NADO 101

October 19, 2026

NADO
National Association of Development Organizations

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 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.

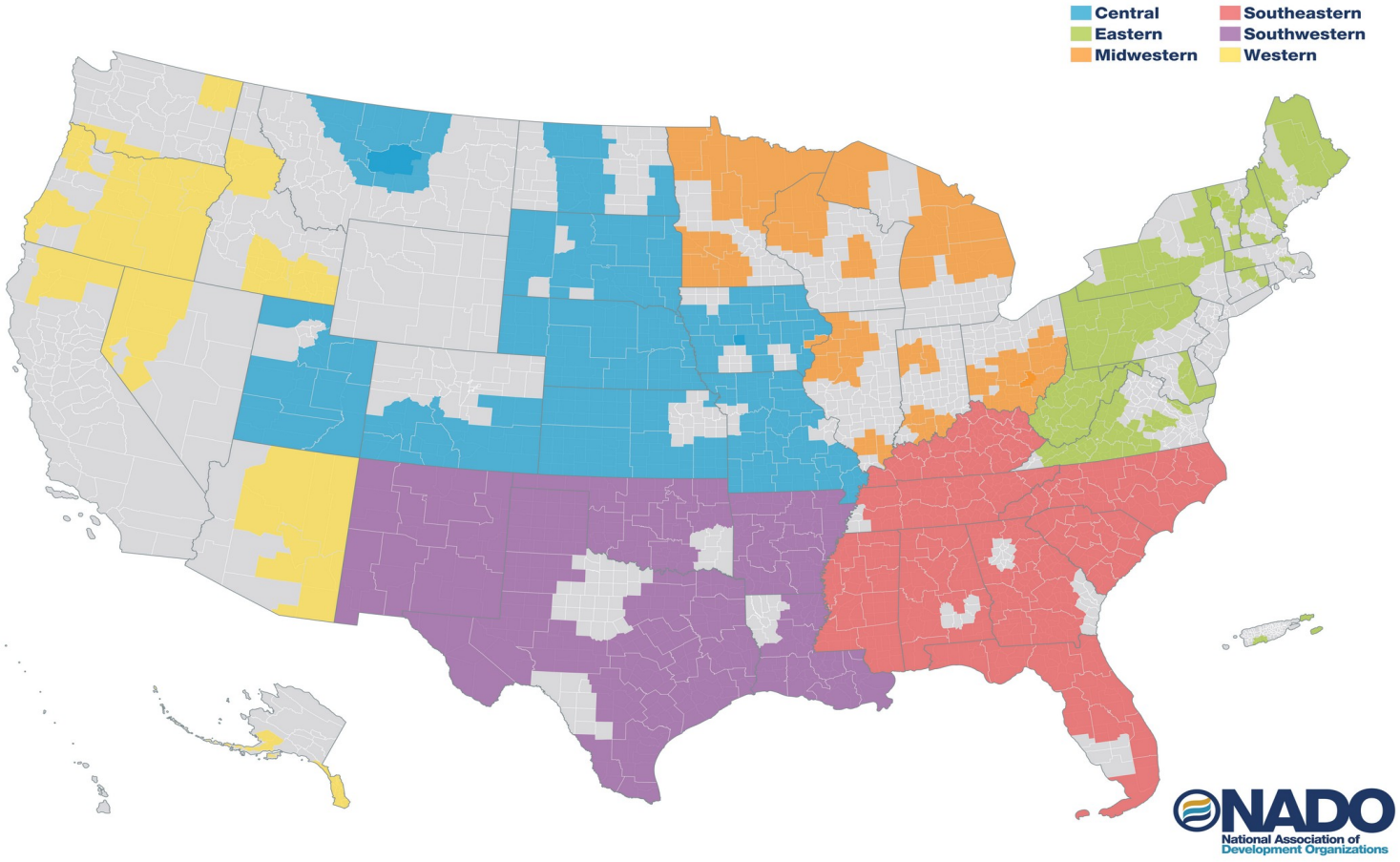
The NADO Research Foundation (NADO RF) is a 501c3 non-profit organization that provides technical assistance, education, research, and training to support and strengthen the national network of Regional Development Organizations (RDOs).

Established in 1988, the NADO RF provides thought leadership, conducts research, and produces publications focused on promising practices and innovative approaches to promote regional community development. NADO RF also works with RDOs and their partners to enhance their organizational and professional capacity.

www.nado.org

National Coverage of RDOs

NADO Standard Members



NADO BY THE NUMBERS

379 Association Members

47 U.S. states

American Samoa

Puerto Rico

U.S. Virgin Islands

321 Standard (RDO) Members

3 Diamond

9 Platinum Plus

22 Platinum

57 Sustaining

230 General

58 Affiliate Members

16 Partner

42 Associate

NADO Board of Directors

bitly

Scan with your phone’s camera to view the full list of NADO’s Board Members!

NADO Executive Committee

From Left to Right:

Charlie Baker, *NADO First Vice President and Executive Director*, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (VT)

Robert Venables, *NADO Second Vice President and Executive Director,* Southeastern Conference (AK)

Matthew Dolge, *NADO President and Executive Director*, Piedmont Triad Regional Council (NC)

Russell Devorsky, *NADO Treasurer and Executive Director,* Heart of Texas Council of Governments (TX)

Melissa Kraemer Badtke, *NADO Secretary and Executive Director,* East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WI)

Rick Hunsaker, *NADO Immediate Past President and Executive Director*, Region XII Council of Governments (IA)

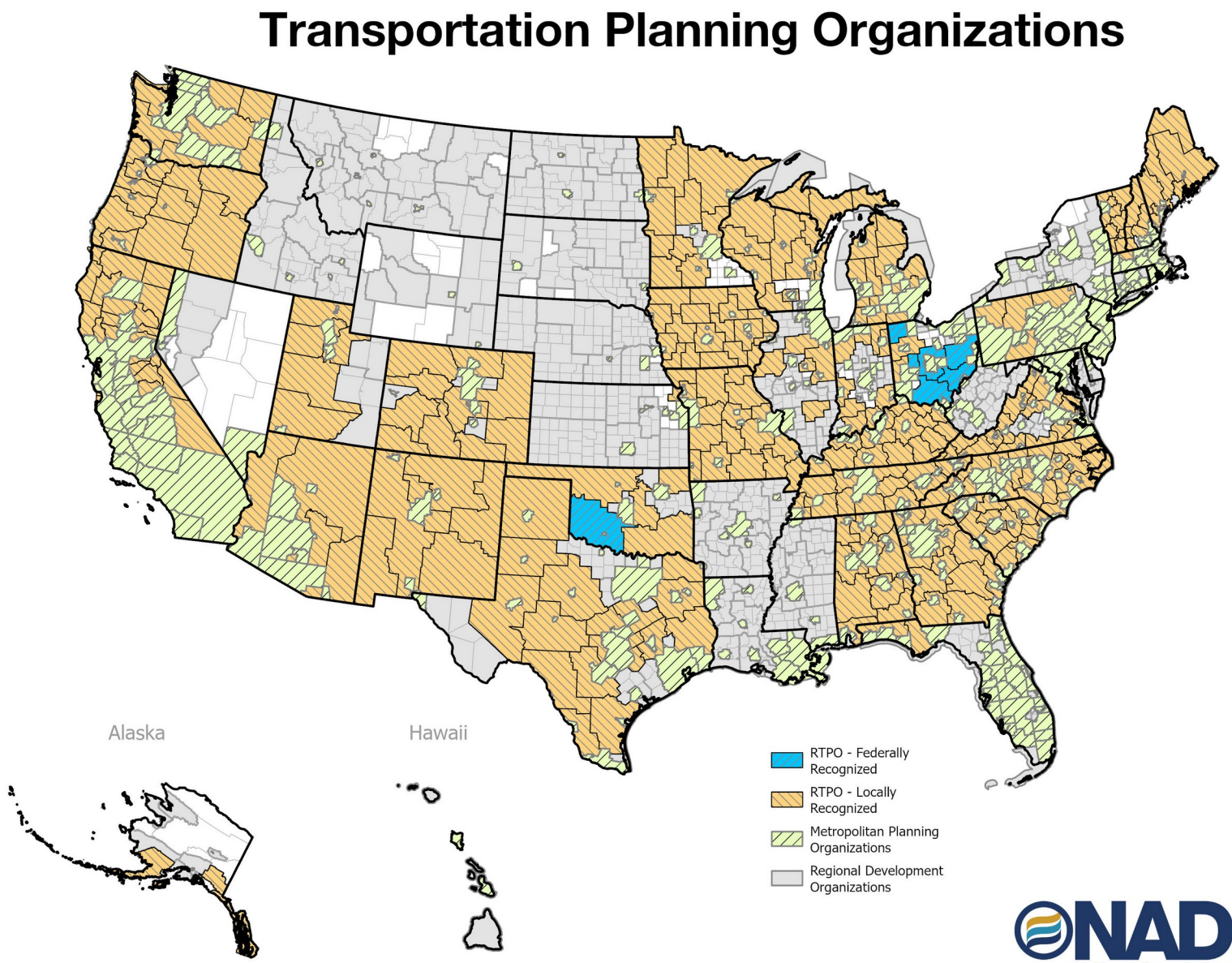
NADO Staff

- **Joe McKinney,** *Executive Director*
- **Katie Allison,** *Associate Director, Communications*
- **Bret Allphin,** *Associate Director, Data and Research*
- **Mirielle Burgoyne,** *Deputy Executive Director*
- **Ryan Collins,** *Program Manager*
- **Joe D'Antonio,** *Program Manager*
- **Krystal DeLeon,** *Director of Operations*
- **Kar'ron Grant**, *Operations Specialist*
- **Rachel Katorkas**, *Associate Director, Finance*
- **Carrie Kissel**, *Associate Director, Transportation*
- **Krishna Kunapareddy**, *Senior Program Manager*
- **Michael Matthews**, *Director of Government Relations*
- **Jamie McCormick**, *Senior Manager, Events & Member Services*
- **Jack Morgan**, *Director of Programs*
- **Haley Schultheis**, *Program Manager*
- **Brett Schwartz**, *Associate Director, Economic Development*
- **London Weier,** *Program Manager*
- **Juliette Wilder,** *Manager of Government Relations*

Scan with your phone's camera to learn more about the NADO team!

RPO Americ

- NADO's affiliate group, RPO America, is focused on transportation planning in rural and small metro communities
- RPO America is the professional network for regional, rural, and small metro transportation professionals



NADO National Association of Development Organizations

NADO News

Weekly Newsletter of Updates and Resources

- Advocacy and legislative updates
- NADO announcements
- EDD Community of Practice upda
- General resources for RDOs
- Job board
- Upcoming events

Scan with your phone's camera to sign-up for NADO's communications!

Conference App:

Whova

Event Access Code:

NADOATC2026

Join us on our official event app!

We're using Whova as our official event app. Download the app and join our event to:

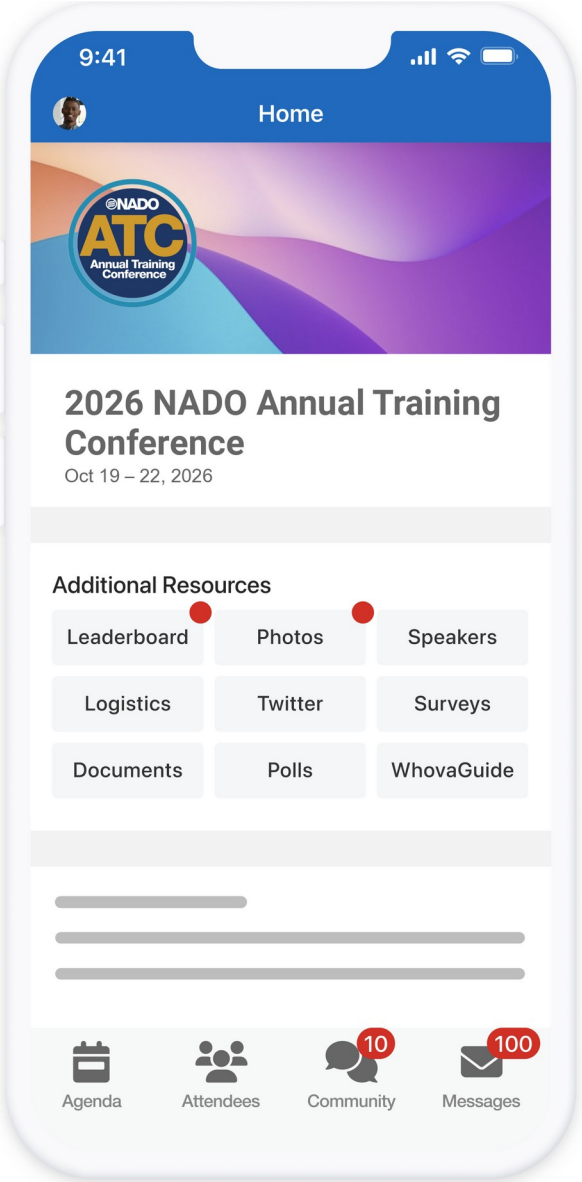
- Personalize your agenda
- Receive event updates and notifications
- Connect with other attendees
- Create and join meet-ups

Scan this code for the link or search "Whova - Event and Conference App" on the App Store or Google Play.

Event Invitation Code: NADOATC2026

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play



About the Annual Training Conference (ATC)

- **Conference agenda overview and key highlights:**
  - Conversation Cafés – great opportunity to meet new people
  - Annual Business Meeting
  - Chapter Meetings
  - Receptions
  - Mobile Workshops

NADO ADVOCACY

Federal Advocacy Overview

- NADO **monitors, educates, and engages federal policymakers**—including Congress, the White House, and executive agencies—to advance policies that bolster economic competitiveness and enhance quality of life by leveraging the national network of Regional Development Organizations (RDOs)

Federal Advocacy Overview

Services NADO Provides for Members:

- Policy Representation:
  - Direct lobbying on Capitol Hill and with federal agencies to champion or defend key legislation and regulations that impact our community/sector.
- Action Alerts & Updates:
  - Provide timely updates and analysis on critical federal legislative and regulatory developments.
- Grassroots Campaign Coordination:
  - Organize and coordinate member outreach (emails, calls, social media) to influence specific votes or rule changes.
- Educational Resources:
  - Develop fact sheets, testimony, and policy briefings to ensure policymakers understand the real-world impact of their decisions.

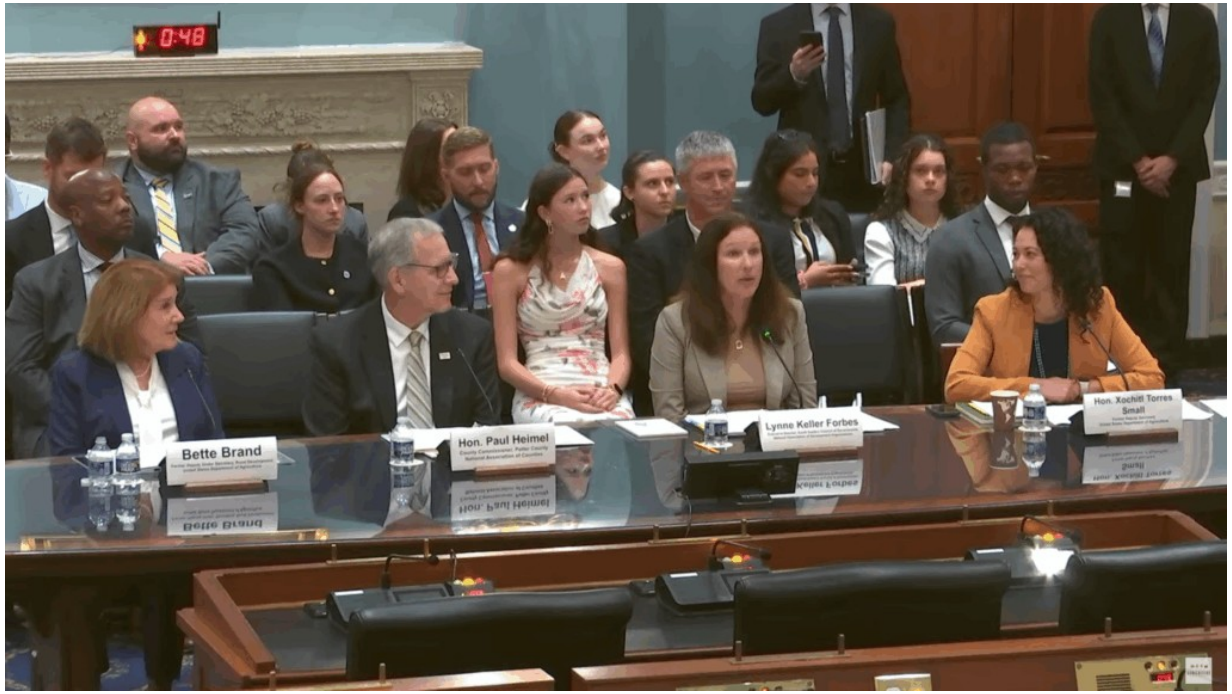
Federal Advocacy Overview

How NADO Members Can Interact to Help Advance Policy

- Respond to Action Alerts:
  - Use our system to quickly email or call your Members of Congress on urgent issues.
- Become a Key Contact:
  - Build a personal relationship with your local Representative or Senator's staff as a trusted, constituent-expert on our issues.
- Share Your Story:
  - Provide real-life examples and data to our staff to help demonstrate the impact of policy (or lack thereof) to lawmakers.
- Participate in Hill Days/Site Visits:
  - Join us for annual advocacy events in Washington, D.C., or host a policymaker for a visit to your operations/office/community.

NADO Advocacy

NADO Past President Lynne Keller Forbes Testifies During House Agriculture Hearing on Strengthening Rural America

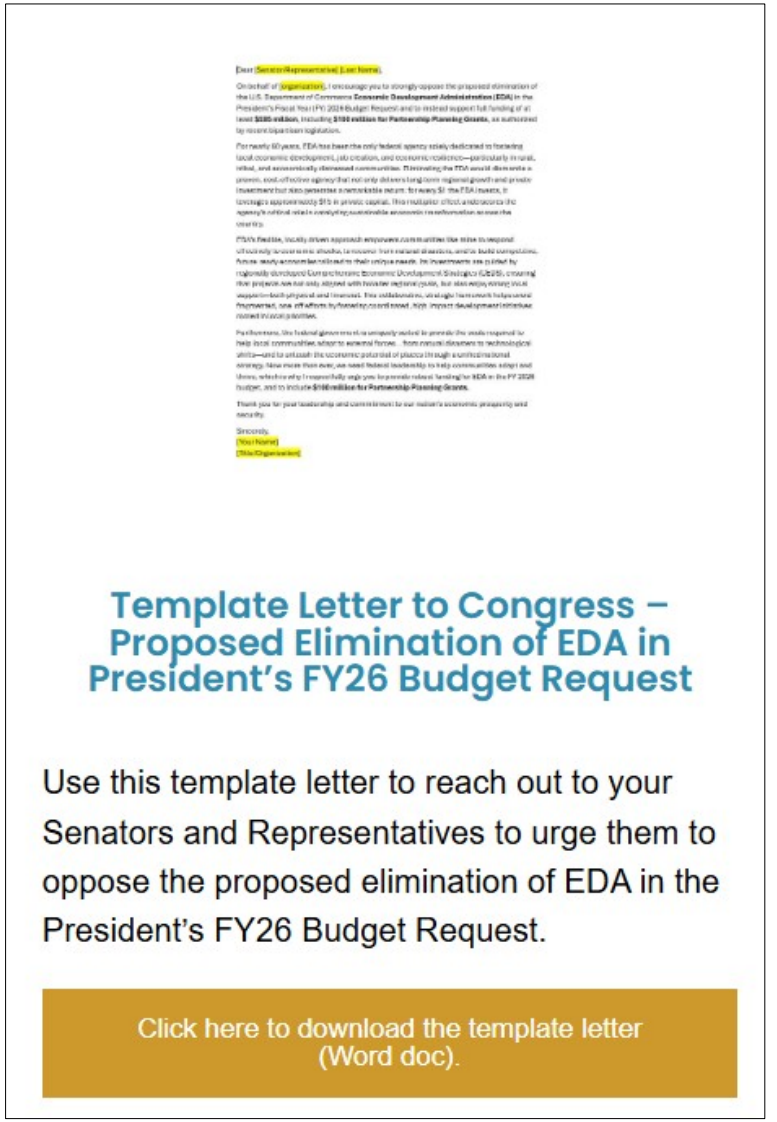


Template Letters to Congress

Available on NADO's Advocacy Action Center

Use the template letters and resources available online to contact your Senators and Representatives to ask them to provide funding and support for programs of importance to RDOs

www.nado.org/advocacy-action-center



Template Letter to Congress – Proposed Elimination of EDA in President's FY26 Budget Request

Use this template letter to reach out to your Senators and Representatives to urge them to oppose the proposed elimination of EDA in the President's FY26 Budget Request.

Click here to download the template letter (Word doc).

Key Advocacy Priorities

- Increase funds for EDDs and RDOs, including funding for local and regional planning, pre-development, and technical assistance
- Reduce local match percentages, especially for small and rural communities
- Increase investments in federal programs focused on economic development, community development, and rural development
- Reauthorize the Farm Bill, the Older Americans Act, the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act, and Surface Transportation Legislation

PROGRAMS AND WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Economic Development District

Community of Practice nado.org/eddcop

- The Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP) is a five-year program managed by the NADO Research Foundation (NADO RF) with generous funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration.
- Through this effort, NADO RF and its partners are providing training, resources, and networking opportunities for EDD staff to strengthen organizational capacity and better guide regions towards becoming more competitive, resilient, and equitable. Learn more at nado.org/eddcop or scan the QR Code.
- The EDD CoP offers relevant and responsive programming through a mix of educational platforms, delivering up-to-date training and networking opportunities tailored to the needs of EDDs.

EDD CoP
Economic Development District
Community of Practice

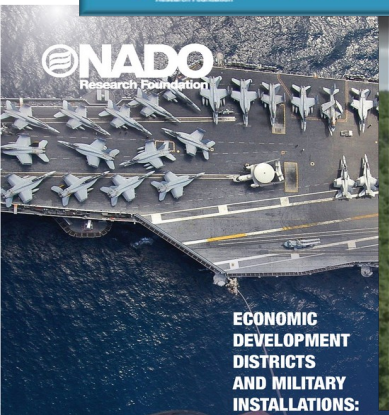
EDD CoP

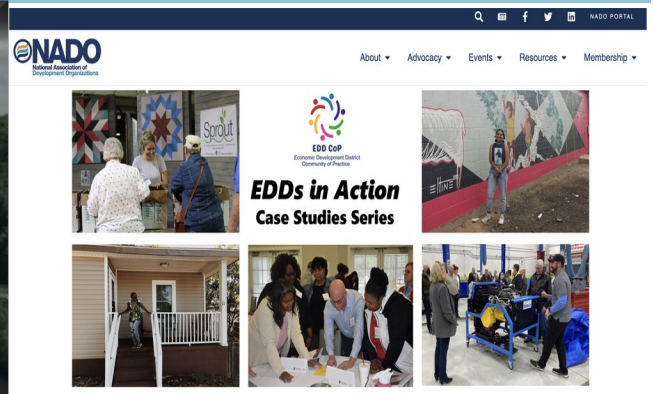
Resources: Case Studies, Tip Sheets, Reports, Webinars, Video Series, and More!

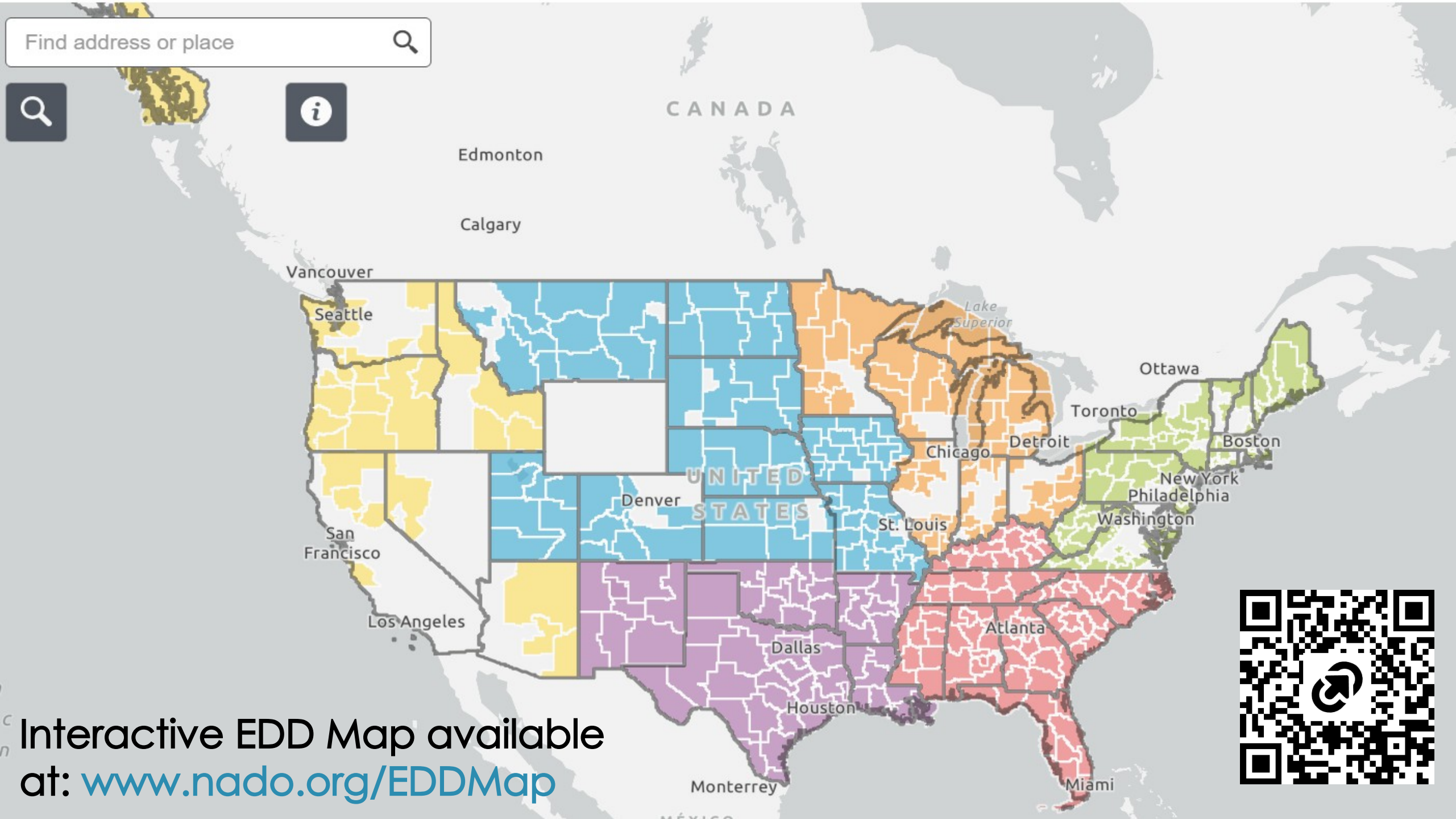
EDDs in Action Video Series

The *EDDs in Action* video series showcases the important role EDDs and Regional Development Organizations (RDOs) play in helping distressed regions grow into economically vibrant communities.

- Video: Region 4 & Region VII Planning District Commissions (WV)
- Video: Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (VA)
- Video: Mid-Shore Regional Council (MD)
- Video: Infrastructure Impacts
- Video: Preparing Regions for an AI Future
- Video: Private Sector Assistance
- Video: A Career in Regional Development







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

Economic Development District COP

Peer Learning Opportunities:

EDD CoP Collaborative Learning Group

The Collaborative Learning Group (CLG) is a 6-month virtual training and networking opportunity for new Economic Development District (EDD) staff who have been at their organization for 2 years or less.

Learn More

New Executive Directors Resources

The New Executive Directors group was formed to share experiences, learn firsthand from experienced Directors, and have support when beginning this often-challenging role.

Learn More

CEDS Peer Exchange Groups

These informal groups are designed to help staff troubleshoot challenges with their CEDS, share methods and 'best practices', and support each other during yearly and 5-year CEDS updates.

Learn More

Virtual EDD Chapter Meets Ups

Virtual EDD Chapter Meet Ups provide a space for Economic Development District staff to connect and network quarterly in small group discussions with peers in their EDA regions/NADO chapters.

Learn More

NADO Mentor Program for Executive Directors

The NADO Mentor Program pairs experienced executive directors with new executive directors for one year to help new executive directors address the challenges facing their organizations and regions by connecting with experienced RDO leaders.

Learn More

nado.org/copgroups

EDD Capacity Building Training Program for Emerging Leade

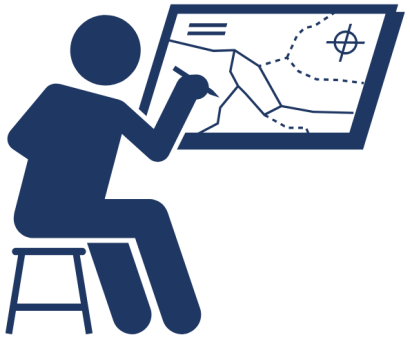
- **Southwest:** Funded by EDA Austin Regional Office
  - 8th Cohort graduated May 2026; 9th Cohort applications opening January 2027
  - 46 participants to date from all 5 states in the region
- **Central:** Funded by EDA Denver Regional Office
  - 1st Cohort launched April 2025; 2nd Cohort Applications ***Open Now***
- **Southeast:** Funded by EDA Atlanta Regional Office
  - 1st Cohort launched in 2026, attending ATC; 2nd Cohort applications launching November 6, 2026

AACOG

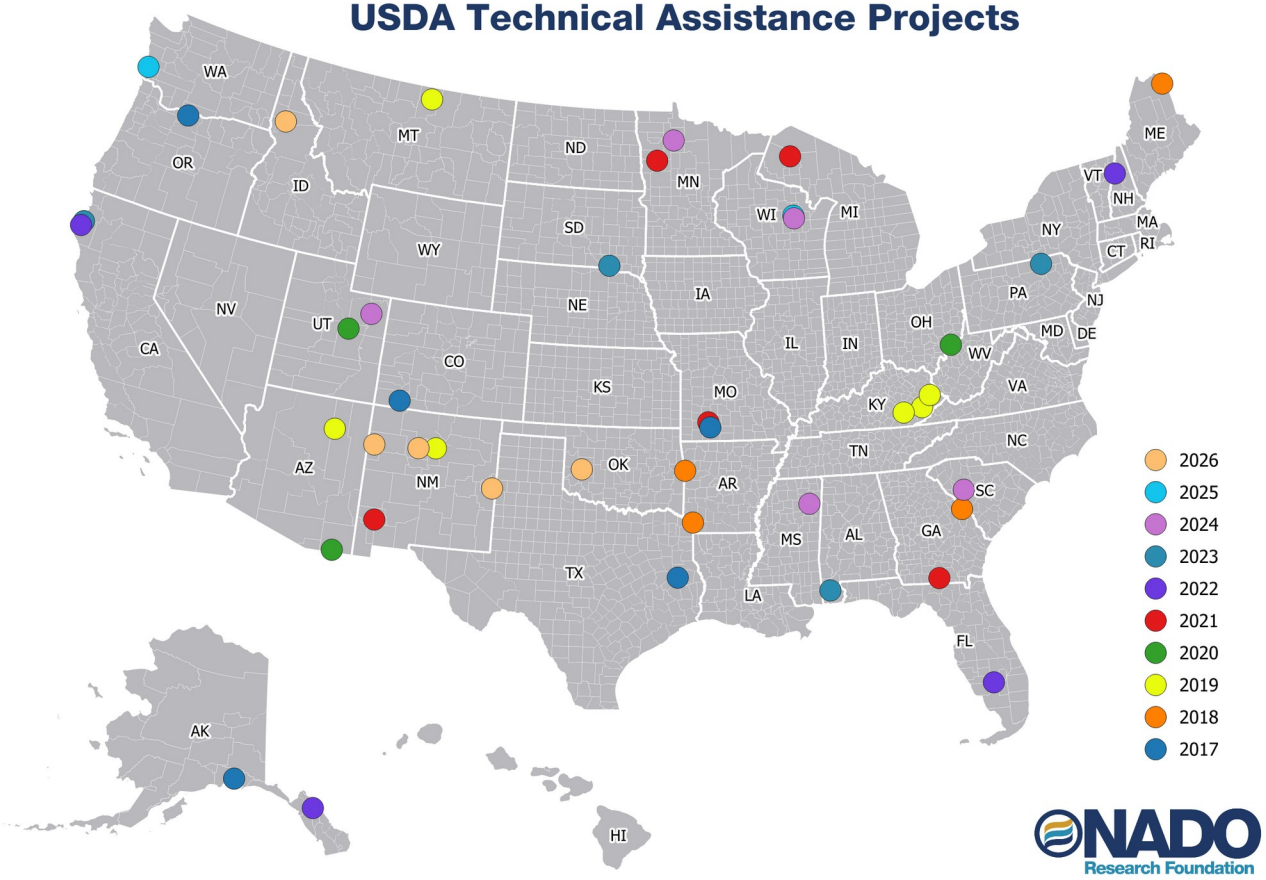
Mid-Shore Regional Council
MSRC

HICKORY
CATAWBA
VALLEY

Rural Transportation



USDA Technical Assistance Projects



NADO Research Foundation

Rural Transportation.org

NADO
National Association of Development Organizations

About | Membership | Advocacy | Events | Programs | Resources

PowerRegions Learning Cohort

Applications Opening November
6-month curriculum of virtual and in-person training and peer-learning

NADO Member Award Programs

nado.org/awards

NADO Aliceann Wohlbruck IMPACT AWARDS

NADO EXCELLENCE in Regional Transportation AWARDS

NADO Member Photo Contest

NADO Member Award Programs

nado.org/awards

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NADO EXCELLENCE in Regional Transportation AWARDS

NADO Member Photo Contest

UPCOMING EVENTS

2027 Conferences and Trainings

nado.org/upcoming-events

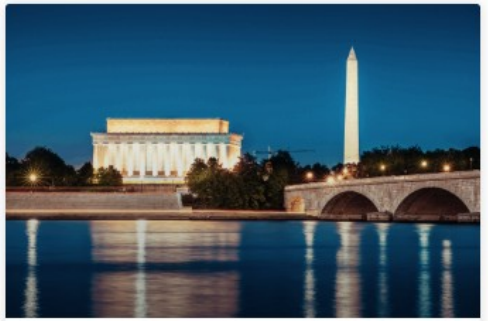
EDA Chicago-Philadelphia Learning & Networking Forum
February 9-10, 2027 / Chicago, IL

Southwest Region Economic Development Association (SWREDA) Conference
May 2027 / Austin, TX

Economic Development Training for EDA Atlanta Region
July 2027

2027 Conferences and Trainings

nado.org/upcoming-events



2027 NADO & DDAA Washington Conference

March 7-10, 2027
Arlington, VA

2027 NADO Board of Directors Summer Meeting

June 15-17, 2027
Lake Geneva, WI

2027 Annual Training Conference

October 18-21, 2027
Buffalo, NY

REFLECTIONS FROM NADO MEMBERS

QUESTIONS?