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5TH EDITION

INFRADAY PACIFIC NORTHWEST

CONNECTING LEADERS.
POWERING INFRASTRUCTURE.
BUILDING THE FUTURE.



AUGUST 20, 2026

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM



BLOCK 41

115 Bell St,
Seattle, WA 98121



A full-day event bringing together infrastructure leaders, innovators, and professionals across the Pacific Northwest to collaborate, learn, and drive impact.

TOPICS INCLUDE:



POWER & GRID INVESTMENT

Grid modernization, transmission expansion & reliability.



DATA CENTERS & AI INFRASTRUCTURE

Meeting the growing demand for power, water & connectivity.



PORTS, SUPPLY CHAIN & TRADE

Strengthening ports, freight mobility & global competitiveness.



AVIATION & LOGISTICS

Airport modernization, cargo growth & multimodal access.



WATER & RESILIENCE

Investing in water infrastructure & building regional resilience.



DIGITAL DELIVERY & CONNECTED ASSETS

BIM, digital twins, AI & data-driven asset management.



SUSTAINABILITY & CLEAN ENERGY

Advancing clean energy, decarbonization & sustainable solutions.



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The program is current as of the publication date and is subject to change.

Infraday Pacific Northwest 2026
Seattle, Washington

7:30 – 8:20 AM

Registration & Networking Breakfast

8:20 – 8:50 AM

Panel: The Pacific Northwest Infrastructure Boom — AI, Clean Energy & Industrial Growth

The Pacific Northwest is entering one of the most significant infrastructure investment cycles in its history as artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, aerospace, clean energy, and industrial development reshape the regional economy. Massive private investment is creating unprecedented demand for electricity, transportation, water systems, industrial land, and digital infrastructure while public agencies work to keep pace with growth. This discussion explores where investment is accelerating across Washington and Oregon, the infrastructure constraints beginning to emerge, and the priorities that will define infrastructure delivery over the next decade.

Moderator:

Nicholas Johnson, Chief Evangelist, **Kahua**

Panelists:

Garrison Marr, Senior Manager, Power Supply, **Snohomish County PUD**

Jack Newman, Director of Clean Energy Solutions, **Sāzān Group**

John Wilson, King County Assessor, **King County, WA**

8:50 – 9:20 AM

Panel: AI Infrastructure, Data Centers & The Northwest Power Challenge

The Pacific Northwest has become one of North America's fastest-growing destinations for hyperscale data centers and AI infrastructure because of abundant renewable energy, fiber connectivity, and available development sites. Utilities are facing record electricity demand, transmission constraints, and increasingly complex interconnection challenges as technology companies race to secure capacity. This panel examines how utilities, developers, and public agencies are balancing economic growth with grid reliability, water availability, permitting, and long-term infrastructure planning.

Moderator:

AJ Waters, Field COO - Public Sector, **Procore Technologies**

Panelists:

Adrian Hilderbrand, Principal Program Manager | Data Center Architecture, **Eaton**

Bill Caram, Executive Director, **Pipeline Safety Trust**

Glen Pruitt, Vice President Legal, Regulatory, and Government Affairs, **Grant PUD**

Tyler Keller, Vice President, Data Center Solutions, **ACI**

Ya-Han Brownlee-Chen, Vice President of Data Center Strategy, **DP World**

9:20 – 9:40 AM

Presentation: Innovation on the Ballard Link Extension — Delivering Transformative Transit in the Puget Sound

The Ballard Link Extension is one of the Pacific Northwest's largest transit investments, expanding Sound Transit's light rail network by 7.7 miles and up to nine new stations while connecting communities across the agency's four-county service area. Designed to serve approximately 150,000 daily riders, the project will improve regional mobility, reduce congestion, and support long-term economic growth throughout the Puget Sound region. This presentation will examine how Sound Transit is applying advanced design methodologies, digital engineering, and collaborative project delivery to improve passenger experience, optimize operations, and streamline construction on a complex, multi-billion-dollar infrastructure program. Attendees will gain insight into innovative planning, engineering, and delivery strategies helping shape the future of transit in Seattle.

Presenter:

Gavin Schaefer, Design Director – Ballard Link Extension, **Sound Transit**

9:40 – 9:50 AM

Project Showcase: EC Electric — Partnership in Action at SeaTac Airport

This video highlights EC Electric's work supporting Alaska Airlines during a time-sensitive electrical challenge at SeaTac Airport. Through rapid response, technical expertise, and close collaboration, EC Electric helped address a critical infrastructure issue while keeping airline operations moving. The project demonstrates the importance of experience, preparation, and strong partnerships when delivering mission-critical infrastructure under pressure.

Presenter:

Don Baker, Regional Operations Director, **EC Electric**

9:50 – 10:20 AM

Morning Break

Sponsored by:



10:20 – 11:00 AM

Panel: Transmission Expansion, Grid Reliability & Electrification

Electric demand across the Pacific Northwest continues to rise as transportation, buildings, industry, and AI infrastructure become increasingly electrified. Utilities are responding with major

investments in transmission, substations, renewable integration, wildfire mitigation, and grid modernization while managing growing reliability expectations. This discussion explores where the largest investments are occurring, the challenges slowing deployment, and what the region's electric system may look like over the next decade.

Moderator:

Phillip Rizzo, VP, North America Public Sector Sales, **Oracle**

Panelists:

Aravindhan Vadivel, Grid Operations Manager - AI/ML - Applied Grid Innovation, **GE Vernova**

Jeff Winmill, Strategic Counsel, Regulatory Affairs, **Seattle City Light**

Katherine Rice, Senior Electric Vehicle Charging Planner, **City of Seattle**

Kishan Mistry, Supervisor of Engineering, Electric Commodities and Innovation, **Puget Sound Energy**

Will Jolley, Vice President - Commercial Analytics, **GridStor**

11:00 – 11:20 AM

Presentation: Why AI Deployments Fail in the Field — And What It Takes to Make Them Work

Artificial intelligence is rapidly entering infrastructure operations, yet many deployments fail because they are designed without the realities of field work in mind. Drawing on more than 25 years of operational leadership at Southern California Edison and Seattle Public Utilities, this presentation explores why the gap between AI developers and frontline crews often prevents successful adoption. Through real-world experience managing 44,000 annual inspections across 26,000 square miles, attendees will learn the operational, organizational, and human factors that determine whether AI succeeds or fails in the field. The session will provide practical strategies for designing AI solutions that improve safety, productivity, and decision-making while earning the trust of the workforce responsible for using them.

Presenter:

Bernard Morris, Founder, Blue Collar AI HQ | Blue-Collar AI Translator and Six Sigma Black Belt, **Seattle Public Utilities**

11:20 – 11:40 AM

Presentation: Seattle's World Class Waterfront: A Waterfront for All

The 2001 Nisqually earthquake and removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct created a rare opportunity for Seattle to reconnect its neighborhoods to the shoreline. Through the Office of the Waterfront, Civic Projects, and Sound Transit (OWCPST), the City transformed the Central Waterfront into a vibrant promenade designed for gathering, recreation, cultural activities, and year-round programming. Guided by community-informed principles, the City and its civic partners delivered a long-term program that moved smoothly from design and construction into activation, operations, and maintenance. The program includes a new seawall, restored beach, rebuilt piers, pedestrian bridges, 20 acres of public park, protected bike lanes, public restroom, and improved east-west connections. Major concurrent projects—such as the rebuilt Colman Dock Ferry Terminal and expansions at the Seattle Aquarium and Pike Place Market—further enhance the waterfront experience. This presentation will highlight the project's history, key components, ongoing

operations, and what comes next for Waterfront Seattle, showcasing how the removal of a divisive highway enabled a renewed and accessible waterfront for all.

Presenter:

Emily Burns, Real Property & Assets Manager, Seattle Office of the Waterfront, Civic Projects, & **Sound Transit**

11:40 AM – 12:20 PM

Panel: Aviation Expansion, Cargo Growth & Airport Modernization

Passenger growth, expanding cargo operations, and aging airport infrastructure are driving billions of dollars in capital investment across the Pacific Northwest. Airports are modernizing terminals, improving airfield capacity, upgrading utilities, and expanding multimodal access to support future demand. This discussion examines how airport owners are prioritizing investments while balancing operational efficiency, sustainability, and long-term regional growth.

Moderator:

Nicholas Johnson, Chief Evangelist, **Kahua**

Panelists:

Brandon Rakes, Airport Director, **Chehalis-Centralia Airport**

Chris Czarnecki, Director - Aviation Business, Properties, and Airline Affairs, **Port of Portland**

Christian Venturino, Capital Project Manager - Aviation, **Port of Seattle**

Ellis Byeon, Associate Vice President, Aviation Area Manager, U.S. West, **AECOM**

Xochitl Castañeda, Director, Pacific Northwest and Alaska Gateway Office, Maritime & Intermodal Outreach, **U.S. Department of Transportation**

12:20 – 1:20 PM

Networking Lunch

1:20 – 1:40 PM

Presentation: Refreshing an Icon — Rehabilitating the Seattle Center Monorail for the Next Generation

Built for the 1962 World's Fair alongside the Space Needle, the Seattle Center Monorail remains one of Seattle's most recognizable landmarks and an essential transportation link between Seattle Center and downtown. This rehabilitation project is modernizing the historic system while preserving its architectural character, improving accessibility, enhancing passenger circulation, strengthening safety, and creating a more seamless rider experience. The presentation will explore how the project balances historic preservation with contemporary design, the planning and operational strategies used to improve system performance, and how the revitalized station will continue serving residents and visitors for decades to come. Attendees will also gain insight into the design tools used to evaluate passenger throughput, wayfinding improvements, and operational enhancements that support long-term maintenance and future ridership growth.

Presenters:

Megan Ching, President, **Seattle Monorail Services**

Mark Johnson, Architect, **Signal Architecture + Research**

1:40 – 2:20 PM

Panel: Cascadia Resilience — Preparing Infrastructure for Earthquakes, Flooding & Wildfire

No region in North America faces a more complex combination of seismic, flooding, wildfire, and climate-related infrastructure risks than the Pacific Northwest. Public agencies are making significant investments to improve the resilience of transportation systems, utilities, public facilities, and critical infrastructure before the next major disaster occurs. This panel explores how resilience planning is influencing capital investment decisions and where the region is making its largest long-term infrastructure commitments.

Moderator:

Elizabeth “Eli” King, Energy Resilience and Emergency Management Director, **Washington State Energy Office**

Panelists:

Ann Richart, Aviation Director, **Washington State Department of Transportation**

Aqsa Mengal, Climate & Clean Energy Policy Lead, **Front and Centered**

Hannah Ljunggren, Climate Resilience Program Manager, **The Suquamish Tribe**

LeAnn Blanco, Civil Rights Program Manager LTD, **Port of Seattle**

Natalie Weiss, Climate Resilience Specialist, **City of Olympia**

Seth Vidaña, Climate and Energy Manager, **City of Bellingham**

2:20 – 2:40 PM

Presentation: Overview of SPU’s Water System Seismic Program

In 2018, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) completed a comprehensive seismic study for the drinking water system serving SPU’s retail and wholesale service areas. This study evaluated the seismic hazards impacting the Puget Sound region and the water system, including earthquake-induced hazards such as intense ground shaking, permanent ground displacement, liquefaction, and landslides to assess vulnerabilities of the water system. The study also identified reinforcement/retrofit capital projects for high-risk pipelines and drinking water facilities, developed post-earthquake performance goals, recommended improvements to SPU’s earthquake emergency preparedness, and proposed seismic standards to adopt in SPU’s Design Standards. This presentation will provide an overview of the seismic study and the ongoing work within SPU’s seismic program to address vulnerabilities and to build a more resilient regional water system.

Presenter:

Stephen Anderson, Water Infrastructure Planning & Seismic Resiliency, **City of Seattle, Seattle Public Utilities**

2:40 – 3:10 PM

Panel: Water Infrastructure, Hydropower & Industrial Water Demand

Water remains one of the Pacific Northwest's greatest competitive advantages, yet aging infrastructure, environmental regulations, industrial expansion, and population growth are placing increasing pressure on water systems. Utilities are balancing drinking water, wastewater, hydropower, stormwater, and ecosystem protection while supporting continued economic

development. This session examines the major investments shaping the future of water infrastructure throughout the region.

Moderator:

Sunni Wissmer, Director of Business Development, **Epic Cleantec**

Panelists:

Cody Colt, Director of Public Works, **City of Yelm, Washington**

Doug Chalmers, Water Resources Engineer, **SEI — Stockholm Environment Institute**

Kristin Masteller, General Manager, **Mason County PUD No. 1**

3:10 – 3:30 PM

Afternoon Break

3:30 – 4:00 PM

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

Infrastructure owners are increasingly connecting BIM, GIS, digital twins, asset management, scheduling, AI, and project controls into integrated digital environments that support the full lifecycle of infrastructure assets. Connected data is improving project delivery, operational performance, executive visibility, and long-term asset management across transportation, utilities, aviation, and water systems. This discussion explores how agencies are building smarter capital programs through digital transformation and enterprise-wide integration.

Moderator:

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

Panelists:

Bradley Philp, Information Technology Security Engineer, **Seattle Housing Authority**

Danielle Devier, Senior Urban Ecology Analyst, **City of Seattle**

Eleonor Bounds, Senior Analyst, Data Privacy & Responsible AI, **City of Seattle**

Max Baker, Development Supervisor, **City of Tukwila**

4:00 – 4:20 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**

4:20 – 4:50 PM

Panel: Alternative Delivery at Scale — What Northwest Owners Actually Want From Contractors

Owners across the Pacific Northwest continue expanding the use of Progressive Design-Build, GCCM/CMGC, Design-Build, and collaborative project delivery models to improve schedule certainty and reduce project risk. Success increasingly depends on early contractor involvement, transparent communication, digital collaboration, and stronger program management capabilities. This session explores what public owners expect from contractors and consultants as infrastructure programs continue growing in size and complexity.

Moderator:

AJ Waters, Field COO - Public Sector, **Procore Technologies**

Panelists:

Eric Ostfeld, Executive Vice President, Design-Build, **Michael Baker International**

Janice Zahn, Washington State 41st LD House of Representative & Chief Engineer, **Port of Seattle**

Mark Ruebel, Capital Strike Team Supervisor, River and Floodplain Management Section, **King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks**

4:50 – 5:20 PM

Panel: Governing Major Capital Programs — Executive Visibility, Controls & Decision-Making

As infrastructure owners oversee larger and more complex portfolios, maintaining visibility across budgets, schedules, procurement, risks, and performance has become just as important as delivering individual projects. Executive leaders require connected information, reliable forecasting, and stronger governance to make informed investment decisions and keep capital programs on track. This discussion examines how infrastructure organizations are strengthening program controls while improving accountability, transparency, and long-term portfolio management.

Moderator:

Michael Tooley, Vice President, State and Local Government, **Aurigo Software Technologies**

Panelists:

Jan Whittington, Associate Professor, Urban Design and Planning Department, **University of Washington**

Jen Tetatzin, Public Works Director | City Engineer, **City of Tukwila**

5:20 – 5:40 PM

Presentation: Governing Complex Legal Technology Programs – What it Takes to Modernize

Modernizing legal technology at an enterprise scale is substantially more complex than replacing outdated systems. It requires coordinate governance, disciplined decision-making, and sustained alignment across diverse legal, administrative, and technical teams. The Oregon Department of Justice's Legal Tools Program illustrates this challenge firsthand: a multi-year modernization effort replacing legacy case, timekeeping, billing, and document management systems with

JusticeNexus, an integrated platform designed to improve data integrity, cross-division collaboration, user experience, and long-term operational resilience.

This presentation explores what it truly takes to govern and deliver a modernization program of this scale. Drawing on real-world experience leading interdependent workstreams, including requirements analysis, vendor management, data architecture, cloud governance, quality gate reviews, change management, and stakeholder engagement, the session will highlight how governance structures, executive alignment, risk mitigation, and consistent communication shape the success of large public-sector technology programs. Attendees will gain practical insights into navigating legacy system constraints, managing cultural and operational impacts, sequencing complex implementation activities, and sustaining momentum over a seven-year program horizon.

By unpacking lessons from DOJ's journey, the session offers a candid look at what modernization really requires: disciplined leadership, clear governance pathways, and unwavering coordination across the teams responsible for delivering vital legal services to the state.

Presenter: Brittany Daoud, IT Program Delivery Manager, **Oregon Department of Justice - Administrative Services Division**

5:40 – 6:30 PM

Networking Reception