

Create and maintain a public relations plan for roadside vegetation management

Although the road foreman, road crew, and town selectboard make many of the decisions regarding road and roadside vegetation maintenance, all people in a town can play a role in deciding how funds are used to manage and maintain their town roads.



Raising public awareness about roadside maintenance will help road crews interact positively with the public while conducting roadwork, mowing, pruning, tree clearing, or erosion control.

A successful public relations plan will also outline appropriate channels for submitting and responding

to complaints from adjacent landowners and road users. Additionally, a public relations plan should outline how road crews, town officials, and local residents should respond to a crisis such as downed trees, a fuel spill, or a road washout.

Recommendations

Consider the audiences of a public relations plan for municipal roads and roadside vegetation. Include homeowners and landowners, school districts, municipal property managers, and local volunteer commissions and planning entities.

Outline appropriate channels for submitting and responding to complaints from adjacent landowners and road users. [Public hearings](#)¹ surrounding tree removal are one method to manage expectations about roadside canopy.

Identify media channels that can communicate short-term and reactive actions such as tree care during a [storm response](#),² repairs of road washouts, or corrective actions after a fuel spill.

Identify media channels for outreach regarding long-term and proactive initiatives such as invasive plant management, ash tree management, and monitoring for emerald ash borer in municipally managed spaces.

Identify any local, regional, or national scenic byways and clarify any notification process required when road or roadside management actions are planned.

1. Vermont Urban & Community Forestry, *Guidelines for Public Hearings for Tree Removals*, bit.ly/VTUCF_PublicHearing.

2. "Storms," Vermont Urban & Community Forestry, bit.ly/VTUCF_Storms.