



State of the Chapter 2008 Presidential Goals and Objectives

December 7, 2007

INTRODUCTION

In 2002, the Chapter embarked on an aggressive journey to draft a strategic plan that revitalized its direction. Since that time, the Chapter has accomplished almost all of the goals in the strategic plan and has built itself into one of the leading chapters of the national American Public Works Association (APWA). We have experienced many positive benefits including increased membership, full attendance at our conferences, and increased conference proceeds. It is now time to build on this success and refocus our efforts toward the current year and future years in this exceptional Chapter. The following outlines my goal for 2008 and the specific initiatives I am proposing to achieve it. As with any successful organization, great things are accomplished by groups of people. This plan will require the full commitment of the leadership team to make progress in 2008 and carry the momentum into future years. The leadership team for 2008 includes:

- Tina Nelson**, Vice-President
- Jay Burney**, Secretary
- Jill Marilley**, Treasurer
- Dave Mandyke**, Past-President
- Board of Directors

I look forward to working with this team, our committee chairs, and our exceptional membership to continue moving this organization in a positive direction.

THE GOAL

The underlying goal for the upcoming year is to extend the excellent work that has been done in recent years into 2008. At the same time, we want to continue striving for improvement in the way that our Chapter functions as well as make improvements in the public works profession as a whole. Each of the initiatives described below work toward achieving at least a portion of this goal.

THE INITIATIVES

IN 2008, I want to focus on three major initiatives that continue the work done in past years that will also set a focus for the future years in this Chapter. They are: (1) a continued emphasis in promoting sustainability, (2) developing awareness in education that promotes the public works profession, and (3) focusing on the continued enhancement of Chapter operations, beginning with Chapter committee expectations and requirements.

(1) SUSTAINABILITY

Continue the work done under the leadership of President Mandyke to focus our direction toward awareness and programs supporting sustainability.

The Chapter recognizes that sustainability is of grave importance to our country and the APWA. This was a major emphasis of the spring and fall conferences in 2007. Some highlights of those conferences included presentations by our national presidents William Verkest and Larry Frevert, Congressman Jay Insee, and our keynote speaker David Johnston, one of the fathers of green building in the country.

Mr. Johnston's speech at the spring conference made us aware of the impacts we are having on our environment, which was perhaps an unpleasant message, but a message we needed to hear. His follow-up at the fall conference made us aware of the things that we, as public works leaders, can and must do to make a difference in the battle against global warming. Of particular significance was the message that David Johnston gave us as a group. He said that the public works profession is the one profession with the most capabilities to tackle this problem. It possesses the creative problem-solving capability to develop solutions for the future. He cited the example of the development of the federal highway system. In a period of forty years, this program helped change the way this country was viewed by the world. As your new president, I endorse the work that was done by President Mandyke and will continue his efforts in sustainability. I believe the message of sustainability is key to our success in the education initiative described below.

(2) PROMOTE PUBLIC WORKS IN EDUCATION

Develop a plan for enhancing the image of public works, making it the career of choice in the future.

Where will we obtain our staff of the future? When we talk about sustainability, we recognize that with the retirement of the baby boomers we are experiencing a mass exodus of our technical expertise. This loss extends to all levels of the public works profession. It not only involves engineers and technicians, but just as importantly, the technical workers including carpenters, laborers, equipment operators, masons, and the people that build our projects and keep our public infrastructure maintained. Some of the facts given by President Frevert, our national president, made us aware that the United States is currently producing 60,000 engineers a year while China is producing 250,000 and India about 150,000. President Frevert raised serious questions about our ability as a country to stay on the leading edge with these numbers. In addition, as you are aware, it is getting very difficult to find qualified individuals to fill vacant positions. The projections are not good considering that in the next 10 years, 40 percent of the management positions across the U.S. will be vacated by retiring baby boomers. That brings up the question:

"Where will we find the people?"

The emphasis of my presidency is based on starting to answer that question. I have formulated an initiative leadership group that is going to take on that problem. This group will be led by the endless energy and vision of Art Louie. Our goal is to make public works the career choice of our young people. After all is said and done, the work that we do is directed toward sustainability of our infrastructure. We are the infrastructure builders that everyone counts on, whether they know it or not. This became very evident by looking at the events of hurricane Katrina. The people of the world now know how important infrastructure is, and they learned the hard way. We need to market our profession to the nation and draw in new recruits to take on this effort.

Our initiative team is moving ahead with the following plan. We intend to unite with other organizations involved with public works in an effort to pool our resources. In line with that effort, we are planning on conducting a regional forum to look at this issue. As a start, we have met with the AGC, UW MPA Program, ASCE, WSDOT, and the PSEC to discuss potential partnerships into this endeavor. They have expressed a strong desire to be involved and support the process. We recognize that there is power in numbers, and we share the same

interest. The need for the labor organizations to have workers is just as important as having engineers. If they don't have the carpenters, laborers, truck drivers, etc., they won't be able to build the projects that we design. Our plan is simple: market public works careers through education. How we go about doing this will be the first product of this initiative.

(3) ENHANCE CHAPTER OPERATIONS

Better utilize the abilities of our leadership team and membership to continue to build our Chapter.

3.A. – *Chapter committees.* The initial focus of this initiative is to improve and clarify the expectations of chapter committees. While some of our committees are making exceptional efforts and contributions to the chapters, others are rarely present, if at all. Working with the Vice-President, Tina Nelson, we intend to redefine what it means to be a committee chair and to formalize expectations for committees within the chapter. While this plan will be better refined as we get further into the year, some of the initial ideas that we are exploring include:

- Officer appointment of committee chairs
- Evaluation of active committees within the chapter
- Developing reporting requirements for committees
- Required participation with magazine

3.B – *Officer/Board of Director Roles.* One of the other major changes I am contemplating is revising the roles of the officers and board to include some additional responsibilities. With our current structure, we have 12 extremely talented individuals that can contribute to the growth and success of our organization. This does not include all the committee chairs and general membership that currently contribute. I do not believe that we take advantage of their energy and abilities to the greatest extent possible. At the same time, it is understood that we are all volunteers to this organization, each with time-consuming jobs outside of APWA. That is the very reason that we need to spread the responsibilities further so that we can accomplish more without over-burdening key individuals in the organization. I do not have all the answers to this topic but have some ideas that I would like to explore further with the leadership team. Some potential assignments could be:

Vice-President: Lead committee restructuring initiative; manage committee financial fund; committee chair training

Secretary: Committee chair training; policy notebook; develop/oversee speaking council; coordinate chapter speaking events

Board Member: Magazine content recruitment; volunteer recruitment, participate in speaking council; assist with development of committee training guidelines

RECOGNITION

Before closing, I want to recognize a few of the people that have been critical to our past successes and have provided the foundation for our future.

1. The past presidents have provided leadership and made great contributions to our chapter. Without them we could not be where we are today. We always need to keep this in mind as we reflect on our current achievements.
2. President Mandyke's contribution of the magazine (see below) to our chapter is truly his legacy. This is a tremendous achievement and a great success in its inaugural year and will definitely be a foundation for our future.
3. John Carpita, MRSC – Not a year in recent history should go by without some recognition for the efforts of John Carpita and the Municipal Research Service Center. While they are a paid contractor, the service we get from them (and particularly from John) goes way beyond the payment they receive and demonstrates their commitment to the organization.

