

# Examining Our Core Ideology

IRWA's vision of the future



## JERRY COLBURN, SR/WA

Wow! As John Mayall once wrote, time is fading “like melting footprints in the snow.” In this new year, we all need to take stock of where we are and where we are going as an Association. This requires us to further explore our Core Ideology, which consists of our core purpose, our mission and our core values.

Our core purpose describes the organization's reason for being. Our mission describes who we are, what we do and how we do it. And our core values are the enduring principles that guide the behavior of the organization. These are some of the guiding principles that we have been discussing with our leadership and strategy consultant, Glenn Tecker, as we re-imagine the IRWA.

### Identifying Our Target Areas

During our 2017 Annual International Education Conference in Anchorage, we met with the voting directors to gather thoughts and ideas from across our leadership to shape our core ideology. We then continued the conversation in October during the Region 1 Fall Forum in Phoenix, Arizona.

With the help of IRWA members from every leadership position, we have identified target areas that will form the basis of the long-range

strategic plan, which will be based on the cumulative vision of the future. Some of these target areas are:

- ⊙ Demographics
- ⊙ Business & Economic Climate
- ⊙ Legislation/Regulations
- ⊙ Technology & Science
- ⊙ Politics & Social Values
- ⊙ Global Dynamics

We then identified which components need to be explored so that we can establish our goals for each of these groups. These components are:

- ⊙ The Public
- ⊙ The Profession & Professionals
- ⊙ IRWA Members
- ⊙ IRWA Chapters
- ⊙ IRWA as an Organization

### Common Goals

During the Fall Forum, we broke into groups to create goals and strategies relevant to each component of the IRWA. As the day progressed, common threads emerged. Some of the shared thoughts include building trust in our profession, improving public relations and outreach to ensure that we are recognized as experts in our field, developing partnerships with other organizations, identifying and recruiting potential leaders, and providing creative educational packages and innovative programs to provide high levels of member benefit.

These collective thoughts have been distributed to our membership through a questionnaire. We plan to meet again in the Spring with a group of representative leaders to hone our strategies and move forward with a vision for IRWA's future.

### In Summary

Among the established goals, one in particular resonated with me: “The IRWA, as an organization, will consistently engage, educate and lead the right of way industry to create enriched infrastructure experiences across the world.”

We are developing objectives and strategies to achieve our lofty goals. We have explored the mega-issues associated with these goals, as well as the unsatisfactory conditions that exist today. Personally, this has been a great experience. Having built businesses from inside of the private sector, this exercise has given me insight into what it takes to look at change from a higher level. What we know today is not what we need to know tomorrow.

Every day the public benefits from a safer and improved infrastructure, as well as the related economic benefits thanks, in part, to IRWA's role in its development. People around the world enjoy increased access to infrastructure and an improved quality of life. We are all part of this. ✪