

**TEMPLETON AREA ADVISORY GROUP**  
**Addressing the Area's Land Use Planning Since 1994**  
**PO Box 1135 Templeton, CA 93465**  
**RECOMMENDATION REPORT TO THE COUNTY**

VIA Email

TO: SLO County Board of Supervisors  
SLO County Planning Department  
John Peschong, District 1 Supervisor  
Trevor Keith, SLO County Planning Director  
Eric Tolle, County Planner

From Scott Shirley, TAAG Board Chair

Date August 22, 2022

CC: TAAG Board members

**SUBJECT:** Report of TAAG Recommendation regarding SLO Countywide Emergency Services Co-Located Dispatch Facility at Highway 101/ North Main Street entrance to Templeton.

The Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the proposed facility can be viewed at [Co-Located-Dispatch-Facility-FEIR-Final-Report.pdf](#) The project site is a 5-acre County-owned parcel at 350-358 North Main Street, Templeton (Assessor Parcel Number 040-201-038) that is currently occupied by a County Sheriff Department building, and is essentially located at the Highway 101/Templeton Main Street interchange.

Visual Dominance of the 140-160 foot tall Communication Tower will result in significant and unavoidable adverse visual impacts to existing scenic vistas. Located within 250 feet of Highway 101, it will be the most dominate structure seen along the entire San Luis Obispo County Highway 101 corridor. According to Cal Trans, approximately 60,000 vehicles pass this project site daily. The proposed tower would be inconsistent with the SLO County visual resource goals because it would be out of character with the rural historic setting of Templeton and the general SLO North County area. Effects of the tower are considered significant and unable to be mitigated to a less than significant level. This would cause irreversible alteration to the scenic character of the site, resulting in an overall degradation of visual quality along the Highway 101 corridor through Templeton. The FEIR describes the proposed Tower as an Industrial-Utilitarian structure with approximately 45 or more antennas, microwave dishes, and other associated communications equipment.

Although SLO County is not required to abide by the Templeton Community Design Plan, this project is flagrantly antithetical to the Design Plan's stated purpose of protecting the town's character while accommodating growth with well-planned drainage

controls. The FEIR recognizes the undesirable aesthetics of the communication tower but emphasizes the critical need for this Emergency Services facility in the County. TAAG acknowledges the importance of finding a suitable location for the facility but still has concerns surrounding the proposed location in Templeton.

The FEIR responded to TAAG's October 5, 2021 comments on the Draft EIR opposing this project due to the visual impact of the Tower and concerns regarding light pollution, traffic, and drainage /potential flooding in the immediate project area:

- The FEIR declares that mitigation measures will be taken to address the concern of light pollution.
- In Appendix G, Attachment A, dated June 22, 2022 (Transportation Review Memo) in the FEIR, the estimated 150 net new daily trips is not expected to significantly impact Transportation or Safety, but the TAAG board questions the reality of such a claim, given the frequency of daily traffic congestion already experienced in Templeton.
- In response to "TAAG-16: *Considering the co-location of critical county-wide services, which include the sheriff office, the need for an alternate emergency access must be analyzed and mitigated, such as providing funding to improve the drainage facility on Main Street at Toad Creek to a 100-year storm water capacity (the highest Public Works standard) as part of this co-located dispatch facility project*", the FEIR states that the project would not contribute stormwater runoff to the Main Street crossing of Toad Creek. In response to "TAAG-17: *The South boundary of the project site is located in a portion of the Toad Creek watershed that experiences substantial periodic flooding events to adjacent properties to the south and east of the project site and across Main street. This project and the cumulative effect of the proposed and possible addition of development on this site greatly increase the potential for stormwater runoff and drainage into Templeton's Toad Creek. It is important that there be no runoff from this site because of the impact on Toad Creek flooding on offsite property damage in Templeton. Sufficient stormwater retention basins are required on the project to prevent any offsite runoff*", the FEIR ensures that the project will not significantly impact hydrology in the Toad Creek watershed...[because] stormwater would only be released from the site in the event of an extreme flooding event considered so unlikely that such scenarios were not studied in the Templeton Drainage and Flood Control Study (2014.)

However, the FEIR also included photographs of a flood event on December 19, 2010 after 4 inches of rain, which severely impacted the North Main Street exit from HWY101. The County method for assessing a theoretical 50-year storm event utilizes a rainfall rate of 0.58" per hour for 10 hours. These theoretical conditions may not best represent actual occurrences which have been evidenced as recently as 12 years ago.

SLO County's 2014 Drainage Study <https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/.../Templeton-Drainage-Study...> advises attention to the inadequate capacity of existing culverts and stormwater retention basin at Toad Creek. It would be unfortunate if flooding impeded access to the proposed Emergency Services dispatch facility, and so TAAG respectfully asks that if the Board of Supervisors wish to approve construction of this Emergency Services dispatch facility at the HWY101/ North Main street entrance to Templeton, they first acknowledge issues identified in this study.

TAAG voted 6-0 to recommend that this matter be moved from the consent agenda to a hearing at the August 23, 2022 Board of Supervisor's meeting, because the TAAG board and members of the community present at TAAG's August 18 meeting have continuing concerns with the proposed location. At this time, TAAG recommends denying approval of this project and asks for reconsideration of other feasible sites.