



## NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** NOACA Board of Directors

**FROM:** Grace Gallucci, Executive Director

**DATE:** January 16, 2015

**RE:** **Resolution No. 2015-016:  
Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) Policy**

#### **ACTION REQUESTED**

The Board of Directors is asked to adopt **Resolution No. 2015-016**, which approves the Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) Policy. This action was recommended by the Planning and Programming Committee.

#### **BACKGROUND**

NOACA's Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) Program provides federal funding assistance to communities and public agencies to contract for the planning of transportation improvements that help advance NOACA's long range goals. The program provides support to explore innovative concepts and plans through a comprehensive, community-based planning process, leading to the construction of projects that improve multimodal transportation across the region. Projects identified through funded studies and plans are expected to lead to the development and construction of projects that can secure funding, and/or compete at the regional level for capital funds through NOACA's regional transportation investment process. The TLCI program has provided assistance to communities and public agencies for planning that strengthens community livability since 2006.

In July of 2012, the NOACA Board requested a staff evaluation of the TLCI program. The report was completed and presented to the Board in December 2012. The purpose of the evaluation report was to assess NOACA's investment in the TLCI program in terms of the development of projects from TLCI plans that improve livability, the extent to which TLCI plans engage and involve the community, and the performance of the program in affecting policy and coordination within the region. The report included information from NOACA board resolutions, NOACA's Transportation Improvement Program between 2006 and 2012, data from the U.S. Census Bureau, and responses from TLCI sponsors collected through a TLCI Implementation Survey.

The report found that the TLCI program has made a significant impact on the region. In the transportation sector, TLCIs have led to an estimated \$166,597,042 investment in planned, programmed, under construction, or completed projects. Outside of rights of way, the program has led to an estimated \$472,598,647 in planned, under construction, or complete land use projects.

Recommended changes to the program included:

- Revised, more concise application for TLCI funding
- Better coordination with capital improvement plans, existing comprehensive and community plans, ongoing planning efforts, areas of investment, and other initiatives
- Representation of key implementing agencies or departments on stakeholder committees, in order to foster better interdepartmental and intergovernmental coordination, and the inclusion of new stakeholders representing interests that impact TLCI recommendations
- Increased focus on implementation strategies
- A flexible funding cap to coordinate larger scale planning between sponsors and areas of the region

NOACA staff incorporated these recommendations into the 2014 TLCI process of which the Board approved 13 planning projects in January 2014.

### **TLCI POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

The TLCI program continues to have a significant impact on the NOACA region. To ensure the continued success of the program, NOACA staff has developed a draft policy (attached) for consideration by the Board.

The proposed TLCI policy continues to support funding for planning grants to support activities that facilitate and promote sustainable development, multimodal transportation, and complete and green streets. The proposed policy also recommends allowing for funding of implementation grants to fund the construction of low-cost, programmatic multimodal transportation improvements recommended in completed TLCI planning studies or other locally completed plans and studies. Examples of eligible projects include:

- Striping of bike lanes, protected bike lanes, and/or bike boxes
- Bike parking (racks, corrals, boxes, etc.)
- Installation of crosswalk infrastructure
- Construction of Transit Waiting Environments/enhanced shelters
- Implementation of comprehensive wayfinding programs

Providing funding for low-cost implementation projects is proposed to help catalyze increased support for greater implementation of TLCI planning projects and other local planning projects.

The selection of TLCI planning projects will happen similarly to previous TLCI rounds. Local agencies will submit online applications for planning grants. NOACA staff will evaluate each application based on previously established criteria that demonstrates project need, relationship to NOACA vision and goals, project organization, project administration and sponsor capacity, partnerships and cross-jurisdictional coordination. NOACA staff will recommend projects to the NOACA Standing Committees and Board based on this evaluation.

TLCI implementation grants will be solicited through local workshops where NOACA staff will work with local agencies to inventory potential eligible projects. Potential projects will be derived from previous TLCI planning studies and other local plans and only at the request of the local government agency with jurisdiction. NOACA staff will create and maintain a comprehensive TLCI Implementation Database of all of the projects from previous TLCI planning studies and local plans. NOACA staff will solicit local plans annually to update the TLCI Implementation Database. The focus of the awards will be on low-cost infrastructure projects that can be implemented through a coordinated, programmatic approach. NOACA staff will recommend projects to the NOACA Standing Committees and Board.

On November 14, 2014, the Policy Committee reviewed the proposed policy and recommended adoption of the policy.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is \$1 million in available funding for the 2015 TLCI program, and the proposed project funding levels would utilize all available funds. The program is funded by an annual set aside from NOACA's Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds, and the Board of Directors will continue to determine the annual set aside for TLCI planning and implementation grants during the development of NOACA's annual OWP and biennial TIP.

## **CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS**

The following calendar outlines proposed milestones for the 2015 TLCI program to ensure that planning and implementation projects are awarded by July 2015.

<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
January 23, 2015	Board Meeting and adoption of TLCI Policy, and TLCI Planning Applications Open
Late February 2015	TLCI Planning Applications Due
January – February 2015	NOACA staff and local agency workshops to develop TLCI implementation projects
February – March 2015	NOACA staff review TLCI Planning Applications
March 2015	Preparation of draft recommended list of TLCI Planning and Implementation projects
March 2015	Bicycle, Pedestrian Advisory Council and Transit Council discussion of TLCI project recommendations
April 2015	Transportation Subcommittee discussion of TLCI project recommendations
May 2015	Planning & Programming Committee discussion of TLCI project recommendations
June 2015	Executive Committee discussion of TLCI project recommendations
July 2015	Board awards TLCI projects

**RESOLUTION 2015-016  
(TRANSPORTATION FOR  
LIVABLE COMMUNITIES  
INITIATIVE (TLCI) POLICY)**

**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's Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) Program provides federal funding assistance to communities and public agencies to contract for the planning of transportation improvements that help advance NOACA's long range plan; and

**WHEREAS**, to ensure the continued success of the program, the proposed TLCI policy continues to support funding for planning grants to support activities that facilitate and promote sustainable development, multimodal transportation, and complete and green streets; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed policy also recommends allowing for funding of implementation grants to fund the construction of low-cost, programmatic multimodal transportation improvements recommended in completed TLCI planning studies or other locally completed plans and studies; and

**WHEREAS**, the selection of TLCI planning projects will be similar to previous TLCI rounds, and staff will evaluate each application based on previously established criteria that demonstrates project need, relationship to NOACA vision and goals, project organization, project administration and sponsor capacity, partnerships and cross-jurisdictional coordination; and

**WHEREAS**, TLCI implementation grants will be solicited through local workshops and staff working with local agencies to inventory potential eligible projects; and

**WHEREAS**, potential projects will be derived from previous TLCI planning studies and other local plans and only at the request of the local government agency with.

**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 Executive Director is authorized to implement the Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative Policy.

**Section 2.** The Executive Director is authorized to transmit certified copies of this resolution to the appropriate federal, state, and local agencies.

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

Secretary: 

Date Signed: 1-23-15



Approved:

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Policy Number: X-X/2015

Effective:

Responsible Division: Planning

Date:

## **DRAFT TRANSPORTATION FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE (TLCI) POLICY**

### **POLICY STATEMENT:**

The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency's (NOACA) Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) provides federal funding assistance to communities and public agencies for the planning and implementation of transportation improvements that strengthen community livability. This policy establishes the standard procedures for the TLCI in determining project eligibility, selecting projects, establishing funding levels and links the program to the vision and objectives of the Regional Strategic Plan.

### **AUTHORITY:**

Ohio Revised Code, Sections § 307, 5501.03(d)

United States Code, Title 23, Section §133,

### **PURPOSE:**

The TLCI Program provides federal funding assistance to public agencies for the planning and implementation of transportation improvements. To advance the vision and goals of NOACA's [Regional Strategic Plan](#) and [Long Range Transportation Plan](#), TLCI projects shall focus on the following objectives:

- Develop transportation projects that provide more travel options through complete streets and context sensitive solutions, increasing user safety and supporting positive public health impacts
- Promote reinvestment in underutilized or vacant/abandoned properties through development concepts supported by multimodal transportation systems
- Support economic development through place-based transportation and land use recommendations, and connect these proposals with existing assets and investments
- Ensure that the benefits and burdens of growth, change and transportation projects are distributed equitably by integrating accessibility and environmental justice into projects
- Enhance regional cohesion by supporting collaboration between regional and community partners
- Provide people with safe and reliable transportation choices that enhance their quality of life

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The TLCI program provides support to explore innovative concepts and plans that improve multimodal transportation across the region through the administration of planning and implementation grants.

### Planning Grants

TLCI planning grants are awarded to support activities that facilitate and promote sustainable development, multimodal transportation, and complete and green streets. Projects must have logical boundaries, and result in deliverables leading to transportation infrastructure improvements. All TLCI plans will include an analysis of existing conditions, and short and long term recommendations. Plans will also include feasibility studies and implementation strategies to support work subsequent to final plan approval.

To promote coordination on the regional transportation system, priority will be given to planning projects that involve partnerships of multiple local agencies and cross jurisdictional boundaries.

Planning projects that encourage or reinforce single occupancy vehicle travel, suburban/exurban sprawl, or activities otherwise inconsistent with NOACA's Long Range Goals or Regional Strategic Plan are ineligible.

### Implementation Grants

TLCI Implementation Grants fund the construction of low-cost, programmatic multimodal transportation improvements recommended in completed TLCI planning studies or other locally completed plans and studies. Projects that implement NOACA approved planning and technical study recommendations, or other regionally significant connections (in addition to TLCI recommendations) will be prioritized.

## ELIGIBILITY:

- Every community and implementing governmental agency in NOACA's five-county region that has legal authority to sponsor a federal-aid capital improvement, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 5501.03, Paragraph (d), are eligible to apply.
- Eligible applicants include: political subdivisions, other state agencies, boards, commissions, regional transit authorities, county transit boards, and port authorities.
- Non-implementing governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations (i.e. Community Development Corporations [CDCs], non-profits, and advocacy organizations) must partner with the eligible governmental entity having jurisdiction over the proposed project to co-sponsor a TLCI grant. Only eligible applicants can complete the planning grant application and assume responsibility for entering into a funding agreement with NOACA to carry out the project.



## PROJECT SELECTION:

### Planning Grants

- Local agencies will submit online applications for planning grants.
- NOACA staff will evaluate each application based on criteria that demonstrates project need, relationship to NOACA vision and goals, project organization, project administration and sponsor capacity, partnerships and cross-jurisdictional coordination.
- NOACA staff will recommend projects to the NOACA Standing Committees and Board based on this evaluation.
- All TLCI planning grant applications will also be considered for implementation as part of NOACA's Technical Assistance program.

### Implementation Grants

- Each program cycle, NOACA staff will work with local agencies through local workshops to inventory potential eligible projects. Potential projects will be derived from previous TLCI planning studies and other local plans and only at the request of the local government agency with jurisdiction.
- NOACA staff will create and maintain a comprehensive TLCI Implementation Database of all of the projects from previous TLCI planning studies and local plans through an annual solicitation of local plans.
- The focus of the awards will be on low-cost infrastructure projects that can be implemented through a coordinated, programmatic approach.
- Examples of eligible projects include:
  - Striping of bike lanes, protected bike lanes, and/or bike boxes
  - Bike parking (racks, corrals, boxes, etc.)
  - Installation of crosswalk infrastructure
  - Construction of Transit Waiting Environments/enhanced shelters
  - Implementation of comprehensive wayfinding programs
- NOACA staff will recommend projects to the NOACA Standing Committees and Board.

## FUNDING:

- The total budget for TLCI awards is determined by the Board of Directors.
- A minimum 20% non-federal match is required for all TLCI awards. In-kind services may not be used for the local match.
- To effectively manage the program, the NOACA Board may limit the funds available within a specific application cycle. TLCI awards are at the discretion of the Board. The Board may also limit the number of awards and funding to applicants within an application cycle.
- Final financial details will not be determined until projects are selected, and no financing will be executed without Board approval.

**SPONSOR RESPONSIBILITY:**

- Preliminary development and detailed design phase activities, including working with NOACA and the appropriate ODOT District Office toward environmental clearance and right-of-way certification.
- Development of the Plans, Specifications and Estimate (PS&E) package, contract administration and funds management activities consistent with the ODOT Locally Administered Transportation Projects Manual of Procedures and other ODOT stated requirements for local-let projects authorized under Ohio Revised Code 5501.03(d).
- Provision of the 20% local funding match requirement for construction and construction engineering related activities.
- Implementation projects are expected to move to construction within 18 months of the award or will not be eligible for this funding.
- Planning projects are expected to be completed within 18 months of the award.

**DEFINITIONS:**

NOACA Board of Directors: NOACA is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and designated areawide water quality management agency for the counties of Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina in Ohio directed by a 45-member Board, representing all five NOACA counties, plus transit agencies, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority, Ohio EPA, and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).

Multi-Modal Transportation: A connected transportation system that supports cars, freight vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, horse and carriage, rail and public transit.