



## **GCI partners with global technology leader Ericsson to deliver first 5G service to the Last Frontier**

June 18, 2019

**GCI combines its flagship metro fiber network and substantial radio spectrum holdings with Ericsson's industry-leading technology to deliver Alaska's first, standards-based 5G NR experience.**

ANCHORAGE, Alaska, June 18, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- GCI (NASDAQ: GLIBA, GLIBP), Alaska's largest telecommunications company, announced today a partnership with Ericsson (NASDAQ: ERIC) to build the nation's northernmost 5G network in Anchorage, the state's largest city.



Starting this summer, the partners will deploy Ericsson's 3GPP standards-based 5G New Radio (NR) hardware and software to 82 macro cell sites across the Municipality of Anchorage from Girdwood to Eklutna, an area larger than the state of Rhode Island. GCI's metro fiber network will provide backhaul services to these sites, which include both towers and building locations. The project will be completed in 2020 with initial 5G service coming online in the first half of the year.

"We are committed to providing superior 5G wireless service to the residents of Anchorage just as we already provide the fastest internet service," said GCI CEO Ron Duncan. "We are bringing all our assets – fiber, spectrum, wireless footprint, Alaska expertise – to bear on that commitment."

GCI's robust metro fiber network and cable plant already offers 1 GIG cable modem service to 95% of Anchorage households. GCI controls more low/mid-band mobile radio spectrum than any other wireless provider in Anchorage. And it has more macro cell sites in Anchorage than any other Alaska wireless provider.

"The combination of our assets and Ericsson's industry-leading 5G solution will increase the capacity of our Anchorage wireless network by 10 times or more and also provide better coverage," said Duncan. "All of our customers will benefit from this increase in capacity."

The announcement was made at a joint press conference attended by Ericsson President and CEO Börje Ekholm and members of the company's leadership team who traveled to Alaska to be present at the announcement.

"Ericsson and GCI have partnered over the past decade to connect customers in some of the most remote communities in Alaska. We are pleased to continue working with GCI to bring 5G service to Alaska's biggest city," said Ekholm. "The introduction of 5G will create a powerful platform for

innovation. Using 5G, new use cases benefitting society, consumers and enterprises, will be created. Consumers will benefit from a premium experience with faster speeds and better coverage, while new wireless functionality will accelerate applications for the oil and gas, mining and health care industries across Alaska."

"Ericsson is a trusted partner that has helped us deliver terrestrial broadband and mobile wireless service solutions to rural Alaska, and we are pleased to work with them again to provide 5G service to our customers in Alaska's largest urban market," said Duncan. "Much as the transition from 3G to 4G LTE paved the way for game-changing services such as mobile ride hailing and remote telemedicine, the move to 5G will enable yet another wave of innovation in Alaska, including IoT (Internet of Things) applications in the home, business and industrial areas like the North Slope."

GCI's 5G deployment will support local government efforts to grow the nation's northernmost [smart city](#). The Municipality of Anchorage already uses a "light grid" to improve efficiency for municipal street lights and is exploring programs that rely on automated systems and connectivity to deliver services more efficiently to residents.

"Smart city technology enables the Municipality to deliver services like transit and power more efficiently, reducing costs and improving the lives of our residents," said Anchorage Mayor Ethan Berkowitz. "GCI's investment in a faster urban wireless network helps Anchorage remain competitive and helps us retain and attract business and talent."

"Innovation has driven GCI for 40 years, and innovation is still at the core of our business strategy today," said Duncan. "We're not stopping with the deployment of a 5G macro network. GCI's mission is to provide Alaska residents the best of the wireless and wireline worlds. Later this year, we will be announcing the move to an all IP cable plant in Anchorage and other Alaska cities. Our teams are working to integrate GCI's wireless network and our metro fiber/cable plant network to fully enable microcell, managed Wi-Fi and other technologies."

"The result will be a wireless/wireline experience that will provide our customers nearly ubiquitous data connectivity. We are making these investments here in Anchorage because it's our hometown, and we know how to deliver service to Alaskans better than any other provider. Anchorage will serve as the model for our network modernization efforts in other Alaska cities."

For more information about GCI and its 5G network, visit <https://www.gci.com/>.

#### **About 5G NR**

5G NR (New Radio) is the global standard for a unified 5G wireless air interface. Developed by the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), 5G NR will deliver a substantially faster and more responsive mobile broadband experience and enable new wireless capabilities and applications. 5G Evolution is not 5G NR.

#### **About GCI's Spectrum Holdings**

GCI controls 210 MHz (megahertz) of mobile radio spectrum in Anchorage, more than any other wireless provider including low-band 600MHz, 700MHz, and 850MHz spectrum, which is particularly useful for in-door coverage, and mid-band PCS and AWS spectrum. GCI's 5G NR deployment will take advantage of all five of these radio bands to ensure a superior experience for Anchorage residents.

#### **About GCI**

GCI provides data, mobile, video, voice and managed services to consumer and business customers throughout Alaska and nationwide. Headquartered in Alaska, GCI has delivered services for nearly 40 years to some of the most remote communities and in some of the most challenging conditions in North America. Learn more about GCI at [www.gci.com](http://www.gci.com). GCI is a wholly owned subsidiary of GCI Liberty, Inc. (Nasdaq: GLIBA, GLIBP). Learn more about GCI Liberty at [www.gciliberty.com](http://www.gciliberty.com).

#### **About Ericsson**

Ericsson enables communications service providers to capture the full value of connectivity. The company's portfolio spans Networks, Digital Services, Managed Services, and Emerging Business and is designed to help our customers go digital, increase efficiency and find new revenue streams. Ericsson's investments in innovation have delivered the benefits of telephony and mobile broadband to billions of people around the world. The Ericsson stock is listed on Nasdaq Stockholm and on Nasdaq New York. [www.ericsson.com](http://www.ericsson.com).

 View original content to download multimedia: <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/gci-partners-with-global-technology-leader-ericsson-to-deliver-first-5g-service-to-the-last-frontier-300870623.html>

SOURCE GCI

Heather Handyside, GCI, Phone: 907-301-3481, Email: [hhandyside@gci.com](mailto:hhandyside@gci.com); Jannie Tong, Ericsson, Phone: 214-415-0815, Email: [jannie.tong@ericsson.com](mailto:jannie.tong@ericsson.com)