



Coachella Water Authority
Public Outreach & Communications
for Proposition 218 Support
June 25, 2026

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Coachella Water Authority and Sanitary District
3462 Enterprise Way
Coachella, CA 92236

RE: Proposition 218 Outreach and Public Education Services

Dear Selection Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this proposal on behalf of Westbound Communications. We are excited to partner with the City of Coachella to support public outreach and education efforts related to proposed water and wastewater rate adjustments.

The City has already completed significant work to evaluate its water and wastewater system needs and develop proposed rate recommendations. The next step is helping residents and businesses understand what the proposal means for them and how they can participate in the process. Our role is simple: help the City communicate clearly and ensure the community has access to accurate information throughout the rate adjustment process.

Westbound is uniquely qualified to support this effort. Our team includes experienced Proposition 218 communicators, bilingual outreach professionals, and community engagement specialists who have worked throughout the Coachella Valley. In addition to supporting Proposition 218 outreach efforts for cities and water agencies across California, our team has experience on regional initiatives including CV Link and CV Rail, giving us firsthand knowledge of the communities, stakeholders and audiences that make the Coachella Valley unique.

We understand that successful Proposition 218 outreach is not measured by the number of materials produced or meetings held. Success is achieved when residents understand the proposal, know where to get information, and feel that the process has been transparent and accessible from start to finish.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to the opportunity to support the City of Coachella during this important community conversation.

Best,

Carrie Gilbreth

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carrie Gilbreth", written in a cursive style.

Principal and Chief Executive Officer
Westbound Communications
cgilbreth@westboundcommunications.com | 909.567.7391

Why Westbound



Why Westbound

Proposition 218 outreach requires a team that understands water and can effectively engage the community throughout the process. Westbound brings the experience, local knowledge and outreach expertise necessary to help the City of Coachella successfully educate residents and businesses about proposed water and wastewater rate adjustments.

Our Role



Provide tools to demonstrate how individual customers would be impacted



Educate residents and business owners about the proposed water and sewer rate adjustments



Offer the public opportunities to ask questions and be involved in the process



Help customers understand why rate adjustments are proposed

Water and Proposition 218 Expertise

Westbound has extensive experience supporting water agencies and infrastructure programs throughout Southern California. Our team has developed communications programs for agencies including Eastern Municipal Water District, Western Municipal Water District, Monte Vista Water District, Mojave River Watershed Group, West Valley Water District, Mesa Water District, and Central Basin Municipal Water District helping communicate topics ranging from water reliability and conservation to infrastructure investments and regulatory requirements.

Supporting this experience is Proposition 218 specialist Jon Barilone, who has assisted cities and water agencies with rate adjustment outreach efforts, including public education campaigns, community meeting facilitation, presentation development and stakeholder communications. Together, our team understands both the technical nature of water and wastewater rate discussions and the importance of helping residents understand how proposed changes would affect them.

Coachella Valley Knowledge

Westbound understands the Coachella Valley because we have worked here. Our experience includes regional initiatives such as the Riverside County Registrar of Voters, CV Link and CV Rail, along with previous communications programs supporting businesses and organizations throughout the Valley. This familiarity provides immediate insight into local audiences, stakeholders and community priorities, allowing our team to begin work quickly and effectively.



Bilingual Community Engagement

Meaningful outreach requires meeting residents where they are. Led by Robert Chevez and supported by Victor Torres and Maria Torres, our team brings extensive experience delivering bilingual communications programs and community outreach efforts throughout Southern California. We understand how to make technical information accessible and relevant to diverse audiences.

A Team Ready to Go

The City will have direct access to a senior-level team led by Carrie Gilbreth and supported by experienced public engagement professionals with expertise in water communications, Proposition 218 outreach and community engagement. Our team is prepared to immediately integrate with City staff and begin implementation of the outreach program.

Westbound's is ready to help the City provide residents with accurate information and support a transparent public process from start to finish.

Our Team

Westbound has assembled a team with direct experience in water communications, Proposition 218 outreach, bilingual community engagement and public education. Together, our team will work closely with City staff to ensure residents have access to clear information throughout the rate adjustment process.



Carrie Gilbreth
Senior Strategist I Project Director

Carrie Gilbreth will serve as the project's senior strategist, providing executive oversight, strategic communications counsel and overall quality assurance throughout the Proposition 218 process. As Chief Executive Officer of Westbound Communications, Carrie has advised cities, water agencies, transportation organizations and special districts throughout California on public information programs, community engagement initiatives and complex communications challenges.

Carrie brings extensive experience supporting water-related communications efforts, including public education programs focused on infrastructure, conservation, water reliability and long-term investment planning. She also brings direct familiarity with the Coachella Valley through communications initiatives including CV Link and CV Rail, providing an understanding of the region's communities, stakeholders and communications landscape.

Throughout the project, Carrie will work closely with City staff to ensure outreach efforts remain clear, responsive and focused on helping residents understand the proposal and the information available to them throughout the process.



Jon Barilone
Project Manager I Proposition 218 Specialist

Jon Barilone is a public relations and strategic communications professional with nearly 20 years of experience supporting local government agencies. He has specialized in digital communications, public education and community engagement efforts for more than 100 California public agencies.

Jon brings direct Proposition 218 experience supporting water agencies and cities with rate adjustment outreach efforts, including work for the Del Paso Manor Water District and the cities of Oxnard, Hawaiian Gardens, American Canyon and Hercules. His experience includes public education campaigns, community meeting facilitation, presentation development, and stakeholder communications designed to help residents understand complex rate proposals and participate in the public process.

As project manager, Jon will lead day-to-day implementation of the outreach program and serve as the City's primary point of contact throughout the Proposition 218 process.



Robert Chevez
Multicultural Outreach Lead

Robert Chevez will lead bilingual communications and multicultural outreach efforts for the project. A native Spanish speaker and experienced community engagement professional, Robert specializes in helping public agencies connect with diverse audiences through culturally relevant communications and meaningful public engagement.

His experience includes outreach and engagement efforts for CV Link, Riverside County Transportation Commission, Riverside County Registrar of Voters, Eastern Municipal Water District and numerous public infrastructure and community-based initiatives throughout Riverside County. Through this work, Robert has developed strong familiarity with Coachella Valley communities, stakeholder groups and communication channels, along with extensive experience designing outreach programs that reach residents in both English and Spanish.

Robert will oversee bilingual messaging, community outreach and Spanish-language engagement efforts throughout the project.



Victor Torres and Maria Torres
Community Outreach and Digital Engagement

Victor Torres and Maria Torres will support bilingual community outreach, stakeholder engagement and digital communications throughout the project. Together, they bring experience supporting public agencies, water organizations and voter education programs across Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

Their experience includes community outreach and public education efforts for Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District, the Mojave River Watershed Group, Riverside County Registrar of Voters, San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters, OC Streetcar, and more. Through this work, they have engaged bilingual audiences and helped residents access important public information through both in-person and digital channels.

Victor and Maria will assist with community outreach activities, public meeting support, stakeholder communications, social media engagement, and digital resource development throughout the Proposition 218 process.

Project Understanding, Approach and Scope of Services



Project Understanding and Approach

The City of Coachella has already completed significant work to evaluate future water and wastewater system needs and develop proposed rate recommendations. The next phase of the process requires helping residents and businesses understand why rate adjustments are being considered and how proposed changes would affect customers.

Our approach is simple: translate complex rate information into clear, accessible communications that help residents understand the proposal and participate in the process.

Westbound understands this is an opportunity to provide clear information and build public understanding before the public hearing process begins.

Our approach is centered on making complex information easy to understand. Working closely with City staff, the rate consultant and legal counsel, we will translate technical information into accessible communications that help residents make informed decisions. Throughout the process, our team will focus on transparency and responsiveness across all outreach materials and engagement activities.

Our Role in the Process



The City's outreach goals identify several important priorities, including bilingual education, community engagement, digital resources, social media communications and public meeting support. Our team has direct experience delivering each of these services and will implement an integrated outreach program that provides residents with multiple opportunities to learn about the proposed rates and participate in the conversation.

Success will be measured by the City's ability to provide residents with accurate information, maintain a transparent public process and ensure community members understand both the proposal and the resources available to them throughout the Proposition 218 process.

Scope of Services

Westbound will provide a comprehensive outreach and public education program designed to help residents and businesses understand proposed water and wastewater rate adjustments while supporting the City throughout the Proposition 218 process. Our approach combines community engagement, bilingual communications and digital outreach to ensure residents have access to clear, accurate information.

Focus on Customer Understanding

Every communication developed through this program will help answer the questions residents care about most:

- Why are rate adjustments being proposed?
- How will the proposal affect me?
- Where can I learn more or ask questions?

Proposition 218 Development and Execution

Our role is simple: help the City communicate clearly, ensure residents have access to accurate information, and support a transparent Proposition 218 process from start to finish.



Outreach strategy development



Community outreach materials



Key message development



Stakeholder communications support



Proposition 218 notice support



Public hearing preparation and support



Frequently asked questions development

Educational Materials

Westbound will develop educational materials that explain proposed rate adjustments and direct residents to additional resources. Materials will be designed to simplify technical information and help residents understand what the proposal means for them.

- Fact sheets
- Informational handouts
- Presentation materials
- Meeting displays and graphics
- Community outreach materials
- Conservation education materials

Community Meetings and Public Engagement

Community meetings will be structured to educate first and answer questions throughout the process. We will support the City's community engagement efforts through meeting planning and facilitation with special attention given to accessibility, bilingual participation and creating opportunities for residents to ask questions in a comfortable and welcoming environment.

- Community meeting coordination
- Presentation development
- Meeting facilitation support
- Public question tracking
- Community feedback documentation
- Follow-up communications

Bilingual Communications

Coachella's diverse population requires outreach that is accessible and culturally relevant. Led by Robert Chevez and supported by Victor Torres and Maria Torres, our team will help ensure information is available to residents in both English and Spanish.

- Spanish-language transadaptation coordination
- Bilingual outreach materials
- Spanish-language community engagement support
- Translation review and quality control

Digital Communications

Recognizing that residents seek information through a variety of channels, Westbound will create a centralized digital information hub supported by social media, website resources and interactive tools that make rate information easier to understand.

- Social media strategy and content development
- Social media monitoring
- ConserveCoachella.com rate information page support
- Website content development
- Bill estimator coordination and content
- Digital resource development

Video and Visual Communications

As the Proposition 218 process advances toward the public hearing, Westbound will provide communications support to ensure residents have access to timely and accurate information and understand how to participate in the process.

- Hearing communications support
- Community information updates
- Public inquiry support
- Final outreach coordination

Included Deliverables

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| ✓ Outreach Strategy | ✓ Social Media Strategy & Monitoring |
| ✓ Key Messaging | ✓ ConserveCoachella.com Content Support |
| ✓ FAQ Development | ✓ Bill Estimator Support |
| ✓ Community Meetings (4) | ✓ Video Development |
| ✓ Bilingual Communications | ✓ Public Hearing Support |



Thank You

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this proposal. Westbound understands the importance of helping residents and businesses understand proposed water and wastewater rate adjustments while supporting a transparent and accessible Proposition 218 process.

The City has already completed significant work to evaluate future system needs and develop proposed rate recommendations. Westbound is prepared to immediately step into the next phase of the process by helping translate technical information into meaningful community engagement and accessible public education resources.

Why Westbound

- + Direct Proposition 218 outreach and education experience supporting cities and water agencies throughout California
- + Extensive communications experience with water agencies and infrastructure programs across Southern California
- + Deep familiarity with Coachella Valley communities through projects including CV Link and CV Rail
- + Dedicated bilingual outreach team with experience engaging diverse audiences throughout the Coachella Valley and Riverside County
- + Senior-level strategic oversight combined with experienced day-to-day project management
- + Ready to begin immediately and seamlessly integrate with City staff, the rate consultant and legal counsel



Westbound's role is simple: help the City communicate clearly, ensure residents have access to accurate information, and support a transparent public process from start to finish.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to the opportunity to partner with the City of Coachella on this important effort.

Scope of Work and Cost Proposal Form





Scope of Work and Fee Proposal Form

Agency: Coachella Water Authority

Project: Public Outreach & Communications for Proposition 218 Support

Scope of Work:

OUTREACH STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED HOURS	COST
Proposition 218 Development and Execution	« Write and design the Proposition 218 Notice of Public Hearing in coordination with staff and legal team « Develop Proposition 218 messaging plan « Draft talking points for staff and elected officials on Proposition 218 notice	40	\$7,800
Educational Collateral Development	« Build frequently asked questions list « Develop outreach collateral « Develop conservation resource document	25	\$4,875
Community Meeting Facilitation	« Facilitate four community meetings and curate feedback « Develop public presentation materials « Create handouts for the meetings « Develop community meeting presentations « Provide meeting promotion collateral and support	65	\$12,675
Spanish Translation	« Translate the Proposition 218 notice into Spanish « Incorporate translation into meeting handouts and all designed documents	10	\$1,950
Social Media Strategy	« Develop social media posts to educate residents about the importance and value of water services, how to reduce bills, why rate adjustments are proposed and community meetings « Monitor community pulse on social media « Provide strategy and counsel related to social media response	50	\$9,750

Bill Estimator and Website Support	« Create a new “Water Rates” section on the ConserveCoachella.com website providing all educational material related to proposed rate adjustments « Build an accurate bill estimator based on the adopted rate study, allowing residents to see how their bills would be affected if the proposed rates are approved « Design the bill estimator page to include easy-to-follow instructions « Ensure quality assurance and accuracy through a thorough testing process	30	\$5,850
Video Development	« Update existing videos highlighting water and sewer services « Produce a new video reflecting key messages and encouraging ratepayer education « Facilitate, film and log footage for video « Write script incorporating message plan, footage and staff input	40	\$7,800
Hearing Support	« Work with the rate study consultant, staff and legal counsel to ensure the hearing covers accurate messaging « Assist staff as needed	25	\$4,875
Subtotal		285	\$55,575
Total Cost (Not to exceed)		\$58,575	

*this includes an additional allotment of \$8,000 for direct expenses which can include printing, mileage, etc.

Comments:

*Budget projections are based on a blended rate of \$195 per hour.

** This is a projected budget only based on the scope. Once awarded the contract, Westbound will work with the City to finalize the scope and budget.

Firm Name: Westbound Communications Inc.

Authorized Representative: Carrie Gilbreth

Title: Principal and CEO

Signature: Carrie Gilbreth

Date: 06.26.2025

Thank you again.

**We welcome the opportunity to
work with you.**

