



May 17, 2021

Design Review Committee, c/o Marina Herrera - Project Planner  
Permit & Resource Management Department, Planning Division  
County of Sonoma  
2550 Ventura Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

RE: AT&T MOBILITY - NATIONWIDE PUBLIC SAFETY BROADBAND  
NETWORK NEW CELL SITE APPLICATION – Santa Rosa Ave & Hwy 101  
Area

Ms. Herrera,

Under the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, Congress established the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) and directed it to ensure the building, deployment, and ongoing operation of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (“FirstNet”), the first nationwide high-speed broadband network dedicated to public safety.<sup>1</sup> The FirstNet Authority’s mission is to provide and maintain a single, interoperable platform that consistently satisfies the demanding communications needs of the public safety community in California and across the country. New radio access network (“RAN”) sites are essential to the success of the program and delivering the mission critical coverage public safety needs to communicate and save lives.

This network has been a top priority for first responders and public safety agencies in California and throughout the country, and has been designed based on their specific, expressed needs, with coverage and capacity being paramount. Simply put, coverage enables a first responder to send and receive data, and capacity ensures speed and quality of those communications. New RAN infrastructure connected to FirstNet will improve communication for first responders where that infrastructure has been currently lacking. The FirstNet Authority and our private-sector partner, AT&T, have worked with the California public safety community to identify coverage needs throughout the state to improve emergency communications in everyday use as well as for large-scale emergencies, such as the recent wildfires that ravaged the state.

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<sup>1</sup> See Title VI of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-96), <https://www.congress.gov/112/bills/hr3630/BILLS-112hr3630enr.pdf>

In December 2017, Governor Brown opted into the FirstNet Authority plan for RAN deployment in California and thus authorizing construction of the FirstNet network in areas of the state where public safety needs coverage and capacity. By opting-in, the Governor enabled public safety to rapidly access broadband services in California, while also allowing the prompt buildout and deployment of the network which began in March of 2018. His decision also directed the FirstNet Authority to take on all the risks, costs, and responsibilities associated with deploying the network in California for 25 years, and take immediate steps to make prioritized services and features available to public safety in the state.

This network not only meets the needs of Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, and the surrounding community, but will also serve the thousands of first responders that have already adopted FirstNet in California that may respond to your next major emergency, and to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. For example, as a first responder to the Kincade Fire in 2019, I relied heavily on the network for data and voice communications in this area while leading my strike team. The FirstNet Authority requests your consideration in our efforts to build new sites to achieve required coverage and capacity for our vital mission in service of public safety.

We have two Senior Public Safety Advisors assigned to California: Kevin Nida and myself. We are retired Chief Fire Officers with extensive fire service, law enforcement, and technical experience. We are available to assist you at any time. I may be reached at [chris.baker@firstnet.gov](mailto:chris.baker@firstnet.gov) or (240) 751-8027. Kevin may be reached at [kevin.nida@firstnet.gov](mailto:kevin.nida@firstnet.gov) or (202) 868-7670. For your reference, attached is additional information about the FirstNet Authority and the network we were entrusted by Congress to establish.

Sincerely,

Chris Baker, J.D., P.E.  
Battalion Chief-Paramedic / Investigator (Ret.)  
Senior Public Safety Advisor – Northern California  
First Responder Network Authority

Attachments:

1. Primer on the FirstNet Authority's Congressional Mandate to Deploy a Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network.
2. FirstNet Network Management-Operations Officer Letter.