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Legislation expected on regulation of small cell networks

AWC staff and representatives from a number of cities have held several meetings with Verizon in response to Verizon's expressed intent to introduce legislation aimed at facilitating the rollout of small cell networks and 5G wireless technology. Verizon has said they would like to address issues related to land use regulations and access to rights-of-way, costs and fees charged by local governments and the need for streamlined permitting processes. All of these issues are important to cities and potentially controversial as legislation could result in pre-emption of current city authority. The aim of the meetings has been to discuss these issues and to try to find common ground.

Cities recognize that new wireless technology and facilities are coming. At least three cities have already adopted new ordinances in response (Kirkland, Kenmore and Spokane). Another group of more than 20 cities is working together, examining and discussing regulatory options to get themselves ready for the rollout of new small cell facilities. In AWC's opinion, this is the right approach and legislation that preempts city authority is not necessary. At this point we believe Verizon intends to push forward with legislation nevertheless. We may learn more at a work session on 5G wireless technology in the Senate Energy, Environment & Telecommunications committee on January 11 at 8 am.

This could be an issue that we'll need to engage on for all of the 2017 legislative session. Stay tuned. If you would like more information or would like to be part of our work group on the issue please contact [Victoria Lincoln](#) or [Dave Catterson](#).

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