

# NEFCO

## NORTHEAST OHIO FOUR COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

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*Richard Regula, Chairman*

*Joseph Hadley, Jr., Executive Director*

April 14, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
United States Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, DC 20590

SUBJECT: *Reimagining the Gateway* East Main Corridor Project, RAISE Grant Application: Kent, Ohio

Dear Mr. Secretary,

The Northeast Ohio Four County Regional Planning and Development Organization (NEFCO) is pleased to offer its full support to the City of Kent for the *Reimagining the Gateway* East Main Corridor Project for funding under the U.S. Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program.

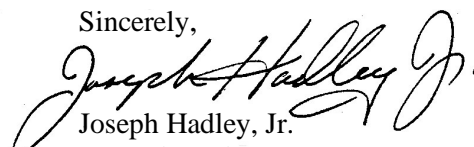
As the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration's designated Economic Development District for Portage, Stark, Summit, and Wayne Counties, Ohio, NEFCO is focused on preparing and implementing a locally based, regionally driven economic development plan. The *Reimagining the Gateway* East Main Corridor Project is consistent with NEFCO's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, which aims to build a strong, resilient regional economy, foster effective transportation access, and support projects that contribute toward strengthening the region's targeted industries.

The *Reimagining the Gateway* East Main Corridor Project – a collaborative partnership between the City of Kent, Kent State University (KSU), and the Portage Area Regional Transit Authority (PARTA) – will provide safe, efficient, and improved community connectivity, promoting economic development and job accessibility in an economically-diverse area. The project will make significant multi-modal improvements to a congested, high-crash corridor, facilitating safe circulation and access to downtown Kent and Kent State University. *Reimagining the Gateway* will significantly improve traffic flow for motorists and transit, while reducing speeds and making crossings safer for pedestrians and cyclists. These improvements will also provide easier access to PARTA's Central Gateway transit hub in downtown Kent, which will better serve the city's transit-reliant, lower income population. These enhancements also integrate well with KSU's Gateway Master Plan.

The project offers an innovative approach to enhance safety, improve mobility and accessibility to transit, foster active transportation, and enhance the quality of life for a diverse population.

NEFCO respectfully requests favorable consideration of this important regional transportation and economic development project. If we can be of further assistance, please contact Nick Lautzenheiser, NEFCO Economic Development Planner, at 330-643-5037 or [nick@nefcoplanning.org](mailto:nick@nefcoplanning.org).

Sincerely,



Joseph Hadley, Jr.  
Executive Director