

AMERICAN RAILWAY ENGINEERING AND  
MAINTENANCE-OF-WAY ASSOCIATION

# STRATEGIC PLAN

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MARCH 12, 2019



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## **Introduction**

The AREMA Strategic Plan was approved by the AREMA Board of Governors in November 2018. The full Strategic Plan document is available from AREMA Headquarters. This Summary Plan is intended to provide guidance to the Functional Group Board of Directors and to the technical Committees with their activities.

AREMA has established its reputation as the technical voice of North American railway by having strong Technical Committee governance which ensures the member volunteer generated content is properly developed, peer reviewed, and approved or rejected in accordance with the organizations Bylaws and Committee Regulations.

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### **AREMA'S MISSION**

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Facilitate the development, advancement, and curation of both technical and practical knowledge and recommended practices pertaining to the design, construction, and maintenance of railway infrastructure.

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### **AREMA'S VISION**

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To be the pre-eminent engineering association for North American and International railways and transit organizations

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### **STRATEGIC PLAN DEFINITIONS**

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AREMA is a 501 C6 organization who develops, maintains, and provides recommended practices for the Engineering and Maintenance, of Track, Bridges, Signals, Communication, and ancillary facilities for the North American and international railway and transit industry. These recommended practices which are maintained by AREMA are rigorously developed by the organization's membership volunteers which are comprised of industry personnel. The information is disseminated throughout the North American and International railway industry through printed and electronically published materials, technical conferences and educational events.

AREMA has established its reputation as the technical voice of North American railways by having strong Technical Committee governance which ensures the member/volunteer-generated content is properly developed, peer reviewed, and approved or rejected in accordance with the organization's Bylaws and Committee Regulations.

## **Presence**

For AREMA to be successful, the technical and training materials developed by the organization must not only penetrate AREMA's membership but must also reach beyond the organization to the North American and International railway industry as a whole. Only through this **presence** will AREMA be able to maintain its intellectual stature throughout the industry and remain a viable endeavor.

Presence is also secured by promotion of the organization as the professional association of choice for railway engineering professionals.

## STRATEGIC PLAN

### Relevance

The development, review, and appropriate retention of recommended practices and materials is a substantial undertaking and key to maintaining **relevance**. Published materials should reflect both current industry best practice, and also recognize the necessity of providing information that is necessary to maintaining existing legacy assets and infrastructure that have not yet reached the end of their economic lifespan.

**Relevance** is also enhanced by ensuring the membership and rail industry as a whole has knowledge and confidence in the organization's governance processes. These processes ensure the member/volunteer-generated content is properly developed in a non-biased manner without commercial influence, is properly peer reviewed, and approved in accordance with the organization's Bylaws and Committee Regulations.

### Participation

Essential to the process of developing recommended practices and training materials, is the collaboration of industry personnel to ensure a broad spectrum of knowledge and experience is considered. Fundamental to the development of material, is the contribution of industry personnel with the appropriate technical expertise in the subject matter areas. AREMA meetings, events, and virtual workspaces should provide a venue for the cooperative development of material. **Participation** is the positive result of the weighing of the cost of the undertaking compared to the benefit gained by both the individual involved, and the organization of which they are employed.

### Value

The interdependent relationship between industry **presence**, **relevance**, and **participation** establish the **value** of AREMA. Without value to the railway industry, AREMA loses the ability to be viable because of the inability to price goods, services, advertising, and dues at a level to offset the costs.

**Value** to the membership and railway industry (the organization's underlying supporter) can be established in many ways, and it is the responsibility of AREMA's headquarter staff and leadership to periodically survey and consult with the membership and the railway industry leadership to review customer needs to better understand their view of the value proposition.

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## INDUSTRY POSITIONING

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As an organization, AREMA must maintain and defend the integrity of its recommended practices and training materials by retaining the organization's independence from other industry or political bodies whose mission is to solely serve their membership. With proper industry positioning, AREMA should be viewed as the technical resource of choice for the development of materials used throughout the railway industry, including but not limited to standards, products, or regulations.

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## KEY FUNCTIONALITY

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*To provide non-biased industry recommended practice and technical training pertaining to the design, construction and maintenance of railway infrastructure.*

It should be AREMA's goal to publish recommended practices that are current in content and scope. Recommended practices should be developed, refined and updated in a continuum that builds upon the historical record without hesitancy to remove content that is no longer reflective of current industry best practice.

*To provide venues for the discussion, exchange, and development of ideas and technical knowledge related to railway and transit infrastructure.*

AREMA must operate its Annual Conference and other Educational Events in a manner that encourages and maximizes the participation of both association members and non-members. This can be achieved by providing high quality technical content, and adequate forums for meaningful intellectual exchange to occur.

*To be the industry leader in the delivery of recommended practices and technical training material to the North American and international railway and transit industry.*

Historically, AREMA and similar organizations have relied upon conferences, seminars, webinars, and printed materials for the delivery of content. As the railway industry continues to seek efficiencies in the training of employees and the storage of information is digitized, it is critical that AREMA continuously evaluate available technologies and develop effective, customer-focused delivery methods for materials beyond the physical.

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## GOALS

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The following Goals will be assessed by the Executive Director/CEO and President on an annual basis to assist in measuring successful execution of the Association's Mission which aim to create **Value** for its membership via **Presence, Relevance, and Participation**;

### Membership

- Primary metric:
  - Overall AREMA Member Retention Rate at, or in excess of, planned annual Budget number.
- Secondary metrics:
  - Variations in the total number of Railroad/Transit Employee Memberships
  - Variations in total Committee Participation by Railroad/Transit Employees

### Annual Technical Conference

- Primary metrics:
  - Paid Technical Conference Registration at the AREMA Technical Conference
  - Sales of Exhibition Space associated with AREMA Technical Conference
  - Corporate Sponsorships associated with AREMA Technical Conference
- Secondary metric:
  - Year to year attendance by active Railroad/Transit Employees.

### Development and Dissemination of Technical Content

- Primary metrics:
  - Development of new published content and/or a Reaffirmation of existing content by all Technical Committees on an annual basis.
  - Seminar and Webinars -
    - Development and Presentation
- Secondary metrics:
  - Release of published content on, or ahead of, planned production schedule.
  - Sales of published content at, or in excess of, planned annual Budget number.

## STRATEGIC PLAN

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### INITIATIVES

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#### **A. Ongoing Operational Focused Initiatives;**

Items related to the operation of the organization's headquarters and staff, its member leadership, its governance, and general fiscal accountability.

#### **B. Near-Term Strategic Initiatives;**

Items related to core mission of the organization that should be regularly assessed for status change and/or planned progress.

#### **C. Long-Term Initiatives;**

Items related to future direction, sustainability, and growth of the organization.

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