



FCC Adopts Plan for C-Band Auction in July 2027

The FCC's Interagency and Industry Coordination Clears the Way for a Harmonized 5G 'Super Band'

WASHINGTON, July 22, 2026—The Federal Communications Commission today set America up to lead the world in next-gen connectivity by adopting rules to auction 160 megahertz of spectrum in the Upper C-Band (3.98-4.14 GHz) by July 2027. The FCC's rules build off the Lower C-band auction in President Trump's first term, which already has brought 5G service, fixed wireless, and massive economic benefits to millions of Americans.

By bridging the Lower C-band and Upper C-band, the FCC will create a single, harmonized "super band" spanning 440 megahertz (3.70-4.14 GHz)—a gigantic swath of licensed, 5G-grade mid-band spectrum that no other industrialized country can boast. The FCC will auction 60% more spectrum than the 100 megahertz minimum required under law, a decision that will raise tens of billions of dollars more for the U.S. Treasury to support deficit reduction and national priorities.

The FCC is moving to deliver an auction of the Upper C-band on time, on budget, and with no surprises. The auction is on track to close by the statutory deadline of July 2027, and the FCC's new rules ensure that the Upper C-Band can be lit up for most Americans before the end of 2030—faster than originally expected. The rules also fairly accommodate satellite and aviation stakeholders in a financially responsible manner that incentivizes a fast transition to 5G in the Upper C-band.

Through close and synchronized collaboration with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the FCC's rules ensure a successful coexistence environment for critical aviation safety systems in the adjacent band for many decades to come. The Federal Aviation Administration recently [said](#): "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."

Additional Background Information

The Order, Order of Proposed Modification, and Order on Reconsideration adopted today responds to the surging demand for additional valuable mid-band spectrum for wireless services. The reconfigured Upper C-Band and forthcoming auction are a major step towards securing American's wireless future and the robust economic benefits that it brings:

- **The Impact:** This plan puts America on a path towards massive gains that could result in at least \$422 billion in GDP, 2.4 million new jobs, and \$621 billion in consumer surplus by freeing up additional spectrum.
- **The 'Super Band':** The 2027 Upper C-Band transition 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 Auction:** The 2027 Upper C-Band auction will make available 160 megahertz of valuable mid-band spectrum through the auction of 3,248 new flexible-use spectrum licenses throughout the contiguous United States. The rules allow winning bidders to commence wireless services in the Upper C-Band starting in December 2030 for the top-75 markets in the contiguous United States, and in any remaining markets starting July 2031.
- **The Incumbents:** The 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 Neighborhood:** The new rules 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, and establishes rebates to support the domestic aviation sector in its efforts to retrofit and upgrade the performance of these critical safety tools.
- **The Coordination:** The 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 Incentive Payments:** The 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 Process:** Following the Commission’s successful Lower C-Band auction in 2020, the FCC began work last year – under its renewed auction authority and Upper 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 adopted final rules. In the next few days, Commission staff will seek comment on auction procedures before establishing the final procedures in preparation for the auction.

Action by the Commission July 22, 2026 by Report and Order, Order of Proposed Modification, and Order on Reconsideration (FCC 26-46). Chairman Carr and Commissioner Trusty approving. Commissioner Gomez approving in part and dissenting in part. Chairman Carr, Commissioners Gomez and Trusty issuing separate statements.

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