

# **CY 2026 EXTERNAL AFFAIRS FOCUS AREAS**

**Business, Community, Rural, and Emerging Leaders  
Advisory Councils**

**March 27, 2026**

# **ACTION REQUESTED**

**No action is requested. This item is for presentation and discussion.**

## **PREVIOUS ACTION**

**The 2026 Focus Areas were approved by the External Affairs Committee**

# BACKGROUND

- Serves as NOACA’s central hub for information, context, and insight—across the region
- Strengthens understanding of NOACA’s role, decisions, and policies among stakeholders, partners, and the public
- Elevates the agency’s mission by aligning regional priorities through clear focus areas and coordinated messaging
- “Connected Progress”



# BACKGROUND

## Goals

- Ensure the efficient and effective development and implementation of the agency's outreach efforts to local elected officials, public agencies, community and business interests, and the public at large.
- Ensure that the agency's outreach addresses its core mission areas of transportation, air quality, and water quality to all communities.

# CY 2026 PRIORITY AREAS

- Proposed areas recommended are similar to 2025, with elevating communication, outreach, policy education, and advocacy initiatives.
- Ongoing key focus is continuing public involvement priorities outlined in the OWP and *WeNEO2050+* long-range plan
- Enhanced outreach and capacity building with our stakeholders and the general public.



# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

2026 Focus Areas	Co-Lead
Advocacy and marketing for climate and clean energy investments including the electric vehicle charging stations, no-idling; focus group planning.	PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Engaging the Business, Community, Rural and Emerging Leaders Advisory Councils	EXECUTIVE
Advocacy and outreach for federal, state, and local priorities	EXECUTIVE/ GOVERNMENT
Brand Identity and Content Marketing to reach vast audiences	PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Communication Messaging (i.e. case studies, impact stories; public awareness through podcasts, social media; results from analytics/plan studies, etc.);	PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Advancing participation for the development of the climate pollution reduction planning outputs	SEP/PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Elevating program and outreach for the Vanpool Program, Workforce Accessibility and Mobility Tool; and Gohio Commute through various community affairs, outreach and mass media marketing approaches.	SEP/PROGRAMMING/ TPED/PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Develop county-specific engagement activities surrounding WeNEO2050+ and TIP to update the residents on important transportation and environmental topics and issues.	PROGRAMMING/ PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Create a structured messaging platform to alert community on pertinent and emerging regional issues via website and online platforms.	PUBLIC AFFAIRS

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

## 2026 Focus Areas

## Responsible Division

Build stakeholder partnerships through PA's Community Affairs function of the division.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Produce speaker forums to build awareness and advocacy around priority projects and programs at NOACA.

EXECUTIVE/PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Translate plain, Spanish, and other languages of NOACA's web and print content to advance audience participation.

AGENCY WIDE/PUBLIC AFFAIRS

# PUBLIC AFFAIRS STRATEGIES

## COLLECT DATA, FORMALLY AND INFORMALLY

To gauge opinions and identify messages that resonate and align with NOACA and public concerns (Data Impacts)



## COMMUNICATE WITH OUR CONSTITUENTS DIRECTLY

Owned, placed and paid media to engage; social media and online platforms; traditional face to face (Digital Marketing/Focus Group)



## DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A "FIELD EFFORT"

Partnerships, events, advocacy efforts, coalitions, collaborations, aligned with marketing and communications efforts and priorities (Community Affairs & Outreach)

## TARGET STRATEGIC INFLUENCERS

(Work with our leadership – External Affairs Committee and others); identify and cultivate relationships and stakeholders

- Advocacy/Forums



**NOACA**  
Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency

## DEFINE "THE NARRATIVE"

Advancing NOACA's mission and goals align with public values (Content Marketing & Communications)



# DISCUSSION

Based on the External Affairs Committee and Councils' input, NOACA will continue implementing work products identified within the focus areas and other recommendations.



# 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.