

2026 STAND UP RURAL AMERICA REGIONAL FORUM

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2026 RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM TO BE HELD IN SHAWNEE, OKLAHOMA

A national economic development forum for rural communities will be held in Shawnee, Oklahoma on February 24 & 25, 2026. This event, the Stand Up Rural America Regional Forum, will feature nationally renowned subject matter experts, dynamic panelists, and successful economic development practitioners.

Topics to be covered include innovative economic development strategies, logistics, downtown revitalization, entrepreneurship, business development, tourism, community development programs, childcare strategies, regionalism, youth & career development, advanced technology tools, collaboration, and more.

The Forum will feature special guests Doug Griffiths (Strategist & Author-13 Ways to Kill Your Community), Steve Brown (Author-The Golden Toilet & AI Strategist), Lorie Vincent (Strategist & Author-Stand Up Rural America), Jon Shallert (Destination Business Expert), Sherri Johnston (President & CEO LaGrange County EDC) and many more.

The Forum is designed specifically for Rural America. Participants will receive tangible strategies to help rural cities, counties and regions grow in economic prosperity. The event will feature informative and dynamic presentations, discussions, case studies, networking and celebrating what makes Rural America special.

This Stand Up Rural America Regional Forum is hosted by ACCELERATION by design LLC, an economic development consulting firm based in Austin, Texas. Lorie Vincent, President of ACCELERATION by design LLC, says "It has been my privilege to work with more than 450 rural communities and regions throughout my 35-year economic development career. I have witnessed the needs and challenges that face Rural America for economic growth and sustainability. Bringing these topics, presenters and participants together puts viable and tested tools into the hands of the changemakers in rural communities and creates an environment for innovative and immediate action."

The Forum is designed for Economic Development Organizations, Chambers of Commerce, Cities, Counties, State Agencies, Downtown Associations, Main Street Communities, Regional Groups, Utilities, Lenders, Logistics, Community & Industry Leaders, and anyone with a vested interest in the growth and prosperity of Rural America.

The Forum is hosted by Shawnee Forward Inc. and will be held at the Grand Casino Hotel & Resort in Shawnee, Oklahoma. Forum Sponsorships are available. Exhibitors are welcome. Registration for the Forum is open.

Previous Stand Up Rural America events have been held in Tulsa OK, Charleston WV, Somerset KY, Mulvane KS, Laurel MS, Decorah IA, French Lick IN, Canyon TX and Gonzales, TX.

For more information about the 2026 Stand Up Rural America Regional Forum in Shawnee, go to www.StandUpRuralAmerica.com.

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