



**STRATEGIC PLAN
(2010-2013)**

ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 9, 2010

INTRODUCTION

This American Council of Engineering Companies of Michigan (ACEC/M) Strategic Plan updates and modifies the previous Strategic Plan (2007-2010). New initiatives have been identified, but the three Big Hairy Audacious Goals (BHAG's) remain a priority and affirm the vision and mission for the Council.

VISION

Enhancing business interests and opportunities for the most respected engineering companies

MISSION

Organizing political advocacy, education and networking while promoting professionalism and ethics

The top 5 critical issues identified from surveys and interviews of ACEC members that were used to develop the original plan are as follows:

1. A few firms carry almost all the load. We need to get the smaller firms active.
2. We are not seeing enough younger people in the organization.
3. We are too focused on MDOT. We have to look beyond MDOT. A lot of our members don't have transportation practices. We're missing the boat with them.
4. We have a strategy to push QBS and all ACEC members have to support it.
5. Our board members need to represent the industry, not their firm.

STRATEGIC RULES

Become the number one resource for firm profitability

What are the two things that every firm in our industry wants to achieve? The answer is increased growth and profitability. As ACEC/M moves forward in implementing this three-year strategic plan, we must consider how our goals and decisions will financially benefit our members. These impacts may come through funding legislation, tax reform, tort reform, contracting reform with client agencies, roundtable discussions or training of member firm staff. Regardless, the financial benefits must be defined, measured and publicized.

Whatever we do, we get young people involved

The future success of ACEC/M is dependent on getting “the future principals” involved in the association. Current firm principals will retire and they will be replaced with individuals. ACEC/M must develop a relationship with these individuals before the current principals retire so that current principals can help their successors understand the value of membership in ACEC. Many individuals within a firm do not know what ACEC is or does. Involving them in committees, seminars, and special projects will help them to learn the value of ACEC. They will then communicate the benefits to their peers. Young people have a different perspective and different needs. Tapping into their ideas will help to improve the value of ACEC.

Partner, Partner, Partner

We can only achieve our goals by expanding our reach, whether in the public arena, political arena, or within the consulting business community. Partnering includes those organizations that we affect and affect us, but also with member firms in coming together to achieve a common objective or for a common cause. It is critical that we embrace all of the organizations and agencies with which we are involved, in addition to improving the interaction we have with each other. Only through effective communication and engagement can we accomplish our BHAGs. For ACEC/M, there is definitely strength, and success, in numbers.

This plan was created on June 11, 2010 during the Board of Directors retreat. We will review the plan annually to determine progress and changes, if needed. The Executive Committee will monitor progress quarterly and report progress to the general membership through our website. As you see from reading this plan, we need the support of all of our members to succeed. Please get involved today!

BHAG #1 - Grow our PAC to Texas Size

To become recognized by legislators in Lansing, ACEC's CEPAC needs to grow such that it has the resources to make strategic contributions to Michigan legislative candidates. Growth of the PAC is closely tied to BHAG #3 (increased involvement) in that in order for firms to become regular PAC contributors, they must be better connected to ACEC/M and have an appreciation for the annual legislative accomplishments, not only for the member firms, but also for the engineering industry as a whole. To demonstrate leadership and commitment, the board members committed to meeting their individual firm PAC financial goals and to raising an additional \$1000 from other member firms of ACEC/M.

Responsibility: Keith Swaffar, Andy McCune, Mark Kramer, Amy Trahey, PAC Chair

Targets:

- Annual CEPAC Fundraising Goal: \$30,000
- Meet annual ACEC PAC goal set by National organization
- Secure sufficient contributions to be recognized as one of Michigan's top 150 PAC's on an annual basis
- Increase membership involvement in the PAC from the current 30-percent level to:
 - 50% participation in 2010
 - 65% participation in 2011
 - 80% participation in 2012
- Advocate for passage of 'good' legislation and defeat 'bad' legislation defined by the legislative committee and the Architects & Engineers Legislative Committee (AELC)

Tasks:

- 1.1 Board Members embrace the PAC goals and demonstrate leadership by meeting target goals for their firm plus an additional \$1000 from other ACEC/M member firms.
- 1.2 Assign firms for board members to contact prior to the start of the calendar year so more time is available to make personal contacts and appeals for donations.
- 1.3 Prepare an electronic briefing sheet on ACEC legislative efforts in the last year and how CEPAC has help advance our legislative agenda.
- 1.4 Encourage firm leaders to request nominal CEPAC contributions (\$10-\$25) from their employees. Use the briefing sheet from task 1.3 as a supporting document to solicit contributions.
- 1.5 Communicate with membership our legislative agenda and activities via the website and the Capital Update quarterly newsletter. Expand the list of recipients.
- 1.6 Hold legislative 'meet & greet' sessions across the state to help connect members to legislators and to advocate for our legislative initiatives.
- 1.7 Promote and recognize those member firms who contribute to the PAC.

BHAG #2: Improve recognition of ACEC, ACEC member firms, and the Executive Director

Being known and trusted is a key start to getting things accomplished. ACEC has seen great success through the partnership with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). Using the MDOT partnership as a model, ACEC needs to have other state and local agencies, the governor's office and the legislative leaders look to ACEC for counsel and advice on infrastructure and business related issues with the executive director as the key contact. Increased recognition will encourage other consultant engineering firms (non-members) to join ACEC to become an involved, active member of the Council.

Responsibility: John Hiltz, Mike Cooper, Jim Susan, Amy Trahey, Ruben Ramos, Bob Rayl

Targets:

- Development of a new ACEC image/brand through the help of an outside expert
- Become better known and recognized by legislators, government agencies, universities and engineering firms
- Use new technologies and communication tools in marketing efforts

Tasks:

- 2.1 Executive Director to increase contacts and involvement with:
 - Peer groups (ASCE, APWA, ESD, MWEA, ASHRAE, etc.)
 - Engineering clients and industry associations (MML, MITA, MTA, Universities, AGC, CAM, etc.)
 - Legislature (proactive contacts with key legislators on issues that effect our industry)
 - Agencies (key spokesman to various governmental agencies – MDOT, MDNRE, DMB, USDA-Rural Development, DWSD, etc.)
- 2.2 Hire branding consultant (fixed dollar cost) in year one to complete Phase I: Discovery and Brand Development
- 2.3 Upon completion Phase I, begin Phase II: Outreach and Media implementation. Most likely to occur in years 2 and 3
- 2.4 Utilizing new brand, create ACEC exhibit booth to participate in conferences of organizations included in Task 2.1
- 2.5 Utilizing new brand, improve membership marketing materials
- 2.6 Better use of current technology and communication tools to promote ACEC (videos, social media, etc.)

BHAG #3: Increase Member Involvement, Increase Membership

This BHAG envisions not only achieving the membership involvement necessary to accomplish the various goals and objectives of the organization, but also to increase membership to provide additional resources to help achieve success.

ACEC/M typically sees only 20% of the member firms active in the organization. To achieve the greatest benefit of membership, members have to be actively involved in committees, the Board of Directors, conferences, task forces, or a special program. Achieving greater participation by its members is a key goal.

To help achieve BHAG #2, ACEC/M must grow its membership. ACEC/M needs to attract engineering companies who practice outside of civil engineering who share our vision and can benefit from membership. ACEC/M needs to reach out at the college level so that new engineers recognize ACEC and understand that a career path exists with private engineering firms. ACEC must continue to promote a Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) process for procuring design professional services with owner agencies but also with engineering firms and university programs.

Responsibility: Kirk Branson, Wally Alix, Paul Wade, Jim Cook, Tom Deneau

Targets:

- Increase overall membership including non-civil engineering firms
- Increase education offerings and offer Professional Development Hours (PDH's)
- Expand "New Leaders" group and use their ideas to improve member benefits

Tasks:

- 3.1 Expand membership through peer-to-peer contacts of member firm principals and ACEC/M current and past leaders
- 3.2 Identify and develop ACEC benefits for the recruitment of non-civil engineering firms
- 3.3 Develop partnerships with client organizations (MML, MTA, APWA, CRAM, etc.) that would be of benefit to member firms
- 3.4 Use New Leaders group to explore creation of a leadership development program
- 3.5 Develop new educational opportunities for members through partnering with existing providers and/or utilization of on-line seminars
- 3.6 Provide credit to members (PDH's) for attendance at all educational offerings
- 3.7 Develop a QBS presentation for public administration programs at colleges and universities
- 3.8 Pursue opportunities to make QBS presentations in university classrooms through individuals who serve on Advisory Boards