

Mason Hardaway Lampton

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Balanced budgets and building codes

We held our summer board meeting this June in New Orleans, La., and the outcome of the event was a great success. After two days of discussions, conversations, and consensus building, we came away achieving three critical goals:

- a balanced budget that adds an additional 25% to PCI's reserves
- a fully adopted strategic plan
- resources to facilitate development of a precast, prestressed concrete design specification


These goals were set through a collaborative effort between the current board, past chairs, and a broad range of industry leaders who all had a voice in the decision making. The consensus we achieved on PCI's priorities was noteworthy, in part because of the sacrifices some groups made, at least in the next fiscal year, to support the broader needs of the membership reflected in the plan.

The strategic plan prioritizes support for several of PCI's legacy programs, including the continued creation and preservation of the PCI body of knowledge, ongoing resources for the plant certification program, and a commitment to fix PCI's information technology (IT) platform. The IT piece includes additional investments to make the PCI website more interactive, to add the ability to track visitors so we can better understand how people are using the site, and to build out the member database and Committee Central portal.

With the remaining resources, we committed to three strategic goals that we all agree will help build the value proposition of PCI for its members. Meeting participants also unanimously agreed that developing a precast, prestressed concrete design specification must be a top priority in the near term. PCI has spent decades conducting research that demonstrates the unique performance, durability, versatility, and economic benefits of precast concrete building materials, but we've never fully translated that knowledge to the building code.

Since the 1960s, we have relied on others to incorporate precast concrete in their codes. By writing a precast, prestressed concrete design specification, which could be incorporated into the building code, we can have more control over the design of our products. It will give our industry a powerful tool to compete using the advantages of precast concrete and provide our members with significant leverage for winning new business.

Achieving these goals is important to all PCI members, so much so that several of PCI's groups sacrificed their own projects to support them. The Marketing Council set aside part of its budget to support the IT investments laid out in the strategic plan. The IT platform is essential for the second goal of increasing market share for precast concrete. The Research and Development Council committed part of its budget to facilitate the specification development. The third goal, enhancing members' businesses, also saw many projects, including workforce development, have to be delayed in the next fiscal year due to lack of resources. These were tough choices, but in the end we all agreed that they represent the best decisions for the organization and reflected our priorities. The tough choices also included a budget with an eye toward PCI covering its costs in several areas that have historically been subsidized. The board also established two task groups to look at current funding structures in order to explore fully funding the plan.

This is an exciting time to be a part of PCI's leadership. Although there are many changes taking place, the collaboration and team spirit I witnessed at this summer's meeting give me confidence that the decisions we are making today will have a positive impact on the organization and its members for years to come. 



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