

WUNC-TV Transition Plan Progress Report

The University of North Carolina (UNC-TV), Licensee of WUNC-TV, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, is a governmental agency entity of the State of North Carolina. As a state entity, it is legally required to comply with certain state requirements, restrictions, and policies regarding construction projects and the purchasing of goods and services. UNC-TV's repack transition project for 11 full-power television stations is no exception, and UNC-TV is required to abide by the applicable construction, contracting, and purchasing requirements, restrictions, and policies for all 11 stations, including WUNC-TV. Significantly, as UNC-TV has previously reported—and bears reiteration here—while UNC-TV's project is considered 11 different projects by the FCC, to the State of North Carolina and its representative agencies it is considered one project. The two state government agencies that are extensively involved in UNC-TV's repack (the State Office of Purchasing and Contracts ["P&C"] and the State Construction Office ["SCO"]) are requiring UNC-TV to bundle together all 11 station repack transitions as one unitary project request to them.

To update the previous (fourth quarter 2018) transition report, pursuant to the applicable State of North Carolina project guidelines, Heartland Contracting Inc. has been awarded the contract to be the general contractor for the WUNC-TV site. As such, Heartland Contracting is responsible for providing the services as necessary to modify the building, electrical, and mechanical elements as necessary to implement the repack channel transition for WUNC-TV. To the extent warranted, Heartland Contracting will also be responsible for overseeing its own subcontractors (if any) at the site. A necessary aspect of Heartland Contracting's service as GC will also include coordination of its services with UNC-TV's other vendors (such as GatesAir) who will be performing critical services in furtherance of the timely completion of WUNC-TV's repack project.

With respect to the two implementation challenges previously outlined in WUNC-TV's transition progress reports—(i) sufficient electrical power to operate pre- and post-transition transmitters at full power at the same time, and (ii) the locating of outdoor equipment in a protected area—UNC-TV still plans to address them in the manner previously outlined.

The WUNC-TV transition plan calls for the tower work to be done in two parts. Part 1 (a) the removal of an existing emergency standby antenna (which cannot be retuned to WUNC-TV's post-transition channel) and (b) the installation of an interim antenna in the space previously occupied by the emergency standby antenna. That work was completed on March 27, 2019. The existing auxiliary transmission line has been reused to connect the soon to be installed new main transmitter to the interim antenna, which will allow WUNC-TV to timely transition to its post-transition channel using interim facility operations pursuant to STA. (UNC-TV will timely file for a CP extension on or prior to the June 10, 2019, deadline for doing so.) Part 2 will occur after the September 6, 2019, scheduled transition date. Part 2 will involve (a) the removal of the existing top mounted main antenna (which cannot be retuned to the post-transition channel) and (b) the installation of the permanent post-transition main antenna in the same location. The tower structural analysis for the two different load cases has been completed. Both cases meet the requirements of ANSI/TIA-22-G-2-2009 as required by the North Carolina Building Code.

UNC-TV will be submitting additional budget updates for FCC Form 399. Among other things, these updates will reflect the general contractor costs, costs associated with the electrical challenges, and revised professional services pricing. Further budget adjustments may be necessary as this project continues.

We believe, as of this early April 2019 filing, that the Phase 5 September 6, 2019, transition deadline remains achievable for WUNC-TV, albeit using interim facilities. A copy of the project schedule / timeline for the WUNC-TV site is included with this transition report demonstrating that, as of the date of the filing of this Transition Progress Report, the transition deadline is achievable. Of course, UNC-TV reserves the right to update the project schedule / timeline as warranted to account for changes that may occur during this fluid process.

To reiterate, WUNC-TV plans to begin its post-transition operations using an interim transmission system. This system will attempt to replicate as much as practically possible the population served by the proposed post-transition facility. When appropriate, UNC-TV will be submitting a request for special temporary authority for WUNC-TV to operate the interim transmission system for its initial post transition operations.

In short, UNC-TV's compound, complicated lodestar for this entire repack enterprise is timely completion of the repack with full compliance of all applicable state and federal regulations while—most importantly—keeping the station operating with as much coverage areas as possible with the least possible negative impact to viewers.