

Town of Three Rivers

RADIO AND TELECOMMUNICATION TOWER PROTOCOL

Protocol # TRP-1

Date of Approval: December 11, 2025

Approved By: Town Council

Part 1 – Title

This Protocol shall be referred to as the "Town of Three Rivers Radio & Telecommunication Tower Protocol" and is referred to herein as the "Protocol."

Part 2 – Protocol Intention

To provide guidelines for the municipal process and public consultation requirements related to applications to establish and/or expand telecommunications towers, antenna systems, and related facilities in the Town of Three Rivers. This Protocol applies to all telecommunications facilities, including but not limited to telecommunications/cell towers, antenna systems, and related structures, unless otherwise excluded by federal protocol.

Part 3 – Objectives

The objectives of this Protocol are to:

- Encourage consultation and engagement between telecommunications Applicants and the Town to facilitate development of telecommunications facilities consistent with the Town's land use objectives.
- Ensure land use compatibility considerations are evaluated during the site selection and planning process for telecommunications facilities.
- Establish siting guidelines for telecommunications facilities within the Town of Three Rivers.
- Protect sensitive uses and natural features by encouraging the siting of new telecommunications facilities in a manner that minimizes adverse visual and environmental impacts, and to ensure adherence to Health Canada requirements.
- Ensure public consultation process for telecommunications facility applications within the Town of Three Rivers has taken place as required under the default federal protocol.
- Ensure compliance with the federal protocol for telecommunications facility applications.
- Facilitate efficient processing and review of applications.

Part 4 – Definitions

Antenna System:

An exterior transmitting device or group of devices used to receive and/or transmit radio-frequency (RF) signals, microwave signals, or other federally licensed communications energy. Antenna Systems include the antenna and may include a supporting tower, mast, or other supporting structure, and an equipment shelter.

The Protocol most commonly refers to the two following system types:

- Freestanding Antenna System: A structure (e.g., tower, mast) constructed from the ground for the purpose of hosting an Antenna System or systems.
- Building/Structure-Mounted Antenna System: An Antenna System mounted on an existing non-tower structure such as a building wall, rooftop, light standard, water tower, or utility pole.

Applicant:

A company, organization, or their designate, proposing to establish or modify an antenna system for the purpose of providing radiocommunication/telecommunications services.

CAO:

The Town of Three Rivers Chief Administrative Officer, their designate, or successor.

Co-Location:

The placement of antennas and equipment operated by one or more Applicants on a telecommunications antenna system operated by a different Applicant, creating a shared facility.

Hazard Area:

Areas where natural or built conditions could make development unsafe, including but not limited to environmental buffer zones, areas subject to rising sea levels or historic flooding, and areas of coastal erosion.

Letter of Concurrence:

A formal letter issued by the Town indicating support following the completion of application and consultation processes.

Natural Feature:

Features and areas including wetlands, significant coastal wetlands, fish habitat, significant woodlands, habitat of endangered or threatened species, significant wildlife habitat, and areas of natural or scientific interest.

Residential Area:

A built-up area zoned for residential uses, or an undeveloped area zoned for future residential uses.

Rural Area:

Areas outside designated urban or rural settlement areas as shown in the Land Use Schedules of the Town of Three Rivers Official Plan and Development Bylaw.

Sensitive Uses:

Uses, buildings, amenity areas, or outdoor spaces where routine activities would experience adverse effects from a proposed development. This includes, but is not limited to, residential uses and community uses such as parks and open spaces.

Tower:

All types of tower structures used to support one or more antenna systems or telecommunications infrastructure, including guyed towers, self-supported towers, poles, masts, or other structures, whether ground-mounted or attached to a building.

Town:

The Town of Three Rivers.

Part 5 – Jurisdiction And Roles

Federal Jurisdiction

The Government of Canada is the approval authority for telecommunications infrastructure, including antenna systems, under the Radiocommunication Act. Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) administer federal requirements and makes the final determination regarding the approval and siting of telecommunications facilities.

The Government of Canada also establishes health and safety standards and protocols which telecommunications service providers must follow.

Municipal Role

Under this Protocol, the Town is the Land Use Authority (LUA). The Town's role is to consult with Applicants regarding local preferences for antenna system siting and design, and to identify any land use compatibility concerns. The Town will assist Applicants in facilitating public consultation as required by federal protocol, including consultation with external agencies as appropriate.

The Town will create a consultation framework consistent with ISED's Client Procedures Circular CPC-2-0-03.

The Town will endeavour to complete the land use consultation process within 120 days of receiving a complete application. Issuance of the Letter of Concurrence shall mark the completion of land use consultation.

Applicant Role

Applicants must:

- Investigate and evaluate opportunities for co-location prior to proposing a new telecommunications facility.
- Pre-consult with the Town in accordance with this Protocol and CPC-2-0-03.
- Submit a complete application following the requirements of Annex A – Development and Design Guidelines.
- Complete public consultation and respond to all public enquiries and concerns.
- Provide the Town with a written consultation summary upon the conclusion of the consultation period.
- Ensure all requirements of ISED Protocols and Health Canada guidelines are met.

Part 6 – Exclusions

As per CPC-2-0-03, the following proposals are excluded from land use authority and public consultation requirements:

New antenna systems:

- Where the height is less than 15 metres above ground level. This exclusion does not apply to antenna systems proposed by telecommunications carriers, broadcasting undertakings, or third-party tower owners.

Existing antenna systems:

- Where modifications, antenna additions, or tower replacements occur— including to facilitate sharing—provided that the total cumulative height increase does not exceed 25% of the height of the initial installation.
- This exclusion applies only to replacements similar in design and location to the original installation.
- No height increase may occur within one year of completion of initial construction.

This exclusion does not apply to purpose-built antenna supporting structures under 15 metres operated by carriers, broadcasters, or third-party tower owners.

Non-tower structures:

- Including antennas mounted on buildings, water towers, lamp posts, etc., provided that the height of the structure is not increased by more than 25%.

Temporary antenna systems:

- Used for special events or emergencies and removed within three months of installation.

Maintenance:

- No consultation is required for maintenance of an existing antenna system.

Applicants uncertain whether their proposal is excluded are advised to contact ISED for guidance.

Part 7 – Site Selection Guidelines

Use of Existing Infrastructure and Co-Location

- Applicants must review surrounding infrastructure to determine the feasibility of co-location. Co-location on existing telecommunications facilities is preferred to minimize the number of new installations.
- Applicants must also evaluate the use of existing infrastructure such as water towers before proposing a new tower.
- Applicants shall provide a site selection report identifying all co-location and infrastructure investigations and reasons why co-location is not feasible.

Preferred Locations

Where co-location or use of existing infrastructure is not possible, preferred locations include:

- Industrial areas
- Commercial or other non-residential areas
- Rural areas
- Areas near utility corridors

Preferred locations should maximize distance from:

- Sensitive uses (residential, community, parks, and open space)
- Natural heritage features
- Hazard areas

Telecommunication facilities should be sited to reduce adverse impacts on future development.

Discouraged Locations:

- Near existing residential development
- In areas intended for future residential development
- In community parks and green spaces
- On lands with identified environmental hazards
- On natural heritage or cultural heritage areas/features

Other Site Considerations:

- Protect existing vegetation; remove only where necessary.
- Use screening and buffering to reduce visual impacts.

Part 8 – Process

Pre-Consultation

Pre-consultation is encouraged to identify and address land use compatibility concerns early. The Town will identify any additional documentation required for a complete application.

Application Process

A complete application includes:

- Completed Town of Three Rivers Telecommunications/Cell Tower application form
- Payment of the required fee under the current Fees and Charges Bylaw
- Detailed site plan showing property lines, existing and proposed buildings, setbacks, and access
- Facility/tower design
- Planning justification report / site selection report
- Any additional studies required by the Town

All submissions shall be made to the CAO or designate.

Public Consultation

For applications requiring consultation:

- The Town will provide mailing addresses for properties located within the required circulation radius, which is three (3) times the height of the proposed tower as per CPC-2-0-03.
- The Applicant shall mail notices to all identified addresses and publish notice in local newspapers.
- The Town of Three Rivers is subject to the official languages consultation requirements of Section 4.4 of CPC-2-0-03.

- The Applicant shall allow a minimum of 30 days for public comment.
- After the consultation period, the Applicant shall provide the Town with a consultation summary including all comments received and the Applicant's responses.

Part 9 – Statement Of Concurrence

Upon satisfactory completion of consultation, the CAO or designate shall issue a Letter of Concurrence, considering:

- Land use compatibility
- Site characteristics
- Location preferences
- Public comments
- Compliance with this Protocol

If the Town cannot support the proposal, a Letter of Non-Concurrence will be issued with reasons.

A file is deemed closed upon issuance of a Letter of Concurrence.

Annex A – Development and Design Guidelines

Co-Location

- Co-location on an existing antenna system is preferred over constructing a new system.

Preferred Locations

Where a new tower is required, preferred locations include:

- Sites maximizing distance from residential areas
- Business, industrial, and utility areas

Discouraged Locations

New antenna systems should not be located on:

- Lands zoned Open Space or subject to rising sea levels/hazard lands
- Heritage-listed or designated properties

Siting on a Property

- Locate towers away from street lines to reduce visual impact.
- Equipment shelters larger than 5.0 m² must comply with zoning requirements (setbacks, buffering, etc.).
- Avoid locating towers on existing parking or loading spaces.

Design

- Allow for future co-location capacity.
- Screen equipment using landscaping or decorative fencing.
- Lattice-style towers are strongly discouraged.
- Monopole towers with shrouded or flush-mounted antennas are preferred.
- Building-mounted antennas should not be visible from public streets or should be architecturally integrated.

High-Profile or Visually Sensitive Areas

- Use stealth techniques (flagpoles, clock towers, trees, light poles, etc.).
- Equipment shelters larger than 5.0 m² should reflect surrounding architectural character.

Colour, Lighting, and Signage

- Use non-reflective, neutral colours unless Transport Canada requires otherwise.
- No lighting except where required by Transport Canada.
- Provide a small plaque at the base identifying the owner or operator.
- No advertising signage except where compliant with the Town's Signage Bylaw.

Adopted:	Last Revision:
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Approval

Debbie Johnston
Mayor

John Jamieson
Chief Administrative Officer