

# The PLUG

Staying Connected, Building for the Future

Winter 2024 Edition



## Plugged In and Paving the Way:

How DC PLUG Opportunity Projects Power Progress

### Supplier Spotlight

TB&A  
Amplifying Community  
Voices on the DC PLUG Project

### Employee Highlight

Cesar Barreto  
Building Resilient  
Infrastructure for D.C.

# Table of Contents



**02**

Feature Story:  
Plugged in and Paving the Way!

**04**

Supplier Spotlight:  
TB&A

**06**

Employee Highlight:  
Cesar Barreto

**08**

In Their Words:  
Community Feature with  
Alison Brooks

**09**

Knowledge is Power

**10**

Asked & Answered  
Kid's Corner



# Plugged In and Paving the Way

## How DC PLUG Opportunity Projects Power Progress

The District of Columbia Power Line Undergrounding (DC PLUG) initiative is a transformative partnership between Pepco and the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) aimed at improving the reliability and resilience of the city's electrical grid. As part of this effort, the program has introduced *Opportunity Projects*, a strategic approach to streamline infrastructure projects and maximize community benefits.

### What Are Opportunity Projects?

Opportunity Projects leverage overlapping infrastructure needs to minimize disruption and maximize efficiency. According to Paquilla Jones, who works with the DDOT's Project Management Consultant team on the DC PLUG program, these projects occur when a project within DDOT IPMA aligns with DC PLUG utility work. By integrating utility upgrades into existing roadway contracts, the initiative saves money, reduces construction timelines, and limits neighborhood disturbances.

The process begins with an inventory of DDOT's upcoming projects, cross-referenced with DC PLUG feeder locations. If an overlap is identified, coordination with DDOT's project teams ensures alignment of schedules. This collaboration minimizes redundancies and enhances programs efficiency.

*Installation of electrical manhole structure on Feeder 15001 at Kennedy Street*

## Spotlight on Feeder 15001

Feeder 15001, located in the Crestwood and Sixteenth Street Heights neighborhoods of Ward 4, will benefit residents, religious organizations, and businesses located in the Ward 4 Crestwood and Sixteenth Street Heights neighborhoods.

This location was identified as an Opportunity Project because portions of the feeder overlap with the Kennedy St Reconstruction project and the construction schedule of the two projects also overlap. Construction began in April 2024 and is ongoing.



*Installation of electrical manhole structure on Feeder 15001 at Kennedy Street*



*Installation of electrical manhole structure on Feeder 15001 at Kennedy Street*

## Other DDOT Opportunity Projects

### **Oregon Avenue (Ward 4)**

Recently completed

### **Kennedy Street (Ward 4)**

Work is ongoing as part of the street's revitalization efforts.

### **Aspen Street (Ward 4)**

Construction slated to begin early next year.

These projects illustrate how Opportunity Projects optimize resource allocation while minimizing inconvenience for residents.

### **A Unique Public-Private Partnership**

The partnership between DDOT and Pepco is vital to the success of DC PLUG. As Jones explains, this public-private collaboration allows Pepco to navigate administrative tasks more efficiently since DDOT serves as the permitting agency. DDOT, in turn, benefits from streamlined communication with Pepco, facilitating quicker design adjustments and better project alignment.

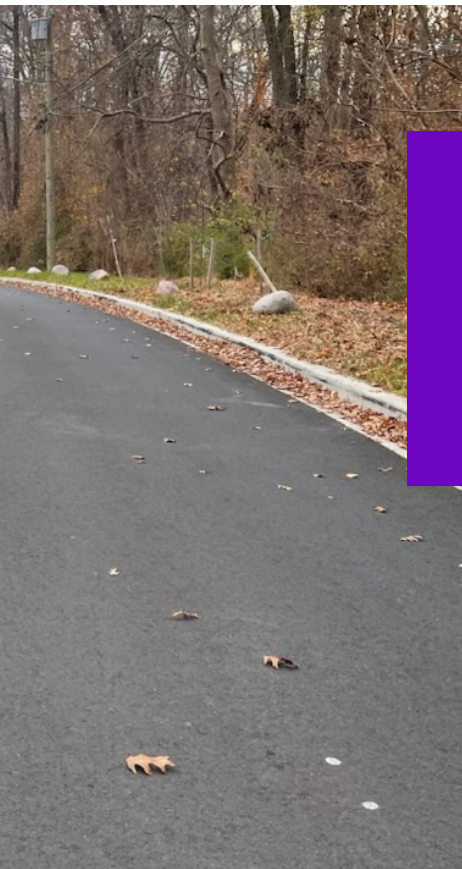




## The Human Impact

For Jones, a Ward 4 resident and Howard University graduate, working on DC PLUG is both a professional milestone and a personal investment in her community. She describes the project as a “full-circle moment,” having begun her career as an intern under Keith Foxx, a pivotal figure in the program’s early stages who was featured in last month’s “The PLUG.”

Looking forward, Jones envisions success as completing the program on time and within budget while compiling lessons learned to guide future projects. As a resident, she eagerly anticipates the completion of construction and the removal of temporary asphalt patches, symbolizing the project’s long-term impact.



DC PLUG’s Opportunity Projects demonstrate the power of collaboration and forward-thinking design in addressing urban infrastructure challenges. By aligning utility upgrades with broader public works, the initiative not only enhances the city’s electrical grid but also improves its streetscapes—laying the groundwork for a more resilient and efficient future.

# Supplier Spotlight

## TB&A

### *Amplifying Community Voices on the DC PLUG Program*

TB&A is a woman-owned Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Certified Business Enterprise (CBE), and Small Business Enterprise (SBE) firm rooted in Washington, D.C. They are making a big impact on the DC PLUG program with Project Managers Jam Kendrick and Peyton Manning leading the charge. The team specializes in community engagement, event planning, and strategic communications, helping to bridge the gap between infrastructure development and the communities it serves.

#### **A Critical Role in DC PLUG**

TB&A has had the unique opportunity to work in community outreach, ensuring that residents are informed and involved, at every phase of the DC PLUG initiative including the design, civil, and electrical work. From the conceptual design stage through construction, their team facilitates community meetings, creates clear and concise presentations, and addresses community concerns.

For feeder projects, TB&A takes a proactive approach by engaging directly with the residents impacted by the construction—those living near transformers, manholes, and various other construction sites. “We organize both virtual and in-person meetings to inform the community about upcoming developments and incorporate their feedback into our project designs,” explains Jam. Peyton further emphasizes, *“Additionally, we act as liaisons between the community and the project team, ensuring that residents’ voices are heard, and their concerns are taken seriously.”*



#### **What sets TB&A apart?**

TB&A’s deep local roots and commitment to community relationships make them unique. *“We’ve lived in these neighborhoods for years, so we genuinely understand the concerns and priorities of the residents,” Peyton shares. “Our work is about representation—being there for the community in a way that shows we care.”*

According to Jam, their grassroots approach has earned them a reputation for building trust and driving productive conversations between stakeholders, elected officials, and residents. *“We’re proud of our ability to form meaningful, productive relationships that move mountains for our clients and their projects,”* says Jam.

## Why DC PLUG Matters

For Peyton, working on the DC PLUG feeder program is personal. *“As a Washingtonian, I’ve experienced the impact of power outages, firsthand. Days without electricity in a densely populated area has always been a challenge, and I am excited to be a part of a utility improvement project that will reduce the impact of power outages and benefit residents today and in the future.”*

Peyton’s firsthand experience with DC PLUG began as a resident affected by feeder installation. *“Most recently during a storm, an overhead powerline came down in our yard, and for the first time, our home did not lose electricity,”* he shares.

## Defining Success and Looking Forward to the Road Ahead

When asked what success looks like for TB&A, both Jam and Peyton agree that success looks like meaningful, engaging moments with stakeholders where they walk away knowing that their input was acknowledged and valued.

Jam adds, *“It is refreshing to work with entities such as PEPCO and DDOT in an environment where there is respect and appreciation for the services and the knowledge and understanding of ‘community’ that TB&A brings to a project.”*

As the program progresses, TB&A looks ahead to a future with more resilient infrastructure and potential collaborations. Peyton, whose family lives near Feeder 15001, has both a personal and professional stake in the project’s success. *“I’m excited to see the completion of this work and hope it leads to new opportunities for TB&A,”* he says.



## ✓ Fun Fact

Many people don’t realize the depth of TB&A’s team. From project managers and coordinators to communications specialists and administrative assistants, their team is expansive and highly skilled, ensuring they deliver excellence on every project.

TB&A’s dedication to community engagement and improving infrastructure is evident in their work on DC PLUG. By prioritizing resident voices and fostering collaboration, they’re helping to make D.C.’s







# Employee

Cesar Barreto,

*Building Resilient Infra*

## ✓ Fun Fact

### A Passion for Exploration

When he's not improving D.C.'s infrastructure, Cesar loves traveling with his wife and two daughters. "Exploring new places keeps my creativity sharp and gives my daughters a chance to learn and grow," he says. From local adventures to trips abroad, the Barreto family embraces every opportunity to discover something new.

Cesar Barreto's dedication, expertise, and personal connection to DC PLUG make him a vital part of the program's success. His work is not only transforming the city's power grid but also leaving a lasting impact on the community he calls home.

# Highlight

## Civil Engineer, DDOT

Infrastructure for D.C.

Meet Cesar Barreto, a dedicated civil engineer who plays a vital role in advancing the DC PLUG program. With over a decade of experience at the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), Cesar brings a unique blend of technical expertise and strategic vision to one of D.C.'s most impactful infrastructure initiatives.

### His Role at DC PLUG

As a civil engineer, Cesar oversees the development of proposed work, manages procurement, and supervises construction management. His responsibilities span formulating budgets, coordinating with utilities and city agencies, and ensuring the program progresses smoothly from initial proposals through civil construction. Cesar's role is integral to bringing DC PLUG's mission of creating a more resilient and reliable power grid to life.

### The Best Part of the Job

For Cesar, the challenge is the most rewarding part. *"I love integrating technical engineering with strategic planning to ensure safety and resilience in our infrastructure,"* he shares. Working alongside Pepco and other utility agencies fosters collaboration and creativity, particularly when finding solutions for the intricate placement of electrical conduits.

### A Personal Connection to Resilient Power

This program holds deep significance for Cesar, who witnessed the devastating effects of unreliable power firsthand. Born and raised in Puerto Rico, his family endured three months without electricity after Hurricane Maria. "It's personal for me," he says. *"Helping to bring better, more reliable power to the District is incredibly meaningful."*

### From Maryland Highways to D.C. Streets

Before joining DDOT, Cesar worked as a transportation engineer for the Maryland State Highway Administration, designing infrastructure and streetscape enhancements. His career continued with the Temple Group, where he served as a project engineer. At DDOT, he previously worked as an Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, focusing on pedestrian safety and accessibility.

### Looking Ahead

Cesar envisions a future where he continues to lead innovative infrastructure projects that combine cutting-edge technology with sustainability. "I want to keep making a positive impact on urban communities," he says, aiming to help D.C. evolve as a safer, more reliable city for its residents.

Meet Alison Brooks, who has proudly served three terms as the Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner (ANC) for 4B08 in the South Manor neighborhood of Ward 4. A lifelong Washingtonian and community advocate, Brooks is a dedicated public servant who embodies what it means to lead with both heart and grit.

## In Their Words Community Spotlight

### Wearing Many Hats as ANC Commissioner

Affectionately referring to ANC Commissioners as “Mayors of the Block,” Commissioner Brooks’ role involves wearing many hats—problem solver, advocate, and community liaison—all with the goal of improving residents’ quality of life. “We’re the closest level of elected officials to the residents,” she explains. *“Our job is to connect residents with agencies, ensure follow-up, and work toward resolution of their concerns.”*

Brooks first ran for commissioner out of a desire to show her children the importance of civic engagement and to ensure residents’ voices were heard. *“There was an issue in the community that wasn’t being addressed properly, so I stepped up,” she recalls.*



### Supporting DC PLUG's Mission

Brooks is an enthusiastic supporter of DC PLUG’s work to improve the city’s electrical infrastructure by undergrounding power lines. Having lived in Ward 4 for 25 years, she remembers frequent power outages caused by heavy storms. *“It’s smart that the District is investing in underground wiring,” she says. “It will make a huge difference in stabilizing power for our neighborhoods.”*

While her neighborhood hasn’t yet seen DC PLUG construction, Brooks has helped guide neighboring communities through the process. *“As 4B Chair, I worked with Ann Walters on the DC PLUG outreach team, who did an excellent job addressing residents’ concerns during feeder installations. The DC PLUG team’s transparency and responsiveness were impressive, even during tough conversations.”*

## Looking Ahead

For Brooks, the biggest win will come when the dust settles—literally. *“I look forward to the streets being back to normal,”* she says. *“But more importantly, I’m excited for the improved power grid that will enhance the quality of life for everyone in the city.”*

## Beyond the Office

When she’s not working full-time or serving as ANC Commissioner, Brooks wears another hat—her favorite one: mom. She’s proud of raising her children, who are now engaged in civic life themselves. A devoted sports fan, she even once coached her son’s AAU basketball team to a win.

With her leadership and dedication, Alison Brooks is a true pillar of the Ward 4 community, exemplifying the power of local action to drive meaningful change.

# Knowledge is Power

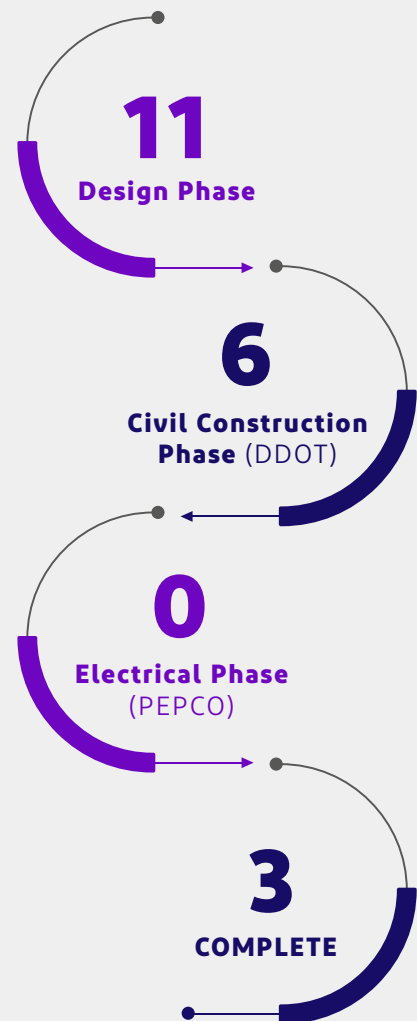
Ramp up your construction knowledge with these definitions and Fun Facts. Don’t forget to take notes - this won’t be the last time you hear construction lingo!

## DID YOU KNOW?



A transformer is a critical component of the electrical grid that helps manage and distribute electricity efficiently. It changes the voltage of electrical power to levels suitable for delivery, either stepping it up for long-distance transmission or stepping it down for safe use in homes and businesses. As part of the DC PLUG project, transformers play a key role in enhancing the reliability and resilience of the city’s underground power infrastructure.

## Feeder Project Status



*This project feeder status is as of December 2024.*

# Asked & Answered

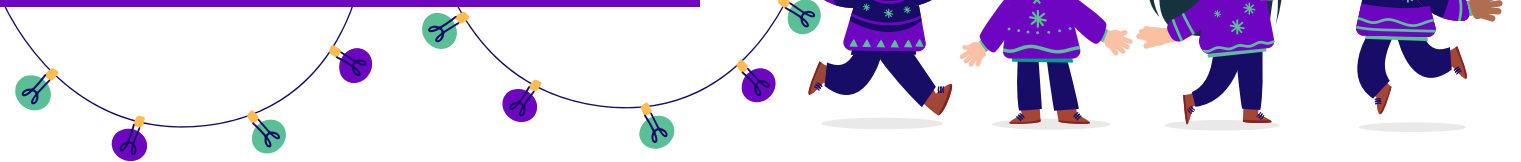
You've got questions and we've got answers! In this section, we'll answer questions we receive from you via our project email at [questions@dcpluginfo.com](mailto:questions@dcpluginfo.com). We look forward to hearing from you!

## How will I know if my street is included in the DC PLUG program?

DC PLUG is focusing on undergrounding power lines for 20 of the most vulnerable areas in Washington, DC. To see if your street is included, visit [www.dcpluginfo.com/map](http://www.dcpluginfo.com/map), and enter your address. If your street is highlighted on the map, your home is part of the initiative.

**Check out other frequently asked questions and answers at [dcpluginfo.com/faq](http://dcpluginfo.com/faq).**

## Kids Korner Tis the Season for Lights!



Washington, D.C., hosts several beautiful light festivals during the holiday season, offering spectacular displays throughout the city. Here are some of the most popular light festivals in D.C. to enjoy with the kids or kids at heart you know during the holidays:

1. The Downtown DC Holiday Market (Nov. 22 - Dec. 23)
2. Zoo Lights (November 22 - Jan 4)
3. Menorah Lighting (Dec 25)
4. Georgetown Glow (Dec 1 - Jan 7)
5. Light Yards - The Yards Park, Capitol Riverfront (Nov 25 - Jan 1)

# Activity: Power Up Your Vocabulary with the DC PLUG Word Search!

## Ready to connect the dots in your knowledge of all things DC PLUG?

Dive into this fun and electrifying word search featuring key terms like transformer, grid, and resilient! These buzzworthy words are at the heart of our work to improve infrastructure and keep our city powered up.



### Instructions

- Hunt down the 10 hidden words related to the DC PLUG program.
- Words can flow in any direction—up, down, diagonal, forward, or backward!
- Circle each term as you find it, and feel the spark of accomplishment as you complete the grid.

conduit  
feeder  
reliable  
utility  
connected  
grid  
resilient  
electricity  
power  
transformer

Z	O	S	U	R	X	T	T	S	K	M	F	W	F	F
S	G	G	O	D	E	R	U	C	H	R	D	T	C	O
F	S	R	H	G	E	Q	F	I	J	H	I	L	N	P
U	E	O	N	T	R	A	N	S	F	O	R	M	E	R
T	R	E	W	O	P	Q	D	U	I	H	G	L	U	E
I	I	P	D	C	I	N	J	Q	Y	C	E	W	L	L
L	E	U	O	E	O	A	T	G	H	C	S	B	I	D
I	V	Y	D	S	R	N	X	P	T	U	A	E	M	R
T	U	I	P	N	D	B	N	R	G	I	P	W	D	R
Y	L	O	P	V	O	G	I	E	L	R	Q	Y	B	T
T	T	R	C	O	E	C	L	E	C	B	B	L	V	H
G	X	Y	P	Q	I	D	R	J	D	T	O	L	B	J
O	I	Q	X	T	R	E	S	I	L	I	E	N	T	Z
I	J	F	Y	V	I	G	S	Z	D	U	H	D	S	L
I	I	D	X	P	G	I	Q	J	F	O	V	X	W	H



**844 - 758 - 4146**



**questions@dcpluginfo.com**



**dcpluginfo.com**

