

2024 Annual Report



2024 NADO MEMBERSHIP

378 Association Members

47 states (+ American Samoa, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands)

322 Standard Members

2 Diamond
12 Platinum Plus
19 Platinum
56 Sustaining
233 General

56 Affiliate Members

13 Partner
43 Associate





ADVOCACY FOR KEY PROGRAMS

Throughout 2024, NADO voiced support for programs that help facilitate community and economic development, transportation planning, workforce training, affordable housing, rural development, support for older Americans, urban and rural planning, disaster recovery, and more.

WASHINGTON POLICY CONFERENCE

In March 2024, NADO held its annual Washington Policy Conference, which was attended by more than 400 participants. It was held as a joint event in conjunction with the Development District Association of Appalachia's (DDAA) Annual Conference. During this event, attendees had opportunities to hear updates from and engage with federal agency leadership and staff, and to participate in NADO on the Hill: a day of advocacy during which NADO members meet with their Senators and Representatives in Washington DC.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WASHINGTON DC FLY-IN

In May 2024, the NADO Executive Committee traveled to Washington DC to participate in NADO's annual three-day advocacy fly-in. The Executive Committee met with numerous federal officials, House and Senate Committee staff on Capitol Hill, leadership from other national associations, and officials at the White House.



The 2023-2024 NADO Executive Committee during the advocacy fly-in. (From L to R: Charlie Baker, Matthew Dolge, Nicole Griensewic, Rick Hunsaker, Chris Brown, and Chris Fetzer.)

EDA REAUTHORIZATION

In December 2024, bipartisan legislation passed in the House and Senate which successfully reauthorized the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the first time in 20 years. The reauthorization of the EDA will strengthen and protect EDA's programs and will enhance many of the EDA initiatives that are important to NADO members and Economic Development Districts across the country. NADO is proud to have played a key role in advocating for EDA reauthorization, working alongside the NADO membership and countless other champions who helped achieve this legislative victory.



In August, Deputy Executive Director Mirielle Burgoyne (pictured far right) spoke at The White House Summit on Capital Support for Place-Based Economic Development, alongside panelists from The Aspen Institute, The Brookings Institution, and the Urban Institute.

COLLABORATIONS WITH COALITIONS AND PARTNERS

NADO worked strategically with other national associations and participated in coalitions pursuing shared goals such as the reauthorization of the Farm Bill, the Older Americans Act, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Although these items did not get reauthorized in 2024, progress was made in terms of advocating for their importance and providing input on draft bill text. NADO will continue to work toward these goals in 2025 in tandem with other national partners.

ADVOCACY RESOURCES

Throughout the year, NADO continually updated advocacy resource materials on www.NADO.org, such as appropriations fact sheets and template letters that NADO members can utilize when conducting outreach to their Senators and Representatives. Learn more at nado.org/about-nado-advocacy.

CONFERENCES AND TRAININGS

6 in-person conferences and trainings across the country hosting more than 1,600 attendees from hundreds of different organizations. These events offered over **120** opportunities for learning and networking in the form of plenary and breakout sessions, learning labs, conversation cafés, mobile workshops, receptions, and more.

11 webinars were conducted through the Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP) covering topics such as housing, food systems, wealth creation, EDD-tribal partnerships, Revolving Loan Funds, and federal grant administration.



RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Through NADO's grant-funded program work, **22** publications were distributed on topics such as economic resilience, workforce development, aging, wealth creation, brownfields, EDD-tribal engagement, EDDs and higher education institutions, downtown redevelopment, electric vehicle and bike/ped infrastructure in rural areas, and climate adaptation and resilience.



Publications ranged from reports and case studies to briefs, guides, tip sheets, and microsites built within NADO's website.

The national EDD Map built by NADO was updated and improved to provide contact information for each EDD, as well as details on their service areas, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS), and EDA regional office. In 2024, the EDD Map page of nado.org was the most visited page outside of event pages with **6,612** views.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND PEER LEARNING

40 regions were served through NADO RF's technical assistance work supported by USDA and Thriving Communities. Assistance was also provided to NADO members through desktop consulting.

Peer learning opportunities were provided through **7** programs providing space for nearly **400** participants from around the country to connect with and learn from each other. Below are programs and opportunities where participants were able to connect with one another:

- » Economic Recovery Corps Fellows Program
- » Training Program for Emerging Leaders
- » Collaborative Learning Group



- » Executive Director Mentor Program
- » CEDS Peer Exchange Groups
- » Virtual EDD Chapter Meet Ups
- » New Executive Director Calls

A MESSAGE FROM NADO'S LEADERSHIP

The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) and our affiliate 501(c) (3) NADO Research Foundation are pleased to share with you a snapshot of our accomplishments and forward progress from 2024 in this Annual Report.

In an ever-evolving economic landscape, the role of government affairs in association work has never been more crucial. As our industry confronts a myriad of challenges and opportunities, NADO's Government Affairs team has been at the forefront of strategic engagement with policymakers, legislators, and leaders for many years. In December 2024, those many hours and years of work by our staff, members, and partners came to fruition when bipartisan legislation passed in the House and Senate which successfully reauthorized the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the first time in 20 years. The reauthorization of the EDA will strengthen and protect EDA's programs and will enhance many of the EDA initiatives that are important to NADO members and Economic Development Districts (EDDs) across the country. NADO is proud to have played a key role in advocating for EDA reauthorization, working alongside the NADO membership and countless other champions who helped achieve this legislative victory.

Our EDD Community of Practice (CoP), supported by the EDA and led by our Research Foundation team, has grown to a robust collective of thorough research publications, webinars, peer learning groups, and in-person trainings that is made available for regional community and economic development practitioners. During 2024, our team continued to meticulously plan and provide timely and relevant information on a variety of topics

important to those working at the forefront of regional development. We encourage you to explore these offerings and learn more about the CoP on our website at nado.org/eddcop.

Our technical assistance and desktop consulting work continued this year providing direct support to more than 30 communities and Regional Development Organizations (RDOs) through our partnerships with the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

In addition, NADO recognized members performing innovative and poignant work in their communities through the awarding of 98 Aliceann Wohlbruck Impact Awards and 10 Excellence in Regional Transportation Awards. The award recipients were recognized at our National Regional Transportation Conference and Annual Training Conference.

At the heart of successful work and progress lies the strength of relationships. This momentum would not be possible without the unwavering support of NADO's valued members, Board of Directors, Executive Committee, partners, and team. We extended our sincere appreciation for every individual and organization who have cheered us on this past year, and we look forward to continuing to build and nurture relationships in the upcoming year.

With a brand new five-year strategic plan already guiding us in 2025, we promise to continue advocating for our members and RDO professionals, providing enlightening research, and giving practitioners ample opportunities to learn and train throughout the year.



Chris Brown
2024 President, NADO
Board Member, Ark-Tex COG



Joe McKinney
Executive Director
NADO & NADO Research Foundation