

2026 STAND UP RURAL AMERICA REGIONAL FORUM

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Date: March 31, 2026

2026 RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM TO BE HELD IN PRATTVILLE, ALABAMA

A national economic development forum for rural communities will be held in Prattville, Alabama and the surrounding region on April 15 & 16, 2026. This event, the Stand Up Rural America Regional Forum, will feature nationally renowned subject matter experts, dynamic panelists, and successful economic development practitioners.

Special programming will feature Andy Portera (Portera & Associates), Charles Jackson (Alabama Power), David Thornell (Small Town Solutions), Lacey Bacchus (Retail Strategies), Brad Thomas (Kentucky's Touchstone Electric Cooperatives), Vanessa Royal (Wetumpka Chamber of Commerce) and Lorie Vincent (Stand Up Rural America).

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

This 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 Central 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, Workforce Groups, Community & Industry Leaders, and anyone with a vested interest in the growth and prosperity of Rural America. Registration is \$129.00 per person.

The Forum is hosted by RurAL Development and will be held at the Central Alabama Community College on April 16, 2026. A Pre-Forum Tour of 17 Springs and a Networking Reception will take place in downtown Prattville on Wednesday, April 15th. 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, Gonzales, TX and Shawnee OK.

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

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