



2021 VIRTUAL
Best Practices Conference
“Changing the Narrative”

May 12th – 13th

We hope you can join us for the 2021 Mid-America EDC Best Practices Conference! As Economic Development professionals, we are always telling the story of our communities, but what do we do when the unexpected occurs? “Changing the Narrative” is the theme of the conference this year – attend and learn not only how to handle adversity should it occur, but plan for it in advance.

The virtual conference agenda is planned to accommodate the various time zones in the Mid-America EDC region, while also allowing time for attendees to visit our virtual exhibitors and connect with sponsors, presenters, and other attendees through the Whova platform. Please note that ALL sessions will be recorded and available on-demand in the Whova platform after each session if you register but are unable to attend a session live.

Register today at www.midamericaedc.org!

THANK YOU TO OUR ANNUAL SPONSORS



PLATINUM LEVEL SPONSORS



GROUNDBREAKING
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COMMUNICATIONS



The Montrose Group, LLC



SIOUX FALLS
DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION



GOLD LEVEL SPONSORS



Nebraska Public Power District
Always there when you need us



SILVER LEVEL SPONSORS



THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 BEST PRACTICES CONFERENCE SPONSORS

CONFERENCE SPONSOR



CONFERENCE SUPPORTER



Schedule of Events

Please note that all times listed are Eastern Standard Time.

Wednesday, May 12th

10:00-11:30 am

Welcome & General Session

Welcome from Dean Dziedzic, Mid-America EDC President & Sheldon Neeley, Mayor of Flint, Michigan

Flint: Changing the Narrative

Presenters: Tyler Rossmassler, Director of Economic Development, Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce; Khalfani Stephens, Director of Economic Development, City of Flint; Jason Caya, Co-Founder, Tenacity Brewing

Many people know the headlines about Flint, but when they stop to take a closer look, they realize there is so much more to the story. In this session we will hear from what Thrillist called “the bravest craft brewery in America” and Flint economic developers about how they navigated the challenges of the water crisis.

12:00-1:30 pm

Shared Success: The Utility’s Role in Economic Development

Presenters: Shelly Klug, Economic & Business Development Manager, AEP/Indiana Michigan Power; Valerie Christofferson, Director of Economic Development, Consumers Energy; Carolyn Bennett, Economic Development Manager, DTE; Jeff Dorr, Director, Customer & Business Solutions, ITC Holdings Corp

Interested in learning more about how to work effectively with your utility partners? Utility partners know their service areas and add value to economic development projects from site search to supporting existing customer needs. This session will provide to you an overview of utility infrastructure and the role utility partners play in corporate decision-making.

2:30-3:30 pm

Real Estate Redevelopment and Reuse

Presenters: Tracey Tucker, Economic Enhancement Director, Flint Township; P. Craig Patterson, Senior Vice President, Woda Cooper Companies, Inc.

A mostly-vacant strip mall is now home base for employers and, as a result, higher paying jobs. Vacant schools and commercial buildings are being purchased and repurposed to include senior and workforce housing. See how vacant big-box and school properties are being redeveloped and economic impact achieved. How marketing, good policy and collaboration is essential to making these developments happen.

4:00-4:30 pm

Virtual Flint Michigan Tour

Join us for a virtual tour to highlight Flint – the original in-person location for the 2021 (and 2020!) Best Practices Conference.

5:00-6:00 pm

Team Trivia Virtual Networking

Join us to team up with your Mid-America region colleagues and compete for prizes (and bragging rights) for the winning team! Register by May 11th to participate, and be sure to join the session by 4:55 p.m. ET, as teams will be randomly assigned when the session begins.



Thank you to Discover Flint Township for their sponsorship of this session, including prize packs for the winning team!

Thursday, May 13th

10:00-11:00 am

Commercial Property Use Post-Covid

Presenter: Gabriel Dion, Director, Global Strategy, Newmark

Moderator: Matt Marshall, Economic Development Administrator, Minnkota Energy

As retail markets change communities are often faced with vacant spaces, and now with changes resulting from COVID-19 some commercial office space may go dark. From non-traditional tenants to innovative capital stacks, hear examples of how real estate redevelopment projects can benefit from out-of-the-box thinking.

11:30-12:30 pm

Optimizing Your Use of Data for Strategy and Branding

Presenters: Nathan Foss, Labor and Market Data Specialist, EMSI; Molly Mason, CEO, Hoyden Creative Group

Data that informs strategy and marketing efforts is becoming more and more accessible. Understanding what the data says about your community can help you position to capitalize on and promote your greatest opportunities. See examples of how data is being used to strengthen economic development programs and results.

1:00-1:30 pm

Mid-America EDC Annual Awards Presentation

Please join us to congratulate the 2020 award winners!

1:45-2:45 pm

Get More Talent! Attraction Strategies in the Age of the Remote Worker

Presenters: Sandy Pratt, UNDERPINNED; John Karras, TIP Strategies; Amanda Jenkins, Golden Shovel. **Moderator:** Aaron Brossoit, Golden Shovel

Learn how remote working, entrepreneurship, and the gig economy are changing workforce and attraction strategies. Learn how the migration of remote workers creates an opportunity for communities all across Mid-America. Case studies will be featured of organizations doing this well, and how communities can position their messaging so remote workers will take notice.

3:15-4:00 pm

Non-Traditional Sources of Economic Development Funding

Presenters: Judy Jandro, Senior Vice President, Community Retirement Fund; Alex Smith, Economic Development Representative, EDA Denver Regional Office; Lee Shirey, Economic Development Representative, EDA Chicago Regional Office

Whether it is a new funding source or an alternative way to approach a project, the opportunities are expanding. Hear how these funders are seeking to support economic development initiatives that your community is undertaking. Topics include technical assistance, loans, grants and even financial assistance for long-term disaster recovery.

4:30-5:30 pm

Community Pride Through Placemaking

Presenters: Joseph Schipani, Executive Director, Flint Art Project; Jennifer McKeone, Executive Director, Cozad Development Corporation; Kady Yellow, Director of Placemaking, What's Up Downtown - Flint

Placemaking can build community pride while contributing to talent recruitment, resident retention, investor confidence, and other key impact. Whether you are working in a rural or urban setting, these event and project successes will offer new ideas for partnership and implementation. See how Flint (MI) and Cozad (NE) continue to promote and build on their placemaking strengths in ways that could be adapted to your community.

2021 Best Practices Conference Registration

Register online through May 11th via check OR credit card at
<https://www.midamericaedc.org/events-and-programs>

Virtual Conference – May 12-13

- Mid-America EDC Member Rate - \$99
- Michigan Economic Developers Association Member Rate - \$99
- Non-Member - \$149

Current Member Renewal Package – \$399

For your convenience! Renew your Mid-America EDC membership now for 2021 now with your virtual conference registration!

MID-AMERICA EDC New MICHIGAN Member Package - \$249

New MICHIGAN Members Only! (\$449 Value: Membership Valued at \$300 plus non-member Conference Registration \$149). Join MID-AMERICA EDC now AND register for the Best Practices Conference for only \$100 more than the non-member conference registration! Because Michigan is the host state for the 2021 Annual Best Practices Conference, new MID-AMERICA EDC members from Michigan receive this special membership discount for the remainder of 2021! For full details about membership benefits visit

https://www.midamericaedc.org/media/userfiles/subsite_134/files/85x11brochure_all_trifold%202020%20FP%20-%20both%20pages.pdf.

Policies:

If you are an established **Platinum or Gold Sponsor** receiving a complimentary registration as a sponsorship benefit, you may register online. Your main sponsorship contact will be sent an email with a Registration Code. Once you have the code you can register online by selecting one of the registration options listed as "SPONSOR". After you have selected your desired "SPONSOR" registration option, you will then be asked for the registration code. Once you enter the code you will then enter your registration information and click next. You will then be asked to review and confirm your information, if everything is correct select "Confirm" and your registration will be submitted without any payment due.

With written cancellation notice, received by May 11th, you will receive a full refund. Cancellations after May 11th are nonrefundable. Notices of cancellation must be emailed to the Mid-America EDC office at karla@assnoffices.com. Sorry, cancellations after May 11th and no-shows are not eligible for refunds.



The 2021 Best Practices Conference is recognized by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) as a professional development event that counts toward recertification of Certified Economic Developers (CED).