

TBA Local Government Forum 2026

October 2, 2026

Total Credits: 3 General, 1 Dual



Government law is an ever-changing practice area with a unique blend of constitutional, statutory, and case law. This year's program will feature topics at the forefront of the field, including a session on zoning, land use, and data centers with the newly-created UT Center for Local Planning, a legislative update from MTAS, and an AI discussion with Laura Chastain of the BPR.

9:00am – 10:30am CT

Local Government Legislative Update

This session will review the public chapters passed in the 2026 legislative session with a direct impact on local governments. Topics discussed will include public planning, HR law changes, municipal courts, fiscal changes, and general government law changes.

John Waddell, University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service

10:30am – 10:45am CT

Break

10:45am – 11:45am CT

DUAL

AI and Its Implications In the Practice of Law

This AI session is not a "nuts and bolts" presentation, but rather a look back at AI's beginnings and how it has quickly morphed into a hot topic because of its implications for lawyers in every area of the law. The presentation will look at current uses and a glimpse into the future of its use in the practice of law.

Laura Chastain, Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility

11:45am – 12:30pm CT

Lunch (Provided)

12:30pm – 2:00pm CT

From Setbacks to Server Farms: Zoning Fundamentals in the Data Center Era

Data centers are arriving in Tennessee communities whether their zoning ordinances are ready or not. This presentation is intended to equip practitioners, whether or not land use is their primary practice, to advise clients on both sides of the podium. It will also introduce the UT Center for Local Planning and the technical assistance we provide to communities across the state.

Josh Suddath, University of Tennessee Center for Local Planning