5 Misconceptions About Community Development (And the Reality You Need to Know)

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Myth

01

Myth:

Community development is just about construction — new housing, streets, and buildings.

Reality:

While construction matters, real community development builds the systems people rely on, like programs, partnerships, and long-term support.

02

Myth:

If the community development grant is spent, the work is done.

Reality:

Spending funds is just the beginning. Real outcomes come from implementation, when plans are followed, partners are engaged, and results are measured and sustained.

03

Myth:

Federal programs are too rigid to support innovation in community development.

Reality:

Many federal programs offer flexibility, but only when communities understand how to use them. With the right structure and guidance, federal grants can support creative, community-specific solutions.

04

Myth:

Community engagement means holding a meeting.

Reality:

True engagement is ongoing. It means listening, adapting, and building relationships that influence decisions before, during, and after a project.

05

Myth:

Technical assistance is only for organizations that are underperforming.

Reality:

The strongest organizations invest in technical assistance to stay ahead, strengthening systems, adapting to change, and expanding their impact.