



Building Partnerships to Support Regional Economic Growth



EDD CoP

Economic Development District
Community of Practice



New Growth
Innovation Network

EDD Community of Practice Webinar
August 18, 2026



EDD CoP

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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 released updates to the **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Content Guidelines**. The website landing provides a reflection on the state of the national 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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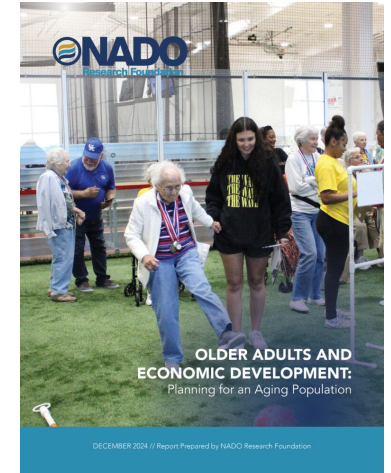
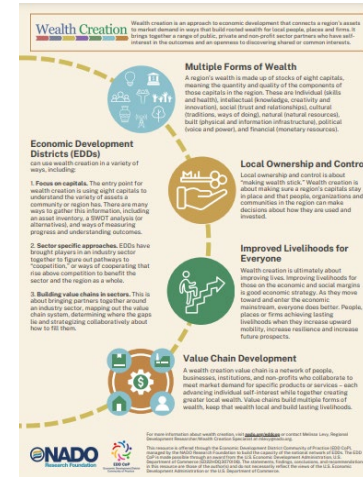
HOW TO BUILD THE CEDS STRATEGY COMMITTEE



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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

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/eddco/p/calendar-edd-cop/](https://www.nado.org/eddco/p/calendar-edd-cop/)

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THE FUTURE IS NOW: Data Center Fundamentals for EDD Staff



MARCH 2020 // Report Prepared by NADO Research Foundation



Meeting the CHILDCARE CHALLENGE Opportunities for Economic Development Districts



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

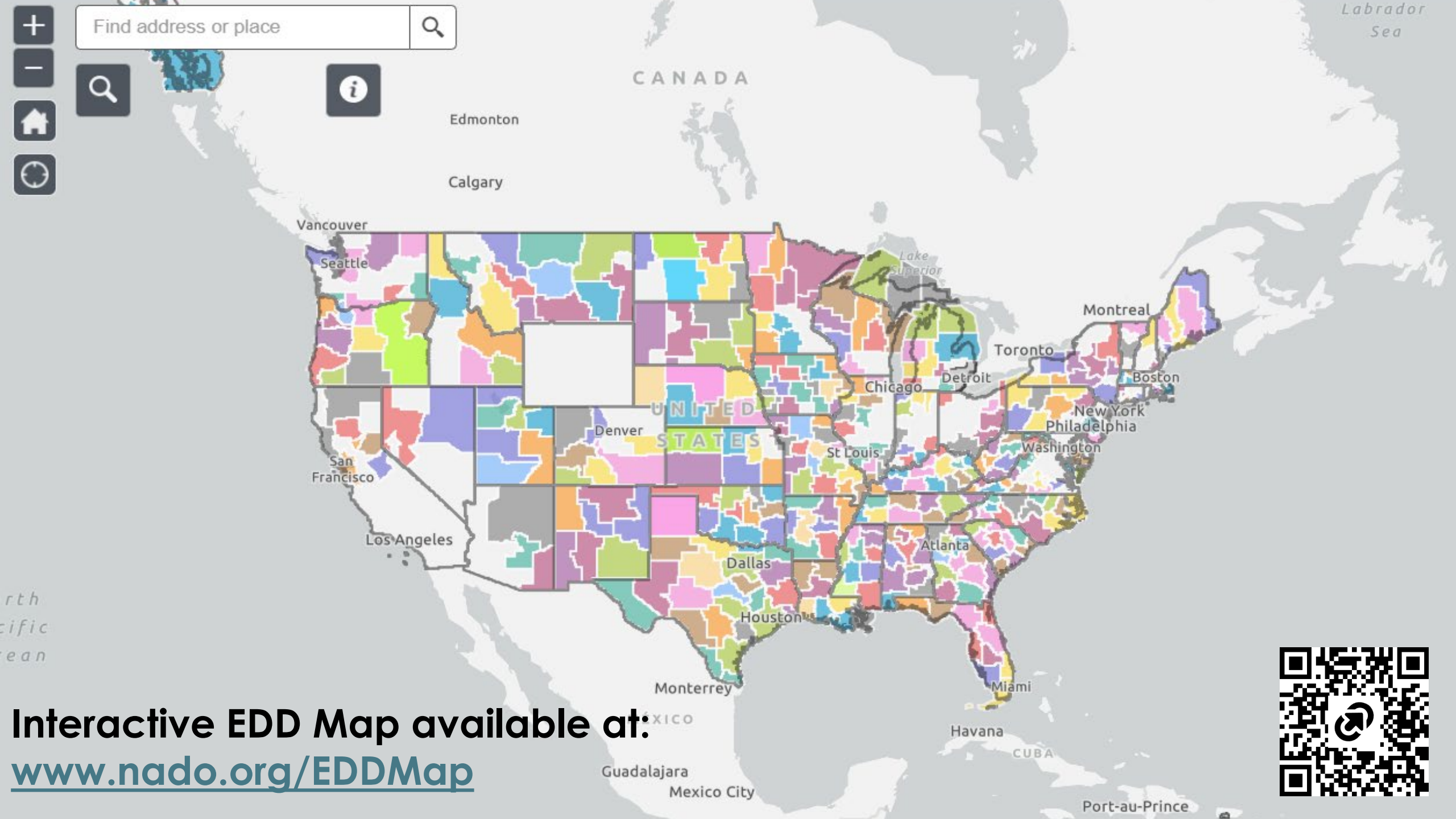
No one ever said doing regional economic development was easy. Whether navigating complex partnerships, aligning diverse community needs, or securing the right resources, EDD staff routinely face a wide range of challenges in their efforts to drive meaningful change. While there's no single roadmap for 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 2020 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



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





The 2026 Impact Awards cohort includes **94 projects** led by **58 organizations** across **20 states**

Business Communicating Planning Emergency Environment Infrastructure Technology Local Government Ti

Map showing project locations across the United States. Key cities labeled include Chicago, St. Louis, Washington, New York, Boston, Toronto, Ottawa, Atlanta, Houston, Monterrey, Miami, Havana, and Mexico City. The map is powered by Esri and includes a scale bar for 500 miles.

Deep East Texas Council of...	Northwest Georgia...	Bi-State Regional...	Upper Coastal Plain Council ...	Mark Twain Regional Coun...
Northwest Georgia...	Lake Champlain - Lake George...	Mid-Ohio Regional...	South Florida Regional...	Western Piedmont...
Coastal Bend Council of...	Foothills Regional...	East Tennessee Development...	Kansas Department of...	Northeast Florida Region...





Join us in Reno, Nevada on October 19-22, 2026!

Today's Presenters

Swati Ghosh, Vice President, Insights and Innovations
New Growth Innovation Network (NGIN)



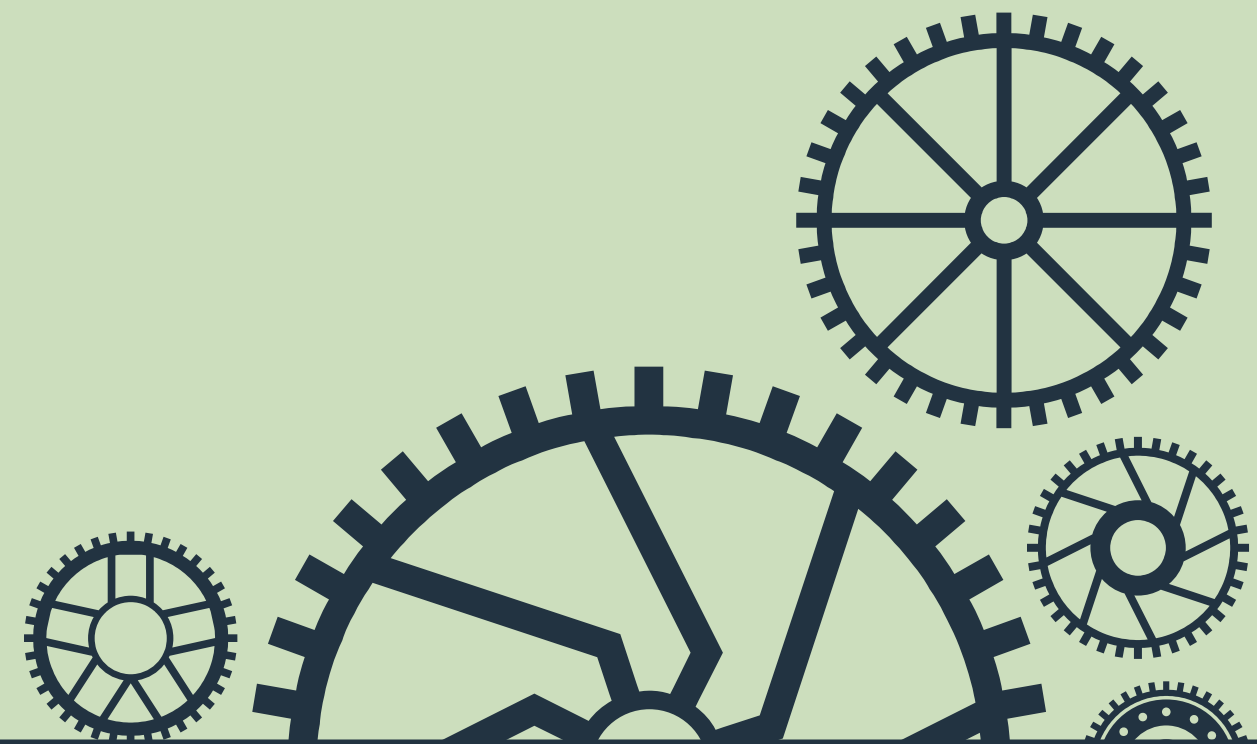
Cuevas Peacock, Senior Advisor
New Growth Innovation Network (NGIN)



Brett Schwartz, Associate Director
NADO Research Foundation



ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP ALLIANCE





New Growth Innovation Network

POWERING INCLUSIVE ECONOMIES

New Growth Innovation Network (NGIN) is a national nonprofit that equips economic, community, and government leaders with insights, innovations, capital, and localized support to ensure that all communities can lead, shape, and benefit from regional economic growth.



Esteemed Partners



Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)

LISC connects local groups across America with the capital and technical know-how to help build inclusive, resilient communities of opportunity.



International Economic Development Council (IEDC)

The International Economic Development Council is a non-profit membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 4,500 members, IEDC is the largest national and global organization of its kind.



HBCU Community Development Action Coalition (CDAC)

HBCU CDAC connects HBCUs, MSIs, CDCs, and the Community Economic Development Industry to build long-term economic opportunities for students, small businesses, and the community.



New Growth
Innovation Network

POWERING INCLUSIVE ECONOMIES

Strong partnerships are essential
to advancing community and
economic development.

Community Based Organizations

Neighborhood focus
Worker/resident orientation
Approaches – real estate,
community engagement, etc.



Economic Development Organizations

Regional focus
Business orientation
Approaches – business attraction,
business retention, incentives, etc.

Partnerships can drive meaningful progress in underinvested neighborhoods

Cross-Sector Partnerships

- **Multiply impact** = literally result in more investment, especially in sectors where large-scale investments and long-term commitments are required
- **Build economic stability and strength**
- **Drive innovation**
- **Bring in different perspectives & resources**
- **Allow stakeholders to tackle more complex challenges**



EDA's Vision

- Build capacity and knowledge of CBOs on economic development planning and projects
- Support EDOs/EDDs on working with CBOs
- Provide TA on partnership building to bring in more CBOs into regional applications

This serves as “infrastructure” for local economic development and community-centered approaches to reflect in regional plans



141 organizations trained

across two 3-month cohorts (6 months total)

- Custom courses for **Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)** and **Economic Development Organizations (EDOs)**
- Curriculum Highlights:
 - Economic development principles and cross-sector partnership models
 - Mapping local economic ecosystems and identifying community assets
 - Practical steps to launch and sustain CBO-EDO collaborations
 - Measuring and evaluating partnership impact
- Completion of the course was required for Phase Two partnership support

Phase 1: Capacity Building and Training



Phase 2: Partnership Assistance

24 coalitions received TA
for partnership support over 12-24 months.

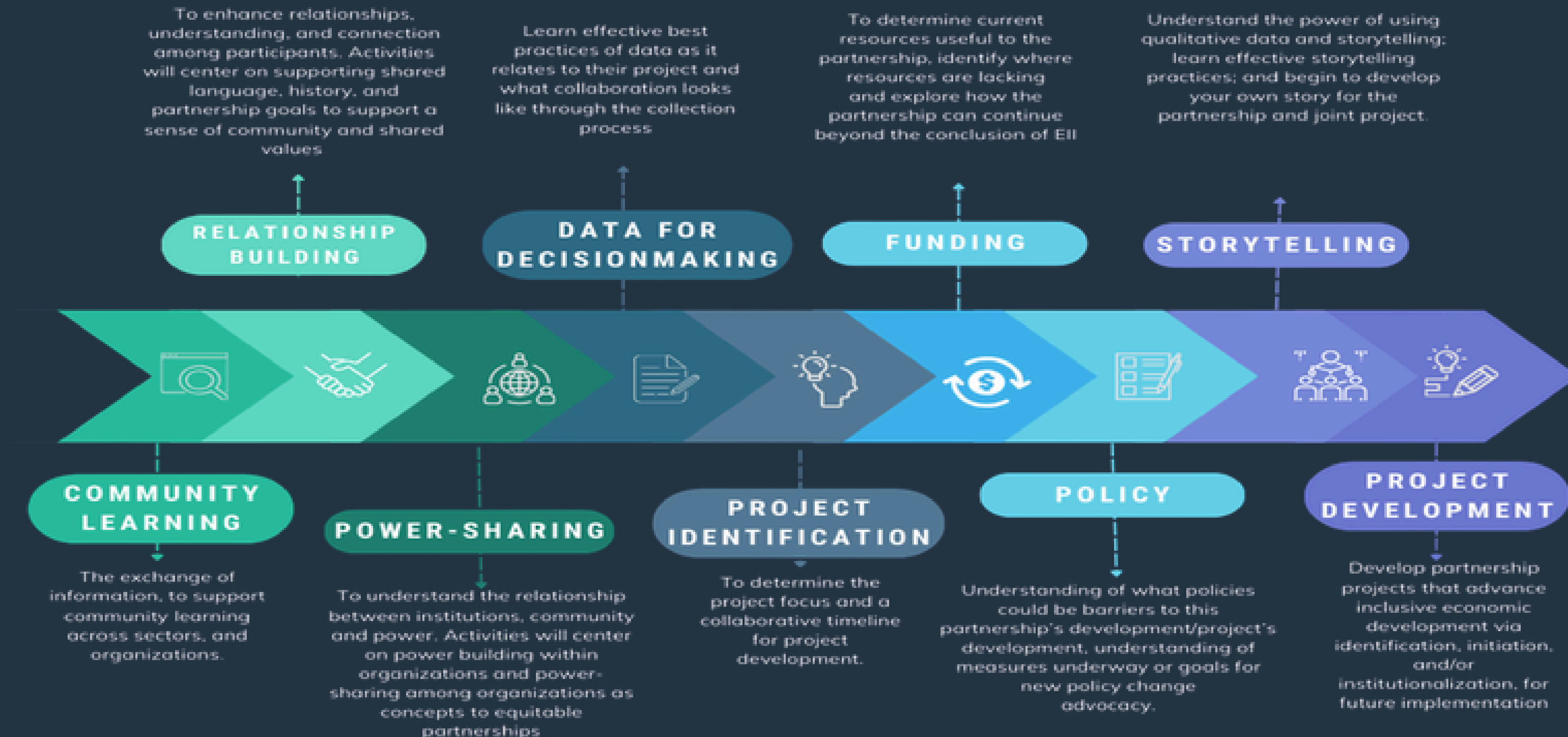
- Hands-on support to build trust, strengthen collaboration, and co-design transformative projects
- Sample Projects:
 - Aligning neighborhood revitalization with regional growth strategies
 - Advancing housing and entrepreneurship models
 - Leveraging anchor institution investments to strengthen neighborhood economies, aligning procurement opportunities, and improving local supply chains
 - Strengthening workforce training for innovation sector growth
 - Designing employer engagement strategies for local hiring

Alliance Site Map

This map illustrates all sites that were selected to participate in Phase Two of the Alliance and have received tailored partnership support. It highlights communities where EDOs and CBOs are actively collaborating, building trust, and implementing projects designed to drive economic opportunity.



Partnership Framework



Introducing the Partnership Alliance Playbook





NGIN's 4 Building Blocks of Partnerships

- Structure
- Facilitation
- Shared Narrative
- Trust

STRUCTURE

Governance structure
Cadence
Documentation
Adaptation
Discipline

Durability

FACILITATION

Navigation
Convening
Pacing
Conflict Resolution
Codification

External vs
Internal

SHARED NARRATIVE

Problem framing
Community stakes
Asset framing
Coalition's approach
Expected outcomes & Timelines

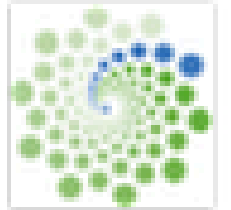
Honesty

TRUST

Positionality
Values and Operating norms
Power mapping

Informality

How strong are your partnerships?



In your work, which is the most common stage of partnership you see?

0

0

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Pre-Partnership

Transactional

Cooperative

Collaborative

Co-ownership

9 Communities. 9 Stories.

These profiles show how partnerships formed, implemented projects, and created conditions for durable outcomes in different local contexts. Each case study documents the organizations involved, the community context, the challenges faced, and the lessons learned — so you can apply what worked.



CITY CASE STUDY

Omaha

- **Partners:** LEDC, MAPA, and the South Omaha BID (Canopy South engaged early)
- **Focus:** Increase awareness of South Omaha cbo's as a central player in the region's economic vision
- **Journey:** Power-sharing and relationship building advanced through project identification toward institutionalizing the partnership
- **Outcome:** MAPA now integrates CBOs like LEDC into its CEDS; LEDC moved from participant to co-lead

**Recognition became a resource transfer
validation that opened doors and gave LEDC
leverage**



Omaha: Partnership to Practice

Sustaining the Partnership

- Fiscal sponsorship, a CDFI partnership, and the Hispanic Contractors Association diversified LEDC's revenue beyond grants
- MAPA elevated LEDC's community-focused narrative into its official CEDS, opening a path to EDA investment
- A formal membership agreement moved LEDC from a transactional partner to MAPA's co-lead

What Comes Next

CEDS SUBMISSION

Submit MAPA's CEDS supplemental to the EDA in 2026 to unlock federal investment

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP

Scale LEDC's sponsorship program by recruiting 2–3 new community organizations

CDFI PARTNERSHIP

Expand blended financing tools through shared staffing with LEDC's CDFI partner

TIF DISTRICT

Advance the park development TIF proposal with the City of Omaha

Next Steps: Finalize the CEDS submission to the EDA • formalize the fiscal sponsorship policy and agreements • advance TIF conversations with the City of Omaha • complete CRM onboarding for partner and donor management

Baton Rouge

- **Partners:** BRNEDD, Build Baton Rouge
- **Focus:** Economic development and blight remediation in North Baton Rouge
- **Journey:** Shared community learning and power-sharing sessions set the stage for a data-driven mapping tool
- **Outcome:** An ArcGIS tool prioritizing redevelopment sites across 48,000+ parcels

Two years of monthly collaboration turned relationship-building into a shared, data-driven strategy



Baton Rouge: Data to Action

The Infill Mapping Tool

- UPD Consulting scored every block face in the BRNEDD service area on six metrics: assessed value, homeownership, vacancy, adjudication, code complaints, and permits
- Each block earns a Strength Quintile, 1 (weakest) to 5 (strongest), turning 48,000+ parcels and 1,000+ condemnations into a clear starting point
- Partners use it to target infill sites, define an NRSA area, and align CDBG/HOME funding

Prioritization Matrix

QUICK WIN

High strength + transitional vacants: ideal for near-term infill

POLICY OPPORTUNITY

Weak block, transitional activity: needs coordinated public action

TARGETED INTERVENTION

Strong block, stubborn vacants: justifies focused acquisition or enforcement

LONG-TERM PROJECT

Weak block, stubborn vacants: needs sustained multi-year intervention

Next Steps: Execute an MOA among partners • pursue Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) designation • align HOME and CDBG funding with priority blocks • host town halls to keep the strategy community-informed

New Orleans

- **Partners:** Ujamaa EDC, Greater Tremé Consortium, and the City of New Orleans
- **Focus:** Small business support and equitable redevelopment in Tremé and the Claiborne Corridor
- **Journey:** Relationship building translated community learning into a corridor-wide ecosystem map
- **Outcome:** The map names the corridor's strengths, gaps, and leadership needs

Site visits and asset mapping turned parallel work into a shared framework for business support



New Orleans: Ecosystem Strategy

The Business Support Ecosystem

- Field surveys and asset mapping identified business clusters, technical assistance gaps, and infrastructure needs across the corridor
- Micro-enterprises and culture bearers show high motivation but lack storage, commercial kitchen, and prep space to scale
- Partners use it to align technical assistance, lending, and training so entrepreneurs move from informal to full-time businesses

What the Ecosystem Needs

PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

A dedicated program lead to coordinate vendors, manage activation, and ensure equitable participation

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Support for business formation, licensing, bookkeeping, and digital presence

SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE

Storage, commercial kitchen, prep space, and vendor stalls businesses can share

DISTRICT BRANDING

Coordinated marketing to turn daily foot traffic into steady, year-round customers

Next Steps: Finalize the business ecosystem framework and partner roles • complete the funding landscape analysis and grant templates • submit the CID small business grant package • continue National League of Cities Southern Cities engagement

Detroit

- **Partners:** Detroit Economic Growth Corporation, Downtown Detroit Partnership, and Live6 Alliance
- **Focus:** Investment in Detroit's commercial corridors
- **Journey:** Two years of project identification and development turned joint work into a shared tenanting guide
- **Outcome:** The Back in Business commercial-space tenanting guide

Without this partnership, these projects might not have gotten off the ground at all



Detroit: Playbook to Policy

Back in Business

- Live6, Downtown Detroit Partnership, and DEGC co-developed alternative tenanting strategies for activating vacant commercial space
- The guide equips entrepreneurs and small businesses with tools to obtain affordable physical space in Detroit's commercial corridors
- The Detroit Business Association Consortium and Commercial Corridor Resiliency Coalition are carrying the work forward citywide

Policy Recommendations

ALTERNATIVE TENANTING

Formalize alternative tenanting models through targeted programming and clear policy frameworks

FLEXIBLE CAPITAL

Expand rapid-access capital, including micro-grants under \$5,000 and commercial rent assistance

MOVE-IN READY SPACE

Establish a white box fund and tenant improvement programs to reduce build-out time and debt burdens

NEIGHBORHOOD STEWARDSHIP

Support BIZs, BIDs, and commercial community land trusts to preserve affordability and prevent displacement

Next Steps: Advocate for policy alignment with Detroit's newly elected mayor • pilot white box tenant improvement funds in target corridors • continue joint work through the Business Association Consortium and Resiliency Coalition • pursue national foundation funding to replicate the playbook in other cities

STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS. STRONGER ECONOMIES.

Informed by partnership assistance in 24 communities over 2 years, this interactive Partnership Playbook delivers insights, resources, and case studies to build stronger partnerships.

allianceplaybook.newgrowth.org



AVAILABLE NOW | EXPLORE THE TOOL | SHARE WITH YOUR NETWORK



Explore the Playbook



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