

ACEC DALLAS MEMBER CHAPTER MEETING

Wednesday, January 30 | 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. | Park City Club, Dallas

IMPORTANT - ACEC Dallas Chapter Meetings are now hosted at the Park City Club.

5956 Sherry Lane, Suite 1700, Dallas, TX 75225

Speaker

Dr. Terry Clower, Director, UNT Center for Economic Development and Research

Topic

Still Emerging from the Great Recession

Terry L. Clower is director for the Center for Economic Development and Research at the University of North Texas and an associate professor of applied economics. The Center provides economic and public policy consulting services primarily to clients in the non-profit and public sectors. Prior to joining UNT in 1992, Dr. Clower was employed in private industry in logistics and transportation management positions.

Dr. Clower has served as project manager, staff researcher and statistical analyst on numerous projects reflecting experience in economic and community development, economic and fiscal impact analysis, survey research design, housing market issues, land use planning, labor market analysis, transportation, and forecasting.

Dr. Clower has authored and co-authored over 100 articles, book chapters, and research reports. His scholarly articles have appeared in *Economic Development Quarterly*, *Urban Studies*, *Economic Development Review*, the *Australasian Journal of Regional Studies*, *Sustaining Regions*, and *Applied Research in Economic Development*. He is a regional (Americas) editor for the journal *Regional Science Policy and Practice*. Dr. Clower is a certified trainer in economic development for the National Association of Workforce Boards and is an instructor for certification courses sanctioned by the International Economic Development Council and the Council for Community and Economic Research.

Dr. Clower received a B.S. in Marine Transportation from Texas A&M University in 1982, a M.S. in Applied Economics from the University of North Texas in 1992 and a Ph.D. in Information Sciences from the University of North Texas in 1997.

Please RSVP no later than **Friday, January 25, 2013**. Cancellations must be made **Friday, January 25, 2013** and no shows will be charged for the meeting. Meals cannot be guaranteed without a reservation.

TO REGISTER, [CLICK HERE](#).

TSPE 2013 Engineers Week Awards Luncheon—Thursday, February 21, 2013

ACEC Dallas is a sponsor for the TSPE 2013 Engineers Week Awards Luncheon. The high-profile event helps raise scholarship funds for college students interested in engineering. This year's event will be held at the Plano Centre - Collinwood Ballroom at 2000 East Spring Creek, Plano, TX.

FOR MORE INFO: Contact Kristine Schwope, Event Planner (Cell 214-734-2281 or eweek@dallastspe.com) Check www.dallastspe.org or www.tspe-prestrail.org for links to register or www.TSPEEngineersWeek.com

ACEC Texas President: Let Texans vote on highway user fees

Let Texans vote on highway user fees

Special to the Star-Telegram, published Jan. 01, 2013

BY STEVE STAGNER

Texas has 80,000 miles of state highways and a rapidly growing population, but no long-term funding plan for repairing, replacing and upgrading our highway system.

It's hard to imagine there's a problem when the region is awash in construction equipment and orange barrels. But the current level of construction masks a sober reality. This program has been built on a mountain of debt - a way of funding that is completely unsustainable. And, unfortunately, the state's credit card is maxed out.

Without new sustainable funding, the future of mobility in Texas looks bleak: a growing population, little money for new capacity roads, increasing congestion, more potholes, more unsafe conditions, less connectivity in rural areas and more toll roads. Actually, many more toll roads and toll lanes. If that is the only alternative left to policymakers, you can bet there will be many more.

Why not let Texans vote on whether they want a different future?

Legislators have relied on bonds because they don't believe voters will accept user fee increases. But voters are smart. They know that road money comes almost entirely from users in the form of gas taxes and vehicle registration fees. And they know there is no free lunch.

A typical car owner who gets 20 miles per gallon and drives 12,000 miles per year currently pays about 1.4 cents per mile in registration fees and fuel fees for the state system. When you drive to Houston, you pay about \$3.50 each way -- quite a bargain.

Two years ago, a group of private citizens and business leaders estimated that to sustain our highway system at current congestion and pavement quality levels, the state will need to spend an additional \$5 billion a year over the next 25 years. That is achievable at a cost of a few pennies per mile for drivers.

Our research suggests that voters will support new user fees to build roads if several conditions are met. They want:

To know with 100 percent certainty (maybe 110 percent) that revenue from new fees will actually go to build roads and not be diverted into other government programs.

To make sure that new fees go to build highways with free access and are not spent on subsidizing toll roads. To have a pay-as-you-go-system of funding, moving away from debt financing and ensuring we don't pass our bills on to the next generation.

To see a solution that is equitable to all road users, from heavy trucks to hybrid vehicles. The next Legislature should offer Texans a referendum on this approach by tying phased-in increases in user fees to a constitutional amendment ensuring that any new fees can only be spent on highways -- with zero money diverted for education, DPS, pensions or any of the other things we spend current gas taxes on. User fee increases would only take effect if the "no diversion" amendment passes, so voters would know that fee revenue goes to roads.

There is enough planning for voters to know what projects would be built. This would be a statewide approach, not the local option of several years ago. We sink or swim together, while guaranteeing that regions get back what they pay in.

What could be more conservative than giving citizens a choice about what future they want? More toll roads, more debt and more congestion? Or broad-based user fees that go to free-access roads? Why not provide a choice that will lead to a brighter Texas future?

Steve Stagner is a member of Texas Future, an organization of individuals and groups involved in educating Texans on the significance of infrastructure issues.



Coming Up Online

January 31 - 2012 Year in Review - Legal Issues for Engineers

In this Live Webinar, James Lee, Jr., Esq., of the law firm Lee & McShane, highlights legal decisions of importance to engineers recently rendered by courts around the United States, as well as an update on often-recurring legal issues in the practice of engineering.

To read more and to register, [click here](#).

February 6 - The New Tax Laws Under the 'Fiscal Cliff' Deal: What it Means For Your Firm

Live Webinar - The new tax law recently signed by the President includes increases in rates, dividends, capital gains, and a host of other changes that will affect decisions by engineering firm executives not only on compensation but business investment, ownership transition, even new markets. To help firm executives better understand the broad impacts of the new law, ACEC is pleased to offer a special webinar on February 6th at 1:30 pm EST featuring two former tax counsels from the U.S. Senate Finance Committee -- Dean Zerbe and Dawn Levy of the Alliant Group.

To read more and to register, [click here](#).

February 14 - The Impact of EMR and Recordable Incident Rates on Your Business

Live Webinar—During this session we will examine and discuss steps firms can take to better understand the common indicators used to evaluate a company's safety status: RIR (recordable incident rate) and EMR (experience modification rate).

To read more and to register, [click here](#).

February 26 - The Collections-Claims Connection: Getting Paid Without Getting Sued

Live Webinar - When the client doesn't pay, engineers are caught between a rock and hard place. You can let the fee go and undermine the financial stability of your practice, or you can pursue payment through the law, and run the high risk of a retaliatory counter-claim for negligence which can be even more devastating. The reality is that engineers can and should strategically control this process. This webinar will suggest a project-long approach to securing and collecting fees with limited litigation risks. The model will be supported by suggested procedures, templates, and contact provisions.

To read more and to register, [click here](#).

ACEC Dallas Sponsoring North Texas Region Future City Competition

In the continued effort to help ensure the future of the Engineering industry through education outreach, ACEC Dallas is proud to be a sponsor of this year's Future City Competition. The competition is designed to inspire 6-8th grade students about engineering by challenging them to solve the real-world problems associated with building a livable city of the future. Hundreds of North Texas students have been working hard since October on their city concepts. ACEC Dallas' sponsorship will provide one of the special awards presented to selected student designs.

More information at [North Texas Region Future City Competition](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR UPCOMING ACEC DALLAS MEMBER CHAPTER MEETINGS

Wednesday January 30	Monday February 25	Monday March 25
Monday April 22	Tuesday May 28	JUNE Joint Chapter To Be Scheduled
Monday July 22	Monday August 26	Monday September 23
MONDAY October 28	MONDAY November 25	December No Meeting

CONTACT INFORMATION

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