

NOON

1:30-2:30 PM

2:45 -3:45 PM

4:00-5:00 PM

5:00-6:00 PM

6:00-8:30 PM

8:30-10:30 PM

DAY 1:

Wednesday, October 14

REGISTRATION OPENS

Visit the registration desk for your nametag, ribbons, and to make sure you have the conference app downloaded!

Conference Registration

Before the Crisis: Managing Risk, Reputation and Response

Hayley Bierkle Burns, Partner, River Strategies

ROOM: Naper 1

From Concept to Completion: An IDOT Leadership Panel on Programming, Design & Construction

Moderator: Griselda Monsivais, Bowman

Fawad Aqueel, Bureau Chief of Design, IDOT R1 | Steve Schilke, Engineer of Program Development, IDOT R1 | Shearrisa Hatcher, IDOT Area Construction Supervisors

Mike Short, Program Development Engineer for District 3

ROOM: Naper 2

Power Skills for High-Impact Project Managers

Jennifer Knox, PE, MBA | Consultant, Strategic Growth Advisory - SNZweig

ROOM: Naper 3

The Next Chapter: Internal Transition, ESOP, or Acquisition?

Colin Desmond Vice President - Chartwell Financial Advisory

ROOM: Conference Room C

Driving Connections: Vision, Planning & Delivery for the Next Generation Tollway

Manar Nashif, Chief Engineering Officer, Illinois Tollway & Karyn Robles, Chief Planning Officer, Illinois Tollway

ROOM: Naper 1

Beyond the Proposal: What IDOT Evaluators Are Looking For

Moderator: Libby Braband, LDB Consulting

Panel: Fawad Aqueel, IDOT Bureau Chief of Design -Region 1 | Steve Schilke, Engineer of Program Development, IDOT Region 1 | Shearrisa Hatcher, IDOT Area Construction Supervisors | Rebecca Tharp Assistant Region 5 Engineer, Jay M. Wavering, P.E. Studies and Plans Engineer, District 6

ROOM: Naper 2

The Profit Equation: How AEC KPIs Work Together for Growth

Jennifer Knox, PE, MBA | Consultant, Strategic Growth Advisory - SNZweig

ROOM: Naper 3

Lessons Learned from Hundreds of FAR Audits: The 10 Most Common Mistakes Costing Engineering Firms Money

Jason Bainter, CPA, CGMA, MBA, CDA Director|CBIZ; Shareholder|CBIZ CPAs and Ben Farmer, CPA Senior Manager|CBIZ

ROOM: Conference Room C

OPENING SESSION: Building a Championship Culture - with Joe Maddon

With a remarkable 31-year Major League Baseball career, Joe managed the Tampa Bay Rays, Chicago Cubs, and Los Angeles Angels — leading the Rays to their first American League pennant in 2008 and guiding the Cubs to their historic 2016 World Series championship.

But Joe’s impact extends far beyond the baseball field. Known for his authenticity, creativity, and unconventional approach to leadership, he brings a perspective shaped by decades of leading teams, navigating challenges, building culture, and bringing people together.

Join us for an inspiring conversation on leadership, teamwork, and what it takes to build something extraordinary.

ROOM: Grand Ballroom

Welcome Reception with Exhibitors

Join us for a welcome reception and to network with exhibitors.

Grand Ballroom Prefunction Area

Dinner in Naperville

Attendees are invited to enjoy dinner off-site and continue conversations with colleagues and fellow ACEC Illinois members.

Off site Dinner

ACEC IL House Party

Keep the night going with games, friendly competition, music, and plenty of laughs. Join fellow ACEC Illinois members for a relaxed, late-night social where the only goal is to have a great time!

Come play games, listen to the DJ, and make some great memories at the ACEC IL Fall Conference!

ROOM: Grand Ballroom

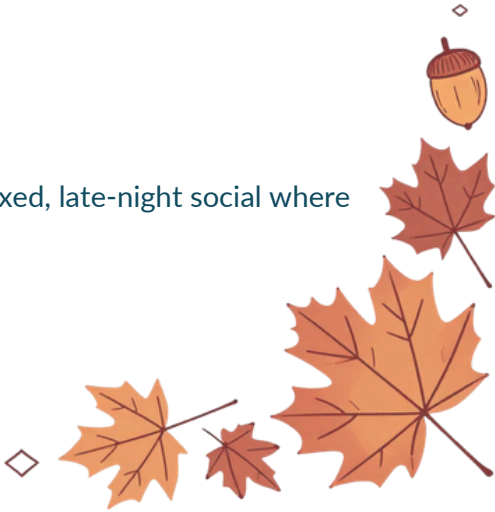
FALL 2026

CONFERENCE

ACEC ILLINOIS

NAPERVILLE, IL

OCTOBER 14 – 15, 2026



DAY 2:

Thursday, October 15

FALL 2026

CONFERENCE

ACEC ILLINOIS

NAPERVILLE, IL

OCTOBER 14 – 15, 2026

8:00 AM

Registration Opens

Visit the registration desk for your nametag, ribbons, and to make sure you have the conference app downloaded!

Grand Ballroom Prefunction Area

8:00-9:00 AM

Breakfast with Exhibitors

Start your morning with a buffet breakfast in the exhibit hall while connecting with exhibitors and fellow attendees. Grab a bite, enjoy a cup of coffee, and take some time to explore the exhibits and make new connections.

Grand Ballroom Prefunction Area

9:00-10:00 AM

Morning Session:
Redefining the Firm: Talent, Technology, and Transformation

SPEAKER: Joe Bates, *Senior Research Consultant* | ACEC Research Institute

ROOM: Grand Ballroom

10:15-11:15 AM

From Blueprint to Action: Transforming Project Delivery at IDOT

Ryan Mitchell, *Deputy Secretary IDOT*

ROOM: Naper 1

AI Won't Replace Engineers... But It Might Change Your Liability

Jake Winkler, *Sr. Account Executive, PC - Holmes Murphy & Dan Brown, Underwriter – Beazley*

ROOM: Naper 2

Reframing Retirement for Engineering Firms

Lydia R. Zabrycki, *Client Engagement* | ACEC Retirement Trust

ROOM: Naper 3

Powering the Digital Future: Data Center Growth, Challenges, and Engineering Solutions

Moderator: Alec Messina, Partner at HeplerBroom

Panel: Erica Spolar, Exec. VP & Environmental Services Manager at HLR | Dale Lewis is Director of Data Centers at The Boldt Company | Jonathan Callaway is the founder and CEO of Recall Strategies | Neil Parish, ECA Director of Operations

ROOM: Conference Room C

11:30AM-12:30PM

Inside IDOT: Perspectives from Regions 4 and 5 Regional Engineers

Teresa Price, *Regional Engineer* and Rebecca Tharp *Assistant Region 5 Engineer*

ROOM: Naper 1

What's Ahead at CDB: Funding, Projects and Progressive Design-Build

TJ Edwards, Executive Director | Nicholas Klein, Assistant Deputy Director of Operations | Brent Lance, Administrator of Capital Planning/QBS | Keith Stewart, Administrator of Construction | Dan Troglio, Project Manager | Jesse Martinez, Administrator of Fair Employment Practices

ROOM: Naper 2

Prompts That Work: Effective AI for the AEC Firm

James Harmon is the founder of XoSelf AI, a Naperville AI training and consulting firm

ROOM: Naper 3

Investing in Illinois Water: SRF, Lead Line Replacement & Infrastructure Priorities

Nidhan Singh, *State Revolving Fund Manager, IEPA* and Alec Messina, *Partner-HeplerBroom LLC*

ROOM: Conference Room C

12:30-2:30 PM

12:30pm Lunch

1:30pm Closing Session:

Inside Illinois Government: Christian Mitchell on Leadership, Rebuild Illinois, and What's Next

Enjoy lunch while connecting with fellow attendees, followed by our closing session.

ROOM: Grand Ballroom

