



SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS VIRGINIA TECH



OUTREACH & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS SOUTHWEST CENTER VIRGINIA TECH



# FIRST EVER SMALL TOWNS CONFERENCE +

June 10-11, 2024

Southwest Virginia Higher  
Education Center (Rooms 103/104)  
1 Partnership Circle,  
Abingdon, VA 24210

## AGENDA

### Monday, June 10

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- 8:00 AM **Registration Opens**
- 8:30 - 9:00 AM **Breakfast**
- 9:00 - 9:30 AM **Opening Remarks**  
Mayor Amanda Pillion, Town of Abingdon  
Delegate Israel D. O'Quinn, Virginia House of Delegates
- 9:30 - 10:30 AM **Placemaking for Community Change**  
Melody Warnick, Writer and Editor, Virginia Tech
- 10:45 - 11:45 AM **The Foundations of Good Governance**  
Kimball Payne, Executive Manager, The Berkeley Group
- 11:45 AM - 12:30 PM **Lunch**
- 12:30 - 1:15 PM **Legislative Update/Town Specific Information**  
Mitchell Smiley, Policy Manager, VML  
Josette Bulova, Policy Communications, VML
- 1:15 - 2:00 PM **Legal Issues in Towns**  
Larry Spencer, Town Attorney, Town of Blacksburg  
Mike Lockaby, Attorney, Spilman, Thomas & Battle, PLLC
- 2:15 - 3:15 PM **Housing in Small and Rural Places**  
Mel Jones, Research Scientist and Associate Director, Virginia Tech Center for Housing
- 3:15 - 4:00 PM **Strategic Planning in Small Communities**  
Stephanie Davis, Collegiate Associate Professor, Virginia Tech
- 4:00 - 5:00 PM **Values-Based Leadership is Transformational Leadership**  
Michael Gallagher, President, MK Leadership
- 5:30 - 7:30 PM **Reception**  
Martha Washington Inn & Spa Ballroom (150 West Main Street)

### Tuesday, June 11

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- 8:30 - 9:00 AM **Breakfast**
- 9:00 - 10:15 AM **Financial Strategies for Small Towns**  
Stephanie Davis, Collegiate Associate Professor, Virginia Tech  
Kyle Laux, Senior Vice President, Davenport & Company, LLC  
LeAnna Surratt, Town Manager, Town of Hillsville
- 10:30 - 11:15 AM **Regional and State Economic Analysis**  
Sheryl Bailey, Visiting Professor of Practice, Virginia Tech
- 11:15 AM - 12:00 PM **Economic Development Panel - Expert Advice and Best Practices**  
David Manley, Executive Director, Wythe County, Joint Industrial Development Authority  
Dana Cronkhite, Director of Economic Development, Dickenson County  
John Kilgore, Director of Economic Development, Scott County  
Nichole Hair, Executive Director, Mount Rogers Regional Partnership
- 12:00 PM **Closing Remarks**

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