The Vision is Yours 2027

Call for Session Proposals | Application Preview

DEADLINE: December 5, 2026

What does it take to turn a community's vision into lasting change?

For The Vision is Yours 2027, we're seeking speakers and facilitators with practical tools, fresh perspectives, and real-world experience to share. We welcome proposals for **60-minute Workshops and Panels** exploring the themes below. We want to hear what you've learned, what you're trying, and what others can take away from your place-based work.

We're especially interested in sessions that bring different disciplines together, surface lessons from work on the ground, and give participants ideas they can put into practice in their own communities.

Conference Themes

Investing in Whole Blocks and Existing Communities

How can investment strengthen neighborhoods while ensuring current residents shape and benefit from change? We're interested in approaches that connect housing, public space, community-led plans, neighborhood leadership, and investment to support change at the scale of a block or neighborhood.

Arts and Culture as Civic Infrastructure

How can arts and culture shape the places we share, sustain community identity, and turn creative visions into reality? Share examples of artists and communities working across sectors to navigate planning, permitting, funding, and partnerships, or to make space for cultural expression and memory in the built environment.

Maintenance and Stewardship

What does it take to care for places over time? We're looking for practical approaches to the long-term care of public spaces and community assets, from securing resources and building local capacity to sharing responsibility and strengthening relationships among residents, organizations, property owners, and public agencies.

Have another idea? We want to hear it.

These themes are a starting point, not a limit. We welcome proposals on the many things that help communities thrive, including food access and local foodways, creative expression, technology, play, safety, greening, gathering spaces, mobility, and more. If your work brings people together around a shared vision for their community, we'd love to hear about it.

Session Formats- 60 Minutes

Workshops

Interactive, hands-on sessions for up to 40 participants. Share a practical tool, skill, resource, or approach that participants can adapt to their own work. We're interested in formats that invite people to practice, experiment, and learn from one another.

Examples: Community engagement strategies, storytelling, creative practices, community organizing, navigating public processes, and building cross-sector partnerships.

Panels

Conversations that bring together different disciplines, perspectives, or project experiences to explore a shared challenge or opportunity. We encourage interdisciplinary collaboration and diverse representation among panelists. Proposals should include time for audience Q&A, with a maximum of four speakers, including the moderator.

Who Should Apply?

Placemaking and placekeeping take many forms, and we want to hear from the people doing the work. We welcome proposals from community organizers, planners, designers, artists, youth leaders, neighborhood residents, public officials, nonprofit partners, and others working to make communities stronger.

Whether you're sharing a proven approach, lessons from a project that didn't go as planned, or a new idea worth exploring, bring your perspective to the conversation.

Questions? Reach out to Nicole Ringel at nringel@ndc-md.org.

About the Conference

The Vision is Yours is the Neighborhood Design Center's annual placemaking and placekeeping conference. This multi-day gathering convenes urban planners, community leaders, designers, artists, and public officials to explore innovative approaches to reimagining our public spaces, build community power, and strengthen the ecosystems that support neighborhood change.

Great neighborhoods are shaped by more than buildings and public spaces. They are sustained by the people, relationships, institutions, and investments that give places their character and communities the capacity to thrive. Through candid conversations, practical learning, and place-based experiences, The Vision is Yours explores what it takes to move from planning to implementation—and how coordinated action across sectors can create greater impact than any single project or organization could achieve alone.

WORKSHOP APPLICATION FORM

The Vision is Yours 2026 Call for Speakers

1. **First Name***
2. **Last Name***
3. **Affiliation**
4. **Title/Position**
   Share your title or position at your organization.
5. **Email Address***
6. **Phone Number***
7. **Address**
8. **City, State, Zip**
9. **Website or Social Media Link**
10. **Professional Bio**
    500 characters or less
11. **Sector**
    Please select the sector(s) that best describe the perspectives and/or content in your proposal.
    [] Community Planning
    [] Design & Architecture
    [] Arts & Culture
    [] Academia & Research
    [] Government & Public Leadership
    [] Non Profit
    [] Private Sector
    [] Other (Please describe)
12. **Session Title**
13. **Session Format***
    A: Learning Lab (60 min): Hands-on, interactive session designed to share a tool, resource, or strategy with a group of up to 40 participants.
    B: Panel (60 min): Conversation that brings together multiple fields, perspectives, or project types — always with time for audience Q&A

14. **What's your big idea? Share a summary of the skill, tool, or resource you'd like to share.***
    Long Answer with 1000 character limit.

15. **Why does your skill, tool, or resource matter now? How will your workshop engage with current challenges or opportunities local communities are facing?***
    Long Answer with 1000 character limit.

16. **Who is your audience, and how will they benefit from your presentation? What tools or learning outcomes will participants take away?***
    Long Answer with 1000 character limit.

17. **Presenters**
    [] I will be presenting alone
    [] I will be accompanied by a co-presenter
    [] I will be accompanied by more than one other co-presenter

18. **Do your speaker(s) hold any of the following professional credentials?**
    Note: this question is for informational purposes and is not scored. Please select all that are relevant.

    [] Planning (AICP)
    [] Landscape Architecture (ASLA)
    [] Architecture (AIA)
    [] Other
    [] None

19. **Learning Objectives for Continuing Education Units**
    Provide at least **four learning objectives** for your session. Begin each with "Participants will…" and describe what attendees will be able to do by the end of your session. Focus on measurable outcomes.

    Proposed sessions with strong learning objectives may be eligible to offer continuing education units for AIA, AICP, and ASLA affiliated attendees.

    While we strongly encourage applicants to provide learning objectives, it is not required. If you have questions about the process or require support please reach out to Nicole Ringel nringel@ndc-md.org.

    Example:

Participants will be able to apply a rubric to evaluate how well a community engagement plan aligns with and responds to local demographics and community priorities.

Tips:
Begin each objective with “Participants will…” and consider objectives that reflect knowledge, skills, and attitudes that participants can carry into their practice. Refer to Bloom’s Taxonomy for verbs: Remembering, Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating, Creating.