



## 2026 NADO Advocacy Priorities

### Economic and Community Development

- Encourage and increase federal funding for **regional community planning**, which ensures the success of subsequent federal project investments.
- Support the programs and initiatives of the U.S. Department of Commerce **Economic Development Administration (EDA)**, particularly those focused on planning, public works, and predevelopment.
- Provide at least **\$645 million for EDA programs** in FY 2027 appropriations, which is the amount that was authorized by Congress within the *Economic Development Reauthorization Act of 2024*, the bipartisan EDA reauthorization legislation that was recently signed into law as part of the *Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act of 2024 (Senate Bill 4367)*.
- Provide at least **\$110 million for EDA Partnership Planning Grants** in FY 2027 appropriations, which is the authorized funding level. EDA Partnership Planning provides funding for locally-based community organizations known as EDA-designated Economic Development Districts.
- Across the board, **increase federal share and reduce local match** percentages for federal programs designed to benefit rural and economically underserved communities.
- Encourage and increase federal investment in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's **Community Development Block Grant program**.
- Encourage federal and state level partners to work closely with Regional Development Organizations to align sources of funding and improve project planning and implementation.
- Preserve and **prioritize local decision-making** in the implementation of federal programs and funding.
- Increase federal investments in **Federal Regional Commissions** including the Appalachian Regional Commission, the Delta Regional Authority, the Denali Commission, the Northern Border Regional Commission, the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission, and the Southwest Border Regional Commission. In tandem with these investments, increase federal investments into the Local Development Districts that serve as the core frontline partners working collaboratively with Regional Commissions at the local level.
- Provide funding for **newly authorized Federal Regional Commissions** that were recently authorized, including: the Great Lakes Authority, the Northern Great Plains Regional Authority, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Commission, and the Southern New England Regional Commission.

### Rural Capacity Building

- Encourage and increase federal investments in U.S. Department of Agriculture **Rural Development** programs.
- **Reauthorize the Farm Bill** in 2026. Within Farm Bill reauthorization, authorize funding for the Rural Partnership Program, which would direct federal funding toward operating expenses for rural organizations.

## Workforce Development

- Encourage and increase federal investments in **workforce development** and training programs and Workforce Investment Boards.
- Invest in **entrepreneurship and innovation initiatives** designed to benefit underserved and rural communities.
- Reauthorize the **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act** in 2026.

## Transportation, Infrastructure, and Broadband

- Expand and enhance the roles of **Regional Transportation Planning Organizations** (RTPOs) and **Metropolitan Planning Organizations** (MPOs).
- Direct more targeted resources to **smaller communities**, including those below a 50,000-population threshold.
- **Increase funding allocated to MPOs and RTPOs**, including Metropolitan Planning (PL) funds, State Planning and Research (SPR) funds, and Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds. Additionally, establish a **minimum funding floor** for all such organizations.
- Provide a **dedicated funding source for RTPOs** that is similar to Metropolitan Planning (PL) funding for MPOs.
- **Reduce or eliminate local match requirements** for rural communities with populations under 50,000, and for small MPOs with populations ranging from 50,000 to 200,000, recognizing that these communities are typically resource-challenged. Reductions in local match are particularly needed within the 5311 Rural Transit Program; the Safe Streets for All Program; the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program; and the State Planning and Research Program.

## Public Health

- Support the national network of **Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs)**.
- Provide support to help older adults and people with disabilities improve their health, well-being, independence, and dignity within their homes and communities.
- Reauthorize the **Older Americans Act** in 2026.

## Disaster Mitigation and Resiliency

- Encourage and increase federal investments that help communities build stronger, more **resilient economies** that are more insulated from economic shocks.
- Work directly with Regional Development Organizations to improve the implementation of **disaster preparedness and disaster recovery** funding, and to help regions mitigate and recover from natural disasters and economic disruptions.

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### About NADO

The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) is a 501c4 membership association that represents the interests of regional community and economic development practitioners. Established in 1967, NADO advocates for federal policies and programs that promote equitable community development, economic competitiveness, rural development, economic mobility, and quality of place. NADO represents a national network of more than 500 Regional Development Organizations (RDOs) across the country. For more information, visit [www.nado.org](http://www.nado.org).