

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Case No. 25-2931-PET

Petition of Bell Atlantic Mobile Systems, LLC requesting a certificate of public good, pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248a, authorizing the installation of wireless telecommunications equipment at 1030 Route 100 South, Rochester, Vermont	
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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMENTS

On November 24, 2025, Vertex Towers, LLC and Bell Atlantic Mobile Systems, LLC d/b/a Verizon Wireless (“Verizon”) (together “Vertex” or “Petitioner”), filed an application with the Vermont Public Utility Commission (“Commission”), pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248a, for approval to construct a telecommunications tower (“Project”) on a plot of land located at 1030 Route 100 in Rochester, Vermont (“Facility”). The Facility will consist of a 140’ above ground lattice tower inside a 50’ x 50’ compound with associated equipment and appurtenances. The Commission deemed the Petition administratively complete on December 12, 2025. The Facility will be located on property owned by Julia W. and Charles W. Martin.

Based on the application, supporting testimony, and accompanying exhibits, the Petitioner proposes the following:

1. Construction of a 140’ lattice tower;
2. Construction of a 50’ x 50’ gravel compound enclosed by either a 6’ or 12’ chain link fence¹;
3. Installation of nine (9) total panel antennas, three (3) each on three (3) sectors mounted at 135’ above ground level, six (6) measuring 72” x 11.9”, and two (2) measuring 28.9” x 15.75”;

¹ Prefiled Direct Testimony of Scott Adams at 2 states that the fence will be 6’ high; Prefiled Direct Testimony of Martin J. Lavin at 2 states that the fence will be 12’ high.

4. Installation of six (6) remote radio head units, two (2) per sector mounted behind antennas, none of which will contribute to any visible surface area;
5. Installation of one (1) OVP distribution box measuring 29.5" x 16.5" mounted to one of the sectors;
6. Construction of a 12' x 20' shed east of the tower within the compound;
7. Construction of gravel access road from route 100, totaling approximately 8,833 square feet of permanent earth disturbance;
8. Installation of a generator on a 12' x 10' concrete pad with a fuel tank under the generator;
9. Installation of utilities to be installed along the new gravel road from Route 100 to the gravel compound; and
10. Installation of ancillary improvements, equipment, and appurtenances necessary to the completion of the Project.

The Vermont Department of Public Service ("Department") has reviewed the Petitioner's application and accompanying exhibits and maintains that the Project raises a few areas of concern regarding the Section 248a criteria subject to the Department's review. The Project will improve telecommunications coverage in the area by expanding Verizon service while allowing potential collocation from other service providers but may have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area or aesthetics because the Project would be visible along sections of scenic road Route 100. The Rochester Planning Commission submitted a comment on December 30, 2025, identifying several issues with the Project and recommending that the PUC schedule an evidentiary hearing. The Rochester Select Board filed a comment on January 6, 2026, concluding that the project does not comply with Rochester's town plan. Vertex states that its coverage goals cannot be met by other locations and states that its equipment is already located on the nearest facilities other than the church steeple, which Vertex claims is unable to support an additional

carrier. However, Vertex has not supplied any engineering evaluation regarding the possibility of collocating on the steeple, nor has Vertex indicated that they have reached out to the owner to discuss modifications that could allow collocation on the steeple. The Two-Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission submitted a comment on December 16, 2025, finding that the Project would not comply with regional planning policies including policies related to impact on forest blocks, tree clearing, and scenic byways. Three members of the public have commented stating their concerns for the aesthetic and orderly development impacts of the Project. Given the interest in the aesthetics impact of the Project and the Rochester Planning Commission's request, the Department intends to hire an aesthetics consultant to evaluate the impact of the Project.

Based on the foregoing, the Department respectfully recommends that the Commission issue a scheduling conference order to allow for a site visit and further litigation of the Project.

DATED at Montpelier, Vermont this 12th day of January 2026.

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE

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cc: ePUC Service List