



# INFRASTRUCTURE AGENDA

## PERMITTING MODERNIZATION

### Background:

ACEC member firms have a strong commitment to global sustainability, competitiveness, and security, including advancement of the nation's critical infrastructure. Federal infrastructure programs, including the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), provide the funding to create truly transformative infrastructure projects that will benefit the nation for generations to come.

A key ingredient to the success of these initiatives will be efficient and responsible environmental review and permitting policies that facilitate the delivery of critical infrastructure while ensuring environmental protections. ACEC supports permitting policies and practices to sustainably deliver infrastructure that efficiently manages environmental protection, human health and safety risks.

### Key Points:

- **Current Delays** – Projects to transform and update renewable energy, high-voltage transmission, critical mineral mining, forestry, drinking water, wastewater, and transportation are often taking more than ten years to complete. Extended delays significantly raise costs and deprive the public of the project's benefits.
- **Information and Data Management** – Timely infrastructure transition and deployment of the significant capital approved for infrastructure requires innovative application of information technology to permitting processes, including stakeholder engagement, interagency and project sponsor coordination, and judicial reviews. ACEC also supports standardization of data formats and modeling, and collaborative public and private application of innovative information management tools.
- **NEPA Reform** – ACEC supports commonsense changes to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), including: establishment of reasonable filing deadlines of one year for environmental assessments (EA) and two years for environmental impact statements (EIS); identifying certain activities that are not major federal actions requiring NEPA review; adopting limitations on scopes of review to reasonably foreseeable and economically feasible impacts; narrowing the consideration of a reasonable number and range of alternatives; and allowing project sponsors to prepare EAs and EISs on request.

### Requests:

- » Advance adoption and use of information technologies that enhance transparency, community and stakeholder engagement, and efficient agency collaboration.
- » Impose deadlines on EAs and EISs, remove certain activities from extensive reviews, and limit reviews to foreseeable and feasible impacts of the applicant's project.
- » Allow project sponsors to prepare EAs and EISs.