

NuMI Construction Project

Community Relations Plan

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ISSUE

In February, the NuMI Project intends to begin building a 4,000-foot-long underground tunnel with two vertical access shafts. The construction of these facilities will involve the excavation of over 80,000 cubic yards of soil and rock.

Employees and users, visitors to the Fermilab campus, and residents of Batavia and North Aurora will all be affected by this activity. Traffic will increase somewhat as trucks transport equipment and materials. More important, the blasting of rock will create noise and vibrations that will be felt in Fermilab buildings and in certain residential areas in Batavia and North Aurora—noise and vibrations that could be annoying to the people affected.

Clearly, such intrusions could potentially harm our good relations with the surrounding community. By reaching out to members of the community well before the construction work begins, soliciting their understanding, and hearing and responding to their concerns, we can preserve the goodwill between Fermilab and its neighbors.

GOALS/OBJECTIVES

Goal: Inform the affected public about the excavation work

Blasting of bedrock will take place about twice a day for a period of six months (February to July). Informing the public of the purpose, extent, and potential impact of this activity is important to avoid misunderstanding, misinformation, and confusion, as well as concerns that might arise when, for example, a family hears an unexplained and unexpected noise. Written and presentational materials should all emphasize the value of the NuMI Project not only to our knowledge of physics but to employees and the surrounding community (e.g., project provides jobs, ensures longevity of Fermilab).

Objective: Provide factual information on the excavation work and its impact on the neighborhood.

Tasks: For internal audience (staff and visitors)

- Publish informational article in FERMINES.
- Develop fact sheet describing the goals and extent of the excavation work, as well as the tentative schedule for completion. Make fact sheet available in the Public Affairs Office and at the Information Desk. Distribute to all staff and users through internal mail system.
- Develop exhibit in Leon Lederman Science Education Center for children and teachers from neighborhood schools (see draft mockup of display attached).
- Place large, attractive sign at Pine Street entrance (description of NuMI Project, plus photo of model of NuMI hall), where ongoing excavation work will be visible.

For external audience (affected neighbors—see map attached)

- Pitch story on start of excavation work for the NuMI Project to the local press (through press release and personal contacts).
- Meet with local officials (see list attached) to explain the nature and extent of the project.

Goal: Minimize the negative impact of any disturbances to the public

People residing or working up to 2,000 feet from the blast site will experience increased noise and vibrations from the blasting of rock. Concerns from residents are expected to focus primarily on the potential for property damage (e.g., cracks in home foundations).¹ Employees and users may be disturbed by disruptions to their workday.

Objective: Prevent any undue disturbances

- Tasks:
- Insert clauses in the construction contract limiting noise and vibration levels and restricting hours of blasting (see attached excerpt from contract).
 - Through oversight by Fermilab staff, ensure that contractor does not violate established limits.

¹ Technical consultants do not expect vibrations from the excavation work to cause any property damage.

- Provide for a contingency to erect a soundproof cover over drilling shafts to dampen noise if complaints from the public are numerous.²

Objective: Provide means for addressing public concerns

- Tasks:
- Establish "hotline," with experienced community relations contact on contractor staff required to respond within 24 hours to any complaints. Public Affairs Office will daily track complaints and responses. Publish hotline number in all written materials (e.g., FERMINews article, fact sheet, press release).
 - Hold public meetings before construction work begins (more than one to keep groups small for better communication). Meetings will include (1) a brief presentation by selected NuMI staff describing the project and its impact in terms of noise, vibrations, and dust; (2) ample opportunity for questions and answers; and (3) assurances that any damage to personal property will be repaired by the contractor as required under the terms of the contract. Residents will be encouraged to take pictures of their homes before excavation work begins. Local officials will be invited to attend. The public meetings will be announced in a flyer that will be distributed in residential areas expected to experience some noise and vibrations from the blasting. This will ensure that all affected neighbors are informed.

² This provision is under discussion.

TIMETABLE

3 months before start of project	<p>Draft communications plan in consultation with technical consultants, public relations professionals from other tunneling projects, Department of Energy officials, and local officials.</p> <p>Begin designing exhibit for Leon Lederman Science Center.</p> <p>Insert clauses in contract restricting noise and vibration levels and hours of blasting.</p>
2 months before	<p>Begin designing sign for Pine Street entrance describing project.</p> <p>Develop fact sheet.</p> <p>Meet with local officials.</p>
5-6 weeks before	<p>Prepare displays and presentations for public meetings.</p>
3 weeks before	<p>Hold public meetings.</p> <p>Distribute press release; contact media.</p> <p>Publish article in FERMINES.</p> <p>Make fact sheet available.</p>
Start of project	<p>Set up exhibit at Leon Lederman Science Center.</p> <p>Place sign at Pine Street entrance.</p>
Ongoing	<p>Oversee contractor to ensure that noise and vibrations levels meet contractual specifications and that blasting is not done outside the designated hours of operation.</p> <p>Monitor (1) complaints about disturbances and (2) responses from the contractor.</p>

LOCAL OFFICIALS

Kane County: Mike McCoy, Board Chairman
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Geneva
232-5931

North Aurora: Mayor Mark Ruby
25 E. State
North Aurora
897-8228

Batavia: Mayor Jeff Scheilke
100 N. Island Avenue
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