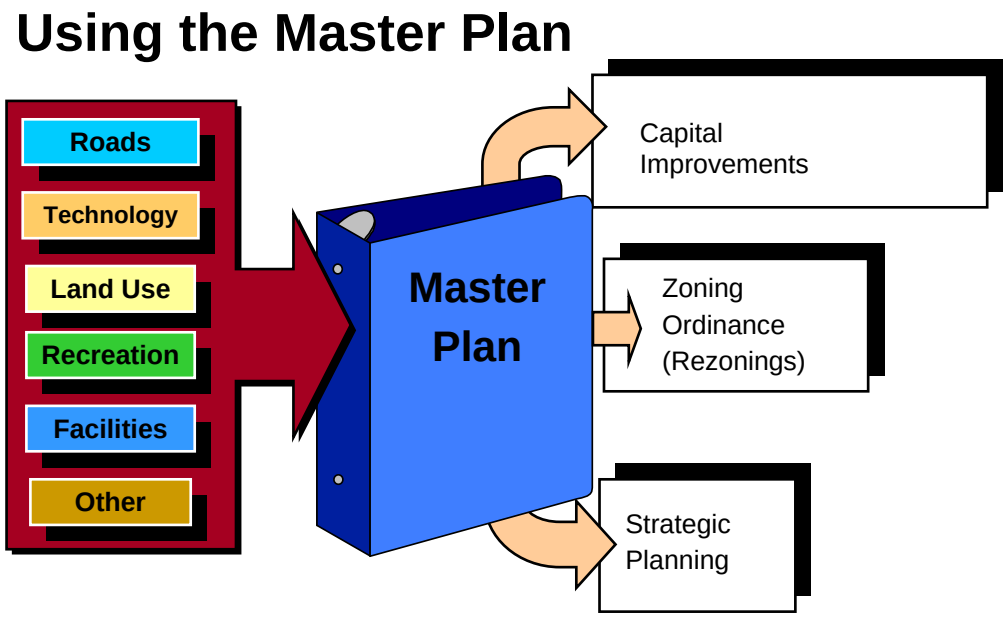
THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN

Planning is a process that involves the conscious choice of policy relating to land use, growth, and the physical development of the community. A Community Master Plan is the officially adopted document that sets forth a long-range statement of general goals and policies aimed at the unified and coordinated development of the community. The plan is intended to develop a balance of orderly change in a deliberate and controlled manner that permits controlled growth. It also attempts to coordinate public improvements and private development. The Plan serves as an aid in daily municipal decision-making and serves as an educational tool giving citizens, property owners, developers and adjacent communities a clear indication of the community's direction for the future.

Each community within Oakland County has its own individual Master Plan. Sometimes called a Comprehensive Plan or Growth Management Plan, the plan provides the statutory basis upon which local land use and zoning decisions are made.



TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

Digital technology and telecommunications have had and continue to have major effects on our society; transforming our work and personal lives and the way we conduct the affairs of business and government. If our communities are to maintain and enhance their quality of life and economic health, our plans for the future must account for the current and future impacts of technology and a technology based economy. There are a

number economic development initiatives and programs in Oakland County relating to technology and emerging business sectors. Local governments could more effectively take advantage of these programs and initiatives if their community planning documents have a well defined focus on this topic.

> *If our communities are to maintain and enhance their quality of life and economic health, our plans for the future must account for the current*

RECOMMENDED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

The goal, objectives and strategies provided below are not restricted to dealing narrowly with technology and telecommunications, but deal more broadly with how a community can prepare itself to thrive in a society and economy driven by technology and telecommunications. The following goals, objectives and strategies may be used as model language for incorporation in a Master Plan (in whole or in part) or as a checklist to compare against current Plans to see if these issues are being adequately addressed by those documents. This approach to technology preparedness is taken instead of specific policies related to specific technologies because Community Master Plans must give the technology issue the priority it deserves while remaining flexible enough to remain relevant in the face of the rapid pace of change which is common to this field.

In terms relevant to community planning, goals, objectives and strategies give the Master Plan the philosophical guidance it needs to address the present issues and advance plans into the future. They are defined as follows:

Goals are broad statements that provide an overall focus for future planning decisions.

Objectives are more specific planning statements used to qualify the goals and provide more detailed direction for planning efforts.

Strategies are specific, action-oriented statements that would help achieve the goals and objectives. Such statements provide justification/direction to revise or draft new ordinances or regulations, finance specific capital improvements, and staff programs/activities.

Example Implementation Actions

Some example implementation actions are provided as bullets under each strategy; this is not an exhaustive list but represents a sample of approaches a community might consider.

In some cases, there may be similar objectives or strategies repeated in different areas of the following section. The repetition is an indication of the importance of the subject and the fact that the issue addressed is multi-faceted and needs to be approached from a variety of directions for best results.

Technology Development Goal

To enhance the ability of the community to attract and retain technology based businesses, providing the services needed to make the community a desirable place to work and do business.

Objective 1: Utilities & Infrastructure

Provide adequate, high quality infrastructure to support the present and future needs of existing and new businesses, particularly businesses involved in technology.

Strategy 1: Private Utilities & Infrastructure

Work with the utility companies (electrical and telecommunications) to ensure that areas planned for light industrial, research and development, and office uses have adequate utility capacity to accommodate the needs of the technology businesses that may locate within them.

- Seek information from private utilities for mapping existing capacity and demand and future demand.
- Recruit representatives of private utilities to take part in the preparation of a strategic plan for telecommunications for the community in an advisory role.
- Use the strategic plan for telecommunications to encourage

private utilities to extend/improve their infrastructure to serve key areas slated for development under the Master Plan.

Strategy 2: Public Utilities & Infrastructure

Ensure that public utility systems and infrastructure (sewer, water and transportation) are developed with sufficient capacity in areas planned for light industrial, research and development, and office uses, particularly to accommodate the needs of the technology businesses that may locate within these areas. Needed utilities should be provided in such a way that they do not degrade other features that make the community attractive.

- Seek information from public utilities for mapping existing capacity and demand and future demand.
- Recruit representatives of public utilities to take part in the preparation of community master plan in an advisory role, addressing issues of land use and system capacity/expansion.
- Develop a Road R.O.W. Master Plan for the community (if municipality has statutory control of local roads) or participate in the development of the County Road R.O.W. Master Plan (if municipality does not have statutory control of local roads).
- Develop an administrative CSS (Context Sensitive Solutions) review process for public utility and infrastructure projects to ensure that the various potential impacts of such projects are assessed and addressed.

Objective 2: Public Services

Provide flexible, rapid, and high quality public services that allow businesses to operate efficiently in a relatively predictable environment.

Strategy 1: Administrative Process

Provide a clear set of procedures for managing permits and other service requests from businesses. This should include establishing time frames for processing and action, and clear lines of responsibility and communication.

- Assign a liaison to each business seeking permits or other services from a municipality. That person would be the point of contact between that business and the municipality and would

manage all interactions with them.
- Create an internet-based system to act as a portal for municipal services; handling the applications, communication and tracking functions on-line.

Strategy 2: Professional Interaction

Establish a highly professional culture and system of operation with regard to the provision of public services. Business representatives appreciate and better understand being able to operate within a business-like, professional relationship with representatives of the community.

- Provide customer service training to municipal employees.
- Make customer service and satisfaction an important part of the performance evaluations of municipal employees.

Strategy 3: Regulatory Environment

Provide a reasonable and predictable regulatory environment. Where possible, some flexibility should be built into regulations to deal with some cases with unusual circumstances or to account for new solutions to regulatory issues. This could be done by use of performance criteria or by providing discretion in application of specific requirements.

- Incorporate performance criteria into the Zoning Ordinance where the intent is to regulate the outcome of a given regulatory issue instead of the approach or solution.
- Regulations should not treat all telecommunications infrastructure the same. Regulations should be designed to address telecommunications infrastructure specifically based on its nature (i.e. towers, overhead, ground mounted or buried) and its corresponding impact on the physical/visual environment.
- Incorporate some Planning Commission discretion into the Zoning Ordinance standards utilized in the site plan review process to permit the design to be better fit the site and type of development.

Strategy 4: Government Operations

Provide internet-based access to information/documents, communication with officials and staff, and the range of public services typically requested via forms or applications.

- Create a website that provides easy and comprehensive access to the information and services that the public and business would typically have to come to the municipal building for.
- Structure the municipal email system so that it can be effectively used for communications with the public and business in addition to internal communications.

Strategy 5: Strategic Planning

Create a strategic plan focusing specifically on telecommunications issues within the community

- See the section at the end of this chapter for details.

Objective 3: Workforce

Develop a workforce with the technical skills and knowledge required by businesses that work in and with technology, preparing them to hold quality jobs in current and future growth industries. Workforce here refers to the general body of employable people living and working within the County.

Strategy 1: Education

Work with public and private organizations to promote and provide education opportunities to develop needed technological skills and knowledge in the community's existing and future workforce.

- Work with the local school district to support, promote, and expand adult/continuing/community education programs. Focus on targeting them to developing the technological skills and knowledge that are or will be in demand by tech and other growth industries.
- Explore involvement in the Oakland Community College Business and Community Alliance as a way to lend support to the educational, professional and workforce development programs provided by this institution.

Strategy 2: Retention

Work to retain the skilled workforce already present in the community by attracting businesses that provide them with good job opportunities and by creating a quality of life in the community that is attractive to them.

The action items incorporated throughout the Master Plan section are all important to workforce retention. The key issue is to understand that, as with recruitment, the community is competing with other communities for these workers.

- Pursue a program of community promotion that targets current residents. The program should emphasize the positive aspects of the community such as unique assets and character, available services, quality schools, etc.

Strategy 3: Recruitment

Work to recruit a diverse, technologically capable workforce by attracting businesses that provide them with good job opportunities and by creating a quality of life in the community that is attractive to a diverse workforce.

- Pursue a program of community promotion that targets potential residents. The program should emphasize the positive aspects of the community such as unique assets and character, available services, quality schools, etc.
- Partner with firms in the area to promote job opportunities side by side with the community itself at job fares and colleges.

Objective 4: Incentives

Develop a range of incentives to encourage new businesses, particularly those involved in technology, to locate or expand operations within the community.

Strategy 1: Local Incentive Programs

Develop local incentive programs to encourage new businesses, particularly those involved in technology, to locate or expand operations within the community.

- Establish a CIA (Corridor Improvement Authority), DDA (Downtown Development Authority), or LDFA (Local Development Financing Act Authority) to provide funding for improvements to promote growth, development or redevelopment in key areas of the community.
- Create a program waiving or reducing municipal fees associated with development and providing access to a fast-track review and approval process for technology businesses.

Strategy 2: Technical and Coordination Assistance

Provide technical assistance to businesses considering expansion or location within the community.

- Provide assistance with site selection, maintaining a database of undeveloped or underutilized land planned or zoned for non-residential uses.
- Provide assistance with the development process, acting as a clearing house of information on all government agencies and that have regulatory influence over the process and the available incentive programs offered by other entities.
- Provide assistance to businesses considering expansion or location within the community by acting as an advocate and liaison for them when dealing with the various government agencies that have regulatory influence over the potential development and the various incentive programs offered by other entities that may be relevant to the project.

Objective 5: Quality of Life

Enhance the quality of life of the community, providing the housing, attractions, infrastructure and services needed to make the community a desirable place to live, work and play.

Strategy 1: Residential Character

Enhance the residential character of the community, providing a mix of high quality housing options and the infrastructure and services needed to make the community a desirable place to live.

- Review and revise the land use plan and zoning map to provide space for housing types desired and affordable to the workforce population the community is trying to attract and retain.
- Create a program providing loan or grant assistance to lower income homeowners to assist with needed maintenance and improvements to their homes.
- Establish a program where building department employees provide advice and technical assistance to homeowners with regard to needed maintenance and improvements to their homes.
- Partner with local home improvement or hardware stores and/or

community education programs to provide/promote home maintenance and improvement classes targeted to the local residents.

- Revise the zoning ordinance to include requirements for sidewalks, street trees, and lighting for new developments and create programs to install these in older areas of the community.
- Revise the zoning ordinance to include provisions for open space, park areas and natural feature preservation in new residential development. These provisions could be accompanied by clustering and density bonus options to keep the housing more affordable.

Strategy 2: Cultural/Social/Commercial Attractions

Provide sufficient cultural, social, and commercial attractions to attract and retain an educated populace within the community.

- Revise the community Zoning Ordinance to include arts and entertainment venues as permitted uses in some districts.
- Establish a local arts council to organize and promote arts events in the community.
- Prepare a community parks and open space plan that includes recreation programs, natural features, and safety paths.
- Establish a historic district in the community and/or work on having key historic structures placed on the National Registry of Historic Places.
- Partner with and promote formation of community groups to strengthen the social fabric of the community, provide social services and organize community events.

Strategy 3: Utilities & Infrastructure

Provide high quality, aesthetic, and pedestrian friendly infrastructure (telecommunications, roads, sewer, water, & electricity) to support the residential, public and commercial areas of the community.

- Create a GIS database of community infrastructure including key information on the nature of the structure and its condition. Utilize the database to prioritize, schedule and monitor repairs and maintenance of municipal infrastructure.
- Incorporate infrastructure planning based on land use planning and economic development programs into the Capital

Improvement Program of the community, proactively responding to development pressures and opportunities.

- See the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) chapters found in this toolkit for more details.

Strategy 4: Public Services

Provide high quality public services, particularly in terms of law enforcement, ordinance enforcement and maintenance, to ensure a positive perception of the residential, public and commercial areas of the community.

- Review local nuisance and anti-blight ordinances to ensure that all relevant issues are addressed and that the ordinances are enforceable.
- Place a high priority on ordinance enforcement, assigning specific staff the responsibility for carrying out the increased enforcement policy. Provide notice to the property owners in the community in advance that enforcement will be stepped up and provide materials clarifying the requirements of the relevant ordinances. This provides fair warning and a chance to redress any issues prior to a visit from the ordinance enforcement officer.
- Promotional materials for the community should include information about the high quality of public safety services provided.

Objective 6: Technology Ready Developments and Buildings

Increase the community's stock of technology ready sites and buildings, these sites should be designed with sufficient flexibility to allow easy integration of new telecommunications and technological advancements in the future. These sites and buildings should more easily accommodate a range of users and should be able to be adapted for new users with less effort, thus reducing the creation of potential brownfields in the future resulting from functional obsolescence.

Strategy 1: Promote the integration of a minimum level of telecommunications/technology readiness into new developments.

- Adopt minimum regulations/standards for telecommunications/ technology readiness for new site development (see the Development Regulations/Standards section of this Toolkit).
- Adopt minimum regulations/standards for telecommunications/

technology readiness for new buildings (see the Development Regulations/Standards section of this Toolkit).

Strategy 2: Promote the integration of a minimum level of telecommunications/ technology readiness into projects involving the redevelopment or adaptive reuse of an existing site or building.

- Adopt minimum regulations/standards for telecommunications/ technology readiness for the adaptive reuse of sites (see the Development/Regulations Standards section of this Toolkit).
- Adopt minimum regulations/standards for telecommunications/ technology readiness for the adaptive reuse of buildings (see the Development/Regulations Standards section of this Toolkit).

RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

The Future Land Use Plan establishes land use categories and illustrates the location of proposed land uses within the community. The Plan presents an idealized view of future growth patterns in the community, but it must also provide practical guidance to local decision makers regarding present issues. It is intended to be a working document which will provide for orderly development, maintaining the desired character and promoting the health of the community.

In order to accommodate the growth of technology and telecommunications in our society and economy, communities must make their land use planning more consistent with the needs of technology based businesses. In order to integrate this economic sector into the Future Land Use Plan, a community must understand how these businesses select where they will locate. In terms of land use patterns, four main factors are generally important:

Scale of Business - Small/Medium or Large

The size of a business has a great deal to do with where it can locate, large tech firms tend to locate in campus settings in suburban or rural locales outside of cities that can provide large pieces of land.

Type of Site Arrangement - Individual Building or Campus or Office/R&D/Light Industrial Park

The organization of a business and the nature of its corporate culture can drive whether it selects a single building or campus configuration. Size is also a primary determinant of this choice. For many technology firms, the isolated location, industrial architecture and minimal amenities of a traditional industrial park are not attractive. Desirable technology campus locations tend to incorporate mixed uses, contain natural features and

other site amenities and tend to be less isolated.

Desired Setting - Urban or Rural

While urban settings are often desired by technology businesses, these areas cannot always provide the amount of space required by larger firms. In non-urban settings, the firms prefer to maintain reasonable proximity to dining, shopping and services or to integrate these uses into their facility for convenience. In both settings, technology businesses prefer either nearby off-site or on-site mixed use to meet the needs of the staff.

Surrounding Land Uses - Mixed Uses or Natural Features or Similar Uses

In the best of all possible worlds, a technology business seeking a site would get all three of the above uses nearby; mixed uses to provide for a dynamic environment with access to services, goods and housing, natural features to provide an attractive setting for the workplace and other technology businesses in the vicinity to provide that synergy that comes from having businesses in related industries in close proximity.

These factors tend to be linked, although the relationship is not absolute. For example, small/medium tech businesses in an urban setting will usually be sited in an individual building integrated into the urban fabric (it may be one of several tenants in that building). Alternatively, the same business in a rural setting might be located as one tenant in a multi-tenant Office/Research Park with other technology businesses. Given the diversity of technology/telecommunications businesses, the primary take home lesson with regard to attracting them is to ensure that the Future Land Use Plan does not encourage the creation of regulations that create excessive barriers to them, particularly at the small/medium scale.

Recommended Modifications to Common Land Use Categories

These businesses can be compatible with many other land uses, depending on their scale and specific activities. Land use categories should be defined in such away as to define the permissible types of activities and potential impacts on adjacent uses. Allowing technology based businesses in many districts, subject to performance standards to ensure they do not create an unreasonable disruption, could be a reasonable approach.

Residential Use Categories: The home is a ready made incubator for small technology based businesses. The use of modern telecommunications and computers make it possible for many small businesses to operate out of the home with no effect on residential character. Telecommuting is used by some and is considered a valuable option for offering some work-life flexibility to employees.

- Ensure that local regulation do not present unreasonable barriers to home occupations or small businesses operated from the home. A set

of reasonable performance standards limiting on-site storage, number of employees, shipping activity and customer visits should be considered. It is important to maintain the residential character of these areas.

Commercial Use Categories: Technology businesses that provide services or products to the general public or to a range of business clients may fit well into area in commercial use categories. Tech businesses may desire to locate in these areas due to attraction of commercial districts for shoppers and for access to the goods and services available in such areas.

- Each commercial use category should include a description of the type of commercial activity desired in those locations, technology based businesses that are consistent or complimentary to that activity should be included as acceptable uses under these categories.

Office and Research & Development Use Categories: Many technology/ telecommunications based businesses should naturally fit into these categories. As these use categories can and often are designated in closer relation to commercial and residential uses, they may be more attractive to technology firms.

- Office and Office/Research categories should permit telecom and technology based uses that do not involve large volume retail or wholesale sales, warehousing, or manufacturing and should not involve research activities of a more industrial nature.
- Appropriate uses would include such things as software development, technology support, consultants, and internet services.

Industrial/ Research & Development Use Categories: Technology/ telecommunications based businesses that involved in telecommunications infrastructure, wholesale sales, or manufacturing or that require larger facilities to house their operations may fit into these categories.

- These uses are typically isolated from residential and commercial uses to some degree, placing these land uses in closer relation to natural features or public, residential and commercial areas may make them more attractive to technology based businesses.
    - Care must be taken to ensure that performance standards and proper buffering are in place to ensure that the facilities do not have negative impacts on surrounding uses, but more subtle techniques other than great distance may be appropriate in some cases (i.e. landscaping, site layout, building design).
- If site isolation is necessary, technology users may be interested in having some commercial or service uses incorporated into the district for the use of their employees or maybe attracted to sites with prominent natural features that might have been avoided by more traditional industrial uses.

- Permitting some retail or services as accessory uses subject to conditions under the community's ordinance or as part of a PUD would allow a community to accommodate this sort of request where reasonable.

- Consider designating sites with natural features as part of this land use category if zoning provisions are in place that permit clustering and flexible site layout so that the features may be integrated into development as amenities.

Mixed Use Categories: As noted in the discussions of the other land use categories, technology businesses and their employees tend to be attracted to areas that offer a variety of goods, services and attractions (cultural and natural). This category is normally an attempt to permit the formation of the dynamic life and synergies of a successful downtown area.

- Create a sub-area plan for the area under consideration for a mixed use designation to ensure that there are guidelines in place to prevent the development of a dysfunctional group of uses and physical layout.
- Consider the creation of an overlay zoning district incorporating form based zoning concepts to provide a physical vision to guide development of the area.

New Land Use Categories

The land use categories used in community master plans tend to be broad and somewhat generalized, driven by goals for a vision of the community in the future. They do not lend themselves to excessive specialization. As such, narrowly defined technology/ telecommunications based land use categories would be of limited utility given the breadth of business types that involve substantial uses of technology in the current economy. It makes more sense to look at the categories now in common use and make sure that they are defined in such a way that they remain relevant and do not lead to the creation of unreasonable barriers to the creation, growth or location of technology based businesses in our communities.

FINAL THOUGHTS ON THE MASTER PLAN AND TECHNOLOGY

To remain relevant and effective, Community Master Plans must acknowledge and address the substantial changes that technology and telecommunications have made and continue to make our society. The Master Plan provides a forum where these trends can be integrated into the vision of the community, promoting traditional community values while providing for the healthy economy that is necessary to support a vital community.

Recommended Work Plan for the Development of a Telecommunications Strategic Plan.

The purpose of a Telecommunications Strategic Plan is to provide access to modern telecommunication technology while also providing a reasonable and aesthetic network

The future development of telecommunications infrastructure requires careful planning. As noted above in the Master Plan section, each municipality should consider developing a strategic plan specifically addressing the provision of telecommunications facilities within the community. The purpose of a Telecommunications Strategic Plan is to ensure that the community has good access to modern telecommunications technology while also providing a reasonable and aesthetic network of infrastructure. Specifically a plan should:

1. Establish well thought-out community location criteria based on the specific technologies under consideration.

2. Identify priority areas where future telecommunication infrastructure should be sited based on potential demand.

3. Provide guidelines for the appearance of such facilities, specifically addressing the four tiers of telecommunication infrastructure structures (underground, ground mounted, overhead, and towers).

The following is the general description of each of the sections of a Telecommunications Strategic Plan.

Section 1: Background Questions and Answers

Telecommunications is an evolving technology. This section provides basic answers to questions brought up at a typical public hearing. The general public is typically unaware of the many issues related to the development of telecommunications facilities. This section is intended to help in a community's education, and to make them more comfortable in their decision making. Answers to the following are addressed in this section of the plan.

1. What are telecommunication facilities?

2. How are telecommunication facilities regulated?

3. How is technology predicted to change in the next few years?

4. Where is demand for telecommunication service likely to located?

5. Will all of these telecommunication facilities be needed in the future?

Section 2 Regulatory Framework

The development of telecommunication facilities is carefully regulated at the Federal, State and local levels. At the federal level, the Telecommunication Act of 1996 was the first major revision to telecommunication laws since 1934. This Federal Act establishes policies that allow full and open competition in all sectors of the communication industry. This section of the plan discusses other aspects of the Act, other laws relevant to telecommunications facilities and other issues a local community should be aware of in regulation of telecommunications facilities.

The plan should also provide a brief overview of local regulatory tools contained within a local community's Zoning Ordinance.

Section 3 Planning Process

The development of a telecommunications plan should include the assistance of a consultant and the telecommunications industry. A special steering committee should be appointed to assist in development of the strategic plan. The process should outline the creation of a clear and attainable plan.

Section 4 Existing Conditions

In order to address future conditions a successful plan should begin with an inventory of the existing conditions. In the case of the Telecommunications Plan, existing conditions are related to the need for future infrastructure. The plan should include detailed data on the location and type of existing facilities, and potential high demand areas for modern telecommunications (particularly wireless): major roads (traffic counts), population density, planned employment centers and the height of structures for future installation of wireless antennas are good examples. A build-out analysis of the community should be prepared to aid in assessment of the location of future demand and priority locations for utility easements and ROW for future infrastructure.

Section 5 Goals and Objectives

Several goals and objectives related to the development of telecommunications facilities should be presented in the plan. The goals are the general statements that define the direction and character of future development. The objectives set forth the framework for action and form the basis upon which more detailed development decisions are made.

Section 6 Future Telecommunication Facilities Areas

Using the data gathered from the preceding five (5) sections, the plan should outline and suggest areas where antennas and other infrastructure could be expected and accepted. Preferred areas should be noted, as well as the recommendation that telecommunication infrastructure be aesthetically compatible with the surrounding area. Guidelines with regard to location and aesthetics should specifically address the four tiers of telecom infrastructure (buried, ground mounted, overhead and towers) individually given the different issues presented by each.