



GOVERNOR'S
LOCAL ISSUES
CONFERENCE

TEAM
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Home



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 50th annual Governor's Local Issues Conference. Since 1976, local officials from across Kentucky have gathered in Louisville every year to speak with and learn from one another. This tradition ensures that these conversations continue amongst leaders from all over our commonwealth.

Because of our work, we've accomplished amazing things together. We've secured over \$50 billion in private sector investment. That investment has created more than 70,000 jobs, at the highest wages in our history. We've lowered our recidivism rate the past two years and reduced drug overdoses for four straight years. Our tourism industry has secured the best four years in its history. We're building the Brent Spence Companion Bridge without tolls, extending I-69 and expanding the Mountain Parkway all at the same time.

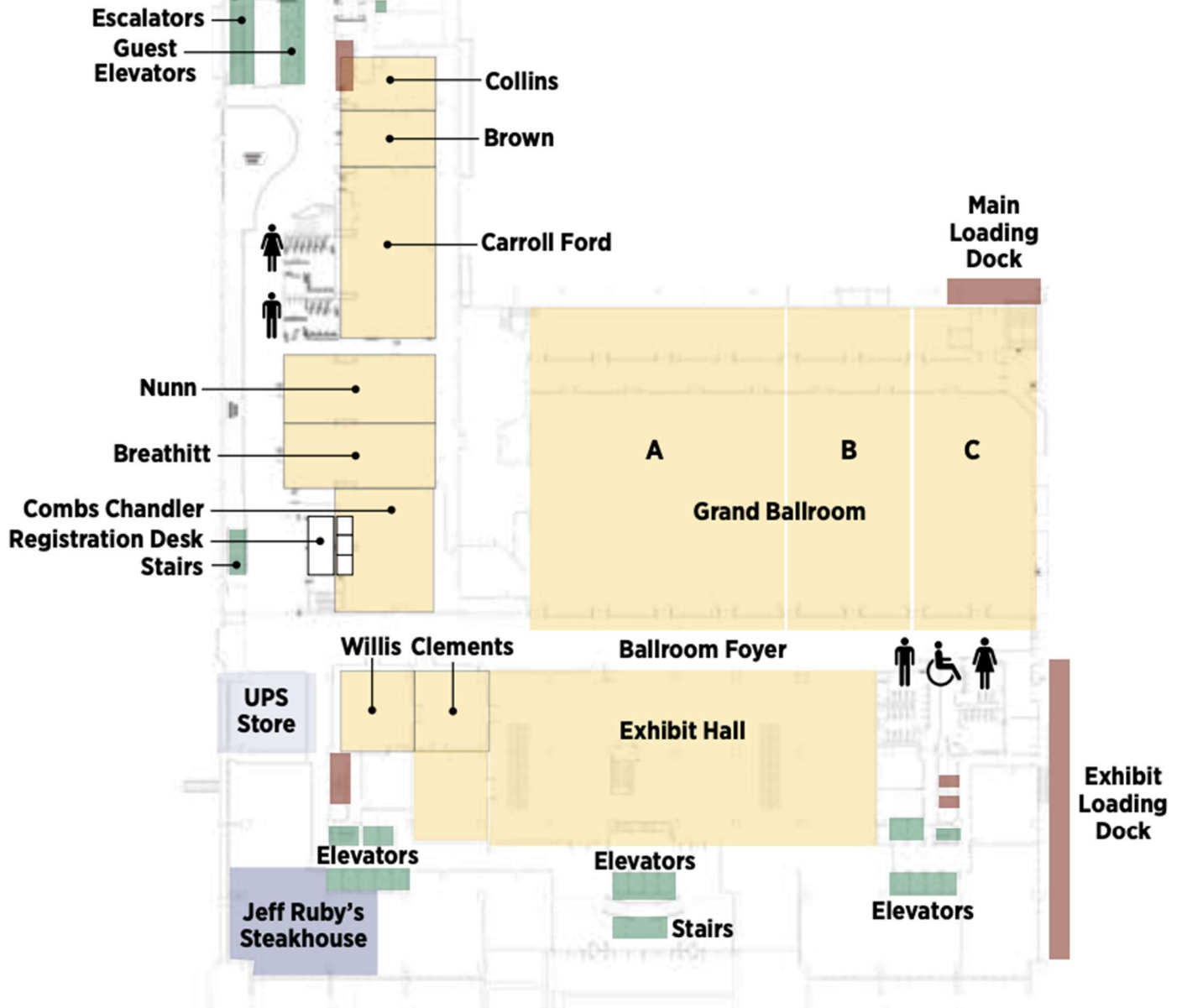
This incredible progress would not be possible without your work. Thank you for showing up for your communities. When we work together, we can do incredible things.

Here's to 50 more years of the Governor's Local Issues Conference.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Beshear". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Andy" and last name "Beshear" clearly legible.

Andy Beshear
Governor

East Tower Second Floor



50th Governor's Local Issues Conference

Board of Directors



Casey Ellis – Executive Director
Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts



J.D. Chaney – Executive Director/CEO
Kentucky League of Cities



JC Young – Executive Director
Kentucky Magistrates & Commissioners Association



Jim Henderson – Executive Director/CEO
Kentucky Association of Counties



Todd Ruckel – Executive Director
Kentucky County Judge/Executives Association



Matt Sawyers – Commissioner
Department for Local Government

General Information

Conference Name badges are required for all conference functions. Please return your badge to the Registration Desk by 9:00 a.m. on Friday morning to be eligible for prize drawings.

Training hours

County officials may earn up to 12 credit hours toward the fulfillment of training requirements outlined in House Bill 810. Proof of attendance (POA) forms will be available in the Willis room. Please return your POA forms on Friday at the registration desk or email within 60 days to receive credit. Kentucky League of Cities training hours have been approved for 10 outside credits.

Conference Trivia



[Kahoot.it](https://kahoot.it)

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AUG 19TH- HMB/S&ME

AUG 20th- Commonwealth Engineers, Inc.

Thank you, we couldn't do it without you!

INFORMATION STATIONS

Willis Room

Local Officials Training Program

Kentucky Infrastructure Authority

Office of Broadband

Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR)

Economic Development Administration

Kentucky Public Pensions Authority

Kentucky National Guard



Conference Agenda

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19TH, 2026

- 9:00 am **Registration Desk Opens**
- 8:30 am **Kentucky Association of County Treasurers & Finance Officers**
Combs/Chandler Room
- 10:00 am **Kentucky Ohio River Regional Recreation Authority**
Collins Room
- 10:00 am **Kentucky Sheriffs' Association**
Nunn Room
- 10:00 am **Kentucky Property Valuation Administrator Association**
Clements Room
- 10:30 am **Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts**
Breathitt Room

50th Annual Governor's Local Issues Conference

MAIN BALLROOM

1:00 Opening Ceremony

Invocation

Hector Alcala, Menifee County Judge/Executive

Presentation of Colors

Jefferson County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard

National Anthem & Pledge of Allegiance

Laura Redmon, DLG

Welcome

Louisville Mayor Craig Greenberg

Keynote Speaker

Lt. Governor Jacqueline Coleman

Local Collaboration: The Tourism and Film Industry

Meg Fister, Executive Director, Kentucky Film Office / Cabinet for Economic Development

Brandon Pennington, Executive Director, City of Harlan Tourist & Convention Commission

Maclean Lessenberry, Executive Director, Glasgow – Barren County Tourist & Convention Commission/Southern Kentucky Film Commission

Lisa Brin, Head of FilmLEX Powered by VisitLEX

Reflecting on the past 50 Years

Casey Ellis, Executive Director, KCADD

JC Young, Executive Director, KMCA

Todd Ruckel, Executive Director, KCJEA

J.D. Chaney – Executive Director/CEO, KLC

Jim Henderson – Executive Director/CEO, KACo

Matt Sawyers, Commissioner, DLG

****Break****

Please join us outside the ballroom for refreshments.

3:15 – 4:00

BREATHITT ROOM

Keeping Your City Compliant: A Guide to Key Requirements

- **Keeaira Lail, Local Government Advisor, DLG**

Join us for an interactive session focused on navigating city compliance and reporting requirements. We will cover essential statutory obligations under KRS 91A.040, walk through the City Calendar to simplify key deadlines, and introduce the new city website. This presentation will provide a first look at enhancements aimed at streamlining processes and supporting city officials in meeting compliance standards.

3:15 – 4:00

CLEMENTS ROOM

How to Successfully Navigate the Section 106 Consultation Process

- **Nicole Konkol, Site Protection Program Administrator / Archaeologist, Kentucky Heritage Council / State Historic Preservation Office**

Kentucky Heritage Council / State Historic Preservation Office staff will provide advice on how to successfully consult with their office to comply with cultural resource protection laws. Information will be provided on what can be expected should your project result in an adverse effect to significant cultural resources.

3:15 – 4:00

NUNN ROOM

Preparing for the Storm, Proactive Community Stormwater Mitigation with Nature-Based Solutions

- **Samantha Vogeler, Branch Manager, Kentucky Division of Water**

The Green Sinks Initiative is an evolving toolkit of nature-based solutions for flood and stormwater mitigation. Practices such as floodplain sinks, wetlands, and how high-flow channels can reduce local flooding, reduce stream erosion, and capture nonpoint source pollution, which improves water quality. In addition, communities are turning these nature-based practices into usable public green spaces.

3:15 – 4:00

CARROLL/FORD ROOM

Maximizing Economic Revitalization & Project Success in Your Community through CDBG-ED

- **Trey Greenwell, Local Government Advisor, DLG**
- **Emma Stevenson, Local Government Advisor, DLG**

Presenters will provide an overview of the CDBG-ED program, along with tips and tricks for successful applications and project administration. Details of the CDBG-ED program that many may be unaware of, such as how to keep economic development funds circulating in your community, how and where to acquire matching funds, and how to use DLG as a tool to build strong, local economic development partnerships.

3:15–4:00

COMBS/CHANDLER ROOM

DLG’s State Grant Programs, Administrative Guidelines and Legislative Updates

- **Aaron Jones, Local Government Branch Manager, DLG**

Overview of the Office of State Grant programs, administrative guidelines, and line-item updates. Programs include Coal & Mineral Severance (Local Government Economic Assistance Fund – LGEAF), (Local Government Economic Development Fund – LGEDF), Regional Development Agency Assistance Program (RD AAP), Local Match Participation Program, and Line-Item appropriations. You will receive guidance for your local government to ensure quick turnaround for your funding opportunities.

4:15 – 5:00

BREATHITT ROOM

Making Waves on the Ohio River: Recreation-Based Economies and Ecological Restoration KORRRA

- **Forest Clevenger, Executive Director, Ohio River Way**

At the local, state, and federal levels, there are renewed focuses on growing recreation-based economies and securing funding for ecological restoration. In June 2025, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior designated 308 miles of the Ohio River Way as a National Water Trail. Currently in Congress, momentum is growing for the nonregulatory Ohio River Restoration Program Act. Join this session to learn more about these projects and how communities along the Ohio River are approaching large-landscape collaboration.

4:15 – 5:00

NUNN ROOM

Federal Outdoor Recreation Grant Programs: RTP, LWCF, & ORLP Overview and Updates

- **Pam Jordan, Federal Program Specialist, DLG**
- **Harper Ford, Local Government Advisor, DLG**

This session provides an overview and update on programs for outdoor recreation: the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), and the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) program. Presenters will cover the basics of each program, including eligible projects, funding priorities, and application tips, in addition to changes to the programs for the current application cycles.

4:15 – 5:00

CARROLL/FORD ROOM

County Government Financial Potpourri

- **Jaarad Taylor, Branch Manager and Local Government Advisor, DLG**

This session looks back at some of the pitfalls of the budget approval process, taking stock of what could have worked better from both the county and branch perspective. Then, this session will delve lightly into tax rates, as about 20% of the counties in attendance will still have to set them. Lastly, county staff will discuss how we review quarterly reports.

4:15 – 5:00

CLEMENTS ROOM

Appalachian Regional Commission Grant Opportunities

- **Brennan Tucker, Kentucky State Program Manager, DLG**
- **Raven Aiken, Local Government Advisor, DLG**

This workshop will encompass multiple upcoming grant opportunities and program updates. The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), including Area Development Initiative, Investments Supporting Partnerships in Recovery Ecosystems Initiative (INSPIRE) and Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization Initiative (POWER). The ARC is an economic development partnership entity of the federal government, made up of 13 state governments, focusing on 423 counties across the Appalachian Region. ARC's mission is to innovate, partner, and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia.

4:15 – 5:00

COMBS/CHANDLER ROOM

Funding Water and Wastewater Infrastructure through KIA Loan Programs

- **Sandy Williams, Executive Director, KIA**
- **John Brady, Loan Analyst, KIA**
- **Rick Harris, Federal Program Specialist, KIA**
- **Debbie Landrum, Regional Compliance Coordinator, KIA**

Kentucky Infrastructure Authority staff will lead a discussion on the application processes for the different types of state and federal low-interest loan funding available for water and wastewater infrastructure construction projects.

5:00-6:00

SAMPSON ROOM

KCJEA/KMCA Social

Hosted by: KY County Judge/Executives Association and KY Magistrates & Commissioners Association

7:30 Hospitality Suite hosted by HMB/S&ME, Room #546

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20th, 2026

7:30 – 8:30

EXHIBIT HALL AREA -- Grab & Go Breakfast

8:30 – 9:15

COMBS/CHANDLER ROOM

Avoiding Common Mistakes: A Counties Branch Perspective

- **Roger Smith, Local Government Advisor, DLG**
- **Tanya Kearney, Local Government Advisor, DLG**
- **Jefferson Abney, Local Government Advisor, DLG**
- **Mandy Otis, Local Government Advisor, DLG**

This is an interactive session with some friendly competition! Participants will be given a mock budget and race against the clock to find as many mistakes as possible. Achievement tokens will be awarded to each participant based on their eye for detail. This session is intended for county treasurers, finance officers, or any other officials responsible for budget preparation and management.

8:30 – 9:15

CLEMENTS ROOM

SPGE Program and Website Overview

- **Rebecca Morton, Local Government Advisor, DLG**

This workshop will provide an overview of Kentucky's Special Purpose Government Entity (SPGE) Program, including reporting requirements under KRS Chapter 65A, compliance deadlines, audit obligations, and common reporting issues. Participants will also receive a guided walkthrough of the SPGE Portal and Public Portal, along with practical tips for navigating and using the website. This session is ideal for anyone wanting to use the portal or responsible for fulfilling annual reporting obligations.

8:30 – 9:15

NUNN ROOM

Kentucky e-Clearinghouse has a NEW LOOK--Out with the Old and in with the NEW!

- **Cindy Seip, Kentucky e-Clearinghouse Program Coordinator, DLG**
- **Don Schierer, IT Business Analyst, KIA**

An overview of the primary features in the NEW and improved e-Clearinghouse portal, which includes how submitters can register for an account, and enter their projects for a successful review. The e-Clearinghouse process is essential for submitters to comply with Presidential Executive Order 12372 and KRS 45.31. The new portal makes the process even more efficient. The session will also include how the WRIS portal and KIA work in tandem with the new e-Clearinghouse portal. In recognition of the 50th anniversary of GLIC, a brief historical overview of how e-Clearinghouse has evolved over the years will be included.

8:30 – 9:15

CARROLL/FORD ROOM

County Animal Shelters and Animal Euthanasia: State Regulations and Oversight

- **Michelle Shane, Executive Director, Kentucky Board of Veterinary Examiners (KBVE)**

Join the Kentucky Board of Veterinary Examiners to learn about county animal shelter requirements, animal control agency certification, DEA Registrations, and rules for animal euthanasia.

8:30 – 9:15

BREATHITT ROOM

Attract, Partner, Build: A Community Guide to New Housing Development

- **Heather Hairgrove, Housing Supply Accelerator**

Attracting housing developers is not a matter of chance—it's the result of deliberate, strategic community action. This presentation provides a practical roadmap for local leaders who want to unlock new residential development and strengthen long-term economic vitality. Participants will leave with a concise checklist, a deeper understanding of how developers assess risk, and proven strategies that have already sparked productive discussions in counties across the state.

9:30 – 10:15

CARROLL/FORD ROOM

Ask the Attorneys

- **Whitney Mendiondo, General Counsel, DLG**
- **Matt Stephens, Staff Attorney, KIA**
- **Rich Ornstein, Staff Attorney, KACo**

This panel of legal representatives will discuss a variety of legal topics of interest to local governments and take questions from the audience.

9:30 – 10:15

NUNN ROOM

Securing the Commonwealth: KOHS' Role in Statewide Preparedness

- **Amy Hess, Executive Director, Kentucky Office of Homeland Security**
- **Adair Ravencraft, Deputy Director, Kentucky Office of Homeland Security**

Discover how the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security strengthens safety and builds resilient communities by coordinating intelligence sharing, tracking emerging threats, identifying vulnerabilities, managing key grant programs, and ensuring access to 9-1-1 services. Attendees will walk away with a clearer picture of how statewide collaboration translates into real-world protection.

9:30 – 10:15

CLEMENTS ROOM

Kentucky National Guard Update

- **LTC Dayna Sanders, KY ARNG Cyber Program Manager**

The Kentucky National Guard will provide an overview of current and future strategic lines of effort and provide a year-in-review highlighting key state and federal accomplishments in cyber.

9:30 – 10:15

BREATHITT ROOM

Area Development Districts

- **Josh Farrow, Executive Director, Gateway ADD**
- **Kevin Cornette, Executive Director, Buffalo Trace ADD**

*Regional collaboration is at the heart of Kentucky's success. This workshop highlights how Kentucky's 15 Area Development Districts bring together local governments, state and federal agencies, community organizations, and private partners to solve complex regional challenges and create lasting economic opportunities. Through an overview of the **Peggy Satterly Spirit of Kentucky Award**, participants will explore the characteristics of successful collaborative projects, learn from award-winning initiatives across the Commonwealth, and discover how strategic partnerships, innovative leadership, and a shared vision can transform communities and strengthen Kentucky's future.*

9:30 – 10:15

COMBS/CHANDLER ROOM

CDBG Handbook Changes and Updates

- **Mark Williams, Executive Director, DLG**
- **Jennifer Peters, Branch Manager, DLG**

The CDBG Handbook has received a complete overhaul. From the flow of the chapters to the use of forms. This session will go over the major changes; don't miss out!

10:30 – 11:15

BREATHITT ROOM

The Nuts and Bolts of KPPA (Kentucky Public Pensions Authority)

- **James Isaacs, KPPA**

Kentucky Public Pensions Authority (KPPA) will discuss how to attain retirement eligibility, how your payment is calculated, and how insurance will work at the time of retirement. This presentation is for everyone. We will cover Tiers 1, 2 and 3

10:30 – 11:15

CLEMENTS ROOM

State Grant Program Guidelines, Line-Item Appropriation Updates & Vendor Account Overview

- **Morgain M. Patterson, Director of Municipal Law, KLC**

Local governments and SPGEs have struggled to retain auditors willing to conduct full GASB audits in compliance with state audit requirements. SB 192 from the 2026 Kentucky General Assembly provides alternative options for SPGEs to comply with the financial reporting requirements while ensuring accountability for spending. This session will cover the new options for SPGE financial reporting and compliance.

10:30 – 11:15

NUNN ROOM

PRICE Kentucky Manufactured Housing Empowerment and Improvement Program: Creating Resident-Owned Manufactured Housing Communities and Replacing Pre-1976 Mobile Homes

- **Curtis Stauffer, Managing Director-Housing Contract Administration, Kentucky Housing Corporation**

The Commonwealth received a \$28 million HUD Preservation and Reinvestment Initiative for Community Enhancement (PRICE) grant to support the Kentucky Manufactured Housing Empowerment and Improvement Program (KMHEIP). KMHEIP, administered by DLG in partnership with Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC), is divided into two separate programs that aim to achieve two primary goals across the state:

- 1) Kentucky ROCs (Resident-Owned Communities)*
- 2) Kentucky Targeted Owner-Occupied Emergency Manufactured Housing Unit Replacement Program*

Kentucky Housing Corporation will provide an overview of both KMHEIP programs in this session.

10:30 – 11:15

COMBS/CHANDLER ROOM

Fiscal Years 2026-2028 (FY26-28) Line-Item Appropriations Overview

- **Aaron Jones, Local Government Branch Manager, DLG**

Overview of the Kentucky General Assembly's 2026 Regular Session line-item appropriations, allocated through the Department for Local Government's FY26-28 Biennium Budget. Recipients of House Bill 900 (HB900) and Senate Bill 197 (SB197) line-item appropriations should attend this workshop to get an overview of the grant administration process necessary to ensure timely receipt of funds and administrative compliance.

10:30 – 11:15

CARROLL/FORD ROOM

Cabinet for Economic Development Program Updates: Focus on GRANT, KPDI and Legislative Updates to Programs

- **Joseph Gearon, Director, Program Administration**
- **Kylee Palmer, Deputy Commissioner**

This session will present a current overview of the Government Resources Acceleration Needed Transformation (GRANT) Program, Kentucky Product Development Initiative (KPDI) Program, and Updates to Kentucky Business Investment, Kentucky Jobs Retention Act, Bluegrass State Skills Corporation, and Introduction of Heritage Counties.

11:30 – 12:15

BREATHITT ROOM

Alcohol Beverage Control: Enforcement & Compliance

- **Shannon Blevins, Assistant Director of Enforcement, ABC**
- **Kevin Duane, Enforcement Investigator, ABC**
- **Joe Martz, Office of Legal Services, ABC**

KY ABC Enforcement and Legal staff will provide a Q&A with local elected officials to discuss enforcement trends, common violations, compliance challenges, and coordination between KY ABC and local enforcement.

11:30 – 12:15

CLEMENTS ROOM

An Overview of APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION Opportunities

- **Lexi Oliva, Program Analyst, ARC**
- **Laura Snell, Program Manager, ARC**

This session will provide attendees with an overview of the purpose and priorities of ARC, ARC's primary funding opportunities and programs, and resources and best practices to consider in preparing an application. Attendees will also have the opportunity to ask questions to clarify program guidelines and application processes.

11:30 – 12:15

COMBS/CHANDLER ROOM

Laying the Groundwork for Disaster Recovery

- **Shellie Hampton, Government Affairs Director, KACo**
- **Kayla Carter Smith, Public Policy Manager, KACo**

KACo advocacy staff will present an overview of new laws that took effect last month and take a look ahead at the 2027 General Assembly session. KACo anticipates this to be an interactive Q&A style format with county officials.

11:30 – 12:15

CARROLL/FORD ROOM

Federal Funding Roundtable: How to Co-mingle Funds for the Greater Benefit

- **Jennifer Peters, Infrastructure Branch Manager, DLG**
- **Debbie Landrum, Regional Compliance Coordinator, KIA**
- **Brennan Tucker, ARC Program Manager, DLG**
- **Lesli Gill, Lead Water & Environmental Programs Specialist, USDA Rural Development**

A summary of four federal funding agencies. Learn how each agency can work together to co-sponsor projects for the greater public benefit.

11:30 – 12:15

NUNN ROOM

Kentucky Workforce System and Reentry Programs – Promoting Strategic Partnerships for Untapped Talent Pipelines and Dynamic Local Workforce Systems across the Commonwealth

- **Aaron Poynter, Reentry and Employment Services Director, Kentucky Office of Adult Education, Education and Labor Cabinet**

Learn how Kentucky communities are building workforce pipelines through partnerships that support justice-involved individuals and other focus populations. This session will highlight successful county-based strategies that reduce recidivism, strengthen workforce participation, and advance economic development while providing practical tools and actionable ideas attendees can implement in their own communities.



Our *New*
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(CONFERENCE BADGES MUST BE WORN FOR ADMITTANCE)

12:30 – 1:45

MAIN BALLROOM

Governor's Luncheon

Peggy Satterly Spirit of Kentucky Award Presentation

Keynote Speaker

Governor Andy Beshear

2:00 – 2:45

BREATHITT ROOM

Stop Leaving Money on the Table: A Funding Playbook for Local Leaders

- **Brian Hutchinson, Chief Development Officer of Community Ventures, Community Ventures**
- **Elizabeth Whitehouse, Founder of Whitehouse Strategies, Whitehouse Strategies**

Every community has big ideas — the challenge is paying for them. In this fast-paced, practical session, two of Kentucky's most experienced funding strategists walk through the full funding landscape — federal grants, philanthropic dollars, and community development capital — covering what funders really want, the mistakes that sink applications, and how to position your community to win. You'll leave with a roadmap, real-world examples, and the confidence to go get it.

2:00 – 2:45

COMBS/CHANDLER ROOM

Ask the Attorneys (Repeated session)

- **Whitney Mendiondo, General Counsel, DLG**
- **Matt Stephens, Staff Attorney, KIA**
- **Rich Ornstein, Staff Attorney, KACO**

This panel of legal representatives will discuss a variety of legal topics of interest to local governments and take questions from the audience.

2:00 – 2:45

CLEMENTS ROOM

An All-Hands-on-Deck Approach to Community and Economic Development: How Eastern Kentucky is Helping Build a Stronger Kentucky

- **Dr. Reed Adkins, Executive Director, SOAR**
- **Dr. Joshua Ball, Chief Operating Officer, SOAR**
- **Kimberly Albright, Chief Program Officer, SOAR**

Discover how Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) is strengthening Eastern Kentucky through an integrated approach to workforce development, entrepreneurship, business growth, talent attraction, and regional collaboration. This session highlights successful initiatives and shares practical strategies for building partnerships, leveraging local assets, and creating sustainable economic opportunities that can be applied in communities across Kentucky.

2:00 – 2:45

CARROLL/FORD ROOM

Department of Rural and Municipal Aid Funding

- **Craig Caudill, Transportation Engineering Branch Manager, KYTC**

This session will discuss the different types of funding available to the state, counties, and cities through the Department of Rural and Municipal Aid.

2:00 – 2:45

NUNN ROOM

Advancing Rural Prosperity | USDA Rural Development

- **Travis T. Burton, Kentucky State Director, USDA Rural Development**
- **Lesli Gill, Lead Water & Environmental Programs Specialist, USDA Rural Development**
- **Jerrod Childers, Lead Community Facilities Specialist, USDA Rural Development**

This session will provide an overview of USDA Rural Development's programs and provide examples of how they can be used to advance prosperity in rural Kentucky. Special emphasis will be placed on Community Facilities and Water & Environmental Programs.

3:00 – 3:45

BREATHITT ROOM

Kentucky Alcohol Beverage Control, Alcohol & Tobacco Licensing

- **Jamar Carter, Director of Tobacco, ABC**
- **Joe Martz, Office of Legal Services, ABC**
- **Maggie Woods, Distilled Spirits Administrator, ABC**

Update on recent legislative changes, regulatory updates, and emerging issues impacting KY ABC

3:00 – 3:45

CLEMENTS ROOM

The Delta Regional Authority: Investing in Health, Leadership, and Workforce Development

- **Sea Talantis, Director of Human Infrastructure, DRA**
- **Daniel Musgrave, Workforce Program Manager, DRA**
- **Cheyton Pendley, Workforce Program Analyst, DRA**

Discover how investments in health, workforce development, and leadership are transforming communities across the Delta region. This interactive session will provide an overview of the Delta Regional Authority's Human Infrastructure portfolio, highlight program outcomes, and offer practical lessons for organizations seeking to build stronger, more resilient communities through people-centered strategies.

3:00 – 3:45

NUNN ROOM

Planning for Water and Sewer Infrastructure

- **Russell Neal, Staff Assistant, KIA**

This presentation will help local decision-makers understand the planning process for water and wastewater projects. Planning can lead to more informed decisions when looking for project funding

3:00 – 3:45

CARROLL/FORD ROOM

BEAD & Beyond: Broadband Updates

- **Meghan Sandfoss, Executive Director, OBD**
- **Beth Sanner, Broadband Program Manager, ARC**

The broadband funding landscape has evolved as major funding programs are reaching completion, major policy changes have occurred in the BEAD program, and many questions remain on what is next in federal funding for broadband deployment. In this session, speakers will talk about the status of statewide broadband deployment programs, what has changed for federal programs, and what communities can do to close the digital divide.

3:00 – 3:45

COMBS/CHANDLER ROOM

Data Centers: What You Need to Know

- **Angie Hatton, Chair, PSC**
- **Mary Pat Regan, Vice Chair, PSC**
- **Andrew Wood, Commissioner, PSC**
- **Barry Mayfield, Commissioner, PSC**
- **Justin McNeil, Executive Director, PSC**

While data centers are increasingly seen as important for the world's digital economy, they have also become a lightning rod for controversy and protest in the communities that are tapped to host these massive projects. Data centers bring both unique challenges and opportunities to the communities that host them. This workshop equips local government officials, urban planners, and policymakers with the foundational knowledge needed to navigate the fiscal, environmental, and infrastructural impacts of data center development.

4:00 – 4:45

NUNN ROOM

From Risk to Readiness: Empowering Kentucky Communities Through Funding and Cyber Confidence

- Gary Burke, Partner, Ernst & Young, LLP
- David Scott, Managing Director, Ernst & Young, LLP

Local governments face a dual challenge: navigating increasingly disruptive cyber threats while making disciplined, high-impact funding decisions. This session blends both perspectives—examining the risks most likely to impact communities, from ransomware and data breaches, to emerging threats to critical infrastructure. Also outline how leaders can align limited budgets to these evolving risks. Attendees will gain practical, actionable insights to prioritize investments, strengthen preparedness and response, and implement controls that help prevent fraud, safeguard public funds, and protect essential services with confidence.

4:00 – 4:45

CLEMENTS ROOM

Kentucky Division of Waste Management Update on Grants and the Statewide Solid Waste Management Plan Draft

- Lisa G. Evans, Environmental Scientist Consultant, Kentucky Division of Waste Management

Updates and changes on grants available through the Kentucky Division of Waste Management. Update on the Draft Statewide Solid Waste Management Plan through the SWIFR Grant.

4:00 – 4:45

CARROLL/FORD ROOM

BEAD & Beyond: Broadband Updates (CONTINUED)

- Meghan Sandfoss, Executive Director, OBD
- Beth Sanner, Broadband Program Manager, ARC

The broadband funding landscape has evolved as major funding programs are reaching completion, major policy changes have occurred in the BEAD program, and many questions remain on what is next in federal funding for broadband deployment. In this session, speakers will talk about the status of statewide broadband deployment programs, what has changed for federal programs, and what communities can do to close the digital divide.

4:00 – 4:45

COMBS/CHANDLER ROOM

Unlocking Federal Investment: How EDA Supports Local Economic Priorities

- Emily Hathcock, Economic Development Representative, Kentucky, U.S. Economic Development Administration

This session introduces city and county leaders to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the tools available to help communities strengthen their economic future.

Attendees will learn how EDA’s mission aligns with local priorities such as job creation, infrastructure development, workforce readiness, and long-term economic resilience. The session will outline the types of projects local governments commonly pursue with EDA support—ranging from planning and technical assistance to large-scale capital investments—and clarify eligibility, match requirements, and strategic considerations.

In addition, the session will walk through what makes a local government proposal stand out. Speakers will highlight practical strategies for building competitive projects, including demonstrating regional collaboration, documenting need and economic impact, aligning with local and regional plans, and ensuring project readiness. Participants will leave with a clearer roadmap for shaping high-impact, fundable project ideas.

5:30

[Shuttle to the Kentucky Derby Museum](#)

CONFERENCE BADGES ARE REQUIRED FOR ADMITTANCE

Transportation to the Commissioner’s reception is provided by the conference. Shuttles run from the lobby of Galt House East every 15 minutes.

6:00 – 8:30

[KENTUCKY DERBY MUSEUM](#)

Commissioner’s Reception

Live Music and Derby Museum Activities (Fun, Fun, and more FUN!)

[SPONSORED BY](#)

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BFW ENGINEERS

Please join Commissioner Sawyers and DLG staff to celebrate the 50th Annual Governor’s Local Issues Conference. A hosted bar and appetizers will be provided. Drink tickets for the event are in your badge holder.

8:00 Hospitality Suite hosted by Commonwealth Engineers, Inc. Rm. 1446

FRIDAY, AUGUST 21st, 2026

MAIN BALLROOM

7:30 – 9:30 Breakfast Buffet

8:30 – 9:15 Data Centers: The Conversation Continues
Presentation by EKPC



**KENTUCKY ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVES**

9:30 – 10:30 Keynote Speaker: Father Jim Sichko (bio on next page)

10:30 Door prizes

11:00 Dismissal

Thank you to Kentucky's ADDs for Providing Door Prizes!



Father Jim Sichko

Fr. Jim Sichko is a priest of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lexington, KY, and has been an internationally known preacher, evangelist, and motivational speaker for over 25 years. In 2015, Pope Francis commissioned Fr. Jim as a Papal Missionary of Mercy in conjunction with the Extraordinary Jubilee Year, making him one of 100 in the United States and 1,000 in the world.

Known for his presentations entitled "60 minutes for Jesus," Fr. Jim's talks and parish missions are geared for every member of the household, from youth to adulthood, and for anyone regardless of religious affiliation or not. Known as "the best opening act ever" by Dolly Parton, Fr. Jim uses real-life experiences, personal stories, and humor, to motivate any audience to recognize the good within themselves and others, while challenging them to make the world a better place.

Fr. Jim has been featured in numerous media outlets including CBS News, EWTN, Fox News, America Media, Esquire Magazine, and the National Catholic Reporter. Celebrated for his "simple acts of kindness" from the streets of Lexington to the flood-torn cities of Eastern Kentucky, Fr. Jim's frequent collaboration with Delta Airlines, Amazon, Willett Bourbon Distillery, True Blue Customs, and the City of Lexington, along with numerous celebrities, politicians, and entrepreneurs, have made thousands of kind acts a reality.

Fr. Jim has spoken across six continents and all 50 states. Preaching the Gospel even through social media, his daily posts reach over 70,000 followers on Facebook, 24,000 on X (formerly Twitter), and over 10,000 on Instagram. He is the author of two books: *Encountering God: As a Traveling Papal Missionary of Mercy* and *Among Friends: Stories from the Journey*. Fr. Jim is also the founder of Miss Marie's Spaghetti Sauce. Named after his mother and created from her secret Italian recipe, proceeds from the nationally acclaimed brand benefit the Southeast Texas Hospice and outreach work in the Diocese of Lexington.

Known for his nonstop, energetic pace, Fr. Jim's current schedule has him "out on the road and in the air" 300 days a year for special events, Masses, and Parish Missions.



Conference Attendees,

Thank you for attending the 50th Annual Governor's Local Issues Conference! On behalf of the Department for Local Government and all of TEAM KY, please know we consider your service to the Commonwealth invaluable and we truly thank you. We hope this conference has provided a platform for valuable information sharing and connection building to take back to your communities.

See you next year,

Matt Sawyers

Commissioner, DLG

Our *New*
Kentucky
Home

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