

# **PUBLIC NOTICE**

EPB is applying for the second round of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) funding through the Tennessee Emergency Management (TEMA) as a sub-applicant.

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), federal actions must be reviewed and evaluated for feasible alternatives and for social, economic, historic, environmental, legal, and safety considerations. EO 12898 requires FEMA to provide the opportunity for public participation in the planning process and to consider potential impacts to minority and low-income populations. This notice may also fulfill requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

Funding for the proposed project will be conditional upon compliance with all applicable federal, tribal, state, and local laws, regulations, permit requirements and conditions.

**Applicant:** EPB

**Project Title:** EPB Chattanooga Community Network Conversion for Critical Infrastructure  
Location of Proposed Work: Within the boundaries of the EPB service territory which includes Hamilton County and portions of the surrounding nine counties in Tennessee and Georgia and the campus of multiple emergency response and safety facilities at 3410 Amnicola Hwy, Chattanooga, TN 37406

**Name of Structure:** EPB Power & Communication Network Conversion  
Approximately two hundred and fifty (250) segments of the EPB power and communications network that support a combination of Critical Community Buildings/Facilities and Severe Repetitive Loss Properties within the boundaries of the EPB service territory

**Point of Contact:** Kelli Grimes-Ballard; (423) 648-1218 / [grimeskl@epb.net](mailto:grimeskl@epb.net)

**Flood Hazard Area Zone:** This project is for the conversion of overhead-to-underground of approximately 250 properties located in various flood zones (some areas may take place in Special Flood Hazard Areas). Confirmation of locations will be made in the latest Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). The proposed work will be to convert overhead properties to underground in previously disturbed public right of way property and is not expected to have any effect on the local floodplain. The action will be mitigated by leaving the structures in place if the infrastructure remains in use by other utilities otherwise removed, returning the property to open space to prevent future loss of property.

## **Proposed Work and Purpose:**

EPB is requesting funds to convert existing electric and communications network from overhead-to-underground. The purpose of these projects is to ensure continuity of local safety and emergency services for the local community and to emergency communications systems across the state of Tennessee as well as prevent recurring replacement of power and communication network property from vegetation impact.

## **Project Alternatives:**

### **Power & Communication Network Conversion**

Alternative #1 (no action alternative): Taking no action would result in these circuits remaining highly prone to all adverse weather conditions. Repetitive weather-related impacts to vegetation and natural hazards could still occur, placing a burden on EPB customers impacted by the loss of power and other customers impacted by socialized replacement and circuit management costs as well as critical local

government resources. If the structures remain, it would remain subject to ongoing and repeated vegetation impacts from all-weather events and continue to contribute to ongoing increasing mitigation costs. It will also continue disrupting power and communication services to critical community facilities and residents and business to the extent the Smart grid operations can currently minimize.

Alternative #2: The most feasible action is to convert approximately two hundred and fifty (250) power and communication network properties from overhead-to-underground by doing so it would lessen the loss of life and property in this area. This action would not put our public safety officers at risk in future flooding events.

**Comment Period:**

Comments are solicited from the public; local, state, or federal agencies; and other interested parties to consider and evaluate the impacts of the proposed project. The comments should be made in writing and addressed to EPB. All comments are due within 30 days of this notice. EPB will forward comments to applicable regulatory agencies as needed.

Interested persons may submit comments, obtain more detailed information about the proposed action, or request a copy of the findings by contacting:

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POSTED ON:

**End of Notice**