



November 7 – 10, 2023

Cleveland, Ohio

This agenda is as of September 15, 2023. It will be updated regularly. Please note sessions are subject to change.

***Mobile workshops require an additional fee and are limited in size. Information about registering for them is [available here](#).**

Tuesday, November 7

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Conference Registration

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

NADO Research Foundation Advisory Committee Meeting

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

- **Regional Resilience: Analysis**

Making it Count: Achieving, Measuring and Reporting Results with Data

Join Argonne National Lab statistician and former EDD program manager Alison Turner to learn how to get the most cutting-edge data possible for your region – by recording your RDO's everyday interactions, discoveries and activities and integrating that data with national tools. Discuss the value and limitations of Big Data for providing context for your region's local conditions, when and how to employ various data tools, and test drive and offer your feedback about public data dashboards created by third parties.

- **Building a Strong RDO:**

Conversation Café: New Executive Directors Networking

Make connections early at the conference and continue the conversations you have been having virtually in person! Join to share experiences and challenges, while building your professional network that will last long past the conference.

12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

NADO Research Foundation Board/NADO Executive Committee Meetings

12:30 – 1:45 p.m.

Tackling Community Revitalization through Brownfields Redevelopment

This session, led by the Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) team and other subject matter expert experts, will include a case study on brownfields redevelopment in multi-county jurisdictions and two hot topics: deploying clean energy (typically solar) on brownfields and redevelopment planning for the decommissioning of a coal-fired plant. *Registrants for the 2 p.m. brownfields mobile workshop are encouraged to attend this session.*

1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Learning Lab

- **Regional Resilience:**

Using GIS Tools for Planning Regional Economic Opportunities

This session will utilize web-based tools to analyze demographic, socio-economic, behavioral, and business data to better understand the overall characteristics and needs of the community. This analysis helps make better policy decisions regarding developing and expanding existing business and efforts to recruit new businesses. Please note that you should bring your laptop as you will use the tools throughout the session. (Tablets and phones are not as compatible.)

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Learning Labs

- **Equitable Regional Development: Looking through the Lens of Wealth Creation: Doing Economic Development Differently**

Join us for this Learning Lab to walk through and practice the ways that the wealth creation approach and principles can be integrated into the CEDS (asset inventory, SWOT, strategies, and evaluation). Consider ways of supporting economic sectors through identifying market opportunities, value chain mapping and development. This will be a highly interactive workshop, allowing participants to practice the concepts.

- **Equitable Regional Development: Underwriting Toolbox: Tools and Techniques for Success**

Attend this session for a practical and informative exploration of the Underwriting Toolbox. This comprehensive session is designed to equip underwriters and loan officers with the essential tools and techniques necessary for success and review the key components of the Underwriting Toolbox that every lender should have at their disposal.

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Mobile Workshop*

- **Equitable Regional Development: Tackling Community Revitalization through Brownfields Redevelopment**

This bus tour will explore various brownfields sites in downtown Cleveland. The sites include the Flats District, (a former riverfront industrial site, now redeveloped with housing, hotels, restaurants, entertainment venues, and more), the Cleveland Port Authority – Confined Disposal Facilities #10 and #12 (the location of testing to reuse river sediments in an environmentally safe manner for beach nourishment, clean fill, and soil for brownfield projects), and a former Cleveland School District building (redeveloped as the Drury Plaza Hotel using federal and state historic tax credits). *Additional fee and pre-registration required.*

4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

NADO 101

Learn about NADO's governance and structure, key programs, meet leadership and staff, and learn about member benefits.

6:00 – 10:00 p.m.

Welcome Reception at Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (Sponsored by Jobs Ohio)

What an exciting opportunity for conference attendees---4 hours to tour the Rock Hall during this private event! There will be beverages and heavy hors d'oeuvres and you will have full access to the collections and exhibits. Transportation will be provided (although it is within walking distance for those who prefer to walk).

Wednesday, November 8

7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Conference Registration

8:00 – 9:30 a.m.

Chapter Meetings Breakfast Buffet

Over breakfast you will be able to convene with peers from across your region to network and talk about issues of relevance to your regions.

9:45 – 10:30 a.m.

Opening Plenary

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

- **Building a Strong RDO:**

Excellence in Board Governance: Don't Just Sit There

Maybe you were elected, maybe you were appointed. Either way you have a seat at the table and the opportunity to positively lead and influence. You will earn a reputation whether you intend to or not. Take a proactive stance on what you can offer and the legacy you can impact for the organizations or communities you represent. This interactive session will offer tips for providing excellent service as a board member.

- **Regional Resilience:**

State-EDD Alignment: Building Your Own Policy Academy

This technical assistance hands-on session will focus on applying lessons learned from state-EDD teams on building a collaborative process to improve alignment in economic development planning and program implementation. Attendees will hear from current Academy team participants on their challenges and successes during their alignment journey, and then apply these lessons to their state-EDD relationship.

- **Regional Resilience:**

The Missing Piece of the Housing Puzzle

As housing challenges have plagued regions across the country, RDOs have found their niche in partnership with local communities, developers, and non-profit groups. Come to this session to learn how successful RDOs have found the role they can play in addressing housing challenges in their regions and how your organization can take on a unique-to-your-region role in solving the Housing Puzzle.

- **Building a Strong RDO:**

Conversation Café: Executive Director Meetup

Executive Directors are invited to join for informal networking, best practice sharing and anything else you would like to discuss!

12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

Plenary Luncheon

1:45 – 4:15 p.m.

Mobile Workshops*

• **Equitable Regional Development: Evergreen Cooperative Laundry**

The Evergreen Cooperatives of Cleveland have become a global innovation model for creating more sustainable regional economies. Over 280 local residents earn an ownership stake as they create thriving businesses, while playing a transformational role in building vibrant neighborhoods. The Evergreen Cooperatives showcase a local ownership and control model consistent with the wealth creation framework for economic development, across a variety of sectors, including laundry services, food systems, renewable energy, manufacturing, etc. Join us for this mobile tour to learn more about the history, social mission and employee ownership model of the Evergreen Cooperatives while visiting the Evergreen Laundry operation in action. You will have an opportunity to learn more from employee owners about their experience and what being an employee owner has meant to them. Evergreen's portfolio is diverse, providing insights into supply chain diversification and protection, keeping wealth local, and connecting with anchor institutions.

• **Regional Resilience: Ohio City and West Side Market Tour (SOLD OUT; waitlist available)**

Join this tour for a multi-faceted view of the Ohio City Neighborhood! Begin with a tour of the neighborhood provided by [Ohio City Incorporated](#), the community development corporation responsible for preserving, promoting, and developing the Ohio City Neighborhood. Next, you'll visit [Refugee Response](#), an organization formed to help refugees adjust to life in Northeast Ohio that currently supports over 700 refugees each year, providing opportunities for hundreds of Clevelanders to mentor and volunteer. The tour will end at the [West Side Market](#), a large indoor market with 100 local vendor stalls offering meats, seafood, fruits, vegetables, baked goods, dairy, flowers, ready-to-eat foods, spices, and nuts, that has been in operation since 1840. You will hear the story of the market and have some time to shop before heading back to the conference.

1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

• **Regional Resilience:**

A Trail Map for Growth: Recreation Economies and Preservation of Local

Quality of Life

Communities across the nation are leveraging their natural assets to build outdoor recreation economies. However, this growth may lead to changing community character challenges, such as overcrowded infrastructure and housing affordability and availability. This session will discuss strategies for regions to balance recreation and tourism growth with preservation of local community character and quality of life.

• **Building a Strong RDO: Engaging and Equipping Your Board**

As an executive director you lead an organization and a board. What does your board need from you to support your organization's success? How active should you be in communicating with the board? What is the most important role your board can play in the community for the organization? Learn the differences between and impacts of engaged and disengaged boards; strategies for building trust with your board; and best practices for communicating with board members.

• **Regional Resilience: Leveraging a Regional Data Platform for Planning**

Learn how a large economic development organization with a broad rural reach is using a Regional Data Platform to leverage GIS and data sharing methods to meet the challenges of the future. The platform enhances data-driven, transparent, and collaborative planning under a common vision for the region. The platform presentation will illustrate how it links local and regional planning with GIS.

• **Building a Strong RDO: Conversation Café: EDD Speed Networking**

During this interactive speed networking session, you will have the opportunity to discuss your current work with your Economic Development District, troubleshoot challenges, and learn what other organizations are doing — all during short one-on-one conversations with your peers.

3:00 – 3:15 p.m.

Networking Break

3:00 – 4:430 p.m.

SERDI Council of Peers Fall Meeting

3:15 – 4:15 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

• **Equitable Regional Development: RDO and Tribal Partnerships**

Tribal governments have the power to determine their own governance structures, pass laws, and enforce laws. They are sovereign entities with relationships with the federal government. RDO service areas sometimes

include or are adjacent to Tribal lands, and many Tribal members live in communities served by RDOs. How are RDOs currently working with Tribes? What might RDOs want to know in order to develop new relationships with Tribal governments?

• **Building a Strong RDO:** **How to Excel as an RDO Leader**

Participate in this interactive session to learn key steps for becoming a strong RDO leader. Whether you are on the path to becoming an executive director, have recently become an executive director, or have been in the position for a while, you will learn specific strategies to enhance your leadership skills.

• **Regional Resilience:** **Innovative Solutions for Regional Transportation**

Research, development, and implementation of transportation programs is improving the safety and mobility of people and goods. In this session, attendees will hear about ways to engage with innovative transportation projects and approaches. Project examples on various topics including safety, travel information, and coordinating planning across multiple regions will be shared.

• **Regional Resilience:** **Conversation Café: State Associations**

This session will reprise the success of last year's best practice sharing session! Hear from three State Associations about their current programs, budget, organizational structures and more. Group discussions will follow the brief presentations- expect to engage in lively discussions and learn from your peers.

3:30 – 5:00 p.m. **Nominating Committee**

All NADO members are invited to attend and hear from the candidates for NADO's Board of Directors Officer positions.

5:00 - 6:30 p.m. **Impact Awards Reception**

All attendees are invited to attend this reception to learn about the 2022 Aliceann Wohlbruck Impact Award projects. This year's class of awardees includes 108 projects from 71 NADO members in 28 states. Many will be on hand to share the details of the project! Light snacks and beverages will be provided.

Thursday, November 9

7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. **Conference Registration**

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. **DDDA Breakfast**

All attendees from a Local Development District located in the 13-state Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) footprint are invited to attend this breakfast and hear from ARC's leadership.

9:15 – 11:45 a.m. **Mobile Workshops***

• **Resilient Regions Track:** **Rid-All Green Partnerships**

Three high school friends turned an empty and forgotten lot in the Kinsman neighborhood into an 18-acre urban farm where they grow produce to bring healthy, local food to area institutions, engage the community, and maintain diverse revenue streams. The [Rid-All Green Partnership](#) features a wide array of programming including a culinary kitchen, farmer's market and restaurant facility, youth and veteran training programs, aquaponics, composting, tree nursery, and more. The Partnership also developed a 5-month Community Urban Agriculture training program, which includes a focus on entrepreneurship. Join the tour to learn more about this incredible story, how it has positively impacted the surrounding neighborhood, and why "every community deserves a Rid-All farm."

• **Resilient Regions Track:** **The Story of Midtown**

This tour will visit the Midtown neighborhood, where you will learn about the transformative work taking place there to develop a dynamic neighborhood. The tour will be hosted at [MAGNET](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping small and medium-sized manufacturers increase sales, create jobs and generate cost savings through technological innovation, workforce training, and improved management practices. Staff from the [Cleveland Foundation](#) and the [Midtown Community Development Corporation](#) will join to tour to share about their work, the history of the neighborhood, and its exciting future development plans. Expect to hear about how they are building partnerships, creating a sense of 'place' and much more!

9:15 – 10:30 a.m. **Concurrent Sessions**

• **Equitable Regional Development:** **Equity and Inclusion Fundamentals**

Now more than ever, RDOs are exploring ways to better incorporate equity and economic inclusion principles into their plans, programs, and outreach efforts to ensure that all residents have an opportunity to be a part of shaping their community's future. This session will provide a foundational understanding and language for approaching equity and inclusion as an individual and an organization.

- **Building a Strong RDO:** **Building a Relationship with your EDA University Center**

Building and maintaining relationships with your EDA University Center can be difficult, despite the incredible resources they can provide. How can EDDs develop and maintain effective UC relationships? What factors make these relationships successful? Discuss this and more at this session led by two UCs in Ohio.

- **Regional Resilience:** **Infrastructure Resilience Planning Framework: A Model for Resilient Regions**

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has recently released the Infrastructure Resilience Planning Framework (IRPF) that gives regional organizations a new tool for resilience planning with local communities and utilities. Focused on dependency analyses in local and regional infrastructure systems, the IRPF is an actionable tool for CEDS and hazard mitigation plan alignment. This session will provide input from CISA planners and Green River Area Development District (KY), who piloted the IRPF in their last regional hazard mitigation planning update.

- **Regional Resilience:** **Conversation Café: Energy Regions and Economic Resiliency**

A rapidly transforming energy landscape is creating both challenges and opportunities for energy-reliant regions nationwide. Join this interactive session to engage with peers from energy communities, federal partners, and key experts and stakeholders working to support regions retool economies.

10:30 – 10:45 a.m.

Networking Break

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

- **Equitable Regional Development:** **Rural Placemaking with Bowling Green State University**

Join staff from Bowling Green State University, an EDA University Center, to learn about their Reimagining Rural Regions, or R³ Program which provides expertise and capacity to assist communities in undertaking a placemaking process to identify assets that could be reimagined to improve quality of life and to aid in the retention and attraction of talent. The program also offers paid positions to undergraduates, tapping into a population interested in making an impact in rural communities.

- **Building a Strong RDO:** **5 Keys to Building a Strong RDO (LT)**

During this session you will learn how embracing 5 key strategies will result in a strong and impactful RDO. You will learn how sharpening your vision, developing staff and board talent, building new and enhancing existing alliances and partners, cultivating strong relationships with your stakeholders, and innovating to promote organizational growth will build a stronger organization.

- **Regional Resilience:** **Renewable and Resilient Energy: Solutions for Your Region**

Solar energy, brownfields to brightfields, microgrids, and energy resilience: all are tools that can be utilized to increase the resilience of your region to extreme weather events, provide cost savings, and redevelop sites with development constraints. Learn from peers and experts how to provide solutions for your region as the number of programs and amount of funding for renewable energy continues to increase. This session is a great accompaniment to the Mobile Workshop 'Renewable Energy and Microgrid Projects'.

- **Regional Resilience:** **Conversation Café: Housing and RDO Roles**

Join your fellow RDO practitioners in open-ended discussions on how organizations are tackling housing problems in their regions. This networking session is meant to give organizations the opportunity to share what works in your region and learn more about other regional housing efforts.

12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

Plenary Luncheon

1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

Mobile Workshops*

- **Regional Resilience:** **Renewable Energy and Microgrid Projects**

Visit and learn from innovative energy projects across the Cleveland region led by Cuyahoga County Department of Sustainability. In the working-class suburb of Brooklyn, Ohio, the department worked with municipal officials to install 4 MW in solar panels on top of a 17-acre former landfill site, which powers local government buildings at an estimated \$3 million in energy savings. To support residential solar, the county has launched solar co-op programs designed to use group buying power to obtain discounted prices, including a pilot project geared toward low-to-moderate income

homeowners. Cuyahoga County is also seeking to become a microgrid hub and developed its own county-run utility, which is working to develop energy storage and microgrid projects to support resilient energy operations during hazard events.

- **Equitable Regional Development: EDWINS Leadership and Restaurant Institute**

Learn how one man's belief that everyone, despite their past, should be given the opportunity to have a fair and equal future evolved into a successful model for vocational training. EDWINS provides training in the restaurant and hospitality industries to formerly incarcerated adults. Students are also provided free housing, legal services, medical care, clothing, literacy programs and more throughout the program. Students work at EDWINS restaurant, butcher shop, and bakery.

1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

- **Regional Resilience:**

Capitalizing on Remote Work as a Rural Economic Development Opportunity

Recent research by the Ohio University Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service concluded that changes to conventional work models caused by the COVID pandemic were creating a transformative opportunity for "remote work ready" rural communities. The researchers found the remote working accelerated emerging trends and revealed market preferences that create opportunities for rural areas to both retain and attract remote workers. Learn more about the research outcomes regarding categories of economic and community development benefits, strategic options for capitalizing on remote work's opportunities, and requisite elements of rural community "Remote Work Readiness".

- **Equitable Regional Development: CEDS Content Guidelines and Best Practices**

In April 2023, EDA revised its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Content Guidelines to include sections on equity, climate resilience, and workforce development. During this session, hear how EDDs are incorporating these themes in their CEDS and other planning efforts and a CEDS update from EDA staff.

- **Equitable Regional Development: Investing in Rural Downtowns**

There has never been a better time for rural communities to invest in downtown revitalization. Investing in downtown redevelopment creates jobs, increases property value, and encourages tourism. Learn more about the Downtown Revitalization Playbook, use the readiness assessment to identify what you have in place to leverage and what barriers need to be overcome, learn about types of investments and capital stacks, and learn from Economic Development Districts supporting downtown revitalization in their regions.

- **Building a Strong RDO:**

Conversation Café: RDO Staff Recruitment & Retention

It is no secret that it is often difficult for RDOs to attract and retain talent for the long-term, especially at smaller organizations serving remote and rural regions. During this networking session, share with peers what you are doing or brainstorm together ways to address this challenge, such as by strengthening organizational culture, offering competitive benefits, allowing for remote work opportunities, and other approaches.

3:00 – 3:15 p.m.

Networking Break

4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

NADO Annual Business Meeting

All NADO members are encouraged to attend to learn more about the governance of your Association.

5:00 – 6:30 p.m.

Reception

Friday, November 10

7:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Conference Registration

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Plenary Breakfast

9:15 – 10:30 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

- **Equitable Regional Development: Strengthening Your Region's Workforce**

This session will highlight best practices and lessons learned from the EDA-funded Good Jobs Challenge which aims to place people into quality jobs and spur equitable economic growth. Hear the latest research and trends in workforce development and how your organization can best support workers and employers in building a stronger regional economy.

- **Regional Resilience:**

The Future of Military Planning and RDOs

Regional organizations can serve as a community liaison and regional planner for local military installations in their regions. RDOs that take a proactive approach to community-installation relationships can create real dividends for their member communities. This session will provide best practices to improve community-based relationships and communication, show examples of what kind of planning RDOs are doing for local military installations, and give insight from partners at the federal level.

- **Regional Resilience:** **Broadband: Continuing Connections**

In this session hear how states are implementing recently allocated federal BEAD funds focused on unserved and underserved areas in Ohio and across the country. Speakers will share information on specific deployment initiatives as well as other critical topics including digital inclusion planning taking place in local regions.

- **Building a Strong RDO:** **Conversation Café: Storytelling**

RDOs are making significant impacts across their regions, in various ways. Often, their communities are not aware of them or their roles in bringing projects and programs from idea to fruition. It is important for RDOs to share their stories and help their stakeholders have a strong understanding of their roles. Join your peers for a discussion about storytelling...hear how they are approaching it, their successes and challenges, lessons learned, and successful strategies. Walk away with new ideas for helping your region know more about your RDO and its work.

10:30 – 10:45 a.m. **Networking Break**

10:45 – 11:45 a.m. **Concurrent Sessions**

- **Building a Strong RDO:** **Cybersecurity as an Organizational Strength**

As many cities, counties, school districts, and infrastructure systems are coming under threat from cyberattacks and hacking, learn what your organization needs to do to prevent these attacks. This session will focus on the basics of cybersecurity and what measures you need to implement now to protect your organization and region.

- **Equitable Regional Development:** **Reframing Aging**

We are all aging! This session will focus on how RDOs can support policies and programs that we all need to thrive at every age. This session will offer strategies for inclusive approaches to aging that can be incorporated into many RDO program areas and communications.

- **Regional Resilience:** **Climate Mapping and Data**

Climate Resilience is now a required section of the CEDS Content Guidelines. At the same time, climate data and mapping resources continue to grow and provide a source of valuable information to RDOs and partners when planning projects and applying for funding. Learn about recent resources and how they can be applied to your work at the regional level.

- **Regional Resilience:** **Conversation Café: Disaster Preparedness and Recovery**

Join your peers and federal partners from EDA for a discussion about how RDOs can best support their regions with planning for and responding to natural disasters and the impacts of a changing climate. Come prepared with your ideas and questions: How are RDOs convening partners and stakeholders? What federal and state resources are being deployed most effectively? What gaps need to be addressed?

12:00 – 1:30 p.m. **President's Award Luncheon**

2:00 – 4:00 p.m. **NADO Board of Directors Meeting**

All NADO members are encouraged to attend to learn more about the governance of your Association.