



office of the chief technology officer

**District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Technology Officer
Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program
Initial Proposal Volume II
(Requirements 1, 2, 4, 8 – 20)**



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Introduction

In May 2022, the mayor of the District of Columbia (“D.C.”), Mayor Muriel Bowser, created within the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (“OCTO”) the State Broadband and Digital Equity Office (“SBDEO”). This diverse and interdisciplinary team includes digital equity experts, community outreach specialists, and data scientists, who together represent the broad technology expertise of OCTO. Among the SBDEO’s core responsibilities is management of D.C.’s obligations under the federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (“BEAD”) program.

The BEAD program was created when President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (popularly known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law or “BIL”), Pub. L. 117-58, 135 Stat. 429, and is administered by the United States Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (“NTIA”). This program makes available to D.C. \$100,694,786.93 for projects and activities related to broadband planning, deployment, mapping, equity, and adoption.¹

To satisfy BEAD’s program requirements, and in accordance with guidance developed by NTIA, the SBDEO has prepared this BEAD Initial Proposal Volume II to satisfy BEAD Initial Proposal Requirements 1, 2, 4, and 8-20. NTIA’s requirements for each section are noted in **blue** text. Please note that D.C. does not consider rural populations, populations in Federally Designated Tribal lands, or units of local government in this proposal, since these populations or units are not located within D.C. Additionally, “covered populations” are defined according to Section I.C. of the Digital Equity Act Notice of Funding Opportunity (“NOFO”).

According to guidance provided by NTIA, the remaining BEAD Initial Proposal Requirements were satisfied by a separate document, the BEAD Initial Proposal Volume I, which was also made available for public comment.

Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 1702(e)(3), this BEAD Initial Proposal Volume II was published in the D.C. Register and made publicly available at techtgether.dc.gov for thirty days (November 16 – December 19, 2023) before submission to NTIA. The D.C. SBDEO has added the “Volume II Public Comment” section to this document and integrated feedback from public comments where applicable.

¹ BEAD Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

Objectives (Requirement 1)

2.1.1 Text Box: Outline the long-term objectives for deploying broadband; closing the digital divide; addressing access, affordability, equity, and adoption issues; and enhancing economic growth and job creation. Eligible Entities may directly copy objectives included in their Five-Year Action Plans.

Mayor Muriel Bowser’s administration outlined three long-term **Goals** to guide D.C.’s State Broadband and Digital Equity Office (“SBDEO”) in its participation in the Biden administration’s broadband and digital equity funding programs. Each of these Goals is supported by highly ambitious, measurable **Objectives** that were calculated to advance the cause of digital equity District-wide. The below goals and objectives are also reflected in D.C.’s State Digital Equity Plan.

Goal One: Make high-quality, affordable, high-speed internet accessible to all residents of D.C. in their homes and local Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) and drive equitable adoption of broadband.

Objective One: Achieve universal (100%) availability of 100/20 Mbps in D.C. households.

Objective Two: Increase internet access among community anchor institutions (CAIs).

Objective Three: Reach at least 95% equitable adoption of high-speed internet.

Objective Four: Reach at least 95% adoption among target populations (*e.g.*, Covered Populations).²

Objective Five: Reach at least 95% adoption in high-priority Wards (*e.g.*, Wards 5, 7, and 8).³

Objective Six: Ensure that no D.C. resident must pay more than 2% of their gross income per month for high-speed internet.

Objective Seven: Increase uptake of the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).

Goal Two: Provide sustainable, low-cost or no-cost devices, IT support, and enabling applications to residents.

² Target populations include racial and ethnic minorities, households below 150% the federal poverty level, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with language barriers.

³ These Wards represent those with the highest “Indicators of Broadband Need,” according to NTIA’s “Indicators of Broadband Need” mapping tool.

Objective One: Effectively communicate the value of a connected device to all D.C. residents and ensure that all residents have access to one internet-ready device.

Objective Two: Increase device access among Covered Populations.

Objective Three: Stand up a responsive, omni-channel customer service center that serves as a “one-stop shop” for all residents. Establish a mature ecosystem in D.C. for affordable tech repair and refurbishing services.

Objective Four: Ensure that residents feel confident in using connected devices and getting the troubleshooting support they need.

Goal Three: Create navigable pathways for D.C. residents to gain digital literacy and digital skills.

Objective One: Improve digital literacy in D.C. so that every resident can safely and proficiently navigate current information technologies.

Objective Two: Enable residents to use technology to improve their learning and their ability to access the tools and jobs of the digital economy (especially related to work, education, and health-monitoring).

Objective Three: Enable residents to use digital tools to improve their quality of life, and track residents’ feedback.

Goal Four: Use increased access to broadband, devices, and digital skills to set up strategic partnerships and initiatives with D.C. agencies to achieve goals related to economic development, the workforce, and health outcomes.

Objective One: Prepare all students for economic and academic success in the 21st Century, including providing access to a device and broadband at home.

Objective Two: Increase the use of telehealth services to expand access to care and healthcare options for D.C. residents.

Objective Three: Improve online accessibility of essential services to increase sign-ups for key social services (*e.g.*, SNAP, TANF/Cash Assistance, and Medical Benefits).

Local, Tribal, and Regional Broadband Planning Processes (Requirement 2)

2.2.1 Text Box: Identify and outline steps that the Eligible Entity will take to support local, Tribal, and regional broadband planning processes or ongoing efforts to deploy broadband or close the digital divide. In the description, include how the Eligible Entity will coordinate its own planning efforts with the broadband planning processes of local and Tribal Governments, and other local, Tribal, and regional entities. Eligible Entities may directly copy descriptions in their Five-Year Action Plans.

Unlike most other Eligible Entities, D.C. operates simultaneously as the state and local government and, as a result, does not contain local governments. Additionally, the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs does not recognize Tribes or Tribal lands within the geographic boundaries of D.C. However, D.C. has launched multiple initiatives to engage community groups and D.C. agencies in the development of the BEAD Five-Year Action Plan, State Digital Equity Plan, and Initial Proposal Volumes I and II.

Below is a summary of D.C.’s “Alignment with Existing Efforts,” as described in Section 5.7 of D.C.’s Five-Year Action Plan submitted to NTIA. Additional information about the stakeholder engagement process is provided in the “Local Coordination” (Requirement 4) Section of this initial proposal. Requirement 4 is aligned with the stakeholder engagement processes described in the State Digital Equity Plan.

Alignment with the State Digital Equity Plan

The D.C. BEAD Five-Year Action Plan was developed simultaneously with the D.C. State Digital Equity Plan (“SDEP”). The same team developed both plans and now conducts stakeholder engagement activities for BEAD-SDEP.

Alignment with other state priorities

Multiple D.C. agencies include District-wide, affordable access to high-speed internet and digital equity as a fundamental or critical enabler of their mission. Table 22 from the SDEP, copied below, provides an overview of other D.C. agencies’ priorities related to broadband and digital equity.

Table 22: Details of other D.C. agencies’ priorities related to broadband and digital equity, from the Five-Year Action Plan

Agency	Plan/report name (with link)	Broadband-related, broadband-enabled, and digital equity priorities
Office of the Mayor	FY24 Budget	The Office of the Mayor appropriated \$34 million over six years to D.C. public schools to improve information technology systems within the schools, to enhance bandwidth and connectivity, to completely refresh smart-board technology systems in classrooms [in FY 24], and to upgrade school data interfaces for families.
Office of the Mayor, Innovation and Technology Inclusion Council	District of Columbia Technology Inclusion Strategy	<p>This report identifies three goals for D.C. technology inclusion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create 5,000 new technology jobs for under-represented workers. 2. Enable 500 new technology businesses founded by under-represented entrepreneurs. 3. Foster a fully inclusive culture among technology ecosystems on the East Coast. <p>To achieve these goals, D.C. created a four-part technology inclusion scorecard that assesses innovative infrastructure, employment, education, and entrepreneurship.</p>
Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED)	2023-2027 Economic Development Strategy	One DMPED priority is to ensure that, by 2028, all D.C. residents have equitable access to affordable, high-speed, and reliable internet service and are empowered with the devices, tech support, and digital literacy and skills to use it effectively.
	Innovation Districts	D.C. made a \$5 million investment to create the world’s destination for uniting digital technology with public policy, equity, and social impact.

Agency	Plan/report name (with link)	Broadband-related, broadband-enabled, and digital equity priorities
Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services	Age-Friendly DC 2028 Strategic Plan	This strategic plan envisions D.C. using all forms of communication to keep older residents connected to their community, friends, and family. To achieve this, Age-Friendly DC 2028 will compile a list summarizing technology training opportunities available to D.C. seniors. Another of the plan’s visions is for D.C. to have full- and part-time work opportunities available for the most experienced workers. To accomplish this, Age-Friendly DC 2028 will explore technical assistance to help small and local businesses become more age-friendly.
Office of Racial Equity	Racial Equity Action Plan	The Office of Racial Equality aims to put racial equity at the forefront of the post-Covid recovery and to rebuild in ways that allow everyone to flourish in D.C. To achieve this goal, the plan proposes racial equity indicators to measure progress toward a more racially equitable D.C. These indicators include broadband access, as measured by the percentage of homes with a broadband internet subscription.

Agency	Plan/report name (with link)	Broadband-related, broadband-enabled, and digital equity priorities
Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD)	DSLBD Performance Initiatives	<p>The DSLBD’s Initiative 3.3 seeks to enhance class curricula to incorporate current business internet trends. DSLBD created a training session that teaches businesses how to market their products through online social networking sites. The class also emphasized the need to have business email addresses and websites.</p> <p>Initiative 3.4 aims to extend services that provide distance-learning opportunities.</p>
D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation	Fiscal Year 2024 Budget	The Department of Parks and Recreation’s budget includes multiple plans to support senior residents, including \$340,500 to distribute tablet devices to them.
D.C. Department of Employment Services	Grant to Improve Unemployment Insurance System and Equity Access to D.C. Workers	One focus of this \$2.28 million grant is to help bridge the digital divide by meeting unemployment insurance claimants’ readability and language needs and by reaching communities that face barriers to online access.
Office of Work Opportunity (Department of Human Services)	Job Clubs	Job clubs promote job-readiness through intensive and interactive instructional experiences and activities related to employment. Services include access to the internet to foster digital accessibility.
D.C. Homeland Security	Homeland Security Strategic Plan, Initiative 2.6.3	This initiative aims to strengthen communication capabilities by deploying a wireless broadband public safety network throughout the National Capital Region.

Agency	Plan/report name (with link)	Broadband-related, broadband-enabled, and digital equity priorities
D.C. Public Library	FY23 Plan	This plan’s mission is to support children, teens, and adults with services and materials that promote reading, success in school, lifelong learning, and personal growth. Objectives include supporting digital citizenship through technology and internet access and training, as measured by the use of publicly accessible computers and Wi-Fi connections, as well as the number of people receiving technology training.
D.C. Public Schools	Strategic Plan: Reflecting and Refining 2022 Engagement Summary	DCPS strives to foster educational equity and student achievement. The school system set many goals toward this aim, including increasing access to school supplies and technology so that all students may thrive.
Public Service Commission District of Columbia	Lifeline Program	This program seeks to make telephone and broadband services more affordable for low-income consumers.

Local Coordination (Requirement 4)

2.3.1 Text Box: Describe the coordination conducted, summarize the impact it has on the content of the Initial Proposal, and detail ongoing coordination efforts. Set forth the plan for how the Eligible Entity will fulfill the coordination associated with its Final Proposal.

As explained in its response to Requirement 2 above, while D.C. does not contain local governments, the SBDEO engaged in extensive community outreach and coordination activities throughout D.C. These outreach activities included in-person events, virtual webinars, Tech Together sessions, one-on-one interviews, D.C.'s Digital Equity survey, and the creation of a dedicated email address, digitalequity@dc.gov, for stakeholders to provide comments, feedback, and questions directly to the SBDEO.

In 2021, the SBDEO began to determine a baseline for the needs of D.C. residents in three areas: internet access, internet-enabled devices, and digital literacy. Since then, the SBDEO engaged with over 50 “Tech Together” partners—non-profit, academic, and industry organizations that partnered with the D.C. government to bridge the digital divide. Members include representatives from universities, healthcare facilities, internet service providers, schools, community-based organizations, and those representing specific covered populations. The SBDEO also convened a summit with internet service providers to discuss current digital equity projects in D.C., such as projects promoting residential Wi-Fi, device distribution, senior technology training, and an iPad distribution program for senior citizens.

The SBDEO engaged with government agencies that directly serve residents in covered populations (such as the Mayor’s Office on Returning Citizens Affairs) and those prioritizing broadband initiatives (such as the D.C. Public Library). The SBDEO partnered with local schools such as the Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School, where it held an in-person listening session in four languages to gain insight from adult students who are currently learning English. The SBDEO maintains close working relationships with these partners, along with the Department of Disability Services (collaborating on their “Tech First” initiative), D.C. Public Schools, local nonprofits, faith groups, and others. A comprehensive list of partners is available in Table 8 of the State Digital Equity Plan, also copied below.

To promote the recruitment of women and other historically marginalized populations for workforce development opportunities and jobs related to BEAD-funded activities, and to increase digital literacy, the SBDEO reached out to and engaged labor organizations and community-based organizations, including:

- Labor organizations. The SBDEO expects an updated D.C. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan to be released in Spring 2024. The plan will include steps for engaging labor organizations in building laborers’ digital skills. The SBDEO will support this plan’s efforts to target the digital literacy of D.C.’s residents in

alignment with this Initial Proposal. Labor organizations in D.C. are welcome to participate in ongoing stakeholder engagement efforts to learn about the needed digital skills for laborers in D.C. To date, the SBDEO has connected with the D.C. Workforce Investment Council (WIC), which serves as a workforce policy and investment board for the District of Columbia. The D.C. WIC board includes representatives from various labor organizations, with private-sector officials making up the majority of members. At the board's recent meeting, information about the development of this plan was provided, and attendees discussed ideas for future initiatives and programs that would support the implementation of the Initial Proposal. Potential initiatives include developing channels for connecting with prospective new partners (e.g., American Job Centers).

- Community-based organizations. The SBDEO will continue to work with community-based organizations through the TechTogether D.C. partnership, where non-profit and community organizations undertake digital equity and workforce development initiatives that serve the residents of D.C. In the implementation of this Initial Proposal, community-based organizations can apply to receive grants under Requirement 9 to support programming for the communities they serve. The programming these community-based organizations propose for D.C. digital equity grants (Requirement 9) will likely be based on the unique knowledge these organizations have as trusted community hubs for D.C. residents, especially those in covered populations.

To ensure the transparency of its processes, the SBDEO undertook an expansive public outreach effort and provided opportunities for feedback. Specifically, the SBDEO published detailed information about upcoming events on the OCTO website and social media platforms, including X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook. The details included contact information—email addresses and phone numbers—so that information would be accessible to different age groups and people with varying levels of device access. Additionally, the SBDEO incorporated opportunities for open dialogue into its event agendas. An example agenda for a virtual town hall event is provided below:

- I. Introduction of the Office of the Chief Technology Officer
- II. Background information on the U.S. Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Broadband Program
- III. OCTO's plans for helping local organizations leverage available resources to ensure connectivity for all residents
- IV. Discussion: What concerns do internet service providers have about the Initial Proposal? What might prevent reaching all unserved, underserved, and covered populations in D.C.?

The SBDEO has assessed feedback from the public and local organizations and has incorporated it into the Initial Proposal accordingly.

Table 8: TTDC Partners, as listed in the State Digital Equity Plan

Partners	Description of current or planned role in broadband deployment and adoption
Tech Together D.C. (TTDC)	Tech Together D.C. is a values-led partnership among D.C. government, the non-profit community, academia, and industry working to bridge the digital divide through access, training, and opportunity. The Tech Together group is a pillar of the stakeholder engagement process for the BEAD 5 Year Action Plan and the State Digital Equity Plan (three meetings, including an ISP summit).
Starry (TTDC pledge partner)	As part of the TTDC program, Starry conducts the following initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starry Connect Program: help increase broadband adoption and usage for residents in public and affordable housing and support digital literacy and device access.
Ward 6 Mutual Aid (TTDC pledge partner)	As part of the TTDC program, Ward 6 Mutual Aid conducts the following initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve Your City / Ward 6 Mutual Aid Digital Liberations Program: provide families with high-speed internet for the 2020-2021 school year in Wards 5, 6, 7, and 8. • Train Black organizers to procure, refurbish and distribute devices, and to provide technical support in Wards 5, 6, 7, and 8. • Provide D.C. students with digital devices in Wards 5, 6, 7, and 8.
Connected DMV (TTDC pledge partner)	As part of the TTDC program, Connected DMV conducts the following initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected DMV: Increase awareness of Emergency Broadband Benefit.
District Department of Transportation (DDT) (TTDC pledge partner)	As part of the TTDC program, DDT conducts the following initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart Street Lighting: install wireless access points and lights in streets, alleys, and other public spaces in D.C.

<p>RCN (TTDC pledge partner)</p>	<p>As part of the TTDC program, RCN conducts the following initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet First: brings affordable, high-speed Internet to low-income households. Provides service at \$9.95/month and 2 months free.
<p>Office of State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) (TTDC pledge partner)</p>	<p>As part of the TTDC program, OSSE conducts the following initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet for all: provide internet access for D.C. residents.
<p>ETTE (TTDC pledge partner)</p>	<p>As part of the TTDC program, ETEE conducts the following initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot Projects in Public Housing: deploy indoor Wi-Fi that's accessible in-unit for public housing residents at two public housing locations in Ward 6.
<p>D.C. Housing Authority (DCHA) (TTDC pledge partner)</p>	<p>As part of the TTDC program, DCHA conducts the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot Projects in Public Housing: deploy indoor Wi-Fi that's accessible in-unit for public housing residents at 2 public housing locations in Ward 6. • Resident Education and Training: provide digital literacy workshops, introductory computer skills trainings, workforce development, STEM/STEAM learning, workplace development and placement in Ward 6. • EnVision Center Training: provides basic digital literacy training workshops for residents in DCHA managed facilities in Ward 6.
<p>Latino Economic Development Center (TTDC pledge partner)</p>	<p>As part of the TTDC program, the Latino Economic Development Center conducts the following initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Business Bootcamp: boost online presence for business owners, leveraging technology offered by Google.

Comcast (TTDC pledge partner)	<p>As part of the TTDC program, Comcast conducts the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet Essentials: brings affordable, high-speed Internet to low-income households. • Free Xfinity public Wi-Fi hotspots: increase access to free internet. • Lift Zones: create Wi-Fi enabled zones for students from low-income families and for residents in homeless shelters. • Affordable computers program: offering an opportunity to purchase affordable devices. • Digital skills training program: provides digital skills training online and in-person.
Gensler (TTDC pledge partner)	<p>As part of the TTDC program, Gensler conducts the following initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ending the Digital Divide in D.C.: increase access to devices for low-income residents, with focus on Wards 5, 7, and 8.
Wild Tech (TTDC pledge partner)	<p>As part of the TTDC program, Wild Tech conducts the following initiatives in partnership with the Department of Aging and Community Living:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior iPad Project: provides over 500 iPads to seniors with training and support needs across D.C., with focus on Wards 5, 7, and 8. • AFTRR AT&T grant: provides 2,000 computers to residents across the D.C., with a focus on Wards 5, 7, and 8.
Crown Castle (TTDC pledge partner)	<p>As part of the TTDC program, Crown Castle conducts the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to the D.C. Education Equity Fund: fund the purchase of laptops and hotspots for public school students. • Crown Castle contribution to LGBT Tech: provides information, education, strategic outreach and job training to LGBT communities. • Crown Castle partnership with UrbanEd: provides a paid virtual job training focused on certified IT support (cloud computing, network engineering and cybersecurity) in Wards 5, 7 and 8.

<p>D.C. Public Library (DCPL) (TTDC pledge partner)</p>	<p>As part of the TTDC program, DCPL conducts the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCPL-ECF (Emergency Connectivity Fund) program: provides devices to D.C. residents, leveraging ECF funding for device procurement and distribution. • Digital Navigators: help D.C. Public Library customers find solutions to their technology needs through focused classes, and onsite and virtual help.
<p>Department of Human Services (DHS) (TTDC pledge partner)</p>	<p>As part of the TTDC program, DHS conducts the following initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA funds, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) workforce program: Provides laptops and job readiness training to program participants.
<p>Byteback (TTDC pledge partner)</p>	<p>As part of the TTDC program, Byteback conducts the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA funds the (TANF) workforce program, which provides laptops and job readiness training to program participants. • Free Digital Literacy and IT training: provides free digital literacy training to D.C. residents, especially Black and Brown communities.
<p>Department of Corrections (TTDC pledge partner)</p>	<p>As part of the TTDC program, the Department of Corrections conducts the following initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Corrections device program.
<p>Department on Disability Services (DDS) (TTDC pledge partner)</p>	<p>As part of the TTDC program, DDS conducts the following initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDS device project: provides devices to D.C. residents with disabilities.
<p>Mayor’s Office on Returning Citizen Affairs (TTDC pledge partner)</p>	<p>As part of the TTDC program, MORCA conducts the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic to Intermediate Computer and Software Training: provides in person and online training for underemployed adults ages 35-60 in Wards 6, 7, and 8. • Distributed Chromebooks in partnership with D.C. Public Library.

Tech Turn up (TTDC pledge partner)	As part of the TTDC program, Tech Turn up conducts the following initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • InteracTech Summer Camp: provides DCPS students in Wards 5, 6, 7, and 8 with a five-week digital literacy summer camp.
Department of Aging and Community Living (DACL) (TTDC pledge partner)	As part of the TTDC program, DAACL conducts the following initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Wellness Center Trainings: conduct trainings at the 6 wellness centers in D.C. in Wards 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. • Distributed iPads and 100 Chromebooks.
D.C. Infrastructure Academy (DCIA) (TTDC pledge partner)	As part of the TTDC program, DCIA conducts the following initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco Networking Academy: provides learning programs ranging from exploratory IT courses to career networking and programming courses in Wards 7 and 8.
Cisco (TTDC pledge partner)	As part of the TTDC program, Cisco conducts the following initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco Networking Academy: provides curriculum programs ranging from exploratory IT courses to career networking and programming courses in Wards 7 and 8.
University of D.C. Community College (TTDC pledge partner)	As part of the TTDC program, University of D.C. Community College conducts the following initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D.C. Broadband Education, Training and Adoption (D.C.-BETA): provides computer skills and education program targeted to underserved individuals.
The Washington Home (TTDC pledge partner)	As part of the TTDC program, The Washington Home conducts the following initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding Seniors Tech Skills: understand technological needs and challenges of D.C.'s older adult communities and provide training.

In addition to engaging with the above partners, the D.C. SBDEO is running an inclusive BEAD-SDEP Stakeholder Engagement plan to gain a holistic view of residents’ needs. A list of stakeholder engagement events can be found in Table 9 of the State Digital Equity Plan, also copied below. The noted community engagement activities have influenced D.C.’s Initial Proposal Volumes I & II by uncovering a strong public interest in offering sustainable,

affordable broadband services to high-need D.C. areas. Public interest in providing low-cost internet options (such as the federal Affordable Connectivity Program), digital workforce development, community outreach, access to low-cost devices, and access to digital literacy training is also keen.

Table 9: Events in the BEAD-SDEP Stakeholder Engagement Plan, as listed in the State Digital Equity Plan

Type of event	Events
In person	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anacostia Library 2. Carol Rosario International School 3. Carol Rosario International School – Amharic 4. Carol Rosario International School – French 5. Carol Rosario International School – Spanish 6. Commission on Aging 7. D.C. Assistive Technology Program 8. D.C. Dept of Disability Services 9. Digital Literacy Class 10. Hattie Holmes Wellness Center 11. Tech 101: Model Cities 12. Ward 6 Internet Safety Workshop 13. Ward 7 Faith Leaders 14. Ward 8 Faith Leaders 15. Washington Senior Wellness Center
Virtual	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Byte Back Introductory meeting 2. Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) Lived Experience Advisory Council 3. Cornell Wise & Associates 4. D.C. Dept of Health Care Finance 5. D.C. Infrastructure Academy 6. Digital Equity in D.C. Education 7. Family First D.C. Leaders 8. Golden Triangle Business Improvement District (BID) 9. National Collaboration for Digital Equity 10. Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition 11. Unidos DMV

Type of event	Events
Survey Informational Sessions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. D.C. State Fair 2. Maternal Health Summit 3. Internet Safety Workshop
One-on-one interviews	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. D.C. Dept of Disability Services (2 interviews) 2. D.C. Dept of Employment Services (DOES) 3. D.C. Dept of Veterans Affairs 4. D.C. Public Library 5. D.C. Workforce Investment Council (1/2) 6. Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) 7. Mayor’s Office of Returning Citizens Affairs (MORCA) 8. Office of Racial Equity 9. Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) 10. Ward 7 Councilmember 11. Ward 8 Councilmember

Each event was designed to engage under-represented groups and covered populations—as described in Figures 33 and 34 from the SDEP—and to ultimately create three touchpoints for each covered population group.

Figure 33: Stakeholder engagement events aligned to D.C. Covered Populations, from State Digital Equity Plan

Type	Event	Covered population						
		Covered household	Aging (60+)	Incarcerated	Veterans	Individuals with disabilities	Language barrier	Racial / ethnic minorities
In-person Sessions	Anacostia Library	●		●	●			●
	Carol Rosario International School	●						●
	Carol Rosario International School – Amharic	●					●	●
	Carol Rosario International School – French	●					●	●
	Carol Rosario International School – Spanish	●					●	●
	Commission on Aging	●	●					●
	DC Assistive Technology Program		●			●		●
	Dept of Disability Services		●			●		●
	Digital Literacy Class		●					●
	Hattie Holmes Wellness Center				●	●		●
	Tech 101: Model Cities		●					●
	Ward 6 Internet Safety Workshop		●					●
	Ward 7 Faith Leaders	●	●	●	●	●		●
	Ward 8 Faith Leaders	●	●	●	●	●		●
	Washington Senior Wellness Center		●		●			●

Type	Event	Covered population						
		Covered household	Aging (60+)	Incarcerated	Veterans	Individuals with disabilities	Language barrier	Racial / ethnic minorities
Virtual Sessions	Byte Back Introductory meeting	●						
	Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) Lived Experience Advisory Council	●	●					●
	Cornell Wise & Associates					●		
	DC Dept of Health Care Finance	●	●					●
	DC Infrastructure Academy	●						●
	Digital Equity in DC Education	●						●
	Family First DC Leaders							●
	Golden Triangle Business Improvement District (BID)							●
	National Collaboration for Digital Equity							
	Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition							
Survey Informational Sessions	Unidos DMV						●	●
	DC State Fair						●	●
	Maternal Health Summit	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Internet Safety Workshop		●					●

Type	Event	Covered population						
		Covered household	Aging (60+)	Incarcerated	Veterans	Individuals with disabilities	Language barrier	Racial / ethnic minorities
One on One Interviews	DC Dept of Disability Services (x2)		●			●		●
	DC Dept of Employment Services (DOES)							
	DC Dept of Veterans Affairs				●			
	DC Public Library	●						●
	DC Workforce Investment Council (1/2)	●						●
	Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED)							
	Mayor's Office of Returning Citizens Affairs (MORCA)							
	Office of Racial Equity							
	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)	●						●
	Ward 7 Councilmember							
	Ward 8 Councilmember							

2.3.1.1 Attachment: As a required attachment, submit the Local Coordination Tracker Tool to certify that the Eligible Entity has conducted coordination, including with Tribal Governments, local community organizations, unions and work organizations, and other groups.

Additional information about organizations engaged in coordination and specific, related activities is presented in the Local Coordination Tracker. D.C. will continue to hold these community engagement activities as part of OCTO's Tech Together D.C. initiative.

2.3.2 Text Box: Describe the formal tribal consultation process conducted with federally recognized Tribes, to the extent that the Eligible Entity encompasses federally recognized Tribes. If the Eligible Entity does not encompass federally recognized Tribes, note "Not applicable."

Not applicable.

Deployment Subgrantee Selection (Requirement 8)

2.4.1 Text Box: Describe a detailed plan to competitively award subgrants to last-mile broadband deployment projects through a fair, open, and competitive process.

Plan to Competitively Award Subgrants to Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects Through a Fair, Open, and Competitive Process

2.4.1.a

D.C.'s end-to-end process for awarding subgrants is outlined below. In addition, the details of D.C.'s plan to award subgrants to last-mile broadband deployment projects are provided in Sections 2.4.2 – 2.4.3 (prioritization approach and scoring rubric), 2.4.5 (compliance with Environmental and Historic Preservation [EHP] and the Build America, Buy America Act [BABA]), 2.4.6 (project area definition and proposal deconfliction), 2.4.7 (plan to engage with prospective subgrantees if locations are left unserved or underserved), 2.4.9 – 2.4.10 (identification and use of the extremely high cost-per-location threshold), and 2.4.11 – 2.4.17 (subgrantee qualifications).

The SBDEO has long been committed to using available resources through fair, open, and competitive processes to deploy broadband to unserved and underserved residents. The subgrantee process described in the sections below will outline specific safeguards to ensure that the SBDEO's subgrantee selection process is fair, open, and competitive.

End-to-end process for awarding subgrants

The SBDEO plans to run up to two rounds of the BEAD grant program to assess and provisionally award grants to prospective subgrantees in a fair, open, and competitive process. The goal of the process is to award end-to-end fiber-optic projects that reach all unserved locations, underserved locations, and eligible CAIs in D.C. and require a minimal BEAD outlay.

Pre-Application Process

Publication of Notice of Funding Availability (“NOFA”) (14 days): D.C.'s subgrantee selection process will begin with the publication of a NOFA, pursuant to the requirements outlined in Section 7 of D.C.'s *Citywide Grants Manual and Sourcebook*.⁴ The NOFA will contain a brief description of the purpose for which funds are available, criteria for eligible applicants, and the time and location at which the Request for Application (“RFA”) may be obtained and submitted.

RFA and subgrantee application materials made available to the public (30 days): At least 14 days after the publication of the NOFA, the SBDEO will publish: i) the RFA, pursuant to Section 7 of D.C.'s *Citywide Grants Manual and Sourcebook*; ii) the subgrantee prequalification requirements; iii) the map of unserved locations, underserved locations, and eligible CAIs in the

⁴ <https://is.dc.gov/book/citywide-grants-manual-and-sourcebook/70-nofa-and-application-process>

District; and iv) the list of project area units. This information will be provided via the OCTO public website, email, and other forms of direct communication to providers and other local stakeholders who are known to the SBDEO through their past local coordination efforts for BEAD.

Application Process

Screening round for all eligible prospective subgrantees (30 days): Following the RFA posting period, the SBDEO will open a 30-day pre-qualification filing window for prospective subgrantees. During this filing period, or “screening period,” prospective subgrantees will be required to submit compliance documents as well as materials and required certifications to demonstrate their financial, operational, and managerial qualifications. Prospective subgrantees that meet all qualification requirements will be invited to participate in the subgrantee selection process. Prospective subgrantees that fail to meet all qualification requirements will be unable to proceed with the first round of applications.

Application submission (30 days): The application submission period for the first round of applications will last for 30 days. Qualified prospective subgrantees will be able to submit applications for any selection of project area units. These project area units will be published in a predetermined list of mutually and collectively exhaustive groupings of all unserved and underserved locations, as well as eligible CAIs. Prospective subgrantees will be required to provide service to all unserved and underserved locations and eligible CAIs within each project area unit in the application. All applications will be judged according to the scoring criteria outlined in Section 2.4.2, and the applications with the highest scores will be selected for each project area unit. The funding amount requested for each project area unit will be weighed against the SBDEO’s published reference cost for that project area unit as part of the scoring mechanism.

Application Review and Program Awards Process

Application review and de-confliction (60 days): During the SBDEO’s application review process, any received applications will be reviewed, de-conflicted and provisionally awarded based on the prioritization and scoring process outlined in Sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3, and the de-confliction process outlined in Section 2.4.6.

Once the SBDEO has reviewed all submitted applications and completed any required deconfliction process, the applications, respective scores, and the SBDEO scoring criteria will be posted on the OCTO website and made accessible to the public to ensure openness and transparency.

Step 1 – Default Winners: Uncontested Priority Broadband Projects that fall under the presumptive Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold (EHCPLT) will first be provisionally awarded. Then, uncontested Other Last-Mile Broadband Projects that fall under the presumptive EHCPLT will be provisionally awarded. A Priority Broadband Project or Other Last-Mile

Broadband Project is considered to be uncontested if there are no common project area units between the application for that project and the remaining applications received.

Step 2 – Non-Default Winners A: After default winners have been provisionally awarded, applications for any remaining Priority Broadband Projects below the presumptive EHCPLT will be scored using the scoring rubric described in Section 2.4.2 below. Applications with the highest scores will be provisionally awarded, and awarded areas will be de-conflicted from all remaining applications pursuant to the de-confliction process outlined in Section 2.4.6.

Step 3 – Non-Default Winners B: After the conclusion of the de-confliction process for Step 3, scoring for Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects will commence. If no qualifying Priority Broadband Projects below the presumptive EHCPLT are proposed for a given project area unit, all proposals for Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects below the presumptive EHCPLT will be assessed using the scoring rubric outlined below. Applications with the highest scores will be provisionally awarded, and awarded areas will be de-conflicted from all remaining applications.

Step 4 – Other Winners: After the conclusion of the de-confliction process for Step 3, the SBDEO will assess the projected total BEAD outlay, accounting for i) provisional awards made and ii) remaining unawarded Priority Broadband Projects only. The SBDEO has determined that it is unlikely that the projected BEAD outlay will exceed D.C.’s BEAD allocation. If the projected outlay does exceed the allocation, the SBDEO will i) adopt a final EHCPLT, and ii) score, de-conflict, and make provisional awards for applications for Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects below the final EHCPLT—thereby ensuring that the total BEAD outlay remains lower than this final EHCPLT. If, however, the projected BEAD outlay does not exceed D.C.’s allocation, the SBDEO will score, de-conflict, and make provisional awards for applications for remaining Priority Broadband Projects and Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects.

Publication of program awards (up to 30 days): Toward the end of the 30-day period allotted for application review and subgrantee selection, the SBDEO will publish all applications, the scoring criteria, and a list of subgrantees that received grant awards on the OCTO website.

Second Grant Round (up to 102 days): If any project area units remain after the first round, the SBDEO will determine whether another round is necessary. If a second round is deemed necessary, the SBDEO will identify the best approach to ensuring that all eligible locations receive a bid, as detailed in Section 2.4.7.

A summary of key activities in the deployment subgrantee process is provided below.

Key milestone activity	Number of days
Pre-application	Total 44 days
Publication of the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)	14
Preliminary Request for Application (RFA) and subgrantee process materials made available	30
Application Process: Round 1	Total 60 days

Screening round for all eligible prospective subgrantees	30
Submission of Round 1 applications	30
Application Review and Program Awards	<i>Up to 60 days</i>
Application review and completion of de-confliction process	60
Finalize review and make provisional awards	Up to 30
Application Process: Round 2	<i>Up to 120 days</i>
Publication of remaining available locations and preliminary RFA	30
Submission of Round 2 applications	30
Application review and completion of de-confliction process	30
Finalize review and make provisional awards	Up to 30 days

Safeguards to ensure fairness, including those that specifically protect against collusion, bias, conflicts of interest, and arbitrary decisions.

The SBDEO plans to incorporate a set of safeguards to ensure a fair subgrantee selection process that is free of collusion, bias, conflicts of interest, and arbitrary decisions.

Safeguards against conflicts of interest: All prospective subgrantees will be required to fully disclose any real or perceived conflicts of interest and must attest that they agree with these terms. Additionally, District employees who are involved in evaluating subgrant applications must disclose any real or perceived conflicts of interest, such as financial or familial interest in any applicant entity. Any employees with such interests will not be permitted to participate in the selection of subgrantees. This aligns with the Code of the District of Columbia, which states, “No employee, member of a board or commission, or a public official of the District government shall engage in outside employment or private business activity or have any direct or indirect financial interest that conflicts or would appear to conflict with the fair, impartial, and objective performance of officially assigned duties and responsibilities.”⁵

Safeguards against collusion: As part of the BEAD application requirements, prospective subgrantees will be required to attest that they have not colluded with any entities or persons through public statements or private communications. Prospective subgrantees will also be prohibited from making any public communication about plans to apply for specific deployment subgrants under the SBDEO until the announcement of final awards.

⁵ Council of the District of Columbia, <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/code/sections/1-618.02#:~:text=No%20employee%2C%20member%20of%20a,and%20objective%20performance%20of%20officially>

Safeguards against bias: To guard against bias, the required qualifications for subgrantees will be widely published so that all potential subgrantees may review them and consider applying for funds.

Safeguards against arbitrary decisions: Applications will be assessed based solely on the scoring criteria and according to the process detailed in the Initial Proposal, which is readily accessible to the public. The evaluation and scoring criteria are standardized to preclude arbitrary decisions. The SBDEO will retain records and submit them to NTIA during the review process.

Safeguards to ensure openness

The SBDEO is taking several steps to ensure a transparent, open process that makes information accessible to the broadest possible range of prospective subgrantees as possible. Before the final RFA is published, there will be a 30-day period following the public release of grant program rules and required materials so that as many prospective subgrantees as feasible may be fully informed about the grant. The SBDEO is also planning an additional round of local coordination during this 30-day period to disseminate information via the OCTO website (with FAQs), social media, press releases, public webinars, and key stakeholders' communication channels. The SBDEO also plans to engage with local government partners, internet service providers (ISPs), non-profits, residents, and all interested stakeholders. This period will allow stakeholders to have their questions answered and should raise additional awareness of the grant program. After subgrantee selections have been finalized, the SBDEO will publicly release the final selections to ensure transparency throughout the process.

Safeguards to ensure competitiveness

To ensure that the process is competitive, the SBDEO will take the following steps:

1. Notify the public of the subgrantee process and eligibility requirements. As described above, OCTO will publicize the subgrantee selection process statewide to multiple stakeholders and through multiple channels to encourage broad participation. Providers who meet the subgrantee qualifications and who agree to abide by the sub-granting accountability procedures (defined in 2.4.11–2.4.17 and 2.16.2) will be eligible to compete.
2. Use competitively neutral evaluation criteria. The subgrantee selection criteria are designed to place qualifying prospective subgrantees on equal footing and to protect D.C. and its residents from the risks associated with less experienced providers. As outlined above, the scoring elements described in 2.4.2 are based on neutral and objective criteria that will be made public in advance of applications, allowing for objective comparisons among applications.

3. Review and assess applications fairly without conflicts of interest, favoritism, and bias. As described above, application reviewers and scorers will be required to submit affidavits attesting that they have no conflicts of interest.
4. Consider public comments related to competitiveness. The SBDEO will ensure that all comments received during the RFA posting period will be reviewed and considered.

2.4.1.b

Of the 100% allocation request, DC is requesting access to the following funds now:

- All Admin: \$5,033,895.53
- SBDEO Initiatives: \$21,700,000.00

And DC is requesting that the following funding be made available upon approval of DC's Final Proposal:

- Deployment subawards: \$8,900,000.00
- Non-deployment subawards: \$60,060,891.40

Category	Admin	Program Cost	Total Allocation
Personnel	\$ 1,207,290.53		
Travel	\$ 31,856.00		
Equipment	\$ 13,699.00		
Supplies	\$ 15,000.00		
Deployment subawards		\$ 8,900,000.00	
Non-deployment Subawards		\$ 60,060,891.40	
Contractors	\$ 2,270,000.00		
Programmatic Implementation costs	\$ 1,496,050.00		
SBDEO Initiatives		\$ 21,700,000.00	
Total	\$ 5,033,895.53	\$ 90,660,891.40	\$ 95,694,786.93

Initial Planning Funds

\$ 5,000,000.00

Total Allocation

\$ 100,694,786.93

Subtotals

<i>Statutory Admin</i>	\$ 2,013,895.53	2.00%
<i>Programmatic/Implementation Admin</i>	\$ 3,020,000.00	3.00%

2.4.2 Text Box: Describe how the prioritization and scoring process will be conducted and is consistent with the BEAD NOFO requirements on pages 42 – 46.

Description of the Prioritization and Scoring Process

D.C.'s subgrantee selection process will begin after NTIA approves D.C.'s Initial Proposal Volumes I and II, after completion of the BEAD Challenge Process, and after publication of a finalized list of unserved locations, underserved locations, and eligible CAIs. If eligible broadband-serviceable locations remain, D.C. will publish a Notice of Funding Availability ("NOFA"), and a Request for Application ("RFA"). Prior to and throughout the application period, the SBDEO will issue clarifying information based on guidance outlined in this Initial Proposal to streamline project development and clarify requirements for prospective subgrantees. Following submission of applications, the SBDEO will begin reviewing all proposals submitted. After approval by the SBDEO and applicable federal partners, awards will be announced.

The SBDEO's scoring rubric is in accordance with NTIA's rules as outlined in the BEAD NOFO, which specifies three primary criteria that account for 75 percent of the total score, and secondary criteria which account for the remaining 25 percent. The secondary criteria are selected based on D.C.'s public policy priorities of maximizing speed to deployment; supporting technologies with greater speeds and greater ease of scalability (where fiber technology is not feasible); encouraging the provision of open access wholesale last-mile broadband service; prioritizing the need for local community support; and emphasizing a history of strong subgrantee performance. In the scoring criteria, the same number of points are available for each category in Priority Broadband Projects and Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects. However, the benchmark for service in Priority Broadband Projects is symmetrical 1 Gbps service, while the benchmark for service in Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects is 100/20 Mbps service. The prioritization process and scoring criteria are described below.

Prioritization Process

D.C.'s subgrantee selection process will prioritize proposals for Priority Broadband Projects that require minimal BEAD outlay and include project area units with a high proportion of unserved locations while also accounting for the need to incentivize providers to apply for project area units that include underserved locations, which improves the provider's business case. The following steps outline how the process will be conducted in a manner consistent with the BEAD NOFO requirements.

1. **Set project area units** that consist of non-overlapping groupings of unserved and underserved locations, and eligible CAIs. ISPs will be required to first prioritize all unserved and underserved locations within a given project area unit awarded to them, and then prioritize eligible CAIs within the project area units.
2. **Make default awards** for uncontested Priority Broadband Projects below the presumptive EHCPLT and uncontested Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects below the presumptive EHCPLT.

3. **Apply the scoring rubric** for contested project areas first to Priority Broadband Projects before considering contested Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects.
4. **Consider Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects** only if:
 - a. There are project area units that did not receive a Priority Broadband Project proposal;
 - b. The Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects are uncontested; or
 - c. Non-fiber projects are needed to achieve full coverage, which can be accomplished by applying the EHCPLT

As described in Requirements 2.4.1 and 2.4.3, the SBDEO will run, at most, two competitive grant rounds that allow eligible prospective subgrantees who meet all gating criteria and qualifications to submit applications for any subset of the project area units defined by the SBDEO.

Scoring

If competing proposals are submitted for the same project area units, the SBDEO will determine each prospective subgrantee's total score based on the scoring criteria detailed below. The SBDEO will use a model of default, non-default, and other cases, in accordance with the BEAD NOFO.

Once final scores are tallied, if two or more subgrantees' scores are tied, the project with the highest score for affordability will be selected.

The primary scoring criteria are the same for Priority Broadband Projects and Other Last-Mile Broadband Projects, but the secondary criteria differ across the two.

Primary Scoring Criteria

Minimal BEAD outlay: Up to 30 points

This criterion weighs the grant amount requested by the prospective subgrantee. Following the selection of subgrantees and the execution of subawards, BEAD funding outlay will be reimbursed on a regular, pre-determined basis. However, reimbursement will only occur if deployment progress milestones outlined in the plan provided by the subgrantee have been achieved. Prospective subgrantees for Priority Broadband Projects should be aware that the cost applies to connecting all eligible locations in the applicable project area. If awarded funding, subgrantees must build the network all the way to the customer's premises. All prospective subgrantees must certify that they understand that their cost commitment is binding, and that the SBDEO will not award any additional funds for any other expected costs.

Prospective subgrantees are permitted to request up to 200 percent of the reference amount. The distribution of points is based on the percentage of funding requested by the prospective subgrantee relative to the reference cost, meaning that an application requesting a greater

percentage of the reference cost will receive fewer points than an application with a lower requested percentage of the reference cost.

Points distribution:

- Requests less than 50% of the reference cost: **30 points**
- Requests more than or equal to 50% but less than 100% of the reference cost: **20 points**
- Requests more than or equal to 100% but less than 150% of the reference cost: **10 points**
- Requests more than or equal to 150% but less than 200% of the reference cost: **0 points**

Affordability: Up to 25 points

This criterion weighs the prospective subgrantee's commitment to provide the most affordable total price to the customer. For Priority Broadband Projects, this weighs the commitment to offer the lowest monthly price to customer for 1 Gbps symmetrical service in the proposed project area unit. For Other Last-Mile Broadband Projects, this criterion weighs the commitment to offer the lowest monthly price to customers in the proposed service area for 100/20 Mbps service. Prospective subgrantees are required to commit to offering an affordability plan at a maximum price of \$65 (inclusive of taxes and fees).

Points distribution:

- Commitment to offer required service at a price less than or equal to \$30/month (inclusive of taxes and fees): **25 points**
- Commitment to offer required service at a price greater than \$30/month but less than or equal to \$50/month (inclusive of taxes and fees): **15 points**
- Commitment to offer required service at a price greater than \$50/month but less than or equal to \$55/month (inclusive of taxes and fees): **10 points**
- Commitment to offer required service at a price greater than \$55/month but less than or equal to \$60/month (inclusive of taxes and fees): **5 points**
- Commitment to offer required service at a price greater than \$60/month (inclusive of taxes and fees): **0 points**

Workforce plan (fair labor practices): Up to 20 points

This criterion weighs prospective subgrantees' demonstrated record of, and/or plans to, comply with federal labor employment laws. For new entrants without a lengthy record of labor and employment compliance, this criterion will weigh their specific, future commitments and their demonstrated capability to enforce compliance. To earn any points, prospective subgrantees must meet the baseline requirements outlined in Section 2.7.1, which include providing information on compliance with federal labor and employment laws on deployment projects in the last three years (if the prospective subgrantee has been operating for three years), certification from an officer/director-level employee evidencing consistent past compliance, and written confirmation of violated laws. The more years for which a prospective subgrantee can provide evidence of compliance, the more points they will be awarded, as outlined below.

In alignment with the BEAD NOFO, to ensure a competitive grant program that is not unfavorable to certain prospective subgrantees, such as smaller ISPs, the SBDEO has also made points available for prospective subgrantees who provide a plan committing to actions beyond

the baseline requirements for a compliance plan. The actions that are eligible for earning points are outlined in Section 2.7.2 and include the following:

- a. Paying prevailing wages and benefits to workers, including compliance with Davis-Bacon and Service Contract Act requirements, where applicable, and collecting the required certified payrolls;
- b. Using project labor agreements (*i.e.*, pre-hire collective bargaining agreements between unions and contractors that govern terms and conditions of employment for all workers on a construction project);
- c. Use of local hire provisions;
- d. Commitments to union neutrality;
- e. Use of labor peace agreements;
- f. Use of an appropriately credentialed workforce (*i.e.*, satisfying requirements for appropriate and relevant pre-existing occupational training, certification, and licensure); and
- g. Taking steps to prevent the misclassification of workers.

Using a directly employed workforce and appropriately credentialed workforce are two additional criteria outlined in Section 2.7.2. They will be required by the SBDEO, so these criteria will not be considered eligible actions for earning additional points within the scoring rubric. The more actions to which the prospective subgrantee commits, the more points they will receive, up to a maximum of 10 points for a compliance plan.

Points distribution:

- Demonstrated record of compliance with federal labor and employment law: **Up to 10 points, allocated as follows:**
 - Three or more years without an instance of non-compliance: 3 points
 - For each year without an instance of non-compliance beyond the minimum of three years: 2 additional points, up to the maximum total of 10 points
 - By default, new entrants will have no record of non-compliance, and will receive the full 10 points.
- Plan for ensuring compliance with federal labor and employment law: **Up to 10 points**
 - Application providing a plan that meets the baseline requirements for a compliance plan, as specified in Section 2.7.1.b below: 5 points
 - Additional, relevant elements included in the plan beyond the baseline requirements for a compliance plan, as specified in Section 2.7.1b: 2 additional points each, up to the maximum total of 10 points.

Secondary Scoring Criteria [Priority Broadband Projects only]

Speed to deployment: Up to 10 points

Per NTIA requirements, secondary scoring criteria accounts for speed to deployment. For Priority Broadband Projects, the speed to deployment criterion weighs prospective subgrantees' binding commitments to provide service by a date before four years after receiving subgrant, with higher points given for an earlier date. For other last-mile broadband projects, this criterion weighs prospective subgrantees' binding commitments to provide network service and receiving points is contingent upon demonstrated technical capabilities to fulfil the stated commitments.

Points distribution:

- Less than or equal to one-year commitment: **10 points**
- Greater than one-year but less than or equal to two-year commitment: **7 points**
- Greater than two-year but less than or equal to four-year commitment: **5 points**
- Greater than four-year commitment: **0 points**

Applications that cannot feasibly commit to deployment within four years will be denied.

Open access: Up to 5 points

This criterion weighs prospective subgrantees' plans to ensure provision of open access wholesale, last-mile broadband over the life of subsidized networks on fair, equal, neutral terms to all potential retail providers.

Points distribution:

- Certified commitment to open access: **5 points**
- No commitment to open access: **0 points**

Local support: Up to 5 points

This criterion weighs prospective subgrantees' demonstrated support from key community institutions and stakeholders, including elected officials. Prospective subgrantees can demonstrate community support by providing (1) letters of support from local philanthropies, community leaders (including those who serve Covered Populations), potential customers, and elected officials; (2) commitments of funding or commitments to purchase services; and (3) board or council resolutions.

Points distribution:

- Four or more local support letters: **5 points**
- Fewer than four local support letters: **0 points**

Past performance: Up to 5 points

The SBDEO will award up to five points to applicants that demonstrate exceptional past performance on state and federal broadband funding awards. This past performance does not have to be based in D.C.

Points will be awarded based on the clarity and extent of information provided, a senior manager or higher-level reference from such project, and the accuracy of the information relative to the SBDEO's own research and observations.

Documentation should address the full range of performance parameters, including timeliness, budgetary overruns (comparison of application's cost per household versus actual cost per household of deployment), and network performance. ISPs' commitment to delivering internet service for all as evidenced by past grant performance, will be considered.

Points distribution:

- Four or more examples of past performance: **5 points**
- One to three examples of past performance: **3 points**
- No past performance reported: **0 points**

Secondary Scoring Criteria [Other Last-Mile Broadband Projects only]

A description of each scoring criterion can be found in the secondary criteria for Priority Broadband Projects above.

Speed to deployment: Up to 10 points

Points distribution:

- Less than or equal to one-year commitment: **10 points**
- Greater than one-year but less than or equal to year-commitment: **7 points**
- Greater than two-year but less than or equal to four-year commitment: **5 points**
- Commitment greater than 4 years: **0 points**

Applications that cannot feasibly commit to deployment within four years will be denied.

Speed of network and technical capabilities: 6 points

This criterion weighs prospective subgrantees' commitments to provide service at a given speed, with higher speeds awarded more points. To receive any points in this category, the SBDEO's technical review must confirm that the proposed network design will feasibly enable the prospective subgrantee to deliver speed commitments to each eligible location and adhere to plans for scaling within their application.

Points distribution:

- Minimum 1000/1000 Mbps speed: **6 points**
- Minimum 400/100 Mbps speed: **3 points**
- Minimum 200/50 Mbps speed: **1 point**
- Minimum 100/20 Mbps speed: **0 points**

Open access: Up to 3 points

Points distribution:

- Certified commitment to open access: **3 points**
- No commitment to open access: **0 points**

Local support: Up to 3 points

Points distribution:

- Four or more local support letters: **3 points**
- Fewer than four local support letters: **0 points**

Past performance: Up to 3 points

Points distribution:

- Four or more examples of past performance: **3 points**
- No past performance reported: **0 points**

2.4.2.1 Attachment: As a required attachment, submit the scoring rubric to be used in the subgrantee selection process for deployment projects. Eligible Entities may use the template provided by NTIA, or use their own format for the scoring rubric.

The scoring rubrics to be used in the subgrantee selection process are provided below as in Attachment [BEAD Initial Proposal_Volume_II_Subgrantee Selection Scoring Rubric.xlsx].

A summary of D.C.’s scoring rubric for **Priority Broadband Projects** is shown in the table below.

Scoring Criteria	Maximum Points available
Primary Criteria (required by NTIA)	
Minimal BEAD program outlay	30
Affordability	25
Workforce plan (fair labor practices)	20
<i>Primary criteria subtotal</i>	75
Secondary Criteria	
Speed to deployment	10
Speed of Network	N/A
Open access	5
Local support	5
Past performance	5
<i>Secondary criteria subtotal</i>	25
Grand Total	100

A summary of D.C.'s scoring rubric for **Other Last-Mile Broadband Projects** is shown in the table below.

Scoring Criteria	Maximum Points available
Primary Criteria (required by NTIA)	
Minimal BEAD program outlay	30
Affordability	25
Workforce plan (fair labor practices)	20
<i>Primary criteria subtotal</i>	75
Secondary Criteria	
Speed to deployment	10
Speed of Network	6
Open access	3
Local support	3
Past performance	3
<i>Secondary criteria subtotal</i>	25
Grand Total	100

2.4.3 Text Box: Describe how the proposed subgrantee selection process will prioritize unserved Service Projects in a manner that ensures complete coverage of all unserved locations prior to prioritizing Underserved Service Projects followed by prioritization of eligible CAIs.

Prioritization of unserved Service Projects

In addition to the measures outlined in Section 2.4.2, the SBDEO will use the following plan to prioritize complete coverage of all unserved locations, followed by coverage of all underserved locations and eligible CAIs.

Project area units: Project area units will be developed to include unserved and underserved locations with varying cost to serve, as well as eligible CAIs, to prevent prospective subgrantees from selecting only more desirable or low-cost locations.

Reference cost determination: In addition to the careful design of project area units, the SBDEO will establish reference costs that consider the underlying variation in cost-to-serve different unserved and underserved locations, as well as eligible CAIs within the boundaries of a project area unit. The objective of this effort will be to ensure project area units are relatively even with regards to their respective attractiveness to prospective subgrantees.

Prioritization process and scoring criteria: The prioritization process and scoring criteria assign more weight to applications that propose to serve a greater proportion of unserved locations than to underserved locations and CAIs.

EHCP LT: Further, the SBDEO has conducted internal modeling that suggests that the available funds will be able to support all unserved and underserved locations in D.C. given the small number of these unserved locations. If the funds prove insufficient to meet all needs, the SBDEO reserves the right and opportunity to undertake negotiations with prospective subgrantees or to add another application round to ensure service to all unserved locations.

Prioritization of eligible CAIs

First, during the application process, prospective subgrantees must commit to serve all unserved and underserved locations as well as eligible CAIs within a project area. The plans provided during the application process will become binding commitments as part of the subgrantee agreement. Should DCs BEAD allocation be insufficient to pass all unserved, underserved, and CAIs, then costs to pass CAIs will not be funded in the provider sub-grant awards (to abide by the NTIA requirement to reach all unserved and underserved, then CAIs if there are funds remaining).

Further, the SBDEO will enforce these binding commitments through several measures, including i) establishing a review process through which all subgrantees will submit regular progress reports for the SBDEO staff review for compliance, and ii) disbursing funding only on a reimbursement basis (per the process described in Section 2.16.2.a) to enable the SBDEO to confirm that eligible CAIs are being prioritized in the subgrantees' activities prior to funding disbursement.

If the subgrantees fail to carry out their commitments to serve unserved and underserved locations and eligible CAIs, the SBDEO plans to deploy the clawback provisions outlined in Section 2.1.2 as corrective measures.

2.4.4 Text Box: If proposing to use BEAD funds to prioritize non-deployment projects prior to, or in lieu of the deployment of services to eligible CAIs, provide a strong rationale for doing so. If not applicable to plans, note “Not applicable.”

Not applicable. D.C. Does not intend to prioritize non-deployment projects prior to, or in lieu of, broadband deployments to serve eligible CAIs.

2.4.5 Text Box: The proposed subgrantee selection process is expected to demonstrate to subgrantees how to comply with all applicable Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) and Build America, Buy America Act (BABA)⁶ requirements for their respective project or projects. Describe how the Eligible Entity will communicate EHP and BABA requirements to prospective subgrantees, and how EHP and BABA requirements will be incorporated into the subgrantee selection process.

The SBDEO will communicate all EHP and BABA requirements via (1) upfront communication with prospective subgrantees regarding NTIA’s EHP requirements, and (2) collection and review of project information in advance.

Incorporation of Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) requirements

D.C. will incorporate the requirements of EHP by adhering to the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 *et seq.*, and National Historic Preservation Act, 54 U.S.C. §§ 300101 *et seq.*, requirements to analyze the potential environmental impacts of projects and other eligible activities that utilize BEAD program funds.

To meet EHP requirements, the SBDEO will take the following actions during the subgrantee process:

- 1. Upfront communication with prospective subgrantees regarding EHP requirements by NTIA.** As part of its technical assistance process, the SBDEO will ensure that prospective subgrantees are aware of EHP requirements by including them in relevant materials outlining the subgrantee process and requirements.
- 2. Collection of project information in advance.** As part of the technical capability requirement, the SBDEO will require subgrantees to provide a network design, diagram, project costs, build-out timeline, and milestones for project implementation, as well as a capital investment schedule showing complete build-out and initiation of service within four years of the date on which the entity receives the subgrant.

Upfront communication: D.C. will communicate EHP requirements in pre-application materials, grant agreement terms and conditions, and in grant monitoring, including the following:

- Proposals for projects containing construction or ground-disturbing activities will be considered non-responsive and will not be scored unless the applicant submits all required environmental EHP materials identified in D.C.'s program documents.
- Projects and other eligible activities are expected to be designed so that they minimize the potential for adverse impacts on the environment.

Collection of project information: The SBDEO will require a detailed narrative description of parts of the project plan that are relevant to EHP regulations. The description must include:

- The part of the project that is subject to EHP review (including planned activities, locations, durations, and equipment)
- Where the project is proposed to take place, at street-level
- A physical description of the surrounding area and the site, and a description of potential construction or ground-disturbing activities
- A description detailing how the project will be implemented
- Any additional material that the SBDEO deems important. Such supporting material may include:
 - Ground-level and aerial photos of the proposed project area and project plan drawings;
 - A floodplain map from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Map Service Center with the project overlain to show whether and where the project falls into a flood zone;
 - A wetlands map from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) National Wetlands Inventory with the project overlain to show whether the project will impact wetlands or waterways, including buffer zones;
 - Initial Consultation with the USFWS to determine whether threatened or endangered species or critical habitat are in the vicinity of the project.

Subgrantees will also be required to budget EHP compliance-related tasks into the project's timeline and milestones. As part of the application packet, subgrantees must submit a description of anticipated or preliminary government authorizations, permits, and other approvals required in connection with the project, as well as an estimated timetable for acquiring such approvals. As part of this requirement, subgrantees must include any permits relevant to EHP compliance to confirm that they are considering any permitting necessary for compliance, and that they are budgeting sufficient time to obtain any identified, applicable permits.

Incorporation of Build America, Buy America Act (BABA) Requirements

To meet BABA requirements, the SBDEO will take the following actions during the subgrantee process:

1. **Communicate upfront with prospective subgrantees about BABA-related requirements by the NTIA.** As part of its technical assistance process and in guidance documents, the SBDEO will ensure that prospective subgrantees are aware of BABA requirements by including them in relevant materials outlining the subgrantee process and requirements. The SBDEO will also include in the materials any limited waivers issued by the NTIA so that prospective subgrantees are aware of the terms of available waivers.
2. **Request certification from prospective subgrantees to comply with BABA requirements.** The SBDEO will require all subgrant recipients to certify that they will comply with BABA requirements, subject to any limited waivers issued by the NTIA. The SBDEO will also require all subgrant recipients to clearly designate all materials planned for their proposed BEAD projects into the categories outlined by the Office of Management and Budget.

Tactically, D.C. will incorporate the requirements of BABA into the subgrantee selection process by:

- Including BABA requirements in grant applications and instructions;
- Including BABA requirements in grant agreement terms and conditions; and,
- Including BABA requirements in grant monitoring.

Proposals for projects which fail to comply with BABA and EHP requirements will be considered non-responsive and will not be scored.

2.4.6 Text Box: Describe how the Eligible Entity will define project areas from which they will solicit proposals from prospective subgrantees. If prospective subgrantees will be given the option to define alternative proposed project areas, describe the mechanism for de-conflicting overlapping proposals to allow for like-to-like comparisons of competing proposals.

How the SBDEO will define Project Areas

Project areas will be defined using a collection of project area units. The SBDEO will define a project area unit as a collection of individual unserved and underserved locations and eligible CAIs within a specific geographic boundary, to be drawn based on the considering factors such as i) the distribution of unserved and underserved locations and eligible CAIs within the District, and ii) existing geographic boundaries like census block groups or neighborhood clusters. The

set of project area units for the BEAD-funded grant round(s) will be a set of non-overlapping project area units.

This approach would enable the SBDEO to use D.C. GIS (geographic information systems) data to create reasonable geographic boundaries that are specific to the contours of D.C. For example, the SBDEO will modify the project units using GIS data to prevent one unit from encompassing certain natural or manmade divisions, such as rivers and railroads. This approach will also enable the SBDEO to consider an area's underlying broadband economics. The SBDEO may use a targeted bundling of project area units to ensure all eligible locations are in the project areas, and to group less-desirable units with more-desirable units to ensure that all eligible locations receive bids. The formation of project areas will also enable a like-for-like comparison of applications as costs can be more objectively benchmarked. Additionally, it helps to streamline and standardize the process for prospective subgrantees, thus preventing certain types of providers from enjoying unfair advantages in their research and selection of bids.

Project areas and units will be defined once the SBDEO has access to all necessary data. These areas will be published on the OCTO website and made easily available to the public as part of the release of initial materials in the Pre-Application Process.

Deconflicting overlapping proposals

To allow for like-to-like comparison of competing proposals, the SBDEO will deconflict project areas during the process of making provisional awards. After the completion of provisional awards for uncontested applications, any subsequent awards for contested Priority Broadband Projects or contested Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects will be subject to the deconfliction process.

When two or more submitted applications propose to serve the same project area units, the highest-scoring application will be deemed the provisional winner.

Any Applicant(s) that are not awarded a grant for the conflicting project area unit must remove the intersecting project area units from their application, and may further revise their applications in the following ways:

- The applicant may revise the cost of the application consistent with the removal of the intersecting project area units.
- The applicant may withdraw the entire application.

The SBDEO will then score any revised deconflicted applications according to the scoring rubric and will make provisional awards to applications with the highest score for a given project area. For each of these provisional awards, the SBDEO will invite a best and final offer from the highest scoring application and will select this prospective subgrantee for a grant award.

The deconfliction process will run iteratively until there are no remaining overlaps between project areas applied for by outstanding applications.

2.4.7 Text Box: If no proposals to serve a location or group of locations that are unserved, underserved, or a combination of both are received, describe how the Eligible Entity will engage with prospective subgrantees in subsequent funding rounds to find providers willing to expand their existing or proposed service areas or other actions that the Eligible Entity will take to ensure universal coverage.

As outlined in Section 2.4.3, the SBDEO's subgrantee process incorporates multiple strategies to minimize the number of locations remaining without any proposals. However, if all unserved or underserved locations have not been covered by awarded subgrants, the SBDEO will take additional steps to reduce the number of locations without any proposals.

The steps are ordered by priority of action; if the first step is infeasible or insufficient to ensure full coverage of all unserved and underserved locations, the SBDEO will proceed to the second step. If the second step is similarly deemed insufficient, the SBDEO will employ each subsequent step in turn, until all unserved and underserved locations are provided for in bids received.

Step 1: Conduct subsequent grant rounds with additional incentives

If there are remaining unserved or underserved locations after a second round of applications following the above procedures, the SBDEO may decide to run (and widely publicize) another round of applications. Depending on the feasibility or success of these steps, the SBDEO may also consider taking further steps to ensure bids are selected for all unserved and underserved locations, including making further adjustments to the reference cost level. In the second round, the SBDEO will consider admitting Other Last-Mile Broadband Projects that utilize alternative technologies, in order to ensure that each unserved and underserved location and eligible CAI is served.

Step 2: Redesign project area units

In the original design of project area units, the SBDEO will group unserved and underserved locations together to form a balanced set of project area units. This approach should enable fair and well-distributed competition between project areas during the first round. Based on internal modelling by the SBDEO, this step will likely result in all project areas receiving a bid in the first round. However, following the conclusion of the initial round of applications, if a group of unserved or underserved locations remain unawarded, the SBDEO may modify project area units in a second round to increase the chances of these locations being selected in the subsequent round. Such modification could include grouping different unserved and underserved locations together or breaking up existing project area units into smaller subdivisions. The specific approach taken will depend on the results of the first round of applications and the insights gained from analysis of the remaining locations to inform the most strategic design for regrouping them.

Step 3: Revise reference costs

In addition to redrawing project area unit boundaries, the SBDEO may also consider lowering

the originally published reference cost for these redefined project area units to make the new units more attractive to prospective subgrantees and incentivize the submission of applications to these areas. These revised reference costs may consider additional funding that the SBDEO may deploy to offer funding that reduces the 25 percent match requirement (assuming NTIA will grant a waiver if the areas are not high-cost areas).

Step 4: Modify scoring criteria

The SBDEO may additionally offer higher points for specific project area units in the second round which should incentivize provider bids for hard-to-reach areas, especially where providers choose to combine such new project area units with previously awarded projects. Any modifications to the scoring criteria will be made in accordance with the principles of fairness, openness, and competitiveness outlined above, and revised scoring criteria will be established prior to the solicitation of additional grant applications. The SBDEO does not intend to modify scoring criteria to address locations with no proposals without prior approval from NTIA.

Step 5: Engage relevant providers for transparent discussion

As a last step to ensure bids are received for every unserved and underserved location and eligible CAI, the SBDEO may engage directly with all prospective subgrantees and owners of physical broadband infrastructure in the District to understand the barriers to buildout in the remaining locations. Based on the feedback received, the SBDEO may decide to provide support to prospective subgrantees with permitting or subsidies for specific costs.

Further, the SBDEO may decide to conduct targeted outreach and negotiation with specific providers or awarded subgrantees that the SBDEO deems most likely to be capable of making targeted extensions of service to individual remaining locations.

Additional steps, as needed:

The SBDEO hopes that taking these steps in turn will enable the SBDEO to partner with prospective subgrantees to ensure universal coverage. Depending on the success of these steps, the SBDEO will commit to an ongoing direct negotiation process of offers and counteroffers with existing providers and/or entities receiving subgrants for a period of no more than four months, to allow sufficient time to submit the Final Proposal within the one-year timeline.

2.4.8 Text Box: Describe how the Eligible Entity intends to submit proof of Tribal Governments' consent to deployment if planned projects include any locations on Tribal Lands.

D.C. contains no federally recognized Tribal Lands, so this requirement is not applicable.

2.4.9 Text Box: Identify or outline a detailed process for identifying an Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold to be utilized during the subgrantee selection process. The explanation must include a description of any cost models used and the parameters of those cost models, including whether they consider only capital expenditures or include the operational costs for the lifespan of the network.

Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold

Given D.C.'s unique geography, D.C. does not expect the deployment of end-to-end fiber to exceed the Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold (EHCPLT), as D.C.'s current unserved and underserved locations are already in close geographic proximity to existing fiber assets. Thus, the SBDEO expects that all eligible locations can be served with fiber to the premises.

However, if an EHCPLT must be set, D.C. will utilize the D.C. Net's expertise in broadband deployment to set an appropriate EHCPLT. This threshold will be set in a way that allows as many end-to-end fiber projects to be deployed as possible, which is a goal of the BEAD program.

The SBDEO plans to determine the EHCPLT once bids are received so that D.C. can use actual bids to connect the highest-possible share of locations via fiber, and to provide enough flexibility to connect all unserved locations, underserved locations, and eligible CAIs using BEAD funds.

2.4.10 Text Box: Outline a plan for how the Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold will be utilized in the subgrantee selection process to maximize the use of the best available technology while ensuring that the program can meet the prioritization and scoring requirements set forth in Section IV.B.6.b of the BEAD NOFO. The response must describe:

- a. The process for declining a subgrantee proposal that exceeds the threshold where an alternative technology is less expensive.
- b. The plan for engaging subgrantees to revise their proposals and ensure locations do not require a subsidy.
- c. The process for selecting a proposal that involves a less costly technology and may not meet the definition of Reliable Broadband.

Utilization of the Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold

If it is determined that all Priority Broadband Projects cannot be provisionally awarded within the state's BEAD allocation, or that all unserved and underserved locations cannot be reached if all Priority Broadband Projects are funded (i.e., determined by comparing D.C.'s BEAD allocation against the sum of provisionally awarded Priority Broadband Projects and the reference price for any PAUs without applications), then the SBDEO will take the following steps:

- For all applications in which the subsidy for the provisionally awarded Priority Broadband Projects exceeds the preliminary EHCPLT, or for project areas where there are no Priority Broadband Project proposals, applications for non-fiber, reliable technologies will be reviewed and scored. Priority Broadband Projects will not be given an opportunity to cure their application should they be found to exceed the EHCPLT.
- The highest-scoring non-fiber applications will be identified and marked for provisional awards, and the impact of those applications on the total BEAD outlay, the impact on the

coverage map, and the number of additional applications that must be de-conflicted will be assessed.

- When, by implementing the above steps, the total BEAD outlay has been reduced to be within D.C.'s allocation, and the count of unserved and underserved locations and eligible CAIs has been reduced to zero, D.C. will proceed to the steps below for the finalization of preliminary awards.
- If, after assessing all non-fiber applications, the projected total BEAD outlay is still above DC's allocation, then DC will rank all Priority Broadband Projects by the average subsidy per location and set the EHCPLT to one dollar (\$1.00) below the highest-ranked application that has conflicting non-fiber applications.
- DC will repeat Steps (2) – (4) until the projected BEAD outlay is below D.C.'s allocation.
- The SBDEO will finalize the provisional awards identified in Steps (1) – (5) above. This effort may involve declining a subgrantee proposal that exceeds the threshold when an alternative technology is less expensive to fulfill the goal of maximizing coverage while also maximizing the use of end-to-end fiber projects.
- If any project areas remain unassigned after taking the steps above, the SBDEO will conduct one or more of the following activities, based on the number of unassigned project area units:
 - Engage providers who are proximate to remaining unserved and underserved locations (due to their current footprint or their winning BEAD applications) and encourage them to incorporate the remaining locations into their proposals, which may or may not need an additional subsidy. This process may include breaking up project area units into smaller subdivisions or addressing other barriers to deployment by providers.
 - Adjust the reference costs in the remaining project area units to make them more attractive to applications.
 - Allow any fixed or wireless provider to apply, whether or not they are a reliable technology (including participants in D.C.'s Community Internet Program [CIP]).

2.4.11 Text Box: Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure prospective subgrantees deploying network facilities meet the minimum qualifications for financial capability as outlined on pages 72-73 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:

- a. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to certify that they are qualified to meet the obligations associated with a Project, that prospective subgrantees will have available funds for all project costs that exceed the amount of the grant, and that prospective subgrantees will comply with all Program requirements, including service milestones. To the extent the Eligible Entity disburses funding to subgrantees only upon completion of the associated tasks, the Eligible Entity will require each prospective subgrantee to certify that it has and will continue to have sufficient financial resources to cover its eligible costs for the Project until such time as the Eligible Entity authorizes additional disbursements

- b. Detail how the Eligible Entity plans to establish a model letter of credit substantially similar to the model letter of credit established by the FCC in connection with the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF)
- c. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to submit audited financial statements.
- d. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to submit business plans and related analyses that substantiate the sustainability of the proposed project.

2.4.11 Deployment Subgrantee Qualifications

The SBDEO is committed to comprehensive vetting of prospective subgrantees throughout the selection process to ensure that the prospective subgrantees seeking to deploy network facilities meet the qualifications for financial capability as defined in the BEAD NOFO.

To submit a grant application, prospective subgrantees will be required to provide the details outlined below related to financial capability, as well as a Statement of Certification pursuant to Section 7 of D.C.'s Citywide Grants Manual and Sourcebook.⁶ The SBDEO will collect and review documentation pertaining to these requirements to confirm that a clear plan for determining participation is in place.

The SBDEO will communicate the requirements stipulated below to all prospective subgrantees prior to the selection process. This communication will be conducted through outreach to participating stakeholders (via webinars, in-person meetings, etc.); posting a list of regulations on the OCTO website; and including the requirements in grant application instructions, grant agreement terms and conditions, and program-monitoring requirements.

2.4.11.a Required Qualifications for Financial Obligations

The SBDEO will require prospective subgrantees to certify that they are qualified to meet the obligations associated with a project, that they will have available funds for all project costs that exceed the amount of the grant, and that they will comply with all program requirements, including service milestones. Since the SBDEO disburses funding to subgrantees only upon completion of the associated tasks, each applicant must certify that it has and will continue to have sufficient financial resources to cover its eligible costs for the project until the SBDEO authorizes additional disbursements.

The SBDEO will require all prospective subgrantees to provide evidence of their financial capability to conduct the work that they propose in their applications. To support this, the SBDEO will conduct a screening process before the application round that requires complete submission of materials. As part of the screening process, the SBDEO will review prospective subgrantees' plans, financial evidence, and certification to determine whether each application is financially feasible. Such evidence will include previous financial statements, balance sheets,

⁶ <https://is.dc.gov/book/citywide-grants-manual-and-sourcebook/70-nofa-and-application-process>

statements of operations of cashflows, details on funding sources for the product, and the financial history of the prospective subgrantee.

Prospective subgrantees that are deemed financially incapable or whose projects are deemed financially infeasible will be removed from the selection process during the screening round and will not be selected for a grant award. For prospective subgrantees that are deemed financially capable, the extent of their financial capability will be judged according to the scoring criteria outlined in Section 2.4.2. Projects with a higher level of financial feasibility will be given a higher score.

2.4.11.b Model Letter of Credit Process

- As part of the grant application, the SBDEO will require prospective subgrantees to submit a letter from an eligible bank (*see* 47 C.F.R. § 54.804(c)(2)) in which the bank commits to issuing an irrevocable standby letter of credit to the applicant. The letter must include the dollar amount of the letter of credit and the issuing bank’s agreement to adhere to BEAD’s model letter of credit terms and conditions.
- Before executing any subgrantee agreements, each applicant must obtain an irrevocable standby letter of credit, which the SBDEO deems acceptable, and amounts to no less than 25 percent of the subaward amount. An opinion letter from legal counsel must be included with the letter of credit stating, subject only to customary assumptions, limitations, and qualifications, that in a proceeding under Title 11 of the United States Code, 11 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.* (the “Bankruptcy Code”), the bankruptcy court would not treat the letter of credit or proceeds of the letter of credit as property of the winning subgrantee’s bankruptcy estate under Section 541 of the Bankruptcy Code.
- The SBDEO reserves the right to update its Letter of Credit requirement upon further review of the NTIA’s updated guidance. Currently, the SBDEO utilizes Initial Proposal Guidance from July 2023 and the BEAD NOFO

2.4.11.c Prospective Subgrantee Audited Financial Statements

According to the requirement stated in the NOFO, each prospective subgrantee must submit financial statements from the prior fiscal year that have been audited by an independent, certified public accountant. If the potential subgrantee has not been audited during the ordinary course of business, in lieu of audited financial statements the prospective subgrantee must submit unaudited financial statements from the prior fiscal year and certify that it will provide financial statements from the prior fiscal year that are audited by an independent, certified public accountant by a deadline specified by the Eligible Entity.

These financial statements will be used during the SBDEO’s screening process to demonstrate financial stability and assess the feasibility of the prospective subgrantee’s completing the work that they propose. The SBDEO will not approve any grant for the deployment or upgrading of network facilities unless it determines that the prospective subgrantee’s submitted documents demonstrate the prospective subgrantee’s financial capability to undertake the proposed project.

2.4.11.d Prospective Subgrantee Business Plans

- The SBDEO will require prospective subgrantees to submit business plans and related analyses that substantiate the sustainability of the proposed project. This can be provided in the form of pro forma statements or analyses, inclusive of cash flow and balance sheet projections and should include at least three years of operating cost and cash flow projections post targeted completion of project.
- The SBDEO will ensure prospective subgrantees are aware of these regulations prior to and throughout the selection process by conducting information webinars, posting a list of regulations on our website, providing additional information from D.C. regulations, and including the requirements in grant applications/instructions as well as contract negotiations records, grant agreement subrecipient grant monitoring program requirements.

Additionally, the SBDEO will send a response letter to selected subgrantees, informing them of their status in the review process and requesting the following supplemental documentation in order to proceed with the grant award.

1. Proof of Insurance – *See* Article XV.

2. Automated Clearing House (“ACH”) Form – Approved awardees will receive disbursed tranche via an electronic transmission to the bank account designated for this grant. To establish this transfer, approved awardees must fully complete and submit an ACH Form that includes the signature of an authorized representative from their financial institution.

3. EEO Policy Statement – Prospective subgrantees are required to sign an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Statement with the D.C. Office of Human Rights.

4. Grant Agreement – Prospective subgrantees are required to sign an agreement setting forth the terms and obligations that will serve as conditions for Applicant’s receipt of the applicable grant funds.

5. Ethics and Accountability Statement – The selected applicant is required to sign an affidavit which attests to an absence of any inappropriate contributions.

6. Debarment Affidavit.

7. Arrest and Conviction Statement.

8. IRS W-9 Form.

9. If applicable, the selected applicant will be required to execute a First Source Employment Agreement with the D.C. Department of Employment Services governing certain obligations of grantees regarding job creation and employment generated as a result of the grant under the Workforce Intermediary Establishment and Reform of the First Source Amendment Act of 2011

(D.C. Law 19-84, D.C. Official Code §§ 2-219.01 *et seq.*) and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, and Mayor’s Order 83-265.

10. If applicable, the selected applicant will be required to execute a Subcontracting Plan governing certain obligations of grantees under the Small and Certified Business Enterprise Development and Assistance Act of 2005, as amended (D.C. Law 16-33; D.C. Official Code §§ 2-218.01, *et seq.*). To remain eligible for this grant, all supplemental documentation must be submitted to the SBDEO within 5 business days of the response letter.

2.4.12 Text Box: Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure any prospective subgrantee deploying network facilities meets the minimum qualifications for managerial capability as outlined on pages 73 – 74 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:

- a. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to submit resumes for key management personnel.
- b. Detail how it will require prospective subgrantees to provide a narrative describing their readiness to manage their proposed project and ongoing services provided.

Managerial Capability

2.4.12.a The SBDEO will ensure that all prospective subgrantees seeking to deploy network facilities comply with the managerial capability requirements outlined in the BEAD NOFO. The SBDEO will require prospective subgrantees to submit resumes for all key management personnel and any necessary project organizational charts and corporate relationships detailing all parents, subsidiaries, and affiliates.

2.4.12.b Each applicant must also provide a narrative describing the applicant’s readiness to manage a broadband services network. The narrative should describe the experience and qualifications of key management for undertaking this project, its experience undertaking projects of similar size, and scope, recent and upcoming organizational changes including mergers and acquisitions, and relevant organizational policies. D.C. will not approve any grant for the deployment or upgrading of network facilities unless it determines the documents submitted demonstrate the applicant’s managerial capability with respect to the proposed project. D.C. will share these and other requirements with prospective subgrantees in program documents, including in guidance, grant agreement terms/conditions, and subrecipient grant monitoring program requirements. Applications that fail to meet the minimum qualifications for managerial capability as outlined on pages 73 and 74 of the BEAD NOFO will be considered non-responsive and will not be scored.

2.4.13 Text Box: Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure any prospective subgrantee deploying network facilities meets the minimum qualifications for technical capability as outlined on page 74 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must

- a. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to certify that they are technically qualified to complete and operate the Project and that they are capable of carrying out the funded activities in a competent manner, including that they will use an appropriately skilled and credentialed workforce.
- b. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to submit a network design, diagram, project costs, build-out timeline and milestones for project implementation, and a capital investment schedule evidencing complete build-out and the initiation of service within four years of the date on which the entity receives the subgrant, all certified by a professional engineer, stating that the proposed network can deliver broadband service that meets the requisite performance requirements to all locations served by the Project.

2.4.13.a The SBDEO is committed to ensuring that prospective subgrantees seeking to deploy network facilities are thoroughly vetted against minimum qualifications for technical capabilities as required in the BEAD NOFO. Prospective subgrantees will be required to submit certification that they are technically qualified to complete and operate the Project upon which they are bidding, and that they are capable of carrying out the funded activities in a competent manner, including that they will utilize an appropriately skilled and credentialed workforce.

2.4.13.b Prospective subgrantees will be required to submit:

- Network designs;
- Diagrams;
- Project costs;
- Build-out timelines and milestones;
- A capital investment schedule evidencing complete build-out and the initiation of service within four years; and,
- A certification of all of the above by a professional engineer, stating that the proposed network can deliver broadband service that meets the requisite performance requirements to all locations required to be served by the Project.

The SBDEO will share these and other requirements with prospective subgrantees in program documents, including in guidance, grant agreement terms/conditions, and subrecipient grant monitoring program requirements. D.C. will review these submissions, and those not conforming to technical requirements will be considered non-responsive and will not be scored.

2.4.14 Text Box: Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure any prospective subgrantee deploying network facilities meets the minimum qualifications for compliance with applicable laws as outlined on page 74 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:

- a. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to demonstrate that they are capable of carrying out funded activities in a competent manner in compliance with all applicable federal, state, territorial, and local laws.
- b. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to permit workers to create worker-led health and safety committees that management will meet with upon reasonable request.

Compliance with Applicable Law

2.4.14.a D.C. is committed to requiring prospective subgrantees to demonstrate that they will carry out funded activities in a competent manner and in compliance with all applicable federal and D.C. laws.

In line with Section 2.7.1, the SBDEO will require prospective subgrantees to submit the following documents with their applications to ensure compliance with federal labor and employment laws:

- A detailed record of past compliance with federal labor and employment laws, which must address the subgrantee's compliance with federal labor and employment laws on broadband deployment projects funded by federal and D.C. programs in the last three years
- Certification from an officer- or director-level employee (or equivalent) of the prospective subgrantee evidencing consistent past compliance with federal labor and employment laws by the subgrantee and by all contractors and subcontractors
- Written confirmation that the prospective subgrantee has disclosed any instances in which it or its contractors or subcontractors have been found to have violated laws such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, or any other applicable labor and employment laws for the preceding three years.

In addition, the SBDEO will require all prospective subgrantees to attest that they will comply with all relevant D.C. laws and regulations, including anti-discrimination and conflict-of-interest laws. Applications not conforming to these requirements will be considered non-responsive and will not be scored. Prospective subgrantees must also provide a history of legal compliance—including any defaults on obligations—of any previous federal or state grants awarded for previous broadband projects.

In developing the subgrant program, the SBDEO will ensure that critical components related to federal and D.C. procurement practices are accounted for. A review of legally binding regulations and agency-specific policies will assist in creating a competitive selection process for prospective subgrantees. The SBDEO will work to recognize existing federal and D.C. requirements, document relevant procedures, and develop new policies where needed.

Additionally, the Office will review and implement guidance from NTIA’s Subgrantee Selection Primer as necessary.

2.4.14.b Additionally, D.C. is committed to requiring prospective subgrantees to permit workers to create worker-led health and safety committees that management will meet with upon reasonable request. D.C. will share these and other requirements with prospective subgrantees in program documents, including in guidance, grant agreement terms/conditions, and subrecipient grant monitoring program requirements. Applications not conforming to these requirements will be considered non-responsive and will not be scored.

The SBDEO will also make readily available resources for prospective subgrantees to leverage, such as D.C. Health’s website, which includes guides to creating and administering health and safety committees. Applications that fail to meet the minimum qualifications for compliance with applicable laws will not be considered to receive BEAD funding through D.C.

2.4.15 Text Box: Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure any prospective subgrantee deploying network facilities meets the minimum qualifications for operational capability as outlined on pages 74 – 75 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:

- a. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to certify that they possess the operational capability to qualify to complete and operate the Project
- b. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to submit a certification that have provided a voice, broadband, and/or electric transmission or distribution service for at least two (2) consecutive years prior to the date of its application submission or that it is a wholly owned subsidiary of such an entity, attests to and specify the number of years the prospective subgrantee or its parent company has been operating.
- c. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees that have provided a voice and/or broadband service, to certify that it has timely filed Commission Form 477s and the Broadband DATA Act submission, if applicable, as required during this time period, and otherwise has complied with the Commission’s rules and regulations.
- d. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees that have operated only an electric transmission or distribution service, to submit qualified operating or financial reports, that it has filed with the relevant financial institution for the relevant time period along with a certification that the submission is a true and accurate copy of the reports that were provided to the relevant financial institution. e. In reference to new entrants to the broadband market, detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to provide evidence sufficient to demonstrate that the newly formed entity has obtained, through internal or external resources, sufficient operational capabilities.

Operational Capability

2.4.15.a D.C. is committed to ensuring all prospective subgrantees seeking to deploy network facilities are thoroughly vetted and meet the minimum qualifications for operational capability as outlined in the BEAD NOFO. D.C. will require prospective subgrantees to certify that they are qualified and possess the operational capability to complete and operate the Project. Examples of such certification requirements include:

2.4.15.b An applicant that has provided a voice, broadband, and/or electric transmission or distribution service for at least the two consecutive years prior to the date of its application or that it is a wholly owned subsidiary of such an entity, must submit a certification that attests to these facts and specifies the number of years the applicant or its parent company has been operating.

2.4.15.c If the applicant has provided a voice and/or broadband service it must certify that it has timely filed FCC Form 477s and the Broadband DATA Act submission, if applicable, as required during this time period, and otherwise has complied with the FCC's rules and regulations. Alternatively, an applicant should explain any pending or completed enforcement action, civil litigation, or other matter in which it failed to comply or was alleged to have failed to comply with FCC rules or regulations.

2.4.15.d If the applicant has operated only an electric transmission or distribution service, it must submit qualified operating or financial reports that it has filed with the relevant financial institutions or regulatory bodies for the relevant time period along with a certification that the submission is a true and accurate copy of the reports that were provided to the relevant financial institution or regulatory body.

For a new entrant to the broadband market, an applicant must provide evidence sufficient to demonstrate that the newly formed entity has obtained, through internal or external resources, sufficient operational capabilities. Such evidence may include resumes from key personnel, project descriptions and narratives from contractors, subcontractors, or other partners with relevant operation experience, or other comparable evidence.

D.C. will share these and other requirements with prospective subgrantees in program documents, including in guidance, grant agreement terms/conditions, and subrecipient grant monitoring program requirements. Applications not conforming to these requirements will be considered non-responsive and will not be scored.

2.4.16 Text Box: Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure that any prospective subgrantee deploying network facilities meets the minimum qualifications for providing information on ownership as outlined on page 75 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide Page | 55 application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:

- a. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to provide ownership information consistent with the requirements set forth in 47 C.F.R. § 1.2112(a)(1)-(7).

Information on Ownership

2.4.16.a D.C. is committed to ensuring that prospective subgrantees provide ownership information consistent with the requirements set forth in 4 C.F.R. §§ 1.2112(a)(1) – (7), which requires the following:

(a) Each application to participate in competitive bidding (*i.e.*, short-form application (*see* 47 CFR § 1.2105)), or for a license, authorization, assignment, or transfer of control shall fully disclose the following:

- (1) List the real party or parties in interest in the applicant or application, including a complete disclosure of the identity and relationship of those persons or entities directly or indirectly owning or controlling (or both) the applicant;
- (2) List the name, address, and citizenship of any party holding 10 percent or more of stock in the applicant, whether voting or nonvoting, common or preferred, including the specific amount of the interest or percentage held;
- (3) List, in the case of a limited partnership, the name, address and citizenship of each limited partner whose interest in the applicant is 10 percent or greater (as calculated according to the percentage of equity paid in or the percentage of distribution of profits and losses);
- (4) List, in the case of a general partnership, the name, address and citizenship of each partner, and the share or interest participation in the partnership;
- (5) List, in the case of a limited liability company, the name, address, and citizenship of each of its members whose interest in the applicant is 10 percent or greater;
- (6) List all parties holding indirect ownership interests in the applicant as determined by successive multiplication of the ownership percentages for each link in the vertical ownership chain, that equals 10 percent or more of the applicant, except that if the ownership percentage for an interest in any link in the chain exceeds 50 percent or represents actual control, it shall be treated and reported as if it were a 100 percent interest; and
- (7) List any FCC-regulated entity or applicant for an FCC license, in which the applicant or any of the parties identified in paragraphs (a)(1) through (a)(5) of this section, owns 10 percent or more of stock, whether voting or nonvoting, common or preferred. This list must include a description of each such entity's principal business and a description of each such entity's relationship to the applicant (*e.g.*, Company A owns 10 percent of Company B (the applicant) and 10 percent of Company C, then Companies A and C must be listed on Company B's application, where C is an FCC licensee and/or license applicant).

D.C. will share these and other requirements with prospective subgrantees in program documents, including in guidance, grant agreement terms/conditions, and subrecipient grant monitoring program requirements. Applications not conforming to these requirements will be considered non-responsive and will not be scored.

2.4.17 Text Box: Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure any prospective subgrantee deploying network facilities meets the minimum qualifications for providing information on other public funding as outlined on pages 75 – 76 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:

- a. Detail how it will require prospective subgrantees to disclose for itself and for its affiliates, any application the subgrantee or its affiliates have submitted or plan to submit, and every broadband deployment project that the subgrantee or its affiliates are undertaking or have committed to undertake at the time of the application using public funds.
- b. At a minimum, the Eligible Entity shall require the disclosure, for each broadband deployment project, of: (a) the speed and latency of the broadband service to be provided (as measured and/or reported under the applicable rules), (b) the geographic area to be covered, (c) the number of unserved and underserved locations committed to serve (or, if the commitment is to serve a percentage of locations within the specified geographic area, the relevant percentage), (d) the amount of public funding to be used, (e) the cost of service to the consumer, and (f) the matching commitment, if any, provided by the subgrantee or its affiliates.

Information Sharing on Other Public Funding

D.C. is committed to ensuring that prospective subgrantees seeking to deploy network facilities are thoroughly vetted and meet the minimum qualifications for providing information on other public funding as outlined in the BEAD NOFO.

2.4.17.a D.C. will require each applicant to disclose, for itself and for its affiliates, any application the applicant or its affiliates have submitted or plan to submit, and every broadband deployment project that the applicant or its affiliates are undertaking or have committed to undertake at the time of the application using public funds, including but not limited to funds provided under: the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (Public Law 116-127; 134 Stat. 178); the CARES Act (Public Law 116-136; 134 Stat. 281); the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260; 134 Stat. 1182); or the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law 117-2; 135 Stat. 4), any federal Universal Service Fund high-cost program (*e.g.*, RDOF, CAF), or any D.C. broadband deployment funding program.

2.4.17.b D.C. will require disclosure, for each broadband deployment project, as follows:

- (a) the speed and latency of the broadband service to be provided (as measured and/or reported under the applicable rules;
- (b) the geographic area to be covered;
- (c) the number of unserved and underserved locations committed to serve (or, if the commitment is to serve a percentage of locations within the specified geographic area, the relevant percentage);
- (d) the amount of public funding to be used;
- (e) the cost of service to the consumer; and,
- (f) the matching commitment, if any, provided by the applicant or its affiliates.

D.C. will share these and other requirements with prospective subgrantees in program documents, including in guidance, grant agreement terms/conditions, and subrecipient grant monitoring program requirements. Applications not conforming to these requirements will be considered non-responsive and will not be scored.

Non-Deployment Subgrantee Selection (Requirement 9)

2.5.1 Text Box: Describe a fair, open, and competitive subgrantee selection process for eligible non-deployment activities. Responses must include the objective means, or process by which objective means will be developed, for selecting subgrantees for eligible non-deployment activities. If the Eligible Entity does not intend to subgrant for non-deployment activities, indicate such.

The District of Columbia intends to align its selection of subgrantees for non-deployment activities with the **objectives, goals, intentions, and purpose** defined in D.C.'s State Digital Equity Plan (SDEP). The goals defined in the SDEP are as follows:

- Make high-quality, affordable, high-speed internet **accessible** to all residents of D.C. in their homes and local community anchor institutions and promote equitable adoption of internet service.
- Provide **sustainable, low-cost or no-cost devices and IT-support**, as well as enabling applications, to the residents who need them most.
- Create **navigable pathways for D.C. residents** across the spectrum of digital literacy and digital skills. These pathways and programs will be accessible to all and will focus on elements such as including online privacy, cybersecurity, accessibility, and inclusivity.

- **Leverage increased access to broadband, devices, and digital skills** to set up strategic partnerships and initiatives with D.C. agencies to affect economic development, workforce goals, and improved health outcomes.

Toward this end, D.C. will implement a fair, open, and competitive selection process for non-deployment subgrantees through the following activities:

- **Publicly announcing the availability of funding, the timeline, and the requirements** for eligible non-deployment activities through **multiple channels** (such as the OCTO website and press releases) to inform prospective subgrantees about this opportunity. The announcement will include detailed information about the application, the application process, and the eligibility and assessment criteria. The expected activities that the SBDEO will conduct during the non-deployment selection process are as follows:

Pre-Application Process

Publication of Notice of Funding Availability (“NOFA”) (14 days): D.C.’s subgrantee selection process will begin with the publication of a NOFA, pursuant to the requirements outlined in Section 7 of D.C.’s Citywide Grants Manual and Sourcebook⁷. The NOFA will contain a brief description of the purpose for which funds are available, criteria for eligible applicants, and the time and location at which the Request for Application (“RFA”) may be obtained and submitted.

RFA and subgrantee application materials made available for public comment (30 days): At least 14 days after the publication of the NOFA, the SBDEO will publish draft versions of i) the RFA, pursuant to Section 7 of D.C.’s Citywide Grants Manual and Sourcebook; ii) the subgrantee prequalification requirements; iii) any other information or materials which the SBDEO deems relevant to the non-deployment subgrantee application process. This information will be provided via the OCTO public website, with additional outreach via email or other forms of direct communication to providers and other local stakeholders known to the SBDEO via past local coordination efforts for BEAD. The SBDEO will also provide a platform for any stakeholder to be able to provide comments on the application. This platform will be publicized and made easily accessible to the public via the OCTO website.

Round of local coordination and response to public comments (30 days): During the period in which the RFA and subgrantee application materials are made public, the SBDEO will conduct an additional round of local coordination and an awareness campaign. This is intended to enable all potential applicants to be aware of BEAD and to consider applying for a non-deployment subgrantee award if they are eligible. During this period, the SBDEO will also review public and respond to public comments and will revise and finalize the RFA accordingly. The SBDEO plans to host public webinars, create posts on the OCTO website, and conduct an awareness campaign both the present information about the subgrantee process, and to address public comments and questions.

⁷ DC.gov, <https://is.dc.gov/book/citywide-grants-manual-and-sourcebook/70-nofa-and-application-process>

Application Process

Screening round for eligible prospective subgrantees (30 days): Following the close of the public period, the SBDEO will open a 30-day pre-qualification filing window for prospective subgrantees. During this filing window, or “screening period”, prospective subgrantees will be required to submit compliance documents, as well as materials and required certifications to demonstrate their financial, operational, and managerial qualifications. Prospective subgrantees that meet all qualification requirements will be invited to participate in the subgrantee selection process. Prospective subgrantees that fail to meet all qualification requirements will be unable to proceed with the first round of applications.

Application submission (30 days): The application submission window for all non-deployment subgrantee award applications will last for 30 days. Qualified prospective subgrantees will be able to submit applications for their proposed projects.

Program Awards

Application review and subgrantee selection (30 days): The SBDEO will review all applications will and will score them according to the scoring criteria outlined in Section 2.5.2. The applications with the highest scores will be selected to receive a provisional subgrantee award, and selection of subgrantees will depend on the remaining BEAD allotment for non-deployment awards.

Notification of applicants (10 days): The SBDEO will notify all applicants of the status of their application.

Public release of final subgrant selections (10 days): Within 10 days following the notification of applicants, the SBDEO will publish all applications, the scoring criteria, and the final non-deployment subgrantee awards on the OCTO website.

A summary of key activities in the non-deployment subgrantee process is below.

Key Milestone Activity	Number of days
Pre-Application	Total 44
Publication of NOFA	14
Preliminary RFA and subgrantee process materials made available for public comment	30
Round of local coordination and response to public comments, after which final RFA and subgrantee process materials will be published	30 (concurrent with prior step)
Application process	Total 60
Screening round for all eligible prospective subgrantees	30
Submission of applications	30
Program Awards	Total 50
Application review and subgrantee selection	30
Notification of application status to subgrantees	10
Public release of final subgrant selections	10

The SBDEO will take several measures to prevent collusion, bias, conflicts of interest, arbitrary decisions, and other factors that could undermine confidence in the process. The measures outlined in Section 2.4.1 describe safeguards for the deployment subgrantee process, and these measures will also be used for the nondeployment subgrantee process. A summary of those safeguards is as follows:

- **Conflicts of interest:** All prospective subgrantees will be required to fully disclose any real or perceived conflicts of interests, and District employees who are involved in evaluating subgrant applications must disclose any real or perceived conflicts of interest. Employees with such interests will not be permitted to participate in the selection of subgrantees.
- **Collusion:** As part of the BEAD application requirements, prospective subgrantees will be required to attest that they have not colluded with any entities and will be prohibited from making any public communication about plans to apply for specific deployment subgrants under the SBDEO until the announcement of final awards.
- **Bias:** To guard against bias, the required qualifications for subgrantees will be widely published so that all potential subgrantees may review them and consider applying for funds.
- **Arbitrary decisions:** Applications will be assessed based solely on the scoring criteria and according to the process detailed in the Initial Proposal, which is readily accessible to the public. The SBDEO will retain records and submit them to NTIA during the review process.

2.5.2 Text Box: Describe the Eligible Entity's plan for the following:

- a. How the Eligible Entity will employ preferences in selecting the type of non-deployment initiatives it intends to support using BEAD Program funds;
- b. How the non-deployment initiatives will address the needs of residents within the jurisdiction;
- c. The ways in which engagement with localities and stakeholders will inform the selection of eligible non-deployment activities;
- d. How the Eligible Entity will determine whether other uses of the funds might be more effective in achieving the BEAD Program's equity, access, and deployment goals.

2.5.2.a Non-deployment Initiative Subgrantee Scoring Criteria

D.C.'s digital equity goals are to facilitate a transformative, achievable, and sustainable state of digital equity in the future. To evaluate proposed projects, D.C. will use a rubric containing the following selection criteria. The SBDEO will finalize the specific metrics used to measure/weigh each criteria.

- **Alignment with D.C.'s digital equity priorities.** Non-deployment initiatives will receive points based on alignment with D.C.'s digital equity priorities, as described in the seventeen objectives within D.C.'s four digital equity goals, as outlined in Requirement 1, Section 2.1.1 of this Initial Proposal. (up to **25 points**)

- Applicants will receive up to 16 points for projects that are in alignment with each objective within one of D.C.'s four digital equity goals
- A maximum of 9 additional points are available for each additional objective that the project aligns with outside of the first goal it aligns with, up to a maximum of 3 objectives. Each additional objective is worth 3 points.

If the project fails to align with any specific goal completely, but still aligns with any objectives, it can receive a maximum of 9 total points for each objective it aligns with, up to 3 objectives.

- **Soundness of the proposed project.** The project's goals, activities, resident and community engagement models, milestones, timelines, costs, data collection, and impact measurement approaches will be assessed for comprehensiveness and feasibility. Each initiative must include specific, measurable outcomes that the project is projected to achieve for D.C.'s covered populations. The points breakdown below is cumulative, so applicants may receive points in each of the categories up to a 25-point maximum. (up to **25 points**)
 - Activities, milestones and engagement models: up to 10 points will be awarded for a sufficiently detailed and compelling description of the activities, milestones and engagement models.
 - Data collection approach: up to 5 points will be awarded for a sufficiently detailed and compelling data collection approach
 - Key-performance-indicators (KPIs): up to 5 points will be awarded for a sufficiently compelling, measurable and collectively exhaustive definition of project KPIs
 - Impact measurement approach: up to 5 points will be awarded for a sufficiently compelling and effective metric for measuring project impact, or fulfilment of project KPIs
- **Prior experience and impact of applicant**—an applicant's prior experience and subject-matter expertise in executing non-deployment initiatives and the outcome of such initiatives. Applications will be weighed based on the years of experience or the number of successful non-deployment initiatives, whichever is greater. The SBDEO will further refine the metrics used to determine a successful initiative to fairly weigh different types, lengths, and contexts of initiatives. Generally, examples of initiatives could include digital equity and literacy events held or devices donated, refurbished and distributed. Example metrics could include the number of residents served by target population, and the total hours of programs and services offered to residents. (up to **20 points**)
 - 10+ years of experience and 20+ successful non-deployment initiatives: 20 points
 - 7-9 years of experience and 15-19 successful non-deployment initiatives: 15 points
 - 4-6 years of experience and 10-14 successful non-deployment initiatives: 10 points
 - 1-3 years of experience and 5-9 successful non-deployment initiatives: 5 points
 - Less than 1 year of experience or less than 3 successful non-deployment initiatives: 0 points

If an applicant qualifies for a different point allocation for years of experience and successful non-deployment initiatives, the points allocated shall be the average of the respective point allocations.

- **Community support for the application.** Projects that can demonstrate trust-based relationships, endorsement, and support from the communities they seek to serve will be prioritized. Prospective subgrantees can demonstrate community support by providing (1) letters of support from community leaders and/or non-profits (especially those who serve Covered Populations), and (2) DC government agencies. (up to **15 points**)
 - Up to 10 points will be available for letters from community leaders and/or non-profits
 - 9-10 local support letters: 10 points
 - 6-8 local support letters: 8 points
 - 3-5 local support letters: 5 points
 - 1-2 local support letters: 2 points
 - 0 local support letters: 0 points
 - Up to 5 points will be available for letters from DC government agencies
 - 3+ local support letters: 5 points
 - 1-3 local support letters: 3 points
 - 0 local support letters: 0 points
- **Funding request and plan for sustainability.** The funding request per unit of the outcome measured, and the percentage of the total, multi-year project costs requested from D.C. will be assessed to determine the potential for longevity beyond the BEAD and DEA funding programs (as with a project launched in partnership with another D.C. agency, for example). (up to **10 points**)
 - Up to 5 points will be available for the proposed match
 - 25% + match: 5 points
 - 15-24% match: 3 points
 - 5-14% match: 1 point
 - Less than 5% match: 0 points
 - Up to 5 additional points will be available for the funding request per unit of the outcome measured
 - Within Q1 (lower quartile range, < 25%) of funding requests per unit of the outcome measured: 5 points
 - Within Q2 (median range) of funding requests per unit of the outcome measured: 2 points
 - Within Q3 (upper quartile range > 75%) of funding requests per unit of the outcome measured: 0 points
- **Innovative solutions**—whether the applicant proposes a feasible, innovative approach to addressing long-standing broadband and digital equity challenges across D.C. (up to **5 points**)

- SBDEO/support staff have not recognized proposed approach as being previously deployed in D.C.: 5 points
- SBDEO/support staff have recognized proposed approach as being previously deployed in D.C.: 0 points

Prospective subgrantees will be scored according to the rubric, and those with the highest score will be selected. Since the highest-scoring applications will be provisionally awarded, this process will be competitive.

In alignment with D.C.’s goals (as described in Requirement 1 and restated below) and the eligible activities outlined in the BEAD NOFO, OCTO identified potential non-deployment activities for which the D.C. SBDEO may consider making BEAD subgrants:

- Making high-quality, affordable, high-speed internet accessible and driving equitable adoption of internet service (*e.g.*, **broadband sign-up assistance, ACP outreach**).
- Providing sustainable, low-cost or no-cost devices and IT support to the residents who need it most (such as the **Mobile Tech Fleet**, which provides technology and broadband access to hard-to-reach neighborhoods in Wards 5, 7, and 8)
 - **Mobile Technology Fleet.** To build on the success of a 2019 pilot, OCTO will consider using non-deployment funds to launch a Mobile Tech Fleet of electric vans that will serve as mobile classrooms and sign-up centers for broadband assistance programs. The vans may feature Tech Together D.C. branding to boost awareness of D.C.’s digital equity efforts and opportunities to participate.
- Creating navigable pathways toward stronger digital literacy and skills for D.C. residents (such as **internships with the D.C. Infrastructure Academy** to support workforce development and skills enhancement for low-income or over-60 D.C. residents and a technology curriculum offered through an **eSports Academy** for low-income or racial- and ethnic-minority high school students).^{8,9}
 - The **D.C. Infrastructure Academy** is a local community center that helps adult D.C. residents enter infrastructure-related careers by offering on-the-job workforce support, skills development, and training. Programs are focused on building and developing the skills of individuals seeking to enter or advance in the workforce (such as low-income residents or residents aged 60 or older). The program has trained over 4,000 residents to date and boasts a 90 percent graduation rate. OCTO may consider partnering with IT providers to offer additional internship opportunities.

⁸ D.C. Infrastructure Academy, <https://dcia.dc.gov/>; “DOES and OCTO announce new paid internship program,” <https://does.dc.gov/release/does-and-octo-announce-new-paid-internship-program-dcia-graduates>; “D.C. Infrastructure Academy to continue mission at Springarn High School,” <https://www.washingtoninformer.com/dc-infrastructure-academy-springarn-high-school/>.

⁹ “DCSAA Esports,” <https://www.dcsaasports.org/esports>; “Esports supports 50+ High School Gamers at Ward 7’s Eastern High School,” <https://www.monumentalfoundation.org/article/wdg-eastern-2023>.

- The **eSports Academy**, an eSports gaming and programming facility, helps students in D.C. public schools learn software, program management, and marketing skills. OCTO may consider building on the success of the current program at Eastern High School and expand offerings to 120 additional students at six schools with the highest demand.
- Leveraging increased access to broadband, devices, and digital skills to effect economic development, workforce goals, and improved health outcomes. For example, to help individuals with disabilities become more self-sufficient, **phone booths were installed in Senior Centers and Recreational Facilities** to improve access to essential services such as telehealth, **smart home audits**, and technology. In another example, online government services come with **translation services** to make them more accessible to individuals with a disability or without proficiency in English.¹⁰
 - **Tech Together “Technology Booths” in Senior Service Centers and Recreational Facilities** is a new program to install monitored, private, technology-equipped booths for individual use, small meetings, 1-on-1 conversations in senior centers and community facilities. Patrons may lack access to the required technology, skills, or space to effectively use devices. These booths may be used for essential services such as telehealth, tutoring, or finance and could be designed as single- or double-occupancy units, depending on residents’ needs and limitations. For example, double occupancy may be necessary if the user would like in-person guidance on devices or skills.
 - **Enhanced Accessibility to Digital Services.** OCTO may partner with agencies such as the Department of Disability Services (DDS) and Department of Aging and Community Living (DACL) to offer home audits for D.C. residents with a disability, to identify technologies that could dramatically improve the lives of individuals living with disabilities, and to consider grants to help residents acquire devices. This initiative aligns with OCTO’s “accessibility first” approach and with mayoral priorities related to accessibility (as demonstrated by the 2023 Disability Tech Summit, for example).

Proposed projects for the non-deployment activities outlined in BEAD NOFO and included below will also be considered.

¹⁰ Press release for 2023 Disability Tech Summit, <https://dds.dc.gov/page/mayor-bowser-presents-2023-disability-tech-summit>.

EXAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE NON-DEPLOYMENT USES

- User training with respect to cybersecurity, privacy, and other digital safety matters.
 - Remote learning or telehealth services/facilities.
 - Digital literacy/upskilling (from beginner-level to advanced).
 - Computer science, coding and cybersecurity education programs.
 - Implementation of Eligible Entity digital equity plans (to supplement, but not to duplicate or supplant, Planning Grant funds received by the Eligible Entity in connection with the Digital Equity Act of 2021).
 - Broadband sign-up assistance and programs that provide technology support.
 - Multi-lingual outreach to support adoption and digital literacy.
 - Prisoner education to promote pre-release digital literacy, job skills, online job-acquisition skills, etc.
 - Digital navigators.
 - Direct subsidies for use toward broadband subscription, where the Eligible Entity shows the subsidies will improve affordability for the end user population (and to supplement, but not to duplicate or supplant, the subsidies provided by the Affordable Connectivity Program).
 - Costs associated with stakeholder engagement, including travel, capacity-building, or contract support.
 - Other allowable costs necessary to carrying out programmatic activities of an award, not to include ineligible costs described below in Section V.K.2 of this NOFO.
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2.5.2.b How Such Initiatives Will Address the Needs of Residents within the Jurisdiction

Any non-deployment projects selected by D.C. to be underwritten by BEAD funds must expressly address a need or gap related to the digital divide. This need or gap must be analyzed and described in detail in D.C.'s State Digital Equity Plan based on extensive quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Prospective subgrantees must describe the specific goal and measurable objective that their proposed project seeks to accomplish, and they must detail their approach to data collection and impact assessment and tracking to ensure that residents' specific needs are addressed.

In addition to aligning with the needs assessment conducted in the State Digital Equity Plan, selected projects must demonstrate substantial community support, further validating that the proposed project will effectively address residents' needs.

2.5.2.c How Engagement with Local Stakeholders will Inform the Selection of Eligible Non-Deployment Activities

Engagement with local stakeholders will inform the selection of eligible non-deployment activities in two ways:

- **Stakeholder engagement shapes D.C.'s overarching digital equity goals, with which all projects must align.** These goals will continue to be shaped by local stakeholders' insights, which will be shared when the D.C. SBDEO conducts its annual update process. As selected projects must align with these goals, stakeholder engagement will implicitly influence project selection.

- **Community support is a prioritized evaluation criterion for project selection.** As described in Sections 2.5.2.a and 2.5.2.b, community support will be given substantial weight in the selection criteria for non-deployment projects. Prospective subgrantees will be required to describe their stakeholder engagement activities and their effect on the proposed project.

2.5.2.d. How D.C. Will Determine Whether Other Uses of the Funds Might be More Effective in Achieving the BEAD Program’s Equity, Access, and Deployment Goals

The D.C. SBDEO will rigorously assess all submitted applications for non-deployment funding. The evaluation criteria include the project’s measured impact, feasibility, and community support—all of which are important determinants of effectiveness in achieving the BEAD goals. Projects will be assessed competitively, and D.C. expects that projects that score highest will be more effective than other uses of funds in achieving the BEAD goals.

2.5.3 Text Box: Describe the Eligible Entity’s plan to ensure coverage to all unserved and underserved locations prior to allocating funding to non-deployment activities.

How D.C. will Ensure All Unserved and Underserved Locations will be covered, prior to allocating funding to non-deployment activities.

D.C. will ensure that all unserved and underserved locations and CAIs will be covered before funding is allocated to non-deployment activities by executing the deployment sub-grantee process prior to executing the non-deployment subgrantee process. D.C. expects the total funds required for deployment activities to be less than \$10 million and will be able to validate that modeling well before beginning the non-deployment subgrantee process.

2.5.4 Text Box: Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure prospective subgrantees meet the general qualifications outlined on pages 71 – 72 of the NOFO.

Prior to entering any subgrant agreement, D.C. will ensure that the prospective subgrantee:

- Is capable of competently carrying out activities funded by the subgrant in compliance with all applicable federal and D.C. laws;
- Has the financial and managerial capacity to meet its commitments under the subgrant, the requirements of the program, and any other requirements prescribed by NTIA or D.C.; and,
- Has the technical and operational capability to provide the services promised in the subgrant in the manner contemplated by the subgrant award.

Applications not conforming to these requirements will be scored to reflect their deficiency and will be disqualified from receiving a subgrant.

D.C. will develop specific questions and a list of required documentation to assess the proposed application according to four required dimensions: financial capacity, managerial capacity,

technical capability, and operational capability. All required questions and documentation will be communicated to prospective subgrantees prior to the selection process to support a fair and open application process. Any documentation that is received by prospective subgrantees will be reviewed by qualified personnel, including the SBDEO staff and any third-party providers or contractors if needed, to further support a fair and open process.

OCTO will also **use D.C.’s current Clean Hands policy** and any other established vendor-vetting protocols from D.C. agencies to assess a vendor’s capability and capacity for carrying out activities.

- Under the District-wide Clean Hands Policy, OCTO will assess whether a potential subgrantee owes any fines, penalties, or interest to D.C. prior to issuing awards. An award may not be denied if a potential applicant agrees to a payment schedule to eliminate the outstanding debt, the payment schedule is agreed to by D.C. government, the applicant is complying with the payment schedule, and the payment schedule is otherwise permitted by law.¹¹ Prospective subgrantees may be required to submit a Certification of Clean Hands (CCH) from the D.C. Office of Tax and Revenue, as required in DOEE’s grants management process.
- OCTO will also partner with D.C. agencies that have a longstanding history of grantmaking to implement best practices in grants management policies and procedures. For example, OCTO may conduct a risk-factor assessment similar to that used by D.C.’s Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants (Section 3.3 in OVSJG’s Grant Management Policies and Procedures). The risk assessment would support OCTO in identifying an applicant’s potential risk level and in setting special risk-mitigation conditions that align with the assessment’s outcome.¹²

Additionally, OCTO will implement a process similar to the one described for Deployment Subgrantee Selection (Requirement 8) to assess whether a prospective subgrantee has the financial and managerial capacity to meet commitments. This process will include:

- A requirement for prospective subgrantees to submit business plans and related analyses that substantiate the sustainability of the proposed non-deployment project; and,
- A requirement for prospective subgrantees to submit narratives that substantiate the applicant’s readiness and ability to manage the non-deployment project (such as prior experience in running a similar program or relevant organizational policies).

¹¹ Clean Hands Act of 2013. <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/code/sections/47-2862>.

¹² OVSJG, Grants Management Policies and Procedures. https://ovsjg.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ovsjg/page_content/attachments/Grants%20PP%20Update%2011-2022.pdf.

Eligible Entity Implementation Activities (Requirement 10)

Without making a subgrant, the D.C. SBDEO plans to directly implement two digital equity initiatives (“Mobile Technology Fleet” and “Enhanced Accessibility to Digital Services”), as well as other programmatic and administrative activities that are related to the execution and administrative processes for the challenge and subgrantee selection. A description of the initiative and rationale for proposing this approach is included below.

2.6.1 Text Box: Describe any initiatives the Eligible Entity proposes to implement as the recipient without making a subgrant, and why it proposes that approach.

Mobile Technology Fleet

Providing sustainable, low-cost, or no-cost devices and IT support

The D.C. SBDEO plans to acquire a “Mobile Technology Fleet” that will serve as a special-purpose community engagement resource. Equipped with broadband access, personal computers and other digital devices, this fleet of three to five electric vans will travel across the District to serve as “a mobile technology center on wheels.” They will thus enable the SBDEO and its partners to bring financial and health services, career training, and outreach directly to the residents of Wards 5, 7, and 8, who are disproportionately low-income and predominantly racial and ethnic minorities. This initiative aims to rejuvenate and expand upon the successful mobile tech fleet pilot launched by the SBDEO in 2019, which was terminated due to lack of resourcing, despite its vast popularity.

By directly implementing this initiative, the SBDEO can maximize its impact, capitalize on past experience, and tailor the initiative to best meet the unique needs of the D.C. communities it serves. Specifically, by building upon D.C.'s past success with the 2019 program, the SBDEO is well-positioned to leverage the existing operating experience and stakeholder relationships to launch and scale the initiative. By implementing it directly, the SBDEO can also accelerate the timeline and use the fleet as an effective branding and messaging tool that showcases the district's commitment to addressing the digital divide and promotes related BEAD initiatives, such as affordable broadband access and stakeholder engagement.

Using the "Mobile Technology Fleet," the SBDEO anticipates fostering collaboration with a dozen or so partners, hosting 200-300 events annually, and engaging up to 10,000 residents each year. The diverse programming will cover topics spanning health, financial literacy, and digital skills. To gauge the program's impact, the SBDEO will employ end-of-class quizzes and continuous knowledge checkups. Additionally, post-event surveys will be conducted to elicit feedback from attendees, probing into their satisfaction, preferences, and perceptions of the event.

Enhanced Accessibility to Digital Services

Leveraging increased access to broadband, devices, and digital skills to make digital services more accessible for populations with language or disability barriers

The D.C. SBDEO plans to invest in accessible technologies to enable D.C. residents who are not proficient in English or who have a disability to interact more effectively with D.C. government services, such as the D.C. Business Portal and the Department of Human Services' (DHS) digital interface for human services.

Enhancing the accessibility of D.C.'s government services websites and applications is a crucial step toward fostering inclusivity and equitable access for all D.C. residents. In a 2022 resident survey, "ease of navigating D.C. websites and applications" was identified as a top barrier for D.C. small business owners and residents. Residents of Wards 5, 7, and 8 who are disproportionately low-income and predominately racial and ethnic minorities can be especially vulnerable to such access barriers. Addressing these barriers aligns with D.C.'s commitment to creating a more accessible and user-friendly online experience for all district residents, irrespective of language proficiency or disability.

OCTO's digital services team plays a significant role in developing and continually improving D.C.'s government services websites and applications. To do so, they collaborate with various agency stakeholders, D.C. residents, D.C. businesses, and technology partners. By directly implementing this initiative, the SBDEO can leverage the digital services team's access, experience, and stakeholder relationships for maximum and accelerated impact, further solidifying D.C.'s commitment to accessibility and civic engagement in the digital equity context.

To ensure the success of this initiative, the SBDEO will adhere to the D.C. Language Access Act, which mandates the D.C. government to provide equal access and participation in public services, programs, and activities for residents with no or limited English language skills. Covered foreign languages include Amharic, Chinese, French, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The SBDEO will prioritize the auditing and translation of websites and applications with the highest user count and impact, such as the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), DC Health, and Department of Employment Services (DOES).

For activities aimed at enhancing accessibility for residents with disabilities, the SBDEO will collaborate with Digital Services and technology partners to pilot and implement web features such as accessible design and alternative formats. The SBDEO will track the progress of this initiative against The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) scores, starting with the same list of prioritized websites and applications mentioned above.

Programmatic and Administrative Activities

OCTO plans to leverage BEAD funds without making a subgrant to implement the BEAD challenge process, as well as the processes for deployment and non-deployment subgrantee selection.

- **Challenge process:** These activities will include contracting with a third-party provider to implement the challenge process portal needed to execute the process. The SBDEO may also contract with temporary workers to support adjudication during the final determination phase.
- **Subgrantee selection processes:** the D.C. SBDEO may contract with a third-party provider to offer technical assistance in the grant process, application analysis and deconfliction, and overall execution support. D.C. may require additional features to be added to its existing grant portal to support the BEAD deployment and non-deployment processes and, as required, will use BEAD funds to support that work.

The D.C. SBDEO has developed preliminary budget estimates for the above activities. Please refer to Requirement 17, “Use of 20 Percent of Funding,” for detail.

Labor Standards and Protection (Requirement 11)

The SBDEO will require prospective subgrantees to provide the specified details when applying, as part of the competitive subgrantee selection process. Prospective subgrantees must furnish information that meets the specified criteria, including details about their contractors and subcontractors.

2.7.1 Text Box: Describe the specific information that prospective subgrantees will be required to provide in their applications and how the Eligible Entity will weigh that information in its competitive subgrantee selection processes. Information from prospective subgrantees must demonstrate the following and must include information about contractors and subcontractors:

- a. Prospective subgrantees’ record of past compliance with federal labor and employment laws, which:
 - i. Must address information on these entities’ compliance with federal labor and employment laws on broadband deployment projects in the last three years
 - ii. Should include a certification from an Officer/Director-level employee (or equivalent) of the prospective subgrantee evidencing consistent past compliance with federal labor and employment laws by the subgrantee, as well as all contractors and subcontractors; and
 - iii. Should include written confirmation that the prospective subgrantee discloses any instances in which it or its contractors or subcontractors have been found to have violated laws such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, or any other applicable labor and employment laws for the preceding three years.

- b. Prospective subgrantees' plans for ensuring compliance with federal labor and employment laws, which must address the following:
 - i. How the prospective subgrantee will ensure compliance in its own labor and employment practices, as well as that of its contractors and subcontractors, including:
 - 1. Information on applicable wage scales and wage and overtime payment practices for each class of employees expected to be involved directly in the physical construction of the broadband network; and
 - 2. How the subgrantee will ensure the implementation of workplace safety committees that are authorized to raise health and safety concerns in connection with the delivery of deployment projects.

2.7.1.a Prospective Subgrantees' Past Compliance with Federal Labor and Employment Regulations

2.7.1.a.i Prospective subgrantees must address information on their compliance with federal labor and employment laws on broadband deployment projects in the last three years;

2.7.1.a.ii Prospective subgrantees must include a certification from an Officer/Director-level employee (or equivalent) of the prospective subgrantee evidencing consistent past compliance with federal labor and employment laws by the subgrantee, as well as all contractors and subcontractors; and,

2.7.1.a.iii Prospective subgrantees must include written confirmation that the prospective subgrantee has disclosed any instances in which it or its contractors or subcontractors have been found to have violated laws such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, or any other applicable labor and employment laws for the preceding three years.

Prospective subgrantees' past compliance will be weighed as part of the Fair Labor Practices scoring criteria, as outlined in section 2.4.2.

2.7.1.b Prospective Subgrantees' Compliance Plan for Federal Labor and Employment Laws

Prospective subgrantees must address how they will ensure compliance in their own labor and employment practices, as well as those of their contractors and subcontractors, including:

2.7.1.b.i.1 Providing information on applicable wage scales and wage and overtime payment practices for each class of employees expected to be involved directly in the physical construction of the broadband network; and,

2.7.1.b.i.2 Providing information on how the subgrantee will ensure the implementation of workplace safety committees that are authorized to raise health and safety concerns in connection with the delivery of deployment projects.

Prospective subgrantees' compliance plans will be weighed as part of the Fair Labor Practices scoring criteria, as outlined in Section 2.4.2.

2.7.2 Text Box: Describe in detail whether the Eligible Entity will make mandatory for all subgrantees (including contractors and subcontractors) any of the following and, if required, how it will incorporate them into binding legal commitments in the subgrants it makes:

- a. Using a directly employed workforce, as opposed to a subcontracted workforce;
- b. Paying prevailing wages and benefits to workers, including compliance with Davis-Bacon and Service Contract Act requirements, where applicable, and collecting the required certified payrolls;
- c. Using project labor agreements (*i.e.*, pre-hire collective bargaining agreements between unions and contractors that govern terms and conditions of employment for all workers on a construction project);
- d. Use of local hire provisions;
- e. Commitments to union neutrality;
- f. Use of labor peace agreements;
- g. Use of an appropriately skilled workforce (*e.g.*, through Registered Apprenticeships or other joint labor-management training programs that serve all workers, particularly those underrepresented or historically excluded);
- h. Use of an appropriately credentialed workforce (*i.e.*, satisfying requirements for appropriate and relevant pre-existing occupational training, certification, and licensure); and
- i. Taking steps to prevent the misclassification of workers.

The SBDEO will require the following protections to be followed around hiring:

2.7.2.a Use a directly employed workforce.

The SBDEO will require prospective subgrantees to provide a detailed plan for their future hiring processes. Subgrantees must demonstrate a feasible plan for directly hiring their workforce, including proposed hiring practices, a rubric for hiring selections (or equivalent), and plans to ensure adherence to D.C. and federal employment and labor laws and to D.C. and federal anti-discrimination laws. This requirement will be incorporated into the subgrantee contract to ensure compliance.

2.7.2.d Use a local-hire provision to ensure that a portion of the workforce is hired from the local community.

The SBDEO will require prospective grantees to provide details on the proportion of its workforce that it plans to hire from D.C. Prospective subgrantees must demonstrate how they plan to ensure that a portion of the workforce comprises local hires.

2.7.2.g Use an appropriately skilled workforce (*e.g.*, through an apprenticeship program, D.C. Infrastructure Academy, and other training programs serving underrepresented residents).

The SBDEO will require subgrantees to provide certification demonstrating an appropriately trained and skilled workforce. It will also share information on current programs and partnerships within D.C. that subgrantees may use to enforce their plans.

Prospective subgrantees will be required to detail their workforce plans to ensure that all of the above protections are enforced. Their commitments detailed in the application will become binding commitments upon award of a subgrant, and the subgrantees will be subject to regular reviews to confirm compliance. Where there is failure to meet the binding commitments, BEAD program requirements, D.C. regulations, or federal regulations, the SBDEO will investigate the failure and issue an appropriate action allowable by law.

The SBDEO will not make any of the other potential requirements mandatory, including the possible requirement to use project labor agreements. However, these actions are incorporated into the Fair Labor Practices scoring criteria as outlined in Section 2.4.2.

Workforce Readiness (Requirement 12)

2.8.1 Text Box: Describe how the Eligible Entity and their subgrantees will advance equitable workforce development and job quality objectives to develop a skilled, diverse workforce. At a minimum, this response should clearly provide each of the following, as outlined on page 59 of the BEAD NOFO:

- a. A description of how the Eligible Entity will ensure that subgrantees support the development and use of a highly skilled workforce capable of carrying out work in a manner that is safe and effective;
- b. A description of how the Eligible Entity will develop and promote sector-based partnerships among employers, education and training providers, the public workforce system, unions and worker organizations, and community-based organizations that provide relevant training and wrap-around services to support workers to access and complete training (*e.g.*, child care, transportation, mentorship), to attract, train, retain, or transition to meet local workforce needs and increase high-quality job opportunities;
- c. A description of how the Eligible Entity will plan to create equitable on-ramps into broadband-related jobs, maintain job quality for new and incumbent workers engaged in the sector; and continually engage with labor organizations and community-based

organizations to maintain worker voice throughout the planning and implementation process; and

- d. A description of how the Eligible Entity will ensure that the job opportunities created by the BEAD Program and other broadband funding programs are available to a diverse pool of workers.

2.8.1.a Highly Skilled Workforce

D.C. has multiple training programs, including an apprenticeship program that prepares workers for jobs in construction, energy, telecommunications, information technology, and other fields. To ensure subgrantees support the development and use of a highly skilled workforce, the SBDEO will work alongside its education and workforce agency partners at the D.C. Department of Employment Services, Workforce Investment Council, D.C. Public Library, Office of the State Superintendent of Education, and the University of the District of Columbia.

Examples of existing programs to promote the development of a skilled workforce include DC Infrastructure Academy (DCIA) and Apprenticeship DC. The DCIA coordinates, trains, screens, and recruits D.C. residents to fulfill local infrastructure needs and provide direct pathways to jobs with leading companies¹³. The Office of Apprenticeship, Information and Training (OAIT) safeguards the well-being of apprentices, ensures the quality of programs, provides integrated employment and training information to sponsors, employers and trainers¹⁴. Under the OAIT is Apprenticeships DC, which serves as the District's Statewide Apprentices Partner, assisting interested businesses in developing and implementing customized apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship offerings that meet industry specific hiring and training needs. It awards grants to organizations that offer apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship opportunities in one of the District's six high-demand industries: construction, infrastructure, hospitality, law enforcement, health care, and information technology¹⁵. Additionally, the Office of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) provides onsite consultation services in establishing and maintaining a safety and health management program to private-sector employers in D.C.¹⁶. The SBDEO plans to expand its partnership with these offices and work with them to design programming to continue to develop a highly skilled broadband workforce.

2.8.1.b Sector-Based Partnerships

D.C. Department of Employment Services currently has a workforce development strategy where employers of all sizes have an opportunity to train, mentor, and hire candidates as they become fully proficient in a particular skillset or job function. The SBDEO will develop and promote partnerships between existing D.C. government programs and private industry programs to provide wraparound services to D.C. workers as they complete training around information technology, healthcare, cybersecurity, and infrastructure. A key sector partnership is with the

¹³ DC Infrastructure Academy, <https://dcia.dc.gov/>

¹⁴ Apprenticeship DC, <https://apprenticeship.does.dc.gov/>

¹⁵ District of Columbia Department of Employment Services, <https://does.dc.gov/service/apprenticeships>

¹⁶ District of Columbia Department of Employment Services, <https://does.dc.gov/service/occupational-safety-and-health>

D.C. Workforce Investment Council (WIC). The WIC administers a pilot program that aims to meet the workforce needs of businesses and job-seekers, particularly within the construction and healthcare industries.¹⁷ They also conduct research on the state of specific industries within the state. For example, they have published a “Guide to Career Pathways” for several industries, including construction.¹⁸ The guide provides information on required training, certifications, beneficial skills, and job openings in different roles in the industry. Sector-specific workforce programs are a key component of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The WIC initiative connects multiple stakeholders within key industries and provides opportunity for significant employment growth within D.C.

The SBDEO plans to expand its partnership with the WIC by collaborating more extensively to offer opportunities for training and certification and to raise awareness of BEAD-funded programming. The aim is to attract, train, retrain, and transition a diverse set of high-quality workers in D.C. For example, the SBDEO and subgrantees can use the WIC’s existing partnership with the D.C. American Job Centers to spread awareness of broadband-related work and to develop solicitation lists.¹⁹ Additionally, the SBDEO plans to work closely with the WIC to determine how D.C. can assist in providing wrap-around (supportive) services that will lower barriers to success within the broadband workforce. Potential wrap-around services that may be prioritized include childcare and transportation programs.

Additionally, the SBDEO has identified existing programs in D.C. that offer wrap-around services and plans to share information about these programs with subgrantees, local organizations, and labor organizations. For instance, the SBDEO will encourage participation in Reduced-Fare Programs, which provide low-income, disabled, and senior residents with discounts on fares, such as 50 percent off Metrorail and Metrobus fares and 50 percent off the 7-Day regional bus pass.²⁰ The SBDEO will also encourage participation in discount programs for bikeshare, electric scooter, bus, and Metro options available for D.C. residents who are low-income or enrolled in state or federal assistance programs such as SNAP and TANF.²¹

Another service is the DC Child Care Subsidy Program (offered by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education), which helps D.C. families with low and moderate incomes to access high-quality education and care in the District.²² Families with incomes up to 300 percent of the federal poverty level, or \$90,000 for a family of four in 2023, may be eligible to receive childcare subsidies. Once a family qualifies for a subsidy, they can maintain the subsidy even if their income increases—up to 85 percent of D.C. median income, or \$129,000 for a family of

¹⁷ D.C. Workforce Investment Council, <https://dcworks.dc.gov/>

¹⁸ D.C. Workforce Investment Council, <https://dcworks.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/DCWorks/publication/attachments/Construction%20Paint-Maintenance%20Career%20Pathways%20Final.pdf>

¹⁹ D.C. Workforce Investment Council, <https://dcworks.dc.gov/service/american-job-center-two>

²⁰ Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, <https://www.wmata.com/fares/Reduced-Fare-Programs/>

²¹ goDCgo, https://godcgo.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Affordable_Transportation_Flyer_011222.pdf

²² Office of the State Superintendent of Education, <https://osse.dc.gov/subsidy>

our in 2023. To support the D.C. workforce, the program aids families in which the parents are working, training, in education, or seeking jobs. To be eligible, a child must:²³

- (a) Be under 13 years old, or under 19 years old if the child has special needs
- (b) Reside with a parent(s), guardian(s), or adult with a legal relationship to the child
- (c) Be a citizen of or legal immigrant in the United States
- (d) Be a resident of the District of Columbia
- (e) Meet the requirements for one of the following categories of need:
 - (1) Resides with parent(s) who is working or attending a job training or education program
 - (2) Resides with parent(s) who is seeking employment or engaging in a job search
 - (3) Receives, or needs to receive, protective services or is considered a vulnerable child, as defined herein
- (f) Reside with a parent(s) or guardian(s) whose gross annual income does not exceed 250 percent of the federal poverty level or 85 percent of the D.C. median income based on family size.

Other examples of programs that provide training and wrap-around services include the Tuition Assistance Program Initiative for TANF (TAPIT), which provides financial assistance for TANF customers to pursue secondary degrees or college certificate programs.²⁴

Another sector-based partnership is TechTogether DC, which is a values-led partnership among the D.C. government, the non-profit community, academia, and industry.²⁵ The partnership works to bridge the digital divide through access, training, and opportunity. One of the priorities of the partnership is to “provide opportunities to tech-enabled internships and apprenticeships,”²⁶ which aligns with the SBDEO’s goal to develop digital skills and accessibility for residents and the workforce in D.C.

2.8.1.c Equitable On-Ramps

The SBDEO is committed to developing a highly skilled workforce and providing effective access to D.C. residents with significant barriers to workforce success. With this priority in mind, the SBDEO will continue to collaborate with organizations that support workforce development in D.C. Specifically, the SBDEO has engaged in ongoing dialogue with several minority-focused organizations and labor unions since the public comment period to collaborate on ways to provide equitable on-ramps to workforce success. Several organizations provide training and certifications in D.C., such as the free Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning training program at the University of the District of Columbia.²⁷

²³ Office of the State Superintendent of Education, <https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/Eligibility%20Determinations%20for%20Subsidized%20Child%20Care%20Policy%20Manual%2010.7.19.pdf>

²⁴ D.C. Department of Human Services, <https://dhs.dc.gov/publication/tuition-assistance-program-initiative-tanf>

²⁵ TechTogether D.C., <https://www.techtogetherdc.com/>

²⁶ TechTogether D.C., <https://www.techtogetherdc.com/action-areas>

²⁷ <https://www.udc.edu/workforce-development/>

With expanded operations, the SBDEO will enlarge its network with such training providers and work with state partners, such as the District of Columbia Public Library, to make information about subsidized programs easily accessible to residents—especially low-income residents and those who may lack access to reliable technology or internet. The SBDEO will focus on making on-ramps easily available and accessible and will conduct an awareness campaign for relevant programs. The campaign will involve posting on OCTO social media, the OCTO website, and in-person locations, as well as collaborating with key figures and other departments in D.C. to reach a wide audience.

2.8.1.d Available to a Diverse Pool of Workers

A key focus of outreach efforts conducted by the SBDEO will be to attract, retain, train, and retrain talent from groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in broadband and information technology jobs. The SBDEO will collaborate with local community colleges, minority-serving institutions, the D.C. American Jobs Center through its work with the WIC, and other community organizations. The SBDEO will partner with these organizations in job fairs and other recruitment efforts, which will include a targeted marketing campaign to recruit women, persons of color, persons with disabilities, and persons for whom English is not a first language.

Additionally, a key focus of the SBDEO’s regular reviews of subgrantee projects will include tracking subgrantees’ proposed mechanisms to ensure a diverse and highly skilled workforce. This should ensure that, in addition to the collaborative efforts of the SBDEO and existing organizations in D.C., subgrantees will be continually incentivized to design and implement innovative strategies for maintaining a diverse pool of workers.

Examples of existing programs in the state that the SBDEO can use to increase awareness and accessibility of job and training opportunities include the Pathways for Young Adults Program (PYAP) and the Cisco Networking Academy. PYAP is designed to assist out-of-school and out-of-work District residents ages 18–24 by combining occupational training, life skills development, and work-readiness instructions to connect them back to the work world successfully. The three areas of occupational training include allied health, administrative services, and basic IT services. As a TechTogether D.C. partner, the Cisco Networking Academy provides curriculum programs ranging from exploratory IT courses to career networking and programming courses in Wards 7 and 9. Both of these programs target people who are historically underrepresented in industry and align with the goals of developing a highly qualified, highly skilled, diverse workforce in D.C.

2.8.2 Text Box: Describe the information that will be required of prospective subgrantees to demonstrate a plan for ensuring that the project workforce will be an appropriately skilled and credentialed workforce. These plans should include the following:

- a. The ways in which the prospective subgrantee will ensure the use of an appropriately skilled workforce, *e.g.*, through Registered Apprenticeships or other joint labor management training programs that serve all workers;

- b. The steps that will be taken to ensure that all members of the project workforce will have appropriate credentials, *e.g.*, appropriate and relevant pre-existing occupational training, certification, and licensure;
- c. Whether the workforce is unionized;
- d. Whether the workforce will be directly employed or whether work will be performed by a subcontracted workforce; and
- e. The entities that the proposed subgrantee plans to contract and subcontract with in carrying out the proposed work.

If the project workforce or any subgrantee's, contractor's, or subcontractor's workforce is not unionized, the subgrantee must also provide with respect to the non-union workforce:

- a. The job titles and size of the workforce (FTE positions, including for contractors and subcontractors) required to carry out the proposed work over the course of the project and the entity that will employ each portion of the workforce;
- b. For each job title required to carry out the proposed work (including contractors and subcontractors), a description of:
 - i. Safety training, certification, and/or licensure requirements (*e.g.*, OSHA 10, OSHA 30, confined space, traffic control, or other training as relevant depending on title and work), including whether there is a robust in-house training program with established requirements tied to certifications, titles; and
 - ii. Information on the professional certifications and/or in-house training in place to ensure that deployment is done at a high standard.

2.8.2.a Appropriately Skilled Workforce

The SBDEO will require prospective subgrantees to share a workforce development plan demonstrating their commitment to recruit, hire, train, and retain a diverse and skilled workforce, specifically D.C. workers and workers from underserved communities.

2.8.2.b Appropriate Credentials

The prospective subgrantees will be required to provide current and future plans around training, certification, and licensure. They will need to share policies that ensure appropriate credentials are maintained by their staff to complete the planned work.

In alignment with NTIA guidance, if the project workforce or any subgrantee's, contractor's, or subcontractor's workforce is not unionized, with respect to the non-unionized workforce the subgrantee must also provide:

1. The job titles and size of the workforce (FTE positions, including for contractors and subcontractors) required to carry out the proposed work over the course of the project and the entity that will employ each portion of the workforce

2. For each job title required to carry out the proposed work (including contractors and subcontractors), a description of:
 - i. Safety training, certification, and/or licensure requirements (e.g., OSHA 10, OSHA 30, confined space, traffic control, or other training as relevant (depending on title and work), including whether there is a robust in-house training program with established requirements tied to certifications and titles
 - ii. Information on the professional certifications and/or in-house training in place to ensure that deployment is done at a high standard.

2.8.2.c Union Status

The prospective subgrantees will need to provide details on the union status of their workforce. If their workforce is not unionized, the subgrantee will need to provide job titles and size of the workforce required for the proposed work, along with a description of safety training, certification, and/or licensure requirements. The subgrantee will also need to provide details on their workforce development practices, including efforts to diversify their talent pipeline from underserved communities.

2.8.2.d Directly Employed or Subcontracted Workforce

The prospective subgrantees will need to provide details on whether the workforce will be directly employed or whether work will be performed by a subcontracted workforce.

2.8.2.e Proposed Entities

The prospective subgrantees will need to provide information regarding the entities which the prospective subgrantee plans to contract and subcontract with for carrying out the proposed work.

Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs)/Women’s Business Enterprises (WBEs)/Labor Surplus Firms Inclusion (Requirement 13)

2.9.1 Text Box: Describe the process, strategy, and the data tracking method(s) the Eligible Entity will implement to ensure that minority businesses, women-owned business enterprises (WBEs), and labor surplus area firms are recruited, used, and retained when possible.

Historically, MBEs and WBEs have encountered disparities in contracting when compared to other entities despite their experience, qualifications, and impact in communities. As major drivers of both economic and employment growth, it’s essential that the SBDEO make concerted efforts to engage with underrepresented enterprises when possible. By adhering to Federal guidelines such as 2 C.F.R. § 200.321, the SBDEO will create an environment within their broadband deployment initiative that allows minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, and labor surplus area firms to have equality in seeking contracted work while also acting in accordance with State regulations such as the Prevailing Wage Statute.

The SBDEO is committed to ensuring that MBEs and WBEs, and labor surplus area firms are recruited, used, and retained when possible. And will implement the following affirmative steps to ensure MBEs, WBEs, and labor surplus area firms are included in the contract process:

- Place qualified small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises on solicitation lists;
- Assure that small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources;
- Divide total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller tasks or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises;
- Establish delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises;
- Use the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce; and,
- Require subgrantees to take the affirmative steps listed above as it relates to its subcontractors.

The SBDEO will also utilize existing programs, partnerships, and advocacy ecosystems in D.C. to spread awareness on contracting opportunities related to the construction and maintenance of D.C.'s broadband network. Potential organizations that the SBDEO and subgrantees can use to raise awareness include:

- Federal and D.C. agencies (e.g., the Small Business Administration, the Department of Education, the D.C. Office of Planning)
- Regional organizations (e.g., Wards and Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, The Washington DC Economic Partnership)
- Minority-serving institutions (e.g., Howard University, Trinity Washington University, University of the District of Columbia)
- Chambers of Commerce (e.g., DC Chamber of Commerce, Greater Washington DC Black Chamber of Commerce, Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce).

In addition to the measures that ensure Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs), Women's Business Enterprises (WBEs), and Labor Surplus Areas (LSAs) have a level playing field in applying for contract awards the SBDEO will also develop a system to track key metrics on the inclusion of underrepresented enterprises throughout the process, including recruitment, utilization, and retention. This tracking system will be incorporated into the regular project reporting and subgrantee monitoring as outlined in **2.16.2.d**.

2.9.2 Check Box: Certify that the Eligible Entity will take all necessary affirmative steps to ensure minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible, including the following outlined on pages 88 – 89 of the BEAD NOFO:

- a. Placing qualified small and minority businesses and women’s business enterprises on solicitation lists;
 - b. Assuring that small and minority businesses, and women’s business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources;
 - c. Dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller tasks or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority businesses, and women’s business enterprises;
 - d. Establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority businesses, and women’s business enterprises;
 - e. Using the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce; and
 - f. Requiring subgrantees to take the affirmative steps listed above as it relates to subcontractors.
- The SBDEO will ensure applicants are aware of these expectations prior to and throughout the selection process by conducting information webinars, posting a list of regulations and expectations on TechTogether.DC.gov, and including the requirements in grant applications/instructions as well as grant agreement terms/conditions and subrecipient grant monitoring program requirements.

Cost and Barrier Reduction (Requirement 14)

2.10.1 Text Box: Identify steps that the Eligible Entity will take to reduce costs and barriers to deployment. Responses may include but not be limited to the following:

- a. Promoting the use of existing infrastructure;
- b. Promoting and adopting dig-once policies;
- c. Streamlining permitting processes;
- d. Streamlining cost-effective access to poles, conduits, easements; and
- e. Streamlining rights of way, including the imposition of reasonable access requirements.

D.C. is committed to improving broadband access and connectivity in the most efficient, cost-effective manner. Over the past decade, D.C. has looked for creative solutions to many obstacles that broadband expansion may present. Since then, the SBDEO has taken action and enabled other stakeholders to set themselves up for success.

Availability of pathways

A key potential barrier to deployment in D.C. is pole access, which can be limited given cost constraints and constraints on pole space. The BEAD funding will require extensions to service, so the SBDEO has been designing solutions to address the potential space issue in D.C.

Historically, D.C. has worked with providers to reduce this deployment barrier. For example, the SBDEO has participated in give-backs and has provided guidance to ISPs on how to proceed in a way that would enable future providers to have space. Specifically, for D.C.-owned multi-dwelling units, providers have been required to follow guidance on deployment that will facilitate lower-cost, efficient upgrades in the future. However, given the scale of BEAD funding, the SBDEO plans to continue partnering with prospective subgrantees to support interventions like targeted pole replacement that will enable sufficient space between pole attachments.

The SBDEO plans to continue building out capacity to address this barrier. Building out available capacity for physical broadband infrastructure is important to cities for a number of reasons. First, the more available the conduit, the lower the barrier-to-entry for new broadband services, and the stronger the downward pricing pressure on retail broadband services. Second, emerging technologies like AI-assisted driving, the ever-growing volume of data-rich consumer tech products, and other future technological developments will all demand data and connectivity at accelerating rates.

Further, the SBDEO plans to address this barrier by deploying resiliency measures. Stronger, more redundant physical broadband assets are more resilient against accidental interruption and bad actors. Given these needs, and the long useful life of physical assets like underground conduit, this period of unprecedented federal investment is the perfect time to build out such capacity in cities.

Multiple rounds of infrastructure installation

Another key barrier identified in D.C. is that multiple rounds of infrastructure installation may result in poorly coordinated installation. Roads thus need to be cut and repaved multiple times, which significantly drives up the cost of every underground deployment of new infrastructure and brings with it all the inefficiencies of traffic interruption.

A key step that the SBDEO plans to take is to establish “dig-once” efficiencies throughout D.C. by coordinating the installation of infrastructure such that roads only need to be cut and repaved once. This would account for a major component of the cost of every underground deployment of new infrastructure, and it would help to prevent inefficiencies related to traffic interruption. D.C. plans to take advantage of dig-once efficiencies to expand the volume of available broadband conduit wherever broadband infrastructure investments are made under the Treasury’s Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund (CPF) and BEAD programs. This should help to improve the resiliency of the broadband assets, to build out available capacity, to alleviate issues associated with limited space in D.C., and to lower the barrier-to-entry for new broadband services. Additionally, it will put downward pricing pressure on retail broadband services and support the SBDEO’s goal to provide high-quality, universal internet service in D.C.

Climate Assessment (Requirement 15)

2.11.1 Text Box: Describe the Eligible Entity’s assessment of climate threats and proposed mitigation methods. If an Eligible Entity chooses to reference reports conducted within the past five years to meet this requirement, it may attach this report and must provide a crosswalk narrative, with reference to page numbers, to demonstrate that the report meets the five requirements below. If the report does not specifically address broadband infrastructure, provide additional narrative to address how the report relates to broadband infrastructure. At a minimum, this response must clearly do each of the following, as outlined on pages 62 – 63 of the BEAD NOFO:

- a. Identify the geographic areas that should be subject to an initial hazard screening for current and projected future weather and climate-related risks and the time scales for performing such screenings;
- b. Characterize which projected weather and climate hazards may be most important to account for and respond to in these areas and over the relevant time horizons;
- c. Characterize any weather and climate risks to new infrastructure deployed using BEAD Program funds for the 20 years following deployment;
- d. Identify how the proposed plan will avoid and/or mitigate weather and climate risks identified; and
- e. Describe plans for periodically repeating this process over the life of the Program to ensure that evolving risks are understood, characterized, and addressed, and that the most up-to-date tools and information resources are utilized.

2.11.1.a Identify Geographic Areas for an Initial Hazard Screening

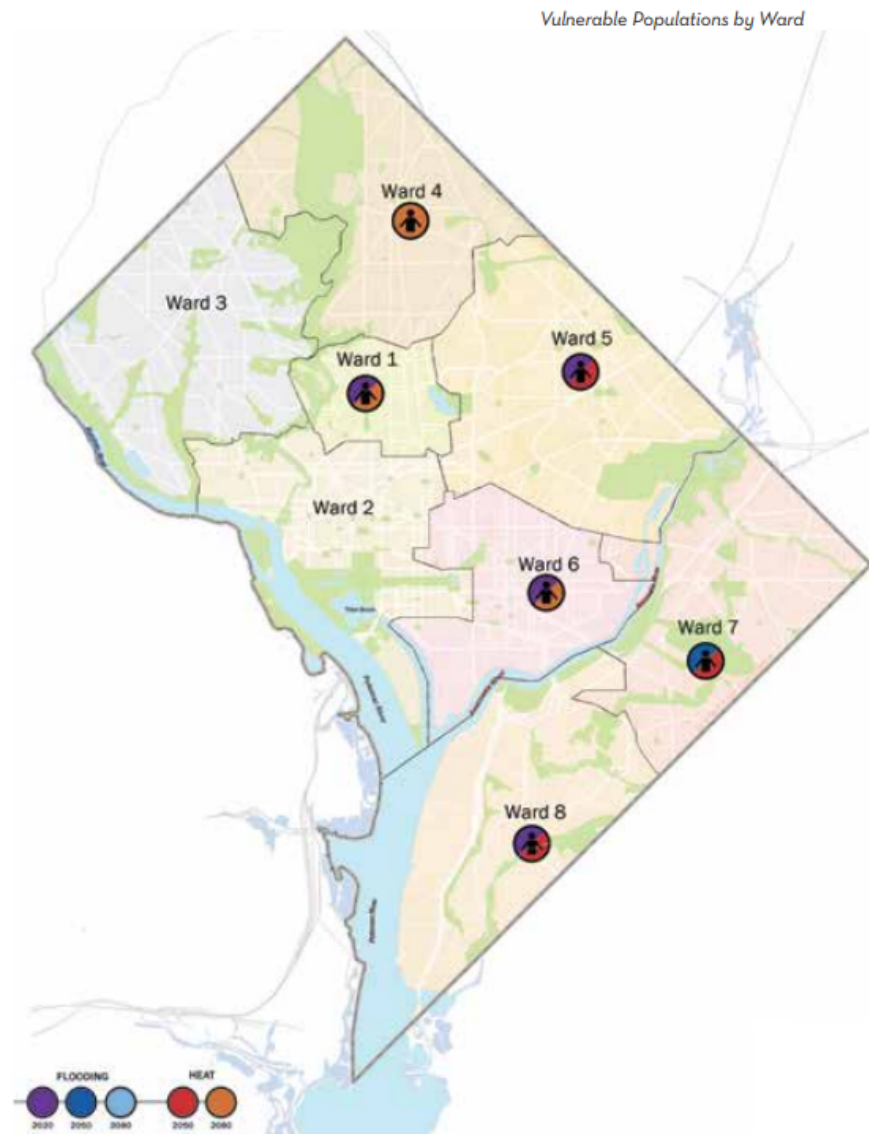
Severe weather events pose a significant threat to the environment, human health, and the economy and are projected to increase in occurrence and severity in the future. Since D.C. is a highly urbanized and small region (68 square miles of land area), the impact of such weather events may be particularly pronounced on residents in comparison with other states in the country.²⁸ However, due to its uniformity, D.C. may be able to devise a centralized, targeted approach to mitigating climate hazards.

All D.C. Wards should be subject to an initial hazard screening for current and projected future weather and climate-related risks. OCTO may partner with agencies that have subject-matter expertise on climate hazards to focus on Wards 5, 7, and 8, where residents may be most vulnerable to flooding and severe heat, and where residents have higher unemployment, poverty, and chronic health concerns.²⁹

²⁸ Britannica, Washington, D.C. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Washington-DC>.

²⁹ DOEE, Climate Ready DC Climate Adaption Plan (November 15, 2016). <https://www.adaptationclearinghouse.org/resources/climate-ready-dc-the-district-of-columbia-eyes-plan-to-adapt-to-a-changing-climate.html>.

Map of D.C. Wards and Potential Climate Risks by Ward



2.11.1.b Characterize Projected Weather and Climate Hazards

The SBDEO used the FEMA National Risk Index, as permitted within NTIA’s Initial Proposal Guidance, to characterize relevant climate risks. Per this index, D.C. has a “relatively moderate” risk index as compared to the remainder of the United States.³⁰

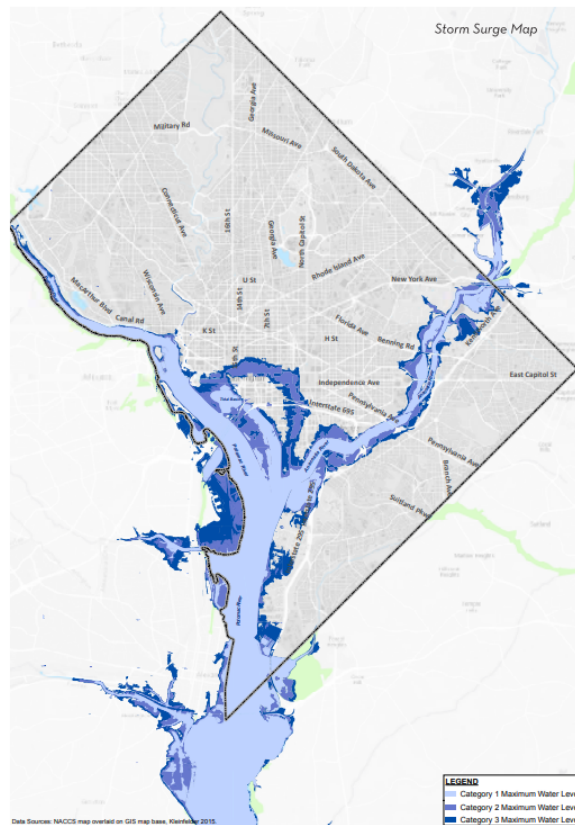
³⁰ FEMA National Risk Index, <https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/map#>.

The climate hazards for which D.C. has the **highest risk** include conditions specific to geographical locations near water bodies and environmental challenges typical to urban and coastal areas in the Mid-Atlantic U.S., such as:

- Heat wave
- Lightning
- Riverine flooding
- Strong wind
- Winter weather

As described in the Climate Ready D.C. report, nearly every D.C. Ward touches a body of water—either the Potomac or Anacostia River—and therefore may be at higher risk for riverine flooding.

Map of Potomac and Anacostia Rivers along D.C. Wards



Source: Climate Ready DC Report, November 2016

While D.C. does not face a heightened risk of threats from avalanches, droughts, tsunamis, landslides, and wildfires as much as other regions, OCTO may consider these factors in the broader context of comprehensive hazard planning.³¹

2.11.1.c Characterize Weather and Climate Risks for BEAD-Funded Infrastructure

The identified high-risk weather hazards—heat waves, lightning, riverine flooding, strong wind, and winter weather—may pose risks to new infrastructure deployed through BEAD programs over the next 20 years.

- **Heat Waves:** While fiber-optic cables are resilient to temperature changes and built according to Networking Equipment Building Systems’ (NEBS) guidance to tolerate extreme temperatures, heat and humidity may contribute to long-term degradation of aerial cables in D.C.³²
- **Lightning, strong winds, and winter weather:** Aerial fiber may be less resilient when met with these challenges (such as power outages, equipment damage, reduced signal quality for D.C. residents) as compared to buried fiber.^{33,34,35}
- **Riverine flooding:** Despite the fact that buried cable is placed deep in the ground to mitigate accidental damage, buried fiber may face heightened risk for equipment damage (especially for protective conduits) from riverine flooding as compared to aerial fiber.³⁶

2.11.1.d Identify Mitigation Strategies

D.C. does not expect to deploy alternative (that is, not fiber or cable) technologies such as fixed-wireless or satellite technology and will collaborate with potential broadband providers to identify the appropriate mix of aerial and buried fiber deployment. As described in Section 2.11.1.c, aerial fiber deployment is often more resilient in areas prone to flooding, while buried fiber is more reliable in areas with strong winds and potential line outages.

As described in Requirement 9 of this Initial Proposal, D.C. will ensure that prospective subgrantees have a history of technical and operational capabilities in broadband deployment that

³¹ Moderate- to low-risk hazards for D.C. include cold waves, earthquakes, hurricanes, landslides, tornados, wildfires, ice storms, hail, and coastal flooding.

³² Fierce Telecom, “Buried vs. aerial—fiber firms try to balance growth with resiliency.” <https://www.fiercetelecom.com/broadband/bury-vs-aerial-fiber-firms-try-balance-growth-resiliency>.

³³ National Oceanography Centre, “How will climate change affect the Internet?” <https://noc.ac.uk/news/how-will-climate-change-affect-internet>.

³⁴ American Scientist, “Key Internet Connections and Locations are at Risk from Rising Seas.” <https://www.americanscientist.org/article/key-internet-connections-and-locations-are-at-risk-from-rising-seas>.

³⁵ NPR, “Rising Seas Could Cause Problems for Internet Infrastructure.” <https://www.npr.org/2018/07/16/627254166/rising-seas-could-cause-problems-for-internet-infrastructure#:~:text=If%20thousands%20of%20miles%20of,have%20already%20affected%20Internet%20hardware>.

³⁶ PPC, “Key Factors When Choosing Between Buried and Aerial Fiber Deployments.” <https://www.ppc-online.com/blog/key-factors-when-choosing-between-buried-and-aerial-fiber-deployments>.

should enable them to deliver on BEAD-funded projects. Capabilities may include a prospective subgrantees' familiarity with building resilient and reliable networks.

If needed, D.C. and partner agencies will provide strategies to grant recipients in areas where additional risk mitigation techniques may need to be considered (*e.g.*, Wards located closer to coastal water bodies) depending on the outcome of climate screenings. Guidance may include favoring buried fiber over aerial to eliminate wind and water-related impacts or retrofitting existing network assets.

Additionally, D.C. will ensure that non-deployment projects are developed alongside subject-matter experts to identify potential climate risks and mitigation strategies.

2.11.1.e Describe Plans for Periodically Monitoring Process

OCTO will collaborate with D.C. agencies that have subject-matter expertise on climate challenges to understand ongoing efforts, develop new efforts related to broadband if required, and determine an appropriate cadence for refreshing climate assessments (such as every five years to match the cadence of FEMA's review of State Hazard Mitigation Plans).

Low-Cost Broadband Service Option (Requirement 16)

2.12.1 Text Box: Describe the low-cost broadband service option(s) that must be offered by subgrantees as selected by the Eligible Entity, including why the outlined option(s) best services the needs of residents within the Eligible Entity's jurisdiction. At a minimum, this response must include a definition of low-cost broadband service option that clearly addresses the following, as outlined on page 67 of the BEAD NOFO:

- a. All recurring charges to the subscriber, as well as any non-recurring costs or fees to the subscriber (*e.g.*, service initiation costs);
- b. The plan's basic service characteristics (download and upload speeds, latency, any limits on usage or availability, and any material network management practices);
- c. Whether a subscriber may use any Affordable Connectivity Benefit subsidy toward the plan's rate; and
- d. Any provisions regarding the subscriber's ability to upgrade to any new low-cost service plans offering more advantageous technical specifications

Eliminating the digital divide requires focus on both access and affordability. According to the NTIA Internet Use Survey conducted in 2021, 23.7 percent of households with no internet users said that their primary reason for not using the internet was that access is "too expensive."³⁷ As such, affordable internet service remains a key priority of the SBDEO. Granting access to high-speed internet without addressing affordability will prevent hundreds of thousands of D.C.

³⁷ NTIA Internet Use Survey, 2021

residents from participating in the benefits of connectivity and improving their lives and outcomes. As part of its digital equity goals, and in alignment with its BEAD goals, the SBDEO is committed to providing residents the opportunity to access broadband service at a low cost. To balance this commitment with keeping the grant process competitive and viable for different provider types, D.C. will follow NTIA's example low-cost plan.

The SBDEO will require all prospective subgrantees to offer a service option that meets, at a minimum, the following criteria as outlined in NTIA's model low-cost broadband service option.

1. The service option:

- a. Costs \$30 per month or less, inclusive of all taxes, fees, and charges if the subscriber does not reside on Tribal Lands; or \$75 per month or less, inclusive of all taxes, fees, and charges if the subscriber resides on Tribal Lands, with no additional non-recurring costs or fees to the consumer
- b. Allows the end-user to apply the Affordable Connectivity Benefit subsidy to the service price
- c. Provides the greater of (a) typical download speeds of at least 100 Mbps and typical upload speeds of at least 20 Mbps, or the fastest speeds the infrastructure is capable of if less than 100 Mbps/20 Mbps or (b) the performance benchmark for fixed terrestrial broadband service established by the Federal Communications Commission pursuant to Section 706(b) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended
- d. Provides typical latency measurements of no more than 100 milliseconds
- e. Is not subject to data caps, surcharges, or usage-based throttling and is subject only to the same acceptable-use policies to which subscribers to all other broadband internet access service plans offered to home subscribers by the participating subgrantee must adhere
- f. In the event the provider later offers a low-cost plan with higher speeds downstream and/or upstream, permits eligible subscribers who are subscribed to a low-cost broadband service option to upgrade to the new low-cost offering at no cost.

2. Subgrantees are required to participate in the Affordable Connectivity Program or any successor program, and eligible subscribers can apply the broadband service subsidy to the proposed service option.

If the ACP is not renewed, the SBDEO will initiate proceedings to partner with relevant District agencies to evaluate viable alternative approaches and the feasibility of establishing potential successor programs for eligible subscribers in D.C., including potentially engaging local Medicaid leadership to determine if broadband subscription may be made reimbursable as a social determinant of health.

Should such a D.C. successor program be established, the SBDEO will determine who is eligible for the low-cost option in D.C., and the low-cost option will apply to those residents. The SBDEO is in discussions with various agencies to find alternative options for determining eligibility. It is possible that the SBDEO may use existing eligibility guidance with programs such as SNAP or other programs under the Department of Human Services. The SBDEO is working to ensure that there will be a refined mechanism to verify eligibility if there is no successor program to ACP. If needed, once the mechanism is defined, eligibility information will be published and made easily accessible to the public. If the ACP is not renewed, charges for the low-cost plan will be required to remain at \$30 per month, inclusive of taxes and fees.

2.12.2 Checkbox: Certify that all subgrantees will be required to participate in the Affordable Connectivity Program or any successor program.

- The SBDEO is committed to ensuring that all subgrantees actively engage in the Affordability Connectivity Program or any successor program that may be implemented in the future. This requirement is a fundamental component of our strategy to promote equitable access to affordable broadband services across a wide range of communities and demographics.

Middle-Class Affordability Plans (Requirement 20)

2.13.1 Text Box: Describe a middle-class affordability plan that details how high-quality broadband services will be made available to all middle-class families in the BEAD-funded network’s service area at reasonable prices. This response must clearly provide a reasonable explanation of how high-quality broadband services will be made available to all middle-class families in the BEAD-funded network’s service area at reasonable prices.

The affordability of broadband services from BEAD-funded networks for middle-class households is a priority for the SBDEO. The affordability of internet service plans for middle class households is addressed by the following program elements:

BEAD Proposal Scoring Criteria

The Office’s primary means of ensuring affordability is the weight of affordability in the criteria established in this proposal. We will use both the Universal Service Scoring Rubric and the Broadband Infrastructure Deployment Rubric. Affordability will comprise 20 percent of the scoring criteria the Office will use to evaluate proposals to serve a location under the BEAD program. Under the scoring criterion, the lowest total cost service package of gigabit symmetrical service will receive full credit. More expensive packages receive a percentage of points reflective of their percent distance from the lowest cost package.

Recommended Service Plan

The SBDEO recommends that subgrantees that are awarded BEAD funds to serve a location adopt the following affordable service option to ensure that BEAD funds are used in a manner that increases the affordability of broadband services for middle-class households:

The affordable service option meets, at a minimum, the following criteria:

- Costs \$50 per month or less, inclusive of all taxes, fees, and charges billed to the customer.
 - Consistently and reliably provides download speeds of at least 100 Mbps and typical upload speeds of at least 20 Mbps.
 - Provides typical latency measurements of no more than 100 milliseconds.
 - Is not subject to data caps, surcharges, or usage-based throttling, and is subject only to the same acceptable use policies to which subscribers to all other broadband internet access service plans offered to home subscribers by the participating subgrantee must adhere.
-
- The affordable service option is made available across the subgrantee's BEAD-funded project areas, with the encouragement the option be made available across an entity's entire service territory.
 - Prospective customers are well-informed of the affordable service option. Information about the plan is publicly available and easily accessible.

Use of 20 Percent of Funding (Requirement 17)

2.14.1 Text Box: Describe the Eligible Entity's planned use of any funds being requested, which must address the following:

- a. If the Eligible Entity does not wish to request funds during the Initial Proposal round, it must indicate no funding requested and provide the rationale for not requesting funds.
- b. If the Eligible Entity is requesting less than or equal to 20 percent of funding allocation during the Initial Proposal round, it must detail the amount of funding requested for use upon approval of the Initial Proposal, the intended use of funds, and how the proposed use of funds achieves the statutory objective of serving all unserved and underserved locations.
- c. If the Eligible Entity is requesting more than 20 percent (up to 100 percent) of funding allocation during the Initial Proposal round, it must detail the amount of funding requested for use upon approval of the Initial Proposal, the intended use of funds, how the proposed use of funds achieves the statutory objective of serving all unserved and underserved locations, and provide rationale for requesting funds greater than 20 percent of the funding allocation.

2.14.1.c D.C. is requesting that 100 percent of funding be made available during the Initial Proposal round so that it may have the budgetary certainty and flexibility to address any needed changes or uncertainties uncovered in the challenge or subgrantee selection process. D.C.’s BEAD allocation is \$100,694,786.93³⁸, of which D.C. has already received \$5,000,000 in planning funds. Therefore, D.C. is requesting that \$95,694,786.93 be made available during the Initial Proposal funding round.

As described at greater length in preceding Requirements 8, 9, and 10 of this proposal, D.C. intends to use funding for the programmatic costs of activities related to deployment subgrantees, non-deployment subgrantees, and eligible entity implementation. Deployment subgrantee activities will be prioritized, as the BEAD program statutorily requires.

Please see a summary of funding use below. A detailed breakdown of provisional costs can be found in D.C.’s Initial Proposal Funding Request, submitted in December 2023.

Deployment subgrantee activities

The SBDEO will require a substantial amount of funding to cover deployment costs such as the purchase of inventory, equipment, and construction. The SBDEO will also require costs to cover the planning processes, such as federal/District law analysis, rights-of-way analysis, environmental permitting, and network design. The costs will fall under the following categories, as part of the SBDEO’s key priority of deployment:

- Running a competitive subgrantee process to ensure that all 109 unserved and underserved locations are served (per FCC National Broadband Map data released on November 28, 2023)
- Run a competitive subgrantee process to ensure that eligible CAIs are served by at least 1 Gbps symmetrical service
- Ensure that units in MDUs without access receive equipment for in-building Wi-Fi/wireless access.

Administrative costs

Funds will be leveraged to ensure that the challenge process, subgrantee process, and implementation processes will be run efficiently and smoothly. Given the large scale of activities and timeline required to close the digital divide in D.C., funds are needed to administer the necessary activities at a high standard, including application intake and review, subgrantee selection, program management, and compliance activities.

³⁸ Source: NTIA BEAD Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Programmatic costs

In addition to administrative costs, the SBDEO will require funding to cover the programmatic elements of the necessary activities. This includes the relevant software, development support, technology, and materials required to conduct the processes described in the Initial Proposal. Specific examples of costs in this category include:

- Challenge process portal and support
- Grant management tools and support
- Subgrantee selection support.

Initiatives directly implemented by the D.C. SBDEO

The SBDEO will require further funding to cover the administrative and programmatic costs of key initiatives that are specific to the unique aspects of digital inequity and access in D.C. These initiatives, as laid out in detail in Requirement 10, include:

- The Mobile Tech Fleet, which provides sustainable, low-cost or no-cost devices and IT support to neighborhoods in Wards 5, 7, and 8, which have historically faced greater economic hardship and less access to high-speed, high-quality internet and devices
- Enhancing accessibility at D.C. digital services sites. The D.C. SBDEO plans to invest in accessible technologies so that D.C. residents who are not proficient in English or who have a disability can interact more effectively with D.C. government services—a crucial step toward fostering inclusivity and equitable access for all D.C. residents.

Non-deployment subgrantee activities

The remaining funds will be used for non-deployment initiatives that meet the priorities laid out in Requirement 9.

Examples of costs in this category include:

- Training and onboarding for the SBDEO staff
- Capacity-building for the SBDEO
- Supplementing digital equity programming
- Communications and partnerships—such as developing workforce programming and partnerships.

2.14.2 Financial Data Entry: Enter the amount of the Initial Proposal Funding Request. If not requesting initial funds, enter ‘\$0.00.’

D.C. is requesting \$95,694,786.93.

2.14.3 Check Box: Certify that the Eligible Entity will adhere to BEAD Program requirements regarding Initial Proposal funds usage. If the Eligible Entity is not requesting funds in the Initial Proposal round and will not submit the Initial Funding Request, note “Not applicable.”

- D.C. will adhere to BEAD program requirements regarding the usage of Initial Proposal funds.

Regulatory Approach (Requirement 18)

2.15.1 Text Box

- a. Disclose whether the Eligible Entity will waive all laws of the Eligible Entity concerning broadband, utility services, or similar subjects, whether they predate or postdate enactment of the Infrastructure Act that either (a) preclude certain public sector providers from participation in the subgrant competition or (b) impose specific requirements on public sector entities, such as limitations on the sources of financing, the required imputation of costs not actually incurred by the public sector entity, or restrictions on the service a public sector entity can offer.
- b. If the Eligible Entity will not waive all such laws for BEAD Program project selection purposes, identify those that it will not waive (using the Excel attachment) and their date of enactment and describe how they will be applied in connection with the competition for subgrants. If there are no applicable laws, note such.

2.15.1.a D.C. has no such laws to waive. OCTO’s D.C. Net program regularly competes and is often awarded broadband service contracts under the federal e-Rate program and is a routine last-mile provider to government and some non-profit customers. D.C. Net is not subject to specific requirements such as limitations on the sources of financing, the required imputation of costs not actually incurred by D.C. Net, or restrictions on the services D.C. Net can offer.

Certification of Compliance with BEAD Requirements (Requirement 19)

2.16.1 Checkbox: Certify the Eligible Entity’s intent to comply with all applicable requirements of the BEAD Program, including the reporting requirements.

- The BEAD NOFO requires D.C. to certify that it intends to comply with all applicable requirements of the BEAD Program, including the reporting requirements. D.C. does so certify.

2.16.2 Text Box: Describe subgrantee accountability procedures, including how the Eligible Entity will, at a minimum, employ the following practices outlined on page 51 of the BEAD NOFO:

- a. Distribution of funding to subgrantees for, at a minimum, all deployment projects on a reimbursable basis (which would allow the Eligible Entity to withhold funds if the subgrantee fails to take the actions the funds are meant to subsidize);
- b. The inclusion of clawback provisions (*i.e.*, provisions allowing recoupment of funds previously disbursed) in agreements between the Eligible Entity and any subgrantee;
- c. Timely subgrantee reporting mandates; and
- d. Robust subgrantee monitoring practices.

The SBDEO is committed to ensuring that prospective subgrantees seeking to deploy network facilities are thoroughly vetted and meet the minimum qualifications regarding compliance with applicable laws as outlined in the BEAD NOFO. In alignment with the qualifications outlined in the NOFO, the SBDEO will include the following measures for fulfillment of requirement 19:

2.16.2.a The SBDEO will require prospective subgrantees to demonstrate that they can carry out funded activities in a competent manner in compliance with all applicable Federal, District of Columbia and local laws.

To ensure that an applicant complies with occupational safety and health requirements, the SBDEO will require prospective subgrantees to permit workers to create worker-led health and safety committees that management will meet with upon reasonable request.

Furthermore, funding to subgrantees will be distributed on a reimbursement-only basis. The SBDEO will follow OCTO's reimbursement policy, which is still in development and will require subgrantees to submit receipts monthly on a predetermined date—for example, the tenth day of every month. The grant manager will review all expenses and ensure that they align with the subgrantee agreement and all federal and D.C. regulations. All approved expenses will be reimbursed. For expenses that are not approved, the subgrantee may be given the chance to submit an appeal, after which a final decision on approval will be made. If expenses are not approved following such a final decision, there will be no reimbursement. The SBDEO will state the reimbursement policy clearly in its application and award guidance, including the timeline within which subgrantees may expect to receive reimbursed funds.

The SBDEO will ensure prospective subgrantees are aware of these requirements prior to and throughout the selection process by conducting informational webinars, posting a list of requirements on our future website, and including the requirements in grant applications/instructions as well as contract negotiation records, grant agreement terms/conditions, and subrecipient grant monitoring program requirements.

2.16.2.b

The SBDEO will include claw-back provisions in agreements with any subgrantee that will enable recoupment of funds previously disbursed if the subgrantee fails to meet any requirements in the subgrantee agreement, or if they fail to meet any applicable laws.

The SBDEO will require all subgrantees to accept the condition that non-compliance with BEAD program requirements may require subgrantees to refund all or part of any program grant that they received. The subgrantee agreement will include a provision that, if funds are not expended by the subgrantee in accordance with the terms and conditions or within the period agreed upon, the award of BEAD grant funds may cease, and the SBDEO will have no further obligation to disburse these funds. The agreement will also include a provision that, if BEAD grant funds have already been paid to the subgrantee, and the SBDEO determines that the subgrantee has not performed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement, the subgrantee must return the funds deemed improperly expended. The SBDEO is working with legal counsel to develop the claw-back policy and to define the timeline for any claw-back payments. The finalized policy will be made clear to all subgrantees.

2.16.2.c Additionally, the SBDEO will require prospective subgrantees to submit the following information during the application period of the competitive subgrantee selection process.

- Prospective subgrantees' record of past compliance with federal labor and employment laws, which:
 - Must address information on these entities' compliance with federal labor and employment laws on broadband deployment projects in the last three years;
 - Should include a certification from an Officer/Director-level employee (or equivalent) of the applicant evidencing consistent past compliance with federal labor and employment laws by the applicant, as well as all contractors and subcontractors; and
 - Should include written confirmation that the applicant discloses any instances in which it or its contractors or subcontractors have been found to have violated laws such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, or any other applicable labor and employment laws for the preceding three years.
- Prospective subgrantees' plans for ensuring compliance with federal labor and employment laws must address the following:
 - How the applicant will ensure compliance in its own labor and employment practices, as well as that of its contractors and subcontractors, including:
 - Information on applicable wage scales and wage and overtime payment practices for each class of employees expected to be involved directly in the physical construction of the broadband network; and
 - How the applicant will ensure the implementation of workplace safety committees that are authorized to raise health and safety concerns in connection with the delivery of deployment projects.

During the competitive subgrantee selection process, the SBDEO will make the determination that information submitted suffices for the purposes of the federal BEAD requirements. Provided this requirement is met, prospective subgrantees will receive full scoring credit under Labor Practices scoring criteria.

The SBDEO will include reporting mandates in any agreements with subgrantees, that would ensure timely reporting of any areas of the project at a regular interval which will later be confirmed by the SBDEO. Failure to meet reporting requirements, or tardiness in meeting them will enable the SBDEO to assess whether to withhold funds.

2.16.2.d The subgrantees must submit routine and on-request reports for project monitoring by the SBDEO. These reports serve to track project progress and signal when technical assistance is necessary.

Scheduled progress reports are mandatory and aim to furnish essential updates on project advancement, obligations, and expenditures to date. They primarily serve to keep both the subgrantee and the SBDEO informed about the project's programmatic and financial status, ensuring there are ample financial resources available to complete project activities.

Progress report include:

- Broadband Quarterly Report
 - A quarterly report summarizes the project's status, encompassing financial spending, project progress, and any flagged issues or needs.
- Closeout Report
 - Once the project is complete, the subgrantee will be required to submit the closeout report, which will confirm that all contractual obligations have been met.

If a subgrantee misses a reporting deadline, they will be marked as non-compliant, and until the issue is rectified, no remittance requests or any other requests will be approved.

Beyond progress reports, the SBDEO will oversee projects by conducting compliance review. These assessments are designed to verify that the project adheres to relevant state and federal guidelines and regulations.

Compliance reviews include:

- Financial and Programmatic Site Visits
 - The SBDEO will perform a financial and programmatic site visit a year to verify and document projects progress.
- Desk Reviews
 - The SBDEO will conduct a desk review of the project on alternating quarters as the site visit.
- Internal Compliance Reviews
 - This review will serve to verify the subgrantee's adherence to 2 CFR § 200 regulations, as well as the maintenance of internal controls, the implementation of

sound financial management procedures, and the currency of the project management plan.

- Final Financial Review
 - Upon project completion, the SBDEO will carry out a Final Financial Review to confirm the project's financial compliance.

The SBDEO will adhere to and fulfill civil rights and nondiscrimination requirements when choosing subgrantees.

2.16.3 Checkbox: Certify that the Eligible Entity will account for and satisfy authorities relating to civil rights and nondiscrimination in the selection of subgrantees.

- The SBDEO hereby certifies that the Eligible Entity will diligently ensure that prospective subgrantees adhere to the cybersecurity and supply chain risk management requirements as outlined on pages 70-71 of the BEAD NOFO, which includes mandating that prospective subgrantees attest to:

Cybersecurity

1. The applicant has a cybersecurity risk management plan (the plan) in place that is either: (a) operational, if the applicant is providing service prior to the award of the grant; or (b) ready to be operationalized upon providing service, if the applicant is not yet providing service prior to the grant award;
2. The plan reflects the latest version of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity (currently Version 1.1) and the standards and controls set forth in Executive Order 14028 and specifies the security and privacy controls being implemented;
3. The plan will be reevaluated and updated on a periodic basis and as events warrant; and,
4. The plan will be submitted to the Eligible Entity prior to the allocation of funds. If the subgrantee makes any substantive changes to the plan, a new version will be submitted to the Eligible Entity within 30 days.

2.16.4 Checkbox: Certify that the Eligible Entity will ensure subgrantee compliance with the cybersecurity and supply chain risk management requirements on pages 70 - 71 of the BEAD NOFO to require prospective subgrantees to attest that:

Cybersecurity

- 1) The prospective subgrantee has a cybersecurity risk management plan (the plan) in place that is either: (a) operational, if the prospective subgrantee is providing service prior to the award of the grant; or (b) ready to be operationalized upon providing service, if the prospective subgrantee is not yet providing service prior to the grant award;
- 2) The plan reflects the latest version of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity

(currently Version 1.1) and the standards and controls set forth in Executive Order 14028 and specifies the security and privacy controls being implemented;

3) The plan will be reevaluated and updated on a periodic basis and as events warrant; and

4) The plan will be submitted to the Eligible Entity prior to the allocation of funds. If the subgrantee makes any substantive changes to the plan, a new version will be submitted to the Eligible Entity within 30 days.

Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM)

1) The prospective subgrantee has a SCRM plan in place that is either: (a) operational, if the prospective subgrantee is already providing service at the time of the grant; or (b) ready to be operationalized, if the prospective subgrantee is not yet providing service at the time of grant award;

2) The plan is based upon the key practices discussed in the NIST publication NISTIR 8276, Key Practices in Cyber Supply Chain Risk Management: Observations from Industry and related SCRM guidance from NIST, including NIST 800-161, Cybersecurity Supply Chain Risk Management Practices for Systems and Organizations and specifies the supply chain risk management controls being implemented;

3) The plan will be reevaluated and updated on a periodic basis and as events warrant; and

4) The plan will be submitted to the Eligible Entity prior to the allocation of funds. If the subgrantee makes any substantive changes to the plan, a new version will be submitted to the Eligible Entity within 30 days. The Eligible Entity must provide a subgrantee's plan to NTIA upon NTIA's request.

Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM)

1. The applicant has a SCRM plan in place that is either: (a) operational, if the applicant is already providing service at the time of the grant; or (b) ready to be operationalized, if the applicant is not yet providing service at the time of grant award;
2. The plan is based upon the key practices discussed in the NIST publication NISTIR 8276, Key Practices in Cyber Supply Chain Risk Management: Observations from Industry and related SCRM guidance from NIST, including NIST 800-161, Cybersecurity Supply Chain Risk Management Practices for Systems and Organizations and specifies the supply chain risk management controls being implemented;
3. The plan will be reevaluated and updated on a periodic basis and as events warrant; and,
4. The plan will be submitted to the Eligible Entity prior to the allocation of funds. If the subgrantee makes any substantive changes to the plan, a new version will be submitted to the Eligible Entity within 30 days. The Eligible Entity must provide a subgrantee's plan to NTIA upon NTIA's request.

Volume II Public Comment

2.17.1 Text Box: Describe the public comment period and provide a high-level summary of the comments received during the Volume II public comment period and how they were addressed by the Eligible Entity. The response must demonstrate:

- a. The public comment period was no less than 30 days; and
- b. Outreach and engagement activities were conducted to encourage feedback during the public comment period.

2.17.1.a D.C.'s public comment period for BEAD IP Volume I & II was held from November 16th, 2023, to December 19th, 2023. The SBDEO experienced robust engagement from the public during this. In aggregate, a total of over 120 comments were received from 27 commenters who represent a diverse array of stakeholders, including broadband service providers, non-profit organizations, and members of the general public. Comments encompassed all sections of the Initial Proposal. The SBDEO thoughtfully reviewed relevant inputs, refining its Initial Proposal where applicable. To ensure transparency and accountability, a comprehensive tracker was prepared and attached hereto per NTIA guidance, detailing the SBDEO's responses to each comment received. A summary table has been inserted below.

Category	Summary of public comments	DRAFT OCTO response
Requirement 1 – Objectives		

<p>Objectives</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note tech literacy is a lifelong learning process (<i>Age-Friendly D.C.</i>) 2. Address all aspects of digital inclusion, including connectivity, access to devices, digital skills, and technical support (<i>Human-I-T</i>) 3. Concerned about safety due to subpar internet and cell phone service in NE D.C. (<i>D.C. Resident 1</i>) 4. Boost internet service throughout Ft. Lincoln which has dead spots for cell and internet service causing safety and public health concerns (<i>D.C. Resident 1, D.C. Resident 2</i>) 5. Supports the district’s vision of expanding the benefits of broadband access as far as it can through this historic funding opportunity (<i>WISPA</i>) 6. Revise to prioritize Digital Equity programming and investing in the residents of the District of Columbia over infrastructure (<i>D.C. Digital Equity Coalition, Sasha Bruce Youthwork</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO recognizes that tech literacy is a lifelong learning process and has reflected such thinking in its goals and objectives. Specifically, Goal Three is to create navigable pathways for all D.C. residents across the spectrum of digital literacy and digital skills, regardless of age and Goal Four is to leverage increased access to broadband, devices, and digital skills in strategic partnerships and initiatives with D.C. agencies to affect economic development and workforce goals, and health outcomes across diverse resident profiles. 2. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO recognizes the importance of digital inclusion through the implementation of the Five-Year Action Plan and the Digital Equity plan. Mayor Muriel Bowser’s administration outlined three long-term Goals to guide the SBDEO in its participation in the Biden administration’s broadband and digital equity funding programs to which the SBDEO has added a fourth. Specifically, Goal Two is providing sustainable, low-cost or no-cost devices, IT-support, and enabling applications to residents; Goal Three is creating navigable pathways for all D.C. residents across the spectrum of digital literacy and digital skills, regardless of age; and Goal Four is leveraging increased access to broadband, devices, and digital skills in strategic partnerships and initiatives with D.C. agencies to affect economic development and workforce goals, and health outcomes across diverse resident profiles. 3. The SBDEO acknowledges this comment, recognizes the need for all residents of D.C. to have high-quality, affordable, high-speed internet that is accessible, and incorporated such thinking in its goals and objectives. Wards 5 and 7 in Northeast D.C. were prioritized in Objective Five as high-priority Wards. 4. <i>See</i> response to 3. 5. The SBDEO thanks the commenter for their feedback.
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		6. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. Aligned to the goals of the BEAD Program set out in the NOFO, the SBDEO plans to expand high-speed internet access by funding and planning infrastructure deployment and adoption programs.
Requirement 2 – Local, Tribal, and Regional Broadband Planning Processes		
Table of partners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use Age-Friendly D.C. 2028 instead of 2023 (<i>Age-Friendly D.C.</i>) 2. Recognize additional community organizations that are partnering with the D.C. government to address tech literacy and connectivity (<i>Age-Friendly D.C.</i>) 3. Foster partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs), local governments, educational entities, and other trusted stakeholders. Collaborate to identify and address digital inequities, leveraging collective expertise and resources for a more significant impact; Collaborate with experienced organizations like Human I-T to close the digital equity gap (<i>Human-I-T</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. Age-Friendly D.C. Strategic Plan language updated to 2028. 2. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. Throughout the deployment of the Five-Year Action Plan and the Digital Equity Plan, the SBDEO expects the number of partnerships with community organizations to grow and ongoing stakeholder engagement to expand. That said, not all community organizations will be defined as an eligible community anchor institution (CAI). 3. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. Throughout the deployment of the Five-Year Action Plan and the Digital Equity Plan, the SBDEO expects the number of partnerships with community organizations to grow and ongoing stakeholder engagement to expand. The SBDEO encourages Human-I-T to join TechTogether so it can help develop D.C. digital equity policies.
Requirement 8 – Deployment Subgrantee Selection Process		
<i>Subgrantee process A) Fair, open, competitive process</i>		
Municipal conduit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer the majority of funds to private providers over a government-owned network (<i>Taxpayers Protection Alliance</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO thanks the Taxpayers Protection Alliance for its comments. The SBDEO plans to follow National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) guidance.

Awards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deem all awards fixed amount sub-awards (<i>USTelecom</i>)³⁹ 2. Anticipate the need for network upgrades (<i>Age-Friendly D.C.</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. Fixed-amount sub-awards currently are not allowed within the BEAD framework. If that does change, the SBDEO may consider incorporating them. 2. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO recognizes that network infrastructure technology may evolve, and future upgrades may be required.
Application materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Treat any information submitted by a broadband provider that contains confidential commercial information or data as exempt from disclosure under state open records laws and other applicable statutes or provisions (<i>Verizon</i>) 2. Clarify the information prospective subgrantees must disclose regarding other broadband deployment projects they are applying for, are undertaking, or have committed to undertake, is limited to projects in the District (<i>Verizon</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO will ensure proprietary information remains confidential. The SBDEO plans to remove all proprietary and confidential information that providers mark (<i>e.g.</i>, financial documents, key personnel, etc.) as proprietary and/or “trade secrets”. These sections won’t be published. The SBDEO also encourages prospective subgrantees to submit a For Public Inspection copy of its application without proprietary information. 2. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The required disclosure will be for projects in the District.
Structure of the subgrant process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove any preference of certain types of entities (<i>INCOMPAS</i>) 2. Remove its prioritization of D.C.’s Community Internet Program participants (<i>Comcast</i>) 3. Utilize and weight selection criteria such that only the most qualified prospective subgrantees are selected (<i>Comcast</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and guidance set forth the rules on prioritization, which the SBDEO plans to follow. 2. <i>See</i> response to 1. 3. <i>See</i> response to 1.
Subgrantee process B) Prioritization		

³⁹ Fixed Amount Awards are a type of grant or cooperative agreement that provides a specific level of support without regard to actual costs incurred by the applicant ([USAID](#)).

Technology preference	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reconsider requiring subgrantees to install D.C. government-supplied conduit and/or fiber wherever the subgrantee opens a public right-of-way (<i>USTelecom, Greater Washington Partnership, Comcast</i>) 2. Use for fiber technology all the way to the end user (<i>Environmental Health Trust</i>) 3. Allow suppliers of all technologies to compete, without preference over technologies, to provide sufficient service for state residents (<i>Stanford University</i>) 4. Incentivize providers to bid non-fiber technologies that not only meet but exceed the NTIA's speed standards of 100/20 Mbps (<i>Tarana Wireless</i>) 5. Consider a managed Wi-Fi solution that allows for increased competition to provide service to every broadband serviceable location (BSL) and a multi-dwelling unit (MDU) Unit in a Project Area (<i>EducationSuperHighway, DojoNetworks</i>) 6. Require subgrantees to not only bring 1G/1G symmetrical access to CAIs, but also install an MDU Wi-Fi solution that provides all residents with free wi-fi during the BEAD performance period (<i>EducationSuperHighway</i>) 7. Believes that with an appropriate combination of technologies, including Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) networks using both licensed and unlicensed spectrum, the SBDEO can realize cost savings (<i>WISPA</i>) 8. Consider other technologies that provide reliable broadband service, such as hybrid fiber-coaxial, instead of merely fixed wireless (<i>Comcast</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. The SBDEO plans to follow the NTIA guidance. 2. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. The SBDEO is abiding by the requirements of the BEAD NOFO, the technology prioritization, and the deployment of the requirements described therein. 3. <i>See</i> response to 2. 4. <i>See</i> response to 2. 5. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. The SBDEO may consider managed Wi-Fi solutions in MDUs. 6. <i>See</i> response to 2. 7. <i>See</i> response to 2. 8. <i>See</i> response to 2.
Back-up signal source	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Address the need for a robust and resilient back-up timing signal source as part of the broadband deployment (<i>Critical Infrastructure Resilience Institute at the University of Illinois</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. The SBDEO encourages this commenter to share its concerns with internet service providers (ISPs).
Subgrantee process C) Scoring		

<p>Overall</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not go beyond the minimum rules required by NTIA for scoring criteria to maintain competition (<i>Taxpayers Protection Alliance</i>) 2. Set a specific and measurable (<i>i.e.</i>, quantitative) scoring mechanism for selecting among subsidy prospective subgrantees to maximize competition and keep BEAD buildout costs down (<i>Stanford University</i>) 3. Determine and communicate in advance specifically how the projects will be evaluated (<i>Stanford University</i>) 4. Ensure that prospective subgrantees have the capability to perform on their promises of delivering service, and ensure subgrantees do perform (<i>Stanford University</i>) 5. Suggest mandating or giving higher scores to solutions that lead to property owner ownership of internal wiring within an MDU (<i>EducationSuperHighway</i>) 6. Consider whether the applicant currently provides 1 Gbps symmetrical service in its existing service area and the monthly price for that service (<i>e.g.</i>, award only half the points an applicant would otherwise receive for certain criteria) (<i>Verizon</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The draft scoring rubric and the relative weighting reflect D.C.’s priorities for broadband deployment. 2. <i>See</i> response to 1. 3. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO acknowledges the comments and believes the release of the Initial Proposal VI and VII for public comment accomplishes this. 4. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO refers the commenter to Section 2.4 which outlines the managerial, technical, operational and financial qualifications that prospective subgrantees must submit as part of their applications, and that will be evaluated by the SBDEO prior to consideration for an award. 5. <i>See</i> response to 1. 6. <i>See</i> response to 1.
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<p>Affordability scoring</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise the proposed affordability scoring methodology and score prospective subgrantees’ proposed prices relative to the applicable service tier based on Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) urban broadband benchmark rate based on an applicant’s commitment to providing customers 1 Gbps/1 Gbps service in the project area and not based on the 100/20 Mbps service rate (<i>i.e.</i>, Universal Service, other for Broadband Infrastructure deployment) (<i>AT&T, USTelecom</i>) 2. Permit providers to change prices charged to end users annually to the extent that they do not exceed the Consumer Price Index (<i>USTelecom, Verizon</i>) 3. Recognize providers’ need for flexibility for future price changes and avoid locking in a rate for the low-cost broadband service option for the life of the network (<i>AT&T</i>) 4. Revise its proposal to rank applications based on who offers 100 Mbps/20 Mbps service at or below \$30 (<i>Verizon</i>) 5. Decrease the points available for the Affordability criterion (<i>Comcast</i>) 6. Award points based on an applicant’s “commitment to provide the most affordable total price to the customer” (<i>Comcast</i>) 7. Any price commitments as part of the selection process should be tied to prices for similar service in unsubsidized areas (<i>Stanford University</i>) 8. Recommends that the Affordability component of the Scoring Criteria include an enumerated time commitment that a provider is expected to offer an economical affordability plan to consumers in a project area (<i>Tarana Wireless</i>) 9. Adjust its approach to affordability scoring to align with legal limitations and federal benchmarks (<i>e.g.</i>, adopt the “reasonable comparability” framework consistent with the FCC’s approach) (<i>CTIA, Comcast</i>) 10. Consider in its selection criteria factors that make a solution effectively more “affordable” for the consumer even if this factor is not strictly price (<i>EducationSuperHighway</i>) 11. Recommend strengthening the plan to maximize Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) adoption by requiring and/or 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO’s affordability scoring does not attempt to regulate rates. The current scoring rubric and the relative weighting reflects the SBDEO’s priorities for broadband deployment. Given the low number of unserved, underserved, and eligible CAIs, the SBDEO followed the NTIA’s guidance for selection along last-mile broadband deployment affordability (<i>i.e.</i>, commitment to provide the most affordable total price to the customer for 100/20 Mbps service in the proposed service area). 2. <i>See response to 1.</i> 3. <i>See response to 1.</i> 4. <i>See response to 1.</i> 5. <i>See response to 1.</i> 6. <i>See response to 1.</i> 7. <i>See response to 1.</i> 8. <i>See response to 1.</i> 9. <i>See response to 1.</i> 10. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The current scoring rubric and the relative weighting reflects the SBDEO’s priorities for broadband deployment. 11. <i>See response to 10.</i> 12. <i>See response to 10.</i> 13. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO acknowledges the comment. The current scoring rubric and the relative weighting reflects the SBDEO’s priorities for broadband deployment.
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	<p>incentivizing providers to commit to ACP adoption strategies <i>(EducationSuperHighway)</i></p> <p>12. Award additional points to solutions that have a commitment to offer free service during the performance period of BEAD <i>(EducationSuperHighway)</i></p> <p>13. Note that the description of the affordability scoring that points will be awarded for the “lowest total cost service package of gigabit symmetrical service” is inconsistent with references to 100 Mbps/20 Mbps service <i>(Verizon)</i></p>	
Minimal BEAD Program Outlay	<p>1. Recommend that the SBDEO assess the costs for MDUs based on a per-unit basis rather than an outlay per BSL <i>(EducationSuperHighway)</i></p> <p>2. Expand its consideration of BEAD outlay in its Broadband Infrastructure Deployment Scoring Rubric for Wards 7 and 8 <i>(WISPA)</i></p> <p>3. Increase the points available for Minimal BEAD Outlay under the Broadband Infrastructure Deployment rubric <i>(Comcast)</i></p>	<p>1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. MDUs will be treated in the same manner that other BSLs are treated in the sub-grantee selection criteria.</p> <p>2. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The current scoring rubric captures the SBDEO’s priorities for broadband deployment.</p> <p>3. <i>See</i> response to 2.</p>
Fair Labor Practices scoring	<p>1. Consider increasing the scoring criteria for fair labor practices to 20 percent <i>(IBEW)</i></p> <p>2. Favor subgrantees with a unionized workforce and include clawback provisions <i>(IBEW)</i></p> <p>3. Prioritize subgrantee prospective subgrantees who hire and rely on experienced and skilled personnel <i>(Verizon)</i></p>	<p>1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO is committed to fair labor practices and plans to institute certain protections around hiring as it relates to subgrantees (<i>i.e.</i>, D.C.-directly employed workforce, local hire provision, appropriately skilled workforce). D.C. plans to consider a variety of factors when selecting deployment subgrant projects, including but not limited to alignment with employment laws and impact on fair labor practices. The current scoring rubric and the relative weighting reflect D.C.’s priorities for broadband deployment.</p> <p>2. <i>See</i> response to 1.</p> <p>3. <i>See</i> response to 1.</p>

Speed to Deployment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suggest the SBDEO only award the maximum score to experienced providers who are best equipped to handle logistical challenges (<i>Verizon</i>) 2. Use “Speed to Deployment” as a significant secondary criterion (<i>WISPA</i>) 3. Weight this criterion more heavily, particularly under the Universal Service rubric (<i>Comcast</i>) 4. Provide further details on this proposal and how points will be allocated (<i>Comcast</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The current scoring rubric captures the SBDEO’s priorities for broadband deployment. 2. <i>See</i> response to 1. 3. <i>See</i> response to 1. 4. <i>See</i> response to 1.
Open access scoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not include an open access requirement, and should it be required or prioritized at all, it should be given very little weight, if any (<i>USTelecom, Comcast</i>) 2. Adopt Open Access as a secondary criterion for selecting Priority Broadband Projects (<i>INCOMPAS</i>) 3. Do not award open access any points under the Proposal’s Broadband Infrastructure Deployment Scoring Rubric (<i>Verizon</i>) 4. Eliminate the open access scoring criterion (<i>CTIA</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The current scoring rubric and the relative weighting reflect D.C.’s priorities for broadband deployment. The SBDEO plans to include an open access requirement as the “NTIA encourages Eligible Entities to adopt selection criteria promoting subgrantees’ provision of open access wholesale last-mile broadband service for the life of the subsidized networks, on fair, equal, and neutral terms to all potential retail providers.” (based on the BEAD NOFO) 2. <i>See</i> response to 1. 3. <i>See</i> response to 1. 4. <i>See</i> response to 1.
Subgrantee process D) Project area and de-conflicting		
Definition of the project area	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow prospective subgrantees to combine eligible locations into logical provider-defined project areas, subject to the requirement that unserved and/or underserved locations comprise at least 80% of a project’s locations (<i>USTelecom</i>) 2. Determine geographic service areas for bidding before the competition (<i>Stanford University</i>) 3. Permit providers to submit applications that contain bundled project areas and aggregated network design and cost proposals, and allow them to identify certain project areas within the bundle that are non-severable (<i>Verizon</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO plans to define project areas, as described in the draft Initial Proposal. Project areas will be collections of addresses, consistent with the BEAD NOFO, that are unserved, underserved or CAIs. 2. <i>See</i> response to 1. 3. <i>See</i> response to 1.

Treatment of MDUs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require any proposed solution from subgrantees bidding on project areas (PA) that include MDUs to demonstrate how it will connect all units within an MDU (<i>EducationSuperHighway</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. The SBDEO plans to follow NTIA guidance and believes that subgrantees could demonstrate how they will connect all units within an MDU. MDUs will be treated in the same manner that other BSLs are treated in the sub-grantee selection criteria.
Subgrantee process E) Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold (EHCPLT) process and plan		
Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow the Treasury's example and set speeds at a level that spurs competition by retaining the standard of at least 100/20 Mbps while encouraging scalability up to 100/100 Mbps (<i>INCOMPAS</i>) 2. Clarify how it will set the Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold (<i>CTIA</i>) 3. Encourages the SBDEO to use the WISPA underwritten Broadband Funding Optimization Tool to explore how an optimal EHCPLT can be used to find an appropriate combination of technologies (<i>WISPA</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. The SBDEO will align to the NTIA guidance in the BEAD NOFO on speed requirements. 2. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. The SBDEO will align to the NTIA feedback provided on the process described in the Initial Proposal for setting the EHCPLT. 3. <i>See</i> response to 2.
Qualifications - Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) and Build America, Buy America Act (BABA) Requirements		
EHP & BABA clarifications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make clear in the Proposal that NTIA's pending final limited waiver of the BABA will apply (<i>Verizon</i>) 2. Encourages the SBDEO to support NTIA's limited nonavailability waiver for certain construction materials and manufactured products (<i>WISPA, Comcast</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. Pending NTIA approval, the SBDEO intends to use the BABA approach that is defined in 2.4.5 of D.C.'s draft initial proposal. ISPs are encouraged to work with NTIA directly on this matter. The SBDEO reserves the right to update its EHP and BABA requirements upon further review of the NTIA's updated guidance. 2. <i>See</i> response to 1.
Qualifications - Financial Capabilities		
Deployment Subgrantee Qualifications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise the range of financial and business information provided by providers to demonstrate their financial capabilities based on experience in the District (<i>Verizon</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. The SBDEO is committed to comprehensive vetting of prospective subgrantees throughout the selection process. The SBDEO plans to be consistent with the BEAD requirements on disclosures regarding experience and technical ability.

Letter of credit requirement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reflect NTIA’s recently issued Letter of Credit waiver and allow for alternatives to requiring a Letter of Credit (<i>USTelecom</i>) 2. Incorporate NTIA’s conditional programmatic waiver of the Letter of Credit (“LOC”) requirement (<i>e.g.</i>, use performance bonds; BEAD reimbursement period) (<i>Verizon, CTIA, WISPA, Comcast</i>) 3. Request a further waiver from NTIA of the LOC requirement where the prospective subgrantee provides a parent guarantee (<i>Comcast</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO reserves the right to update its letter of credit requirement upon further review of the NTIA’s updated guidance. Currently, the SBDEO utilizes the historical NTIA guidance, Initial Proposal Guidance from July 2023 and the BEAD NOFO, and may look into the NTIA conditional programmatic waiver for the letter of credit requirement. 2. <i>See</i> response to 1. 3. <i>See</i> response to 1.
Qualifications – Technical capabilities		
Engineer certification	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider alternative authorities to Professional Engineer (in similar fashion to FCC’s own rules) (<i>WISPA, Comcast</i>) 2. Allow certain prospective subgrantees, based on industry experience, to certify its network designs and diagrams using a Society of Cable Telecommunications Engineers (<i>Comcast</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO plans to be consistent with the NTIA guidance and require certification from a professional engineer, stating that the proposed network can deliver broadband service that meets the requisite performance requirements to all locations required to be served by the Project. 2. <i>See</i> response to 1.
Qualifications – Information on Ownership		
Ownership details	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delete ownership references that go beyond the NOFO requirements (<i>Comcast</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. D.C. is committed to ensuring that prospective subgrantees provide ownership information consistent with the requirements set forth in 4 C.F.R. §§ 1.2112(a)(1) – (7). Per the BEAD NOFO, prospective subgrantees will be required to provide ownership information.
Qualifications – Network speeds		
Network speeds	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider adding speed tiers of service for wireless to ensure selected bids are competitive (<i>INCOMPAS</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO plans to be consistent with the BEAD requirements on network speeds, as described in the BEAD NOFO.
Requirement 9 – Non-deployment subgrantees		

<p>Non-deployment activities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledge that senior residents struggle to access information and could benefit from teachers and incentive programs (<i>Triangle View and Milestone Senior Building</i>) 2. Build out the only senior rec center in D.C. (<i>Medical, Laboratory & Technology Consultants</i>) 3. Be responsive and proactive in assisting individuals seeking support. Provide personalized assistance in real-time, addressing specific needs and challenges immediately, without necessitating additional phone calls or website visits (<i>Human-I-T</i>) 4. Recognize and respect the diverse cultural backgrounds and identities of the communities served. Tailor services to meet the unique needs and preferences of different cultural groups, fostering inclusivity and value for everyone (<i>Human-I-T</i>) 5. Offer both in-person and remote support options using multiple communication channels (phone, email, chat, video conferencing) to ensure accessibility and convenience for individuals seeking assistance (<i>Human-I-T</i>) 6. Recommend that the District of Columbia proactively plan for long-term costs and collaborate with broadband offices and community stakeholders to establish a foundation capable of supporting these needs after federal funds are expended (<i>Human-I-T</i>) 7. Update the IP's list of potential non-deployment activities to include strategies to address affordability and access within affordable housing communities (<i>Preservation of Affordable Housing, Inc.</i>) 8. Consider using remaining BEAD funding for fiber deployment to any locations that already have reliable broadband service but lack fiber, including any assistance for ensuring providers can bring fiber into buildings where they previously have not had access (<i>Verizon</i>) 9. Consider a variety of non-deployment activities (<i>D.C. Digital Equity Coalition</i>) 10. Consider using any remaining BEAD funding to achieve the critical climate 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. D.C. plans to consider a variety of factors when selecting non-deployment subgrant projects, including but not limited to alignment to digital equity priorities and impact on covered populations, which accounts for senior residents of D.C. 2. <i>See</i> response to 1. 3. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. D.C. non-deployment activities will prioritize accessibility and inclusivity and recognize a need for a variety of communication channels for individuals. Eligible activities for potential non-deployment subgrants include broadband sign-up assistance, phone booths, and translation of online government services. 4. <i>See</i> response to 3. 5. <i>See</i> response to 3. 6. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. The SBDEO recognizes that network infrastructure technology may evolve, and future upgrades may be anticipated. The SBDEO's Initial Proposal focuses on the deployment of broadband infrastructure within the four-year build deadline. 7. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. D.C. plans to consider a variety of factors when selecting non-deployment subgrant projects, including but not limited to alignment to digital equity priorities, impact on covered populations, and community support for the application, which incorporates affordable housing communities. 8. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.'s IP Volume II. D.C. plans to consider a variety of factors when selecting non-deployment subgrant projects, including but not limited to, alignment with digital equity priorities, impact on covered populations, community support for the application, plan for sustainability, and innovative solutions. Non-deployment activities that with any of the SBDEO's four goals will be considered. 9. <i>See</i> response to 9. 10. <i>See</i> response to 9.
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	<p>resiliency and equity objectives of BEAD more effectively by using non-deployment funds to support network or infrastructure hardening or resiliency (<i>Verizon</i>)</p> <p>11. Establish of a percentage limit on the funds D.C. Government Agencies, ensuring that a significant portion of resources is dedicated to Digital Equity initiatives (<i>D.C. Digital Equity Coalition</i>)</p> <p>12. Utilize Community Internet Program (CIP) for adding equipment to roof of existing recreation center to boost internet service throughout Ft. Lincoln (<i>Medical, Laboratory & Technology Consultants</i>)</p> <p>13. Clarify resident vs. household distinction and adopt a model where a designated individual within the household takes on the trainer role (<i>Orca Intelligence</i>)</p> <p>14. Mandate subgrantees to provide a training curriculum that enhances digital literacy and equips individuals with the skills to adapt to technological advancements (<i>Orca Intelligence</i>)</p>	<p>11. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. D.C. will implement a fair, open, and competitive subgrantee selection process. D.C. plans to consider a variety of factors when selecting non-deployment subgrant projects, including but not limited to, alignment with digital equity priorities, impact on covered populations, and community support for the application.</p> <p>12. The SBDEO acknowledges this comment, recognizes the need for all residents of D.C. to have high-quality, affordable, high-speed internet that is accessible, and has reflected such thinking in its goals and objectives. Wards 5 and 7 in Northeast D.C. were prioritized in Objective Five as high-priority Wards. D.C. intends to align its non-deployment activities with these objectives.</p> <p>13. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. D.C.’s non-deployment activities align with the goals defined in the State Digital Equity Plan. D.C. is committed to supporting residents to gain digital skills and plans to consider variety of factors when selecting non-deployment subgrant projects.</p> <p>14. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The District of Columbia intends to align its non-deployment activities with the objectives goals, intentions, and purpose. Eligible activities for potential non-deployment subgrants include digital literacy programming and training along with IT-support.</p>
Requirement 11 – Labor Standards		

Labor standards for subgrantees	1. Incorporate prevailing wages, project labor agreements, union neutrality, labor peace agreements, an appropriately credentialed workforce, and steps to avoid misclassification of workers (<i>IBEW</i>)	1. The SBDEO acknowledges the importance of fair labor practices and aims to encourage best practices around hiring as it relates to subgrantees (<i>i.e.</i> , D.C.-directly employed workforce, local hire provision, appropriately skilled workforce). The SBDEO believes that the stated labor standards and protections are sufficiently strong and align with D.C.’s priorities for broadband deployment.
Requirement 12 – Workforce Readiness		
Workforce needs	1. Supports strong job training programs to encourage young people to enter the broadband workforce to match workforce needs (<i>WISPA</i>)	1. The SBDEO acknowledges the comment. D.C. has multiple training programs, including an apprenticeship program that prepares workers for jobs in construction, energy, telecommunications, information technology, and other fields. The District will create workforce plans to address other ongoing barriers to deployment.
Requirement 13 – Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs)/Women’s Business Enterprises (WBEs)/Labor Surplus Firms Inclusion		
MBEs/WBEs	1. Adopt the NTIA’s waiver from this requirement and pursue other mechanisms to ensure fiscal accountability in the BEAD grant process (<i>WISPA</i>)	1. The SBDEO is committed to ensuring that MBEs and WBEs, and labor surplus area firms are recruited, used, and retained when possible and plans to implement affirmative steps to ensure MBEs, WBEs, and labor surplus area firms are included in the contract process.
Requirement 14 – Identification of steps to reduce costs and barriers to deployment		

<p>Cost and barrier reduction</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Address causes of delays for providers including permitting, fee processing, locating, allowing for more plowing, and establishing rules for timelines and costs for getting pole agreements and access poles in place (<i>INCOMPAS</i>) 2. Encourage local jurisdictions to expedite permitting, and allow prospective subgrantees to submit applications in batches (<i>INCOMPAS</i>) 3. Evaluate needs in cities and towns that need financial assistance to upgrade technology for speeding permitting processes and cover reasonable costs by BEAD program funding (<i>INCOMPAS</i>) 4. Work with D.C.’s 811 One Call Center local authorities to evaluate their process to address barriers to deployment regarding the underground utility locates process (<i>INCOMPAS</i>) 5. Make clear that awarded grants are conditioned upon grantees permitting competitors reasonable, fair, and non-discriminatory access to their owned and managed utility poles (<i>INCOMPAS</i>) 6. Implement a “Broadband Ready City” checklist to help guide cities, counties, and all local municipalities (comment lists detailed suggestions) (<i>INCOMPAS, WISPA</i>) 7. Identify where there are current gaps, including training employees, reviewing processes that can be expedited by investing in tech upgrades, and coordinating between agencies/managers of rights-of-way (<i>INCOMPAS</i>) 8. Review or enact guidelines that enable faster processing to allow the deployment of broadband infrastructure more quickly, covering small cells and other wireless equipment and fiber (<i>INCOMPAS</i>) 9. Recognize the importance of access to utility poles, conduits, easements, and public rights-of-way and encourage efforts that facilitate timely, cost-effective, and orderly access while maintaining safety and other relevant considerations (<i>Comcast</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. D.C. is committed to improving broadband access and connectivity in the most efficient, cost-effective manner. The SBDEO plans to continue to explore ways to work with communities to eliminate barriers to deployment. 2. <i>See</i> response to 1. 3. <i>See</i> response to 1. 4. <i>See</i> response to 1. 5. <i>See</i> response to 1. 6. <i>See</i> response to 1. 7. <i>See</i> response to 1. 8. <i>See</i> response to 1. 9. <i>See</i> response to 1.
<p>Requirement 15 – Climate Assessment</p>		

Climate-related concerns	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring the resilience of broadband operations, commonly referred to as climate resiliency, is paramount for maintaining online connectivity for businesses and residents (<i>Tarana Wireless</i>) 2. Encourages the SBDEO to consider including climate-related concerns in its scoring model (<i>WISPA</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. As needed, D.C. and partner agencies plan to provide strategies to grant recipients in areas where additional risk mitigation techniques may need to be considered (<i>e.g.</i>, Wards located closer to coastal water bodies) depending on the outcome of climate screenings. 2. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The scoring rubric reflects D.C. priorities for broadband deployment.
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Requirement 16 – Low-Cost Broadband Service Option

Satisfaction of the low-cost service option	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish that a provider can satisfy the low-cost service option requirement by participating in the ACP or any successor program and keeping prices within the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) Urban Rate Survey (URS) rates (<i>USTelecom, AT&T, Verizon</i>) 2. Allow periodic rate-adjustments to the plan based on inflation and the Consumer Price Index (“CPI”), which is permitted by NTIA (<i>Verizon, CTIA, Comcast</i>) 3. Recognize the need to include reasonable limits on the duration of the required plan (<i>Verizon, CTIA</i>) 4. Leverage providers’ existing low-cost offerings to avoid engaging in prescriptive rate regulation (<i>Comcast</i>) 5. Clarify the definition of “useful life of the network assets,” with respect to how long subgrantees must offer the low-cost broadband service option (<i>Comcast</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The D.C. plan for the low-cost broadband service option is as described in the Initial Proposal Volume II. D.C. plans to follow NTIA guidance for the low-cost broadband service option. 2. <i>See</i> response to 1. 3. <i>See</i> response to 1. 4. <i>See</i> response to 1. 5. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO recognizes that network infrastructure technology may evolve, and future upgrades may be anticipated. The SBDEO’s Initial Proposal focuses on the deployment of broadband infrastructure within the four-year build deadline.
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Requirement 19 – Certification of Compliance with BEAD Requirements

Broadband reporting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require semi-annual reporting rather than quarterly (<i>Comcast</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The current reporting cadence captures the SBDEO’s priorities for broadband deployment.
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Requirement 20 – Middle-Class Affordability Plans

Broadband service rates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not adopt an approach that would regulate broadband service rates (<i>AT&T</i>) 2. Compare broadband service rates in funded areas to those in competitive areas served with broadband service for a standardized way to ensure that broadband prices are affordable more generally (<i>USTelecom</i>) 3. Adopt a middle-class affordability framework that relies on reasonable comparability to rates offered by the applicant in non-funded competitive areas or to the FCC’s Urban Rate Survey for the District (<i>Verizon, Comcast</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SBDEO appreciates your engagement on D.C.’s IP Volume II. The SBDEO’s affordability scoring does not attempt to regulate rates. The D.C. plan for the middle-class affordability plans is as described in the Initial Proposal Volume II. 2. <i>See</i> response to 1. 3. <i>See</i> response to 1.
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2.17.1.b

The SBDEO widely shared the Initial Proposal Volume II document on its website with an easily accessible platform for submitting public comments. A non-exhaustive list of platforms that the SBDEO used to share information about the public comment period is below:

- **Publication of Initial Proposal Volumes I and II on D.C.’s broadband and digital equity websites.** The SBDEO has published the complete draft of IP Volume I and II on the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) website (<https://octo.dc.gov/>) and the TechTogether D.C. website (<https://www.techtogetherdc.com/bead-de-publiccomment>).
- **Publication of Initial Proposal Volumes I and II on the D.C. Register.** The D.C. Register is the official weekly legal publication for the D.C. government and is regularly monitored by public companies, non-profits, and lobbyists. The Register includes D.C. laws, administrative rulemakings, notices, orders, and other items from the Council of the District of Columbia, the Mayor’s executive agencies and independent agencies, charter schools, advisory neighborhood commissions (ANCs), and other official entities of the D.C. government.
- **A press release on OCTO’s website** to announce the opening of the public comment period (<https://octo.dc.gov/release/dc-state-broadband-and-digital-equity-officer-sbdeo-opens-public-comment-bead-and-digital>).
- **Social media campaigns to promote the public comment period** through OCTO’s LinkedIn, OCTO’s Twitter (X), and Mayor Muriel Bowser’s Twitter (X) accounts.

The SBDEO has read through all public comments and has engaged in numerous conversations with constituents and local organizations to gather feedback and discuss the Initial Proposal. Many comments were insightful and brought a diverse, nuanced perspective to issues including labor, inclusion of local organizations, local support, and equity for covered populations. D.C. takes public comments seriously and has incorporated several of these comments into the updated version of its Initial Proposal Volume 2.

How D.C. has encouraged feedback during the public comment period:

The SBDEO has encouraged feedback during the public comment period by widely advertising the opportunity on the OCTO website and social media, and by urging all residents and stakeholders to provide feedback. The public comment period was advertised through an announcement in the D.C. Register, email outreach to Tech Together DC's mailing list, social media posts, and advertising on the OCTO's and Tech Together DC's websites. In addition, upon request, the SBDEO met with various organizations and companies to discuss their feedback. The SBDEO's diverse mechanisms and platforms for stakeholder outreach—from social media to community organizations—were designed to encourage participation and feedback from a diverse set of residents who could represent a large proportion of the views, concerns, points of support, and queries in D.C. regarding digital access and equity, as well as the disbursement of BEAD funding. The SBDEO also accepted feedback in different forms, via its portal and through events. During webinars and in-person events, the SBDEO conducted Q&A sessions which enabled people to provide feedback and ask questions directly, enabling people who are less comfortable with providing digital feedback to also be able to engage in the public comment period.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Local Coordination Tracker
For more details, see Requirement 4

Appendix 2: Scoring Rubric
For more details, see Requirement 8