

2026 Texas Downtown ANNUAL CONFERENCE

November 1-4, 2026 | Amarillo, Texas

Four days of ideas, connections, field experiences, and practical tools designed for the people shaping vibrant downtowns across Texas.

Host Hotel & Primary Conference Venue
Embassy Suites by Hilton Amarillo Downtown

Schedule subject to change. Final session details, sponsors, and locations will be updated as confirmed.

TEXAS DOWNTOWN

Connecting people. Strengthening places. Building vibrant downtowns.

SUNDAY

NOVEMBER 1
Arrival + Downtown Welcome

By Noon	Conference Swag Bag Stuffing Volunteer Opportunity Embassy Suites - Board Room Early arrivals are welcome to lend a hand.
1:00 - 5:00 PM	Registration Open Registration Embassy Suites
1:00 - 5:00 PM	TXD Marketplace Exhibitor Setup Exhibitors Embassy Suites
2:00 - 3:30 PM	TXD Board Meeting / Conference Prep Board Only Embassy Suites
5:00 - 7:00 PM	Historic Bivins & Taylor Building Experience Field Session Downtown Amarillo Hosted by Beth Duke & Amarillo partners Step into Amarillo's downtown history through two landmark properties.
7:00 - 9:00 PM	Let's Go Full Swing Welcome Reception + Field Experience Hodgetown Stadium VIP Club Level access, behind-the-scenes stadium experience, food, drinks, networking, and a special Amarillo welcome.

TIP: Wear comfortable shoes. Several conference experiences take place throughout Downtown Amarillo.

7:00 AM	Breakfast Complimentary Hotel Breakfast Embassy Suites		
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Registration Open Registration Embassy Suites		
9:00 - 10:00 AM	Route 66 Passport Vendor Tour Exhibitor Meet & Greet TXD Marketplace Meet our marketplace partners, collect stamps, and get started on conference prizes.		
10:00 - 11:00 AM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS		
	Sanborn A Power of Praise: Leverage Recognition for Downtown Engagement Andrea Tantillo	Sanborn B Tapping Into Vibrant Downtown Places Ray Tipton & Micah Jaynes	Sanborn C Stretch the Grant, Strengthen the Ask: Value Engineering as a Funding Multiplier Ryan S. Thomas
11:00 AM - 12:30 PM	Lunch on Your Own Explore Downtown Downtown Amarillo		
12:30 - 2:00 PM	TXD Big Bash Welcome Kick-Off + Amarillo's Downtown Comeback General Session + Keynote Yellow Rose Ballroom Amarillo leadership & community partners		
2:00 - 2:45 PM	Route 66 / Amarillo Networking Break Networking TXD Marketplace		
2:45 - 3:45 PM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS		
	Sanborn A Department of One Survival: Building Your AI Assistant Sandy Rehkopf	Sanborn B Building a Small-Business Development System for Your Downtown Amy Miller	Sanborn C Creative Strategies to Transform Community Meetings Meg Greene
4:00 - 5:30 PM	Meet Me Downtown: The Barfield + Paramount Recreation Club Historic Tour + Networking The Barfield Explore a signature downtown rehabilitation and adaptive reuse story - with a speakeasy twist.		
6:30 - 7:30 PM	Newcomer Reception New Attendees + New Members Amarillo National Bank - Skyline Room		
7:30 - 9:00 PM	Everyone Is Welcome: Opening Reception Networking Reception Amarillo National Bank - Skyline Room		
9:00 - 10:00 PM	After-Dark Neon Sign Tour Walking Field Session Downtown Amarillo		

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Registration Open Registration Embassy Suites		
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	TXD Marketplace Open Exhibitors Yellow Rose Ballroom & Prefunction		
8:00 AM	Breakfast Complimentary Hotel Breakfast Embassy Suites		
9:00 - 10:00 AM	The Trust Accelerator Keynote Yellow Rose Ballroom Zack Starr		
10:00 - 10:30 AM	TXD Marketplace Networking Break Networking Yellow Rose Ballroom & Prefunction		
10:30 - 11:30 AM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS		
	Sanborn A The Entrepreneur Pipeline Your Downtown Is Missing Nick Tietz	Sanborn B From Corridors to Community: Creating the Heart of Downtown Tim Bargainer	Sanborn C Marketing Can't Fix a 'Meh' Downtown Vicky Soderberg
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM	Lunch on Your Own Explore Downtown Downtown Amarillo		
1:00 - 2:30 PM	The Trust Accelerator Workshop Interactive Workshop Yellow Rose Ballroom Zack Starr		
1:00 - 3:00 PM	Get Your Kicks on Route 66 Field Session Route 66 - Sixth Street Historic District Explore Amarillo's historic Route 66 district by guided tour.		
2:30 - 3:30 PM	Networking Break Networking Conference Venue		
3:30 - 4:30 PM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS		
	Sanborn A Downtown Friendswood Revitalization - Past, Present, and Future Aubrey Harbin	Sanborn B From Awareness to Activation: Building a Downtown Entrepreneur Pipeline Nicole Chavez	Sanborn C Advocacy in Action: A Step-by-Step Framework for Downtown Leaders Molly Alexander
4:30 - 5:30 PM	Performing Arts Center - The Jewel of Downtown Field Session Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts		
5:30 - 7:30 PM	Dinner & Drinks on Your Own Explore Downtown Downtown Amarillo		
7:30 - 9:30 PM	Route 66 Jukebox Music + Networking Evening Event Celebrate the Mother Road with classic music, vintage vibes, and a night built for connecting.		

8:30 - 11:00 AM	TXD Marketplace - Final Vendor Visits Exhibitors Yellow Rose Ballroom & Prefunction	
8:30 - 9:00 AM	Partner Welcome General Session Yellow Rose Ballroom Featuring statewide partners and friends of downtown.	
9:00 - 10:00 AM	Texas Downtown Annual Members Meeting Members Meeting Yellow Rose Ballroom Shane Wilhelm, TXD Board President Annual business, Anice Read Grant winners, board updates, and next year's host city reveal.	
10:00 - 11:00 AM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS	
	Sanborn A Paying for Preservation Ellis Mumford-Russell	Sanborn B From Vision to Consensus: Catalyzing Downtown Carrollton's Next Chapter Kim Dresdner & David Retzsch
		Sanborn C The Strategy Chessboard Rory Sheppard
11:00 AM - 12:30 PM	Lunch on Your Own Explore Downtown Downtown Amarillo	
12:45 - 2:15 PM	Imagine the Possibilities - A President's Award Winner Field Session Downtown Amarillo See award-winning downtown work in action.	
2:15 - 3:15 PM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS	
	Sanborn A Downtown Deal Lab: Can This Project Be Financed? Shane Wilhelm	Sanborn B Have You Made the Pivot? Co-Creative Engagement and Innovative Storytelling Brandon Palanker & Rik Adamski
		Sanborn C Building Momentum: The Missing Middle of Downtown Revitalization Courtney Kuehner
3:30 - 4:30 PM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS	
	Sanborn A Bringing Public Art to Life John James	Sanborn B Moving Past Planning: Turning Your Downtown Plans Into Action Ben Levenger
		Sanborn C Vacant Building Registries: Tilting the Scales Toward Investment Kate Kizito
4:30 - 5:30 PM	Refresh & Get Gala-Ready Break Embassy Suites	
5:30 - 7:00 PM	Anice Read Fund Silent Auction Reception Hotel Prefunction Space Light hors d'oeuvres, drinks, and bidding in support of downtown projects across Texas.	
7:00 - 8:30 PM	President's Awards Gala Awards Dinner Yellow Rose Ballroom Celebrate the people, projects, and places representing the very best of Texas downtowns.	
8:30 - 10:00 PM	You Are the Star! After-Party Dessert + Dancing Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts - Stage Cross the alley and step onto the stage for a one-of-a-kind closing celebration.	