

Expanding PCI's influence


PCI recently conducted a strategic planning session, and I'm happy to say that it was well attended by the Board of Directors, past chairs of the institute, and PCI staff. Much of my last Chairman's Message was aimed at encouraging members to voice their opinions regarding the direction of the institute in anticipation of this event, and now that it's past, I'd like to give you a little feedback.

Like many other strategic planning sessions or CEO summits I've been a part of, the topics of growing the industry, developing and retaining human capital at all levels, and improving technology or innovation in the industry were big talking points. This year, however, there was also a little more focus on PCI expanding its influence in the knowledge generation, legislative, and safety roles. Although many of the issues discussed are already being addressed, there are opportunities to move forward with others, but they will require commitments of the institute and its members. For illustrative purposes, I'd like to call out a couple of examples: PCI's role as a standards developer and the PCI Foundation's role as both a developer of talent for the industry and a catalyst for growth through education of the design community.

The board and past chairs identified increased standards development as one goal to influence PCI's prominence as the entity known for the development of standards related to the design and construction of precast, prestressed concrete. With the increased status and prominence of PCI standards, PCI members will benefit from increased credibility in the marketplace and an easier ability to influence precast, prestressed concrete standards.

The cyclical nature of our business ensures that there will be positive and negative swings in the economy in the future and, thus, funding of the institute. It will take ongoing support and resources to maintain the standards-development process and PCI's status as a technical institute. If we are to be successful, our commitment and resource allocation to the maintenance of these standards must be consistent throughout these economic fluctuations. This is an issue the board will be deliberating in the months ahead as we finalize our plans and determine the resources necessary to meet our goals.

With regard to the PCI Foundation, this is a program that has proved to be hugely successful in developing professional talent for the industry and, more important, educating future design professionals on the benefits of precast concrete. Again, to ensure the long-term viability of this program, our commitment needs to be consistent in good times and bad, and I don't believe that relying on voluntary donations will support this. In that vein, funding the PCI Foundation through dues is currently under consideration.

Over the next few months, a proposal in concept is being developed for the February 2018 board meeting. This proposal will clearly articulate which activities PCI will be involved in and what the anticipated economic impact (if any) would be. Depending on the outcome of that meeting, the proposal will then be incorporated into the fiscal 2018–2019 budget for approval at the June 2018 board meeting. As always, I would encourage you to reach out to your respective regional affiliate board representative for questions or comments on this process and what you would like to see from your institute. 



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