

## Proposals for Residential Retrofit Program Round III

(No. 2025-MBI-08)

Questions and Answers  
 Questions Due Friday, February 14, 2025  
 Posted: February 25, 2025

	Question	Answer
1.	In the draft list of locations, you included 3 areas in Concord, MA. In the current application, I don't see Concord, MA or the Concord Housing Authority as an option. Is this intentional or accidental?	Concord was not included in the Round 3 site selection; we did not receive a Program Participation Agreement in time to include Concord Housing Authority for this grant round.
2.	Will a list of bidders be provided, to potentially discuss partnering?	A list of bidders will not be available until awards are made.
3.	Does MBI have any leverage with pole owners? It can take a while just to get pole permit paperwork together before it can be submitted to pole owners. I understand it is estimated to then take 12-14 months to get make ready work done before	MBI and its partners at the Executive Office of Economic Development plan to establish a Make Ready Working Group that will serve as a forum for collaboration between Gap Networks, Residential Retrofit, and BEAD Deployment awardees, the Commonwealth of MA, and the utilities (i.e. Eversource, National Grid, and Verizon). This forum is expected to launch in April 2025 and will meet monthly. The primary goals of the forum are keeping project schedules on track, promoting collaboration, and problem solving.
4.	In Round 3, MA has eliminated the site survey phase. What is the process if the winning applicant conducts the site visit (after notification of the award) and the revised budget results in project costs higher than the 2 <sup>nd</sup> highest scoring competing application? Will the second highest bidder be invited to conduct a site visit?	Please see Section 6.4 Scoring and Site Visits of the solicitation document. The Project Group will be awarded to the highest scoring applicant based on the scoring criteria outlined in section 7.2 and 7.3 of the solicitation. Upon award, the highest scoring applicant may conduct a site visit and resubmit a budget adjustment, within 45 days of award, a final budget and accompanying budget narrative describing

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		<p>changes in the budget based on findings from a site visit. MBI will review budget adjustments based on site visit findings to ensure any increased project costs are reflective of conditions that would have been otherwise unforeseeable based on information provided by MBI at the time of solicitation.</p> <p>MBI will provide budget submission instructions to awarded applicants via email. The second highest scoring applicant will not be able to conduct a site visit unless the housing operator chooses to proceed with the second highest scoring applicant.</p>
5.	<p>What qualifies as a condition, or conditions, that are unforeseeable when MBI reviews post-award budget increases? Given the larger size of the Project groups, and the short window in which to prepare and submit proposals, applicants must rely on property information provided by the MBI and desk top reviews. Will the MBI consider this in its assessment of whether a condition could have been foreseen?</p>	<p>Unforeseeable conditions could include information that is not provided by MBI at the time of the solicitation or ascertained during desktop reviews.</p>
6.	<p>With respect to the introductory paragraph of Section 7.3 on page number 21 of the solicitation, could MBI please clarify whether the number of additional Bonus Points available is 35 or 25?</p>	<p>The solicitation incorrectly stated 35 points instead of 25. This has been amended in an updated version of the solicitation available on the solicitation webpage.</p>
7.	<p>Will the MBI provide additional information or certifications (i.e., related to asbestos) for each property?</p>	<p>MBI has worked to gather as much information as possible about every development in the solicitation, including where possible, the presence of asbestos. This information is available in the detailed properties online database.</p>
8.	<p>The MBI in all previous broadband grant programs has defined a project area within a municipal boundary. In this Round, the MBI deviates from this long-established practice and deference to municipalities.</p>	<p>a. Larger project groups were developed under this RFP based on feedback from program participants under Rounds I &amp; II that indicated larger project groups</p>

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	<p>a. Is the change intended to reduce the competition in the program by excluding broadband providers whose authority to build and operate infrastructure in the public right of way is granted by a municipality in a franchise agreement.?</p> <p>b. If a Project Group includes properties outside a franchise-dependent broadband provider’s existing franchise area, will the MBI accept applications contingent on applicant securing the applicable franchise(s) to serve said area(s)?</p> <p>c. If a municipality does not issue a franchise in the time required, and under conditions amenable to the provider, will the broadband provider be found in default for the entire Property Group?</p> <p>d. Did the MBI conduct topological or other surveys when establishing a Property Group? How does the MBI suggest an applicant approach a proposal where one of the properties in the Property Group has unique permitting concerns, like a water crossing, the permitting for which could delay the timely completion of the total project?</p>	<p>were more appealing from a market perspective and to ensure housing developments outside of core markets were served under the program.</p> <p>b. As outlined in section 7.1.3 of the solicitation, The applicant must commit to substantial completion of the project by September 31, 2026. Applicants are strongly encouraged to plan to complete construction scopes by July 30, 2026. If a July 30, 2026, deadline cannot be met, the Applicant must detail how it will guarantee substantial completion prior to the federal deadline of December 31, 2026.</p> <p>c. See above response.</p> <p>d. No, project groups were established based on available property submissions and regional proximity to other locations. The applicant is responsible for developing a deployment plan that accounts for needed permitting to reach the locations in any given project group.</p>
9.	<p>The US Treasury has exempted ARPA\CPF projects from the Davis Bacon Act. May applicants rely on previous Rounds where MBI indicated there are no state or local wage laws applicable to the projects funded under this program.</p>	<p>MassTech is not requiring demonstration of compliance with the Davis Bacon Act. However, for projects exceeding \$5 million, a recipient may provide a certification that, for the relevant Project, all laborers and mechanics employed by contractors and subcontractors in the performance of such Project are paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing, as determined by the U.S. Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code (commonly known</p>

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		<p>as the “Davis-Bacon Act”), for the corresponding classes of laborers and mechanics employed on projects of a character similar to the contract work in the civil subdivision of the State (or the District of Columbia) in which the work is to be performed, or by the appropriate State entity pursuant to a corollary State prevailing-wage-in-construction law (commonly known as “baby Davis-Bacon Acts”). If such certification is not provided, a Recipient must provide a project employment and local impact report detailing: • The number of contractors and sub-contractors working on the Project; • The number of employees on the Project hired directly and hired through a third party; • The wages and benefits of workers on the Project by classification; and • Whether those wages are at rates less than those prevailing.<sup>3</sup> Recipients must maintain sufficient records to substantiate this information upon request. <a href="#">see Revised-CPF-State-Guidance.pdf (treasury.gov)</a>. For additional information regarding wage determinations, and rates please visit the Department of Labor website at <a href="https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/construction/guidance">https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/construction/guidance</a></p>
10.	With respect to the Fiber IRU, has MBI\MassTech included requirements beyond those included in Rounds 1 and 2?	The Fiber IRU requirement will remain in place under grant Round 3, as in Round 1 and Round 2.
11.	Will a detailed network diagram need to be provided for every property at the time of application submission?	No. MBI requests that applicants submit a general network diagram and narrative that outlines their organizations typical installation and technology plan in alignment with the Retrofit program requirements. The awarded applicant will provide a detailed network design as part of the first milestone payment submission, as outlined in Section 3 of the sample agreement posted on the solicitation webpage.
12.	Will the contract between MassTech and the awarded applicant include a separate exhibit for each project group, or each property?	Under the previous rounds, MassTech had included a separate exhibit in the contract for each project group. Given the much larger

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
		project groups under Round 3, MBI will work with the applicant at the time of contracting to disaggregate project groups to an appropriate level that would allow the applicant to invoice at milestone points that are commensurate to the nature of the work.