



# Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists Amended Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027

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**Prepared by:**

SOLID Planning Solutions

Department of Consumer Affairs

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## Members of the Board

Christina Wong, Public Member, Board President

Guillermo Martinez, Electrical Member, Board Vice President

Fel Amistad, Public Member

Alireza Asgari, Structural Engineer Member

Khaesha Brooks, Mechanical Engineer Member

Rossana D'Antonio, Civil Engineer Member

Michael Hartley, Land Surveyor Member

Coby King, Public Member

Elizabeth "Betsy" Mathieson, Geologist Member

Frank Ruffino, Public Member

Wilfredo Sanchez, Public Member

Fermin Villegas, Public Member

Cliff Waldeck, Public Member

Gavin Newsom, Governor

Tomiquia Moss, Secretary, Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency

Kimberly Kirchmeyer, Director, Department of Consumer Affairs

Richard B. Moore, Executive Officer, Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists

## Message from the Board President

This new strategic plan is being published at an exciting time for the Board. During the strategic planning process (described in the final section of this document) the Board reflected upon and responded to recent changes in society and technology as well as in its regulated professions.

We are 2-1/2 years into the global COVID-19 pandemic, having adapted to circumstances by implementing changes such as temporary teleworking for Board staff and holding two years of Board meetings via an online hosting platform that allows remote participation by Board members, staff, guests, and the public.

Increased recognition of the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion of underserved communities led to the expansion of the Board's list of Values and the development of some important new Objectives.

The Board's ongoing rollout of its new online application/licensing portal, Connect, facilitated development of several Objectives designed to meet needs identified during internal and external surveys conducted early in the strategic planning process.

This strategic plan is but one example of the Board incorporating input from various stakeholders. I encourage every licensee to respond to Board surveys such as the periodic job analysis surveys for exam development. I also encourage all individuals to take advantage of opportunities to provide feedback to the Board. That input will increase the Board's effectiveness in meeting the Goals described in this strategic plan and will further protection of the public.

## About the Board

- 1891
  - Licensing for land surveyors (first in nation) was enacted on March 31, 1891 by the Legislature, which also established the State Surveyor General.
- 1920s
  - The Board was created by the Legislature. Registration was for civil engineers only.
- 1930s
  - Structural Engineer license was added by the Legislature.
  - State Surveyor General's office was abolished and Land Surveyor licensing authority was transferred to the Board by the Legislature.
- 1940s
- The Legislature added restrictions on use of engineering titles (this began the creation of the "title acts") for the branches of professional engineering in the fields of chemical, electrical, mechanical, and petroleum engineering.
- 1960s
  - The Legislature added restrictions on use of engineering titles for the branch of metallurgical engineering.
  - The Legislature added restrictions on the practices of electrical and mechanical engineering (change in status from "title act" to "practice act") and on use of engineering titles for the branch of industrial engineering.
  - The Legislature delegated authority to the Board to create new title acts.
  - The Legislature created the Board of Registration for Geologists under the Geologist Act to regulate the practice of geology.
- 1970s
  - The first Professional Geologist license and the first Certified Engineering Geologist title authority license were issued.
  - Professional Geophysicist licensure and regulation of the practice of geophysics were added by the Legislature.
  - The Board held hearings and created nine additional title act branches of engineering: agricultural, control systems, corrosion, fire protection, manufacturing, nuclear, quality, safety, and traffic.
- 1980s
  - The Geotechnical Engineer license was added by the Legislature.
  - The Board's authority to create new title act branches of engineering was eliminated by the Legislature at the Board's request.
  - The requirement for testing of all civil engineering applicants on engineering surveying principles and seismic principles was added by the Legislature.

- 1990s
  - The Legislature created the sunset review process for all licensing boards under the Department of Consumer Affairs.
  - The Board adopted regulations to create the title authority license of Certified Hydrogeologist for Professional Geologists.
- 2000s
  - Laws requiring licensees to execute written contracts for professional services were enacted.
  - Legislation was enacted that eliminated the Board for Geologists and Geophysicists and transferred all of the duties, powers, purposes, responsibilities, and jurisdiction to regulate the practices of geology and geophysics to the Board for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors.
- 2010s
  - Effective January 1, 2011, the name of the Board was changed to the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists. The Board began administering its state-specific licensing examinations via computer-based testing (CBT).
  - The Board implemented online licensure renewals via credit card payment.
  - The Legislature authorized the Board to collect fingerprints from applicants for the purpose of a criminal history record check to further its mission of public protection.
  - The Board conducted a review of its operational processes and procedures and, based on that review, reorganized into four functional units: Administrative Services, Enforcement, Examination Development, and Licensing.
  - The Board transitioned all eight of its state-specific licensing examinations to computer-based testing (CBT) format, allowing for more testing opportunities.
- 2020s
  - Working with a vendor and the Department of Consumer Affairs' Office of Information Services, the Board developed and launched its BPELSG Connect system, a licensing and enforcement monitoring system that allows submission of applications, renewals, and complaints through an online portal.

## Significant Accomplishments

The Board has achieved the following accomplishments related to the objectives in its July 27, 2017, Updated Strategic Plan:

**Objective 1.1** Develop and implement an integrated licensing and enforcement case management system.

Status – The Board conducted a Business Process Improvement Study, then retained a vendor to implement a Business Modernization Project including a newly acquired integrated software system to manage workflows across all units of operation within the Board. The resulting online application/licensing portal, BPELSG Connect, includes license application, renewal, and enforcement case management modules. The first phase went live in late 2020, facilitating online applications and application status tracking for engineer-in-training and land surveyor-in-training, and online submittal of complaints to the Board’s Enforcement Unit. Subsequent phases included additional applications for other licenses and payment for license renewal, and payment for state-specific exams and notification of exam results. The Board’s speed and success in implementing its Business Modernization Project has received acclaim from DCA, and license applicants have provided overwhelmingly positive feedback about their experience submitting an application on the platform.

**Objective 2.1** Monitor and report annually whether national exams continue to meet California’s licensing requirements.

Status –The Board monitors national exam results and trends. Board members and staff are actively involved with NCEES and ASBOG examination development and oversight committees. The Board’s Executive Officer continues to encourage Board members and staff to maintain involvement with NCEES and ASBOG.

**Objective 3.2** Proactively monitor and clarify as needed laws and regulations.

Status – Board staff continuously monitors the laws and regulations under the Board’s jurisdiction to ensure they are clear, appropriate, and relevant and recommends additions, amendments, or repeals as needed.

**Objective 5.1** Communicate enforcement actions on an ongoing basis on the Board website as soon as feasible.

Status – Accusations against licensees are posted in the License Lookup section of the Board’s website once they are filed and served on the respondent (licensee). Final disciplinary decisions are posted on the website once they become final and effective.

**Objective 5.2** Maintain and expand as necessary the Board’s social media presence.

Status – As reported quarterly, the responses to the Board’s Facebook posts and Twitter tweets indicate the Board’s social media presence is reaching licensees.

**Objective 5.3** Report annually to the Board the steps taken to educate university administrators and students about the importance of licensure.

Status – Board staff provides quarterly reports on the Board’s extensive outreach program to college and university academic staff and students. This outreach emphasizes the importance of, and paths to, licensure. Outreach presentations are usually done in-person on campus but may also be done as virtual/remote presentations.



## Mission, Vision, and Values

### Our Mission

We protect the public's safety and property by promoting standards for competence and integrity through licensing and regulating the Board's professions.

### Our Vision

A safe and resilient California with confidence in the integrity and work of the Board's licensed professionals.

### Our Values

- Accountability
- Competence
- Consumer Protection
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Fairness
- Integrity
- Professionalism

## Goal 1: Licensing

*The Board protects the public by licensing qualified individuals who provide professional services in California.*

### Objectives:

- 1.1 Improve communication to licensees to ensure they are engaged and up to date on regulations and policies.
- 1.2 Continue rollout and enhancement of the Connect system to improve interactions with licensees.
- 1.3 Develop a strategy to implement a continuing education requirement to help licensees maintain and improve their professional knowledge and awareness of new, pertinent laws.
- 1.4 Implement a renewal assessment to promote better informed licensees regarding relevant laws and regulations.
- 1.5 Explore options to reduce cost barriers for licensure.

## Goals 2: Applications and Examinations

*The Board processes applications and administers examinations in a timely and accessible manner to determine individuals' qualifications for licensure.*

### Objectives:

- 2.1 Improve communication to potential applicants to educate them on application and examination requirements, the Connect system, and the licensing process.
- 2.2 Offer applicants current status updates in the Connect system as a way of checking the status of their application online and reducing the need for applicants to call the Board.
- 2.3 Continue rollout and enhancement of the Connect system to streamline applications and the exam scheduling process.
- 2.4 Update and maintain the list of frequently asked questions and appropriate answers to enable applicants to submit a complete application package and improve staff efficiency.
- 2.5 Educate prospective references that their opinion of an applicant's readiness for licensure is as important as passing an exam to provide additional verification of the applicant's qualifications.
- 2.6 Advocate for national exam and state exam standards to maintain their high quality and which reflect the knowledge and skills needed in the profession(s) to accurately measure applicants' qualifications to practice in California.
- 2.7 Keep licensure requirements and exams relevant and fair to competent applicants with varied education and experience to increase diversity in the professions, leading to an increase in the number of licensees.
- 2.8 Increase the visibility of application processing timeframes on the website to inform Board members, licensees, and consumers of the Board's performance.

## Goal 3: Laws and Regulations

*The Board strives to ensure that statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures strengthen and support its mandate and mission.*

### Objectives:

- 3.1 Collaborate with the Department of Consumer Affairs and the California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency on the timeline for approval of regulations to facilitate timely implementation of changes.
- 3.2 Develop a mentorship or succession plan to provide staff with continuity of knowledge and skills related to the legislative and rulemaking processes.
- 3.3 Anticipate the need for new legislation, recruit potential sponsors for bills, and respond to bills that have an effect on the Board's ability to protect the public in an effort to ensure statutes are relevant and to support the Board's mission.
- 3.4 Develop and promote new regulations as necessary to implement statutory authority and to keep Board policies and procedures consistent and relevant across all the professions.
- 3.5 Improve communication, including utilization of plain language, to increase awareness and understanding of changing laws and regulations.
- 3.6 Promote legislation to increase and collect penalties for unlicensed practice to provide effective deterrents.

## Goal 4: Enforcement

*The Board strives to protect the public by enforcing the laws and regulations governing the Board's professions.*

### Objectives:

- 4.1 Continue development and refinement of the Connect system's enforcement module to increase the efficiency of complaint submittal, respondent contact, case-tracking, and reporting of case status.
- 4.2 Improve education to applicants and licensees of common violations that could lead to disciplinary action to reduce violations and increase understanding of requirements.
- 4.3 Work with law enforcement and other appropriate government agencies to enforce penalties to provide effective deterrents to unlicensed practice.
- 4.4 Continue to reduce investigation timelines to streamline enforcement against violators and be responsive to complainants.
- 4.5 Educate other governmental entities about unlicensed practice to minimize risk to the public and increase effectiveness of enforcement actions against unlicensed individuals.
- 4.6 Develop a plan for recruitment, training, and retention of diverse expert consultants to improve the quality and consistency of case reviews.
- 4.7 Explore ways to expand language access during the complaint process.
- 4.8 Evaluate enforcement procedures for alignment with laws and regulations to maximize consistent disciplinary application.

## Goal 5: Outreach

*The Board promotes the importance of licensure to educate applicants, licensees, the public, and other stakeholders about the practice and regulation of the professions.*

### Objectives:

- 5.1 Solicit feedback from applicants, licensees, complainants, respondents, consumers, and staff to gauge the Board's success in meeting its goals and to receive suggestions for improvement.
- 5.2 Increase outreach to students through innovative tools and social media platforms to increase interest in the professions, recognition of the importance of licensure, understanding of requirements, and awareness of the Board's activities.
- 5.3 Explore and implement additional means of outreach on social media, including advertising, to increase interest in the professions, recognition of the importance of licensure, understanding of requirements, and awareness of the Board's activities.
- 5.4 Increase public awareness of the Board's functions and services so the public knows how to submit complaints and can use the Board and DCA as a resource.
- 5.5 Disseminate information on licensure and engage in outreach to underrepresented populations to increase diversity among the professions.
- 5.6 Collaborate with the Department of Consumer Affairs to educate the public on the enforcement process and the resources available to them.
- 5.7 Increase public accessibility and awareness of the services offered by professions regulated by the Board.

## Goal 6: Customer Service and Administration

*The Board continuously works to improve efficiency, quality, and accessibility of its services.*

### Objectives:

- 6.1 Provide customer service training to staff on a periodic basis to reinforce the importance of serving the public.
- 6.2 Develop a mentorship or succession plan for all management positions to provide continuity of knowledge.
- 6.3 Assess and administer, where appropriate, technological developments that improve process efficiencies to better serve applicants, licensees, and the public.
- 6.4 Create an onboarding program for the board members to educate them on the Board's regulated professions, policies, and procedures to increase the board members' effectiveness and confidence.
- 6.5 Evaluate customer service complaints to find patterns related to the sources and types of complaints to implement changes where needed.

## Strategic Planning Process

To understand the environment in which the Board operates and to identify factors that could impact the Board's success, the California Department of Consumer Affairs' SOLID Planning Unit (SOLID) conducted an environmental scan of the internal and external environments by collecting information through the following methods:

- Interviews were conducted with twelve members of the Board, as well as the Executive Officer, and five members of Board management. These interviews were completed during the months of August and September 2021.
- An online survey was posted on the Board website and sent to a Listserv of external Board stakeholders in August 2021. Six hundred and twenty-three stakeholders completed the survey.

The most significant themes and trends identified from the environmental scan were discussed by the Board members and the Executive Officer during a strategic planning session facilitated by SOLID on January 10, 2022. This information guided the Board in the review of its mission, vision, and values while directing the development of the strategic goals and objectives outlined in this new strategic plan.

The plan was revised and approved in November 2023, revising language in two objectives (5.5 and 5.6).

## DEI Supplement Planning Process

In September of 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom, through Executive Order N-16-22, strengthened the State's commitment to a "California For All" by directing state agencies and departments to take additional actions to embed equity analysis and considerations into their policies and practices, including but not limited to the strategic planning process.

SOLID conducted a new DEI focused scan and analysis during January of 2024. Feedback was solicited from external stakeholders, board members, and the Board's leadership and staff. This feedback was used to assist BPELSG in considering a diversity, equity, and inclusion perspective to its current strategic plan.

The supplemental planning session was held in October of 2024 and during this session, the Board revised five objectives and added four new objectives.



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This strategic plan is based on stakeholder information and discussions facilitated by SOLID for the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists on January 10, 2022.

This plan was amended on October 16, 2024.



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