



Beyond Growth: Building Community Wealth with the Wealth Builders Game

2026 Annual Training Conference

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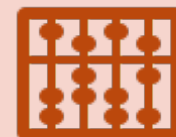
Objectives



Get to know each other



Learn about wealth creation



Play a wealth creation game



Wealth creation is an approach to economic development that

- connects a region's **assets** to market **demand** in ways that build **rooted wealth** for local people, places and firms.
- brings together a range of public, private and non-profit sector partners who have **self-interest** in the outcomes and an openness to discovering **shared or common interests**.
- focuses on building a **sector** rather than individual and unrelated businesses.



Principles of Wealth Creation

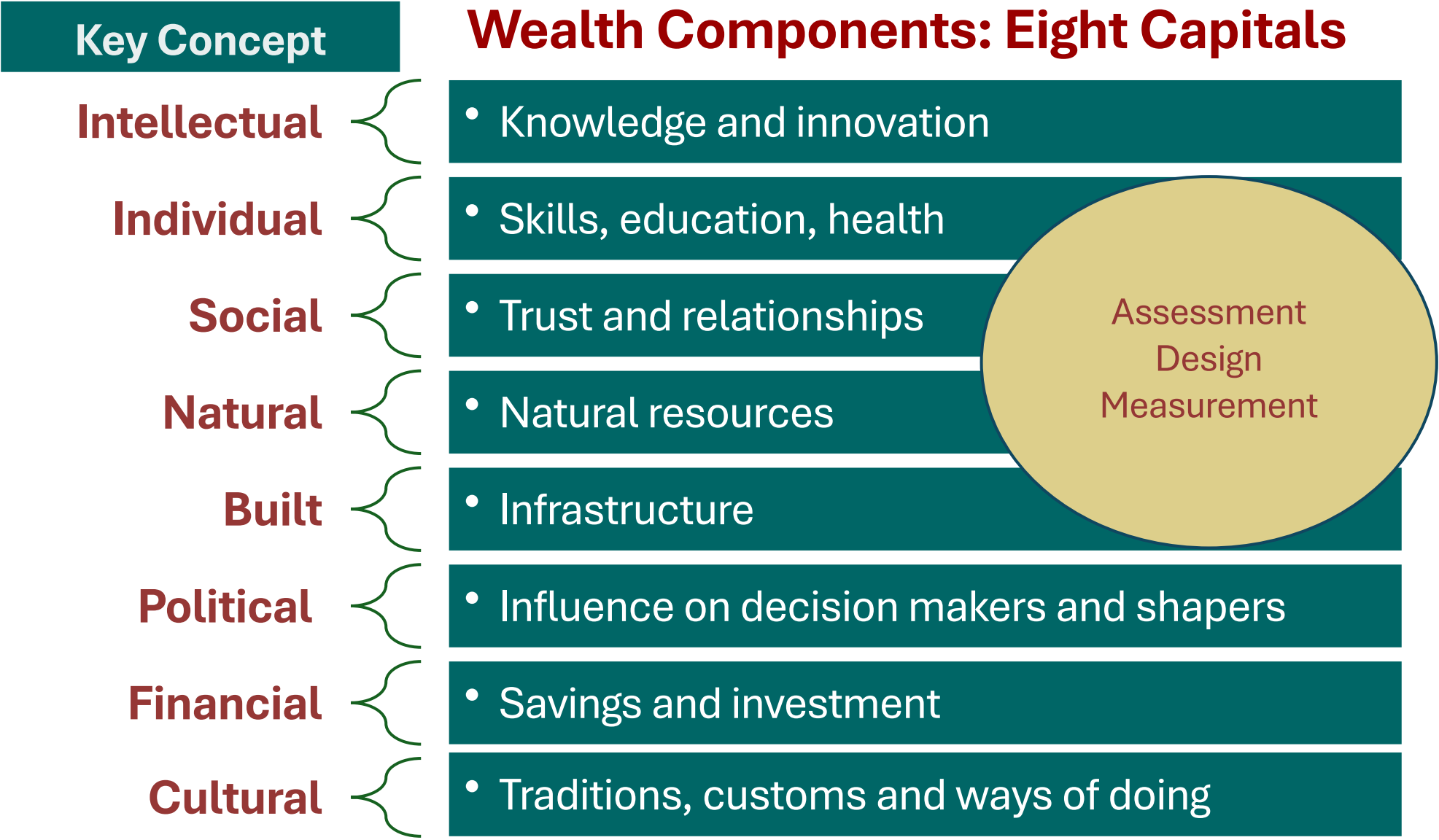


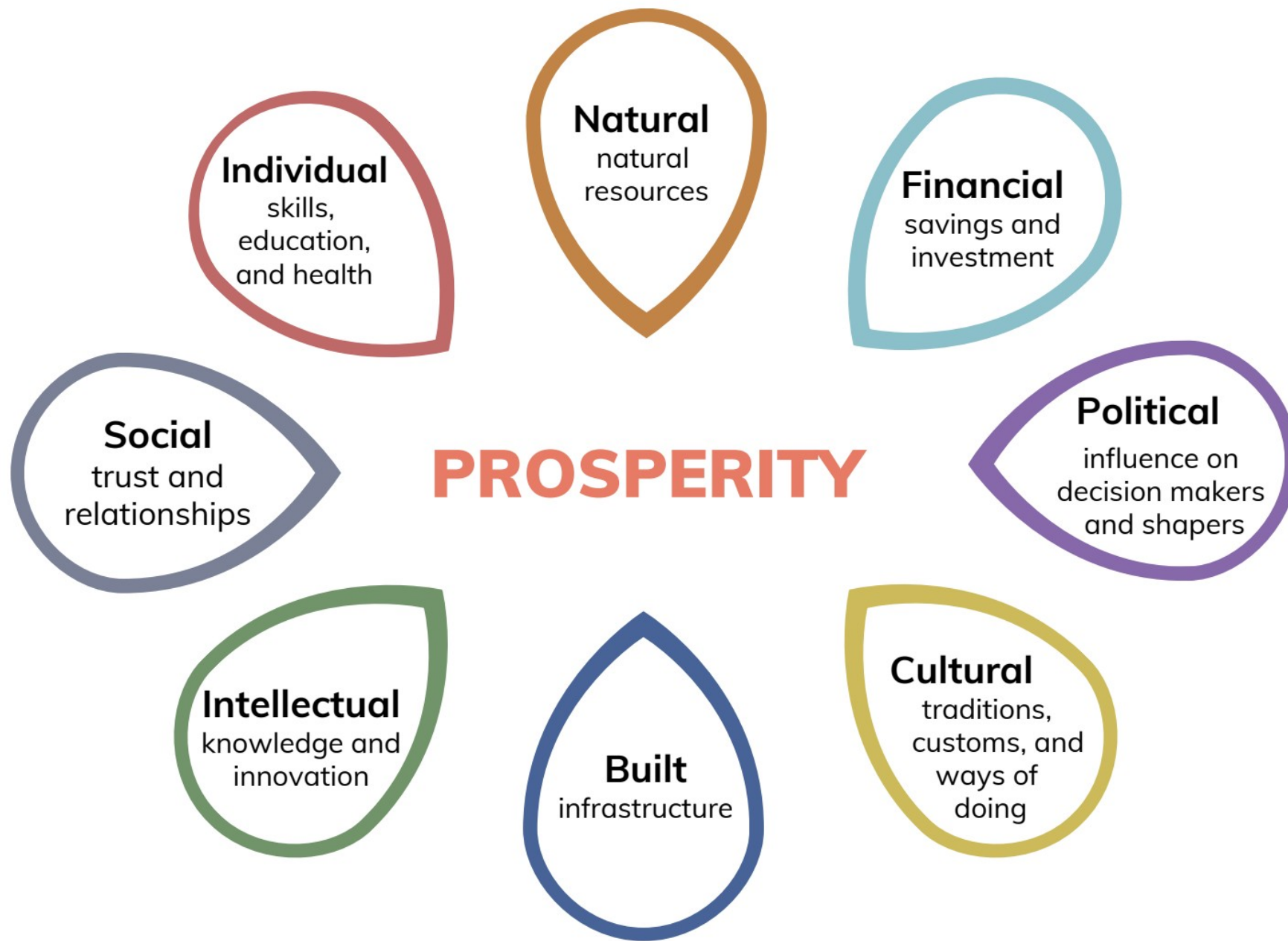
#1 – **Create wealth**, broadly defined, and aspire to do no harm.

#2 – **Root wealth** in local people, places and firms through local ownership, control and influence.



#3 – Build **lasting livelihoods** by intentionally including people and firms on the economic margins.





A Continuum for EDDs

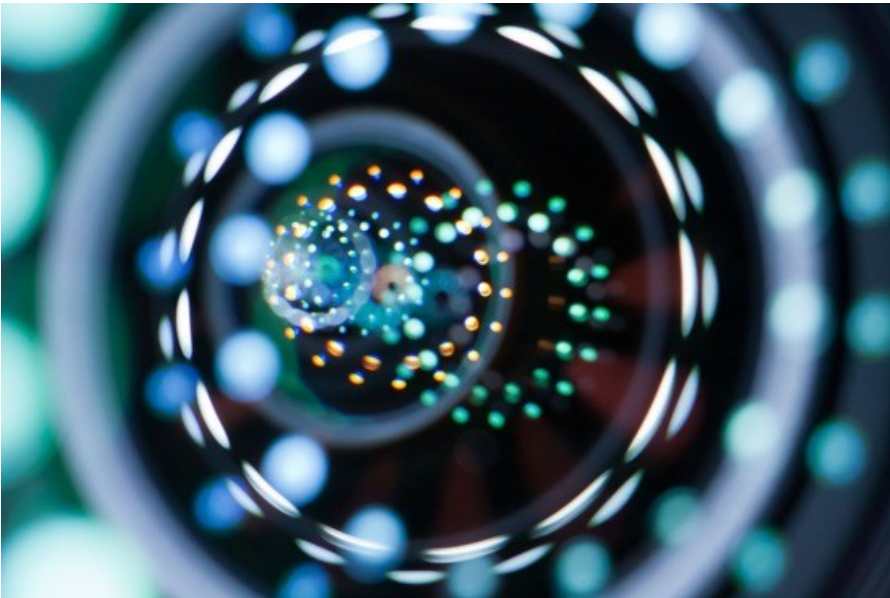


Looking Through a Wealth Creation Lens: What does this mean?



- Using the eight capitals in your CEDS – asset inventory, SWOT, strategy, metrics.
- Supporting sectors in your region to collaborate for mutual benefit.
- Building partnerships – engaging partners with strengths in different areas, different capitals – to build wealth and keep it local.
- Supporting market opportunities in your region, by bringing partners together to identify what the gaps are and how to fill them through entrepreneurship.
- Viewing all your work through this lens of building wealth, keeping it local and building livelihoods.

The Wealth Creation Lens



Regional planning and development

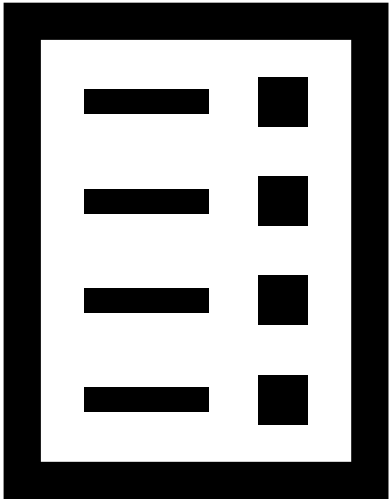
Value chain development

Organizational development and strategic planning

Project and program evaluation.



Regional planning/development



Map regional assets across the eight capitals with partners

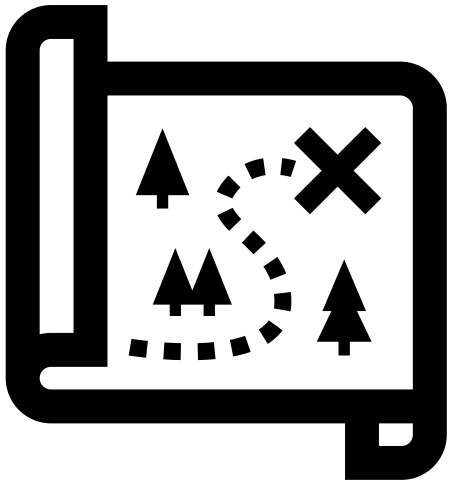
Identify and reduce economic and other leakage from the region

Build strategies around increasing local ownership

Align planning resources and investments around real market opportunities

Formalize relationship-building as part of regional and municipal strategy

development



Identify and validate real market opportunities that benefit multiple communities/counties

Map the full value chain with partners

Appoint or support a value chain coordinator

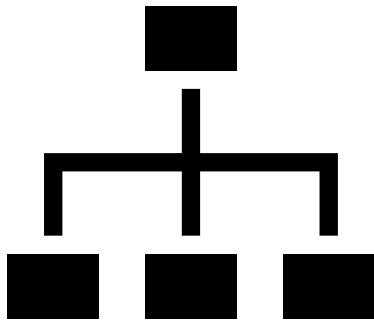
Build pathways for expanded participation of underrepresented groups

Plug leaks and keep more value in the region

Strengthen multiple forms of wealth in the chain.



Organizational development - strategic planning



Use wealth creation as the strategic lens in comprehensive and strategic planning



Assess your organization's strengths and opportunities across the eight capitals.



Align programs to long-term, asset-building outcomes



Prioritize initiatives that create or grow multiple forms of wealth



Build cross-sector partnerships as an asset strategy



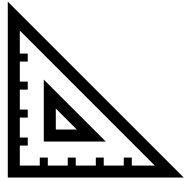
Strengthen internal culture around long-term collaboration and asset-based thinking



Program and project evaluation



Build a "multiple forms of wealth" dashboard



Measure benefit distribution, not just totals



Use feedback loops or continuous learning cycles to adjust strategy in real time.

Measure how much value stays in the region.

WEALTH BUILDERS

WealthBuilders - Components

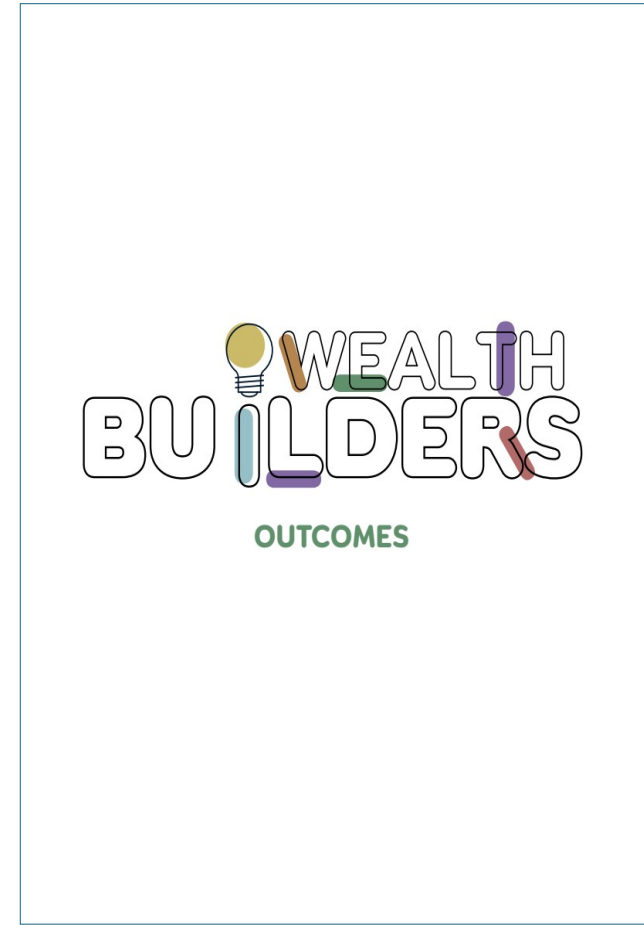
Wealth Cards



Partner Cards



Outcomes Cards



WealthBuilders - Instructions



Outcome cards – Flip over one for the table.



Each person draws a Wealth card and a Partner card.



Each person will speak to what they could contribute to the outcome based on their wealth type and/or partner card.



WealthBuilders - Questions



What does your form of wealth look like in this place?



How can this form of wealth be used to contribute to the outcome?



What role could the partner play in moving toward the outcome?



What else is needed to make progress?



Does your partner or wealth card remind you of any assets within your own community?



WealthBuilders - Debrief

How did it go?

What was
easy? What
was hard?

Is there
anything
you'd change?



WealthWorks Website - www.wealthworks.org

Connecting community assets to market demand to build lasting livelihoods.

wealthworks

[About](#) [The Basics ▾](#) [Success Stories ▾](#) [Resources](#) [Connect](#)



What is WealthWorks?

WealthWorks is a 21st-century approach to local and regional economic development that belongs in every community and economic development toolkit. WealthWorks brings together and connects a community's assets to meet market demand in ways that build livelihoods that last.

WealthWorks aims to advance a region's overall prosperity and self-reliance, strengthen existing and emerging sectors, and increase jobs and incomes for lower-income residents and firms — all at the same time. It can work for people, firms and places of all sizes, shapes and success levels.

[See the results](#)



NADO Wealth Creation Site

www.nado.org/wealthcreation

Wealth Creation

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Training Materials and Resources

For several years, the NADO Research Foundation has trained EDD staff and partners on a wealth creation framework known as *WealthWorks* that seeks to build multiple types of capitals or assets in a community or region. This approach, recognized as a best practice in EDA's CEDS Content Guidelines, emphasizes support for local ownership and control of businesses and assets in order to root wealth in a region. It is also intentionally inclusive, seeking ways to incorporate a variety of voices as planners and owners, not only as intended beneficiaries or consumers. A handful of EDDs are using wealth creation in CEDS and other EDD regional planning efforts, demonstrating that this approach can influence EDD operations, including improving consideration of equity and access when designing stakeholder participation or even procurement and hiring. Through the Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP), made possible through an award from the Economic Development Administration, the NADO Research Foundation is coordinating with EDD practitioners and other rural and regional development practitioners to incorporate this wealth creation model where appropriate.

Wealth creation is an approach to economic development that connects a region's assets to market demand in ways that build rooted wealth for local people, places and firms. It brings together a range of public, private and non-profit sector partners who have self-interest in the outcomes and an openness to discovering shared or common interests.

WealthWorks Regional Hubs



For More Information

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