

State of Small Business Symposium | 2026

June 24 & 25,
Cleveland, OH



Michael Elliott

**Vice President of Neighborhood Economic Development
Cleveland Neighborhood Progress**

Michael R. Elliott, MPA, EDFP, is an accomplished economic development executive with over 15 years of experience driving transformative and equitable growth across the public and nonprofit sectors. As the Vice President of Neighborhood Economic Development at Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP), Michael leads the strategic design and execution of initiatives to revitalize commercial corridors, strengthen local business ecosystems, and build sustainable community wealth. At the 2026 State of Small Business Symposium, he will serve as the moderator for the breakout session, "Neighborhood Prosperity through Small Business Development."

With a keen focus on breaking down traditional barriers to capital for minority and underserved business owners, Michael oversees an impactful portfolio of community investments. This includes administering the \$5M Southeast Side Commercial Corridor Program and the \$3M Middle Neighborhood Commercial Corridor Initiative in close collaboration with municipal and community stakeholders. Championing grassroots entrepreneurship, he also collaborated with CDC leaders to design and launch the CDC Neighborhood Micro Grant Program, successfully deploying \$300K in vital funding directly to more than 150 small businesses across the community.

Prior to his executive leadership at CNP, Michael served as the Program Manager for the Grow America's (f.k.a. National Development Council) Capital Access Fund of Greater Cleveland, where he helped spearhead innovative lending models and successfully scaled capital access programs. His extensive background also includes managing multi-million dollar revolving loan funds and public-private small business grant programs for the City of Cleveland's Department of Development.

Michael is a two-time graduate of Cleveland State University, holding a Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.) and a Bachelor of Arts in Nonprofit Administration. He is a

certified Economic Development Finance Professional (EDFP) and actively contributes to regional economic resilience through various civic leadership roles, including serving on the Cleveland Citywide Development Corporation Loan Review Committee and the Greater Cleveland Better Business Bureau.