



With tighter travel and training budgets, conference attendance must be clearly justified. Whether you're a project manager, program leader, or emerging construction management professional, **CMAA2026** delivers high-value learning, networking, and professional development that benefit both you and your organization.

This three-day event — October 4 - 6, 2026, in Denver (Aurora), Colorado — features four plenary sessions, 28 concurrent education sessions, four pre-conference courses (available at a discount when bundled with conference registration), a comprehensive expo hall, and the annual CMAA Industry Recognition Awards, including the 2026 Project Achievement Awards.

The program is designed to advance the program and construction management profession by equipping professionals at all career stages with knowledge, skills, and perspectives that strengthen project and program outcomes. Sessions focus on leadership, innovation, and overcoming challenges construction managers (CMs) face daily, offering content and interactive engagement you can't get anywhere else.

Use this toolkit to outline your return on investment (ROI) and make it easy for leadership to see the value of sending you to CMAA's flagship event.

1. Focus on What You Will Bring Back

Frame your request around measurable, actionable benefits.

- **Gain New Insights and Strategies**
“Between the education sessions and conversations with peers, CMAA2026 is full of practical ideas and proven approaches I can bring back and apply immediately.”
- **Learn From Industry Leaders and Peers**
“I’ll hear from experienced practitioners and innovative thinkers in sessions that address current challenges, new technologies, and evolving best practices.”
- **Stay Ahead of Industry Trends**
“With topics covering alternative delivery, sustainability, technology integration, risk management, and leadership, I’ll return better equipped to address upcoming project and program needs.”



2. Emphasize Employer Benefits

Highlight how your participation supports organizational goals.

- **Build a Network of Resources**
“CMAA2026 brings together CMs, owners, contractors, and service providers from across the country. I can connect with experts and peers facing the same challenges we do — connections that last beyond the event.”
- **Enhance Performance and Efficiency**
“Many sessions focus on tools, processes, and strategies that can streamline delivery, improve risk management, and enhance client satisfaction.”
- **Support Talent Development and Retention**
“Attending demonstrates our organization’s commitment to continuous learning and professional growth, which can improve retention and morale.”
- **Identify Potential Partners and Talent**
“The expo hall and networking events offer opportunities to meet solution providers and identify future team members.”

3. Commit to Knowledge Sharing

Offer ways to extend the value of your attendance.

- Prepare a **short presentation or lunch-and-learn** to share key takeaways with your team.
- Distribute **speaker handouts and session materials** to relevant departments.
- Provide **summaries of best practices** that could be implemented internally.
- **Connect your CMAA Chapter** with new resources and contacts you make at the event.

4. Plan for Coverage

Show you’ve considered the operational impact.

- Identify who will handle responsibilities during your absence.
- Offer to be available remotely for urgent matters.



5. Manage Costs

Demonstrate cost-conscious planning.

- Register early to secure the **Early Bird Rate** (deadline is August 11).
- Use the **CMAA hotel block rate** at the Gaylord Rockies (book by September 4).
- Consider sharing lodging or transportation with other attendees to reduce costs.

6. Conference Expenses Worksheet

Expense	Tips	Estimated Cost
Conference Registration	Register by August 11 for best rates	\$
Flight/Travel	Use fare comparison tools to find best rates	\$
Hotel	CMAA rate at Gaylord Rockies	\$
Ground Transportation	Research shuttle, rideshare, or public transit options	\$
Parking (if driving)	Check hotel rates; consider off-site parking	\$
Meals	Several meals included; plan for dinners	\$
Subtotal		\$
# of Employees Attending	Multiply subtotal by attendees	\$

7. Understanding the Benefits

While some benefits — like networking — are hard to quantify, they can have long-term impact. When making your case:



- Tie sessions directly to organizational priorities (e.g., sustainability practices, alternative delivery, technology adoption).
- Identify specific tools, processes, or technologies you expect to learn about.
- Highlight opportunities for skills development that align with current or anticipated projects.
- Emphasize PDHs earned (up to 12), which contribute to professional credential maintenance.

Sample Justification Language

Attending CMAA2026 will allow me to participate in targeted education sessions that address current challenges facing our organization, earn up to 12 PDHs toward maintaining professional credentials, and connect with peers and experts from across the country. I will return with actionable strategies, industry contacts, and shared resources that can help improve our project outcomes and team performance.



From our Past Attendees:



“As a regional business leader, attending the conference gives me a great perspective on how construction management services are being implemented around the country and get in front of trends that are either already growing in my region or seem to be catching on in others. As a member of my CMAA Chapter Board, attending the conference really helps me connect with other chapter leaders and share our journey and learn from others.” – Andrew Mittleman, CCM, Vice President - Executive Director of Operations - West PM/CM, Jacobs

“I have attended many CMAA conferences and look forward to meeting with friends I have made in the industry. I have gained new partnerships while expanding our reach in our business operating areas. Conference sessions and interactions have also enabled us to implement better practices that have raised our company's bottom line.” – Dave Wissman, CCM, President, Development Facilitators, Inc.



“My favorite part is the networking. Being able to meet new people and form relationships, that's truly valuable.” – Gina Marie Napoli, CACM, Project Manager, STV

“What makes attending CMAA conferences different from other industry conferences is that it speaks to the construction management side of things specifically, versus other conferences treat project/construction management as a secondary or gloss over topic.” – Jaxson Fleshman, Project Manager, City of Post Falls