



Notice of Intent to Fund:
Boston Area Clean Thermal Assessment

Date of Issue: November 6, 2025
Proposals Due: December 8, 2025

All proposals must be submitted to:
buildings@masscec.com

I. SUMMARY

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) a public instrumentality of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, announces its intent to accept the following unsolicited and best-value offer from the Innovation Network for Communities (INC) on behalf of the Boston Green Ribbon Commission (GRC), a voluntary CEO network representing dozens of companies working together to accelerate implementation of the City's Climate Action Plan, pending the results of the posting of this notice.

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center seeks to fund an assessment of the technical, regulatory and economic feasibility of using thermal energy from Boston-area waterways to support a transition away from the use of natural gas. The assessment would focus on thermal sources in the Charles and Mystic Rivers, Boston Harbor and Fort Point Channel and provide a robust evidence base for local policymakers, utilities, and potential energy off-takers to consider Thermal Energy Networks (TENS) for phasing the city away from natural gas. This proposal was received from the INC on behalf of the GRC (collectively, the Offeror).

II. ABOUT MASSCEC

MassCEC is a quasi-state economic development agency dedicated to accelerating the growth of the clean energy sector across the Commonwealth to spur job creation, deliver statewide environmental benefits and to secure long-term economic growth for the people of Massachusetts. MassCEC works to increase the adoption of clean energy while driving down costs and delivering financial, environmental, and economic development benefits to energy users and utility customers across the state.

MassCEC's mission is to accelerate the clean energy and climate solution innovation that is critical to meeting the Commonwealth's climate goals, advancing Massachusetts' position as an international climate leader while growing the state's clean energy economy. MassCEC is committed to creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization where everyone is welcomed, supported, respected, and valued. We are committed to incorporating principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice in all aspects of our work in order to promote the equitable distribution of the health and economic benefits of clean energy and support a diverse and inclusive clean energy industry. MassCEC strives to lead and innovate in equitable clean energy and climate solutions.

III. JUSTIFICATION

Decarbonizing the buildings sector remains a great challenge for the Commonwealth, and networked geothermal districts offer a promising opportunity for rapid decarbonization scaling. Networked geothermal energy already straddles several MassCEC priority areas, particularly

High-Performance Buildings and Net Zero Grid, and networked geothermal districts have been identified as a strategic priority.

However, geothermal networks have not been sufficiently investigated in dense urban geographies, and this study would expand the potential of networked geothermal to decarbonize these areas. The applicant team is highly experienced, and MassCEC has worked directly with INC/GRC on prior projects. The proposal is highly detailed and represents a high level of quality with a detailed workplan, staffing structure, and budget.

This proposal brings together a uniquely positioned team to undertake the ambitious scope of establishing a zero-emissions TEN in Boston. The GRC, a voluntary CEO network representing dozens of companies working together to accelerate implementation of the City's Climate Action Plan, is a unique convenor of private entities, making them a singular interlocutor to drive this project forward. GRC has amassed a strong coalition of interested partners including from local government, higher education institutions, utilities, and large energy users to serve as potential early off-takers. Several of these are providing support for the project in the form of funding or in-kind contributions.

IV. INSTRUCTIONS

All interested respondents (Respondents) must submit a proposal to this notice containing evidence of their qualification and interest. To submit a proposal, Respondents should follow the below steps:

1. Review this Notice of Intent to Fund to develop an understanding of the justification and proposed program;
2. Submit any questions about this Notice of Intent to Fund to buildings@masscec.com by November 21, 2025 and review answers to any potential applicant questions, which will be regularly added to the Q&A section of the notice of intent webpage;
3. Develop a proposal submission that demonstrates the ability of the Respondent to provide a program that would represent a comparable or better value;
4. Submit a complete proposal by December 8, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time via email to the contact address below. Proposals will not be accepted after the deadline. Email submissions should contain the subject line "Best Value Grant Notice of Intent – Boston Area Clean Thermal Assessment – [Respondent Entity Name]". A complete application must include:
 - a. Full contact information about the lead Respondent, including address, phone number, and email address.
 - b. A thorough overview of the program proposed, including organizational qualifications, approach, and leveraged funds that will support the execution of the program.

- c. General scope of work detailing the proposed project stages, timelines, and key outcomes.
- d. Annual organizational operating budget, including the lead Respondent's revenue and expenses, as well as top-level expense categories such as salaries, operational expenses, and administrative overhead.
- e. Proposed project budget that includes a standard line-item project budget representing the full term of the proposed project, including staff salaries, direct program costs, subcontracting costs, indirect costs, and fringe costs. Each line item should include rates and units/quantities, as well as detailed narratives that align with the proposed activities. Detailed subcontractor budgets must be included for any subcontractors receiving over \$25,000 or responsible for conducting a core part of the proposed program
- f. Three references that can attest to the Respondent's ability to execute the proposed program

If interest is generated by this Notice, MassCEC will review all proposals and will determine whether they will:

- i. Withdraw the notice and not accept the Offeror's offer (and cancel the Notice of Intent); or
- ii. accept the offer from the Offeror; or
- iii. accept a proposal from another Respondent offering a comparable or better value than the Offeror.

Contact Information:

Massachusetts Clean Energy Center 294 Washington Street, Suite 1150
Boston, MA 02108
buildings@masscec.com

V. SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSAL

Proposal Purpose

This study will explore the technical, regulatory and economic feasibility of using thermal energy from Boston-area water sources to support a transition away from the use of natural gas. The resulting report will provide needed information for policy makers to select the best method(s) for further investigation and potential enactment.

The targeted thermal sources will include water in the Charles River, Mystic River, Boston Harbor, and Fort Point Channel, and bedrock below the Charles and Mystic Rivers that can be accessed by inclined boring. The study will seek to address five key questions for these thermal

reservoirs:

1. **Thermal Supply.** How much thermal energy can be reliably extracted from or stored in the targeted thermal reservoirs?
2. **Thermal Distribution.** How can this energy be cost-effectively distributed to potential users?
3. **Thermal Demand.** What is the potential phased demand of large energy users for the delivered thermal energy and is this demand sufficient to justify capital investment for extraction/storage, distribution and consumption?
4. **Investment Opportunities.** For those new thermal opportunities where feasibility is validated by the technical, economic and regulatory analysis, what next steps will help convert those opportunities into projects ready for investment?
5. **Regulatory and Permitting Barriers.** What are the regulatory and permitting barriers to new clean thermal development?

The Clean Thermal project will be done in partnership with a portfolio of large thermal energy users – higher education, health care, commercial real estate, governmental and quasigovernmental entities – who could potentially serve as early stage off takers for new thermal energy networks. These partners will anchor the analysis with detailed building data that can be extrapolated to create a menu of technical and financial options applicable to many sites for both installation and growth.

VI. GENERAL REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CONDITIONS

NOTICE OF PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

As a public entity, MassCEC is subject to Massachusetts' Public Records Law, codified at Chapter 66 of the Massachusetts General Laws. Thus, any documentary material, data, or other information received by MassCEC from a Respondent is a public record subject to disclosure. Respondents shall not send MassCEC any confidential or sensitive information in response to this Notice. If confidential information is submitted as part of the application and not clearly marked as confidential, such information may be made publicly available by MassCEC without further notice to the Respondent.

DISCLAIMER & WAIVER AUTHORITY

This Notice does not commit MassCEC to award any funds, pay any costs incurred in preparing a proposals, or procure or contract for services or supplies. MassCEC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements,

modify the anticipated timeline, request modification of the application, negotiate with all qualified Respondents, cancel or modify the Notice in part or in its entirety, or change the proposal guidelines, when it is in MassCEC's best interests.

This Notice has been distributed electronically using MassCEC's website. It is the responsibility of Respondents to check the website for any addenda or modifications to an Notice to which they intend to respond. MassCEC accepts no liability and will provide no accommodation to Respondents who submit a proposal based on an out-of-date Notice document.

NOTICE OF INTENT DELIVERY METHOD

This Notice of Intent has been posted in "MassCEC Funding" section of MassCEC's public website at <https://www.masscec.com/funding>. It is the responsibility of every Respondent to check MassCEC's website for any addenda or modifications to proposal requirements. MassCEC accepts no liability and will provide no accommodations to Respondents who fail to check for amended requirements and submit inadequate or incorrect proposals.