

NOACA

Summary Report

Fiscal Year 2008 Specialized Transportation Program
(Section 5310) Competitive Selection Process



October 2008

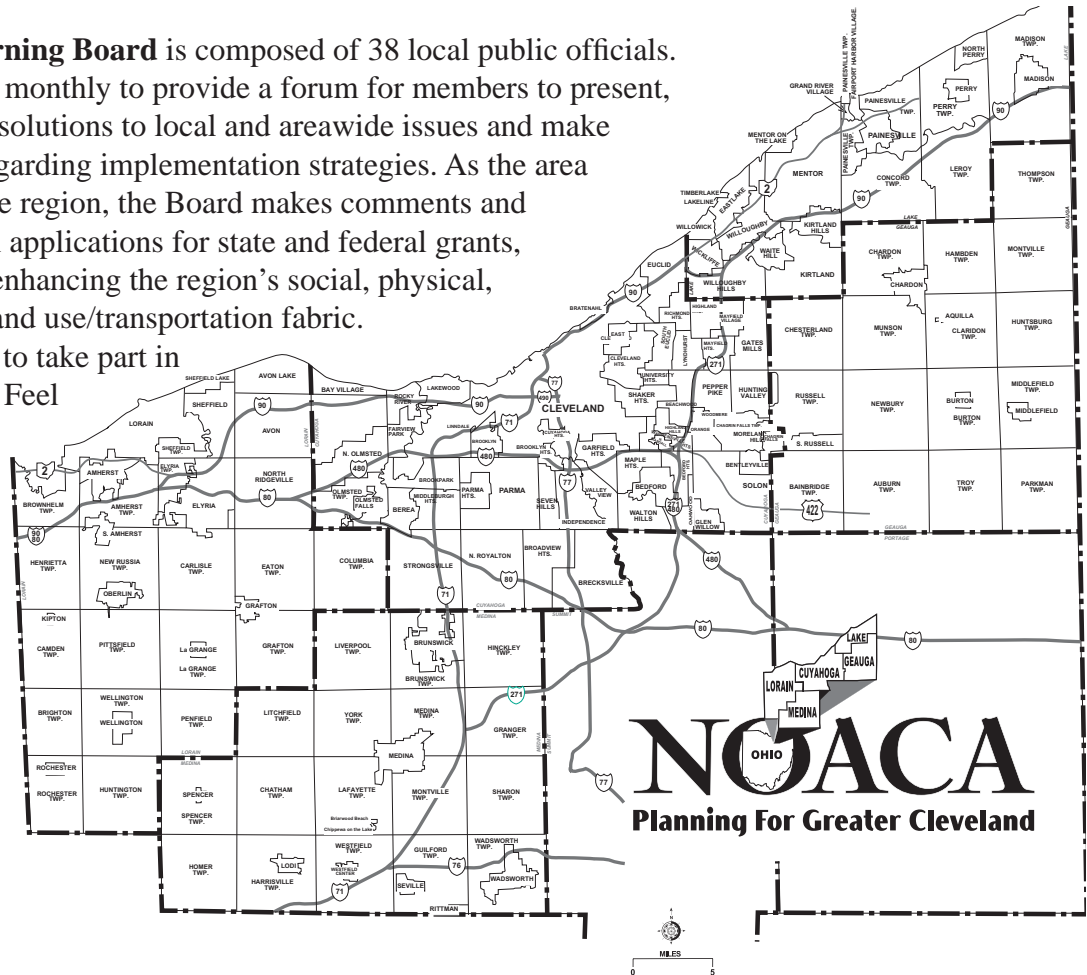
The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) is a public organization serving the counties of and municipalities and townships within Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina (covering an area with 2.1 million people). NOACA is the agency designated or recognized to perform the following functions:

- Serve as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), with responsibility for comprehensive, cooperative and continuous planning for highways, public transit, and bikeways, as defined in the current transportation law.
- Perform continuous water quality, transportation-related air quality and other environmental planning functions.
- Administer the area clearinghouse function, which includes providing local government with the opportunity to review a wide variety of local or state applications for federal funds.
- Conduct transportation and environmental planning and related demographic, economic and land use research.
- Serve as an information center for transportation and environmental and related planning.
- At NOACA Governing Board direction, provide transportation and environmental planning assistance to the 172 units of local, general purpose government.

The NOACA Governing Board is composed of 38 local public officials. The Board convenes monthly to provide a forum for members to present, discuss and develop solutions to local and areawide issues and make recommendations regarding implementation strategies. As the area clearinghouse for the region, the Board makes comments and recommendations on applications for state and federal grants, with the purpose of enhancing the region’s social, physical, environmental and land use/transportation fabric.

NOACA invites you to take part in its planning process. Feel free to participate, to ask questions and to learn more about areawide planning. For more information, call:

(216) 241-2414 or
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1) Title & Subtitle Fiscal Year 2008 Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310) Competitive Selection Process	2) NOACA Report No. TR-09-02
3) Author(s) Sara Byrnes Maier Peer Review: Colleen Donnelly, Mona Aziz, Gary Grano, Sally Hanley, Dave Kuebler, Bill Davis, Jonathan Giblin	4) Report Date October 2008
5) Performing Organization Name & Address Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency 1299 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44114-3204 Phone: (216) 241-2414 FAX: (216) 621-3024 Web site: www.noaca.org	6) Project Task No. 6013-02
	7) NOACA Contract/Grant No. ODOT/FHWA
8) Sponsoring Agency Name & Address Ohio Department of Transportation 1980 W. Broad St., Box 899 Columbus, OH 43216-0899	9) Type of Report & Period Covered
	10) Sponsoring Agency Code
11) Supplementary Notes Federal funding for this project was provided by the Federal Highway Administration and administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation.	
12) Abstracts This year-end report describes the ODOT-sponsored FY 2008 Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310) competitive grant selection process.	
13) Key Words & Document Analysis A. Descriptors: Specialized Transportation Program, Section 5310 B. Identifiers/Open Ended Terms: Older adults, elderly, individuals with disabilities, disabled, transportation, capital grant program, coordination, ODOT	
14) Availability Statement NOACA	15) No. Pages 9
	16) Price

Fiscal Year 2008 Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310) Competitive Selection Process

October 2008

Prepared by

NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY

Principal Author: Sara Byrnes Maier

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The preparation of this publication was financed through grants received from the Federal Highway Administration and the Ohio Department of Transportation and appropriations from the counties of and municipalities within Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina. The contents do not necessarily reflect official views or policies of the U.S. Department of Transportation or the Ohio Department of Transportation. This report does not constitute a standard or regulation.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 1

Background 2

Coordinated Planning Requirement 2

Public & Agency Notification 3

Grants Process..... 3

 New Letter of Intent Requirement 3

 Application..... 4

 Competitive Selection Process..... 4

 Vehicle Procurement & Delivery..... 5

Exhibit A: Fiscal Year 2008 Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310)
Application Schedule 6

Exhibit B: NOACA Governing Board FY 2008 Specialized Transportation Program
(Section 5310) Memorandum..... 7

Exhibit C: FY 2008 Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310) Awards:
Cuyahoga, Lake & Lorain Counties 9

Executive Summary

In August 2008, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) announced fiscal year (FY) 2008 Specialized Transportation Program awards. This program, also known as Section 5310, supports improved mobility and transportation options for older adults and individuals with disabilities by providing capital grants to private nonprofit agencies for vehicles and equipment. This year, ODOT awarded funding totaling approximately \$481,800 to 12 agencies in the NOACA region. The funds will allow for the purchase of 16 vehicles and two computers.

This report includes a description of the Specialized Transportation Program, along with requirements of applicants pertaining to coordinated planning and public and agency notification. An overview of the competitive grant selection process is also provided. Attachments provide additional information on the application and awards schedule, NOACA Governing Board notification of recommended projects, and awards by agency.

Background

The Specialized Transportation Program, also known as Section 5310, is a capital grant program funded through the federal transportation law, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).¹ The program supports the purchase of vehicles and equipment used in transportation services for the elderly and people with disabilities. Beginning with the state's fiscal year (FY) 2006 application cycle, ODOT changed the way the Specialized Transportation Program funds were distributed within the state. Instead of allowing NOACA to select projects that would receive funding in the urbanized counties of Cuyahoga, Lake and Lorain, as had been done in the past, ODOT now awards grants after conducting a statewide competitive selection process. NOACA staff assists ODOT by scoring applications in the above three counties.

Coordinated Planning Requirement

In order to optimize the use of federal resources, the Specialized Transportation Program requires coordination of federally assisted programs and services. As a federal requirement, any projects awarded through this program must be derived from a locally developed coordinated public transit-human service transportation plan. In the NOACA region, this plan is called the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Northeast Ohio, and it was adopted in March 2008 by the NOACA Governing Board.

The coordinated plan outlines goals for improving transportation services and mobility for the target populations of older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low income. It was developed using input from stakeholders including transit agencies, private nonprofit groups, advocacy groups, government entities, transportation users, and the general public. It provides:

- an assessment of available transportation services;
- an assessment of transportation needs of target populations;
- strategies and activities to address the identified needs of the target populations; and
- a prioritization of the identified strategies and activities for implementation, based on resources, feasibility and time.

Applicants to the program must demonstrate how their project will further specific goals of the Coordinated Plan to be successful in their funding request.

Specialized Transportation Program applicants must be willing to coordinate services or activities with other agencies and organizations in an effort to maximize the program's benefits. During the project period, the applicant must make the vehicles and/or equipment available for use on other projects or programs, as long as such other use does

¹ Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Program (49 USC Section 5310).

not interfere with the FTA-related service for which it was originally acquired. Vehicles and equipment may be used by non-federally funded providers, first to meet the needs of elderly persons and persons with disabilities, and then to serve the transportation needs of the general public on an incidental basis. Additionally, vehicles may be used to coordinate and assist in providing meal delivery services for homebound persons on a regular basis if the meal delivery services do not conflict with the provision of transportation services or result in a reduction of service to elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

Public & Agency Notification

Applicants must either publish a public notice advertising the proposed service in the most widely circulated local newspaper or send a letter to all human service agencies operating or located within the area to be served by this project. Public body applicants are required to either send letters to human service agencies or conduct a public hearing in an accessible location. They must also publish notices no later than two weeks prior to the public hearing date.

Specialized Transportation Program applicants must also notify transit agencies of a proposed project. To ensure that Section 5307 (urbanized transit systems) and 5311 (rural transit systems) providers are aware of the project, the applicant must provide a letter to the transit system or systems in the area of proposed service with a description of the project. This requirement ensures that transit systems are notified of an applicant's intent to apply for a Specialized Transportation Program vehicle. It also helps ensure the coordination of transportation services with transit agencies.

Grants Process

The Specialized Transportation Program application process consists of four component phases described below: letter of intent, application, competitive selection, and vehicle delivery. The entire process takes approximately one year.

New Letter of Intent Requirement

As a new requirement for the FY 2008 application process, interested applicants were required to submit a letter of intent (LOI) that allowed ODOT to prescreen applicants for eligibility. These LOIs were available from ODOT and NOACA's Web sites in mid-September and were originally due to ODOT by October 1, 2007. This deadline was later pushed back to November 5, 2007 (see Exhibit "A"); however, additional LOIs were not received for Cuyahoga, Lake or Lorain counties past the original due date. The 17 agencies in the NOACA region that submitted LOIs were invited to an application workshop with ODOT transit planner, Pat Pikula, hosted by NOACA on October 22, 2007.

Application

On November 29, 2007, eligible agencies that had submitted an LOI received an electronic program application via email from ODOT. This year, applications were due to NOACA on January 19, 2008 for agencies in Cuyahoga, Lake, and Lorain counties, and to ODOT for Geauga and Medina counties. Of the 17 agencies that submitted an LOI, 15 were determined to be eligible for the program. Ultimately, 13 of the agencies that received applications from ODOT applied to the program for a total of 17 vehicles and three computers.

Competitive Selection Process

The statewide competitive selection process for the program utilizes standard applications for new and prior applicants, along with corresponding scoring criteria developed by ODOT Central. Metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) are called upon to assist ODOT in scoring applications for the urbanized counties. However, ODOT scores applications for non-urbanized counties, and ultimately determines awards for the entire state.

There are separate applications for existing Specialized Transportation Program recipients and new applicants. Both are evaluated in the following areas:

1. Access to transportation and need
 - a. Lack of public transit services
 - b. Lack of other private nonprofit or private for-profit service providers
2. Managerial capacity
 - a. Agency's ability to operate transportation program and maintain program vehicles
3. Days of service per year
4. Trips provided per year (one-way passenger trips)
5. Vehicle mileage per year
6. Replacement vehicles
 - a. Does vehicle being replaced meet current disposition standards (does not apply to new applicants)
7. Coordination efforts
 - a. Coordination of human service agency and public transit system resources
8. Previous usage of Specialized Transportation Program vehicles (new applicants are not eligible for points)
 - a. Current trips and miles within 10 percent of estimates on previous applications

Two NOACA staff members individually scored each of the urbanized applications and assigned an average score. Twelve applications scored the necessary 60 or more points required by ODOT guidelines. These eligible applications included requests for 16 vehicles and three computers. All applications and corresponding scoring sheets were forwarded to ODOT for final review on February 20, 2008. Please see Exhibit "B" for a

listing of all eligible applications. ODOT awarded funds to applications that received the highest scores from the combined pool of urbanized and non-urbanized applications.

On August 12, 2008, ODOT issued press releases announcing the Specialized Transportation Program awards. The 12 applicants in the NOACA region were awarded all 16 requested vehicles and two of the three requested computers. ODOT will provide \$481,800 (80 percent) of the total \$599,899 vehicle and equipment costs.² Program awards for the NOACA region are listed in Exhibit “C.”

Vehicle Procurement & Delivery

ODOT sends notification to all applicants regarding the vehicle procurement process upon announcement of program awards. Selected agencies work with ODOT to order vehicles off of the state’s term contract. ODOT requires that at least 50 percent of an applicant’s active fleet of vehicles must be wheelchair accessible, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), before an applicant is permitted to request any vehicle without a wheelchair lift.

ODOT will administer the vehicle procurement process, including advertising; reviewing and awarding of bids; collecting federal and local shares; processing payments to vendors; and monitoring vehicle usage. All other procurements (for computer equipment, etc.) will be the responsibility of the grantee and must be conducted in compliance with state and federal procurement guidelines, including Buy America.

To ensure that the federal share of the project is secured, ODOT will be named as lien holder and will hold the title to all vehicles purchased under the Specialized Transportation Program, and the grantee will receive a memorandum title. Vehicle titles will be provided to the grantee following ODOT’s approval of vehicle disposition.

² The total vehicle and equipment costs are subject to slight adjustments based on dealer and after-market conversion specifications.

Exhibit A

**Fiscal Year 2008 Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310)
Application Schedule**

Date	Description	Time
10/22/07	Application Workshop at NOACA	10:30 am-12:30 pm
11/5/07*	Letter of intent due to ODOT	
11/29/07	Application packets sent to eligible organizations	
1/19/08**	Applications due to: NOACA for Cuyahoga, Lake & Lorain counties ODOT for Geauga & Medina counties	5:00 pm, if hand-delivered
2/20/08	NOACA submits proposed application list to ODOT	
3/20/08	NOACA submits proposed application list to Transportation Advisory Committee for information	
4/11/08	NOACA submits proposed application list to Governing Board for information	
8/12/08	ODOT award announcement	

* Letter of intent deadline changed by ODOT from 10/1/07 to 11/5/07

** Application due date changed by ODOT from 12/7/07 to 1/19/08

Exhibit B
NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY

MEMORANDUM

TO: NOACA Governing Board Members

FROM: Sara Byrnes Maier, Project Manager

DATE: April 2, 2008

RE: **FY 2008 Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310)**

Background

The Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310) is a federally funded capital program supporting the purchase of vehicles and equipment used in transportation services for the elderly and people with disabilities. Beginning with the FY 2006 application cycle, ODOT changed the way the Specialized Transportation Program funds were distributed within the state. Instead of allowing NOACA to select projects that would receive funding in the urbanized counties of Cuyahoga, Lake and Lorain, ODOT now awards grants after conducting a statewide competitive selection process. NOACA staff assists ODOT by scoring applications in these three counties.

New Letter of Intent Requirement

Interested applicants were required to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to ODOT as part of this year's application process. The LOI allowed ODOT to prescreen applicants for eligibility, and were due by November 5, 2007. The seventeen agencies in the NOACA region that submitted LOIs were invited to an application workshop with ODOT Transit Planner Pat Pikula hosted by NOACA on October 22, 2007. On November 29, 2007, eligible agencies received an electronic program application from ODOT.

Competitive Selection Process

The statewide competitive selection process for the program utilizes standard applications for new and prior applicants, along with corresponding scoring criteria developed by ODOT Central. MPOs are still called upon to assist ODOT in scoring applications for the urbanized counties; however, ODOT scores applications for nonurbanized counties and ultimately determines awards for the entire state.

This year, applications were due to NOACA for agencies in Cuyahoga, Lake, and Lorain counties and to ODOT for Geauga and Medina counties on January 19, 2008. Thirteen of the fifteen agencies that received applications decided to apply to the program for a total of seventeen vehicles and three computers. Two NOACA staff members individually scored each of the urbanized applications and assigned it an average score. Twelve applications scored the

necessary 60 or more points required by ODOT guidelines and are eligible to advance to the next step in the process. These eligible applications included requests for sixteen vehicles and three computers.

Next Steps

All applications and corresponding score sheets were forwarded to ODOT for final review on February 20, 2008. All eligible applicants and requested equipment are listed in the table below. ODOT will award funding to applications that receive the highest scores from the entire state pool. ODOT has not given a date when awards will be announced.

More information about NOACA's Specialized Transportation Program and this specific component can be found at <http://www.noaca.org/specialtrans.html>. If you have any additional questions, please contact Sara Byrnes Maier at 216-241-2414 Extension 308 or by e-mail at smaier@mno.noaca.org.

FY 2008 Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310) Eligible Applications Cuyahoga, Lake & Lorain Counties

Agency	Vehicle Requested (Ambulatory - Wheelchair Positions)	Vehicle Cost	Computer Cost	Total Cost	Section 5310 Funds (80%)	Local Share (20%)
Cuyahoga County:						
North East Ohio Health Services dba: Connections Health Wellness Advocacy	Modified Minivan (3-2)	\$31,000	\$1,820	\$32,820	\$26,256	\$6,564
North East Ohio Health Services dba: Connections Health Wellness Advocacy	Modified Minivan (3-2)	\$31,000	\$0	\$31,000	\$24,800	\$6,200
Orange Senior Advisory Council Association, Inc.	Converted Van (6-1)	\$35,544	\$0	\$35,544	\$28,435	\$7,109
Parma Commission on Aging, Parma Senior Center	Light Transit Vehicle, Narrow Body (8-2)	\$44,826	\$0	\$44,826	\$35,861	\$8,965
Schnurmann House	Light Transit Vehicle, Wide Body (14-1)	\$51,102	\$0	\$51,102	\$40,882	\$10,220
Senior Citizen Resources, Inc.	Converted Van (6-1)	\$35,544	\$0	\$35,544	\$28,435	\$7,109
Southwest General Health Center	Converted Van (6-1)	\$36,844	\$0	\$36,844	\$29,475	\$7,369
Tri-City Consortium on Aging	Converted Van (6-1)	\$36,144	\$0	\$36,144	\$28,915	\$7,229
United Cerebral Palsy Association of Greater Cleveland	Light Transit Vehicle, Wide Body (0-6)	\$52,071	\$0	\$52,071	\$41,657	\$10,414
United Cerebral Palsy Association of Greater Cleveland	Converted Van (2-3)	\$37,939	\$0	\$37,939	\$30,351	\$7,588
West Side Community House	Converted Van (12-0)	\$33,942	\$0	\$33,942	\$27,154	\$6,788
Lake County:						
OPRS - Breckenridge Village	Modified Minivan (3-2)	\$31,000	\$0	\$31,000	\$24,800	\$6,200
OPRS - Breckenridge Village	Modified Minivan (3-2)	\$31,000	\$0	\$31,000	\$24,800	\$6,200
Lorain County:						
Nord Center, The	Converted Van (6-1)	\$35,544	\$2,351	\$37,895	\$30,316	\$7,579
Nord Center, The	Standard Minivan (6-0)	\$22,000	\$0	\$22,000	\$17,600	\$4,400
North Ridgeville Seniors, Inc.	Light Transit Vehicle, Wide Body (12-2)	\$54,399	\$0	\$54,399	\$43,519	\$10,880
Total Costs		\$599,899	\$4,172	\$604,071	\$483,257	\$120,814

Exhibit C

**FY 2008 Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310) Awards
Cuyahoga, Lake & Lorain Counties**

Agency	Vehicle Requested (Ambulatory - Wheelchair Positions)	Vehicle Cost	Computer Cost	Total Cost	Section 5310 Funds (80%)	Local Share (20%)
Cuyahoga County:						
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Nord Center, The	Standard Minivan (6-0)	\$22,000	\$0	\$22,000	\$17,600	\$4,400
North Ridgeville Seniors, Inc.	Light Transit Vehicle, Wide Body (12-2)	\$54,399	\$0	\$54,399	\$43,519	\$10,880
Total Costs		\$599,899	\$2,351	\$602,250	\$481,800	\$120,450