



An Assessment of EDA's Partnership Planning Program

Bryan Borlik
Director, Performance and National Programs

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In February 2010, EDA staff and the Upjohn Institute kicked off an evaluation of the Planning Program.

Goals

- ★ Identify challenges in the program
- ★ Provide additional focus on the CEDs document process
- ★ Determine steps necessary to better address needs of EDDs

Methodology

- ★ Sample EDDs selected through qualitative analysis
- ★ Review the sample based on organizational structure, capacity, and quality of their CEDS
- ★ Interview EDDs and other stakeholders interviewed
- ★ Conduct 11 EDD site visits



To develop the key findings and recommendations, the report explores:

- ★ A theoretical framework of regional economic development
- ★ An external and internal assessment of EDDs
- ★ Analysis of the CEDs
- ★ Stakeholder and collaborator views of the EDDs and the CEDs
- ★ A study of best practices among EDDs





Overall, the majority of EDDs expressed satisfaction with the way EDA's current system operates.

Themes

- ★ EDDs play a more dominant role in rural areas
- ★ Communication is extremely important
- ★ Infrastructure projects are popular
- ★ About half of non-EDA funded organizations partner with an EDD, but only 11% recognize the CEDs strategy
- ★ However, more organizations are partnering with EDDs



Leveraging other resources is critical to the success of EDDs.

Themes

- ★ EDDs link success to their ability to leverage other federal, state, and local resources
- ★ The ability to garner matching funds is the greatest challenge in meeting EDA expectations
- ★ EDDs have longevity, highly-qualified, and well-educated staff





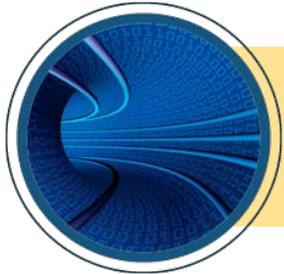
Most CEDs in the sample group were successful based on the structure and contents of the overall presentation of the CEDs.

Strengths:

- ★ Description and history of region
- ★ Basic economic analysis
- ★ Discussion of the regions' strengths and weaknesses
- ★ Overall presentation of the strategy

Weaknesses:

- ★ Lack of global perspective
- ★ Missing performance indicators
- ★ Weak ties between planned activities, strategies, and the project list
- ★ Focus on document itself rather than strategic implementation



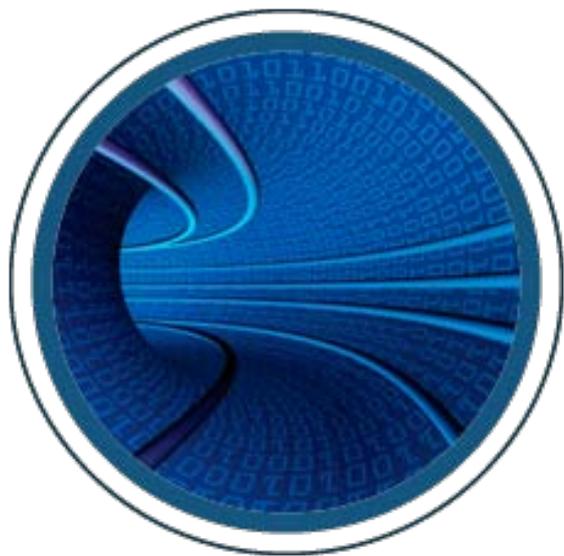
Increase the EDDs' ability to guide regional economic development efforts



Enhance the CEDs



Advance EDA's relationship with EDDs



Increase EDDs' ability to guide regional economic development efforts

- ★ Encourage EDDs to focus on looking forward to new opportunities and creating strategies
- ★ Promote EDD leadership that can express a clear, unified vision based on the region's strengths
- ★ Encourage EDDs to identify and develop clusters driven by innovation and entrepreneurship



Enhance the CEDs

- ★ Reduce the size of the document and focus more on strategic development and collaboration to implement regional vision
- ★ Discontinue five-year CEDs updated schedule
- ★ Make the CEDs planning process annual
- ★ Conduct better outreach to increase awareness and the use of the strategy
- ★ Partner with EDA University Centers to collect data



Advancing EDA's relationship with EDDs

- ★ More feedback from EDA
- ★ Promote best practices
- ★ Establish larger regional working groups
- ★ Examine how funding applications are handled at the federal level



EDA published an opportunity for the public to comment on EDD/CEDS regulations through a Federal Register Notice. Some ideas received were:

Public Comments on EDDs

- ★ More resources to EDDs for professional support, networking, and professional development
- ★ Don't fund projects not in CEDS
- ★ Expand list of individuals that can be on the EDD Board
- ★ Require coordination with District Organizations for all projects
- ★ Consider revising District Organizations requirements to not require that majority be representatives of a general purpose subdivision, or at least allow special purpose subdivision
- ★ Restore 10% project bonus for working with Districts



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Public Comments on CEDS

- ★ Get rid of prescriptive requirements for CEDS Strategy committees
- ★ Simplify CEDS requirements by adopting NADO's Peer Standards of Excellence
- ★ Update CEDS data sets to measure relevant 21st century global knowledge factors
- ★ Either get rid of project list requirement in CEDS or ensure that only projects on CEDS lists are funded
- ★ Adopt standards for non-EDA funded CEDS that are consistent with EDA-funded CEDS
- ★ Ensure that all implementation projects be tied to a CEDS, make the current project list requirement meaningful



Increase EDDs' ability to guide regional economic development efforts

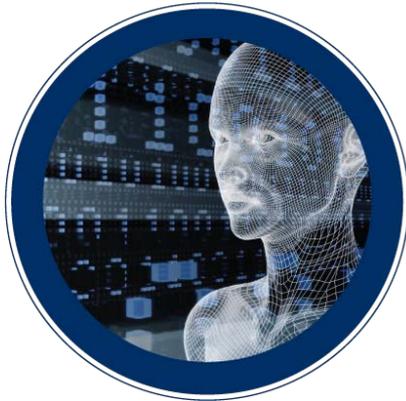
- ★ Provide training to stakeholders to implement CEDS guidance
- ★ Use resources such as NADO training curriculum and EDA tools



Enhancing the CEDS



- ★ Provide clear guidance to stakeholders for EDAs expectations and required elements to be included in CEDS
- ★ Collect best practices among EDDs and CEDs development
- ★ Update EDA Best Practices for the Planning Program on our web site
- ★ Revise regulations to provide greater flexibility
- ★ Add provisions for resiliency for natural disasters



Advance EDA's relationship with EDDs

- ★ Improve communication between EDA and stakeholders
- ★ Clearly communicate EDA priorities and expectations
- ★ Provide clear guidance to inform the Regional Offices (ROs) CEDS review
- ★ Provide clear guidance to inform ROs in their review of EDDs (e.g. financial management, economic development activities)
- ★ **Your thoughts are always welcome! Contact Laura Stierle, EDA Performance and National Programs Division, at 202-482-2681 or lstierle@eda.doc.gov**



EDA

U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Bryan Borlik

Director, Performance and National Programs

(202) 482-3901

bborlik@eda.doc.gov

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