



Checklist of Best Practices for Municipalities Coordination with Gas Company

I. Set Foundation

Staffing & Communication

Hold pre-construction season meeting with gas company.

Purpose:

- Introduce **all** participants in the coordination process for gas company and municipality
- Compare infrastructure plans and identify opportunities for aligning schedules
- Establish communication procedures for the construction season
- Establish clarity on restoration, paving and inspection procedures

Establish policy to coordinate paving, water, and sewer infrastructure planning efforts internally.

Hold annual internal meeting to schedule infrastructure plan updates across highway, water and sewer.

Obtain contact information for gas company key representatives, including

- Community liaison (i.e. point-person)
- Managers for gas main planning (i.e. engineering), gas main construction, gas main maintenance (i.e. leak repair), and new services

Note: these may be available on a website provided by the gas company.

Include requirement in paving contracts for minimum of three week notice of schedule changes

Paving contractor should send updates directly to gas company.

Infrastructure Plans

Maintain three year plans for paving, water and sewer infrastructure upgrades.

Extend to five years if possible. Gas companies expect that plans beyond year one will be priorities and subject to change. Gas companies have a five year planning cycle for gas main replacement.

Update annually list of completed paving, water and sewer projects.

Maintain street-cut moratorium list, showing streets by year paved.



Data Management

- Acquire access to Geographic Information Systems (GIS), through software- or cloud-based programs.
- Some options in use by MAPC municipalities are: [ArcGIS](#), [UtilityCloud](#), [PeopleGIS](#), and [MapGeo](#)

- Keep paving, water, and sewer infrastructure plans in GIS and produce map.

- Keep street-cut moratorium list in GIS and produce map.

- Explore need for a data-base system, like COBUCS.
- One option tested by at least one MAPC municipality is: [Envista](#)

2. Share & Strategize

Share Data

- Share list of streets under a Street Cut moratorium.

- Share all years of all infrastructure plans, including paving, water and sewer.

- Share any other “wish-list” information related to infrastructure plans or needs.

- Share information on planned new developments as soon as possible.

- Request gas main replacement plan.

- Request map showing existence of gas main on streets and pipe material.

- For **municipal** engineering projects, request gas main location information.

- For **gas company** engineering projects, share water and sewer main location information.



Share Data (Continued)

- Request gas leaks data.

- Request and offer to share GIS files for infrastructure and plans.

Compare & Synchronize Plans

- At pre-construction season meeting: -
- 1. Compare gas company and municipal infrastructure plans for years 1-3.
Use maps and GIS if available to facilitate comparison.

 - 2. Agree on infrastructure schedule changes for years 1-3 that would benefit both parties.

 - 3. Define projects that need sequencing of schedules for the upcoming construction season.
- Develop program for other utilities to participate in plan sharing and project synchronization efforts.
- Like Cities of Worcester and Cambridge, this may take the form of a regular meeting or series of meetings with all utilities present.

3. Generate & Capture Savings

Generate Savings

- At pre-construction season meeting: -
- 1. Discuss trench restoration requirements of [DTE 98-22](#) compared with municipal preferences.

 - 2. Agree to changes to trench restoration that are cost saving or cost neutral.

Some examples of cost-saving changes are:
 - Allow temporary patches to persist until municipal paving occurs
 - Allow temporary patches to persist through the preferred settlement period
 - Allow permanent patches to use the grind-and-inlay method rather than full depth cut-back



(At pre-construction season meeting: continued)

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3. Schedule an early-construction season check-in, such as mid-May.

Evaluate efficacy of coordination efforts one-month into the season and identify improvements or corrections needed.

4. Determine frequency and method of other meetings during construction season.

Method and frequency should be commensurate with complexity and type of work.

Link permits to gas company attendance at any construction season meetings.

Consider **not** requiring curb-to-curb repaving during the street-cut moratorium.

Approach suggested especially if municipality has not historically provided street-cut moratorium information to gas company.

Capture Savings

Sign bilateral agreement to share savings from synchronized projects.

Institute mechanism to use shared savings for municipal infrastructure projects.

Could be a Special Revenue Fund, approved by the legislature, or a verbal agreement in the municipal government to prioritize returning funds to the Public Works or department responsible for coordination.

Start a cooperative program to leverage shared savings to incentivize more infrastructure repair across multiple utilities.

Like the City of Worcester, implement a program to identify opportunities for more than one utility to do infrastructure upgrades. Use the shared savings to reduce the cost of repaving that section of street curb-to-curb. This could build upon the regular meeting or series of meetings with all utilities to share plans and find shared opportunities.



4. Find Efficiencies

New Customers

Include address information in street-cut moratorium list.

Facilitates gas company removing address from direct mail campaign lists

Ahead of paving, notify residents of opportunity to convert on roads that may be paved.

Making a map of road paving priorities could be a low- effort and low-cost method to notify residents. Be clear that priorities are subject to change to preseve municipal flexibility.

Trench / Street Opening Permits

Process permits at least two weeks before the start of construction season.

For applications, implement: -

1. Email submission of electronically fillable PDFs (near-term solution)

2. Online permitting (long-term solution)

Programs in use by MAPC municipalities include: [PeopleGIS](#), [Tyler Technologies](#), and [ViewPoint Cloud](#)

For payment, implement: -

1. Batch payments for invoices, such as invoicing twice per year for all permits submitted

2. Online permit payment

Mark-Outs for Underground Infrastructure

Clarify with gas company if and when it will mark out abandoned mains.

Report errors with mark-outs using Dig Safe form.

Form at: http://www.digsafe.com/violation_reports.php



Call Dig Safe before excavating for municipal projects.

Trenches & Paving

Request data on frequency and result of gas company paving patch inspections.

Request gas company use plastic ownership tags for patches.

Do not request use of "flowable fill".

Consider requesting use of a soil compaction meter to achieve better compaction results.

Tree Planting

Require that an arborist or tree contractor check soil in tree pits for the presence of natural gas.

Use a combustible gas indicator (CGI) to take sub-surface readings. CGI used in MAPC-HEET study is [Bascom Turner Gas Ranger](#).

Prohibit planting if natural gas is found below the soil.
Report any gas found to gas company immediately. Consider using an above ground planter until leak is fixed or pipe is replaced.