



RESOLUTION 2025-049: CY 2026 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

**Board of Directors
December 12, 2025**

INTRODUCTION BY ED/CEO

- Each year, the External Affairs Committee provides input regarding the Legislative Agenda for the upcoming year
- These priorities reflect the vision, goals & objectives of NOACA's Regional Strategic Plan
- For 2026, External Affairs and its advisory councils recommend updates to better articulate NOACA's priorities for the upcoming reauthorization bill

ACTION REQUESTED

Request that the Board of Directors adopt the following Resolution:

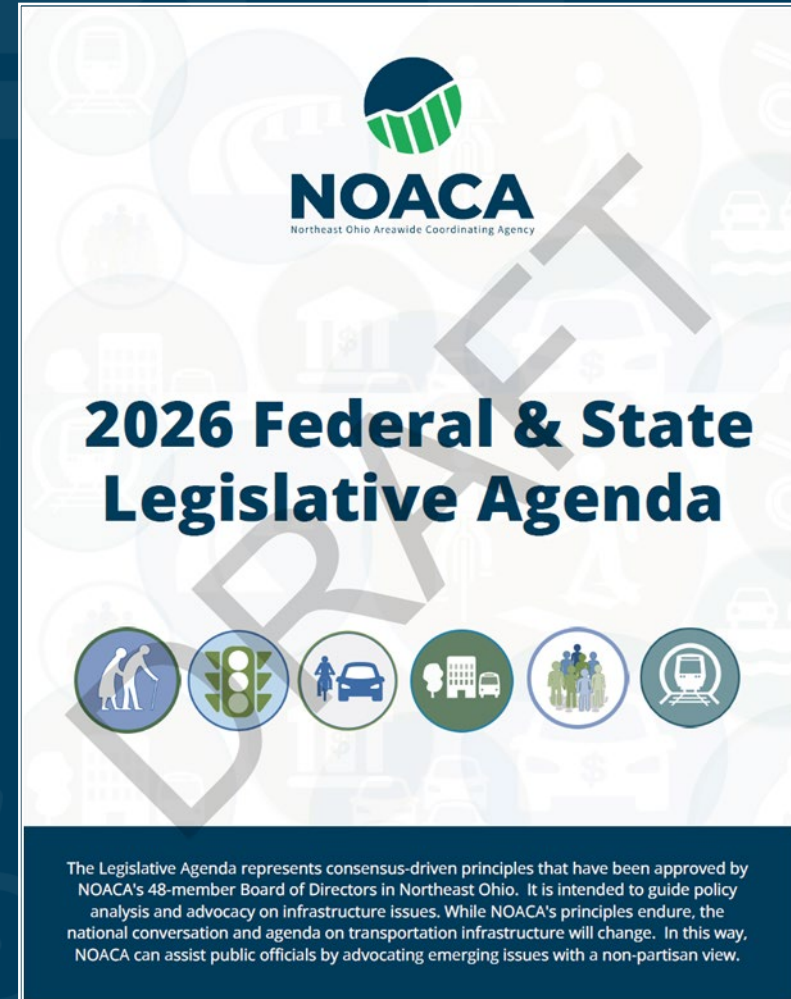
- Resolution 2025-049, which adopts the Calendar Year (CY) 2026 Legislative Agenda

PREVIOUS ACTION

This item was recommended by the External Affairs Committee at their October 10 meeting, following input from the Business, Community, Rural, and Emerging Leaders Advisory Councils.

BACKGROUND

- Represents consensus-driven principles intended to guide policy analysis and advocacy related to NOACA's work
- Reflects the vision, goals, and objectives in NOACA's Regional Strategic Plan



BACKGROUND

- Reviewed annually for potential updates, with input from the Advisory Councils and the External Affairs Committee
- External Affairs Committee recommends adding additional Federal Priorities related to reauthorization of the surface transportation bill
- No changes recommended to the State Priorities

Federal Priorities

1

1. Strengthen local control of core transportation programs

NOACA advocates that Congress should consider making metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) direct recipients for core planning programs – to streamline the funding process, eliminate bureaucratic hurdles, and **empower local elected officials** serving on MPO boards to make decisions that directly impact their respective communities while reaching national goals. These core programs include the Surface Transportation Program, the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program, the Transportation Alternatives Program, and the Carbon Reduction Program.

Similarly, Congress should consider additional reforms to strengthen local control: a) reduce the number of discretionary grant programs and shift funding to MPOs to advance projects already prioritized in regional Long Range Plans; b) increase planning (PL) funds to meet complex federal planning requirements and ensure successful project implementation; c) reduce local match for federal transportation programs to remove barriers for low income rural and urban communities; and d) streamline environmental review and permitting to accelerate project delivery while maintaining critical natural resource protection and public review and input.

2

2. Promote asset management as a funding priority

NOACA advocates that Congress should recognize the preservation of transportation assets as an equal or greater economic priority as compared to the development of new infrastructure. Regional authorities like NOACA allocate as much as 90 percent of available funding toward asset preservation. U.S. DOT has already recognized this priority by mandating asset management programs at the state level; Congress should consider creating and augmenting funding streams for asset management – for transit, roads and bridges – at the regional/local level.

3

3. Incorporate safety, sustainability, and multi-modalism in planning and funding

NOACA advocates that Congress should include safety, sustainability, and multi-modalism as specific priorities within state and regional planning requirements, and focus on expanding transportation choice for all residents through public transit, passenger rail, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and developing technologies like hyperloop.

4

4. Stabilize the Highway Trust Fund (HTF)

NOACA advocates that Congress take action to stabilize the Highway Trust Fund to provide long-term predictable funding for transportation programs, inclusive of transit, and continue the traditional “user pays” system to support these critical investments.

BACKGROUND

Proposing 4 new sub-priorities for Federal Priority 1

1. Strengthen local control of core transportation programs

- a) Reduce the number of discretionary grant programs & shift funding to MPOs to advance projects already prioritized in regional LRPs
- b) Increase planning (PL) funds to meet complex federal planning requirements & ensure successful project implementation
- c) Reduce local match for federal transportation programs to remove barriers for low income rural and urban communities
- d) Streamline environmental review and permitting to accelerate project delivery while maintaining critical natural resource protection and public review and input

BACKGROUND

No changes to Federal Priorities 2 and 3:

2. Promote asset management as a funding priority

3. Incorporate safety, sustainability, and multi-modalism in planning and funding

BACKGROUND

Proposing a new Federal Priority 4

4. Stabilize the Highway Trust Fund

NOACA advocates that Congress take action to stabilize the Highway Trust Fund to provide long-term predictable funding for transportation programs, inclusive of transit, and continue the traditional “user pays” system to support these critical investments

BACKGROUND

- New additions mirror priorities NOACA previously shared with U.S. DOT, congressional delegation, and congressional leaders
- Priorities largely align with those put forth by the Local Officials in Transportation (LOT) coalition

AMPO

NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
of COUNTIES **NACo**

NADO
National Association of
Development Organizations

NARC
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

NLC NATIONAL
LEAGUE
OF CITIES
CITIES STRONG TOGETHER



NEXT STEPS

- Pending Board approval, the CY 2026 Legislative Agenda will be forwarded to federal and state legislative and administrative officials who represent Northeast Ohio.
- The Agenda will guide NOACA's government affairs work throughout 2026.

ACTION

Approve Resolution 2025-049, which adopts the CY 2026 Legislative Agenda



**Motion
Second
Discussion
Put the Question**





NOACA

Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency

NOACA will **strengthen** regional cohesion, **preserve** existing infrastructure, and **build** a sustainable multimodal transportation system to **support** economic development and **enhance** quality of life in Northeast Ohio.