

2025 IARC Annual Conference
Terre Haute Casino Resort - November 12 – 13, 2025

Wednesday - November 12, 2025

10:00 - Registration opens.

Noon - Opening Lunch - General Session – *Business meeting/speaker. We will be highlighting recent significant accomplishments and contributions made by IARC members.*

1:45 - Concurrent Workshops - Session 1

Workshop 1 - Placed-based Community Development Arts Strategies - Connie Brahm, Marketing and Communications Director - Indiana Arts Commission - 1 CEU

Given the growing budget constraints on Indiana Local Governments, this workshop will overview low budget, high impact strategies for creative community development that focus on quality of place and quality of life as well as strategies for integrating public art, creative placemaking , and cultural programming to strengthen local economies and foster community pride.

Workshop 2 - New Clusters for the 21st Century - Purdue University Center for Regional Development - Dr. Indraneel Kumar, Director, Dr. Annie Cruz-Porter, Community & Regional Development Specialist for Cluster Presentation & Dr. Andrey Zhaltin, GIS/Data Analyst -1 CEU

This workshop will address the knowledge, skills and industries clusters data collected by the Center for Rural Development and provide guidance to the Regional Council staff on ways to apply and use the data to communicate to the regional stakeholders in crafting policies at the regional level.

3:15 - Concurrent Workshops - Session 2

Workshop 3 - Applications for Artificial Intelligence by Regional Councils - Jeff Roeder, Director of External Affairs & Cody Tyler, CISO & Managing Director- EXOS IT - No CEU

There are increasing opportunities for Regional Councils to use artificial intelligence in performing their many activities and responsibilities. This workshop will describe some of the basic and readily available applications but will also provide cautions and guidelines on relying too heavily on artificial intelligence and some of the over-hyped benefits from this growing trend.

Workshop 4 - Current Trends in Child Care - Purdue University Center for Regional Development- Dr. Melinda Grismer, Community & Regional Development Specialist, Tanya Hall, Purdue Extension Regional Educator & Brianne Wrede, Purdue Extension Childcare Team Director and Indiana University Center for Rural Engagement - Kyla Cox Deckard, Interim Executive Director & Uplands Start Smart, Jennifer Myers, Director - 1 CEU

Indiana residents face significant challenges securing high-quality childcare, impacting their participation in the workforce and family quality of life. This workshop will address some of the issues facing the childcare industries and communities and what some areas of the state are doing to overcome these challenges.

5:00 - Cocktail reception

7:30-ish - Hospitality suite

Thursday - November 13, 2025

8:00 - Breakfast & General Session- *David Bottorff, Executive Director - Association of Indiana Counties and Ryan Hoff, Senior Director of Governmental Affairs - Indiana Farm Bureau – SEA 1*

9:45 - Concurrent Workshops - Session 3

Workshop 5 -Measuring the Impact of Senate Enrolled Act 1 on Local Governments, Susan Cowan, Senior Manager -Baker Tilly - 1 CEU

To better address the budgetary pressures of the recent legislative changes in Indiana, proactive planning has become even more essential for Indiana local governments. This workshop will provide the Regional Councils with tools and strategies needed to navigate revenue constraints and build long term resilience they can use to assist the governments in their regions.

Workshop 6 - Community Development Strategies and Updates, Office of Community and Rural Affairs, Pamela Guerrero, Senior CDBG Program & Policy Analyst, Steve St. John, CDBG Program Director, and Adam Moschell, Grant Services Director - 1 CEU

This session will explore recent developments and best practices in key areas of the State Community Development Block Grant Program. Topics include updates to the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition procedures and timing considerations, insights into Resiliency Index scoring as a measure to increase resilience in rural areas and actionable steps communities can take to improve their ratings, an overview of evolving blight clearance strategies with a focus on residential impacts, and effective approaches to owner-occupied rehabilitation, including compliance with radon mitigation standards. Attendees will gain practical knowledge and policy context to support informed decision-making and program implementation.

11:00 - Concurrent Workshops - Session 4

Workshop 7 - Brownfields, Transforming Eyesores into Opportunities, Todd Relue, Partner - Kreig Devault, Cindy Taylor, Regional Manager -Atlas Technical Consultants, and John Morris, Stakeholder Engagement Coordinator - Indiana Finance Authority - 1 CEU

Indiana Communities continue to suffer the effects of properties that have been abandoned because of contamination and legal uncertainties. This workshop will offer information on overcoming the legal, environmental and financial challenges that typically serve as barriers for redevelopment and improvement of those Brownfields.

Workshop 8 -Tools to Manage Local Government Transportation Networks, Jen Sharkey PE, Assistant Director for Engineering, Indiana LTAP- 1 CEU

This session will examine tools and methodologies for efficiently collection and analyzing infrastructure data to support data-driven decision-making within local governments. Discussion will also address available funding mechanisms, including the newly legislated direct distribution program and the requirements associated with the locally enacted wheel taxes and excise surtaxes for eligibility.

12:15 - Closing Lunch General Session – Joe McKinney, Executive Director, NADO. Followed by election of officers.