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# Andrade wants Verizon to share details on 5G transmitters with Pensacola residents

Jim Little, Pensacola News Journal Published 1:08 p.m. CT Sept. 18, 2019

Rep. Alex Andrade, R-Pensacola, is calling for Verizon to share details with property owners about new small cell antennas being placed in Pensacola ([/story/news/2019/09/13/more-than-150-small-cell-antennas-works-pensacola-escambia-county/2289345001/](https://story/news/2019/09/13/more-than-150-small-cell-antennas-works-pensacola-escambia-county/2289345001/)) and for company representatives to meet with city leaders.

In the city of Pensacola and Escambia County, officials have received written and verbal notice that more than 150 small cell antennas are set to be installed in public rights of way ([/story/news/2019/09/13/more-than-150-small-cell-antennas-works-pensacola-escambia-county/2289345001/](https://story/news/2019/09/13/more-than-150-small-cell-antennas-works-pensacola-escambia-county/2289345001/)). In several cases, that right of way is directly in the front yards of private homes.

Once the new transmitters are installed, they will broadcast 4G LTE technology to increase the bandwidth of the current network, but at some point, the new antennas could be switched to broadcast the much faster 5G technology.

The 5G signal will bring much faster internet speeds that advocates say will open the door to new technologies like self-driving cars. But the new cell signal requires many more transmitters than previous technologies because the radio waves used are easily blocked by trees and buildings.

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▶ [More than 150 'small cell' antennas in the works for Pensacola, Escambia County \(/story/news/2019/09/13/more-than-150-small-cell-antennas-works-pensacola-escambia-county/2289345001/\)](#)

▶ [5G cell towers could be coming to your front yard. Here's why Pensacola can't stop them \(/story/news/2019/08/13/pensacola-5-g-cell-towers-city-says-has-no-say-over-small-cell-nodes/1989821001/\)](#)

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"In Pensacola, notices of intent to install telecommunication poles to implement 5G have been submitted without any input or contact with residents," Andrade wrote in the letter. "Installing these new structures would place poles or boxes in my constituents' front yards and along the city's rights-of-way. These new proposed structures, when not co-located on existing infrastructure, are not small in size. Residents of my district have become increasingly more concerned about protecting the character of their neighborhoods."

Andrade sent the letter to Courtney Barnard, a lobbyist with Verizon, on Monday and shared it with the News Journal on Wednesday. Andrade said he had not yet received a response from Verizon. Barnard was not immediately available for comment.

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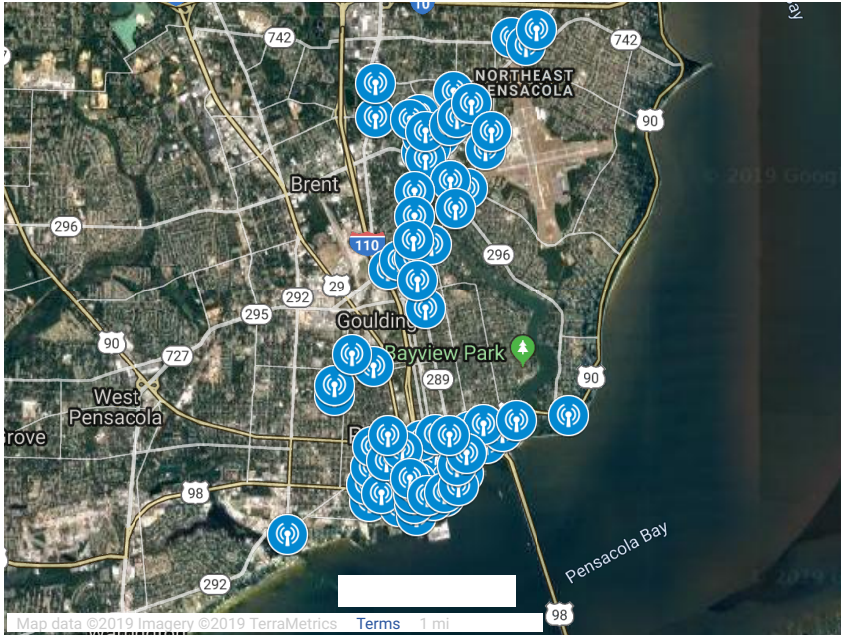
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"My main concern is just making sure that these communities are aware of what's going on," Andrade told the News Journal. "They need to feel listened to and have input on exactly how these poles are going to affect the character of their neighborhoods."

In the last two sessions, the Florida Legislature passed laws virtually restricting local governments from regulating the installation of small cell antennas in public right of way.

### Potential small cell sites ☆



In his letter, Andrade said that when those laws were passed, the wireless companies made "assurances" that they would co-locate the antennas on existing utility poles whenever possible and provide transparent communication to affected residents. Andrade said that has not been happening.

"My constituents have expressed their concerns with me, both in passing and through my office," Andrade wrote. "It is my responsibility to speak up for them on this issue. There is no question that 5G implementation will be a benefit for all Floridians. I simply expect that the promises made to be good neighbors to your customers, Florida citizens, will be honored and respected."

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A 5G small cell transmitter is pictured outside Peg Leg Pete's on Fort Pickens Road. (Photo: John Blackie/jblackie@pnj.com)

A Verizon spokeswoman [told the News Journal last week](/story/news/2019/09/13/more-than-150-small-cell-antennas-works-pensacola-escambia-county/2289345001/) that the company is making every effort to co-locate on existing poles.

"We are working closely with the city and NextEra (Gulf Power) to co-locate wherever possible," said spokeswoman Kate Jay. "Unfortunately, we don't have access to all poles in the right of way, so in some instances, we do have to place our own poles in order to meet customer needs. We are also working with city on design standards, blending with environment — that specifically includes historic districts. All historic district designs will be

thoroughly vetted prior to submission."

Andrade said that in the next three weeks, he wants affected residents to receive more information about the transmitters.

"I would also like to facilitate a meeting between leaders in Pensacola and Verizon representatives to clear the air and work towards a better relationship with our shared constituents," Andrade wrote.

Read the full letter below:

To print the document, click the "Original Document" link to open the original PDF. At this time it is not possible to print the document with annotations.

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