

A Wealth Building Framework to Do Economic Development Differently

Framework
Developed By:

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
Community
Strategies Group



Wealth Building Goals

Create wealth, broadly defined, and aspire to do no harm



Keep in mind...

- Wealth is **not just money**.
- Wealth is the **reservoir of all assets** that can contribute to the well-being of people, places or economies.
- Every place has wealth.

See the eight capitals on the next page!

Root wealth in local people, places and firms through local ownership, control and influence



Capitals that are “owned” locally build wealth.

- Benefits – e.g., income, know-how, better technology – flowing from local ownership of capitals can be re-invested and re-circulated locally, enriching many.
- Preserving local ownership or control over your capitals can increase the chances of preserving local jobs.
- **Local ownership is an anchor** that helps wealth stick.

Build lasting livelihoods by intentionally including people and firms on the economic margins



“Lasting livelihoods” means...

- People, especially those on the economic margins, are **doing better today**.
- They are **earning and saving more**.
- They have **improved skills** to qualify for **higher-paying jobs** and to **build their careers**.
- They are putting something aside for the future, e.g., **building assets**, so they are more resilient.
- They have better future prospects so they can **give back** their time, talent, and even treasure to the community.

Design Elements for Wealth Building

- Be **demand** driven. “Talk to” real market demand to find market opportunities.
- Think **regionally**. Market opportunities may be anchored in place but regional in scope.
- Choose **market opportunities** with the greatest “wealth-building” potential.
- Identify and **connect local assets** and **partners** to address the market opportunity and meet demand.
- Build **relationships** – trusted, flexible, boundary-crossing, inclusive.
- **Coordinate** action to create a “wealth-building system” that optimizes the use of local and regional assets to **fill gaps** and **leverage resources**.
- **Measure** your results – to plan and strengthen wealth-building, and to tell your story.

The Eight Capitals

Each capital is a collection of one category of related resources; every region has a stock of each type of capital—meaning the combined quantity and quality of the many components of that capital in the region; and taken together, the existing stocks of these capitals constitute a region’s current wealth.

The capital	The definition
 Individual	The existing stock of skills, understanding, physical health and mental wellness in a region’s people.
 Intellectual	The existing stock of knowledge, resourcefulness, creativity and innovation in a region’s people, institutions, organizations and sectors.
 Social	The existing stock of trust, relationships and networks in a region’s population.
 Cultural	The existing stock of traditions, customs, ways of doing, and world views in a region’s population.
 Natural	The existing stock of natural resources—for example, water, land, air, plants and animals—in a region’s places.
 Built	The existing stock of constructed infrastructure—for example, buildings, sewer systems, broadband, roads—in a region’s places.
 Political	The existing stock of goodwill, influence and power that people, organizations and institutions in the region can exercise in decision-making.
 Financial	The existing stock of monetary resources available in the region for investment in the region.