



CDFI Information Mapping System Frequently Asked Questions

December 11, 2013 (Updated December 23, 2013)

1. What is CIMS3?

The CDFI Information Mapping System, version 3 (CIMS3) is a substantial update to the mapping system the CDFI Fund has supported over most of the past decade for CDFIs, CDEs, and intermediaries supporting certification and eligibility for all the CDFI Fund's basic programs: Certification, CDFI Program and NACA Program Financial Assistance and Technical Assistance, the BEA Program, and the New Markets Tax Credit Program.

2. Who will be able to use CIMS3?

CIMS3 will be accessible to the public via the CDFI Fund's website (www.cdfifund.gov), and to institutions applying for certification or awards through the CDFI Fund's programs via their myCDFIFund accounts.

3. Once CIMS3 launches, will organizations have access to or be able to still use the CDFI Fund's older mapping system, CIMS2?

No, CIMS2 will not be available for use after the launch of CIMS3 on December 11, 2013. Maps created and saved in CIMS2 will be transferred to users' accounts in CIMS3.

4. Will I be required to have a *myCDFIFund* account to access CIMS3?

No. There will be a public facing level of CIMS3 where users can perform many useful functions such as tentatively confirm that specific sites are eligible for the CDFI, NACA, BEA, or NMTC programs. Public users can also upload address data and geocode these sites. These users can also select one or groups of census tracts and examine an array of census data for that site. Public users are not, however, able to save the results of their queries or map-based analyses. To be able to save identified target market maps, or the results of geocoding addressed, for example, users must have a myCDFIFund account.

5. Are the capacities of CIMS3 comparable to those of the mapping system previously supported by the CDFI Fund?

The capacities of CIMS3 far exceed those of the previously supported system, CIMS2. CIMS3 will be significantly more efficient, and users will be able to process requests in much less time than in the past.

All users will have access to the CDFI Fund's eligibility data for all programs by census tract, both that based upon the Census' contemporary data, the American Community Survey (ACS) as well as previous eligibility criteria based on the 2000 Census. Users will also be able to access the location of CDFI headquarters and the boundaries of contemporary Congressional Districts. Those holding myCDFIFund accounts will have access to all maps and data previously saved in CIMS2, as well as all data CDFIs and CDEs have submitted to the CDFI Fund through its Community Information Impact System (CIIS), in addition to all the data available to the public.



6. Will previous users of CIMS2 have access to and be able to use data and maps submitted to CIMS2?

Yes. All maps and data submitted in CIMS2 will be migrated to CIMS3 and available to appropriate users.

7. Will I be able to batch geocode addresses in CIMS3, and will there be a limit to the number of addresses I can geocode?

Yes, CIMS3 will have dramatically improved geocoding capacities in comparison to the CDFI Fund's previous mapping system. The CDFI Fund recommends an upper limit of 1,000 addresses a user can geocode, although to save the results, users must have a myCDFIFund account.

8. What enhanced capacities will be available in CIMS3?

CIMS3 has significantly enhanced capacities in comparison to the previous mapping system maintained by the CDFI Fund. All users will be able to upload and process accurate batch geo-coding of addresses, whether these be prospective locations for individual projects (for example, to test whether or not specific locations are eligible for various CDFI Fund programs) or actual transactions funded under one of the CDFI Fund's programs.

CIMS3 users who have myCDFIFund accounts will be able to save any of the maps or data sets that are uploaded and manipulated in CIMS3, and are able to retrieve and further analyze or modify these maps or data. Holders of myCDFIFund accounts will also be able to save and attach maps and data to support applications to the CDFI Fund for certification or to one of the CDFI Fund's programs. Organizations holding myCDFIFund accounts will be able to retrieve, modify, certify, and save any map or data set at any time, as these users find appropriate.

9. Will data privacy be protected? Will any other users be able to see or use data submitted by any user in CIMS3?

Privacy is of paramount importance to the CDFI Fund. Public users without a myCDFIFund account will only be able to see and use: eligibility criteria for the CDFI Fund's programs by census tract, the headquarters of CDFIs, and Congressional District boundaries, which are in the public domain. Individual myCDFIFund account holders will only have access to the data and maps they have previously submitted or will save and/or submit to the CDFI Fund. Data integrity will be maintained in the new system.

10. What if I have trouble distinguishing colors or shades in CIMS3?

Users can easily save any map selection in CIMS3 to a database and directly examine or analyze data to discern any differences between areas.

11. What changes in certification or program applications will result as a consequence of the launch of this new mapping program?

None. No changes in policy for any of the CDFI Fund's programs will result with the launch of this new mapping program. CIMS3 is a tool provided to assist the public and the CDFI industry to better access the CDFI Fund's resources and to enhance their business capacities.



12. Will there be a transition period for NMTC investments whose census tracts were determined using the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC) Geocoding System?

Yes. The CDFI Fund recognizes that CDEs may have already begun to structure potential QLICIs based on the census tract associated with the geocoded address in the FFIEC System. Any CDE that has been awarded NMTC-allocation authority may use the following timelines for guidance on the data that will be used to qualify potential investments.

1. QLICIs closed before January 31, 2014, may use the FFIEC Geocoding System or the CIMS 3.0 Mapping System to determine Low-Income Community Eligibility.
2. QLICIs closed on or after January 31, 2014, must use the CIMS 3.0 Mapping System to determine Low-Income Community Eligibility (except under the circumstances detailed in item 3.)

If a CDE experiences challenges meeting the criteria outlined above, please contact the CDFI Fund Help Desk by phone at (202) 653-0422 or by email (cdfihelp@cdfi.treas.gov). The deadline to contact the CDFI Fund with any concerns regarding the transition to CIMS3 as it relates to NMTC-allocation authority is 5 p.m. ET on Friday, January 31, 2014.

3. If a CDE with current NMTC allocation authority has already begun to structure potential QLICI(s) based on the census tract associated with a geocoded address in the FFIEC System **AND** the CIMS 3.0 Mapping System geocodes the transaction in a different, ineligible tract, the CDE will still be able to qualify the QLICI(s) based on the FFIEC system provided the QLICIs closed on or before October 31, 2014.

The CDE must inform the CDFI Fund by e-mail of the discrepancy by 5:00 pm ET, January 31, 2014. The e-mail must be sent to ccme@cdfi.treas.gov with the subject line "FFIEC Geocode Exemption Request." The body of the e-mail must include the address of the proposed QLICI(s), the FFIEC geocoding result indicating that the address is in an NMTC eligible census tract, and a screen shot of the CIMS 3.0 geocode indicating that the QLICI(s) is not in an NMTC eligible census tract. The CDFI Fund will only accept such requests from CDEs with a current NMTC allocation.

13. Where can I find additional help for using CIMS3?

CIMS3 was designed to be user friendly, and new users will discover that an elaborate help system is available on-line within the Help function of CIMS3. The Help function available in the program covers a wide variety of issues, queries, and topics which, if carefully perused, will answer many possible questions that arise to the users of this new mapping system.

Additionally, the CDFI Fund will support a CIMS3-specific Help Desk at 202-653-0422 or ITHelpDesk@cdfi.treas.gov that will be closely monitored for user support.