is visible to a large number of visitors, travelers or residents. Guidance will be provided, concerning the appropriate key sites at a pre-application meeting.
  - 3) An assessment of the visual impact of the Tower base, guy wires and accessory buildings from abutting and adjacent properties and streets as relates to the need or appropriateness of screening.
- L) The Applicant shall demonstrate and provide in writing and/or by drawing how it shall effectively screen from view the base and all related facilities and structures of the proposed Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.

M) Any and all representations made by the Applicant to the County on the record during the Application process, whether written or verbal, shall be deemed a part of the Application and may be relied upon in good faith by the County.

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N) All utilities at a Wireless Telecommunications Facilities site shall be installed underground and in compliance with all Laws, ordinances, rules and regulations of the County, including specifically, but not limited to, the National Electrical Safety Code and the National Electrical Code where appropriate.

O) All Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall contain a demonstration that the Facility be sited so as to be the least visually intrusive reasonably possible and thereby have the least adverse visual effect on the environment and its character, on existing vegetation, and on the residences in the area of the Wireless Telecommunications Facility.

P) Both the Wireless Telecommunications Facility and any and all accessory or associated facilities shall maximize the use of building materials, colors and textures designed to blend with the structure to which it may be affixed and/or to harmonize with the natural surroundings, this shall include the utilization of stealth or concealment technology as may required by the County.

Q) At a Telecommunications Site, an access road, turn around space and parking shall be provided to assure adequate emergency and service access. Maximum use of existing roads, whether public or private, shall be made to the extent practicable. Road construction shall at all times minimize ground disturbance and the cutting of vegetation. Road grades shall closely follow natural contours to assure minimal visual disturbance and reduce soil erosion.

R) A Person who holds a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall construct, operate, maintain, repair, provide for removal of, modify or restore the permitted Wireless Telecommunications Facilities in strict compliance with all current applicable technical, safety and safety-related codes adopted by the County, State, or United States, including but not limited to the most recent editions of the National Electrical Safety Code and the National Electrical Code, as well as accepted and responsible workmanlike industry practices and recommended practices of the National Association of Tower Erectors. The codes referred to are codes that include, but are not limited to, construction, building, electrical, fire, safety, health, and land use codes. In the event of a conflict between or among any of the preceding the more stringent shall apply.

S) A holder of a Special Use Permit granted under this Ordinance shall obtain, at its own expense, all permits and licenses required by applicable Law, rule, regulation or code, and must maintain the same, in full force and effect, for as long as required by the County or other governmental entity or agency having jurisdiction over the applicant.

T) With respect to this application process, the County intends to be the lead agency, pursuant to Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The Commission shall conduct an environmental review of the proposed project in combination with its review of the Application under this Law.

U) An Applicant shall submit to the County the number of completed Applications determined to be needed at the pre-application meeting. Written notification of the Application shall be

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provided to the legislative body of all adjacent municipalities.

V) The Applicant shall examine the feasibility of designing a proposed Tower to accommodate future demand for at least five (5) additional commercial applications, for example, future co-locations. The Tower shall be structurally designed to accommodate at least five (5) additional Antenna Arrays equal to those of the Applicant, and located as close to the Applicant's Antenna as possible without causing interference. This requirement may be waived, provided that the Applicant, in writing, demonstrates that the provisions of future shared usage of the Tower is not technologically feasible, is Commercially Impracticable or creates an unnecessary and unreasonable burden, based upon:

- 1) The foreseeable number of FCC licenses available for the area;
- 2) The kind of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities site and structure proposed;
- 3) The number of existing and potential licenses without Wireless Telecommunications Facilities spaces/sites;
- 4) Available space on existing and approved Towers.

W) The owner of the proposed new Tower, and his/her successors in interest, shall negotiate in good faith for the shared use of the proposed Tower by other Wireless service providers in the future, and shall:

1. Respond within 60 days to a request for information from a potential shared-use Applicant;
2. Negotiate in good faith concerning future requests for shared use of the new Tower by other Telecommunications providers;
3. Allow shared use of the new Tower if another Telecommunications provider agrees in writing to pay reasonable charges. The charges may include, but are not limited to, a pro rata share of the cost of site selection, planning, project administration, land costs, site design, construction and maintenance financing, return on equity, less depreciation, and all of the costs of adapting the Tower or equipment to accommodate a shared user without causing electromagnetic interference.

Failure to abide by the conditions outlined above may be grounds for revocation of the Special Use Permit for the Tower.

X) There shall be a pre-application meeting. The purpose of the pre-application meeting will be to address issues which will help to expedite the review and permitting process. A pre-application meeting shall also include a site visit if there has not been a prior site visit for the requested site. Costs of the County's consultants to prepare for and attend the pre-application meeting will be borne by the applicant.

Y) The holder of a Special Use Permit shall notify the County of Liberty of any intended Modification of a Wireless Telecommunication Facility and shall apply to the County to modify, relocate or rebuild a Wireless Telecommunications Facility.

Z) In order to better inform the public, in the case of a new Telecommunication Tower, the applicant shall, prior to the public hearing on the application, hold a "balloon test". The Applicant shall arrange to fly, or raise upon a temporary mast, a minimum of a three (3) foot in



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diameter brightly colored balloon at the maximum height of the proposed new Tower. The dates, (including a second date, in case of poor visibility on the initial date) times and location of this balloon test shall be advertised by the Applicant seven (7) and fourteen (14) days in advance of the first test date in a newspaper with a general circulation in the County . The Applicant shall inform the County, in writing, of the dates and times of the test, at least fourteen (14) days in advance. The balloon shall be flown for at least four consecutive hours sometime between 7:00 am and 4:00 PM on the dates chosen. The primary date shall be on a week-end, but in case of poor weather on the initial date, the secondary date may be on a week day.

- AA) The applicant will provide a written copy of an analysis, completed by a qualified individual or organization, to determine if the Tower or existing structure intended to support wireless facilities requires lighting under Federal Aviation Administration Regulation Part 77. This requirement shall be for any new tower or for an existing structure or building where the application increases the height of the structure or building. If this analysis determines, that the FAA must be contacted, then all filings with the FAA, all responses from the FAA and any related correspondence shall be provided in a timely manner.

## **Section 7. Location of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.**

- A) Applicants for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall locate, site and erect said Wireless Telecommunications Facilities in accordance with the following priorities, one (1) being the highest priority and six (6) being the lowest priority.
- 1) On existing Towers or other structures without increasing the height of the tower or structure;
  - 2) On County-owned properties;
  - 3) On properties in areas zoned for Heavy Industrial use
  - 4) On properties in areas zoned for Commercial use
  - 5) On properties in areas zoned for Agricultural use
  - 6) On properties in areas zoned for Residential use
- B) If the proposed site is not proposes for the highest priority listed above, then a detailed explanation must be provided as to why a site of a higher priority was not selected. The person seeking such an exception must satisfactorily demonstrate the reason or reasons why such a permit should be granted for the proposed site, and the hardship that would be incurred by the Applicant if the permit were not granted for the proposed site.
- C) An Applicant may not by-pass sites of higher priority by stating the site proposed is the only site leased or selected. An Application shall address co-location as an option. If such option is not proposed, the applicant must explain to the reasonable satisfaction of the County why co-location is Commercially or otherwise Impracticable. Agreements between providers limiting or prohibiting co-location shall not be a valid basis for any claim of Commercial Impracticability or hardship.
- D) Notwithstanding the above, the County may approve any site located within an area in the above list of priorities, provided that the County finds that the proposed site is in the best interest of the health, safety and welfare of the County and its inhabitants and will not have a deleterious effect on the nature and character of the community and neighborhood.
- E) The Applicant shall submit a written report demonstrating the Applicant's review of the above

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locations in order of priority, demonstrating the technological reason for the site selection. If appropriate, based on selecting a site of lower priority, a detailed written explanation as to why sites of a higher priority were not selected shall be included with the Application.

- F) Notwithstanding that a potential site may be situated in an area of highest priority or highest available priority, the County may disapprove an Application for any of the following reasons.
- 1) Conflict with safety and safety-related codes and requirements;
  - 2) Conflict with the historic nature or character of a neighborhood or historical district;
  - 3) The use or construction of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities which is contrary to an already stated purpose of a specific zoning or land use designation;
  - 4) The placement and location of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities which would create an unacceptable risk, or the reasonable probability of such, to residents, the public, employees and agents of the County, or employees of the service provider or other service providers;
  - 5) Conflicts with the provisions of this Ordinance.

### **Section 8. Shared use of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities and other structures.**

- A) Locating on existing Towers or others structures without increasing the height, shall be preferred by the County, as opposed to the construction of a new Tower. The Applicant shall submit a comprehensive report inventorying existing Towers and other suitable structures within four (4) miles of the location of any proposed new Tower, unless the Applicant can show that some other distance is more reasonable and demonstrate conclusively why an exiting Tower or other suitable structure can not be used.
- B) An Applicant intending to locate on an existing Tower or other suitable structure shall be required to document the intent of the existing owner to permit its use by the Applicant.
- C) Such shared use shall consist only of the minimum Antenna array technologically required to provide service primarily and essentially within the County, to the extent practicable, unless good cause is shown.

### **Section 9. Height of Telecommunications Tower(s).**

- A) The Applicant shall submit documentation justifying the total height of any Tower, Facility and/or Antenna and the basis therefore. Such documentation will be analyzed in the context of the justification of the height needed to provide service primarily and essentially within the County, to the extent practicable, unless good cause is shown.
- B) No Tower constructed after the effective date of this Ordinance, including allowing for all attachments, shall exceed that height which shall permit operation without required artificial lighting of any kind in accordance with municipal, County, State, and/or any Federal statute, law, local law, County ordinance, code, rule or regulation.

### **Section 10. Visibility of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.**

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- A) Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall not be artificially lighted or marked, except as required by Law.
- B) Towers shall be galvanized and painted with a rust-preventive paint of an appropriate color to harmonize with the surroundings and shall be maintained in accordance with the requirements of this Ordinance.
- C) If lighting is required, Applicant shall provide a detailed plan for sufficient lighting of as unobtrusive and inoffensive an effect as is permissible under State and Federal regulations.

### **Section 11. Security of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.**

All Wireless Telecommunications Facilities and Antennas shall be located, fenced or otherwise secured in a manner that prevents unauthorized access. Specifically:

- 1) All Antennas, Towers and other supporting structures, including guy wires, shall be made inaccessible to individuals and constructed or shielded in such a manner that they cannot be climbed or collided with; and
- 2) Transmitters and Telecommunications control points shall be installed such a manner that they are readily accessible only to persons authorized to operate or service them.

### **Section 12. Signage.**

Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall contain a sign no larger than four (4) square feet in order to provide adequate notification to persons in the immediate area of the presence of an Antenna that has transmission capabilities and shall contain the name(s) of the owner(s) and operator(s) of the Antenna(s) as well as emergency phone number(s). The sign shall be on the equipment shelter or cabinet of the Applicant and be visible from the access point of the site and must identify the equipment owner of the shelter or cabinet. The sign shall not be lighted, unless lighting is required by applicable law, rule or regulation. No other signage, including advertising, shall be permitted.

### **Section 13. Lot Size and Setbacks.**

All proposed Towers and any other proposed Wireless Telecommunications Facility structures shall be set back from abutting parcels, recorded rights-of-way and road and street lines by the greater of the following distances: A distance equal to the height of the proposed Tower or Wireless Telecommunications Facility structure plus ten percent (10%) of the height of the Tower or structure, or the existing setback requirement of the underlying zoning district, whichever is greater. Any Accessory structure shall be located so as to comply with the applicable minimum setback requirements for the property on which it is situated.

### **Section 14. Retention of Expert Assistance and Reimbursement by Applicant.**

- A) The County may hire any consultant and/or expert necessary to assist the County in reviewing and evaluating the Application, including the construction and modification of the site, once permitted, and any requests for recertification.

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- B) An Applicant shall deposit with the County funds sufficient to reimburse the County for all reasonable costs of consultant and expert evaluation and consultation to the County in connection with the review of any Application including the construction and modification of the site, once permitted. The initial deposit shall be \$8,500.00. The placement of the \$8,500 with the County shall precede the pre-application meeting. The County will maintain a separate escrow account for all such funds. The County's consultants/experts shall invoice the County for its services in reviewing the Application, including the construction and modification of the site, once permitted. If at any time during the process this escrow account has a balance less than \$2,500.00, the Applicant shall immediately, upon notification by the County, replenish said escrow account so that it has a balance of at least \$5,000.00. Such additional escrow funds shall be deposited with the County before any further action or consideration is taken on the Application. In the event that the amount held in escrow by the County is more than the amount of the actual invoicing at the conclusion of the project, the remaining balance shall be promptly refunded to the Applicant.
- C) The total amount of the funds needed as set forth in subsection (B) of this section may vary with the scope and complexity of the project, the completeness of the Application and other information as may be needed to complete the necessary review, analysis and inspection of any construction or modification.

### **Section 15. Exceptions from a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.**

- A) No Person shall be permitted to site, place, build, construct, modify or prepare any site for the placement or use of, Wireless Telecommunications Facilities as of the effective date of this Ordinance without having first obtained a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this section, no Special Use Permit shall be required for those non-commercial exceptions noted in the definition of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.
- B) All Wireless Telecommunications Facilities existing on or before the effective date of this Ordinance shall be allowed to continue as they presently exist, provided however, that any visible modification of an existing Wireless Telecommunications Facility must comply with this Ordinance.

### **Section 16. Public Hearing and Notification Requirements.**

- A) Prior to the approval of any Application for a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, a public hearing shall be held by the County, notice of which shall be published in the official newspaper of the County no less than ten (10) calendar days prior to the scheduled date of the public hearing. In order that the County may notify nearby landowners, the Applicant, the Application shall contain the names and address of all landowners whose property is located within fifteen hundred (1500) feet of any property line of the lot or parcel on which the new Wireless Telecommunications Facilities are proposed to be located.
- B) There shall be no public hearing required for an application to co-locate on an existing tower or other structure, as long as there is no proposed increase in the height of the Tower or structure, including attachments thereto.

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- C) The County shall schedule the public hearing referred to in Subsection (A) of this section once it finds the Application is complete. the County, at any stage prior to issuing a Special Use Permit, may require such additional information as it deems necessary.

### **Section 17. Action on an Application for a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.**

- A) The County will undertake a review of an Application pursuant to this Ordinance in a timely fashion, and shall act within a reasonable period of time given the relative complexity of the Application and the circumstances, with due regard for the public's interest and need to be involved, and the Applicant's desire for a timely resolution.
- B) The County may refer any Application or part thereof to any advisory or other committee for a non-binding recommendation.
- C) After the public hearing and after formally considering the Application, the County may approve, approve with conditions, or deny a Special Use Permit. Its decision shall be in writing and shall be supported by substantial evidence contained in a written record. The burden of proof for the grant of the permit shall always be upon the Applicant.
- D) If the County approves the Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, then the Applicant shall be notified of such approval in writing within ten (10) calendar days of the County's action, and the Special use Permit shall be issued within thirty (30) days after such approval. Except for necessary building permits, and subsequent Certificates of Compliance, once a Special Use Permit has been granted hereunder, no additional permits or approvals from the County, such as site plan or zoning approvals, shall be required by the County for the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities covered by the Special Use Permit.
- E) If the County denies the Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, then the Applicant shall be notified of such denial in writing within ten (10) calendar days of the County's action.

### **Section 18. Recertification of a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.**

- A) Between twelve (12) months and six (6) months prior to the five (5) year anniversary date after the effect date of the Special Use Permit and all subsequent five year anniversaries of the effective date of the original Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, the holder of a Special Use Permit for such Wireless Telecommunication Facilities shall submit a signed written request to the County for recertification. In the written request for recertification, the holder of such Special Use Permit shall note the following:
  - 1) The name of the holder of the Special Use Permit for the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities;
  - 2) If applicable, the number or title of the Special Use Permit;
  - 3) The date of the original granting of the Special Use Permit;
  - 4) Whether the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities have been moved, re-located, rebuilt, or otherwise visibly modified since the issuance of the Special Use Permit and if

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so, in what manner;

- 5) If the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities have been moved, re-located, rebuilt, , or otherwise visibly modified, then whether the County approved such action, and under what terms and conditions, and whether those terms and conditions were complied with;
  - 6) That the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities are in compliance with the Special Use Permit and compliance with all applicable codes, Laws, rules and regulations;
  - 8) Recertification that the Tower and attachments both are designed and constructed and continue to meet all local, County, State and Federal structural requirements for loads, including wind and ice loads. Such recertification shall be by a Professional Engineer licensed in the State, the cost of which shall be borne by the Applicant.
- B) If, after such review, the County determines that the permitted Wireless Telecommunications Facilities are in compliance with the Special Use Permit and all applicable statutes, laws, local laws, ordinances, codes, rules and regulations, then the County issue a recertification of the Special Use Permit for the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, which may include any new provisions or conditions that are mutually agreed upon, or that are required by applicable statutes, laws, ordinances, codes, rules or regulations. If, after such review it is determined that the permitted Wireless Telecommunications Facilities are not in compliance with the Special Use Permit and all applicable statutes, laws, ordinances, codes, rules and regulations, then the County may refuse to issue a recertification Special Use Permit for the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, and in such event, such Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall not be used after the date that the Applicant receives written notice of the decision by the County until such time as the Facility is brought into compliance. Any decision requiring the cessation of use of the Facility or imposing a penalty shall be in writing and supported by substantial evidence contained in a written record and shall be promptly provided to the owner of the Facility.
- C) If the Applicant has submitted all of the information requested and required by this Ordinance, and if the review is not completed, as noted in subsection (B) of this section, prior to the five (5) year anniversary date of the Special Use Permit, or subsequent five year anniversaries, then the Applicant for the permitted Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall receive an extension of the Special Use Permit for up to six (6) months, in order for the completion of the review.
- D) If the holder of a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities does not submit a request for recertification of such Special Use Permit within the timeframe noted in subsection (A) of this section, then such Special Use Permit and any authorizations granted thereunder shall cease to exist on the date of the fifth anniversary of the original granting of the Special Use Permit, or subsequent five year anniversaries, unless the holder of the Special Use Permit adequately demonstrates that extenuating circumstances prevented a timely recertification request. If the County agrees that there were legitimately extenuating circumstances, then the holder of the Special Use Permit may submit a late recertification request or Application for a new Special Use Permit.

## **Section 19. Extent and Parameters of Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.**

The extent and parameters of a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall be as follows:

- 1) such Special Use Permit shall be non-exclusive:

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- 2) such Special Use Permit shall not be assigned, transferred or conveyed without the express prior written notification to the County.
- 3) such Special Use Permit may, following a hearing upon due prior notice to the Applicant, be revoked, canceled, or terminated for a violation of the conditions and provisions of the Special Use Permit, or for a material violation of this Ordinance after prior written notice to the holder of the Special Use Permit.

## **Section 20. Application Fee.**

- A) At the time that a person submits an Application for a Special Use Permit for a new Tower, such person shall pay a non-refundable application fee of \$5,000.00 to the County. If the Application is for a Special Use Permit for co-locating on an existing Tower or other suitable structure, where no increase in height of the Tower or structure is required, the non-refundable fee shall be \$2,000.00.
- B) No Application fee is required in order to rectify a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, unless there has been a visible modification of the Wireless Telecommunications Facility since the date of the issuance of the existing Special Use Permit for which the conditions of the Special Use Permit have not previously been modified. In the case of any modification, the fees provided in Subsection (A) shall apply.

## **Section 21. Performance Security.**

The Applicant and the owner of record of any proposed Wireless Telecommunications Facilities property site shall, at its cost and expense, be jointly required to execute and file with the County a bond, or other form of security acceptable to the County as to type of security and the form and manner of execution, in an amount of at least \$75,000.00 and with such sureties as are deemed sufficient by the County to assure the faithful performance of the terms and conditions of this Ordinance and conditions of any Special Use Permit issued pursuant to this Ordinance. The full amount of the bond or security shall remain in full force and effect throughout the term of the Special Use Permit and/or until any necessary site restoration is completed to restore the site to a condition comparable to that which existed prior to the issuance of the original Special Use Permit.

## **Section 22. Reservation of Authority to Inspect Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.**

In order to verify that the holder of a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities and any and all lessees, renters, and/or licensees of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, place and construct such facilities, including Towers and Antennas, in accordance with all applicable technical, safety, fire, building, and zoning codes, Laws, ordinances and regulations and other applicable requirements, the County may inspect all facets of said permit holder's, renter's, lessee's or licensee's placement, construction, modification and maintenance of such facilities, including, but not limited to, Towers, Antennas and buildings or other structures constructed or located on the permitted site.

## **Section 23. Annual NIER Certification.**

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The holder of the Special Use Permit shall, annually, certify to the County that NIER levels at the site are within the threshold levels adopted by the FCC.

## Section 24. Liability Insurance.

- A) A holder of a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall secure and at all times maintain public liability insurance for personal injuries, death and property damage, and umbrella insurance coverage, for the duration of the Special Use Permit in amounts as set forth below
  - 1) Commercial General Liability covering personal injuries, death and property damage: \$1,000,000 per occurrence/\$2,000,000 aggregate:
  - 2) Automobile Coverage: \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence/ \$2,000,000 aggregate:
  - 3) Workers Compensation and Disability: Statutory amounts.
- B) The Commercial General liability insurance policy shall specifically include the County and its officers, Commissions, employees, committee members, attorneys, agents and consultants as additional named insureds.
- C) The insurance policies shall be issued by an agent or representative of an insurance company licensed to do business in the State and with a Best's rating of at least A.
- D) The insurance policies shall contain an endorsement obligating the insurance company to furnish the County with at least thirty-(30) days prior written notice in advance of the cancellation of the insurance.
- E) Renewal or replacement policies or certificates shall be delivered to the County at least fifteen (15) days before the expiration of the insurance that such policies are to renew or replace.
- F) Before construction of a permitted Wireless Telecommunications Facilities is initiated, but in no case later than fifteen (15) days after the grant of the Special Use Permit, the holder of the Special Use Permit shall deliver to the County a copy of each of the policies or certificates representing the insurance in the required amounts.

## Section 25. Indemnification.

- A) Any application for Wireless Telecommunication Facilities that is proposed for County property, pursuant to this Ordinance, shall contain a provision with respect to indemnification. Such provision shall require the applicant, to the extent permitted by the Law, to at all times defend, indemnify, protect, save, hold harmless, and exempt the County, and its officers, Commissions, employees, committee members, attorneys, agents, and consultants from any and all penalties, damages, costs, or charges arising out of any and all claims, suits, demands, causes of action, or award of damages, whether compensatory or punitive, or expenses arising therefrom, either at law or in equity, which might arise out of, or are caused by, the placement, construction, erection, modification, location, products performance, use, operation, maintenance, repair, installation, replacement, removal, or restoration of said Facility, excepting, however, any portion of such claims, suits, demands, causes of action or award of damages as may be



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attributable to the negligent or intentional acts or omissions of the County, or its servants or agents. With respect to the penalties, damages or charges referenced herein, reasonable attorneys' fees, consultants' fees, and expert witness fees are included in those costs that are recoverable by the County.

- B) Notwithstanding the requirements noted in subsection (A) of this section, an indemnification provision will not be required in those instances where the County itself applies for and secures a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.

### **Section 26. Fines.**

- A) In the event of a violation of this Ordinance or any Special Use Permit issued pursuant to this Ordinance, the County may impose and collect, and the holder of the Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall pay to the County, fines or penalties as set forth below.
- B) The holder of a Special Use Permits failure to comply with provisions of this Ordinance shall constitute a violation of this Ordinance and shall subject the Applicant to the code enforcement provisions and procedures as provided in \_\_\_\_\_ of the County of Liberty Code of Ordinances and Section 166.0415, Florida Statutes. In addition, violation of this Ordinance may be punishable as provided in Section 162.22, Florida Statutes, as it may be amended.
- C) Notwithstanding anything in this Ordinance, the holder of the Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities may not use the payment of fines, liquidated damages or other penalties, to evade or avoid compliance with this Ordinance or any section of this Ordinance. An attempt to do so shall subject the holder of the Special Use Permit to termination and revocation of the Special Use Permit. The County may also seek injunctive relief to prevent the continued violation of this Ordinance, without limiting other remedies available to the County.

### **Section 27. Default and/or Revocation.**

If Wireless Telecommunications Facilities are repaired, rebuilt, placed, moved, re-located, modified or maintained in a way that is inconsistent or not in compliance with the provisions of this Ordinance or of the Special Use Permit, then the County shall notify the holder of the Special Use Permit in writing of such violation. Such notice shall specify the nature of the violation or non-compliance and shall be in accordance with the procedure outlined in Chapter 162.06, Florida Statutes.

### **Section 28. Removal of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.**

- A) Under the following circumstances, the County may determine that the health, safety, and welfare interests of the County warrant and require the removal of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.
- 1) Wireless Telecommunications Facilities with a permit have been abandoned (i.e. not used as Wireless Telecommunications Facilities) for a period exceeding ninety consecutive (90) days or a total of one hundred-eighty (180) days in any three hundred-sixty five (365) day period, except for periods caused by force majeure or Acts of God, in which case, repair or removal shall commence within 90 days;
  - 2) Permitted Wireless Telecommunications Facilities fall into such a state of disrepair that it

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creates a health or safety hazard;

- 3) Wireless Telecommunications Facilities have been located, constructed, or modified without first obtaining, or in a manner not authorized by, the required Special Use Permit, or any other necessary authorization.
  - B) If the County makes such a determination as noted in subsection (A) of this section, then the County shall notify the holder of the Special Use Permit for the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities within forty-eight (48) hours that said Wireless Telecommunications Facilities are to be removed. the County may approve an interim temporary use agreement/permit, such as to enable the sale of the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.
  - C) The holder of the Special use Permit, or its successors or assigns, shall dismantle and remove such Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, and all associated structures and facilities, from the site and restore the site to as close to its original condition as is possible, such restoration being limited only by physical or commercial impracticability, within ninety (90) days of receipt of written notice from the County. However, if the owner of the property upon which the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities are located wishes to retain any access roadway to the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, the owner may do so with the approval of the County.
  - D) If Wireless Telecommunications Facilities are not removed or substantial progress has not been made to remove the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities within ninety (90) days after the permit holder has received notice, then the County may order officials or representatives of the County to remove the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities at the sole expense of the owner or Special Use Permit holder.
  - A) E)
- If, the County removes, or causes to be removed, Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, and the owner of the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities does not claim and remove it from the site to a lawful location within ten (10) days, then the County may take steps to declare the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities abandoned, and sell them and their components.
- F) Notwithstanding anything in this Section to the contrary, the County may approve a temporary use permit/agreement for the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, for no more ninety (90) days, during which time a suitable plan for removal, conversion, or re-location of the affected Wireless Telecommunications Facilities shall be developed by the holder of the Special Use Permit, subject to the approval of the County, and an agreement to such plan shall be executed by the holder of the Special Use Permit and the County. If such a plan is not developed, approved and executed within the ninety (90) day time period, then the County may take possession of and dispose of the affected Wireless Telecommunications Facilities in the manner provided in this Section.

### **Section 29. Relief.**

Any Applicant desiring relief, waiver or exemption from any aspect or requirement of this Ordinance may request such at the pre-Application meeting, provided that the relief or exemption is contained in the original Application for either a Special Use Permit, or in the case of an existing or previously granted Special Use Permit a request for modification of its Tower and/or facilities. Such relief may be temporary or permanent, partial or complete. However, the burden of proving the need for the requested relief, waiver or exemption is solely on the Applicant to prove. The Applicant shall bear all costs of the County

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in considering the request and the relief, waiver or exemption. No such relief or exemption shall be approved unless the Applicant demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that, if granted the relief, waiver or exemption will have no significant affect on the health, safety and welfare of the County, its residents and other service providers.

### **Section 30. Periodic Regulatory Review by the County.**

- A) The County may at any time conduct a review and examination of this entire Ordinance.
- B) If after such a periodic review and examination of this Ordinance, the County determines that one or more provisions of this Ordinance should be amended, repealed, revised, clarified, or deleted, then the County may take whatever measures are necessary in accordance with applicable Law in order to accomplish the same. It is noted that where warranted, and in the best interests of the County, the County may repeal this entire Ordinance at any time.
- C) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (A) and (B) of this Section, the County may at any time and in any manner (to the extent permitted by Federal, State, or local law), amend, add, repeal, and/or delete one or more provisions of this Ordinance.

### **Section 31. Adherence to State and/or Federal Rules and Regulations.**

- A) To the extent that the holder of a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities has not received relief, or is otherwise exempt, from appropriate State and/or Federal agency rules or regulations, then the holder of such a Special Use Permit shall adhere to, and comply with, all applicable rules, regulations, standards, and provisions of any State or Federal agency, including, but not limited to, the FAA and the FCC. Specifically included in this requirement are any rules and regulations regarding height, lighting, security, electrical and RF emission standards.
- B) To the extent that applicable rules, regulations, standards, and provisions of any State or Federal agency, including but not limited to, the FAA and the FCC, and specifically including any rules and regulations regarding height, lighting, and security are changed and/or are modified during the duration of a Special Use Permit for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities, then the holder of such a Special Use Permit shall conform the permitted Wireless Telecommunications Facilities to the applicable changed and/or modified rule, regulation, standard, or provision within a maximum of twenty-four (24) months of the effective date of the applicable changed and/or modified rule, regulation, standard, or provision, or sooner as may be required by the issuing entity.

### **Section 32. Conflict with Other Laws.**

Where this Ordinance differs or conflicts with other Laws, rules and regulations, unless the right to do so is preempted or prohibited by the County, State or federal government, this Ordinance shall apply.

### **Section 33. Effective Date.**

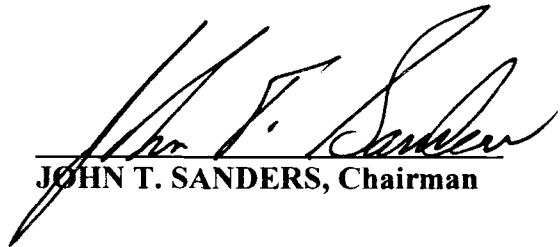
This Ordinance shall be effective immediately upon passage, pursuant to applicable legal and procedural requirements.

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**Section 34. Authority.**

This Local Ordinance is enacted pursuant to applicable authority granted by the State and federal government.

DULY ENACTED THIS 24<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2003, by the Liberty County Board of County Commissioners of Liberty County, Florida.

  
JOHN T. SANDERS, Chairman

ATTESTED BY:

  
ROBERT HILL, Clerk of Court

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