



# connecting Ontario

Infrastructure Growth  
and the Power of Partnership

99<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL  
ONTARIO ROAD  
BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION  
CONVENTION

**FEBRUARY 1–3, 2026**  
Fairmont Royal York, Toronto

PRESENTING  
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**Kiewit**

# 99<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL ORBA CONVENTION

Dear Members and Industry Colleagues,

We are pleased to invite you to the **99<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Ontario Road Builders' Association**, taking place **February 1–3, 2026**, at the **Fairmont Royal York** in downtown Toronto.

This year's theme, "**Connecting Ontario: Infrastructure Growth and the Power of Partnership**," highlights the strength, resilience, and innovation that emerge when industry partners come together with a shared purpose. As Ontario's infrastructure landscape continues to grow and evolve, this event offers an invaluable opportunity to collaborate, gain insight, and contribute to shaping the province's transportation future.

Our program features **two compelling keynote presentations**, each addressing the critical trends and forces influencing our sector today.

In a rapidly expanding province, the demand for efficient, sustainable, and interconnected infrastructure has never been greater. Our first keynote speaker will delve into the pivotal role of partnership—between governments, contractors, consultants, and communities—in driving successful project delivery. Learn how collaborative models, shared expertise, and unified vision can accelerate infrastructure growth and strengthen Ontario's long-term economic and social wellbeing.

Our second keynote will show how strategic resilience fuels lasting success, this presentation will provide practical insights into how your organization can adapt and thrive in an era of unprecedented change.

Together, we have the opportunity to build stronger connections—across sectors, across regions, and across our industry. Join us as we come together to learn, collaborate, and help drive the next chapter of Ontario's infrastructure development.

Sincerely,

**Mark Mallett**, ORBA Board Vice President



THE 2026 ORBA CONVENTION  
**A WORD FROM THE CHAIR**

## 2026 ORBA CONVENTION PLANNING COMMITTEE

Mark Mallett	Peter Kiewit Sons ULC
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Afra Shokraei	Black and McDonald Limited
Walid Abou-Hamde	ORBA

# 99<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL ORBA CONVENTION

This year's 99th Annual Convention of the Ontario Road Builders' Association will once again bring together the leaders, innovators, and collaborators who are driving Ontario's infrastructure forward. Connect with contractors, engineers, policy makers, and suppliers as we explore how strategic partnerships and forward-thinking investment are shaping the next era of provincial growth. Discover the trends, technologies, and collaborative models that will redefine how we build and connect communities across Ontario.

Join us for the Sunday evening Welcome Reception at Kelly's Landing, conveniently located just steps from the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. Enjoy great food, reconnect with colleagues, and start the Convention with meaningful conversations in a relaxed atmosphere.

This year's program features a dynamic lineup of plenary discussions and breakout sessions led by industry experts and thought leaders. With more than 1,000 participants expected over two high-energy days, the 2026 ORBA Convention remains the industry's premier forum for networking, insight, and partnership.

Reserve your place today and be part of Ontario's next chapter.

**Be part of the connection. Be part of the momentum.**  
**Connecting Ontario Together—through Partnership and Progress.**

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



**Dr. Hayley Wickenheiser**

Four-time Olympic Gold Medalist, Member of the Hockey Hall of Fame



**Dan Gardner**

Risk Management, Forecasting, and Big Projects, Award-Winning Journalist, Bestselling Author of How Big Things Get Done

## 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/99th-annual-orba-convention>  
for more information  
and register today!

\* Please note that the program is subject to change.

**SUNDAY**  
FEB 1

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

Sponsored by **DECAST**

**DAY 1**  
**FEBRUARY 2**

**7:00 AM** **REGISTRATION/CHECK IN**  
BALLROOM FOYER

**7:00 AM** **WELCOME BREAKFAST BUFFET**  
CONCERT HALL

Sponsored by: **HUB**

**8:00 AM** **WELCOME AND OFFICIAL CONVENTION OPENING**  
CANADIAN ROOM

Sponsored by: **HUB**

- **Walid Abou-Hamde**, CEO, ORBA
- **Mark Mallett**, ORBA Board Vice President
- **Stephen Laforme**, Elder/Knowledge Keeper for Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations

**8:20 AM** **GUEST SPEAKER** CANADIAN BALLROOM  
**The Hon. Todd McCarthy**, Acting Minister of Infrastructure

**8:40 AM** **KEYNOTE ADDRESS** CANADIAN ROOM



Sponsored by: **PLATFORM**

## **Dan Gardner**

*Risk Management, Forecasting, and Big Projects, Award-Winning Journalist, Bestselling Author of How Big Things Get Done*

## **How Big Things Get Done – The Power of Planning and Partnerships**

In this captivating keynote, Dan Gardner author of *How Big Things Get Done* reveals why most projects struggle and what sets the rare successes apart. Drawing on groundbreaking research and real-world examples, Gardner uncovers the hidden forces and partnerships that shape how we conceive, plan, and deliver big endeavors. Whether you're leading a global infrastructure build or tackling a home renovation, his insights will transform the way you think about projects — helping you plan smarter, execute better, and dramatically increase your odds of success.

**9:40 AM** **PLENARY SESSION I** CANADIAN ROOM

## **Building the Future—Leadership in Construction**

The panel aims to generate forward-looking dialogue among industry leaders, offering both strategic vision and practical insights that can guide the construction sector into a more innovative, sustainable, and resilient future.

### **SPEAKERS:**

- **Kieran Hawe**, President & Chief Executive Officer, EllisDon
- **Geoffrey Stephens**, Chief Executive Officer, Capital Paving and Fowler Construction Company
- **Mike McMillan**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Toromont
- **John Pontarollo**, COO, GIP

### **MODERATOR:**

**Walid Abou-Hamde**, CEO, ORBA



**11:00 AM** **AM REFRESHMENT BREAK** CONVENTION FLOOR FOYER

Sponsored by:



**11:20 AM** **CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

■ **SESSION A:**

## It's Not Always the Binder – Discussing Alternative Solutions to Quality Roads – A Northeast Perspective SALON A

This session will explore how Ontario's extensive binder grade system compares to approaches used across the Northeast U.S. Greg Harder, P.E., NE Regional Engineer for the Asphalt Institute, will share insights on how quality roads are achieved without complex binder restrictions. Attendees will learn practical strategies for maintaining pavement performance and consistency in a post-specification-harmonization environment.

**SPEAKER:**

**Greg Harder, P.E.,** *Senior Regional Engineer, Asphalt Institute*

■ **SESSION B:**

## Legal and Regulatory Updates Every Contractor Needs to Know SALON B

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This session provides a clear, plain-language overview of the most significant legal and regulatory developments affecting Ontario's road building and heavy civil construction industry, with a focus on practical implications for ORBA members. The discussion will cover key updates to the Construction Act, including the annual release of holdback, evolving lien and trust rights, adjudication developments, and emerging expectations around proper invoicing, as well as recent court and adjudication decisions shaping claims management, contractual exposure, and industry best practices. Attendees will also receive important updates on workplace legislation, including the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Employment Standards Act, and Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, with insight into regulatory changes, enforcement trends, and compliance requirements that directly impact day-to-day operations.

**SPEAKERS:**

- **Owen Heritage,** *Managing Director, Ramudden Services Canada*
- **Rocco Russo,** *Principle of RAR Litigation*
- **Keith Burkhardt,** *Partner, Sherrard Kuzz LLP*

**MODERATOR:**

**Steven Crombie,** *Senior Director of Public Affairs, Ontario Road Builders' Association*

■ **SESSION C:**

## Compensation Requests & Dispute Resolution: Building Stronger Partnerships. Discover how collaboration drives success! CANADIAN ROOM

Join the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) for an interactive session designed to strengthen partnerships and streamline the resolution of compensation requests and disputes.

**What you'll gain:**

- **Clear insights** into the dispute resolution process
- **Guidance** on what information is essential for CR and Claim submissions
- **Transparency** on how MTO reviews and evaluates requests
- Our approach focuses on **fair contract administration, confidential negotiations, and objective ministry review**—ensuring issues are resolved quickly and equitably at the field level. By working together, we can achieve timely outcomes that benefit all parties.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE →

# Monday

**DAY 1**  
**FEBRUARY 2**



**Don't miss this opportunity to build stronger relationships and improve project success!**

Sponsored by:



**PRESENTERS:**

- **Rebecca Li**, Manager, Contract Claims
- **Derek Illman**, Head, Claims West
- **Robert Mount**, Claims Engineer
- **Doug Pateman**, Claims Engineer

**MODERATOR:**

**Frank Lucente**, Manager, Construction and Audit Services

**12:05 PM LUNCHEON 'CAESAR' RECEPTION** CONCERT HALL FOYER

Sponsored by:



**12:35 PM LUNCHEON** CONCERT HALL  
**GUEST SPEAKER: The Hon. Doug Ford**, Premier of Ontario

Sponsored by:



**2:05 PM GUEST SPEAKER** CANADIAN ROOM  
**The Hon. Greg Rickford**, Minister of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation of Ontario

**2:20 PM PLENARY SESSION II** CANADIAN ROOM

## Fireside Chat with Metrolinx

Sponsored by:



Join us for an exclusive fireside chat with Michael Lindsay, President and CEO of Metrolinx, and Walid Abou-Hamde, CEO, ORBA. Together, they'll explore the evolving transportation landscape for 2026 and beyond, highlighting innovation, infrastructure investment, and collaboration shaping Ontario's future mobility.

**SPEAKER:**

**Michael Lindsay**, President and CEO, Metrolinx

**MODERATOR:**

**Walid Abou-Hamde**, CEO, ORBA

**3:05 PM PLENARY SESSION III** CANADIAN ROOM

## The Path to Major Project Success: From Vision to Delivery, and the Value of Client-Industry Partnership

Sponsored by:



This panel will explore the challenges and opportunities involved in advancing large-scale infrastructure programs shaping Ontario. Panelists will reflect on the critical early decisions that set projects up for success, including selecting the most suitable delivery model and assembling teams with the right expertise. The discussion will trace the progression from early planning into active delivery and explore how consistent engagement between clients and industry mitigates risk and drives successful execution.

**SPEAKERS:**

- **Marcia Medrano**, Executive Vice President, Union +
- **Malvika Rudra**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Major Highway Projects Division, MTO
- **Rick Tamburro**, Vice President of Brennan Paving and Construction
- **Paul Jankowski**, President, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation

**MODERATOR:**

**Andrew Southam**, Alternative Delivery Manager, Kiewit

**DAY 1**  
**FEBRUARY 2**

**4:05 PM PM REFRESHMENT BREAK**

Sponsored by:



**4:30 PM ORBA & OAPC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS ONTARIO ROOM**

**5:30 PM TRAVEL TIME TO CONTRACTOR'S ROUND UP**

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**6:00 PM - Contractor's Round Up – Biggest Industry Party**  
**1:30 AM** Offsite at Real Sports Bar & Grill – 15 York St., Toronto ON

Sponsored by: **Brandt**





**DAY 2**  
**FEBRUARY 3**

**7:00 AM** **REGISTRATION/CHECK IN**  
BALLROOM FOYER

**7:30 AM** **AWARDS BREAKFAST BUFFET**  
CONCERT HALL

Sponsored by: **HUB**

**8:00 AM** **ORBA AWARDS**  
CONCERT HALL

Sponsored by: **HUB**

**SPEAKERS:**

- **ORBA CEO**
- **ORBA Past President**
- **ORBA President**

**9:00 AM** **KEYNOTE ADDRESS** CANADIAN BALLROOM



Sponsored by: **ABTECH** 

## **Dr. Hayley Wickenheiser**

*Four-time Olympic Gold Medalist, Member of the Hockey Hall of Fame*

## **Partnership in Action: Resilience that Drives Ontario's Growth**

In this inspiring keynote, Dr. Hayley Wickenheiser — four-time Olympic gold medalist, Toronto Maple Leafs executive, and emergency physician — shares how strategic resilience fuels lasting success. Drawing on her remarkable journey from the ice rink to the ER, she reveals why true resilience isn't about "toughing it out" but mastering the deliberate skills to thrive under pressure. With evidence-based strategies and powerful stories, Wickenheiser equips audiences in every field to perform at their best, recover from setbacks, and sustain excellence without compromising mental health or well-being.

**10:00 AM** **AM REFRESHMENT BREAK** CONVENTION FLOOR FOYER

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MILLING**



**DAY 2**  
**FEBRUARY 3**

**10:20 AM** **PLENARY SESSION IV** CANADIAN ROOM

## Asphalt 4.0: Driving Innovation Toward a Sustainable Future

Discover how *Asphalt 4.0*, developed by the European Asphalt Pavement Association (EAPA), is transforming one of the construction sector's biggest challenges—low productivity—through innovation, digitalization, and automation. By embracing smart technologies and data-driven solutions, Asphalt 4.0 paves the way for a more efficient, sustainable, and resilient industry.

Ontario and Canada face many of the same challenges and opportunities. Insights from Asphalt 4.0 will help ORBA and its members shape a sustainability action plan that supports the transition to a climate-neutral, circular economy and advances the Government's commitment to net-zero emissions by 2050.

**SPEAKER:**

**Dr. Carsten Karcher**, *Secretary General, European Asphalt Pavement Association (EAPA)*

**11:30 AM** **LUNCHEON 'CAESAR' RECEPTION** CONCERT HALL FOYER

Sponsored by:



**12:00 PM** **LUNCHEON** CONCERT HALL

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**LUNCHEON WITH GUEST SPEAKER: Hon Prabmeet Sarkaria**, *Minister of Transportation Ontario*

### Ministry of Transportation Awards

- **2025 MTO Asphalt Paver of the Year Awards**
- **2025 MTO Concrete Contractor of the Year Award**

**2:15 PM** **PLENARY SESSION V** CANADIAN ROOM

## Ministry of Transportation: Looking Ahead to 2026

Join Executive leaders from the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) to hear updates on MTO's major infrastructure projects, maintenance updates, the importance of positive relationships and collaboration driving success and insight into what's to come in 2026.

**SPEAKERS:**

- **Eric Doidge**, *Assistant Deputy Minister, Transportation Infrastructure Management Division*
- **Alain Beaulieu**, *Chief Engineer, Transportation Infrastructure Management Division*
- **Jason Ranger**, *Director, Operations Division*
- **Michelle McGrath**, *Director, Capital Program Delivery Branch*
- **Malvika Rudra**, *Assistant Deputy Minister, Major Highway Projects Division*
- **Vanessa Cashmore**, *Manager, Northern Infrastructure & Partnerships Branch, Major Highway Projects Division*
- **Michelle Pasqua**, *Director, Asset Management Branch Transportation Infrastructure Management Division*

**3:15 PM** **PM REFRESHMENT BREAK**

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**3:30 PM** **CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

## MUNICIPAL PLANS & PROJECTS

■ **SESSION D:**

### Municipal Session: Northern & Eastern Regions

 ONTARIO ROOM

- **Bruce Kenny**, *Director, Infrastructure Services, City of Ottawa*
- **Joe Reid**, *Director of Transportation and Operations, City of Belleville*
- **Rob Rocca**, *Manager of Design Services, Engineering, City of Greater Sudbury*

**DAY 2**  
**FEBRUARY 3**

■ **SESSION E:**

**Municipal Session: Southwest & GTA Regions** CONCERT HALL

- **Salim Alibhai**, Director, Capital Delivery-Transportation, Capital Infrastructure Services Public Works, York Region
- **Jennie Dann**, Director, Construction & Infrastructure Services, Environment & Infrastructure, City of London
- **Jennifer Graham Harkness**, Chief Engineer & Executive Director, Engineering & Construction Services, City of Toronto
- **Graeme Guthrie**, Associate Director, Transportation Engineering Public Works, Niagara Region
- **Janet Mosher**, Senior Project Manager, Works Department, Transportation Infrastructure Management, The Regional Municipality of Durham
- **Emily Pelleja**, Manager of Design & Construction, Town of Oakville

**4:30 PM** **PLENARY SESSION VI** CONCERT HALL

**How U.S-Canada Relations Are Reshaping the Construction Industry in Ontario**

Sponsored by:  **Dufferin**  
Construction  
A CRW COMPANY

Canada and the United States share a deeply integrated economic and political relationship that has long shaped North American trade and infrastructure. Today, tariffs and shifting policies are disrupting supply chains, raising costs, and creating uncertainty for Canadian construction firms. This session will examine the historical context, current trade dynamics, and industry strategies to mitigate risks—from legal and procurement practices to interprovincial trade opportunities. We'll highlight supply chain challenges such as rising material costs and customs delays, while exploring practical solutions like tariff indexing, cost escalators, and improved planning. The goal is to equip the construction sector with insights to adapt, advocate, and thrive amid evolving US-Canada relations.

**SPEAKERS:**

- **Doug Porter**, Chief Economist, BMO Financial Group
- **Jamie Tronnes**, Executive Director, Center for North American Prosperity and Security

**MODERATOR:**

**Catherine Clark**, President, Catherine Clark Communications Inc.

**5:30 PM** **PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION** BALLROOM

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**6:30 PM** **PRESIDENT'S DINNER** CANADIAN BALLROOM

Sponsored by:  **Kiewit**

- 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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