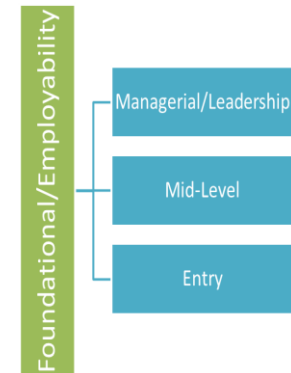# Building the Engine of Community Development in Detroit
Community Development Organizations (CDO) Competency Framework

What is the CDO Competency Framework?

The CDO Competency Framework was designed to identify *what an individual should know and be able to do to perform work that is essential to developing, managing, and maintaining* effective community development organizations and *carrying out the work of the organization in the community*. The tool represents three levels of competency statements (entry, mid- and managerial). It also captures foundation/employability competencies at a generic level and defines, more discreetly, specialized CDO competencies.

- Identifies foundational community development competencies that people at all levels of Community Development work should know and be able to do. In some instances, these competencies also cross affiliated sectors.

- Identifies and profiles specialized competencies within the CDO context at three levels of career pathways.

- Provides a framework to align competencies to existing and new educational programs and pathways including credit for work-based learning, development of new credentials, improved professional development pathways for CDO's and increased mobility for CDO professionals to move within the profession and into other sectors

How was the Framework Developed?

The tool's **structure** represents a synthesis of information derived from:
1. Identifying the role and work of community-based organizations in the community development field.
2. Identifying organizations that employ community development professionals.
3. Identifying broadly defined categories of foundational activities, knowledge, and values held by employees within community development and allied sectors, with a specific focus on the work of community development organizations.
4. Using the "Preliminary Competency Model for Community Engagement" – a tool developed through extensive literature review and surveys.
5. Reviewing and synthesizing competency framework models from multiple sectors as well as those used in competency-based education and competency-based hiring.

The tool's **content** was produced through an iterative process involving practitioners (Focus Groups, Kitchen Cabinet, Task Force) to:
1. Identify/validate work functions and competency categories within the community development profession.
2. Articulate what is done in each competency category through the development of competency statements.
3. Engage in multiple feedback loops to further develop and refine work functions, competency categories and competency-statements.

How can this Framework be Used?

The CDO Framework is a tool **that can be used to:**

1. Align competencies to existing and new educational programs and pathways including credit for work-based learning.

2. Provide a shared taxonomy of competencies to support the development of new credentials including stacked credentials and modularized training.

3. Produce competency-based job descriptions to help better qualify talent, draw from alternative talent pools (people who may not hold a degree), and improve professional development planning for individual CDO employees.

4. Support broader organizational development.

5. Improve the clarity of professional development pathways and increase mobility within the CDO profession and across other related sectors/professions.

This framework is not a static document and will be updated as this set of community development work and competencies evolve.

*** Note: In the context of this tool, a competency statement describes what a person knows and is able to do within a specific context. The statement can be used to shape the assessment of how well someone demonstrates a given competency.

Summary of Foundational and Specialized Competencies in a CDO Context

Foundational/Employability Competencies	Specialized Competencies within a CDO Context
Self-Development & Awareness ■ Motivation (to learn community development on the job) ■ Ethics and Integrity (to listen, respond, & plan with residents in mind) **Critical Thinking** ■ Problem Solving, Flexibility, Resourcefulness ■ Creativity & Innovation ■ Power Analysis ■ Research & Applied Strategies ◆ Ethnographic & Best Practices **Communication** ■ Interpersonal (with a variety of external stakeholders) ■ Written (including grant writing), formal and informal ■ Team ■ Visual Communication **Professionalism** ■ Dependable/Reliable ■ Flexible/Adaptable **Digital Literacy** ■ Microsoft Office Platforms ■ Digital Graphic/Visualization Tools ■ Social Media	**Resident Engagement** ■ Social Justice/Cultural Respect & Effectiveness ■ Community Engagement ■ Volunteer Management **Resident Empowerment** ■ Community-Based Planning and Design ■ Board Training and Development ■ Community Education & Training **Economic Development** ■ Commercial Corridor Development ■ Business Organizing and Development ■ Commercial Real Estate Development ■ Housing Development ■ Vacant Land Reclamation **Public Policy and Advocacy, Issue Organizing, and Facilitation** **CDO Organizational Development and Management** ■ Service Leadership ■ Staff Development ■ Board Management ■ Fundraising ■ Data & Information Management ■ Project Management ■ Financial Management ■ Organizational Strategic Planning **Programmatic Initiative Development and Management** ■ Research into Best Practices ■ Program Design ■ Fund Development ■ Implementation ■ Success Measure/Data Collection/Reporting, Leveraging, Scaling

Examples of Specialized Competencies

CDO Functions	Competency Categories	Competency Statements	Level (Entry, Mid, and Managerial)
Resident Engagement	Social Justice/Cultural Respect & Sensitivity	Uses reflective and critical thinking skills to gain insights into assumptions, worldviews, values, beliefs and biases within privileged and marginalized status	Mid to Managerial
		Facilitates an understanding (in the workplace) of how privileged and marginalized status influences worldviews and experiences	Mid to Managerial
		Assesses the degree to which privileged and marginalized status affects CDO initiatives and identify ways to reduce impact	Mid to Managerial
		Seeks professional development opportunities for the community and staff to explore the impact of privileged and marginalized status on their ability to work effectively in the CDO sector	Managerial
	Community Engagement	Understands, chooses, and applies tools to identify resident and local stakeholders skills, assets, rights and responsibilities	Managerial
		Demonstrates the ability to inspire and recruit residents and other stakeholders to volunteer to assist in organizational activities	Entry, Mid, Managerial
		Identifies community outreach strategies and engages community and stakeholders in recruitment of community members	Mid to Managerial
	Volunteer Management	Organizes events, tasks and activities that utilize and deploy local volunteers	Mid
		Assesses and leverages volunteer strengths to support organizational work	Mid to Managerial
		Provides information, training, and supervision for resident volunteers	Mid to Managerial

CDO Functions	Competency Categories	Competency Statements	Level (Entry, Mid, and Managerial)
Resident Empowerment	Community-Based Planning and Design	Designs, coordinates and facilitates gatherings of community stakeholders to identify and resolve community issues	Mid to Managerial
		Provides processes and tools that support idea generation and creativity	Mid to Managerial
		Advocates for issues raised by the community and raises community awareness using multiple communication channels including writing, speaking, and listening	Mid to Managerial
		Demonstrates and articulates knowledge of community history and evolution including realtionship and impacts within the current community context	Mid to Managerial
		Employs mediation skills to resolve conflicts and align competing interests	Entry, Mid, Managerial
		Engages in and encourages openess to learning about cultural and economic backgrounds and diversity within the community	Entry, Mid, Managerial
		Builds community members' confidence in their individual and collective power	Mid to Managerial
		Assists in developing community defined, driven and operated programs by initiating conversations, supporting the development of a vision, soliciting and organizing sponsorship, setting goals, developing and implementing strategy	Managerial
		Matches appropriate professional design services with resident-led projects	Mid to Managerial
		Facilitates interaction between designers and resident organizations	Mid to Managerial
	Resident Board Training and Development	Provides tools to help resident board members understand board decision-making, board roles and authority and board responsibilities	Mid to Managerial
		Translates complicated policy language and programmatic jargon into understandable language	Mid to Managerial
	Community Education & Training	Helps residents participate in conversations or negotiations with public and private officials	Managerial
		Uses basic community organizing techniques to organize committees, boards, and other collective decision-making bodies to continuously improve residents' ability to ask appropriate questions and negotiate to achieve resident priorities	Managerial

CDO Functions	Competency Categories	Competency Statements	Level (Entry, Mid, and Managerial)
Economic Development	Commercial Corridor Development	Assesses commercial corridor best practices and applies those with high potential to achieve desired outcomes	Mid to Managerial
		Uses market analysis to understand the dynamics of a micro-economy within a corridor and its surrounding macro economy	Managerial
		Engages local business stakeholders to align/match corridor strategies to priorities and needs defined in market and planning analysis	Managerial
		Identifies and implements funding strategies that include government resources and tools, as well as private funding to achieve aligned strategies	Mid to Managerial
	Business Organizing and Development	Understands principles of business development and management to inspire and recruit business to engage with CDO	Mid to Managerial
		Uses community development principles, processes and tools when engaging and integrating businesses in community development work	Mid to Managerial
		Facilitates and brokers support services to local businesses	Mid to Managerial
	Commercial Real Estate Development	Employs necessary tools and strategies to generate market analysis for commercial/institutional real estate development	Mid to Managerial
		Identifies and aligns development to resident priorities	Mid to Managerial
		Develops and deploys real estate development team for any given project including design, financial strategies, securing financing, environmental impacts, site control and/or site clean up and clearance, construction/rehab/repair, tenant recruitment, property management	Mid to Managerial
	Housing Development	Employs necessary tools and strategies to generate market analysis for housing real estate development	Mid to Managerial
		Identifies and aligns development to resident priorities	Mid to Managerial
		Develops and deploys real estate development team for any given project including design, financial strategies, securing financing, environmental impacts, site control and/or site clean up and clearance, construction/rehab/repair, tenant recruitment, homebuyer recruitment, property management	Mid to Managerial
	Vacant Land Reclamation	Assesses and applies land reclamation best practices to develop and implement land reclamation strategies that align with resident and business priorities	Mid to Managerial

CDO Functions	Competency Categories	Competency Statements	Level (Entry, Mid, and Managerial)
Public Policy and Advocacy	Public Policy	Employs an understanding of local, state, and federal political environment and the impact these environments have on the CDO community	Mid to Managerial
		Identifies specific government policy and practices that facilitate or impede the organization's mission and strategy and develops approaches to enhance or mitigate the impact of policies	Managerial
		Develops professional, constructive relationships with elected/appointed government officials that help shape, anticipate, inform policy decisions impacting the community	Mid to Managerial
		Uses basic community organizing tactics to engage residents in defining strategies to influence/impact policy	Mid to Managerial
		Translates complicated policy language to help those residents unfamiliar with jargon understand the impacts	Mid to Managerial
Issue Organizing		Ensures larger systemic issues (e.g. racism, sexism, immigration, education) are identified and addressed as drivers of inequity	Mid to Managerial
		Develops relationships with key intermediaries to address larger issues (beyond geography) that impact community, are barriers to community work, and impeded implemenation of locally driven initiatives	Mid to Managerial
		Helps translate issues for the community as they relate to specific CDO initiatives	Mid to Managerial
Facilitation of Collaboration	Group Facilitation	Manages group discussions toward a specific goal, specifically with a cross-sectoral diversity of participants	Mid to Managerial
	External Relationships	Identifies necessary external players/organizations that may impede or facilitate the organization's mission	Mid to Managerial
		Develops professional and constructive relationships with these various actors	Mid to Managerial

CDO Functions	Competency Categories	Competency Statements	Level (Entry, Mid, and Managerial)
Organizational Development and Management (within CDO)	Service Leadership	Cooperatively develops organizational mission, design, and policies in service of community-driven work	Managerial
		Identifies and understands team dynamics and creates strategies to ensure teams are informed, effective, and productive	Mid to Managerial
		Participates as a team member as opposed to leader when appropriate	Mid to Managerial
		Ensures people have the tools and resources required to get work done	Managerial
		Sets aspirational yet attainable team/organizational objectives	Mid to Managerial
		Models curiosity and out-of-the-box thinking	Mid to Managerial
	Staffing and Staff Development	Develops organizational structure and functions. Identifies staffing roles and responsibilities and aligns resources to ensure the organization operates effectively and efficiently	Mid to Managerial
		Establishes processes and procedures to recruit, hire, and develop paid and volunteer staff	Mid to Managerial
	Board Management	Seeks and recruits a community-representative and skilled board of directors	Mid to Managerial
		Employs tools and resources to deploy board training and development for board members	Mid to Managerial
		Utilizes board members appropriately for fund development, technical expertise and to provide amplification of resident priorities	Mid to Managerial
		Employs tools and resources to keep board members regularly informed	Mid to Managerial
		Works with board members to assure by-laws compliance and to set up required board committees which may include HR, Finance, Fund Development, Nominations, Programs, Real Estate Activity, or committees related to key issues of the organization	Mid to Managerial
	Fundraising	Develops and leads fundraising strategies ranging from events to donor solicitations to crowd funding	Mid to Managerial
		Identifies funding sources	Mid to Managerial
		Secures support through individuals, philanthropy, grants, government funding	Managerial
		Collects data and information to define program and organizational impact	Mid

CDO Functions	Competency Categories	Competency Statements	Level (Entry, Mid, and Managerial)
	Data and Information Management	Analyzes data and information to understand trends, fund development strategies, strategic positioning of community priorities	Mid to Managerial
	Project Management	Uses fundamental project management processes, methods, tools and techniques and adapts them to CDO work	Mid to Managerial
		Structures projects to reflect project goals, timelines, deliverables and resources needed to achieve outcomes	Mid to Managerial
	Financial Management	Demonstrates a basic understanding of non-profit fund accounting	Entry to Mid
		Works with financial personnel to: Deal with independent auditors; understand the rules and regulations of different financial resources; and ensure compliance with financial regulatory requirements, taxes, conflict of interest, etc.	Mid to Managerial
		Manages revenue streams to ensure projects and operations are adequately funded.	Mid to Managerial
		Identifies resources necessary to assure asset management is being handled appropriately	Mid to Managerial
		Establishes processes and procedures to ensure financial management staff and consultants have the necessary skills and expertise to manage organizational/project finances. financial management staff and consultant expertise	Managerial
	Organizational Strategic Planning	Works in concert with the Board of Directors to establish and set organizational priorities including who is served, how to serve, why to serve, and how to ensure the organizations future	Managerial
		Ensures employees and stakeholders are working toward common goals	Mid to Managerial
		Establishes agreement on intended priority outcomes and results	Mid to Managerial
		Assesses and adjusts organization's direction in response to changes in external environment	Managerial
		Marshalls and focuses energy and resources to strengthen the organization's ability to achieve mission and work	Managerial

CDO Functions	Competency Categories	Competency Statements	Level (Entry, Mid, and Managerial)
Programmatic Initiative Development & Management (Youth, Seniors, Workforce, Business)	Research	Identifies key topical areas for research, synthesize information from that research and draw conclusions on how that research will apply to the CDO service area	Mid to Managerial
	Fund Development	Matches the organizations' initiatives and programs with appropriate philanthropic sources	Mid to Managerial
		Projects the organizations' direction and develops appropriate relationships with philanthropic, wealthy donor and government sources	Managerial
		Creates a revenue portfolio that contains a diversity of funding sources	Mid to Managerial
	Program Management & Implementation	Once programs are designed and resourced, recruits and hires appropriate staff to implement program details	Mid to Managerial
		Sets and communicates clear objectives to staff and governing body	Managerial
		Monitors and trouble-shoots program implementation, based on ongoing monitoring of progress against success indicators	Mid to Managerial
	Success Metrics/Data Collection/Reporting & Program Design	Uses logic models leading to ultimate community impact	Mid to Managerial
		Identifies "success indicators" based on that logic model	Mid to Managerial
		Establishes realistic processes to collect data to monitor and assess achieving success	Mid to Managerial
		Synthesizes research, stakeholder input on desired outcomes and elements of logic model to develop and document beginning-to-end service program	Mid to Managerial