NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY

MEMORANDUM

TO: NOACA Board of Directors

FROM: Grace Gallucci, Executive Director

DATE: June 7, 2019

RE: Resolution No. 2019-024: NOACA Geauga County Amish Safety BUILD Project

ACTION REQUESTED
The Board of Directors is asked to approve Resolution 2019-024, which approves $1,500,000 of NOACA Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding for the NOACA Geauga County Amish Safety BUILD project.

The Executive Committee recommended this action to best meet the grant deadlines associated with the federal Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) program.

BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRENT ACTION
The Geauga County Amish Safety project was developed as a result of a strategic safety plan completed in 2015 in partnership between Geauga County, ODOT District 12 and NOACA. The study identified projects needed on Geauga County roadways to improve safety for motorists, Amish buggies, and pedestrians. In 2017, the identified projects were adopted into the NOACA AIM Forward 2040 Long-range Transportation Plan.

In April 2018, NOACA partnered with the Geauga County Engineer to submit an application for a Geauga County Amish Safety project for federal BUILD program funding consideration. The project includes widening roadway shoulders for the construction of buggy lanes and pedestrian facilities; warning and detection signal systems; and signage safety improvements. To enable the project to best compete for funding under the program's guidelines and criteria, staff included a commitment of $1,500,000 of Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding to match a request of $9,651,000 of BUILD program funding in the overall project financing plan.

In December 2018, NOACA was notified by US DOT that the project was selected for BUILD program funding for the full $9,651,000 request amount. Since that time, staff has worked with the Geauga County Engineer, ODOT and FHWA to determine an acceptable approach for project administration in accordance with the agencies’ oversight and monitoring requirements. As part of the BUILD program requirements, funds awarded to the project must be obligated for construction phase activities no later than September 30, 2020 or the grant funding expires. The project benefits NOACA identified Environmental Justice populations in Geauga County. Consistent with the Board approved Environmental Justice policy, the $1,500,000 of NOACA funding match to the project was committed for allowable preliminary engineering and detailed design activities. These activities must begin as soon as possible to allow for the necessary time for completion prior to the stated deadline.
As such, staff planned to include a funding recommendation for the project in conjunction with the development of SFY 2021-2024 NOACA TIP funding recommendations, originally planned for Planning and Programming Committee review in April 2019 and Board approval in June 2019. That item is being delayed by one quarter, resulting from the delay of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) due to the uncertainty of future federal funding, with an anticipated action by the Board in September 2019. As a result, a commitment of funding for Geauga County Amish Safety BUILD project request would be delayed, causing significant impact to the project development and design schedule.

Therefore, to allow for the necessary time needed to complete project development and design activities prior to the stated BUILD program deadline, the Executive Committee was requested to add this project funding recommendation to the Board agenda for action in June 2019.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**
The request would commit $1,500,000 of NOACA TAP funding to the NOACA Geauga County Amish Safety project. NOACA STBG funding would be utilized in SFY 2019 and SFY 2020 to finance the request, which would be made whole through the TAP program in SFY 2021 for new 2021-2024 TIP projects. Therefore, there is no impact to existing TIP projects.

**CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS**
With Board approval, the NOACA TIP will be amended to incorporate the recommended project funding and project development and design activities will be advanced.

GG/rf/3062b
RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY

WHEREAS, the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the counties of Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina, and the City of Cleveland; and the areawide water quality management agency for the same region; and

WHEREAS, the Geauga County Amish Safety project was developed as a result of a strategic safety plan completed in 2015 in partnership between Geauga County, ODOT District 12 and NOACA; and

WHEREAS, projects identified through the study to improve safety for motorists, Amish buggies, and pedestrians were adopted into the NOACA AIM Forward 2040 Long-range Transportation Plan; and

WHEREAS, in April 2018, NOACA partnered with the Geauga County Engineer to submit an application for a Geauga County Amish Safety project for federal BUILD program funding consideration, including widened roadway shoulders for the construction of buggy lanes and pedestrian facilities; warning and detection signal systems; and signage safety improvements; and

WHEREAS, to enable the project to best compete for funding under the program’s guidelines and criteria, staff included a commitment of $1,500,000 of Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding to match a request of $9,651,000 of BUILD program funding in the overall project financing plan; and

WHEREAS, in December 2018, NOACA was notified by US DOT that the project was selected for BUILD program funding for the full $9,651,000 request amount; and

WHEREAS, As part of the BUILD program requirements, funds awarded to the project must be obligated for construction phase activities no later than September 30, 2020 or the grant funding expires; and

WHEREAS, the project benefits NOACA identified Environmental Justice populations in Geauga County; and

WHEREAS, consistent with the Board approved Environmental Justice policy, the $1,500,000 of NOACA funding match to the project was committed for allowable preliminary engineering and detailed design activities; and

WHEREAS, preliminary engineering and detailed design activities must begin as soon as possible to allow for the necessary time for completion prior to the stated deadline; and

WHEREAS, staff planned to include a funding recommendation for the project in conjunction with the development of SFY 2021-2024 NOACA TIP funding recommendations, originally planned for Planning and Programming Committee review in April 2019 and Board approval in June 2019; and

WHEREAS, TIP development is being delayed by one quarter, resulting from the delay of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) due to the uncertainty of future federal funding; and

WHEREAS, as a result, a commitment of funding for Geauga County Amish Safety BUILD project request would be delayed, causing significant impact to the project engineering and detailed design schedule; and
RESOLUTION NO. 2019-024
(NOACA Geauga County
Amish Safety BUILD Project)

WHEREAS, approval of funding to the project is requested to allow for the necessary time needed to complete project development and design activities prior to the stated BUILD program deadline.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, consisting of 45 principal officials serving general purpose local governments throughout and within the counties of Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina that:

Section 1. $1.5 million of NOACA Transportation Alternatives Program funds are approved for the NOACA Geauga County Amish Safety

Section 2. The 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will be amended to reflect the BUILD program funding of $9,651,000 for construction activities and NOACA TAP program funding of $1.5 million for preliminary engineering and detailed design activities.

Section 3. The Executive Director is authorized to transmit certified copies of this resolution to appropriate federal, state, and local agencies.

Certified to be a true copy of a Resolution of the Governing Board of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency adopted this 14th day of June, 2019.

Secretary: 

Date Signed: 6-14-2019