

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Sheet

NILES DITCH DRAINAGE AREA IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

1. Am I being assessed now?

No. Please read on for more information.

2. Why petition the project?

Drainage infrastructure within Ohio is the responsibility of private landowners. The petition ditch process allows Lucas County to expend public funds for continued/long-term maintenance of private ditches which provide a public benefit. Without a petition, ditch maintenance would remain the responsibility of the adjacent landowners.

3. What is the purpose of the View?

The View is the opportunity for the Lucas County Commissioners to view the existing condition of the watercourses (e.g., ditches) and to allow the public to voice comments or concerns regarding existing conditions of the ditches.

After the view, the Lucas County Engineer's Office will prepare a preliminary report which includes a preliminary design and cost estimate, comments on the feasibility of the project, and an opinion as to whether the benefits of the improvement are likely to exceed the preliminary costs.

4. What is the purpose of the First Hearing?

At the first hearing, the Lucas Commissioners hear the preliminary report of the Lucas County Engineer, and review any evidence offered by benefitting landowners. At the First Hearing, the Board may approve the petition if they find that the improvement is necessary, conducive to public welfare, and they are reasonably certain that the costs are less than the benefits.

5. I do not live directly on a ditch in the proposed maintenance area, why am I considered a benefitting landowner?

The Ohio Petition Law considers all land owners in the watershed (i.e., drainage area) of a ditch improvement as *benefitting* from the improvement or future improvement.

If you are receiving this letter, a property identified as yours is located within the Niles Ditch drainage area and benefits from the stormwater drainage capacity provided by the associated ditches. For a map of the Niles Ditch drainage area,

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please visit the Ditch Petition Information Section on the Lucas County Engineer's website at <https://www.co.lucas.oh.us/3456/Drainage-Petitions>.

6. What is proposed to be improved as a result of this petition?

The associated ditches within the drainage area are proposed to be placed under permanent maintenance. This means that Lucas County will review the condition of the ditches on a routine basis and may perform maintenance work on the ditches from time to time to keep them functioning and in good working order.

7. Is there any possibility of being assessed for maintenance of ditches within the drainage area?

Should it be determined by the Lucas County Engineer's Office, that maintenance work is required for any ditch/ditches included within this petition, the Lucas County Engineer will request an assessment from all benefiting landowners, including all state, county, and township property, in order to perform said maintenance work the following year. Property owners will be assessed for maintenance costs to assure ditches remain in good working condition.

Depending on the type of maintenance required, current policy does provide for the Lucas County Stormwater Utility to pay assessment costs, on behalf of those properties within Jerusalem Township, for select permanent maintenance projects once they are complete. This is determined on a case by case basis, and can only occur on maintenance projects that reduce discharge of sediment & pollutants from storm water runoff.

8. What comes after the First Hearing?

After completion of any required design work, the Lucas County Engineer will present his detailed plans and detailed cost estimate. At this point, the Commissioners will hold a Final Hearing to reconsider their decision made at the First Hearing, based on the detailed information presented by the Lucas County Engineer as well as any testimony provided by benefitting land owners.