

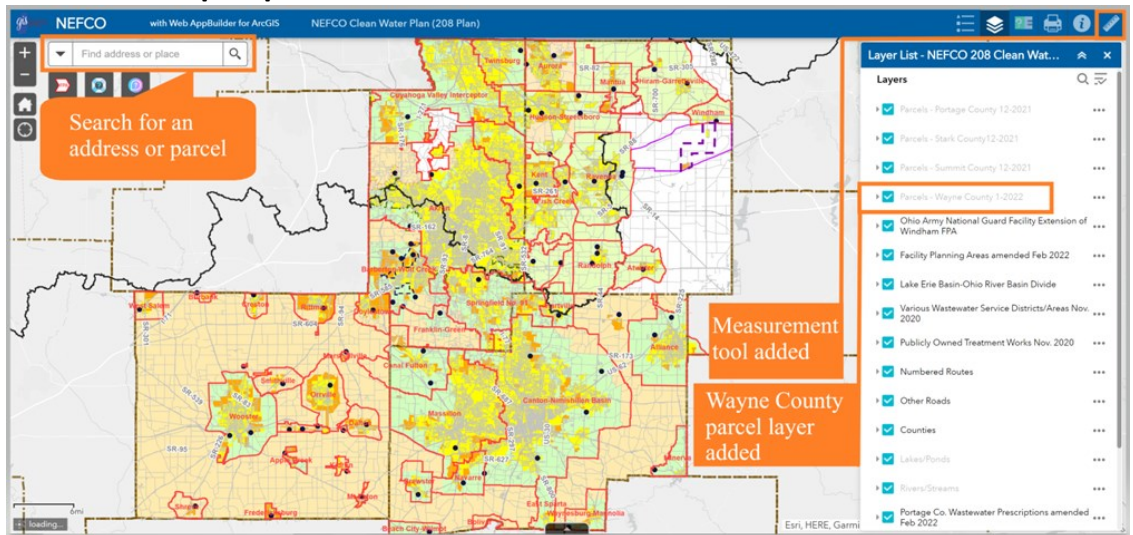


# NEFCO FORUM

June 2022

## NEFCO interactive online 208 Plan map improved

NEFCO’s interactive online 208 Plan map displays facilities planning areas (FPAs) and wastewater treatment prescriptions within each FPA that were developed by the Region’s wastewater management agencies (sewer authorities) with the advice of affected local units of government through NEFCO’s 208 Plan update process. The updated FPAs and wastewater treatment



prescriptions shown on the map were approved by the NEFCO General Policy Board on November 18, 2020, when it adopted the Clean Water (208) Plan update. The updates were then certified by Governor DeWine on September 21, 2021 and approved by the USEPA on February 17, 2022. Subsequent FPA wastewater treatment prescription amendments/updates have been incorporated in the map, as noted in the map’s county/FPA layer list.

NEFCO made several recent improvements to the online 208 Plan map. Viewers can now search for properties by addresses and parcel numbers to find wastewater prescriptions and FPAs. The online 208 Plan map now also contains parcel-level data for the entire four-county region (Portage, Stark, Summit, and Wayne Counties). Having parcel-level data for the region enables NEFCO’s staff and members, Ohio EPA, and the private sector to search for addresses and parcels on the 208 Plan map to quickly find available wastewater treatment options and for the pertinent FPA. It should be noted that the region’s parcel data when applied to the 208 Plan, may not match the boundaries for the FPAs and wastewater treatment prescriptions. A measurement tool has also been added to the website application, which allows viewers to measure the distance between any parcel and the nearest area currently served with sanitary sewer on the map. Please contact Tom LaPlante at [tlaplante@nefcoplanning.org](mailto:tlaplante@nefcoplanning.org) or 330-643-5042 with any questions regarding the FPAs, wastewater treatment prescriptions, or how to navigate the online 208 Plan map and search for parcels. The interactive online 208 Plan map may be accessed from NEFCO’s Clean Water (208) Plan webpage at <https://www.nefcoplanning.org/clean-water-plan-208-plan-overview/>.

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## ER&R Planning Update

NEFCO continues to work on the Economic Recovery & Resiliency (ER&R) plan which is being funded by a CARES Act Recovery Assistance grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). Through the grant, NEFCO is working collaboratively with communities and organizations in Portage, Stark, Summit and Wayne Counties to develop a comprehensive economic recovery and resiliency plan, including both short-term recovery projects and long-term resilience strategies.

Since 2020, NEFCO has conducted over 50 individual meetings with regional partners to discuss pandemic related impacts, issues, opportunities, and obstacles. From information we gathered from these meetings, we circulated two different surveys, surveying over 1,800 individuals from the financial, non-profit, education, public and private sectors.

The ER&R Planning process is being shaped not only by the interviews and surveys, but by the instrumental contributions of three subcommittees. The Regional Business, Workforce Development and Entrepreneurship, and Community Development Subcommittees include approximately 40 individuals collectively, comprised of experts from municipalities, non-profits, business organizations, small business assistance providers, workforce development entities, funders, and academic institutions.

NEFCO staff is working with the ER&R planning consultant, Environmental Design Group, on the development of the ER&R Plan. The draft Action Plan—a major component of the ER&R Plan—will be completed by June 10<sup>th</sup>, and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee will meet on June 17<sup>th</sup> to review the draft and other additional feedback. A draft of the full ER&R Plan will be available for review by the Regional CEDS Committee on approximately July 1<sup>st</sup>. The draft Plan will be available for the General Policy Board on July 6<sup>th</sup>. An executive summary will be included in the July 13<sup>th</sup> NEFCO Board mailout, and staff and the planning consultant will provide a presentation to the General Policy Board on July 20<sup>th</sup>.



## City of Akron awarded \$2 million EDA grant for renovation and expansion of Bounce Innovation Hub



On May 10<sup>th</sup>, the City of Akron was awarded a \$2 million U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant through the American Rescue Plan Act Economic Adjustment Assistance program for the renovation and expansion of the Bounce Innovation Hub. The Bounce Innovation Hub Expansion and Renovation Project will activate over 20,000 square feet of unused space at the facility for use by entrepreneurs. The project will greatly expand Bounce's incubator space and augment its ability to provide entrepreneurial support and development to startups. The investment will support more than 60 start-up businesses and entrepreneurs at the incubator through the addition of new technologies, such as 3D printing, as well as conference rooms and workspaces. The EDA investment will be matched with \$530,354 in local funds and is expected to create 100 jobs, retain 42 jobs, and generate \$2 million in private investment. The project will build on the successes Bounce has demonstrated, which will drive economic growth and make the NEFCO region more resilient. NEFCO staff provided technical assistance with the project and coordinated a site visit with staff from the EDA Chicago Regional Office.

## NEFCO awarded \$210,000 EDA 2022-2025 Partnership Planning Grant

On May 17<sup>th</sup>, NEFCO was awarded a U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) 2022-2025 Partnership Planning Grant. Under this grant, the EDA will provide NEFCO with \$70,000 (or a total of \$210,000) in federal funds each of the next three years to be matched with \$210,000 in local funds (cash), \$70,000 per year (50/50 federal local match). This grant enables NEFCO to continue to provide economic development planning services to its members, as an EDA Economic Development District (EDD), a designation NEFCO has held since 1978. These services include the preparation and maintenance of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS); the creation and maintenance of a Regional CEDS Committee; the availability of NEFCO staff to be part of various county and multicounty economic development committees; and the availability of staff to provide EDA grant application technical assistance. The grant period began retroactively on April 1, 2022 and will end on March 31, 2025.



## 2023-2028 CEDS planning update

NEFCO staff continues to work closely with the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee on the development of the 2023-2028 CEDS Plan. Staff is utilizing a combination of meetings and information gathering surveys to collect data and input that will be used in developing the various sections of the CEDS Plan. The Regional CEDS Committee has reviewed regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and continues to identify and refine target industries and strategic goals. Future phases of the CEDS Plan development will include the development of a strategic action plan and performance evaluation framework. The new CEDS Plan is due to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) by January 31, 2023.



Preparation and maintenance of the CEDS Plan maintains NEFCO's status as an EDA-designated Economic Development District and the region's eligibility for EDA grant funding. The CEDS Plan is fully updated every five years; every other year, NEFCO completes an Annual Performance Report, which evaluates the region's progress on the goals and objectives outlined in the CEDS Plan. The current CEDS Plan is from 2018. The 2023-2028 CEDS Plan will also incorporate the NEFCO Economic Recovery and Resiliency Plan, which is expected to be completed in July 2022.

## Current EDA funding opportunities

There are currently no open funding opportunities with the EDA. The next notice of funding opportunity for the Public Works/Economic Adjustment Assistance (PW/EAA) program will not be announced until after October 1<sup>st</sup>, when FY2023 begins. The PW/EAA program supports construction, non-construction, planning, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects. Eligible geographies include communities with a per capita median income of 80-percent or less than the national average or an unemployment rate of one percent or greater than the national average. A non-federal match of 50-percent is required. It is uncertain whether or not the pandemic will continue to be considered a "special need" or "natural disaster" for geographic eligibility, as it had with EDA CARES and ARPA-related funding opportunities; if this provision continues, the applicant would need to demonstrate how a proposed project will respond to the impact of the pandemic on the community/organization.



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Eligible applicants include political subdivisions, nonprofit organizations (acting in cooperation with a political subdivision), and institutions of higher education. Eligible applicants must apply at grants.gov. Projects must be consistent with the NEFCO CEDS Plan and EDA Investment Priorities. Please contact Nick Lautzenheiser at [nick@nefcoplanning.org](mailto:nick@nefcoplanning.org) if you have questions regarding the PW/EAA program or would like to discuss projects. For more information, please visit <https://eda.gov/funding-opportunities/>.

### All federal grants, including EDA grant applications, now require Unique Entity ID (UEI)

The federal government is transitioning from the DUNS to the Unique Entity ID (UEI) issued by SAM.gov for all entities applying for federal awards. All entities looking to apply for federal funds, including U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants, must have a UEI after April 1, 2022. For additional information regarding the transition from DUNS to UEI, please visit <https://SAM.gov>.

The EDA will also be updating some of the Grants.gov packages to incorporate the new versions of the ED-900 application forms. Applicants should be aware of this change, particularly if they are returning applicants and are familiar with the old ED-900 application forms.

**NEFCO FORUM**

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**MISSION STATEMENT**  
*To improve the region's quality of life, through collaborative planning efforts with NEFCO's area governments, in order to ensure environmental quality, orderly growth, and economic and community development*