



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: [Allison Schneider](#)

(810) 334-0939

**ACEC Releases Monthly Economic Update for the Engineering and Design Industry**

***Residential construction drives construction increase; shortage of workers leading to wage increases and added flexibility***

Washington, D.C. – Today, the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) released a monthly video economic update. Each month, ACEC Vice President of Private Market Resources Erin McLaughlin analyzes the latest public industry data and provides insights for the engineering and design industry. Download an audio version of the economic update [here](#).

Here are the topline from this month's update:

Total construction is up 7.8% from January through September 2021 over the same time frame last year, per the U.S. Census Bureau. That category is being driven by residential construction which is up 19.3% over last year.

Public construction is rebounding and only down 2.4% year over year, U.S. Census Bureau data shows. Public construction has been trending upward since May 2021 when it hit a low, down 8.9% from the same time in 2020. The upward trajectory can be attributed to the CARES Act and other stimulus efforts reaching state and local governments.

Wages are rising in a tight labor market. In the latest National Association for Business Economics (NABE) survey, 58% of respondents said wages rose in Q3 compared to 51% of respondents in July. In the engineering and design industry, the continued shortage of skilled workers has spurred wage increases and shows no signs of easing.

Cost pressures were cited as the biggest downside risk to a company's outlook in the NABE survey with one-third (33%) agreeing. This is a challenge in the engineering and design industry where the now-rising labor costs were baked into multiyear contracts, and supply costs are on the rise.

Hybrid work environments are expected to continue into the future with 65% of NABE respondents affirming, up from 61% in July. As companies work to compete for labor, we can expect more flexibility from employers.

The video series is one of ACEC's resources for media and members, which also includes ACEC's popular Private Industry Briefs. The briefs provide analysis on five key markets: Commercial and Real Estate; Intermodal and Logistics; Energy and Utilities; Health Care and Science+Technology; and

education.

In December, the ACEC Private Market Resources team will hold its first-ever symposium on the intermodal and logistics market in Charleston, S.C., on December 3rd.

Learn more about ACEC's full slate of private market offerings [here](#).

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The [American Council of Engineering Companies](#) (ACEC) is the business association of the nation's engineering industry. Founded in 1909, ACEC is a national federation of 52 state and regional organizations representing more than 5,500 engineering firms and 600,000+ engineers, surveyors, architects, and other specialists nationwide. ACEC member firms drive the design of America's infrastructure and built environment.