



WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: August 19, 2025

DATE: July 16, 2025

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Aaron Smith, Division Director Operations
Community Services Dept., 328-2172, aasmith@washoecounty.gov

THROUGH: Eric Crump, Operations Division Director
Community Services Dept, 328-3625, ecrump@washoecounty.gov

SUBJECT: Recommendation to approve a Grant of Access and Utility Easement between Washoe County (grantor) and New Cingular Wireless PCS, Limited Liability Company (grantee), a public utility, to expire on December 31, 2050 unless otherwise extended, totaling ±48,865 square feet on Washoe County's Galena Terrace Open Space, Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 144-010-22 [for the appraised value of \$4,243.00] in support of enhancing regional cellular coverage. If approved, this easement will allow fiber optic infrastructure to service an AT&T cellular monopole facility planned at a landlocked Truckee Meadows Water Authority water tank parcel, APN 144-010-23. (Commission District 2.) FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

SUMMARY

New Cingular Wireless requires a non-exclusive access and utility easement (Public Utility Easement - PUE) impacting the Washoe County Open Space parcel APN 144-010-22, for the implementation of a proposed AT&T 58-foot monopole telecom facility and associated equipment that will be located on the adjacent Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) owned parcel (APN 144-010-23). Alignment of the facilities will fall within an existing easement held by TMWA. An appraisal of the requested easement determined the value of the PUE at \$4,243. In order to implement these facilities, the applicant needs permanent access across the Washoe County Open Space parcel and to underground utilities including conduit for power and fiber to the adjacent TMWA owned parcel. This project will provide service in the existing coverage gap to residents and increase the network capacity to the surrounding community and Galena High School during high-capacity events. All utilities are to be located within the existing gravel road.

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Economic Impacts - Meet the Needs of Our Growing Community

PREVIOUS ACTION

July 26, 2023— The Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission recommended that the Board of County Commissioners approve the proposed temporary construction easement and a permanent, non-exclusive access and public utility easement (PUE), for the appraised value of \$4,880.00. Comments were made by commissioners

AGENDA ITEM # _____

that the preference of the public utility easement follow the alignment of the existing access road.

BACKGROUND

Washoe County, through its Community Services Department, received a parkland easement request from New Cingular Wireless for its Mount Rose Wedge Cell Tower project that proposes to construct an AT&T 58-foot tall monopole telecom facility with associated equipment on TMWA owned parcel APN 144-010-23. The TMWA parcel is landlocked by ± 385.979 acres of Washoe County Open Space property APN 144-010-22, commonly known as Galena Terrace Open Space, located south of Mount Rose Highway and north of interstate 580. The only accessible route to the proposed future monopole site is by the existing gravel road across Washoe Open Space that connects from a TMWA owned parcel (APN 144-010-23) off Great Falls Loop within the Galena Terrace 9 subdivision.

New Cingular Wireless in coordination with TMWA is seeking an easement to construct a 58-foot monopole on the TMWA owned parcel adjacent to the existing water tank. The TMWA parcel is a preferred site for New Cingular Wireless because the hillside provides concealment for the monopole facilities equipment area while also providing elevation to increase coverage to the surrounding community and ability to co-locate on a parcel with existing utility infrastructure.

For New Cingular Wireless to submit a Special Use Permit application for review and permitting by the Washoe County Building and Planning Division, the applicant must first obtain a property owner affidavit for the Washoe County Open Space parcel APN 144-010-22 from the Board of County Commissioners. In order to begin this project, New Cingular Wireless is requesting a permanent non-exclusive access and utility easement (PUE) totaling $\pm 48,865$ square feet over the Washoe County Open Space parcel APN 144-010-22. The Open Space parcel landlocks the TMWA parcel and provides the only accessible route to the TMWA property where the proposed future monopole will be located. Washoe County recorded document number 2597346 describes the TMWA easement on the which New Cingular Wireless will construct the facility.

While no related previous actions have occurred between Washoe County and New Cingular Wireless or TMWA on the Washoe County Open Space parcel APN 144-101-22, TMWA currently operates an existing water tank located on APN 144-010-23. TMWA holds an existing access and utility easement (PUE) with Washoe County that provides non-exclusive access across the existing gravel road on the Washoe County Open Space parcel to access water tank facilities.

The Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission recommended that the Board of County Commissioners approve the proposed temporary construction easement and a permanent, non-exclusive access and public utility easement (PUE), for the appraised value of \$4,880.00. Comments were made by commissioners that the preference of the public utility easement follow the alignment of the existing access road. These comments were incorporated into the proposed easement.

New Cingular Wireless and AT&T are Telecommunications Public Utilities, as defined in NRS 704.020(1)(b), and is exempt from appraisal requirements under NRS 244.281, but as a

matter of best practice an appraisal was completed on May 27, 2023 by Granite Appraisal Group, which determined an appraised value of \$4,886.00. The value was incorrectly transposed on the staff report, resulting in a vote on a value of \$4,880.00. After delays to the project planning, the appraisal value expired. A new appraisal was completed on February 10, 2025 by Granite Appraisal Group, reporting an appraised value of \$4,243.00.

FISCAL IMPACT

Should the easements be approved, proceeds of \$4,243.00 will be deposited into the Parks Capital Fund (404), Parks District 1C (900130), County Property Sales (485191).

Purchase of the easements, construction, revegetation maintenance, and permitting associated with the project would be the responsibility of New Cingular Wireless.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners approve a Grant of Access and Utility Easement between Washoe County (grantor) and New Cingular Wireless PCS, Limited Liability Company (grantee), a public utility, to expire on December 31, 2050 unless otherwise extended, totaling $\pm 48,865$ square feet on Washoe County's Galena Terrace Open Space, Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 144-010-22 [for the appraised value of \$4,243.00] in support of enhancing regional cellular coverage. If approved, this easement will allow fiber optic infrastructure to service an AT&T cellular monopole facility planned at a landlocked Truckee Meadows Water Authority water tank parcel, APN 144-010-23.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to approve a Grant of Access and Utility Easement between Washoe County (grantor) and New Cingular Wireless PCS, Limited Liability Company (grantee), a public utility, to expire on December 31, 2050 unless otherwise extended, totaling $\pm 48,865$ square feet on Washoe County's Galena Terrace Open Space, Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 144-010-22 [for the appraised value of \$4,243.00] in support of enhancing regional cellular coverage. If approved, this easement will allow fiber optic infrastructure to service an AT&T cellular monopole facility planned at a landlocked Truckee Meadows Water Authority water tank parcel, APN 144-010-23."