



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES  
of Colorado

#### MISSION STATEMENT

*The mission of the ACEC/CO is to assist its members in achieving higher professional, ethical, business and economic standards, enabling member firms to provide quality consulting engineering services for their clients and the public.*

#### **ISSUES OF CONCERN TO CONSULTING ENGINEERING FIRMS**

**TRANSPORTATION FUNDING:** Highway congestion and the economic costs related to it are increasing on Colorado's streets and highways, due to continued growth of the population and the associated economic impacts. Effective and efficient multi-modal mobility is essential to our quality of life, safety on the highway, economic vitality, sustaining Colorado's major industries and productivity of the labor force. Continued inadequate investment in our state and local roads and highways is allowing the system to deteriorate, inducing an increase in maintenance costs, causing serious and costly damage to vehicles, and diminishing the vitality of our economy. Building on the recent voter approved improvements in transit finance, it is essential to develop an enhanced long-term revenue program for the local, county and state highways of Colorado. **The Legislature and Governor are urged to continue to support present legislation that provides transportation funding, and to enact additional and innovative (including user fee based) programs to increase the annual funding of Colorado's transportation system.** This action is important to ensuring the integrity of the present system and to provide for the improvements essential to sustain the quality of life and economic vitality desired by all of our present and future Colorado citizens.

**COMPETITION FROM STATE AGENCIES / OUTSOURCING OF SERVICES:** Our member firms are concerned about state agencies, as well as research arms of universities, performing work that could be more appropriately and more cost-effectively performed by the private sector. As budgetary pressures remain, there is a tendency for state agencies to internalize the services that consulting engineers have traditionally performed. This approach denies the State the efficiencies to be obtained in the competitive marketplace through outsourcing services. **We strongly encourage our legislators to be aware of the economic benefits, improved performance, and value to taxpayers of maximizing use of the private sector for providing engineering services.**

**HEALTH INSURANCE FOR SMALL BUSINESS:** ACEC/CO member firms continue to see skyrocketing increases in health care costs, while relatively low inflation holds wages and fees in-check. In addition, access to insurance coverage is limited for many of our small business member owners. The result is an increasingly difficult business environment for private sector firms. **We strongly support the advancement of legislation that will provide alternatives to small businesses and affordable quality health insurance to all businesses.** We also encourage our legislators to be active in developing State initiatives and not solely rely on a federal solution.

**HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING:** The consulting engineering profession is dependent on Colorado's major research institutions for many of the staff hired each year. **For Colorado to rank 48<sup>th</sup> in per capita state tax dollars directed toward higher education, per a CCHE report, is seriously adverse to the future well-being of all the citizens of Colorado.** The Colleges of Engineering and complementary disciplines clearly are in need of greatly increased State of Colorado funding support to bring them at least up to the funding level per student of their peer institutions nationally; the vitality of the Colorado economy in the future demands it. As a report of the National Academies notes: "That vitality is derived in large part from the productivity of well-trained people and the steady stream of scientific and technical innovations they produce."

**SUSTAINABILITY:** The economy and the security of our country are dependent upon the reliability of an affordable energy supply. The continued reliance on foreign sources of energy is a concern to ACEC-CO. The State of Colorado is positioned well within traditional energy development such as oil and gas. Governor Ritter has placed a focus on “Colorado’s New Energy Economy.” He is making a commitment to encourage development of wind, solar and agricultural energy products as well as the development of new technology for the extraction and use of traditional resources. Renewable energy resources must play an important role in our energy policy. We must encourage research and the use of new and emerging technology. An appropriate balance between supply and demand must be maintained. The supply side includes the development and distribution of our energy resources. The demand side balances supply with conservation, utilization and efficiency. We must review all of our current and potential energy resources and balance them with efficiency, environment impacts, sustainability and economic impacts. **We encourage the Governor and the Legislature to provide the leadership and create the policies required to make Colorado a leader in the New Energy Economy by supporting environmentally responsible development and use of all resources.**

*The American Council of Engineering Companies of Colorado (ACEC/CO) is the business association of approximately 250 member firms employing over 10,000 employees in the independent practice of consulting engineering. Consulting engineering firms in ACEC/CO provide expertise for a wide range of activities including acoustical, chemical, civil, electrical, geotechnical, industrial, materials, mechanical mining, petroleum, photogrammetric, structural, transportation, water resources, environmental, agricultural, and surveying.*

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