

# State of Small Business Symposium | 2026

June 24 & 25,  
Cleveland, OH



## **Cathryn Easterling**

**Director of Neighborhood and Economic Development  
City of Erie**

Cathryn Easterling – Director of Neighborhood and Economic Development, City of Erie is a community and economic development leader with experience spanning federal policy, financial inclusion, and municipal strategy. She currently works at the intersection of local government, neighborhood revitalization, and economic development in Erie, bringing a unique perspective shaped by both national and local leadership roles.

Previously serving as a Lead Community Development Analyst with the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, Cathryn advised senior leadership on emerging economic conditions, community development finance, and the evolving needs of underserved communities and financial institutions. Her work focused on strengthening partnerships across public, private, and nonprofit sectors while advancing strategies that promote equitable access to capital, housing stability, and community investment.

Cathryn’s expertise includes community development finance, CDFI policy, housing and neighborhood revitalization, stakeholder engagement, and strategic program development. She is recognized for translating complex economic and policy issues into actionable strategies that support sustainable community growth and operational excellence.

With experience bridging federal systems and municipal implementation, Cathryn brings a practical, data-informed approach to conversations around economic mobility, inclusive development, and cross-sector collaboration.