



Spring 2025 Conference
Embassy Suites Cool Springs Hotel, Franklin
AGENDA

(All meetings are in the Chestnut/Poplar/Redbud/Sycamore room unless otherwise noted)

Wednesday, April 30

9:00 President's Introduction

9:15 Let's Sabotage our Community and Career – MTAS Management Consultant Pete Auger

Occam's razor is the problem-solving principle that recommends searching for explanations constructed with the smallest possible set of elements. This same principle can be applied to local economic development. In this session we will take an offbeat look at learning these principles by first learning the best ways to destroy your community. You (and your city) have the solutions to guide your community on a trajectory that is either upward or downward. So, buckle up, get ready to step into tough issues instead of around them and embrace the community's entrenched beliefs and political realities so we can ensure (tongue in cheek) that we stagnate your community's growth and opportunities.

10:15 A Look Ahead to the Fall Conference in Kingsport – Kingsport City Manager Chris McCartt

Chris will give us a preview of what we can expect from the upcoming Fall Conference in Kingsport. It promises to be an exciting and special time.

10:30 Break

10:50 Leadership: It's a Process, not a Soft Skill – Heather Schoch, President and CEO, the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence

In this session we will first understand the definition of a leadership system and how leaders are different from managers. We will then learn key elements of leadership and how your city management stacks up. Best practices from award-winning

organizations such as the City of Germantown will also be reviewed as well as the Baldrige framework for city improvement.

- 11:35 Happenings at TML and the State Legislature – Anthony Haynes, TML Executive Director and Chad Jenkins, TML Deputy Director

Find out what's been going on at the State Legislature during this session, and what has happened that will affect cities. Also learn about new happenings within TML itself.

- 12:00 Networking Lunch – Coordinated by Angie Carrier, MTAS Program Manager

Join your colleagues for an off-site small-groups lunch and networking opportunity.

- 1:30 Platinum Sponsor Cumberland Securities - John Werner

Gold Sponsor Performance Services – Brian Stone

- 1:40 Creating a Psychologically Safe Environment – Adela Bonta, Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership Training Specialist

Creating a psychologically safe environment for your employees is an important part of successfully managing a city, and especially the management of your employee leadership team. Learn key components of doing this effectively and applying techniques to create better interrelationships among employee groups.

- 3:00 Break

- 3:20 Creating a Psychologically Safe Environment (continued)

- 4:00 What's Going on at the Department of Economic and Community Development – Allen Borden, Deputy Commissioner for Business, Community and Rural Development, ECD

Hear Deputy Commissioner Borden speak on the State's economic and community development efforts and the emerging trends affecting our cities and the state.

- 4:30 Committee Meetings

Join in on either the Legislative, Membership, or Professional Development Committees as they solicit your ideas and input.

- 5:00 Hospitality Suite

Graciously supported by Cumberland Securities with hosts John Werner and Joe Ayres Jr., will be open until 11:00. Come join your friends for snacks, drinks, and excellent conversation.

6:00 Evening Social Event until 9:00

Join your colleagues in the Whiskey and Royal Rooms at *Kings Dining & Entertainment*, 1910 Galleria Blvd (adjacent to Cool Springs Mall) for an evening of fun including karaoke and more - while enjoying gourmet pizza, appetizers, and beverages. The event starts at 6:00 p.m. and ends at 9:00 p.m. Buses will leave from the front of the hotel beginning at 5:50 p.m. and will continue to shuttle back and forth until 9:00. There is plenty of parking on-site should you want to drive. This is a ticketed event. The evening is being sponsored by our friends at the *Perfection Group, OHM, Sherrill Morgan, and Davenport Public Finance*.

Thursday, May 1

9:00 Practiced Leadership: the 6 C's for Effective Leaders – Lieutenant General Keith M. Huber, U.S. Army (retired)

Join Lieutenant General Huber as the concepts of commonality, competence, communication, candor, courage, and commitment are translated into practical applications to improve your “practiced leadership.”

10:15 Platinum Sponsor Public Entity Partners – Michael Fann

Platinum Sponsor Wold Architects and Engineers

Gold Sponsor Readyly – Kris Sandor

10:30 Break

10:50 The Power of People: Investing in Organizational Health Through Employee Engagement - Jaime Ewald, Organizational Development Manager and Eric Stuckey, City Administrator, City of Franklin

Eric and Jaime will share about Franklin's very successful employee engagement process, delving into lessons learned and the essential role Administration and senior leaders have in championing such initiatives. Gain valuable insights and practical tips to promote organizational health within your city.

11:50 Platinum Sponsor Energy Systems Group – Pete Tebbe

Gold Sponsor Gallagher – Marisa Combs Smith

12:00 Lunch

A buffet lunch will be served, and Committee reports will also be given at this time. Also on the agenda is a special presentation and a keynote address from incoming ICMA President-Elect Mike Land.

1:25 Platinum Sponsor Sherrill Morgan – Mark Morgan

Platinum Sponsor Verdantas – James Golias

1:40 The Franklin Battlefield Lecture and Tour – Todd Smith, Town of Greeneville City Manager, and the Franklin Battlefield Staff

Todd will first give a presentation on “Leadership and the Battle of Franklin.” We will then board buses at around 2:40 to the Franklin Battlefield Carter House for a 1-hour tour, and then to Winstead Hill Park for an elevated view of the battlefield. The tour will be conducted by Franklin Battlefield staff. We will return to the hotel by 5:00. The tour is being graciously sponsored by our friends at *Gallagher*.

5:00 Hospitality Suite

Graciously supported by Cumberland Securities with hosts John Werner and Joe Ayres Jr., it will be open again until 11:00. Come join your friends for snacks, drinks, and excellent conversation.

Friday, May 2

9:00 State of Tennessee *Department of Finance and Administration* Commissioner Jim Bryson

Commissioner Bryson will update us on the current state of Tennessee’s Finance and Administration activities and how those impact our State’s cities.

9:30 Happenings at ICMA – ICMA Southeast Regional Director Randy Reid

Find out what’s been happening at ICMA and how that can benefit our members.

9:45 Retirement Ready: Preparing Your Mind for the Next Chapter – Betsy Cunningham, MTAS Human Resource Consultant along with panel members Jim Thomas (retired MTAS Director and City Manager of Goodlettsville), Beth Reardon (retired City Manager of Belle Meade), and Randy Williams (retired MTAS Consultant, PEP Consultant and Paris City Manager)

This engaging session is designed to help individuals navigate the psychological aspects of retirement. Participants will explore the emotional and mental transitions

that accompany this significant life change, gaining valuable tools and strategies to ensure a fulfilling and purposeful retirement.

A panel of successfully retired managers will be joining us to share their valuable suggestions on how to manage retirement effectively. These experienced professionals will provide insights and practical advice based on their own journeys, helping you navigate this significant life transition with confidence.

10:45 President's Conclusion and Conference Evaluation

11:00 Conference Finished