CALL FOR PROPOSALS

To: Interested Speakers & Presenters
From: Virginia White, MACo Member Services Director
Subject: Submitting topics to be considered for MACo’s Summer Conference, August 19-22, 2020

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) is beginning to gather topics for our Summer Conference to be held August 19-22, 2020 at the Roland Powell Convention Center, Ocean City Maryland.

The theme of this year’s conference is “2020 Vision: Today’s Roadmap, Tomorrow’s Reality.” Our decisions now guide where Maryland’s counties will be in the years ahead. What better time than 2020 to talk about our vision? MACo and county leaders will explore strategic planning, evolving service delivery, advancing technologies, land use challenges, and fiscal obstacles – all of which constitute the fabric of local leadership.

LIST OF POTENTIAL TOPICS:
(all proposals will be considered, but MACo is interested in covering the following topics)

- Best practices around county priority issues such as the opioid epidemic, Next Gen 9-1-1, school construction, etc.
- Technological tools or best practices to deliver services, respond to crises, or inform residents
- Leveraging private and non-profit resources to improve county functions
- Vaping and how to address it
- Money-saving opportunities or innovative partnerships
- Local infrastructure and rights of way: balancing county rights and business interests
- Case studies where a common local issue was solved
- Innovative inter-agency efforts to improve services for vulnerable populations
- Communication techniques to engage residents – social media, but also innovative ways to reach “unplugged” populations
- Cybersecurity in digital service delivery
- Engaging residents – on screen and in person
- Social media policies and best practices for government agencies and officials
- Agritourism – promoting economic development impacts and preventing public health risks
- Employment best practices for recruitment, retention, and multi-generational concerns
SUBMITTING YOUR PROPOSAL:

For your topic or session to be considered, please send the following information by email to vwhite@mdcounties.org no later than 5:00 pm on April 15, 2020:

- Topic and/or draft title
- Brief abstract of information to be covered
  (LIMIT: 100 words – abstract will be truncated at word 101)
- Suggested speakers (individual names or generic titles, e.g. county finance officer, Delegate, etc. – please do NOT make invitations and please see notes below regarding session format)
- Contact information for follow-up

SESSION FORMAT DETAILS:

MACo’s educational sessions are typically 1 hour in length and focus on issues of interest to county government officials and staff. A proposed session does not need to fit the conference theme, but it is strongly encouraged.

To ensure that we present a balanced presentation with varying viewpoints, MACo’s conference sessions will normally include 3, possibly 4, speakers; for example: a county representative, an academic representative, a State agency representative, and/or a commercial representative. MACo is open to other formats so long as they are balanced and inclusive.

We frequently invite legislators to moderate the panels, particularly when the subject matter extends into state policy or potential legislation.

MACo’s conference planning group is very open to other formats, but please keep in mind that if your topic is accepted, MACo may need to add or substitute speakers to achieve our desired level of viewpoint diversity – MACo will make all decisions on speaker invitations. If your topic is selected, a MACo staff person will be assigned to coordinate that session and invite speakers.

We do not allow presentations that strive to sell a particular product or service as part of our educational session program. If a commercial representative is included on a panel, they are included as an industry expert and are asked to speak broadly about industry best practices with only minimal focus on their particular commercial entity and only as it relates to the topic or project being discussed.

If you represent a commercial organization and would like an opportunity to talk specifically about your product or service, we offer a special Solutions Showcase of 30-minute sessions on a topic of the sponsor’s choice. Please contact Communications Coordinator Heather Legg at 410.269.0043 or hlegg@mdcounties.org for more details.

NOTIFICATION TIMETABLE:

MACo’s conference planning group meets in late April and makes decisions on a final slate of presentations by early May. You will receive an email confirmation that your proposal was received right away, but notification of proposal status may not be until May 15.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I can be reached by phone at 410.269.0043 or by email at vwhite@mdcounties.org.