

Auxiliary Antenna

The planned WLTX auxiliary antenna and associated transmission line were required to limit disruption to the pre-Auction operation. The new auxiliary antenna was going to be side-mounted to eliminate disruption. WLTX did not have any interim facilities it could use to move to its post-Auction channel (Channel 15) pending completion of post-Auction facilities.

In early September 2019, WLTX lost multiple days of tower work due to circumstances beyond the station's control. These include days on which high winds and other inclement weather made it impossible to work, as well as a mandatory off day after the tower crew had worked for 15 days straight and, in one instance, the loss of the majority of the day of tower work on September 2, 2019, when the crew chief determined that two climbers were not prepared to safely work that day. In addition, on September 7, 2019, while the crew was removing old transmission line from a position about 1,300 feet up on the tower, a section of line fell about 10-15 feet, damaging multiple horizontal braces that provide structural reinforcement for the tower. Although temporary reinforcement allowed for the completion of some additional work that day, further analysis on September 8 concluded that work would have to be paused until the damaged braces could be replaced with custom reinforcement. That repair work was completed on September 9.

These tower crew delays and work disruptions substantially slowed the post-Auction construction process. The decision to replace the top mounted main antenna using a helicopter lift was made. This decision was based solely on the attempt to expedite construction to meet the post-Auction cut-over deadline.