



# 2026 LGMA Annual Conference

June 9 – 11, 2026

Penticton Trade and Convention Centre  
273 Power Street, Penticton, BC

Faced with emerging issues and increasing challenges of an ever-changing world, effective leaders reinvigorate relationships and cultivate connections while learning from each other and growing together. LGMA2026 will inspire; infused with local flavour, highlighting our host location Penticton and showcasing community solutions. Local government leaders, experts, and partners will return to their communities with a strengthened peer network and actionable ideas for a resilient future.

Sessions have been curated along the following primary learning tracks. Watch for these letters to stay on track:

- R The Power of Relationships:** What are we doing to help build capacity and support our teams to adapt, grow, and evolve? How do we increase access to opportunities & resources and cultivate leaders? How can we strengthen our communities, our organization, and our professional networks?
- A Advancing Reconciliation:** What are the building blocks of meaningfully engaging in reconciliation? How can we strengthen respectful, reciprocal, and long-lasting local government-First Nation government relationships? What are we doing to reflect upon and work toward decolonizing practices?
- L Livable & Sustainable Communities:** How can we grow to equitably meet the social and economic needs of our citizens now and in the future? What approaches support positive economic, social, and environmental outcomes and contribute to community resilience or improved quality of life?
- E Emerging Tech Trends:** Local governments are expected to leverage emerging digital technologies at increasing rates to streamline operations and meet citizen expectations. Have you used new technologies or applied existing technology in new ways to help local government administration or service delivery? What are best practices when navigating the digital journey?

## Register online for the 2026 LGMA Annual Conference

June 9 Pre-Conference Day	
7:45-8:30am	Breakfast
8:30am-5pm	<p><b>Communications and Engagement Professionals Forum (R, E)</b> This jam-packed day will feature panelists who will share practical approaches, best practices, lessons learned, and wins in their role as local government communicators. Topics will include communicating under pressure, public engagement innovations, integrating communications into council orientation, AI in communications and more. Take this opportunity to learn from peers, increase the effectiveness of your organization’s communications efforts, and expand your professional network.</p> <p><i>Please note: Forum registration is separate from general conference registration. View the detailed <a href="#">forum agenda</a> and <a href="#">register online</a>.</i></p>
12-1:15pm	Lunch

1-4:30pm	<p><b>Beyond the Code: Operationalizing Responsible Conduct in Local Government (R)</b>  With the Province considering advancing responsible conduct initiatives and local governments navigating rising tension, the pressure is real: councils and boards need clear expectations, fair processes, and practical ways to repair trust when things go sideways. Having a code of conduct is one thing, operationalizing responsible conduct is another. This skills-and-systems workshop, facilitated by Christina Benty, Strategic Leadership Solutions &amp; Reece Harding, Young Anderson, is designed to help local government professionals translate conduct principles into everyday practice.</p> <p><i>Please note: Workshop registration is separate from general conference registration. <a href="#">Register online.</a></i></p>
2-4:30pm	<p><b>Field Trip: Watercourses Revitalized (R, L)</b>  Decades ago, the rivers in Penticton were channelized for flood mitigation, leading to major environmental impacts. This tour will visit Penticton Creek, which is in the process of being naturalized to support the environmental, riparian, and fish habitat values, and Penticton Dam, where a fish ladder project was recently completed. Working with partners including the Okanagan Nation Alliance and snPink'tn Indian Band allows for a blend of traditional and western perspectives when working to undo past decisions. Join city and Nation staff for this interactive tour to visit two different examples of environmental reclamation projects and hear about their successful collaboration, future steps to continue relationships on similar projects and lessons learned on persevering on complex municipal projects.</p> <p><i>Please note: Field trip registration is separate from general conference registration. <a href="#">Register online.</a></i></p>
4:15-5pm	<p><b>First Time Attendees' Meet and Greet</b>  First time attending the conference? Cultivate some connections in a casual setting. Warm up your networking muscles and meet the LGMA Board and perhaps a new friend or two.</p> <p><i>*Open to first-time attendees only</i></p>
5-7:30pm	<p><b>President's Welcome Reception &amp; Trade Show Kick-Off</b> <i>(Sponsored by Lidstone &amp; Company)</i>  Join LGMA President Keri-Ann Austin to kick off LGMA2026! Reacquaint with old friends and connect with new colleagues. Meet knowledgeable exhibitors who supply the goods and services that make our work possible.</p>
<b>June 10</b>	<b>Conference Day 1</b>
7:45am-3:30pm	<i>Trade Show hours</i>
7:45-8:45am	<i>Breakfast</i>
8am-3:30pm	<i>Professional Headshots with Stuart Bish – by appointment (Sponsored by Civic Legal LLP)</i>
8:30am-4:30pm	<i>Wellness Lounge</i>
8:45am-5:30pm	<i>Pension Consulting with Jerry Woytack – by appointment</i>
8:30-9:45am	<p><b>Welcome &amp; opening keynote "Knowledge means nothing if you don't share it with someone" (A, L)</b>  Anona Kampe</p> <p>Anona will welcome delegates to SnPink'tn (Penticton) with a blessing, singing of the Okanagan song, and a special keynote about her life-long learning journey and the power of knowledge. She will share how she came to do the important work that she does within her nation, pepper in some of their traditional stories that have teachings and lessons embedded, and touch how she personally has worked towards healing by reconnecting with her culture and learning her Indigenous language.</p>
9:45-10:15am	<i>Networking Break / Meet the Exhibitors</i>
10:15-11:15am	<p><b>Joint Task Force: Government Cooperation for Enforcement (L)</b>  Troy DeSouza, Dominion GovLaw and Avtar Sundher, Agricultural Land Commission</p> <p>Discover how local governments working with the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) can</p>

	<p>collaborate effectively through a Joint Task Force (JTF) for property compliance. This presentation will offer a detailed exploration of the statutory framework and practical implementation of the ALC, as well as local government authority and shared jurisdiction. Attendees will gain a clear understanding of the legal powers and responsibilities of the ALC and local governments, how to evaluate the advantages and potential challenges of forming a Joint Task Force, and learn the procedural steps to initiating one effectively.</p>
	<p><b>Winning the Talent Game: Building Strategies for Attraction, Development &amp; Retention (R)</b>  Nikki Caulfield and Graham Stuart, City of Coquitlam</p> <p>In today's competitive landscape, organizations face unprecedented challenges in attracting, developing, and retaining top talent. A strategic approach to talent management can directly impact key business outcomes, helping reduce turnover and build internal capacity. This session will provide a compelling case for why a proactive, well-defined strategy is no longer a "nice-to-have," but is critical for long-term organizational success. Attendees will learn the who, what, why and how of a comprehensive talent acquisition and retention strategy.</p>
	<p><b>Building a System of Collaborating with Local Governments (A)</b>  Ned Taylor, WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council</p> <p>Join the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council (WLC) for a deep dive into their Local Government Program, which includes government-to-government agreements, as well as ongoing joint projects and collaboration between Tsartlip &amp; Tseycum First Nations and the eight separate local governments that operate in and make decisions over WSÁNEĆ Territory. This session will share lessons learned on building relationships and a system of collaboration between First Nations and local governments, including establishing structures and processes for joint working groups. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss with the presenter.</p>
11:30am-12:30pm	<p><b>Human + Machine: The Legal Side of AI at Work</b> (<i>Sponsored by Mathews, Dinsdale &amp; Clark</i>) <b>(E)</b>  Paul McLean and Kaelyn Burns, Mathews, Dinsdale &amp; Clark</p> <p>As artificial intelligence continues to become embedded in nearly every aspect of contemporary life, its presence in the workplace is becoming more common. Yet, as it reshapes the modern workplace, the use of AI can raise complex legal questions. In this session, we will examine the expanding integration of AI in the workplace, what advantages it offers, and where the pitfalls lie, ranging from privacy and confidentiality risks to misinformation and bias. We will discuss how the use of AI in employment contexts may challenge existing Canadian legal principles, such as human rights and privacy rights. Bring your questions!</p>
	<p><b>Engaging Through the Noise: Building Trust in Challenging Times (R)</b>  Julie Rogers, Julie Rogers Consulting</p> <p>Community engagement can be tough when the public conversation feels more like a battleground than a dialogue. In this session designed for local government staff, we'll zero in on strategies to foster respectful, meaningful engagement—even when critics dominate the conversation. You'll learn practical ways to set the tone for constructive dialogue, respond effectively when discussions get heated, and support your own resilience while leading community conversations. The focus is on turning engagement from a flashpoint into a trust-building opportunity, ensuring that even in an era of incivility, your efforts strengthen connections rather than erode them.</p>
	<p><b>Legal Update 2026 (L)</b>  Ryan Bortolin, SMS Law</p> <p>Join Ryan Bortolin for an annual attendee favourite! This engaging and insightful session will explore significant court decisions from the past year that affect local governments. It will examine major rulings and discuss what they mean for your communities, helping you stay up to date and ready to respond. Recent legislative developments relevant to local governments will also be covered.</p>

12:30-1:15pm	<i>Volunteer Recognition Lunch</i>
1:15-1:30pm	<i>Stretch Break</i>
1:30-2:45pm	<p><b>Neutralizing Attacks on Local Governments: New Proactive Tools and Support (R)</b> Don Lidstone K.C., Ale Henao and Mary Nguyen, Lidstone &amp; Company</p> <p>Local government officers and employees are often uncertain how to respond effectively to rudeness, bullying, harassment, defamation or problematic behaviour of elected officials and the public. Bullying, harassment, and code of conduct processes are expensive, delayed, and often inconclusive or ineffective, or worse, result in retaliation. The panelists will introduce and explain new, proactive tools of tort law, criminal law, Worksafe BC, SLAPP laws, the new Defamation Advocacy Foundation, and more, as well as highlight best practices from different jurisdictions for financial and other support. The session will engage attendees in a two-way conversation to identify relevant examples and offer recommendations.</p>
	<p><b>Meet Your New Co-Worker: AI in Local Government (Sponsored by Municipal Finance Authority) (E)</b> Daphne Thomson, Catch the Beat</p> <p>AI is no longer just a tool. It is becoming a workplace partner. This session dives into Copilot agent creation, custom GPTs, and the real differences between Copilot and ChatGPT, including what paid versus free actually means for your organization. We will explore practical use inside Microsoft 365, from Word and Excel to Outlook and PowerPoint. We will also tackle job impact head on. What is likely to be automated, what will be augmented, and how can AI strengthen critical thinking and decision-making? Bring your laptop. This session is practical, honest, and hands-on.</p>
	<p><b>Rethinking Community: Diverse Community Voices (Sponsored by BC Assessment) (A)</b> Nicole Barker and Celina Deneault, Tkemlúps te Secwépemc, Michelle Amaral and Sarah Candido, City of Kamloops</p> <p>Tkemlúps te Secwépemc and the City of Kamloops co-hosted Rethinking Community: Diverse Community Voices, a gathering that brought together community leaders, public servants, private sector professionals, and representatives from the charitable sector. Each participant entered the space with a shared commitment to respect, openness, and collaboration. This session explores how the conference fostered meaningful dialogue, built stronger relationships, and highlighted the power of working together rather than in silos. Through reflection and shared learning, this panel will discuss how honouring diverse voices and perspectives strengthens our collective capacity to support inclusive, resilient communities. Attendees will be invited to consider new ways to collaborate across sectors, listen deeply, and co-create solutions that reflect our shared values. Together, we celebrate the power of community, where connection, understanding, and mutual respect lead the way toward lasting change.</p>
2:45-3:15pm	<i>Coffee Break / Meet the Exhibitors</i>
3:15-4:30pm	<p><b>Pathways to Partnership: One Region integrating Indigenous Engagement into Emergency Management (A, L)</b> District of Saanich and members of the regional Indigenous Engagement Working Group (panelists to be confirmed)</p> <p>Building resilient communities requires collaboration, respect and shared understanding. This panel will share insight into initiatives bringing together emergency managers and Indigenous partners working collectively to meet engagement requirements under the Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA). Panelists will share how local governments across the region are coordinating their efforts to strengthen relationships, align priorities and reduce engagement fatigue for Indigenous partners. Through shared stories and practical examples, participants will gain insights and tools to advance meaningful, effective collaboration that supports all communities in preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies.</p>
	<p><b>Hot Topics: Navigating Post-Election Changes (R)</b> James Ridge, James Ridge Consulting Inc. and Kevin Ramsay, Innova Strategy Group</p>

	<p>Elections always have an effect on your organization. Sometimes new elected officials bring great energy and work collaboratively to make your community a great place. Sometimes new elected officials want to shake up the world. It is your responsibility to ensure that your elected officials have the information and understanding required to be successful. And you'll need to address strategic planning, organizational reviews, and all of the other changes that can come with a new council/board. This session will provide tactics and tips for staff at all levels.</p>
	<p><b>Beyond Compliance: A Dynamic Data Governance Strategy for the Modern Era (E)</b> Ja'-elle Leite, Ultralogix Inc.</p> <p>Across local governments, the overwhelming backlog of paper records and fragmented digital systems has become a major obstacle to efficient service delivery and informed decision-making. This session will highlight practical strategies for digitizing legacy records, managing information assets, and unlocking the value of data for smarter, faster decisions. By moving beyond compliance-based recordkeeping to a dynamic governance approach, local governments can reduce administrative burdens, improve transparency, and make data a true strategic resource. Participants will gain insights into how modern data governance connects people, processes, and technology – turning yesterday's paperwork into tomorrow's insights.</p>
<b>June 11</b>	<b>Conference Day 2</b>
7:45-9:15am	<i>Breakfast (Sponsored by Municipal Insurance Association)</i>
8am-4:30pm	<i>Professional Headshots with Stuart Bish – by appointment (Sponsored by Civic Legal LLP)</i>
8am-5pm	<i>Pension Consulting with Jerry Woytack – by appointment</i>
8:30am-4:30pm	<i>Wellness Lounge</i>
8-9am	<b>2026 LGMA Annual General Meeting</b>
9:15-10:05am	<p><b>Building the Relationship: Lessons from Renewing a City–First Nation Relationship Agreement (R, A)</b> Representatives from snpink'tn Indian Band and City of Penticton – speakers to be confirmed</p> <p>As local governments and First Nations navigate new pressures and evolving governance expectations, strong relationships matter more than ever. This fireside chat brings together representatives from Penticton Indian Band and the City of Penticton to discuss the renewal of their relationship agreement and what it reflects about a more mature, respectful approach to reconciliation. The conversation will highlight how the agreement was developed, how it supports collaboration, shared priorities and demonstrated respect, and why investing in the relationship first leads to stronger, more sustainable outcomes for both communities.</p>
	<p><b>Tales from the Trenches: Strategies for Successful Major Capital Project Delivery (L)</b> JoAnne Kleb and Jim Bauer, City of Delta</p> <p>This session shares the City of Delta's experience of weaving meaningful community engagement into a major recreation centre project to deliver it on track, on time, and rooted in community trust. Instead of slowing the process, engagement strengthened governance, built trust, and helped shape a facility that reflects the community's needs and aspirations. The presenters will walk through the journey from early approvals to co-designing amenities with residents and balancing the priorities of diverse user groups for both the facility and surrounding park space. Expect practical insights, real challenges, and the strategies used to keep the project on track while staying transparent and responsive. Attendees will leave with actionable takeaways for integrating engagement into capital project planning without losing time or momentum, plus a chance to share their own experiences navigating community voices in complex builds.</p>
	<p><b>Managing Risk and Maximizing Benefits with Local Government Land Assets (L)</b> Pam Jefcoat, Civic Legal</p> <p>Local governments hold significant land assets — parks, civic facilities, rights-of-way, roads, surplus lands, and development sites — that represent both opportunities and liabilities. How these real property assets are managed, leased, developed, or disposed of can have long-term implications for financial sustainability, community development, and environmental stewardship. This session is designed to support local governments in strategically managing</p>

	their real property assets, ensuring they meet policy objectives (including the provision of housing) while minimizing legal, financial, and environmental risks.
10:05-10:20am	<i>Stretch Break</i>
10:20-11:45am	<p><b>Indigenous Title: What the Cowichan Tribes Decision means for BC Local Governments (A)</b> Reece Harding and Nick Falzon, Young Anderson</p> <p>This session will walk participants through the recent B.C. Supreme Court decision in Cowichan Tribes v. Canada and its implications for local governments in British Columbia. This case, in significant part relating to the Quw'utsun mustimuhw former village site of Tl'uqtinus, has garnered substantial media attention since it was produced, much of which is highly political. Given the length of the case, it can be difficult to understand the implications regarding fee simple interests without taking a deep dive into the specific circumstances that were present there. This session will, on the one hand, explain what happened in the case from a legal perspective and, on the other hand, will set out potential implications of the decision for local governments and for broader reconciliation efforts.</p>
	<p><b>People First: Reimagining Employee Mental Health Support for Local Governments (R)</b> Marcy Boyd, BC Association of Clinical Counsellors</p> <p>When it comes to employee mental health, one size definitely doesn't fit all. This session takes a closer look at who's actually providing care in BC — from clinical counsellors and psychologists to social workers — and why understanding these designations matters. We'll explore how BC's landscape of mental health supports differs from other provinces, and how even the most well-intentioned (and expensive) extended health plans can sometimes leave employees without the help they need. Together, we'll unpack what happens when plan design limits access and how that can disrupt someone's path to recovery. Using real data and practical examples, we'll talk about how local governments can build benefit plans that truly support their people — plans that offer real choice, timely access, and care that meets employees where they are, no matter where they live or work in BC.</p>
11:45am-12:45pm	<i>Networking Lunch</i>
12:45-1:55pm	<p><b>Beyond the Storm: Lessons in Extreme Weather Events (L)</b> Peter Cohen, District of North Vancouver</p> <p>On October 19-20, 2024, a Category 4 atmospheric river unleashed over 300mm of rain to parts of the North Shore, surpassing the intensity of a 1-in-200-year storm. For the District of North Vancouver, the deluge triggered widespread flooding, infrastructure failures, debris flows, and sewer backups, with emergency calls peaking at one every 15 seconds. Multiple local emergency declarations and evacuations were issued as the District grappled with the scale of the event. This session offers a local government's first-hand account of the events unfolding, its impact on urban systems and residents, and the important lessons learned. With climate change driving more frequent severe weather, this storm - once considered rare - is projected to reoccur every few decades. Attendees will gain insight into the District's evolving strategies for flood resilience, inter-agency coordination, and emergency preparedness in the face of escalating climate risks.</p>
	<p><b>From Pilot to Practice: Responsible AI Adoption in Local Government (E)</b> Duncan Malkinson, Village of Pouce Coupe and Jessica Bagnall, Muniworth</p> <p>Local governments are exploring how artificial intelligence can enhance governance, streamline workflows, and strengthen trust in decision-making. The Village of Pouce Coupé is one of the BC partners in a pilot between local governments and solution partner Muniworth that explores how these collaborations can build readiness and confidence for innovation. The pilot aims to demonstrate practical examples of AI-enabled innovation in key local government functions while maintaining a strong focus on privacy, transparency, and accountability. This session will share early lessons, challenges, and strategies emerging from these pilots, along with a discussion of the regulatory requirements necessary to ensure responsible, safe, and ethical AI adoption.</p>
	<p><b>Resilient by Design: Making Strategy Stick during Change (R)</b> Dyra Pridham, Crossroads Consulting</p>

	<p>Local governments often invest significant effort into developing strategic plans, yet many of these strategies struggle to stay active after leadership turnover, election cycles, shifting mandates, and changing organizational pressures. These strategies lose momentum, even when no formal leadership change occurs. The challenge is not creating strategy; it's keeping strategy alive. This session explores real tools and practical ways to design resilient initiatives that can adapt through transition, maintain relevance, and continue gaining support as circumstances evolve. Drawing on experience supporting change initiatives in public-sector and local-government environments, particularly during leadership transition, the session highlights where momentum typically weakens and how leaders can respond.</p>
2-3pm	<p><b>Solving Wicked Problems: A Community Ecosystem Toolkit (L)</b> Dan Olivieri, System 2 Consulting and Karyn Zuidinga, NextWAVE Innovation</p> <p>Local governments face intractable problems, from affordable housing to climate adaptation, without sufficient capital (financial, human, social, built) to solve them alone. Community resources exist but remain disorganized and fragmented, preventing effective collaboration despite stakeholder goodwill. Through facilitated ecosystem mapping, local government leaders can re-orient scattered community assets around shared challenges, creating coordinated action where isolated efforts once prevailed. Participants will map their own ecosystem, identify leverage points for intervention, and develop a robust theory of change that mobilizes diverse stakeholders through clearer value exchanges and enhanced partnerships. This hands-on workshop applies the Ecosystem Project toolkit as a structured method for sensing system dynamics, illuminating opportunities, co-creating future designs, and sustaining momentum.</p>
	<p><b>ELEVATE: Flipping the Script on Annual Performance Evaluations (R)</b> Sophie Knowles, Town of Gibsons</p> <p>Traditional performance evaluations often focus on assessment rather than growth, leaving employees disengaged and leaders frustrated. What if we flipped the script? In this knowledge café-style session, we'll explore how shifting from performance evaluation to performance conversation can elevate trust, engagement, and accountability across teams. By reframing feedback as an ongoing, two-way dialogue — rooted in curiosity, recognition, and shared ownership — leaders can create a culture where employees feel valued, heard, and motivated to reach new heights. Participants will leave with actionable strategies to replace check-the-box evaluations with meaningful conversations that inspire growth, increasing employee and leadership buy-in and building a culture of continuous improvement and connection.</p>
	<p><b>Creating Safe Spaces for Meaningful Dialogue (R, L)</b> Dr. Clint Abbott, MNP LLP</p> <p>This session will explore how policy, planning and program development benefit from meaningful relationships with a variety of actors, including community members, non-profit associations, business, academia and other levels of government, including First Nations. Techniques for creating psychologically and culturally safe spaces, including trauma informed practices, will be discussed to provide delegates with tools on how to promote meaningful engagement with diverse audiences. Case studies will be shared to provide current, relevant and engaging illustrative examples, and delegates will be encouraged to reflect on their own experiences and learnings.</p>
3-3:30pm	<i>Ice Cream Break</i>
3:30-4:30pm	<p><b>Closing Keynote "Your Organization's Future" (Sponsored by Municipal Finance Authority) (R, L)</b> Dr. Roslyn Kunin</p> <p>Whether you're running a company, a government organization, a town or city, or just trying to survive in today's economy, Roslyn Kunin can give you answers: When will the economy get better? What's happening in the housing market? How will treaties with First Nations affect us? How is "my town" doing compared to others? What's happening to our industries and our workers? How can we benefit from the rapid rate of change? What kind of opportunities will there be for my children and how can they prepare? What kind of opportunities will there be for me?</p>
6-6:30pm	<b>Awards Reception</b>

6:30-11:30pm

**Awards & Gala Dinner** (*Sponsored by Young Anderson*)