

BROWNFIELDS AND BEYOND:

2026 MINNESOTA REDEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE



MEET THE SPEAKERS

ROCHESTER, MN



EMPLOYMENT AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



ZACK AVRE

Zack Avre is the Redevelopment Programs Manager at Hennepin County. He manages the Transit Oriented Communities program and helps steer the county's strategy on affordable commercial space and predevelopment assistance for emerging developers. Previously, he conducted planning and policy research for the Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative, the MIT Living Wage Calculator, and the MIT Task Force on the Work of the Future. He also led a range of neighborhood planning, infrastructure development, urban manufacturing, and climate adaptation projects as a Project Manager in Neighborhood Strategies at the New York City Economic Development Corporation. Zack earned a Bachelor of Arts from Macalester College and a Master in City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.





DEB BROWN

Deb Brown is a seasoned rural economic development strategist, speaker, author, and cofounder of SaveYour.Town that helps small towns turn possibility into practical progress. With deep roots in rural life, a strong public voice, and a body of work focused on community action, she is known for making big ideas feel usable, human, and hopeful. Her best work sits at the intersection of strategy, storytelling, facilitation, and encouragement for communities determined to shape a stronger future.





RYAN CROSS

Ryan joined BCI in 2013 and has been leading the organization since 2017. When a team of investors—including Ryan—purchased the rights to BCI, they quickly set a new course for the company. Building on the energy and drive of their predecessor, Ryan focused on establishing values centered on people and process—emphasizing clients, employees, and key relationships. Under his leadership, the team adopted five key values and one core vision that continues to guide the company today.

With a strong commitment to training, education, and transparency, Ryan has cultivated a culture where team members are empowered, informed, and aligned with project outcomes. This approach has helped BCI grow into a leading construction firm in Central Minnesota. Beyond the company, Ryan has been extremely active in community programs such as serving the YMCA, Greater St. Cloud Corporation (GSC), Rotary, and many community initiatives. He is also an avid coach across multiple youth programs in the St. Cloud area.

As a former collegiate multi-sport competitor, his dedication, energy, and commitment continue to shine through his leadership and delivery. Since new ownership, the company has consistently surpassed revenue and team growth goals and has emerged as one of Minnesota's premier builders.





JENNIFER FORCE

Jennifer Force is a Principal Scientist with Braun Intertec who brings 34 years of experience—and a practical, collaborative approach—to assessing and cleaning up contaminated properties. She has guided complex brownfield projects from early due diligence through cleanup and redevelopment, including Superfund sites and former industrial facilities. Jennifer enjoys bringing project teams, regulators, and communities together to develop cleanup strategies that support successful redevelopment. She has also helped secure more than \$25 million in local, state, and federal grants for environmental investigation and cleanup.





JUSTIN GAARDER

Justin Gaarder is the Senior Real Estate Specialist for Rondo CLT and has spent the last 4.5 years helping to advance the organization's mission to build community wealth and neighborhood stability through the development and stewardship of permanently affordable homeownership opportunities, rental housing, commercial space, and other community assets. He brings 10 years of experience in community development in the public and nonprofit sectors, and his work is rooted in the belief that community land trusts offer a lasting tool for repairing historic harms, like the displacement caused by the construction of I-94 through the Rondo neighborhood, and for ensuring that the wealth generated by new development stays in the hands of the community it serves.





MIKEYA GRIFFIN

Mikeya Griffin is the President and CEO of Rondo Community Land Trust (Rondo CLT). A community leader rooted in St. Paul's historic Rondo neighborhood, she has transformed the 30-year-old institution into a national model for reparative development. The first African American woman to lead the organization, Mikeya has grown its annual budget from \$300,000 to \$9.8 million, raised \$30 million for community projects and added roughly 27 million in assets of commercial space along Rondo CLT's corridor.

Her leadership centers a reparative development framework that prioritizes the right to return for Black families and long-term community wealth building. A daughter of Rondo, Mikeya brings lived experience and deep community knowledge to her work, challenging extractive practices and advocating for policies that repair historical harm caused by urban renewal and disinvestment. Her vision connects property ownership, economic justice, and collective power as pathways to neighborhood stability and generational prosperity.





AMY HADIARIS

Amy Hadiaris has been the supervisor of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Voluntary Investigation and Cleanup (VIC) Program since 2019. Prior to becoming supervisor, she worked for 20 years as a hydrogeologist in the VIC program. Amy holds a B.S. in Natural Resources Policy and Management from the University of Michigan and an M.S. in Hydrogeology from the University of Nevada. She is a licensed professional geologist in Minnesota.





CHERYL HAHN

Cheryl Hahn is the City Administrator of Sebeka, Minnesota, a rural community of approximately 750 residents. Her work spans the many responsibilities of small city administration, including economic development and downtown revitalization. In Sebeka, she has helped advance community engagement, placemaking, and early assessment of vacant properties while navigating the limited staff capacity and starts and stops that often shape redevelopment projects.

Cheryl is a Minnesota Master Municipal Clerk and President of the Minnesota Association of Small Cities, which she represents on the League of Minnesota Cities Board of Directors.

She also serves on the Wadena County Economic Development Alliance Board.





JOANNA HICKS

JoAnna is the principal and CEO of Element Commercial Real Estate, a boutique real estate firm that provides real estate development consulting, project management and brokerage services to owners and entrepreneurs in urban walkable areas of the Twin Cities. Element provides landlord leasing services for 890,000 SF of office and retail properties in Minneapolis and St. Paul and has been redeveloping historic properties in the North Loop.

JoAnna co-founded the company in 2015 after serving as Managing Director at The Ackerman Group, following development roles at Ryan Companies, United Properties and the Neighborhood Development Center. With over twenty years of commercial real estate experience, JoAnna has led over \$300 million of office, retail, mixed-use, and housing projects and utilized almost every type of grant and tax credit currently available. Her passion and expertise continue to shape the Twin Cities' evolving urban landscape with a focus on strengthening neighborhoods and fostering the creative economy. Some of her most recent infill projects include the development of a new arts campus for Juxtaposition Arts, Pillsbury Communities' new Creative Commons, supportive housing for teens with Avenues for Youth and the construction management for Project for Pride in Living's Opportunity Crossing project, a six-story affordable housing development at 3030 Nicollet Avenue in Minneapolis.





JOHN HINZMAN

John Hinzman has led city planning and development for the City of Hastings for nearly 25 years, serving as Community Development Director and Planning Director. John holds a Master of Arts Degree in Urban Planning from Minnesota State University Mankato and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography from the University of Wisconsin River Falls. He has held American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certification since 2001.





TEB HUBBES

I have worked in the environmental consulting field since 1992, including the last 27 years for Braun Intertec, based in Hibbing, Minnesota. I enjoy working on many challenging Brownfield redevelopment projects throughout northeast and central Minnesota. My clients include industrial and mining sector clients, banks, developers, municipalities and tribal governments. Outside of work, I enjoy the outdoors, lake cabin weekends and spending time with my newborn grandson.





ADAM KIENBERGER

Adam Kienberger is an accomplished community and economic development professional with over 20 years of experience advancing local economies, leading planning initiatives, and cultivating key stakeholder partnerships. As the Community Development Director for the City of Rosemount, he oversees municipal economic development, city planning, and building inspections – guiding growth in one of the Twin Cities’ fastest-growing suburban communities across a diverse portfolio of commercial, industrial, and residential developments.

Throughout his career, Adam has built a strong track record of aligning the interests of businesses, developers, municipal leadership, and residents to foster sustainable economic expansion. His extensive public-sector expertise includes leadership roles with the cities of Farmington, Lakeville, and Woodbury, alongside state-level experience administering brownfield and redevelopment grant programs at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED).

Demonstrating a strong commitment to industry leadership in the economic development field, Adam is a past president of the Economic Development Association of Minnesota (EDAM) and served for many years on the Marketing and Communications Committee. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Urban and Regional Studies from Minnesota State University, Mankato, and an Economic Development Certificate from Hamline University.





ELIZABETH M. KLUESNER

Elizabeth is originally from Madison, Wisconsin, and is currently the Executive Director of Minnesota Brownfields. She has been in the Executive Director role since November 2021. She also serves as the part-time Executive Director of the Minnesota Groundwater Association.

Prior to her work with Minnesota Brownfields, she served as Deputy Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources during the administration of Governor Tony Evers. Elizabeth also served as the DNR's director of Local and Federal Relations, and held a number of other positions in the Department over the course of a 20 plus year career. She served as the Policy Director to Dane County (Wisconsin) Executive Kathleen Falk, where her primary duties focused on conservation based land acquisition, recreation, land use, and transportation planning. Elizabeth holds a Bachelor of Science and Master's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Elizabeth moved to the Twin Cities in 2019. She lives with her husband Dave in Edina and has two children, Katherine (29) and Teddy (25). She enjoys being outdoors, particularly with her family in Wyoming.





ERIC LARSON

Eric D. Larson is a municipal, economic development, commercial real estate, and non-profit organization attorney at Eckberg Lammers.

As the Saint Paul Port Authority's full-time general counsel from 2008 to February 2023, Eric has been a long-time lead government attorney and, in addition, has an extensive economic development project portfolio, which includes Highland Bridge (120-acre Ford Plant) redevelopment, Major League Soccer's Allianz Field (35-acre Snelling/Midway site); Beacon Bluff (40+ acre former 3M plant); CHS Field (Saint Paul Saints Stadium), as well as numerous other redevelopment projects.

Eric joined Eckberg Lammers in February of 2023 adding his Civil Municipal, Economic Development, Real Estate, Finance, and Business experience to the Eckberg Lammers' Team, where he is currently the City Attorney for the City of Blaine and the City of Sartell. Additionally, Eric serves as lead counsel for development projects for the firm's Minnesota city clients, advises the Saint Paul Port Authority, and serves as special counsel for the City of Woodbury's major development projects. Eric has extensive experience and knowledge in municipal law, working on general municipal, economic development, and land use matters.





NICK LARSON

Nick Larson is the Development Coordinator for the City of Winona and Port Authority of Winona. He works within the Community Development Department and Port Authority of Winona, where he plays a central role in managing the city's economic vitality, downtown revitalization, and commercial port operations. Nick coordinates major local economic programs, including the deployment of a \$1 million Main Street Grant used to leverage millions in private investments for downtown building rehabilitation and new construction, along with administration of the MN DEED Clean-up Grant for the 60 Main Project.





SEAN LEARY

Sean Leary is an Associate Principal and VP of Transaction Risk Management at GZA GeoEnvironmental. He is also GZA's District Office Manager for their Minneapolis office. He is an Environmental Professional with 18-years of environmental due diligence and remediation consulting experience with degrees in Biology and Environmental Science. Mr. Leary also serves as a national instructor and content developer for ASTM International, where he teaches Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessment courses to a diverse profile of industry professionals, including State and Federal agencies and the US EPA. Mr. Leary's environmental due diligence experience is extensive, including oversight of thousands of Phase I ESAs and hundreds of Phase II ESAs across the nation. Mr. Leary a Subject Matter Expert (SME) for ASTM and assisted in development of the ASTM Certified Environmental Professional (CEP) exam and test preparation training courses. His due diligence consulting expertise also includes review and management of over a thousand Property Condition Assessments (PCAs) nationwide. In 2024 Sean received the President's Award from the Environmental Bankers Association following a five-year term on the association's Board of Governors.





SHANNON MARTIN

Shannon Martin is the Brownfields Community Outreach Coordinator at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. She provides site and community-level technical support for brownfield redevelopment, conducts brownfield outreach and education at events across the state, and coordinates the MPCA's Targeted Brownfield Assessment Grant Program. Prior to joining the MPCA, Shannon spent nearly 7 years at The Nature Conservancy conducting environmental outreach and education activities in Canada.





KIM NORTON

Kim Norton became the first woman Mayor of Rochester, Minnesota and took office on January 8, 2019. Kim was selected to be part of the Harvard-Bloomberg City Leadership Institute and has had education, support, and grant opportunities providing unprecedented support for our city.

Prior to her election as Mayor, Kim won a Bush Fellowship which allowed her to complete a master's degree and certificate of Leadership in Public Policy at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Affairs and experiential learning focused on leadership and energy policy. Kim served in the Minnesota House of Representatives for 10 years. During her tenure as a legislator, Kim introduced and helped pass many pieces of significant legislation including the Destination Medical Center (DMC) economic development project, Primary Seat Belt and many other health related bills aimed at positioning Rochester and Minnesota as a premier location for healthcare. Before serving on the state legislature, Kim served eight years, including one as board chair of the Rochester Public School Board.

In addition to Kim's solid and long history of public service, volunteerism, and leadership, she has a record of asking tough questions, seeking out and listening to people with differing opinions, and working with the community to build bridges toward finding smart, fair solutions.

Kim participated in the Women in Power and Senior Executives in State and Local Government executive education program at Harvard University's Kennedy School earning an Executive Leadership in Public Policy certificate. She serves on the National League of Cities (NLC) Board of Directors and as a member of the NLC University Communities Council. She also serves on the Steering Committee of the Mayors Innovation Project.

Kim is married to Randy Stone, the mother of four grown children and a stepson. She is grandmother of five. She spends her personal time traveling and reading and has a special fondness for kayaking.





KAITLIN OUVERSON

Kaitlin is a Senior Principal Engineer, Midwest Director of Business Operations, and licensed professional engineer with over 15 years of experience in the industry across the United States. She joined Geosyntec Minneapolis, Minnesota office in 2020 and is leading work related to brownfields. Her experience as a civil engineer includes due diligence, site investigation, remedial design, construction oversight, vapor intrusion, and project management on some of the largest environmental sites in the Midwest and East Coast.





KRISTIN PROSOSKI

Kristin Prososki is an Assistant Regional Director for the Technical Assistance to Brownfield (TAB) Program at Kansas State University. Kristin has more than twenty years of experience working at both the state and local level on community and economic development projects and has a passion for brownfield redevelopment. Kristin began her career as a city planner before joining the Brownfields and Redevelopment Unit at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, where she had the opportunity to assist many communities across Minnesota with overcoming challenging redevelopment sites. She returned to local government, working for the City of Mankato for nearly a decade in the Community Development Department on both economic development and affordable housing initiatives, including the redevelopment of more than a few particularly challenging sites. She worked as a Community Development Specialist at SEH assisting communities with engagement, planning, project funding, and implementation strategies. In her current role in the TAB program, Kristin assists communities within EPA Regions 5 and 7 by navigating brownfield redevelopment and helping find ways to advance their projects.





LINDSEY REMAKEL

Lindsey combines her comprehensive environmental and regulatory knowledge with her transactional experience to provide added value to her industrial, commercial and energy clients.

Lindsey is a shareholder in the firm's environmental and energy practice groups. In her environmental practice, Lindsey advises a wide range of industrial, energy, and commercial clients regarding environmental and liability issues, particularly those arising in the transactional context. She has served as environmental counsel

in hundreds of successful mergers, acquisitions, and real estate transactions where she counsels clients regarding environmental liability and risk allocation; manages environmental due diligence; coordinates with environmental consultants and experts; and drafts and negotiates environmental provisions in purchase agreements, contracts and leases.

Lindsey advises industrial, energy and commercial clients on permitting and regulatory compliance in areas including waste, water, chemical regulation, brownfields, Superfund, air, and occupational health and safety. She regularly represents clients in negotiations and communications with the Environmental Protection Agency and state and local environmental agencies and departments, including those relating to enforcement and release reporting matters, as well as voluntary cleanup and brownfields programs. Lindsey also advises clients regarding environmental review processes (e.g., NEPA, NHPA, and MEPA) and land use and zoning matters.

In her energy practice, Lindsey provides regulatory counsel to clients regarding environmental matters, project permitting, generator interconnection, and compliance. She regularly serves as counsel to renewable energy developers in connection with construction debt and tax equity financing, where she provides federal, state, and local permitting and state and local regulatory support. She also advises energy developers and electric utilities regarding NEPA and NHPA triggers and requirements in connection with large-scale wind, solar, and transmission projects. Additionally, Lindsey has assisted renewable energy clients with navigating generator interconnection processes and provides counsel regarding compliance with federal regulations including the FPA and PURPA.

Prior to joining the firm, Lindsey worked as a legal intern for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7 in Kansas City, Kansas.





MILES R. SEPPelt

Miles R. Seppelt, MS, EDFP, is the Economic Development Director for the City of Hutchinson, Minnesota, where he has led economic development initiatives for more than two decades. During his tenure, he has helped recruit major employers, secured more than \$6 million in grant funding, overseen industrial and downtown redevelopment projects, and established the Hutchinson Enterprise Center small business incubator. He also co-developed TigerPath, Hutchinson's award-winning skilled workforce development initiative.

Seppelt holds a master's degree in Economic Development from St. Cloud State University and is a certified Economic Development Finance Professional. His professional recognition includes being named the Economic Development Association of Minnesota's Economic Development Professional of the Year and receiving EDAM's President's Award, along with awards for business recruitment, business retention and expansion, workforce development and economic development marketing. He was also named Business Person of the Year by the Hutchinson Chamber of Commerce. In addition to his economic development career, Seppelt served 21 years in the U.S. Army and Minnesota National Guard as a tank commander and had one deployment overseas.





LAURA SHAGALOV

Laura Shagalov is a Partner and Architect at Van Meter Williams Pollack and leads the firm's Minneapolis office. Laura engages with Architecture projects from feasibility and concept design through construction, including affordable multi-family housing, mixed-use, supportive housing, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse. Laura also provides technical assistance for emerging developers and oversees urban design projects in the Minneapolis office including design standards, station area, and downtown studies. Laura is dedicated to creating sustainable, inclusive, healthy and beautiful communities for people of all incomes and abilities. She has over 18 years of experience in housing and mixed-use development, universal design and green building. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Urban and Regional Studies from Cornell University and a Master of Architecture from the University of California, Berkeley.





RYAN SPENCER

Ryan has more than 19 years of environmental consulting experience serving public- and private-sector clients. He leads WSB's Environmental Investigation and Remediation group and serves on the Minnesota Brownfields Program Committee. Ryan has successfully managed numerous brownfield redevelopment projects throughout Minnesota, including the Opportunity Crossing Project, which received a 2026 ReScape Award in the Community Impact category.





KRISTINE WILLIAMS

Kristine joined the Saint Paul Port Authority in August of 2023. With over 15 years of experience in commercial real estate and leasing, Kristine brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to this role. Kristine is responsible for overseeing the development team leading real estate projects, development opportunities and overseeing river terminals supported by the Port Authority. She also focuses on developing strategic partnerships to identify future opportunities within the City of Saint Paul. Kristine previously held key roles at IAG Commercial Real Estate and Canadian Pacific. Her extensive industry experience, coupled with her problem-solving skills and leadership qualities, make her ideally suited to lead real estate and development transactions for the Saint Paul Port Authority. Kristine holds a bachelor's degree and an MBA from the University of Saint Thomas.

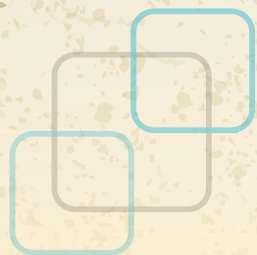




ADAM ZOBEL

Adam is a Principal with the Environmental Services team at Stantec, based in the Plymouth, Minnesota office. Adam is a Remediation Practice Leader at Stantec for the Great Lakes Region. He has 23 years' experience in environmental consulting. Adam assists clients with transaction-based environmental due diligence, including site assessment, investigation, and remediation. In addition, Adam has extensive experience working with clients on brownfield redevelopment, assessment, and cleanup grants. At Stantec, Adam also coordinates real estate due diligence with multidisciplinary teams for various industries across the United States. Adam has served on the Minnesota Brownfields Membership Committee from 2019-2025, the Minnesota Brownfields Advisory Committee Chair since 2026 and the Minnesota Brownfields Board of Directors since 2024 and is currently the Vice Chair of Minnesota Brownfields.





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