



CITY OF COMMERCE

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Draft Approved by the City Council

August 13, 2025

Hector De La Torre, Executive Director
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
16401 Paramount Blvd
Paramount, CA 90723

Subject: Gateway Cities Regional Fiber Optic Network Project

Dear Mr. De La Torre,

The City of Commerce supports the regional collaboration and shared vision behind the Gateway Cities Regional Fiber Optic Network (GCRFON) Project. We recognize the project's potential to enhance broadband access, promote digital equity, and expand connectivity for the public facilities, businesses, and residents.

However, following a detailed review of the GCRFON plans and the associated draft Right-of-Way Use Agreement, the City has identified several concerns regarding the long-term implications and obligations placed upon the City as part of this project.

One of the primary concerns is that the proposed agreement offers no franchise benefits for the City and the request to waive all permit fees related to the installation, maintenance, and operation of the network in perpetuity, which the City finds implausible from a policy or fiscal standpoint. Additionally, the absence of a master plan outlining the governance, use, and maintenance responsibilities of the network raises concerns regarding long-term coordination and oversight. The offer of two dedicated dark fiber strands for City use is inadequate to meet the City's needs, particularly as the City would bear the full cost of utilizing those strands.

The proposed agreement places the full burden on the City for any future relocation or removal of GCRFON infrastructure due to right-of-way conflicts or public improvements and expansion projects, which could complicate both implementation and long-term management of the network. Furthermore, the City is concerned about potential impacts to its infrastructure during construction and the lack of clarity around ongoing and future maintenance responsibilities. It appears that the cost of future undergrounding of aerial segments would fall entirely on the City.

To address these concerns, the City respectfully requests that the following provisions be included in the Right-of-Way Use Agreement:

- Proportionate franchise fees to compensate for the use of City assets.



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- Licensing and permitting fees be applied consistent with City policy.
- The City's policy requires that all utilities in the City are to be underground, therefore, the aerial portion of the fiber optic within the City should be placed underground.
- For meaningful use the City requests allocation of additional fiber strands for municipal use and support. The City anticipate up to 50 strands would be needed to meet the municipal needs.
- The cost of relocating fiber infrastructure due to future City-led projects should be the responsibility of GCRFON or the project owner.
- To protect and preserve the City's roadway infrastructure at locations where asphalt is removed and replaced, the pavement be restored to a minimum of half the width of the street and a minimum of 20 feet in both directions of the trench. While restoration limits may vary depending on field conditions at each location, the final restoration shall be subject to the determination of the City.

The City of Commerce remains committed to working collaboratively to support regional broadband initiatives, but it is essential that the terms of participation are equitable and sustainable for all local agencies involved. We welcome continued discussions to address these concerns constructively.

A revised draft agreement reviewed by the City Council is attached for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Shahid Abbas
Public Works Director
City of Commerce

Attachment. Right-of-Way Use Agreement