

Beverly - Salem Transmission Reliability Project

Outreach Plan

Updated November, 2021

Overview

This document describes National Grid’s stakeholder and community outreach plan for the Beverly – Salem Transmission Reliability Project. This plan has been designed to reach neighbors in a variety of ways, to allow the Company to remain in regular communication with a range of stakeholders, and to be adjusted based on conditions on the ground and feedback from local officials and community members. The plan mirrors a similar, successful community outreach program executed for National Grid’s Salem Cable Replacement Project from 2014 through 2017. As was the case with that project, the outreach program will include regular on-the-ground presence and communication with stakeholders.

National Grid’s comprehensive outreach strategy prioritizes engaging in meaningful conversations with those along the project route and in the immediate impact zone surrounding the route. The Company will track the individual concerns of residents and businesses and compile the data into a central file. We will maintain relationships with individual stakeholders and ensure they have a direct line to the Company so that questions can be answered quickly, and information is provided in advance of inconveniences on the ground.

Our communication features a “surround sound” approach, utilizing one-on-one conversations, a digital presence, toll-free hotline and direct mail (as needed) to educate stakeholders and direct them to resources for information, timely updates, and bulletins for neighbors. The objective will be to ensure that the public is notified about: (1) the scheduled start, duration, and hours of construction in particular areas; (2) the methods of construction that will be used in particular areas (including any use of nighttime construction); and (3) anticipated street closures and detours.

Throughout each phase of the project, National Grid’s goal is to communicate with three separate but intertwined groups: elected officials and community leaders; the residents, business owners, and employees whose homes or work sites lie along the project’s pathway; and the broader population within a predetermined radius around the project route. Distinct messages and methods of communication will be utilized to effectively reach each group. Though it would be unrealistic to meet every resident in close proximity to the proposed project route in Salem and Beverly personally, our aim has been and will be to notify and / or converse with as many business owners and concerned residents as possible in the pre-construction and construction phases of the project.

No single method will necessarily achieve our goals on its own, but by integrating a wide assortment of channels, we will ensure our message effectively reaches all our intended audiences. Below, we provide information on the key channels for communications with civic leaders, abutters, and the general public both prior to and during project construction.

Door-to-Door Outreach

Door-to-door outreach is an effective means of reaching the residents and businesses that will be most directly affected by project construction. To date, National Grid has conducted door-to-door outreach along the project route in Beverly and Salem four times: in October 2018/April 2019, May/June/July 2019, March 2021, and October 2021. Door-to-door outreach will continue throughout the construction phase of the project.

As we move into the construction phase of the project, door-to-door communications will be focused on areas where construction is imminent. Consistent with best practices from other similar projects, e.g., Salem Cable Project, National Grid will conduct door-to-door visits at least one week prior to construction on any section of the project route. During these visits, we will notify businesses and residents about upcoming work, share the latest schedule information, explain the construction process, answer and address questions and concerns, and promote the project's weekly email newsletter program. Fact sheets and notices will be left at locations when residents are not at home.

Digital Outreach

➤ ***Website***

The first place many Salem and Beverly residents will turn to for information about the project will be the website, www.beverlyregionaltransmissionreliabilityproject.com. The project website was established in 2018 to keep the public informed and share information in a convenient and open manner. During construction, the website will serve as a comprehensive, easy-to-access, and timely resource that provides information about various aspects of the project, including construction updates, traffic management, and public announcements. It will include detailed maps showing progress made on the project. Additionally, it will provide information about complaint and response procedures, including how to submit claims to the Contractor. The website will include a brief description of the project in Spanish and Portuguese and provide direction to Spanish and Portuguese speaking individuals needing further translation of the information appearing only in English to call the project hotline for assistance. The website address will be listed on any material sent to residents and on all project signage.

➤ ***Website Feedback Form***

The website will include a feedback form to enable feedback on a specific topic or issue. This form is the fastest way for interested parties to submit their concerns and for National Grid responders to log and respond to them. This channel offers a round-the-clock opportunity for comment.

➤ ***Email Newsletter Program***

Our weekly email newsletter is designed to keep interested parties updated on the project and its progress. The newsletters will also direct recipients to the website and will provide project contact information. Within each component of the Community Outreach programs, residents

and community leaders will be encouraged to sign up to receive email updates. The email lists will be built and managed through the database via an opt-in form on the project website and collection of information during door-to-door outreach.

24-Hour Hotline

National Grid has established a dedicated project hotline which is staffed during business and evening hours to answer questions from individuals, business owners, and community leaders throughout the duration of the project. During off-hours, the hotline accepts messages, to which staff responds during business hours. This hotline number is published on all materials, including the website, and translators should be available for callbacks upon request. The message on the hotline will be in English, Portuguese and Spanish.

Open Houses and Public Information Sessions

The Company will hold open houses and public information sessions to provide an accessible channel for public engagement and comment. These gatherings will be staffed by appropriate National Grid representatives, supported by its outreach team, and elected officials and community leaders will be invited to participate. Public meetings will also offer a ready-made venue for announcements and updates. We will coordinate such events through local officials and neighborhood organizations.

Community Leader Communications

The project's community leader communication program has been designed to maintain strong relationships and open communications channels with key city leaders to keep them informed and allow them to effectively communicate with their constituencies, in coordination with National Grid. To this end, we will provide regular, brief email updates for elected officials, and business and community organization leaders to make sure an open line of communication is maintained, information is being shared and outreach milestones are made known. The information being shared via this program will serve as a preview of information the Company intends to share with the general public to ensure leaders are informed.

During these meetings the Company work with City partners to help identify any special events in the City and work to accommodate them to the greatest extent feasible.

Protocols for Notifying Schools of Upcoming Construction

As part of our Community Leader Communications program, National Grid will work with the Beverly School Transportation Director to identify bus stops along the project route. The same protocol will be followed in Salem. Transportation directors and school principals will receive regular updates, notifying them of upcoming construction schedules and locations.

Pre-Construction Photo / Video Survey

The Company will work to ensure that residents and businesses along the construction route have the opportunity to participate in pre-construction photo/video surveys to document the

pre-construction condition of residences and businesses along the construction route. Residents and businesses will be entitled to receive a copy of the survey taken from their property upon written request. Prior to construction, the Company will mail a letter to all abutters (including property owner and tenant) of the approved construction route explaining the survey process.

Outreach Timeline

The project team has developed a comprehensive community outreach plan that builds on existing work and ongoing efforts. Our strategy includes detailed plans and calendars for general messaging and public engagement through digital channels (website, search engine, and email), as well as in-person contact and numerous other coordinated means of outreach. Commencing two weeks before the start of construction and continuing for the duration of construction in each City, the Company will provide City officials with a look-ahead report describing the construction activities planned for the upcoming two weeks.

The plan calls for several phases of work, outlined below.

Prior to Construction

- Community Meeting/Virtual Open House noticed via mailings and media advertisement.
- Community Leader Email.
 - Weekly project update preview including most current schedule and other information of interest to local officials.
- Weekly Email Newsletter.
 - Weekly project update including most current schedule information.
- Virtual Open House.
 - Featuring subject matter experts on construction, engineering, permitting, and other topics.
- Canvass / re-canvass of upcoming work areas.

Throughout Construction

The Company will engage a nearly full-time Community Engagement Director from its community relations provider, Hilltop Public Solutions, to be on the ground throughout project construction. Activities will include door-to-door outreach in advance of project work, meetings with officials, management of email newsletter, social media and serving as the overall project ombudsman. The Community Engagement Director will be supported by the full Hilltop team.

Construction phase outreach will use many of the same communications channels as pre-construction outreach, but with a stronger focus on the actual construction; the information directed to the public will provide frequent updates, address people's concerns, and continue to foster positive relationships with the public. Typical weekly outreach activities will include:

- Community Leader Email.

- Weekly project update preview including most current schedule and other information of interest to local officials and community leaders
 - Link to sign up for weekly email newsletter
- Weekly Email Newsletter
 - Weekly project update
- Local meetings
- Canvass of upcoming work areas
- Work site check-ins

The Company will also use its digital presence to provide weekly and/or daily updates on where and when construction is taking place, detours, neighborhoods, businesses, schools, etc. that may be affected by construction; information on upcoming events; contact information for questions and concerns; and directions on how to sign up for the weekly email newsletter.

As construction continues, regular outreach activities will be adjusted based on progress in the field, lessons learned and feedback from the community and elected leadership. At every stage, the Company will evaluate the need to add resources to ensure a steady presence on the ground and fast turnaround on questions, comments and concerns from neighbors. We will canvass ahead of upcoming work throughout the project and distribute information, special notices and other materials as needed. Throughout, National Grid will continue to build relationships with community leaders and a wide range of interested parties.

In short, the Company's Outreach Plan is designed to proactively communicate with and assist neighbors who may be affected by the inconveniences of outdoor construction activities. At the same time, we will communicate regularly with elected leadership so that they are aware of our activities and plans.