



Policy Committee Meeting

January 30, 2026, 10 a.m.

NOACA Offices, 1299 Superior Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44114

RSVP to 216-241-2414 ext. 282
or boardliaison@mpo.noaca.org

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.



NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Policy Committee Members
Samuel J. Alai, Mayor, Broadview Heights
Larry Antoskiewicz, Mayor, City of North Royalton
Morris Beverage III, Commissioner, Lake County
Justin Bibb, Mayor, City of Cleveland
Annette M. Blackwell, Mayor, City of Maple Heights
Pamela Bobst, Mayor, City of Rocky River
Jack Bradley, Mayor, City of Lorain
Ben Capelle, Chief Executive Officer, Laketran
Mary Cierebiej, Executive Director, Cuyahoga County Planning Commission
Joe Cimperman, President and CEO, Global Cleveland*
Jeff Epstein, President & CEO, Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority
Marty Gallagher, Commissioner, Lorain County
Meghan George, Mayor, City of Lakewood
Aaron M. Harrison, Commissioner, Medina County
Andy Haupt, P.E., P.S., County Engineer, Geauga County
Matt Hiscock, Director of Public Service, City of Wadsworth
Brian Kazy, Council Member, Ward 13, Cleveland City Council
Calley Mersmann, Director, Planning Commission, City of Cleveland
Matt Moss, Senior Strategist for Transit & Mobility, City of Cleveland
John Picuri, P.E., Deputy Director, ODOT District 12
Jeff Riddell, Commissioner, Lorain County
Chris Ronayne, County Executive, Cuyahoga County

FROM: Kim Thomas, Chair
Mayor, City of Richmond Heights

DATE: January 23, 2026

RE: Policy Committee

Attached please find materials for the Policy Committee meeting on **Friday, January 30, 2026, from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. at NOACA's Offices, 1299 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio.**

Please note that in addition to the members listed above, any interested Board members are welcome to attend. Notice of this meeting has been publicly posted, and major public media has been notified.



Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency
Friday, January 30, 2026
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

The public can view the meeting live at: <https://youtube.com/live/1gXAuQBjOu0?feature=share>

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

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Next Meeting: **Friday, April 10, 2026, at 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.**
NOACA Offices, 1299 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio



**NOACA Policy Committee
Meeting Minutes**
October 10, 2025
NOACA Offices
1299 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio

Present: Please see the attached attendance record.

Ms. Mary Cierebiej, Chair of the Policy Committee, convened the meeting at 10:04 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Mayor Kim Thomas made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 11, 2025. Ms. Debbie Berry seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

Subcommittee Updates

Economic Development Subcommittee

The Policy Committee received a summary of the Economic Development Subcommittee meeting that took place in September 2025.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

No one signed in to speak at this meeting.

Chair's/Executive Director's Report

No report was presented at this meeting.

Action Items

No action items were presented at this meeting.

Presentation/Discussion Items

Transportation for Safer Communities Initiatives (TSCI) Policy

Director Grace Gallucci explained that NOACA's Transportation for Safer Communities Initiative (TSCI) was discussed at the last Policy Committee meeting, where a draft policy was approved with input from members. Staff distributed the draft for further comment following the meeting and based on the comments received, have delayed presenting it to the Board in September to "reimagine" the proposed policy to develop an implementable program. She noted that staff remains focused on low-cost, small-scale safety countermeasures while ensuring the program can be executed efficiently, minimizing bureaucracy for NOACA, ODOT, and local communities. Director Gallucci suggested following a process similar to NOACA's TEDI program: release a draft policy, implement a pilot program, and use lessons from the pilot to finalize the policy. She

added that she has discussed potential TSCI pilot projects with several communities, including Richmond Heights, North Royalton, and Parma, which the Committee may wish to consider.

Mr. Ali Makarachi said TSCI aims to support local safety improvements across the region by reducing crashes linked to infrastructure deficiencies.

Mr. Makarachi presented information on the following:

- Human Error and Infrastructure Failure
 - 2024 Regional Crashes
- NOACA Community Safety Reports
- Funding Bridge from Planning to Implementation
- Planning Procedures
- Implementation Phase 1
- Implementation Phase 2

Mr. Makarachi stated that the financial impacts include a minimum annual allocation of \$1 million through the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and the Ohio Consolidated Planning Grant (OCPG), with a 20% non-federal match that could be supported by NOACA's toll credits. He noted that feedback from the Committee will be incorporated into a revised policy.

Director Gallucci said NOACA staff wants to move away from an application-based approach, which is administratively burdensome and may not meet ODOT's \$100,000 minimum, as seen with TLCI projects. Instead, staff is considering a partnership model with local communities: identifying needs from Community Safety Reports, confirming priorities, and linking them to create larger projects. A possible approach could mirror the EV charging program, where NOACA holds the regional contract and communities execute projects in partnership. This approach meets ODOT's requirements while delivering projects efficiently.

Ms. Sarah O'Keeffe asked how NOACA partners with local communities. She noted that in Cleveland, comparing expected versus actual crash rates in Community Safety Reports is minimally useful, as high-crash corridors meet expectations and are not prioritized. She expressed concern that relying on these reports for safety measures could misalign priorities or create conflicts. She asked whether the community partnership approach would follow the EV charging stations model, where proposals were submitted by letter and the city responds.

Director Gallucci said NOACA is open to whichever approach works best. She explained that the process would mirror the EV Charging Program, in which staff identified optimal locations for stations based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and geographic equity, invited nearby communities to partner, held workshops for discussion, and then sent partnership letters to interested communities. She added that staff should follow up to understand better the deficiencies in the Community Safety Reports noted by Ms. O'Keeffe.

Mr. Makarachi explained that the crash data currently available reflect observed crashes from 2024, as 2025 data are not yet available. He noted that crash numbers can fluctuate unexpectedly and that the Highway Safety Manual relies on forecasts, which staff compares with observed data for each community and county. Staff focuses on future conditions rather than past incidents. He acknowledged that some corridors may have shown high crash rates previously but may not remain high-priority based on future projections. He emphasized that the Community Safety Reports are only one planning tool among several and not the sole basis for decision-making.

Staff also consider local data and reports, recognizing that crash patterns can change significantly from year to year.

Ms. Kessa Turnbull asked if she understood Ms. O’Keeffe’s point correctly, which was that when a corridor has both a high expected and observed crash rate, a detailed analysis of the expected rate does not add value.

Ms. O’Keeffe said the person with that information was not present at the meeting and that she would follow up with Ms. Turnbull.

Ms. Turnbull noted that while expected rates may be less useful in cities like Cleveland, where observed crashes are already high, they are valuable in smaller or rural areas with lower exposure for identifying streets that have a high likelihood of future crashes despite currently low crash numbers.

Director Gallucci said NOACA staff could consider approaches tailored to larger communities, rather than only aggregating multiple communities.

Ms. Bonnie Teeuwen said she is concerned about including design and construction in NOACA’s role. She supports NOACA coordinating studies and grouping similar issues but believes actual construction should be left to agencies like ODOT or local authorities, as planning and not implementation is NOACA’s primary responsibility.

Director Gallucci asked Mr. John Picuri if ODOT would be willing to take on the projects.

Mr. Picuri said he and Director Gallucci could discuss it further. He noted that if each community manages its own project with federal funding, the process becomes complicated, requiring support from ODOT and NOACA. Bundling projects by region or type would be more efficient, cost-effective, and timely. He added that it remains to be decided whether the project management would be handled as an LPA or ODOT-led project and suggested a pilot could be useful to determine the best approach.

Mr. Claypool explained that in Geauga County, townships, and citizens fund nearly all infrastructure through local levies rather than federal dollars. He expressed concern that, as a metropolitan planning organization using federal funds, NOACA should not support projects outside federally eligible infrastructure, noting that doing so could risk misuse or even appear fraudulent. While supportive of safety initiatives such as rumble strips, which local contractors implement under ODOT standards and oversight, he asked for clarification on when NOACA dollars are appropriate for implementing projects versus supporting federalized infrastructure.

Director Gallucci said NOACA dollars are spent appropriately and audited by the state, ODOT, and the federal government, with no risk of fraud. The proposed safety program responds to community concerns and statistical data, aiming for zero fatalities as included in NOACA’s Long Range Plan. Funding would only apply to federal-aid roads, ensuring alignment with federal programs. NOACA would not fund projects, such as rumble strips, on non-federal residential roads; all spending follows federal guidelines.

Mr. Claypool clarified he was not suggesting any misconduct but noted that, without context, it could appear that NOACA funded projects in all communities. He emphasized, as Director Gallucci explained, that NOACA provides funding only for federalized projects and wanted to ensure that was understood.

Director Gallucci said staff avoids repeating “federal-aid roads” since Board members know NOACA funds apply only to federally designated routes. References to “communities” mean areas eligible for NOACA participation.

Mr. Tom Jordan asked if smaller projects identified in surveys would be bundled and assigned to pre-bid contracts or preferred vendors once the city identifies them.

Director Gallucci confirmed that this was correct and noted that this proposal is more actionable than previous approaches.

Mr. Jordan then clarified that the main reason for this approach is that having individual cities or NOACA bid projects for ODOT review under federal standards can be problematic, particularly for smaller projects.

Director Gallucci agreed, confirming that this was correct.

Mr. Jordan added that the EPA faced a similar issue, moving from individually awarded grants to using vetted preferred vendors. This streamlined the process, ensured compliance with federal regulations, and reduced paperwork, particularly benefiting smaller municipalities. He said this approach would likely be effective and well-received by cities.

Mr. Ben Capelle suggested reviewing all planning projects to identify potential project sponsors—cities, municipalities, or agencies—willing to handle the construction. He noted that Laketrans currently sponsors three community projects in Lake County, hiring contractors in partnership with other entities. He said identifying experienced partners could leverage their construction expertise while allowing NOACA to focus on its strengths.

Director Gallucci said NOACA does not intend to manage construction but aims to support local communities. She suggested that NOACA could bundle projects by county, allowing county engineers to take responsibility while staff coordinates the process.

Ms. Berry asked how NOACA would prioritize projects, noting that small projects may be locally important, but resources are limited, and emphasized the need for clear ranking criteria. She added that Community Safety Reports rank projects within a community, not across counties.

Director Gallucci said the reports provide some ranking, usually within communities. Staff previously compiled rankings for Cuyahoga County and could expand this by county or region. She noted NOACA often categorizes communities by size—small, medium, and large—to ensure fair comparison. With the application component removed, all projects would be included, though size-based considerations remain useful.

Ms. Berry observed that funding is likely limited, so not all community projects could be completed in the first round.

Director Gallucci said NOACA could allocate a set budget for specific safety measures, like rumble strips, regionwide, while aiming not to exclude any community.

Ms. Berry asked whether this approach focuses on funding particular solutions versus addressing specific community problems.

Director Gallucci said both approaches are possible. For example, problematic intersections could be addressed individually, with designers proposing solutions and funding allocated accordingly.

Mr. Makarachi noted that NOACA uses different calibration factors for communities based on size and VMT, so analyses are not one-size-fits-all.

Ms. Berry said it is reassuring that these factors are already considered.

Director Gallucci said the Committee's feedback will help solidify the next iteration of the program.

Ms. Cierebiej asked about the next steps in the process.

Director Gallucci said NOACA staff will prepare a revised draft incorporating today's Committee discussion and feedback from ODOT, Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, Cuyahoga County Public Works, and others. Staff will present the draft at the next Committee meeting and propose pilot projects to test the process. She noted the program combines planning and implementation elements, similar to a hybrid of TEDI and TLCI. She outlined the following next steps:

- Present draft and proposed pilots to the Committee
- Develop policy defining program objectives: improving community transportation safety
- Develop procedures for implementation and coordination with ODOT and county engineers
- Clarify execution and align policy with federal standards

Mr. Jordan said that the Community Safety Reports show many small improvements, like restriping intersections, which can be costly and cumbersome if each community manages them individually under federal standards. Grouping similar projects across neighboring communities would simplify the process. He noted that awarding small grants for local assessments, as the EPA did, can lengthen projects and increase costs. He agreed with Director Gallucci on moving forward with a pilot project.

Director Gallucci highlighted that ODOT has approximately \$100 million annually for major safety projects, which require safety studies. Many communities lack the resources to complete these studies. NOACA could provide consultants (typically \$40,000–\$50,000 per project) to assist communities in developing plans for submission to ODOT. He noted this aspect should remain part of the program and be included in follow-up information.

Mr. Makarachi suggested reviewing all Community Safety Reports to identify common solutions, which could inform a pilot implementation for the region, focusing on measures addressing prevalent crash causes.

Reports/Updates

No reports/updates were presented at this meeting.

Old Business

Resolution 2025-040: Compliance with Federal Executive Orders

Director Gallucci summarized NOACA's recent DEI-related policy updates. In September, the Board passed Resolution 2025-040 to comply with Executive Order (EO) 14173, which eliminated DEI initiatives while retaining federal civil rights protections and dissolved the Equity Subcommittee. Staff amended policies containing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI); equal

employment opportunity (EE); or environmental justice (EJ) language, replacing EJ criteria with Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP) or removing them. She noted that the Diversity and Inclusion Policy is no longer in effect, though some of its provisions remain active and aligned with federal civil rights requirements.

Mr. Claypool noted that the Climate Action Plan still contains environmental justice (EJ) language and questioned whether it had been reviewed for compliance.

Director Gallucci said she asked staff to review the plan after the Board meeting and confirmed that it contains no EJ language and is compliant.

Mr. Claypool requested the contact information of the NOACA staff working on the document so he could share examples.

Director Gallucci said the staff member is Mr. Joe McDonald and asked that any correspondence copy her.

Director Gallucci reviewed and compared EJ areas with APP. She noted that the largest reductions in EJ areas occurred in Geauga, Medina, Lorain, and parts of Cuyahoga counties. While the updated areas reflect the federal intent to support disadvantaged communities, they do not meet all previous EJ criteria, which raises some concerns.

Ms. Cierebiej asked if the map shown in the presentation represented APP.

Director Gallucci confirmed it did.

Ms. Cierebiej noted that switching from EJ areas to APP reduces regional coverage.

Director Gallucci agreed, adding that while some areas were gained, much was lost, particularly in the outer counties. She explained that before 2015, NOACA included certain outer county communities based on micro-level analysis of traffic analysis zones (TAZs), which identified pockets meeting the EJ criteria even if the broader community did not. With the updated APP criteria, that detailed analysis is no longer applied, leading to the loss of these outer county areas.

Ms. Cierebiej said the visual was very helpful in understanding the Board meeting outcomes and their impact on future policies, noting it addressed a sub-request she had made before the meeting.

Mayor Bobst asked whether other MPOs are using the same criteria of APP and if it is a universal approach.

Director Gallucci said NOACA adopted the concept from other MPOs, and generally, the federal government also utilizes APP. It has become a commonly used alternative to EJ.

Mr. Claypool raised concerns, noting that a Department of Transportation (DOT) document listing counties with APP does not include Cuyahoga County. He suggested this may reflect the downstream effects of the DEI Executive Order and advised staff to monitor the situation. He also noted that changing terminology without changing practices could be legally inappropriate and cautioned that NOACA must ensure compliance with federal law, as there are many moving parts and evolving guidance.

Director Gallucci said NOACA staff followed a deliberate methodology when mapping APP, and she is confident it complies with federal definitions and guidelines. She noted that APPs are currently accepted by the federal government, and NOACA would revisit the use of those changes. She emphasized that the shift from EJ to APP was more than a terminology change: it uses a different methodology and removes race-based criteria, which are no longer allowable under the Executive Order.

Ms. Cierebiej added that the APP map shows different coverage than EJ areas, confirming that NOACA did not simply rename the previous designations.

Mr. Claypool asked for examples of how APP would be used in NOACA's calculation for a project.

Director Gallucci said one example is waiving the local match requirements for projects in APP under NOACA's Toll Credit Policy.

Mr. Claypool asked if there was a subjective or objective criterion for making that evaluation.

Director Gallucci said APP criteria are objective, based on income, unlike the previous EJ designation, which included race. The goal is to help historically disadvantaged communities participate in NOACA programs, for example, by waiving local match requirements. When evaluating projects for funding and the TIP, staff considers factors like VMT, lane miles, and road condition. APP is used to identify impacts on these communities, and projects with adverse effects are adjusted or reconsidered to minimize harm.

Ms. Cierebiej said NOACA does not have to revise past documents following the new Executive Order.

Director Gallucci confirmed that Ms. Cierebiej's statement was correct. She noted that the change applies to documents going forward. She explained that the Climate Action Plan includes a Low Income/Disadvantaged Communities (LIDAC) analysis that was required at the time and remains in the plan, even though it is no longer a federal requirement.

Mr. Claypool expressed concern that prior analyses might now be invalid and said the Climate Action Plan could still influence local decisions.

Director Gallucci clarified that the plan does not include funding or project criteria but is meant to inform communities about climate impacts.

Mr. Claypool said even without funding, the plan could influence spending decisions and should be used cautiously.

Director Gallucci clarified that NOACA followed the USEPA's prescribed scope and specifications for developing the plan, which were reviewed and approved by both the previous and current administrations. She said the only change was that the LIDAC analysis is now encouraged rather than required, and NOACA's plan remains fully within current USEPA requirements.

Mr. Thomas Patrick expressed concern about the nine-month timeline to comply with the Executive Order and asked for clarification on APP, including its definition, qualifiers, amendments, and whether it affects project prioritization or simply waives local match requirements.

Director Gallucci said waiving the local match is just one example. APP is primarily used to assess project impacts and avoid adverse effects. In cases where projects are otherwise comparable, being in APP community could serve as a tiebreaker, but it is a consideration not a primary funding criterion.

Mr. Patrick asked if staff tracks how often APP serves as a tiebreaker.

Director Gallucci said staff has not tracked this historically but can report back when presenting projects for approval.

Mr. Patrick asked how many times executive orders have affected the business of NOACA and what the timeline was for compliance in those cases.

Director Gallucci said that, to her knowledge, NOACA has not previously had to comply with an executive order. The January Executive Order eliminating EJ was directed to USDOT, which then guided grantees like NOACA. Given that only two board meetings had occurred before September and no guidance had been issued, the September adoption of changes was reasonable and responsive.

Mr. Patrick expressed concern about government efficiency, funding risks, and whether NOACA is simply renaming programs without safeguarding funds.

Director Gallucci confirmed that funds are not at risk. Staff reviewed policies with legal counsel, suspended the Equity Subcommittee when necessary, and amended policies to comply with the Executive Order. These precautions ensured compliance and protected funding while awaiting official board action.

NOACA Policy Updates

Ms. Liz Barlik explained that Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP) are defined using long-term census data, specifically census tracts with poverty rates of 20% or higher for 30 years. She reviewed specific policies that were amended and outlined the changes made as follows:

- Removal of references to Environmental Justice where used only in definitions
- Replacement of references with economic indicators, such as poverty and unemployment rates
- Legal alignment with the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Ms. Barlik emphasized the updates are procedural, aligning with federal guidance emphasizing economic indicators over environmental justice frameworks, not substantive policy shifts.

Ms. Cierebiej said Ms. Barlik's presentation was helpful and noted that the Board resolution contained extensive information. She emphasized the importance of Policy Committee members understanding what was approved.

Ms. O'Keeffe asked for clarification on the replacement language, confirming that "Areas of Persistent Poverty," which would now be used as the standard measure, was defined as census tracts where poverty has been 20% or higher for approximately 30 years.

Ms. Barlik confirmed it was.

Ms. Cierebiej noted that the September resolution dissolved the Equity Subcommittee, which had done significant work, including developing a strategic plan and making recommendations to the

Policy Committee. She suggested forming a working group to explore creating a new subcommittee, not focused on equity, that could review policies and recommendations before they go to the Policy Committee and Board. She encouraged interested members to follow up with her after the meeting to discuss and preserve the valuable work previously done.

New Business

No new business was discussed at this meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Patrick made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:21 a.m. Mr. Jordan seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

The next Policy Committee meeting will be scheduled for 2026.

Note: Additional information on the agenda items can be found on [NOACA's website](#) and [YouTube channel](#).

DRAFT



2025 Policy Committee Attendance Record

Meeting Dates	1/31//25	4/11/25	7/11/25	10/10/25
ALAI , Samuel J. David Schroedel, Alternate	X	X	X	X
ANTOSKIEWICZ , Larry Thomas Jordan, Alternate	X	X	A	A
BEVERAGE III , Morris Morgan McIntosh, Alternate Richard Regovich, Alternate on 1/31/25 and 4/11/25, 10/10/25 Robert Fiala, Alternate on 7/11/25	A	A	A	A
BIBB , Justin Bonnie Teeuwen, Alternate Mike Culp, Alternate on 7/11/25	A	A	A	A
BLACKWELL , Annette M. Geoff Englebrecht, Alternate	X	X	X	A
BOBST , Pamela Bill Schneider, Alternate	A		A	X
BRADLEY , Jack Dale Vandersommen, Alternate	X	A	X	X
CAPELLE , Ben Brian J. Falkowski, Alternate	X	X	X	X
CIEREBIEJ , Mary Annie Pease, Alternate	X	X	X	X
FIELDS , Marka Tom McNair, Alternate	X			
MERSMANN , Calley Tom McNair, Alternate Sarah O'Keeffe, Alternate on 7/11/25 Marka Fields, Alternate on 10/10/25		X	A	A
GEORGE , Meghan Angela Byington, Alternate	A			X
GUTHEIL , David Linda Sternheimer, Alternate	A	A		A
HARRISON , Aaron Stephen D. Hambley, Alternate John Kalas, Alternate on 4/11/25		A		
KAZY , Brian Kris Harsh, Alternate	X	X		X
MAGOVAC , Paul Matt Hiscock, Alternate	X	X		
MERSMANN , Calley	X			

Meeting Dates	1/31//25	4/11/25	7/11/25	10/10/25
Sarah O'Keeffe, Alternate				
MOSS , Matt Sarah O'Keeffe, Alternate		X	X	A
MOORE , David J. Thomas Patrick III, Alternate	A	A		A
PICURI , John Bob Weaver, Alternate Matt Walter, Alternate on 7/11/25	X	X	A	X
RIDDELL , Jeff John Gall, Alternate	A	A	X	A
RONAYNE , Chris Debbie Berry, Alternate Annie Pease, Alternate on 4/11/25	A	A	A	X
SPIDALIERI , Ralph Walter "Skip" Claypool, Alternate		A	A	A
THOMAS , Kim Bayyinah Brooks, Alternate	X		X	X
Subcommittee Chair and Vice Chair (Ex-Officio Members)				
HARRISON , Aaron Chair of Economic Development Subcommittee Joe Cimperman, Vice Chair				

X = Member Present A = Alternate Present



**NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY
M E M O R A N D U M**

TO: NOACA Policy Committee
FROM: Grace Gallucci, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
DATE: January 23, 2026
RE: **Subcommittee Update**

ACTION REQUESTED

No action is requested at this time. This is an information item.

BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRENT ACTION

The Economic Development Subcommittee provides advice and policy recommendations to the Policy Committee to support economic growth and enhance the quality of life. Below is a summary of the December 5, 2025, Economic Development Subcommittee meeting:

Economic Development Subcommittee

Mr. Khalid Bahhur chaired the Economic Development Subcommittee meeting Friday, December 5, 2025.

Under presentation/discussion items, the Subcommittee was provided with information on CEDS Data and Research Proposal Update and the Aerozone Transportation and Economic Development Initiative (TEDI).

In Reports/Updates, the Economic Development Subcommittee was updated on the status of the Economic Development District (EDD).

The next Economic Development Subcommittee meeting will be Friday, March 27, 2026, 8:30-10 a.m.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

Updates of the Subcommittee meetings will continue to be provided to the Policy Committee.

GG:EB:BW



**NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY
M E M O R A N D U M**

TO: NOACA Policy Committee
FROM: Grace Gallucci, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
DATE: January 23, 2026
RE: **CY 2026 Policy Committee Focus Areas**

ACTION REQUESTED

The Committee is asked to adopt Focus Areas to guide what it intends to accomplish in calendar year 2026.

BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRENT ACTION

Every year, NOACA’s Committees and Subcommittees adopt Focus Areas for the calendar year at their first meeting. The Focus Areas are meant to align the high-level, strategic Committee and Subcommittee purposes and functions with the day-to-day work of NOACA, as well as guide the development of the meeting agendas.

Last year, the Policy Committee established the following focus areas:

2025 Focus Areas	Status
Regional Climate Action Planning/Climate Pollution Reduction	Ongoing
Transportation Safety Program/Policy	New
CEDS Policy Outcomes and Performance Measures	New/Ongoing
Brownfields Remediation	Ongoing
eNEO2050+ Policy Areas	New

2025 focus area activities include the following:

Regional Climate Action Planning/Climate Pollution Reduction

- NOACA and the City of Cleveland developed greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets for the region. The NOACA Board of Directors adopted Resolution 2025-047, adopting the Cleveland-Elyria Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP). The City of Cleveland and NOACA finalized the CCAP, an Implementation Playbook to help communities act on CCAP measures, a Technical Appendix, and submitted them to the US EPA (United States Environmental Protection Agency)

Transportation Safety Program/Policy (now Transportation for Safer Communities Initiative)

- In 2025, NOACA introduced its Transportation Safety Program, Policy, and Fund in response to clearly articulated concerns from our members and public outcry. Over the year, it transformed into the Transportation for Safer Communities Initiative. During this process, the Policy Committee and NOACA staff agreed that, in parallel to the popular Transportation for Livable

Communities Initiative, it would contain separate planning and implementation components. The planning component will focus on creating plans meeting ODOT specifications to allow communities to apply for Highway Safety Improvement Program funds. The implementation component will focus not only on construction but, critically, on design and engineering, which representatives have identified as a prominent barrier to their ability to build safety countermeasures. In 2026, NOACA is pursuing pilot projects of both planning and implementation to gather information and real-world examples to better inform the final policy, before bringing it to the Board for approval.

CEDS Policy Outcomes and Performance Measures

- Staff continued refinement of baseline performance measures. NOACA will partner with CSU to provide data to inform stakeholders, guide local policy, strengthen the understanding of economic conditions, and guide strategic decision-making across CEDS priority areas. In December, American StructurePoint presented the Aerozone Transportation and Economic Development Initiative (TEDI), which aims to stimulate regional economic growth through aerospace, advanced manufacturing, and logistics.

DEI/EJ Policy Updates

- In September, the Board passed Resolution 2025-040 to comply with Executive Order (EO) 14173, which eliminated DEI initiatives while retaining federal civil rights protections and dissolved the Equity Subcommittee. Staff amended policies containing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); equal employment opportunity (EE); or environmental justice (EJ) language, replacing EJ criteria with Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP), underserved areas, or removing them.

Potential 2026 focus areas include:

Potential 2026 Focus Areas	Status
Transportation for Safer Communities Initiative (TSCI), <i>formerly Transportation Safety Program/Policy</i>	New
CEDS Policy Outcomes and Performance Measures	Ongoing
<i>weNEO2050+</i> Policy Areas	New
Agency Policy Review and Updates	New
Others?	

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

Based on the Policy Committee’s input, meeting agendas and materials will be developed to address the identified focus areas.

GG:EB:RB



**NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY
MEMORANDUM**

TO: NOACA Policy Committee
FROM: Grace Gallucci, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
DATE: January 23, 2026
RE: **CY 2026 Economic Development Subcommittee Focus Areas**

ACTION REQUESTED

The Committee is asked to approve Focus Areas for the Economic Development Subcommittee for calendar year (CY) 2026.

BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRENT ACTION

The Policy Committee evaluates recommendations from the Economic Development Subcommittee (EDS), and the EDS provide advice and policy recommendations to the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee sets the Focus Areas for its reporting Subcommittee.

Urban and economic development planning includes the development plans, policies, and programs to promote regional economic growth. Focus areas are established to carry out the goals of the Economic Development Subcommittee (EDS) which are to: 1) Provide input and recommendations in NOACA project planning and prioritization and 2) Be a forum for regional collaboration to support regional economic growth. The 2026 focus areas are like 2025.

Potential 2026 Focus Areas	Status
Implement and refine adopted performance measures	Ongoing
Continue development of a grant strategy	Ongoing
Promote community collaboration through regional projects	Ongoing
Educate communities on the CEDS and its benefits to their areas	Ongoing
Create a centralized repository for all information	Ongoing
EDA approval of the economic development district (EDD) designation	Ongoing

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

Focus areas assist the EDS in carrying out its goals and successfully implement and maintain the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Based on the Policy Committee's input, meeting agendas and materials will be created to accomplish the identified focus areas for the Subcommittee.

GG:EB:rb



**NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY
M E M O R A N D U M**

TO: NOACA Policy Committee
FROM: Grace Gallucci, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
DATE: January 23, 2026
RE: **Transportation for Safer Communities Initiative (TSCI) Update**

ACTION REQUESTED

No action is requested; this is a status update for the ongoing development of TSCI.

BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRENT ACTION

Last year, NOACA presented in the second, third, and fourth quarters on our vision for a transportation safety funding program that would serve as a bridge between planning and implementation. The Policy Committee provided valuable feedback, which led staff to reimagine the initiative from the ground up.

Following the guidance of the Committee, NOACA is conducting pilot projects to inform policy development. We are proceeding with two safety planning study pilot projects in Richmond Heights and North Royalton. We are currently arranging scoping meetings between the cities' and NOACA's staff to draft RFPs for hiring a consultant team. The goal of the planning studies is for communities to be able to apply to ODOT for Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding, which is not only significantly larger than what NOACA can directly fund, but is one of the largest in the nation.

Additionally, a project in Parma has been identified for a later phase implementation pilot with a second pilot implementation project to be selected that is open to any community with a need identified in NOACA's [Community Safety Reports](#). These pilot projects will guide further development of the policy and procedure documents for Committee review.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

NOACA's allocated Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and/or Ohio Consolidated Planning Grant (OCPG) funds are proposed as funding sources and will be finalized through the appropriate funding allocation processes. A minimum allocation of \$1 million annually would be required to sustain the initiative as a program.

CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

NOACA will continue developing the pilot projects and the policy and procedure documents. The Policy Committee will be kept informed of the progress.

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TRAVEL OPTIONS FOR NOACA MEETINGS

LOCATION

NOACA is conveniently located in Cleveland's central business district at 1299 Superior Avenue, on the NW corner of Superior and E. 13th Street.

TRANSIT & BICYCLE TRAVEL TO NOACA

NOACA is accessible by transit and bike.

The NOACA office building is situated on several major and minor bus routes. You can plan your transit trip to NOACA by using trip planner tools or with information provided by the region's public transit agencies:

- [GCRTA Trip Planner](#)
- [Geauga County Transit](#)
- [Laketran Trip Planner](#)
- [Lorain County Transit service](#)
- [Medina County Transit](#)

Bikes may be stored and locked at U-racks located directly in front of the building.

PARKING (see map)

The following map shows parking facilities in the vicinity of the NOACA building. Unfortunately, we are unable to offer reimbursement for parking.

On-street, metered parking is also available for up to 2-hour periods along E. 13th Street north of Superior Avenue. Please heed parking signs and note any time restrictions. Payment can be made at these meters with credit card or by using the [ParkMobile](#) mobile device application.

Street parking is also available along Rockwell Avenue, east of E. 13th Street.

TRAVEL ASSISTANCE AND SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION

If you have further questions about parking or need assistance with travel to or special accommodation at NOACA, please contact Lindy Burt at 216-241-2414, x. 108.

