

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# What's next?

“What’s next?” This is what the character President Barlett in *The West Wing* political drama on TV would famously say when he was ready to move on to the next thing. As we went to print for the first edition of *PCI Journal* for 2026, we were still awaiting the PCI Board of Directors’ strategic planning meeting in December. I’m not certain exactly what will come out of the meeting; I hope to report that in the next issue of *PCI Journal* and at the PCI Convention in February; however, I am fairly certain of a few things.

I don’t expect any radical change in direction or priorities. Admitting my obvious bias, PCI is mostly on the right track. Our finances are in great shape. The successful publication of the precast concrete building code, ACI/PCI 319-25, as well as many additional standards and technical documents in the current strategic plan reinforced that PCI is first and foremost a technical institute, and a healthy one. I am sure that will continue in the next plan.

Talking with our members and chapters, there is general satisfaction in our marketing efforts. The How Precast Builds campaign continues, and the Precast Protects Life program emphasizes that the resilience of precast concrete structures is getting traction in the design community. The Sustainability Committee has done remarkable work in the past two years, making great progress on not only messaging but the nuts and bolts of a new product category rule (PCR) specifically for precast concrete products. In fact, this is an area where I believe we will see even greater emphasis in the next plan.

Our education offerings over the past five years have increased greatly. Each year tens of thousands of design professionals come to PCI to get the continuing education units to maintain their licenses and learn about the benefits and value of precast concrete along the way. The many webinars and online academy courses we offer continue to grow and will continue with the next plan.

It is in another area of education that I foresee the biggest emphasis for PCI in our next plan: outreach to universities. Our academic professional members (as well as the headlines) report monumental and fundamental shifts at our institutions of higher learning. PCI, our members, and our chapters are going to have to increasingly fill a void that for decades was filled by the universities. Faculty members tell us that many universities are now basically a business and that prestressed concrete classes with 10 to 15 students enrolled simply won’t be offered. PCI will increasingly have to fill that role for engineers coming out of school. As far as the architecture community, we still have much to do to see that students are even exposed to precast concrete as a building material in school. How to structure the needed programs (and pay for them) will be a big topic in our next plan.

As 2025 ends and also sunsets our current strategic plan, I want to thank the hundreds of volunteer members and the PCI staff, who have worked so hard to make the plan’s goals a reality since the board met in December 2017 to chart our future. I want to thank PCI’s chair, Carlos Cerna, for his leadership, and I look forward to working with Cheryl Lang when she takes over in the year ahead. Together we’ve all created a new future. I can’t wait to see what’s next. ■



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