

## Memo

From: Dean C. Ringle, P.E., P.S., Executive Director  
County Engineers Association of Ohio (CEAO)

Re: Update on Water & Sewer Quality Program (created by HB 168)

Date: July 9, 2021

There are many questions quickly arising among various entities regarding the Water & Sewer Quality Program, created through the very recently passed House Bill 168. Following is an update.

The Water & Sewer Quality Program makes available \$250 million for local water and sewer projects, and is being administered by the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) to make grants to political subdivisions for eligible water and sewer projects. The ODOD will establish rules and guidelines for program eligibility as well as a means of applying for grants under the program.

As stated in the legislation, no later than 60 days after the effective date of the legislation (on or about August 27, 2021), **the county engineer of each county is to submit to ODOD a ranked list of projects** that are eligible to receive funding under the program. A political subdivision shall be required to provide a local match or contribution (unless extraordinary circumstances exist, in which the local match may be waived).

There are two processes needing to be developed:

1. How the 88 county engineers will review, select and rank eligible projects within their county to submit to the ODOD
2. How the ODOD will review, select and rank all those projects submitted by the county engineers.

Currently those two processes have not been developed. Representatives from the local associations – County Engineers Association of Ohio (CEAO), County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO), Ohio Township Association (OTA), Ohio Municipal League (OML), along with the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC), are in discussions and will be meeting next week to continue to look at how best to address the prioritization process and other details on the program requirements. We also recognize some answers will need to be provided by the ODOD as they continue to look at some of the same issues and questions.

In the mean time we ask for your patience as we try to collect information to share with you as this process develops. We are often asked to “hurry up and wait” – this program will be closer to “wait and hurry up!” We will share another update after our next meeting.