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AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES OF MASSACHUSETTS

October 15, 2026

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A Note from Kevin: One Year at ACEC/MA

Yesterday marked one year since I joined ACEC/MA as Executive Director, and I wanted to take a moment to reflect on what has been an incredibly rewarding first year.

First, I want to thank Abbie Goodman for her guidance and support during the transition, our Board of Directors and past and present leadership for their trust and partnership, and our entire membership for the warm welcome I've received. I also want to thank the team at TECET for their hard work, dedication, and support throughout the year. I've been fortunate to get to know so many of you over the past year, and I'm grateful for the time, energy, and commitment you bring to this organization and our industry.

It's been a busy and productive year. Together, we've successfully advocated for record funding levels in the state budget for critical infrastructure programs while helping prevent legislative proposals of concern to our industry from advancing.

We've strengthened our relationships with state agencies and policymakers while offering a wide range of programs providing members with insights into major infrastructure projects, emerging technologies like AI, climate change and resiliency, and the challenges and opportunities shaping our industry. Our leadership education programs have provided unparalleled opportunities to help develop the next generation of industry leaders.

Looking ahead, I'm excited to build on that momentum by expanding our advocacy efforts, strengthening the value of membership, and continuing to provide opportunities for our members to connect, learn, and help shape the future of engineering in Massachusetts.

Thank you again for your partnership, encouragement, and support over this past year. Please never hesitate to reach out to connect or discuss how you or your firm can become more engaged with ACEC/MA. I'm looking forward to all that we'll accomplish together in the years ahead.

Kevin O'Shea

Executive Director
ACEC/MA

MassDOT's Jonathan Gulliver Named Finalist for MWRA Executive Director

MassDOT Undersecretary of Transportation and Highway Administrator **Jonathan Gulliver** has been named one of two finalists to serve as the next Executive Director of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA).

Gulliver, who joined MassDOT in 2009 and has served as Highway Administrator since 2017, oversees approximately 2,800 employees and a \$2 billion capital program. He took on additional responsibilities as Undersecretary of Transportation in 2025 while continuing to lead the Highway Division.

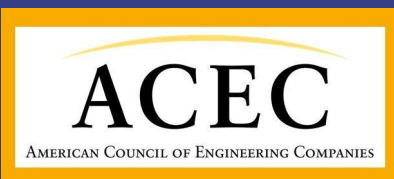
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**ACEC/MA FY2027 Board
of Directors**

**ACEC/MA Forums &
Committees**

**Events & Briefings
Calendar**

**Join an ACEC/MA
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The other finalist is Matthew Brown, Interim CEO and General Manager of DC Water, who previously served as that agency's Chief Financial Officer and Board Chair.

The selected candidate will succeed longtime Executive Director Fred Laskey, who retired in May after nearly 25 years leading MWRA. Stephen Estes-Smargiassi has served as Interim Executive Director.

The MWRA Board of Directors is expected to vote on the selection on Wednesday, October 21. The next Executive Director will oversee significant water and wastewater infrastructure investments, system expansion, and environmental and climate resilience initiatives.

[Read more from State House News Service.](#)

Don't Miss Out! ACEC/MA Energy, Environment & Utilities Markets Conference Next Tuesday, October 20

There's still time to register for ACEC/MA's [Energy, Environment & Utilities Markets Conference](#), taking place **Tuesday, October 20, from 11:00 AM–3:30 PM at CDM Smith in Boston**, with virtual attendance also available.

Join us to hear directly from state agencies and utility leaders about **upcoming projects, infrastructure investments, procurement opportunities, and priorities shaping these important markets across Massachusetts.**

Michael Judge, Undersecretary of Energy, will open the conference with a keynote on the *State of Energy in Massachusetts*.

Confirmed speakers also include:

- **Tom O'Shea**, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game
- **Deanna Moran**, Chief Coastal Resilience Officer, Office of Coastal Zone Management
- **Kathleen M. Murtagh, P.E.**, Chief Operating Officer, and **Brian Kubaska**, Chief Engineer, Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA)
- **Peter Salvatore, P.E.**, Deputy Chief Engineer, Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC)
- **John Scannell**, Director, Division of Water Supply Protection, Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

Whether your firm is already active in these markets or looking to expand its work, this is an opportunity to learn what's ahead and connect with the organizations driving infrastructure investment across the Commonwealth.

In-person and virtual attendance available | 3.5 PDHs (not applicable in NY or FL)

[Register Today!](#)

2027 ACEC/MA Engineering Excellence Awards: Final Project Submissions Due October 26

Firms participating in the [2027 ACEC/MA Engineering Excellence Awards Competition](#) are reminded that **electronic project submissions are due Monday, October 26, at 12:00 PM (noon).**

Following the October 9 virtual Submissions Assistance Session, firms should be finalizing their materials and ensuring all submission



requirements are met ahead of the deadline. For those who were unable to attend or would like to review the information presented, **the session recording is available [here](#).**

Key Dates:

- **October 26, 12:00 PM:** Electronic Project Submissions Due
- **December 10:** Presentations to Judges for Finalists
- **January 6, 2027:** Eligible Entries Due to ACEC National
- **March 25, 2027:** ACEC/MA Engineering Excellence Awards Gala at the Renaissance Boston Waterfront Hotel

ACEC/MA finalists and Silver Award winners are eligible to advance to the ACEC National Engineering Excellence Awards competition.

2027 EEA Key Dates & Submission Information:

<https://www.acecma.org/acecma-2027-engineering-excellence-awards-competition-entry-forms-now-available/>

October 28 ACEC/MA TALC Meeting: In-Person Registration Open

[In-person registration is now open](#) for the next meeting of the ACEC/MA Transportation Agencies Liaison Committee (TALC) on **Wednesday, October 28, from 12:00 to 1:30 PM**. The meeting will be held in a hybrid format, with in-person attendance at **GFT, 101 Arch Street, 2nd Floor, Boston**, and virtual participation via Zoom.

The October speaker and presentation topic will be announced soon. Thank you to GFT for hosting the meeting and providing lunch for in-person attendees.

At our October meeting, we will be joined by **Lisa Schletzbaum**, who recently assumed the role of Assistant Chief Engineer at **MassDOT Highway**, and **Francisco Lovera**, Deputy Director of Highway Design. Lisa will introduce herself and discuss her new role, while Francisco will seek input from TALC members on the Complete Streets Guide currently under development and discuss Design Justification Workbooks (DJWs).

In-person attendance is limited to 45 participants, with a maximum of two representatives per ACEC/MA member firm. Firms are asked to coordinate internally before registering. In-person registration closes Monday, October 26, or when capacity is reached. GFT employees should coordinate directly with Angela Tran rather than registering.

All TALC participants will receive the Zoom information closer to the meeting.

[Register here.](#)

ACEC/MA Accounting & Finance Forum: Financial Benchmarking and Industry Trends – October 21

Join ACEC/MA's Accounting & Finance Forum on **Wednesday, October 21, from 2:00 to 3:00 PM via Zoom** for a discussion on financial benchmarking, key performance indicators, and industry trends affecting architecture and engineering firms.

Nicholas Tamvaklis, Partner, and Michelle Downing, Director, with PKF O'Connor Davies' Architecture & Engineering Practice, will share findings from the firm's newly released Architectural & Engineering Studies, offering insights into financial performance, industry

benchmarks, and key metrics that firms can use to evaluate their operations and business performance.

Date: Wednesday, October 21, 2026

Time: 2:00–3:00 PM

Location: Zoom

[Register Here](#)

Federal Permitting Reform: Bipartisan Senate Legislation Introduced

A bipartisan group of U.S. Senators has introduced the **American Affordability and Jobs Act of 2026 (S. 5653)**, a comprehensive permitting reform proposal aimed at accelerating infrastructure development and streamlining federal environmental reviews.

The legislation addresses NEPA, the Endangered Species Act, historic preservation reviews, electric transmission siting, and permitting certainty. Key provisions include faster permitting timelines, expanded transmission infrastructure development, grid modernization, and a new federal electronic permitting portal.

ACEC National has welcomed the legislation as a positive step toward permitting reform, reflecting several longstanding industry advocacy priorities. The Senate is expected to consider the bill following the November 3 election, and ACEC continues to review its implications for engineering firms across multiple infrastructure sectors.

[Read the legislation \(S. 5653\).](#)

ACEC/MA Joins Coalition Urging Action on Mass Ready Act

ACEC/MA joined The Nature Conservancy, Massachusetts Water Works Association, and Massachusetts Forest Alliance in an October 13 letter urging the Massachusetts Legislature's Conference Committee to finalize the Mass Ready Act and advance critical investments in the Commonwealth's infrastructure and climate resilience.

The letter highlights the importance of funding for coastal resilience, water quality, natural resource protection, and infrastructure improvements, including dams, bridges, culverts, seawalls, and flood control systems. The organizations emphasized that timely action is essential to protect communities, support local economies, and avoid higher infrastructure costs in the future.

ACEC/MA will continue advocating for investments that strengthen Massachusetts' infrastructure and support long-term resilience.

[Read the coalition letter.](#)

MBTA Updates Prompt Payment Reporting Forms

The MBTA has issued [revised Prompt Payment Reporting Forms F and F-2](#) in response to USDOT-FTA guidance. Contractors and subcontractors should begin using the revised forms, which include updates to payment-date reporting, a new field to track compliance with the 10-business-day prompt payment requirement, and additional retainage information.

The MBTA is providing a **30-day grace period following October 1**, with the revised forms expected for all projects by the **November 15, 2026 prompt payment reporting deadline**. Firms submitting an incomplete or

previous version of the forms after the deadline will have five business days to correct and resubmit them.

[Read the MBTA Notice on the Prompt Payment Reporting Form Updates](#)

MBTA Roadway Worker Protection Program Update

The MBTA is transitioning from its existing Right of Way (ROW) program to a new **Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) program**, beginning with the Blue Line on **October 25, 2026**. Personnel working within or potentially entering the foul zone will need RWP certification, which requires a two-day, in-person course.

Training will be prioritized based on project needs, with the MBTA estimating more than 2,300 contractors may require certification. Existing ROW certifications remain valid through **December 31, 2026** for lines that have not yet transitioned.

ACEC/MA member firms working on MBTA projects should review the attached MBTA memo for additional details and training information. Questions can be directed to mbtarwp@mbta.com.

The memo from the MBTA can be found [here](#).

2026 Election Reminder: Vote-by-Mail Deadlines Approaching

Massachusetts voters planning to vote by mail in the November 3, 2026 State Election must submit their vote-by-mail applications by **Tuesday, October 27, at 5:00 PM**. Voters are encouraged to apply early to allow sufficient time to receive and return their ballots.

Mail-in ballots must be postmarked by Election Day, November 3, and received by local election officials no later than **Friday, November 6, at 5:00 PM**.

Voters can [request a mail-in ballot online](#) or [track the status of their ballot](#) through the Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth's website.

This year's ballot includes **nine statewide ballot questions**, addressing a range of issues, including government transparency, election procedures, and state finances. Secretary of the Commonwealth William Galvin has published the [2026 Information for Voters Guide](#), which includes summaries of each question, explanations of what yes and no votes mean, and arguments for and against each proposal.

U.S. DOT Finalizes Changes to DBE Program

The U.S. Department of Transportation has issued its **final rule updating the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program**, largely maintaining the framework established last fall that eliminated automatic presumptions of disadvantage based on race and gender and requires individualized demonstrations of social and economic disadvantage.

The final rule includes several clarifications sought by ACEC. U.S. DOT clarified that individualized determinations may consider an applicant's experiences involving race or gender; established a **December 24 deadline** for certifying agencies to complete reevaluations; and streamlined interstate certification so that, once a firm is reevaluated by its home state, other states generally must accept that determination without imposing additional requirements.

[Final Rule](#)

Support ACEC/PAC and Enter the 2026 Fall Sweepstakes

ACEC/PAC is the engineering industry's primary tool for political engagement at the national level. Strong participation from ACEC members helps ensure the engineering industry has a voice in Washington and supports ACEC's efforts to advance policies that strengthen the business environment for engineering firms and promote investment in the nation's infrastructure.

ACEC's advocacy has helped deliver historic federal infrastructure investment, protect QBS, promote contracting out, strengthen federal procurement rules, and advance important tax policies for engineering firms. [Learn more about ACEC/PAC's accomplishments and current policy priorities.](#)

The [2026 ACEC/PAC Fall Sweepstakes](#) is underway, with **18 prizes totaling \$50,000**, including a \$10,000 grand prize. Members can participate with a **\$200 contribution to ACEC/PAC**, with the drawing taking place October 27 during the ACEC National Conference in Phoenix.

Please note that ACEC/PAC participation is subject to federal election law. Employees of corporate ACEC member firms may be solicited only if their firm has provided ACEC with prior approval to solicit eligible employees. **Contributions must be made with personal funds; corporate checks and corporate credit cards are prohibited. Contributions are voluntary and are not tax deductible.**

Government Affairs

[Government Affairs Committee](#)

The October GAC meeting will be held on Thursday, October 22 at 10:00AM.

[Request Zoom for 10/22/26.](#)

Join us as we review bills impacting the engineering, land surveying, and design professional community.

[Join ACEC/MA GAC](#)

IN THE NEWS

[State, CSX agree to rail upgrades in the Berkshires](#)

[Ballot reforms could upend election landscape in 2027](#)

[Healey demands early refunds from utilities as winter, and election, near](#)

[Eversource CEO tells industry conference he expects Healey to turn down the 'volume' on utility criticism post-election](#)

[Goldberg declines GBH debate with Dionne](#)

[Question 7 aims to change Mass. zoning law to build more single-family homes](#)

[A data center. Underwater. Yes, some in this small Maine town are worried.](#)

[City of Boston to offer five free shuttle routes by early next year, including in Seaport and Roxbury.](#)

[New agreement puts expanded Berkshire Flyer service on track](#)

[Boston Public Schools is on the market for bus-mounted cameras to catch stop-sign runners](#)

ACEC and Federal Updates

[A/E Industry Shows Resiliency in the Face of National Economic Volatility](#)

[Monitoring U.S. DOT Changes to the Disadvantaged Business](#)

[Enterprise \(DBE\) Program](#): ACEC National's continually updated landing page on DBE-related resources, including DBE FAQs on the Interim Final Rule (IFR), an interactive State DOT DBE Policies map, and ACEC Resources

Monitoring the Trump White House's Impact on Engineering:

[Bookmark this ACEC page](#) - announcements, executive actions, & decisions **including tariffs** from White House that directly impact America's engineering & design services industry

ACEC/MA STEM Task Force

Opps & Resources to promote **STEM careers**, particularly in Engineering & Land Surveying.

See our [STEM Task Force page](#) for opportunities to increase awareness about engineering and land surveying careers.

Upcoming Major Events to Save the Dates

October 20: Fall Energy, Environment & Utilities Markets Conference - [Register here.](#)

Program Registration

***If Your Firm is an ACEC/MA Member, You're an ACEC/MA member.**

Get the ACEC/MA Member Rate for Programs: Register with your Individual username/password. Never use someone else's login info. ?s: Contact acecma@engineers.org or 617-227-5551.

Links live 10/15/2026; Next issue: 10/22/2026

ACEC/Matters: Produced by Kevin O'Shea

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