

2021 COUNCIL ELECTION PLATFORM

Mike Houvardas, P.Eng.

Candidate nominated by Members

- EDUCATION:** BSc Mechanical Engineering, University of Manitoba, 1984
- ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES:** Professional Engineer, Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba, 1988-present
- OTHER ENGINEERING/ GEOSCIENCE ACTIVITIES:** Professional Engineer, Engineers Geoscientists British Columbia
Professional Engineer, Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta
Professional Engineer, Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Saskatchewan
Professional Engineer, Professional Engineers Ontario
Association of Consulting Engineering Companies Manitoba (ACEC), member, board member (Secretary/Treasurer), and participated in committees including,
- ACEC/Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba liaison
 - Energy, Science, and Technology Committee
 - Golf Committee
 - Quality of Documents Committee (ad hoc)
 - Buildings and Institutional Committee (presently active on)
- EMPLOYERS SINCE GRADUATION:** Tower Engineering Group, P.Eng., Principal, 1997-present
Nova 3 Engineering, P.Eng., Senior Mechanical Engineer, 1992-1997
SMS Engineering, P.Eng., Mechanical Systems Designer, 1991-1992
K&D Engineering, EIT, Mechanical Systems Designer, P.Eng., 1987-1991
EJ Faraci & Associates, Drafter, EIT, Jr. Mechanical Designer, 1984-1987

PLATFORM PART 1 – THE PUBLIC OF MANITOBA

The Association governs and regulates the professions in the public interest. What is, or what should, Council be doing to ensure that its governance is in the public interest and why?

In my opinion, Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba's Code of Ethics is a very demanding document. Demanding, but not draconian. Demanding in a way that tells the public their health, safety, and welfare is an engineer's upmost priority and reminds the engineer of that duty. I can think of no other profession that demands as much from their practitioners and I have read many other codes, oaths, and see evidence of impropriety daily in media. Through rigorous training and access to mentorship programs, engineers have some of the highest standards of practice. Maintenance of these standards is through execution of the Act and by-laws and must be preserved, otherwise government officials will regulate the profession and they may not have the necessary background, education, or skillset to do this properly. Politicians may step away from issues at the end of their terms, but engineers cannot.

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PLATFORM PART 2 – THE ASSOCIATION

Council sets the expectation for the Association by defining the Ends. What is, or should be, the most important End and why?

Ends 1, 2, and 3 in my opinion are self-explanatory. They are important and will always be the core issues of the Association. I had to decide on E-4.2 and E-6.2. Given the ongoing working relationship with the provincial government, work needs to be done on E-4.2. The commodification of engineering services is not appropriate. However, I choose E-6.2. Sustainability will be a major topic for years to come and no one is better poised to help in that regard than engineers – not accountants, economists, or politicians. Others may have ideas, but only engineers, as the world's problem solvers, must be seen as being in the forefront. While everyone is interested in sustainability, young people are especially so, and as engineers, we would have the knowledge and background to properly assess ideas (including those of others), their practicality, their efficiency, and cost-benefit. They would be the ideal candidates to lead us into the future.

PLATFORM PART 3 – THE COUNCIL

Council sets out the core characteristics of what it considers to be a good councillor in Clause 1 of GP-6. What is, or should be, the most important characteristic of a good councillor and why?

After reading through the eleven core characteristics considered to be important, my first cull left me with 1.3, 1.7, and 1.9. On further review, I realized that what those three all have in common is effective communication. In my opinion, characteristic 1.7 best summarizes those three. I think many of us can recall meetings where two or three people dominated, either intentionally or accidentally, often leaving good ideas unsaid. Some attendees may even get frustrated, only to return to their offices to send a long email, or worse, to undermine or reverse the work of the meeting by other means. As the point states, assertive, respectful, and honest discussion considering the best facts available are key to productive, fruitful, and successful undertakings.

PLATFORM PART 4 – THE CANDIDATE

Please provide any additional information you would like as to why you would make a good councillor.

I have been an engineer for over 30 years involved exclusively in the consulting industry. It took my involvement in ACEC before I realized that consulting, at least in Manitoba, made up only about 10% of our membership. This was made clearer to me after my involvement in a number of reverse career fairs. I was surprised at how few students knew what a consulting engineer was, but were incredibly interested when I explained many of the daily aspects of the position. It offers opportunities to work directly with the public and people with diverse backgrounds – architects, brew masters, contractors, dentists, doctors, manufacturers, restaurateurs, etc. It also offers engineers a path to business ownership that perhaps other areas of engineering may not, or where it might be more difficult to do so, and that may be attractive to some students. As a councillor, I would like to help foster this area of our profession.