

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS
WEST VALLEY CENTRAL 230KV CONNECTION PROJECT
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February 2022

INTRODUCTION

Unique factors that guided the development of a stakeholder and public involvement strategy for the APS West Valley Central 230kV Connection Project included the large size of the study area, the number of affected jurisdictions, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Virtual Public Engagement was utilized in lieu of traditional in-person public meetings not only due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but also to capture a broader audience than traditional public meetings can. The Virtual Public Engagement process utilized a range of technology and social media tools to successfully capture important information from key stakeholders in the project area. The involvement program launched in July of 2020 and continued through February 2022 and included the following elements:

- Stakeholder Briefings
- Virtual Open House Website
- Project Newsletters
- Live Virtual Public Meetings
- Telephone Information Line
- Social Media
- Customer Emails

Stakeholder Briefings

APS conducted meetings at key milestones during the project with staff members from the cities of El Mirage, Glendale, Peoria, and Surprise, the Town of Youngtown, the Maricopa County Department of Transportation, the Flood Control District of Maricopa County, and Luke Air Force Base. The meetings occurred in August/September 2020, May 2021, and January 2022. Due to the special circumstances associated with avoidance of the Luke Air Force Base Accident Potential Zones and Airfield Surface Area, meetings with Luke Air Force base were more frequent. Each of the three rounds of briefings noted above occurred prior to information being sent to the public, so that they agencies would be informed prior to their constituents receiving information. The team also specifically offered assistance with briefing organization management and elected officials, and in all cases the staff members indicated that they would prefer to handle that correspondence internally.

The study team also conducted considerable coordination with representatives of large land developments (e.g., Woolf Logistics Center and Copperwing Logistics Center) rapidly occurring within the study area. Documentation of all the stakeholder and large land development coordination is included in Exhibit J.



Virtual Open House Website

The project website at www.apswestvalleycentral.com launched in October 2020 and included project information, interactive elements, and opportunities for input and comment. The website was available continuously and offered the convenience of 24/7 participation. More than 3,400 people visited the website throughout the project.

Project Newsletters

The mailing area for the project included approximately 38,000 addresses. Newsletters were sent in October of 2020, May 2021, and early February 2022. The newsletters provide information about the project need, location, and design, as well alternative routes under consideration and announced live virtual public meetings in 2020 and 2021, and the 2022 public hearings.

Live Virtual Public Meetings

APS hosted live virtual public meetings in November 2020 and June 2021. These meetings provided opportunities for the public to receive a presentation from the study team and also to ask questions directly from the APS team. The team also made itself available to conduct one on one virtual discussions with anyone who requested it.

Telephone Information Line

A dedicated project information telephone line was publicized in all newsletters, and the calls to that number are included in Exhibit J.

Social Media

APS posted information about the project on Facebook in advance of the November 2020 and June 2021 live virtual public meetings, and also in conjunction with the January 2022 newsletter mailing that announced the proposed transmission line route and the public hearings starting February 28, 2022.

Customer Emails

APS sent 51,756 emails sent to customers announcing the hearings and providing information on how to get more information. There were 24,195 unique interactions, meaning the recipient opened and presumably read the email.

Public Comments

As with any transmission line siting effort, many of the comments addressed keeping lines closer to industrial areas and taking advantage of existing linear features such as other electrical lines. Documentation of comments received is included in Exhibit J.