



AI Strategic Plan

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Introduction

With Mayor’s Order 2024-028 (the “Mayor’s Order”), Mayor Muriel Bowser firmly committed DC agencies to explore and deploy AI tools in careful alignment with DC’s **six** AI Values:

- Clear Benefit to Residents
- Safety and Equity
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Sustainability
- Privacy and Cybersecurity

These AI Values guide all agency efforts in and around AI. DC’s AI Values Alignment Handbook, issued by OCTO in 2024, and publicly available at techplan.dc.gov/aivalues, provides a deep explanation of what each value means in practical terms. That Handbook helps to guide agencies in asking questions about prospective AI deployments that will best support close alignment between these AI Values, and the likely outcomes of any AI deployment.

This AI Strategic Plan is a companion piece to the AI Values Alignment Handbook, and provides a durable, overarching framework to promote OCTO’s efficient and responsible AI utilization through four continuous activities:

- Identifying AI tools available to improve agency and customer outcomes
- Mapping and mitigating foreseeable risks associated with such tools
- Engaging with stakeholder on our AI utilization, and
- Refining this strategic plan iteratively, over time

OCTO’s mission—to direct the strategy, deployment, and management of DC government technology with an unwavering commitment to IT excellence, efficiency, and value for government, residents, businesses, and visitors—is especially important during times of rapid technological development, when technology’s impact on the lives of residents can feel more pronounced. We are sensitive to this feeling, and encourage residents and other stakeholders to engage with us on a continuous basis. To learn more about how this AI Strategic Plan fits into OCTO’s larger mission, please visit us at techplan.dc.gov, or reach out to us directly at ai@dc.gov.

Scope

When an organization provides as rich and varied services as DC government provides to residents, visitors, and personnel, understanding how all its pieces fit together can be a challenge. For this reason, it's worthwhile here at the outset to define this AI Strategic Plan's scope. This Plan is issued by DC Chief Technology Officer Stephen N. Miller, pursuant to OCTO's statutory grant of central authority¹ over DC government's investments in information technology and telecommunications systems.

What does this mean in plain language? This AI Strategic Plan outlines OCTO's continuous evaluation and implementation of enterprise AI tools deployed as part of an OCTO Led² project. This AI Strategic Plan is **not** a Districtwide AI Strategic Plan. In accordance with Section V(F) of the Mayor's Order, each DC government agency will provide its own agency-specific AI Strategic Plan by the end of Fiscal Year 2026.

¹ DC Official Code §§ 1-1401 *et seq.*

² DC Tech Plan: Our Operating Model: Deliver for DC: *Deliver core technologies services efficiently and provide thought-leadership and guidance for DC Gov.*

Identifying Valuable AI Tools

OCTO operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, providing a broad catalogue of network, cybersecurity, data, enterprise software, and tech enablement services to sister agencies, residents, and federal partners. Shouldering these responsibilities wouldn't be possible without the dedicated service of a skilled, experienced team from a wide variety of technical and non-technical backgrounds. OCTO leverages the strength of this team through a collaborative, whole-of-agency approach to identifying opportunities to promote its mission through the responsible incorporation of new AI tools.

An idea for a new AI deployment might come from any person at OCTO.³ A member of the Data Team may see an opportunity to improve residents' access to OCTO's 1,400 open datasets through an AI tool capable of receiving requests from residents in natural language, and generating responsive maps and summaries of open data at the touch of a button.⁴ Or, a member of a sister agency may see an opportunity to work with university partners to use powerful language modeling tools to offer residents richer opportunities to take part in the conversation around matters of public concern.⁵ When it comes to identifying opportunities for better, more efficient delivery of services to residents, we're all ears!

But, the OCTO mission is too important to allow ourselves to wait passively for ideas to flow in. The public, our sister agencies, and our own workforce rely on us to be proactive in researching, planning, and thoughtfully deploying valuable AI tools. Guided by the first AI Value identified in Mayor Bowser's Order—**Clear Benefit to Residents**—OCTO's first step in identifying potentially valuable AI tools is always to think about how best to deliver for DC residents.

I. Engage with Customers to Identify Needs

OCTO's work is driven by the needs of its customers, but who *exactly* is an OCTO customer? More people and organizations than you might think! As a member of the Government Operations Cluster, OCTO's most immediate customers are other agencies of the DC government. But who else might be an OCTO customer?

Pursuant to DC Official Code § 1-1432, OCTO provides fiberoptic telecommunications services, not just to agencies of the DC government, but to agencies of the federal government, nonprofits and community anchor institutions, and participants in broadband adoption and economic development initiatives. Through its Tech Together initiative, OCTO provides training and other

³ <https://octo.dc.gov/page/about-octo>

⁴ <https://opendata.dc.gov/pages/compass>

⁵ <https://octo.dc.gov/release/bowser-administration-announces-first-its-kind-ai-pilot-program-new-platform-mit-governance>

technology outreach services directly to residents, and through its role in dc.gov projects, OCTO is an important part of many residents' first contact with their government.

With such a broad customer base, how does OCTO stay abreast of their varied needs?

- Biweekly meetings with agency Chief Information Officers
- Targeted surveys and feedback events with customer agencies
- Tech Together's direct outreach efforts in the community
- Participation in Mayor Bowser's Advisory Group on AI Values Alignment's public listening sessions

By maintaining multiple pipelines through which customer needs are explored, OCTO helps to make sure that all customers are regularly afforded the opportunity to surface whatever needs they might have. Are you aware of a need we missed? Let us know, at octo.dc.gov/askthecto!

II. Explore Potential AI Solutions Currently Available, or Feasible as Internal Builds

As the OCTO team becomes aware of opportunities to better meet the needs of its customers, we move into the easiest phase of our process for identifying valuable AI tools—seeing what potential solutions are on offer. Why is this the easiest step? Because participants in the nascent AI-for-government market are always eager to talk about their products, and because OCTO maintains strong relationships with technology offices in its sister states.

Through organizations like the Washington, DC Economic Partnership, National Association of State Chief Information Officers, State Broadband Leaders Network, and others, leaders within OCTO participate in communities of government technology professionals nationwide. And we share notes! When OCTO enjoys a successful launch of an AI tool like DC Compass, members of our leadership share the lessons learned. And neighboring jurisdictions do the same!

Under Mayor Bowser's Order, both the Chief Information Security Officer and the Chief Data Officer prepare annual reports for the Chief Technology Officer, concerning AI technological developments in their respective subject matter areas. Members of the OCTO Tech Enablement team routinely develop internal trainings on AI and AI governance for all DC employees, and the OCTO General Counsel has provided Districtwide AI training for government attorneys in 2024 and 2025.

Constant education, market research, and technical review have been, and will remain, the core of this second phase of OCTO's process for identifying AI tools capable of delivering value for residents.

III Assess What Value AI Tools Might Offer

The final stage in OCTO's process for identifying potentially valuable AI tools is to directly scrutinize how a proposed AI tool might add value for DC residents. Here, OCTO relies on collaborative internal discussions among subject matter experts and managers within the team considering an AI solution, OCTO's Human Capital Management Team, and OCTO's internal AI experts.

Evaluating the value proposition of a prospective AI tool is serious work. By assembling the right internal, multi-disciplinary team to assess a prospective tool, by considering all aspects of the workflow into which a proposed tool might be introduced, and by taking a critical look at the technical capabilities claimed by a given AI tool or family of AI technologies, OCTO gathers all the information necessary to confirm that a given deployment will deliver a clear benefit to residents.

To learn more about the details and scope of this phase of our review, have a look at the **Clear Benefits to Residents** section of the Handbook for AI Values Alignment, at: techplan.dc.gov/aivalues.

Mapping and Mitigating Risk

AI tools are exciting, especially at a technology agency! In the first year since issuance of Mayor Muriel Bowser’s comprehensive AI values alignment Order, OCTO has helped to author core AI governance documents, piloted and deployed novel AI tools, and engaged in continuous dialogue with residents. But, even during times of exuberance in exploration and adoption, we need to remain risk conscious. A potential concern that might prove serious and costly if discovered post-deployment, might be an easy thing to address adequately if it’s dealt with in the early stages of planning. This is why proactively mapping and mitigating risk is the next core step in OCTO’s AI strategy.

What does it mean to map risk? It means that once our interdisciplinary team has determined that an AI tool or family of tools might provide clear benefits to residents, their efforts turn to identifying and cataloging risks the proposed deployment might entail. How do we go about the work of identifying and cataloguing? The answer, in one word, is a familiar one: collaboration.

Proper AI risk mapping and risk mitigating require more than just deep, technical understanding. Good mapping and risk mitigating depend on deep familiarity with both the proposed tool’s specific deployment environment, and the deploying agency’s general risk posture.⁶ When OCTO is itself the deploying agency, an internal group led by the OCTO team proposing a given deployment engages in the AI Values Alignment process and generates an AI Values Alignment Report for submission to the AI Taskforce for privacy and cybersecurity approval. When OCTO is assisting an outside deploying agency, that agency’s work in the AI Values Alignment process forms the core mapping and mitigation efforts supporting a given deployment. In every case, these efforts are recorded in a final AI Values Alignment Report, which—if the nature of the deployment permits—is affirmatively made public. techplan.dc.gov/aivalues.

What sorts of risks does OCTO consider as part of the AI Values Alignment process, and how does it track them? What does OCTO’s documentation of these concerns look like? How does the Values Alignment lifecycle correspond to the product lifecycle of a given deployment? These answers and more are available in OCTO’s publicly available Handbook for AI Values Alignment.⁷

⁶ Tabassi, E. (2023), Artificial Intelligence Risk Management Framework (AI RMF 1.0), NIST Trustworthy and Responsible AI, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD, [online], <https://doi.org/10.6028/NIST.AI.100-1> at 1.2.4, https://tsapps.nist.gov/publication/get_pdf.cfm?pub_id=936225 (Accessed November 17, 2025)

⁷ <https://techplan.dc.gov/page/dcs-ai-values-and-strategic-plan>

Stakeholder Engagement

Residents are the ultimate beneficiaries of everything OCTO does, so no project is finished until the public's been made aware of the work we've done on their behalf. OCTO tells the public about its work in a number of ways. Our Tech Together initiative regularly meets with non-governmental partners in the commercial tech space and non-profit sector. We routinely send community engagement professionals to community anchor institutions like libraries, senior centers, and schools across all eight Wards. Most importantly, under Mayor's Order 2024-028, OCTO provides administrative support to Mayor Muriel Bowser's Advisory Group on AI Values Alignment, and participates in every public listening session held by that public body.

To take part in the conversation, and to ensure your voice is heard on issues relating to the use of AI, be sure to check techplan.dc.gov/aivalues regularly for upcoming public outreach events and public listening sessions, and follow us at the Office of the Chief Technology Office, @OCTODC, on all major social media platforms.

Refining OCTO's AI Strategy

As funny as it may sound to say aloud, governing AI governance tools is its own governance activity, and evaluation tools have to be evaluated.⁸ This AI strategy document is no exception. As OCTO nears the end of its 2023 – 2025 Tech Plan, it will assess how best to integrate its AI strategy into the larger agency strategic mission. As part of that process, leaders within OCTO will look at how OCTO's been able to leverage AI tools in OCTO Led projects, to assist other agencies in review and deployment of AI tools in their own work, and how well our governance efforts are helping safe and efficient AI solutions reach residents.

What might updates to this AI Strategic Plan look like? Review processes may be consolidated or multiplied, based on how far actual review and alignment workflows or volumes deviate from those expected. Depending how the environment develops over time, risks that may appear attenuated or insubstantial at present may later be prioritized, and new risks may emerge. Risks we fear today may prove less threatening, and what seems technologically out of reach today may prove commonplace in the future. While it is impossible to know how the government/AI environment might develop over the near term, it is possible for every DC resident to have a part in shaping OCTO's response. Contact us today at ai@dc.gov, and monitor techplan.dc.gov/aivalues for our public meeting schedule. We want to hear from you!

⁸ Tabassi, E. (2023), Artificial Intelligence Risk Management Framework (AI RMF 1.0), NIST Trustworthy and Responsible AI, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD, [online], <https://doi.org/10.6028/NIST.AI.100-1> at 19, https://tsapps.nist.gov/publication/get_pdf.cfm?pub_id=936225 (Accessed November 17, 2025)