

**Delivery to Utilities | Transmission:
Lower Customer Costs with Innovative Solutions**
Summary of Comments - September 17, 2025

On September 17, 2025, OurEnergyPolicy and The Earthshot Foundation hosted their second GridIron Series discussion on the advantages and risks of grid improvement strategies. Find the recording [here](#).

SPEAKERS



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OurEnergyPolicy is a non-partisan organization. The following represents a summary of comments from the panelists.

Summary of Key Points

- While discussions around permitting reform focus on policy, it is the implementation, and the available personnel and resources to do so that impact the permitting process most significantly.
- Increasing utility bills reflect an aging grid infrastructure that is more restrained by upkeep costs.
- Community engagement is an essential pillar in both generation and transmission projects.
- Grid-enhancing technologies are not a replacement for major infrastructure investments. However, they still play a valuable role in grid planning.

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Interregional Planning

- Since peak loads vary across geographic regions, interregional transmission can optimize the use of existing generation capacity by transporting energy generated in off-peak regions to the regions that need it most.
- Current requirements for interregional coordination in transmission planning are minimal.
- Inconsistent coordination between the many stakeholders involved in transmission planning stymies progress and prolongs project timelines.

Project Timelines and Permitting

- Timelines for utility scale power plants are increasing.
 - Project delays can be attributed to community opposition, local permitting ordinances, and grid connection barriers.
- Community members are more inclined to accept the outcome of infrastructure projects when they perceive the decision-making process as fair.
- One underappreciated aspect of permitting reform is staffing and implementation.
 - County governments--especially in rural counties--have limited resources for permit processing.
 - Allocating more resources towards permit processing--such as hiring more qualified staff-- would significantly shorten permitting timelines.

Grid Enhancing Technologies

- While their contributions to the grid are smaller in scale, grid-enhancing technologies can be deployed faster than major infrastructure projects so grid planners are not outpaced by load growth.
- Reconductoring is the process of upgrading existing transmission infrastructure with advanced conductors.
 - While slower in pace of implementation compared to other grid-enhancing technologies, this upgrade alone can double transmission capacity of existing infrastructure.
- The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) has a presence in ~350 U.S. communities.
 - Given the magnitude of its operations, the DOD has the opportunity to play a more intentional role in transmission planning as an “anchor customer” and an investor in scaling innovative transmission technology.