Delegated Action of the Executive Director

PROJECT
Beltsville Agricultural Research Center Water Tower AT&T Antenna Modification
10300 Baltimore Avenue
Beltsville, Maryland

SUBMITTED BY
United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service

NCPC FILE NUMBER
8817

NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER
3212.10(38.30)46279

ACTION TAKEN
Approved preliminary and final building plans

REVIEW AUTHORITY
Advisory
Per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), on behalf of AT&T, proposes to modify existing antennas located at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center's water tank near Beaver Dam Road in Beltsville, Maryland. The purpose of the proposed upgrade is to enhance wireless coverage and capacity, including support for the National Public Safety Broadband Network (FirstNet). AT&T proposes to remove six antennas, nine remote radio heads (RRHs), and three diplexers and install nine new antennas and nine new RRHs. All antennas are to be mounted to the existing water tank mounts.

Three new antennas will be installed in three existing sectors (Alpha, Beta, and Gamma). Each sector will receive one Ericsson antenna and two different CELLMAX antennas. The proposed Ericsson Air6472 B77G B77M antennas measure 36.41"H by 16.14"W by 7.48"D; the proposed CELLMAX CMA-UBTULBULBHHP-6516-16-21-21 antennas measure 72.4"H by 27.2"W by 7.7"D, and the proposed CELLMAX 120716 antennas measure 72.5"H by 16.4"W by 5.3"D. The proposed antennas are not significantly larger than the existing antennas that will be removed and the project is consistent with the use of the water tower as a mounting location for other telecommunications antennas. AT&T has also run a Maximum Permissible Exposure (MPE) report that analyzes the Radio Frequency exposure. As a result, AT&T will post signs where required and will comply with (Federal Communications Commission) FCC regulations.

USDA initiated consultation with the Maryland State Historic Trust (MHT) for this proposal pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 process. MHT concurred with a finding of no adverse effect on historic properties on October 14, 2026. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the USDA stated its use of a categorical exclusion that pertains to the repair or replacement of structural components or equipment. As this is a federal project located in the environs, NCPC does not have an independent NEPA or Section 106 responsibility for this project.

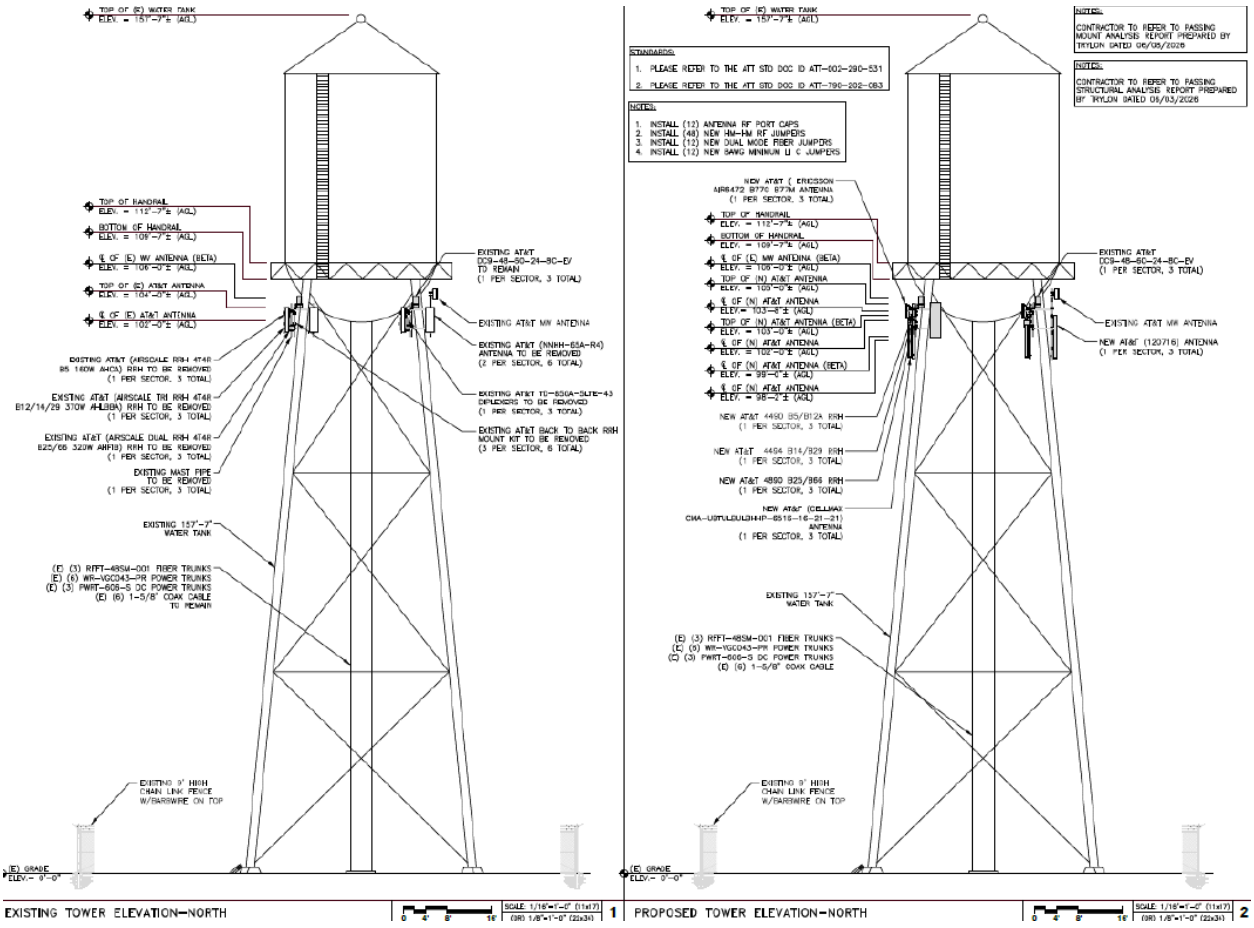


Figure 1: Existing Tower Elevation (left) and Proposed Tower Elevation (right)

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Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on March 6, 2025 and per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1), I approve the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center Water Tower AT&T Antenna Modification located at 10300 Baltimore Avenue in Beltsville, Maryland for a period not to exceed five years.

Diane Sullivan
Acting Executive Director

Date