



Speaker Application

You can find a digital version of this form at: <https://form.jotform.com/260355504393153>

Inspire Neighborhoods Conference Theme

The 2026 Inspire Neighborhoods Conference is tentatively scheduled for September 11th. City of Fort Wayne residents can register to attend at no cost.

Learning Tracts for the Neighborhood Conference align with the focus areas of the Neighborhood Planning & Activation Workgroup. We encourage speakers to submit proposals for presentations, workshops, and activities in the following four categories: Connection, Collaboration, Resources, and Vibrancy.

Speakers do not need prior presenting experience or formal training to submit a proposal.

This year, Inspire will offer a limited number of optional speaker-coaching opportunities to support first-time presenters and anyone who would benefit from help shaping their session or building confidence.

Descriptions of each learning tracts and our 2026 conference theme **"Resilience: Together we are Stronger"** can be found on the sixth page of this document.

Tell us about... you & your team!

Use this space to tell us more about you and/or your team.

1. Contact Information: Speaker 1

Name (First & Last) _____
Email Address _____ Phone Number _____
Neighborhood _____ Organization/ Title _____
T-shirt size _____ Social Media Handle(s) _____

2. Contact information: Additional Speakers (if applicable)

Speaker 2 - Name (First & Last) _____
Email Address _____ Phone Number _____
Neighborhood _____ Organization/ Title _____
T-shirt size _____ Social Media Handle(s) _____

Speaker 3 - Name (First & Last) _____
Email Address _____ Phone Number _____
Neighborhood _____ Organization/ Title _____
T-shirt size _____ Social Media Handle(s) _____

Speaker 4 - Name (First & Last) _____
Email Address _____ Phone Number _____
Neighborhood _____ Organization/ Title _____
T-shirt size _____ Social Media Handle(s) _____



Neighborhoods

3. Speaker Bios & Headshots

Provide a brief (100-word) bio for each of your speakers.

Tell us about... your session!

We'd love to know more about what you would like to share with your conference attendees. Sessions will be 50 or 90 minutes long including time for Q & A. Speakers are encouraged to provide opportunities for conference attendees to actively participate in their session. Examples of past session topics are included on the sixth page of this document.

1. Session Title:

2. Session Format & Language

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Presentation (50 mins) | ☐ I can adjust to a 50- or 90-minute format |
| ☐ Short Panel (50 mins) | ☐ Language of delivery: English |
| ☐ Long Panel (90 mins) | ☐ Language of delivery: Spanish |
| ☐ Workshop (90 mins) | ☐ Other language: _____ |

3. Learning Tract Topic Alignment

Please indicate which of the following topics your proposed session aligns with. (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Connection (opportunities to meet and network with others) | ☐ Resources (tools for neighborhood associations and leaders) |
| ☐ Collaboration (with residents, volunteers, other associations, etc.) | ☐ Vibrancy (practices that support the well-being of neighborhoods and their leaders) |

4. First-Time Speakers

Is this your first time presenting at Inspire! or a similar conference?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I've presented informally (e.g., community meetings, workshops, neighborhood events)

5. Coaching Support

Would you like to be paired with a speaker coach to support you in developing or delivering your session? (Coaching is optional, free, and available to a limited number of participants.)

- ☐ Yes, I would welcome a coach
☐ Maybe / I'd like more information
☐ No, I do not need coaching at this time

6. Learning Objectives

Please name 3 learning objectives for your session. Character-limit 150 words.

7. Session Description

Please describe your session in 100 words or less. You are encouraged not to repeat your learning objectives, though you can describe how you will meet them.

8. Alignment – Impact for Conference Attendees

We want meaningful engagement of attendees to be a hallmark of neighborhood conference content. Opportunities to interact can include formal activities like drafting action plans as well as more light-hearted activities like talking to and laughing with one another. Please let us know how this session will inspire, equip, or energize conference attendees. (100-word limit)

9. Technical Support Needs for Presentation

Please indicate what technical support or materials you may need for your presentation (i.e., access to a projector/screen, sound/speakers, post its, whiteboard, markers, dry-erase markers, internet access, etc.).

2026 Conference Theme

Resilience — Together We Are Stronger

This year's theme recognizes resilience as something built with neighbors—through relationships, shared learning, and practical on-the-ground experience. We welcome session proposals that center real stories, hard-earned lessons, and accessible tools that help neighborhood leaders sustain hope, navigate challenges, and support one another for the long haul.

Learning Tract Definitions

Focus Area 1: Connection

Connection sessions remind neighborhood leaders that they are not in this work alone. These sessions provide opportunities to meet others, build relationships, and experience shared joy through interactive, welcoming activities that foster trust, belonging, and mutual support.

Past & Potential topics include: *Telling your story and your Neighborhood's story; Healing and Connecting with Art; Neighborhood Networking Hour*

Focus Area 2: Collaboration

Collaboration sessions explore how neighborhood associations work well together—within their own leadership teams, with volunteers, and across neighborhoods and organizations. Topics may include organizing people effectively, member leveraging diverse strengths, reducing burnout, and building partnerships that make the work more sustainable and impactful.

Past topics have included: *Building Bridges Across Generations: Avoiding Burnout; How Language Access Can Generate a Positive Impact in Your Community; Fostering Unity and Resilience in our Communities; Conflict Resolution*

Focus Area 3: Innovation & Resources

Innovation and resource-focused sessions help neighborhoods better understand and build on what they already have. These sessions may explore identifying strengths, mapping community assets, accessing funding, and connecting to people, existing or new programs and systems that support prosperous, resilient neighborhoods.

Past topics have included: *Fundraising 101: Seeking Grants & Sponsorships; Tree Planting as Neighborhood Activation; Innovative Housing; Neighborhood Associations' Responsibilities & Best Practices; Fair Housing in Action*

Focus Area 4: Vibrancy

Vibrancy sessions focus on infusing more energy, life, and momentum into neighborhood work. Topics may include creative placemaking, celebration, and community-led advocacy efforts that shape local policies, strengthen civic participation, and help neighborhoods feel more connected, hopeful, and alive—while sustaining the people who lead the work.

Past topics have included: *Healthy & Livable Communities; Organized Outdoor Activities to Build Safer, Friendlier, Healthier Neighborhoods; Complete Streets & Traffic Calming; Healing Communities: Addressing Trauma; Tools and mindsets to improve goals and performance*

Speaker Application Checklist:

- ☐ Completed Application
- ☐ Headshot(s) for all speakers
- ☐ Bio(s) for all speakers

Application Deadline: 11:59 pm, Tuesday, March 31st

Applications can be submitted by using the online form or by completing the PDF application form and emailing it to rena.bradley@cityoffortwayne.org. Both the online and PDF forms can be found on our website at www.inspirefortwayne.com.

Program Manager Contact Information

If you have any additional questions about the conference, contact Réna Bradley at rena.bradley@cityoffortwayne.org or by calling 260-427-2284.