Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
2020 Annual Performance Report

Northeast Ohio Four County Regional Planning
and Development Organization (NEFCO)
January 2020

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RESOLUTION NUMBER FY2020-004

RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHEAST OHIO FOUR COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (NEFCO) GENERAL POLICY BOARD ADOPTING AND AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) 2020 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

WHEREAS, the NEFCO region is undergoing significant changes in the structure of its economy; and

WHEREAS, the Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce, has designated the NEFCO region as an Economic Development District (EDD) based on the incidence of unemployment rates and the existence of the CEDS; and

WHEREAS, the NEFCO General Policy Board in conjunction with its 126 local units of government has formulated a regional economic development strategy and incident local place strategies entitled the CEDS 2020 Annual Performance Report; and

WHEREAS, the EDA requires the submittal of the CEDS 2020 Annual Performance Report by January 31, 2020 to maintain Economic Development District designation and eligibility for EDA funding; and

WHEREAS, communities in the Counties of Portage, Stark, Summit, and Wayne have participated in the formulation of the CEDS; and

WHEREAS, the Regional CEDS Committee has reviewed and commented on the CEDS 2020 Annual Performance Report;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NEFCO General Policy Board adopts the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2020 Annual Performance Report, its goals, strategies, and action items, and authorizes the submission of the report to the Economic Development Administration.

Certified as action taken by the NEFCO General Policy Board at its regular meeting of January 15, 2020

[Signature]

Todd Peetz, Secretary
NEFCO General Policy Board
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Annual Performance Report is updated annually by the Northeast Ohio Four County Regional Planning and Development Organization (NEFCO). This update reports recent trends observed between the issuance of the 2019 CEDS Annual Performance Report and the present time. The CEDS Plan can be found at NEFCO’s website, www.nefcoplanning.org. Preparation of the CEDS and the Annual Performance Report maintains eligibility of the NEFCO region’s communities to receive grants from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA).

The CEDS and the annual performance reports describe the region’s economic conditions, as well as the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. In 2020, NEFCO continues to analyze the economic health of the region by addressing the following questions: (1) Where are we going? (2) Where do we want to be? and, (3) How do we get there?

The 2020 Annual Performance Report spans the period between February 2019 and January 2020. It describes changing economic conditions in the region, including Portage, Stark, Summit, and Wayne Counties. The report details significant events and issues that have occurred over the past year, which have shaped NEFCO’s regional economic development planning work plan.

The regional economy continues to be stable. The region continues to invest in its core economic strengths: health care, information technology, and manufacturing. Amazon will locate a fulfillment center at the former Rolling Acres Mall in Akron and promises to employ 1,500. The Johnson Controls Hall of Fame Village continues to develop and be a major focus, not only for the City of Canton, but for the entire NEFCO region. The other principal cities of Kent and Wooster continue to invest in the revitalization of their respective downtowns, while collaborating with their local universities.

Cities like Barberton continue to battle economic resilience, enduring repetitive flooding and the loss of Babcock & Wilcox, its largest employer. Additional regional challenges include lack of shovel-ready sites, lack of office space, lack of natural gas availability, and transportation obstacles for the lower income workforce. The opioid crisis also continues to impact the region.

There are numerous opportunities for economic growth and prosperity in the region. The 27 Opportunity Zones offer attractive incentives for development and investment. The region has numerous universities and medical facilities, which continue to anchor economic growth. Regional partnerships such as the Elevate Greater Akron economic development strategy and a proposed Akron-Canton Metroplex branding illustrate the region’s strong cooperative spirit. Officials in Stark County continue to promote the expansion of U.S. Route 30, which will place the region at an economic advantage for businesses supporting the oil and gas industry.

The future economic strength of the region will be dependent on collaboration, public-private partnerships, workforce development, and quality of life enhancements. The region is poised to continue in a positive trajectory.
ADJUSTMENTS TO NEFCO’S STRATEGY

Report on Changing Economic Conditions and Adjustments

24-month Unemployment and Per Capita Income in the NEFCO Region
In the past two years, the region has experienced monthly unemployment rates roughly equivalent to that of the State of Ohio (see Figure 1). Seasonal peaks occurred during summer months and the holiday seasons. Unemployment levels were higher than the national average in each of the past 24 months. The highest rate occurred in January 2019, when the unemployment rate for the NEFCO region reached 5.7 percent.

Figure 1: 24-Month Unemployment Rates, November 2017 to October 2019

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, January 2020

Table 1 displays calculations of economic distress for counties and select cities and villages in the NEFCO region. Local governments may qualify for EDA assistance based on the economic distress of a census tract or a community’s per capita income. The data shown in Table 1 were obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics data available in January 2020 and the American Community Survey’s estimates of per capita income for a single point in time between 2014 and 2018.

City names in bold denote economically-distressed communities. A community can qualify as economically distressed either by its per capita income or unemployment rate. A community’s per capita income must be less than 80% of the U.S. per capita income ($26,097) or have a 24-month unemployment rate 1% or greater than the national average (3.8%). Cells without data indicate that statistics are not provided at this geographic level by the U.S. Census Bureau. In Portage County, the villages of Hiram and Windham and the cities of Kent and Ravenna have per capita income levels less than 80% of the national average. In Stark County, the cities of Alliance, Canton, and Massillon have per capita income levels less than 80% of the U.S.; Canton and Massillon both also have 24-month unemployment rates of 5.5%. In Summit County, the cities of Akron and Barberton and the villages of Lakemore and Mogadore...
have per capita income levels less than 80% of the U.S.; Akron and Barberton have 24-month unemployment averages of 5.2 and 5.1, respectively. In Wayne County, the City of Rittman has a per capita income level 66.1% of the national average.

**Table 1: Economic Distress in the NEFCO Region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of Government</th>
<th>24-month Unemployment % (BLS)</th>
<th>ACS PCMI 5-yr. est. (2014-2018)</th>
<th>Percentage of U.S. PCMI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portage County</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>$29,439</td>
<td>90.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village of Hiram</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$16,596</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Kent</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>$21,231</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Ravenna</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$23,689</td>
<td>72.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village of Windham</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$18,285</td>
<td>56.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stark County</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>$27,401</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Alliance</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$20,044</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Canton</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>$19,097</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Massillon</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>$23,869</td>
<td>74.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summit County</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>$32,055</td>
<td>98.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Akron</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>$23,430</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Barberton</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>$22,455</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village of Lakemore</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$25,203</td>
<td>77.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village of Mogadore</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$25,099</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne County</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>$26,822</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Rittman</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$21,554</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>$30,304</td>
<td>92.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>$32,621</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: American Community Survey; Bureau of Labor Statistics, December 2019
N/A – not available; statistics not provided at this geographic level

**Organizational Changes**

In June 2019, NEFCO hired a new, full-time Economic Development Planner to manage the agency’s regional economic development planning program, under the direction of NEFCO’s long-time Executive Director. The new planner will work closely with NEFCO’s Regional CEDS Committee to formulate the District’s economic development strategy and planning process.

The Regional CEDS Committee includes representatives from the NEFCO’s four counties and major cities, private sector representatives from the various county economic development boards, a university representative, and a network development specialist from a nonprofit entrepreneurial company (see Table 2). The Regional CEDS Committee is representative of the region’s principal economic interests and drives the CEDS process.

NEFCO’s Regional CEDS Committee and General Policy Board participate in the agency’s regional economic development planning program, directing the planning strategy, providing economic development updates, and assessing the progress of the region in implementing the CEDS.
Table 2: 2020 Regional CEDS Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Representing</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>EDA Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Betty Aylsworth</td>
<td>Ohio Agricultural Research &amp; Development Center</td>
<td>Program Coordinator</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregg Cramer</td>
<td>Greater Akron Chamber</td>
<td>Vice President, Economic Development</td>
<td>Private Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brad Ehrhart</td>
<td>Portage Development Board</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Private Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia Grospiron</td>
<td>JumpStart, Inc.</td>
<td>Network Development Director</td>
<td>Private Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray Hexamer</td>
<td>Stark Economic Development Board</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Private Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Millea</td>
<td>City of Wooster</td>
<td>Economic Development Director</td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Nau</td>
<td>Stark County Regional Planning Commission</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Pukys</td>
<td>Wayne Economic Development Council</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Private Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis Tubbs</td>
<td>Summit County Department of Community and Economic Development</td>
<td>Assistant Director</td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Wagner</td>
<td>Barberton Community Development Corp.</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Private Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abraham Wescott</td>
<td>City of Akron</td>
<td>Manager, Development</td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Wilke</td>
<td>City of Kent</td>
<td>Economic Development Director</td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fonda Williams</td>
<td>City of Canton</td>
<td>Deputy Mayor</td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total members = 13. Private sector/Higher Education Representatives = 7 (54%)

This roster of the 2020 Regional CEDS Committee represents the principal economic interests of the NEFCO region. Note: some updates or changes to this list may occur.

Table 3 shows the composition and affiliations of NEFCO’s General Policy Board for 2020. NEFCO’s governing board is the decision-making body for the organization. This General Policy Board is broadly representative of the principal economic interests of the region. There are 39 members from the counties of Portage, Stark, Summit, and Wayne and the cities of Akron, Canton, Kent, and Wooster. Membership composition is determined by the General Policy Board bylaws.
Table 3: 2020 NEFCO General Policy Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Bierlair</td>
<td>Portage Soil and Water Conservation District</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Diiorio</td>
<td>Portage County Health Commissioner</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vicki Kline</td>
<td>Portage County Commissioner</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todd Peetz</td>
<td>Portage County Regional Planning Commission</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gene Roberts</td>
<td>Portage County Sanitary Engineer</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Zizka</td>
<td>Freedom Township Trustee</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridget Susel</td>
<td>City of Kent Community Development Director</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Portage County</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith Bennett</td>
<td>Stark County Engineer</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doug Lane</td>
<td>North Canton Area Chamber of Commerce President</td>
<td>Private Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Maley</td>
<td>City of Massillon Economic Development Director</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vince Marion</td>
<td>City of Louisville Planning Director</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Mazzola</td>
<td>City of Alliance Planning Director</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Regula</td>
<td>Stark County Commissioner</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Troike</td>
<td>Stark County Sanitary Engineer</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Underwood</td>
<td>Stark County Regional Planning Commission</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Weedon</td>
<td>Stark Soil and Water Conservation District</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Moeglin</td>
<td>City of Canton Engineer</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stark County</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Brubaker</td>
<td>Summit County Engineer</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David DePasquale</td>
<td>Sagamore Hills Township Trustee</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Judge</td>
<td>City of Barberton Mayor</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Kohlmeier</td>
<td>CTI Engineering</td>
<td>Private Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly Miller</td>
<td>Summit County Department of Community &amp; Economic Dev.</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilene Shapiro</td>
<td>Summit County Executive</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dianne Sumego</td>
<td>dms water solutions, llc.</td>
<td>Private Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Weant</td>
<td>Summit County Sanitary Engineer</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Wilhite</td>
<td>Summit County Council President</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brad McKittrick</td>
<td>City of Akron Council member</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Horrigan</td>
<td>City of Akron Mayor</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Ludle</td>
<td>City of Akron Service Director</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharon Connor</td>
<td>City of Akron Council member</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich Swirsky</td>
<td>City of Akron Council member</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Tatam</td>
<td>City of Akron Housing &amp; Community Services Manager</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Tomic</td>
<td>City of Akron Comprehensive Planning Manager</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summit County</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becky Foster</td>
<td>Wayne County Commissioner</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor Hunt</td>
<td>Wayne County Planning Director</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Wheeler</td>
<td>City of Orrville Safety/Service Director</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Breneman</td>
<td>City of Wooster Mayor</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wayne County</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurt Princic</td>
<td>Ohio EPA – Northeast District Office</td>
<td>Public Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ohio EPA (Ex Officio)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Appointments pending*
A major focus for the Federal administration in 2019 has been Opportunity Zones (OZ). OZs are also now one of EDA’s investment priorities. Community leaders in the NEFCO region have begun targeting these areas for development and job creation. There are 27 OZs in the NEFCO region (16 in Summit County, eight in Stark County, two in Wayne County, and one in Portage County). Of the 27 OZs, 13 are located in the City of Akron and five in the City of Canton. As a result, economic development professionals in these areas have developed materials to help promote these OZs as preferred investment areas.

Figure 2: Opportunity Zones in NEFCO Region

Sources: U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2019; Portage County GIS; Stark County GIS; Summit County GIS; Wayne County GIS; Ohio Department of Transportation; Ohio Department of Natural Resources GIS
Summit County has developed a prospectus, which promotes its 16 OZs. The prospectus is tailored to market the OZs through the use of an ESRI geographic information systems story map on a designated website.¹ The City of Canton has partnered with the Stark Economic Development Board and the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce to develop an OZ booklet, which markets its five OZs, each clustered around major economic hubs of the city.²

NEFCO participated in Opportunity Zones (OZ) roundtable meetings in Alliance and Canton on July 31 and August 1. Representatives from the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council (WHORC), Small Business Administration, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Energy, U.S. EPA, and the EDA, including Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Dr. John Fleming and staff from the Chicago Regional Office joined community officials to discuss OZs and highlight projects in the two cities. Dr. Fleming stressed the importance of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning process and working with the regional Economic Development District (NEFCO).

NEFCO staff continues to work with area leaders to investigate project development within these zones, particularly relative to EDA grant funding. Staff also keeps the NEFCO General Policy Board updated on developments and OZ program information, including an expert presentation at its October 2019 meeting.

**A REGIONAL APPROACH**

As the four-county region’s Economic Development District, Areawide Planning Agency (water quality), and regional council of governments, NEFCO strives to address issues that cross county and watershed boundary lines. Member communities value the regional approach and understand the region is stronger when the counties and cities work together. NEFCO’s economic development program is guided by the following questions: Where are we going? Where do we want to be? And, how do we get there?

**Where are we going?**

Although the regional economy is relatively stable, community leaders are working to expand the economic base and improve the region’s resiliency. The region’s core industries – manufacturing, health care, and information technology – continue to drive the economy. The southeastern part of the region is focusing on the shale energy industry. With pipeline infrastructure and large ethane cracker plants under construction or proposed along the Ohio River Valley, the region is ripe to support petrochemical industries such as plastics manufacturing. The northern parts of Summit and Portage Counties continue to be attractive to logistics and transportation companies, given their superior highway accessibility. The legacy cities of Akron and Canton are making substantial investments in their downtowns. Akron and Canton have also invested in targeted city planning efforts. Akron’s reorganized Office of Integrated Development (OID) combines the planning and economic development divisions, streamlining its development processes. The OID recently issued its five-year strategic framework, which aims to create an equitable, prosperous Akron.³ Canton’s Comprehensive Plan focuses on augmenting its six major community asset regions, including the Pro Football Hall of Fame, Mercy Medical Center, Aultman Hospital, Downtown, Shorb neighborhood, and Timken.⁴ Construction on Canton’s downtown centerpiece, Centennial Plaza, highlights the city’s commitment to revitalizing its downtown, while

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¹ County of Summit, Opportunity Zones Prospectus, [https://sway.office.com/QEymAn7Dn4ssVpEb](https://sway.office.com/QEymAn7Dn4ssVpEb)
connecting the core to the Pro Football Hall of Fame Village development. The cities of Kent and Wooster are also revitalizing their downtowns to attract investment, while collaborating with their respective universities.

**Where do we want to be?**
Collaboration fosters a competitive region. Leaders in the Canton and Akron area have discussed the concept of marketing the combined metropolitan statistical areas (MSA) and re-branding the region as the Akron-Canton Metroplex. The Metroplex label would create a regional identity and build on the two metro areas’ shared strengths. The concept also elevates the region nationally, as the combined MSAs have a total population of 1.2 million. The City of Akron has teamed up with Stark State College to provide technical training and development for its employees. The region’s job centers are working with employers to identify workforce needs.

**How do we get there?**
The NEFCO region is poised to effectively address the challenges and capitalize on its numerous strengths and opportunities. The region is blessed to have strong leadership in not only in its local governments, but also in its private sector economic development organizations and nonprofit organizations who are working to create a strong economic ecosystem. In order to maintain the positive momentum and meet the goals of the CEDS, the region must continue the following:

- Continue regional collaborative efforts to foster economic development
- Continue investing in strategic economic development and planning initiatives
- Focus on regional strengths
- Identify and address regional economic development deficiencies
- Improve workforce development and training programs
- Have universities and vocational schools work with area’s employers to develop curricula and career programs to meet industry demand
- Remove barriers for underserved populations
- Improve transportation accessibility for lower income and carless households to employment centers

**Staff/capacity of Economic Development District to support the CEDS**
NEFCO hired a full-time economic development planner in June 2019 to manage the economic development planning program and CEDS process. In addition, two other full-time staff members assist with the economic development program, including the NEFCO Executive Director. The economic development program focuses on the CEDS planning process, working collaboratively with communities in the four-county region, and assisting members with potential projects for EDA grant consideration. The map on page 11 illustrates the distribution of EDA monies invested in the NEFCO region since 1980 (see Figure 3).

The NEFCO General Policy Board has committed matching funds to support the economic development program for the current fiscal year through June 2020. The Board has already passed a resolution committing the organization to providing the necessary matching funds as required under the three-year Partnership Planning Grant.
Figure 3: Economic Development Administration Investments in NEFCO Region

EDA Investments
- $71,001 - $300,000
- $300,001 - $700,000
- $700,001 - $1,200,000
- $1,200,001 - $2,000,000

Project Decade
- 1980s
- 1990s
- 2000s
- 2010s

Sources: Portage County GIS; Stark County GIS; Summit County GIS; Wayne County GIS; Ohio Department of Transportation; Ohio Department of Natural Resources GIS
REPORT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

The following activities were undertaken to support and implement NEFCO’s 2018 CEDS Update:

Economic Resilience
The NEFCO CEDS 2018 Update does address economic and environmental resilience. While the region is stable, there are areas vulnerable to natural hazards and economic disruptions. NEFCO is participating in a flooding task force for the City of Barberton, which continues to be affected by economically-disruptive flooding. Barberton was awarded a $595,000 grant through the Federal Emergency Management Agency to purchase and demolish up to 15 properties within a 100-year floodplain that experience repetitive damage. NEFCO’s Environmental Resources Technical Advisory Committee holds ongoing discussions on various environmental issues. NEFCO is also a member of Summit County’s Technical Advisory Committee, which reviews and recommends projects for funding by the Ohio Public Works Commission. Climate change and its impact on existing and planned infrastructure has been a discussion among the region’s city engineers.

Performance Evaluation by EDA
It is anticipated that the requisite agency evaluation by the EDA will occur during the last quarter of the grant.

NEFCO Region Economic Development Conditions
Staff reviews five area newspapers on a daily basis to stay current with economic development news and changes in the region. Significant closures are reported to the Economic Development Representative, and, when appropriate, meetings are requested to discuss projects that will assist a community with efforts to address economic challenges. Significant positive economic development stories are also noted.

Involvement on Regional Committees
During 2020 NEFCO’s Executive Director will continue to serve as a member of the local Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Additionally, the Executive Director serves as a TAC member of Summit County’s District 8 Integrating Committee, which recommends public infrastructure projects for funding by the Ohio Public Works Commission.

In 2010, NEFCO became part of a 12-county study to examine the effects of various future land use development patterns. A vision framework and list of recommendations were adopted in 2014 by the Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Consortium Board of Directors. Since that time, a Launch Board was formed and convenes quarterly meetings to advance the plan, Vibrant NEO 2040. NEFCO’s Executive Director serves as the 2nd Vice Chairman and Secretary. 2019 marked the second year of the Vibrant NEO Champions awards. These awards were given to organizations and individuals demonstrating exceptional leadership in the advancement of the Vibrant NEO Vision. NEFCO served on the award selection committee.

Updates and Communication
Staff communicates opportunities and provides updates on issues that affect the region on at least a monthly basis to its members. NEFCO’s monthly General Policy Board meetings provide a forum for this communication. Time-sensitive information on new initiatives and other information are e-mailed to economic development professionals. NEFCO utilizes its website to communicate public events, important meetings, and dates of the public General Policy Board meetings. NEFCO’s board meetings also occasionally feature speakers on topics selected by staff and/or requested by Board members.

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2019, the Assistant Director of the Summit County Department of Community and Economic Development discussed Opportunity Zones.

Planning Assistance
NEFCO assisted area officials, community leaders, and professionals with various projects of importance to local communities. In 2019, NEFCO has met with the Cities of Canton, Kent, and Wooster; Summit County; Stark County Regional Planning Commission; Wayne Economic Development Council; Portage Development Board; Strengthening Stark; Barberton Community Development Corporation; the Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences; NEFCO members; and other communities and organizations seeking EDA grant assistance.

Implementation Assistance
NEFCO has provided letters of support and other entities whose projects and goals complement those of NEFCO. Staff continues to assist local governments with the implementation of infrastructure investments and programs. In 2019, NEFCO participated in the Ohio Public Works Commission infrastructure project program (Program Year 34) as a member of the six-person Technical Advisory Committee of Summit County’s District 8 Public Works Integrating Committee.

Technical Assistance
NEFCO staff provides information to the public and private sectors on critical issues affecting the region, including Census data updates, federal and state legislative updates, and funding notices. NEFCO’s administration of two U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-funded brownfields assessment grants has made the agency a critical resource for brownfields redevelopment planning. Additionally, staff’s close relationship with the U.S. EPA and the Ohio EPA allows NEFCO to assist its members in obtaining quick answers to questions on environmental issues.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWS

The following regional economic development news items were reported and distributed to NEFCO communities and General Policy Board members. Dates of the news items are provided in parentheses.

TimkenSteel eliminates 55 positions and lays off 80-90 additional employees in recent restructuring moves (July 2019)
NEFCO has notified the EDA of reductions in employment at TimkenSteel in Canton. In recent restructuring moves, TimkenSteel issued layoff notices to 80-90 employees (Repository) and eliminated another 55 positions. The reductions are in response to market conditions and customer demand. TimkenSteel also replaced its CEO.

NEFCO staff and Chairman participate in Opportunity Zones Roundtable meetings held in Alliance and Canton with federal officials, including EDA (August 2019)
NEFCO participated in Opportunity Zones (OZ) roundtable meetings in Alliance and Canton on July 31 and August 1. Representatives from the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council (WHORC), Small Business Administration, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Energy, U.S. EPA, and the EDA, including Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Dr. John Fleming and staff from the Chicago Regional Office joined community officials to discuss OZs and highlight projects in the two cities. Dr. Fleming stressed the importance of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning process and working with the regional Economic Development District (NEFCO).

Construction has begun on Canton’s Centennial Plaza (August 2019)
Construction on downtown Canton’s centerpiece officially began August 27. The Centennial Plaza will
feature a football-shaped green surrounded by trees and outdoor seating. There will be covered stage with a video board and four, 75-foot vertical arches. Additional plaza features will include a café, public restrooms, digital kiosks, a sound system, fire pits, and a civic sculpture. The total construction cost is estimated at $12.3 million and is expected to be completed before the city hosts the NFL Centennial Celebration in September 2020. The Plaza is being funded primarily through the comprehensive plan fund, with additional revenues from the state and private donations.

**Amazon to locate on former Rolling Acres site** (August 2019)
Amazon announced it will build a 2.7 million square-foot fulfillment center on the site of the former Rolling Acres Mall on Romig Road in Akron. The facility is expected to employ 1,500 full-time workers. Construction began in September and is expected to be completed in fall 2020. Additionally, Amazon announced it will open a second facility in Akron, a delivery station on Gilchrist Road. The delivery station will employ approximately 200 and utilize a 45,000 square-foot warehouse previously used by the Keebler and Kellogg companies.

**Smithers Group to relocate HQ to downtown Akron** (September 2019)
Smithers Group announced it will move its headquarters and about 200 employees from its West Market Street, Akron location to a redeveloped Austen BioInnovation Institute campus in downtown Akron. The $16.9 million redevelopment will include a research and development facility. As part of its planned move from West Market Street to the former Austen BioInnovation Institute location in downtown Akron, Smithers Group is expected to hire another 84 highly-skilled employees. These new hires — many with advanced degrees — will likely be added in upcoming years and contribute to the company’s planned research and development center.

**Hall of Fame Village development continues** (September 2019)
A merger between Johnson Controls Hall of Fame Village and Gordon Pointe Acquisition Corporation has been finalized. The merger will create a new publicly traded company, “The Hall of Fame Resort and Media Company.” The deal infuses significant capital, which will help spur development of the second phase of the Hall of Fame Village, estimated at nearly $300 million.

Johnson Controls Hall of Fame Village confirmed it will also purchase the McKinley Grand Hotel in downtown Canton for $3.8 million and make more than $20 million in renovations. The purchase comes after The Village secured a 15-year, 75% tax abatement on improvements from the City and Board of Education. The City also approved a $3.5 million loan to the Hall of Fame Village to assist with the renovations. Though the hotel will be closed during renovations, representatives are hopeful it will reopen prior to the 2020 enshrinement.

The National Football League (NFL) announced it will invest up to $10 million for the development of the Hall of Fame Village project in Canton. Details on the timeline and specific amount of the contribution are not currently available.

**BioHio reorganizes under the Ohio State University** (September 2019)
The BioHio Research Park on the campus of the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) will become part of the Ohio State University’s College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CFAES). BioHio, which aims to advance research and agricultural technologies into private sector commercialization, had operated independently since 2010. University officials believe there is greater potential for BioHio under the umbrella of the OSU. (Daily Record) NEFCO, years ago, assisted the City of Wooster and Wayne County in securing an EDA grant for Pounden Hall, part of the BioHio Research Park.
Summa to vacate St. Thomas by 2022; to build new behavioral health center on Summa campus (October)
Summa Health announced it will vacate St. Thomas Hospital and construct a new 60-bed behavioral health facility on its Akron City Hospital campus by 2022. The 14-bed detox unit will be relocated to the campus, as well. The $60 million project is in accordance with Summa Health’s master facility plan.

US-30 Expansion project in Stark County progresses (November 2019)
The Regional Transportation Improvement Project (RTIP) representing officials from Stark, Carroll, and Columbiana County was awarded an $18 million Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation for the U.S. Route 30 expressway extension. The BUILD grant will help fund the nearly three-mile, $116.7 million highway expansion from Trump Avenue eastward to State Route 44 near East Canton. Of the $900 million in BUILD grants approved, this was the sole project from Ohio. The project has been identified as a key economic development component of the region’s growing shale energy industry.

Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce, Strengthening Stark to market Akron-Canton region to businesses using plastics in manufacturing (November 2019)
The Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce is poised to hire the Ohio River Corridor Company to help market the Akron-Canton region to businesses utilizing plastics in their manufacturing. The proposed hire is a recommendation from the Strengthening Stark economic development initiative, which is hoping to capitalize on businesses looking to locate near the Monaca, Pennsylvania Cracker Plant. The Ohio River Corridor Company is a petrochemical site selection and commercial real estate services company that focuses along the Ohio River.

Bridgestone’s Akron race tire plant to open by end of 2020 (November 2019)
Bridgestone Americas Inc. announced its plans to open a new race tire plant in Akron by the end of 2020. The facility, which will be a few blocks from the company’s Technical Center, will include both new construction and renovation of an existing structure. The 80,000-square-foot plant will produce Firestone Firehawk race tires, which will be featured in IndyCar racing.

Walco Lift Corp. moves from Tallmadge to Streetsboro (November 2019)
Walco Lift Corp., a company that manufactures lift gates for trucks, announced it will move from Tallmadge to Streetsboro to accommodate its growing business. Walco plans to invest more than $2 million in improvements to an existing facility on Miller Parkway in Streetsboro. The move will bring 185 jobs and $9.1 million in payroll to Streetsboro.

Clinton Aluminum to move to Norton (November 2019)
Clinton Aluminum has purchased property from the City of Norton to build a new 230,000 square-foot aluminum cutting and shaping facility. The company is moving from its current location in the Village of Clinton to the Norton site at the intersection of Fairland and Eastern Road, property purchased by the City earlier this year from the Summit Metro Parks. Clinton Aluminum will employ about 120 people at the new facility.

Nexen holds grand opening of its $5.2 million tech center in Richfield (November 2019)
Nexen Corp. held a grand opening of its $5.2 million tech center on Wheatley Road in the Village of Richfield. The Korean company is the world’s 20th largest tire maker and uses the tech center to design and test equipment, replacement tires, molds, and compounds.

Green City Council Oks deals to secure 237 tech jobs (November 2019)
The City of Green has executed agreements with two companies, which will retain 88 tech positions and create another 149 jobs over the next five years. Glassdoor Inc. and Surgere Inc. are both moving to larger
facilities within Green. Each received five-year municipal economic development grants from the City as incentives to encourage expansion, while staying in Green. Per the terms of the agreements, both firms have committed to remain in Green for the next 10 years.

**Community leaders discuss Akron-Canton Metroplex idea** (November 2019)

Officials in the cities of Akron and Canton are discussing the idea of combining the Akron and Canton metropolitan statistical areas (MSA) and branding this conurbation the “Metroplex.” The Metroplex concept demonstrates collaboration to expand the region’s visibility and positioning while retaining unique character, infrastructure, and local identity. The region shares an interstate, a regional airport, and numerous shared assets like the Pro Football Hall of Fame, NEOMED, Stark State College, polymers, and shale. The combined population of the two MSAs is 1.2 million, which would help the region better compete for resources and attention.

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**EVALUATION OF PROGRESS ON ACTION PLAN AND GOALS**

1. **Support programs that diversify local and regional economies and which build a strong regional economy capable of recovering from natural disasters and economic setbacks.**

   **Encourage programs and projects that create and retain jobs**
   The City of Akron has reorganized and consolidated its planning and economic development departments into an Office of Integrated Development. The new department promotes enhanced coordination and collaboration and aims to streamline development and improve interdepartmental communication. Through the Elevate Greater Akron program, the City of Akron works closely with Summit County and the Greater Akron Chamber on business retention and expansion (BR&E). Elevate Greater Akron targets mid-sized business growth through a five-tier strategy: economic inclusion and opportunity; talent and skill development; downtown and job hub development; innovation and high potential start-ups; and connect and leverage resources to support business growth. The Portage Development Board hosts monthly meetings with economic development professionals around Portage County to review updates on project and programs. The Wayne Economic Development Council (WEDC) works with the cities of Wooster, Orrville, and Rittman. The WEDC has focused on better understanding company needs and has placed an emphasis on workforce development pilot programs. The City of Canton and Stark County are focusing redevelopment efforts around six major investment areas (and five opportunity zones). Focus areas include the Hall of Fame Village, Aultman Hospital, and the Downtown Innovation District.

   **Support entrepreneurial, innovative and technological development**
   The Wayne Economic Development Council is working closely with the College of Wooster to develop a culture of entrepreneurship. The City of Kent is meeting with Kent State University to work on innovation and entrepreneurial projects.

   **STATUS: MAKING PROGRESS**

2. **Encourage the development of industries that support Northeast Ohio’s economic clusters**
   The NEFCO region’s three main industries include health care, information technology, and manufacturing. Hospitals throughout the region continue to make significant investments. Aultman Hospital in Canton has announced plans to construct a $28 million Cancer Center on its campus. Canton’s Mercy Medical Center has signed a nonbinding letter of intent to explore the possibility of becoming a member of the Cleveland Clinic health system. There have also been major construction

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6 Greater Akron Chamber, Elevate Great Akron, [https://greaterakronchamber.org/about-the-chamber/elevate-greater-akron](https://greaterakronchamber.org/about-the-chamber/elevate-greater-akron)
additions at Akron Children’s Hospital and Summa Health Center in Akron. Summa Health also announced it will vacate St. Thomas Hospital and construct a new $60 million, 60-bed behavioral health facility on its Akron City Hospital campus by 2022.

Two information technology firms have made commitments to remain in the region. Surgere and Glassdoor both signed agreements to remain in the City of Green. The two firms also plan to make expansions, retain 88 jobs, and create an additional 149 jobs. The City of Canton is marketing its downtown Innovation District to attract more technology-based jobs.

Manufacturing continues to be a focus for the region. Bridgestone has broken ground on a new 80,000-square-foot race tire manufacturing facility near the company’s Technical Center in Akron. Nexen opened its new $5.2 research and development center in the Village of Richfield, where it will test tires and equipment. Smithers Group announced it will move its headquarters and about 200 employees to a redeveloped Austen BioInnovation Institute campus in downtown Akron. The $16.9 million redevelopment will also include a research and development facility. Smithers Group is expected to hire another 84 highly-skilled employees.

**STATUS: MAKING PROGRESS**

3. **Build intergovernmental and public-private partnerships that place a high value on working cooperatively to address the region’s needs**

NEFCO’s General Policy Board and Regional CEDS Committee represent the collaboration between public and private sectors within the region as they make decisions affecting the regional economy. The majority of the 13-member committee is employed in the private sector. Both the Board and the Regional CEDS Committee drive the economic development strategy and work plan of NEFCO.

There are a number of strong public-private partnerships throughout the NEFCO region. All counties work closely with their respective private economic development board: Portage Development Board, Stark Economic Development Board, Greater Akron Chamber, and the Wayne Economic Development Council. Elevate Greater Akron is a strategic and inclusive economic development partnership between the City of Akron, Summit County and the Greater Akron Chamber. Elevate Greater Akron focuses on supporting small and mid-sized business growth, inclusion and opportunity, workforce talent development, downtown and job hub development, innovation and high potential start-ups, and leveraging resources to support business growth. The Wayne Economic Development Council collaborates with Wayne County and the cities of Wooster, Orrville, and Rittman to attract business growth. Strengthening Stark – a collaboration between the Stark Economic Development Board, the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Stark Community Foundation, and communities in Stark County – is an economic and social development plan for Stark County.  

There are even multi-county collaborative efforts afoot in the NEFCO region. The Greater Akron Chamber, Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce, and community leaders are discussing a new “branding” of the region as the Akron-Canton Metroplex, to market the commonalities of the region while maintaining separate identities. Both chambers and Strengthening Stark are also working to market the Akron-Canton region to the petrochemical and plastics industries. This effort is strengthened by the region’s efforts to expand the US-30 expressway in Stark County, which will spur economic development and connect the NEFCO region to the shale energy region in the Ohio River Valley.

**STATUS: SUCCESSFULLY MET GOAL**

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4. **Promote the redevelopment of blighted, underused, or vacant, and environmentally-challenged sites with high market potential**

NEFCO has been involved in a number of activities that directly address this goal. VibrantNEO identified the remediation and reuse of vacant industrial sites as one of its priorities. NEFCO has completed its U.S. EPA Brownfields Assessment grant, the second grant of this type for NEFCO. The 600,000 grant assessed approximately 20 properties in Summit County, including the former Rolling Acres Malls site, which will become a new Amazon Fulfillment Center employing 1,500. Staff also provides technical assistance to its members and to others in Northeast Ohio, informing the public and private sector of how these EPA grants can help foster redevelopment. To date, no projects have led to applications for EDA grants; however, it is still relatively early since NEFCO’s involvement precedes remediation. NEFCO will continue outreach efforts to inform Summit County communities of the opportunity to consider brownfields redevelopment and the promotion of sustainable development through the reuse of existing underused properties and facilities. To date, NEFCO has been actively involved in the environmental assessment of over 30 properties, leading to the generation of over $41 million in private investment and the creation of over 250 jobs. The Amazon Fulfillment Center will add another $100 million in investment and create over 1,500 jobs.

The city of Akron has actively promoted the redevelopment of its downtown. Major projects include the Bowery redevelopment, CitiCenter, Former Cascade Hotel, Law Building, and Mayflower Building. The city is revitalizing these vacant and underused buildings into luxury apartments, offices, and retail space. Akron is promoting downtown living to complement its $31 million Main Street Promenade project, which will include a cycle track, widened pedestrian pathways, green infrastructure and storm water management, and public transit improvements.

Portage, Stark, and Summit Counties all have active land banks that work to eliminate blight and prepare properties for reuse. Wayne County is actively working on developing a county land bank for addressing blight.

**STATUS: SUCCESSFULLY MET GOAL**

5. **Support existing programs that build human capital**

NEFCO continues to assist its communities with obtaining assistance to create and retain jobs and strengthen the regional economy through diversification and innovation. During 2019 NEFCO provided technical assistance to several communities exploring potential EDA grant opportunities.

NEFCO is meeting with its members to better understand how the various communities in the region work with public workforce entities and private development agencies on training and retaining its workforce for current and future job demands. NEFCO will need to continue to gain a better understanding of how the region’s programs and resources for workforce development are addressing the needs of the area’s companies.

Stark State College is working to address the workforce development needs of the region. Through Stark State’s Workforce Training program offer employers the opportunity to customize courses and curricula to effectively train employees. Stark State College initiated new commercial driver’s license (CDL) program, which addresses need for more commercial truck drivers. City of Akron employees are eligible for CDL program tuition-free.

A number of challenges still remain. Addressing the workforce skills gap continues to be one of region’s chief economic weaknesses. Community officials and employers will need to continue to collaborate with high schools, vocational schools, and colleges. Summit County is aggressively pushing its jobs hubs as employment centers. Transportation deficiencies continue to be a problem for
the workforce, especially lower-income residents and carless households. Public transportation options are limited and hamper the ability of some residents to secure employment. Wooster and Wayne County are starting a new program to provide transit passes for qualified lower-income residents who reside or work up to 3 miles beyond City of Wooster limits.

**STATUS: SLIGHT PROGRESS**

**6. To the extent possible, promote the integration of the CEDS with other regional plans**

NEFCO enjoys an excellent working relationship with its two metropolitan planning organizations in the region: the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) and the Stark County Area Transportation Study (SCATS). These agencies are responsible for transportation planning and are required to produce transportation plans every four years. Covering similar geographic areas, NEFCO, AMATS, and SCATS share population, land use, and other data for planning purposes and report production. AMATS and SCATS share their transportation plans with NEFCO, and NEFCO shares its water quality management plan (208 Clean Water Plan) and economic development plan (CEDS). NEFCO is a member of the AMATS Technical Advisory Committee, which provides technical recommendations to the AMATS governing board.

NEFCO is also focused on ensuring its 208 Plan and CEDS Plan are consistent with other regional plans, including the four county comprehensive plans, Strengthening Stark, and other local comprehensive plans.

**STATUS: MAKING PROGRESS**

**7. Promote programs that support sustainability and quality of life for the region**

NEFCO participates as a Board officer for the Vibrant NEO Launch Board, which aims to plan for a sustainable, resilient region. NEFCO staff sits on the AMATS and Summit County District 8 technical advisory committees, recommending transportation and public infrastructure projects. NEFCO is also an active member of the Cuyahoga River Area of Concern Advisory Committee, which has developed a remedial action plan to improve water quality. NEFCO was awarded an $800,000 from the U.S. EPA to remove the Canal Diversion Dam on the Cuyahoga River. The grant award marks an exciting 2019 for the Cuyahoga River, which celebrated the 50th anniversary of the 1969 fire and the state water trail designation by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

The region is embracing active transportation and recreational amenities. AMATS has published its Active Transportation Plan, which aims to enhance safety and transportation options for pedestrians and bicyclists. Kent State University and the University of Akron have developed bike share programs. These quality of life improvements are important for regional economic growth.

**STATUS: SUCCESSFULLY MET GOAL**

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2020 Goals and Objectives
The following goals and objectives have been reviewed and approved by the NEFCO General Policy Board.

Support programs that diversify local and regional economies and which build a strong regional economy capable of recovering from natural disasters and economic setbacks.
Objectives:
- Encourage programs and projects that create and retain jobs
- Support entrepreneurial, innovative and technological development
- Support efforts that will make the region more globally competitive

Encourage the development of industries that support Northeast Ohio’s economic clusters
Objectives:
- Support projects that contribute toward strengthening the region’s targeted industries, including those in manufacturing, health care, and information technology
- Support activities that complement the targeted as well as other existing industries in the region

Build intergovernmental and public-private partnerships that place a high value on collaboration by working cooperatively to address the region’s needs.
Objectives:
- Support projects that are consistent with the general plan of the appropriate unit of government
- Encourage collaborative efforts in order to reduce duplication in government services and resources
- Explore opportunities to collaborate with private economic development entities

Promote the redevelopment of blighted, underused, or vacant and environmentally-challenged sites with high market potential.
Objectives:
- Encourage programs that support and pursue state and federal brownfields grant programs
- Encourage counties and local governments to identify potential sites for brownfields assessments and cleanups
- Support projects that preserve greenspace, either through innovative design or through measures taken to ensure more compact development

Support existing programs that build human capital
Objectives:
- Gain an understanding of how the region’s programs and resources for workforce development are addressing the needs of the area’s companies
- Support the continued growth and success of programs that train or develop workers and entrepreneurs

To the extent possible, promote the integration of the CEDS with other regional plans
Objectives:
- Identify existing regional plans
- Identify common themes, goals, aspects, etc. that the plans share
- Hold for discussion major aspects of the plans that appear to be inconsistent or in conflict
Promote programs that support sustainability and quality of life in the region

Objectives:

- Support economic development possibilities tied to the local food industry and activities that improve the local food infrastructure
- Explore regional solutions for identified problems/challenges impeding the success of local food efforts
- Continue involvement with Vibrant NEO and assist, as resources allow, in implementing measures recommended by Vibrant NEO to move toward a more sustainable region

### 2020 Timeline for Goals and Action Items

#### Goal 1: Support programs that diversify local and regional economies and which build a strong regional economy capable of recovering from natural disasters and economic setbacks.

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Meet with NEFCO region county emergency management agencies regarding disaster resiliency planning

Vibrant NEO participation

Monitor changes in regional economy

Assist communities responding to economic restructuring and layoffs

Identify communities facing economic distress and notify those eligible for EDA assistance

#### Goal 2: Encourage the development of industries that support Northeast Ohio’s economic clusters

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Attend meetings that support technology/entrepreneurial development

Identify communities facing economic distress and notify those eligible for EDA assistance

Share Census Bureau information and updates

#### Goal 3: Build intergovernmental and public-private partnerships that place a high value on collaboration by working cooperatively to address the region’s needs

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Identify communities facing economic distress and notify those eligible for EDA and other grant assistance

Convene Regional CEDS Committee meetings

Meet with community and regional economic development partners

Publish NEFCO Forum Newsletters
### Goal 4: Promote the redevelopment of blighted, underused, or vacant and environmentally-challenged sites with high market potential.

- Pursue grant opportunities for brownfield assessment and cleanup
- Support local and regional brownfields redevelopment initiatives
- Identify communities facing economic distress and notify those eligible for EDA and other grant assistance

### Goal 5: Support existing programs that build human capital

- Meet and network with region’s workforce development agencies and colleges/universities
- Notify communities, universities, and organizations of EDA and other grant opportunities

### Goal 6: To the extent possible, promote the integration of the CEDS with other regional plans

- Support community comprehensive planning efforts in NEFCO region
- Participate in Summit County’s District 8 Technical Advisory Committee
- Participate in AMATS Technical Advisory Committee
- Identify/notify communities and organizations eligible for EDA and other grant assistance

### Goal 7: Promote programs that support sustainability and quality of life in the region

- Vibrant NEO participation
- Support economic development initiatives for local foods and related infrastructure
- Support local and regional bicycle and pedestrian planning initiatives
- Support recreational and open space planning and development