TO: NOACA Board of Directors

FROM: Grace Gallucci, Executive Director

DATE: January 16, 2015

RE: 2015-018: NOACA Legislative Agenda

ACTION REQUESTED
The Board of Directors is asked to approve Resolution 2015-018 which adopts the 2015 NOACA Legislative Agenda (http://www.noaca.org/index.aspx?page=3375).

BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRENT ACTION
The NOACA Legislative Agenda is comprised of a platform of basic principals and specific priorities for advocacy efforts in Washington D.C. and Columbus. The NOACA Board of Directors approved the 2014 Legislative Agenda last April.

With the goal of creating a robust legislative agenda for 2015, staff has recommended that the Federal priorities of 2014 remain intact, while adding new priorities at the state level. This includes improving the NOACA region's rate of return on state allocated transportation funds and advocating the inclusion of policy related to other modes within Section 5(a), Article XII of the Ohio Constitution.

The NOACA External Affairs Committee discussed this item at their November 14th meeting and was reported to the Board by the Executive Committee in December.

FINANCIAL IMPACT
There is no financial impact.

CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS
The 2015 Legislative Agenda will be used to inform the state and federal delegations of Northeastern Ohio's infrastructure priorities.

GG/ph/2818b
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 areawide water quality management agency for the same region; and

WHEREAS, NOACA is responsible for transportation planning functions in accordance with the current federal law, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21).

WHEREAS, MAP-21 expires on May 31, 2015 and Congress and the President have begun to work on reauthorization proposals which will impact Northeast Ohio.

WHEREAS, the State Biennial budget process for transportation will be presented and discussed in February 2015.

WHEREAS, NOACA has developed a legislative agenda in kind that advocates for a transportation platform that is consistent with the NOACA vision as well as specific priorities for consideration by policy makers.

WHEREAS, NOACA’s Executive Committee has reported this resolution for adoption.

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. The NOACA Legislative Agenda (Exhibit 1) is hereby endorsed.

Section 2. The Executive Director is hereby authorized and directed to forward certified copies of this Resolution and the Legislative Agenda to President Obama and Governor Kasich, plus all appropriate members of Congress, Administration officials and state officials.

Certified to be a true copy of a Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency adopted this 23rd day of January 2015.

Secretary: ____________________________

Date Signed: ________________________
The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) Board of Directors and staff are proud to present the 2015 Federal and State Legislative Agenda.

Transportation infrastructure empowers Ohioans to reach jobs, access healthcare, education, recreational opportunities and see family and friends. Ideally, each of these destinations should be accessible by multiple modes. Furthermore, the optimal alignment of infrastructure and economic activity is the foundation of regional competitiveness. As you know, the need for support and collaboration at the Federal and State level is paramount as the highway trust fund faces insolvency and as our infrastructure continues to deteriorate. Uncertain funding impacts project delivery, increases congestion, jeopardizes safety, and reduces economic throughput.

Therefore, NOACA has developed its own regional strategy and vision.

**NOACA will STRENGTHEN regional cohesion, PRESERVE existing infrastructure, and BUILD a sustainable multimodal transportation system to SUPPORT economic development and ENHANCE the quality of life in Northeast Ohio.**

The NOACA vision statement is a fundamental touchstone that will be applied to regional programs, priorities, and projects.

To that end, the Legislative Agenda is comprised of:

- A Legislative Platform that can be used as policy criteria and
- Specific Legislative Priorities which inform the Legislative Platform

The Regional Strategic Plan encompasses the idea that it is critical to have both a grounding of the current realities as well as a roadmap to navigate the future. With a renewed vision and purpose, NOACA can better inform transportation and infrastructure policy makers as they seek solutions and sources of innovation. As such, we look forward to working with you and greatly appreciate your support.

Sincerely,

Ted Kalo
President, NOACA Board of Directors

Grace Gallucci
Executive Director
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Overview of NOACA

The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for Northeast Ohio responsible for transportation and environmental planning. NOACA prepares the region’s long-range transportation plan and short-range transportation improvement program, which prioritizes and schedules federally funded transportation projects for the region. NOACA works with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), project sponsors and other stakeholders to help address Northeast Ohio’s transportation, air quality, and water quality needs.

Funding for NOACA’s transportation and environmental planning programs are derived from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), ODOT, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and annual dues paid by local governments throughout the region.

The Legislative Agenda

NOACA’s 2015 Legislative Agenda is intended to be a source of information and innovation for Northeast Ohio public policy makers. The Legislative Agenda is comprised of two regionally significant items: NOACA’s Legislative Platform and Legislative Priorities.

- The Legislative Platform is the foundation of NOACA’s Legislative Agenda. The Platform is the conversion of NOACA’s vision into a legislative approach and criteria for policy evaluation.

- The Legislative Platform informs the Legislative Priorities which are the specific requests.
NOACA’s Legislative Platform

In order to be an effective source of information and innovation to Ohio policy makers, NOACA must identify basic values. To that end, the Legislative Platform represents consensus-driven principals that have been approved by NOACA’s 45-member board (comprised of county executives, county commissioners, mayors, and infrastructure authority leaders) in Northeast Ohio. The Legislative Platform is intended to guide policy analysis and advocacy on infrastructure issues. The NOACA Board approved the 2015 Legislative Agenda on January 23, 2015.

The Legislative Platform includes the following infrastructure questions which reflect NOACA’s vision statement:

- Does the issue strengthen regional cohesion?
- Does the issue preserve existing infrastructure?
- Does the issue support a sustainable and multimodal system?
- Does the issue support economic development and enhance the quality of life in Northeast Ohio?

These questions provide for clear guidance to evaluate transportation planning and programming in Greater Cleveland.

While NOACA’s principles endure, the national conversation and agenda on transportation infrastructure will change. In this way, NOACA can assist public officials by advocating emerging issues with a non-partisan view.

But most importantly, the Legislative Platform incentivizes NOACA to identify emerging trends, which allows for forward-looking, strategic decisions. Currently this includes:

- A renewed focus on local responsibility and local control
- A strategic decision to focus on asset management over projects that increase capacity, and
- Placing a premium on sustainability.
Local Responsibility & Local Control

The value of local control is that it allows public officials to solve problems with flexibility and independence. Infrastructure issues demand this. The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) is an example of this need.

Regional Cohesion: The CMAQ program promotes system preservation by making the transportation system function efficiently. Air quality challenges cross jurisdictional lines. Therefore CMAQ projects tend to focus on coordinating systems to work efficiently together, like traffic congestion being resolved through signalization projects.

Preservation: CMAQ is a core transportation program which needs to be viewed in relation with two other critical transportation programs: the Surface Transportation Program and the Transportation Alternatives Program. Working with other programs, the primary purpose of CMAQ is to promote preservation and to prevent capacity.

Sustainable & Multimodal: Regional transit agencies have depended on the CMAQ program for the regular procurements of new transit vehicles and other infrastructure needs, including bus replacement. Investments in transit vehicles and related infrastructure expands transportation choice, improves air quality, and reduces congestion on the road system.

Economic Development: Quality of life is a determinant factor in the location decisions of households and businesses. Communities that support different modes of mobility and appreciate the link between environmental quality and healthy living are attractive to investment.

Enhance Quality of Life: CMAQ improves area air quality and mitigates congestion in Northeastern Ohio, enhancing mobility, efficient travel time, and facilitating healthy living.

Asset Management Principals Over Increasing Capacity

It is fiscally responsible to first maintain what you have before adding capacity. This is critically important in areas that are experiencing economic stagnation such as Northeast Ohio.

Regional Cohesion: Investors in a globalized economy regard the attractiveness of regions as much as they do local communities. Well maintained communities retain their tax base and thereby the ability to maintain the supporting structure of their regional economy. Maintaining the regional infrastructure of a community is an important step in preventing cyclical decline.

Preservation: Historically, asset management has been a critical, but under-represented and under-funded element of the transportation planning process. Asset management is based on a simple, but powerful premise that agencies should consider the full life-cycle cost of their funding decisions and manage their assets accordingly. The road system is a strength in Northeast Ohio. Road conditions should be as strong as the road network.
**Sustainable and Multimodal**: Asset management is a systematic approach to maintaining infrastructure by regarding the full lifecycle of an asset. Improvements to existing infrastructure to enhance functionality and efficiency are part of an asset management approach.

**Economic Development**: Investing in the improvement of existing infrastructure is a fiscally sound approach to infrastructure growth and therefore economic growth. A systematic approach to maintaining infrastructure promotes current and future investments and preserves the wealth of the community for investments in important priorities critical to maintaining economic competitiveness.

**Enhance Quality of Life**: Infrastructure in a good state of repair is reflective of a higher standard of living. Communities with safe roads and well maintained infrastructure are easily judged as superior places.

**Sustainability**

Placing a premium on sustainability ensures that infrastructure meets the market demands and user needs of the next generation of Ohioans. The Complete Streets Program is an example of this value in practice.

**Regional Cohesion**: “Complete Streets” is an infrastructure principle that begins with the premise that all modes of transportation are deserving of safe and sustainable access to roadways. This is exemplified in NOACA’s Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) which integrates transportation land use planning with livability. The program places a premium on public involvement and regional collaboration.

**Preservation**: TLCI creates incentives for localities to invest in under-utilized, vacant, and abandoned property. Priority projects include: in-fill / redevelopment projects and existing activity center projects. This also reinforces the preservation principals within asset management as well.

**Sustainable and Multimodal**: Complete Streets is the essence of sustainable and multimodal transportation. Complete Streets identifies and plans numerous ways for one to travel from point A to point B. It recognizes the importance of automobiles while acknowledging the growing needs of public transportation and the developing requirements of non-motorized transport.

**Economic Development**: Communities that have a good understanding of sustainability create economic growth plans that incorporate sustainable practices and are enhanced by them. As the interests and priorities of investors shift towards quality of life, sustainability will be a standard by which communities of choices are measured.

**Enhance Quality of Life**: The concept of sustainability encompasses a wide range of attributes that all comport with an improved standard of living. Adherence to sustainability is an approach to growth that directly consistent with improvements to quality of life.
FEDERAL

NOACA’s Legislative Priorities

NOACA’s Legislative Priorities are the specific requests which are informed by the Legislative Platform. For the 114th Congress, NOACA’s Federal Legislative Priorities include:

PRIORITIES

- Strengthen the MPO’s local control of core transportation programs
- Promote asset management as a funding priority and
- Incorporate safety, sustainability and multimodalism within local planning

1. Strengthen the MPO’s local control of core transportation programs

Requested Action: Congress should strengthen and expand local control to metropolitan planning organizations for core planning programs. This would include the Surface Transportation Program, CMAQ, and the Transportation Alternatives Program, improving predictability, air quality, and mobility.

➤ LOCAL CONTROL TO MPO’s ENHANCES PREDICTABILITY

Background: The Surface Transportation Program is a primary source of local funding for highway, bridge, public transportation and pedestrian projects. Metropolitan planning organizations already receive direct sub-allocations for STP from state departments of transportation and have proven to be good stewards. The STP distribution is based on population. However the predictability of STP is stifled by the unpredictable nature of the CMAQ and TAP programs. CMAQ and TAP funds are often leveraged together to determine regional goals and projects, yet red tape often gets in the way. To enhance efficiency and improve local decision-making CMAQ and TAP should be structured to align with the mechanics of STP.

➤ LOCAL CONTROL TO MPO’s IMPROVES AIR QUALITY

Background: Through 2020 NOACA has identified $150 million in air quality projects while the agency is programmed to receive $42.7 million, leaving $107.3 million in unfunded needs. NOACA needs these projects to meet the MPO’s Federal responsibilities to the TMA and to the CMAQ performance plan under MAP-21, the current authorization bill.

However, the Federal allocation process does not provide for a guarantee to the MPO’s. The responsibility of the MPO to bring the region into air quality compliance should be a major consideration for the distribution of funds.
In the final analysis, Congress should directly sub-allocate CMAQ funding to metropolitan planning organizations, like NOACA, that are in non-attainment areas so as to achieve national air quality goals and to save taxpayers from red tape and needless bureaucracy.

**LOCAL CONTROL TO MPO’s IMPROVES MOBILITY**

**Background:** The Transportation Alternatives Program is intended to enhance mobility through funding for such projects as trails, improved pedestrian access, and safe routes to schools. In order to properly align with STP and the CMAQ Program, Congress should directly sub-allocate TAP funding to MPO’s.

Under MAP-21, 2% of the Highway Trust Fund is dedicated to TAP funding. For example, $27.5 million was apportioned to Ohio in SFY 2013. 50% of this allocation was determined by population. However, the remaining 50% was determined by the State. In the end, greater funding should be directly sub-allocated to MPOs.

2. Promote Asset Management as a Funding Priority

**Requested Action:** As NOACA begins to scope an historic asset management project for the region, Congress should make preservation a funding priority in the upcoming surface transportation bill. A Federal program comparable to the standards and due diligence required in the Rail Modernization program, which provides significant funding for fixed-guideways may be an appropriate analogy.

3. Incorporate Safety, Sustainability and Multi-Modalism in Planning

**Requested Action:** As Congress begins to debate the intrinsic merits of the current surface transportation bill, NOACA requests that its Legislative Platform be incorporated. This includes making safety, sustainability and multi-modalism a priority within state & local MPO planning requirements.

NOACA will evaluate draft proposals of the reauthorization bill as they are made available by applying the NOACA platform, and briefing congressional staff as a source of information.
The Ohio state budget runs for two years and is usually decided within the first six months of the newly sworn-in General Assembly. This includes the critical funding of transportation programs which are derived from the state gas tax and motor vehicle license tax, and turnpike toll revenue. The legislative vehicle for such programs is the transportation budget bill. NOACA’s state priorities will specifically address issues within this bill.

PRIORITIES

- Improve the region’s rate of return from state allocated funds to meet regional asset management needs.
- Advocate multi-modal transportation within Article XII Section 5(a) of the Ohio State Constitution.

LOCAL CONTROL TO MPO’s ENHANCES EQUITY

Background: Despite being the largest metropolitan region in the State of Ohio, there is a significant disparity between contributions made by and distributions to Northeastern Ohio through the state gas and license tax, and toll revenue. The NOACA region loses $36.63 per licensed drivers due to the bias in state policy against older and more developed communities.

Requested action: A potential remedy would be the creation of an equity bonus which exists on the Federal level to address such disparities. Moreover, if the rate of return increases in Northeast Ohio the most effective use of funding would be for asset management. A comparable, new state program was the creation of the Ohio Bridge Partnership Program which provides $120 million from SFY 2015-2017. Like the bridge program, asset management has clear criteria and need.
LOCAL CONTROL TO MPO’s IMPROVES MOBILITY

**Background:** Article XII Section 5(a) of the Ohio State Constitution prohibits the usage of state gas tax funds for any other mode of transportation than highways. This is a Depression-era policy when the Federal program was not inclusive of multimodal transportation.

**Requested action:** The State of Ohio should allow the same flexibility to solve transportation solutions locally as it demands from the Federal government. For the purposes of the biennial budget, it should be specifically defined what multimodal projects are consistent with Section 5(a) and most importantly what projects can not be funded.
Breakdown of NOACA Projects

Roadway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>NOACA$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cuyahoga</td>
<td>Cuyahoga County</td>
<td>STEARNS ROAD</td>
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<td>Broadview Heights</td>
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<td>Geauga County</td>
<td>PETTIBONE ROAD</td>
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<td>CHAGRIN ROAD</td>
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<td>Lake</td>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>HEISLEY RD PHASE III</td>
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<td>Lake</td>
<td>Lake County</td>
<td>McMACKINROAD</td>
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<td>Lorain</td>
<td>Lorain County</td>
<td>BUTTERNUT RIDGE</td>
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<td>Cuyahoga</td>
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<td>VAN AKEN BLVD</td>
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## Bikeways

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<tr>
<td>Lorain</td>
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<td>MORTON-HEADLANDS TRAIL II</td>
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## Enhancement

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## Bridges

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<td>Cuyahoga</td>
<td>Cleveland</td>
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## Signals

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## Transit

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<td>Cuyahoga</td>
<td>Greater Cleveland RTA</td>
<td>GCRTA PARATRANSIT OPERATING</td>
<td>$ 2,500,000</td>
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The NOACA Board is made up of elected officials and administrators from NOACA’s five counties. Board makeup is proportional to the region’s population, and is updated after each decennial Census.

The NOACA Board:

- Determines how federal transportation dollars will be spent in northeast Ohio;
- Sets policies that guide transportation development throughout the five counties; &
- Approves NOACA’s water and air quality policies.

President: 
Ted Kalo, Commissioner, Lorain County

First Vice President: 
Daniel P. Troy, Commissioner, Lake County

Second Vice President: 
Adam Friedrick, Commissioner, Medina County

Secretary: 
Armond Budish, County-Executive, Cuyahoga County

Assistant Secretary: 
Michael Summers, Mayor, City of Lakewood

Assistant Secretary: 
Richard Heidecker, Columbia Township, Lorain County

Treasurer: 
Valarie J. McCall, Chief of Government & International Affairs, City of Cleveland

Assistant Treasurer: 
Julius Ciaccia, Jr., Executive Director, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

Assistant Treasurer: 
Susan Infeld, Mayor, City of University Heights

Immediate past Board President: 
Mary E. Samide, Commissioner Emeritus, Geauga County
CUYAHOGA COUNTY 15 members
Samuel J. Alai, Mayor of Broadview Heights
Tanisha R. Briley, City Manager of Cleveland Heights
Amund Budish, Cuyahoga County Executive
William R. Cervenik, Mayor of Euclid
Scott E. Coleman, Mayor of Highland Heights
Yvonne Conwell, Cuyahoga County Council
Glenn Coyne, FAICP, Executive Director, Cuyahoga County Planning Commission
Timothy J. DeGeeter, Mayor of Parma
Ann Marie Donegan, Mayor of Olmsted Falls
Susan K. Infeld, Mayor of University Heights
Charles Smith, Mayor of Woodmere
Robert A. Stefanik, Mayor of North Royalton
Michael P. Summers, Mayor of Lakewood
Deborah L. Sutherland, Mayor of Bay Village
Bonita G. Teeuwen, P.E., Public Works Director

CITY OF CLEVELAND 6 members
Freddy Collier Jr., Planning Director
Martin J. Keane, Councilman-Ward 21
Valarie J. McCall, Chief of Government and International Affairs
Mamie J. Mitchell, Councilwoman-Ward 6
Terrell Pruitt, Councilman, Ward 1
Matthew L. Spronz, P.E., PMP, Capital Projects Director

GEAUGA COUNTY 3 members
Blake A. Rear, County Commissioner
Walter Claypool, County Commissioner
Ralph Spidalieri, County Commissioner

LAKE COUNTY 5 members
James R. Gills, P.E., P.S., County Engineer
Raymond Jurkowski, General Manager, LAKETRAN
Judy Moran, County Commissioner
Daniel P. Troy, County Commissioner

LORAIN COUNTY 7 members
Holly Brinda, Mayor of Elyria
Kenneth P. Carney, Sr. P.E., P.S., County Engineer
Richard Heidecker, Columbia Township Trustee
John D. Hunter, Mayor of Sheffield Village
Ted Kalo, County Commissioner
Chase M. Ritenauer, Mayor of Lorain
TBD, County Commissioner

MEDINA COUNTY 4 members
Colene Conley, Brunswick Hills Township Trustee
Adam Friedrick, County Commissioner
Robert Patrick, Service Director, City of Wadsworth
Michael J. Salay, P.E., P.S., County Engineer

REGIONAL AND STATE 5 members
Joseph A. Calabrese, CEO and General Manager, Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) (one representative)
Julius Ciaccia Jr., Exec. Director, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORSD) (one representative)
William D. Friedman, President/CEO, Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority (one representative)
Myron S. Pakush, Deputy Director, Ohio Department of Transportation - District 12 (one representative)
Kurt Princic, Chief, Northeast District Office Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (ex officio member)
The preparation of this publication was financed through grants received from the Federal Highway Administration and the Ohio Department of Transportation, and appropriations from the counties of and municipalities within Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina. The contents do not necessarily reflect official views or policies of the U.S. Department of Transportation or the Ohio Department of Transportation. This document does not constitute a standard or regulation.