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WHAT IS A CONGRESS?

Every year, CNU's Congress brings together over 1,500 individuals from around the world for an immersive placemaking experience that challenges and transforms their work, leaving a positive impact on the host region. Our 34th annual Congress—which we are excited to bring to Northwest Arkansas in 2026—provides a unique opportunity to showcase regional design and development successes, daylight and workshop local urban challenges, and increase the energy and momentum in NWA to provide more urbanism that is walkable, sustainable, and supports opportunity across the region.

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CNU 34 Focus

A Future Built on New Urbanism: Applying the Transect

The Growth of Neighborhoods, Towns, and Cities Across a Region

In a rapidly-growing region like Northwest Arkansas, a well-coordinated approach to the development and redevelopment of the built environment is fundamental to ensuring that growth is healthy, sustainable, humane, and protects the uniquely valuable character of the surrounding natural environment. As communities face important decisions about their built future, they will need to do so in a way that respects context and scale with each new development and redevelopment. The Charter of the New Urbanism describes the breadth of principles that apply to the full rural-to-urban spectrum of development, and when applied effectively, these principles ensure that every community possesses its own authentic identity, from the most rural farming village to the most urban downtown core. The ordering device that the New Urbanism uses to demonstrate this revolutionary idea is the Transect.

The Transect offers a powerful tool for strategic community-building that establishes an ambitious yet rational vision for change. In reforming existing sprawl, application of the Transect offers a clear way to redevelop autocentric conditions and the harms it causes. In the development of new settlements, the Transect provides an approach for urban design that will possess qualities associated with the best of old urbanism. NWA faces urbanization pressures that many growing regions can identify with, where economic progress and migrating populations can clash with the need to preserve nature and farmland.



Schedule At-a-Glance

True to its name, CNU 34 Northwest Arkansas is a multicity Congress and will be held over five days across two of the largest cities in the region. Tours, sessions, keynotes, and workshops will take place in both Bentonville and Fayetteville.

CNU 34 Northwest Arkansas

Week at a Glance
May 12-16, 2026

**Tuesday
May 12**

Specialty
Programming

Local and
Regional Tours

Local Government
Day Program

Builders &
Developers Day
Program

CNU
Accreditation
Bootcamp

Opening Party in
Downtown Rogers

**Wednesday
May 13**

Fayetteville Day
First Timers'
Breakfast Reception
Networking Market
at the
Fayetteville Square

Local and
Regional Tours

Sessions and
Workshops

Opening Keynote

Happy Hours,
Dine Arouds,
& Pub Crawl

Live Music Jam at
George's Majestic
Lounge

**Thursday
May 14**

Dual Spoke Day
Local and
Regional Tours
Art Room

Choose your
Location for:

Sessions

Project
Showcases

Meetings

Main Stage
Conversations

Charter Awards
Reception and
Ceremony at
HWHI Gallery

**Friday
May 15**

Bentonville Day

CNU Chapter
Networking
Breakfast

Closing Keynote

Local and
Regional Tours

Sessions and
Workshops

Closing Party at the
RODE House

**Saturday
May 16**

New Urbanism
Open House

Local and
Regional Tours

Free, Public
Educational
Programming

CNU34
Northwest Arkansas
Closing Remarks by
Regional Leaders

Keynote Speakers:

We Shape Our Neighborhoods, and Our Neighborhoods Shape Our Future



CNU 34 Keynote Speaker: Raj Chetty
Professor of Economics, Harvard University



CNU 34 Keynote Speaker: Eric Klinenberg
Professor of Social Science, NYU

Opening Keynote: Raj Chetty

Connecting quality of place to economic opportunity.

Raj Chetty is the William A. Ackman Professor of Economics at Harvard University and the Director of Opportunity Insights, which uses big data to study the science of economic opportunity: how we can give children from all backgrounds better chances of succeeding? Chetty's work has been widely cited in academia, media outlets, and policy discussions in the United States and beyond.

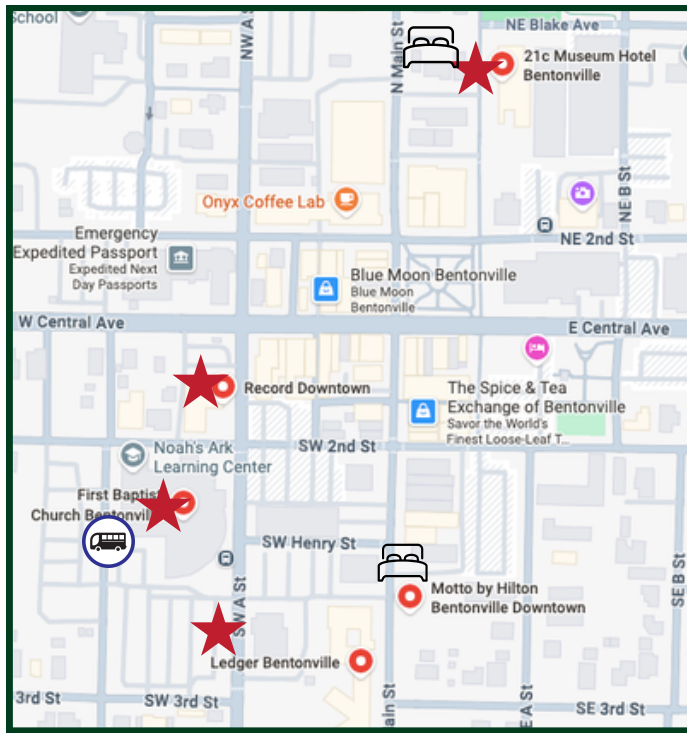
Closing Keynote: Eric Klinenberg

Measuring the impact of place on social connectivity.

Eric Klinenberg is a bestselling author, renowned sociologist, and Helen Gould Shepard Professor of Social Science and Director of the Institute for Public Knowledge at New York University. His latest book, 2020, is a "gripping, deeply moving account of a signal year in modern history." In his previous book, Palaces for the People, Eric argues that social infrastructure, "the physical places and organizations that shape the way people interact," is the surprisingly simple key to building a democracy that works for everyone.

Transit Hubs and Venues

Bentonville



CNU 34 Transit Hub: Bentonville First Baptist Church



Bentonville Venues:

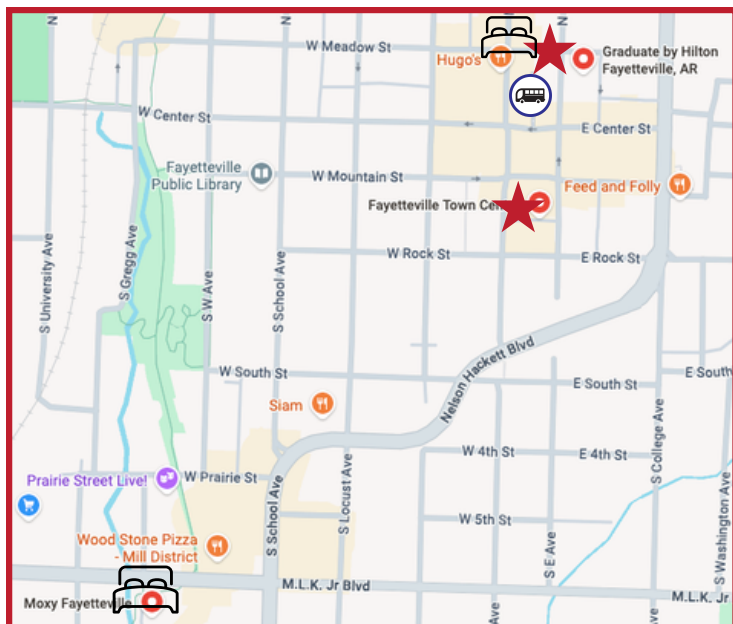
- First Baptist Church
- The Record Downtown
- The 21C Museum & Hotel (Art Room, Thursday only)
- The Ledger (Friday only)



Bentonville Hotels: Motto by Hilton, 21C Museum & Hotel

Not Pictured: Charter Awards Ceremony at the Heartland Whole Health Institute and the Closing Party at the RODE House. Walkable from all venues, but return transit to Fayetteville will be provided. Full CNU 34 Map available [here](#).

Fayetteville



CNU 34 Fayetteville Transit Hub: Graduate Hilton Hotel



Fayetteville Venues:

- Graduate Hilton
- Fayetteville Town Center



Fayetteville Hotels: Graduate Hilton and the Moxy Fayetteville

Transportation to/from the Tuesday Opening Party and the Charter Awards ceremony will be provided from (and back to) both Transit Stops. Special transportation home to Bentonville from the Live Music at George's and home to Fayetteville from the Closing Party will also be provided.

Specialty Programming

Builders & Developers Workshop at CNU34:

A full day of programming and networking for builders and real estate developers.

Each Builder's Day session below provides the following CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A:1 LH

Welcome and Introduction

Building Community

Mallory Baches, President, Congress for the New Urbanism; and Ashley Terry, President of development, Pivot, Oklahoma City (OK)

Opening Session

PLACES That Create Value: How Mixed-Use Urbanism Outperforms Its Comparable Parts

Why do some places command exceptional value while others stagnate, even when they share the same county, schools, and demographics? This session uses the PLACES framework to compare Birkdale Village and Norton Commons with their surrounding subdivisions, revealing how walkability, mixed uses, and intentional urban form create powerful economic and social multipliers. Attendees will see how great places don't just look different — they perform differently.

Daniel Wright, Associate Director, The Childress Klein Center for Real Estate; Belk College of Business, University of North Carolina – Charlotte

Primary Educational Session 1

Paths for Urbanism to Enhance Developer & Investor Returns

Thoughtful new urban properties consistently show appreciation by the market through strong sales prices, attractive rents, and continuing value enhancement over time. However, developers haven't always participated equally in the rewards for the effort of complex mixed-use projects. In this session, three experienced New Urbanists explore how multiple avenues of short- and long-term revenue streams can lead to enhanced returns with reduced risk, for both developers and their investors. Hear about real world projects that include a variety of deal structures and opportunities to create value both during and beyond the life of the project.

Steve Maun, Founder, Leyland Alliance LLC (NY); Ward Davis, Principal, High Street Real Estate Development (AR); and David Tomes, Founder, Norton Commons (KY)

Breakout Block 1:

Techniques and Lessons Learned from Incubating Neighborhood Main Streets

To deliver the walkable living that so many American households want, neighborhoods need a center that provides services, amenities, and a thriving social life. These places break many rules of conventional commercial and retail development, so a developer must think outside of the box to effectively deliver them, while limiting their financial risk. This full-group session will explore techniques used to both create a strong sense of place and increase value, deep-diving into how a thoughtful combination of small flex/live-work spaces, mobile businesses, pop-up businesses, programming, and smaller shopfront spaces thoughtfully timed and placed have effectively delivered vibrant, thriving neighborhood main streets

Stephen Poulakos, VP, Town Planning & Design, Seabrook (WA); Edie Weintraub, Founder, Terra Alma; and Alex Vondeling, Principal, Opticos

Complete Neighborhoods: Shops & Restaurants – The Triple Bottom Line

Walkable, 15-Minute neighborhoods rely on businesses offering the daily retail goods and services needed and desired by their households. Delicious cafes, well stocked groceries and attentive personal services, embedded within a community can foster a desirable quality of life and ecological sustainability advocated by the New Urbanism. On the other hand, poorly managed shops, selling unappealing goods and providing poor service can adversely impact a neighborhood's character, social aspects and property values. This seminar will define the statistical demand for market-based retail and restaurant businesses generated by households living within a 5-minute walk, bike ride and electric bike rides. Additionally, the amenity, legacy and profit center commercial business objectives and design's best practices will be illustrated with proven case studies.

Bob Gibbs, Founder, Gibbs Planning Group

Lunchtime Presentation

Re-Regulating for Attainability in Real Estate Development

KUA staff, including Eric Kronberg and Elizabeth Ward Williams will present KUA's current best practices for delivering attainable housing by talking through necessary modifications to local zoning ordinances to calibrate with most efficient IRC/Building Code practices (opportunities). This includes calibration with local subdivision ordinances, conventional financing opportunities, and pre-designed plans. This session will include primary practice areas that include Urban Design, Architecture, State Policy, Housing, and Development.

Eric Kronberg, Founder, Kronberg Urbanists + Architects; and Elizabeth Ward Williams, Director of Urban Design, Kronberg Urbanists + Architects

Primary Educational Session 2

Aligning Design and Development in New Urbanist Real Estate

Delivering successful New Urbanist projects requires more than vision—it demands alignment between design intent and development realities. This panel features developer David Tomes alongside design leaders Senen Antonio, Scott Layton, and Louis Nequette in a candid discussion on bridging that gap. Drawing from real-world experience to explore how teams translate financial goals, market demands, and regulatory constraints into lasting, place-based outcomes. The conversation tackles fundamental questions: Does design truly drive value in real estate, and what does success look like in practice? The panel will then deep-dive into examinations of what makes design partnerships succeed, where misalignment occurs, and how early coordination avoids costly setbacks. Attendees will gain practical strategies for structuring collaboration, aligning expectations, and integrating design excellence into development from concept through delivery.

Joel Embry, Founder, Amelia Park (FL); Senen Antonio, Partner, DPZ CoDesign Scott Layton, Project Manager, Michael Watkins Architect LLC; and Louis Nequette, Founder, Nequette Architecture & Design

Breakout Block 2:

The Tuning of Urbanism and Architecture

The Tuning of Architecture and Urbanism Contextual Intelligence: Designing Culturally Resonant Architecture and Urbanism How do we design buildings and urban spaces that feel timeless, rooted, and alive in their surroundings? This session explores the art of architectural and urban tuning – aligning form, proportion, material, and meaning to reflect cultural and climatic context. Drawing from classical, vernacular, and New Urbanist traditions, panelists will share strategies for creating places that honor local heritage and craftsmanship while advancing contemporary goals of sustainability, equity, and civic pride. Through illustrated case studies and interdisciplinary dialogue, we'll examine how regional typologies, civic memory, and ethical design practices can guide the creation of environments that foster belonging and beauty. Participants will leave with a renewed understanding of how architecture and urbanism can be tuned to the rhythms of place, people, and tradition – with both rigor and creativity.

Geoffrey Mouen, former Town Architect, Celebration (FL); and Sara Bega, former Town Architect, Las Catalinas (Costa Rica)

How to Implement Urbanism Through Faith-Based Housing Development

Across America, faith institutions are rediscovering their historic role as neighborhood builders. For hundreds of years, congregations have been vital partners in housing and community development, yet decades of disinvestment and suburban sprawl has left much of their land underutilized. Today, congregations are again stepping forward, often with New Urbanist principles and mission-driven purpose, to create homes, civic spaces, and small-scale neighborhoods that strengthen local life. Led by Aaron Lubeck and Eli Smith of the Faith-Based Housing Initiative, this session traces the evolution of faith-based housing from the Great Society programs of the 1960s to the present resurgence, presenting design, financing, and policy models for redeveloping faith-owned land. Attendees will gain both historical context and actionable strategies for helping congregations become catalysts for walkable, beautiful, and enduring communities that infuse mission into the built environment.

Aaron Lubeck, Development Director, Southern Urbanism; and Eli Smith, Director, Faith-Based Housing Initiative

Closing Session

Building Better: Lessons Learned from Developing Thoughtfully

This closing panel ties together the themes of the day along with personal reflection and audience questions. Exclusively made up of real estate developers, these panelists have all experienced both the risks and rewards of new urban projects. Key discussion points will include what led them to pursue both development in general, and New Urbanism in particular; with the benefit of hindsight, what changes would they make with their career; and what the greatest challenges ahead will be for new urban developers. Attendees should expect frank and surprising remarks from developers who have helped pave the way for the implementation of New Urbanism.

Steve Maun, Founder, LeylandAlliance LLC (NY); Frank Starkey, Founder, People Places LLC (FL); David Tomes, Founder, Norton Commons (KY); and Joel Embry, Founder, Amelia Park (FL)

Specialty Programming

CNU Accreditation Booktcamp at CNU34

A pathway to accreditation for professional practitioners of the New Urbanism.

Welcome and Agenda Overview: Jennifer Hurley, Chair, CNU Board of Directors; Principal, PlaceMakers

Module 1: Foundations of New Urbanism & Urban Theory (CNU34102-1)

Ashleigh Walton, Architect and Project Manager, Urban Design Associates; Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Founder, CNU; Malcolm Matheson Distinguished Professor of Architecture and Director of the Master of Urban Design Program, University of Miami

This foundational module introduces the principles of New Urbanism across regional, neighborhood, and block scales, grounded in the Charter of the New Urbanism. It covers the rural-to-urban transect, Special Districts, and historical influences including pre-war urbanism, suburban sprawl, and key planning movements. Emphasizing sustainability, equity, and housing diversity—especially missing middle housing—it equips participants with a foundational framework for more context-sensitive planning and design.

CEUs: AIA: 1.5 HSW / 1.5 CM / ASLA: 1.5 PDH / CNU-A:1.5 LH

Module 2: Urban Design & Physical Form (How Places Are Shaped) (CNU34102-2)

Lauren Kelly, Vice President, MK Design Group, Inc.; Sara Bega, Bega Design Studio and Adjunct Faculty, University of Notre Dame

Participants will explore the fundamentals of New Urbanist design, focusing on how street networks, building placement, and public spaces shape walkable, human-scaled communities. Participants will examine connectivity, block size, and complete streets; frontages, setbacks, and proportions; and the role of squares, greens, and civic buildings. The discussion also covers practical parking strategies and introduces Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) principles to support compact, connected, and vibrant places.

CEUs: AIA: 1.5 HSW / 1.5 CM / ASLA: 1.5 PDH / CNU-A:1.5 LH

Module 3: Codes, Policy & Implementation Tools (CNU34102-3)

Susan Henderson, Principal, PlaceMakers; Larry Gould, Principal, Nelson\Nygaard; Mary Madden, Principal, Madden Planning LLC; Patrick Siegman, Principal, Siegman & Associates

This session examines the regulatory frameworks shaping New Urbanist practice, contrasting conventional zoning with form-based codes and transect-based approaches. Participants will explore regulating plans, parking reform, and policies supporting ADUs and missing middle housing. The discussion addresses subdivision regulations, street standards, and common conflicts with engineering requirements. Topics of note include integrating strategies into development, equipping practitioners to align policy, design, and infrastructure to deliver walkable, resilient, and context-sensitive communities.

CEUs: AIA: 1.5 LU / 1.5 CM / ASLA: 1.5 PDH / CNU-A: 1.5 LH

Module 4: Planning Process, Community, and Development Economics (CNU34102-5)

Sharon Woods, President and Founding Principal, LandUseUSA; Jennifer Hurley, Chair, CNU Board of Directors; Principal, PlaceMakers; Rebekah Kik, Deputy City Manager, Kalamazoo (MI)

Faculty will discuss the collaborative processes behind successful New Urbanist projects, from community engagement and charrettes to managing stakeholder conflicts and building consensus. Participants will examine public-private partnerships, development phasing, and strategies for market feasibility and incremental growth. Emphasis is placed on advancing equity through approaches that address displacement and affordability, equipping practitioners with tools to align community vision, economic realities, and inclusive outcomes.

CEUs: AIA: 1.5 LU / 1.5 CM / ASLA: 1.5 PDH / CNU-A: 1.5 LH

Specialty Programming

Local Government Day at CNU 34:

Custom training and networking for Local Government and Elected Officials.

Each session below provides the following CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / 1 CM | 1 EQ / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A:1 LH

Welcome and Agenda Overview:

Christina Anderson — City Planner & Deputy Director, City Planning & Economic Development, Kalamazoo (MI)

Opening Session | The State of Affordable Urbanism: Bringing it Home (CNU34101-1)

Shane Phillips, Housing Initiative, UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies

In this session, Shane Phillips explores how cities can meaningfully address housing affordability through better policy and urban design. Drawing on research and case studies of North American cities and towns, he will examine how land use regulations, zoning reform, and incremental development strategies can expand housing supply while supporting walkable, livable neighborhoods. Attendees will gain a clearer understanding of the tradeoffs, myths, and practical tools shaping the future of affordable urbanism.

Educational Session | Tired of Waiting? City as Developer (CNU34101-2)

Rebekah Kik, Assistant City Manager, City of Kalamazoo (MI); Tim Corcoran, Planning Director, City of South Bend (IN); and Eric Kronberg, Kronberg Urbanists + Architects, Atlanta (GA)

This session will look at two cities that are rethinking their role in getting projects built — moving from regulatory changes, pre-approved plan sets, to site acquisition and now partnerships for development. When market gaps or infrastructure barriers stall development, we are increasingly stepping into the role of developer of last resort to ensure that community visions actually happen. This conversation with South Bend and Kalamazoo will walk through how cities can move a vision from concept plan into a viable project using proactive tools: pre-approved plans, brownfield remediation funds, infrastructure investments, and partnerships with motivated developers.

Educational Session | Rewiring the Public Realm: Creative Solutions for Public Works in Fast-Growing Regions (CNU34101-3)

John McCurdy, Director of Community Development, City of Rogers

This session examines how public works can evolve from a focus on vehicle throughput to shaping vibrant public realms. Drawing on projects in Northwest Arkansas, including Railyard Park, it highlights corridor retrofits, form-based codes, and tactical pilots that transform suburban landscapes into walkable, mixed-use places. Attendees will gain practical, replicable strategies for aligning infrastructure, policy, and design.

Educational Session | Reimagining Housing Conversations: The CHATS Engagement Experience (CNU34101-4)

Duke McLarty & Lindsey Navarrette, Groundwork

Northwest Arkansas Council CHATS (Connecting Housing and Transformative Solutions) is a community engagement initiative developed by Groundwork that allows attendees to participate in a guided discussion about housing challenges and solutions. During this 60-to-90-minute session, each table of 7-10 attendees will participate in a CHATS with Groundwork staff facilitating. The interactive CHATS experience goes through impact and solution cards that reveal how different residents are affected by the lack of housing options and what strategies can address those gaps. Groundwork will guide table hosts to lead dialogue and reflection, simulating how CHATS builds empathy, understanding, and collective problem-solving. Attendees will leave with insights on how to replicate this scalable, engagement model to foster productive housing discussions in their own cities or regions.

Educational Session | Rebalancing the Rules: Zoning for Fiscal Health (CNU34101-5)

Heather Worthington, Principal, Urban3, former Director of Long Range Planning, Minneapolis (MN) and Brooke Bailey, Performance & Finance Manager, Urban3

This session explores how a city's regulatory framework directly shapes its financial future. Learn how zoning, land use, and development patterns impact long-term revenue and costs—and how rebalancing these systems can create more resilient, productive, and sustainable communities. Through real-world analysis, discover how better rules lead to stronger municipal balance sheets.

Closing Session | Incremental Success: Bite-Size Lessons from Big Cities (CNU34101-6)

Emily Liu, Planning Director, City of Dallas (TX) and Rico Quirindongo, Planning Director, City of Seattle (WA)

During this closing session, attendees will hear from two planning directors with decades of experience of incremental successes over the long-haul. Emily Liu, currently Director of the Planning Department for the City of Dallas, will discuss the lessons learned through decades of planning across four states, and the way small wins can build big change. Rico Quirindongo, Director of the City of Seattle's Office of Planning & Community Development, will share how he has maintained a proactive vision for revitalizing and reimagining the City's historic landmarks and neighborhoods through multi-agency collaboration, for over 25 years. Then, in a moderated discussion, the pair will address common setbacks faced by cities large and small, and identify the best bite-sized lessons to close the day.

Sponsored by:



Mobile Tours

Ticketed mobile tours allow attendees to see the greater NWA region and learn outside the Congress venues.

TUESDAY, MAY 12

Connecting NWA: Razorback Regional Greenway Square to Square (CNU34T24)

5/12/2026 9:00AM - 3:00PM

A two decade long commitment from multiple jurisdictions, paired with a vision of transformation through trails, the Razorback Regional Greenway has catapulted NWA into Active Transportation Planning. The Greenway's success began with an idea of culture and equity, and it's influence and momentum has snowballed, creating a biking mecca in a small corner of Arkansas. This greenway was one (if not THE) first step to planning regionally, and thinking of what was one 5 very individual cities to a regional area, now know as NWA (Northwest Arkansas).

Speakers: Jane Ziegler, Matt Mihalevich, Ryan Hale

Sponsors: Laneshift

CEUs: AIA: 5.5 HSW / AICP: 5.5 CM | 1 SR / LA CES: 5.5 HSW / CNU-A: 5.5 LH

Explore Eureka Springs (CNU34T23)

5/12/2026 9:00AM - 4:00PM

With an entire downtown on the National Register and not a single traffic light, historic Eureka Springs remains a jewel of 19th century architecture built on a steep, limestone ridge. This casual, day-long tour, is an opportunity for attendees to experience the city without much structure - walking the winding, non-grid network of streets developed incrementally to accommodate the steep landscape and engaging in discussion with fellow new urbanists about the unique architecture. Led by Victor Dover, this tour will be an exploration of what makes Eureka Springs unique, including a stop at Thorncrown Chapel, with plenty of opportunities for casual conversation and side quests.

Speakers: Andrew Georgiadis, John McCurdy, Victor Dover

CEUs: AIA: 3.5 LU / AICP: 3.5 CM / LA CES: 3.5 PDH / CNU-A: 3.5 LH

Illinois River Float: Exploring the Balance Between Conservation and Recreation (CNU34T27)

5/12/2026 9:00AM - 4:00PM

As Northwest Arkansas urbanizes, conflicts between natural stream functioning and urban infrastructure arise. Outdoor recreation continues to be among the top five contributors to the state's economy and is still a growing industry throughout Arkansas. While NWA's recent biking investments and culture have captured national attention, river recreation has been popular for generations as a powerful driver of multi-sport excursions. Water quality is the thread that connects well-being in urban environments with ecological functioning in wild and scenic waterways. The IRWP River Recreation Masterplan was the first of its kind in Arkansas in exploring the balance between introducing new recreational experiences to the Illinois River and ongoing riparian conservation efforts. This float will explore the scenic beauty and river experiences that are worthy of protection, while highlighting consideration for the impacts of cities on riparian functioning.

Speakers: Ammen Jordan, Jenny Burbidge, Jessica Norris, Leif Kindberg

Sponsors: Prism Design Studio

CEUs: AIA: 4 HSW / AICP: 4 CM / LA CES: 4 HSW / CNU-A: 4 LH

Mobile Tours

E. Fay Jones: Elevated Design in the Ozarks (CNU34T18)

5/12/2026 9:00AM - 5:00PM

Journey through Ozark hill towns outside of Fayetteville to explore E. Fay Jones' architectural legacy, including two of his most celebrated works. The Thorncrown Chapel outside Eureka Springs was voted by the American Institute of Architects as fourth on the list of the most important American buildings of the twentieth century. The soaring wooden chapel made from humble 2x dimensioned lumber bolted together by steel fasteners has been called by critics as "one of the finest religious spaces of modern times. The chapel has been honored with the AIA's 25-Year Award and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In Bella Vista, the Mildred B. Cooper Chapel continues Jones investigation of a gothic-like structure, this time in standard steel channel construction. The tour ends with one of Jones' most significant homes, the dramatic Faubus House for the former Arkansas governor, overlooking downtown Huntsville.

Speakers: David McKee, Gregory Herman

CEUs: AIA: 6 LU / AICP: 6 CM / LA CES: 6 PDH / CNU-A: 6 LH

Let them Eat! A Deep Dive into the Local Food Systems in NWA (CNU34T10)

5/12/2026 9:00AM - 5:00PM

This full-day bus tour explores Northwest Arkansas's vibrant local food network and its growing impact on community health, placemaking, and regional resilience. Beginning at 8th Street Market and Brightwater: A Center for the Study of Food in Bentonville, participants will see how culinary education and creative entrepreneurship converge to shape a sustainable food culture. The tour continues to Springdale's Market Center of the Ozarks, Arkansas Food Innovation Center, and Spring Creek Food Hub, showcasing regional distribution and value-added production that support local growers. In Fayetteville, enjoy a chef-prepared lunch at Appleseeds Teaching Farm, where educational gardens and outdoor kitchens foster food literacy. The day concludes at Cobblestone Farms, a nonprofit community farm addressing food insecurity through regenerative agriculture, illustrating how local food systems nourish both people and place.

Speakers: Dan Hintz, Emily English

CEUs: AIA: 7 HSW / AICP: 7 CM / LA CES: 7 HSW / CNU-A: 7 LH

Southyard, the Mill District, and Beyond: Exploring Fayetteville's Newest Mixed-Use Entertainment Neighborhood (CNU34T02)

5/12/2026 1:00PM - 4:30PM

Important places in Fayetteville are built on top of the hill in one of Arkansas' few hill towns. Located at the bottom of the hill from downtown Fayetteville, South Fayetteville was poor, the location of rails spurs, warehouses, and industrial and food production. Explore the transformation of South Fayetteville through its emerging neighborhoods and diverse housing innovations that include code hacks. The tour begins in the Mill District, where adaptive reuse of a mill building guides context-sensitive infill, offering new urban lifestyles. Visit Southyard, a former farmers food cooperative that blends residential, retail, hospitality, and public space on a former industrial site. Nearby, Range's 8-plex on South Washington Avenue and the colorful "Painted Babies" on 9th Street showcase creative missing middle housing development. The tour concludes at the 11th Street Cottages, a pocket neighborhood demonstrating thoughtful density, craftsmanship, and livability in Fayetteville's evolving urban fabric.

Speakers: Allison Quinlan, Kaitlyn Fondano, Rob Sharp

CEUs: AIA: 3 LU / AICP: 3 CM / LA CES: 3 PDH / CNU-A: 3 LH

Mobile Tours

30 Years of New Urbanism in NWA: Har-Ber Meadows and Johnson Square (CNU34T01)

5/12/2026 1:00PM - 5:00PM

Visit Har-Ber Meadows, the first TND developed in NWA, originally founded in 1997 on the outskirts of Springdale. Explore hits and misses, from public spaces and mature streetscapes, neighborhood schools, street layout and architecture, to (lack of) a mixed-use neighborhood center. From Har-Ber Meadows, travel by bus to Johnson Square, the latest TND in NWA, with thriving restaurants, offices, and housing as well floodplain habitat restoration well underway. Hear directly from the developer about work completed to-date as well as the third phase of development now underway, with focus on additional employment center and entertainment.

Speakers: Ward Davis, Wes Craiglow

Sponsors: Lloyd

CEUs: AIA: 3.25 LU / AICP: 3.25 CM / LA CES: 3.25 PDH / CNU-A: 3.25 LH

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

University of Arkansas: NWA's First Regional Institution (CNU34T15)

5/13/2026 8:00AM - 11:00AM

Dubbed the "Athens of the Ozarks", Fayetteville has hosted many private- and public-school, college, and seminary establishments since the mid-nineteenth century, including the state's land grant university in 1872, the University of Arkansas. Explore the campus' historic core featuring the 1925 master plan by Jamieson & Spearl (the St. Louis architectural firm that designed most of the buildings at Washington University in St. Louis) and listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places. The Collegiate Gothic style buildings form a district atop the hill overlooking downtown with views of the Boston Mountains. The academic campus stretches along ridgelines while the athletic campus sits in the valley below. The burgeoning 34,000-student campus features both revival and contemporary buildings over the last century by E.D. Stone (Fayetteville native), Robert Stern, Machado Silvetti, Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture, Marlon Blackwell Architects, Miller Boskus Lack, John Milner Associates, and Charles Thompson.

Speakers: Matthew Hoffman, Roger Boskus, Todd Furgason

CEUs: AIA: 3 LU / AICP: 3 CM / LA CES: 3 PDH / CNU-A: 3 LH

Fayetteville Trail-Oriented Development & Campus Connectivity (CNU34T25)

5/13/2026 8:00AM - 11:00AM

Thirty years ago, conventional wisdom held that urban trails facing the backs of homeowners' properties were conduits for crime. Discover how Fayetteville, Arkansas became a national model for trail integration and active mobility, where new development now seeks to face the trail. This biking tour highlights the city's award-winning 100+ mile trail system, seamlessly connecting downtown, neighborhoods, parks, and the University of Arkansas campus, with the Razorback Greenway. The latter was inspired by Fayetteville's early investments in trails. Participants will experience how complete streets, shared-use paths, and campus green corridors create a cohesive network that supports alternative transportation among students, residents, and visitors alike. Stops will showcase key design features, public art, and strategic redevelopment along the trail that link to campus gateways and mixed-use districts. Learn how bike-centric policies and community vision transformed Fayetteville into a Top 10 Best U.S. City for Bicycles, blending recreation, sustainability, and placemaking.

Speakers: Dane Eifling, Matt Mihalevich

CEUs: AIA: 3 HSW / AICP: 3 CM / LA CES: 3 HSW / CNU-A: 3 LH

Mobile Tours

Marlon Blackwell: Projects of the 2020 AIA Gold Medalist (CNU34T14)

5/13/2026 8:00AM - 3:00PM

This tour will explore the architecture of Marlon Blackwell, FAIA, rooted in Ozark vernacular while offering iconic examples of globally acclaimed modern buildings. His work occurs across a range of building typologies, scales, and budgets. Blackwell cites the notion of "radical simplicity" in the making of buildings and places as a constant, authentic focus, "an architecture in the place, of the place and for the place for anywhere and for anyone with dignity, wonder and joy." Traveling by bus and foot throughout Northwest Arkansas cities, highlights include the civic-scale transformation of Fayetteville High School, the sculptural Kennan Tower House, and the elegantly crafted Blessings Golf Club. Stops will include the Greek Orthodox Church, Harvey Pediatric Clinic, and the downtown Thaden School campus. The tour concludes at Bentonville's Whole Health Institute and The Ledger, the world's first bikeable office building, each reflecting Blackwell's belief that architecture can be both deeply local and universally resonant.

Speakers: Carley Chastain, Marlon Blackwell, Meryati Johari Blackwell, Michael Davis

CEUs: AIA: 5.5 LU / AICP: 5.5 CM / LA CES: 5.5 HSW / CNU-A: 5.5 LH

More than a Co-Op, a way of life: Ozark Natural Foods and Farms (CNU34T09)

5/13/2026 9:00AM - 12:00PM

Of the 165 retail grocery cooperatives estimated to be operating in the U.S., Fayetteville's Ozark Natural Foods is Arkansas' only food cooperative. ONF is a member-owned-and-governed grocery store specializing in local organic and all-natural products. They are dedicated to healthful living and sustainability with strict product standards excluding artificial preservatives, colors, flavors, chemical additives, etc. Akin to a food hub, the store supports a constellation of local farmers through one-on-one sourcing relationships ensuring that expenditures support local agriculture. This direct relationship gives farmers the confidence to pursue local and alternative growing models that fulfill ONF's mission. The tour will emphasize the workings of a local food supply chain from the store to a nonprofit urban farm, a downtown commercial urban farm, and a downtown adjacent commercial urban farm. ONF is also a thriving downtown "third place" as defined by Ray Oldenberg, sporting Fayetteville's best porch.

Speakers: Jonathan Curth, Melissa Terry

CEUs: AIA: 2.5 HSW / AICP: 2.5 CM | 1 SR / LA CES: 2.5 HSW / CNU-A: 2.5 LH

Exploring Downtown Fayetteville - from the Square to the Ramble (and Back Again!) (CNU34T04)

5/13/2026 9:00AM - 12:00PM

Tour Downtown Fayetteville on foot (or bike), from the Square to the Ramble, to see a variety of projects completed over the past 20 years that have fulfilled the key goals of the 2004 Downtown Master Plan (led by Dover Kohl and Partners). See a range of redevelopment, infill housing, improved streetscapes, and new public spaces, in the context of public and private investments and zoning ordinance changes. Explore opportunities for the next 20 years as the city begins to update its plan for "the heart of Fayetteville".

Speakers: Mary Madden, Rob Sharp

CEUs: AIA: 3 LU / AICP: 3 CM / LA CES: 3 PDH / CNU-A: 3 LH

Mobile Tours

Scaling up Housing: Fayetteville's Large-Scale Commercial Housing (CNU34T03)

5/13/2026 9:00AM - 2:00PM

Fayetteville-based Modus Studio is arguably Arkansas' and the Southeast region's premier architect of large-scale housing development with projects across the nation. This tour explores innovative housing projects that redefine sustainable urban living in Fayetteville. Stops include Adohi Hall, the University of Arkansas's groundbreaking mass timber residence hall featuring state-of-the-art biophilic design. Their Eco Modern Flats, a LEED Platinum-certified redevelopment of a once low-end apartment development pioneered place making amenities and energy-efficient housing retrofits in a nationally award-winning project. Frisco Student Housing and nearby Bear Claw/Cardinal Housing both showcase large courtyard housing developments adjacent to the university, which fit in with their neighborhoods. Uptown Apartments and Shops, a mixed-use infill exemplifies sprawl repair near the region's suburban shopping mall. These projects illustrate collectively Modus Studio's work in bridging architecture, sustainability, and urban context to elevate everyday living in reshaping Fayetteville's housing landscape.

Speakers: Chris Baribeau

CEUs: AIA: 4 HSW / AICP: 4 CM / LA CES: 4 HSW / CNU-A: 4 LH

The Ramble Walking Tour (CNU34T30)

5/13/2026 1:00PM - 3:00PM

The Ramble in Fayetteville is an excellent example of a linear trail "thickened" by components that transform a path into a place. Designed by the celebrated landscape architectural firm, Nelson Byrd Woltz, under the NWA Design Excellence Program, The Ramble is a 50-acre urban park spanning more than one-half mile linking Fayetteville's "main street", Dickson Street, to the Mill District at the edge of downtown and the University of Arkansas' Windgate Arts + Design District. Consisting of two sections, the Upper Ramble and a Lower Ramble, the Upper Ramble connects the Walton Arts Center, TheatreSquared, and the Public Library, through plazas, bridges, art installations, and performance spaces on wooded hillside sites. The Ramble is Arkansas' first SITES-certified project, emphasizing sustainable landscape design that incorporates a state-of-the-art urban stream restoration of the Tanglewood Branch Creek and native flora restoration of a woodland ecosystem in the downtown.

Speakers: Alison Jumper, Peter Nierengarten, Sandi Formica

CEUs: AIA: 2 HSW / AICP: 2 CM / LA CES: 2 HSW / CNU-A: 2 LH

The University of Arkansas Art and Design District: Spaces for the Humanities (CNU34T11)

5/13/2026 1:00PM - 4:00PM

This new off-campus district engaging the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design, the Fulbright College's School of Art, and the UA Libraries, is designed to bring together art, architecture, design, and education, on MLK Boulevard in south Fayetteville. The district serves both the university and the broader community through galleries, maker spaces and outreach functions. A walking tour of buildings by internationally acclaimed architects, Grafton Architects, winner of the 2020 Pritzker Prize (architecture's Nobel Prize), and others, include the Anthony Timberlands Center, the Studio + Design Center, the Sculpture Building, the upcoming Gallery + Foundations Building, and the UA Library Annex. The district is catalyzing new neighborhood development in this once industrial zone of Fayetteville, demonstrating that campus expansion can be effectively integrated into urban fabrics. The district is also important to the development of the arts ecosystem in Northwest Arkansas, including the attraction of nationally recognized educators.

Speakers: Peter MacKeith

CEUs: AIA: 2 LU / AICP: 2 CM / LA CES: 2 PDH / CNU-A: 2 LH

Mobile Tours

THURSDAY, MAY 14

Walmart Home Office Campus: From Logistics to Architecture and Placemaking (CNU34T20-TH)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 12:30PM

The new Walmart Home Office covers more than 400 acres in the heart of Bentonville, Arkansas. Thoughtfully designed as a connected and sustainable campus, it features six amenity buildings, 11 parking decks and 12 office buildings organized into distinct neighborhoods and constructed with sustainable materials, including 2.4 million square feet of mass timber. Over half of the campus is preserved as green space, with office and amenity buildings nestled among more than 750,000 plants, trees, and shrubs. The grounds also include over 13 acres of lakes and nearly seven miles of scenic walking and biking paths, creating a vibrant environment for work and well-being. This tour highlights the integration of architecture, urban landscapes, and mobility networks, creating a people-centered workplace that will become a new anchor to the surrounding community. Participants will experience the campus's walkable layout, adaptive building forms, and emphasis on health, nature, and collaboration. Learn how Gensler, Walter P Moore, and other partners translated strategies in sustainability, mass timber construction, public space design, and multimodal connectivity to shape one of the more significant corporate campuses in the U.S.

Speakers: Robert Grove

Sponsors: Colliers

CEUs: AIA: 3 LU / AICP: 3 CM / LA CES: 3 PDH / CNU-A: 3 LH

Active Transportation as a Redevelopment Catalyst: Exploring the revitalization of Downtown Springdale as the result of the Razorback Greenway (CNU34T26)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 12:30PM

Explore the transformative impact of the Razorback Regional Greenway as it threads through Downtown Springdale, reshaping the city's core into a vibrant, people-centered destination. Once dominated by through traffic, Emma Avenue now features improved streetscapes, wider sidewalks, landscaping, and bike connections that invite residents and visitors to linger and explore. Key stops include Shiloh Square, a revitalized civic plaza hosting markets and community events; Walter Turnbow Park, an inviting public space overlooking Spring Creek; and Mile 16, the symbolic midpoint of the 40-mile Greenway linking Northwest Arkansas' cities. The corridor's reinvention has catalyzed new mixed-use development, restaurants, housing, and creative workspaces, demonstrating how active transportation infrastructure can serve as a powerful catalyst for downtown revival, economic growth, and regional connectivity.

Speakers: Jill Dabbs, Paxton Roberts, Tristan Hill

Sponsors: Alvarez-Diaz & Villalon

CEUs: AIA: 3 HSW / AICP: 3 CM / LA CES: 3 HSW / CNU-A: 3 LH

Rogers Downtown Walking Tour (CNU34T05)

5/14/2026 12:00PM - 4:00PM

Explore downtown Rogers and learn from those who are shaping its growth. How does a booming small city grow inward and intensify at an appropriate scale? See how Rogers is maximizing its existing public infrastructure to help promote economic development, combat sprawl, and provide increased housing choices. Observe burgeoning infill housing projects and the public investments which spurred them, along with a growing restaurant and recreation scene, all in downtown.

Speakers: Hannah Cicioni, Lance Jobe

Track: TOURS [Ticketed / off-site]

CEUs: AIA: 3 HSW / AICP: 3 CM / LA CES: 3 SW / CNU-A: 3 LH

Mobile Tours

Cycling in the Land of Oz: Bentonville Biking Tour (CNU34T29)

5/14/2026 1:00PM - 4:00PM

Explore how Art has created a new identity for an unassuming, once sleepy hill town called Bentonville. Crystal Bridges, the Momentary are formal art spaces hosting concerts, exhibitions all within walkable designated districts. Osage and Coler park are cultural assets through open space preservation and recreation working alongside each other, nestled in and around urban and commercial conditions. This balance of the built and wild environment is core to NWA regional values.

Speakers: David Wright, Jessica Pearson

CEUs: AIA: 3 HSW / AICP: 3 CM / LA CES: 3 HSW / CNU-A: 3 LH

Thaden School, Bentonville: A Walkable Downtown School Campus . . . with a Barn (CNU34T22)

5/14/2026 3:30PM - 6:00PM

Discover the award-winning Thaden School campus in Bentonville, Arkansas, a national model for middle and high school design that integrates learning, landscape, and community. Designed by Marlon Blackwell Architects, Eskew Dumez Ripple, and Andropogon, the 30-acre seven-building campus transforms a downtown edge into an innovative environment emphasizing hands-on, learning by doing interdisciplinary education. The school's unique curriculum features three signature programs: Wheels (construction of bicycles and other wheeled machines), Meals (the science and art of food), and Reels (media production of film and video). The campus' productive landscape is a teaching tool for growing food, showcasing native ecosystems, and illustrating low impact development processes in managing urban stormwater runoff ecologically through rewilded landscapes. The tour highlights how architecture, ecology, and pedagogy converge to create a vibrant, walkable campus that reflects Bentonville's evolving urban fabric and commitment to design excellence in a small town of 61,000 people.

Speakers: Kertis Weatherby, Sam Slaton, Stephen Reyenga

CEUs: AIA: 2 LU / AICP: 2 CM / LA CES: 2 PDH / CNU-A: 2 LH

FRIDAY, MAY 15

Supply and Demand: Infill Housing in Downtown Bentonville (CNU34T06)

5/15/2026 11:30AM - 2:30PM

Demand for walkable, downtown living in Bentonville has risen significantly in recent years thanks in part to investments in the city's pedestrian and bike infrastructure, an increased emphasis on public art, and the growth of the local dining scene, reflecting national trends towards car-free (or less car-dependent) living. This walking tour explores the various housing projects that are responding to this demand - both new, infill construction and those that leverage the rehabilitation of historic buildings - and gives the opportunity to explore the vibrant, evolving district as a whole.

Speakers: Dan Hintz, Jake Newell, Tyler Overstreet

CEUs: AIA: 3 LU / AICP: 3 CM / LA CES: 3 PDH / CNU-A: 3 LH

The Impact of Infill: A Tour of Bentonville's Urban Shift (CNU34T07)

5/15/2026 11:30AM - 2:30PM

This guided scooter tour follows the Razorback Greenway through Bentonville's evolving urban landscape, from transitional neighborhoods in south Bentonville to the new Walmart Home Office campus, the Town Branch infill corridor, and downtown's fully realized urban core. Participants will experience the continuum of change firsthand, exploring how trails, corporate investment, and public realm design are reshaping a once-suburban environment into a connected, human-scaled city. The tour highlights trail-oriented development, missing-middle housing opportunities, and how mobility infrastructure can anchor civic identity and sustainable growth.

Speakers: Claire Wise, Cory Amos, Nathan Izard, Tom Adler

CEUs: AIA: 3 HSW / AICP: 3 CM | 1 SR / LA CES: 3 HSW / CNU-A: 3 LH

Mobile Tours

Uptown Rogers: Retrofitting Suburbia (CNU34T08)

5/15/2026 11:30AM - 2:30PM

Explore the New Urbanism-based design solutions that initiated sprawl repair of an auto-dominant commercial enclave along I-49. Like all "edge cities", Uptown Rogers concentrated single-use shopping centers, office parks, and entertainment complexes, in large parking lots along arterial highways for commuters. Retrofit solutions include insertion of a street network with walkable blocks and enhanced pedestrian facilities like those found in a downtown. The tour will feature the developments where missing middle housing is integrated with neighborhood-based retail and dining, along with other land uses in mixed-use development to reduce car dependency. Parks, trails, and other public gathering spaces are central to this new urban fabric. Design and planning solutions are supported by the City's adoption of a new Unified Development Code in 2024 that includes zones like Uptown Core Mixed Use, Uptown Entertainment, and Uptown Neighborhood Transition.

Speakers: Isaac Stevens, Joe Rexwinkle

Sponsors: ISG

CEUs: AIA: 3 HSW / AICP: 3 CM | 1 SR / LA CES: 3 HSW / CNU-A: 3 LH

Walmart Home Office Campus: From Logistics to Architecture and Placemaking (CNU34T20-F)

5/15/2026 11:30AM - 2:30PM

The new Walmart Home Office covers more than 400 acres in the heart of Bentonville, Arkansas. Thoughtfully designed as a connected and sustainable campus, it features six amenity buildings, 11 parking decks and 12 office buildings organized into distinct neighborhoods and constructed with sustainable materials, including 2.4 million square feet of mass timber. Over half of the campus is preserved as green space, with office and amenity buildings nestled among more than 750,000 plants, trees, and shrubs. The grounds also include over 13 acres of lakes and nearly seven miles of scenic walking and biking paths, creating a vibrant environment for work and well-being. This tour highlights the integration of architecture, urban landscapes, and mobility networks, creating a people-centered workplace that will become a new anchor to the surrounding community. Participants will experience the campus's walkable layout, adaptive building forms, and emphasis on health, nature, and collaboration. Learn how Gensler, Walter P Moore, and other partners translated strategies in sustainability, mass timber construction, public space design, and multimodal connectivity to shape one of the more significant corporate campuses in the U.S.

Speakers: Robert Grove

Sponsors: Colliers

CEUs: AIA: 3 LU / AICP: 3 CM / LA CES: 3 PDH / CNU-A: 3 LH

Alice Walton's Cultural, Education and Wellness Development, and Place Making in Bentonville (CNU34T19)

5/15/2026 11:30AM - 5:00PM

One of the nation's most impactful philanthropists, Alice Walton, combines investments in art, education, and health to build prosperity and well-being in the nation's third poorest state. This tour explores the visionary Crystal Bridges campus and its four architecturally significant structures shaping Alice Walton's cultural and wellness ecosystem in Northwest Arkansas. The tour will include the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, housing one of the country's most significant collections of American art. The Heartland Whole Health Institute and the Alice L. Walton School of Medicine highlight wellness and health education in a state suffering the lowest health rankings nationwide. Serving these developments, the Campus Parking Complex demonstrates how mobility infrastructure can create great places. Together, these developments reveal an evolving regional vision, where art, health, and environment form a unified framework for human flourishing and community vitality.

Speakers: Marlon Blackwell, Meryati Johari Blackwell, Shayan Dehbozorgi

CEUs: AIA: 5 LU / AICP: 5 CM / LA CES: 5 PDH / CNU-A: 5 LH

Mobile Tours

Hit the Bricks: Downtown Rogers Biking Tour (CNU34T28)

5/15/2026 11:30AM - 2:30PM

Rogers is known for having one of the largest, most intact historical downtowns in NWA. With the railroad running down the center of downtown, they have leaned into the railroad as a cultural asset and identity. Explore the railyard urban park, which includes a playground, splash pad, plaza, and pavilion spanning nearly 6 blocks of former parking lots. Railyard Bike Park and Lake Atalanta complete the trifecta of outdoor recreation opportunities and infrastructure, all connected by paved shared-use trails as well as single track soft trails along the hillside.

Speakers: Kent Laughlin, Lance Jobe

CEUs: AIA: 2 HSW / AICP: 2 CM / LA CES: 2 HSW / CNU-A: 2 LH

South 8th Street Walking Tour: Weaving Path and Place in Bentonville (CNU34T31)

5/15/2026 11:30AM - 2:30PM

Participants will experience three distinct but interwoven streetscape projects that connect corporate campuses, regional parks, and neighborhoods along a microcosm of the urban-to-rural transect in Bentonville. Speakers will share how quick-build and full street redesign approaches, led by both public and private sector sponsors, intersect to form a cohesive corridor, including how near-miss analyses are being used to improve safety and comfort for walking and bicycling.

Speakers: JP Shaffer, Kourtney Barrett, Nathan Boone, Tyler Overstreet

Sponsors: Lloyd

CEUs: AIA: 2 LU / AICP: 2 CM / LA CES: 2 PDH / CNU-A: 2 LH

SATURDAY, MAY 16

Walmart Home Office Campus-Biking Tour: World Class Landscapes on a Corporate Campus (CNU34T21)

5/16/2026 9:30AM - 12:00PM

The new Walmart Home Office covers more than 400 acres in the heart of Bentonville, Arkansas. Thoughtfully designed as a connected and sustainable campus, it features six amenity buildings, 11 parking decks and 12 office buildings organized into distinct neighborhoods and constructed with sustainable materials, including 2.4 million square feet of mass timber. Over half of the campus is preserved as green space, with office and amenity buildings nestled among more than 750,000 plants, trees, and shrubs. The grounds also include over 13 acres of lakes and nearly seven miles of scenic walking and biking paths, creating a vibrant environment for work and well-being. This biking tour will explore the landscape and outdoor spaces which have created a people-centered workplace that is an anchor to the surrounding community at the edge of downtown. Participants will experience the campus's walkable layout and emphasis on well-being, nature, and collaboration. Learn how various partners and consultants translated strategies in sustainability, public space design, and multimodal connectivity to shape one of the more significant corporate campuses in the U.S.

Speakers: Jana Wehby, Ted Vuong

Sponsors: Colliers

CEUs: AIA: 2 HSW / AICP: 2 CM / LA CES: 2 HSW / CNU-A: 2 LH

Mobile Tours

E. Fay Jones: Fayetteville Homes Designed by the 1990 AIA Gold Medalist (CNU34T13)

5/16/2026 9:00AM - 3:00PM

Explore the enduring influence of Arkansas native E. Fay Jones, FAIA, (1921-2004) apprentice to Frank Lloyd Wright and one of America's most celebrated architects. Jones was a leading figure among midcentury regional modernists who captured a rootedness in place through a modernist vocabulary that retained traditional architectural principles. The tour, led by an architect who worked with Jones, will focus on Jones' vocabulary in shaping space through natural light, native materials, interlocking masonry and wood construction systems, interior and exterior relationships, and simplicity in open plan organization. His houses shaped the architectural identity of the Fayetteville area. This bus and walking tour will visit Jones' personal residence, and several other key homes in Fayetteville as well as those on dramatic rural hillside sites, including the home considered to be the "Taliesin" of Jones' built work.

Speakers: David McKee, Gregory Herman

CEUs: AIA: 5.5 LU / AICP: 5.5 CM / LA CES: 5.5 PDH / CNU-A: 5.5 LH

Design Philanthropy: WFF Design Excellence Program Projects (CNU34T12)

5/16/2026 9:00AM - 5:00PM

This full-day bus tour highlights the Walton Family Foundation's Design Excellence Program and its transformative role in shaping vibrant, people-centered places across Northwest Arkansas. Stops include TheaterSquared and The Ramble in Fayetteville, models of civic architecture and urban green space integration; Springdale Municipal Campus and Luther George Park, a reimagined civic core featuring Shiloh Square, Walter Turnbow Park, and Mile 16 of the Razorback Greenway; and Railyard Park in Rogers, an adaptive downtown park linking art, play, and community events. In Bentonville, participants will explore Thaden School, a nationally acclaimed campus blending innovation and craftsmanship; the Helen Walton Children's Enrichment Center, an inviting early learning environment emphasizing nature and light; and 8th Street Gateway Park, a signature public space connecting neighborhoods through art and landscape. Finally, we will explore the newly opened A Street Promenade, a conversion of a vehicle street to a bicycle and pedestrian only promenade, connecting several parks and enabling users to ride from the heart/square of Bentonville directly to hundreds of miles of soft surface trails without interruption. Together, these projects showcase how design excellence fosters connection, inclusivity, and enduring community identity across the region.

Speakers: Allison Quinlan, Jeremy Pate, Meredith Bergstrom

CEUs: AIA: 6.5 LU / AICP: 6.5 CM / LA CES: 6.5 PDH / CNU-A: 6.5 LH



Sessions

Sessions: Fayetteville Day

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

The first full day of Congress programming for CNU 34 is held in Fayetteville, a city growing with the region through incremental change.

Accelerating Climate Action at Regional Scale (CNU34073)

5/13/2026 10:00AM - 11:15AM

Curtailling global warming and contending with an already-disrupted climate demand regional urban solutions. Leading cities around the world, including Chicago, are tackling urban climate action. Extending beyond the center city to align actions regionally is the next step. Finding common ground across the urban transect presents a formidable barrier. A model for advancing cross-transect identity and cooperation was developed right here in Northwest Arkansas, the Fayetteville 2030: Food City Scenario, demonstrating the power of outside-the-box thinking. The impacts of sea-level rise on coastal zones are stimulating an exemplary intensity of regional urban action. The study of sea-level rise and formulation of urban solutions in Southern Florida is a compelling example. This session is proposed as a double session. Part 1 provides an overview of case-studies for Chicago, Fayetteville, and Southern Florida. Part 2 is a moderated panel discussion about aligning regional climate action with the new urban agenda.

Speakers: Carl Elefante, Doug Farr, Jeffrey Huber, Stephen Luoni

Track: Climate/Sus Design

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 HSW / AICP: 1.25 CM | 1 SR / ASLA: 1.25 HSW / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Lessons Learned: Quick-Build In Northwest Arkansas And Beyond (CNU34065)

5/13/2026 10:00AM - 11:15AM

Transportation and public space planning efforts continue to integrate Tactical Urbanism and "Quick-Build" projects as a means for testing and delivering enduring changes to community-serving infrastructure. In 2016/2017 the Walton Family Foundation partnered with Street Plans, NWA RPC, and three local municipalities (Rogers, Bentonville, Bella Vista) to rapidly deliver projects that filled bikeway network gaps between town centers/regional destinations and the Razorback Greenway. The program set out to test a wide variety of barrier elements to determine how the region might apply Quick-Build infrastructure across the region at scale. This sessions will explore the effectiveness and challenges associated with these tactical "Quick-Build" projects across the NWA region and other auto-oriented "Sun Belt" contexts across the country.

Speakers: Michael Lydon, Ryan Hale, Tim Conklin

Track: Transportation

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Mentorship Huddles (CNU34030)

5/13/2026 10:00AM - 11:15AM

Session hosted by Emerging New Urbanists (ENU) members intended for Congress attendees to connect through mentorship over a lunch session. The session would start with a short introduction, instructions, and prompts for the small group breakouts that include at least 1 mentor at each table. This session ideally takes place in a room with tables laid out for small groups to share over a lunch. There are no panelists for this session, but there would be a moderator. Anyone that registers will participate in the small break-out sessions. ENU members will organize participants into small groups.

Speakers: Kip Santos, Thomas Long

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Sessions: Fayetteville Day

Ramble On: From Design to Delivery of Fayetteville's Urban Trail (CNU34083)

5/13/2026 10:00AM 11:15AM

The Ramble is one of the more precious public spaces in Fayetteville, located just blocks from the CNU34 venues. This reimagining of nearly 50 acres of public space in downtown Fayetteville enhances walkability, environmental sustainability, and cultural engagement in the city. Learn from the lead designers and engineers who took the Ramble from an inventive and enticing open space design to an absolute show-stopper of an urban sanctuary in this session where no detail of its complicated implementation will be left unearthed.

Speakers: Allison Quinlan, Dan Willcutt, Sandi Formica

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 HSW / AICP: 1.25 SR(X) / ASLA: 1.25 HSW / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Reframing Aspirations for Walkable, Equitable Communities: Insights from Sub-Saharan Africa (CNU34014)

5/13/2026 10:00AM - 11:15AM

This session will explore the paradox of urban aspirations through a comparative lens between the United States and Sub-Saharan Africa. While U.S. cities are investing in reconnecting communities, reducing car dependency, and reintroducing walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods, these same conditions are the standard and usual way of life in many African cities. Yet they are often perceived as poverty markers, with aspirations rather leaning toward car ownership, gated housing, and suburban living. Drawing from ongoing research, this session will reframe walkability, density, and transit not merely as planning tools but as cultural aspirations that shape how people imagine a "good life." It will discuss a framework for aspirationally sustainable urbanism, an approach that recognizes cultural values as central to achieving equitable, inclusive, and climate-resilient communities. Participants will gain insights into how global flows of planning ideas influence urban form and how planners can rebrand sustainability as a shared aspiration across contexts.

Speakers: Simon Donkoh

Track: Preserv/Community/Culture

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 HSW / AICP: 1.25 CM | 1 EQ / ASLA: 1.25 HSW / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Research on New Urbanism: Good News, But More Is Needed (CNU34056)

5/13/2026 10:00AM - 11:15AM

A recent research project at the University of Notre Dame provided strong evidence for what many practitioners of the New Urbanism already suspected: there is a growing body of clear research evidence for the many positive impacts of New Urbanist development and its related reforms, including economic, environmental, social and health benefits. However, more work remains to fill in key gaps in the literature, and even more important, to translate the research into communication that will move the needle with mayors, planning officials, developers and citizens. The research also provides cautionary guidance on the dangers of negative impacts and their remedies, including gentrification, affordability challenges, and the need to mitigate continued impacts from the automobile. This session will gather researchers and practitioners to assess progress to date and next steps in this important work to accelerate implementation, and reverse the continued trends of sprawl and its proven harmful impacts.

Speakers: Jennifer Hurley, Michael Mehaffy

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Sessions: Fayetteville Day

The Complete Story of the Rural-to-Urban Transect (CNU34075)

5/13/2026 10:00AM - 11:15AM

The urban-to-rural Transect is a system that places all of the elements of the built environment into useful order, creating immersive environments that support human well-being at every level of urban intensity. As the foundation of the CNU34 Focus, this concept is one that all New Urbanists should not only know but understand the origins of, if we are to adequately embed its lessons into our design and implementation practices. In this session, hear from the person who first adapted this biological concept into the idea of an urban-to-rural Transect for human habitat, Douglas Duany, and learn from his brother Andres Duany about the evolution of the concept into an ordering tool and a framework for regulation of the built environment.

Speakers: Alejandro Douglas Duany, Andres Duany

Track: Planning/Design

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

The Core, Practical Distinctions between People-Centered and Car-Centered Design (CNU34048)

5/13/2026 10:00AM - 11:15AM

In national planning, architecture, and engineering standards, there is no clear distinction between car-centered and people-centered design -- that is, between design methods that prioritize cars above all other modes, versus methods that prioritize pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders. Many common challenges result from this ambiguity, such as using traffic level-of-service to design urban streets. Happy Cities and Mobycon have written a white paper outlining the distinct policies and tools needed for car-centred and people-centred design. We outline the economic and geometric logic that underlies the two types of design, the common mistakes that result when applying design practices in the wrong places, and strategies to avoid these mistakes. We will present our experience using these principles to help governments reform local practice, including in Las Vegas and Overland Park. The white paper is a first step towards updating national professional standards to better reflect this distinction.

Speakers: Matthew Pinder, Tristan Cleveland

Track: Transportation

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Building a Promising Future for Suburbia (CNU34069)

5/13/2026 11:45AM - 1:00PM

Built for families with children, what is the future of suburbs in 2040, when fewer than one in four US households includes a child? A changing society calls for bold new planning, policies, and programs to guide suburbia through an era of profound transition.

The program will open with analysis of fundamental demographic changes that are reshaping housing markets—which will represent roughly two-thirds of all investment in suburbia over the next two decades.

The focus will shift to additional forces reinforcing the impact of demographic change: for example, the current transition from a service to an idea-based economy, rapid advent of mobility innovation, and growing need for a stronger fiscal base in the midst of an aging society.

The program will conclude by discussing the urban design direction that can translate these forces into an era of more walkable, amenitized, community rich, prosperous, and environmentally responsible suburbs.

Speakers: David Dixon, Galina Tachieva, Todd Zimmerman

Track: Planning/Design

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 HSW / AICP: 1.25 CM | 1 SR / ASLA: 1.25 HSW / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Sessions: Fayetteville Day

Learning from Mediterranean and South American Cultures (CNU34015)

5/13/2026 11:45AM - 1:00PM

This session is aimed at instigating an eye-opening discussion on how an effective network of strong and complete local economies creates a landscape of resilience. The session will focus on how the concepts of diversity (of businesses, and essential services), agility (in local economy), street life, and social cohesion are related with resilience. Two presentations will showcase examples from Mediterranean and Latin American cultures and highlight lessons learned in the form of simple policy recommendations and design principles. The session will go back and forth between regional scale coordination and hyperlocal agility, highlighting the responsibilities of both local governments and regional planning alliances. The session will also introduce a place typology approach to transect in organizing regional coordination.

Speakers: Fernando Pages Ruiz, Korkut Onaran

Track: Preserv/Community/Culture

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 HSW / AICP: 1.25 CM | 1 EQ / ASLA: 1.25 HSW / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Making Room: How Cities & States Can Re-Legalize Co-living (CNU34039)

5/13/2026 11:45AM - 1:00PM

In an era of surging housing demand and constrained supply, co-living and single-room occupancy (SRO) models offer an under-explored pathway to more compact, affordable, and socially engaging urban housing. This session will examine how municipalities, legislators, developers, and advocates can overcome regulatory barriers and implement co-living/SRO projects that align with new urbanist principles -- particularly as regions like Northwest Arkansas rapidly expand.

Speakers: Atticus LeBlanc, Meagan Forbes, Zoe Tishaev

Track: Housing

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

In Conversation:

Learning from the Archives of New Traditional Architecture

Each year, CNU invites New Urbanist practitioners from the founding generation to sit in conversation on a number of topics, with a live audience. This year's In Conversation led by Stephanos Polyzoides, Dean of the University of Notre Dame School of Architecture, discussed the production of the Archives of New Traditional Architecture (ANTA), a journal created for the exchange of ideas that enrich architectural discourse.

Periodicals that put forward sensible urban, architectural, and environmental approaches, or offer themselves as platforms for meaningful debate, are woefully few in number today. Thanks to support from the University of Notre Dame School of Architecture, this journal begun in the Spring of 2021 has brought forward critical examination of the importance of traditional architecture within the contemporary conditions of disparate economic opportunity, dangerous climate impacts, and a deterioration of social fabric. Hear from three ANTA contributing authors as University of Notre Dame School of Architecture Francis and Kathleen Rooney Dean of the School of Architecture, Stefanos Polyzoides guides this fireside chat.

Sessions: Fayetteville Day

Mapping the Urban Harvest: Integrating Food Systems and Form-Based Urbanism (CNU34035)

5/13/2026 11:45AM - 1:00PM

This session demonstrates how data-driven mapping and stakeholder collaboration can guide equitable food system planning. Using Birmingham's Urban Agricultural Land Use Suitability Analysis as a case study, presenters will showcase a GIS-based site selection tool that evaluated over 100,000 parcels for potential community gardens, community-benefit farms, and commercial farms. The project integrated zoning, ecological, social, and investment criteria, bridging policy and practice to visualize where urban agriculture can thrive. Attendees will learn how the team worked with local farmers, nonprofits, and city officials to translate data into zoning reform, land lease strategies, and implementation pathways. The tool demonstrates how planning, design, and community engagement can converge to operationalize food equity and sustainable land use at the citywide scale.

Speakers: Anna Baggett, Sara Delroshan

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM | 1 SR / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

The 8 Cs of Sustainable, Resilient Communities (CNU34016)

5/13/2026 11:45AM - 1:00PM

Now more than ever, a comprehensive approach to development is necessary for the creation of sustainable and resilient developments. Every development, be it an urban core, town, or neighborhood, is made viable through certain basic characteristics. Though these characteristics have been articulated in various ways over the years, perhaps the most effective summation is The 8 Cs: Compact, Complex, Complete, Connected, Convivial, Conserving, Cost-Effective, and Co-Designed. (Note: The proposed session is an introduction to the New Urbanism, geared mainly to those new to the movement/organization; it is in effect an updated version of Andres Duany's New urbanism 101.)

Speakers: Senen Antonio

Track: Planning/Design

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 HSW / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 HSW / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

The Northwest Arkansas Regional Growth Strategy (CNU34005)

5/13/2026 11:45AM - 1:00PM

Northwest Arkansas is facing significant growth pressure, and cracks have formed before growth has met its stride. In the next 25 years, the region is set to double its population. Yet today, infrastructure and transportation systems are failing, housing is already out of reach, and recent growth has eroded the sense of tight-knit communities dear to residents and is rapidly converting rural lands and sensitive natural areas to placeless suburban sprawl. The Northwest Arkansas Regional Growth Strategy was commissioned to set a course for the region's future. The strategy covers two counties and over 35 municipalities. This session will provide details of the strategy, released in April of 2026, including key actions, examples, financing methods, and goals, all cross-disciplinary and multi-jurisdictional. This region is dealing with rapid suburban growth head-on, with solutions and strategies that are relevant to places big or small.

Speakers: Matt Lambert, Nelson Peacock, Susan Henderson

Track: NWA/Regional

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Sessions: Fayetteville Day

State, Local, and the Rules of Growth: A Working Session on Land Use Policy (CNU34089)

5/13/2026 11:45AM - 2:45PM

For those interested in impacting the ways that state legislation can support quality urbanism, this is a can't-miss working session. CNU will convene a cross-sector group of legislators, planners, developers, and policy experts to examine how state policy can better support housing supply, predictable development, fiscal sustainability, and locally responsive growth. This workshop will identify practical, politically viable state-level reforms that reduce unnecessary barriers, improve coordination, and create better outcomes for communities facing growth pressure, with a focus on the NWA context that can serve as a model for communities across the country looking to achieve the same goals.

Speakers: John McCurdy

Track: Codes/Zoning/Policy

CEUs: AIA: 2.5 LU / AICP: 2.5 CM / ASLA: 2.5 PDH / CNU-A: 2.5 LH

Evaluating Built New Urbanism: Developing the System (CNU34028)

5/13/2026 1:30PM - 2:45PM

This session will be a meeting to discuss and refine a system for evaluating built new urbanist projects. The session will review and refine a proposed set of variables and data sources. The meeting will also discuss appropriate comparisons to use in evaluating projects. Finally, the meeting will develop a plan and schedule for extending initial pilot research that was begun in the summer of 2025.

Speakers: Jennifer Hurley, Scott Bernstein

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Hope VI Retrospective (CNU34082)

5/13/2026 1:30PM - 2:45PM

Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk of DPZ, Neal Payton of Torti Gallas + Partners and Megan O'Hara of Urban Design Associates revisit CNU's early and influential role in shaping the HOPE VI program, including the design-guideline framework its members helped develop. The session highlights how these guidelines informed built projects across the country, and how firms translated them into walkable, mixed-income neighborhoods that redefined public-housing redevelopment. As a lead-in to Raj Chetty's keynote on the long-term mobility gains experienced by children in HOPE VI communities, the panel will reflect on how design decisions made decades ago continue to shape opportunity today. This sets the stage for understanding the powerful relationship between urban design, neighborhood context, and life outcomes.

Speakers: Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Neal Payton

Track: Planning/Design

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 HSW / AICP: 1.25 CM | 1 EQ / ASLA: 1.25 HSW / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Sessions: Fayetteville Day

Latino Urbanism and the Laws That Shaped the New World (CNU34068)

5/13/2026 1:30PM - 2:45PM

As the Latino population reshapes the cultural and physical landscape of the U.S., one truth becomes undeniable: El futuro del urbanismo habla español. But the planning systems we've inherited often ignore or overwrite the beauty, order, and vibrancy of Latin American urbanism spaces rooted not just in culture, but in centuries of classical architectural legacy. In this session, we'll uncover how the colonial grid, plazas, portales, and ceremonial axes hold lessons for today's fragmented American cities. Classical architect Richard Cameron will trace the Greco-Roman and Renaissance DNA embedded in the physical forms of Latin America's great cities while urbanist and realtor Dyllan Nguyen draws a bold line between those inherited forms and today's Latino-led reurbanization across the U.S. What if the Transect could reflect nuestro linaje? What if the past wasn't lost but waiting to be reclaimed? Join us to reframe the future of planning through the lens of Latino classical inheritance.

Speakers: Dyllan Nguyen, Richard Cameron

Track: Preserv/Community/Culture

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM | 1 EQ / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Lexicon of the New Urbanism (CNU34078)

5/13/2026 1:30PM - 2:45PM

Andres Duany, co-founder of the New Urbanist movement, will discuss CNU's Lexicon of the New Urbanism. The Lexicon, as both a learning tool and a practical framework for advancing cohesive, people-centered communities, is a comprehensive reference that defines the core terms, principles, and practices shaping New Urbanist planning and design. It covers concepts ranging from the rural-to-urban transect and mixed-use development to frontage types, block structures, and public realm design. More than a glossary, the Lexicon is a shared vocabulary that reflects the movement's emphasis on walkability, connectivity, human-scale design, and vibrant public spaces.

Speakers: Andres Duany

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Smart Zoning & Predictive Planning: AI in Code Implementation (CNU34050)

5/13/2026 1:30PM - 2:45PM

Zoning codes shape every detail of the built environment -- but they are notoriously opaque. This session explores how generative AI, natural language processing, and predictive modeling are revolutionizing zoning workflows for planners, architects, and municipalities. By enabling real-time, parcel-specific interpretation and simulation, AI helps bridge the persistent gap between written code and spatial design. The speakers will demonstrate how tools like Zonar are already streamlining zoning visualization and compliance workflows in major cities. They'll also address concerns about accuracy, accessibility, and ethical implementation in civic processes. This session will provide practical insight into how planners and policymakers can adapt zoning regulations to reflect New Urbanist values - clarity, human scale, and local character - through next-generation tech. Co-presented by Andrew Clum and Max Zabala, this session is ideal for practitioners ready to lead in translating regulatory frameworks into resilient, data-informed planning tools.

Speakers: Andrew Clum, Elmira Moskvina, Max Zabala

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Sessions: Fayetteville Day

The Transect+Traditional Urbanism in Practice: Community-Driven Planning from Indigenous Lands to Latin American Cities (CNU34080)

5/13/2026 1:30PM - 2:45PM

This session explores how traditional urban patterns and community-driven planning can guide contemporary development across diverse cultural and geographic contexts. Speakers will present case studies in Xochimilco and Cuernavaca in Mexico, and Aquinnah, Massachusetts, in the U.S. home of the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head. Participants will examine how historic settlement patterns, ecological systems, and Indigenous and local knowledge can inform walkable, mixed-use places today. Using the rural-to-urban Transect as a framework, presenters will demonstrate how planners and communities can translate traditional urban morphology - such as canal networks, natural village alignments, and human-scale street patterns - into modern zoning, block structures, and design strategies. The session highlights participatory processes that engage residents, respect cultural heritage, and build consensus around future growth. By connecting theory with real-world implementation, this discussion offers practical insights into regenerating communities, strengthening cultural identity, and creating resilient neighborhoods that bridge historic patterns with contemporary planning tools.

Speakers: Miriam Samir Rincon, Nadia Samir Rincon, Peter Friedrichs

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM | 1 EQ / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

The Walkable City with Jeff Speck (CNU34095)

5/13/2026 1:30PM - 2:45PM

Fifteen years ago, DPZ disciple Jeff Speck took a shot at redefining new urbanism as walkability... and it worked! Come join the best-selling city planning writer alive as he reframes all that is good about urbanism through the window of walkability. You may know this stuff already, but do you know the best way to win hearts and minds? This session has two main purposes: to run through the roughly two dozen techniques new urbanists use to make places thrive; and to convey the most effective language and success stories for selling these techniques to a skeptical public. And don't blink; there will be 412 slides.

Speakers: Jeff Speck

Track: Planning/Design

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 HSW / AICP: 1.25 CM | 1 SR / ASLA: 1.25 HSW / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Keynote Presentation:

The Geography of Opportunity: How Place Shapes Economic Mobility (CNU34012)

5/13/2026 4:00PM - 5:30PM

This Opening Keynote presentation explores the powerful connection between place and economic opportunity through the groundbreaking research of Dr. Raj Chetty. Dr. Chetty is the William A. Ackman Professor of Economics at Harvard University and the Director of Opportunity Insights, a research-to-policy lab that uses data to study the science of economic opportunity: how we can give children from all backgrounds better chances of succeeding? As the Opening Keynote for CNU 34, Dr. Chetty will share decades of data-driven insights on how neighborhood design influences upward mobility, with a focus on recent findings demonstrating significantly improved outcomes for children raised in HOPE VI communities, a program that embraced new urbanist principles.

Speakers: Raj Chetty

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

Sessions: Dual Spoke Day

THURSDAY, MAY 14

On Dual Spoke Day, attendees select whether to attend sessions in Bentonville or Fayetteville, selecting the context (and content) that best aligns with their learning goals.

BENTONVILLE

A Tale of Two Transect-Based Cities (CNU34024)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 10:30AM

Bentonville and Rogers, Arkansas -- two rapidly growing Northwest Arkansas cities -- share borders, infrastructure, and economic momentum, yet each has charted a distinct course in shaping future growth. Both cities are applying the Transect to guide their new Future Land Use Maps and Unified Development Codes, tailoring the framework to local character, development pressures, and community values. This session explores how two municipalities can "speak the same language" of form-based planning while expressing unique dialects that reflect their identity and aspirations. Presenters will examine the collaborative and technical processes behind each city's planning efforts, highlight lessons learned in implementation, and discuss how the Transect provides a unifying regional vocabulary for growth management, design, and policy alignment.

Speakers: Joe Rexwinkle, Shelli Kerr, Tyler Overstreet

Track: NWA/Regional

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Implementing Climate-Adaptive Urbanism (CNU34013)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 10:30AM

By mid-century, most of the world's urban growth will occur in the Hot-Humid and Hot-Arid belts' regions already stressed by heat, flooding, and water scarcity. This session translates lessons from vernacular architecture and recent global experiments into practical guidance for architects, planners, and regulators working in these climates. Presenters will compare traditional cooling strategies, such as courtyards, shaded arcades, and windcatchers, with modern passive and mechanical systems, and then examine how current building codes often hinder such adaptations. Participants will learn how form-based and performance-based codes can better support climate-responsive design and how these principles can be applied to fast-growing regions in the U.S. and abroad. The discussion will conclude with clear implementation steps for local governments and practitioners seeking to align urban design, material systems, and codes for resilient development in hot-climate cities.

Speakers: Andres Duany, Dhiru Thadani

Track: Climate/Sus Design

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

Planning for the Transportation Future: Urban Design Strategies for Transit Ready Development

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 10:30AM

What do you consider when planning a development or town and the transit is not ready yet? How can you develop a place for people and multi transportation needs now and let it grow into a more robust system. Learn thru personal stories and case studies how to design places for all types of transportation for a range of ages allowing freedom and accessibility, with the Urban Guild .

Speakers: Jeremy Sommer, Kenneth Garcia, Neal Payton

Track: Transportation

Dual Spoke Day: Bentonville

Resiliency in the face of post-natural disaster recovery. (CNU34055)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 10:30AM

This session will highlight ongoing initiatives that support residents in recovering and rebuilding after natural disasters, empowering them to actively shape the future of their communities. As climate change accelerates, floods and wildfires are becoming more frequent and severe. Join us to explore how professionals, local governments, and nonprofit organizations serve as guiding lights in the aftermath of these events--providing critical resources and fostering community resilience. Each speaker will share insights into their efforts to restore and strengthen communities impacted by natural disasters, while addressing challenges such as equitable recovery and rebuilding practices. Together, we will discuss innovative strategies, collaborative partnerships, and lessons learned that can inspire future recovery and resilience.

Speakers: Jennifer Mayden, John Miki, Marianne Cusato, Willem Swart

Track: Climate/Sus Design

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Small Towns Leading the Way on Zoning Code Reforms (CNU34049)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 10:30AM

Cities and towns have always been key laboratories for experimental change and innovation, and that is especially true today. Smaller towns often have the agility to press forward on innovations that might be caught up in the political or economic controversies of larger cities. This meeting will gather representatives working in several small towns on the forefront of zoning code reform and related innovations, including form-based coding, pre-approved plans, ADUs and tiny houses, and Community Land Trusts. We will consider implementation strategies and tools, as well as common barriers and their solutions. In addition to the listed speakers, meeting participants will include Jennifer Krouse, an expert on pre-approved plans; Allison Quinlan, an architect working with municipalities in NW Arkansas on pre-approved plans, pattern zones and related innovations; and Dean Gunderson, Planner with the City of Cambridge, Maryland, working on pre-reviewed plans, affordable housing, land banking, and related innovations.

Speakers: Dean Gunderson, Jennifer Krouse, Marla Keethler, Michael Mehaffy

Track: Codes/Zoning/Policy

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Building the Practice with Practice (CNU34038)

5/14/2026 1:00PM - 2:00PM

How does a New Urbanist firm grow from principle to practice? This session explores the stages of New Urbanist practice through the lens of business development. A panel of practitioners representing 1, 10, 30, and 40+ years of experience come together for a real-world, cross-generational conversation about what it takes to build and sustain a New Urbanist business. The presentation will flow through a Q and A structure where junior practitioners will ask the more senior panelists relevant questions to their stage of the journey. Panelists will respond with hard-learned lessons, stories of successes and practical advice they may have wished they had known earlier in their careers. Rather than a lecture, this session is an exchange of wisdom where everyone from emerging practitioners to seasoned leaders can benefit from the conversation.

Speakers: Dhuru Thadani, Doug Farr, Juniper Rose Hentz, Matt Lewis

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Dual Spoke Day: Bentonville

Pattern Writing: The Design DNA for Livable Neighborhoods (CNU34062)

5/14/2026 1:00PM - 2:00PM

Neighborhood plans may appear successful on paper yet fall short in lived experience. Livable neighborhoods arise from underlying patterns that support belonging, connection, and daily life. This session introduces pattern writing as a practical design process for shaping coherent, human-scaled places a way to write the guiding design DNA of a project. Drawing from built work ranging from pocket neighborhoods to mixed-use districts, Ross Chapin and Michael Mehaffy demonstrate how patterns emerge through listening, observation, and shared insight and how they guide design decisions across scales. Participants will learn the basic structure of a pattern, how patterns nest to create life-centered places, and how the process constructively engages residents, clients, and stakeholders. The session includes a brief pattern-writing exercise and a take-home template for continued practice.

Speakers: Michael Mehaffy, Ross Chapin FAIA

Track: Planning/Design

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

The Town Architect's Craft and Design Review across Transects (CNU34021)

5/14/2026 1:00PM - 2:00PM

Designing a compelling master plan is fast, but bringing it to life is a long game requiring years of disciplined implementation and design stewardship. In this session, Town Architects from various New Urbanist communities will discuss how they translate vision into built form, sustain quality over time, and adapt their roles to different community scales and budgets. Through a fast-paced presentation, we will explore how Town Architects verify compliance with urban codes, use effective principle-based design review systems, mentor builders, ease regulatory burdens, and guide projects through development phases. These architects balance creativity with consistency, ensuring every decision reinforces the community's intent while allowing for inspired evolution. This session will reveal the systems and professional rigor that keeps master plan on course, turning visionary designs into enduring places.

Speakers: Marina Khoury, Mike Watkins, Steve Mouzon, Tim Busse

Track: Codes/Zoning/Policy

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Toward a Model Adaptation Legislation Guidebook (CNU34072)

5/14/2026 1:00PM - 2:00PM

Following last year's Model Climate Adaptation Enabling Legislation and Climate Ready Communities On the Park Bench seminar, this meeting will present progress toward the forthcoming Adaptation Legislation Guidebook - a joint effort of CNU members, affiliates, and PLACE Initiative. The guidebook aims to help states and localities enact policies that strengthen resilience through land use, urban design, and governance reform. Participants will review emerging frameworks shaped around five themes - renewable energy and infrastructure, localization of systems, economic self-reliance, social cohesion, and disaster readiness. The session will include insights from recent CNU member interviews and invite new contributors to refine policy ideas and legislative language for the next phase of the guidebook. Attendees will leave with opportunities to join the working group, contribute essays or case studies, and help shape the national conversation on climate-ready legislation.

Speakers: Camille Cortes, Korkut Onaran, Scott Bernstein

Track: Codes/Zoning/Policy

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM | 1 SR / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

Dual Spoke Day: Bentonville

Climate Action Handbook for Urbanists: Engaging the Movement (CNU34077)

5/14/2026 2:30PM - 3:30PM

A panel will outline CNU's first new book in over a decade: A Necessary Response: The Climate Action Handbook for Urbanists. The handbook makes the case for urbanist climate solutions, including an overview of extensive research. Thirty-seven New Urbanism Supported Actions are described and explained. Essays report on implementation, including case studies that employ Actions described in the book. The handbook is both a manual and a call to action. It offers both theory and practical responses to a changing climate. It addresses climate resilience, adaptation, and mitigation related to urbanism, as well as climate migration and disaster response.

Speakers: Andres Duany, Doug Farr, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Korkut Onaran, Mallory Baches, Michael Mehaffy, Ricardo Alvarez-Diaz, Rob Steuteville

Track: Climate/Sus Design

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM | 1 SR / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

DIY Disaster Recovery: Using the Transect to Address Immediate Needs (CNU34058)

5/14/2026 2:30PM - 3:30PM

Over the past 10 years, Arkansas suffered 15 major disaster declarations, totaling over \$1B in damage. Federal programs treat Highfill, AR, the same as Houston, TX, imposing complex urban-centric burdens on communities with limited capacity. Funding cuts created a void, offering a clear opportunity to finally right-size recovery. Attendees will translate the Transect into a community-centric recovery framework. This applies the T1 rural to T6 urban scale to guide how place-based assets (labor, faith networks, small businesses) can be leveraged for effective response. The Transect is a policy triage approach to differentiated governance based on subsidiarity. Participants will learn where Transect-based scaling and New Urbanist principles expedited rebuilding. Utilizing tactical urbanism and pattern books, these principles expand the public's ability to remain self-reliant and recover at the necessary pace. Attendees will craft a Transect-informed manual useful to any community, reframing the Transect for disaster systems reform and closing service gaps.

Speakers: LC Clemons, Steve Mouzon

Track: Climate/Sus Design

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM | 1 SR / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

The Role of Pattern Books in the Design of Places People Love

5/14/2026 2:30PM - 3:30PM

Ever wonder how Pattern Books, Pattern Zones, and Living Traditions help to create places people love? Come learn about the history of pattern books and pattern languages, how to train your eye to observe and analyze the built environment. What are the differences between these different approaches and when should you choose to implement these various tools. Join us for a lively moderated session by the Urban Guild.

Speakers: Ashleigh Walton, Jeremy Sommer, Matthew Hoffman, Steve Mouzon

Track: Planning/Design

Dual Spoke Day: Bentonville

The Transect and Firm Culture: A Tale of Two Practices (CNU34025)

5/14/2026 2:30PM - 3:30PM

The Urban to Rural Transect is a clear and effective tool for delivering coherent and cohesive urban design from the big picture to the finest detail, but it is also a powerful idea and organizing structure in and of itself with broad application and impact. This session will examine the influence the Transect has had on the firm culture of two New Urbanist architecture, urban design and planning firms - Torti Gallas + Partners and Union Studio. Firm structure, design approach, project organization, analysis, and business development are all areas of practice that have been shaped by the Transect, and this Educational Session will explore and share the broad impact and influence the Transect has had on these two firms.

Speakers: Don Powers, Murphy Antoine

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Laying the Foundation for a Main Street Design Toolkit (CNU34066)

5/14/2026 4:00PM - 5:00PM

As regions grow, it is increasingly important that downtowns and main streets are dynamic places that speak to a community's identity. The pace of development often means that administrators and residents are reacting rather than being proactive about how they want their town or village to look as it grows. This meeting will explore the challenges of implementing successful downtown and Main Street strategies and introduce tools, approaches, and language that empower communities to advocate for and achieve policies supporting improved design and performance outcomes.

Speakers: Adam Bonosky, Judith Bell

Track: Transportation

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Small Wheel Coalition Kickoff (CNU34067)

5/14/2026 4:00PM - 5:00PM

Bring your boards, skates or scooters. It's a Board meeting! Making cities navigable for those of us on small wheels skateboards, scooters, roller skates, and push bikes requires a real shift in the design of streets and public spaces. The Small Wheel Coalition is championing a vision where the public realm supports a seamless, safe, and inclusive experience for the small-wheel movers. This session explores how simple obstacles like a pebbles or uneven pavement can hinder us from self propelling. Thoughtful design, street materials, maintenance, and multi-use pathways empower people to travel freely and confidently on small wheels. Join the Small Wheel Coalition to enable a more playful, efficient, and human-scaled places.

Speakers: Dean Gunderson, Eliza Juliano, Matt Lewis

Track: Transportation

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM | 1 SR / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

The Invaluable Lessons of Failure: A Look Back at the Mistakes that New Urbanists Can't Afford to Forget! (CNU34084)

5/14/2026 4:00PM - 5:00PM

Bill Gates famously said, "It is fine to celebrate success but it is more important to heed the lessons of failure." In this session, CNU founder Andres Duany will interview fellow New Urbanists, exploring the mistakes they made in each of their long, storied careers. This session will offer an exploration of the wisdom that only comes with experience, and from the trial and error that came with the earliest days of the New Urbanists movement.

Speakers: Andres Duany, Frank Starkey, Louis Nequette, Ward Davis

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Dual Spoke Day: Bentonville

Why Planners and New Urbanists Should Study Ecology (CNU34018)

5/14/2026 4:00PM - 5:00PM

In this session we will discuss how knowledge of ecology gives planners a more holistic understanding, which not only allows for protection of wildlife in communities, but also can address matters of public health, climate impact, and public finances. After reviewing the concept at a high level, we will go through a case study applying an ecological lens to the region of Northwest Arkansas. The session is led by Matt Schaefer, a planner and architect at Historical Concepts and a Masters student at the University of Edinburgh's program of Biodiversity, Wildlife, and Ecosystem Health.

Speakers: Matt Schaefer

Track: Climate/Sus Design

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM | 1 SR / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

2026 Charter Awards Ceremony (CNU3408)

5/14/2026 6:00PM - 9:00PM

Each year since 2001, the CNU Charter Awards have celebrated the best current work in New Urbanism from around the world. The Charter Awards provide a dual opportunity: first to spotlight amazing work by practitioners in the field. Second, they highlight the foundational and evolving priorities of New Urbanism as a movement. The theme of this year's awards is the transect, a deeply fundamental component of New Urbanism. 2026 Charter Award winners exemplify the best of the New Urbanism including new towns, suburban retrofits, attainable housing, regional trail and mobility infrastructure, and thoughtful investments in main streets.

Heartland Whole Health Institute Ballroom

On the Campus of the Crystal Bridges Museum of Art (850 MUSEUM WAY, BENTONVILLE)

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH



Sessions: Dual Spoke Day

THURSDAY, MAY 14

On Dual Spoke Day, attendees select whether to attend sessions in Bentonville or Fayetteville, selecting the context (and content) that best aligns with their learning goals.

FAYETTEVILLE

From Languishing to Lively - Transforming Dead Malls into Neighborhoods (CNU34071)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 10:30AM

The era of the suburban mall is waning. The commercial strip mall, in particular, is posing logistical questions for local municipalities as they grapple with the potential futures and maintenance of these locations. At the same time, demand for housing and communities where people can build relationships with their neighbors is increasing. These two trends are meeting and presenting an opportunity to rethink our land development patterns. This session will briefly cover the development patterns that led to the current situation, identify the economic and social opportunities that suburban mall sites present, cover case studies, and provide an approach for how to retrofit malls into complete neighborhoods.

Speakers: Adam Bonosky

Track: Planning/Design

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Improving Neighborhood Affordability through Traditional Site and Infrastructure Design (CNU34061)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 10:30AM

Discussions on affordable neighborhood development usually focus on external funding sources, efficient use of affordable building materials, and regulatory exemptions. Less attention, however, is paid to site and infrastructure design, where conventional engineering approaches can increase development costs in hidden ways. These approaches can eat up developable area and increase costs, which are then fronted onto residents. This presentation will detail the various ways that employing traditional site and infrastructure design can decrease costs and increase the affordability, durability, and attractiveness of a housing development. Design elements such as parking lot design, stormwater management, grading, utility and easement location, zoning and entitlement requirements will be analyzed, and show how site impacts, capital costs, and maintenance costs compare from a conventional to a traditional approach. Real-world case studies will be discussed, showing how traditional solutions have been designed on previous projects, and how they can be employed on your next development.

Speakers: Jacob Hyman, Paul Crabtree

Track: Real Estate Dev/Finance

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Dual Spoke Day: Fayetteville

Multiplying the Middle: Expanding Housing Choice in Arkansas and Texas (CNU34043)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 10:30AM

In 2025, Arkansas passed HB1503 - the first statewide ADU law in the South. At the same time, Texas leaders came together to pass SB840, which requires larger cities to allow multifamily and mixed use housing in commercial zones. This session will examine how early messaging, grassroots advocacy, power-mapping and bipartisan coalition-building came together to advance key housing solutions - that unlock "gentle density" and expanded housing choice and affordability, to allowing for new and needed homes near jobs and amenities. We'll discuss how a regional movement in Northwest Arkansas sparked statewide policy change, and how Texas advocates built a strong coalition to advance significant, bipartisan legislation, and what's next for both states. Participants will see how New Urbanist principles translate into real-world regulatory outcomes that balance walkability, character, and affordability. The session will combine policy insight with practical implementation tools for municipalities, advocates, and design professionals nationwide.

Speakers: Brita Wallace, Duke McLarty, Felicity Maxwell, Nicole Clowney

Track: Housing

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Newest New Urbanists (CNU34060)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 10:30AM

What does the field of Urbanism look like for young professionals today? How do professionals in this field discover their passion and mission? Join us for short presentations featuring emerging New Urbanist leaders in Northwest Arkansas and learn about their career paths, pivotal decisions, and inspiring takeaways. Hear from emerging experts in a range of disciplines at the forefront of the New Urbanist movement. Panelists will take us through their career journeys and the moments that have inspired their outlook on the industry. They will offer advice on topics from how to find ideal mentors to what professional development opportunities can kick start your career. This panel is meant to offer both advice to young professionals and insight into trends in the professional life of the Urbanist community. This session is presented by ENU (Emerging New Urbanists), a nonprofit community focused on fostering the next generation of New Urbanist professionals.

Speakers: Cameron Clark, Keegan Stanton, Sophie McAdara

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Safe and affordable: legalizing taller single-stair apartment buildings (CNU34031)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 10:30AM

America's soaring rents, home prices, and commute costs have been driven, in no small part, by an unusual cost problem. In many advanced nations, costs stay roughly the same as developers move from building single-family houses to midrise apartments. In the U.S., midrise buildings cost far more. One significant factor driving this difference is America's unusual habit of requiring two staircases in buildings taller than three stories. New research indicates that this practice increases costs without increasing safety. This session will present research from The Pew Charitable Trust's Housing Policy Initiative that compares fire safety in the U.S. by building type and age, and finds that, multifamily buildings built since 2000 have the lowest fire death rates. It will also discuss research that shows no difference between fire death rates in single-stair and other residential buildings in two U.S. cities that have long allowed single staircases in taller buildings.

Speakers: Alex Horowitz, Patrick Siegman

Track: Housing

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

Dual Spoke Day: Fayetteville

The Design of Cities Begins with the Design of Streets (CNU34036)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 10:30AM

The Design of Cities Begins with the Design of Streets Victor Dover and John Massengale will showcase new tools and essential reference material in the greatly expanded Second Edition of Street Design, The Secret to Great Cities and Towns. The First Edition sold over 1000 copies at the 2014 Congress. The 2026 edition adds dozens of case studies and contributions from guest authors, including Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Carlos Moreno, Witold Rybczynski, Maria Sanchez, and Yodan Rofe. A new chapter, "Whose Streets?" covers both progress and setbacks from the past decade, challenging designers to put people first. This session will include: - the new Catalog of Essential Street Types - new and reworked case studies from around the world - a first-ever history of the design of Riverside Drive in New York - how to leverage street design in your community

Speakers: John Massengale AIA CNU, Victor Dover

Track: Transportation

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

CNU Latino Gen Z Urbanists: Organizing the Next Generation of Leaders (CNU34023)

5/14/2026 1:00PM - 2:00PM

Across the country, Gen Z and diverse communities face a widening gap between the cost of living and the dream of belonging in the neighborhoods being built today. Yet their voices are rarely included in conversations about design, housing, and the future of cities. Communities led by people who do not reflect their diversity often resist density and inclusion, limiting opportunities for growth and innovation. Demographic trends show that the future of the United States is young and diverse. While the non-Hispanic white population continues to age, the Hispanic and Latino population remains much younger, similar to Latin America. This shift means the next generation of Americans will be more multicultural and dynamic than ever. This session, led by members of CNU Latino, invites young planners, designers, and advocates to explore how New Urbanism and the Transect can advance affordability, inclusion, and representation while building a Gen Z Urbanism Network.

Speakers: Abraham Zorrilla, Bryan Barros, Carlos Espinoza

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM | 1 EQ / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Commercial Main Street Architecture: Fayetteville, Bentonville, Rogers (CNU34051)

5/14/2026 1:00PM - 2:00PM

The first part of this presentation will focus on best practices and missed opportunities observable on commercial main streets, using downtown Fayetteville, Bentonville, and Rogers as examples. Attendees learn about the components of architecture that support good urbanism, including elements of the pedestrian frontage, such as shopfronts, signage, and common entries, as well as what goes on above, including fenestration, cornices and eaves. These are contextualized within a taxonomy of facade elements. Attention is paid to how these elements are assembled into inviting, pedestrian-friendly frontages that shape the space of the street and optimize retail. Codes and architectural guidelines are also considered. For the second part of this session, weather permitting, participants step outside for a 30-minute walk around downtown Fayetteville to observe how the elements are experienced directly by pedestrians. We examine good examples and analyze what makes them work. We take note of weaker examples and discuss how they could be improved. We will be moving quickly, but participants are encouraged to sketch and photograph.

Speakers: Ben Northrup

Track: NWA/Regional

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Dual Spoke Day: Fayetteville

Expanding Housing: Applying the International Residential Code up to Eight-Units (CNU34045)

5/14/2026 1:00PM - 2:00PM

To address housing affordability and supply challenges, the City of Dallas amended its residential building code to allow buildings with up to eight dwelling units to be reviewed under the International Residential Code (IRC). This session will explore the policy rationale behind this change, highlight key differences between the International Residential Code (IRC) and the International Building Code (IBC), and examine the design and regulatory implications. Presenters will share lessons from the code development and adoption process, emphasizing the role of community engagement. Attendees will also learn about similar efforts in other cities and gain practical strategies for implementing local code reforms that support small-scale, affordable multifamily housing.

Speakers: Emily Liu, Willie Franklin

Track: Housing

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

From Vacant to Vibrant: A Blueprint for Local Retail Revival (CNU34009)

5/14/2026 1:00PM - 2:00PM

Cities struggling with vacancy, leakage + sprawl don't need massive capital to spark change -- they need a more intentional, community-first approach to local retail. From Vacant to Vibrant offers a practical New Urbanist blueprint for recruiting small businesses that become walkable anchors, strengthen local identity + reduce pressure for outward suburban growth. This session outlines how incremental downtown activation supports polycentric regional planning, empowers residents through listening-based engagement + reframes growth and quality-of-life conversations in plain, accessible language. Participants will learn how to measure the long-term value created by vibrant ground floors, use incentives to shift capital toward small-scale urbanist projects, and deploy tools like micro-retail, storefront activation, and tactical programming to bring districts back to life. The result: a replicable model for turning underperforming downtowns and small-city main streets into connected, people-centered places that shape a more sustainable regional future.

Speakers: Edie Weintraub, Monte Anderson

Track: Planning/Design

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM | 1 EQ / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Principles for growing transit in a Polycentric region (CNU34011)

5/14/2026 1:00PM - 2:00PM

As transect-based development drives growth in NW Arkansas, a well used transit system becomes a possibility and perhaps a necessity. Before considering the design, roll-out and right-sizing of a regional transit system for NW Arkansas, this session will consider North American and international best practices, principles and case studies for growing transit in a polycentric region where the transect is emerging as the primary growth context. The discussion will cover the mix of transit modes and route patterns, phasing, and right sizing that serves developing transit markets. Attributes of transit such as stop spacing, frequency, hubs and speed will be identified for specific transect contexts. The "last mile" network that provides access to transit will be correlated with community structure. We'll also cite the political and financing structure that has supported these investments elsewhere. This learning session will support post-CNU 34 discussions of transit growth in NW Arkansas.

Speakers: Larry Gould, Tim Reavis

Track: Transportation

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Dual Spoke Day: Fayetteville

Razorback Greenway Corridor Plan: Regional Transect for Seven Cities (CNU34041)

5/14/2026 1:00PM - 2:00PM

The Razorback Greenway Corridor Plan is the first regional-scale application of the rural-to-urban Transect in Northwest Arkansas. Building on earlier city-level plans and codes along the 40-mile trail, this effort uses the Transect as a shared language for seven municipalities, tying together a cohesive vision for the corridor and a coordinated set of zoning and policy tools. The project team pairs one of the nation's leading landscape architecture firms with New Urbanist practitioners focused on housing delivery and best practices in urban design. That combination is uniquely suited to addressing design and implementation needs in every Transect zone- from conserved rural valleys and working landscapes to suburban retrofit segments and historic downtowns on the trail. The session will unpack both the design framework and the practical steps that are aligning regional partners, codes, and capital projects around the Greenway as the region's civic spine.

Speakers: Matthew Hoffman, Rohan Lewis

Track: NWA/Regional

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM | 1 SR / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

Bridging Planning and Engineering for Human-Scale Streets (CNU34057)

5/14/2026 2:30PM - 3:30PM

Civil engineers make pivotal decisions that shape how people experience cities, yet their training and incentives often differ from planning goals. This meeting brings together planners, engineers, and emerging professionals to create a collaboration model that aligns engineering practice with New Urbanist principles and the Transect. Participants will identify friction points such as safety versus speed, Level of Service versus Vehicle Miles Traveled, and standardized designs versus local context. Together, they will outline policy tools and draft a shared workflow for scoping, design review, and approvals focused on people rather than vehicles. The group will produce a pilot checklist, a shared vocabulary for cross-disciplinary work, and commitments to test the model on a Northwest Arkansas corridor or town center. Discussion will connect to CNU34's regional focus by demonstrating how Transect-based design (T3 to T6) guides street typologies, targets, and evaluation metrics for walkable communities.

Speakers: Abraham Zorrilla, Patricia Tice, Wei Liu

Track: Transportation

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Emergency Vehicle Access - An Update on Research and Code Reform (CNU34052)

5/14/2026 2:30PM - 3:30PM

Learn how fire access codes impact urban development. Receive an update on efforts to reform national model fire codes. Many design and operations strategies for providing fire safety on narrower streets will also be taught, as will the history of fire access codes in the US.

Speakers: Patrick Siegman, Scott Brody

Track: Codes/Zoning/Policy

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Dual Spoke Day: Fayetteville

How to be a Lovable Engineer: Engineering New Urbanism (CNU34064)

5/14/2026 2:30PM - 3:30PM

In conjunction with ongoing work on the CityBuilding Manual, this presentation looks at the role that Engineers play in making great places. What do engineers look at when facing a design problem? How can they bring their expertise to address concerns that arise from utility companies, fire chiefs, and state highway departments? How do we get people, power, water, sewer, rainwater, and communications all into and out of buildings? Across neighborhoods? Across regions? How can the engineering of street sections, alleys, plazas, and other places make - or break - the public realm? For the engineers in the audience, how do we deliver better places when making our CD's? For those working with engineers, what do you need to know to ask the right questions and task engineers with the tasks they are best suited to handle?

Speakers: Aaron Cook, Ed Lane, Maggie Taylor

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Incremental Development: Training, Codes, Coalition (CNU34002)

5/14/2026 2:30PM - 3:30PM

This session explores how communities can advance incremental, small-scale development by integrating three key perspectives: developer capacity, regulatory reform, and coalition-building. Participants will learn how training programs for small developers interact with zoning reforms to enable context-sensitive infill projects. The session also highlights how coalitions of practitioners, municipal staff, and advocates sustain and scale these efforts. Using case studies, slides, and interactive discussion, the session incorporates all three perspectives. Presenters include Alli Thurmond Quinlan, Eric Kronberg, and Elizabeth Ward Williams, who will speak to coalition building, development, and regulatory reform and zoning. Attendees will gain insight into how these elements work together to create walkable, human-scale neighborhoods. They will also acquire practical tools to evaluate their communities and identify actionable next steps. Combining live presentations with curated examples, the session ensures every voice is represented and provides a comprehensive framework for achieving incremental development goals.

Speakers: Allison Quinlan, Elizabeth Ward Williams, Eric Kronberg

Track: Codes/Zoning/Policy

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

Trail Network Planning from Vision to Regional Transformation: Lessons from the Razorback Greenway and Beyond (CNU34022)

5/14/2026 2:30PM - 3:30PM

This Implementation Session will focus on regional trail network planning, highlighting the Razorback Greenway network and the unique confluence of funding, collaboration, political will and staff expertise that brought the network to life. Speakers will also offer some actionable smaller steps or alternative paths for establishing a regional trail network in a variety of contexts for those attendees facing funding or political challenges in their regions. Examples of projects along the East Coast Greenway will highlight the differing challenges and opportunities related to building and maintaining active transportation infrastructure that traverses the transect, connecting dense urban areas with preserved lands while also providing safe connections through auto-centric suburban sprawl.

Speakers: Allison Burson, Jim Hemphill, Tim Reavis, Tristan Hill

Track: Transportation

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Dual Spoke Day: Fayetteville

Transportation Context Classifications (DOT) and the Local-scale Transect (CNU34006)

5/14/2026 2:30PM - 3:30PM

In the past decade, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has worked hard to revise their statewide rules and guidance in order to embed context-sensitive design practices at all scales. As part of this, they adopted a Context Classification system and associated illustration that appears very similar to the Transect. While some of the Context Zones correlate with Transect Zones, per their guidance, others do not. Recently the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission published a Regional Complete Streets Guide that includes the FDOT Context Classifications. Others are doing so across the country. Planners working on Future Land Use and Zoning utilize a different Transect-based approach. They are similar in some ways, but not all. This meeting is a chance for transportation professionals who created and have implemented the Context Classification system to engage with planners who use the Transect for growth management and zoning.

Speakers: DeWayne Carver, Matt Lambert

Track: Transportation

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

CNU Transportation Forum (CNU34004)

5/14/2026 4:00PM - 5:00PM

This is the annual meeting of the CNU Transportation Forum. Transportation Practitioners and other interested urbanists are welcome. Topics are:

About of the Transportation Practice at CNU

Transportation Resource Forum: How you can help CNU affect legislation and earned media

NW Arkansas Active Transportation Projects Wins & Losses in 2025

Status of Reconnecting Communities grants

Federal "Notice of Funding Opportunities"

Future of the CNU Transportation Summit

Speakers: Jared Draper, Larry Gould, Phil Veasley, Tim Reavis

Track: Transportation

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Designing Participation: Setting Your Project up for Success (CNU34054)

5/14/2026 4:00PM - 5:00PM

In this session, seasoned practitioners will teach approaches and tools to develop effective public participation programs for urban design projects. Topics covered will include participation goals, measures for evaluating success, key messages and input needs, target audiences and how to reach them, and engagement tools to match participation goals and audience needs.

Speakers: Christina Anderson, Jennifer Hurley

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Dual Spoke Day: Fayetteville

Framework versus Free-for-all: A Building Types Approach to Zoning Reform (CNU34032)

5/14/2026 4:00PM - 5:00PM

Enabling walkable, urban environments through zoning reform is a central tenet of the New Urbanism. While the parameters for success are clearly spelled out in the Charter of the New Urbanism, in too many cases, the built outcomes stemming from zoning reforms do not embody these principles - or they do so poorly. This session will teach attendees how to analyze the neighborhoods they wish to emulate, to create an orderly framework of building types as a basis for zoning reform. Paired with the careful delineation of districts, the building types approach allows for a thoughtful and contextually appropriate integration of uses, densities, and housing formats across the transect. Attendees will also learn how this approach lends itself to meaningful public engagement surrounding zoning, allowing for effective communication with those who may feel threatened by changes to the built environment.

Speakers: Adam Cook, Mark Nickita

Track: Codes/Zoning/Policy

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

From Strip Malls to Main Streets: Retrofitting Suburban Neighborhoods (CNU34044)

5/14/2026 4:00PM - 5:00PM

Across the country, aging suburban retail corridors and isolated residential subdivisions are being reimagined as vibrant, walkable centers. This session demonstrates practical strategies for transforming conventional suburban fabric, retail strips, big-box sites, and single-use neighborhoods into mixed-use, human-scaled communities. Drawing from built examples and real-world redevelopment efforts, Monte Anderson will show how design, zoning reform, public-private partnerships, and incremental infill can revitalize these areas while preserving affordability and local character. Participants will gain implementable tools for coordinating local policy, market realities, and design principles to deliver lasting change.

Speakers: Monte Anderson

Track: Real Estate Dev/Finance

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

New Urbanist Design and Retrofit for Rainwater Conveyance and Detention (CNU34063)

5/14/2026 4:00PM - 5:00PM

Rainwater is a valuable resource. Even Charter Award winning communities have roofs, streets, and sidewalks that increase runoff and require thoughtful management of how stormwater leaves a neighborhood. Detention and retention ponds are common in urban watersheds but often underperform. Designed primarily to control peak flows and mimic predevelopment conditions, many serve a single purpose and fail to clean water, support habitat, or provide meaningful community amenities. Their limited hydrologic and ecological complexity reduces their ability to improve water quality, foster biodiversity, or enhance surrounding landscapes. New or retrofitted basins that incorporate green infrastructure can provide measurable environmental and social benefits. Strategies such as increasing infiltration and residence time, using native plantings for pollutant removal and habitat creation, and integrating ponds into the urban fabric can transform them into attractive neighborhood assets. Even before reaching a pond, stormwater can be celebrated and put to work. Moving beyond conventional "pave, pipe, and dump" approaches reduces downstream impacts and builds more resilient communities.

Speakers: Aaron Cook, Annie Sales, Paul Crabtree

Track: Climate/Sus Design

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM | 1 SR / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

Dual Spoke Day: Fayetteville

Streamlining Housing Development with Pre-Approved Plans (CNU34047)

5/14/2026 4:00PM - 5:00PM

Explore three distinct approaches to pre-approved building programs demonstrating how coordinated design, policy innovation, and community engagement accelerate attainable housing delivery. The Cape Cod Commission's regional catalog addresses missing middle housing across multiple municipalities, offering context-sensitive designs that respect historic character while enabling gentle density. Tulsa's HOME Program provides a comprehensive city-wide system with plans from ADUs to 12-plexes, featuring streamlined permitting and zoning flexibility as non-monetary incentives for developers. Bloomington's Hopewell pilot demonstrates neighborhood-scale implementation, where detailed site planning yields shovel-ready small development projects coordinated for optimal streetscape and unit diversity. Each project reveals critical lessons about catalog structure, licensing models, developer engagement, municipal partnerships, and balancing architectural quality with construction efficiency. Speakers share implementation strategies, adoption challenges, and measurable outcomes- including units built, timeline reductions, and cost savings- providing attendees with practical frameworks for launching similar programs in their communities.

Speakers: Allison Quinlan, Christina Carlson, Eric Kronberg

Track: Housing

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH



Dual Spoke Day: Main Stage

Shared Prosperity: Affordable Urbanism that Expands Opportunity (CNU34026)

5/14/2026 11:00AM - 12:30PM

What does it take to turn the promise of affordable urbanism into reality? In this session, Janis Bowdler, President of the Solutions Division at Enterprise Community Partners, leads a timely conversation on the systems required to deliver equitable, attainable communities. Bringing together a panel of New Urbanist practitioners with hands-on experience, the discussion explores how housing policy, land use regulations, capital investment, and development delivery must align to produce meaningful affordability outcomes. Panelists will share practical insights from projects across the country and Northwest Arkansas, highlighting both barriers and proven strategies. Framed around a central challenge facing communities nationwide—ensuring access to the health, economic, and social benefits of well-designed places—this session offers a grounded look at how coordinated action across sectors can expand opportunity and make quality urbanism accessible to all.

Speakers: Allison Quinlan, Duke McLarty, Eric Kronberg, Janis Bowdler, Jim Petty, Macon Toledano

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

Bentonville Main Stage: Public Life by Design: Building Places People Love (CNU34033)

5/14/2026 11:00AM - 12:30PM

What does it take for a city to truly work for the people who live in it? This Main Stage session brings together two thinkers whose work converges on that essential question and points toward a deeper understanding of what cities can and should do for the humans who inhabit them. Matthew Lister, Managing Director for the Americas at Gehl, opens the session drawing on Gehl's half-century of human-centered urban practice and research to explore how the design of streets, public spaces, and neighborhoods shapes not just how people move through cities, but how they feel and interact together in them. At a moment when people are hungry for connection and belonging, Matthew makes the case that public life, supported by thoughtfully designed social infrastructure, is the everyday foundation on which trust, well-being, and community are built. At the heart of that design is understanding: built from observation and data about what actually draws people together, keeps them comfortable, and invites them to stay, to linger, and to experience joy. Through examples from Gehl's global work, he'll show what cities look like when civic leaders, developers, and designers take that seriously, and what becomes possible when they do. Carol Coletta, Bloomberg Public Innovation Fellow, will follow with a focused look at how public space can serve as a platform for social connection, the brief encounters between strangers that, over time, quietly strengthen the fabric of community life. She'll share what the evidence tells us about how those connections happen across lines of difference, and what public space practitioners can do to cultivate them. Framed as a hopeful and practical bridge between design, data, and lived experience, the session closes with a conversation between Matthew and Carol, exploring what cities can be when design and human intention work in concert.

Sponsors: Torti Gallas + Partners

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

Art Room

CNU's Art Room is special gathering at the annual Congress where those who are passionate about the drawing aspects of urban design get back to their roots. This year's Art Room is held in the 21C Museum Hotel in Bentonville.

Art Room: Neighborhood Design (CNU34092)

5/14/2026 2:30PM - 3:30PM

The New Urbanism is all about crafting great neighborhoods for people. In this exciting session you'll get to take a site, roll up your sleeves, grab drawing supplies and then learn step-by-step how to design your first neighborhood.

Speakers: James Dougherty

Track: Art Room

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Art Room: Classic American Urban Building Design (CNU34091)

5/14/2026 1:00PM - 2:00PM

Have you wondered how in historic American cities, building after building was designed to such a consistently high degree of excellence and harmony – from the large urban forms, down to the small details? Building facades with highly individual personalities sit side-by-side and cooperate visually to create wonderfully harmonious urban spaces. Would you like to know how to employ these design techniques today? Together, let's examine great architectural examples from Providence. Prepare to roll up your sleeves!

Speakers: James Dougherty

Track: Art Room

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Art Room: Observing and Analyzing the City - Plein Air (CNU34090)

5/14/2026 9:30AM - 10:30AM

Hand drawing is a powerful tool to assist seeing and understanding the built environment. Grab your sketch pad, brushes, digital tablets and other graphic tools of choice as we learn techniques for observational sketching and painting (in the field, weather permitting). This session will focus on urban structure, architectural elements, streetscapes and individual buildings. Leading practitioners will provide helpful tips and demonstrations of techniques.

Speakers: Arti Harchekar, Ashleigh Walton, James Dougherty

Track: Art Room

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Art of the New Urbanism Volume II

To round out the Art Room content for the day, the University of Miami is hosting a happy hour to celebrate the success of the Art of the New Urbanism Volume I book, showcasing some of the art included in this publication, and kicking-off a year-long celebration for the second volume, coming out in 2027.

Sessions: Bentonville Day

FRIDAY, MAY 15

The final full day of Congress programming for CNU 34 is held in Bentonville, a city on the growth edge of the NWA Region.

Keynote Presentation:

Investing in Connection: The Case for Social Infrastructure (CNU34034)

5/15/2026 10:00AM - 11:30AM

Eric Klinenberg's influential work on "social infrastructure" has reshaped how designers, planners, and civic leaders understand the impact of the built environment. His Keynote presentation at CNU 34 will explore how investments in the public realm—libraries, parks, museums, trails, and other shared spaces—serve as critical foundations for social connection, resilience, and community well-being. Drawing on extensive research, Klinenberg will illustrate how the quality and accessibility of these civic assets can profoundly affect outcomes ranging from public health to social cohesion. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of how social infrastructure functions as an essential component to physical design, reinforcing the New Urbanist commitment to vibrant, inclusive, and connected places. The session will equip attendees with compelling, evidence-based arguments for prioritizing these elements in planning, policy, design, and development to create stronger, more equitable communities.

Speakers: Eric Klinenberg

Track: Keynote Presentation

CEUs: AIA: 1 HSW / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 HSW / CNU-A: 1 LH

Family Foundations (CNU34027)

5/15/2026 12:00PM - 1:15PM

The philanthropy of Family Foundations are a driving force critical to improving the quality, character and experiences within their home communities and regions. Their mission, leadership and resources support innovation in placemaking, integrated with financial, social, and physical investments, can bring transformative change across the entire rural to urban transect. The context of implementation ranges from natural areas, farmland, and rural villages to urban centers, suburbs, and redevelopment areas that span entire regions and a range of community typologies. This session highlights three Foundations sharing examples and experiences that embody the unique roles they play in working with the public, private, and non-profit sectors to focus collective resources, facilitate collaboration, engage communities, reverse long-term disinvestment, and utilize vision and design to address critical regional, community and neighborhood issues, supported by funding for follow-up/on-going implementation.

Speakers: Jim Constantine, Macon Toledano

Track: Real Estate Dev/Finance

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Sessions: Bentonville Day

Faith as Infrastructure: Strategic Planning with Churches in Disinvested Communities (CNU34019)

5/15/2026 12:00PM - 1:15PM

Planning with Purpose explores how faith-based institutions can serve as key partners in shaping neighborhood revitalization across Indiana's northern, middle, and southern regions. Drawing on insights from the Lilly Endowment's Supporting Churches Initiative, this session demonstrates how churches' longstanding social, cultural, and spatial anchors' can operationalize New Urbanist principles to advance equitable, human-scaled, and regionally connected development. Participants will learn how planners, congregations, and philanthropic partners collaborate to repurpose church properties, organize nonprofit boards, and align faith missions with local planning goals. Through practical models of partnership, this session highlights how underused church assets can become catalysts for inclusive housing, community reinvestment, and civic engagement. By bridging planning, faith, and philanthropy across the rural-to-urban transect, Planning with Purpose presents a replicable framework for building resilient, inclusive, and sustainable communities that embody the Charter's call for design, stewardship, and regional equity.

Speakers: Carlos Perkins, Jerry Davis III, Teresa Jeter

Track: Planning/Design

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 HSW / AICP: 1.25 CM | 1 EQ / ASLA: 1.25 HSW / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Fire Code - Where to go from here? Fight or Collaborate (CNU34059)

5/15/2026 12:00PM - 1:15PM

After attending CNU33, it was clear that many view the Fire Code as an obstacle and hold a negative perception of fire code officials -- sometimes with reason. In contrast, at Fire Rescue International and NFPA's Fire Chief Forum, the fire service viewed proposed changes as attacks on the Code. This divide highlights a critical issue: conflict alone will not produce meaningful reform, and small victories on either side yield little progress. The Fire Code has evolved over decades. Some see its growth as excessive, while others believe even minor compromises could jeopardize life safety. The truth lies between these perspectives. This session seeks to establish common ground and foster collaborative dialogue on modernizing the Fire Code. Facilitators will present insights from a panel of forward-thinking experts and guide an open forum, focusing on a few key issues to show how meaningful progress can be achieved through collaboration.

Speakers: Brad Hardin, Matthew Hoffman

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

The Data is In! New Urbanism is Good for Your Health (CNU34094)

5/15/2026 12:00PM - 1:15PM

Social connectivity and neighborly relationship are more naturally created in new urban neighborhoods. Joel Embry leads a discussion with researchers Dr Matthew Lee and Dr. Tim Chapin regarding proof of the negative health effects of isolation and loneliness, and how communities designed to promote social connectivity provide a remedy.

Speakers: Joel Embry, Matthew Lee, Timothy Chapin

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Sessions: Bentonville Day

The Economics of Urbanism 101: Form Follows Finance (CNU34087)

5/15/2026 12:00PM - 1:15PM

Economic vitality is a central strategy of the CNU foundational Charter. The physical shape of our regions, cities, towns and neighborhoods results from a cocktail of policies and economic forces that enable or hinder placemaking. Joe will present a variety of examples to break down the economic forces embedded in policy, and present an argument for the value of mixed-use and walkable urbanism. Minicozzi is known for his engaging and fun presentations on a topic as wonky as taxation. This session will give you a better understanding of the fundamentals of how the municipal financial systems affects the physical shape of community.

Speakers: Joe Minicozzi

Track: Real Estate Dev/Finance

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 HSW / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 HSW / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

The Software of Community: Building Social Fabric Through Design (CNU34001)

5/15/2026 12:00PM - 1:15PM

New Urbanists excel at the "hardware" of community-- street widths, building setbacks, porch depths. But as architect Ross Chapin observes, housing conversations are often "dominated by numbers, dwelling unit shortfalls, AMI thresholds, density per acre, while we rarely discuss the actual lives of the people we are building for." This collaborative discussion brings together practitioners focused on the "software": Alli Thurmond Quinlan (Incremental Development Alliance), Ross Chapin (Ross Chapin Architects), Kat Velloso (Better Places Studio), and Clay Chapman (Chapman Design Group). Participants will explore design features that create both "refuge and prospect," threshold spaces enabling controlled social engagement, strategies for cultivating shared stewardship, and how thoughtful design supports resident agency and long-term stability. This discussion grounds CNU 34's Transect focus in its ultimate purpose: ensuring Northwest Arkansas's growth delivers environments where people feel safe, connected, and capable of shaping their lives across the full spectrum of contexts.

Speakers: Allison Quinlan, Clay Chapman, Kat Velloso, Ross Chapin FAIA

Track: Housing

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Reporting and Request for Ideas following the New Urban Council IX: Affordable Urbanism (CNU34085)

5/15/2026 12:00PM - 4:45PM

Following the gathering in January at New Urban Council IX, this afternoon Working Session will advance the goals for impact that came out of the event, by opening the discussion on achieving affordable urbanism to the entire CNU34 audience. Structured around 3 Strategic Initiatives identified at Council IX, these sequenced conversations will be facilitated by Council IX co-leads Anne Tate and Rico Quirindongo, and led by expert practitioners leading next-steps on addressing the affordability crisis. Attendees will hear a report-out on the proceedings of the Council itself, engage in discussions that will carry on the core themes of that event, and sign on to work groups advancing Charter-based reform work aimed at influencing the International Codes Council, state-level policy approaches, local-level infill strategy, and creation of sound solutions to financing the development of affordable urbanism. Shane Phillips will kick-off the day of discussions by examining how land use regulations, zoning reform, and incremental development strategies can expand housing supply while supporting walkable, livable neighborhoods.

Speakers: Anne Tate, Mallory Baches, Rico Quirindongo, Shane Phillips

Track: Codes/Zoning/Policy

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU* / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

Sessions: Bentonville Day

Planning and Coding in a Time of Pre-Emption (CNU34085-1)

5/15/2026 1:00PM - 2:00PM

State legislatures across the U.S. are passing laws that limit the ability of cities and counties to shape development. In 2025, Orange Code, an ambitious, ground-up, form-based rewrite of Orange County's Florida's 60+ year old zoning code was put in limbo weeks after adoption as a result of broadly worded state legislation. Other states including Arkansas and California have adopted or are considering similarly broad pre-emptions on local land use regulation. These laws are part of a larger pre-emption trend that includes measures that prohibit architectural standards, pre-empt regulations of accessory dwelling units, change extra-territorial jurisdiction, and YIMBY legislation that dramatically expands where and how housing can be built. This session will provide an overview of public policy projects impacted by state legislation and the gains, losses, and pivots resulting from these changes.

Speakers: Eliza Juliano, Lisa Wise, Marina Khoury, Susan Henderson

Track: Codes/Zoning/Policy

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU* / AICP: 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

CNU France and the Transformational Ecosystem (CNU34074)

5/15/2026 1:45PM - 3:00PM

This session introduces CNU France (Pour une Renaissance Urbaine) the new French chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism. Speakers will share the movement's origins, objectives, and mission to promote Renaissance Urbaine across France and the Francophone world. The session will also present CNU France's Transformational Ecosystem, a framework of ten key pillars designed to inspire lasting societal and spatial change. Each pillar will be illustrated through recent initiatives demonstrating how collaboration and action can translate urbanist ideals into measurable impact. Adapted from a presentation at IMCL in Potsdam, this session offers practical insights into building partnerships, advancing New Urbanism internationally, and creating a culture of transformation through design and community engagement.

Speakers: Guy Courtois

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Great BODs (Bicycle-Oriented Developments): Supporting Urbanism through Regional Bikeways (CNU34037)

5/15/2026 1:45PM - 3:00PM

As regions grow, the Transect offers a meaningful framework to shape urbanism that is context-sensitive, multimodal, and people-first. This session explores how regional bikeways benefit the urban form and catalyze Bicycle-Oriented Development (BOD), connecting neighborhoods, districts, and corridors across the Transect. Through three project showcases, we'll examine how regional bikeways -- Razorback Greenway (AR), Cross Charlotte Trail (NC), and the Fall Line Trail (VA)-- are supporting polycentric growth, reactivating underutilized land, and empowering communities to shape their built environments. These projects demonstrate how regional bikeways not only counter autocentric sprawl but also support economic vitality and offer real transportation choices for daily trips. Each project also reveals how storytelling and communications strategies have elevated public understanding and inspired action. Attendees will gain insights into how regional bikeway investments can serve as a backbone for walkable and transit-focused urbanism as well, integrating infrastructure, land use, and community engagement across scales.

Speakers: Brantley Tyndall, Jared Draper, Scott Curry, Tim Conklin

Track: Transportation

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM | 1 SR / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Sessions: Bentonville Day

New Urbanism and Agriculture: Creating Healthy Communities and Conserving Farmland (CNU34007)

5/15/2026 1:45PM - 3:00PM

Each year, the United States loses approximately two million acres of farmland to development and suburban sprawl-- eroding local food systems, community health, and rural economies. This session explores how the principles of New Urbanism can work in tandem with agriculture to reverse that trend. Drawing from the work of Hamlet Capital, we'll look at how agricultural-based neighborhoods can conserve vital farmland, create opportunities for the next generation of farmers, and build multigenerational, mixed-income communities, and provide a new framework for rural economic development.

Speakers: Daron Joffe, Neal Collins

Track: Climate/Sus Design

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 HSW / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 HSW / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Re-Establishing Urban Roots - Vision for Reparative Design (CNU34029)

5/15/2026 1:45PM - 3:00PM

A Vision for Reparative Design presents the Black Heritage Corridor along Spout Spring Branch as both a case study and a call to action for planners, designers, and civic leaders. This session, led by Sharon Killian of Northwest Arkansas Black Heritage Association, examines how a nearly erased Black community is reclaiming its place in the city's urban fabric through the principles of reparative design. Participants will explore the intertwined histories of loss and endurance that shaped the corridor's landscape, from the seizure of Black-owned properties to ongoing efforts to restore cultural and spatial equity. Grounded in Afrofuturist thinking -- the past is not gone; it is data for the future -- this presentation reframes preservation as a tool of transformation, illustrating how memory, policy, and design converge to create a model for restorative urbanism and inclusive community revitalization.

Speakers: Ngozi Brown, Sharon Killian, Wayne Hamilton

Track: Preserve/Community/Culture

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM | 1 EQ / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Reimagining Housing Conversations: The CHATS Engagement Experience (CNU34003)

5/15/2026 1:45PM - 3:00PM

CHATS (Connecting Housing and Transformative Solutions) is a community engagement initiative developed by Groundwork that allows attendees to participate in a guided discussion about housing challenges and solutions. During this 60-to-90-minute session, each table of 7-10 attendees will participate in a CHATS with Groundwork staff facilitating. The interactive CHATS experience goes through impact and solution cards that reveal how different residents are affected by the lack of housing options and what strategies can address those gaps. Groundwork will guide table hosts to lead dialogue and reflection, simulating how CHATS builds empathy, understanding, and collective problem-solving. Attendees will leave with insights on how to replicate this scalable, engagement model to foster productive housing discussions in their own cities or regions.

Speakers: Duke McLarty, Lindsey Navarrette

Track: Housing

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 HSW / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 HSW / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Sessions: Bentonville Day

CNU34 Workshop: Fire Safety Without Suburban Sprawl (CNU34088)

5/15/2026 1:45PM - 4:45PM

CNU34 will provide a platform for a much-needed collaboration to help steer urbanism-supportive fire safety. This session will bring together fire officials, planners, urban designers, and developers to collaborate on solutions that protect life safety and also promote walkable, sustainable urbanism. By identifying shared goals, this coalition will workshop how a collaborative approach between urban planning, public safety and real estate development can provide effective solutions to supporting fire safety in urban neighborhood contexts – cooperation that will be truly vital to ensuring that NWA growth delivers walkable, sustainable, equitable urbanism.

Speakers: Britin Bostick, Carl Keller, Jeremy Criner, John Vanatta

CEUs: AIA: 2.5 HSW / AICP: 2.5 CM / ASLA: HSW / CNU-A: 2.5 LH

Building the Missing Middle: Code Reform and Equitable Infill Strategies (CNU34085-2)

5/15/2026 2:15PM - 3:45PM

As cities seek solutions to housing affordability and displacement, reforming outdated regulations and expanding equitable infill development have become urgent priorities. This 90-minute session explores how changes to building and zoning codes can unlock new opportunities for missing middle housing while broadening participation in neighborhood growth. Andre Jones and Matt Hoffman will discuss ongoing efforts to influence the International Residential Code and related reforms that support more flexible, urban housing types. Rico Quirindongo will then present City of Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development's innovative Partnership for ADU Development pilot, a co-development model designed to help lower-income homeowners and homeowners of color access financing, navigate permitting, and build wealth through accessory dwelling units and infill housing.

Speakers: Andre Jones, Matthew Hoffman, Rico Quirindongo

Track: Codes/Zoning/Policy

CEUs: AIA: 1 LU / 1 CM / ASLA: 1 PDH / CNU-A: 1 LH

From Design to Development: Bridging Vision and Viability (CNU34042)

5/15/2026 3:30PM - 4:45PM

Across the country, thoughtful urban design often stops short of implementation. Between zoning, financing, and market risk, even well-conceived ideas struggle to reach construction. At the same time, more architects and planners are beginning to lead development themselves, reshaping how small-scale, walkable projects get built. This meeting, co-facilitated by Ethnie Xu (Yale MArch MBA, F&T Group) and Andrew Clum (Co-Founder, Overhead Studio), brings together professionals who aspire to bridge design and development to discuss how vision and viability can reinforce one another. Through open dialogue and case sharing, participants will uncover practical lessons, identify recurring barriers, and explore pathways to align walkable design with feasible delivery. The goal is to connect practitioners who are already experimenting at this intersection and build momentum toward a shared framework for design-led, community-focused development that strengthens the New Urbanist movement.

Speakers: Andrew Clum, Ethnie Xu

Track: Tech/Communication/Other

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Sessions: Bentonville Day

Legacy Projects (CNU34079)

5/15/2026 3:30PM - 4:45PM

Each year, in conjunction with its annual Congress, CNU invites municipalities and neighborhood organizations within the Congress host region to apply for pro-bono technical assistance from leading urban design firms. Through public engagement and collaboration, CNU's Legacy Projects demonstrate the power of great urban design beyond the boundaries of each selected community, and targeted communities experience both short-term progress and long-lasting momentum.

This year's Legacy Projects include a plan for a 61-acre walkable, mixed-use village in Elm Springs, AR; a new street plan that would enable incremental change into a mixed-use, walkable downtown gateway in the La Plaza District in Rogers, AR; and a reimagining of the downtown core in Cave Springs, AR by expanding upon previous work done by ULI Northwest Arkansas.

Speakers: Josely Lam, Joseph Shiveley, Katy O'Meilie, Mary Madden, Scott Layton

Sponsors: Buffalo Builders

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Reimagining Cultural and Civic Districts: "Continuous Transformations" in Germany (CNU34046)

5/15/2026 3:30PM - 4:45PM

From libraries and concert venues to museums and town halls, cultural and civic districts are foundational elements of urban centers, connecting people to each other and to the built heritage of place and a common vision of civil society. Yet as public buildings age, and as the demands placed upon them grow more complex, new solutions are critical. With seemingly obsolete buildings, *umbau* or continuous transformation offers a path that reinvents historic fabric for contemporary public uses. This session illuminates global New Urbanist approaches centered on *umbau* -- the German word describing the process of renewing existing structures and districts. Case studies illustrate this *umbau* design approach, emphasizing a long-term process of strategic reinvention and adaptation that preserves character while enhancing functionality. Through award-winning examples with relevant U.S. takeaways -- including Munich's pioneering Gasteig HP8 cultural center -- attendees learn effective, replicable, and inspiring approaches to cultural and civic reuse and renewal.

Speakers: Tobias Keyl

Track: Preserv/Community/Culture

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

Bridging the Gap: From Alternative Financing to Affordable Neighborhoods (CNU34085-3)

5/15/2026 3:45PM - 4:45PM

Ashley Terry will present an alternative financing model that would facilitate affordable neighborhoods, followed by a panel discussion by experts in the field who envision how to bring it to reality. The program ends with a call for ideas of how to activate initiatives presented throughout the afternoon.

Speakers: Anne Tate, Ashley Terry, Duke McLarty, Eric Kronberg, Joe Minicozzi, Rico Quirindongo

Track: Codes/Zoning/Policy

Sessions: Bentonville Day

Walmart Home Office: Design Decisions for a Walkable, Connected Campus (CNU34053)

5/15/2026 3:30PM - 4:45PM

Walmart's 350-acre Home Office in Bentonville is one of the largest investments in a walkable corporate campus in the United States. MBL, a Fayetteville-based urban design and architecture firm, was chosen as the local design partner on the core master planning team, working alongside Sasaki, Gensler, and SWA. MBL's work is rooted in New Urbanism and local efforts to shift Northwest Arkansas from sprawl toward walkable, human-scaled neighborhoods. From that vantage, the team helped shape early decisions: bringing the Razorback Greenway through the center of campus, shifting the plan to straddle 8th Street, and committing to a network of streets, blocks, and civic spaces. Those moves turned a conventional headquarters brief into an open, city-facing campus. The result is public spaces, short blocks, and active-transportation links, with the Razorback Greenway as regional spine and 8th Street emerging as a new Main Street for Bentonville.

Speakers: Joe Allbright, Matthew Hoffman, Roger Boskus

Track: NWA/Regional

CEUs: AIA: 1.25 LU / AICP: 1.25 CM / ASLA: 1.25 PDH / CNU-A: 1.25 LH

CNU 35 Closing Party

Head over to the RODE House at the Momentary, for food, drinks, and dancing with all your new and old CNU friends!

In Memoriam

CNU recognizes the loss of these dedicated, passionate people from the new urbanist community during the past year:



Leon Krier



Robert A.M. Stern

CNU 34 Northwest Arkansas

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, May 16th | 8:30am - 5:00pm | Fayetteville Town Center

A free all-day Community Open House hosted by the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU).

This public event invites residents to connect with local planners, designers, and community leaders discussing topics like walkability, transit, housing, economic opportunity, and regional growth. Hear from nationally renowned speakers and learn about trends influencing the region as well as how residents, businesses, and local government can shape the future for better outcomes.

8:30 AM

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Robert Burns, Program Director, Home Region, Walton Family Foundation

9:00 AM

Why the New Urbanist Dialogue Matters to the Future of the Region (CNU34103-2)

Marques King, Founder, Fabric[K] Design

Many of the challenges that come with rapid growth require solutions that are multifaceted - bringing together policy and design to see the whole picture. In this framing session, learn how the interconnected practice of New Urbanism is so important to the conversations happening about growth across the region.

9:30 AM

Visualising Growth: How data can help us see the value (and possibilities) of our region more clearly (CNU34103-3)

Joe Minicozzi, Founder and Principal, Urban3

Almost all growth brings economic stimulation to communities, but not all growth carries the same level of value - immediately and over time. In this presentation, learn how new urbanists leverage publicly-available data to visualize value.

10:15 AM

Forward 2050: Regional Transportation Plan for Northwest Arkansas (CNU34103-4)

Tim Conklin, Executive Director, and Nicole Gibbs, Assistant Director, Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission

Forward 2050 is Northwest Arkansas's long-range metropolitan transportation plan, designed to guide how the region grows, connects, and invests over the next 25 years. Explore how the plan guides growth and investment to create a more connected, multimodal, and fiscally responsible regional future. Attendees will learn how Forward 2050 links growth management with transportation investment to support vibrant downtowns, attainable housing, and safe, resilient infrastructure.

11:00 AM

Growing Home: Northwest Arkansas Regional Growth Strategy Update (CNU34103-5)

Matt Lambert, Principal, DPZ Co-Design

The Northwest Arkansas Council's regional growth strategy reflects more than a year of research, analysis and engagement with residents, local officials and business leaders. Recently completed, come hear an update on this strategy.

11:30 AM

Intermission

12:30 PM**What's at Stake for Northwest Arkansas: A conversation on the human impact of planning for growth. (CNU34103-6)**

- **Nelson Peacock, President and CEO, Northwest Arkansas Council**
- **Tim Conklin, Executive Director, Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission**
- **Wes Craiglow, Executive Director, ULI Northwest Arkansas**

Representatives from organizations across the region who work daily on growth, development, and planning dive into the human aspects of this work. Hear a new perspective connecting us all to the big picture thinking often associated with regional growth planning and how the ideas of New Urbanism can support and expand this work.

1:20 PM**Streamlining Infill: Pre-Approved Buildings Across Four Cities (CNU34103-7)**

- **Matthew Petty, CEO Pattern Zones Co.**
- **Kyle Clifton, Planning Director, City of Claremore, OK**
- **Leslie Karr, Planning Director, City of Overland Park, KS**
- **John McCurdy, Director of Community Development, City of Rogers, AR**
- **Jonathan Curth, Planning Director, City of Fayetteville, AR**

Municipalities across the tri-state region are deploying pre-approved building programs to accelerate quality infill development. This showcase presents four nearby jurisdictions ranging from 20,000 to 200,000 in population that have adopted pre-approved building portfolios to streamline permitting and make infill development more accessible to builders.

2:10 PM**Trail-Oriented Development: Applying the Transect to Active Transportation Infrastructure (CNU34103-8)**

- **Julie Flynn, Principal, The Street Plans Collaborative**
- **Kourtney Barrett, CEO of Velocity NWA**
- **Matt Hoffman, Architect, President of Blockwright and Pattern Zones Co-Founder**
- **Tyler Overstreet, Director of Planning, City of Bentonville**

How can trails function like transit corridors to shape regional growth? This session examines Trail-Oriented Development (TrOD) as a strategic planning framework that integrates active transportation infrastructure across the urban-to-rural Transect.

3:00 PM**Fire Code Reform and State Legislative Policy: CNU 34 Workshop Findings (CNU34103-9)**

John McCurdy, Director of Community Development, City of Rogers

3:30 PM**Carrying it Forward: A panel of regional leaders on the impact of this discussion (CNU34103-10)**

A panel of elected leaders from across Northwest Arkansas will discuss the importance of the conversations had during CNU 34 and reflect on the lessons learned that will continue to influence the future of the region.

- **Mayor Greg Hines, City of Rogers**
- **Mayor Stephanie Orman, City of Bentonville**
- **Mayor Molly Rawn, City of Fayetteville**
- **Mayor Doug Sprouse, City of Springdale**

4:30 PM**Closing & Gratitude**

**Mallory Baches, President, CNU, with CNU34 Local Host Committee Co-Chairs
John McCurdy, Director of Community Development, City of Rogers, and
Ward Davis, Principal and Founding Partner, High Street Real Estate Development**

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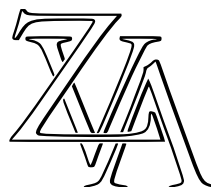
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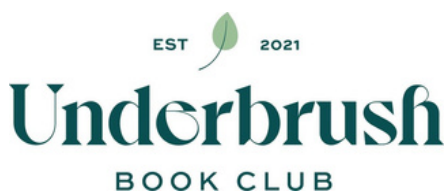


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