



OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN BRENDAN CARR

Chairman Carr Announces Plan for a Big Auction of 160 MHz of Prime Mid-Band Spectrum, Advancing America’s Wireless Leadership

FCC’s July Vote on Upper C-Band Order Follows Close Interagency Coordination

WASHINGTON, June 30, 2026—Today, Chairman Brendan Carr announced that the FCC will vote at the next Commission meeting on an order that tees up a large swath of prime, mid-band spectrum for auction. Specifically, the FCC will vote on July 22 to hold an auction of 160 megahertz of spectrum in the Upper C-Band (3.98-4.14 GHz) next year. The rules would also effectively harmonize terrestrial wireless operations across the entire C-Band to create a single “super-band” spanning 440 megahertz (3.70-4.14 GHz). This sets America up to lead the world in next-gen connectivity.

The plan also maximizes the amount of spectrum repurposed while establishing a fast and fair transition for incumbent satellite services and a successful coexistence environment for critical aviation safety systems in the adjacent band. Congress required the FCC to auction at least 100 megahertz of Upper C-Band spectrum no later than July 2027, and the FCC has moved quickly. We are on track for an on-time auction that clears significantly more spectrum than the minimum required under law. This auction is expected to raise many billions of dollars for the U.S. Treasury as well.

By accommodating the transition of aviation and satellite services in tight coordination, the FCC’s plan ensures that the Upper C-Band can be lit up for most Americans before the end of 2030—faster than originally expected.

Chairman Carr issued the following statement:

“America’s wireless leadership is back. After years of falling behind other countries, President Trump and Congress restored the FCC’s spectrum auction authority in the One Big Beautiful Bill and established an aggressive spectrum pipeline. In doing so, the statute assigned the FCC an unprecedented task—auction a massive swath of mid-band spectrum in record time. Thanks to the early and close collaboration with the FCC’s federal partners across the Trump Administration—including the Federal Aviation Administration—we are delivering on time, on budget, and with no surprises. This is a really good win for the country.

“While more complex than your average spectrum auction, the FCC moved from NPRM to Order in record time. We have also coordinated with aviation and satellite stakeholders so that wireless providers can light up the Upper C-Band and provide service to most Americans by the end of 2030—ahead of many expectations.

“The draft Order, which the Commission will vote on during our July 22 meeting, sets the stage for the FCC to auction 160 megahertz of prime, mid-band spectrum next year—exceeding the 100 megahertz minimum established in the law. The Upper C-Band auction will also unify a big and contiguous swath of 440 megahertz of spectrum when combined with the Lower C-Band, which the FCC freed up during the previous Trump Administration.

“I want to thank and recognize the many agency partners across the Trump Administration that worked towards this important accomplishment. I greatly appreciate the extensive coordination with our FAA and NTIA colleagues. The steps the FAA will be undertaking in parallel with this FCC decision will ensure that C-Band services successfully coexist with critical aviation safety tools in the adjacent band. Indeed, the FCC and FAA processes will together provide for the upgrade radio altimeters and provide rebates to support eligible domestic aircraft operators and owners in this effort.

“Freeing up this spectrum will further drive down prices for consumers, increase competition, and mean faster wireless speeds. Thanks to President Trump’s leadership, America will once again lead the world in wireless. The One Big Beautiful Bill Act made certain that we will put this prime, mid-band spectrum to its best use through another major FCC auction.

“Finally, I want to thank in particular the FCC’s talented staff that have worked tirelessly on this proceeding. The agency acted with unprecedented speed, solving complex problems, and doing so while collaborating closely with government and private sector stakeholders.

The Federal Aviation Administration issued the following statement:

“The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is confident that the use of radio signals from the FCC’s 5G auction can safely coexist with aviation after years of FAA-led testing and technical analysis. The FCC worked closely with the FAA while developing its auction rule, which contains key safeguards that protect the band of frequencies that aircraft radio altimeters use.

“These safeguards include limiting the power of the auctioned 5G signals to levels the FAA has determined are safe for aviation; protecting the altimeter band with a buffer band between it and the band of frequencies that will be auctioned; and limiting the height of 5G transmission towers. Additionally, the FCC rule would ensure the functionality of key altimeter-based alerting systems including Terrain Avoidance Warning Systems.

“Later this summer, the FAA will issue its own rule to require aircraft altimeter upgrades to ensure altimeters can safely operate with signals from the 5G wireless signals that will be auctioned.”

Additional Background:

- This draft Order, Order of Proposed Modification, and Order on Reconsideration responds to the surging demand for additional valuable mid-band spectrum for wireless services and puts America on a path towards massive gains that could result in at least \$264 billion in GDP, 1.5 million new jobs, and \$388 billion in consumer surplus by freeing up additional spectrum.
- The 2027 Upper C-Band auction will ultimately result in a 440 megahertz contiguous block of spectrum for the provision of wireless services by combining the Lower C-Band (3.7-3.98 GHz) and now the Upper C-Band (3.98-4.14 GHz).
- The draft item circulated today would make available 160 megahertz of valuable Upper C-Band spectrum through the auction of 3,248 new flexible-use spectrum licenses throughout the contiguous United States.
- The proposed rules set forth a framework that will fairly and expeditiously transition incumbent satellite operations out of the reconfigured portion of the Upper C-Band. Total incentives to

satellite operators will be less in aggregate than those paid after the Lower C-Band auction, but roughly commensurate given the lower amount of spectrum being cleared.

- The draft item reflects extensive input and coordination from the FCC’s federal partners, including through OMB’s OIRA and NTIA’s IRAC review processes. In particular, this effort has been closely coordinated with the FAA, which is undertaking a parallel rulemaking to greatly enhance the robustness and signal rejection capabilities of radio altimeters.
- The proposed rules would also take steps to ensure a continued successful coexistence between wireless operations throughout the C-Band and radio altimeters in the nearby 4.2–4.4 GHz band, including the establishment of retrofit rebates to support the domestic aviation sector in its efforts to upgrade the performance of these critical safety tools.
- The draft item proposes that winning bidders will be responsible for transition costs and incentive payments for in-band licensees, as well as rebates for the purchase and installation of upgraded radio altimeters. This total budget is well below the low-end of expected proceeds from auctioning the 160 megahertz.
- The draft item would allow winning bidders to commence wireless services in the Upper C-Band starting in December 2030 for top-75 markets, and in remaining markets starting July 2031.
- While the draft item sets detailed dollar amounts for the costs, incentives, and rebates, those specific dollar figures will be redacted from the public draft ahead of the July 22 vote given the sensitive nature of this type of financial information. The FCC will release the figures publicly with the Commission’s vote. A confidential version without redactions has been shared with each of the Commissioners.
- Following the Commission’s successful Lower C-Band auction in 2020, the FCC began work last year – under its renewed auction authority and C-Band auction remit pursuant to the One Big Beautiful Bill Act – to establish the framework necessary to successfully put this spectrum to more intensive use. The Commission built on an original [Notice of Inquiry](#) to adopt a [Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) last November, and today begins consideration of final rules.

The draft Order, Order of Proposed Modification, and Order on Reconsideration will be made available to the public tomorrow on FCC.gov: <https://www.fcc.gov/July2026>.

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