

2026 ARIZONA STATE PLANNING CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE BROCHURE AND PROGRAM

HISTORIC ROUTES

Timeless Skies



November 4-5, 2026

High Country Conference Center
Flagstaff, AZ



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PRESIDENT'S WELCOME



Welcome to the 2026 Arizona State Planning Conference! I'm so glad you're here. I can't think of a better place to gather than Flagstaff, one of my absolute favorite Arizona communities. With its rich history, vibrant culture, and incredible natural setting, it's the perfect host for this year's conference.

The timing couldn't be better. As we celebrate the centennial of Route 66, we're reminded that great places are shaped by the journeys that connect them. Our theme, **Historic Routes, Timeless Skies**, invites us to reflect on the paths that have defined our communities while looking ahead to the opportunities that will shape their future. There's no better place to do that than Flagstaff, recently recognized as the 2026 International Dark Sky Place of the Year, a community that reminds us the best planning doesn't just preserve what's special, it helps future generations experience it.

Our conference committee has assembled an outstanding program packed into two inspiring days. Across five tracks—The Nighttime City, From Heritage to Homestead, Sovereign Lands and Shared Futures, Higher Ground in Technology, and Resilient Routes—you'll find conversations grounded in the issues shaping our profession today: housing, tribal partnerships, artificial intelligence, wildfire resilience, historic preservation, transportation, and so much more.

We're also honored to welcome keynote & plenary speakers Dr. Nikki Cooley and Liz Archuleta, whose perspectives will challenge and inspire us, deepening our understanding of the work ahead. And if your schedule allows, I encourage you to experience one of our mobile tours. Whether you're exploring historic downtown, discovering Flagstaff's craft beverage scene, or taking in one of the world's premier dark sky destinations, you'll see firsthand what makes this community so remarkable.

You'll notice this year's conference is a little shorter than usual. Friday belongs to you. Take time to explore Flagstaff, venture out along Route 66, visit a nearby national monument, or simply enjoy the cool mountain air. Consider it an extension of the conference, because some of the best planning lessons come from experiencing great places firsthand.

Thank you for being here, for investing in your profession, and for the work you do every day to build and create great communities for all across Arizona. Enjoy every session, every conversation, and every lesson under Flagstaff's timeless skies.

Next Stop: Tucson. See you in 2027!

Warmly,

Sarah Meggison, AICP

President, Arizona Chapter, American Planning Association



A SPECIAL THANK YOU

TO OUR CONFERENCE CHAIR, SARA

I want to recognize this year's Conference Committee for their incredible work in putting together an APA Arizona planning conference that highlights the best of Northern Arizona. Special thanks to:

Ben Mejia
Sullivan Moore
Melissa Shaw
Jess McNeely
Dustin Stiffler

Michelle Dahlke
Matthew Gomez
Jessica Young
Paige Wolfrom

Amanda Leon
Taylor Plummer
Laney Corey
David Neal



GENERAL INFORMATION

It's time for the 2026 Arizona State Planning Conference at the High Country Conference Center in Flagstaff. Historic Routes, Timeless Skies highlights historic milestones that tie together our practice's past, present, and future. This year's theme celebrates the Route 66 centennial and the legacy of highway construction throughout the state as well as the 25th anniversary of Flagstaff being declared a dark skies city, an international designation shared with Sedona, Cottonwood, Camp Verde, Fountain Hills, Tucson, Bisbee, and Tubac. The conference will offer 27 sessions and 9 mobile tours across five tracks.

Conference Hotels

Drury Inn & Suites Flagstaff

300 South Milton Road, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Our group rates:

- \$142/night for deluxe rooms
- \$172/night for suites

Book your stay at: www.druryhotels.com/bookandstay/newreservation and **enter group code 10170136** or call 1.800.325.0720 and use group code 10170136. The cut-off date for our group rate is Sunday, October 11, 2026.

Embassy Suites by Hilton Flagstaff

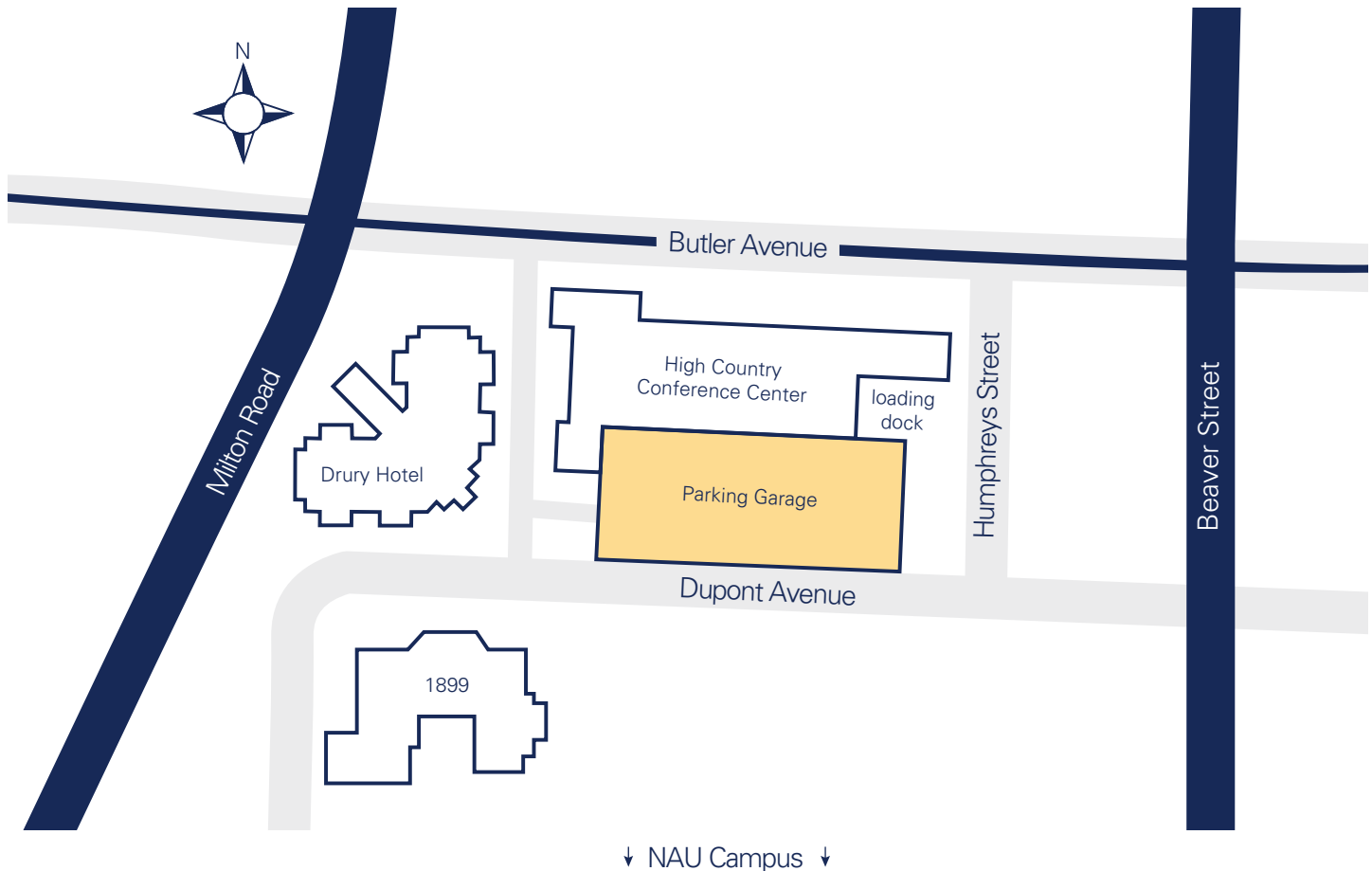
706 South Milton Road, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Our group rate is \$189/night.

Book your stay at: www.group.embassysuites.com/anb6b6 or call 1-800-EMBASSY and mention the Arizona Planning Association Conference to receive the group rate. The cut-off date for our group rate is Sunday, October 4, 2026.

City of Flagstaff Land Acknowledgement

The City of Flagstaff humbly acknowledges the ancestral homelands of this area's Indigenous nations and original stewards. These lands, still inhabited by Native descendants, border mountains sacred to Indigenous peoples. We honor them, their legacies, their traditions, and their continued contributions. We celebrate their past, present, and future generations who will forever know this place as home.



Parking

Complimentary parking is available at both of the conference hotels, and at the High Country Conference Center (201 West Butler Avenue, Flagstaff, AZ 86001) for registrants who are not staying at either hotel. The parking garage is attached to the conference center. For conference registrants not staying at the Drury Inn, parking ticket validations will be available daily at the main host conference registration desk and the High Country front desk; a ticket is required for entering and departing unless the parking gate is open. For any parking fee refunds, see High Country front desk attendant to complete a request form.

Registration and Information Desk

The registration and information desk will be in the High Country Conference Center lobby. The desk will be staffed the following days and times:

- Wednesday: 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- Thursday: 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Conference Cancellations/Refund Policy

All registration changes/cancellations must be received in writing by Monday, October 12, 2026 to be eligible for a refund or modification less a \$100 conference cancellation fee. Changes/cancellations after this date and conference no-shows will be responsible for the full amount of the registration because your attendance will have already been guaranteed. You may send a substitute in your place in the event you are unable to attend. For registration information or questions, call 602.866.7188 or email info@azplanning.org.

Conference Contact Information

The APA Arizona website, www.azplanning.org, is an excellent source for updated conference information.

For other conference information, please contact the association office at 602.866.7188 or by email at info@azplanning.org.

CONFERENCE TRACKS

THE NIGHTTIME CITY

Night Work, Dark Skies,
Exploration

FROM HERITAGE TO HOMESTEAD

Attainability, Affordability,
Rehabilitation, Neighborhoods

SOVEREIGN LANDS, SHARED FUTURES

Partnership, Stewardship,
Amplifying Voices

HIGHER GROUND IN TECHNOLOGY

Innovation, Automation,
Resilience

RESILIENT ROUTES

Mobility, Ecology,
Community, History



SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Tuesday, November 3, 2026

	DRURY BALLROOM	1899 BALLROOM	HHC BALLROOM 1	HHC BALLROOM 2	HHC BALLROOM MAIN	MOBILE TOURS (OFF-SITE)
6:00 - 8:00 PM	Happy Hour: Fast and Fun 8: What Happens in the Dark held at Mother Road Brewing Company, 7 S Mikes Pike					

Wednesday, November 4, 2026

8:00 - 9:00 AM	Opening Remarks by Flagstaff Mayor Becky Daggett Breakfast – Networking and Visit					
9:00 - 10:15 AM					Ethics: AZ APA*	
10:15 - 10:30 AM - Break						
10:30 - 11:45 AM	N/A	N/A	Law: Ratification! What They Didn't Tell You in Planning School	Law: Legislative Update	Law: Innovation in Zoning Case Presentation and Planning Law	
12:00 - 1:30 PM	Keynote Luncheon: Nikki Cooley, Director, Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals, NAU					
1:45 - 3:00 PM	Timeless Skies, Growing Cities: the Dark-Sky Model of Flagstaff	Planning for Transit Before the Train: I-10 West, Maryvale, and Development Oriented Transit	Pre-Approved Housing Programs: Lessons Learned in Implementation	Energy Ready: Preparing Communities for the Future of Energy Development	Envisioning a Two-Spirit Third Space: A Spatial Intervention in Urban Landscapes	From Hops to Heritage: Exploring Flagstaff's Craft Beverage Entrepreneurship
3:15 - 4:30 PM	Bringing New Housing Opportunities HOME	From Highway to Main Street	How Cities Respond When the Highway Moves - the Live Version of the Cars Movie	Shared Stewardship: The Importance of Consulting & Collaborating with Tribes	Preparing Planning Departments for the Age of AI	<i>and</i> Timber, Transit, and Transformation - Tour of the Downtown Connection Center
5:00 - 8:30 PM	Opening Reception at the Orpheum, 15 W Aspen Ave.					

CONFERENCE TRACKS/ KEY

 The Nighttime City	 From Heritage to Homestead	 Higher Ground in Technology
 Resilient Routes	 Sovereign Lands, Shared Futures	

Thursday, November 5, 2026

	DRURY BALLROOM	1899 BALLROOM	HHC BALLROOM 1	HHC BALLROOM 2	HHC BALLROOM MAIN	MOBILE TOURS (OFF-SITE)
8:00 - 9:00 PM	Breakfast – Networking and Visit					
9:00 - 10:15 AM	Plenary Session: Liz Archuleta					Flagstaff's Downtown Mile: Leveraging Infrastructure to Advance Community Planning <i>and</i> Building an Innovation Ecosystem: Inside the Moonshot Incubator
10:30 - 11:45 AM	Community Wealth Building for Resilient Local Economies	Crowdsource the Plan: Interactive Best Practices in Action	Small City, Big Skies: Reimagining Horseshoe Bend After Dark Through Stargazing and Community Partnerships	Sage Memorial Tiny Home Community	Unlocking Housing Choice: Code Changes to Expand Options	
12:00 - 1:30 PM	Awards Luncheon					
1:45 - 3:00 PM	ARCHES: Emerging Trends from the State of Housing in AZ - Report & Research Quick Hits	Beyond the Cloud: How Arizona Cities are Planning for Data Centers	Blueprint for Accessibility: Developing Scottsdale's ADA Transition Plan	From Plan to Practice: Using Community Wildfire Protection Plans to Reduce Wildfire Risk	Route 66: Celebrating the Centennial and Planning for the Next 100 Years	Resilient Routes, Safer School: MetroPlan's Data-driven Safe Routes to School Framework
3:15 - 4:30 PM	Active Transportation at Every Level: Federal Changes, State Successes, and Local Innovation	Tribal and Local Partnerships for Economic Resilience and Shared Prosperity	Gateway Communities and Value-Based Decision-making	Housing, Tourism, Economic Development: Why You Shouldn't Be Afraid of Historic Preservation	From Pines to Saguaros: Planning Connected Communities Across Arizona	
5:00 - 6:00 PM	Planners' Bazaar					
6:00 - 8:00 PM	Dinner and Drinks					
7:30 - 9:00 PM						Touring the Night Skies and Lighting a Growing City

CONFERENCE TRACKS/ KEY

 <i>The Nighttime City</i>	 <i>From Heritage to Homestead</i>	 <i>Higher Ground in Technology</i>
 <i>Resilient Routes</i>	 <i>Sovereign Lands, Shared Futures</i>	

Friday, November 6, 2026 - MOBILE TOURS ONLY

	MOBILE TOURS (OFF-SITE)
7:30 AM-8:30 AM	Women in Planning Breakfast (Pueblo Sunrise Cafe)
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Babbitt Ranches: Powering the Future, Preserving the Landscape
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM	Training Certified Local Government Training at City Hall, Provided by SHPO
9:00 - 11:00 AM	Canvas of a Community: Discovering Downtown and Southside's Public Art
9:00 - 11:00 AM	Investing in History: The Business of Historic Preservation in Downtown Flagstaff
9:00 - 11:00 AM	Fire on the Landscape: Exploring Sunset Crater

SPECIAL EVENTS & MOBILE TOURS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

Fast and Funny 8: What Happens in the Dark (Hosted by Jessica Sarkissian)

6:00 - 8:00 p.m. | Mother Road Brewing, 7 South Mikes Pike

Getting to town early? This is the 8th year of this fun, highly requested session, which places the audience into teams to form a panel game show. Audience members will learn from others' experiences, which will be hard to forget as they laugh at others' scary planning stories and feel empathy.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4



Opening Remarks by Flagstaff Mayor Becky Daggett | Breakfast – Networking and Visit

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. | Main Ballroom

Begin the day with opening remarks by Flagstaff Mayor Becky Daggett. An Arizona native with a long history of local and statewide leadership, Flagstaff Mayor Becky Daggett was elected Vice Mayor in 2020 and first elected Mayor in 2022.

Prior to her first election, Mayor Daggett served in executive leadership of four Flagstaff nonprofits and worked for the City of Flagstaff as the Business Retention and Expansion Manager. Mayor Daggett has served and is serving and working with several local, state, and national organizations including the League of Arizona Cities and Towns Executive Committee, U.S. Conference of Mayors, Bloomberg Center for Cities at Harvard University, Mayors' Institute for City Design, Climate Mayors, and Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger. Mayor Daggett earned a Master's degree in Sustainable Communities from Northern Arizona University.

Mayor Daggett was appointed by Governor Hobbs to the Arizona Arts Commission, serves on the Arizona Citizens for the Arts board, completed the Just City Mayoral Fellowship at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, and is a Flinn-Brown Fellow through the Arizona Center for Civic Leadership.

SPECIAL EVENTS & MOBILE TOURS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4 (CONTINUED)



Keynote Luncheon: Indigeneity and Shared Futures in Planning and Partnerships

12:00 - 1:30 p.m. | Main Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.5 (Special Credits)

Nikki Cooley, Director of the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) at Northern Arizona University, is a Diné woman from Shonto and Blue Gap, Arizona, on the Diné Nation. She is of the Towering House People and born for the Reed People. Ms. Cooley is an alumna of Northern Arizona University (NAU, where she earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees in forestry with an emphasis on Indigenous Knowledges.

In her role as Director, she works across the continental United States and Alaska to provide outreach, training, and workshops. Her work supports Tribal Nations as they prepare for and respond to environmental impacts. ITEP collaborates with a wide range of federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, and community partners.

She has extensive experience working with Tribal Nations, including the Kaibab Paiute Tribe and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. In addition, she was the first Diné woman to be licensed as a commercial river guide on the San Juan River in Utah and the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon and has served as a cultural educator. She was a co-author of the Human Health chapter for the Fifth National Climate Assessment (NCA5). She was also a co-lead and co-author of the first and second volumes of the Status of Tribes and Climate Change (STACC) Report, which centers Indigenous Knowledges and efforts by Tribal relatives and nations. This report is convened by ITEP and developed in collaboration with contributors from across the country, including many Tribal scholars, artists, leaders, Elders, young leaders, and community members.

Opening Reception

Orpheum Theatre | 5:00 - 8:30 p.m. | 15 West Aspen Avenue

Please contact info@azplanning.org if you need reasonable accommodations for this event. This event is included in your registration fee.

SPECIAL EVENTS & MOBILE TOURS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4 (CONTINUED)

MOBILE TOUR From Hops to Heritage: Exploring Flagstaff's Craft Beverage Entrepreneurship

1:30 - 4:30 p.m. | Cost: \$50

During this van tour, learn about the development and operations of brewers and distilleries in Flagstaff, including an overview and discussion with Michael Marquess, CEO and founder of Mother Road Beer, and Nick Irvine, Marketing Director of Drinking Horn Meadery. Flagstaff has become a leading city for small-scale beer and alcohol production, with eight operating breweries, one meadery, and one distillery. The tour will include four half-hour tours of local alcohol production operations and tasting rooms with the proprietors, as well as planning and economic development staff from the city. You will learn how the businesses evolved, the technical demands of their craft, the legal issues in Arizona, and the successes and challenges that the city has experienced in supporting and promoting this growing industry.

MOBILE TOUR Timber, Transit, and Transformation - Walking Tour of the Downtown Connection Center

1:30 - 3:30 p.m. | Cost: \$25

Join us for a guided walking tour of the future Downtown Connection Center, a transformative project for central Flagstaff to enhance mobility, create a vibrant civic gathering space, and strengthen connections throughout the heart of downtown. This tour will explore the vision behind the project, including why this location was selected as the community's transit hub and how it will improve access to public transportation while supporting downtown businesses, residents, and visitors. Participants will explore key design elements, including opportunities for public art, architectural features that shape the character of the space, and future plans for an expanded bus terminal and welcoming civic gathering area. Attendees will also learn about the integral CMAR process, future bus hub, its role in the community, and how the project will improve connectivity and enhance the downtown experience.

SPECIAL EVENTS & MOBILE TOURS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5



Plenary Session: Rooted in Place: Values and Heritage as a Foundation for Rural Community Planning

9:00 – 10:15 a.m. | Main Ballroom

Liz Archuleta is the President and CEO of United Way of Northern Arizona. She is a highly accomplished, nationally recognized leader who served on the Coconino County Board of Supervisors and as a presidential appointee in the Biden-Harris Administration on the U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Secretary's senior leadership team.

United Way of Northern Arizona (UWNA) improves the quality of life for children, youth, and families by changing community conditions. Liz's connection to UWNA dates back to 1997 when she served on its Board of Directors.

Known as an agent of change, Liz is an inspirational and innovative leader with extensive local, state, and national connections. She has significant experience convening communities, building partnerships, and advancing community-based initiatives. A fourth-generation Flagstaff resident, Liz comes from a Hispanic pioneer family with deep roots in the railroad, logging, and entrepreneurial sectors. In 1996, she became the first Latina elected to the Coconino County Board of Supervisors. During her 25 years representing District 2, she helped position the county as a nationally recognized model for innovation, fiscal stewardship, justice reform, health and human services, and collaboration with rural and tribal communities.

Liz Archuleta's accomplishments as a County Supervisor include establishing a regional transportation system, enhancing public safety, increasing citizen engagement, advancing comprehensive land use planning, and leading rural economic development initiatives.

Through leadership roles with the National Association of Counties and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, Liz helped shape national policy and testified before Congress on numerous occasions. She developed a national model for post-wildfire flood mitigation following unprecedented wildfires and flooding. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she guided Coconino County through the crisis, helping establish Arizona's first testing site and leading the county to become the first in the state to provide vaccines.

In 2021, the Biden-Harris Administration appointed Liz Director of the Office of External & Intergovernmental Affairs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In this role, she cultivated relationships with elected officials, government leaders, private sector CEOs, trade associations, and nonprofit organizations on behalf of USDA and Secretary Tom Vilsack.

SPECIAL EVENTS & MOBILE TOURS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5 (CONTINUED)

MOBILE TOUR Flagstaff's Downtown Mile: Leveraging Infrastructure to Advance Community Planning

9:00 - 11:00 a.m. | Cost: \$25

Interagency project partners will lead a tour of the Downtown Mile, a transformative multimodal transportation project improving safety, connectivity, and mobility along Flagstaff's historic rail corridor. Explore key project locations and discover how planning, partnerships, and innovative design are helping reconnect neighborhoods, support active transportation, and enhance community access while maintaining rail operations.

MOBILE TOUR Building an Innovation Ecosystem: Inside the Moonshot Incubator (Drive)

9:00 - 11:00 a.m. | Cost: \$50

Explore how Moonshot at NACET supports entrepreneurs, startups, and emerging businesses while strengthening Northern Arizona's innovation economy. Learn how partnerships, mentorship, and business incubation are helping turn ideas into successful ventures and fostering long-term economic resilience.

Awards Luncheon

12:00 - 1:30 p.m. | High Country Conference Center Main Ballroom

Gather together to celebrate our award-winning colleagues and their projects at the annual awards luncheon.

MOBILE TOUR Resilient Routes, Safer School: MetroPlan's Data-driven Safe Routes to School Framework

1:30 - 3:30 p.m. | Cost: \$25

Take the bus with local planners for an interactive Safe Routes to School experience, traveling by transit to a local elementary school to observe student travel behavior, surrounding infrastructure, and safety conditions during the afternoon dismissal period. Participants will then work in small groups to identify key challenges and develop practical Safe Routes to School strategies, providing a hands-on opportunity to engage directly in the planning process. Bus day passes provided courtesy of Mountain Line.

Cocktail Hour

5:00 - 6:00 p.m. | Atrium Outside Main Ballroom

SPECIAL EVENTS & MOBILE TOURS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5 (CONTINUED)

Planners' Bazaar and Dinner

6:00 - 8:00 p.m. | Main Ballroom

This year's Planners' Bazaar theme is "Under the Stars." This conference theme reflects Arizona's rich transportation and planning history and its world-renowned dark skies, celebrating the connections between place, heritage, stewardship, and the communities the planners shape for today and tomorrow.

MOBILE TOUR Touring the Night Skies and Lighting a Growing City

7:30 - 9:00 p.m. | Cost: \$50

Ever since passing the world's first dark-sky lighting ordinance in 1958, Flagstaff has been a living laboratory that demonstrates the real-world results of effective lighting. This session is a driving tour of Flagstaff at night, showcasing the City's newly-completed retrofit of nearly 4000 streetlights to narrow-band amber (NBA) LEDs and the Arizona Department of Transportation's new retrofit to amber LEDs for nearly 400 streetlights in the Flagstaff area, including those on interstate roadways—another first. This tour includes historic Route 66, Interstate 40 and a final stop at the City's Buffalo Park. Views of the Milky Way included.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6

MOBILE TOUR Babbitt Ranches: Powering the Future, Preserving the Landscape

8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | Meet at the Drury Inn and Suites Entrance | CM Credit: 4 | Cost: \$55

Learn about renewable energy planning in Coconino County. We'll discuss policy making at the comprehensive plan level with the public and stakeholders - including large property owners and wildlife planners. We'll discuss how policy drives regulation updates to balance competing values such as protecting visual resources and wildlife while encouraging land use diversification to encourage large properties staying intact with adjoining public lands, keeping landscape scale ecosystems healthy. And, we'll see renewable wind and solar projects built and operating and under construction on Babbitt Ranches.

Training | Certified Local Government Training

9:00 - 1:00 p.m. | Flagstaff City Hall | CM Credit: pending | Cost: \$0

Is your city filled with special places and unique character? Chances are some of those places are historic! Through the Certified Local Government program, the State Historic Preservation Office assists Cities, Towns, and Counties in understanding their historic and cultural resources and implementing local government programs to incorporate historic places into future planning and development. This informational training session is open to all, and will also include information and exercises for appropriately modifying historic buildings and new construction in historic contexts. Representatives from current Certified Local Governments are also encouraged to attend. No advance registration required. Email questions to Arianna Urban at aurban@azstateparks.gov.

SPECIAL EVENTS & MOBILE TOURS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6 (CONTINUED)

MOBILE TOUR Canvas of a Community: Discovering Downtown and Southside's Public Art

9:00 - 11:00 a.m. | Meet at City Hall, 211 West Aspen Avenue | CM Credit: 2 | Cost: \$25

Led by the City's Beautification, Arts, and Sciences staff, this tour highlights how public art enhances community identity, celebrates local culture, and transforms public spaces. Learn about the vision, partnerships, and programs behind Flagstaff's growing public art collection and discover how art contributes to placemaking, economic vitality, and neighborhood character.

MOBILE TOUR Investing in History: The Business of Historic Preservation in Downtown Flagstaff

9:00 - 11:00 a.m. | Meet at Heritage Square | CM Credit: 2 | Cost: \$25

Step behind the facades of Downtown Flagstaff's historic commercial buildings with a longtime property owner and steward. Discover the stories, challenges, and opportunities of preserving historic properties while adapting them to serve the community today.

MOBILE TOUR Fire on the Landscape: Exploring Sunset Crater

9:00 - 11:00 a.m. | Meet at Flagstaff Mall and Carpool | CM Credit: 2 | \$0

The National Park Service charges \$25 per vehicle. The pass is good for 7 days. If you have an America the Beautiful—the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass, you can use this instead of paying the fee. Carpooling is also crucial because parking at trailheads is limited. Explore the volcanic legacy of Sunset Crater on a self-guided hike of the Lava Flow Trail. Along the way, planners will discuss the role of conservation, public land management, and landscape-scale stewardship in protecting Northern Arizona's unique natural resources.

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4

Opening Remarks/Welcome from Flagstaff Mayor Becky Daggett

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. | Main Ballroom

At the Crossroads: Ethics in Arizona Planning Practice

9:00 - 10:15 a.m. | Main Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25 Ethics

Four real ethical dilemmas. One room full of practitioners. This interactive session works through the AICP Ethics Committee's 2026 Cases of the Year using live polling, table discussions, and perspective from APA Arizona chapter leadership spanning public sector planning and land use law, closing with an honest look at the ethical crossroads specific to Arizona practice today

Moderator: Sarah Meggison, AICP - City of Tucson

Panelists: Noel Griemsmann, AICP - Snell & Wilmer and Amanda Leon, AICP - City of Phoenix

2025 Legislative Law Update

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. | Ballroom 2 | CM Credit: 1.25 Law

This session will present brief highlights of the most recent and significant current planning law cases impacting Arizona and an open discussion opportunity to ask the panel a variety of planning law questions.

Moderator: Ryan McCann, AICP - Snell & Wilmer

Presenters: Tom Dorn, President - Dorn Policy Group Inc.

Ratification! What They Didn't Tell You in Planning School

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. | Ballroom 1 | CM Credit: 1.25 Law

A panel of experts with recent general plan ratification experience will speak about legal requirements, education campaigning and related statutes, social media rules and influences, and organizing quick responses to misinformation during the ratification process.

Moderator: Cesar Acosta, AICP - City of Tucson

Presenters: Sara Dechter - Mountain Line, formerly City of Flagstaff; Ian Wan and Carver Struve - City of Tucson; Elsa Erling - City of Flagstaff

Innovation in Zoning Case Presentation and Planning Law

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. | Main Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25 Law

Planning is becoming more visual, more immediate, and more interactive- and technology is at the center of that transformation. Whether it's using drones for site analysis, incorporating multimedia into presentations, or leveraging social media, these tools are helping us make better decisions. Learn how these advances intersect with permitting, privacy, and property rights.

Moderator: Lindsay Schube - Gammage & Burnham

Presenters: Brian Vacarro - Gammage & Burnham

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4

Keynote Luncheon: Indigeneity and Shared Futures in Planning and Partnerships

12:00 - 1:30 p.m. | Main Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.5

Nikki Cooley, Director of the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP at Northern Arizona University)

1:45 - 3:00 P.M. // CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Envisioning a Two-Spirit Third Space: A Spatial Intervention in Urban Landscapes

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. | Main Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

Urban landscapes are forever-growing systems that often exclude and dismiss marginalized communities, particularly Indigenous Queer, Trans, & Two-Spirit (IQT2S Peoples from safely existing within these cities. Look at this dilemma with two guiding questions: 1 What would Indigenous Queer spaces look like in cities? And 2 How do we center IQT2S perceptions of safety? We envision a streamlined process that allows IQT2S voices and experiences to be heard and implemented within city development.

Moderator: Lauren Clementino, AICP

Presenters: Dr. Souksavanh T. Keovorabouth and Brendan Wang, Northern Arizona University

Energy Ready: Preparing Communities for the Future of Energy Development

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. | Ballroom 2 | CM Credit: 1.25

The electrical grid is critical infrastructure that underpins our daily lives, enables economic development and contributes to our wellbeing in countless ways. At the local level, there is mounting concern over rising energy costs, reliability, safety and other impacts associated with energy infrastructure development. This session will share tools, resources and strategies that local governments can use to prepare for and manage the next generation of energy technologies.

Moderator: Brandy O'Quinn - Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC)

Panelists: Kelsea Dombrovski - ICMA; Andrew Light - World Resources Institute

Pre-Approved Housing Programs: Lessons Learned in Implementation

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. | Ballroom 1 | CM Credit: 1.25

Arizona municipalities are developing pre-approved housing programs under new state requirements aimed at streamlining development and increasing housing supply. This session highlights lessons, challenges, and community responses from early adopters, with insights from programs in Oro Valley, Tucson, Tempe, Flagstaff, and Phoenix.

Moderator: Michael Garcia, Town of Oro Valley

Panelists: Loran Shamis - City of Tucson; Lucas Jensen - City of Tempe; Genevieve Pearthree - City of Flagstaff; Amanda Leon - City of Phoenix

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4

Planning for Transit Before the Train: I-10 West, Maryvale, and Development-Oriented Transit

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. | 1899 Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

This session explores how Phoenix's I-10 West TOC policy planning is using "development-oriented transit" to guide reinvestment in Maryvale, a high-potential transit corridor with postwar single-family neighborhoods, industrial land, freeway access, BRT, and future rail connections. Panelists will discuss planning for equitable redevelopment, mid-rise intensity, and why station-area policy can prepare communities for transit before the train arrives.

Moderator: Alan Beaudoin - Norris Design

Panelists: Chase Hales and Joel Carrasco - City of Phoenix; Allison Shinn, AICP - CivTech

Timeless Skies, Growing Cities: the Dark-Sky Model of Flagstaff

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. | Drury Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

The City of Flagstaff was named Dark Sky Place of the Year in 2025, and in 2026 it celebrates 25 years as the world's first International Dark Sky City. Flagstaff stands as a model for other cities, demonstrating through empirical data that a city can safely illuminate the ground and grow economically without sacrificing an inspiring view of the cosmos. Our panelists will tell the story of Flagstaff's dark-sky journey and share the world-leading standards and best practices that other communities can replicate to restore their own starry skies.

Moderator: Roger E. Eastman, AICP - Logan Simpson

Panelists: Danielle Adams and Christian B. Luginbuhl PhD - Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition; Mark Stento - Coconino County; Robert Faus - City of Flagstaff

MOBILE TOUR From Hops to Heritage: Exploring Flagstaff's Craft Beverage Entrepreneurship

1:30 - 4:30 p.m. | CM Credit: 3

MOBILE TOUR Timber, Transit, and Transformation - tour of the Downtown Connection Center (walking)

1:30 - 3:30 p.m. | CM Credit: 2

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4

3:15 - 4:30 P.M. // CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Preparing Planning Departments for the Age of AI

3:15 – 4:30 p.m. | Main Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

Planning departments are increasingly encountering AI across engagement, development review, and customer service, offering efficiency gains but raising questions about transparency and governance. This session examines early applications, lessons, and practical approaches to using AI responsibly while building trust and supporting informed adoption.

Presenter: Ali Fakih - Sustainability Engineering Group and AIAEC

Shared Stewardship: The Importance of Consulting & Collaborating with Tribes

3:15 – 4:30 p.m. | Ballroom 2 | CM Credit: 1.25

Effective consultation between Tribal Nations and local governments is the cornerstone of responsible land management and public administration. Rooted in the inherent sovereignty of Indigenous nations, meaningful consultation requires moving past standard “notice-and-comment” periods into true collaborative decision-making. As local and state governments increasingly adopt formal intergovernmental protocols, this panel brings together tribal leaders and municipal cultural heritage managers to discuss the mechanisms, challenges, and successes of tribal-local consultation in Arizona.

Moderator: Mary Ellen Walsh - Arizona State Historic Preservation Office

Panelists: Reylynne Williams - Gila River Indian Community; Stewart B. Koyiyumptewa, M.A. - Hopi Tribe; Christopher W. Schwartz - S’edav Va’aki Museum; Ian M. Milliken - HPO

How Cities Respond When the Highway Moves - The Live Version of the CARS Movie

3:15 – 4:45 p.m. | Ballroom 1 | CM Credit: 1.25

Travel through time in this classic story of how four cities were transformed by the relocation of U.S. Routes 60 and 66. Like Pixar’s movie CARS, Mesa, Tempe, Phoenix and Kingman adapted and remained resilient. Route 60 evolved into Main Street, Apache Boulevard, Mill Avenue, and Van Buren Street. Discover how Mesa preserved historic character through adaptive reuse, revitalization, reinvestment, and public art. Learn how Tempe intensified development around ASU through capital improvements, public-private partnerships and redevelopment. Explore Phoenix’s Van Buren corridor burgeoning with businesses and transportation options fueling future development. Celebrate Kingman’s national status as the last uninterrupted 158 miles of Route 66. Keeping cities vibrant takes a team, not a one-man show.

Moderator: Diana Kaminski - City of Tempe

Panelists: Matthew Kriegl - City of Tempe; Neil Calfee - ASU; Chase Hales - City of Phoenix; Jack Plaunty - City of Kingman

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4

From Highway to Main Street

3:15 - 4:30 p.m. | 1899 Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

Transforming main street and highway corridors to support mobility, placemaking economic vitality and community identity. Planners and urban designers provide proof-of-concept examples and practical tools to align transportation investments with community goals.

Moderator: Jessica Sarkissian, LEED AP, AICP - RVI Planning and Landscape Architecture

Panelists: Will Wagenlander, Craig Russell, Brett Anderson- RVI Planning and Landscape Architecture

Bringing New Housing Opportunities HOME

3:15 - 4:30 p.m. | Drury Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

Learn from a panel of regional planners exploring housing challenges and practical regulatory and programmatic solutions. Drawing on the HOME-TA Program, the session highlights tools, strategies, and partnerships that helped Phoenix-area communities advance housing outcomes.

Moderator: Colin Lowe - Matrix Design Group

Panelists: Grace Brenize - Matrix; Peter Burnett - Maricopa Association of Governments; Samantha Keating - City of Phoenix; Christian Williams - City of Goodyear; Adam Cray - CSG Advisors

Opening Reception

5:00 - 8:30 p.m. | Orpheum Theatre | 15 West Aspen Avenue

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5

Plenary Session: Rooted in Place: Values and Heritage as a Foundation for Rural Community Planning

9:00 - 10:15 a.m. | Main Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

MOBILE TOUR Flagstaff's Downtown Mile: Leveraging Infrastructure to Advance Community Planning

9:00 - 11:00 a.m. | CM Credit: 2

MOBILE TOUR Building an Innovation Ecosystem: Inside the Moonshot Incubator (Drive)

9:00 - 11:00 a.m. | CM Credit: 2

10:30 - 11:45 A.M. // CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Unlocking Housing Choice: Code Changes to Expand Options

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. | Main Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

Cities like Tucson, Phoenix, and Flagstaff were already advancing zoning reforms—such as ADUs, expanded housing types, and reduced parking—before HB 2721 expanded the conversation statewide. This session explores where zoning code reforms have succeeded, where gaps remain, and what it will take to move from updated codes to actually delivering housing on the ground.

Moderator: Michelle McNulty, AICP City of Flagstaff; Koren Manning, AICP - City of Tucson

Panelists: Tiffany Antol, AICP; Jennifer Mikelson, Genevieve Pearthree - City of Flagstaff; Elisa Hamblin - City of Tucson, Tricia Gomes - City of Phoenix

Sage Memorial Tiny Home Community

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. | Ballroom 2 | CM Credit: 1.25

The Sage Memorial Hospital and the Fourth World Design Group (FWDG) team collaborated to develop the Sage Memorial Master Plan Development for a Tiny Home Community to serve as a blueprint for future housing development. The site consists of 15 Tiny Home units on 13 acres of land located on the north side of the hospital campus in Ganado, Arizona on the Navajo Nation. With the growth of the Sage Memorial Hospital, the intent of the project is to provide housing options for the staff who provide meaningful health services to patients.

Moderator: Rio Lopez - Fourth World Design Group

Panelists: Kim Kanuho - Fourth World Design Group; Tina James-Tafoya and Jarom Prows - Sage Memorial Hospital



CONFERENCE SESSIONS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5

Small City, Big Skies: Reimagining Horseshoe Bend After Dark Through Stargazing and Community Partnerships

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. | Ballroom 1 | CM Credit: 1.25

Horseshoe Bend in Page, Arizona draws millions of visitors each year, with the night sky emerging as a key part of the experience through stargazing, cultural storytelling, and public engagement. This session explores how partnerships have created these experiences and highlights strategies for tourism management, stewardship, and integrating dark skies into planning and policy.

Moderator: Sylvia Shaffer - City of Page

Panelists: Adam Geller, Debbie Ketchersid, Frank Marbury - City of Page

Crowdsource the Plan: Interactive Best Practices in Action

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. | 1899 Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

Interactive round table exploring planning best practices across the full spectrum from macrolevel strategies to cutting edge digital tools. Attendees will engage in a collaborative case study, working through realworld challenges and contributing their own solutions and ideas. Through facilitated discussion and peer exchange, participants will compare approaches, identify what works, and discover new techniques to enhance outcomes in their communities. This session emphasizes practical application, shared learning, and insights that bridge traditional planning methods with innovative, tech-enabled practices.

Moderator: Heather Garbarino - Logan Simpson

Panelists: Alison Almand - Project Cities, ASU; Kristen Busby - Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy; Sara Dechter - Mountain Line; Deirdre Pfeiffer - ASU

Community Wealth Building for Resilient Local Economies

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. | Drury Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

Community Wealth Building (CWB) is an economic development model that transforms local economies based on communities having direct ownership and control of their assets, and challenges conventional approaches and addresses wealth inequality at its core. Inspiring examples will show participants how local assets combine in a plurality of democracy to drive inclusive, sustainable prosperity.

Moderator: Ryan Stephenson - Logan Simpson

Panelists: Kimber Lanning - Local First; Bonnie Bazata - Pima County; James Hannley - Arizona Coalition for Public Banking

Awards Luncheon

12:00 - 1:30 p.m. | Main Ballroom

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5

MOBILE TOUR Resilient Routes, Safer School: MetroPlan's Data-driven Safe Routes to School Framework
1:30 - 3:30 p.m. | CM Credit: 2

1:45 - 3:00 P.M. // CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Route 66: Celebrating the Centennial and Planning for the Next 100 Years

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. | Main Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

Learn how Arizona cities and towns along Route 66, some completely bypassed when Interstate 40 opened nearly 50 years ago, have found ways to celebrate and honor the historic route by creating plans, securing funding, holding events and implementing projects to preserve, protect and enhance the highway user's experience, and concluding with recommendations on ways to attract tourists beyond 2026.

Moderator: Kevin Davidson - Hualapai Tribe

Panelists: Josh Noble - City of Kingman; Trace Ward - City of Flagstaff; Bob Hall - City of Winslow

From Plan to Practice: Using Community Wildfire Protection Plans to Reduce Wildfire Risk

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. | Ballroom 2 | CM Credit: 1.25

Wildfire risk is an increasingly critical planning issue across Arizona's wildland-urban interface. This session explores how planners can use Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs), land use strategies, and development codes to reduce risk and build fire-adapted communities to engaging, underserved communities, support growth and redevelopment through case studies from Coconino County and the City of Flagstaff.

Moderator: Jill Grams - SWCA Environmental Consultants

Panelists: Annie Lutes - SWCA; Neil Chapman and Tiffany Antol - City of Flagstaff; Anne Mottek - Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership

Blueprint for Accessibility: Developing Scottsdale's ADA Transition Plan

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. | Ballroom 1 | CM Credit: 1.25

The Scottsdale ADA Transition Plan outlines a long-term, data-driven strategy to improve accessibility across City programs, facilities, infrastructure, and digital services. It establishes a 20-year implementation framework integrated with capital planning, advancing proactive improvements in mobility, inclusion, and quality of life.

Moderator: Kevin Lardner, PE - Matrix Design Group

Panelists: Felicia Beltran - Scottsdale's Andy Arias, Chris Martin, Steven Mifsud - Matrix Design Group

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5

Beyond the Cloud: How Arizona Cities Are Planning for Data Centers

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. | 1899 Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

Data centers are emerging as a major land-use issue in Arizona, raising questions about zoning, infrastructure capacity, water and energy use, economic development, noise, heat, design, and community expectations. This panel will bring together Phoenix, Mesa, and Tucson to discuss how each city is responding to data center interest through zoning, infrastructure coordination, entitlement review, and economic development strategy.

Moderator: Ian Wan - City of Tucson

Panelists: Carver Struve - City of Tucson; Joshua Bednarek - City of Phoenix; Rachel Phillips - City of Mesa

ARCHES: Emerging Trends from the State of Housing in AZ Report & Research Quick Hits

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. | Drury Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

The Arizona Research Center for Housing and Economic Solutions (ARCHES), a HUD-sponsored Center of Excellence, will present key findings from its latest State of Housing in Arizona report alongside highlights from ongoing research. Panelists will share brief insights on topics including fair housing challenges for Hispanic homebuyers, indoor heat impacts on housing stability, and the needs of Native American workers living off-reservation.

Moderator: Kenny H. Wong - University of Arizona

Panelists: Nancy Baca - NAU; Liza C. Kurtz, Aurora M. Munoz Casarrubias - ASU

3:15 - 4:30 P.M. // CONCURRENT SESSIONS

From Pines to Saguaros: Planning Connected Communities Across Arizona

3:15 - 4:30 p.m. | Main Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

Planning leaders from across Arizona will discuss how communities are advancing active transportation and connectivity through integrated approaches to mobility, ecology, accessibility, and public engagement. Panelists will share lessons, strategies, and emerging opportunities to build connected, resilient, and equitable networks while balancing community needs and fostering partnerships statewide.

Moderator: Marissa Pellegrini - Kimley-Horn

Panelists: Rebecca Sayers - City of Flagstaff; Kyle Packer - Town of Oro Valley; Kay Bork - MAG

Housing, Tourism, Economic Development: Why You Shouldn't be Afraid of Historic Preservation

3:15 - 4:30 p.m. | Ballroom 2 | CM Credit: 1.25

Historic preservation is often seen as conflicting with growth, but this session reframes it as a tool for advancing housing, economic development, and long-term resilience. Through real-world examples from urban and rural communities, panelists will highlight how thoughtful preservation supports change, rather than limits it, and can be leveraged to achieve broader community goals.

Moderator: Arianna Urban - Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

Panelists: Kathryn Leonard, Helana Ruter - SHPO; Josh Noble - City of Kingman; Lauren Clementino - City of Flagstaff

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5

Gateway Communities and Value-Based Decision Making

3:15 - 4:30 p.m. | Ballroom 1 | CM Credit: 1.25

Learn how the Crested Butte Community Compass developed a base on values rather than vision as a method of building community trust in decision making. The plan has successfully guided the community through divisive issues such as the housing emergency STR, new parking management and many others.

Moderator: Taylor Plummer - Olsson

Panelist: Troy Russ - Olsson

Tribal and Local Partnerships for Economic Resilience and Shared Prosperity

3:15 - 4:30 p.m. | 1899 Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

Tribal and local economies do not operate in isolation. Increasingly, communities are recognizing that long-term economic sustainability depends on regional collaboration, strategic planning, and strong partnerships between Tribal Nations and neighboring jurisdictions. This session will explore how economic planning can serve as a framework for building shared prosperity across Tribal and local communities.

Moderator: Dr. Eric S. Trevan, PhD - aiLocal.ai

Panelists: Sharon Waukau - Menominee Tribal Enterprises; Dawn Houle - SunSinger Consulting; Haley Mustafa - aLocal.ai

Active Transportation at Every Level: Federal Changes, State Successes, and Local Innovation

3:15 - 4:30 p.m. | Drury Ballroom | CM Credit: 1.25

An overview and update of the federal policy environment for active transportation, including the latest on the Surface Transportation Reauthorization process and its implications, Arizona policies and funding, and regional funding updates. An exciting case study on the work that Yavapai County has done to spearhead bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and safety across the region.

Moderator: Kenneth Steel - Pinnacle Preservation

Panelists: Elle Segal - Rails to Trails Director; Jen Mabery - Yavapai County Community Health Services

Cocktail Hour

5:00 - 6:00 p.m. | Atrium Outside Main Ballroom

Planners' Bazaar: "Under the Stars"

6:00 - 8:00 p.m. | Main Ballroom

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6

Training | Certified Local Government Training

9:00 - 1:00 p.m. | Flagstaff City Hall

Email Arianna Urban at aurban@azstateparks.gov with questions.

MOBILE TOUR Babbitt Ranches: Powering the Future, Preserving the Landscape

8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | Meet at Drury Inn and Suites Entrance

MOBILE TOUR Canvas of a Community: Discovering Downtown and Southside's Public Art

9:00 - 11:00 p.m. | Meet at City Hall, 211 West Aspen Avenue

MOBILE TOUR Investing in History: The Business of Historic Preservation in Downtown Flagstaff - David Stephens

9:00 - 11:00 a.m. | Meet at Heritage Square

MOBILE TOUR Fire on the Landscape: Exploring Sunset Crater

9:00 - 11:00 a.m. | Meet at Flagstaff Mall and Carpool

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