

CO  **GEN** **CE** Alliance
Owners + Architects + Engineers + Contractors

Inspire. Educate. Unite.



Mission + Purpose

Cogence *(Latin)*

“To drive together” or “Thinking that is well organized”

The purpose of the Alliance is to bring Owners and Developers, Architects and Engineers, Construction Managers and Contractors, and Allied Industry Professionals together to **advocate** and be a **resource** for improved project delivery.

For more information visit us at www.cogence.org

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Panelists:

- **Aaron Hill – Bialosky Architects, Principal and Co-CEO**
- **Tari Rivera – Regency Construction, President**
- **Aaron Lobas – Osborn Engineering, Director**
- **Daniel Waters – Bedrock, Director of Construction**
- **Brandon Lawler – CC&E, President**



Northeast Ohio Roundtable Summary: May 20, 2026

State of the Northeast Ohio AEC Industry

- Northeast Ohio AEC market remains active, but project delivery is under pressure from labor shortages, cost escalation, and permitting delays.
- Teams that prioritize trust, transparency, and early issue escalation are better positioned to manage risk and maintain project momentum.
- Strategic actions include clarifying delegated design scope early, simplifying design for workforce realities, and engaging permitting authorities proactively.



Collaboration and Project Culture

- Project success depends on a collective environment where all stakeholders can contribute.
- High-performing teams allow bad news to surface early so issues can be addressed before they escalate.
- Building social capital supports candid problem-solving and stronger decision-making under pressure.



Delegated Design and Risk Allocation

- Delegated design is expanding beyond traditional specialty systems, increasing ambiguity and friction.
- Unclear scope and hidden specification requirements often lead to change orders and liability disputes.
- Teams should define responsibility for design, review, and professional seal requirements at the outset.



Market Volatility and Workforce Constraints

- Labor shortages are reshaping how projects are designed and executed, requiring simpler and more buildable solutions.
- Cost escalation continues at a pace of roughly 5% annually, adding pressure to project budgets.
- Early procurement packages are becoming a key strategy to address long lead times and pricing uncertainty.



Permitting and Regulatory Risk

- Permitting and entitlement delays can extend project starts by 6 to 12 months and now represent a major critical-path risk.
- Incomplete submissions create rework and further slow already strained review systems.
- Early coordination with authorities and complete zoning-critical packages can reduce downstream delays.



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Strategic Takeaways

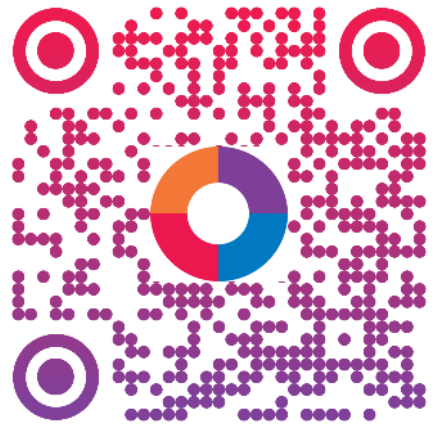
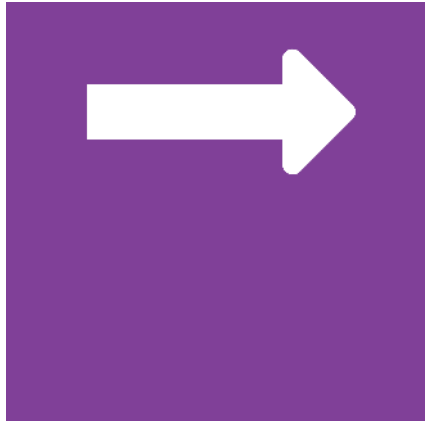
- Invest in project culture that encourages transparency, accountability, and fast decision-making.
- Clarify delegated design expectations early to reduce scope ambiguity and downstream claims.
- Plan for escalation, procurement risk, and permitting lead times earlier than traditional project timelines assume.



Northeast Ohio Roundtable Summary: May 20, 2026

Closing

- The industry is navigating a more complex delivery environment that rewards early coordination and disciplined execution.
- Organizations that adapt their planning, communication, and procurement strategies will be better positioned to succeed.

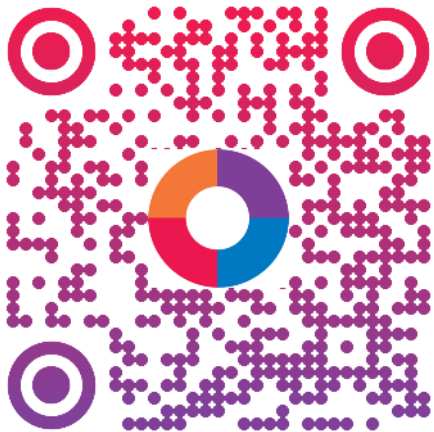


FORWARD
TOGETHER
The Cogence Way

Townhall 2026 | September 15-16 | Huntington Convention Center of Cleveland

FORWARD TOGETHER

Sponsorship Opportunities



TOWNHALL 2026

September 15-16

Huntington Convention Center of Cleveland

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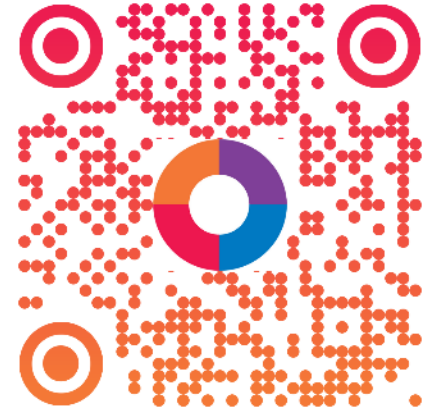
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WALTER JONES DRIVE AWARDS 2026

Cogence Alliance would like to honor the best in project collaboration, while showing our community how their contributions are improving project outcomes in the A/E/C industry.

The Walter Jones Drive Awards highlight the critical role and immense value that collaboration and innovation bring to building projects.



*Intent to Submit
Deadline
July 17, 2026*



*Final Submission
Deadline
August 14, 2026*



*Judging Period
August 15 –
September 11, 2026*



*Town Hall
Awards Event
September 16, 2026*