



Wealth Creation
Series

Building Stronger Sectors Through Collaboration

As part of the Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP), EDDs across the country are exploring ways to incorporate wealth creation strategies into their planning and implementation efforts. This series of briefs provides EDDs with guidance and examples showing how wealth creation can be used to focus on community capitals in the CEDS, to develop sector-specific strategies of collaboration and coopetition, and to bring partners together to build value chains in sectors. This work builds on NADO's previous work around wealth creation by focusing on how EDDs can best integrate it into their work, using new case studies and examples from EDDs. This framework may introduce unique terminology and concepts to learn along the way.

The Wealth Creation Series, while often focused on rural challenges and opportunities, does not preclude urban and suburban communities or EDDs from learning from and using this framework. The approach has wide applicability to all communities, regions and EDDs.



Building Stronger Sectors Through Collaboration



➔ Introduction

The strength of the wealth creation approach is in its inherent flexibility. The approach focuses on three key principles:

1. Recognize and build multiple forms of wealth.
2. Promote local ownership and control.
3. Improve livelihoods for those currently living on the economic and social margins.

Economic Development Districts can connect with wealth creation in a variety of ways:

1. Focus on Capitals.

The entry point for wealth creation is using [eight capitals](#) to understand the variety of assets a community or region has. There are many ways to gather this information; some communities use an asset inventory. The [SWOT \(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats\) analysis](#), a key component of the [Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy \(CEDS\)](#), is another way to do this, by using the variety of community assets to identify the strengths, weaknesses,

opportunities and threats of the region, while also considering local ownership and control of those assets. The forms of capital also provide a framework for thinking about how to measure progress and outcomes in the CEDS. A region's capitals can also provide a backdrop for regional promotion efforts.

2. Sector specific approaches.

In some places, EDDs have had rewarding experiences bringing players in an industry sector together to figure out pathways to “*coopetition*,” a way of cooperating that rises above competition to benefit the sector and the region as a whole. This builds social and political capital along the way and keeps wealth local, by retaining successful industries and businesses. These pathways can include collaborating on workforce development, purchasing, etc.

3. Building value chains in sectors. A [wealth creation value chain](#) is a network of people, businesses, organizations, and agencies addressing a market opportunity to meet demand for specific products and services – advancing self-interest while

building rooted local and regional wealth. Building a value chain takes cooperation to a higher level, in terms of bringing partners together, mapping out the value chain system, determining where the gaps lie and strategizing collaboratively about how to fill them.

[In the last piece](#), we discussed ways that EDDs are focusing on capitals in their CEDS, through asset inventory, SWOT analysis, strategy development and evaluation and metrics. In this piece, we will be exploring the second step on this continuum: Sector Specific Approaches. These approaches are about creating collaboration within an economic sector that benefits all sector businesses.

Building Stronger Sectors Through Collaboration

► Sector Focus in the CEDS

The Economic Development Administration's (EDA's) CEDS Guidelines emphasize the importance of economic resilience and workforce development, both of which acknowledge a sector focus and building on a region's assets.

[Economic resilience](#) is defined as “an area’s ability to prevent, withstand, and quickly recover from major disruptions (i.e., “shocks”) to its economic base.”

EDDs considering how to build economic resilience would benefit by considering a wealth creation framework and, more specifically, encouraging the development of new sectors or clusters based on the particular mix of assets found in that place.

“Undertaking efforts to broaden the industrial base with diversification initiatives, such as targeting the development of emerging clusters or industries that (a) build on the region’s unique assets and competitive strengths; and (b) provide stability during downturns that disproportionately impact any single cluster or industry.”

EDA also mentions the value of “[sectoral partnerships](#)” as a key element of success in workforce development. “One way for regions to ensure workforce development initiatives are well-coordinated and impactful is by encouraging

the use of sectoral partnerships. A sectoral partnership is formed by a critical mass of employers from the same industry who join with other strategic partners to train and place workers into good, high-quality jobs that meet the needs of the targeted industry.” These strategic partners can include K-12 educational institutions, community colleges, colleges and universities, community-based organizations, workforce boards, unions, industry associations, and employer-serving organizations.



Sectoral partnerships build resilience by bringing together industry and other key stakeholders, working toward workforce systems that meet the needs of a local economy and its sectors. Sectoral partnerships have been shown to improve training programs’ participation and completion and have resulted in better economic outcomes for workers and employers. Bringing employers together with educational and other stakeholders is an example of a wealth creation approach, taking a demand-driven approach to designing educational programs that meet the needs of the market. A sectoral partnership approach means this work with educational stakeholders can be even more impactful, with

the potential to impact the entire sector.

► EDDS: Partners in Sector Development

Sector development is not new to economic development. Work in sectors can take many forms, whether it is industry clusters, industry sectors, or value chains. Regardless of what you call these types of partnerships, Economic Development Districts (EDDs) are well-positioned to support

this work, as they have the facilitation and convening skills necessary to identify growth opportunities, convene sector leaders and businesses, and assist in creating successful partnerships. EDDs can also help to identify opportunities for inclusion of individuals and businesses on the economic and social

margins. This might involve working with educational institutions and others to develop more inclusive job ladders, business supplier diversity, and opportunities for entrepreneurs.

EDDs’ status as regional entities also makes them uniquely positioned to identify, build and contribute to regional sector development; this could happen through understanding infrastructure opportunities and needs as well as through ways of supporting workforce development. As leaders in public-private partnerships, EDDs are key players in connecting sector partnerships to economic development and workforce development strategies.

► Sector Strategies: Coopetition

Some EDDs are using wealth creation to frame their work in sector-based economic development, helping to develop and encourage partnerships to overcome mutual challenges, including barriers to resilience and workforce development.

Supporting Multiple Sectors in Idaho

Deb Smith, at [Clearwater Economic Development Association \(CEDA\)](#), an Economic Development Administration designated Economic Development District (EDD) serving Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis and Nez Perce Counties, and another colleague attended a WealthWorks Training for Coaches and Coordinators to learn and apply the wealth creation approach. These trainings took place between 2014 and 2016 with cohorts of 10-15. According to Deb, *“We mold it to adapt to our needs and industries’ needs. The most valuable lesson coming out of the training was the word ‘coopetition.’”*

CEDA has now used the practice of coopetition with three different industry sectors. Deb explains, *“Once you say coopetition, people are nodding their heads... they open up. You’ve given them the hall pass to cooperate with one another. They recognize that they’re competitors but if they don’t solve a problem cooperatively, they won’t be able to solve it.”*

Wine Industry

The Clearwater region is home to a vineyard and wine maker

Coopetition

Coopetition is a mix of competition and cooperation. It requires choosing the right people, who are open to the dual mindset of coopetition. *“That isn’t always easy, because people tend to think in either/or terms, as in either compete or cooperate, rather than compete and cooperate. Doing both at once requires mental flexibility; it doesn’t come naturally. But if you develop that flexibility **and** give the risks and rewards careful consideration, you may well gain an edge over those stuck thinking only about competition.”*

Coopetition works in a few different ways:

- **Expand the current market’s size** or develop a whole new market. By cooperating, costs and risks can be minimized and collectively firms can gain a more dominant position in the market.
- **To utilize resources more efficiently.** Coopetition allows businesses to integrate their resources and produce goods with fewer risks and better efficiency.
- **Acquire a larger share in the market** and enhance the competitive position. If two companies join together through coopetition, they can gain more significant market share.

sector. The initial exploration of the potential to create an American Viticultural Area (AVA) in the Lewis-Clark Valley was funded by the EDA through a \$100,000 award to the Idaho Wine Commission in 2010. The region was designated as an American Viticultural Area (AVA) in 2016; the [Lewis-Clark Valley AVA](#) builds upon an industry that emerged in the late 1800s but disappeared due to Prohibition. The first vineyards in the Lewis-Clark Valley were planted as early as 1872. Before Prohibition, the Valley was well-known for its award-winning wines. When designated, the AVA was home to five commercial wineries and seven vineyards. The Lewis-Clark Valley AVA has since grown to include nine wineries, 16 vineyards, downtown tasting rooms, and wine tour companies, encompassing nearly 100 acres of grapes growing approximately 20 unique varietals. Formed by the Snake and Clearwater Rivers, the Lewis-Clark Valley AVA consists of canyon side and bench lands and is about

306,658 acres in size. About 72% (219,838 acres) of the Lewis-Clark Valley AVA is in Idaho, the rest in Washington.

The Lewis-Clark Valley Wine Alliance, the industry’s regional trade association, works collectively to increase consumer awareness of Lewis-Clark Valley AVA wines; promote/host education events relative to industry growth; and increase wine/culinary tourism.

The popularity of the wine industry has, in turn, increased the appetite for good food and tourism experiences. To meet this demand, the hospitality program at nearby Lewis Clark State College has blossomed because of the wine and tourism industries, offering degrees in hospitality management and food and beverage management.

The Clearwater area is at the end of the line for river cruises that start in Astoria or Portland, Oregon. While the cruise ships once would go

Building Stronger Sectors Through Collaboration

back and forth, some are now one-way, which has caused an increase in airport passenger counts. Visitors are flying into Lewiston and booking wine tours, history tours and exploring the Lewis and Clark Trail.

The Nez Perce Tribe is getting involved also, as they own a great deal of land in the area, including all the water rights; the Nez Perce Reservation consists of 750,000 acres, of which the tribe or tribal members own 13 percent. A feasibility study done by the University of Idaho for the Nez Perce found that planting their land in wine grapes would be more profitable than their land leases for alfalfa and hay. The Nez Perce is now taking those leases back and hiring a vinologist to determine where and what to plant. The next stage will be to build their own winery, bottling it under the Nez Perce name and promoting their history on the bottles. One tribal member started a touring company to meet the growing demand for experiences for river cruise passengers; she met with the cruise lines and showed them what kinds of experiences her company could offer. She bought a jet boat and takes cruise passengers into the canyon, shares tribal dances, and hires tribal members.

Clearwater is now writing a grant to EDA for the Port of Lewiston, which is the farthest inland port on the west coast. During COVID, more and more cruise ships were

coming into Lewiston; Idaho saw an increase in visitors in general. American Cruise Lines will build the new dock. There are other upland improvements needed, including a building to house retailers, local tour operators, visitor services and an amphitheater.

The wine sector also considered how to interest the next generation in vinology (study of wine and its history, culture and consumption) and oenology (science and production of wine). “There are now vans moving around the region, hosting wine tours. There



are more fine dining restaurants whose owners insist on tasting their wines with their staff. How do we create that next generation of wine growers, wine makers or those who want to own a tasting room? Much of it is about building a pipeline of people interested in the industry. There's been significant growth in the state around the wine industry. Many people with educated palates have moved to Idaho.”

After the WealthWorks training, Deb used the concepts specifically about collaboration, coopetition, and understanding value propositions (including self-interest

but also shared interest) to engage with the burgeoning wine industry in Idaho. Those in the industry did not like one another, rarely spoke with one another, and were not welcoming to new people planting vineyards or entering the industry.

Coopetition is now a word they use, and it has helped them move the sector forward. According to Deb, “There was a wall they had built up with a competitor, not wanting to put effort into it. You have to have that neutral third party to instigate the discussion. My organization serves as that, as convenors.”

Clearwater learned the basics of the WealthWorks approach over a three-day in-person training and a several month practicum and convened wine industry players to talk about their ongoing challenges and needs. Through this process, those in the wine industry learned that they

were all experiencing similar challenges, for example, around supply and other costs. Now, the wineries and vineyards know they can do cooperative buying together. Two wineries bought wine barrels at a discount, ordering more than they would have individually. The sector has had tremendous growth as a result. The process built social capital among the wine industry players, creating trust and cooperation, and political capital, in that they could speak with one voice about their needs. This process advanced and accelerated the economic impact of the sector.

Building Stronger Sectors Through Collaboration

Health Care Industry

Once they saw success with the wine industry, Clearwater began to consider how this focus on cooperation and competition could be useful in other sectors with different kinds of challenges. Clearwater convened a cohort of health care professionals, including CEOs, nursing directors and HR directors, to address workforce supply chain issues, or talent pipelines. The two-state border region is blessed to be between two land grant universities in Washington and Idaho with two community colleges nearby, offering an impressive potential talent pipeline. Graduates from those institutions, however, did not have the skills to enter the health care industry in the COVID and post-COVID era.

One barrier to success was that Clearwater's region offered different credentialing for health care from Idaho to Washington. To overcome this barrier, Clearwater was able to convene all the key stakeholders on both sides of the state border. While the first meeting was rough, according to Deb, the second meeting began to delve into cooperation and how it could be beneficial to the industry as a whole. At the third meeting, Clearwater brought the suppliers (educators and trainers) into the discussion. One hospital CEO said it was the first time they had ever sat down at a table with all seven hospitals in the region. The group and the discussion blossomed. The educational institutions were interested, though it was challenging to hear that their students were not ready for work in the health care industry. The result: health care workforce training and



Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) classes were moved to rural areas, filling a gap. Graduates were hired immediately by two rural hospitals.

Manufacturing Industry

In 2022, CEDA executed the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) program to partner with regional manufacturers to address workforce pipeline deficiencies. When convened for their first meeting, the participants were distant, arms crossed across their chests, and not so talkative. During the second meeting, a discussion about workplace culture sparked an open conversation among the manufacturers. By the end of the meeting, the manufacturers were asking when the next meeting would be. By the end of the program, the participants had identified training opportunities to strengthen workers' skills and changes that would create a workplace culture that supports workers of all ages.

Deb and Clearwater originally thought about WealthWorks as a way to address challenges in the region's wine/tourism sector; it has since proved to be useful in any sector experiencing challenges that might benefit from collaboration.

"It is the lens through which we approach our jobs. It's not like I need to check this box or do this step. It's more organic."

-Deb Smith, CEDA

Building Stronger Sectors Through Collaboration



Mid-Columbia Economic Development District & Gorge Tech Alliance

The [Mid-Columbia Economic Development District \(MCEDD\)](#) has 30 employees and serves five counties, two in Washington and three in Oregon. These counties share a common workforce, geography, and economy on both sides of the Columbia River. MCEDD was formed in 1969 by its member counties. The organization received federal designation as an Economic Development District from the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) in 1970. MCEDD's focus areas include strong businesses, a robust workforce aligned with industry needs, resilient infrastructure, and powerful regional collaboration to meet the economic needs of its communities.

While MCEDD may not have been trained in WealthWorks, their example reflects a wealth creation approach. MCEDD believes that the private sector creates jobs and their role as a public-private partnership is to support the sustainable growth of sectors to create meaningful employment. MCEDD focuses on the area's core assets to support six target industry areas:

- High Tech: Unmanned Systems
- Manufacturing: Fermentation Science, Value-Added Agriculture
- Healthcare
- Forest/Wood Products

- Art/Culture/Tourism/Recreation
- Renewable Energy

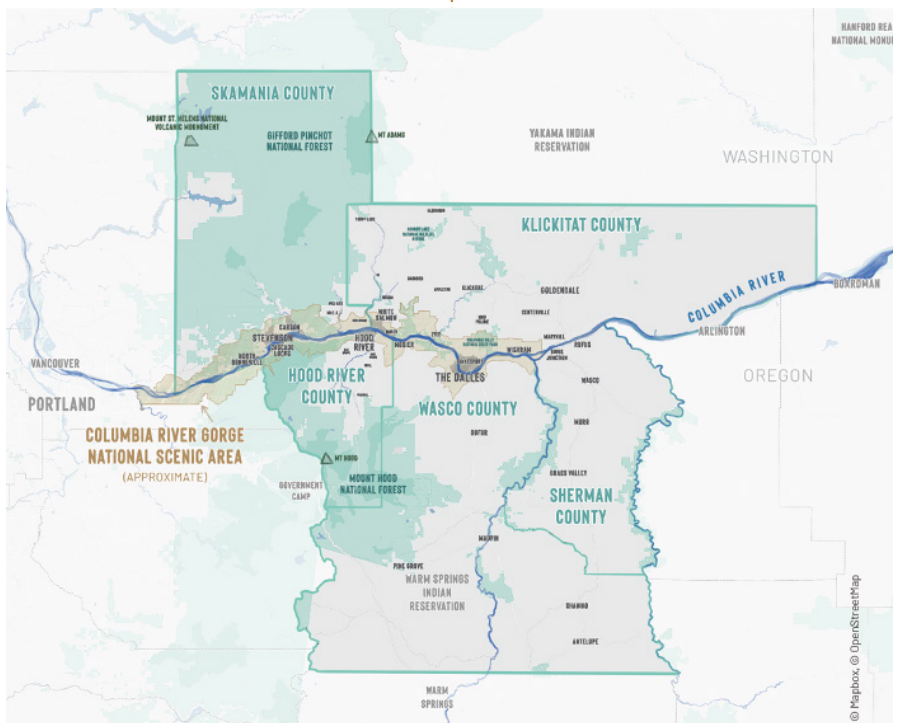
The High Tech: Unmanned Systems industry area is instructive as to how sector collaboration is implemented at MCEDD.

At one point known for pear and apple orchards, wineries and windsurfing, the Columbia River Gorge region has become home to a cluster of tech companies, especially in the unmanned systems industry. The Columbia River is one mile wide and one hour east of Portland, Oregon. In the 1990s, windsurfers discovered it, drawn to the natural wind tunnel that funnels air through the canyon. Other outdoor enthusiasts followed. The region's natural beauty and outdoor recreation vibe drew Andy von Flotow, an aeronautics professor at MIT, and several of his colleagues who immediately relocated and started aviation-focused technology companies. In the 1990s, a modern-day fixed

wing drone was created and taken to tuna fishermen to use in finding schools of fish. In 1999, the companies in this region were party to the first transatlantic flight of a drone, Canada to Ireland. The industry grew and, with it, increased interest in collaboration.

The high-tech cluster includes aerospace engineering, electronics, Internet, computer hardware and software, and alternative energy technology companies. Many companies in the Gorge tech cluster are small enterprises, several started by outdoors enthusiasts who wanted to work where they played. The largest and most notable of these is Insitu, a pioneer in the field of unmanned aircraft.

Founded in the Gorge in 1994, Insitu is a company that has aimed to become the gold standard in Group 2 and 3 Uncrewed Autonomous Systems (UAS). The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) classifies unmanned aerial systems



Building Stronger Sectors Through Collaboration

(UAS) into “Groups” according to their size and capability; Groups 2 and 3 are best for higher altitudes, higher speeds and longer endurance. The company’s focus has been on providing Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Services, Software and Fully Integrated Systems around the world. In 2008, Boeing bought Insitu for \$407 million. The demand for these kinds of unmanned aerial systems sparked an entire ecosystem of UAS-related companies in and around the Gorge.

The Gorge’s population has grown to almost 90,000 residents, reflecting its growing importance as a hub for technology companies. In 2004, MCEDD received an EDA grant to identify and develop the top industry clusters in the region. When the high-tech industry was identified as one of these key sectors, MCEDD brought the companies together to explore how the businesses could collaborate on opportunities and on solving common challenges such as reliance on external suppliers for machine components and the need for human resources support. This led to the inception of an industry association (or sector collaboration) called the [Gorge Tech Alliance \(GTA\)](#), which has since continued to contract with MCEDD for staffing support.

Since then, the GTA has emerged as a collaborative solution to industry-wide issues such as the shortage of STEM education and limited cooperation among companies. Serving as a platform for networking, joint marketing efforts, and representation at trade shows, the Alliance fosters a vibrant community by organizing

a monthly happy hour, convening human resources professionals from member companies, hosting events that showcase the many local technology advancements, and supporting STEM education and scholarships.

The GTA vision is “a Columbia Gorge region known as an innovative technology community where businesses thrive, entrepreneurs are nurtured, community members are engaged, meaningful employment is abundant, and all learners have access to innovative Science, Technology, Engineering and Math opportunities.”

Goals include:

1. Foster a thriving Gorge tech community.
2. Promote and support member businesses.
3. Support STEM education.
4. Optimize the GTA’s impact.

“Workwise, the GTA offers opportunity for both the collaboration and competition that are needed to help our local industry sector achieve a greatness that one company would not be able to achieve on its own.”

-Ryan Smith, Insitu

COVID was difficult for the GTA, as it thrives on networking, but the organization has been refreshed over the last few years. Additionally, MCEDD successfully applied for a grant from the State of Washington in 2023 to develop an innovation cluster focused on unmanned systems/drones – a direct result of the collaboration created by the GTA. The state’s support will allow MCEDD to continue to build up and

support this cluster.

“The collaboration is evident all around here. There are dozens of companies that have all spun out of each other and contracted back to each other. They’re working together extremely well. This is attributable to the GTA.”

-Jason Hartmann, MCEDD

Moving forward, to cultivate entrepreneurship, innovation and ongoing prosperity, the MCEDD recently completed a Regional Innovation Hub plan to assess how the region can better serve innovators. Funded by a grant from Business Oregon, MCEDD contracted with ECONorthwest in 2023 to work with a team of regional partners in developing the plan.

The Hub will directly tackle the remaining challenges, such as lack of venture capital and government support, by cultivating a collaborative culture among entrepreneurs, showcasing the region’s assets to potential investors, strengthening connections to statewide resources, and linking to venture capital providers. The next step will be to seek implementation funding from Business Oregon and others to address the gaps, primarily through new positions at MCEDD, that will be focused on this work. The outcome would not be a physical space but rather individuals who can better connect innovators with resources.



Building Stronger Sectors Through Collaboration

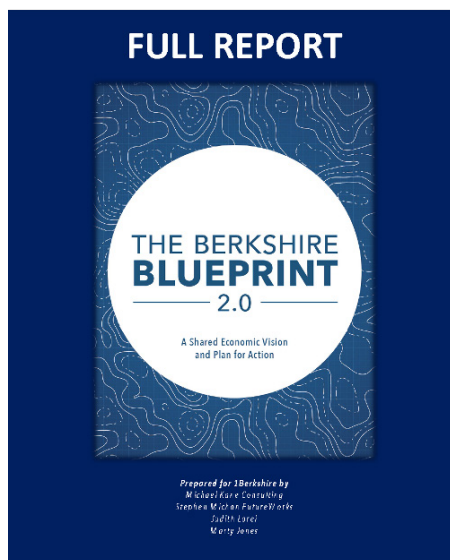
Berkshire Blueprint

The [Berkshire Regional Planning Commission \(BRPC\)](#) in western Massachusetts, an Economic Development District of one county as of early 2022, is a key partner of the [Berkshire Blueprint 2.0](#) initiative. Their 2023 CEDS notes that many of their strategies are under the purview of this initiative. This is another example that reflects the wealth creation approach, though they may not have been exposed to WealthWorks training.

BRPC was not the lead on the Berkshire Blueprint; key to this initiative was another regional organization, [1Berkshire](#). 1Berkshire was created in June 2016 by a merger of four countywide economic development organizations: the Berkshire Economic Development Corporation, the Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, the Berkshire Visitors Bureau, and the Berkshire Creative Economy Council. By combining these entities, 1Berkshire leverages resources, improves efficiency, expands audience reach, and coordinates programs that benefit every area of the region.

In 2007, the Berkshire Economic Development Corporation launched the Berkshire Blueprint, with the goal of initiating work toward sustained economic growth across the Berkshires. Ten years later, in 2017, 1Berkshire started working on the Berkshire Blueprint 2.0, which offers a strategy and lays out the new narrative of the Berkshire economy.

The Berkshire 2.0 Strategy is a supporting document to the Berkshire Region's primary



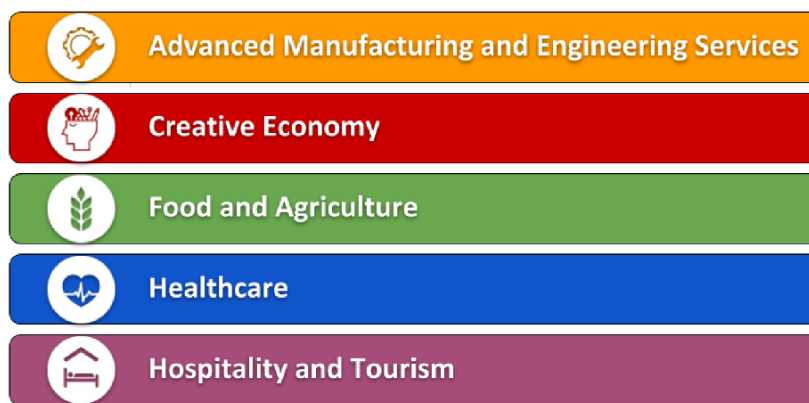
economic strategy which is the BRPC 5-year CEDS document. 1Berkshire was at the table and involved throughout the development process of the region's [2023-2027 Regional CEDS](#).

The Blueprint outlines the present state of the Berkshire economy and aims to guide the region forward through the activation of key partnerships coordinated by 1Berkshire, to provide energy, resource support, and strategic alignment of various regional economic hubs.

The original Blueprint identified five industry clusters and developed partner hubs for each (see above). These efforts included the creation of an advisory

board, implementation support, and benchmarking. Launched in February 2019, the Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 uses a cluster-based model to address the needs, and help to track and benchmark work, in six central industrial clusters; Outdoor Recreation was added to the original five, while Healthcare became Healthcare and Wellness. These clusters, each facilitated by a partner Hub, include Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology, Creative Economy, Food and Agriculture, Healthcare and Wellness, Hospitality and Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation. The Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 provides a reliable and regionally owned strategic scaffolding that allows for improved collective approaches to challenges and opportunities, enhanced connective tissue between stakeholders, and a vision for pursuing resources and support that will allow for the economy to thrive over time.

1Berkshire works with partner organizations who oversee the hubs. According to Ben Lamb, the organization's Vice President of Economic Development, this system provides "a gentle nudge and feedback mechanism" for the hubs. Certain clusters are more robust than others, including Creative Economy and Culture and Advanced Manufacturing.



Building Stronger Sectors Through Collaboration

Cross cluster collaboration is also a large part of the work that 1Berkshire oversees. For example, during the pandemic, the Advanced Manufacturing and Healthcare hubs collaborated to help make more masks. Creative Economy and Advanced Manufacturing have also collaborated, as the creative economy benefits from the manufacturing of art installations and public art infrastructure, outdoor seating, etc. The Berkshire Innovation Center's (BIC) new location at the MASS MoCA (Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art) campus is the physical embodiment of cross collaboration – “how do we expand the reach of those two entities into one another, learn best practices, share resources, and tap into resource streams outside of the area.” BIC, in partnership with the MA Institute of Technology (MIT), received \$915K funding in FY22 ARPA funds for the launch of the Berkshire Innovation Center Manufacturing Academy, to support the growth of the advanced manufacturing sector in Western Massachusetts through technical assistance and workforce development programs. In addition, the Creative Economy cluster is working with the Healthcare industry, creating a program in Massachusetts of cultural institutions as a wellness endeavor. Doctors are now prescribing museum passes to improve mental health and wellness.

The most recent cluster, Outdoor Recreation, is making connections with other clusters, like Hospitality and Tourism and Healthcare and



Wellness. Links are being created with work in downtowns. The Town of Adams, for example, was the recipient of \$2,894,500 in FY22 ARPA Tourism funding for Water Infrastructure Improvements to support the development of the Greylock Glen Resort, significantly expanding tourism and outdoor recreational access within the Town of Adams and Berkshire County.

Overall, the model is very adaptive. According to Ben Lamb, “It came out and looked like a strict plan. It was always going to be a living thing, moving according to the needs of the community.” The model has been helpful to keep 1Berkshire on track and provide something agile and inclusive for a variety of areas. This model has been especially helpful for federal and state grant applications, showing a collective impact, based on a variety of organizations pulling their own weight.

1Berkshire's role has been in convening partners, pulling together tables of people, identifying ideas, etc. There are 700 stakeholders in this work. 1Berkshire organizes resource partners that address cross-cutting issues such as broadband, energy costs, population, and

transportation. According to Ben Lamb, “we're not meant to be the doer of everything, but more of the catalytic convener and educator.”

Workforce and housing have been two issues and areas of crisis in the area that go hand in hand. The area is functionally at full employment, with around 3% unemployment in the County. Housing is a crisis in Berkshire

County and Massachusetts, as it has been elsewhere. A housing project in the area has brought 1Berkshire, Berkshire Housing and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission together to discuss and identify strategies.

An Advisory Group of more than 60 individuals is key to providing input and supporting the Blueprint. This is a collection of individuals and organizational leaders, aiming to be as diverse as possible across service agencies related to cross-cutting issues and elected leadership. There is one big event a year, working on how best to implement the Blueprint together. There are also smaller convenings of specialized groups as needed. According to Ben Lamb, serving on the Advisory group means that “you'll be open to answering a question or problem-solving around an issue. These are thinkers and doers who are ready and willing to engage in the Blueprint deeply. It is a thing of value that they will support in action and narrative. This is the most diverse and largest advisory council of anything happening in the county now.”

Building Stronger Sectors Through Collaboration

Takeaways:

- 1. Consider key assets.** The first step to a sector collaboration strategy is considering key assets on which economic sectors may be built or have already been built.
- 2. Understand sectors.** The CEDS typically outlines key economic sectors in the region. It may help to conduct research on what challenges the sector is experiencing, which can be done through secondary research, surveys and one-on-

- one interviews with key players in the sector (another way of building social capital). These shared challenges may turn into value propositions for sector engagement.
- 3. Identify value propositions** based on overcoming shared challenges for sector partners to rally around. Different players may have different value propositions. See the [NADO Wealth Creation site](#) for a tool (Opportunities to Build Partnerships) to work on identifying value propositions.

- 4. Economic development districts (EDDs) are entities** perfectly positioned to support sector collaboration through convening and facilitation. Due to their regional nature and their focus on economic development planning, EDDs are ideal leaders of these strategies.

Tool: Opportunities to Build Partnerships

Use the below worksheet to consider new partners and their value propositions. Click on the images below to open them in a browser and download.

Opportunities to Build Partnerships

Who is on your region's CEDS committee or other leadership committees, and who are targeted stakeholders that engage in the CEDS? If your CEDS or other planning process could use some fresh perspectives, try thinking through the eight forms of Community Capital to identify potential new committee members or audiences to target in your outreach.

Community Capital	Current committee members (or other leadership)	Potential partners working to build these assets	Why would they be interested in participating in your work? How would you engage them?
Individual capital (health, wellness, workforce, education, other skills)			
Intellectual capital (innovation partners)			
Natural capital (businesses, organizations, or agencies focused on land, water, air, etc.)			
Built capital (owners and operators of infrastructure, including private sector)			

Wealth Creation

Community Capital	Current CEDS committee members (or other leadership)	Potential partners working to build these assets	Why would they be interested in participating in your work? How would you engage them?
Financial capital (financial institutions, insurance, entities building economic success at the household level)			
Political capital (local, state, federal decisionmakers, coalitions, institutions with policies such as hiring or purchasing)			
Social capital (civic groups, clubs, churches, neighborhood associations)			
Cultural capital (libraries, museums, arts organizations, festival organizers, and others involved in celebrating evolving regional identity)			

Don't forget intended beneficiaries of economic development: How do low-income people, or others who might not have been at the table previously, participate in the CEDS? Are there opportunities to engage them or develop their roles in the planning process? As suppliers or producers? Employees? Owners of assets? Consumers? Why would they want to engage?

Wealth Creation