



Tuesday, October 20, 2020

12:00 – 1:15 p.m. | Plenary Session: Conference Opening Plenary

RDOs Rapid Response: NADO Members Helping their Regions Navigate the Pandemic

1:30 – 2:45 p.m. | Break-out Sessions

A Place to Call Home: How RDOs and Other Partners Assist Rural Housing

RDOs are serving as key players and coordinators in creating better access to housing throughout their regions. From conducting research and tracking trends to assembling financing to assisting with project development, RDOs and their partners can be there from the initial planning discussions through the day a new family moves in. During this session, hear examples from two RDOs about what they are doing to support housing opportunities in their regions, as well as an update from a national partner about what rural and small-town housing initiatives are underway across the country.

- Sarah Kackar, Director – Rural Initiative, NeighborWorks America, Washington, DC
- Matt McCauley, CEO, Networks Northwest, Traverse City, MI
- Rick Hunsaker, Executive Director, Region XII COG, Carroll, IA

Business Pivots: Strengthening Your Region's Economic Resilience

Local ownership and control of businesses and assets is key to rooting wealth within regions. However, COVID-19 and other economic disruptions make it difficult for locally owned businesses to thrive or even survive, whether they are small or larger businesses. Businesses might have opportunities to pivot their operations to tweak products and services to stay focused on their existing and potential demand. Hear about strategies and common themes to business survival in uncertain times.

- Barbara Wyckoff, Co-founder, Creative Disruptors, Silver Spring, MD

3:15 – 4:15 p.m. | Break-out Sessions

Bringing Broadband to Rural Communities and Regions

The global pandemic has illustrated the stark reality that rural communities and regions must have access to broadband that is equal to broadband in suburban and urban locations. Not only for local businesses to survive, but to assure employees can work remotely and students can attend classes virtually. Learn about strategies NADO members have been using to bring adequate broadband to their regions, before and during the pandemic.

Supporting Tourism-based Economies during Economic Downturns

Speakers during this best practice session will share their approaches to and lessons learned from marketing their regions to tourists during economic downturns, and especially during the COVID 19 pandemic.

Wednesday, October 21, 2020

11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. | Plenary Session: 2020 – Foresight, Not Hindsight

We all know there is only one constant in this world—change—and nothing exemplified that better than 2020. This year has accelerated systemic shifts in the workforce, educational system, and in society. In addition, the growth of new technology, specifically in automation and artificial intelligence, will cause further disruption. Research shows that these forces will continue to gain speed and come together to cause a massive decoupling by the year 2030. Rather than sit back and hope, now is the time to prepare for the coming reality. 2020 has given us insight on the coming changes, and we have a decade to work with. We need to be developing the changes to build a resilient and inclusive workforce with the skills need to be successful today and into the future. Learn how we can develop the leadership skills that will make you relevant today and in the future. Now is the opportunity for us to evolve our practices and ensure that we develop solutions that ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity for success in 2030 and beyond. The skills of yesterday need to evolve to prepare for the coming reality. The future will have a greater need for leaders at all levels in an organization, and they will require a different set of skills and abilities. While it is often said that hindsight is 2020, great leaders are instead using it as foresight.

- Josh Davies, CEO, Center for Work Ethic Development, Denver, CO

12:30 – 1:30 p.m. | 2020 Impact Awards Showcase

1:45 – 2:50 p.m. | Break-out Sessions

Innovative Approaches to Public Engagement

COVID-19 social distancing recommendations and heightened awareness about equitable and inclusive public engagement have prompted regional development organizations to apply innovative, virtual approaches when gathering public input. This session explores how enhanced surveys, video tours, and interactive tools have been used to encourage public participation.

- Sheryl Gonzales, Executive Director, Western Nevada Development District, Reno, NV
- Heidi Lusby-Angvick, Executive Director, Pershing County Economic Diversification Authority, Lovelock, NV

The Changing Workplace Environment: Cybersecurity for a Remote Workforce

RDOs, along with businesses and organizations everywhere, have been adjusting in many ways since the World Health Organization declared COVID 19 a global pandemic. Stay-at-home orders in many areas resulted in employees working remotely from their homes. No matter how prepared an organization could be for remote working situations, there are challenges to mitigating cyber risks that RDOs should know. A leading expert in the field will share information about ways to prevent cyber-attacks at your organization.

3:15 – 4:30 p.m. | Break-out Sessions

RDO Continuity of Operations Plans

RDOs generally are planning-oriented agencies, but 2020 has given the U.S. circumstances that many organizations had not anticipated. RDOs serve in critical roles to help their local governments, business contacts and loan clients, and are nonprofits and other external partners, as well as having ongoing required administrative and programmatic functions. Hear from RDO directors about the steps they've taken to establish continuity of operations plans and other policies and processes to minimize business disruptions, and engage with other attendees in this interactive session that will give you a start on developing or refreshing your RDO's continuity plan.

Brownfields: On the Road to Redevelopment

Brownfields are opportunities—opportunities to spur economic development, create sustainable and resilient communities, improve environmental quality, and enhance quality of life. This session will share how key partners, various resources, and funding mechanisms can be leveraged throughout the brownfields process to realize successful redevelopment. Staff from EPA’s designated Technical Assistance to Brownfield Communities (TAB) providers and an expert in brownfields redevelopment finance will cover funding sources and financing options, engagement strategies, and more.

Thursday, October 22, 2020

11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. | Plenary Session: Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: RDO Roles

RDOs, their leadership, their staff, and their external partners are all starting from different places and have different interests in equity and inclusion. Our member regions’ populations vary quite a bit around the United States, and so does the approach to addressing equity. For instance, even in locations with little racial, ethnic, or language diversity, there may be barriers to accessing programs and services among people with limited income and residents with disabilities, as well as among minority groups that may be a small part of the total population. Many RDOs consider equity to be integrated across their regional programs and services. Some complete plans and written documents with an equity focus, such as an updated public participation plan, a housing assessment, or an ADA and sidewalk inventory. Others work on equity-focused projects, such as workforce housing, entrepreneurship in low-income communities, or public dialogues about diversity.

- Moderator: Jazmine Kilpatrick, Membership Development Manager, Local Government Federal Credit Union, Raleigh, NC

12:30 – 1:30 p.m. | Block Parties

During the lunch (or snack, depending on your time zone) break, you will be able to stop by one of our virtual meeting rooms for facilitated conversations with your peers about specific topics. We will be announcing the topics in the coming days.

1:45 – 3:00 p.m. | Break-out Sessions

2 CFR 200 Uniform Requirement for Federal Awards

OMB recently announced a set of revisions to 2 CFR 200 that will take effect November 12, 2020. The impact of the revisions will be felt by all organizations that have federal grants. This session will cover the key things you need to know about the revisions so that you will be prepared to be in accordance with them in November.

- Bob Lloyd, Federal Grants Management, Greenville, SC

Best Practices in Resilience Planning to Support Economic Recovery

Many EDDs are currently in the process of spending their EDA CARES Act funding to support recovery and resilience in response to the pandemic. While the long-term economic landscape remains unclear, organizations can draw inspiration from prior examples of regions that have planned for resilience and better positioned themselves to recover from other shocks. This session will feature the best practices of three NADO members who will share how they have embraced resilience planning. You will learn how their approaches and strategies can support your own current efforts to enhance your CEDS, write resilience plans, leverage economic recovery coordinators, and overall make resilience the foundation for how your organization approaches planning and economic development.

- Laura Lewis Marchino, Executive Director, Region 9 EDD of SW CO, Durango, CO
- Joshua Owens, Executive Director, Wharton Economic Development Commission, Wharton, TX

- Vicki Rusbult, Director of Community & Business Services, Eastern Maine Development Corporation, Bangor, ME
- Moderator: Brett Schwartz, Associate Director, NADO Research Foundation, Washington, DC

3:15 – 4:00 p.m. | Closing Plenary

Closing Plenary: Virtual Advocacy Strategies and Successes in the COVID-19 Era

Join a panel comprised of advocacy professionals and directors of regional development peer organizations for a discussion about adapting your advocacy strategies and priorities during the COVID-19 era. During this closing plenary session, learn how Congressional offices and constituents have continued to engage through virtual meetings and even virtual site visits; hear about approaches that Regional Development Organizations have used to continue to engage effectively with their Representatives and to bring attention to critical issues for their communities; and learn about NADO's advocacy approaches, successes, challenges, and continued efforts since the onset of—and in response to—the COVID-19 pandemic.

Draft