



External Affairs Committee Meeting

April 10, 2026, 8:30 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: External Affairs Committee Members
Bishara Addison*
Ferzan M. Ahmed, P.E., Executive Director, Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure
Commission*
Larry Antoskiewicz, Mayor, City of North Royalton
Justin Bibb, Mayor, City of Cleveland
Kevin Bishop, Council Member, Ward 2, City of Cleveland
Jack Bradley, Mayor, City of Lorain
Kyle Dreyfuss-Wells, CEO, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District
James W. Dvorak, Commissioner, Geauga County
Eric Hange, District Manager, Medina County Soil and Water Conservation District*
Michael J. Houser, Council Member, District 10, Cuyahoga County
Chris Kosman, Trustee, York Township, Medina County
Eric C. Mack, P.E., Project Manager & Engineer, Cuyahoga County, Department
of Public Works*
Valarie McCall, Founder & Chief Executive, Valarie McCall Consulting Agency*
Morgan McIntosh, Commissioner, Lake County
Matt Moss, Senior Strategist for Thriving Communities, City of Cleveland
Jim Petras, Mayor, City of Cleveland Heights
Jeff Riddell, Commissioner, Lorain County
Chris Ronayne, County Executive, Cuyahoga County
India Birdsong Terry, General Manager and CEO, Greater Cleveland Regional Transit
Authority

*Ex Officio Member

FROM: Timothy J. DeGeeter, Chair
Mayor, City of Parma

DATE: April 3, 2026

RE: External Affairs Committee

Attached please find materials for the External Affairs Committee meeting on **Friday, April 10, 2026, from 8:30 – 10:00 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, April 10, 2026
8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

The public can view the meeting live at: youtube.com/live/3W6RjsxG-Ls?feature=share

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

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1. Call to Order	
a. Pledge of Allegiance	
2. Minutes of January 30, 2026, Meeting	1
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a. Business Advisory Council (Chair: Valarie McCall)	
b. Community Advisory Council (Chair: Bishara Addison)	
c. Rural Advisory Council (Chair: Eric Hange)	
d. Emerging Leaders Advisory Council (Chair: Eric Mack)	
4. Public Comment on Agenda Items	
5. Chair's/Executive Director's Report	
6. Action Items (none)	
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c. Government Affairs Report	12
8. Reports/Updates	
9. Old Business	
10. New Business	
11. Adjourn	

Next Meeting: **Friday, July 10, 2026, at 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.**
NOACA Offices, 1299 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio



**NOACA External Affairs Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 30, 2026
NOACA Offices
1299 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio**

Present: Please see the attached attendance record.

Mayor Tim DeGeeter, Chair of the External Affairs Committee, convened the meeting at 8:35 a.m.

Mayor DeGeeter welcomed all new board members to the External Affairs Committee.

Meeting Minutes

Mayor Jim Petras made a motion to approve the October 10, 2025, meeting minutes. Commissioner Jim Dvorak seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

Advisory Committee Updates

The External Affairs Committee received a summary in its packet of the joint advisory council meeting held in December 2025.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

No public comments were made at this meeting.

Executive Director's Report

No report was presented at this meeting.

Action Items

CY 2026 External Affairs Committee Focus Areas

Ms. Danielle Render presented recommended focus areas for calendar year (CY) 2026 to the Committee for approval. She presented the following information:

- Committee Purpose and Goals
- CY 2026 Priority Areas
- Proposed 2026 Focus Areas
- Public Affairs Strategies

Ms. Render noted that based on the External Affairs Committee's input, NOACA will continue implementing work products identified within the focus areas and other recommendations.

Ms. Debbie Berry made a motion to approve the CY 2026 External Affairs Committee Focus Areas. Mayor Petras seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

Presentation/Discussion Items

Public Affairs Updates

Ms. Render stated that the Public Affairs efforts are aligned with NOACA's strategic priorities for FY2026. These efforts include advanced Public Affairs initiatives that focus on enhancing visibility, engagement, and awareness. Additionally, inclusive and consistent outreach and advocacy efforts have been ensured. Quarterly reports will be provided, covering both external outputs and public interfacing.

Ms. Render presented information on the following:

- External Outputs (Public-Facing Deliverables)
- FY2026 Quarterly Action Plans
 - Brand Management
 - Public Engagement – Major Projects
 - Community Awareness
- Focus Area: Brand Management
 - Brand Messages
 - Brand Message: Mural Dedication
 - Branding: National Recognition
- Paid Advertisements
 - Public Engagement: Branding
 - Paid Advertisements: Quarter 2
 - Campaign – FY2026 Go Car(bon) Free Challenge – WKYC Ad
- Public Involvement and Outreach
 - Measurable Impact
 - Public Meetings
- Upcoming Quarters 3 & 4
 - Currently Quarter 3: January – March
 - Upcoming Quarter 4: April - June

Ms. Render invited the Committee to share input or additional priorities for the next two quarters. No comments were offered.

Government Affairs Updates

Ms. Bev Burtzlaff presented information on the following:

- Draft 2026 Initiatives for Action (Federal and State)
 - Updates: Federal Initiatives
 - Discussion Item: Add TOD?

Ms. Berry said the idea of add transit-oriented development (TOD) is a good one, noting that Cuyahoga County is working with GCRTA and other partners on TOD and has created a new loan program to support it. She said it would make sense for NOACA to elevate this focus as well.

Mr. Matt Moss said he supported the idea from the City of Cleveland's perspective, noting that TIFIA and RRIF programs are undersubscribed, as communicated by DOT, and that improving access to these funds would benefit communities.

Mr. John Gall asked whether NOACA will include housing or still be focused on transportation.

Director Gallucci explained that transit-oriented development (TOD) includes housing and mixed-use development but is primarily focused on transportation which is within NOACA's MPO function. She noted that NOACA historically engaged in housing through HUD funding in the

1970s and 1980s and referenced a \$250,000 TOD study from approximately five years ago, which influenced Cuyahoga County's TOD program.

Mr. Gall thanked Director Gallucci for the explanation.

Mr. Moss added that credit programs also help transit agencies with station redevelopment and associated commercial or housing uses. He explained that accessing these funds is complex and bureaucratic, and that legislation reducing barriers would increase capital for communities.

Ms. Burtzloff confirmed that the legislation was intended to reduce red tape and offered to provide an analysis or copy of the bill, noting strong bipartisan support.

Mayor DeGeeter stated that receiving a copy of the bill would be great.

Ms. Terry highlighted the importance of advocacy partnerships and suggested that NOACA could strengthen advocacy by collaborating with external partners to educate legislators in Washington, D.C., and Columbus. She noted that this could enhance NOACA's visibility and effectiveness.

Director Gallucci said NOACA's federal advocacy involves working with national organizations like AMPO, NARC, APTA, and AASHTO to align priorities, and meeting directly with legislators, including an upcoming Legislative Meet and Greet with state legislators in March and annual visits to Washington, D.C. She noted that TOD aligns well with NOACA's advocacy approach and supported Ms. Terry's idea of coordinating with multiple partners for joint advocacy efforts in Columbus or Washington.

Ms. Terry emphasized NOACA's role as a convener and the potential to elevate its branding and influence with legislators.

Director Gallucci said she appreciated the suggestion and supported efforts to strengthen advocacy and define NOACA as a convener.

Ms. Burtzloff agreed and noted ongoing coordination with the GCRTA team. She stated that she would report on TOD at the next Committee meeting.

Ms. Berry asked if making MPOs direct recipients of core planning program funds would take funding away from ODOT.

Ms. Burtzloff explained that current funds are sub-allocated through ODOT and that national organizations support more direct MPO funding.

Director Gallucci described the CMAQ program, which allocates funds to states based on population in non-attainment areas and provides funding for the eight largest MPOs. She explained that direct funding to NOACA would allow the agency to prioritize projects locally, while construction and environmental responsibilities would remain with the state.

Ms. Berry asked whether NOACA is best positioned to manage the projects, noting that ODOT has agreements with FHWA that help advance the environmental process and that managing the projects would involve significant additional responsibility.

Director Gallucci clarified that NOACA staff are responsible only for programming and planning the funds, including incorporating them into the Plan and TIP, while construction and related processes remain with the state.

Ms. Berry said that the information was very helpful.

Director Gallucci added that staff focus solely on the funding programs.

Ms. Berry asked about the status of the Hyperloop and its priority.

Director Gallucci said that in 2017–2018, NOACA worked closely with the Trump administration and a private company to develop a feasibility study for a potential U.S. Hyperloop, connecting Chicago, Cleveland, Washington, D.C., and New York. The proposal was well received, and NOACA staff met directly with the White House and the USDOT's Advanced Transportation Technologies. She noted that the project generated positive press and strong connections with USDOT. The feasibility study demonstrated that the Hyperloop could be built, operated, and maintained by the private sector without subsidies. NOACA is currently monitoring developments, following private sector and USDOT actions, but is not actively pushing the project.

Ms. Berry thanked Director Gallucci for the explanation.

Ms. Burtzloff added that it was important for USDOT to continue preparing a regulatory framework for new transportation technologies to address safety and implementation issues.

Ms. Burtzloff continued with the presentation:

- Updates: State Initiatives
 - Two recommended changes:
 - Remove action item re: interstate interchanges
 - Add action item re: supporting the role of MPOs

Ms. Bonnie Teeuwen said she generally supported all the recommendations in the Legislative Agenda but suggested rewording some language to stay positive. She recommended removing the reference to opposing legislation and instead use the phrasing “advocate to empower local elected officials” to make it more user-friendly.

Director Gallucci noted that the language referred to existing legislation that could undermine MPOs, specifically HB445.

Ms. Burtzloff confirmed the reference was to HB445.

Director Gallucci said that even if the first sentence is removed, additional language would be needed to allow NOACA to address the bill, which is expected to be discussed this winter or spring.

Ms. Teeuwen said she preferred to keep the language positive, focusing on advocacy for MPOs and NOACA without including negative references. She emphasized highlighting the positive contributions of NOACA and Ohio, rather than “poking the bear.”

Director Gallucci asked Ms. Burtzloff whether she would have included the language if HB445 did not exist.

Ms. Burtzloff responded that the language was prompted by HB445, noted that NOACA staff generally try to stay positive.

Director Gallucci said staff could remove the first sentence and consider adding language to still convey a stronger, specific message.

Mayor DeGeeter said that if NOACA follows Ms. Teeuwen's suggestion to keep overall state initiatives positive, NOACA could still address HB445 separately. As a former state legislator, he understands the perspective and suggested providing updates on the bill's legislative status, including sponsor and opposition testimony, so that overall messaging remains positive while specifically addressing that legislation.

Director Gallucci said the Legislature received sponsor testimony on HB445 in the fall, with further action expected in 2026. She noted NOACA is working with OARC on opposition testimony and suggested using language such as participate in legislative advocacy or testimony on behalf of MPOs and OARC to avoid negative wording.

Ms. Teeuwen said she would defer to Mayor DeGeeter for guidance on appropriate wording based on his experience in Columbus and agreed it was a good idea.

Mr. Moss noted that the top bullet in the state initiatives update already supports MPOs positively, and that supporting MPOs inherently includes opposing legislation that would undermine the organization.

Ms. Terry asked whether any of the legislation included items that the MPOs actually support, or if the only concern is the one item NOACA opposes.

Director Gallucci said the legislation has four components: three harmful to MPOs, which require action, and one personally targeting her, which requires no action. She agreed staff could later work with Mayor DeGeeter, as Committee Chair, on how best to present the concerns to the Legislature.

Mayor DeGeeter said that if there was no objection, members could send input to him and Director Gallucci, and the matter would be brought back to the Committee.

Ms. Berry said she agreed and was fine with Mayor DeGeeter and Director Gallucci working on it. She noted that the items are written broadly, which allows flexibility throughout the year, and cautioned against focusing too specifically on one bill.

Director Gallucci said Ms. Burtzlaff was reacting to removing an item specific to interchanges, which are also important to NOACA's work, and noted that staff understood the direction given.

Mayor DeGeeter asked if both items in the State House legislation undermine the MPO.

Director Gallucci confirmed that they do. She pointed out the language in two slides under state initiatives: "Advocate for equitable return of state transportation dollars & encourage comprehensive maintenance of NHS routes," to be listed as a separate item, and "Support the federally established role of the metropolitan planning organizations to ensure regional collaboration and cooperation among local governments," which staff will revise this item to be more positive.

Ms. Burtzlaff thanked the Committee and said staff could adjust the language.

Ms. Burtzlaff continued with the presentation:

- Updates: State Initiatives
 - Why does this matter?
- Federal Updates

- USDOT Appropriations
- THUD Bill: Highlights
- FY2026 THUD Earmarks Included
- FY2026 THUD Earmarks: HUD
- Other FY2026 Earmark Requests
- Surface Transportation Reauthorization
- NOACA Transportation Day 2026
- Grant Funding Update
- NOACA's Funding Resources Webpage
- State Updates
 - Speed Limit Initiative
 - Passenger Rail Advocacy
 - 2026 Legislative Meet & Greet
 - MPO Legislation

Director Gallucci stated that she and Mayor DeGeeter were discussing that if HB445 begins moving and hearings are scheduled, NOACA may consider a board resolution addressing it in Columbus. She noted that at this point, no action would be taken, but the External Affairs Committee would be informed via email, and the chair would be contacted regarding placement on the Board agenda.

Mayor DeGeeter said that if the bill remains in committee, the External Affairs Committee will wait, but if it advances and additional hearings are held, that would be the time to consider action.

Director Gallucci stated that she had not heard from colleagues at OARC that a similar suggestion should be made for all MPOs.

Ms. Burtzloff said she could raise the matter at an OARC Policy Committee meeting.

Reports/Updates

No reports/updates were presented at this meeting.

Old Business

No old business was discussed at this meeting.

New Business

No new business was discussed at this meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Tom Jordan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 a.m. Mr. Matt Moss seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

The External Affairs Committee will hold its next meeting Friday, April 10, 2025, from 8:30 – 10:00 a.m., at the NOACA offices.

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



**External Affairs Committee
Attendance Record**

Meeting Dates	1/30/26	4/10/26	7/10/26	10/09/26
ANTOSKIEWICZ , Larry Thomas Jordan, Alternate	X			
BIBB , Justin Bonnie Teeuwen, Alternate	A			
BISHOP , Kevin Kris Harsh, Alternate				
BRADLEY , Jack Dale Vandersommen, Alternate	A			
DEGEETER , Timothy J. Scott Wangler, Alternate	X			
DREYFUSS-WELLS , Kyle Angela Jones, Alternate	A			
DVORAK , James W. Nick Gorris, Alternate	X			
HOUSER , Michael J. Joseph Nanni, Alternate				
KOSMAN , Chris Bruce Christopher, Alternate				
MOSS , Matt Sarah O’Keeffe, Alternate	X			
MCINTOSH , Morgan Robert Fiala, Alternate	X			
PETRAS , Jim Eric Zamft, Alternate	X			
RIDDELL , Jeff John Gall, Alternate	A			
RONAYNE , Chris Debbie Berry, Alternate	A			
TERRY , India L. Birdsong Paul Koomar, Alternate	X			
AHMED , Ferzan M. (Charles Cyrill, Alternate)				
Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Councils				

Meeting Dates	1/30/26	4/10/26	7/10/26	10/09/26
McCALL , Valarie (Mary Samide, Alternate)				
ADDISON , Bishara (Jeff Sleasman, Alternate)				
HANGE , Eric (Jacki Baca, Alternate)	A			
MACK , Eric (Angie Schmitt, Alternate)	X/A			

X = Member present

A = Alternate present

DRAFT



**NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY
MEMORANDUM**

TO: NOACA External Affairs Committee
FROM: Grace Gallucci, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
DATE: April 3, 2026
RE: **Advisory Council Updates**

ACTION REQUESTED

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

BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRENT ACTION

The External Affairs Committee evaluates recommendations from its four Councils: Business, Community, Rural, and Emerging Leaders. The Councils provide advice and policy recommendations to the External Affairs Committee. Below is a summary of the joint Council meeting March 27, 2026.

Business, Community, Rural, and Emerging Leaders Advisory Councils

Ms. Valarie McCall chaired the joint meeting on Friday, March 27, 2026.

The Councils were presented with information on the following:

- Calendar Year (CY) 2026 External Affairs Committee Focus Areas
- Government Affairs Report
- Bike & Pedestrian Count Program
- NOACA EV Charging Stations Program

The next BAC, CAC, RAC, and ELAC meeting will be held Friday, June 5, 2026, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

Updates of the joint Council meeting will continue to be provided to the External Affairs Committee.

GG:EB:bw



NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY MEMORANDUM

TO: NOACA External Affairs Committee
FROM: Grace Gallucci, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
DATE: April 3, 2026
RE: **Public Affairs Quarterly Update**

ACTION REQUESTED

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

BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRENT ACTION

During the third quarter of fiscal year (FY) 2026, NOACA advanced its coordinated public engagement and communications strategy to support major regional planning initiatives, elevate public awareness, and ensure meaningful opportunities for community input. These efforts align with NOACA's role and its commitment to transparency, accessibility, and inclusive participation in project decision-making.

3rd Quarter FY26 activities focused on three interconnected areas:

- Public engagement and outreach activities (NOACA Loves Transit Campaigns and Cleveland Charge)
- Targeted communications, social media, and campaigns to broaden awareness and participation
- Developing External Affairs Forum for FY 2027

Together, these efforts ensured that stakeholders, including residents, businesses, local governments, and partner agencies, had timely information and clear pathways to engage in projects with local and regional implications.

This presentation will provide the External Affairs Committee with details on how engagement, communications, and public meetings are being strategically deployed to support NOACA's planning responsibilities and regional leadership role.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

NOACA will continue to engage committee members to share information and elicit input and recommendations for Public Affairs.

GG:EB:DR



**NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY
MEMORANDUM**

TO: NOACA External Affairs Committee
FROM: Grace Gallucci, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
DATE: April 3, 2026
RE: **Street Supplies Program**

ACTION REQUESTED

No action is requested. This item is for information and discussion.

BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRENT ACTION

NOACA's Street Supplies Program is a "library" of items that communities can use to temporarily demonstrate how a transportation project might function before it is permanently installed. The roadway materials are free for communities in the NOACA region to borrow and include items such as paint, tape, cones, signage, bike racks, street furniture, and planters.

Items from the library can be used to build "pop-up" configurations such as bike lanes, curb extensions, and roundabouts. These temporary configurations can be used to gather public input on a proposed design and evaluate the potential benefits of a project before its permanent construction while enlivening public spaces, improving safety, and encouraging multimodal transportation use. NOACA accepts project requests on a rolling basis.

NOACA staff will provide a general overview of the program including library contents and upcoming projects, before-and-after data collected from completed projects demonstrating program successes, and recent updates to the program including an increased capacity to measure the impact of future projects.

Staff will also review efforts to develop a more proactive approach to increasing program awareness and outreach to municipalities, especially those with no previous program experience, leveraging safety data to find possible candidates.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The budget for the combined Bike & Pedestrian Count and Street Supplies outreach campaign is \$21,160 for fiscal year 2027.

CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

NOACA will continue to share information and updates about the program with the subcommittee for awareness and input.

GG:EB:SS



NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY MEMORANDUM

TO: NOACA External Affairs Committee
FROM: Grace Gallucci, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
DATE: April 3, 2026
RE: **Government Affairs Report**

ACTION REQUESTED

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

BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRENT ACTION

NOACA staff will provide a quarterly status report on government affairs activities aimed at fulfilling the NOACA Board-adopted [2026 Federal and State Legislative Agenda](#). In particular, staff will discuss and seek Committee input on the following items:

- Updates to the draft 2026 Federal and State Initiatives for Action document, which contains specific action items to implement the 2026 Legislative Agenda, including:
 - Revised language regarding supporting the role of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs)
 - Adding support for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) proposals
- Update on FY 2026 federal transportation appropriations
- Status of federal grant funding opportunities
- NOACA's ongoing outreach to Congress regarding surface transportation reauthorization legislation
 - Capitol Hill and U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT) visits in March
 - NOACA Transportation Day on April 1 to engage region's communities in outreach and information regarding reauthorization
 - Continued collaboration with partner organizations to inform and educate members of Congress regarding reauthorization proposals that will advance local and regional priorities
 - BASICS Act proposal
- Updates to NOACA strategy for improving passenger rail service in Northeast Ohio, including:
 - Coalition building to support NOACA's passenger rail initiatives
 - Upcoming meeting for stakeholders

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

NOACA will continue to provide quarterly government affairs status reports to the Committee.

GG:EB:bb

Attachment 1: Draft NOACA 2026 Federal and State Initiatives for Action

NOACA's 2026 Federal Initiatives For Action

Background: The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) is set to expire on September 30, 2026. NOACA will work with federal officials to shape the next surface transportation law consistent with NOACA's 2026 Legislative Agenda and Long Range Plan, and support federal initiatives and funding to improve the economy and quality of life in Northeast Ohio.

Recommendations for Advocacy: Northeast Ohio's Congressional Delegation and the Administration

■ **Advocate for a reauthorized federal surface transportation law that strengthens local control of core transportation programs**

Ask Congress to consider making metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) direct recipients for core planning programs like STBG, CMAQ, TAP, and CRP. Support additional reforms to support local decision-making: shift some discretionary funding to MPO-directed formula funding to advance projects prioritized in regional Long Range Plans, increase MPO planning funds, reduce local match for federal transportation programs in low-income communities, and streamline environmental reviews without compromising environmental protection.

■ **Support efforts to stabilize and grow the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) and encourage the search for new revenue sources**

Urge lawmakers to stabilize and grow the HTF to provide long-term predictable funding for the nation's transportation programs with an updated "user pays" system to replace the increasingly outdated federal gas tax. Ensure that any new funding mechanisms will continue to support public transit.

■ **Encourage federal support for making Greater Cleveland a significant hub on the national passenger rail network**

Collaborate with the FRA, Amtrak, and others to elevate Greater Cleveland on the national passenger rail system, improve passenger and freight service, and create economic opportunity. Seek federal support for service and infrastructure improvements to existing Amtrak east-west long distance routes through the region, and proposals for new Ohio corridors: 3C+D and Cleveland-Toledo-Detroit. Support extension of the CVSR north to Cleveland.

■ **Support federal actions that promote economic development and environmental stewardship in the Great Lakes megaregion**

Support implementation of the Great Lakes Authority and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) to protect fresh water resources, create new education and job opportunities, and collaborate on infrastructure investments.

■ **Pursue initiatives and funding to implement NOACA's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy**

Support policies and funding that align with NOACA's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and the recently reauthorized Economic Development Administration (EDA) to improve economic opportunity and jobs in the region.

■ **Urge Congress to continue support for U.S. DOT's NETT Council to advance hyperloop technology and projects like Great Lakes Hyperloop**

Ask Congress to fund the U.S. DOT Non-Traditional and Emerging Transportation Technology (NETT) Council, to provide a regulatory framework and funding to advance emerging technologies, like hyperloop, which have potential to transform and decarbonize the nation's transportation network.

■ **Support proposals to advance Transportation Oriented Development (TOD) initiatives in local communities**

Improve local communities' access to federal financing tools to support the creation of housing and economic development initiatives near public transit services.

NOACA's 2026 State Initiatives for Action

Background: In early 2027, the Ohio Governor and the General Assembly will consider and enact the 2028-2029 Biennial Transportation Budget. NOACA will continue to advocate for policies and funding to enhance Northeast Ohio's multimodal transportation network, increase travel options, improve transportation safety, and support regional collaboration through metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs).

Recommendations for Advocacy: Northeast Ohio's Statehouse Delegation and Governor

■ **Oppose any suspension of Ohio's 2019 gas tax increase**

NOACA supported Ohio's 2019 user fee increase on gasoline and diesel fuel, and will continue to oppose efforts to reduce these fees, which are vitally important to ODOT and local governments for roadway maintenance. NOACA will support efforts to improve the state's ability to adequately fund Ohio's transportation system.

■ **Advocate for increased and predictable funding for transit in Ohio**

Ohio continues to lag behind most states in per capita transit dollars, and historical disinvestment has left GCRTA and other Ohio transit systems in financial straits. NOACA supports a dedicated, long-term source of transit funding to improve local economies, attract new employers, connect workers to jobs, and improve air quality.

■ **Encourage state support for passenger rail improvement and expansion in Ohio**

Advocate for improved and expanded passenger rail service in the region, including Amtrak's existing east-west long distance routes across Northeast Ohio, and proposals for new service: 3C+D, and Cleveland-Toledo-Detroit. Encourage state funding to advance these routes. Support extension of the CVSR north to Cleveland.

■ **Support efforts to remediate contamination and protect air and water quality**

Support policies to remediate and repurpose brownfields and seek funding for the NOACA/Vibrant NEO Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund to spur new economic investment. Support legislation to revitalize the Clean Ohio Fund. Protect air and water quality to improve public health, economic vitality, and quality of life in the region.

■ **Support proposals to increase transportation safety and reduce distracted driving**

Work with state and local partners to increase transportation safety -- focusing on programs and legislation to reduce distracted driving, establish safe speed limits, and improve network design to protect drivers and passengers, roadway workers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and all users of the region's transportation system.

■ **Advocate for an equitable return of state transportation dollars to Northeast Ohio**

Advocate for transportation funding formulas that send user fee dollars back to the regions and communities where they were collected, in the true spirit of a "user fee," to correct inequities that shortchange the NOACA region. As Ohio analyzes new revenue models to collect transportation user fees, we should also consider formulas to equitably return these dollars to the places where they were collected.

■ **Encourage comprehensive and equitable maintenance of National Highway System (NHS) routes in Ohio**

Raise awareness of the need for comprehensive and equitable maintenance of National Highway System (NHS) routes -- including those outside the interstate system, for which the state receives federal funds. This will reduce the maintenance burden on local communities.

■ **Support the federally established role of metropolitan planning organizations to ensure regional collaboration and cooperation among local governments**

Support legislation to uphold the important work of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) like NOACA. Continue to empower local elected officials, working through their respective MPO boards, to conduct regional transportation and environmental planning and make decisions that directly impact their communities while reaching national goals through a "continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C)" process.



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.

