



# BROADBAND STRATEGY AND SMALL CELL DEPLOYMENT

To successfully implement the City’s Digital Inclusion and Broadband Strategy, a robust citywide public and private sector digital infrastructure is required. The City currently partners with telecommunication companies that maintain antennas across the City, many of which are installed on City property, such as streetlights, traffic lights, and rooftops. These antennas are known as "small cells". The City seeks to leverage small cell technology, which will offer enhanced voice and data capacity citywide, improve emergency communication capability, and pave the way for the equitable deployment of 5G broadband technology. As of September 2018, the City has agreements with AT&T, Mobilitie, and Verizon.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: What are small cells?

A: Small cells are small radio antenna equipment installed on streetlights, rooftops, and other locations as a primary way to deliver 5G (Fifth Generation) mobile technology. The City of San José Small Cell Deployment relies upon installing small cell equipment on city-owned streetlights to meet the network design needs of this latest version of mobile technology.



Q: What are the benefits of small cell technology?

A: Small cell technology offers enhanced voice and data capacity citywide, improves emergency communication capability, and paves the way for the equitable deployment of 5G broadband technology. Additionally, allowing small cells generates revenue for the San José Digital Inclusion Partnership to support efforts to close the digital divide for the residents of San José, with a focus on low-income youth as well as other vulnerable populations.

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such as the elderly and disabled, providing affordable broadband service, devices, and digital literacy to underserved communities. All income received from small cell usage fee revenue is to be allocated to the Digital Inclusion Program Fund.

**Q:** What is the City doing to ensure aesthetic appeal and design?

**A:** The City of San Jose understands the need to ensure aesthetic appeal when considering infrastructure enhancements and is devoted to developing sensible, fair, and safe small cell design and permitting guidelines that deliberately address aesthetic appeal.

**Q:** How is the City using this opportunity to help under served communities?

**A:** San José has chosen to dedicate the usage fees generated from leasing streetlights to target digital inclusion. 95,000 San Jose residents do not have access to high-speed internet at home. The commitment to equity and making a difference sets the City of San Jose apart as a leader. Learn more about the Digital Inclusion Partnership Grants at [sjdigitalinclusion.org](http://sjdigitalinclusion.org).

**Q:** What is the notification process for any small cell site?

**A:** After a mobile carrier reserves a streetlight location with the City, they are required to mail certified notice to all occupants within a 250-foot radius of the site for a 20-day notice period. The carriers are available to answer questions and receive feedback on the site. Once a permit is reviewed and approved, carriers or their construction contractors are required to publicly notice within 300-feet of the site at least 72-hours before construction begins.

**Q:** I am a San José resident. What if I want the location of a small cell site moved?

**A:** While the City may not deny the permit based on health or environmental impact concerns, you may contact the mobile carrier or their engineering firm and request reconsideration of the site location. Some carriers use multiple engineering firms for their small cell deployment, so please check the mailed notice letter you received to confirm the correct carrier or engineering company working on behalf of the carrier. These contacts include:

#### AT&T

- Ericsson or Sure-Site, [escsd@sure-site.com](mailto:escsd@sure-site.com)
- Modus, [info@modus-corp.com](mailto:info@modus-corp.com) or 415-898-1102
- Pramira, contact the Small Cell Project Mailbox at 1-800-678-1169 Ext: 2084 or [smallcellsanjose@pramira.com](mailto:smallcellsanjose@pramira.com)

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## Mobilitie

- Mobilitie, [norcalpermits@mobilitie.com](mailto:norcalpermits@mobilitie.com)

## Verizon

- The CBR Group, [projects@theCBRgroup.com](mailto:projects@theCBRgroup.com)

Q: If there is a City streetlight in my yard and not on the sidewalk, can a small cell be installed?

A: Yes, the City allows companies to lease its streetlights including a limited number of streetlights located on private property through a public service easement, which enables the City to install, own, and operate the streetlight pole on private property as if it were fully in the public right-of-way.

Q: What infrastructure in the public right way is not under the city's design control?

A: The City has limited control over PG&E (wood) poles. The City is not the landlord of this private infrastructure; therefore the City's involvement is limited to safety inspection related to construction and traffic management, which is designated in [sections 7901 and 7901.1 of the California Public Utility Code](#). The City is not legally able to enforce design standards on PG&E wood poles or poles managed by the Northern California Joint Pole Association. Design approval, permitting, and control of these poles reside with the California Public Utilities Commission as defined by [General Order Number 95](#).

Q: How is the City working with other government entities to address safety concerns?

A: The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) studies and regulates the use of radio frequencies across the electromagnetic spectrum. The safety of radio waves has been extensively studied by government agencies and health groups that set standards continuously review this research. The World Health Organization (WHO) [concludes](#), "Considering the very low exposure levels and research results collected to date, there is no convincing scientific evidence that the weak RF signals from base stations and wireless networks cause adverse health effects."

Additionally, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [concludes](#), "Based on the FDA's ongoing evaluation, the available epidemiological and cancer incidence data continues to support the Agency's determination that there are no quantifiable adverse health effects in humans caused by exposures at or under the current cell phone exposure limits."

While small cells must meet FCC-approved radiated emission levels for the currently accepted health safety guidelines, the City of San José is encouraging federal agencies to update health studies on wireless communications.

The FCC preempts cities from denying any small cell permit based on health concerns or the environmental effects of radio frequencies under Section 332(c)(7) of the Communications Act.

For more information, please refer to the [FCC's Safety FAQ](#) and the [Cancer.org Safety Information page](#). Additional details can be found at the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#), the [National Cancer Institute](#), and the [World Health Organization](#).

### **Small Cell Guidelines**

The City of San José partners with telecommunications companies installing small cell equipment on City-owned property to ensure there are reasonable and consistent guidelines that help streamline the permitting review and approval process. The City is committed to design standards that integrate into the existing streetlights, minimize visual impact, and remain safe and secure.

[Small Cell Permit and Design Guidelines \[March 04, 2021\]](#)

[Small Cell Screening Map](#)

Contact Information and Community Outreach, email: [broadband@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:broadband@sanjoseca.gov)

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