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7TH EDITION

INFRADAY SOUTHEAST

SEPTEMBER 23, 2026

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

SUMMIT at 8 West

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The program is current as of the publication date and is subject to change.
Thursday, September 17, 2026

Infraday Southeast 2026
Atlanta, Georgia

7:00 – 8:10 AM
Registration & Networking Breakfast

8:10 – 8:50 AM

Panel: Delivering the Southeast's Capital Program Boom — Strategy, Risk & the Future of Major Projects

The Southeast is entering an extraordinary period of capital investment across transportation, energy, water, digital infrastructure, manufacturing and public facilities. But as programs grow larger and more complex, infrastructure owners face mounting challenges around cost, schedule, procurement, workforce, governance and risk. This opening discussion examines how public agencies, utilities and private infrastructure owners are strengthening capital planning, improving program controls, deploying new technology and developing delivery strategies capable of turning unprecedented investment into successful projects.

Moderator:

Matt Yarbrough, Vice President, Policy & Government Affairs, **Council for Quality Growth**

Panelists:

Aaron Szarowicz, Economic Development Director, **City of Brookhaven**

Erica Brizzee, Assistant Director, Department of Transportation, **Gwinnett County Government**

Kelsey Brantley, Manager, **Atlanta Emerging Markets, Inc. Invest Atlanta**

Rachel Smith, Capital Projects Financial Reporting Manager, **Forsyth County Government**

Wesley Parkmond, Deputy Commissioner – Capital Delivery, **Atlanta Department of Transportation**

8:50 – 9:30 AM

Panel: Powering the Southeast — Data Centers, Manufacturing & the Race for Electricity

AI data centers, advanced manufacturing, EV and battery plants, and continued population growth are driving a historic increase in electricity demand across the Southeast. Utilities and energy providers must expand generation, transmission, substations and grid capacity fast enough to support billions of dollars in new economic development. This panel examines where new power will come from, how quickly critical grid infrastructure can be delivered, and whether electricity availability could become the defining constraint on the Southeast's growth.

Moderator:

Hector Ayala, Account Executive III, **Aurigo**

Panelists:

Bobby Lundy II, Sustainability Manager, **Turner Construction Company**

Cameron Ford, Senior Project Manager of Commercial Development, **Anderson County Economic Development**

David Cole, Vice President, **NAI Brannen Goddard**

Jeff Miller, Senior Program Manager - Industry Learning, **Institute of Nuclear Power Operations**

Metin Vargonen, Energy Storage Systems Product Line Leader, Power Conversion & Storage, **GE Vernova**

9:30 – 10:10 AM

Panel: The Data Center Boom — Building the Southeast's Digital Infrastructure

The Southeast is emerging as one of America's fastest-growing data center markets as AI and cloud computing drive unprecedented investment in digital infrastructure. Developers must secure viable sites, power, land, water, fiber and permits while delivering increasingly large campuses on aggressive timelines. This panel examines where the next generation of data centers will be built, what infrastructure will be required to support them, and how developers, communities and infrastructure partners can accelerate projects from site selection through construction and operation.

Moderator:

F. J. "Josh" Fenn, Director, Public Affairs, **STACK Infrastructure**

Panelists:

Andrew Tupper, Senior Manager - Acquisitions, **CloudHQ, LLC**

David Craley, Director, Data Center Delivery Solutions, **QCells North America/TheEdge/Transgrid Energy (TGE)**

Shaun Dodson, Manager | Site Development, Community & Economic Development, **Georgia EMC**

Steve Ledbetter, County Manager, **Spalding County**

Susanne Reynolds, Director, **Development Authority of Early County**

10:10 – 10:40 AM

Morning Networking Break

10:40 – 11:15 AM

Panel: Moving Southeast: Highways, Bridges, Transit & the Next Generation of Mobility

Population and employment growth are placing enormous pressure on transportation networks across the Southeast. DOTs, transit agencies and metropolitan governments are advancing major highways, bridge and transit investments while confronting congestion, funding constraints and rising construction costs. This discussion examines projects and investment priorities reshaping regional mobility.

Moderator:

Rob Cary, Specialist Executive, Transportation and Resilient Infrastructure, **Deloitte Consulting LLP**

Panelists:

Alyssa Davis, Executive Director, **Sugarloaf Community Improvement District**

Mark Reida, Utility Permitting Manager, **Cobb County Department of Transportation**

Scott Keith, Public Works Director, **Town of Greenville**

Taylor Worley, Manager, Business & Economic Development, **Georgia Ports Authority**

11:15 – 11:35 AM

Panel: Building Better Cities: Procurement, Public Works & Infrastructure Delivery

As Southeast communities grow, local governments face increasing pressure to expand and modernize the infrastructure residents and businesses depend on every day. Delivering roads, utilities, stormwater systems, public facilities and other essential assets requires closer coordination between public works, procurement and capital planning teams. This discussion examines how municipalities are prioritizing projects, improving procurement and contracting, managing limited resources, and finding practical ways to deliver critical infrastructure faster and more effectively.

Moderator:

Brian Dorelus, Vice President, **Aerotropolis Atlanta Alliance**

Panelists:

Angela Seymour, Procurement Manager I – Solicitation Services, Department of Procurement & Contracts, **City of Columbia, SC**

Pete Sewczwicz, Director of Public Works, **City of Alpharetta**

Rex Facer, Head, Local Government Unit, **UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government**

11:35 AM – 12:10 PM

Panel: Airports, Ports & Logistics — Infrastructure Behind the Southeast's Global Growth

The Southeast has emerged as one of America's most important passenger, freight and logistics gateways. Airports, ports, railroads and freight corridors are investing billions to accommodate population growth, manufacturing, e-commerce and international trade. This discussion examines the infrastructure investments required to maintain the region's competitive advantage.

Moderator:

Nicholas Johnson, Chief Evangelist, **Kahua**

Panelists:

Ali Phillips-Herring, Ph.D, Project Manager, **City of Atlanta Department of Procurement**

David Arnett, Public Works Director, **Anniston, AL**

Denson White, Chief Commercial Officer, **APM Terminals**

12:10– 1:10 PM

Networking Lunch

1:10 – 1:50 PM

Conversation: ATL's Infrastructure Future: Capital Strategy, Investment & Financial Resilience

Atlanta is entering a significant period of infrastructure investment, with major capital priorities shaping the future of both the city and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. This conversation brings together senior financial and infrastructure leaders from the City of Atlanta and

ATL to share their perspectives on capital investment, infrastructure finance and the financial considerations surrounding one of the nation's fastest-growing metropolitan regions.

Presenters:

Bryan Benefiel, Senior Deputy General Manager and CFO, **Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport**

C. Courtney Knight, Treasurer, Office of Treasury, Debt and Investments, **City of Atlanta**

1:50 – 2:30 PM

Panel: Water for Growth: Building Infrastructure for the Southeast's Next Generation

Population growth and industrial development are creating enormous new requirements for drinking water, wastewater, stormwater and water reuse infrastructure. Utilities must expand capacity while simultaneously replacing aging assets and managing affordability, environmental requirements and resilience. This discussion examines the investments needed to keep water from becoming a constraint on Southeast growth.

Moderator:

Leslie Gillespie-Marthaler, Ph.D, Public Sector Water Lead (U.S.), **Deloitte Consulting LLP**

Panelists:

Arkedia Raines, Water Business Administrator, **Athens-Clarke County Unified Government**

Ben Robinson, Water Distribution ORC, Brevard Public Works Department, **Brevard, NC**

David McLawhorn, Capital Projects Coordinator, **Mount Pleasant, SC**

Kimby Peek, Director of Water Resources, **Rockdale County, GA**

Vondra McIntyre, Water Reclamation Center Manager, **City of Atlanta**

Wendi Hartup, Stormwater Manager, **Town of Kernersville, NC**

2:30 – 2:50 PM

Presentation: Strong Opinions, Weakly Held: A Mindset for the Future of Construction

In a fast-changing construction industry, holding tightly to outdated beliefs can be a silent killer of innovation. This session challenges attendees to reexamine what they “know” to be true and introduces the transformative mindset of “Strong Opinions, Loosely Held.” Through thought-provoking examples and real-world tech insights, Kahua's Nicholas Johnson dismantles common industry myths, advocates for humility over hubris and proposes actionable strategies for navigating paradigm shifts.

Walk away with a fresh perspective and an actionable plan to foster adaptive leadership, question assumptions and model the mindset needed for tomorrow's challenges.

Presenter:

Nicholas Johnson, Chief Evangelist, **Kahua**

2:50 – 3:20 PM

Panel: Infrastructure Finance: Paying for the Southeast's Next Generation of Projects

The Southeast's infrastructure ambitions increasingly exceed what traditional public funding can support. Owners are combining federal programs, state and local funding, bonds, private capital, P3 structures and innovative financing approaches to advance major projects. This discussion examines how projects are being funded and where private capital can play a larger role.

Moderator:

Susan Pease Langford, Attorney, **Butler Snow LLP**

Panelists:

Chad Lewis, Vice President - Private Credit, **Voya Investment Management**

Nino Maisuradze, Chief Financial Officer, **Atlanta Beltline, Inc.**

Patrick Casey Bush, Director, Infrastructure Finance, **KeyBanc Capital Markets**

Terry Jackson, Chief Financial Officer, **Clayton County Board of Commissioners**

3:20 – 3:50 PM

Afternoon Networking Break

3:50 – 4:10 PM

Presentation: From Plans to Projects: Why Municipal Capacity Must Extend Beyond City Hall

Municipalities across the Southeast are developing ambitious plans to accommodate growth, modernize infrastructure, and strengthen their communities. Yet vision, funding, and technical expertise alone do not guarantee successful delivery. Turning plans into projects requires the capacity to prioritize initiatives, define scope, govern decisions, align resources, manage risk, and coordinate stakeholders.

This presentation explores the gap between planning and execution through a project management lens, arguing that municipal capacity is itself a critical component of infrastructure capacity. It introduces a framework built on two complementary forms of capacity: internal capacity, the people, processes, governance, and project controls required to manage delivery and collaborative capacity: the ability to meaningfully engage stakeholders beyond City Hall.

Using a development review task force as a practical example, the session demonstrates how structured collaboration can improve problem definition, stakeholder alignment, and project outcomes.

Presenter:

Yasmine Edge, Project Manager, Planning & Community Development, **City of East Point**

4:10 – 4:40 PM

Panel: Connected Infrastructure: Managing the Full Lifecycle of Capital Programs

Infrastructure owners are connecting BIM, GIS, project controls, asset management, scheduling, field data, digital twins and AI into integrated environments supporting the full lifecycle of infrastructure assets. This discussion explores how agencies are using connected information to improve project delivery, executive visibility, operations and long-term asset management.

Moderator:

Ayden Prigoff, Senior Sales Development Representative, **Kahua**

Panelists:

Chase Horton, Project Manager - Transportation, **HNTB**

Karyl Clayton, SPLOST Construction Project Manager, **Clayton County Board of Commissioners**

Kelley Brown, Senior Director Program Management, **Turner & Townsend Heery**

Sarah Margaret O'Brien, Data Scientist - Information Management Office, **Southern Company**

4:40 – 5:10 PM

Panel: Resilient Southeast: Hurricanes, Flooding, Heat & Critical Infrastructure

Extreme weather is changing how Southeast infrastructure owners plan, design and invest. Transportation agencies, utilities, airports, ports and municipalities are strengthening critical assets and incorporating resilience into long-term capital programs. This panel explores where resilience investment is occurring and how agencies are prioritizing projects before the next major event.

Panelists:

John Roberts, Jr., Community Resilience Manager, **Groundswell Community Power**

Kaine Riggan, Grants Development Specialist - Infrastructure Lead, **North Carolina Department of Public Safety**

Molly Caggiano, Resilience & Sustainability Manager, **Charleston County Government**

5:10 – 5:30 PM

Presentation: Leveraging AI to Enhance Efficiency, Innovation, and Impact in Parks & Recreation

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming how governments operate - and for parks and recreation agencies, it presents an opportunity to streamline operations, improve efficiency, and enhance service delivery.

The City of Atlanta Department of Parks and Recreation will share its experience exploring and applying AI across a range of projects, from everyday tasks that help staff save time to more complex applications supporting data, analysis, planning, and operations. The panel will provide a practical look at what AI implementation can look like on the ground, including workflow adjustments, lessons learned, and considerations for responsible use.

Attendees will gain practical tips for identifying opportunities to incorporate AI into their own work, developing effective prompts, evaluating AI-generated outputs, and balancing efficiency with accuracy, data privacy, human oversight, and other organizational considerations.

Presenter:

Sabina Kasumova, Performance and Operations Specialist, **City of Atlanta**

5:30 – 6:00 PM

Panel: AI, Robotics & the Future of Infrastructure Delivery

AI, robotics, drones, autonomous equipment and machine vision are beginning to transform how infrastructure is planned, designed, constructed, inspected and maintained. This closing discussion examines where these technologies are already delivering measurable value and how automation could reshape infrastructure delivery and the workforce over the coming decade.

Panelists:

Anthony Choi, Director of Machine Intelligence & Robotics Laboratory (MIRL), Professor of Electrical & Computer Engineering, **Mercer University School of Engineering**

Charlie Cichetti, CEO + Co-Founder, **Skema.AI**

Desmond Domfeh, Information Technology Security Manager, **City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management**

6:00 PM

Closing Remarks