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HISTORICAL SHORELINE MAPPING

F I N A L

# STRATEGIC PLAN

FISCAL YEAR  
2009 *to* 2012

**ACEC**

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES  
OF MASSACHUSETTS

American Council of Engineering  
Companies/Massachusetts

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**ACEC/MA  
STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012**

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# ACEC/MA STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012

**APPROVED BY EXCOMM 2-12-10**  
**APPROVED BY BOARD 2-25-10**

## INTRODUCTION A FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION

On June 12, 2009 the American Council of Engineering Companies of Massachusetts (ACEC/MA) leadership team (directors, committee chairs, interested parties and The Engineering Center (TEC) staff) convened to review the accomplishments of the previous year's Strategic Plan and to plot a course for the next 12 to 36 months that are consistent with the overall objectives of the organization namely Advocacy, Financial Stability and Membership. This Strategic Plan is the culmination of five years of strategic planning efforts and was approved by the ACEC/MA Board of Directors on February 25, 2010.

ACEC/MA represents members of firms in the states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Thus, the use of ACEC/MA throughout this plan is intended to refer to members in both states.

This ACEC/MA Strategic Plan 2009-2012 was developed to be consistent with ACEC/MA's mission to be the **"voice of the consulting engineering industry and the advocate for the promotion and protection of our business interests."** Specifically, the three Strategic Goals outlined in this plan support ACEC/MA's Vision Statement and Core Ideology by focusing on three overarching objectives:

- **ADVOCACY** – including promoting qualifications based selection (QBS), single point of audit, and eliminating salary and overhead caps; maximizing contracting out of designer services; participating on commissions, committees, task forces, and working groups that affect all client sectors (transportation, buildings and facilities, environmental affairs, and private development); taking legislative action in support of the engineering community; and initiating a more aggressive marketing and public relations program to promote ACEC/MA and the engineering profession.
- **FINANCIAL STRENGTH** – continuing to build financial strength by budgeting over the next three to five years a budget value of 3% of revenues to be added to our financial reserves with the ultimate goal to build up to one year's operating expenses (approximately \$400,000) in our reserve fund.
- **MEMBERSHIP** – demonstrating value each year to our ACEC/MA member firms through advocacy, programs, events, training, business forums, and committee opportunities in support of all client sectors.

From the outset there has been consensus that financial sustainability of the organization is paramount. Financial stability, financial predictability, and a solid financial foundation provides ACEC/MA with the strength required to truly be the voice of the engineering community and demonstrate value to all ACEC/MA member firms. However, financial strength is best achieved by demonstrating value to our member firms.

## **ACEC/MA STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012**

The ACEC/MA Strategic Plan 2009-2012 provides the framework and foundation for implementation that can be built upon in the future. The Strategic Plan is intended to be a living document, in which committee goals developed as part of their yearly Work Plans are reviewed annually and tied to the three strategic goals and action items outlined in the Strategic Plan. Action items should be reviewed annually and revised, as needed, as part of the annual strategic planning conference tradition, giving the leadership team 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.

# **ACEC/MA STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012**

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

To promote the business environment by providing advocacy and resources that enhances and advises the engineering industry.

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

Creating a sustainable world through:

- Applying science and technology to societal challenges,
- Protecting the health, safety and welfare of the public,
- Conducting ethical business practices, and
- Stewarding sustainability in the natural and built environments.

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

To lead with our knowledge and expertise and to be the voice of the engineering industry for the benefit of society and the natural and built environment.

## **WHO WE ARE**

The American Council of Engineering Companies of Massachusetts (ACEC/MA) is the business trade association of the Massachusetts and Rhode Island engineering community. Our members include over 110 firms, representing more than 7,400 employees.

ACEC/MA member firms design the building, environmental, transportation, educational, and recreation infrastructure of the state, which allows the residents of Massachusetts and Rhode Island to be able to drink clean water, take advantage of new technologies, and travel safely and efficiently. Founded in 1960, ACEC/MA is dedicated to assisting its members in achieving higher professional, ethical, business, and economic standards to provide quality consulting engineering services for their clients and the public.

ACEC/MA members are the leading engineering firms in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Our member firms range in size from single employee entrepreneurs to the corporate headquarters of international firms. About one third of our members are small businesses with ten or fewer employees.

In 2010 ACEC/MA will be proud to celebrate its' 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as the voice of the engineering industry.

## **ACEC/MA STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012**

At the June 2009, planning session the leadership team reviewed the three strategic goals from the previously adopted plan and felt they still reflected the appropriate direction for ACEC/MA to pursue. Several aspects of those goals had been achieved, were in process or still need to be developed. Some of them required minor modifications to reflect events that have occurred over time. Those changes as discussed at the planning session are reflected in this updated plan.

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**STRATEGIC GOAL #1**

(Champion: President Elect)

**MAINTAIN RECOGNITION BY ALL ACEC/MA MEMBERS AS THE  
ADVOCATE FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THEIR  
BUSINESS INTERESTS**

**DESCRIPTION:** ACEC/MA serves as the primary business advocate for the engineering profession in the arenas of government, public and private sector clients, affiliated professional organizations, and the general public. Advocacy occurs in many forms; the enhancement of the business interests of ACEC/MA member firms; the enhancement and improvement of the public image of engineering firms and the profession; and the enhancement of partnering relationships through participation on commissions, boards, and appointed positions. By committing to broad, strategic participation in the public and private sectors, ACEC/MA can achieve a high level of recognition and influence.

**DESIRED OUTCOMES:** ACEC/MA should be considered as the voice of the engineering industry, advocating for its' member firms and society; and providing leadership in improving the quality of life for the public good while protecting the business interests of its' members.

**ACTION PLAN:**

**Action Item 1 – Strengthen Internal Advocacy**

**Key Steps:**

1. Learn and track what we have done through the Transportation Agency Liaison Committee (TALC) and other committees (e.g., Member, Government Affairs, etc.).
2. Communicate and share the information with other committees by posting. Information on the website, promoting more participation in regular Group meeting/conference calls and providing quarterly communications on ACEC/MA activities and successes.
3. Develop a specialized strategy for each group/committee and document it in an annual Work Plan.

**Lead:**

1. Committee Chairs through the Group Directors.
2. President in secondary role.

**Results/Outcome:**

1. More effective and efficient groups/committees.
2. Member firms support participation of their employees in participating on groups/committees.

## **ACEC/MA STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012**

3. Outside agencies/ groups seek input from ACEC/MA
4. Quarterly communications via *Insights* articles and list of accomplishments, distributed to member firms.

### ***Time Frame:***

1. Regular meetings with groups/committees.
2. Quarterly meetings and communications with Group Directors and Committee Chairs
3. Ongoing with annual updates.

### **Action Item 2 – Create a Public Relations Campaign based on our Vision and Communicate the Vision**

### ***Key Steps:***

1. Combine the Public Relations Committee and the Insights Committee into one Communications Committee.
2. Create a Speakers Forum through The Engineering Center
3. Actively pursue stories/issues and regularly meet with Press
4. Prepare and issue one Press release each year (can be integrated with President's Letter and Insights)
5. Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs coordinate their activities with the Communications Committee
6. Committees create their own summary/ promotional pieces and provide to the Communications Committee
7. Re-establish "Seat at the Table" in Insights highlighting one committee in each issue

### ***Lead:***

1. Communications Committee
2. Committee Chair/Co-Chair and Group Directors

### ***Results/Outcome:***

1. Improved external and internal communication with public articles and brochures, etc.
2. Improved public perception of ACEC/MA and engineers
3. Gain synergy by combining two committees into one

### ***Time Frame:***

1. FY10

## **ACEC/MA STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012**

### **Action Item 3 – Broaden Interactions with State Agencies (non-transportation)**

#### **Key Steps:**

1. Develop a targeted program to interact with the Executive Branch specifically Secretary and Commissioner level appointees including the following:
  - Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
  - Department of Environmental Protection
  - Division of Capital Asset management
  - Department of Conservation and Recreation
  - Massachusetts Water Resources Authority
  - Fish and Wildlife Services
  - Massachusetts Historical Commission

#### **Lead:**

1. Environmental Affairs Committee (EAC).
2. Develop a TALC equivalent committee (could be EAC or subcommittee of EAC).

#### **Results/Outcome:**

1. Executive Branch seeks out ACEC/MA for advice and opinions
2. Trusted advisor to public officials and business leaders
3. Free and easy communication with the Executive Branch
4. Develop a core group of state environmental agencies that meets with ACEC/MA on a quarterly basis

#### **Time Frame:**

1. FY10

### **Action Item 4 – Establish, Expand and Strengthen Partnerships with other Professional Organizations**

#### **Key Steps:**

1. Identify key partners in each public policy area including TEC members
2. Cosponsor events with key partners
3. Enhance ACEC/MA members participation and/or presence at each event
4. Broadly advertise events

## **ACEC/MA STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012**

5. Communicate to membership

***Lead:***

1. Executive Committee

***Results/Outcome:***

1. Increased recognition of ACEC/MA to the business industry
2. Increased ACEC/MA membership and participation in events
3. Strength in numbers
4. Leverage net revenues by joining financial forces with other organization

***Time Frame:***

1. FY10

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**STRATEGIC GOAL #2**  
(Champion: Senior Vice President)

**ENHANCE THE FINANCIAL STRENGTH OF ACEC/MA**

**DESCRIPTION:** Financial strength and stability will allow ACEC/MA to maintain its' leadership role in providing business advocacy and programs for the member firms.

**DESIRED OUTCOMES:** Diversify revenue sources (sponsorships), meet or exceed national Political Action Committee (PAC) goals, create larger programs, increase membership to increase dues revenue, maintain stable and profitable budget, and maintain a reserve account equal to the yearly operating expenses

**ACTION PLAN:**

**Action Item 1 – Create a Budget Sensitivity Sub-Committee that will explore, develop, and conduct sensitivity analyses on a three-year look ahead budget.**

**Key Steps:**

1. Have the Executive Committee appoint a Budget Sensitivity Sub-committee that will as a minimum include the current President, President-elect, and Treasurer.
2. Have the sub-committee work with the Executive Committee to develop their mission of evaluating potential economic or TEC scenarios that could impact the ACEC/MA budget.

**Lead:**

1. Budget Sensitivity Sub-Committee

**Results/Outcome:**

1. Increase net income
2. Increase revenue outside membership
3. Reserve account with balance equal to one year's operating expenses
4. Scenario planning to adjust to changing economic and/ or TEC climates
5. Three year look ahead budget

**Time Frame:**

1. Kick-Off FY10

## **ACEC/MA STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012**

### **Action Item 2 – Conduct a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration/Fundraising Gala Event**

#### ***Key Steps:***

1. Create an Ad Hoc Committee to organize the event
2. Have Board support and embrace the event
3. Develop a plan for the celebration through the Ad Hoc Committee
4. Develop a scholarship program to honor past presidents.

#### ***Lead:***

1. Jim Pappas, Dave Young and Lisa Brothers and/or designees

#### ***Results/Outcome:***

1. Generate net revenue over expenses of \$10,000
2. Generate funds for 501 (c) 3 ACEC/MA Education Corporation for future past president scholarships
3. Celebrate ourselves and the accomplishments we have provided to the engineering community
4. Provide public relations to the engineering community
5. Attract new member firms
6. Get Vendors to sponsor the event and remain connected with ACEC/MA

#### ***Time Frame:***

1. Planning for event in June 2010

### **Action Item 3 – Increase Participation in Events to raise funds, provide exposure, participation, and to mentor next generation**

#### ***Key Steps:***

1. Find out why events/programs are and are not successful – positive revenue over expenses
2. Present and evaluate the history
3. Create an action plan

#### ***Lead:***

1. Dave Young, and Mary Hall with joint participation with Program, Engineering Excellence Awards (EEA), Business Practice Forum, Membership and Leadership Education Committees.

## **ACEC/MA STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012**

***Results/Outcome:***

1. Document and create guidelines for future programs and events
2. Successful Everest Program for senior leaders
3. Increased participation in programs and events by 10% which will lead to more income and public relations

***Time Frame:***

1. FY10 and ongoing in the future

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**STRATEGIC GOAL #3**  
(Champion: Vice President)

**MAINTAIN, DIVERSIFY AND GROW THE MEMBERSHIP OF ACEC/MA**

**DESCRIPTION:** The ACEC/MA goal of expanding member firms by three percent and member headcount by two percent (three-year annual averages) is in harmony with ACEC National's goals. Growth is important to maintain a healthy, viable organization. By adding new firms and new categories of firms, we will increase organizational diversity and enhance our programs, legislative initiatives, and pool of organizational volunteers. Additionally, maintenance of existing members leads to safeguarding existing dues revenues and better word of mouth testimonials by existing members to gain new members.

**DESIRED OUTCOME:** Increase in membership, membership diversity, revenue, and strengthen ACEC/MA.

**ACTION PLAN:**

**Action Item 1 – Attract more members to the organization**

**Key Steps:**

1. Develop a profile of the existing membership
2. Evaluate and update target membership list
3. Develop a recruitment plan for the top 10 potential member firms
4. Commit to a Quarterly President's Letter to the membership
5. Develop list of ACEC/MA accomplishments over previous 12 months

**Lead:**

1. Membership Committee, with support from Board

**Results/Outcome:**

1. Five new MEP and/or Structural Engineering Firms (non-civil)
2. Five new Civil Engineering Firms
3. Quarterly President's Letters to the membership

**Time Frame:**

1. FY10 and ongoing in the future
2. Complete membership profile and evaluation of target members by October 31, 2008

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3. Complete recruitment plan and implement by December 31, 2008

### **Action Item 2 – Enhance Participation from Existing Member Firms**

#### ***Key Steps:***

1. Develop a “Tool Kit” for Member Firm Representatives
2. Determine how to expand involvement of Affiliate and Associate member firms
3. Develop and implement a recruitment plan for Membership Committee members
4. Update and maintain Web Site
5. Potentially post Committee Work Plans on the ACEC/MA website but as a minimum have available in a notebook at The Engineering Center (TEC) for all to review.

#### ***Lead:***

1. Membership Committee with assistance from the Board
2. Website will be led by Executive Committee

#### ***Results/Outcome***

1. Five new members recruited in FY10
2. All Work Plans have been completed by Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs

#### ***Time Frame:***

1. Complete submission of Work Plans by December 31, 2009
2. Web site is operational by February 1, 2010
3. Post all Work Plans on Website by May 1, 2009.

### **Action 3 – Retain Existing Member Firms**

#### ***Key Steps:***

1. Develop and conduct a member survey using Survey Monkey
2. Develop press releases and educational materials outlining benefits of being ACEC/MA member
3. Revisit implementation of the Ambassador Program with reduced requirements
4. Review, modify, and develop programs that meet Member needs and interests

#### ***Lead:***

1. Membership Committee with assistance from the Board

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### ***Results/Outcome***

1. Increased participation (in terms of variety of people and firms), in events/programs.
2. Goals of no net decrease in members

### ***Time Frame:***

1. Complete survey within 3 months
2. Remainder this Fiscal Year