



edanl

Economic Developers Association
of Newfoundland and Labrador



Training Program Concept

Economic Development

May 8, 2026



Happy Economic Development Week!





Agenda

1. About EDANL

2. Why Economic Development?

3. Insights to Inform Training Program

4. Key Inputs / Non-Negotiables

5. Training Program Concept

6. Discussion & Feedback



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About EDANL



About EDANL

EDANL is a not-for-profit with a mission to build the capacity of those engaged in economic development in Newfoundland and Labrador and advance the practice as a distinct and recognized profession.

**Over 130 Members
Working in Economic
Development Across
Nearly 45 Communities
in Newfoundland &
Labrador.**





About EDANL



Mission

Build the capacity of those engaged in economic development in Newfoundland and Labrador and advance the practice as a distinct and recognized profession.



Vision

A robust community of professional development practitioners contributing to the economic well-being of Newfoundland and Labrador.



Mandate

Provide Training
Foster a Community of Practice
Share Stories and Successes
Advocacy



Board of Directors 2026



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Strategic Plan 2026-2030

1

**Governance and
Operations**

3

**Training and
Professional
Development**

2

**Activities and
Network**

4

**Communications
and Advocacy**

2

Why Economic Development?



What is economic development?



Who Does Economic Development?

Economic development is the fundamental work that municipalities, industry associations, community groups, special interest organizations, impact investors, provincial and federal public servants do to improve their 'community'.

While some organizations have the resources to hire dedicated Economic Development Officers (EDOs), in Newfoundland & Labrador this is the exception and not the norm.

Rather, in our province, actions and outcomes associated with economic development are typically undertaken by staff who have a wide variety of different responsibilities.

Why is Training Needed?

Economic development is vital. The health and success of our communities depends on deliberate actions to support them. Communities rarely thrive by accident; most often fundamental actions associated with economic development are at play.

Because there are few dedicated economic development officers in Newfoundland & Labrador, there is a low level of knowledge, experience, and skill in this important field.

Therefore, a level of training is required to give professionals – even those whose job description does not include the words economic development – the ability to positively impact their communities.

3



Insights to Inform Training Program



Insights to Inform Training Program



Targeted
Surveys

1

March/April

March

2

Jurisdictional
Scan

Subject Matter
& Training
Experts

3

April

April/May

4

Consultation

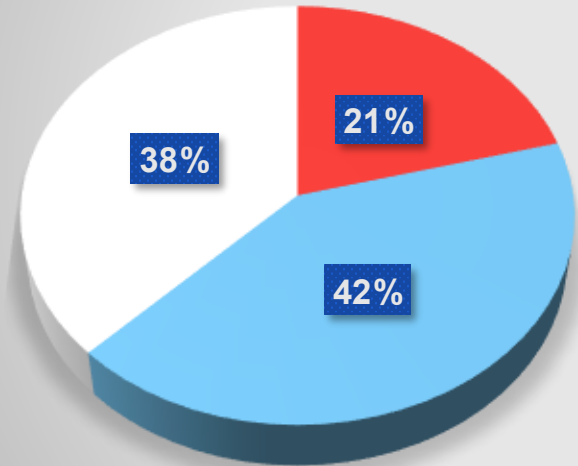
Targeted Surveys

96 Responses between targeted surveys to...



Targeted Surveys

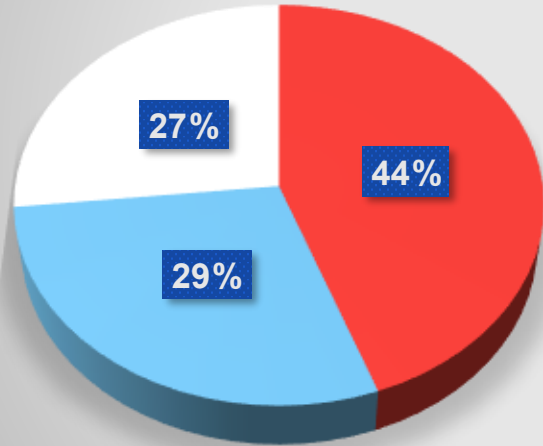
What type of training would be most valuable to you?



- Key principles and concepts to inform economic development strategy
- Skills and tactics that you can use for economic development
- Information on tools and resources that help you do economic development

Targeted Surveys

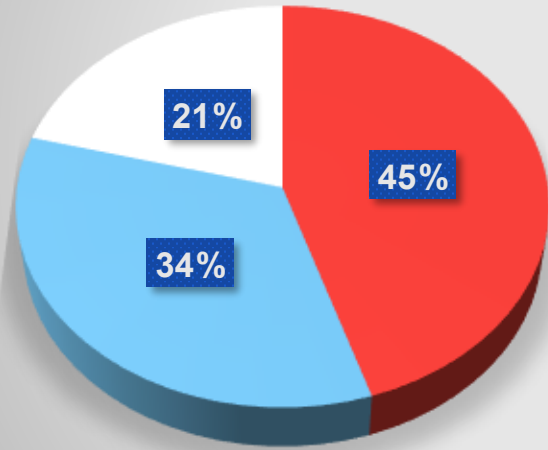
What length of training would you be most likely to participate in?



- Full day training - I want to get the most information as possible at the one time!
- Half day training - It's easier for me to set aside a half-day!
- Short 1-hour sessions - It's too hard for me to set aside a lot of time at once!

Targeted Surveys

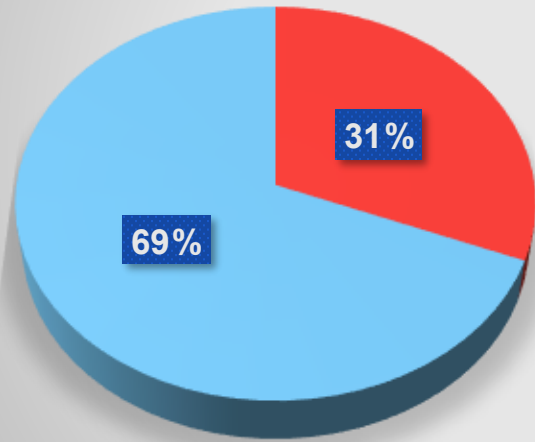
How would you prefer to access training and resources?



- In-person at a certain time and location - I get the most out of it when I'm with other people!
- Online training at a certain time - I like the flexibility of doing the training from my office!
- On-demand training (recorded) - It is best if I can participate at a time the best suits me!

Targeted Surveys

Would you rather that training take place...



- At events that I already try to participate in anyways (workshops, conferences, etc.)
- Separate from existing events

Targeted Surveys

Are there any specific topics or skills relating to economic development that you already know that you would like to learn?

Summary:

1. **None/Not Sure**
2. Funding Options and Strategy
3. Business, entrepreneurship, and tourism
4. Investment attraction / marketing
5. Enhancing towns
6. ROI, KPIs, measuring impacts

Jurisdictional Scan

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Among all findings, the most significant gap appears to be the absence of Newfoundland and Labrador specific training. As many smaller municipalities and regions exist across the province, training designed specifically for municipal leaders and employees, mayors, councilors, community development organizations, and economic development committees, presents a unique opportunity. EDA Australia's one-day course for local government executives stands out as a model with strong relevance to Newfoundland and Labrador. This audience is currently underserved, and a similar offering could position EDANL as a leader in this space.

1. Economic Development Organizations

1.1 International Economic Development Council (IEDC)

Training Provider:	International Economic Development Council (IEDC)	
Location:	Primary US Based but does have a presence/recognition in Canada	
Course Name	Duration	Description
Delivery Method:	In-person	
Basic Economic Development Courses (BEDCs)	4 Days	The BEDCs are independently managed by state-level organizations and/or universities. These courses provide professionals with the foundational knowledge and skills necessary to build a career in the economic development field. BEDCs are also part of the required coursework to apply for IEDC's Certified Economic Developer (CED) Exam.
Delivery Method:	Virtual, synchronous	
Economic Development Fundamentals	1 Day, 6.5 hrs	A comprehensive survey of the profession: history, core activities (attraction, BRE, entrepreneurship), enablers (workforce, real estate, neighborhoods), and cross-cutting tools (planning, marketing, finance). <i>Benefits for Economic Developers</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orients newcomers to the full scope of practice. Establishes shared vocabulary and frameworks. Prepares participants for deeper dives into core/elective courses.

The jurisdictional scan is thorough, drawing on a wide range of Canadian and international comparators. While highlighting that there is an absence of programming designed specifically for the NL context, it shows that there is significant material to draw from in important subject matters.

Subject Matter & Training Experts

Experts were engaged to review the survey results, jurisdictional scan, comprehensive research undertaken in 2020, supplementary materials – and to draw from their own experience and insights – to comment on what an economic training program for NL could look like.

Their insights include...

Subject Matter & Training Experts

Training must be accessible throughout NL. Travel and time are major barriers. While in-person is preferred, online is necessary.

There is no unified framework or shared language across practitioners in NL, leading to inconsistent practices and reduced collaboration.

Economic development will happen from the side of the desk. Accept this trend and help make that side of the desk extremely productive.

Cooperation and collaboration across the ecosystems and throughout regions is a requirement in the face of shrinking populations and taxbases.

Nobody grew up saying they wanted to be an economic developer. Most fall into the role and thus need support to even know that best practices exist.

Consultation

Engagement with subject matter and training experts will continue throughout the development process.

The training concept that has been developed is being considered, reviewed, and refined through the following arenas:

- EDANL Board of Directors
- Regional Economic Development (RED) Task Force
- PMA Annual Conference April 14-15, 2026
- MNL Municipal Symposium May 7-9, 2026
- Survey participants willing to continue providing input

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Key Inputs / Non-Negotiables



Key Inputs / Non-Negotiables



Meet People Where
They Are



Make it Accessible
Province-Wide



Infuse it with Necessary
NL Context



Split Delivery Between
3 Methods



Provide On-Ramps for
Keepers

Key Inputs / Non-Negotiables



Meet People Where They Are

There are a number of different **audiences**. Municipal staff. Elected officials. Community organizations. Investors. Industry and business groups. Etc. Training must appeal to each.

Many report having **little or no knowledge/skills** in economic development. Programming must start from the ground up and focus on what is necessary to know (and not nice to know).

In fact, many engaged in economic development do not know that there is a label on some of the work that they do, not to mention that there might be best practices.

In order to collaborate, people need to be using a common language and a shared understanding of what they are doing.

Key Inputs / Non-Negotiables

It is vital that the economic development training programs be readily **accessible** throughout Newfoundland & Labrador



**Make it Accessible
Province-Wide**

While in-person is the best method for learning, **travel is a significant barrier** for many, and it is not feasible to provide training everywhere.

Online training can still be **engaging** if the content is structured appropriately, the instructor is skilled in this format, and the proper technology is used.

The program will benefit from a broader and more **diverse participant base**; i.e., programming will be less dominated by the Avalon-centric discussions that tend to occur when taking place in that area.

Key Inputs / Non-Negotiables

Our **culture** impacts economic development approaches that are considered best practices elsewhere

The economic development **ecosystem** in NL is unique and very different from other jurisdictions.

The **geography** and population distribution in NL affects how economic development can and should be approached - - **regionally**.

NL's current **demographics** – and their future trajectory – is a reality that must be considered and incorporated into economic development strategy.



**Infuse it with Necessary
NL Context**

Key Inputs / Non-Negotiables

Synchronous delivery –
participants taking training at the same prescribed time with the ability to interact with peers and the instructor.

Asynchronous delivery –
participants access materials and complete training on their own schedule as time allows.



**Split Delivery Between
3 Methods**

Hybrid/blended delivery –
Combines synchronous and asynchronous elements, leveraging both in-person, live-virtual, and independent online work.

Key Inputs / Non-Negotiables

*Keeners/advanced practitioners need avenues to continue to **build their expertise** as skilled and motivated individuals have the potential to have high impact.*



**Provide On-Ramps for
Keeners**

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Training Program Concept



Proposed Training Program

The Basics

The proposed program includes 3 courses which provide individuals with the baseline information and skills necessary to advance economic development initiatives:

- Introduction to Economic Development
- Economic Development Fundamentals
- Skills Fundamentals for Economic Development

NL Context

... and 3 courses which provide vital Newfoundland & Labrador context that will inform and assist in their work.

- Opportunity Identification and Management
- Partnership Brokering and Facilitation
- Demographics, Labour Market, and Workforce

1. Introduction to Economic Development

- What is economic development?
- Why is economic development important?
- Who engages in economic development?
- How do individuals engage in economic development?
- How is economic development different in Newfoundland and Labrador?
- What does the economic development ecosystem look like in our province?
- The link between economic and community development.
- This serves as a soft entry point for those brand new to the field.

2. Economic Development Fundamentals

- Developing a shared and baseline understanding of economic development approaches and strategies.
- Learning the basics about important concepts like Business Retention and Expansion, Investment Attraction, Placemaking, Cluster Strategy, etc.
- Practical examples of what has worked (and hasn't worked) in NL
- Walkthrough of real resources and real tools to help practitioners get started.
- Learning about other programming available nationally and internationally to take a deeper dive into the subject.

3. Skills Fundamentals for Economic Development

- Gaining an understanding about the key skills and concepts that inform and enable economic development. For example...
- How the economy works.
- Application writing.
- Project development and execution.
- Monitoring, measuring, and reported on economic development.
- Marketing and communications.

4. Opportunity Identification and Management

- Methods to uncover unique opportunities for communities.
- Tips on how to decide between a number of different options. With limited capacity, how do communities choose what to focus on?
- How do determine if an idea is feasible.
- Understanding finance and funding opportunities.
- Tools to advance and manage a project (project management 'lite')

5. Partnership Brokering, Facilitation, and Engagement

- Understanding who the potential partners are in economic development.
- What can they bring to the table?
- What are their motivations?
- What does success look like?
- How to engage partners and explore win-win initiatives.
- How to broker relationships with multiple partners.
- How to facilitate discussions between partners.
- How to engage stakeholders and the community on opportunities: (1) who to communicate with, (2) how to communicate; (3) tools and resources; and (4) best practices.

6. Demographics, Labour Market, and Workforce

- Understanding the realities of NL's demographic situation.
- Approaching economic development within the context of an aging, shrinking population.
- What does successful economic development look like in this context? Jobs vs. wealth creation / quality of life.
- Tools to help understand labour market data (data literacy)
- Guidance on how to present and communicate information to build support for economic development initiatives.
- Understanding the importance of 'productivity' or helping people get more output from the same (or less) effort.

Plus... A Special Offering for Elected Officials

- Elected officials are making consequential decisions everyday that relate to economic development.
- Most elected officials do not have any training in the field.
- A safe space for elected officials to learn about economic development concepts with their peers.
- Material to focus on emphasizing sound decision-making versus technical practice of economic development.

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Discussion & Feedback







Final Thoughts

- The intent is for the courses to lead to a Certificate
- The intent is for the courses to be eligible for points towards national certification (if this is of interest)
- EDANL needs to ensure that this programming can be delivered consistently and sustainably over a long period of time.

In the meantime...

EDANL will soon be launching an **Artificial Intelligence Micro-Credential Program** in partnership with Keyin College.

Harness the power of AI to transform your work – and take a giant leap in what you can achieve from the side of your desk in economic development.

This 30-hour, fully funded micro-credential is being designed to meet the needs of professionals who need to do economic development faster and better. No background in AI needed!

Stay tuned to your MNL-NL communications for more information when it becomes available, and there is a QR Code on your tables.



Thank You!

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