University Center Showcase for Region 5 to be held in Cleveland on April 21 and 22

Northeast Ohio will be the location of the University Center Showcase for Region 5 on April 21 and 22. University Centers are funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, which also partially funds NEFCO’s regional economic development program. These centers provide high-quality services to assist economic development professionals, local governments, and the general public in matters concerning economic development, regional issues, policy, and urban planning. Many of these services are provided free of charge.

Speakers will present on the role of manufacturing in local economies, fundamentals of economic development, the Midwest workforce, and other topics.

This FREE showcase will take place at Cleveland State University’s Levin College of Urban Affairs in Cleveland from Tuesday April 21: 1 P.M. – 5 P.M. and Wednesday April 22, 8 A.M. – 3 P.M. The deadline for registration has been extended. For a conference agenda and more information, please visit www.nefcoplanning.org or contact Sylvia Chinn-Levy.

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Brownfields Assessment Program Outreach Begins

NEFCO staff has met with bankers, small business lenders, community organizations, and local governments to distribute information about our brownfields assessment program, funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA). Most recently, we made a presentation to the Township Association of Summit County. NEFCO’s brownfields program has funds available to begin the process of redeveloping/reusing vacant properties in Summit County that may be contaminated by hazardous substances or petroleum pollutants.

Please help us get the word out on this program. More information may be obtained by visiting www.nefcoplanning.org or contacting Sylvia Chinn-Levy. Staff is also available to speak at meetings or before groups that may want to learn more about the program. A similar program is also available in Stark County.

Brownfields Program Success Story
25 West Miller, City of Akron

A Save-A-Lot grocery store opened in late January 2015 on the site of a former brownfield and vacant grocery store, which had been used for various activities including a machine shop.

The store employs 11 full-time workers, and is located in a low-income neighborhood of Akron also considered a "food desert" (a place where residents lack easy access to fresh and healthy food). This property was among the first in NEFCO's brownfields assessment program, and no clean-up was involved.

2015 National Brownfields Conference

Want more information on brownfields redevelopment? Attend the bi-annual 2015 National Brownfields Conference, "Brownfields 2015: Sustainable Communities Start Here" in Chicago on September 2-4. Collaborating with the Cuyahoga Department of Development, NEFCO’s brownfields program coordinator, Sylvia Chinn-Levy, will present “A Tale of Two Coalitions.” Conference information can be found at www.brownfieldsconference.org. For more information, contact Sylvia Chinn-Levy.
NEOSCC wins prestigious Daniel Burnham Award

A 12-county, three-year planning/visioning effort in which NEFCO participated recently won the American Planning Association’s Daniel Burnham Award, named for a comprehensive or general plan that advances the science and art of planning. The award honors America's most famous planner, Daniel Burnham, for his contributions to the planning profession and to a greater awareness of the benefits of good planning. NEFCO’s Executive Director Joe Hadley served as a board member of the Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Consortium (NEOSCC), which produced VibrantNEO 2040, a vision document for northeast Ohio. The efforts of the NEOSCC, funded in part by a $4.25 million U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), with in-kind services from NEFCO and other Consortium members, and cash contributions by others, called attention to land use and infrastructure trends that have weakened our region’s core cities and have produced unsustainable and expensive growth patterns. The vision, representing a public/private/non-profit collaborative effort, undertook a large-scale public outreach/engagement process to determine preferred choices that could be made now to create a more vibrant future. The result, VibrantNEO 2040, reflects feedback from participants who indicated the desire to strengthen established communities, increase transportation choices, preserve and protect natural resources, and promote collaboration and efficiency.

Mr. Hadley said: “With this regional context now available, VibrantNEO 2040 represents an opportunity for communities, counties, businesses and citizens to voluntarily use the information collected and developed by the NEOSCC staff and consultants to help plan their future and consider listed suggestions for possible action.”

Vibrant NEO 2040 and other APA award winners will be honored at the 2015 National Planning Awards luncheon April 20, 2015, at the Washington State Convention Center in Seattle, Washington. The plan is featured in the April 2015 issue of Planning magazine.

Visit www.neoscc.org for details on VibrantNEO 2040.
Stark County Failing Home Sewage Treatment Systems Priority Analysis

NEFCO is working with the Stark County Metropolitan Sewer District and the Stark County Health Department on determining a priority for extending sewers to areas that the Health Department has determined to have above average failure rates for Home Sewage Treatment Systems (HSTs). The age of the system, number of bedrooms, pollution potential (e.g., proximity to drinking water supply), and the E. coli sample results are some of the weighted criteria.

An in-field inventory of storm drains, ditches, and streams has been completed for each of the 11 “Priority” areas: North Lawrence (Lawrence Twp.), East Greenville (Tuscarawas Twp.), Justus (Sugarcreek Twp.), Harmon (Sugarcreek Twp.), Moreland Allotment (Canton Twp.), East Tuscarawas (Canton Twp.), States (Lexington Twp.), Limaville (Lexington Twp.), Nellabrook (Lexington Twp.), Lynn Park (Marlboro Twp.), and Uniontown (Lake Twp.). These areas are located in four watersheds: the Mahoning (4), Nimishillen (2), Sugar Creek (1), and Tuscarawas (4). Local Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) studies were used to determine the status and sources of impairment as determined by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly, the Soil Conservation Service) methodology will be used for time of concentration, assuming that the flow is shallow concentrated distances greater than 300 feet between septic leach field to water sources.

NEFCO and the health department will start sampling for E. coli as soon as there are three consecutive dry days of weather to meet sampling protocol. Two rounds of sampling for each hotspot need to be completed within 30-days of one another. The Stark County Metropolitan Sewer District will be performing all the lab work on the samples. The sanitary engineering department is also providing NEFCO staff with data on the feasibility of connecting these priority areas to sewers which, along with the community’s interest/willingness to provide funds, will also play a factor in the final ranking. Once all these data, both mapping and sampling, have been collected, NEFCO, in concert with the Sewer District and Health Department, will begin to prioritize the areas. Please contact Laura DeYoung for more details.

Dawn DeColibus is NEFCO’s new part-time Water Quality Planner. She graduated from Ohio Northern University with a B.S. in field biology, and from Ball State University with a M.S. in biology. Dawn has worked on multiple studies examining aquatic ecology and interned at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. She loves to learn about plants, but algae is her favorite! Out of the office, Dawn likes to read and listen to music. Dawn’s last name will be changing to Koenig in the middle of May.