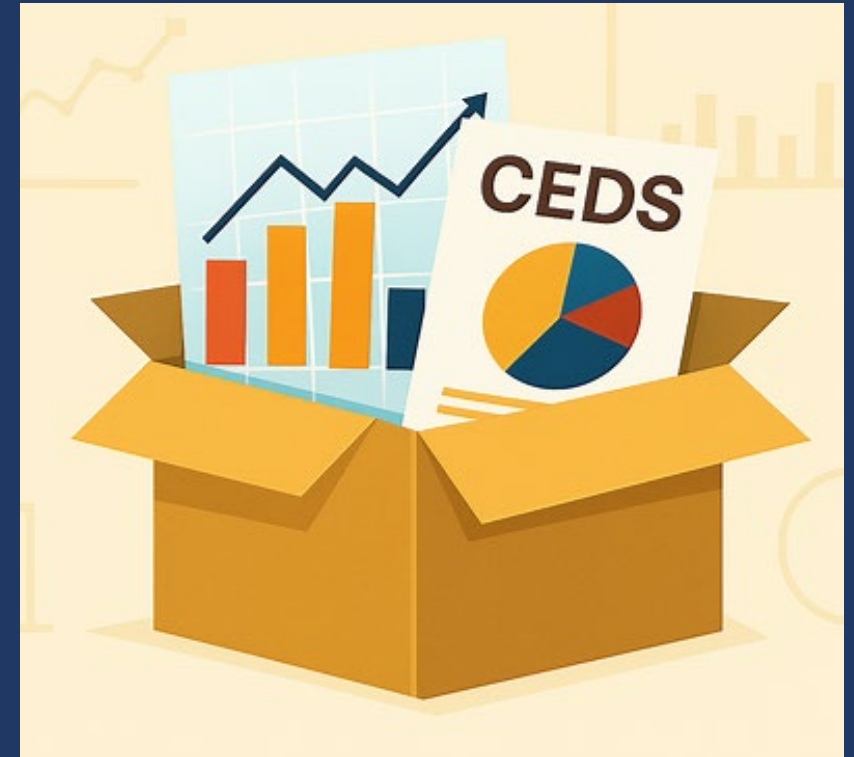




CEDS Unpacked: Basics & Beyond



2025 NADO Annual Training Conference
Salt Lake City, UT

Today's Presenters

Brett Schwartz, Associate Director, Economic Development
NADO Research Foundation (CA)



Sharon Astrin, Manager, Community & Economic Development
Association of Central Oklahoma Governments





EDD CoP

Economic Development District
Community of Practice



More info at: www.nado.org/EDDCoP

This webinar is offered through the Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP), managed by the NADO Research Foundation to build the capacity of the national network of EDDs. To learn more, visit: www.nado.org/EDDCoP. The EDD CoP is made possible through an award from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce (ED22HDQ3070106). The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations in this webinar are those of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Economic Development Administration or the U.S. Department of Commerce.



The State of the EDDs & CEDS Content Guidelines Updates (June 2023)



In the spring of 2023, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) designed its 400th **Economic Development District (EDD)** and also released updates to the **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Content Guidelines**. The website landing provides a reflection on the state of the regional network of EDDs and information about the updated CEDS Content Guidelines that highlight equity, climate resilience, and workforce development. Presentation slides are [available here](#) (PDF).

CEDS 101: What You Need to Know Right Now About the CEDS (March 2021)



During the webinar, staff from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, NADO Research Foundation, and local/state conference (LSC) covered CEDS fundamentals, best practices, and latest trends. The session is intended primarily for new staff working on the CEDS, though it may also be of interest as a refresher for CEDS veterans. Presentation slides are [available here](#) (PDF).



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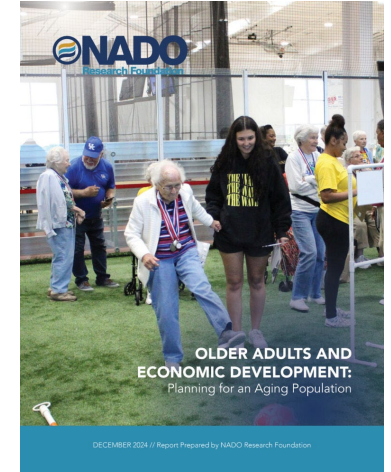
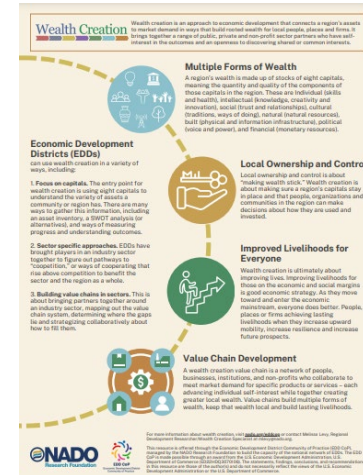
HOW TO BUILD THE CEDS STRATEGY COMMITTEE



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TRIBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES: A PRIMER FOR EDD STAFF



OLDER ADULTS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Planning for an Aging Population

DECEMBER 2024 // Report Prepared by NADO Research Foundation



nado.org



NADO RESILIENCE WORKSHOP PLANNING GUIDE

Sourced from recommendations and strategies created by successful EDDs, the following resource will walk you through the steps to set up your own workshop and provide tips and tricks for creating valuable outcomes for your region.



HAZARD MITIGATION & CEDS INTEGRATION

TIP SHEET



Wisdom from the Field: 10 Practical Tips for EDD Staff to Improve Projects and Programs

No one ever said doing regional economic development was easy. Whether navigating complex partnerships, aligning diverse community needs, or securing the right resources, EDD staff routinely face a wide range of challenges in their efforts to drive meaningful change. While there's no single roadmap for success, one of the best ways to chart a path forward is by learning from peers who've tackled similar hurdles.

This resource shares ten pieces of advice from Economic Development District staff whose 2023 NADO Impact Award-winning projects show how vision, planning, and collaboration can lead to meaningful results. These insights offer practical guidance for moving initiatives from concept to completion, reflecting the creativity, determination, and problem-solving needed to advance economic and community development. Whether you're starting a new effort or working to complete an existing one, these lessons provide real-world encouragement from those who've successfully navigated the path.



September 2025

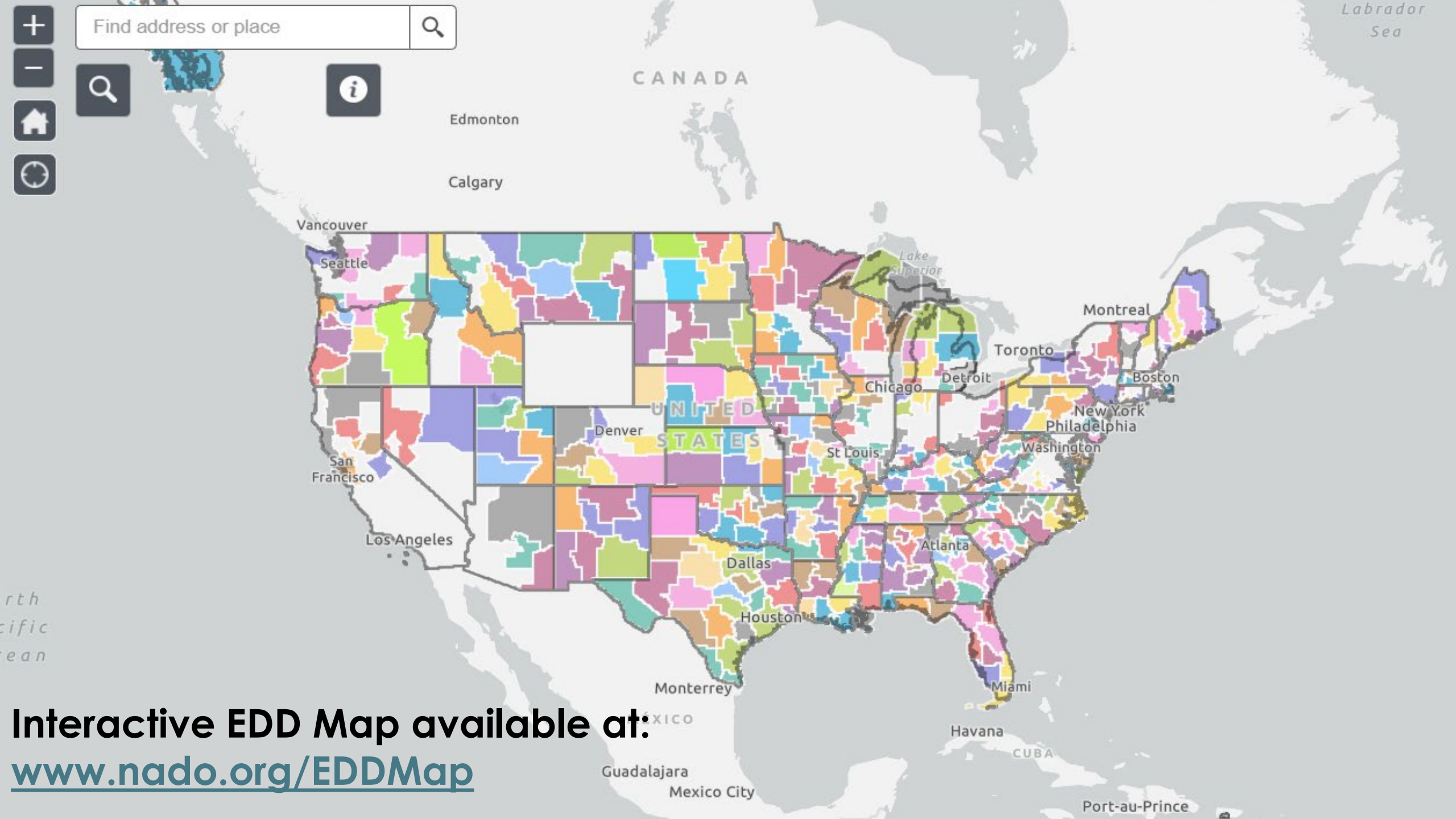
Visit: www.nado.org/EDDCoP

Federal Grant Administration Webinar Series

11	September	SINGLE AUDIT READINESS AND SURVIVAL	2:00-3:30 p.m. ET
26	September	GRANT COST ALLOWABILITY 101	2:00-3:30 p.m. ET
02	October	INDIRECT COST RECOVERY FOR RDOs	2:00-4:00 p.m. ET
09	October	PURCHASING GOODS AND SERVICES WITH FEDERAL FUNDS	2:00-3:30 p.m. ET

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER FOR FREE AT: nado.org/eddcop/calendar-eddcop/

This webinar series is offered through the Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDDCoP) managed by the NADO Research Foundation. To learn more, visit: www.nado.org/EDDCoP. The EDDCoP is made possible through on-funds from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 15C0000207000000. The website, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the presenters and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Economic Development Administration or the U.S. Department of Commerce.

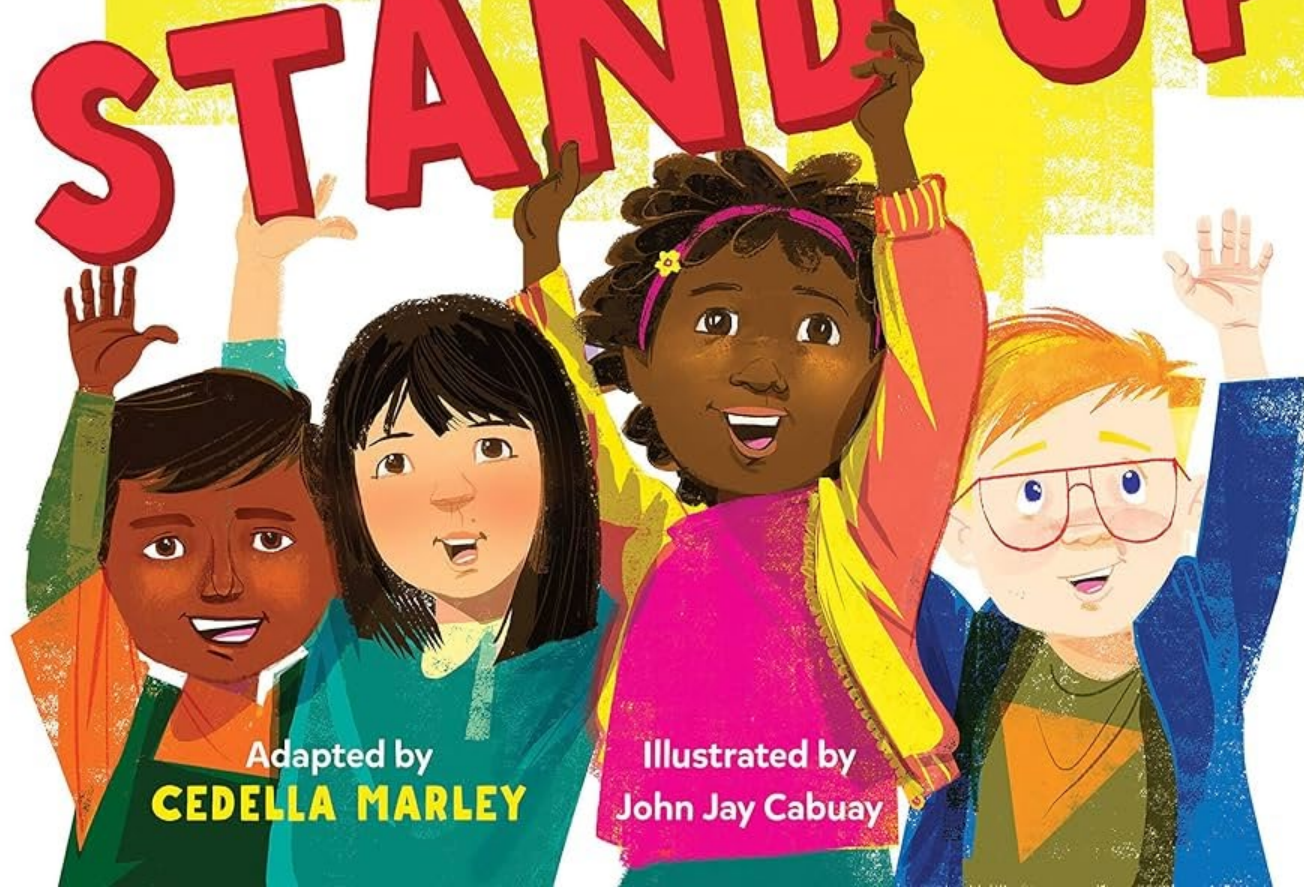


Interactive EDD Map available at:
www.nado.org/EDDMap

Based on the song by

BOB MARLEY

GET UP, STAND UP



Adapted by

CEDELLA MARLEY

Illustrated by

John Jay Cabuay

Good **economic development**...starts with good economic development **planning!**



- David Ives, US EDA

CEDS Help Build Regional Capacity

- **Volume and complexity** of federal support for economic development can be difficult to navigate.
 - New funding and programs from an array of agencies
 - Eligibility, timing, procedures vary
 - Capacity required to assess, compete, implement
- **EDDs** are essential convenors, curators, connectors, networkers, facilitators and implementors for advancing regional and statewide CEDS.
- **CEDS process** is a crucial forum for scanning, prioritizing and coordinating a strategic, regional approach for the integrated use of myriad local, state and federal funds.





4 Ways to Think About the CEDS...



The CEDS is Your Region's "State of the Union"



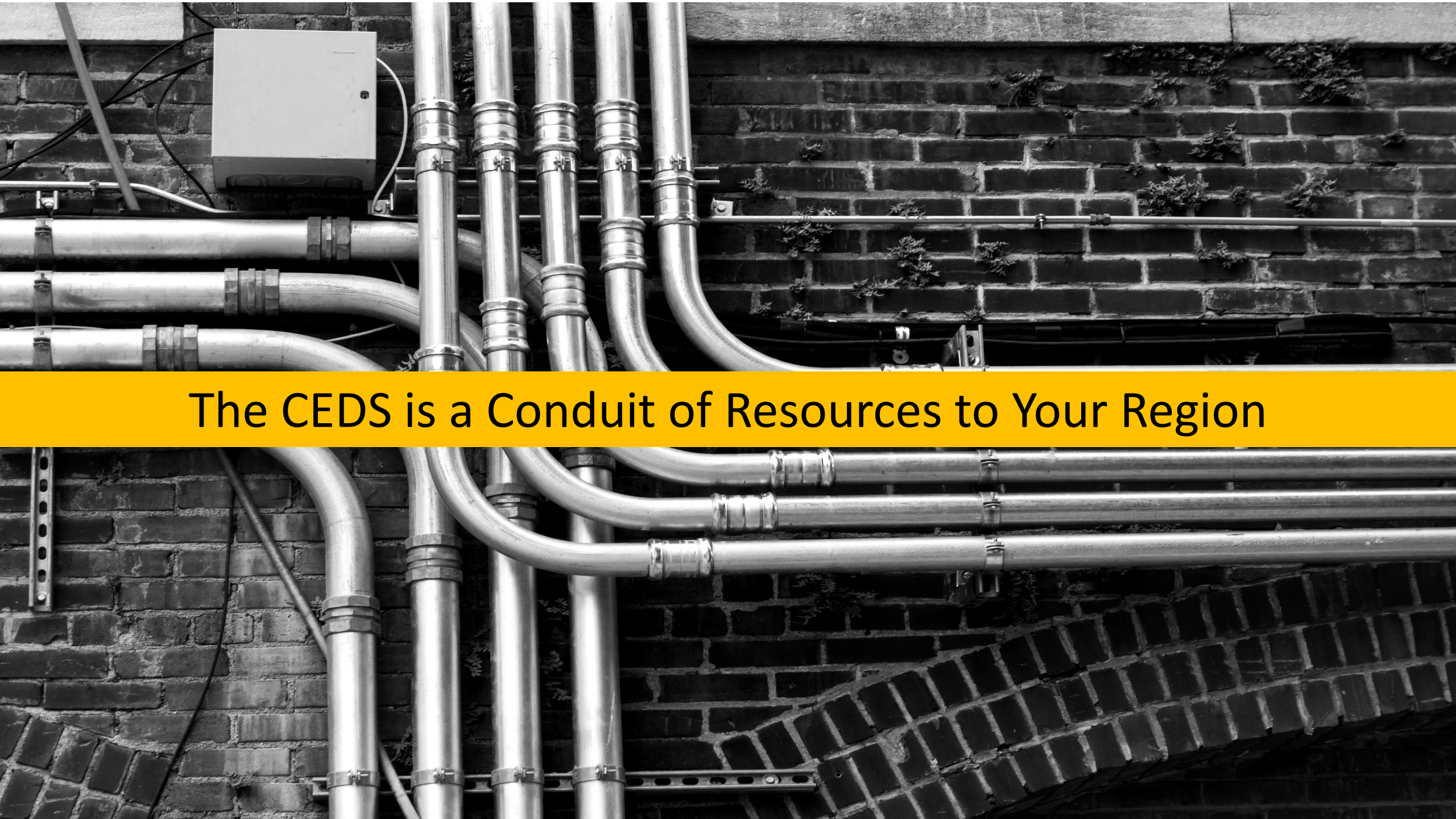


The CEDS is Your Region's Strategic Plan



A person is holding a large, detailed topographic map outdoors. The map shows green hills, roads, and various geographical features. The person's hand is visible at the bottom left, holding the map. The background is blurred, showing other people and a rocky terrain.

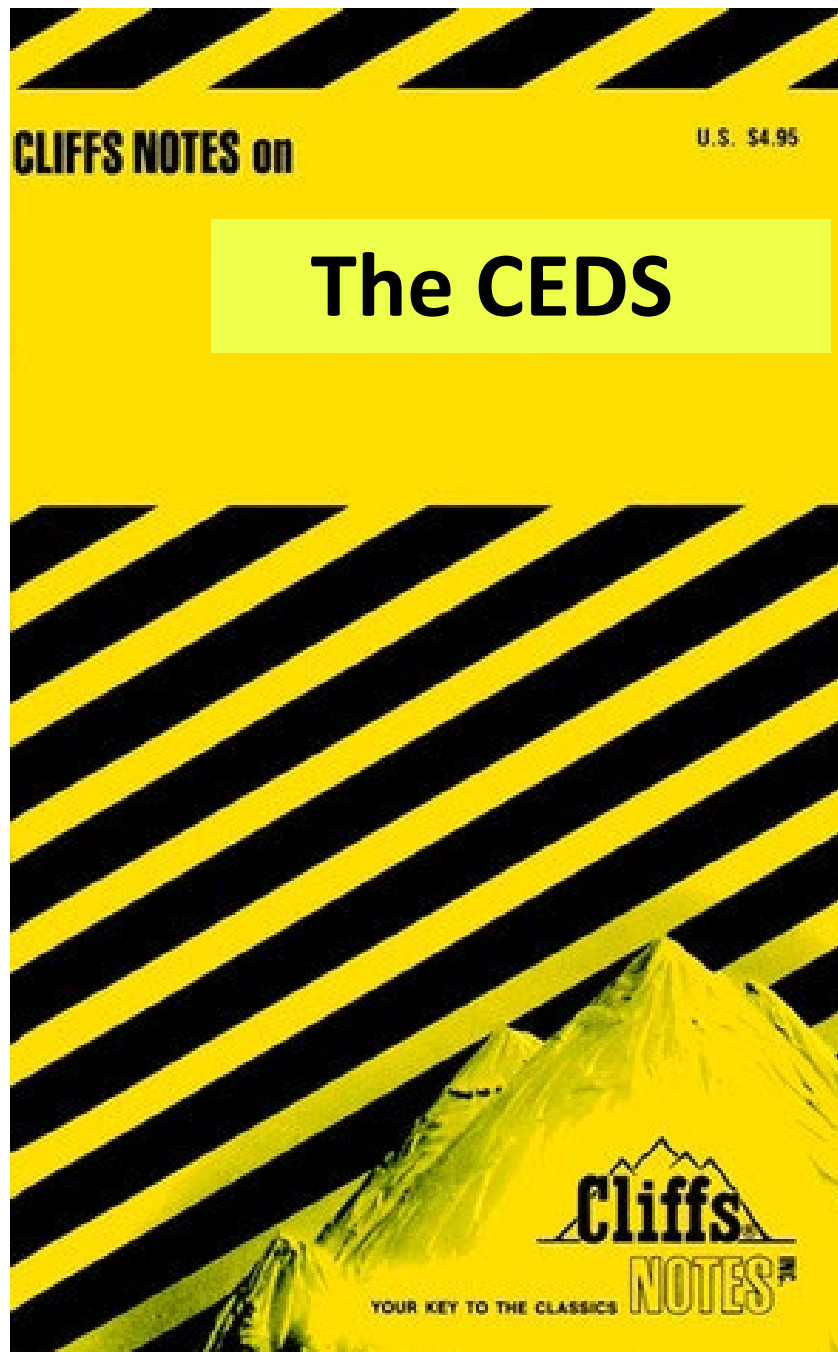
The CEDS is a Roadmap for Regional Economic Development



The CEDS is a Conduit of Resources to Your Region

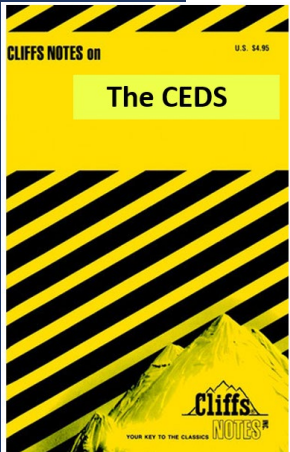


How Do You Think About Your Region's CEDS?



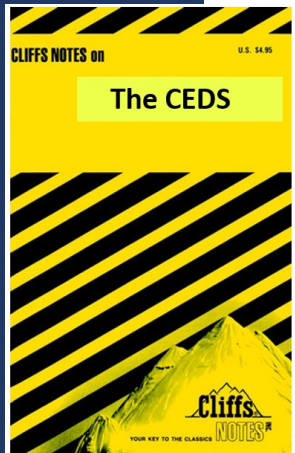
What is the CEDS?

The **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)** is a locally-based, regionally-driven economic development planning **process** and **document** that creates the space for your region to identify its strengths and weaknesses and brings together a diverse set of partners to create good jobs, diversify the economy, and spur economic growth.



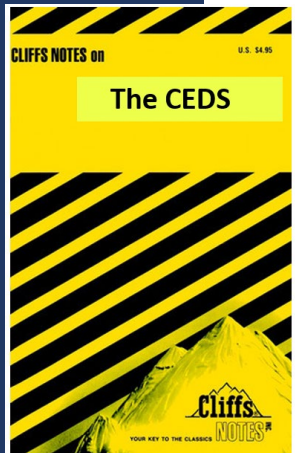
A Brief History of EDA, EDDs, and the CEDS

- EDA was established through the **Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965** with the purpose of facilitating public works projects, creating jobs, and building local capacity in distressed rural regions of the United States
- This was followed by the creation of a network of **Economic Development Districts** in 1966 to serve as multi-county economic development entities that would be professionally staffed and provide local technical assistance and support in accessing federal and state resources
- EDDs were required for decades to maintain an **Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP)** as a prerequisite for funding
- The OEDP was replaced by the more streamlined **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)** as part of the 1998 EDA Reauthorization
- The **2015 CEDS Content Guidelines Updates** offered recommendations and examples about how to complete the required sections of CEDS and also introduced the concept of *economic resilience*
- **New recommended sections** in the CEDS were offered in 2023: equity, climate resilience, and workforce development. **In 2025**, the sections on equity and climate resilience were removed.
- In the almost 60 years since the first-ever EDD was designated in Texas, the network has **grown to over 400 organizations** that cover around 85% of U.S. counties



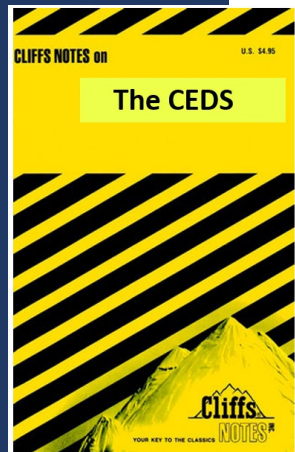
Additional Details

- Required for designation as an Economic Development District from U.S. EDA
- Tribes and some states and municipalities also maintain a CEDS
- Updated every five years with annual reports
- Submitted to EDA regional office for approval
- Requirement for various EDA funding including EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs & other funding

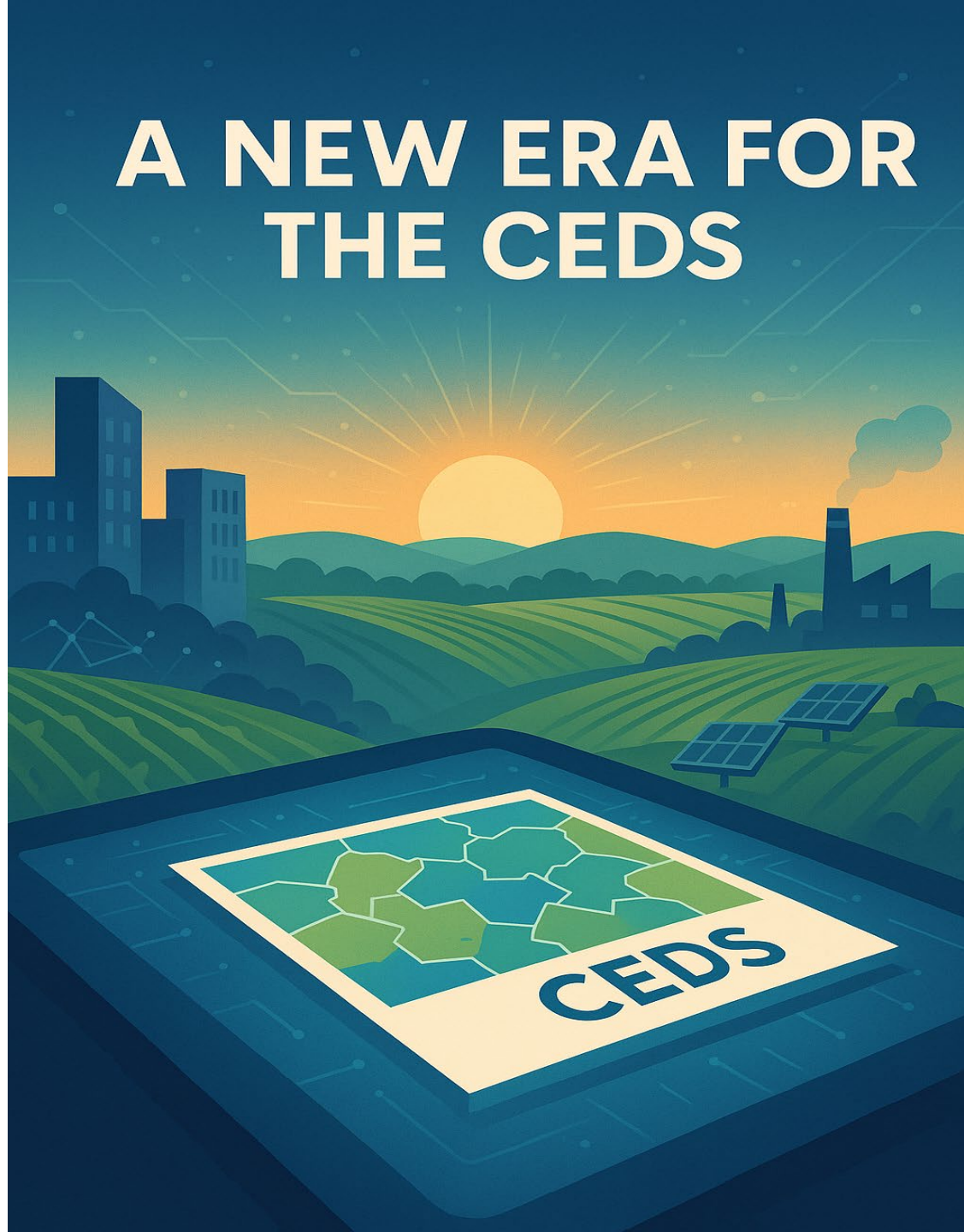


What are the Required Sections of the CEDS?

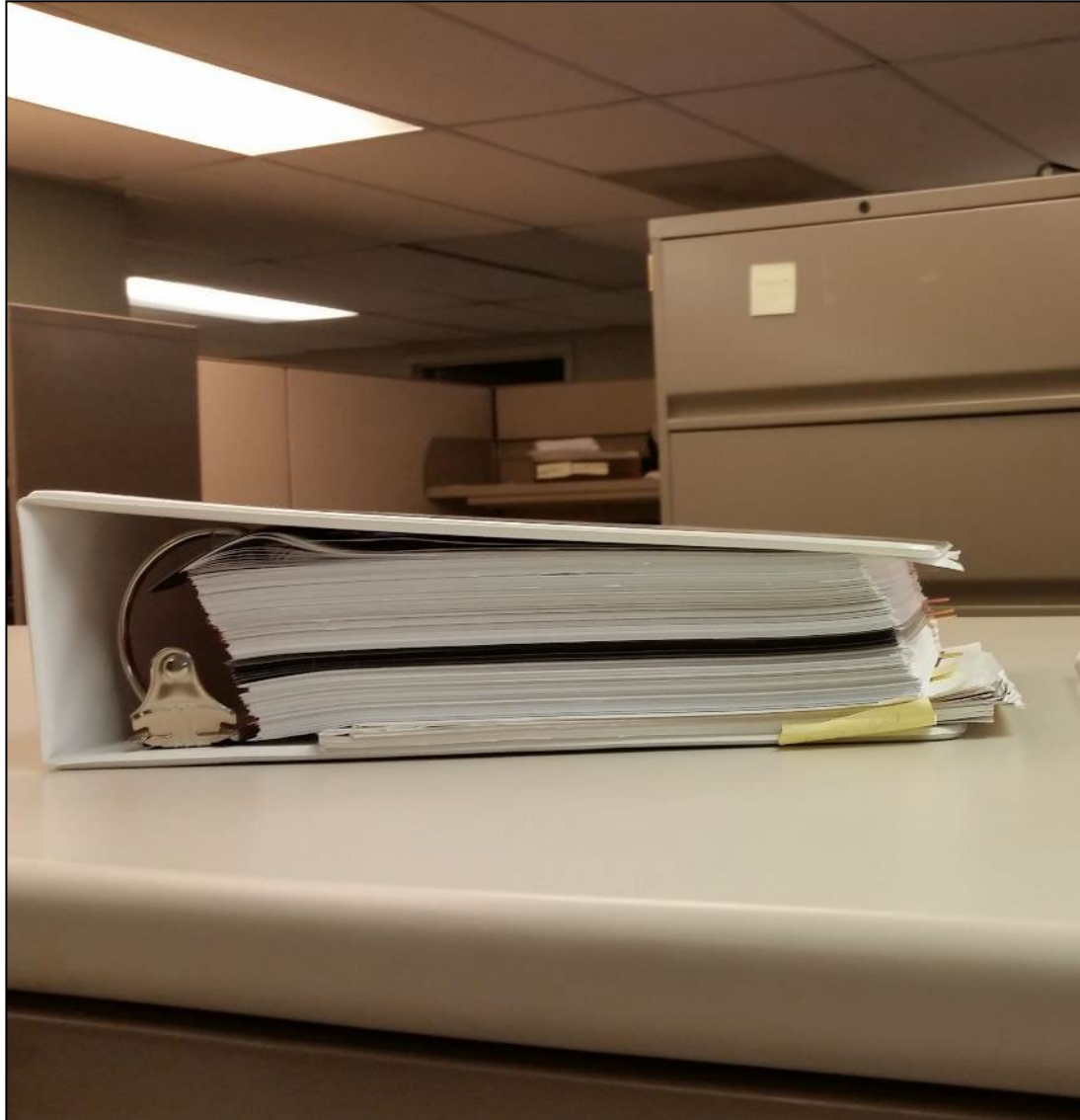
- **Summary Background:** A background summary of the region should answer the question, “What have we done?” and present a clear understanding of the local economic situation, supported by current, relevant data.
- **SWOT:** A SWOT analysis of the regional economy should answer the question, “Where are we now?” by using the relevant data and background information to help identify the critical internal and external factors that speak to the region’s unique assets and competitive positioning.
- **Strategic Direction/Action Plan:** The strategic direction and corresponding action plan contained within the CEDS are the heart and soul of the document. They should answer the questions “Where do we want to go?” and “How are we going to get there?” by leveraging the analysis undertaken in the SWOT.
- **Evaluation Framework:** The evaluation framework helps answers the question “How are we doing in meeting our goals?” and serves as a mechanism to gauge progress on the successful implementation of the overall CEDS while providing information for the CEDS Annual Performance Report.
- **Economic Resilience:** In building economic resilience, it is critical that economic development organizations consider their role in the pre- and post-incident environment to include steady-state and responsive initiatives.



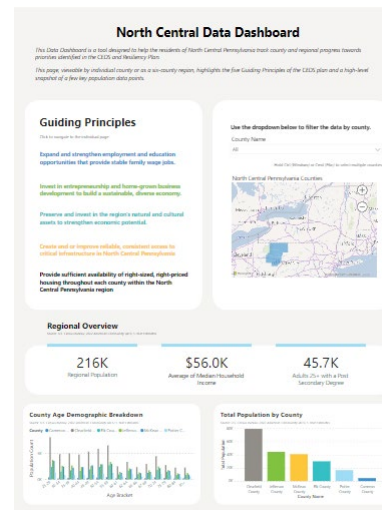
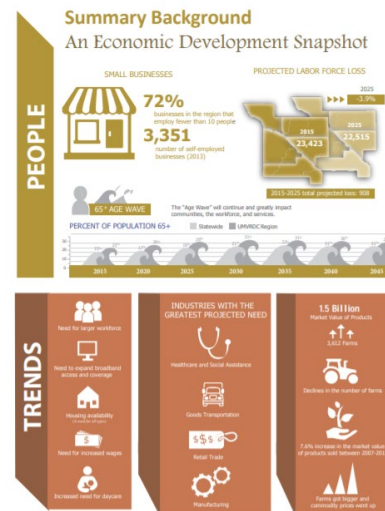
A NEW ERA FOR THE CEDS



The “Door Stopper” CEDS Era (~ 20 years ago)



What Do Today's CEDS Look Like?



Spreadsheet on Online / Digital CEDS Examples

Online / Interactive CEDS

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Extensions Help

100% \$ % .00 .00 123 Arial 10 B I A

A8 | fx East Central Iowa Council of Governments

	A	B	C
1	Organization	State	Link to Online CEDS
2	Barren River Area Development District	KY	Website: https://planning.bradd.org/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy/
3	Blackhawk Hills Regional Council	IL	https://ceds.blackhawkhills.com
4	Catawba Regional Council of Governments	SC	Website: https://catawba.digitalceds.com/
5	Central Arkansas Planning & Development District	AR	Website: https://www.capdd.org/ceds
6	Centralina Council of Governments	NC	Website: https://centralinaedd.org/economic-strategy/
7	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission	PA	Story Map: https://www.dvrpc.org/economic/ceds/
8	East Central Iowa Council of Governments	IA	Website: https://www.envision-eastcentraliowa.org/regional-plan
9	Heart of Texas Council of Governments	TX	Website/Interactive Map: https://www.hotcoq.org/hotedd/ceds
10	Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency	KY	Website: http://kipdaceds.org/
11	Kisatchie-Delta Regional Planning and Development District	LA	Website: https://trello.com/b/M0exbxHr/ceds-online-kisatchie-delta-regional-strategy
12	Land of Sky Regional Council	NC	Story Map: https://losrc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=3db8474da7e24f36b59e
13	Mid-Shore Regional Council	MD	Website: https://ceds.midshore.org/
14	North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning & Development Commission	PA	Website: https://ceds.ncentral.com/
15	Northern Neck Planning District Commission	VA	Website: https://www.northernneck.us/cedsonline/



<https://tinyurl.com/mwwwv38ux>

CEDS Content Guidelines

US Economic Development Administration - 030916

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Content Guidelines:

Recommendations for Creating an Impactful CEDS

Contents

1. Overview	2
2. Content.....	4
A. Summary Background: A summary background of the economic development conditions of the region.....	4
B. SWOT Analysis: An in-depth analysis of regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats	6
C. Strategic Direction/Action Plan: Strategic direction and an action plan (flowing from the SWOT analysis), which should be consistent with other relevant state/regional/local plans.	11
• Strategic Direction: Vision Statement and Goals/Objectives	11
• Action Plan: Implementation	12
D. Evaluation Framework: Performance measures used to evaluate the organization's implementation of the CEDS and its impact on the regional economy.	14
E. Economic Resilience:.....	15
• Planning for and Implementing Resilience	17
• Establishing Information Networks	18
• Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning.....	20
• Measuring Resilience	21
3. Format.....	22
4. Preparation.....	23
5. Equivalent/Alternative Plans.....	25

- Intended to help regional planning organizations craft more impactful CEDS
- Provides guidance on the required sections of the CEDS
 - Summary Background
 - SWOT
 - Strategic Direction/Action Plan
 - Evaluation Framework
 - Economic Resilience
- Focused on best practices, case studies, and links
- Collection of suggestions and recommendations. . .*not* a list of additional requirements

<https://www.eda.gov/CEDS>



EDA slides courtesy of David Ives, EDA

Simply put:

**EDDs and the CEDS
matter. And they will
continue to matter.**

Latest CEDS Guidance (April 2025)

In-Process CEDS: CEDS that are under development (i.e., in any stage of development prior to EDA final approval) should have all references to and sections about equity and/or climate removed from the document.

Previously-Approved CEDS: CEDS that have been previously approved (prior to the change in Administration) by EDA do not need to be changed or altered in order to remove references or sections related to climate or equity. While voluntary changes to remove such language outside of the regular 5-year update process will be allowed (e.g., as part of an annual update), no changes will be required before the regular 5-year update. However, as part of the regular 5-year update, it will be expected that grantees make changes to their CEDS as noted above for in-process CEDS.



U.S. Economic Development Administration
A bureau of the U.S. Department of Commerce

Investment Priorities

Critical Infrastructure

Workforce

Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Economic Recovery Resilience

Manufacturing

A full-page background image showing a sunset or sunrise over a large body of water. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds that are illuminated from below by the sun, creating a vibrant orange and yellow glow. The sun is a bright, horizontal band of light just above the horizon. In the distance, a city skyline is visible with various buildings and structures. The water in the foreground is dark with some ripples, reflecting the light from the sky.

Resilience: The ability of a region or community to anticipate, withstand, and bounce back from shocks, disruptions, and stresses including:

- ☐ Weather-related disasters or hazards
- ☐ The closure of a large employer or military base
- ☐ The decline of an important industry
- ☐ Changes in workforce / effects of automation
- ☐ COVID-19 response & recovery
- ☐ Much more...



SOLVING THE HOUSING PUZZLE:

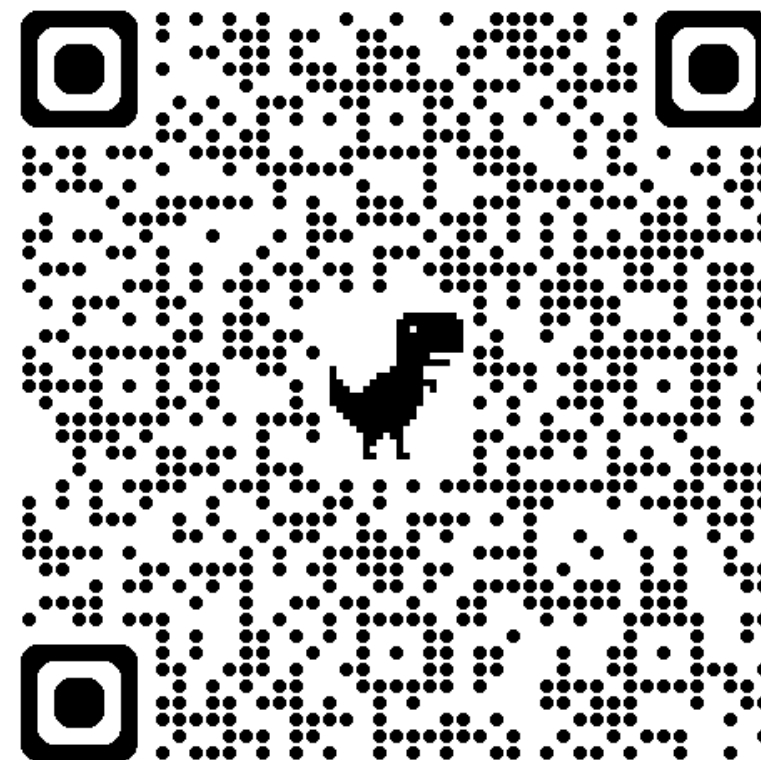
EDDs as Regional
Housing Changemakers



www.nado.org/housing



HOW TO BUILD THE CEDS STRATEGY COMMITTEE



<https://www.nado.org/ceds-strategy-committee/>



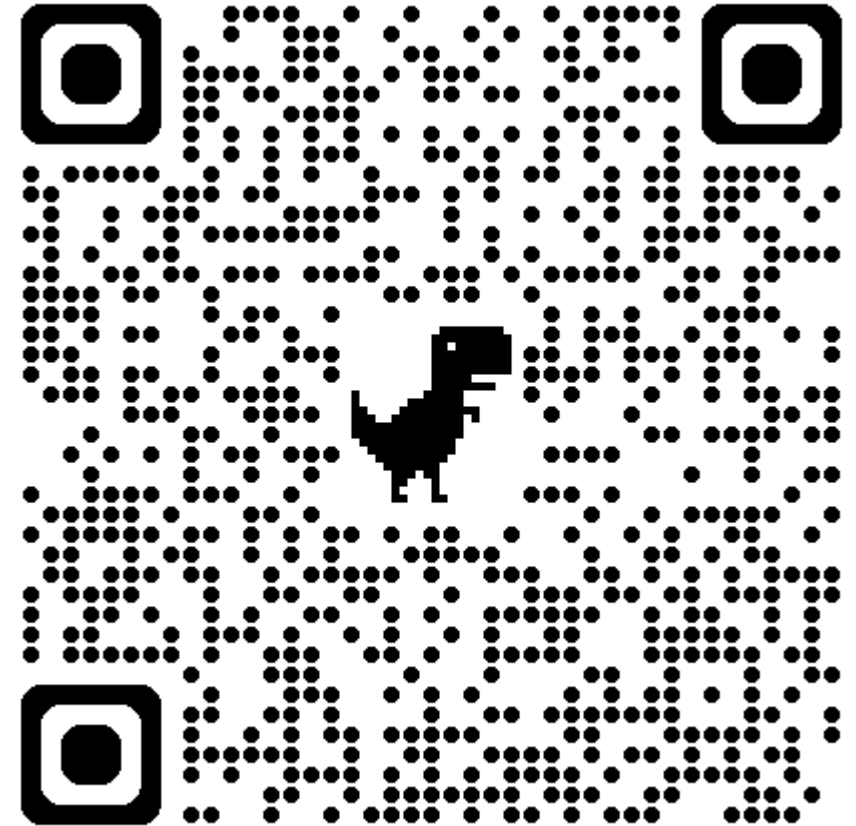
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September 2025



www.nado.org/wisdom-from-the-field/



The Most **Impactful** CEDS Are:

Creative
Engaging
Driven by Data
Storytellers



Stronger CEDS, Stronger Regions

CEDS Resource & Training Archive

www.CEDSCentral.com



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Stay in Touch!

Brett Schwartz

Associate Director
NADO Research Foundation

bschwartz@nado.org



THE ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GOVERNMENTS



CEDS UNPACKED — BASICS & BEYOND

SHARON ASTRIN

Community & Economic Development Manager



“Completing a CEDS in-house is not only feasible — it builds staff capacity and creates lasting institutional knowledge.”

Developing Your CEDS

- Leverages local, on-the-ground knowledge → spot trends before they appear in broad data
- Today’s robust tools make it achievable:
 - **ChatGPT Projects** → organize, draft, refine sections, and manage the document digitally
 - **NERDE** (EDA’s National Economic Resilience Data Explorer) → county-level, sectoral, resilience data
 - **BEA / ACS** → economic & demographic baselines
 - **BLS & Census OnTheMap** → jobs, commuting, workforce flows
 - **Canva or InDesign/Illustrator** → visually compelling digital or printed document with regional photos

MAKING A BETTER, MORE ENGAGING CEDS

ABOUT THE CEDS

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a document for the Capital Area Economic Development District (CAPEDD), updated every five years, that charts a course for our region's future. It allows partners and stakeholders throughout the district to align around shared priorities. This alignment positions our region to leverage investment from local and federal governments. The strategy identifies regional needs, actions necessary to address those needs, and organizations with the ability to lead those actions.

HOW TO USE THE CEDS

- **Inform:** The plan will be used to engage elected officials and business leaders to help amplify the vision and provide support through actions.
- **Invest:** The strategy will be used to leverage greater investment in regional priorities by providing data and rationales that can be used to obtain grants to fund implementation and align federal and states' legislative agendas to cooperatively solicit funding.
- **Collaborate:** The work will engage organizations and departments within agencies and jurisdictions to break down silos and leverage resources to the greatest extent possible to elevate one another's work.



CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development and is the result of a regionally-owned planning process designed to guide the economic prosperity and resiliency of an area.

3

CEDS: A BLUEPRINT
A blueprint to grow, strengthen and
diversify the economy of Central Oklahoma

CEDS REPORT
ABOUT THE CEDS

GUIDING PLANS & REGIONAL ALIGNMENT

This CEDS is informed by many relevant planning documents across sectors. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Forward VI OKC Chamber, 2021-25
- Oklahoma Business Leaders Poll, 2023
- Innovation District Connectivity Master Plan, 2023
- State of Oklahoma Emergency Operations Plan, 2019
- ACOG Cost of Nonattainment Study, 2022
- ACOG Encompass 2045 and 2050
- ACOG Regional Safety Plan
- planokc/adaptokc/sustainokc and component plans
- 2021-2026 Science & Innovation Strategic Plan
- Aging Our Way: Oklahoma's Multisector Plan on Aging
- Oklahoma Long Range Transportation Plan 2020-2045
- Rural Housing Initiative - A Collaborative Effort
- Internet for All: Five Year Action Plan for Oklahoma, 2023-2028
- Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes CEDS 2023-28
- The Future of Transportation: Maximizing Oklahoma's Potential in the EV Supply Chain
- Housing Supply Accelerator Playbook, 2024
- Heartland Flyer Corridor ID Study, 2023
- Four-Year Regional and Local Plan for Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB), 2024

REGIONAL VISION



CENTRAL OKLAHOMA IS KNOWN FOR ITS LOW COST OF LIVING, RICH NATIVE AMERICAN AND WESTERN CULTURE, VIBRANT PUBLIC ART, THRIVING SPORTS SCENE, AND STRONG PUBLIC INVESTMENT, BALANCING QUALITY OF LIFE WITH ROBUST ECONOMIC GROWTH THAT EQUITABLY BENEFITS BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS. 4

- Strong Section Headers
- Whitespace
- Local vs Stock Photos, Infographics, Icons

- Type Hierarchy
- Color Palette
- Call-outs

Why use ChatGPT Projects for CEDS?

One Workspace for a Complex Process

- CEDS is multi-layered: data, strategy, stakeholder voices, compliance.
- Projects = dedicated workspace for your CEDS (files + context stay together).
- Saves time on drafting, organizes research, keeps every revision in one place.



How I Used Projects to Build the CEDS



Tips for CEDS with ChatGPT Projects

- **Upload once, reuse often:** Past CEDS, ACS/BEA data, survey notes, EDA guidelines.
- **Iterate in context:** AI “remembers” prior drafts → refine instead of restart.
- **Data to narrative:** raw tables → plain-language analysis ready for the doc.
- **Policy alignment:** ask, “*Does this section meet EDA’s guidelines?*”
- **Living workspace:** staff can return weeks later → context still there.



Do’s & Dont’s

- **Name it clearly** → e.g., *Capitol Area Economic Development District CEDS 2025-30*
- **Upload key docs first** → past CEDS, EDA guidelines, data tables
- **Iterate, don’t restart** → refine drafts in the same Project
- **Save by section** → Economic Analysis, SWOT, Strategy, Implementation



TOOLKIT

[Master Canva in 15 Minutes.
Canva Tutorial For Beginners](#)

[Beginning Graphic Design:
Layout & Composition](#)

[How to Create an eBook in Canva
Step by Step Tutorial](#)

[Make Your First Ebook in Canva +
ChatGPT](#)

QUESTIONS?

✉ sastrin@acogok.org



[Read ACOG CEDS here](#)



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Sharon Astrin, Manager, Community & Economic Development
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