

Cover Letter

Conditional Use Application for Wireless Communication Facility

5425 Gharrett Street, Missoula, MT 59803

Date: October 28, 2025

To: City of Missoula Community Planning, Development & Innovation

From: Lighthouse Baptist Church

Re: Conditional Use Application for Ground-Supported Wireless Communication Facility

Purpose of Proposed Project

Lighthouse Baptist Church respectfully requests conditional use approval for the installation of a ground-supported wireless communication facility at 5425 Gharrett Avenue. This project will establish a federally licensed, low-power FM radio station to serve the local Missoula community with educational, religious, and public service programming.

The primary purposes of this facility include:

- **Community Broadcasting:** Providing local programming and content specifically tailored to the Missoula community
- **Emergency Communications:** Offering critical communication capabilities during emergencies when commercial power and wireless systems may be unavailable
- **Public Service:** Making the station available to City and emergency officials for rapid dissemination of emergency information to the public
- **Backup Power Capability:** Ensuring continuous operation during power outages through planned backup power systems

This facility operates under Federal Communications Commission (FCC) approval, file number 0000271565.

Existing Site Conditions

The subject property is located at 5425 Gharrett Avenue in the R8 (Residential 8) zoning district. Current site conditions include:

- **Property Ownership:** Lighthouse Baptist Church

- **Current Use:** Religious assembly facility with existing church building and parking areas
- **Zoning Context:** Surrounded by residential properties with mixed zoning designations (R8, County-R, and Unzoned areas)
- **Topography:** The property provides suitable terrain for radio transmission coverage
- **Access:** Existing vehicular access and parking infrastructure
- **Utilities:** Access to necessary utilities for facility operation

Brief Description of Proposal

The proposed project consists of installing an 80-foot self-supporting radio tower in the southwest corner of the church property. Key project elements include:

- **Tower Specifications:** Fully engineered, 80-foot-high self-supporting tower structure analyzed and approved by a Montana-licensed professional engineer
- **Strategic Placement:** Located at the maximum possible distance from existing residential homes while remaining on the applicant's property
- **Minimal Visual Impact:** Tower height designed to provide necessary coverage while minimizing visual impact on the surrounding neighborhood
- **Safety Features:** Vehicle barriers will be installed to prevent collisions with the tower structure. A small fence will be erected around the tower and the equipment shelter to prevent unauthorized access. In addition, the equipment shelter will be locked as an additional security measure.
- **No Aviation Requirements:** The proposed tower height does not require FAA lighting or aviation painting
- **Environmental Considerations:** The installation will protect existing natural features, with many viewpoints naturally screened by existing trees, landscaping, and structures

The facility will operate as a low-frequency, federally approved radio station with no noise generation and no impact on local traffic patterns. The tower's location in the southwest corner of the property ensures minimal impact on adjacent residential properties while providing the necessary coverage area for effective community broadcasting.

This project represents a valuable community asset that will enhance local communication capabilities while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding residential neighborhood character.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Lemmons, Pastor
Lighthouse Baptist Church
Phone: (406) 360-8428
Email: pastor@lbc-missoula.com

Frank Bodiker Jr.
Lighthouse Baptist Church
5425 Gharrett Avenue
Missoula, MT 59803
Phone: (907) 590-3338
Email: frankbodikerjr@gmail.com



COMMUNITY PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

435 RYMAN • MISSOULA, MT 59802 - 4297 • (406) 552-6630 • FAX: (406) 552-6053

CITY CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Submit a pdf of the completed application with all attachments by email to the City Zoning Desk at ZoningDesk@ci.missoula.mt.us
2. Once the application is deemed complete by CPDI, Development Services and the applicant has paid the Conditional Use fee the conditional use proposal will be scheduled for public hearing at City Council.
3. Name of Conditional Use Request:
4. Name(s) of Applicant:
Mailing Address:
Telephone Number:
Email Address:
5. Name(s) of all Owner of Record:
Mailing Address:
Telephone Number:
Email Address:
6. Name and Company of Representative:
Mailing Address:
Telephone Number:
Email Address:
8. If the applicant is someone other than the property owner, the owner must also sign the application in the space provided below.

Certification: I hereby certify that the foregoing information contained or accompanied in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Owner's Signature

Date

Representative's Signature

Date

July 17, 2022

B. SUBJECT PROPERTY INFORMATION

General location of subject property and address (if address has been assigned):

Legal Description - complete and unabbreviated:

Bearings & Distances Descriptions (if boundaries of proposed Conditional Use are not exactly the same as the boundaries of the property legally described above):

Geocode:

C. ZONING AND GROWTH POLICY INFORMATION

1. Complete the following table (where applicable, indicate Unzoned):

	Zoning	Current Land Use
Adjacent (North)		
Adjacent (South)		
Adjacent (East)		
Adjacent (West)		

2. What is the current zoning of the property (including intensity designator)?
3. What is the applicable City Growth Policy (comprehensive plan) and land use designation for the property?
4. What is the conditional use requested?

D. RESPONSES TO TITLE 20 ZONING ORDINANCE CONDITIONAL USE REVIEW CRITERIA

1. Describe how the proposal meets the following review criteria. Not all criteria will apply in every case. Only the applicable review criteria need to be met. Conditional use applications may be approved by the City Council only when they determine that the review criteria listed below, as applicable, have been satisfied. All of the applicable review criteria must be addressed in the City Council's findings of fact in support of their decision.
2. Uses that require conditional use approval may be approved by the City Council when they determine that the proposed use:
 - a. Is in the interest of the public convenience and will not have a significant adverse impact on the neighborhood or community
 - b. Will not impede the orderly development and improvement of the surrounding properties for uses permitted in the district;
 - c. Has operating characteristics that are compatible with the surrounding area in terms of hours of operation, outdoor lighting, noise, and traffic generation;

- d. Will not have a significant adverse impact on traffic safety or comfort, including all modes of transport (non-motorized and motorized), and will be functional and safe in terms of pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular access, parking, loading and servicing;
- e. Is in accordance with the Growth Policy and other relevant adopted plans;
- f. That the site properly addresses open space, light, and protection of natural features; and,
- g. That uses are compatible with adjacent properties and uses in terms of physical elements such as open space design, screening and buffering, any applicable use-specific standards and any other elements considered important by the City Council.

E. FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 1. In determining whether all applicable review criteria have been satisfied, the City Council may specifically consider agency and public testimony.

F. ATTACHMENTS

As separate attachments (8.5" x 11" or 11" x 17"), provide the following materials with the site clearly identified. Where appropriate, required information may be combined, as long as the information is clearly presented. Please check the box if the material is included in the packet. If the material is not included in the submittal packet, please note "N/A".

- A cover letter** describing the purpose of the proposed project, existing site conditions and a brief description of the proposal.
- A vicinity map** showing the subject property and the area within 300 feet of the subject property.
- A Zoning map** of the subject property and vicinity (showing the existing zoning district), extending at least 300 feet from the property boundaries.
- An aerial photo** of the subject property and vicinity extending at least 300 feet from the property boundaries.
- NA** **A Growth Policy/Comprehensive Plan map** of the subject property and vicinity extending at least 300 feet from the property boundaries for the applicable comprehensive plan, clearly showing the land use designation of the subject property and surrounding properties.
- The current plat** of the subject property.
- A site plan**, including existing and proposed landscaping, parking, streets/access, sidewalks, bike lanes and any improvements to the property.
- NA** **Building elevation drawings** of all proposed structures and/or photos of existing structures.
- NA** **Floor plans** of all existing buildings to remain and proposed buildings on the subject property.

Lighthouse Baptist Church
Conditional Use Permit
Responses

M. Gibbs..8/20/25

(D)(2)(a) The proposed broadcast station will provide programming for the local community, including most of Missoula. In the event of an emergency where power and wireless communication facilities may not be available, the applicant will make the station available to City and emergency officials to rapidly disseminate emergency information to the public. The applicant intends to equip the station with a backup power source to be used in these situations. The proposed facility is approved by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), file number 0000271565 (copy attached)

(D)(2)(b) The applicant proposes a fully engineered (structure analyzed and approved by a Montana-licensed professional engineer) 80-foot-high self-supporting tower that would be in the southwest corner of the applicant's property, which is sufficiently high to provide unimpeded coverage from the broadcast station yet low enough to have minimal visual impact on the surrounding neighborhood. It is located the greatest distance possible from existing homes while remaining on the applicant's property.

(D)(2)(c) The proposed tower is not required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to have lighting or aviation painting, generates no noise and would have no impact on traffic generation.

(D)(2)(d) The proposed tower will have no impact on traffic safety or comfort, located in a far corner of an existing parking lot, and will have barriers erected to prevent vehicles from collisions with it.

(D)(2)(e) The proposed tower will have no effect on plans adopted by the City for growth and other related objectives.

(D)(2)(f) The site will protect natural features, with many view points obstructed by trees, landscaping or structures

(D)(2)(g) The site will have no adverse impact on the community, having been located in a remote corner of the subject property.

Lighthouse Baptist Church

Conditional Use Permit

Responses Additional Clarification:

1. Future plans for gymnasium. Show this building location on site plan.

Please see sloped drawing.

2. Someone will need to intermittently check on the radio tower.

Church staff and members will check on the tower throughout the week, during service times, and during Monday – Friday business hours.

No additional traffic to and from the property than what is already present today.

3. Check with Engineer on specs for noise frequency – Noise Ordinance

100 watt transmitter: Equipment within the outdoor rack is nearly inaudible outside the rack, using low velocity cooling fans. The rack includes a 5000 BTU air conditioner that has a noise rating of 55dBA, lower than normal conversation. The frequencies and level of noise are identical to a small window mounted air conditioning unit.

4. Security lighting will need to meet Missoula Outdoor Lighting Ordinance

No additional lighting is proposed. Use of existing lighting from the parking lot is sufficient.

5. Include future buildings, transmitter, fencing on the site plan

Site plan has been updated with small transmitter shed next to the tower, fencing, and vehicle barriers.

6. Show anything you can in support of mitigating impacts – noise, height, lighting

The 100 watt transmitter and equipment will be fully enclosed as described in question 3. No additional lighting is needed or required by local or federal laws.

Tower was moved to southwest corner of the property to ensure minimal impact to our neighborhood.

7. Are there any future plans for a building or office associated with the tower?

No additional building or offices are plan or needed.

8. Will there be any employees associated with the tower?

No employees will be associated with the tower. It will be a ministry of LBC with volunteer work from our membership.

9. Does the proposed tower height require flashing beacon lights under FCC rules?

The tower does not require any lighting or painting following glideslope analysis using the FAA's TOWAIR determination software

10. Do you propose to install any lights, such as security or safety lighting, surrounding the tower?

No additional lighting is required or planned. Current parking lot lighting will be sufficient

11. Will the tower require fencing or an equipment enclosure?

A small fence will be erected around the tower and the equipment shelter to prevent unauthorized access. In addition, the equipment shelter will be locked as an additional security measure

12. How will the tower and associated equipment be secured?

Fence and equipment shelter will be locked.

13. Provide details on any proposed fencing or landscape buffering.

A chain link 6 foot tall fencing will be placed around the tower and equipment building. Minimal impact to landscaping.

14. Is there any noise associated with the tower?

Address with question 3, minimal noise impact, 55 dBA or less.

15. What is the broadcasting distance for the tower?

a. Why was this distance proposed?

The proposed facility will provide a reasonable signal over most of Missoula, with the FCC licensed coverage area approximately 3-1/2 miles in most directions.

b. Explain how the proposed height was selected based on engineering information.

The height of the tower was chosen as the best compromise between coverage and compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. The center of radiation ("COR") where the signal actually emits from the antenna is approximately 4 feet

below the tower top, and must clear any nearby obstructions (trees, buildings, etc.). In addition, point-to-point simulations have been run that calculate signal strength over all locations within the coverage area. These simulations (using the "Longley-Rice" point-to-point terrain-based algorithm) were run at various antenna heights to optimize the balance between coverage and height.

c. Provide a scaled elevation drawing of the tower.

See tower drawings with permit.

16. Provide information on any FCC lighting requirements or proposals for the tower.

Attached is the FCC construction permit for the station; any requirements for lighting or marking would be on this document, and there are no specific requirements in the "Obstruction Marking and Lighting Specifications" section, just a reference to Section 303(q) of the Communications Act which essentially states that the FCC can require marking and/or lighting.

17. Provide additional support and clarification for Conditional Use Criteria 2.a, 2.b, and 2.e.

2a: The current permitted tower is in the best location on our property to mitigate impact on our neighbors. Our current building blocks most of the view from Gharrett Street and it is out of direct view of our neighbors to the East. The previously permitted location would have been in direct view of our neighbors on the Eastside.

2b: The current permitted location does not impede the orderly development and improvement of the surrounding properties. Please reference drawings.

2e: The current permitted location does not contribute to any growth in the area. No additional traffic or construction of additional buildings.

18. Based upon permitting approval on 05/05/2025 and again on 06/11/2025, we proceeded with construction and currently have the foundations poured for the tower and equipment enclosure. We have already purchased and obtained all the required tower materials based upon the approved construction permits.

Permit Submission - Document ApprovedPermit No. 2024-MSS-COM-00153.01**Report Date: 06/10/2025****Description : 5/19/25 REVISION TO LOCATION OF TOWER ON PROPERTY****Site Address : 5425 GHARRETT AVE, MISSOULA, MT, 59803****Type : Building Revision****Document Filename : 2024-MSS-COM-001153.01 INITIAL PLAN.pdf**Reviewer Contact Information:

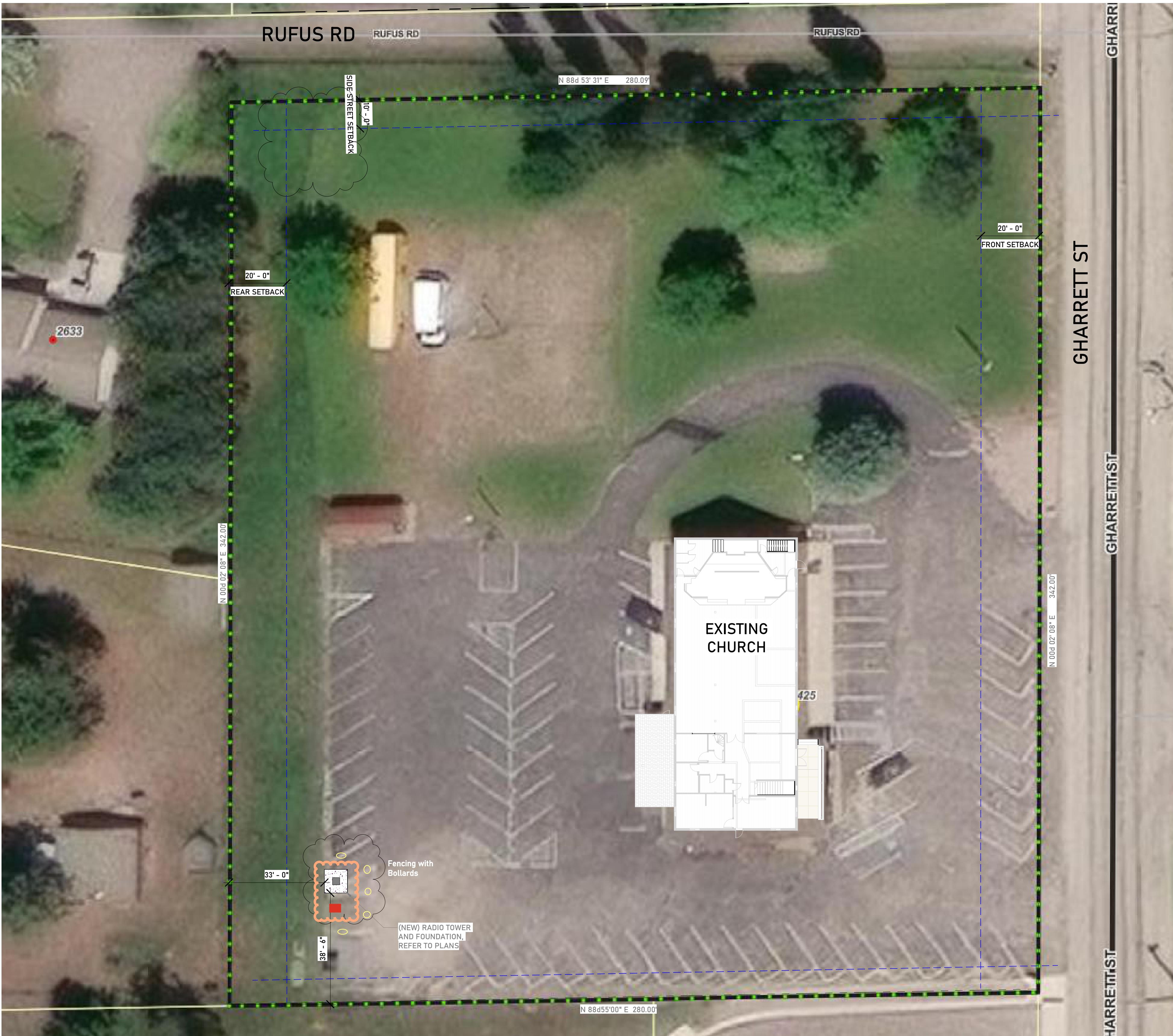
Reviewer Name	Reviewer Email	Reviewer Phone No.:
Krystal Aucutt	kaucutt@ci.missoula.mt.us	(406) 552-6060
Adam Sebastian	sebastiana@ci.missoula.mt.us	(406) 552-6191
Zoe Walters	waltersz@ci.missoula.mt.us	(406) 552-6399
Aaron Lebsack	lebsacka@ci.missoula.mt.us	(406) 552-6105

Corrections in the following table need to be applied before a permit can be issued

Comment ID	Annotation Type	Reviewer Department	Status	Page Reference	Reviewer's Comments
-	Stamp	Building - Krystal Aucutt	Open	1	PLAN APPROVED
-	Stamp	Engineering - Aaron Lebsack	Open	1	ENG APPROVED
-	Stamp	Fire - Adam Sebastian	Open	1	FIRE APPROVED
-	Stamp	Planning - Zoe Walters	Open	1	ZONE APPROVED

CITY OF MISSOULA
2024-MSS-COM-00153.01
Application ID
Aaron Bowman
Reviewed by:
Date: 06.10.2025

Approved
For
Construction



PROJECT OVERVIEW

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: NEW RADIO TOWER
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: SOUTH SIDE HOMES, S06, T12 N, R19 W, Lot 16B, OF LOTS 15 & 16 1ST AMENDED
ADDITION: R8
ZONING: R8
GEOCODE: 04-2093-04-3-01-04-0000
SITE SF: 87,273 SF
BUILDING TYPE: COMMERCIAL, CHURCH
BUILDING OCCUPANCY: GROUP A (IBC 303.1)
SPRINKLERED: NO
EXISTING SF: 8,400 SF <- NUMBER FROM MONTANA CADASTRAL
ADDITION SF: N/A
TOTAL SF: N/A

ZONING NOTES

TITLE 20 ZONING: R8
USE: RELIGIOUS ASSEMBLY
SETBACKS:
FRONT SETBACK: 20'
REAR SETBACK: 20'
SIDE STREET SETBACK: 10'
SIDE INTERIOR: 7.5'
ALLOWED HEIGHT: 30'/35'
(E) BUILDING HEIGHT: 30'
(N) ADDITION HEIGHT: TBD
(E) BUILDING AREA: 4,200 GSF

THIS PLAN HAS BEEN REVIEWED
FOR FIRE DEPT. COMPLIANCE

By: Adam Sebastian
Date: 06.02.2025
Permit #: 2024-MSS-COM-00153.01
Comments: _____

[A] 105.4.4 Approved documents.
Construction documents approved by the fire code official are approved with the intent that such construction documents comply in all respects with this code. Review and approval by the fire code official shall not relieve the applicant of the responsibility of compliance with this code.

ENGINEERING

The City of Missoula, by this approval does not accept any responsibility for omissions in the design or review of plans, nor does it relieve the engineer, architect, or contractor from compliance with codes, ordinances, standard drawings, Missoula City Public Works Standards and Specifications Manual, industry standards, or applicable state and federal laws.

APPROVED AS NOTED
DATE: 06.02.2025

Aaron Lebsack
Engineering Plan Reviewer

RADIO TOWER
LIGHTHOUSE BAPTIST CHURCH
5425 Gharrett St, Missoula MT
PROJECT #:

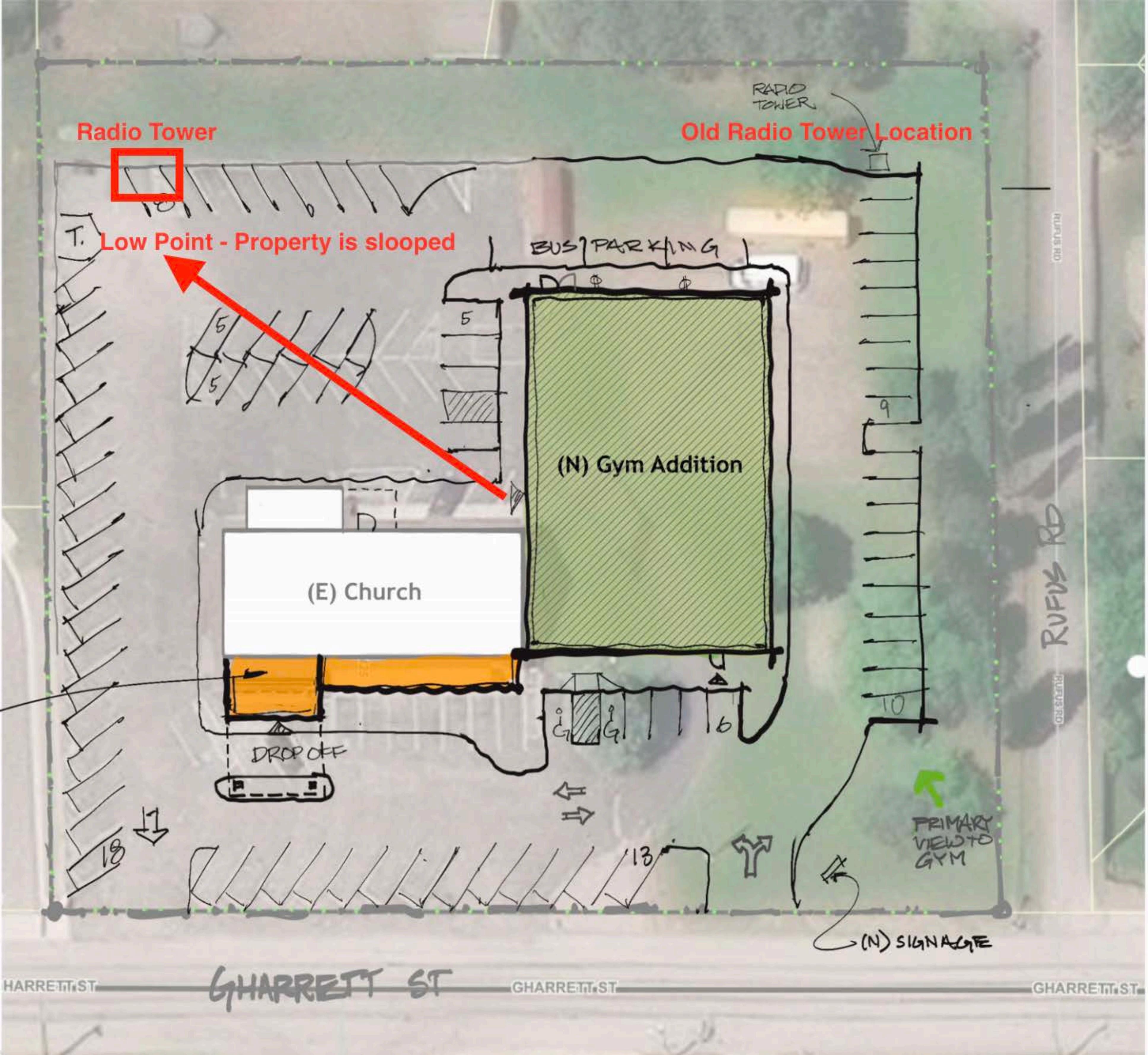
SITE PLAN

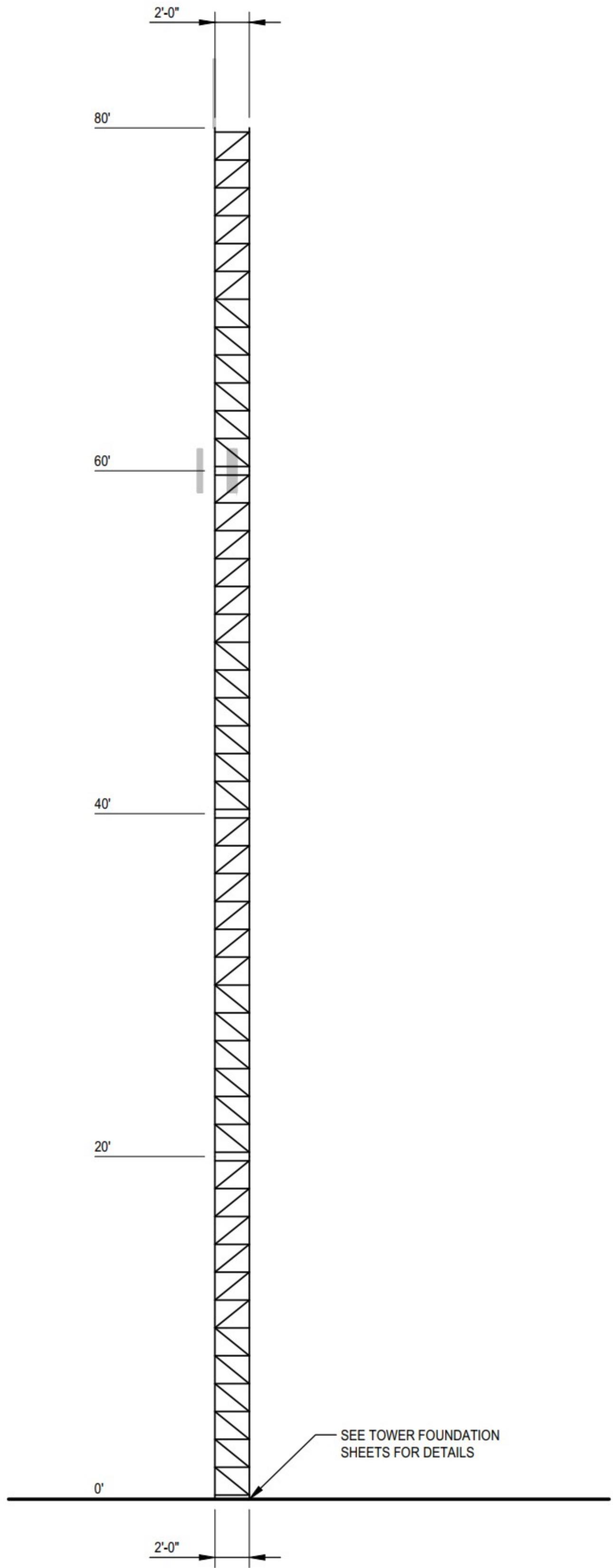
A1.0

12.04.2024

IN2ITIVE
ARCHITECTURE

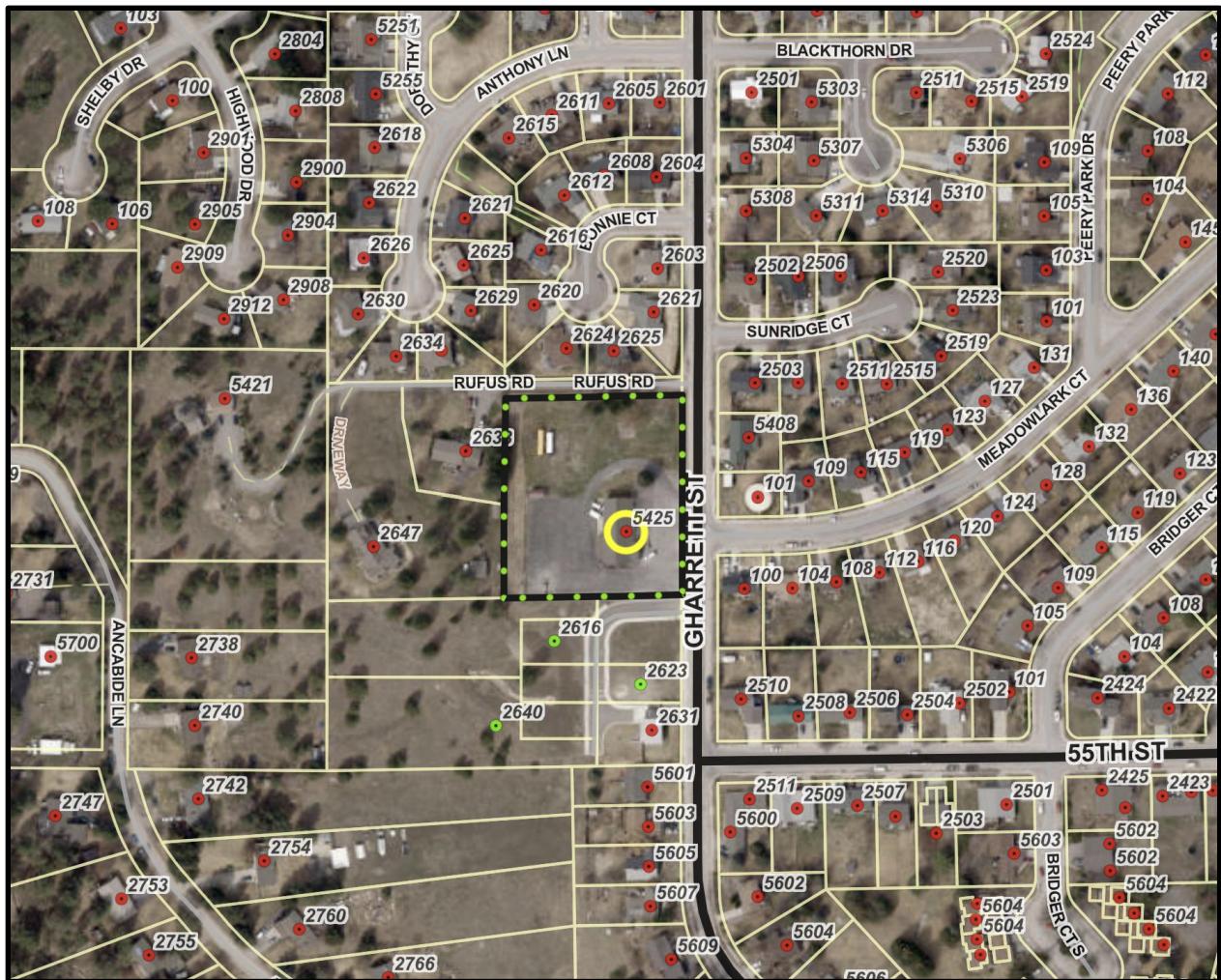
127 E Main St, Ste 302
Missoula, MT 59802
www.in2itvearch.com
406.926.2326



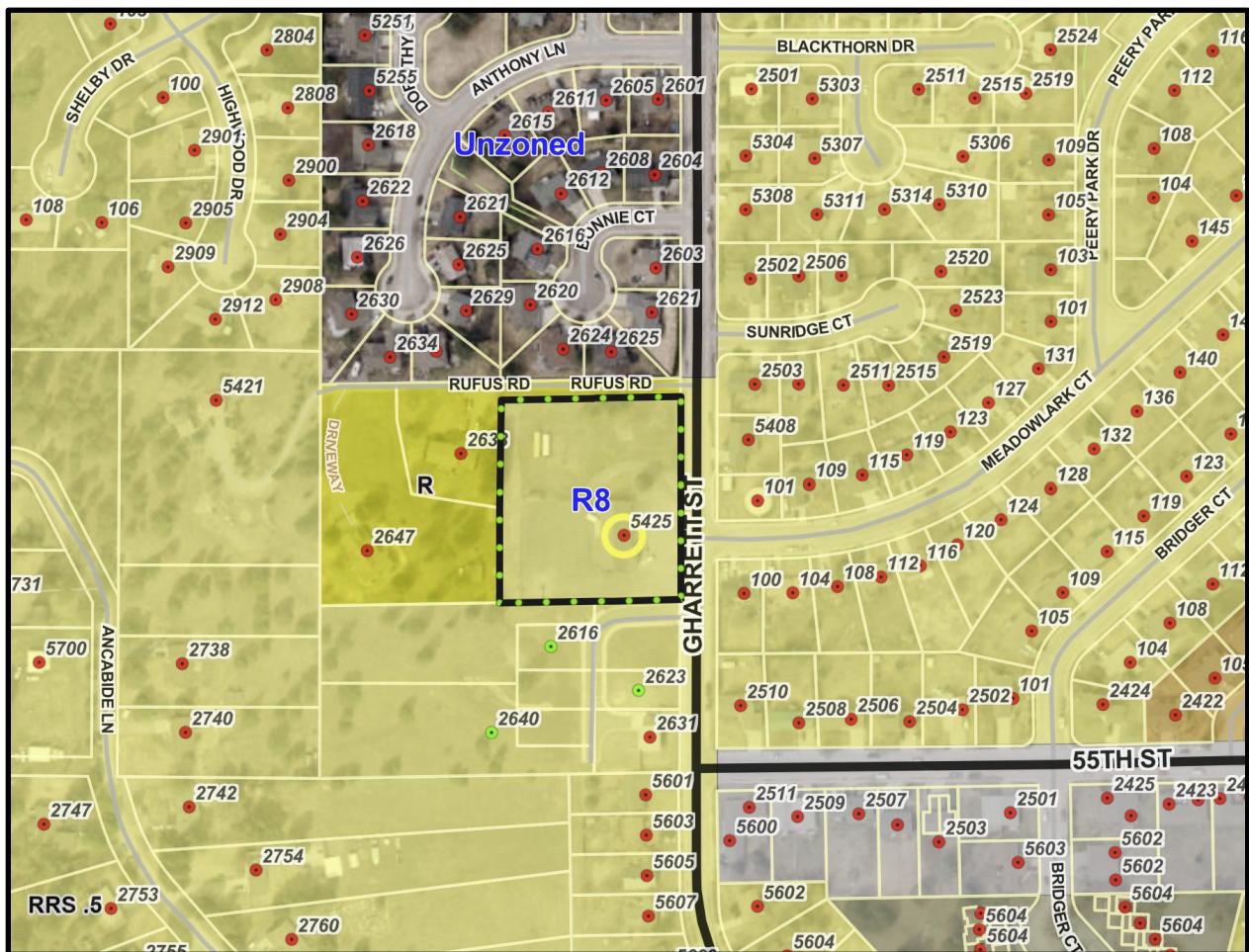


TOWER ELEVATION

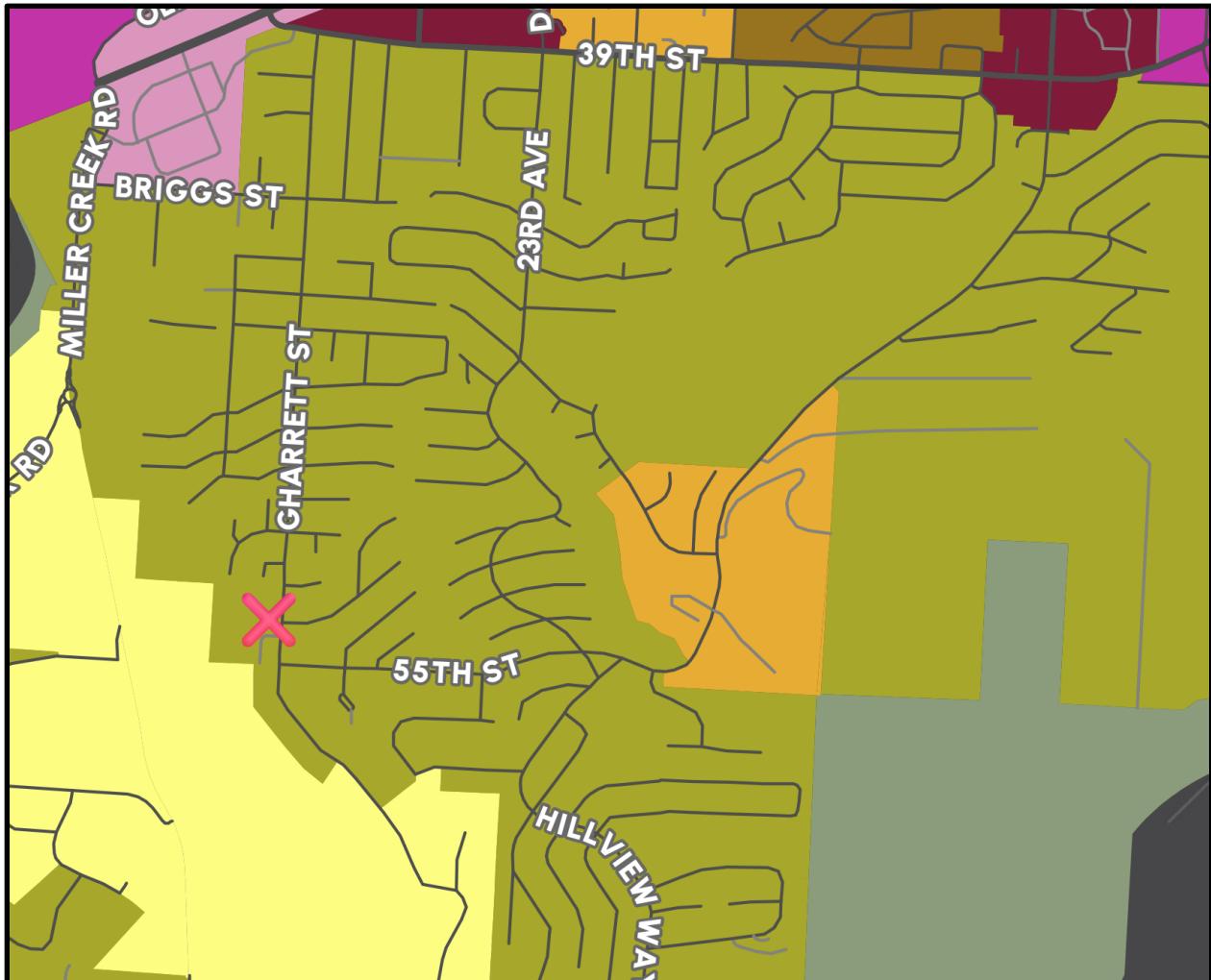
Aerial Map



Zoning Map



Land Use Plan Placetype



Limited Urban Residential

Federal Communications Commission

LOW POWER FM BROADCAST STATION CONSTRUCTION PERMIT

Permittee

Lighthouse Baptist
Church
5425 Gharrett St
Missoula, MT, 59803

Call Sign	Facility ID
KEIV-LP	784044

File Number 0000271565	This Permit Modifies License File No. 0000231781	
Filing Date 05/28/2025	Grant Date 06/02/2025	Expiration Date 04/02/2027

Community of License City: MISSOULA State: MT	Frequency (MHz) 105.3	Station Channel 287	Station Class LP100
Hours of Operation: Unlimited			

Transmitter Certified for Compliance. See Sections 73.1660, 73.1665 and 73.1670 of the Commission's Rules.	Transmitter Output Power As required to achieve authorized ERP.
Antenna Type Non-Directional	Antenna Coordinates (NAD 83) Latitude 46-49-14.10 N Longitude 114-2-38.40 W

	Horizontally Polarized Antenna	Vertically Polarized Antenna
Maximum Effective Radiated Power in the Horizontal Plane (W)	100.0	100.0
Minimum Effective Radiated Power in the Horizontal Plane (W)	50.0	50.0
Height of Radiation Center Above Ground (meters)	22.9	22.9

Height of Radiation Center Above Mean Sea Level (meters)	1041.9	1041.9
Height of Radiation Center Above Average Terrain (meters)	-145.0	-145.0

Antenna Structure Registration Number Not Required	Overall Height of Antenna Structure Above Ground (meters) 24.0
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Obstruction Marking and Lighting Specifications for Antenna Structure

It is expressly understood that the issuance of these specifications is in no way to be considered as precluding additional or modified marking or lighting as may hereafter be required under the provisions of Section 303 (q) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

Special Operating Conditions or Restrictions

The permittee/licensee in coordination with other users of the site must reduce power or cease operation as necessary to protect persons having access to the site, tower or antenna from radiofrequency electromagnetic fields in excess of FCC guidelines.

Subject to the provisions of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, subsequent acts and treaties, and all regulations heretofore or hereafter made by this Commission, and further subject to the conditions set forth in this permit, the permittee is hereby authorized to construct the radio transmitting apparatus herein described. Installation and adjustment of equipment not specifically set forth herein shall be in accordance with representations contained in the permittee's application for construction permit except for such modifications as are presently permitted, without application, by the Commission's Rules(See Section 73.875).

Pursuant to Section 73.3598, this Construction Permit will be subject to automatic forfeiture unless construction is complete and application for license is filed prior to expiration.

Equipment and program tests shall be conducted only pursuant to Sections 73.1610 and 73.1620 of the Commission's Rules.