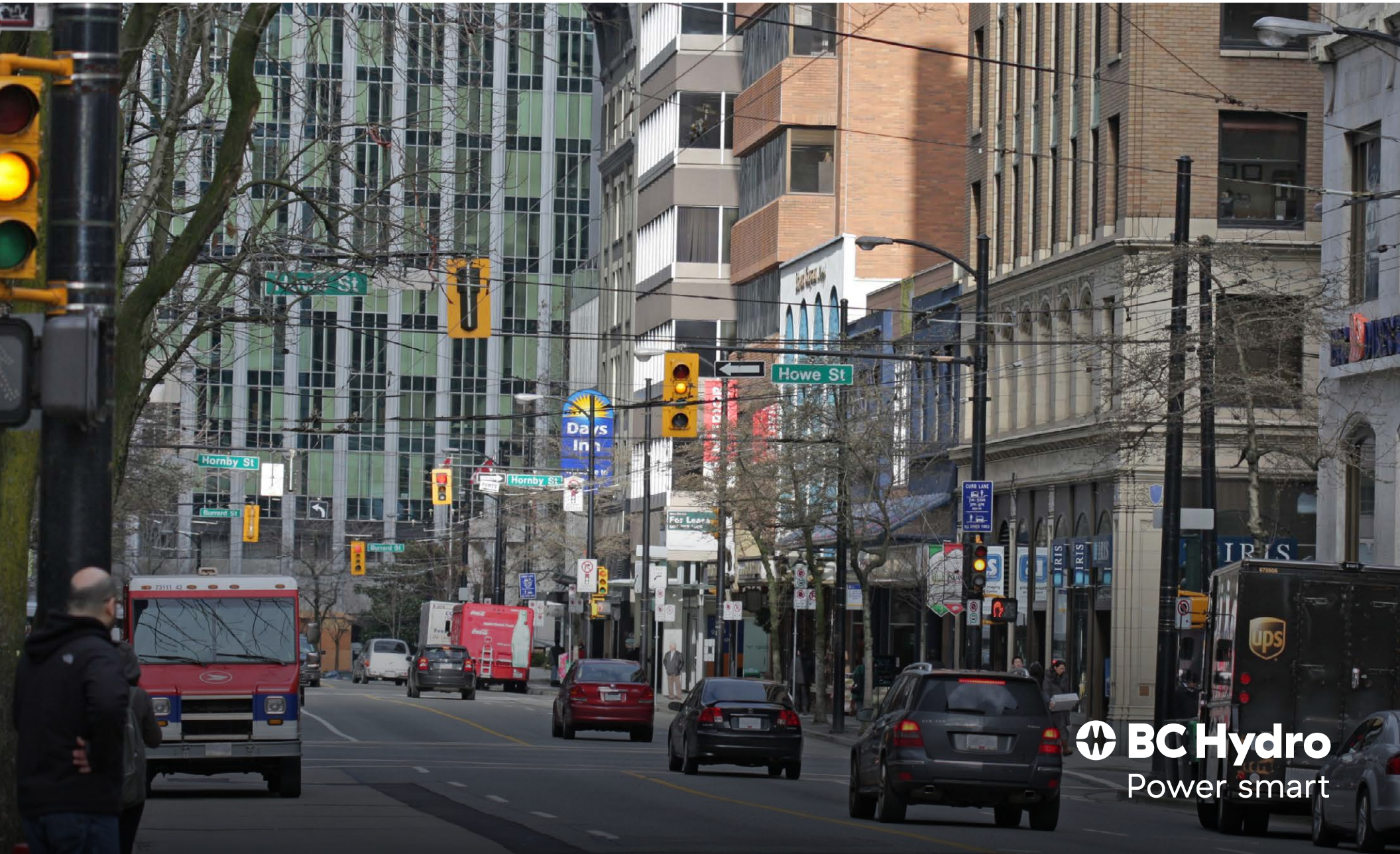


# West End Substation

Consultation summary and response, November 3 – 25, 2025

Issued March 25, 2026



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## Acknowledgement

We recognize and acknowledge that the West End Substation and the power line routes discussed in this report will be constructed on the unceded, traditional territories of the x̱m̱əθḵʷəy̱əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

Thank-you to everyone who provided input during this consultation on the West End Substation power lines. BC Hydro is committed to working with stakeholders and the communities impacted by its work, and we appreciate your time and effort.

# Executive summary

In November 2025, we hosted community consultation to share information about where and how we'll construct power lines to connect the West End Substation to the existing electrical system in downtown Vancouver. Through this consultation, we asked participants what they would like us to consider as we plan for construction.

## Numbers in brief

<b>47,911</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>7</b>
postcards mailed	hours at open houses	surveys completed	stakeholder meetings

## Key themes

Through this consultation, we heard from survey participants that they want:

1. Traffic to keep moving when we're constructing power lines in downtown Vancouver,
2. Consideration of the needs of people who walk, cycle and roll – as well as drive, and
3. Accessible and easy-to-understand information about traffic impacts and any detours.

And at stakeholder meetings we heard:

1. Appreciation for early notification and communication,
2. An ask to ensure that easy access is maintained to business districts for workers, customers, and deliveries, and
3. An ask to ensure safe movement for all modes of transportation.

Our construction team is considering this feedback and, when we onboard a contractor to construct the power lines, we'll share this feedback with them to inform the traffic management plans they develop.



# Background

BC Hydro provides clean, reliable power to homes and businesses across the West End, but our electricity system serving downtown Vancouver is ageing and needs upgrading.

A key step in updating our system is replacing the Dal Grauer Substation on Burrard Street, which was energized in 1953. Since this substation was powered up, the community and its energy needs have changed. The Dal Grauer Substation is reaching the end of its life and can't be re-built at its current location, so we need to construct a new substation that can accommodate future growth when needed.

The West End Substation will be located underground at the Vancouver School Board's Lord Roberts Annex site. Once we've finished construction, this substation will operate safely out-of-sight, and can be topped by play space for a new school, located beside the substation. Taking this approach protects the West End's limited housing stock and ensures that our property acquisition funds are being reinvested locally in improvements to schools and parks. We believe this solution offers the best benefits for residents, businesses, and the Vancouver school community while minimizing impacts.

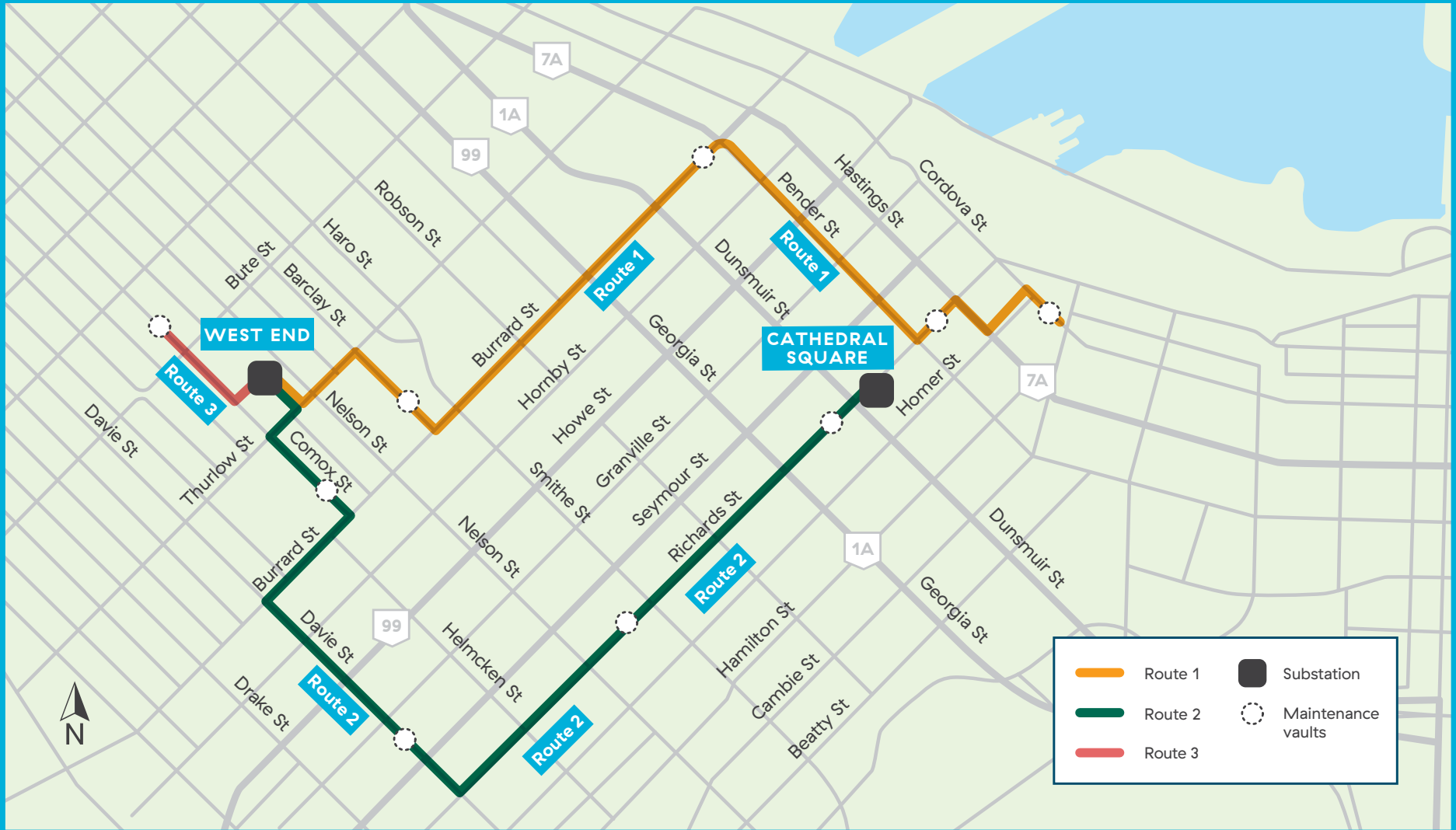
In November 2025, we held community consultation to share information about where and how we'll construct new power lines to deliver electricity to the substation, and to deliver electricity from the new substation to local homes and businesses. We explained that the power line routes had been developed in coordination with the City of Vancouver, based on technical and safety requirements and that, while the routing can't be changed, we'd like to hear how stakeholders and the members of the public might be affected by this work so that we can plan to reduce potential impacts.

We are engaging with First Nations in a parallel process and will continue to do so for the duration of this project.

This document shares what we did during consultation, what we heard, and how we plan to use this input. Our consultation materials can be found at [bchydro.com/westendsub](https://bchydro.com/westendsub).



# West End Substation Power Transmission Lines



# What we did

From November 3 to November 25, 2025, we held community consultation on the power lines that will serve the West End Substation.




## Notifications

We let stakeholders and the community know about this consultation with:

<b>47,911</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
postcards distributed to Canada Post areas with V6G, V6E and V6C postal codes	emails to project email subscribers	poster locations across downtown Vancouver	publications displayed digital ads: The Vancouver Sun, The Province, Vancouver is Awesome, and The West End Journal	posts on Facebook geotargeted to West End residents

## Communications

We shared information with stakeholders and the community on our:

		
webpage	presentation	open house boards

These materials explained where we'll install underground power lines to bring electricity into the new substation and back out to local homes and businesses, what we considered to select these routes, how we construct underground power lines generally, and the construction impacts we anticipate and how we can mitigate them.

## Consultation activations

We met stakeholders and the community at:

<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>
public open houses <sup>o</sup>	stakeholder meetings

<sup>o</sup> We also planned an online open house, but it did not attract participants.

# How the public engaged with us and shared their input

Webpage	1115	views
	1037	visits
Digital ads*	159,460	impressions
	116	clicks
Social posts	13,425	Impressions
	105	link clicks

Public open houses	2	open houses
Stakeholder meetings	12	attendees
	7	meetings

Surveys	25	online surveys
	0	paper surveys
Email	3	emails
Telephone	0	phone calls

\* One publication did not return impression or click results



# What we heard from participants and our responses

## Power line routing

Although we invited consultation participants to provide feedback on the proposed power line routes, no comments specific to routing were received.

We had explained in our materials and survey that the power line routes were developed in coordination with the City of Vancouver, based on technical and safety requirements, and that they could not be changed.

## Power line construction

Almost all the responses we received via the survey, and many of our stakeholder conversations, focused on power line construction.

Interest or idea	Our response
<p><b>Traffic impacts</b> The most common feedback we received was an ask to limit traffic impacts.</p>	
<p><b>Road traffic impacts</b> e.g. “Nelson is a major thoroughfare for almost all of Westend residents...How will the construction of the power lines impact traffic coming and going from the Westend?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We understand that downtown Vancouver roadways are busy and heard the concerns shared about impacts to traffic on Nelson, Thurlow, Burrard and Richards Streets.</li> <li>○ Before construction starts, we’ll work with our contractors to write a detailed traffic-management plan that takes account of typical traffic flows.</li> <li>○ The traffic management plans will be reviewed by the relevant road authorities, who consider projects happening across downtown, and work with them to find appropriate mitigation measures.</li> <li>○ To keep everyone safe, we’ll need to divert traffic away from our work zones. We’ll close as few lanes as possible and currently think we’ll be able to keep roads open by alternating traffic if needed.</li> <li>○ We’ll make sure traffic changes required are communicated in advance, and that during construction there is clear signage and on-site traffic-management workers keep people moving safely.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Vehicle building access</b> e.g. “I am concerned with parkade access for buildings along this route.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We heard concern from individuals and business representatives about how vehicles will be able to access parkades and delivery areas when construction is taking place in the road outside these areas.</li> <li>○ Our traffic-management plans will consider entryway and delivery access, and when our contractors finish work each day, they’ll make sure there is access to buildings.</li> <li>○ We’ll provide advanced notice of this work so that residents and businesses can plan alternate access if necessary.</li> <li>○ In some cases, our contractors may use alternating traffic flow or temporary steel plates to provide access to buildings.</li> <li>○ We expect to complete each block of construction in about a week, so we won’t cause any long-term access issues.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Impacts to people using the sidewalk</b> e.g., “Please limit the limit the disturbance of pedestrian traffic. Usually they are left as the lowest priority.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Our traffic management plan will consider all modes of transportation, including cycling, walking, and rolling.</li> <li>○ Our work will take place entirely in the roadway, so we don’t expect to need to divert people using the sidewalk.</li> <li>○ When our contractor is working through an intersection, we’ll make sure there are safe alternative crossings for people crossing the street.</li> <li>○ We’ll also work with our contractors to ensure that material storage doesn’t impact people using the sidewalk.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bike lane impacts</b> e.g. “My only comment is to ensure that the two-way bike line on Richards street remains open for the duration of the project.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Although we will impact short sections of bike lanes on Burrard and Richards Streets, the majority of our work will take place outside bike lanes.</li> <li>○ During this consultation, we met with HUB Cycling to ask about best practices to ensure people can continue to cycle safely during construction. We are reviewing the information HUB provided and will share it with our contractor before they develop their traffic management plans. We also expect to share our traffic management plans with HUB for comment before we begin construction in bike lanes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other construction impacts</b></p>	
<p><b>Construction hours</b> e.g. “What will the construction hours be?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In general, we expect to complete power line construction work during daytime hours, six days per week.</li> <li>○ We expect that there will be locations where we will need to work overnight to ensure the work can be completed safely and efficiently, and to maintain traffic movement.</li> <li>○ When we hire a contractor to complete this work, they will prepare a schedule and we’ll better understand where we’ll be working and when. We’ll share this information with the community well before work takes place.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Noise</b> e.g. “Noise and vibrations are also a concern.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When we select a contractor, they will complete a pre-construction plan that includes how we can mitigate common construction impacts including noise.</li> <li>○ In general, we try to mitigate noise impacts as much as practical and expect to follow best construction practices to limit noise e.g. selecting quieter equipment and turning off equipment that isn’t in use.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Trees</b> e.g. “we have many beautiful mature trees; PLEASE MINIMISE FELLING AND DAMAGE”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Before we start work, we’ll complete an environmental management plan that details how we will limit our impact on the environment, including trees.</li> <li>○ Although we’ll need to remove about 20 of the 500+ trees along our power line routes to complete our work safely, our arborist found that almost all of these are ‘danger trees’ or in poor health.</li> <li>○ We’ll fund the replacement of every tree we remove at a minimum of a 1:1 ratio.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communications</b></p>	
<p><b>Request for updates on traffic changes and other potential impacts</b> e.g. “an ask to inform BIA members of upcoming traffic changes”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Closer to the start of construction of these power lines, we’ll reach out to stakeholders and people who live, work and commute along the construction routes to inform them about construction timing and impacts.</li> <li>○ Once we start work, we’ll use rolling notifications to inform people about our work and its progress, including on-street signage.</li> <li>○ The best way to stay informed about our work is to sign-up for project notifications at <a href="http://bchydro.com/westendsub">bchydro.com/westendsub</a>. We have segmented this list so that you can sign up for the information that is most important to you, depending on where you live, work and commute.</li> </ul>

# Other topics we were asked about and our responses

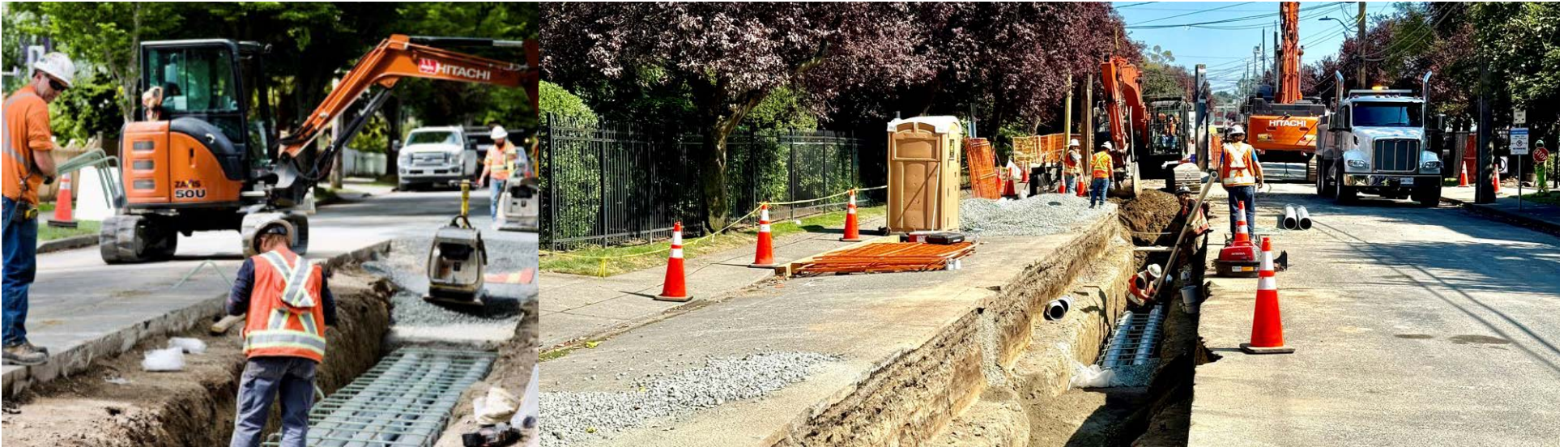
Through this consultation, we were able to identify key themes that participants are interested in hearing more about. The table below outlines these themes and our responses.

Interest or idea	Our response
<p><b>Substation location</b> e.g. “Why a substation in Nelson Park and not somewhere near Stanley Park where construction is already ongoing?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We’ve purchased underground rights at the Vancouver School Board’s Lord Roberts Annex property to construct the West End Substation, and we’re progressing our design for this site.</li> <li>○ Substations need to be located close to the centre of demand – that is, near where electricity is being used—to be efficient and reliable.</li> <li>○ We believe that building underground on public property is the right approach in the West End and that our approach benefits the community by: delivering a safe, modern substation to support reliable electrical service; protecting local housing stock – because our alternative was removing at least half a block of residential use for this industrial facility; investing in local public schools and supporting the refresh of local parks.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Play space</b> e.g. “When will the school playground be closed?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We expect that the Vancouver School Board play equipment will remain in place until late summer 2026.</li> <li>○ The Nelson Park play equipment will remain in place for most of our construction period, but it will be removed temporarily to allow for the powerlines to be installed, which is expected to take up to 3 months to complete, during the winter months.</li> <li>○ In response to Vancouver Park Board engagement in 2019, we agreed to realign our power line routing in Nelson Park, and as a result, our construction will require the temporary removal of the park play equipment.</li> <li>○ Our power line construction will take place over winter, when the park is less used, and is expected to take up to three months.</li> <li>○ We’re continuing to work with the Park Board to explore if there are opportunities for alternative locations for the play equipment.</li> </ul>

## Electric and magnetic fields (EMF)

e.g. “Will the children in the school be affected by the substation?”

- We recognize that there are questions about EMF (electric and magnetic fields). We take these seriously and have considered EMF very carefully during our planning.
- Over 40 years, health agencies, including the World Health Organization and Health Canada, have reviewed scientific studies and have concluded that there are no confirmed health consequences from low-level electric fields and magnetic fields, like those near power lines.
- These agencies have endorsed maximum magnetic field exposure guidelines created by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation (ICNIRP), which include large safety factors. The ICNIRP recommends a limit of 2000 mG (milligauss) for residential exposure and 10,000 mG for occupational exposure e.g. for people like power line technicians who work on BC Hydro’s high-voltage power lines.
- The main source of EMF from our project will be the transmission power lines leading into the substation. Right above these lines magnetic fields will be only 5 per cent of the health agency-endorsed conservative exposure limit and within the school building there will be a minimum distance of 45 metres from the transmission lines and the magnetic field will be less than 1 mG.
- To help alleviate public concern about EMF, we have committed to:
  - Bury transmission power lines deeper underground and implement magnetic shielding within the boundaries of Nelson Park and the Vancouver School Board property,
  - Commission an independent study of current EMF levels at the existing Lord Roberts Annex property and Nelson Park, and report this publicly.
  - Confirm the EMF levels expected at and around the proposed substation, based on final design, and report this publicly.
  - Commission an independent study to verify EMF levels once the substation is in-service and to continue to monitor EMF levels and report them publicly on an ongoing basis.
  - You can find more information about EMF on our website at [bchydro.com/EMF](http://bchydro.com/EMF).

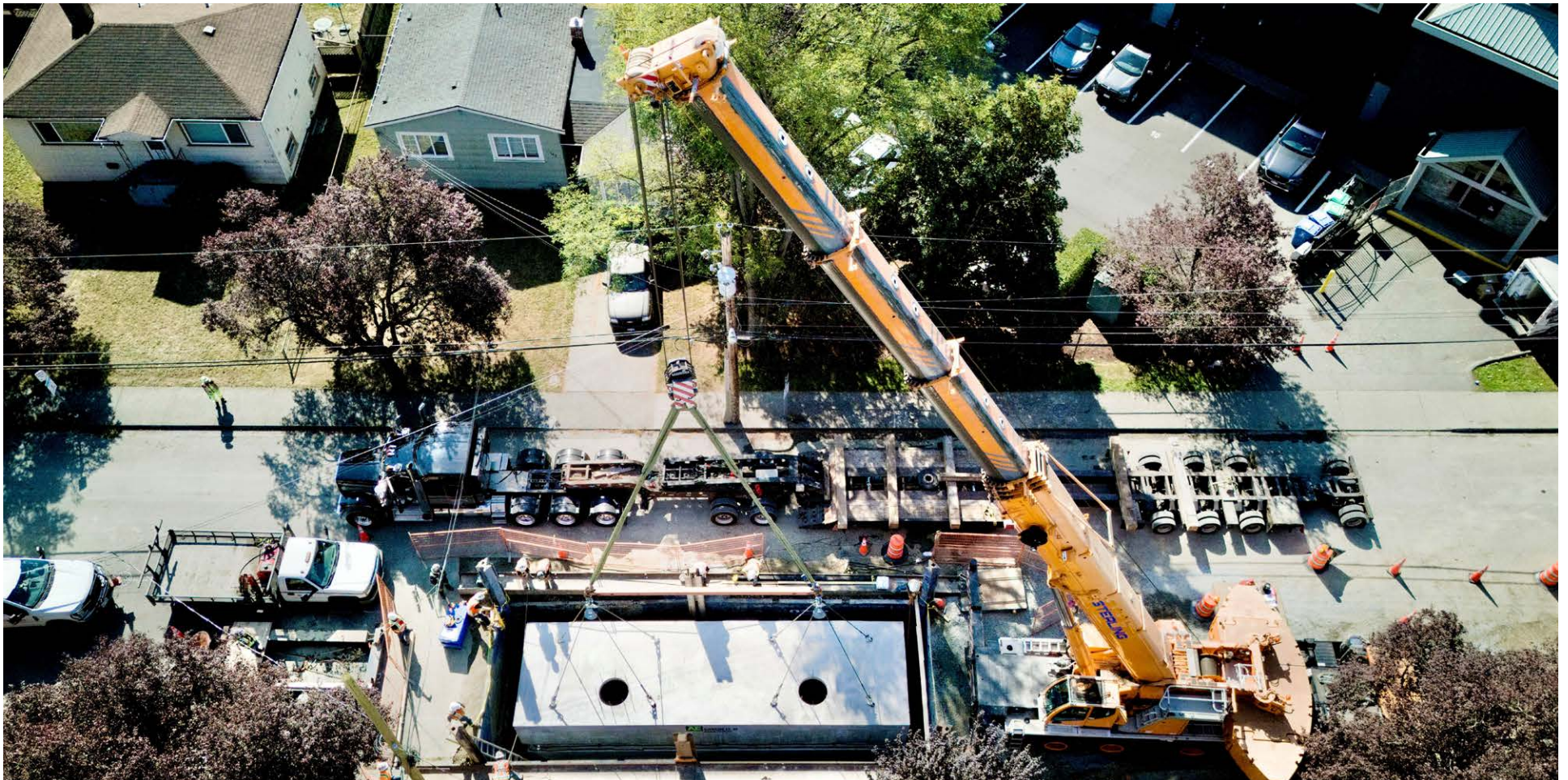


# Next steps

We expect to begin construction of the power line routes in fall 2027, about a year after we start construction of the West End Substation.

About three months before we start power line construction, we'll reach out to people who live, work and travel along these routes to let them know that we are starting work and how we expect to mitigate anticipated impacts.

To stay up-to-date with this information, please sign-up for email updates at [bchydro.com/westendsub](https://bchydro.com/westendsub).

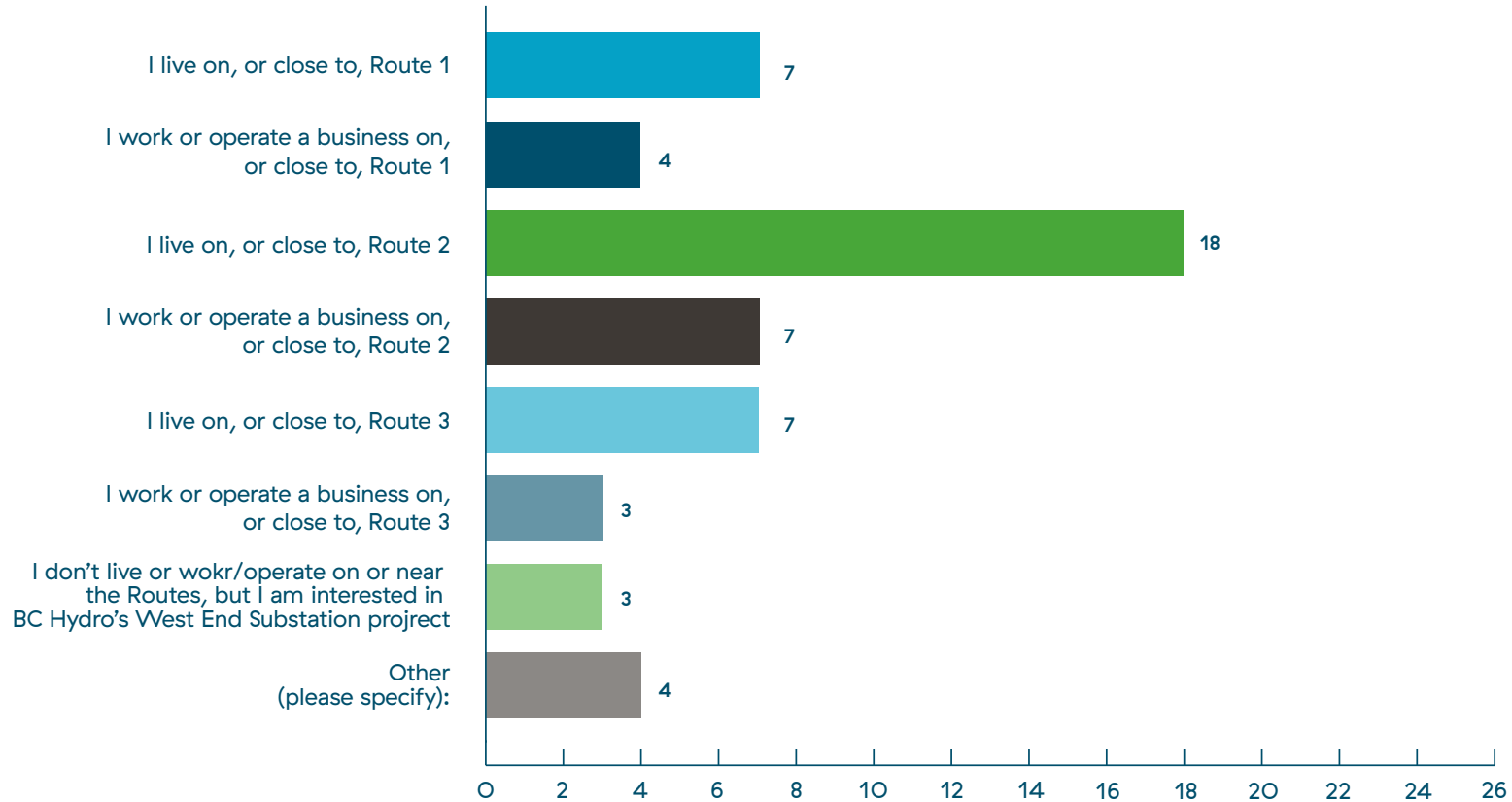


# Appendix A: Survey results

## About you

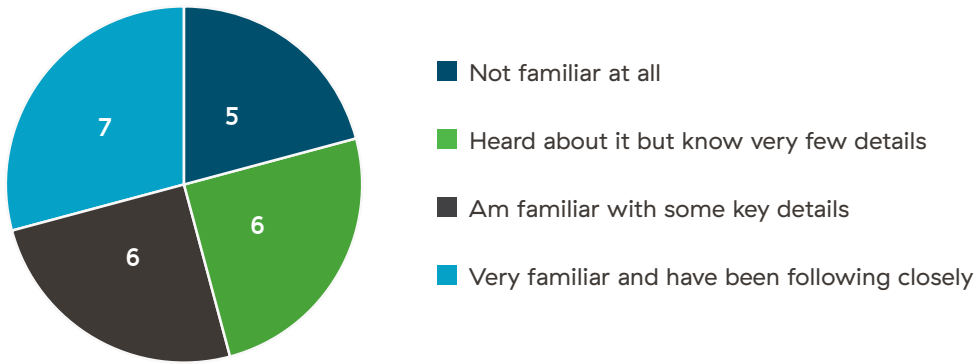
### 1. What is your interest in West End Substation power line routes? Select all that apply:

n = 26, people could select more than one option



## 2. Before today, how would you describe your familiarity with the West End Substation project?

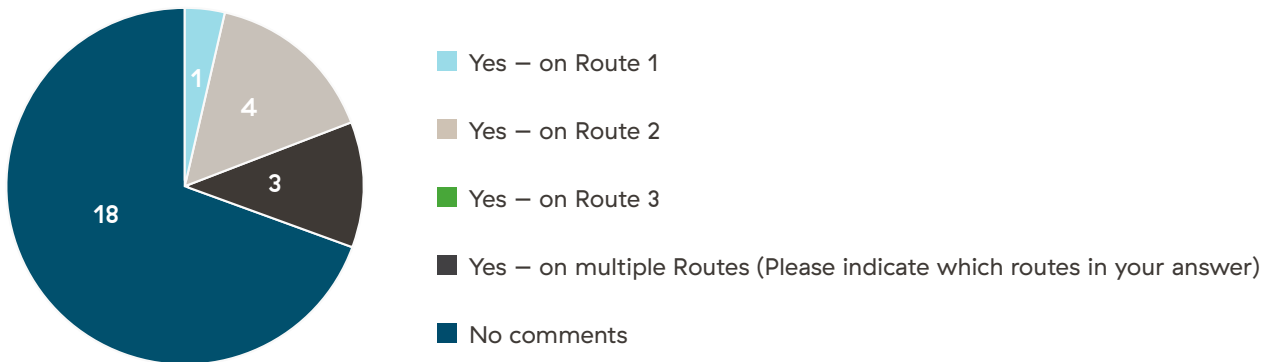
n = 24



## Power line routing

### 3. Do you have any comments on the power line routes? Select one answer.

n = 26



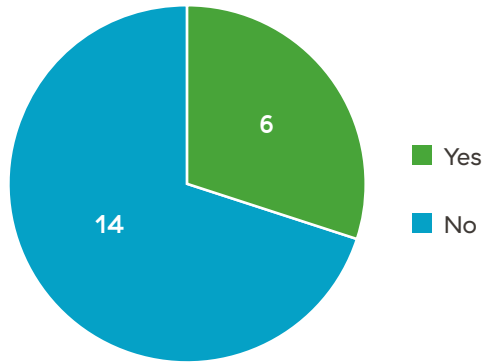
Most of the eight comments in reply to this question shared concerns about traffic, other comments were about construction impacts and safety.

## Power line and maintenance vault construction

### 4. Do you have any comments about our proposed construction mitigations?

If your comment is about a specific route or impact, please include that information in your response.

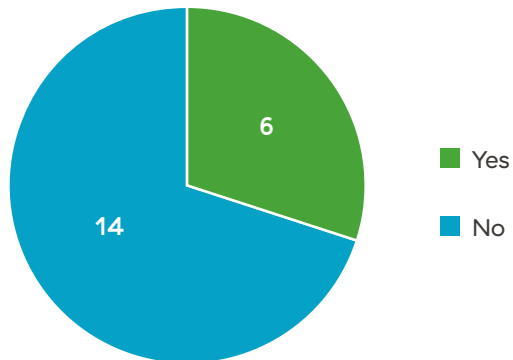
n = 20



Of the six comments shared, participants most often expressed concerns about road traffic and how pedestrians might be impacted.

### 5. Do you have examples of effective construction mitigation efforts implemented by other organizations or businesses working downtown?

n = 20

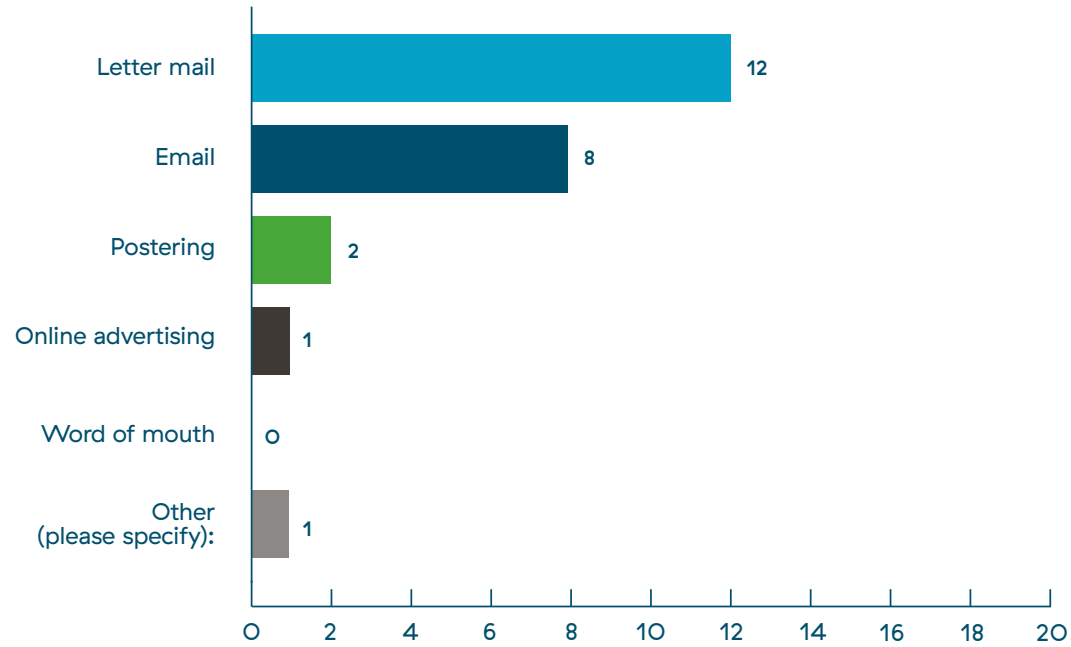


Participants offered suggestions for how to maintain safe pedestrian and bicycle movement.

## Keeping you informed

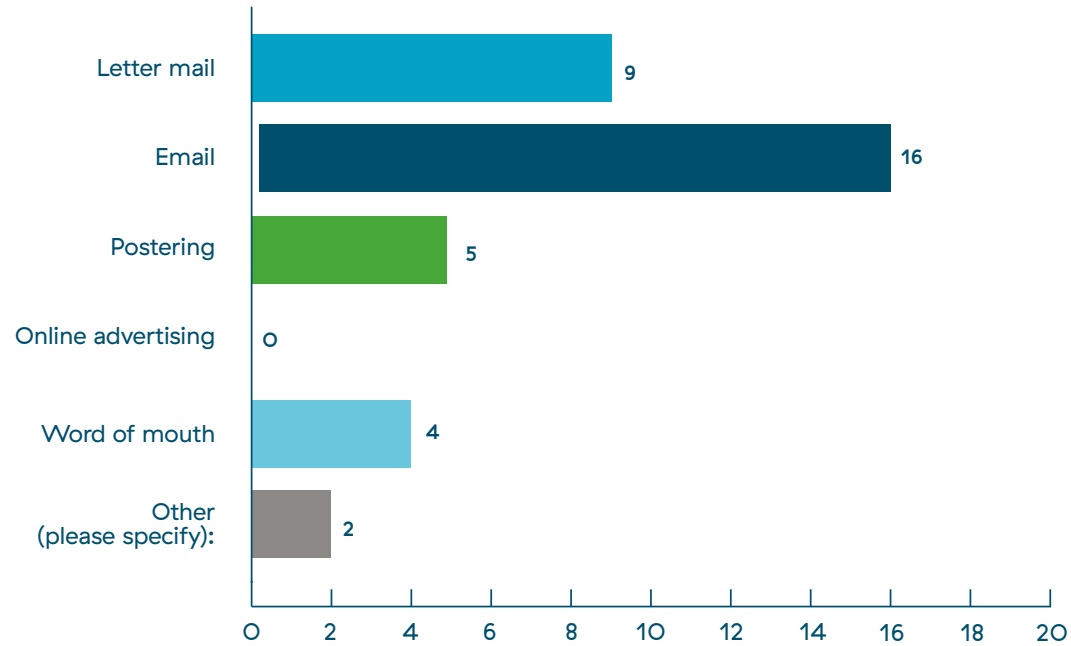
### 6. How did you hear about this engagement? Select all that apply:

n = 20, participants could select multiple answers



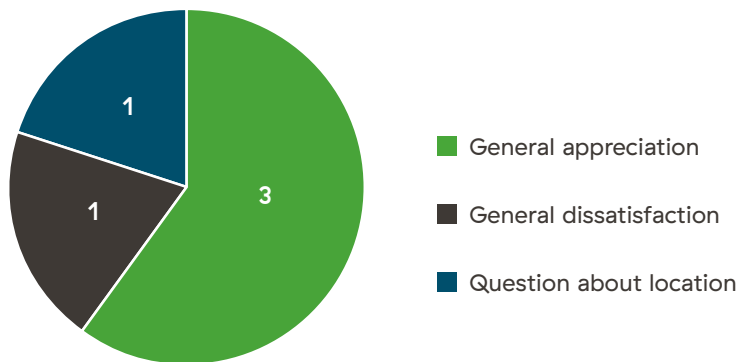
**7. When we are closer to starting construction, what would be the best way to make sure you hear about construction plans?  
Select all that apply:**

n = 20, participants could select multiple answers



**8. Is there any other feedback you'd like to share, or questions you'd like to ask, about the West End Substation project?  
This question is optional.**

n = 5



**9. Would you like to subscribe for email updates about the West End Substation project and/or power lines?  
If you do, you can choose to get updates about just the substation, specific power line routes, or a combination.**

n = 19

