Cowen and Company 45th Annual Technology Conference

Most States Will Join FirstNet, AT&T's Donovan Says

AT&T is working with FirstNet on developing state plans and aims to be ready to share those with governors for their evaluation on or around June 19. “We expect most, if not all, states will join” the effort to deploy a nationwide first responder communications network, says AT&T Chief Strategy Officer and Group President of Technology and Operations John Donovan.

He told attendees of the Cowen and Company 45th Annual Technology, Media and Telecom Conference the carrier began planning for the project early in the year, so when the contract was awarded they’d be ready to move. AT&T believes it will be able to give states the opportunity to be on the carrier’s commercial network by the end of this year, rather than waiting until sometime in 2018. They’d have “preemption,” he explained, “so when all hell is breaking loose and states need to get on the network they can.”

FirstNet gives AT&T the ability to deploy all of its spectrum gained in different auctions all at once in every market. Though the carrier has five years for buildout, Donovan says it will move as fast as it can. FirstNet has “unlocked an opportunity for us to get an economical way to deploy spectrum,” making AT&T's network “more comprehensive, faster and reliable.”

North Carolina

Easier Cell Tower Placement Across the State Could Be Voted In Today
Better wireless service and easier 5G upgrades is the goal of a North Carolina State House bill tentatively approved yesterday. House Bill 310 will allow technology companies to install 50-foot poles in the public right-of-way, and limit how cities restrict wireless infrastructure placement. Rep. Scott Stone stated, “What this does is give some clarity to what cities can do … and to what the industry can do in deploying small cell towers.” The final House vote will be held today, June 1. The preliminary vote passed overwhelmingly in favor of the tower industry, 105-6.

The bill has spurred a Crown Castle request to install four small cells in Piper Glen, a Charlotte suburb. The Charlotte Observer explained residents of the neighborhood adamantly oppose the installation of the antennas, and even shouted down company representatives at a recent information meeting. H.B. 130 would allow Crown Castle to install the equipment on street lights, telephone poles, and free-standing poles in the neighborhood, and in other locations across the state as needed.

Canada
Public-Private Partnership May Reduce Cellular Dead Zones in Eastern Ontario
The non-profit Eastern Ontario Regional Network was instrumental in bringing about a $175 million broadband project to the region; it’s proposed a new project to invest $213 million to bring improved cell service to Eastern Ontario. Currently one-quarter of the region’s inhabitants have no access to cellular service, according to the EORN, while an additional 28-40 percent of estimated inhabitants have “inadequate capacity to provide high quality mobile broadband service,” reports Mobile Syrup.

The organization attributes this lack of cell coverage to minimal carrier investment in rural areas due to ROI concerns. But EORN Chair J. Murray Jones believes mobile broadband should be brought to the region, just as broadband internet recently was. “Too often, Eastern Ontarians find themselves with no signal or dropped cell services. EORN is building on the investment we’ve already made in fiber optics across the region to close the gap in cell services and improve economic growth, quality of life and public safety,” Jones said in a press release.

The group has proposed bundling the project with another that would build out a public safety broadband network to connect first responders. It estimates the combined cost of the two projects would be $299 million—which is about $47 million less than if the two projects were built separately.

Colorado
Fort Collins Ponders Build-Out of Its Own ISP Using Public Utilities
Oftentimes, municipalities will partner with private ISPs to provide internet service as a public utility. But one Colorado city—Fort Collins—is considering a ballot initiative that would give it authority to develop its own internet network through the city’s Light and Power Utility, reports Community Networks.

The ballot initiative, which would be voted on this upcoming November, would change the city charter to enable the Light and Power Utility to provide internet service. It may also ask voters to consent to allowing municipal bonds to
fund the build-out of the network infrastructure, which could cost an estimated $125 to $140 million.

In 2015, the city’s partnership with the private, Canadian-owned company Axia fell through, prompting the municipality to weigh other options for providing a municipal-wide network. That same year, 83 percent of voters chose to opt out of SB 152, which discouraged Colorado municipalities from building out their own networks.

Local public officials have cited this vote as a sign that residents favor the build-out of a locally owned and operated network, provided through the city government. City Council member Ross Cunniff told Community Networks that voters are more than ready. “When I talk to citizens, really the main question on their minds isn’t ‘should we?’ It’s, ‘Why haven't you gotten around to do it yet?’”

**North Carolina**

**Crowdsourced Broadband Data Might Finally Bring Service to Rural Areas**

North Carolina’s state technology agency unveiled a new tool for measuring broadband speeds statewide, reports Statescoop.com. This portion of a long-term infrastructure plan could bring improved connectivity to rural areas throughout the state, since current laws limit broadband competition, restricting access to wireless service.

The new tool will use a map to show which areas have broadband access, the number of providers available, and encourage residents to share their broadband availability to validate and refine data. This information will be shared with the FCC and can influence the amount of grant funding the state receives, hopefully moving to increase coverage in underserved areas. The state Department of Technology states the data will help "prioritize future projects and expand broadband to communities that need it most," in a press release. [Continue Reading](#)

**Inside Towers Survey**

**LAST CHANCE TO WIN!**

This is the last week our survey will be open! It's important to connect with our loyal subscribers. That's why Inside Towers periodically runs surveys. Trade five minutes of time (only 15 brief questions!) for an opportunity to win a $150 Amazon gift card. Access the survey [here](#). One entry per subscriber. Thanks for being a part of our valued Tower Tribe!

**Tower Ticker**

**May 31, 2017 at Close**
## Stock Market Summary

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**Wisconsin**

**Tower Company Tells County “We Are Not Going To Sue You”**

Vital Statistics: Bug Tussel Wireless is willing to invest $6 million for expanding wireless service in La Crosse County by building six towers.
A heated dispute over the construction of a 200-foot cell tower can still end without legal action. The La Crosse County Board rejected a proposal for the tower submitted by Bug Tussel Wireless in March. The intention was to build a tower in the town of Holland. The *La Crosse Tribune* reported the conflict was mostly over the contractors initially hired by the wireless company, and the location of the proposed tower.

Steven Schneider, president and CEO of Hilbert Communications, Bug Tussel’s parent organization, assured members of the board, legal action would not be necessary to bring high-speed wireless access to the county. His company wants to invest $6 million to build six towers in other locations. To build public trust, Schneider said, “We are not going to sue you.”

Bug Tussel is partnering with AT&T and T-Mobile to build out service in the rural county. Schneider has specific plans concerning four potential towers, and hopes the board will approve accommodations made for the county. Board members are already more open to the changes. Committee Chair Tina Wehrs told Schneider, “We’re not anti-broadband or anti-progress in this county. We look forward to them being placed in the right spots.”

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**International**

**China**

**China Tower IPO Scheduled For Q4 2017 or Early 2018**

China Tower is going public in the next six-to-eight months. It owns and manages mobile tower infrastructure on the Chinese mainland for all three of the nation’s cellular providers and, according to *Reuters*, has invited investment banks to submit proposals for a role in the firm’s initial public offering. The IPO is due to take place between Q4 2017 and Q2 2018 and is expected to raise up to U.S. $10 billion, according to *TeleGeography*.

Established in September 2014, China Tower combines the site portfolios of the three mobile network operators (MNOs) with China Mobile having the largest stake at 38 percent. China Unicom and China Telecom split the remaining shares with six percent held by state asset-management group China Reform Holding.

**United Kingdom**

**UK Broadcast and Cell Tower Giant Arqiva Begins Sale Process**

The sale of Britain’s “biggest wireless mast owner, Arqiva” will formally begin this week, according to *The Telegraph*. The inventory of cell and broadcast towers blanketing the UK is expected to fetch up to the equivalent of $7.7 billion in U.S. currency.

The bidding will be spurred on by the government’s encouragement and potential subsidies. British PM Theresa May said 95 percent of the UK will get a signal by 2022, and major roads and rail links will enjoy uninterrupted coverage by then with the Labour Party making similar predictions.

Interested parties include: Cellnex Telecom (Spain); Cheung Kong Infrastructure Holdings (China), the holding company of Hong Kong’s richest man Li Ka-shing; GIC (Singapore), Allianz (Germany); and TDF Group (France).
Pennsylvania

State Vows To Match Unclaimed Federal Funds for Rural Internet Deployment

Across the nation, federal subsidies are granted to facilitate the deployment of rural broadband internet, approximately $1.8 billion per year. But sometimes these funds are turned down by wireless carriers and ISPs due to high deployment costs and low potential return on investments, as is the case in rural Pennsylvania, reports The Item.

For example, Verizon and large ISPs have turned down $138 million over a six-year period to improve rural broadband connectivity in western Pennsylvania. But in order to keep that money in the state, Pennsylvania has offered to match that subsidy in the form of credits to fund rural broadband service. Continue Reading

NATE’s Unmanned Aerial Systems Video Debuts at Drone Focus Show

The National Association of Tower Erectors (NATE) unveiled an Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) safety video as part of Volume 2 of the popular Climber Connection series. The UAS Operations video was showcased by NATE during a main stage presentation at the 2017 Drone Focus Conference in Fargo, North Dakota yesterday. The 2017 Drone Focus Conference is a prominent annual gathering of commercial UAS enthusiasts from throughout the United States. U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao, U.S. Senator John Hoeven (R-ND) and North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum all attended and participated in the event.

The NATE UAS Operations video shines a spotlight on the important role that drones are playing in the communications tower industry. The video also provides
a detailed overview on the best practices associated with conducting drone operations at a tower site, the current regulatory environment governing commercial drone operations and the industry resources available to UAS operators to ensure these activities are performed safely and efficiently.

Additionally, the video includes aerial footage of a tower crew using a drone at a tower site. Continue Reading

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**Tower Tribe**

**Strachan To Direct Office of Legislative Affairs at FCC**

Tim Strachan has been promoted to director of the Office of Legislative Affairs, the FCC’s primary liaison to Congress. The move enables him to continue work he has been doing as acting director. He joined the office as an attorney in 2008.

Strachan has an interesting backstory. In addition to his work at the FCC, he’s a motivational speaker as well as a color analyst covering University of Maryland football games for the Maryland Sports Radio Network. Strachan was a quarterback for Maryland’s DeMatha High School and was courted by several universities. He was paralyzed in a swimming accident before his senior year in high school. Strachan then joined the Maryland football program as a student assistant coach from 1996 to 1999 and earned an undergraduate degree in communication. He earned his law degree from Georgetown University Law Center and then worked as counsel to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary where he concentrated on civil legal policy.

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**Network Equipment & Services**

Tower-Pro.com, Inside Towers’ companion Buyer’s Guide has over 3,500 listings in 130+ categories. Each month we will be featuring one of our primary categories. This month, we’re highlighting Network Equipment &
Services.

Should your company be in one of these categories?
See if you’re listed and if you only have a basic listing, find out why you should upgrade [here](#).

We will be randomly highlighting our enhanced listings in Inside Towers for added exposure.
Email us with questions or for assistance.

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**Tower Calendar**

**Live NATE Webinar: Achieving Operational Excellence and Profitability Through Safety**

**June 15, 11-12 p.m. EST**

Edwin G. Foulke, Jr., former Secretary of Labor for OSHA, will be conducting a live NATE webinar entitled Achieving Operational Excellence and Profitability Through Safety. Companies benefit when management is committed to workplace safety and health. It is crucial that employers maintain safe workplaces for both practical and legal reasons. Discover how to develop a strategic and tactical safety system and achieve operational excellence. Explore real benefits and learn how an effective safety system can assist in protecting a brand and reputation. In addition, learn how, when used properly, safety compliance can be a "profit center" and not another administrative cost. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

**Mid-Atlantic Educational and Networking Summit**

**June 8, 2017, National Museum of the Marine Corps, Virginia**

Please join the Virginia Wireless Association and Warriors4Wireless on Thursday, June 8 for the 2017 Mid-Atlantic 5G Educational and Networking event. We are thrilled to have Major General (ret.) Kevin Kennedy and John Hunter, Senior Director of Technology and Engineering Policy for T-Mobile, speak at the event. After they speak, we will enjoy networking with colleagues at a social reception! The Event runs from 5:30 p.m. through 8:30 p.m. at the National Museum of the Marine Corps!! For more information and to register, click [here](#).

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**Bankruptcy Sale of Cell Tower Lease**

**Location** - 2230 Tierra Verde Road, Chula Vista, CA.

- Sale to occur on June 29, 2017, 2:00 p.m., Dept. 3, US Bkrtcy Court 325 West F St., San Diego, CA.
- **Purchase Price** $308,000 – initial overbid $15,000 and thereafter increments of $5,000.
- Overbidder must deposit $61,200 as deposit no later than June 22, 2017 and provide proof of financial ability
to close transaction.

For complete, further information contact Gary Rudolph, 619-595-3225, email Rudolph@sullivanhill.com.

An upgrade for a local telco company in Winchester, Queensland Australia. The site is a 100 meter guyed mast. Photo by Scott Davies @scottdavies13 contributed via Instagram.

Keep current throughout the day.

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