

Micro-Trenching Proposed Standards

Public Comments through September 12, 2025

Lumen (Centurylink) - My team placed a trial run fiber cable, fiber drops in asphalt using a sawcut/micro trench 10-15 years ago in the Anthem area of Maricopa County. It was difficult to place and keep the County happy. The County didn't like us sawcutting at lip & gutter so we were 6-8' out in the street. The transition from asphalt to concrete sidewalk was always difficult. The expansion of asphalt and concrete never occurs at the same rate and damaged some of the drops over time. Maricopa County choose not to permit any more micro-trenching jobs after that trial run. I do believe there are other municipalities in the valley that do allow it. Lumen chose not to work any more fiber jobs with micro-trenching, however we still saw cut streets for copper drops in some of the cities. Not trying to sway the City of Flagstaff either direction but CenturyLink/Lumen has chosen to stick with standard roll duct & fiber bored in at 3-4'.

Coconino County - John Carr Development Engineering Supervisor - I conferred with County Engineer Nate Reisner and Public Works Deputy Director Chad Auker, and we do not have any comments.

Wecom – Paul Fleming, CEO - One big issue we see is the 5-permit limit highlighted below. That will kill productivity and speed (as it is hurting us right now) and increase costs to the project. We would suggest this be 15 at minimum. There could be other restrictions around restoration time etc, but we really need this number higher (we actually need it higher right now in the pilot also). Can this please be adjusted?

Optimum – James Campbell, Vice President Government Affairs –

August 29, 2025

RE: Comments on Draft Amendments to Title 13 – Engineering Design Standards and Specifics for New Infrastructure.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and offer suggestions on the City of Flagstaff's draft amendments to Title 13 of the City Code, specifically regarding micro-trenching for broadband deployment. We appreciate the City's proactive approach in evaluating various

methods of broadband infrastructure deployment and its commitment to expanding connectivity for residents and businesses. In addition, we appreciate and encourage the City make any decisions recognizing that broadband deployment is extremely competitive to ensure fair treatment for all providers, regardless of the technology used to deploy such services.

Optimum commends the City's willingness to consider multiple deployment techniques as part of a comprehensive strategy to improve broadband access. This flexibility is essential for meeting diverse infrastructure needs across Flagstaff's unique terrain and climate.

We would like to highlight some concerns regarding micro-trenching, particularly in the context of Flagstaff's weather conditions, as well as bring forth other technical items that might benefit the City's effort. The region's freeze-thaw cycles pose a significant risk to the integrity of micro-trenched installations. Specifically, the slurry used to seal micro-trenches may be prone to popping out during winter months, potentially leaving behind numerous small holes that compromise road surfaces and public safety.

Depth Requirement Below Frost Line:

We recommend that all micro-trenching installations be required to extend below the frost line. This measure would help ensure long-term durability and reduce the likelihood of surface degradation due to seasonal temperature fluctuations.

Uniform Permitting Standards Across Deployment:

To promote fairness and efficiency, we suggest that the permitting process be standardized across all deployment methods – whether micro-trenching, directional boring, or aerial installations within the public right-of-way. A consistent permitting framework will help streamline project approvals and maintain equitable treatment of all providers in what is an incredibly competitive environment.

We appreciate the City's openness to feedback and its dedication to maintaining high engineering standards. Please feel free to contact us if further clarification or discussion would be helpful.