2026 League Civic Connection

Track Guide

Track	Track Details
Accelerating Community Growth- Track 1	From TIF fundamentals to the broader toolkit of economic development strategies, this track equips municipal leaders with practical knowledge to attract investment, activate underutilized spaces, and support sustainable community growth. Sessions will explore the tools, partnerships, and public trust needed to turn development opportunities into lasting impact.
No Place Like Housing- Track 2	For communities looking to grow, housing is not somewhere over the rainbow. This track connects the dots between financing tools, development partnerships, and the strategies municipalities need to position themselves as places where growth actually happens.
The Fiscal Formula- Track 3	Municipal finance is part science, part creativity, and part knowing where to look. This track covers the budgeting basics, the unconventional tools hiding in plain sight, and what is coming out of the legislature that will shape your fiscal future.
Innovation Called. Local Government Answered.- Track 4	Innovation does not happen by accident. This track explores how municipalities are rethinking the way work gets done, using AI, grants, creative funding strategies, partnerships, and pilot projects to test ideas, solve problems, and turn local innovation into measurable impact.

Wednesday, October 7

Time	Session
12:30 to 3:30 PM	**Bus Tour** **Everything Development, All at Once** **Departs from Hotel Lobby, Main Entrance** No charge. Registration required. Limited to 50 attendees.
1:00 to 4:00 PM	**Pre-Conference** **Local Government Basics** **Room: Lawrence Room**

Time	Session
5:30 to 7:00 PM	Reception **Welcome Reception** **Room: Exhibition Pre-Function & Outdoor Patio** Food and drinks

Thursday, October 8

Time	Track 1	Track 2	Track 3	Track 4
8:30 to 9:45 AM	Opening Keynote Breakfast & Annual Business Meeting **Finding the Moment** **Room: Salon A/B** Business Meeting 8:30 to 8:45 AM. Keynote 8:45 to 9:45 AM. Jake Woodford, Mayor, Appleton.			
9:45 to 10:00 AM: Break				
Breakout Session 1 | 10:00 to 10:50 AM				
10:00 to 10:50 AM	**TIF Fundamentals for Municipal Decision-Makers** **Room: Salon C** Speakers: Melissa Hunt, WEDA	**Making the Math Work: Financing Housing Development** **Room: Salon D** Speakers: Becky Bissel, Village of Ellsworth; Randy Meyer, City of Sheboygan Falls	**Funding the Future: Thinking Beyond Property Taxes** **Room: Rosewood/Linden** Speakers: Evan Miller, Government Affairs Director, League; Toni Herkert, Director of Strategic Projects, League	**How to Make AI Work for Your Community** **Room: Great Hall** Speakers: Andy Pederson, Village of Bayside, Jerry Gabrielatos, City of Beloit
10:50 to 11:00 AM: Break				
11:00 to 11:50 AM	Roundtable **Small Community Roundtable** **Room: TBD** Roundtable **Medium Community Roundtable** **Room: TBD** Roundtable **Large Community Roundtable** **Room: TBD**			

Time	Track 1	Track 2	Track 3	Track 4
11:50 AM to 12:00 PM: Break, transition to lunch				
12:00 to 1:15 PM	General Session & Lunch **The Forces Shaping Wisconsin's Midterms** **Room: Salon A/B** Charles Franklin, Professor of Law and Public Policy, Marquette Law School			
1:15 to 6:30 PM	Exhibit Hall **Exhibit Hall & Solution Sessions** **Room: Expo Hall** See the separate Solution Sessions schedule for details			
4:30 to 6:30 PM	Reception **President's Reception** **Room: Expo Hall** Networking drinks and appetizers			

Friday, October 9

Time	Track 1	Track 2	Track 3	Track 4
8:00 to 9:00 AM	General Session & Breakfast **When the Data Center Conversation Becomes Yours** **Room: Salon A/B**			
9:00 to 9:15 AM: Break				
Breakout Session 2 | 9:15 to 10:05 AM				
9:15 to 10:05 AM	**Turning Partnerships into Progress** **Room: Salon C** Speakers: Deb Reinbold, Thrive Economic Development; Ben Wehmeier, Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation	**Using TIDs for Home Repairs** **Room: Salon D** Speakers: Jeff Hintz, City of Racine; Todd Taves, Ehlers; Cory Mason, City of Racine	**The Long View: Decades of Data Behind Your Municipal Budget** **Room: Rosewood/Linden** Speakers: Valeah Foy, State and Local Finance Division Administrator, Wisconsin Department of Revenue	**How to Use AI and Still Sound Like Yourself** **Room: Great Hall** Speakers: Maria Davis, The League
10:05 to 10:15 AM: Break				

Time	Track 1	Track 2	Track 3	Track 4
Breakout Session 3 | 10:15 to 11:05 AM				
10:15 to 11:05 AM	**TIF 201: From Creation to Compliance** **Room: Salon C** Speakers: Harry Allen, Ehlers; Kevin Lahner, Ehlers	**Positioned for Partnership: Attracting Development to Your Community** **Room: Salon D** Speakers: Travis Coenen, Village of Wrightstown	**Beyond Balancing the Budget** **Room: Rosewood/Linden** Speakers: Caz Muske, Platteville	**Quiz and Questions with League Attorneys** Ryan Sendelbach, The League Nick Zavos, The League
11:05 to 11:15 AM: Break				
Breakout Session 4 | 11:15 AM to 12:15 PM				
11:15 AM to 12:15 PM	**Public Trust for Community Growth** **Room: Salon C** Speakers: Tracy Johnson, RCE, CAE	**TIF Extension for Housing** **Room: Salon D** Speakers: Ryan Sorenson, Mayor, Sheboygan Adam Sonntag, City Administrator, Ripon David Kress, Deputy Director of Community Development, Appleton	**Basics of Municipal Budgeting and Reporting** **Room: Rosewood/Linden** Speakers: Joe Harrison, Bauman; Eric Davidson, Bauman	**The Language of Innovation: Why Good Government Needs a New Communications Mindset** **Room: Great Hall** Speakers: Kimberly Kane, President & CEO, Kane Communications Group; Matt Hamrin, Vice President of Client Services, Kane Communications Group
12:30 to 1:30 PM	**Closing Keynote & Lunch** **The League at 128. The Future Is on the Agenda.** **Room: Salon A/B** Speakers: Emily McFarland, Executive Director, The League			