



Navigating the Current: Supporting Affordable, Livable Communities



As of July 13, 2026

2026 COSCDA Annual Conference – TENTATIVE AGENDA

October 5 - 7, 2026

Sunday – October 4	Monday – October 5	Tuesday – October 6	Wednesday – October 7
	8:00 am	8:30 am	8:30 am
	Regional Breakfast	Plenary: Affordability – More than Housing	Plenary: COSCDA Award Winner Presentations
	10:00 am	10:15 am	9:45 am
	Welcome and Opening Plenary Keynote: Mayor Paul Young (invited) Tennessee Program Presentation	Breakout Session C (Four Simultaneous Sessions for Each Program Area– options listed below)	Plenary: Lightning Round
			10:30 am
			Plenary: Community Project Showcase
12:00 pm	12:00 – 1:30 pm	12:00 pm	12:00 pm
Registration Opens	Lunch on Your Own	Box Lunches (Provided)_	Lunch Banquet Speakers
4:00 pm	1:30 pm	12:30 pm	1:15 pm
COSDCA Board Meeting	Breakout Session A (Four Simultaneous Sessions for Each Program Area– options listed below)	Mobile Workshop Covington – Health Care Training Shelby County – NDR Project Memphis Hospitality Hub Northside Square Development (Transportation Provided)	Plenary: Washington Update Briefing
			2:00 pm
			Breakout Session D (Four Simultaneous Sessions for Each Program Area – options listed below)
			3:45 pm
5:30 pm	3:15 pm		Business Meeting and Closing Remarks
Welcome Reception & 1st Time Attendee Acknowledgement (All Conference Attendees Invited)	Breakout Session B (Four Simultaneous Sessions for Each Program Area– options listed below)		
6:30 pm	5:00 pm	6:00 pm	4:45 pm
Dinner on Your Own	Dinner on Your Own	President's Reception National Civil Rights Museum	Adjourn

Plenary Sessions

Monday, October 5, 10:00 AM

Keynote

Mayor Paul Young, City of Memphis (invited)

Tuesday, October 6, 8:30 AM

Affordability – More than Housing

Panel presentation examining how the tri-state region (Tennessee, Mississippi, and Arkansas) is confronting this critical housing challenge. The panel also will share how housing impacts the broader range to community development needs. This session will bring together practitioners, policymakers, and innovators for a dynamic panel discussion, followed by an open Q&A.

Wednesday, October 7, 9:45 – 10:15 AM

Lighting Round Presentations

COSCDAs' sponsors will describe significant projects and engagements that they have undertaken recently. This fast-paced session will give attendees information about projects they may want to undertake and resources to facilitate creative and effective uses of HUD funding. Each speaker will be limited to just five minutes to describe their recent successful work and opportunities to work with other state agencies.

Wednesday, October 7, 10:30 AM

Community Project Showcase

Hear presentations that showcase exemplary projects from across Tennessee! Speakers will share successful strategies and outcomes in community development, housing, homelessness, and disaster recovery.

Wednesday, October 7, Noon

Lunch Speakers: Opportunity Zones

The lunch speakers are anticipated to present information about Opportunity Zones (OZs), how they work, what's changed in version 2.0, and on-the-ground examples of how OZs can support housing and community development. COSCDA is inviting a representative from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as well as practitioners to share their experience with OZs.

Breakout Sessions

Date & Time	Community Development	Housing	Homelessness	Disaster Recovery
Breakout Session A Monday, 1:30 PM	Deploying AI in Managing CDBG & Disaster Recovery (Joint Session w/ DR)	New Housing Resources from 21st Century ROAD to Housing	Increased Elderly Homelessness - Roundtable Discussion	Deploying AI in Managing CDBG & Disaster Recovery (Joint Session w/ CD)
Breakout Session B Monday, 3:15 PM	Using CDBG for Emergency Response / Urgent Need	Developing Policies and Procedures for Housing Programs	Interagency Councils on Homelessness - State Level Initiatives	DR Codification in 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act
Breakout Session C Tuesday, 10:15 AM	CD Aspects of 21st Century ROAD to Housing	State Housing Plans/Initiatives	Challenges of Merging CoCs and/or Connecting HMIS Systems	Sharpening Procurement Practices: Cost Estimates & RFPs
Breakout Session D Wednesday, 2:00 PM	Using CDBG for Demolition in Rural Areas	Data-Driven Selection of HOME and HTF Applicants	Housing Navigation & Landlord Engagement	Mapping to Support CDBG-DR compliance

Community Development Breakout Sessions

Breakout Session A

Monday, October 5, 1:30 pm

Deploying AI in Managing CDBG & Disaster Recovery (Joint Session with Disaster Recovery)

Artificial intelligence is powerful and can be scary. It is rapidly changing many aspects of program management. This session will discuss current and emerging uses of AI in CDBG and disaster recovery programs, drawing on experiences from state agencies and the private sector. Presenters will also address key governance considerations, including transparency, data quality, privacy, and appropriate human oversight in federally funded recovery programs. Attendees will leave with real-world examples of how AI can improve efficiency, strengthen compliance, and support faster, data-informed recovery outcomes.

Breakout Session B

Monday, October 5, 3:15 pm

Using CDBG for Emergency Response / Urgent Need

States have experienced a proliferation of disasters that could be addressed using CDBG: floods, fire, storms. While federally declared disasters are addressed through CDBG-Disaster Recovery, the regular CDBG program offers opportunities to address smaller scale disasters. The Urgent Need national objective can be effective to assist communities in need. This funding method presents certain challenges that will be discussed.

Breakout Session C

Tuesday, October 6, 10:15 am

CD Aspects of 21st Century ROAD to Housing

This session will highlight the CDBG changes authorized in the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act, including permitting new housing construction as an eligible CDBG activity and a requirement to maintain a public land database. The act also establishes a variety of smaller, new grant programs. COSCDA staff and members will provide an overview and early insight into the changes.

Breakout Session D

Wednesday, October 7, 2:00 pm

Using CDBG for Demolition in Rural Areas

This session will highlight how states have effectively used CDBG for demolition and the options for its use. States will share their experience and exemplary projects that demonstrate how demolition work can support community revitalization, particularly in rural communities.

Housing Breakout Sessions

Breakout Session A

Monday, October 5, 1:30 pm

New Housing Resources from 21st Century ROAD to Housing

This session will cover the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act provisions for HOME modernization and reauthorization as well as the environmental review and Section 3 streamlining. The Act directs HUD to take steps to improve BABA implementation and coordinate housing with other federal agencies (USDA & VA). There are many other new housing provisions that will impact the work of state housing managers. COSCDA staff and members will provide an overview and the latest information on implementation of the Act.

Breakout Session B

Monday, October 5, 3:15 pm

Developing Policies and Procedures for Housing Programs

A Policies and Procedures manual is important for HOME and HTF to provide clear operational guidelines and assure compliance with regulations for these programs. The updated HOME rule warrants attention to create such a manual, if a state does not have one, or update any that do exist. This session will have COSCDA members share their experience in developing such a manual and may include best practices information from a technical assistance provider.

Breakout Session C

Tuesday, October 6, 10:15 am

State Housing Plans/Initiatives

Several states have launched a state housing plan or initiatives to guide statewide housing development. In light of the concerns about affordable housing and with the potential passage of the 21st Century Road to Housing, this session will provide examples of how states are innovating and marshaling their resources to address housing affordability.

Breakout Session D

Wednesday, October 7, 2:00 pm

Data-Driven Selection of HOME and HTF Applicants

States have different approaches in application selection for housing projects for the HOME program and Housing Trust Fund supported developments. Quantitative data can be used in many different ways, and other qualitative factors often weigh in too. COSCDA members will share their experience and the criteria used to select the best applications for federal housing funding.

Homelessness Breakout Sessions

NOTE: A brief update regarding the homelessness program changes made by the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act will be incorporated into one of these breakout sessions. That short briefing will be announced at a later date.

Breakout Session A

Monday, October 5, 1:30 pm

Increased Elderly Homelessness – Roundtable Discussion

The facilitator for this session will lead conference attendees in discussing the changes seen in the number of elderly among those experiencing homelessness. Clearly the increasing number of seniors is posing new challenges for housing and service delivery providers. The focus of this roundtable will be to identify both the challenges and share strategies to address their needs.

Breakout Session B

Monday, October 5, 3:15 pm

Interagency Councils on Homelessness - State Level Initiatives

Several states have launched a state-level interagency council on homelessness (ICH) to coordinate and guide multiple state agencies that provide assistance to persons experiencing homelessness. This session will provide overviews of the operation and focus of state ICHs. The coordination and activities of states with an ICH can offer ideas and opportunities for states without an ICH to collaborate with their partner state agencies.

Breakout Session C

Tuesday, October 6, 10:15 am

Challenges of Merging CoCs and/or Connecting HMIS Systems

Merging homelessness Continuums of Care (CoCs) can face multiple challenges as different systems may have varying standards and practices. Coordinating among diverse stakeholders and aligning their objectives can complicate the integration process. Additionally, while there are significant benefits to connecting Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS), ensuring data quality and addressing different system procedures can thwart the desired coordination improvements. COSCDA members will share their experience in implementing these efforts.

Breakout Session D

Wednesday, October 7, 2:00 pm

Housing Navigation & Landlord Engagement

Programs that help families and individuals experiencing homelessness to secure housing are critical resources. Providing information and support to landlords and property managers assists in expanding the pool of available and affordable housing. This session will have states describing their housing navigation programs as well as landlord engagement efforts.

Disaster Recovery Breakout Sessions

Breakout Session A

Monday, October 5, 1:30 pm

Deploying AI in Managing CDBG & Disaster Recovery (Joint Session w/ Community Development)

Artificial intelligence is powerful and can be scary. It is rapidly changing many aspects of program management. This session will discuss current and emerging uses of AI in CDBG and disaster recovery programs, drawing on experiences from state agencies and the private sector. Presenters will also address key governance considerations, including transparency, data quality, privacy, and appropriate human oversight in federally funded recovery programs. Attendees will leave with real-world examples of how AI can improve efficiency, strengthen compliance, and support faster, data-informed recovery outcomes.

Breakout Session B

Monday, October 5, 3:15 pm

DR Codification in 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act

This session will highlight the CDBG changes authorized in the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act, including permitting new housing construction as an eligible CDBG activity and a requirement to maintain a public land database. The act also establishes a variety of smaller, new grant programs. COSCDA staff and members will provide an overview and early insight into the changes.

Breakout Session C

Tuesday, October 6, 10:15 am

Sharpening Procurement Practices: Cost Estimates & RFPs

Hiring a contractor that fails to deliver creates many headaches. Promises go unmet; firms that looked strong on paper arrive with inexperienced and non-dedicated staff, and agencies are left managing the program and the contractor. This session will help COSCDA members improve the effectiveness of their RFP process. This discussion will focus on setting clear expectations, strengthening accountability, and ensuring contractors deliver the team, capacity, and services promised. The session will also cover best practices for developing cost estimates, a critical step in supporting fair pricing, informed evaluation, and stronger procurement outcomes.

Breakout Session D

Wednesday, October 7, 2:00 pm

Mapping to Support CDBG-DR Compliance

Geographic information systems (GIS) can be an effective management tool to support Disaster Recovery. COSCDA members will share their expertise and ideas for using mapping programs to manage compliance requirements ranging from national objectives, to Safe Housing Incentives program, duplication of benefits, and reporting. With the right data and policies, interacting with maps can be not only useful visual supporting documentation but a key tool for making compliance determinations.