



Regional Board Policy

BP24-2025

Antenna Systems Siting Consultation Policy

Category: PLAN	Authority: Regional Board	Date Adopted: 2025-06-19	Date of last Amendment: N/A
Office of Primary Responsibility: Development and Engineering Services			
Related Policy: N/A			

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

To establish a transparent land use consultation process, and guidelines for *antenna system* siting proposals which respect the Regional District of Central Okanagan's community context in Electoral Areas.

PURPOSE

Under the *Radiocommunication Act*, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) is responsible for the licensing and location of radiocommunication antennas. The *Radiocommunication & Broadcasting Antenna Systems Client Procedures Circular* (CPC-2-0-03) defines processes where local authorities may establish a policy to help determine consultation requirements in their community.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 1) Establish a land use consultation process and guidelines for *antenna system* siting proposals in the RDCO's Electoral Areas;
- 2) Minimize the number of new *antenna system* tower sites by encouraging *co-location*;
- 3) Encourage designs that integrate with the surrounding land uses;
- 4) Allow ISED and the *proponent* to identify and resolve any potential land use, siting or design concerns with the RDCO at an early stage in the proposal process;
- 5) Establish a land use consultation framework that ensures the *Regional District* and members of the public contribute local knowledge that facilitates and influences the siting and design of *antenna systems*; and
- 6) Ensure that the RDCO has a suitable evidence base for all *antenna system* siting proposals to allow the Regional Board to make an informed decision on whether to issue a *Letter of Concurrence* or *Letter of Non-concurrence* for the *proponent*.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to proposals to site radiocommunication antennas within the Regional District of Central Okanagan Electoral Areas, however under Section 6 of CPC-2-0-03, certain proposals are considered to have a minimal impact on local surroundings and are excluded from public and local government consultation requirements.

Despite the Section 6 exclusions, *proponents* are asked to inform the RDCO of all new *antenna system* installations within RDCO boundaries so the RDCO can:

- 1) Be prepared to respond to public inquiries;
- 2) Be aware of sites for future *co-location* opportunities within the RDCO;
- 3) Maintain records to refer to in the event of future modifications and additions; and
- 4) Engage with the *proponent* with respect to the appearance of the *antenna system* and structure prior to the *proponent* investing in full design.

Section 4 of CPC-2-0-03 requires that *proponents* contact applicable land-use authorities with an interest in the proposal. The RDCO is located within the traditional, ancestral, and unceded land of the syilx / Okanagan people, and therefore in addition to meeting the requirements of this policy, *proponents* must contact Westbank First Nation and/or Okanagan Indian Band to confirm their independent requirements for consultation.

Definitions:

Antenna system: Means an antenna and supporting structure, normally a tower. Most antennas have their own integral mast so they can be fastened directly to a building or a tower.

Co-location: Means the placement of *antenna systems* that are operated by different providers on a single antenna supporting structure.

CPC-2-0-03: Means the Radiocommunication & Broadcasting Antenna Systems Client Procedures Circular.

Height: Means the distance from the lowest ground level at the *antenna system*, including the foundation, to the tallest point of the *antenna system*. Any attempt to artificially reduce the *height* (addition of soil, aggregate, etc.) will not be included in the measurement of the *height* of the *antenna system*.

ISED: Means Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada.

Letter of Concurrence: Means a letter from the RDCO supporting the *proponent's* proposal for the installation of the *antenna system* at the specified location within the RDCO Electoral Areas.

Letter of Non-concurrence: Means a letter from the RDCO signifying non-support for the *proponent's* proposal for the installation of an *antenna system* within the *Regional District*.

Proponent: Means a company, business or organization, including contractors or agents undertaking work for telecommunication carriers, to install or modify an *antenna system*.

Prescribed distance: Means the area surrounding the proposed *antenna system* where property owners and tenants must be notified of the proposal and given the opportunity to provide feedback. The *prescribed distance* encapsulates all properties 150 metres of the boundary of the subject property, or if the subject property is within the Joe Rich Rural Land Use Bylaw area, all properties within 500 metres of the boundary of the subject property.

Regional District: Means the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO).

POLICY STATEMENTS:

Location Guidelines

The RDCO permits telecommunications and similar utility facilities in all zones (Zoning Bylaw No. 871 section 3.12.2), however the intent of this policy is to ensure *antenna systems* are sited and designed to respect local surroundings and community preferences.

The *Regional District* encourages *co-location* of *antenna systems*. This may include:

- 1) The installation of a *proponent's* telecommunication antenna on an existing tower.
- 2) The construction of a new *antenna system* on which other *proponents* are invited to co-locate.
- 3) The reconstruction or modification of an existing *antenna system* to accommodate the equipment of additional *proponents*.
- 4) The relocation of a *proponent's* existing *antenna system* to another *proponent's antenna system* followed by the removal of the redundant antenna structure.

When new *antenna systems* must be constructed, the following locations are preferred:

- 1) Areas that maximize the distance from residential areas, parks and public amenities.
- 2) The utilization of existing structures, transmission towers, utility poles, roof tops and similar structures.
- 3) Areas that utilize existing road access to proposed locations.
- 4) Industrial, commercial and institutional areas.
- 5) Areas that minimize the impact on public views and vistas.
- 6) Agricultural and rural areas where the siting of the *antenna system* will not significantly impact agricultural outcomes or resource production.
- 7) Areas not within sensitive terrestrial and/or sensitive aquatic development permit areas.
- 8) Transportation and utility corridors.

Design Guidelines

- 1) The architectural style of *antenna systems* should be compatible with the surrounding area and adjacent uses.
- 2) The *proponent* should mitigate negative visual impacts through use of appropriate landscaping, screening, and design techniques. Screening may include existing vegetation, landscaping, fencing or other measures to blend with the built and natural environment.
- 3) Where appropriate an *antenna system* may be designed to resemble or integrate with existing built or natural landmark features found in the area.

- 4) In commercial areas, and in parks, public spaces or heritage areas, the design of the *antenna system* should generally be unobtrusive and consider special design treatments.
- 5) *Antenna systems* should have a non-reflective surface and colours that blend into the surroundings.
- 6) Antennas that extend above the top of a supporting utility pole or light standard should appear in terms of colour, shape, and size to be a natural extension of the pole.
- 7) The use of monopoles is strongly encouraged.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The *Proponent* will review the guidelines identified above early in the design process and should attempt to resolve any outstanding issues prior to submitting an *antenna system* siting proposal and undertaking public consultation.

Pre-Application Consultation with the Regional District of Central Okanagan

Prior to submitting an *antenna system* proposal, the *Proponent* will undertake preliminary-application consultation with RDCO Development Services staff for initial guidance on siting, design, consultation and application processes.

The *Proponent* will submit the following information prior to a pre-application meeting:

- 1) The proposed location;
- 2) Potential alternative locations;
- 3) The type and *height* of the proposed *antenna system*; and
- 4) Preliminary site plans, footprint, elevations, drawings or visual renderings of the proposed *antenna system* to depict the context, scale and design of the proposal;

Proposal Submission

The *Proponent* must provide the following when submitting an *antenna system* siting proposal:

- 1) A letter or report from the *Proponent* indicating the need for the proposal, the proposed site, the rationale for site selection, coverage and capacity of existing *antenna systems* in the general area and a summary of opportunities for *co-location* on existing or proposed *antenna systems* within 1,600 meters of the subject proposal;
- 2) Visual renderings of the proposed *antenna system* superimposed to scale;
- 3) A site plan showing the proposed development situated on the site and all setbacks from property boundaries and other structures on site;
- 4) An area map showing all properties within the *prescribed distance* of the proposed *antenna system*;
- 5) Confirmation of legal ownership of the lands subject to the proposal, or a signed letter of authorization from the registered property owner of the land, their agent, or other persons having legal or equitable interest in the land;
- 6) Payment of application fees as prescribed by the RDCO Development Application Fees and Charges Bylaw.

ISED expects that land-use consultation with the RDCO will be completed within 120 days. The consultation period commences once *proponents* have formally submitted the documentation described above.

Notification Requirements

If the proposed *antenna system* is not excluded from public consultation requirements, the *Proponent* will initiate the RDCO's public consultation process. When public consultation is required, mailed notification shall be sent to properties within 150 metres of the subject property, or within 500 metres of the subject property if within the Joe Rich Rural Land Use Bylaw No. 1195 area. The buffer area shall be measured from the lot lines of the subject property.

In addition to the public notification requirements noted above, where proposals are for an *antenna system* over 30 metres in *height*, *proponents* must concurrently place a notice in a local community newspaper circulating in the subject property's area. Electronic notification shall also be posted according to the Regional District of Central Okanagan Public Notice Bylaw No. 1549.

If, during pre-application discussions with the RDCO, Development Services staff determine it may be in the public interest to extend the *prescribed distance*, the *Proponent* will be advised. Furthermore, *proponents* may be asked to:

- 1) Post development application signs at the subject property boundary, and/or
- 2) Host a public information session. Details of the public meeting shall be included in the written notice to properties and published according to the Regional District of Central Okanagan Public Notice Bylaw No. 1549.

The *Proponent* will send mailed notifications to:

- 1) All affected properties owners and tenants within the *prescribed distance*;
- 2) Any local governments within the *prescribed distance*; and
- 3) The ISED regional office.

Mailed notifications shall be sent in an envelope addressed to the "Occupant" and/or "Tenants" and shall clearly show in bold type on the face of the envelope the statement: "NOTICE FOR RESIDENTS: NEW PROPOSED CELL TOWER - INFORMATION IS ENCLOSED."

Mailed notification packages shall include:

- 1) Information on the location, *height*, type, design and colour of the proposed *antenna system*, including a copy of the site plan submitted with the application;
- 2) The rationale, including *height* and location requirements, of the proposed *antenna system*;
- 3) Clear information on the role of ISED as the sole approving authority for the siting of *antenna systems*, consultation requirements, and that the *proponent* has requested a *Letter of Concurrence* from the RDCO Regional Board;
- 4) An attestation that the *antenna system* will respect Health Canada's Safety Code 6 which sets safe radiofrequency emission levels for these devices;
- 5) Guidance to recipients on how and when they can convey their comments to the *proponent*, the *Regional District*, and ISED; and
- 6) Notice of an upcoming information session, if applicable.

Request for Statement of Concurrence

Upon completion of the notification requirements and conclusion of the 30-day consultation period, the *Proponent* shall submit the following to RDCO Development Services Staff:

- 1) An Affidavit of Notification confirming that RDCO's public notification requirements have been fulfilled, and that the *proponent* has contacted Westbank First Nation and/or Okanagan Indian Band to confirm their independent requirements for consultation.
- 2) A copy of all public consultation materials distributed by the *proponent*.
- 3) Copies of all correspondence received in response to the public notification.

Based on a review of the application and public correspondence received, RDCO Development Services will prepare a staff report and recommendation for Regional Board consideration. The Regional Board may direct staff to:

- 1) Issue a *Letter of Concurrence*, expressing support for the *antenna system* where the proposal conforms with the guidelines as set out within this policy, and with community interests.
- 2) Issue a *Letter of Non-concurrence* where the proposal does not sufficiently align with *Regional District* policies and community interests.

A *Letter of Concurrence* is valid for 3 years from the date of issuance.

***** END OF POLICY *****

REVISION HISTORY				
Version	Date	Revision description/ Summary of Changes	Responsible Department	Approved by
V1.0	2025-06-19	New policy	Development & Engineering Services	Regional Board