



WESTERN  
GOVERNORS'  
ASSOCIATION

# REIMAGINING THE RURAL WEST INITIATIVE

## Reimagining the Rural West Workshop Fargo, North Dakota October 1, 2019

### Agenda

#### 8:00am Breakfast and Welcome

**Welcome:** James D. Ogsbury, Executive Director, Western Governors' Association

**Opening Remarks:** The Honorable Doug Burgum, Governor of North Dakota

#### 9:00am Opening Session

**Keynote: Overview of the Rural West**

**Roundtable Response: Reimagining the Rural West**

Panelists will discuss strategies to address the challenges and opportunities facing the rural West, focusing on how to support rural communities to build on their strengths and reach their potential.

**Entrepreneurship & Innovation:** How can entrepreneurs and businesses in rural communities be fostered to drive economic growth?

**Local Capacity:** How can leadership and expertise be developed in rural communities so that they have the capacity, resources, and forums in place to reimagine themselves?

- **Katharine Ferguson**, Associate Director of the Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group
- **Greg Tehven**, Executive Director, Emerging Prairie

**12:00pm**      **Lunch**

**1:00pm**      **Advances in Modern Agriculture**

Agriculture forms the backbone of western rural economies and is well-positioned to support prosperous communities into the future. This panel will examine how agricultural producers can improve their operations by using new technologies, from simple soil moisture monitors to fully automated harvesting systems. Panelists will also discuss the practical need for broadband internet to support advanced agriculture efforts and highlight other challenges facing the sector.

- **Moderator: Clare Carlson**, *North Dakota State Director, USDA Rural Development*

**2:15pm**      **Understanding the Intersections: Smart Rural Transportation Investment**

Transportation needs and challenges are closely intertwined with a rural community's economy and community, yet these complexities are often not considered in the administration of federal transportation programs. This panel will examine how federal programs can better address the needs of rural localities in the West, including the ability to capitalize on existing infrastructure, seize creative opportunities, and develop more walkable and bikeable towns.

- **Kevin Adam**, *Arizona Rural Transportation Advocacy Council*
- **William Panos**, *Director, North Dakota Department of Transportation*

**3:30pm**      **Building Cultural and Community Assets**

Communities across the West are integrating cultural heritage and the creative sector into their community development plans to create vibrant spaces, foster tourism, and attract new residents. This panel will share case studies from several states and discuss the policies and programs that make these efforts successful.

- **Moderator: Mary Anne Carter**, *Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts*

**4:45pm**      **Closing Remarks**

**5:00pm**      **Reception**