

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JULY 6, 2022

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

FROM: HISTORIC PRESERVATION STAFF

SUBJECT: BAR ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL POLICY FOR SMALL CELL
WIRELESS FACILITIES

At the April 21, 2021, public hearing, the BAR voted not to approve the proposed *Policy for Administrative Approval of Small Cell Wireless Facilities* due to the lack of familiarity with the different types of small cell facilities. At that time, the City of Alexandria (City) had recently signed the *Telecommunications Facility Franchise Agreement*, (December 2020), with each carrier and the Board was not yet aware of the *Approved Small Cell Designs*, Exhibit A, attached to that document.

Prior to the April 21, 2021, hearing, the BAR had rescinded an administrative approval policy adopted in June 2019 for the same reason of lack of familiarity with the small cell facility designs. Then and there, the Board directed staff to return after a year with an administrative approval policy, which was tabled as stated above.

Thus far, the BAR has received 53 small cell facility applications, of which, 12 were approved administratively (prior to April 21, 2021); 5 were approved automatically due to the expiration of the shot clock; 31 approved by the Board, 4 denied, and 1 case was withdrawn by the applicant. Of the denied cases, one, near 215 North Patrick Street, was appealed to the City Council that overturned the BAR decision.

The majority of the applications were replacement wood poles and approved as submitted with conditions that are addressed by the *Telecommunications Facility Franchise Agreement*. Only two applications were for standalone poles which were both approved by the Board.

The franchise agreement language states that:

The companies will have the right to deploy “approved” equipment throughout the City. Approved equipment is defined by the franchise agreement as equipment that has been previously approved by the City as a standard design pole, which is a design that has been approved by the City or is a design that the company has sought specific review of and has received approval of the City. These designs are set forth on Exhibit A to the proposed franchise agreements, which are attached

hereto. Notwithstanding the granting of the franchise agreement, the companies are required to file applications with the City with respect to the proposed equipment they are seeking to install in the public rights-of-ways. In addition, the companies will be subject to the City's aesthetic requirements and any and all requirement and conditions of installing their equipment in the City's historic districts.

Taking into consideration that most small cell facilities are installed on top of replacement utility poles which are taller than the original pole and taller the adjacent property height in most cases; staff has few concerns about small cell facilities obstructing the viewshed of historic properties.

Therefore, staff recommends the *Policy for Administrative Approval of Small Cell Wireless Facilities*, be included in the BAR POLICIES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL IN THE OLD AND HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT AND IN THE PARKER-GRAY DISTRICT FOR COMMERCIAL USES as shown in red bellow:

<p>Antennae</p>	<p>Replacement or new co-located antennae meeting the original BAR conditions and the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penthouse Wall mount: may not project above the wall on which they are mounted and must be painted to match the adjacent wall surface • Flat Roof mount: must be on a freestanding tripod set back a minimum of 10 feet from the building face
<p>Small Cells</p>	<p>Replacement or new co-located small cell facilities and required equipment meeting the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complies with the Telecommunications Facility Franchise Agreement approved pole designs and materials. • Painted, coated with film, or otherwise shrouded with a color matching the utility pole. • Not located within the KR (King Street Urban Retail) zone or the Waterfront Small Area Plan boundary.

The proposed administrative approval policy would allow staff to administratively approve small cell wireless facilities (antennas and their associated equipment) on existing or replacement wood, metal, or composite utility poles or new standalone poles in the public right-of-way provided the proposed facilities and their designs are consistent with an approved *Telecommunications Facility Franchise Agreement* and the *Zoning Ordinance Section 7-1206 through 7-1212*. Additionally, small cell facilities on replacement utility poles or on standalone poles must comply with the *Memorandum to Industry 2021-01* established by the Transportation and Environmental Services Department (T&ES) in addition to all City codes and ordinances and may require separate approval of permits from other City departments.

Small cell facilities located within the KR (King Street Urban Retail) zone, or the Waterfront Small

Area Plan boundary will require full Board review. Furthermore, antennas and equipment that are not painted, coated with film, or otherwise shrouded with a color matching the utility pole will require full Board review.

As with all administrative approval policies, failure to meet the requirements does not result in denial but rather requires that the applicant seek BAR approval at a public hearing. In addition, using good judgement, staff may find that a proposed small cell facility outside of the KR or Waterfront Small Area Plan zones and boundaries may need full Board review, in which case the application would be docketed.

Staff looks forward to any questions and feedback from the Board, as well as the public. Following that discussion staff looks forward to the Board's approval of the proposed revisions.

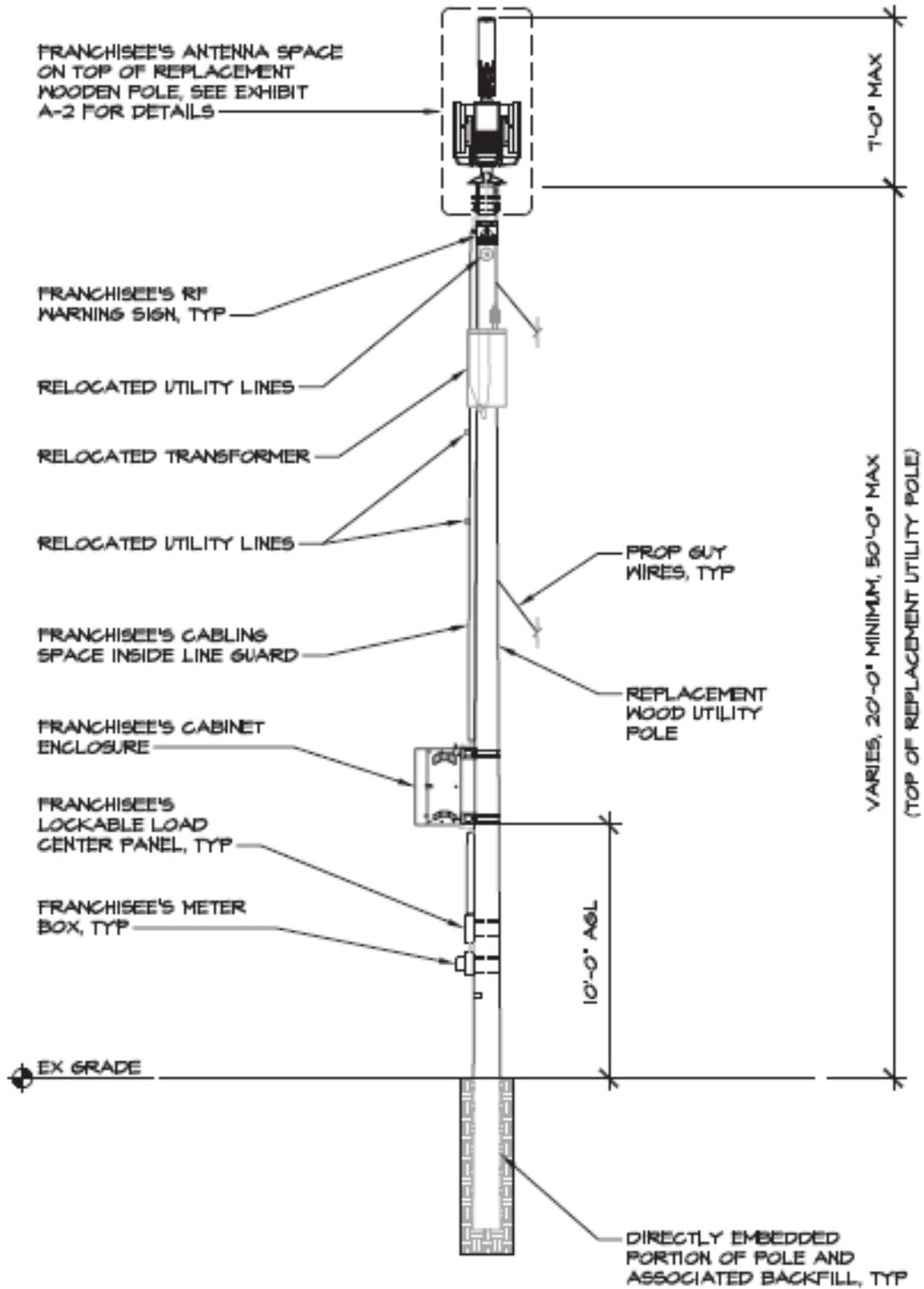
Attachment: Approved Small Cell Designs

Attachment A

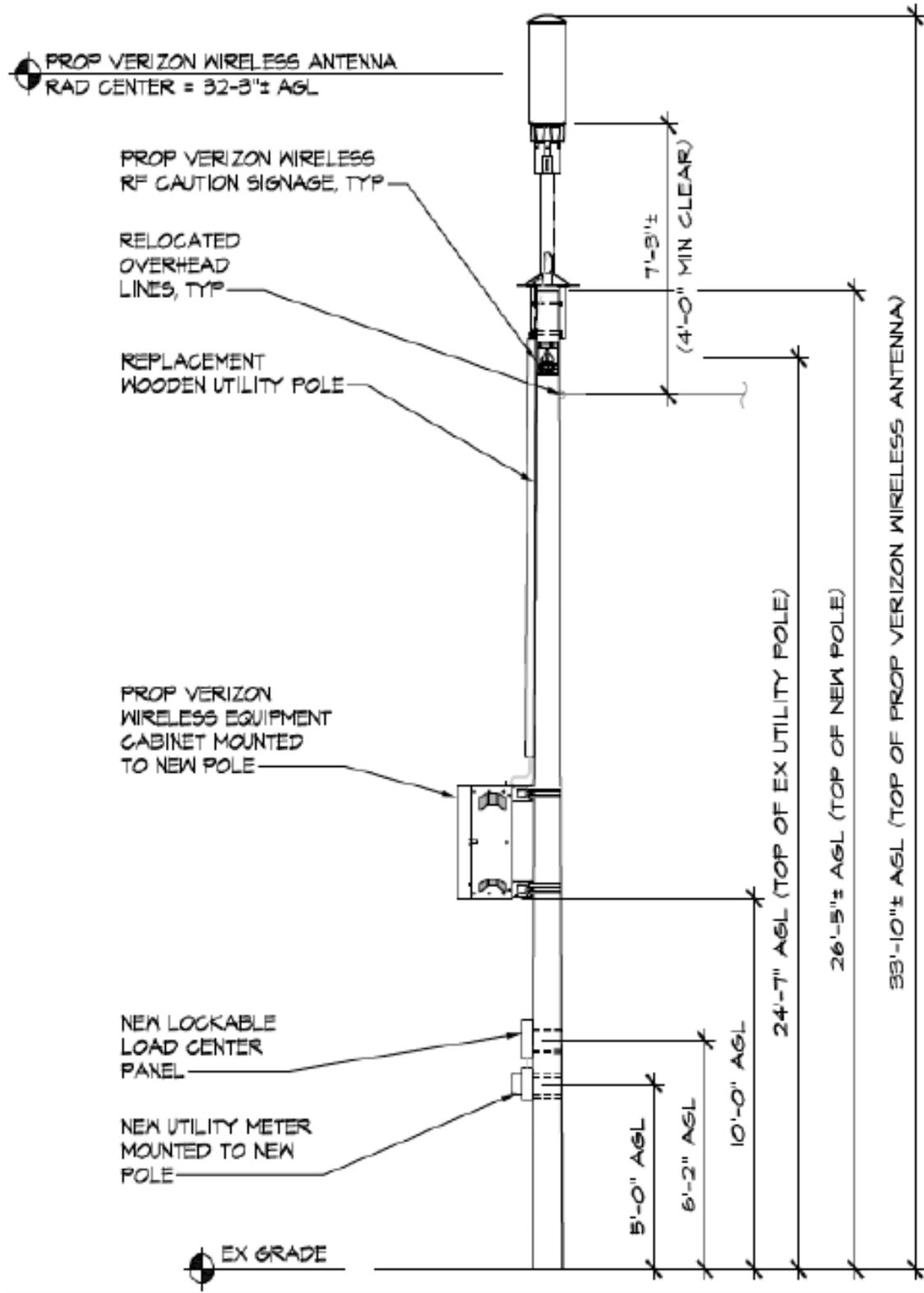
Approved Pole Designs

Small cell installations shall be the same as or substantially similar to those designs included in this attachment.

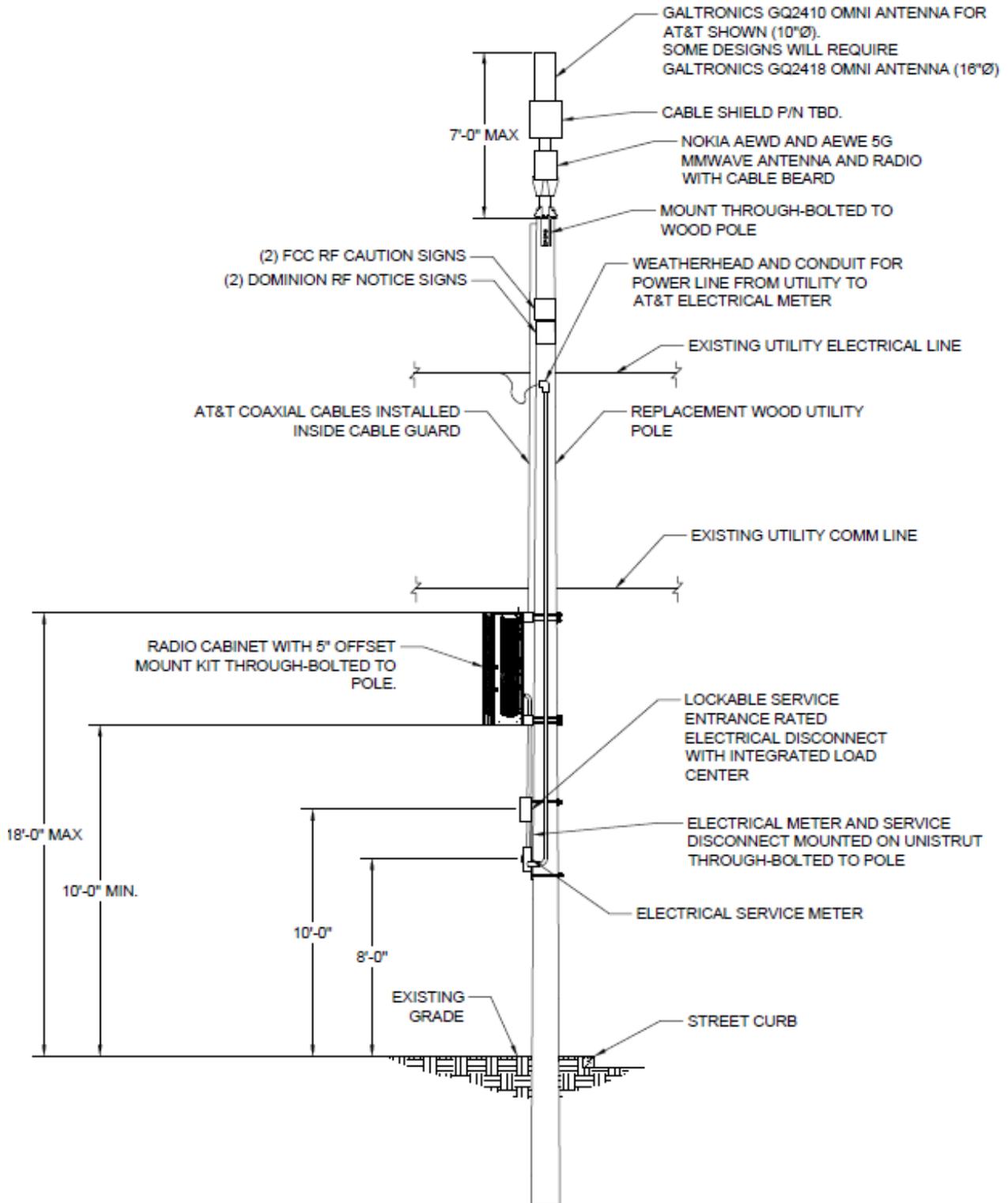
A-1: Wood Utility Pole Replacement and Stand-Alone Pole with 4G & 5G antenna Configuration



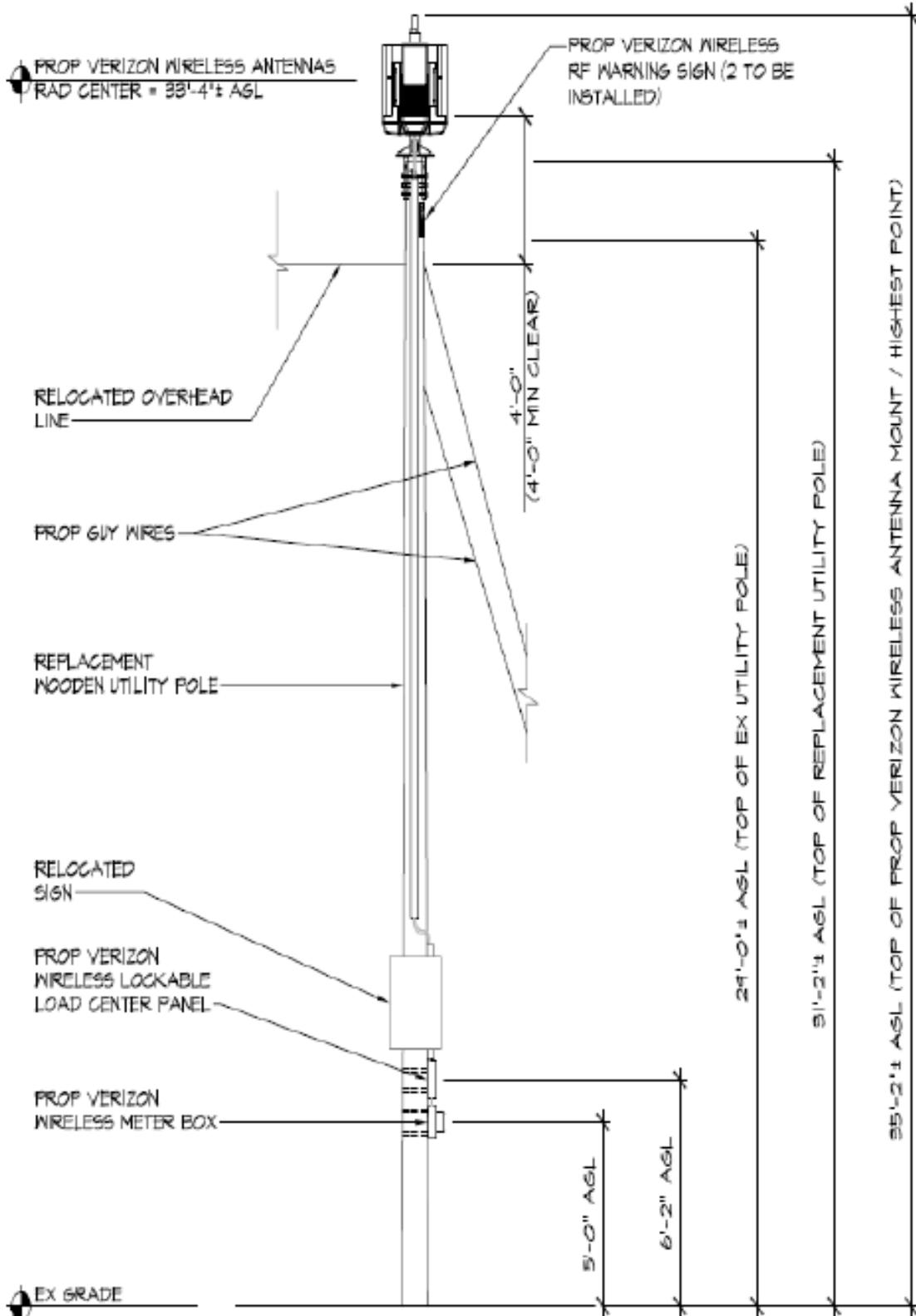
A-2: Wood Utility Pole Replacement and Stand-Alone Pole with 4G antenna Configuration



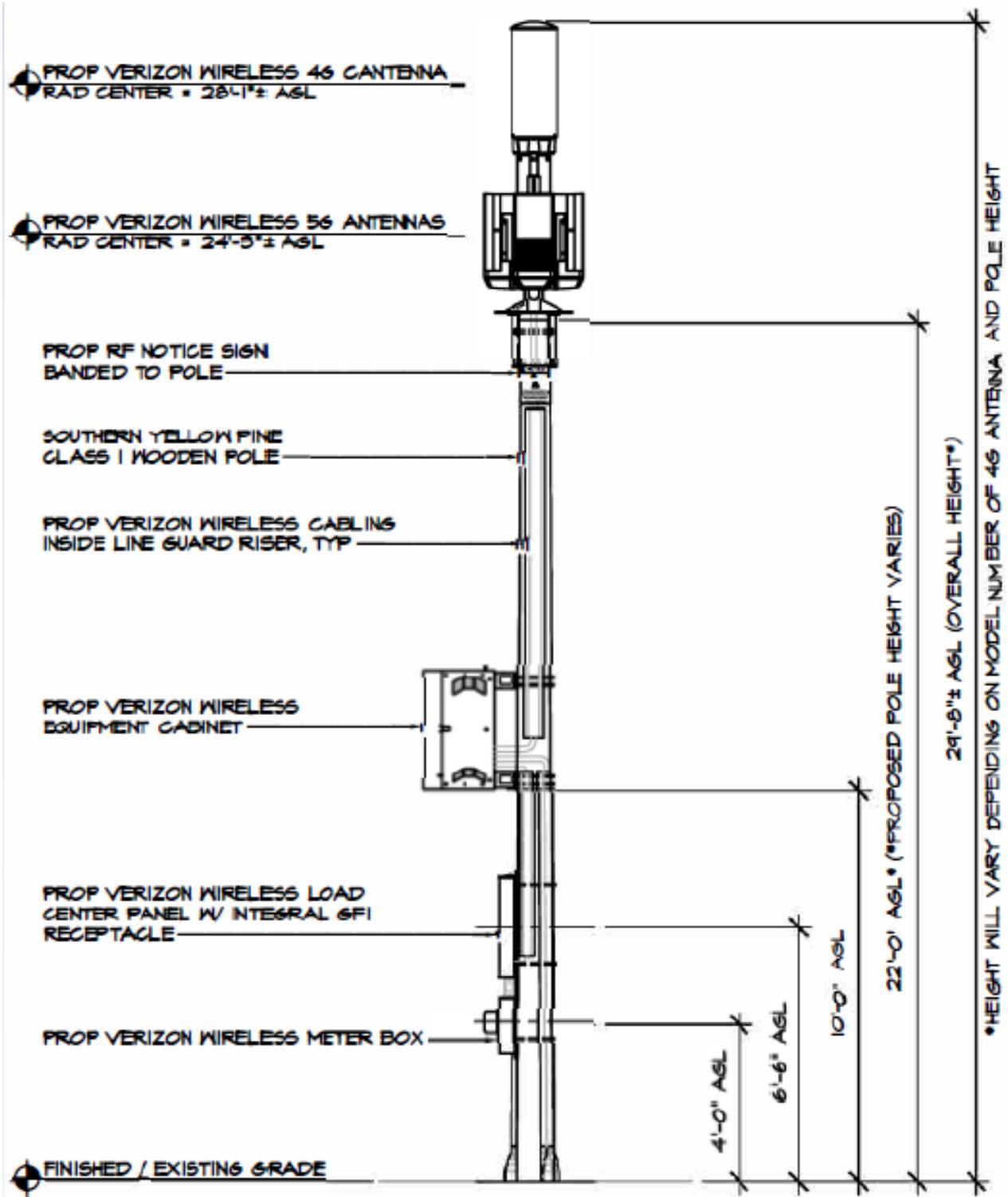
A-2.1: Wood Utility Pole Replacement and Stand-Alone Pole with 4G antenna Configuration



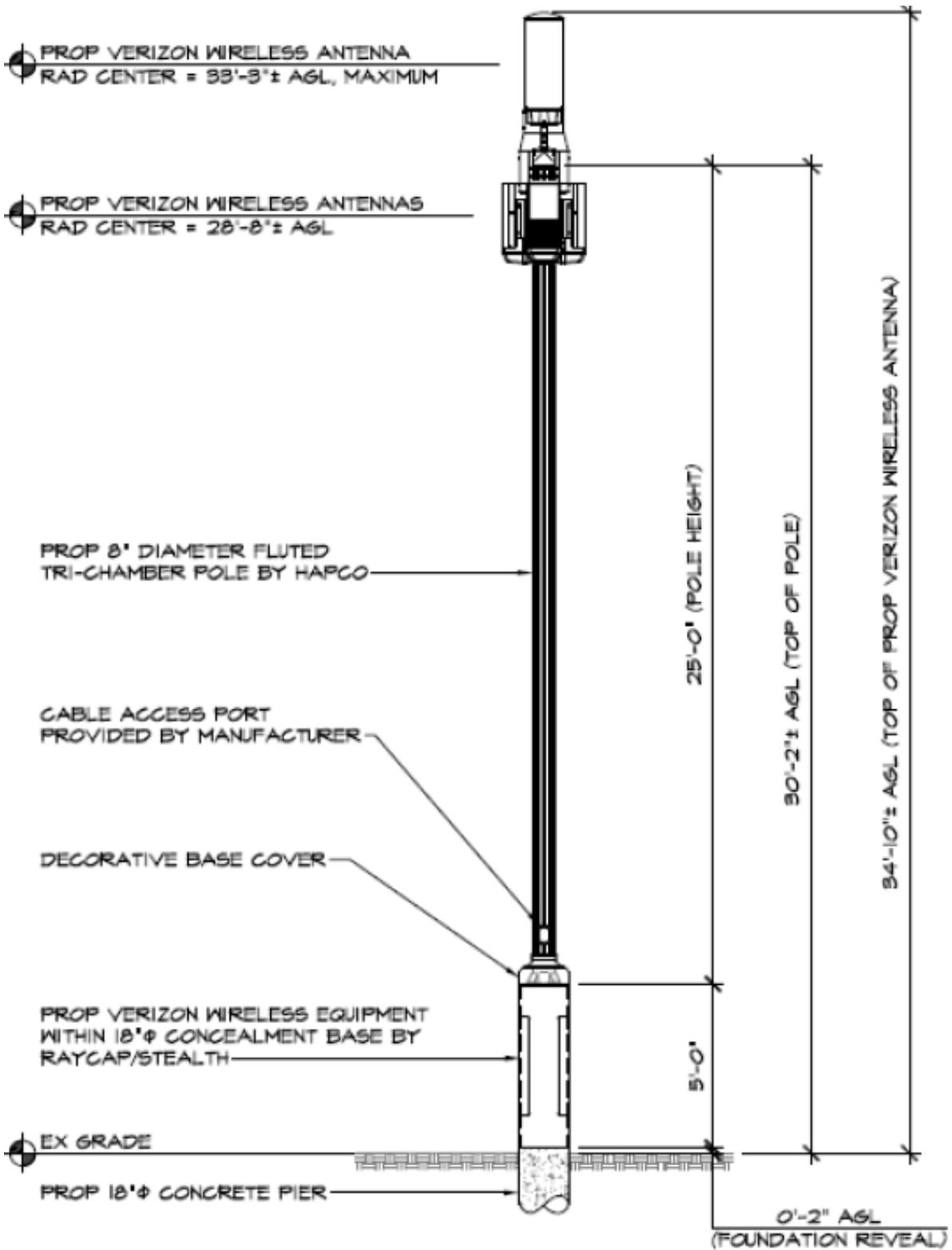
A-3: Wood Utility Pole Replacement and Stand-Alone Pole with 5G antenna Configuration



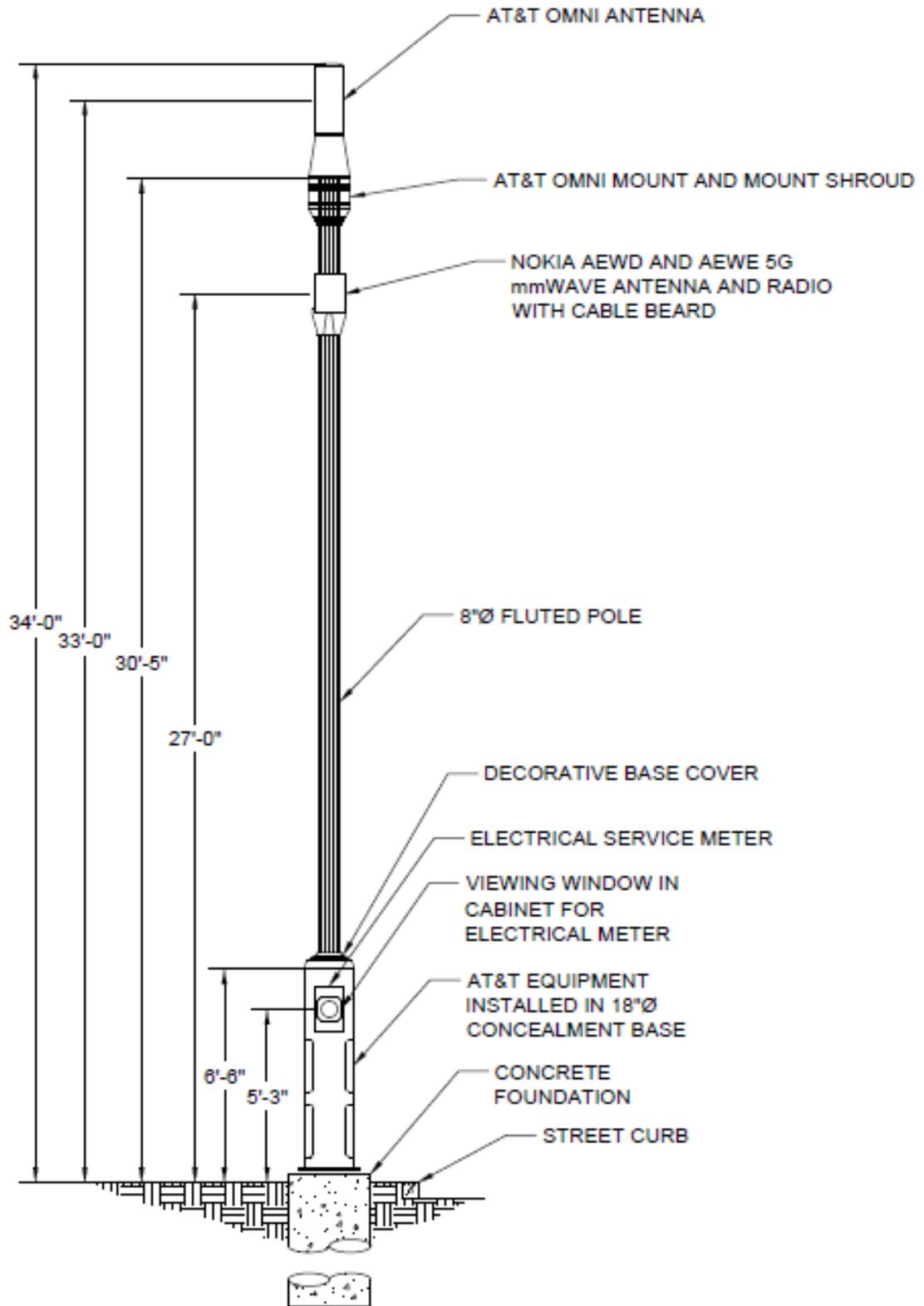
A-4: Stand Alone Metal Pole with 4G/5G Configuration



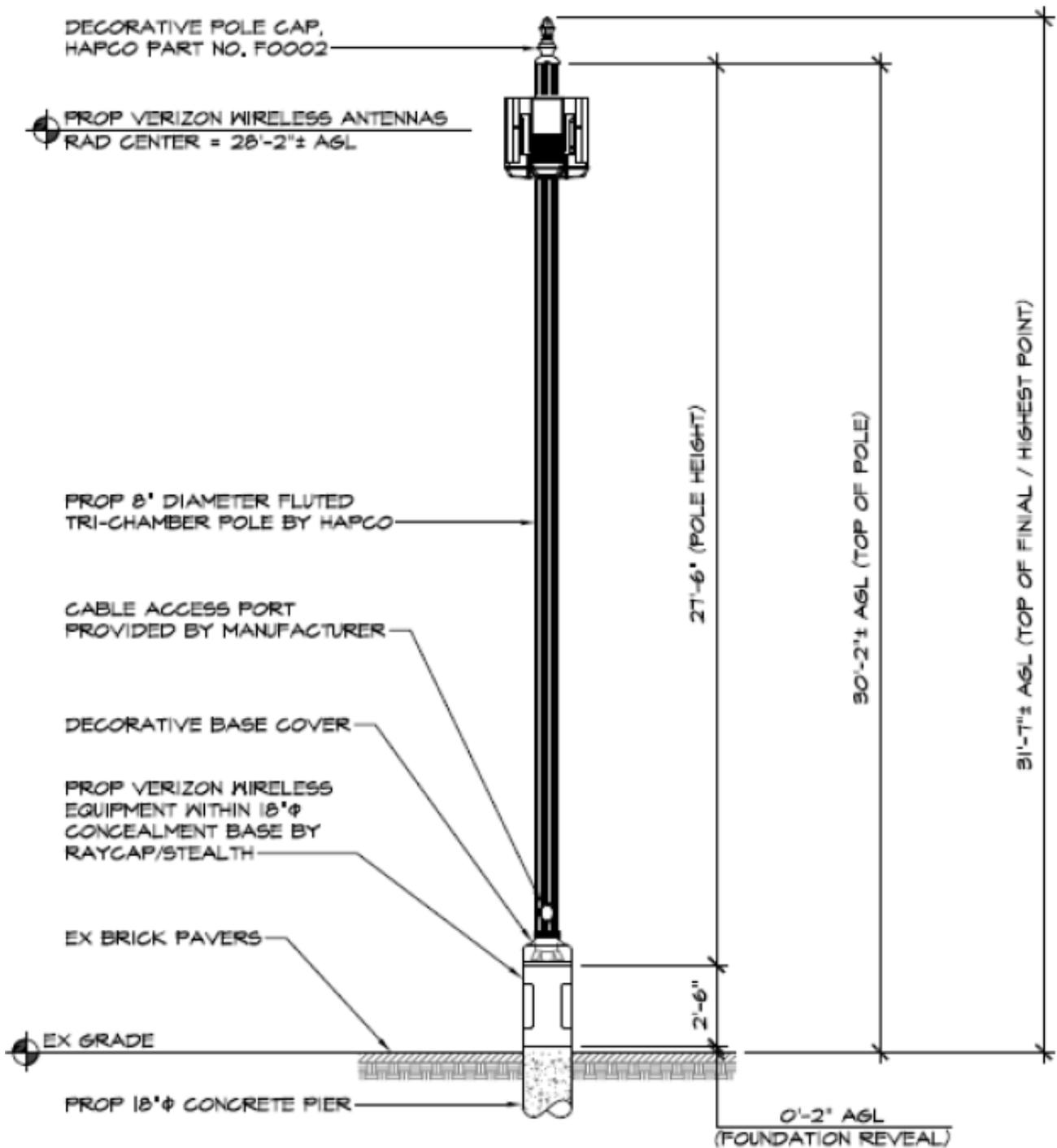
A-5: Stand Alone Metal Pole (Black Slick Stick) with 4G/5G Configuration



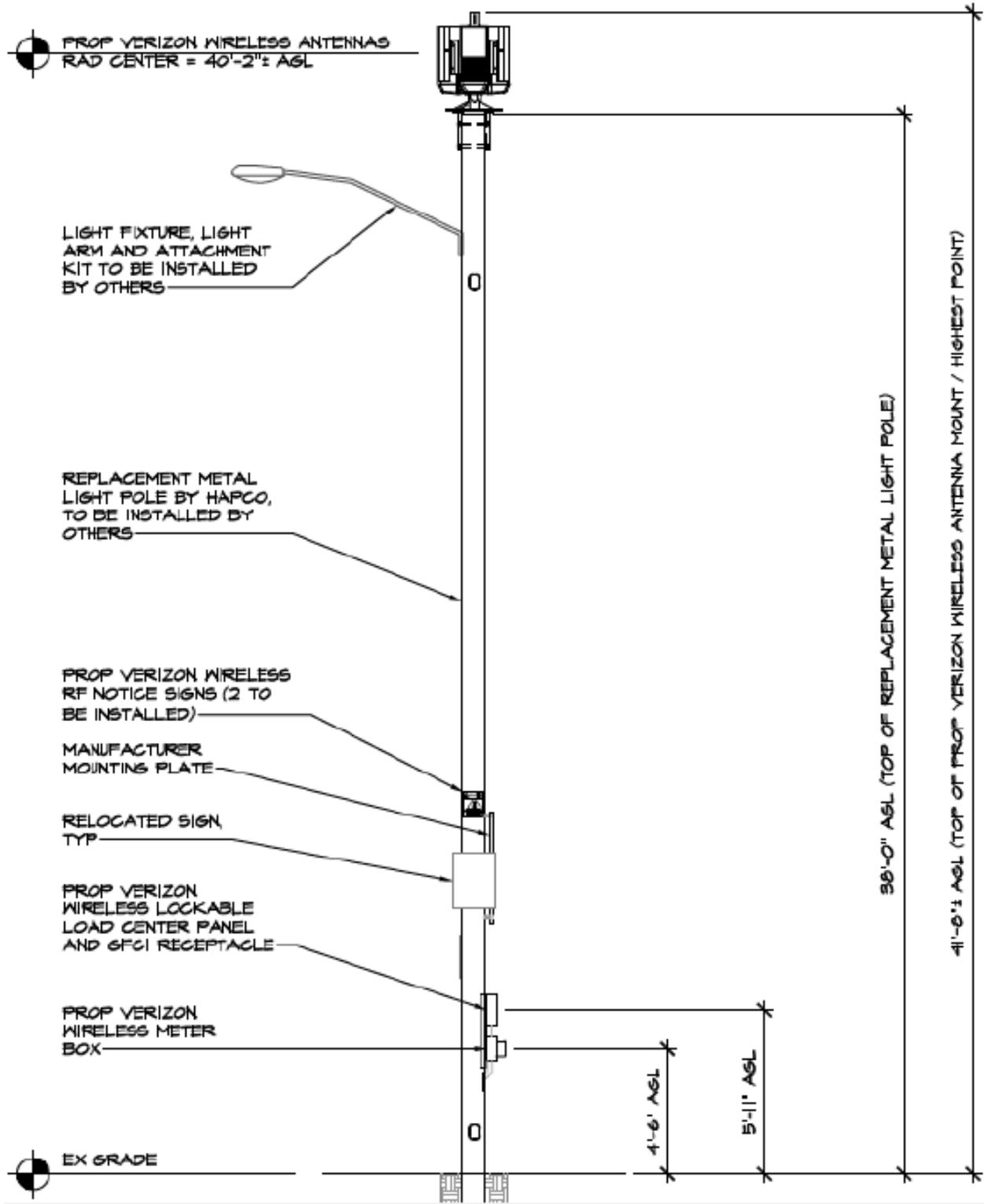
A-5.1: Stand Alone Metal Pole (Black Slick Stick) with 4G/5G Configuration



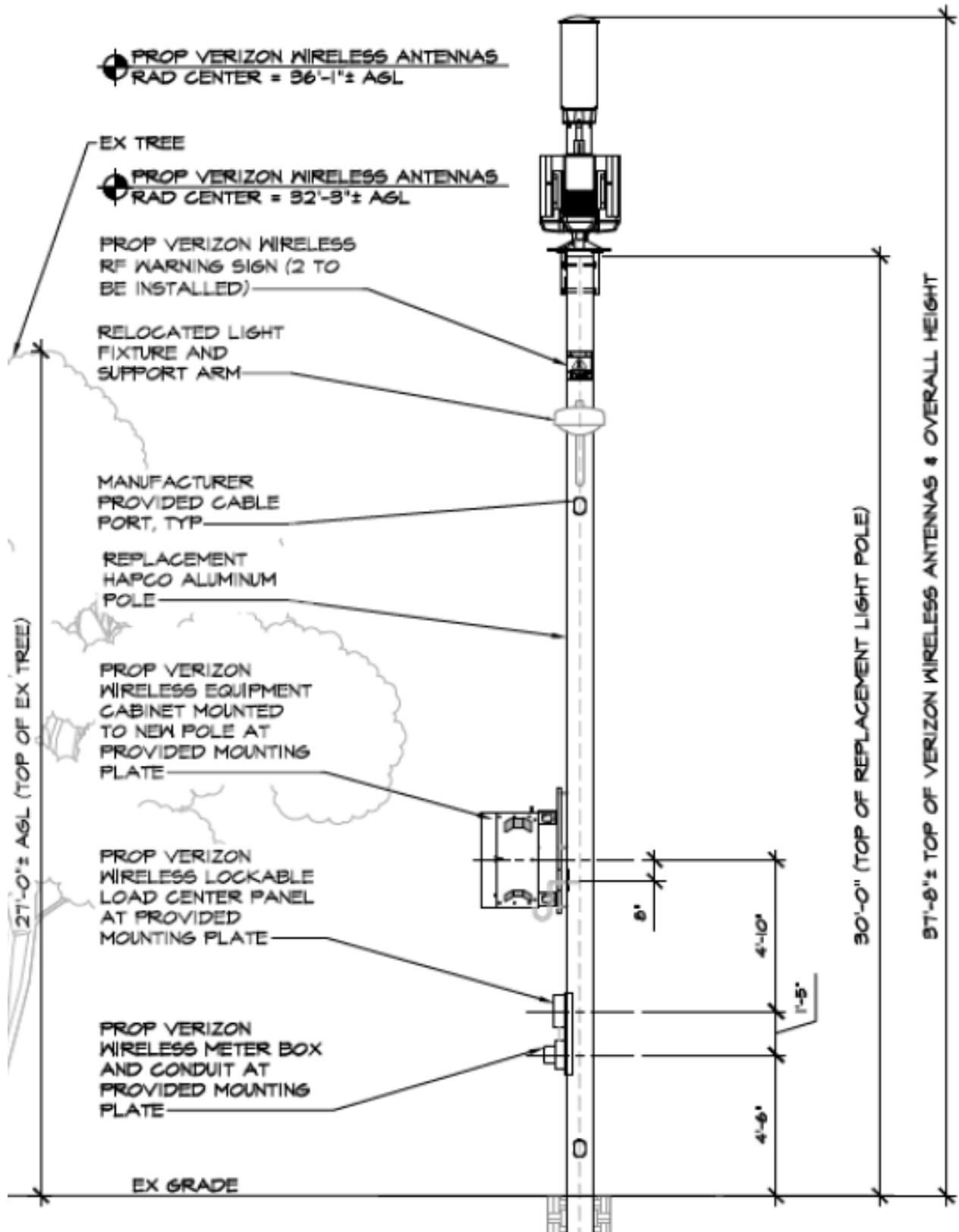
A-6: Stand Alone Decorative Metal Pole (Black Slick Stick) with 5G Configuration



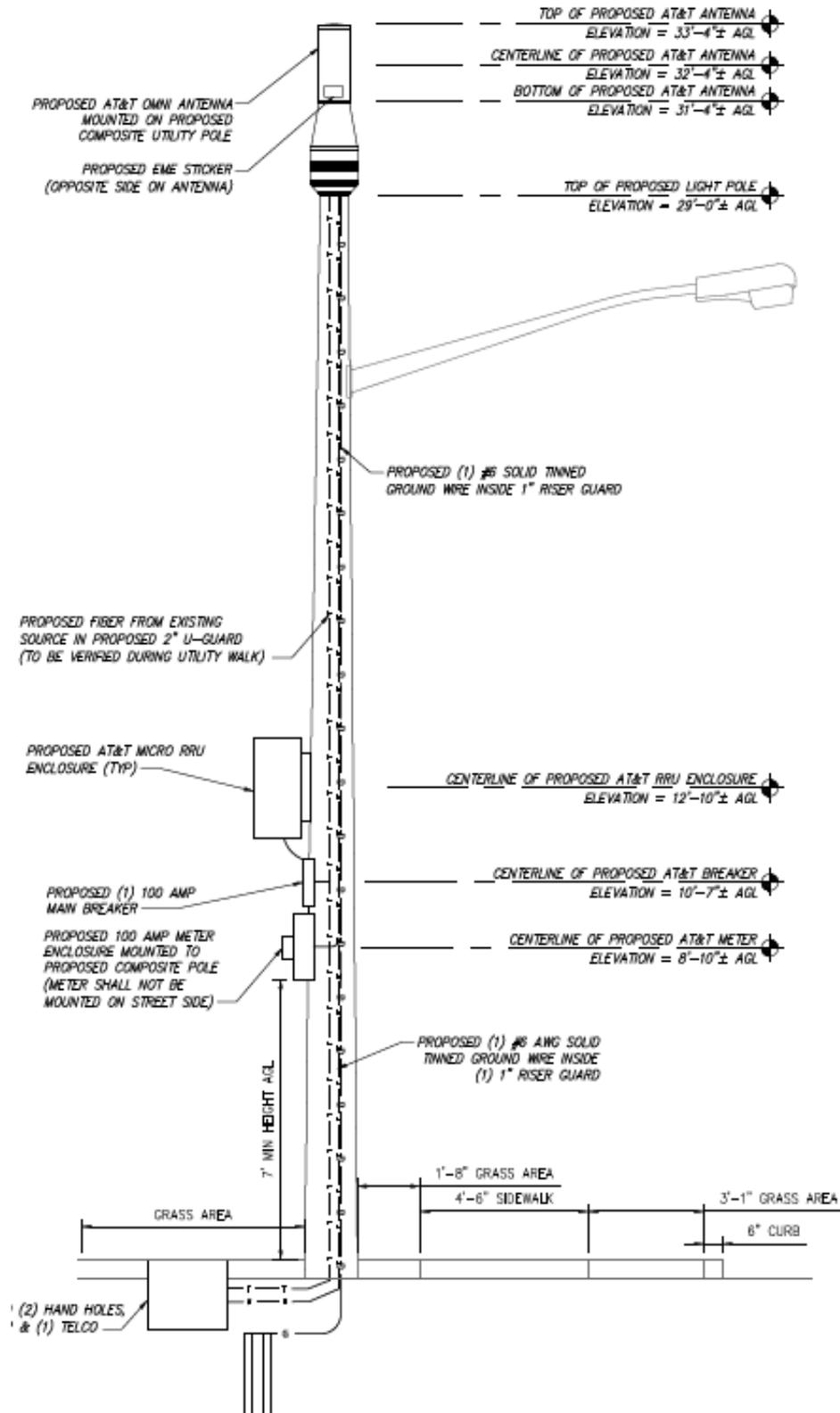
A-7: Metal Light Pole Replacement with 5G Configuration



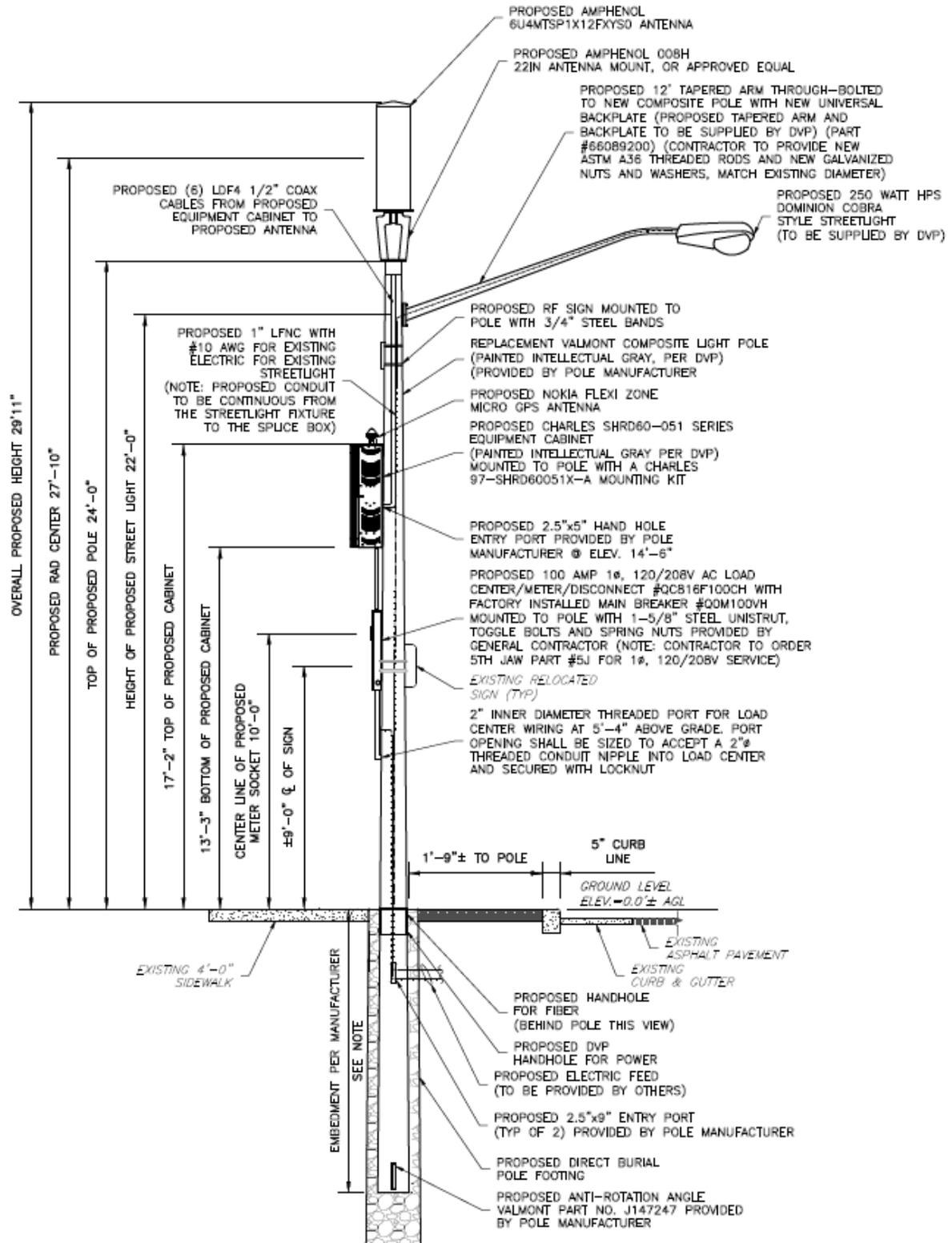
A-8: Metal Light Pole Replacement with 4G/5G Configuration



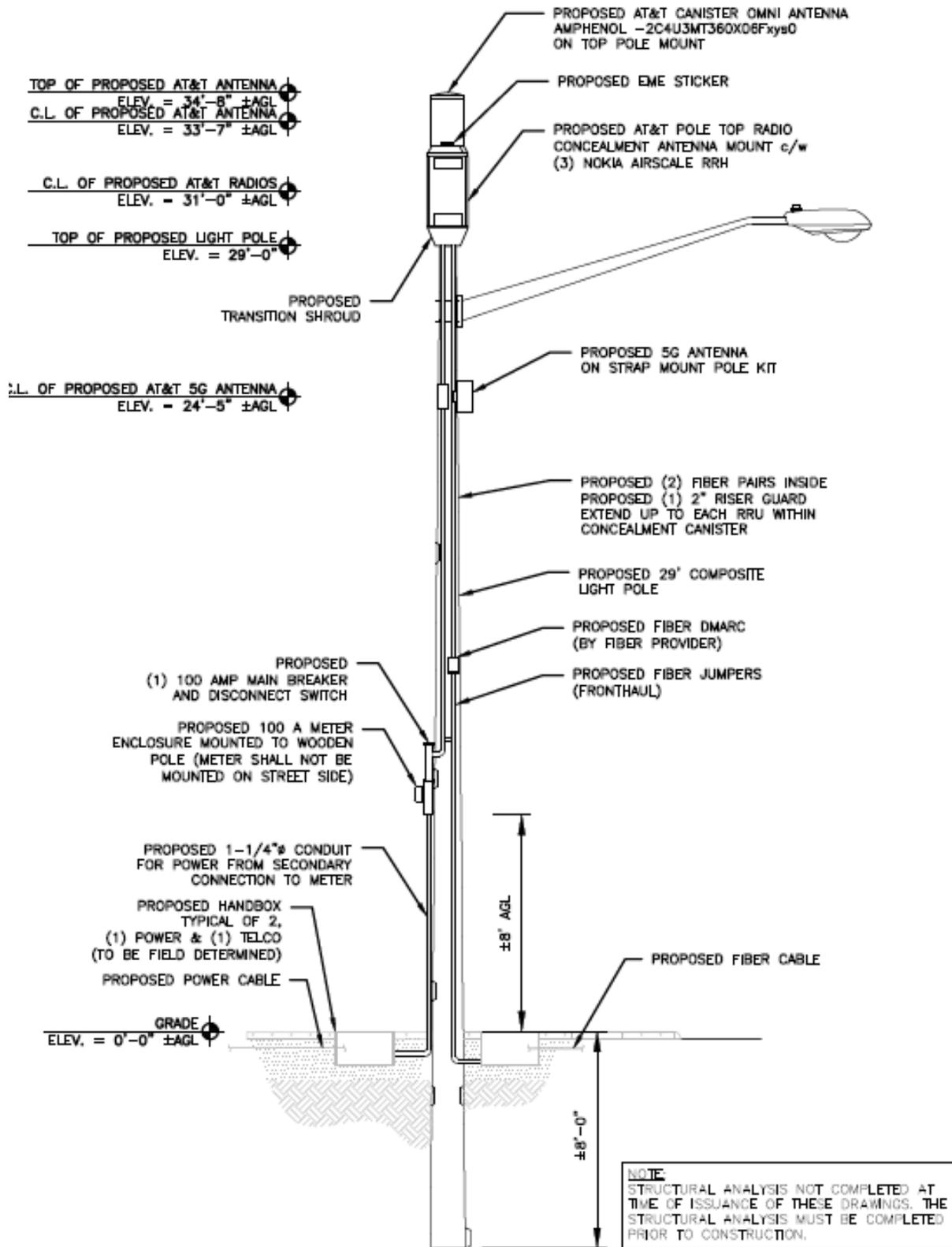
A-9: Composite Light Pole Replacement with 4G Configuration



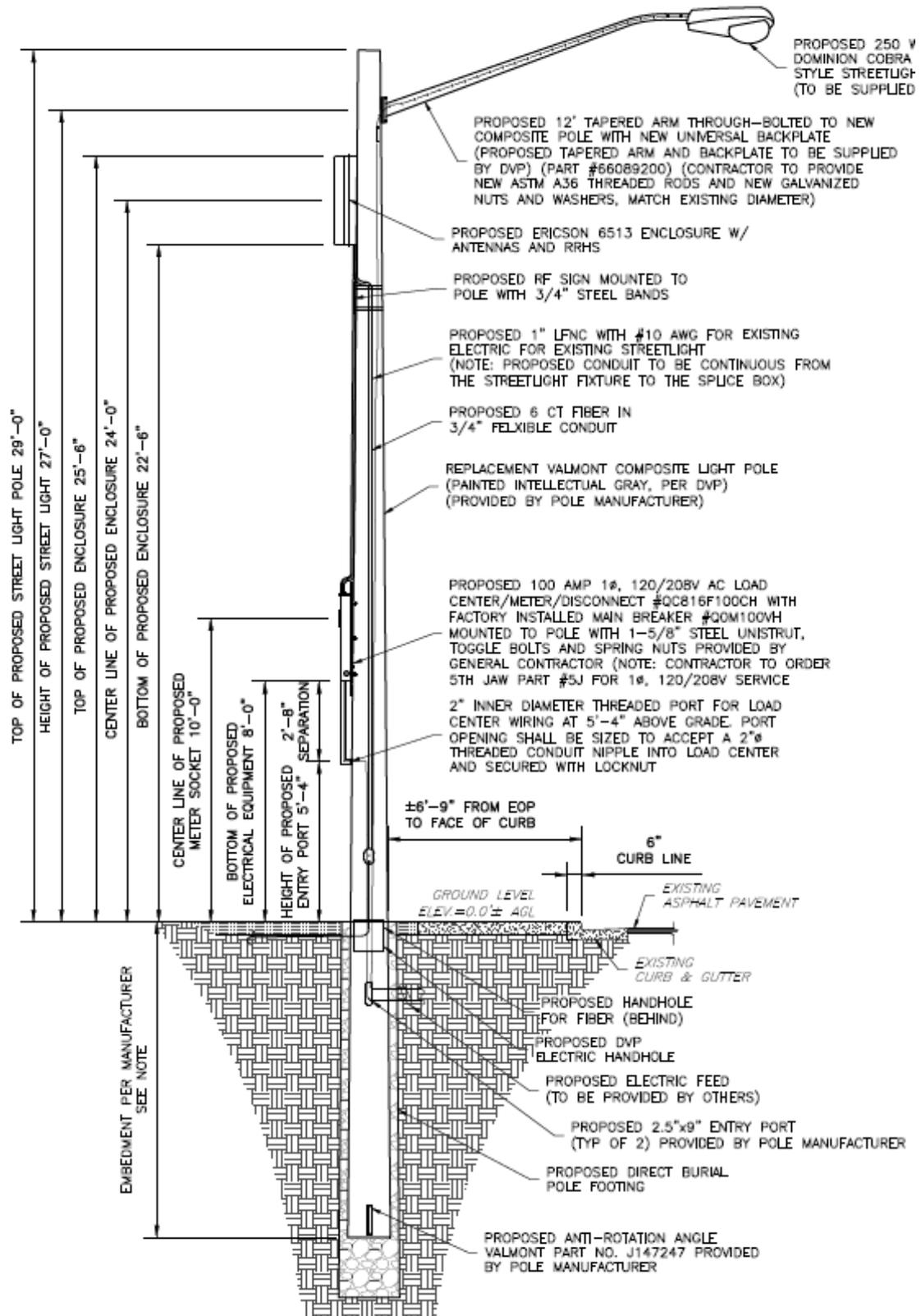
A-10: Composite Light Pole Replacement with 4G Configuration



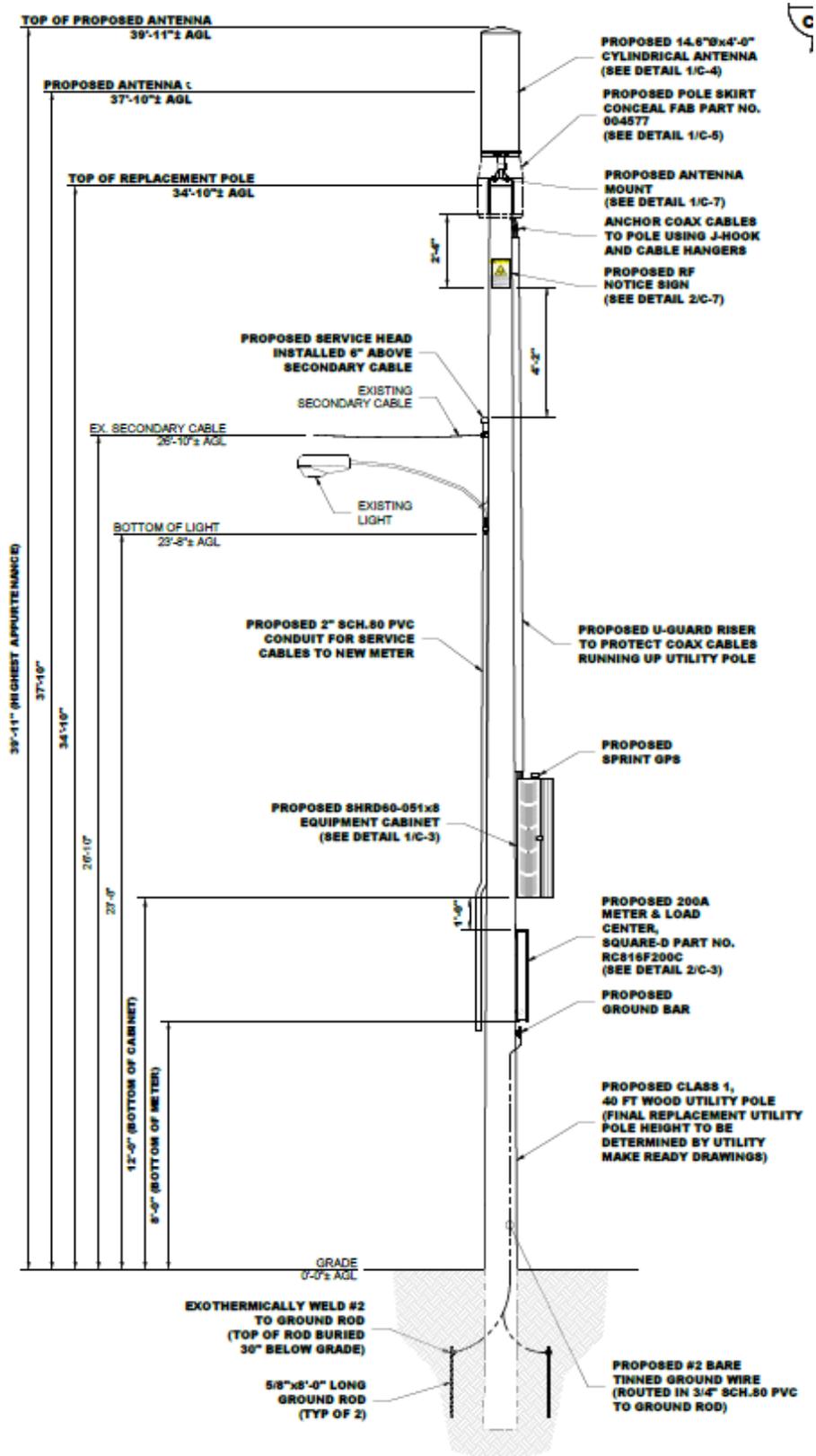
A-11: Composite Light Pole Replacement with 5G Configuration



A-12: Composite Light Pole Replacement with 5G Configuration



A-13: Wood Light Pole Replacement with 4G Configuration



A-14: Large Base Standalone Pole with 5G Configuration

