

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER**

**Construction of a DC Government-Owned Middle-Mile and Last Mile Fiber Asset,
a CPF Broadband Infrastructure Project**

NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

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NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

The District of Columbia's (District) Office of the Chief Technology Officer ("OCTO") is requesting information in conjunction with DC government's Ward 5 middle mile fiber project for companies ("Contractor") who could perform a non-personnel services contract. The Ward 5 middle mile fiber project is being constructed using grant funds from the U.S. Treasury's Capital Projects Fund ("CPF") and the vendor will provide the following services:

- Fiber conduit design, construction and installation services; and
- The provision of residential and non-residential broadband services.

OCTO shall not exercise any supervision or control over the contract service providers performing the services herein. Such contract service providers shall be accountable solely to the Contractor who, in turn, is responsible to OCTO and DC government.

This document is an RFI only. It is not being posted as a statement of work (SOW) at this time, nor does it constitute a Notice of Funding Availability, Request for Proposals or Request for Applications or a promise to issue any related solicitation in the future.

Respondents are advised that OCTO will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFI. All costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the Contractor or interested party's expense. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future solicitation.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

OCTO's mission is to direct the strategy, deployment, and management of DC government technology with an unwavering commitment to IT excellence, efficiency, and value for government, residents, businesses and visitors. OCTO manages DC-Net, DC government's all-fiber network. Since 2005, DC-Net has provided telecommunications services to the DC government, federal agencies, eligible community anchor institutions ("CAI"), and directly to the public through operation of over 700 public Wi-Fi hot spots. Through Treasury's CPF program, OCTO proposes to greatly increase DC-Net's capacity to serve the public both directly through greater broadband service offerings at CAIs, and indirectly, through greater affordability, performance, and product variety in commercial home and mobile internet offerings in Ward 5.

Access to, and adoption of, reliable broadband is essential to full participation in the community and economy. A reliable broadband connection enables work, learning, healthcare, and more equitable access to government services. In DC, the need for broadband infrastructure investment is deepest in Wards 5, 7, and 8—those regions within DC which have the lowest broadband adoption rates and highest rates of poverty according to American Community Survey (ACS) data, and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) publicly available Indicators of Broadband Need Map.

OCTO proposes to address this need by coordinating resources from multiple federal funding programs, along with existing DC government resources, to accomplish a transformative, equitable, sustainable, achievable and measurable improvement in DC's broadband infrastructure. Note, CPF funding will be used to improve DC's broadband infrastructure in Ward 5.

2. INFORMATION REQUEST

- 2.1. Potential Project Approach: Please describe how your company will meet the scope and technical requirements areas identified below. Discuss and describe your company's experience and approach in addressing each of the technical requirements.
- 2.2. Project Cost: Describe and estimate in dollars the costs associated with the project requirements identified in the following sections for budgeting purposes.

3. CPF PROJECT SCOPE AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

OCTO proposes the procurement and installation of physical broadband infrastructure including conduit and fiber in public rights of way, and to purchase and install network equipment in one or more CAIs in Ward 5 (“CPF Project”). This will enable DC-Net to provide a 10 Gbps symmetrical connection between the Trinidad Recreation Center in Ward 5 and the backbone of the global internet through DC’s open-access Internet Exchange Point (“IXP”).

The Contractor shall provide consulting services and construct a DC government-owned and operated middle mile and last mile broadband infrastructure capital asset in Ward 5, as well as the creation of a new Contractor owned and operated middle mile and last mile capital assets in Ward 5, which will be made subject to permanent affordability and performance standards.

The CPF conduit construction route is identified as a red line in Figure 1, and preliminary drawings are provided in Attachment 1. The white line in Figure 1 represents the Service Area boundary for residential broadband service requirements within this RFI, which the Trinidad and Arboretum neighborhoods.

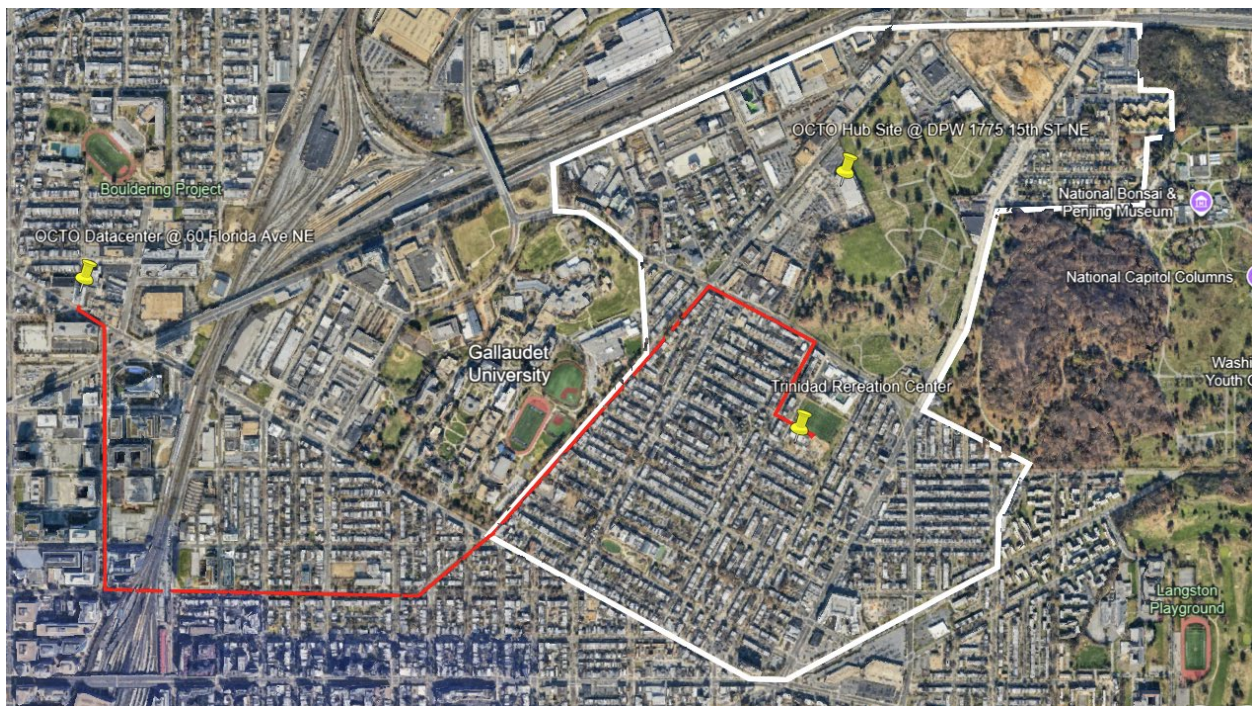


Figure 1.

The selected contractor for the Conduit Design, Permitting, and Construction along the route in Figure 1 will deliver a full solution for OCTO's CPF Project. Responsibilities include creating a detailed design plan, securing all necessary permits, and constructing approximately 12,755 feet of conduit and 22,355 feet of fiber. The Contractor must ensure compliance with local regulations, minimize public disruption, restore affected areas, and provide regular progress updates. Additionally, they will address potential risks, such as permitting delays or material shortages, and implement strategies to mitigate them. Timely completion and quality work before or by June 30, 2026, is key to supporting OCTO's broadband expansion and meeting CPF grant requirements.

3.1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CONDUIT DESIGN, PERMITTING AND CONSTRUCTION

- 3.1.1. Contractor shall provide the necessary services for the successful design, construction and installation of the broadband infrastructure and equipment identified in the technical and hardware requirements below.
- 3.1.2. Contractor shall obtain OCTO's acceptance for each deliverable prior to moving forward with the next deliverable.
- 3.1.3. Contractor shall provide expertise, materials, tools and support in this end-to-end solution for broadband infrastructure installation and broadband service to the public.
- 3.1.4. OCTO will retain the right to all data and intellectual property (i.e., reports) resulting from this engagement.
- 3.1.5. Contractor shall work with OCTO's project team to provide the services and equipment identified in the following technical and equipment requirements sections.

3.2. HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS

Requested hardware and associated components for underground, outdoor, or indoor use as specified below.

- 3.2.1. ~12,755 feet of 4-inch conduit x 12 for a total of ~153,060 feet (underground).
- 3.2.2. ~22,355 feet of 864 strand fiber cable (underground).
- 3.2.3. ~57 manholes (outdoor/underground).

3.3. PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION REQUIREMENTS

Installation requires Contractor to (1) prepare and submit applications for obtaining all necessary entitlements for the benefit of OCTO (*i.e.* construction permits, occupancy permits, easements, right of way agreements, etc.) prior to commencing construction, and (2) satisfactory competition of all required post-construction restoration, including, but not limited to, public rights of way.

- 3.3.1. Purchase and install ~12,755 feet of 4-inch conduit x 12 for a total of ~153,060 feet.
- 3.3.2. Purchase and install ~22,355 feet of 864 strand fiber cable.
- 3.3.3. Purchase and install ~57 manholes.
- 3.3.4. Provide all necessary engineering/design services to support entitlement applications.

- 3.3.5. Verify construction, hardware and equipment is free of defects and is fully installed and fully functioning.

3.4. MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

- 3.4.1. Provide project management support, including testing, system integrations, user acceptance testing, deployment and post deployment.
- 3.4.2. Ensure adherence to project methodologies and project governance.
- 3.4.3. Conduct planning and coordination meetings with OCTO project manager to keep project on time and within budget.
- 3.4.4. Provide weekly, monthly and quarterly reporting to identify project tasks status, identifying any potential bottlenecks and problems.
- 3.4.5. Report accurate information and analytical results to OCTO project manager.
- 3.4.6. Attend scheduled collaboration meetings.
- 3.4.7. Identify skill sets, roles and responsibilities of resources assigned to support the CPF Project.

3.5. POST CONSTRUCTION SUPPORT

- 3.5.1. Participate in the post construction support activities and reporting as needed.
- 3.5.2. Provide red lined drawings.
- 3.5.3. Support SME validation post deployment.

4. RESIDENTIAL BROADBAND SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

DC's affordability standards require the Contractor to offer eligible Ward 5 DC residents a reduced cost broadband internet access service plan. The minimum requirements for the Low-Cost Consumer Broadband Plan ("Low-Cost Plan") to be offered to eligible Ward 5 DC residents are the following:

- 4.1.1. An eligible Ward 5 DC resident's address is within the Service Area in Figure 1 and the household meets at least one of the following requirements:
 - 4.1.1.1. Household income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines;
 - 4.1.1.2. Anyone in the household, including children or dependents, participates in certain government assistance programs like SNAP, Medicaid, WIC, Federal Housing Assistance or others;
 - 4.1.1.3. Anyone in the household participates in the National School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast Program;
 - 4.1.1.4. Anyone in the household received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
 - 4.1.1.5. Anyone in the household already receives a Lifeline benefit; or
 - 4.1.1.6. The household already participates in one of the Contractor's existing low-income programs.
- 4.1.2. Household may apply DC or federal broadband subsidies to the Low-Cost Plan service price.
- 4.1.3. 100 Mbps symmetrical bandwidth speed internet access plan costing \$30 or less per month, including all allowable taxes, fees, etc.

- 4.1.4. Low-Cost Plan not subject to data caps, surcharges, or usage-based throttling and is subject only to the same acceptable-use policies which apply to all of Contractor's residential broadband internet access service plans.
- 4.1.5. Latency measurements of no more than 100 milliseconds.
- 4.1.6. If Contractor later offers a new reduced cost broadband service plan with higher speeds downstream and/or upstream, eligible Low-Cost Plan subscribers may subscribe to the new reduced cost plan with higher speeds.
- 4.1.7. Low-Cost Plan must be offered through December 31, 2034 (the end of the federal interest in broadband infrastructure constructed using CPF funds).

5. INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESPONDING

- 5.1. Interested parties are requested to respond to this RFI with a white paper.
- 5.2. White papers in Microsoft Word for Office 2010 compatible format are due no later than Friday, December 11, 2024 11:59 PM EST to be considered.
 - 5.2.1. Responses shall be submitted via e-mail only to OCTO.RFI.Response@dc.gov. Proprietary information, if any, should be minimized and **MUST BE CLEARLY MARKED**. To aid OCTO, please segregate proprietary information.
 - 5.2.2. Please be advised that all submissions become DC government property and will not be returned.
- 5.3. Section 1 of the white paper shall provide administrative information, and shall include the following as a minimum:
 - 5.3.1. Name, mailing address, overnight delivery address (if different from mailing address), phone number, fax number, and e-mail of designated point of contact.
 - 5.3.2. Recommended project strategy.
 - 5.3.3. Business type (large business, small business, small, disadvantaged business, Certified Business Enterprises, small, disadvantaged business, HUBZone small business, woman-owned small business, very small business, veteran-owned small business, service-disabled veteran-owned small business) based upon National Institute of Government Purchasing (NIGP) Commodity 962-46-10, AUDIO/VISUAL EQUIPMENT, INSTALLATION/REMOVAL. "Small business concern" means a concern, including its affiliates, that is independently owned and operated, not dominant in the field of operation in which it is bidding on District contracts, and qualified as a small business under the criteria and size standards in 13 CFR part 121.
- 5.4. Section 2 of the white paper shall provide the following:
 - 5.4.1. Cost Breakdown of Conduit Design, Permitting and Construction
 - 5.4.1.1. Please itemize the cost estimates for both labor and materials.
 - 5.4.1.1.1. Labor breakdowns across design, permitting and construction should be included.
 - 5.4.1.1.2. Material breakdowns such as conduit, manholes, fiber, etc. should be included.
 - 5.4.2. Schedule for Conduit Design, Permitting and Construction

- 5.4.2.1. Please provide detailed construction timeline with key milestones and deliverables, especially ensuring the project completes by June 30, 2026.
- 5.4.3. Risks for Conduit Design, Permitting and Construction
 - 5.4.3.1. Please identify potential issues (e.g., permitting delays, material shortages) and describe strategies to mitigate these risks.
 - 5.4.3.2. Identify any risks or uncertainties that may affect the successful completion of this project, including permitting delays, supply chain disruptions, or resource availability. Provide strategies or contingencies your company would implement to mitigate these risks.
- 5.5. Section 3 of the white paper shall provide the following:
 - 5.5.1. Please discuss how the respondent will implement the Low-Cost Plan described in Section 4 of this RFI.
 - 5.5.2. Identify any concerns or potential challenges with implementing the Low-Cost Plan.
 - 5.5.3. Please estimate the number of households that will be eligible to participate in the respondent's proposed implementation of the Low-Cost Plan.
 - 5.5.4. Estimate the number of new households that will now be within the respondent's service area.

6. INDUSTRY DISCUSSIONS

OCTO representatives may or may not choose to meet with respondents or industry representatives. Such discussion would only be intended to get further clarification of potential capabilities to meet the requirements.

7. QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this RFI shall be submitted in writing by emailing OCTO.RFI.Response@dc.gov. Verbal questions will not be accepted. Questions must be submitted by December 3, 2024, by 11:59 PM, to receive a response. Questions and answers will be posted to OCTO's website <https://www.techtogetherdc.com/>.

ATTACHMENT 1: PROPOSED CONDUIT PATH