

Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Northeast Ohio

Planning & Development

The Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Northeast Ohio (“Coordinated Plan”) includes information on the existing transportation options and unmet needs of:

- Older adults
- Individuals with disabilities
- People with low income

The Coordinated Plan also includes strategies and priorities for addressing these unmet needs to help ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively by eliminating gaps and redundancies in transportation services.

NOACA is the lead agency for the development of the Coordinated Plan, a requirement under the federal transportation law to receive certain grant funding. To create this plan, a working group was convened to guide its development, and participation from a wide variety of stakeholders was encouraged and sought through outreach efforts.



The Coordinated Plan includes strategies and priorities for addressing the unmet transportation needs of older adults, people with disabilities and people with low income.

Stakeholders Involved in Creating the Plan:

- Health and human service agencies
- Transit agencies
- Users of transportation services
- Private transportation providers
- Community groups
- Employers
- Advocacy groups
- Members of the general public



A regional workshop was held in December 2007 to identify and prioritize strategies.

Outreach Activities:

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| • Coordinated Plan Web page | Launched April 2007 |
| • Public comment | April - Present |
| • Interviews of transit agencies | May - June 2007 |
| • Public meetings | July 2007 |
| • Stakeholder survey | July - September 2007 |
| • Stakeholder committee meetings | August 2007 |
| • Focus groups | August - September 2007 |
| • Regional planning workshop | December 2007 |

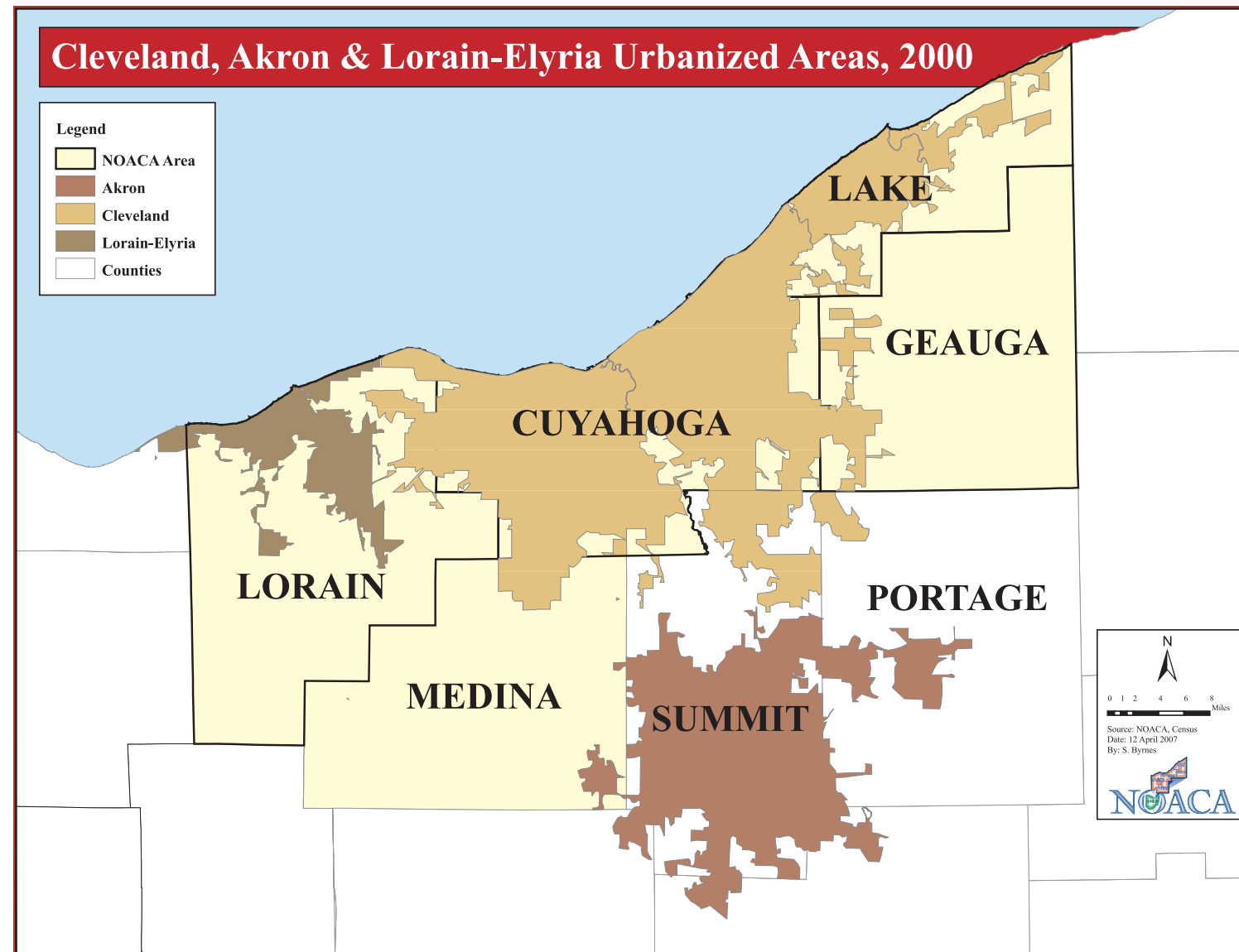
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Northeast Ohio

The completed Coordinated Plan enables Northeast Ohio to compete for these Federal Transit Administration grant programs:

- Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities, or Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310)
- Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) (Section 5316)
- New Freedom (Section 5317)

Program Descriptions

- **JARC:** provides funding for transportation services to jobs and employment-related activities for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals, and can also fund transportation projects for reverse commutes.
- **New Freedom:** provides new public transportation services and alternatives beyond those currently required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for individuals with disabilities.
- **Specialized Transportation Program:** funds capital projects to meet the special needs of elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities.



Competitive Selection Process

- The Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310) grant selection process is conducted by ODOT for the entire state. Fiscal Year 2008 grants are currently under review.
- For the Cleveland Urbanized Area: a competitive selection process for JARC & New Freedom grants will be conducted by NOACA after adoption of the Coordinated Plan by the Governing Board (estimated spring 2008); recipients to be selected by the NOACA Governing Board.
- For areas outside the Cleveland Urbanized Area: the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) conducts the competitive selection process for JARC & New Freedom grants (estimated spring 2008).

Priorities for the Region

The Coordinated Plan includes four core components:

- Inventory of existing transportation services and providers
- Transportation needs assessment
- Strategies and goals for addressing unmet needs
- Priority structure for implementing strategies

The Coordinated Plan identified nine recurring transportation needs or overarching themes and assigned each to a three-tiered priority structure. This structure provides guidance for allocating resources to projects that address the most pressing needs and that will provide the most benefit to improving the regional transportation system. This tier system will be used during the competitive selection process for projects seeking JARC or New Freedom funding.

Listed below each priority are two examples of sample strategies or activities identified in the Coordinated Plan.

Top Tier:

Improve Coordination of Services

- Increase ease of referral & access to services
- Create a forum or quarterly meeting for transportation stakeholders

Reduce Costs for Transportation Providers

- Offer & promote travel training programs
- Advocacy to receive state & federal resources

Reduce Costs for the End User

- More coordination between transportation providers and businesses to address costs for their workers
- Explore funding for transportation (e.g., charity grants & levies)



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Second Tier:

Improve Outreach, Education & Travel Training

- Improve distribution of transportation information to human service agencies
- Improve public education through media, travel training, etc.

Improve Weekend & Evening Service

- Find ways to secure more resources to pay for expanded service
- Expand options available to target populations

Improve Last-Minute Transportation Options

- Create an easily accessible & centralized information source on all transportation options
- Establish voucher, pass, or set rates for multiple provider types (transit agencies, private providers, etc.)



Third Tier:

Improve Paratransit Services

- Reduce window & travel time for those with certain medical conditions (e.g., dialysis)
- Travel training for personnel working with or transporting older adults & those with disabilities

Improve Safety

- Special services for frail clients or those needing extra help
- Removal of environmental barriers to accessing transportation

Improve Out-of-County Service

- Facilitate travel by fixed route & demand response
- Involve private transportation providers

About NOACA

The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) is a transportation and environmental planning agency that represents state, county, city, village, and township officials. NOACA works with other organizations to address Northeast Ohio's transportation, air quality, and water quality needs. In its region consisting of Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina counties, NOACA plans for all modes of transportation (vehicles, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, etc.), as well as the transportation system's impact on the environment and land use.

NOACA focuses on preserving existing transportation facilities, relieving congestion, enhancing the region's economic development, improving quality of life, offering greater choice in modes of transportation, and increasing mobility to the elderly, the physically disabled and those who are dependent on transit. As a public agency, NOACA seeks public involvement and comment about all of its planning efforts.



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