



IMLA 2026 91st Annual Conference

Salt Lake City, Utah - Hyatt Regency Salt Lake City

September 23-27, 2026

Tuesday – September 22, 2026

Time	Session	Location
5:30 PM – 7:30 PM	Informal Basketball Game Lace up your sneakers and get ready to hit the hardwood! Whether you are looking to break a sweat, showcase your crossover, or simply enjoy a fun evening of basketball, this free event is the perfect way to connect with fellow attendees. Attendees will meet at 5:30 PM in hotel lobby.	The University of Utah - Eccles Student Life Center

Wednesday – September 23, 2026

Time	Session	Speaker(s)
7:30 AM – 4:45 PM Salt Lake Foyer	IMLA Registration Registration will be closed for lunch from 12:15PM - 2:15PM.	
8:30 AM – to 12:00 PM Traverse	IMLA Board of Directors Meeting	
8:30 AM – to 4:50 PM Salt Lake B	ILGL Program - Full program listed below. This program is free and open to all registrants.	
8:00 AM – to 5:00 PM Salt Lake D	Code Enforcement Program - Full program listed below. This program is free and open to all registrants.	
12:30 AM – 5:00 PM Salt Lake A	Utah Day - Full program listed below. This program is free and open to all registrants.	
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM Salt Lake E	Large Population Meeting This meeting will feature a round table discussion of several topics of interest to larger population centers, including laws eliminating race and gender conscious goal setting in city contracts; data centers; providing legal counsel as municipal attorneys when clients are running for reelection; other federal issues (grants, litigation, investigations); and other topics the group may bring up. This meeting will not be for CLE.	Susana Alcala Wood, Andrea Leslie-Fite, Meaghan Goddard & Samuel Scavuzzo Moderator: Amanda Karras
3:00 PM – 3:15 PM Salt Lake Foyer	Coffee Break	
3:15 PM – 4:45 PM Salt Lake E	State League Counsel Roundtable: What Keeps Your Phone Ringing? State League counsel across the country face many of the same legal, legislative, and practical challenges—but often develop different approaches to addressing them. This interactive 90-minute roundtable provides an opportunity to compare experiences, discuss emerging issues, and share practical strategies for advising member municipalities.	Amber Eisenschenk, Jared Tingey & Christian Rinehart Moderators: Rusi Patel & Benjamin Mount

	Discussion topics will include the year's biggest legal and legislative developments, litigation trends, recurring member questions, and best practices for providing timely, consistent legal guidance. Topics may include public record's requests, data centers, First Amendment auditors, and internal disputes among members' staff, council, and mayors. Participants will also discuss how their organizations respond to inquiries from the media, transparency organizations, and other external stakeholders regarding the actions of member municipalities, including strategies for balancing legal accuracy, organizational neutrality, public credibility, and strong member relationships during high-profile or controversial matters. This meeting is NOT for CLE.	
5:00 PM – 6:00 PM	State League/First Time Attendee Reception Join all of our first timers and state league counsel for a great reception with drinks and hors d'oeuvres. It's a great way to meet your fellow attendees right at the start of the Conference!	

Thursday – September 24, 2026

Time	Session	Speaker(s)
7:00 AM – 4:45 PM Salt Lake Foyer	IMLA Registration	
7:30 AM – 8:30 AM Regency AB	State/Provincial Breakfast The State/Provincial Breakfast with give attendees an opportunity to sit down with fellow attendees from their area. Advance registration is required.	
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM Salt Lake Foyer	Coffee Break	
8:30 AM – 9:00 AM Salt Lake C	Opening Ceremonies Join IMLA President and Executive Director for welcoming remarks and helpful tips for new and long-time attendees alike, including information about the Conference and various networking opportunities.	Amanda Karras & Susana Alcalá Wood
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM Salt Lake A/B	Homeless Solutions: When Every System Responds but No One Stabilizes People experiencing homelessness with serious mental illness and substance use disorder cycle for years through emergency departments, jails, and crisis stabilization units without sustained treatment. Every system responds, but none stabilizes the person for long. This session looks at two different state approaches to this problem. California's SB 43 (2023) expanded eligibility for involuntary treatment for the first time in over fifty years, and the session examines why admission rates have not measurably changed since, tracing a pattern in which barriers within the system block access to the expanded care. Bozeman, Montana took a very different approach, pairing a 2025 urban camping ordinance with outreach connecting people to housing and services, reporting a 25% drop in homelessness, from 523 to 394 people, in 2025. The session draws lessons from both systems for participants working in any jurisdiction.	Anna Saverud, Jordan Lowery, Aaron Meyer & Ann Marie Council Moderator: Susana Alcalá Wood
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM Salt Lake C	Immigration Update for Local Governments	Nicholas Masero & Adam Lauridsen Moderator: Darren Shulman
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM Salt Lake Foyer	Coffee Break	
10:45 AM – 12:15 PM Salt Lake A/B	Inclusionary Zoning and Affordable Housing Ordinances: From Policy to Practice Affordable housing continues to generate significant legal and policy debate across the country. As communities across the country grapple with housing affordability, inclusionary housing ordinances (IHOs) have become one of the most widely used local land use tools to encourage or require the production of affordable housing. Whether advising jurisdictions actively pursuing affordable housing initiatives or those evaluating the limits of their	Kirsten Crawford, Tim Hole & Christopher Alexander Moderator: Jeff Dorocak

	authority, municipal attorneys are increasingly expected to navigate a rapidly evolving body of policies and new laws, including the recent adoption of the federal 21st Century Road Home Act. As housing legislation continues to expand nationwide, practitioners must understand both the legal authority for these programs and the practical considerations involved in affordable housing policies and programs. This program provides municipal attorneys with a comprehensive, practical guide to drafting, adopting, implementing, and defending inclusionary zoning programs. The presentation will examine the legal authority for inclusionary housing requirements, discuss the evolving relationship between state, federal and local land use authority, and explore how jurisdictions can design programs that produce meaningful affordable housing while minimizing litigation risk. Participants will learn the essential components of a successful inclusionary housing ordinance. The program will also examine the practical steps necessary to move from policy concept to ordinance adoption, including conducting housing and nexus studies, preserving long-term affordability through deed restrictions, affordability covenants, resale restrictions, as well as establishing effective compliance and enforcement programs to help ensure affordable units remain available throughout the required affordability period.	
10:45 AM – 12:15 PM Salt Lake C	Technology Governance for Local Governments: AI, Cybersecurity, and Managing Risk Advances in artificial intelligence and technological innovation are evolving at a rapidly increasing speed. Unfortunately, so too are the litany of problems resulting from deficiencies in the implementation and monitoring of these tools. Local governments across the country are confronting the same legal and operational risks. This session will explore how local governments can work to address emerging technology challenges. Panelists will discuss practical models for AI governance and risk management frameworks, cybersecurity initiatives, AI implementation, and more. Attendees will learn how local governments can develop stronger policies and minimize the risks associated with technological innovation, negotiate more favorable vendor agreements, improve cyber resilience, and create consistent approaches to regulatory compliance. *IMLA has applied for Technology CLE credit for this session*	Joel Liberson, Benjamin Benhan & Janette Smith Moderator: Sean Cooley
12:15 PM – 2:15 PM Regency AB	All Conference Lunch & Awards Ceremony - Included in all full Conference registrations.	
2:30 PM – 3:30 PM Salt Lake A/B	Municipal Response to Citizen Suits Under Clean Water and Clean Air Acts Citizen suits present unique opportunities for collaboration in developing environmental stewardship and sustainability. The traditional adversarial tacks taken by government defendants often result in prolonged litigation and exorbitant fines and attorney fees. This program explores not only effective defense and examines best tactics to preserve municipal rights and options, but explores creative collaboration between the parties in the prelitigation phase to secure mutually beneficial results and long-term sustainable government practices that encompass climate resilience.	Tip Torres Moderator: Molly Shortall
2:30 PM – 3:30 PM Salt Lake C	Best Practices for Validating and Verifying Citations with AI Tools What are best practices government attorneys can leverage to ensure they are using AI ethically? During this CLE session, we'll explore how municipal attorneys can reduce manual processes with AI while maintaining the highest standards of accuracy. In this session we'll discuss best practices for: Preventing hallucinations, validating and verifying citations, checking answers from any AI solution, and getting the best answers from AI tools.	Lori Eller Moderator: Roscoe Leslie
2:30 PM – 3:30 PM Salt Lake D	From Policy to Practice: Model Local Government Ordinances that Protect Pets and People Local governments are modernizing animal care and control laws to improve public safety while prioritizing the public's desire to live in a no-kill community. This panel explores proven and scalable ordinances — including dangerous dog laws, ordinances to address	Karen White & Amy Fields Moderator: Kelsey Gilmore-Futeral

	free-roaming cats, and laws that address the puppy-mill-to-pet-store-pipeline — by sharing their implementation experiences, ideal legal frameworks, and key implementation strategies to bring agencies and the public along. Attendees will gain practical tools to draft, defend, and enforce effective local laws.	
2:30 PM – 3:30 PM Salt Lake E	Airport Governance Best Practices Commercial service and general aviation airports must manage complex federal regulations and business interactions with a diverse set of tenants and airport users. Proper governance documentation, such as rules and regulations, minimum standards, and operational and business authorizes assist airports in managing a safe environment and in achieving their strategic objectives. The session will cover the role of these airport governance documents and key considerations for airports to better manage their airports.	Sean Cusson, Elizabeth Smithers & Dana Farmer Moderator: Charlotte Ferns
2:30 PM – 3:30 PM Regency C	The Evolution Is Now: Alternative Project Delivery Methods and What It Means for Municipal Attorneys This presentation explores the rapid shift from traditional design-bid-build to alternative project delivery methods such as CMAR, CM/GC, and Progressive Design-Build. It will highlight the key legal, procurement, and risk-allocation differences that municipal attorneys must understand to effectively advise their clients. Attendees will leave with practical insights on how to navigate this evolving landscape and support successful project outcomes.	Mary Beth Coburn & Craig Hayes Moderator: Barak Vaughn
2:30 PM – 3:30 PM Regency D	Trying Yesterday's Criminal Case in Today's Civil Court: Practical Lessons from Defending Reversed-Conviction Litigation Reversed-conviction civil suits are among the most complex and emotionally charged cases a municipal defense attorney will face — and they're becoming more common. This session breaks down the unique litigation challenges that arise when defending a §1983 claim built on a decades-old criminal conviction: navigating ancient discovery, working with dead witnesses and former testimony, and confronting recanting witnesses on cross. Attendees will leave with concrete strategies for opening statements, jury psychology, and trial — drawn directly from the courtroom.	Perry Wasserman Moderator: Amanda Stanley
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4:45 PM – 5:00 PM Salt Lake D	Nominating Committee	
5:15 PM – 6:45 PM	Welcome Reception Join all attendees for an evening of drinks, hors d'oeuvres and fun while we kick off an excellent Conference! Included in all full Conference registrations. If you'd like to bring a guest, please email info@imla.org .	
8:00 PM Keys On Main	Post-Reception Dueling Pianos After the Welcome Reception, grab a bite to eat or relax for a bit and then join fellow attendees for an optional night out. Keys On Main is an all-request Dueling Piano Show. You choose the songs they play all night long. From Rap to Rock, Country to Pop, their incredible entertainers can play anything.	

Friday – September 25, 2026

Time	Session	Speaker(s)
7:30 AM – 5:00 PM Salt Lake Foyer	IMLA Registration Registration will be closed for lunch from 12:00PM - 1:30PM.	
7:40 AM Mountain Dell Golf Course	Rick Doyle Memorial Golf Outing Attendees will play the Canyon Course and must sign up before September 14, 2026. We have tee times booked on Friday, September 25 (7:40AM, 7:50AM, 8:00AM, 8:10AM, 8:20AM)	

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM Regency AB	WONK Breakfast For the WONK breakfast you will sign up for a table based on subject matter and sit down with the subject matter expert to enjoy a meal and discuss areas of interest. Advance registration is required.	
8:30 AM – 9:30 AM Salt Lake Foyer	Coffee Break	
9:15 AM – 10:15 AM Salt Lake A/B	Untangling the Spaghetti Bowl of Federal Limits on Local Broadband Deployment and Wireless Siting As we near the halfway point of the second Trump Administration, this panel will provide an update on leading legislative, regulatory, and judicial developments affecting local authority over broadband deployment and wireless siting. The FCC and Congress have been active in proposing new limits on local governments, including fee and compensation caps, franchising rules, zoning restrictions, right-of-way management constraints, new and shorter shot clocks, fast track complaints at the FCC and more. Does your code need an update? The panel will also address key state-level developments and provide market intelligence on municipal property in the telecommunications real estate space.	Gerry Lederer & Cheryl Leanza Moderator: Todd Sheeran
9:15 AM – 10:15 AM Salt Lake C	Resilient Lawyering in Local Government: Surviving (and Thriving) as Local Government Counsel Local government attorneys operate in uniquely challenging conditions: intense public scrutiny, high-conflict environments, demanding clients who are often elected officials, and decisions that unfold in real time before constituents and the press. These pressures can create isolation, compassion fatigue, and chronic stress—especially in offices where workloads are heavy and resources limited. This session draws on real experiences and offers practical, evidence-informed strategies that truly fit the day-to-day realities of municipal practice. We'll dig into concrete approaches for managing conflict, maintaining perspective, recognizing the early signs of burnout, and building sustainable habits in offices of any size. Effective leadership plays a central role in attorney well-being and we'll examine how supervisors can identify early signs of burnout, support staff during high-pressure periods, and foster a culture of camaraderie where meaningful work is sustainable.	Kimberly Rehberg & Meghan Goddard Moderator: Patricia Link
10:15 AM – 10:30 AM Salt Lake Foyer	Coffee Break	
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM Salt Lake A/B	Challenges on State Preemption in Home Rule and Dillon's Rule States The first part of the presentation will discuss how to preserve home rule. Many state constitutions grant some form of "home rule" authority to municipalities, a cornerstone of local autonomy and authority. The extent of local home rule authority can be hotly contested between localities and their state governments. Today, land use matters are front-and-center of many home rule battles. The presenters, who work in Oregon – considered one of the most favorable home rule states – will take the audience on a ride along the Oregon Trail, discussing the battles to preserve home rule. The presentation will highlight strategies, both litigation and adopted policies, being employed by local jurisdictions to protect and preserve their home rule authority. The second part of the presentation will discuss lessons from recent testimony (mayor, manager, police chief) before the General Assembly and ongoing audits by the State Auditor/Treasurer regarding public safety and "DEI-related" contracts.	Amanda Guite-Hinman, Jayme Pierce & Lina James Moderator: Rusi Patel
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM Salt Lake C	Public Comment 2.0 – Emerging Threats and Advanced Scenarios This presentation moves beyond foundational protected speech and forum analysis to tackle the complex, high-stakes First Amendment challenges municipal attorneys face in today's charged public meetings. This fun and entertaining session dives deep into the practical application of speech regulations, addressing the modern headaches that disrupt municipal business and invite litigation.	Todd Sheeran & Neal Falgoust Moderator: Barbara A. Adams

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM Regency AB	Lunch On Your Own Regency AB will be open if you would like to bring lunch and eat with other attendees, or feel free to eat lunch out in Salt Lake City or the hotel.	
1:35 PM – 2:35 PM Salt Lake A/B	1,4 Dioxane: Emerging Contaminants in Drinking Water PFAS has been the focus of regulators and many water providers in recent years. An emerging contaminant-1,4 Dioxane- is following a similar path in terms of regulation and litigation. This session will introduce 1,4 Dioxane to municipal attorneys, discuss the regulatory frameworks that currently exist and possible future regulation, and explore opportunities to ensure that your public water system and municipality are ahead of the game when it comes to identifying and responding to 1,4 Dioxane.	Michael Stag & Ashley Liuzza Moderator: Melissa Manderschied
1:35 PM – 2:35 PM Salt Lake C	Future-Proofing the Legacy City Many of America's most successful municipalities are reaching a new stage of maturity, requiring leaders to balance redevelopment, fiscal sustainability, and evolving community expectations. This session will explore how established suburban communities can remain competitive for corporate investment, attract and retain top employers, and strategically expand their tax base while preserving quality of life. This presentation will also discuss how cross-departmental collaboration among the city manager's office, legal department, economic development, planning, and other key functions helps drive sustainable growth, revitalize commercial districts, and position cities for long-term success. Attendees will gain practical insights into the legal, policy, and governance strategies that enable municipalities to thrive in an increasingly competitive landscape.	Karen Kennard, Paige Mims & Mark Israelson Moderator: Lisa Glover
1:35 PM – 2:35 PM Salt Lake D	Investors' Claims: Local Governments' Hidden Tool Investor litigation is a well-known avenue for recovering investment losses and strengthening local governments' fiduciary stewardship with their beneficiaries. But an overlooked consideration for engaging in investor litigation is the possibility to pursue corporate accountability on issues that affect the safety and well-being of the communities that local governments serve.	Ashley Price & Jeff Dana
2:45 PM – 3:45 PM Salt Lake A/B	Setting the Rules for AI: An Attorney's Guide to Drafting GenAI Policies for Local Governments As generative AI tools become increasingly embedded in government operations, local government attorneys play a critical role in helping their jurisdictions establish responsible, risk-conscious AI use policies. This presentation will examine the emerging landscape of state and local government GenAI policies — drawing on frameworks adopted by Oregon, New York, Maine, Washington, Georgia, Kansas, and cities including New York City, San Jose, Seattle, and Boston — to identify common principles and best practices that attorneys can adapt for their own communities. Attendees will gain practical guidance on drafting policies that define clear boundaries for acceptable and prohibited AI uses, mandate human oversight and accountability for AI-generated content, and protect sensitive, confidential, and personally identifiable information from unauthorized exposure through AI systems. The session will also address key legal considerations, including how AI-generated content intersects with public records laws, copyright obligations, and contractor and vendor requirements.	Tenee' Frazier Moderator: Janette Smith
2:45 PM – 3:45 PM Salt Lake C	Passing the Torch: Preserving Institutional Legal Knowledge Across Generations in Municipal Law Departments Municipal law departments are confronting a pivotal moment: four generations working side-by-side with differing work styles while satisfying ABA Rules 1.1, 1.3, and 1.4 through competent, diligent, and well-communicated transitions. There is a growing retirement wave with a loss of undocumented knowledge poses a direct threat to consistent, competent legal representation under Rule 1.1. This presentation will explore how municipal attorneys can maintain ethical competence and continuity under the ABA Model Rules while preparing for inevitable turnover through structured succession planning and modern knowledge-preservation tools. Structured knowledge-transfer systems and	TJ Martin & Jake Evans Moderator: Sherri Russell

	cross-training are essential to uphold supervision duties under Rules 5.1 and 5.3 during staff changes. Using a real case study from a large city attorney's office, the session highlights practical, technology-supported strategies to safeguard institutional memory and strengthen future operations.	
2:45 PM – 3:45 PM Salt Lake D	Undesirable Zoning Sometimes an urban planning idea can sound great in a presentation but lead to consequences no one imagined. This presentation explores zoning decisions in Dallas and Austin that led to undesirable planning outcomes and the legal consequences of those decisions, along with tips to help guide your planning and zoning officials from making the same mistakes.	Casey Burgess & Patricia Link Moderator: Kari Fisk
2:45 PM – 3:45 PM Salt Lake E	Practical Guidance to Mitigate Environmental Risk When Acquiring Real Property Acquisition of real property carries unique environmental risks that can expose public agencies to significant liability if not properly managed. This session will provide practical guidance on conducting effective environmental due diligence before and post-purchase, including key assessments, common pitfalls, and risk allocation strategies, helping minimize exposure and navigate environmental risk effectively.	John Holloway & John LeSueur Moderator: Sharae Reed
2:45 PM – 3:45 PM Regency C	When Washington Falls Short: Local Responses to Withheld FEMA Funding Local governments rely on federal funding to prepare and respond to natural disasters such as flooding and wildfires. Unfortunately, this partnership is broken with funds appropriated being unlawfully withheld. This session will examine legal and practical issues related to withdrawn federal funds for disaster relief. While providing an update on litigation challenging funding withheld by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, it will also share specific community solutions to preparing for and responding to natural disasters such as wildfire.	Sharon Buccino & Michelle Zaltsberg Moderator: Michael Martin
2:45 PM – 3:45 PM Regency D	Durable Inclusion Initiatives in a Changing Legal Landscape This session will cover an overview of federal and state developments in litigation, legislation, and executive orders attempting to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives while providing guidance around what programs remain viable. *IMLA has applied for Diversity CLE credit for this session*	Jeannine Williams & Tianna Kalogerakis Moderator: LeeAnne Lawrence
3:45 PM – 4:00 PM Salt Lake Foyer	Coffee Break	
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM Salt Lake A/B	Setting the Rules for AI: An Attorney's Guide to Drafting GenAI Policies for Local Governments As generative AI tools become increasingly embedded in government operations, local government attorneys play a critical role in helping their jurisdictions establish responsible, risk-conscious AI use policies. This presentation will examine the emerging landscape of state and local government GenAI policies — drawing on frameworks adopted by Oregon, New York, Maine, Washington, Georgia, Kansas, and cities including New York City, San Jose, Seattle, and Boston — to identify common principles and best practices that attorneys can adapt for their own communities. Attendees will gain practical guidance on drafting policies that define clear boundaries for acceptable and prohibited AI uses, mandate human oversight and accountability for AI-generated content, and protect sensitive, confidential, and personally identifiable information from unauthorized exposure through AI systems. The session will also address key legal considerations, including how AI-generated content intersects with public records laws, copyright obligations, and contractor and vendor requirements.	Tenee' Frazier Moderator: Janette Smith
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4:00 PM – 5:00 PM Regency C	The Municipal Attorney's Guide to FEMA Public Assistance Appeals & Arbitrations Anyone who has ever been told "no" by FEMA will want to attend this session. This presentation will cover the FEMA's dispute resolution process for the Public Assistance program under 44 C.F.R. § 20.206. Attendees will learn the process and strategies for pursuing FEMA administrative appeals from receipt of a Determination Memo denying Public Assistance eligibility or costs through First and Second Appeal. The session will also cover arbitration before the U.S. Civilian Board of Contract Appeals, including when it is available, the process, and what to expect from FEMA and the Board judges.	Michelle Zaltsberg Moderator: Michael Martin
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM Regency D	Durable Inclusion Initiatives in a Changing Legal Landscape This session will cover an overview of federal and state developments in litigation, legislation, and executive orders attempting to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives while providing guidance around what programs remain viable. *IMLA has applied for Diversity CLE credit for this session*	Jeannine Williams & Tianna Kalogerakis Moderator: LeeAnne Lawrence
5:00 PM – 6:00 PM Salt Lake Foyer	Networking Reception - Included in all full Conference registrations. This reception will provide an additional opportunity for attendees to network with one another. Plan to come and enjoy light hors d'oeuvres and drinks while getting to know more attendees. Included in all full Conference registrations.	

Saturday – September 26, 2026

Time	Session	Speaker(s)
8:45 AM – 12:15 PM	IMLA Registration	
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	IMLA Past Presidents Breakfast – Open only to IMLA Past Presidents.	
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM Salt Lake Foyer	Coffee Break	
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM Salt Lake A/B	Strings Attached: Federal Grant Conditions, Rule Changes, Litigation, and Protecting Local Interests	Lisa Marcus & Barak Vaughn Moderator: Sharon Buccino

	Cities and counties that depend on federal grant funding are navigating unprecedented legal and operational challenges. Since early 2025, federal Executive Branch actions targeting municipal grants have triggered tighter rules, political policy mandates from the federal government, compliance uncertainty, operational disruption for cities and counties nationwide, and a wave of litigation. This session is co-presented by a Deputy City Attorney charged with primary responsibility for reviewing grants for the City of Los Angeles and a former DOJ Civil Division litigator now serving as City Solicitor for the City of Pittsburgh (opinions expressed are their own). The session will explore: (1) the legal framework governing federal grants, (2) the shift in federal rules, 2 CFR Part 200, (3) key litigation developments, and (4) practical strategies for reviewing grant agreements, maintaining strong internal controls, monitoring subrecipients properly, and avoiding sudden funding cuts. Learn how cities and states are successfully fighting back against unlawful federal funding restrictions and how you can best protect your locality's interests.	
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM Salt Lake C	Rock and Roll Employment Law Update	Justin Pierce & Rebecca Hayward Moderator: Shauna Billingsley
10:30 AM – 11:00 AM Salt Lake Foyer	Coffee Break/Passport Drawing Participating exhibitors will provide prizes as attendees visit all exhibitor booths to be eligible for the prize drawing.	
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM Salt Lake A/B	Data Centers – The Power, Payments, and Problems This session will address the current issues involved in data center development. Data centers use enormous amounts of electricity. Addressing those power needs will mitigating the impacts on your community. Data centers are lucrative economic development. Better understanding of the assessment process will provide a more accurate picture of the payments to your locality. A discussion of land use and zoning considerations to better address the problems caused by data centers development.	Leo Rogers, Andrew McRoberts & Brian Kimball Moderator: Lynette Perez
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM Salt Lake C	Counties Update This session will feature three attorneys from very different counties talking about where their jobs overlap and diverge, from current concerns impacting counties to the variety of unpredictable matters that come up on a daily basis. The focus will be on challenges working with governments at all levels – federal, state, and municipalities contained within counties – as well as interesting situations arising with county-wide elected officials and their interactions with each other and their counties as entities.	Ben Schweigert, Roscoe Leslie & Joseph Cardamone Moderator: James R. Benjamin, Jr.
2:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Land Use Tours Click here to view the tour routes. Advance registration is required and there is an additional cost. If you would like to add the tour to your registration, please email info@imla.org.	
5:30 PM – 8:00 PM Riverside Park	Softball Game You're killing me, Smalls... you won't want to miss this! Step back in time and join us at Riverside Baseball Field, the legendary ballpark featured in the classic film The Sandlot. Come play or watch the annual IMLA softball game brought to you by Best Best & Krieger! This is free for attendees to join. Please bring your own glove. Buses will leave the hotel at 5:15.	

Sunday – September 27, 2026

Time	Session	Speaker(s)
8:00 AM – 12:00 PM Salt Lake Foyer	IMLA Registration	
8:00 AM – 8:30 AM Regency BCD	Business Meeting	

8:00 AM – 8:30 AM Salt Lake Foyer	Coffee Break	
8:30 AM – 9:30 AM Regency BCD	Beyond the Warrant: A Collaborative Municipal Approach to Traffic Warrant Resolution How can municipalities address outstanding traffic warrants while improving access to justice, strengthening community engagement, and creating meaningful pathways toward resolution? The City of Mobile's Traffic Warrant Clinics offer a collaborative model that brings together the municipal legal system, criminal justice stakeholders, and community-based resources to help individuals address outstanding traffic warrants. Led by the Deputy City Attorney, Criminal Chief, and founder of GRAE (Growing Real Alternatives Everywhere), this presentation will explore the development and implementation of Mobile's warrant clinics, the legal and operational considerations involved, and the importance of community partnerships in achieving sustainable outcomes. Attendees will gain practical insight into how municipalities can move beyond a traditional enforcement-focused approach and develop innovative, collaborative strategies for resolving outstanding warrants while promoting accountability, accessibility, and public trust.	Suntrease Maynard, Anza Becnel & Grant Gibson Moderator: Kimberly Rehberg
9:45 AM – 10:45 AM Regency BCD	Working with Elected Officials This presentation will provide practical advice to assist attorneys in developing and maintaining a positive working relationship with their councils.	Patrick Baker & Kuruvilla Oommen Moderator: Rebecca Tydings
10:45 AM – 11:00 AM Salt Lake Foyer	Coffee Break	
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM Regency BCD	Ethics for Government Attorneys: Interactive Scenarios In this interactive presentation, speakers will discuss different ethics scenarios and how to address them. The presentation will then go over the professional rules (including ABA Rule 1.11, 1.7, 1.9, and 3.3, 4.1, 8.4), and cases that apply to the situation and provide the 'answer' to the dilemma. *IMLA has applied for Ethics CLE credit for this session*	Darren Shulman & Alan Bojorquez Moderator: Alan Bojorquez

Please note the agenda is tentative and subject to change.

Last Updated: 09/10/26

2026 Annual Conference Programs

Institute for Local Government Lawyers (ILGL)

Wednesday – September 23, 2026

Time	Session	Speaker(s)
8:30 AM – 9:30 AM	Personnel and Employment Law It often has been said that one of the largest components of a local government budget is for personnel and labor costs. While there are many similarities between guiding employers between the public and private sectors, public employers have some additional concerns not faced by their private employment counterparts. This presentation provides some road maps and guideposts to help navigate through the maze of federal and state statutory employment requirements along with discussion of some common issues that arise in public sector employment.	Nicole Hutter & Kari Fisk
9:40 AM – 10:40 AM	Land Use 101 Whether you are new to land use law or looking for a refresher, this session provides a practical introduction to the fundamental principles that shape local land use decision-	Ellie Neiberger

	making. Attendees will explore the legal framework underlying zoning, planning, development approvals, and property rights, along with common issues and emerging trends that municipal attorneys encounter regardless of jurisdiction.	
10:40 AM – 10:55 AM	Coffee Break	
10:55 AM – 11:55 AM	Fundamentals of Municipal Finance and Borrowing This presentation will provide an overview of legal issues that may arise in generating, expending, and borrowing money. The overview will include identification of basic legal issues related to identifying a public purpose, distinguishing between taxes and fees, and municipal borrowing.	Eric Shytle
11:55 AM – 12:55 PM	Lunch Break	
12:55 PM – 1:55 PM	Parliamentary Procedure Municipal and county governing boards are often populated with dedicated public servants who have little experience or knowledge of parliamentary procedure. Consequently, they may conduct their meetings informally, applying procedural rules loosely and perhaps even inconsistently. This relaxed approach might appear to work well when the board is dealing with noncontroversial matters. Yet when controversy arises – and it always does – the result can be multiple motions made in rapid succession and members who are confused about what they are being asked to vote on. In such situations, the presiding officer is likely to seek the advice of counsel. This presentation will arm local government attorneys with basic principles of parliamentary procedure, examine the legal sources of those principles, and review common procedural problems.	Benjamin Mount
2:05 PM – 3:05 PM	Establishing Good Relationships as a Young Professional Municipal government is unique in that each unit of government is a diverse organization that largely functions on the ability to forge effective, professional relationships with elected and administrative officials and staff. By considering and tending to these relationships in a thoughtful and intentional manner, officials and staff can ensure that the organization is successful into the future. This session presents a framework to analyze and improve one's professional relationships and suggest techniques to repair relationships that are less than effective.	Wynetta Massey
3:05 PM – 3:20 PM	Coffee Break	
3:20 PM – 4:50 PM	Negotiations This presentation will outline the steps in preparing for a negotiation, discuss factors to consider in picking a strategy, and demonstrate both how to use and how to counter some of the most common negotiation tactics.	Mac McCarley

Code Enforcement Program

Wednesday – September 23, 2026

Time	Session	Speaker(s)
8:45 AM – 9:45 AM	Code Enforcement: Nuts and Bolts This presentation will provide you with the basics about common legal issues. This presentation will cover Search/Seizure, Takings, Due Process, Preemption, and Causes of Action.	Trish Link
9:55 AM – 10:55 AM	Annual Code Enforcement Case Law Update This presentation will get you up-to-date on the latest and greatest court decisions on code enforcement from around the country.	Sherri Russell
10:55 AM – 11:10 AM	Coffee Break	

11:10 AM – 12:40 PM	Strategies to Abate Nuisance Activity in and Around Service Provider Facilities Over the past couple years, more and more service providers have come to us through our normal filters for criminal activity. Most provide housing and/or services to homeless individuals. This presentation will cover strategies to address these situations and include a litigation case study.	Steve Dunbar, David Dennis & Molly Costello
12:40 PM – 2:00 PM	Lunch	
2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	I Saw the Sign...And They're Claiming It's Free Speech If your city does not want gargantuan billboards or colorful, flashing signs, a sign ordinance may be the way to go. However, how do you handle it when citizens start claiming that the ordinance violates their right to free speech? What limitations should municipalities keep in mind when crafting a sign ordinance? And at what point do the citizens' rights outweigh the interest in municipal restrictions? This CLE will explain the legal and practical considerations that city attorneys face when their city's sign ordinance and the First Amendment collide.	Hannah Hungate & Sharon Dickgrafe
3:30 PM – 3:45 PM	Coffee Break	
3:45 PM – 4:45 PM	Coordinating County-Municipal Responses to Nuisance Abatement Lessons learned by a nuisance abatement unit that unites the multiple municipalities/townships with local and state law enforcement in addressing problem properties within the county. The unit can tackle criminal nuisances (drugs, prostitution, liquor, tobacco, gang, violent crime), environmental crimes (illegal dumping, environmental/wildlife issues), and code enforcement (zoning, property maintenance, health, fire, building). The types of properties the unit handles include residential houses, apartments, bars, corner stores/gas stations, general commercial, hotels, vacant lots, etc.	Sarah Pomeroy & Shayla D. Favor

Utah Day

Wednesday – September 23, 2026

Time	Session	Speaker(s)
1:05 PM – 2:05 PM	Local Solutions to the Housing Affordability Challenge Utah is facing significant and growing challenges related to housing affordability. This panel of experts from across the state will discuss the issues communities are facing, the tools available to municipalities to address housing affordability, and the legal, practical, and policy limitations on local solutions. The panel will explore what local governments can realistically do to expand housing opportunities and address affordability while balancing the needs and concerns of existing communities.	Gary Crane, Shawn Guzman, Todd Godfrey & Todd Sheeran Moderator: Heather White
2:15 PM – 3:15 PM	Utah Update: The Past, Present, and Future of All Things Legislative The Utah Legislature did what? Why? And now they want to do that?! Although the Utah Legislature's 45-day session may seem short to some around the country, what many do not see are the countless conversations that begin the day after the session ends and the beginning of the next session. This presentation will briefly cover what legislation passed last session, and more importantly, what has been happening since then. From data privacy to HOAs, from impact fees to annexation, from water (or lack thereof) to building inspections, we hope to cover it all to help prepare you for the roller coaster that begins (or continues) in another 4 months. We want to hear from you on what challenges you are facing in your cities and help come up with solutions whether those be found through legislative efforts or otherwise.	Cameron Diehl & Jared Tingey Moderator: Katie Ellis
3:15 PM – 3:30 PM	Coffee Break	
3:30 PM – 4:30 PM	The Great Salt Lake: Local Solutions to a Regional Water Crisis	Nathan Bracken, Emily Lewis & Carly Castlee

	The Great Salt Lake is one of the most significant natural resources in the American West, and its decline presents legal, policy, and governance challenges unlike almost anything municipalities have faced before. While the problem is regional, local governments have the potential to support the lake using several new and innovative tools that have been adopted in recent years. This panel explores the legal, policy, and water management tools municipalities are using and can use to help protect the Great Salt Lake and the critical role municipal attorneys play in implementing solutions. Using the Great Salt Lake as a case study, the panel will examine how local governments are responding to a complex environmental crisis through creative water rights transactions, conservation initiatives, and legal innovation. Although grounded in Utah, the lessons are broadly applicable to municipal attorneys advising clients on water scarcity, regional collaboration, infrastructure, land use, and long-term resource management.	Moderator: David Quealy
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