



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

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## INTRODUCTION

The ACEC Strategic Plan, adopted by the Board of Directors on May 15, 2002, and amended on April 10, July 11, and September 21, 2005, updates and modifies the Strategic Plan of May 1998 to meet the changing needs of the Council in a new century. Drafted by the Planning Cabinet after more than two years of deliberations, the Strategic Plan builds on previous strategic plans and working documents to define ACEC's core purpose, core values, vision, and strategic goals.

An organization's core purpose and core values define its core ideology, i.e., its enduring character. The core purpose defines an organization's reason for being, what it was brought into existence to accomplish. Core values define the moral principles to which the organization is committed as it executes its core purpose.

With the core ideology in place, ACEC and its member firms must envision the future. The Strategic Plan maintains ACEC's Vision Statement that the Council will lead "the business interests of firms providing professional knowledge and services for the built environment." To make this vision meaningful in concrete terms, the Plan sets forth six strategic goals, with key action items under each goal. These goals and action items are more explicit than those in the previous strategic plan. They also respond directly to the recommendations of the 2001 Peer Review of ACEC conducted by ASAE (the American Society of Association Executives) that called for more specificity in ACEC's Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan is intended to be a living document, in which committee goals can be pegged annually to the six strategic goals and key action items. Action items can be revised as needed each year, giving the Council the necessary flexibility to respond to new conditions while remaining focused on the strategic goals. This combination of a clear focus and flexible execution is the essence of the Strategic Plan.

## **WHAT WE DO: OUR CORE PURPOSE**

To promote the business interests of engineering companies  
by providing legislative advocacy and business services.

## **WHAT WE ARE COMMITTED TO: OUR CORE VALUES**

Creating a better future through:

- Improving the quality of life through the application of science and technology
- Protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public in the built environment
- Adhering to a high level of ethical conduct in business practices
- Promoting sustainability in the natural and built environments

## **WHERE WE ARE GOING: OUR VISION**

To be the lead organization promoting the business interests of companies  
providing professional knowledge and services for the built environment.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL # 1:**

**BECOME RECOGNIZED BY ALL ENGINEERING COMPANIES IN THE UNITED STATES AS THEIR LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATE FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THEIR BUSINESS INTERESTS.**

### **Key Action Items**

- 1.1 Initiate, advocate and help to pass at least one bill or regulatory measure each year at the federal and state levels to improve the business environment for engineering companies.
- 1.2 Promote outsourcing of engineering services at the federal and state levels.
- 1.3 Promote QBS and VBDS in federal, state, local and private contracting as well as in international funding programs.
- 1.4 Eliminate unreasonable tort liability for engineering companies.
- 1.5 Promote reforms in federal wage-and-hour, ergonomics, and other labor laws and regulations.

### **COMMENTARY**

With the accomplishment of Strategic Goal # 1, ACEC will become the spokesman for the engineering industry and trusted advisor to government, thereby protecting the engineering industry's legislative interests for the benefit of our society.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL # 2:**

**BECOME RECOGNIZED BY ALL ENGINEERING COMPANIES IN THE UNITED STATES AS THEIR PRIMARY RESOURCE ON BUSINESS PRACTICES.**

### **Key Action Items**

- 2.1 Continually develop products and services to assist member firms in improving their business expertise, upgrading the quality of their services and achieving their financial goals.
- 2.2 Become the recognized authority and advocate for Value-Based Delivery Systems and the individual delivery systems encompassed by this concept.
- 2.3 Promote the use of "Best Business Practices" by member firms in their business management.
- 2.4 Work to achieve greater mobility in professional and corporate licensure.

## **COMMENTARY**

With the accomplishment of Strategic Goal # 2, ACEC will become the business institution with the lead role in the continued success of our member firms. Every engineering company in the country will know it can turn to ACEC for current business information.

In addition, each year we must develop business products that help realize Strategic Goal # 2, and be aggressive in ensuring that these products are available to our membership.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL # 3:**

**BECOME RECOGNIZED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AS  
THE NATIONAL VOICE OF THE ENGINEERING INDUSTRY.**

### **Key Action Items:**

- 3.1 Publicize ACEC's advocacy and business programs listed in Strategic Goals # 1 and 2 to general and targeted audiences through all appropriate public relations channels.
- 3.2 Promote the legislative and regulatory achievements of ACEC and its member firms to general and targeted audiences through all appropriate public relations channels.
- 3.3 Promote ACEC's Core Values for "Creating a Better Future."
- 3.4 Develop the Engineering Excellence Awards as the highest expression of ACEC's Core Values and the nation's premiere program recognizing engineering achievement.

## **COMMENTARY**

With the accomplishment of Strategic Goal # 3, ACEC will achieve enhanced public recognition befitting the trade organization of the engineering industry. ACEC's legislative and business achievements will be featured in major media outlets. Such a higher profile will facilitate ACEC's efforts to advance the business interests of its members.

For purposes of this Strategic Goal, "stakeholders" are defined as the principals of all ACEC member firms; leaders of potential member firms; key public and private clients both present and potential; legislators and key staff at the federal, state, and local levels; and key federal and state regulators. This Strategic Goal supports the fundraising and membership targets in the remaining three Strategic Goals.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL # 4:**

**GROW ACEC/PAC TO A \$1 MILLION-PER-YEAR PAC BY 2010, WHILE “CAPTURING” THE INFLUENCE OF OUR MOST POLITICALLY ACTIVE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS.**

### **Key Action Items**

- 4.1 The volunteer leadership at the National and State levels must embrace the Goal as a “to do” action item and take necessary steps to gain the necessary commitment of members for contributing to the PAC.
- 4.2 Encourage all of the ACEC and M.O. leadership, including committee chairs and members, to join the Millennium Club and Chairman’s Club.
- 4.3 Increase fundraising goals by providing more opportunities for all segments of ACEC to contribute.
- 4.4 Publicize the benefits and successes of ACEC/PAC as part of fundraising efforts.
- 4.5 Establish intermediate target goals to help gauge progress in reaching the \$1 million-per year goal.
- 4.6 Enlist our most politically active members in the Chairman’s Club to capitalize on their contributions and relationships in support of ACEC legislative initiatives.

### **COMMENTARY**

With the accomplishment of Strategic Goal # 4, ACEC/PAC will help substantially in the achievement of Strategic Goal # 1.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL # 5:**

**GROW THE MINUTEMAN FUND TO RESPOND TO CRITICAL STATE ISSUES AND FEDERAL APPELLATE CASES WHILE MAINTAINING A “WAR CHEST” OF \$1 MILLION.**

### **Key Action Items**

- 5.1. Encourage all member firms to participate in the Minuteman Fund by contributing 10% of their ACEC dues to the Fund in compliance with the Board of Directors’ resolution of 1995.
- 5.2. Encourage all of the ACEC and M.O. leadership, including committee chairs and members, to contribute individually to the Minuteman Fund.
- 5.3 Reinforce the connection between Minuteman fundraising and the achievement of M.O. and national legislative objectives.

### **COMMENTARY**

With the accomplishment of Strategic Goal # 5, ACEC will be able to increase dramatically the level of support it can offer to the M.O.s to promote our interest in state and local legislative and judicial actions of national importance. Such assistance will also publicly demonstrate ACEC’s influence and resources at the state level.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL # 6:**

**GROW THE NUMBER OF MEMBER FIRMS BY 2% EACH YEAR,  
GROW THE NUMBER OF MEMBER FIRM EMPLOYEES BY 3% EACH YEAR, AND  
RECRUIT 90% OF THE ELIGIBLE *ENR* TOP 500 DESIGN FIRMS AS ACEC MEMBERS BY 2010.**

### **Key Action Items**

- 6.1 Carry out an aggressive, nationwide membership campaign in cooperation with the M.O.s.
- 6.2 Create more special interest committees in the manner of the Council of Professional Surveyors and the Council of American Structural Engineers to attract additional specialized firms.
- 6.3 Create more special interest forums in the manner of the Legal Counsels Forum to provide a center for all non-engineering professions and special groups within our member firms to participate in ACEC activities.
- 6.4 Enhance ACEC's membership recruitment grant program that helps to finance the cost of a recruiter to work with M.O.s to enlist new member firms.
- 6.5 Work in cooperation with all M.O.s to help establish their annual target membership goals based on Strategic Goal # 6. Publicize these annual goals, and give national recognition to the M.O.s that meet or exceed their goals to reward them for their efforts and encourage the other M.O.s to achieve their goals.

### **COMMENTARY**

With the accomplishment of Strategic Goal # 6, ACEC will directly represent the vast majority of the nation's engineering companies. It will also enormously enhance our pool of experience, leadership, and business expertise. In addition, all members will benefit from the opportunity to interact, work with, and learn from a much larger number of their peers.

There are many firms practicing in traditional fields of engineering that benefit from ACEC's activities but are not members. There are also many non-member engineering companies engaged in new, cutting-edge disciplines. ACEC, in cooperation with the M.O.s, should focus first on recruiting non-member firms in traditional engineering fields that benefit from ACEC's services, and then target firms in new areas of science and technology.

New special interest committees would serve as opportunities for principals and leaders of specialized firms to discuss their common business issues and share information on the status of the industry.

The accomplishment of Strategic Goals # 1 and 2 will have a major positive impact on achieving Strategic Goal # 6. Many firms have unique needs for ACEC advocacy in specific legislative/ regulatory initiatives in areas other than those now available, and ACEC should determine those needs and enhance its legislative programs to provide the required level of service. In addition, a new level of business affairs service should be developed to meet the unique needs of firms that are currently not members.