



98th Annual Ontario Road Builders' Association Convention

February 2-4, 2025
Fairmont Royal York, Toronto

READY to Build
Ontario's Future
TOGETHER



PRESENTING
SPONSOR



98th ANNUAL ORBA CONVENTION



Dear Members and Industry Colleagues,

We are excited to invite you to join us for the 98th Annual Convention of the Ontario Road Builders' Association, a premier event happening from February 2 - 4, 2025, at the Fairmont Royal York hotel in downtown Toronto.

This year's theme "*Ready to Build Ontario's Future Together*" brings together voices in the construction and infrastructure sectors. This is your chance to connect with infrastructure colleagues, learn from industry experts and help shape the future of road building in Ontario.

We have two dynamic and engaging keynote presentations that are relevant to the latest trends and developments within the industry.

In a world filled with ever-changing opportunities and challenges, businesses must rise to meet change or risk falling behind. Jon Montgomery's keynote will explore the power of belief in overcoming obstacles. Drawing from his personal experiences growing up in rural Manitoba, Jon will share stories of trial and error, showing how the goals we set are only as achievable as our belief in them. Discover how confidence can fuel success, and learn practical ways to build this vital quality within yourself and your team. In an ever-evolving technological landscape, our second keynote presenter, John Gibson, an AI expert will show you how artificial intelligence is transforming the road infrastructure industry. In his keynote, John will guide you through the fundamentals of AI, offering practical strategies on how to harness its power to improve operations, streamline workflows and drive innovation in your business.

Get ready to build a brighter future in Ontario. This is your opportunity to connect, learn and drive change as we work together to lay the foundation for Ontario's next generation of infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Malcolm Croskery, ORBA Board Vice President

2025 ORBA CONVENTION PLANNING COMMITTEE

Malcolm Croskery	Pioneer Construction Inc.
Mark Mallett	Peter Kiewit Sons ULC
Christopher Campbell	Imperil Oil
Kourtney Adamson	Yellowline Asphalt Products Ltd.
Rick Tamburro	The Miller Group, A Colas Company
Luca Fiore	Amico Infrastructures Inc.
Graziela Girardi	R.W. Tomlinson Limited
Peter Hamstra	Dufferin Construction Company A CRH Company
Afra Shokraei	Black and McDonald Limited
Walid Abou-Hamde	ORBA
Steven Crombie	ORBA

THE 2025 ORBA CONVENTION
A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

98th ANNUAL ORBA CONVENTION

The 98th Annual Convention of the Ontario Road Builders' Association will once again provide an opportunity for you to meet and network with industry top professionals, from contractors, engineers to policy makers and suppliers. Gain valuable knowledge from experts who are shaping Ontario's infrastructure future and discover emerging trends and technologies that will define the road building industry for years to come.

Join us for the Sunday evening Welcome Reception hosted at Kelly's Landing, just steps away from the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. This is a great way to kick off the Convention with your colleagues over delicious food and networking opportunities.

The Convention will showcase a variety of industry leading plenary and breakout sessions.

Anticipating over 1,000 participants during these action-packed two days, the 2025 ORBA Convention stands as the foremost networking opportunity in the industry. Reserve your spot today!

Be part of the conversation. Be part of the future. Ready to Build Ontario's Future - Together!

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



JON MONTGOMERY
Olympic Gold Medallist and host of the Amazing Race Canada



JOHN GIBSON
Chief Commercial Officer at Faculty

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

**INDUSTRY
MUNICIPAL
PROVINCIAL
TECHNICAL
DEVELOPERS
ACADEMIA**

**Contractors, Producers and Industry Suppliers
Councillors, Public Works Engineers and Designers
MTO Staff
Consultants, Engineers, Technologists, Inspectors and Contract Administrators
Industrial, Commercial, Institutional (ICI) and Residential
Students, Faculty and Researchers**



Go to
[https://www.orba.org/
events/98th-annual-orba-
convention](https://www.orba.org/events/98th-annual-orba-convention)
for more information
and register today!

* Please note that the program
is subject to change.

SUNDAY
FEB 2

6:00-11:00 PM | WELCOME RECEPTION
Members Only
KELLY'S LANDING
123 Front St W., Toronto ON

Sponsored by **DECAST**

DAY 1

FEBRUARY 3

Monday



7:00 AM	REGISTRATION/CHECK IN BALLROOM FOYER	
7:00 AM	WELCOME BREAKFAST BUFFET CONCERT HALL	Sponsored by: HUB
7:55 AM	WELCOME AND OFFICIAL CONVENTION OPENING CANADIAN ROOM	Sponsored by: HUB
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walid Abou-Hamde, CEO, ORBA • Malcolm Croskery, ORBA Board Vice President • Mayor Paul Lefebvre, City of Greater Sudbury 	

8:20 AM **KEYNOTE ADDRESS** CANADIAN ROOM



Sponsored by:

Jon Montgomery

Olympic Gold Medallist and host of the Amazing Race Canada

Building a Road to Believing *It is Possible*

Faced with an ever-evolving matrix of opportunities, challenges, and growing communities, we are forced to meet these changes head-on or our businesses and the services they provide risk decline. The single greatest factor in rising-to-the-challenge of delivering services and finishing projects in the communities we call home, is our ability to **believe** that it is possible. In Jon's session, he'll share personal stories about growing up in rural Manitoba and learning through trial and error that the goals we set for ourselves are only as achievable as we believe they are. His light-hearted keynote will shed light on how our capacity to achieve can be bolstered by our own personal confidence, and what we can do to build this precious quality in each of us.

9:20 AM	AM REFRESHMENT BREAK CONVENTION FLOOR FOYER	Sponsored by:
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9:40 AM **PLENARY SESSION I** CANADIAN ROOM

Outlook 2025: New President, New Challenges

The economic focus shifted over the past year from managing inflation (bringing it down) to managing growth (lifting it up). And it appears that policymakers, especially in the U.S., have largely achieved that goal. Even Canada's economy looks to be turning the corner as inflation hovers near the 2% target and spending growth is improving, thanks to the Bank of Canada's early move to cut rates. Now, with the Trump Administration in charge, the focus will turn to the possibility of tax relief, but offset by risks, including further trade wars, the threat of retaliatory tariffs, and geopolitics. These and other issues will be addressed.

PRESENTER:
Douglas J. Porter, Chief Economist, BMO Financial Group

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Monday

DAY 1
FEBRUARY 3



10:25 AM **PLENARY SESSION II** CANADIAN ROOM

In Search of a Silver Bullet: Addressing the Industry's Generational Workforce Crunch

Sponsored by:



This session explores immediate and long-term labour supply challenges facing the infrastructure industry, particularly at a time of historic government investments in roads, highways, mass transportation, energy and other asset classes.

PANELISTS:

- **Karen Renkema**, *Vice President, Ontario, Progressive Contractors Association of Canada*
- **Steven Crombie**, *Ontario Skilled Trades Alliance Chair*
- **Mary Emirzian**, *HR Manager, Dufferin Construction Company – A division of CRH Canada Group Inc.*
- **Melanie Winter**, *Executive Director, Support Ontario Youth*

MODERATOR:

Walid Abou-Hamde, *CEO, ORBA*

11:30 AM **CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

■ **SESSION A:** (SALON A)

Connecting the Dots: Workforce Resources for ORBA Members

This panel will explore resources available in Ontario to help members find and hire the talent they need. Experts will discuss programs and opportunities that assist employers in hiring both local and international workers. The session will cover practical strategies for sourcing skilled talent, including government initiatives and recruitment techniques. Panelists will also share insights on overcoming hiring challenges and building a diverse, successful workforce. Whether you're expanding your team locally or internationally, this session offers valuable advice and actionable steps to help you create a strong, effective workforce and grow your business.

PANELISTS:

- **Natalie A. Parent**, *Human Resources Manager, Pioneer Construction Inc./Fisher Wavy Inc.*
- **Anthony Lawley**, *President & CEO Ivey Group*
- **Puneet Mehta**, *Associate, Weaver Simmons*

MODERATOR:

Malcolm Croskery, *Chief Operations Officer, Pioneer Construction Inc.*

■ **SESSION B:** (ONTARIO ROOM)

Cost-Effective Quality Pavements through Municipal Specification Harmonization

Municipalities across Ontario are grappling with budget constraints while managing aging infrastructure. As they work to maintain and improve public assets, the lack of consistency in the application of OPSS has created challenges. These challenges include increased costs and inefficiencies due to the need for industry to adapt to varying specifications. This session will discuss the benefits of adhering to OPSS without deviations and encouraging municipalities to align their specifications to reduce costs and streamline project delivery.

KEYNOTE & MODERATOR:

Stephen Goodman, *President, Goodman Pavement and Materials Engineering Inc.*

PANELISTS:

- **Chris Spere**, *Director, Engineer, City of Kitchener*
- **Scott Butler**, *Executive Director, Good Roads*
- **Domenic Passalacqua**, *General Manager, D. Crupi & Sons Ltd.*

DAY 1

FEBRUARY 3

Monday



■ **SESSION C:** (CANADIAN ROOM)

Navigating Legislative Changes: Key Updates to Ontario's Construction Act, ESA and OHSA

This breakout session will provide participants with critical updates on legislative amendments impacting Ontario's construction industry. Key topics include recent changes to Ontario's Construction Act, Employment Standards Act (ESA), and Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA). Hear expert insights and gain actionable knowledge to help them navigate the evolving regulatory landscape.

SPEAKERS:

- **Norm Keith**, *Partner, KPMG Law*
- **Rocco Ruso**, *Principal, RAR Litigation*

MODERATOR:

Steven Crombie, *Senior Director of Public Affairs, ORBA*

12:10 PM **LUNCHEON 'CAESAR' RECEPTION** CONCERT HALL FOYER

Sponsored by:



12:40 PM **LUNCHEON** CONCERT HALL

2:15 PM **WORKSHOP** ONTARIO ROOM

Beyond the Basics: An In-Depth CMS Workshop with LIVE Feedback

Join us for an interactive and insightful workshop focused on MTO's Contract Management System (CMS) technology, hosted by members of the MTO CMS team and partners from Kahua. This session will kick off with a comprehensive, live demonstration of the CMS, showcasing its key features, capabilities, and how it can streamline your contract processes. Following the demo, participants will have the opportunity to share their thoughts, experiences, and suggestions through a dedicated feedback session!

3:00 PM **PLENARY SESSION III** CANADIAN ROOM

Delivering a Historic Ontario Infrastructure Pipeline: The Key to Success on Major Projects

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This panel will develop a blueprint for successfully planning and delivering major infrastructure in Ontario, particularly with a historic project pipeline expected over the coming years. The panelists will also explore how properly scoping projects, selecting the best procurement model, choosing the right project team, collaboration and open communication through project development and execution are all crucial elements for the success.

PANELISTS:

- **Tim Shepherd**, *Director, Major Projects, Kiewit*
- **Corina Moore**, *Executive Vice President, Transportation and Infrastructure, WSP*

MODERATOR:

Brad Nicpon, *Partner, McCarthy Tetrault*

DAY 1
FEBRUARY 3

Monday



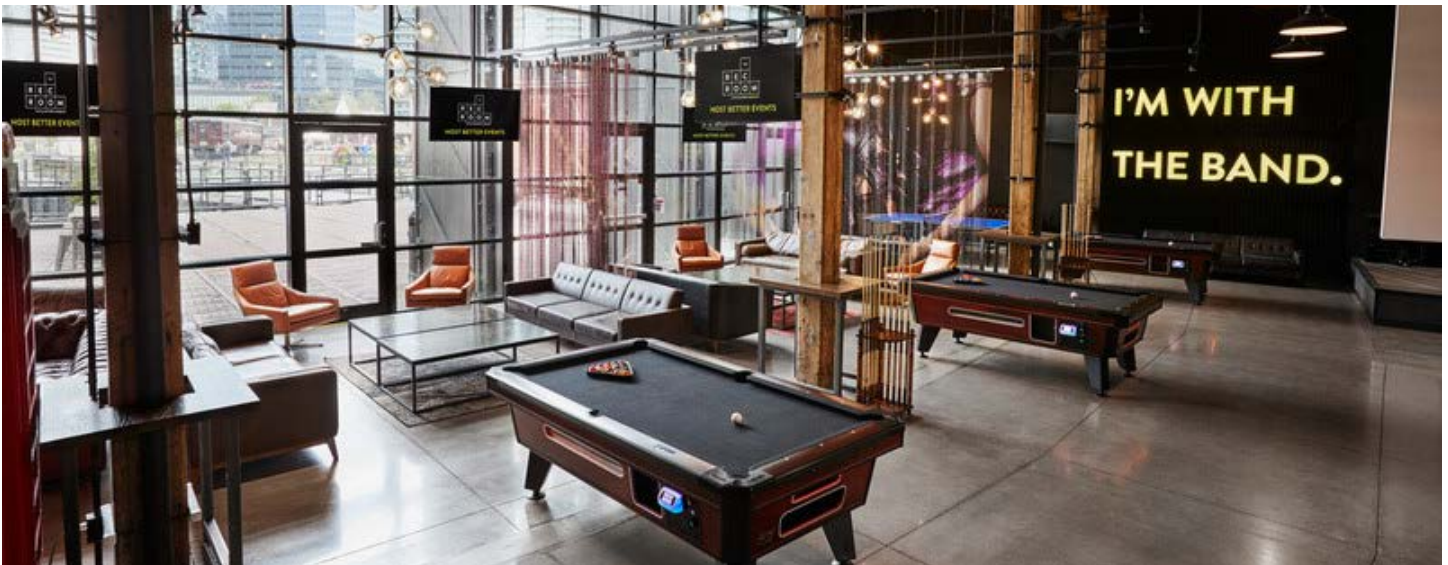
4:00 PM FREE TIME

5:15 PM TRAVEL TIME TO CONTRACTOR'S ROUND UP



6:00 PM - 11:00 PM **CONTRACTOR'S ROUND UP**
Offsite at **The REC Room Roundhouse** – 255 Bremner Blvd Toronto



Contractor's Round Up – Biggest Industry Party



DAY 2
FEBRUARY 4

Thursday



7:00 AM	REGISTRATION/CHECK IN BALLROOM FOYER	
7:00 AM	AWARDS BREAKFAST BUFFET CONCERT HALL	Sponsored by: 
8:30 AM	ORBA AWARDS CONCERT HALL SPEAKERS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ORBA CEO• ORBA Past President• ORBA President• OAPC Chair• OAPC Past Chair	Sponsored by: 
9:15 AM	KEYNOTE ADDRESS CANADIAN BALLROOM	




Sponsored by: 

John Gibson

Chief Commercial Officer at Faculty

How to Think About AI and How to Put it to Work for You

John is Chief Commercial Officer at Faculty AI, Europe's leading applied AI business. His talk will help leadership teams understand how to situate AI and how to successfully adopt it into their business. He will cover how the present moment in AI fits into wider technology trends, how to think about the scale and speed of change to come. The role that adoption strategies play in the application of technology to society and some practical lessons on how to implement AI into your business successfully.

10:00 AM	AM REFRESHMENT BREAK CONVENTION FLOOR FOYER	Sponsored by: 
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DAY 2
FEBRUARY 4



10:15 AM **PLENARY SESSION IV** CANADIAN ROOM

Conflict Avoidance in Construction Projects

In this session we will discuss how to identify, control and manage potential conflicts early in construction projects preventing escalation into formal disputes. This panel of industry experts will provide participants with a deep dive into practical solutions and case studies to help foster a culture of collaboration, effective communication, and proactive conflict resolution in construction projects.

PANELISTS:

- **John Fletcher**, *Director of Dispute Resolution, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (UK)*
- **Marty Harris**, *Senior Vice President and Executive Lead, Civil East, Aecon Group Inc.*
- **Rick Moffat**, *Economist - HKA Global - Partner and Head of Operations Canada*

MODERATOR:

Dan Leduc, *Counsel, Soloway Wright LLP*

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11:15 AM **PLENARY SESSION V** CANADIAN ROOM

Prioritizing Workers' Health and Safety: Understanding and Preventing Work Zone Intrusion

Work zones are essential yet high-risk environments for road construction crews. One of the most pressing dangers is work zone intrusion, where vehicles breach the boundaries of a closed-off area, putting workers at immediate risk. This panel will focus on practical strategies to enhance worker safety, addressing how we can better protect those who operate in these hazardous environments.

Key to the discussion will be sharing lessons learned from past experiences, offering insights into the challenges faced, and celebrating the success stories that have shaped better safety outcomes. Attendees will gain valuable knowledge from real-world examples of how work zones have been managed more effectively to reduce the risk of accidents and intrusions.

The panel will also explore new tools and methods designed to improve the safety of work zone closures. Whether through better planning, improved communication, or innovative safety measures, the goal is to find the best approaches that can be applied to different scenarios.

A key focus of the discussion will be on emerging technologies that support more efficient and secure work zone closures. Innovation and enhancement in technologies have proven effective in keeping workers safe. Panelists will discuss how these technologies are reshaping work zone safety standards, providing both immediate benefits and long-term improvements.

In addition, success stories will be highlighted, showing how various organizations have successfully adopted new practices to protect their workforce. By discussing these proven strategies and best practices, we aim to promote safer, more resilient work environments across Ontario's road construction industry.

Join us for this engaging panel to learn, share, and explore ways to create safer work zones, protect workers, and adopt practices that benefit the entire industry.

KEYNOTE:

Peter Wehmeyer, *President, Cobblestone Safety Consultants Inc.*

PANELISTS:

- **Mark Baxter**, *President, Police Association of Ontario*
- **James Delamere**, *Chief Executive Officer, Ramudden Canada Inc.*
- **Michelle Roberts**, *Vice President Stakeholder & Public Relations at Infrastructure Health & Safety Association (IHSA)*
- **Rob Covassin**, *Director EHS, Aecon Infrastructure Management Inc.*

MODERATOR:

Jesse Hopkins, *Innovations Academy, Director, RSG International*

DAY 2
FEBRUARY 4

Thursday



12:15 PM LUNCHEON 'CAESAR' RECEPTION CONCERT HALL FOYER

Sponsored by:



12:50 PM LUNCHEON CONCERT HALL

2:30 PM PLENARY SESSION VI CANADIAN ROOM

Canada-US Relations at a Historic Crossroads: What Does it Mean for Ontario and What to Expect this Year?

SPEAKERS:

- **Jamie Tronnes**, Executive Director, Center for North American Prosperity and Security
- **Lisa Mitchell**, President and CEO, The Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships
- **Paul Smetanin**, President of the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis (CANCEA)

MODERATOR:

Walid Abou-Hamde, CEO, ORBA

3:30 PM CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS

MUNICIPAL PLANS & PROJECTS

■ SESSION D: (SALON A)

Municipal Session: Northern Region

SPEAKER:

David Shelsted, Director, Engineering Services, City of Greater Sudbury

■ SESSION E: (CONCERT HALL)

Municipal Session: Southwestern Regions

SPEAKERS:

- **Jennie Dann**, Director Construction & Infrastructure Services, Environment & Infrastructure, City of London
- **Graeme Guthrie**, Associate Director, Transportation Engineering Public Works, Niagara Region
- **Shawn Buckley**, Manager, Transportation Program Development, The Region Municipality of Waterloo

4:10 PM Attendees move to Concurrent Breakout Sessions

4:15 PM CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS

MUNICIPAL PLANS & PROJECTS

■ SESSION F: (CONCERT HALL)

Municipal Session: GTA Region

SPEAKERS:

- **Emma Calvert**, Director of Infrastructure Planning & Engineering Services, City of Mississauga
- **Salim Alibhai**, Director, Capital Planning and Delivery, York Region

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Thursday

DAY 2
FEBRUARY 4



■ **SESSION G: (SALON B)**

Municipal Session: Eastern Region

SPEAKER:

Bruce Kenny, *Manager of Design and Construction, City of Ottawa*

5:00 PM **ORBA & OAPC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, OAPC CHAIR'S ADDRESS** ONTARIO ROOM

6:00 PM **PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION** BALLROOM

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6:45 PM **PRESIDENT'S DINNER** CANADIAN BALLROOM

Sponsored by:



- President's Inaugural Address
- Hall of Fame Awards & Inductions Ceremony

- Guess the Gross Prize Draw



9:00 PM **AFTER DINNER NIGHT CAP**
ONTARIO ROOM



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