Executive Summary: EMO Conference May 2025 – Anchorage CEDC Briefing
Conference Title: Seizing Economic Mobility and Opportunity
Location: Baltimore, MD.
George Martinez, Chair, Anchorage CEDC

The EMO Conference 2025 brought together national thought leaders, policymakers, practitioners, and innovators to address persistent inequities in economic mobility, access to capital, and neighborhood stability. Through keynote sessions and breakout workgroups, the event highlighted the importance of integrated, place-based approaches to development, rooted in asset-building, shared vision, and actionable outcomes, rather than just activity. Anchorage's current trajectory toward an equity-driven, opportunity-rich economy aligns with the conference themes. This report summarizes actionable highlights and outlines recommendations for CEDC consideration.

Session Highlights & Relevance to Anchorage

1. The Value of Work: Aligning Labor with Wealth Creation
   - Insight: Jobs alone don't drive mobility—ownership, credit access, and asset-building do.
   - Anchorage Takeaway: Build workforce pipelines tied to small business development, entrepreneurship, and creative industries. Invest in capacity, not just employment.
   - CEDC Action: Support incentives for ownership, business incubation, and home-based startups in the creative sector.

2. From Red Lines to Green Lights: Breaking Legacy Inequities
   - Insight: The history of disinvestment in "middle neighborhoods" must be reversed through targeted investment.
   - Anchorage Takeaway: Stabilize areas like Muldoon and Mountain View using public tools (e.g., tax abatements, low-interest loans) to spur private development.
   - CEDC Action: Launch a data-driven neighborhood stabilization program based on homeownership, small business growth, and transit access.

3. Social Capital Mapping & Resilience
   - Insight: Mobility is not just financial—it's relational. Connections, trust, and shared values enable communities to weather risks and seize opportunities.
   - Anchorage Takeaway: Develop and measure Anchorage's social capital to understand where assets are lacking and build neighborhood-based solutions.
   - CEDC Action: Pilot a "Social Capital Mapping" initiative in partnership with local universities and community groups.

4. Creative Economy as Infrastructure
   - Insight: Arts and culture are not decorative—they are economic engines and trust builders.
   - Anchorage Takeaway: Expand investment in the music and creative economy as a central component of youth engagement, placemaking, and entrepreneurship.

- CEDC Action: Develop an “Anchorage Open for Creativity” toolkit and funding mechanism to support music venues, arts festivals, and creative workforce development.

5. From Red Tape to Green Tape: Streamlining Development
   - Insight: Legacy permitting systems hinder innovation and impede inclusive development.
   - Anchorage Takeaway: Implement “Right-Sizing” for city permitting—efficient, predictable, and aligned with neighborhood visioning.
   - CEDC Action: Recommend an audit of Anchorage’s permitting process and initiate an “Open for Development” campaign.

Strategic Integration with the Anchorage Framework

Anchorage Open For:

Business. Development. Growth. Mobility. Opportunity.

- Reframe new revenue as an investment engine in neighborhood stabilization, housing affordability, mobility, and cultural infrastructure.
- Align with the EMO themes of asset-based, ROI-driven public policy.

Shared Vision Strategy:

- Set the vision with the community
- Measure outcomes, not just effort
- Reinforce shared values and mutual responsibility

Recommended Actions for CEDC

1. Adopt a “Measures for Movement” Agenda
   - Track social capital, credit score increases, savings, and small business ownership, alongside housing starts and job growth.
2. Launch the “Anchorage Open For” Campaign
   - Signal the city’s new alignment toward transparency, access, and development.
3. Initiate a Middle Neighborhoods Blueprint
   - Identify at-risk yet viable areas for targeted investment using ROI-based tools.
4. Pilot a Resiliency & Self-Sufficiency Index
   - Map asset poverty, emergency fund access, and income volatility across Anchorage neighborhoods.
5. Explore Public-Private Innovation Fund

Next Steps

- Invite local partners (universities, artists, credit unions, housing agencies) to co-design pilots.
- Schedule a work session on streamlining development processes (“Right-Sizing”).
- Create a briefing for the I-Team to align on scope, purpose, and deliverables related to implementation.