



**Maricopa Area Labor Federation  
Arizona AFL-CIO**

# Maricopa Area Labor Federation

**Teresa D'Asaro**  
Chair

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Vice-Chair

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November 19, 2024

Mayor Kate Gallego

Phoenix City Hall

200 W. Washington Street

Phoenix, AZ 85003

Dear Honorable Mayor Gallego,

The Maricopa Area Labor Federation (MALF) is aware that the City of Phoenix is currently developing city code changes to allow companies to install fiber-optic cabling in the City's rights-of-way (ROW). While we are enthusiastic about the impending upgrade to Phoenix's broadband infrastructure, we write to alert the City to risks from current business practices in the broadband sector that underline the need for careful oversight and accountability for entities carrying out construction in the ROW. We encourage the City of Phoenix to include transparency and training disclosures in the proposed city code changes to protect public infrastructure and the workers building out our critical broadband networks.

Communications Workers of America Locals 7019 and 7050, which represent over 2,000 workers, including almost 500 telecom technicians who deploy and maintain our broadband infrastructure in Arizona, have brought to our attention the troubling deployment record of two of the potential licensees – Gigapower and Google Fiber. CWA has monitored Gigapower's deployments in other active markets including Bloomington, Minnesota. Between March and August of this year, Gigapower's prime contractor ITG Communications was cited in more than 400 resident complaints and agency incident reports related to its work in the right-of-way in Bloomington, including damage to underground utilities, such as gas line hits. The deployments of another potential licensee, Google Fiber, have been plagued with constituent complaints, rights-of-way damage, and utility hits over the past decade. In 2022, the Texas Climate Jobs Project produced a report on Google Fiber's work in the state and found that the company regularly relied upon contractors that owed employees back wages and had enforcement actions levied against them.

We noted the lively debate during the June 20<sup>th</sup> Transportation, Infrastructure, and Planning Subcommittee meeting regarding trenching methods and were happy to see the level of focus and intention on the preservation and care of our city infrastructure. While trenching methods can absolutely affect our public infrastructure in negative ways, it is also critical to include in this conversation the labor and broader operational practices utilized by the contractors hired by licensees to build out the network. The MALF believes it is critical that we know not only who is

working in our rights-of-way, but that their deployment, health and safety, and labor records match our desires to have good actors working in our city.

The MALF also understands the critical importance of having a well-trained and directly employed technician workforce. The multi-layered employment structures that companies like Gigapower and Google Fiber rely on can create accountability problems and dangerous conditions at worksites. Low-road subcontracting is a huge problem in the telecom industry, affecting work quality, worker safety, and public safety. Many other jurisdictions have already added contractor transparency disclosures to their city code, including the [City of San Diego](#), [County of San Diego](#), and [City of Chula Vista](#), to improve oversight of their ROW. To hold companies like Gigapower and Google Fiber accountable as they build out our critical infrastructure, we hope to collaborate with our elected officials to elevate Phoenix's right-of-way standards to the highest level.

As well as CWA Locals 7019 and 7050, the Maricopa Area Labor Federation counts among its affiliates the American Federation of Musicians Local 586, AFSCME 2960, BCTGM Local 232, Machinists Lodge 2559, IATSE Local 336, Teamsters Local 104, Lettercarriers Local 576 & the Arizona State Association of Lettercarriers, TWU 555, United Campus Workers at ASU, and UFCW Local 99.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

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Vice Chair

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