

# What is an Economic Development Corporation?



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- An EDC is a non-profit organization (not a company), created to promote economic growth within a specific geographic area.
- EDCs can do the following things:
  - Attract new companies to an area and/or help existing businesses expand
  - Apply for grants on behalf of a community
  - Issue grants, loans, or other incentives to support business development
  - Improve public infrastructure (roads, sewers, etc.) and help market sites to potential new businesses
  - Help create training programs and assist with workforce recruitment
  - Provide data, research and community input to inform how government addresses economic planning
  - Fund community projects like affordable housing, parks, and museums

# History of EDCs

- EDCs popularized in the 1960s with organizations like the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation and Bucks County EDC launching in response to manufacturing industries declining.
- At the time, the federal government began pouring renewal dollars into communities with declining industrial base.
- The way the federal grant programs were set up, ***EDCs were, and are, a necessary vehicle to capture these funds.*** Period.

*Food distribution centers like this one in Philadelphia declined and sought expansion in cheaper areas outside of the City.*



1958, Food Distribution Center on Pattison Avenue



*PIDC stepped in to provide financing to help buy land to expand new facilities within Philadelphia instead.*

# EDCs: From Cities to Rural Regions



- Cities saw initial success from EDCs
  - ☾ As a result, rural communities banded together to create similar EDCs to bring investment to neglected areas
- **Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA)**, was founded in 1964
  - ☾ To serve the seven counties of Northeastern Pennsylvania including Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill and Wayne
- Gave the region the ability to compete for government and private investment.
- As steel industry declined
  - ☾ Bethlehem EDC formed in 1982; Lehigh Valley EDC formed in 1995

# Case Study: NEPA Alliance Now

- In 2024, NEPA accomplished many things for the region, including:
  - ☾ Helped to retain 1,344 jobs in the region
  - ☾ Helped secure \$113,409,658 in government contracts awarded in the region and assisted 300 existing local businesses
  - ☾ Leveraged \$3.44 million in ARC grants for regional and local organizations
  - ☾ Provided \$24.5 million in loans, generating an additional \$37.2 million in investment for existing local businesses
  - ☾ Through the Get Connected E-Commerce program, used \$70,000 in grant funding to provide e-commerce platforms including websites and social media support to over 20 existing local businesses

# Case Study: Lehigh Valley EDC Over Time

- LVEDC organized in 1995 in response to major employers closing and to diversify its business community with employers of all sizes
- Funds were raised to support economic development and transportation projects
  - created stability for the region and GDP grew from \$25 million in 1995 to now \$56 million in 2025
- Median household incomes in the area increased by \$17K to \$81K over the past 5 years, outpacing inflation and exceeding the PA and National benchmarks.
- LVEDC was crucial in securing \$400 million PA SITES program that makes properties shovel-ready for development.
- Launched an apprenticeship program promoting careers in advanced manufacturing

Why not bring this type of investment and these types of resources to Barrett?

