Request for Siting Concurrence for Communications Antenna Structure Proposed for 21903 - 128 Avenue

Recommendation:

THAT Council direct staff to provide TELUS with a letter of siting concurrence by City of Maple Ridge Council for the communications antenna structure proposed for 21903 – 128 Avenue.

Report Purpose and Summary Statement:	To present an overview of the now-completed consultation process for the TELUS communications antenna structure proposed for 21903 – 128 Avenue and to petition Council for a siting concurrence for same.
Strategic Alignment:	Liveable Community; Diversified, Thriving Economy; Governance & Corporate Excellence
Applicable Legislation/ Bylaw/Policy:	Telecommunications Antenna Structure Siting Policy (Policy 5.59)

To: Mayor and Council

Request for Siting Concurrence for Communications Antenna Structure Proposed for 21903 - 128 Avenue

BACKGROUND:

TELUS Communications (TELUS) has approached the City of Maple Ridge with its plans to install a 47-metre tall monopole communications antenna structure to be located at 21903 128 Avenue. The property is a privately-owned, 29-acre agricultural property which currently consists of agricultural land, a residential home, and several storage sheds/barns.

TELUS has shared that the demand for cellular communications bandwidth continues to escalate as consumers and first responders alike rely more on wireless devices such as smartphones, tablets and laptops for business and personal use. TELUS has identified service gaps in its coverage within the north-west quadrant of Maple Ridge and has proposed the installation of the new antenna to improve network performance.

The antenna structure and facilities are proposed to be located near the west lot line and set back approximately 100 metres from 128 Avenue (Attachment A). The proposed site and location is a result of many considerations, including existing structures, towers and rooftops which were initially reviewed during the site selection process. After examination, TELUS has determined that there are no existing viable structures in the area that would be suitable for the operations of its network equipment.

ANALYSIS:

Discussion:

To support the orderly development and efficient operation of radiocommunications in Canada, Section 5 of the Federal *Radiocommunication Act* assigns oversight and approval of communications antenna structures to ISED. ISED considers all matters it deems relevant for the issuance of authorizations and approvals for each site on which radio/communications antenna structures are proposed to be located.

To secure the necessary approvals to install or modify a communications antenna system from the Federal Government's Innovation, Science and Economic Development Agency (ISED), telecommunications carriers and other proponents of antenna structures, are required to complete a structured public consultation process and respond to concerns that arise from the process ahead of securing siting concurrence from the local land use authority. The public engagement and approval process is outlined in ISED's Client Procedures Circulate (CPC-2-0-03-Issue 6-July 2022). Unless exempt from consultation, telecommunications carriers, broadcasting undertakings and third-party tower owners must notify and consult with the public, either by following ISED's default public consultation process or that of the respective land use authority.

Upon completion of the public consultation process, proponents are asked to seek siting concurrence from the land use authority, in this case, the City, stating that it is satisfied with the proposed location of the antenna structure, the outcomes of the public consultation process and that any/all existing siting protocols have been respected.

Staff are satisfied that TELUS has followed both ISED's and the City's protocols as related to public consultation which completed in early October and are now recommending that Council pass a resolution indicating siting concurrence. Through its consulting agency Cypress Lands, TELUS has followed the directives included within the City's Telecommunications Antenna Structure Siting Policy No. 5.59 and has recently completed the public engagement requirements for this proposed installation as per the following timeline;

- May 26, 2025: TELUS submitted an Information Package to City staff formalizing the initiation of the consultation process for the proposed tower (Attachment C).
- August 18, 2025: Notification Packages were issued to residents who fell within a radius of 500 metres of the proposed location - 66 notification packages were mailed out (Attachment B).
- August 22, 2025: An advertisement was placed in the Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows News, inviting interested residents to attend an Open House as related to the proposed installation.
- September 24, 2025: An open house was held at the Golden Ears United Church.
- On October 6, 2025, the consultation period concluded. During the consultation period, 18 comments were received. Of those, 16 comments were related to concerns over radio frequency waves and community health and safety, one comment was related to the appearance of the proposed antenna structure against the scenic backdrop, and one comment queried why the Cascadia tower to the west was not considered.

TELUS connected with each of the individuals who submitted comments and explained that concerns as related to health and safety are not considered relevant to ISED, given that antenna proponents are each mandated to conform to Health Canada's Safety Code 6 which dictates the recommended safe limits of human exposure to radio frequency electromagnetic energy. A preliminary calculation the level of radio frequency electromagnetic emissions from the proposed antenna structure, has been completed as per City policy, which indicates that the maximum permitted electromagnetic output from the structure at ground level is .15% of Safety Code 6.

TELUS further explained that the proposed antenna site is set well back from nearby homes and situated among mature trees, which will help to partially screen the structure and is well back from 128 Avenue (approximately 100 metres) and from the urban area (over 500 metres); all of which help limit visibility of the structure and exposures to electromagnetic energy. The placement of the structure on the north side of 128 Avenue increases the setback from most homes in the area and is an alternative to the placement of a tower in the urban area. Lastly, TELUS advised that it already has plans to utilize the westerly Cascadia Tower in support of providing enhanced coverage within the north-west quadrant of the community.

As the consultation period has concluded and the public concerns have been addressed, TELUS has requested written siting concurrence from Council for this proposed installation. Staff have reviewed TELUS's adherence to the City's Policy 5.59 and are satisfied that its (the City's) policy directives as related to antenna structure siting have been respected. Staff have requested that TELUS paint the proposed antenna structure green to better blend in with the surrounding tree cover.

Accordingly, staff are recommending Council concurrence of the proposed antenna structure

Strategic Alignment:

While they are regulated under existing Federal regulations, communications antenna structures can be located on any property irrespective of local land use, zoning or community plan designation. Locating them in areas that respect the proximity to residential structures and neighbourhoods as well as incorporating respectful antenna design would align with Council's Policy 5.59 and its priorities focussing on Liveable Community, Diversified, Thriving Economy, and Governance & Corporate Excellence.

Applicable Legislation/Bylaw/Policy:

The legislation applicable to communications antenna structures is developed and approved at the Federal Government level. The City has in place, Policy 5.59 - Telecommunications Antenna Structure Siting Policy, which staff utilize to guide telecommunications carriers and their applications. Staff are satisfied that TELUS has adhered to the both the Federal standards as related to these types of installations as well as the City's Policy.

OPTIONS & IMPLICATIONS:

TELUS explored several alternative locations in the area to best achieve its network coverage objectives and eliminate coverage gaps. The proposed location allows TELUS to meet these network coverage objectives. If the request for siting concurrence is not approved by Council, the matter would be referred to ISED for review and resolution of any outstanding concerns expressed by Council.

CONCLUSION:

With the demand for communications and cellular bandwidth increasing, TELUS is proposing to install a 47-metre tall monopole communications antenna structure at 21903 128 Avenue with the aim of improving service to its customers in the area. The proposed location, the siting and proposed tower design follow the City's Telecommunications Antenna Structure Siting Policy 5.59 which was developed to guide these types of proposals and installations. Accordingly, staff are recommending Council's concurrence of the siting.

Darrell Denton, Manager - Corporate Properties

Attachments:

(A) Location of Proposed TELUS Antenna Structure
(B) TELUS Open House – Public Notice Circular

(C) Request for Concurrence for a TELUS Tower Installation Letter from Cypress Land Services

Appendix A: Location of Proposed TELUS Antenna Structure

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Request for Concurrence for Communications Antenna Structure Proposed for 21903 128 Avenue.docx
Attachments:	- B 10-24-25 TELUS - 21903 - 128 Ave - Notification Package.pdf - C 10-24-25 TELUS - 21903 - 128 Ave - Request Letter.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Dec 3, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Chad Neufeld, Manager of Parks Planning & Development

Valoree Richmond, Director of Facilities, Parks and Properties

James Stiver, Director of Planning and Building

Stephane Labonne, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

Scott Hartman, Chief Administrative Officer