

# Committee on the Environment

AIA Knowledge Communities



## Letter from the Chair

### Hello COTE Community!

During the 2016 presidential campaign, the newly-elected US Administration made it very clear that climate change and protection of our environment were "hype" rather than imperative issues facing all humans. Through rhetoric and bombast, promises were made to deliberately unravel decades of work to protect and heal our environment. Now the environmental dominos are all lined up: Supreme Court appointees, the Clean Power Act, the EPA, Keystone XL, the Paris Agreement, our climate. Our planet. The ramifications are unimaginable. And at this point, we really have no idea of what will happen or what to expect.



Here's the thing: regardless of what happens on the political front, COTE has no intention of stopping the work we're doing on these critical issues. In [an open letter to Architects](#), COTE reaffirms our determination to remain dedicated to creating a healthy, beautiful, inclusive and environmentally-responsible built environment. We are not doing this because it's nice or polite. We're doing it because, as architects, it's a responsibility required by law and our ethical duty. For me, it's also a moral obligation.

While it is unclear what the next four years will bring, COTE's mission and position are very clear. We will continue to work to positively impact our world. We will not be discouraged by dogma and distractions. We will continue to ask you to join and support this work. Add your name and comments to the open letter. Seek opportunities to engage and advocate. Plant and grow grassroots efforts. Now is the time for action. Thank you for yours.

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Paula McEvoy, FAIA, LEED Fellow  
2016 Chair, AIA Committee on the Environment Advisory Group

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## COTE Top Ten Undergoes an Extreme Makeover

By Z Smith, AIA



In 2016, the COTE Top Ten Plus Award went to the renovation of the Edith Green – Wendell Wyatt Federal Building in Portland; in future years, it will be a designation available for all COTE Top Ten projects. | PHOTO: Jeremy Bittermann

2017 will bring with it big changes for AIA's sustainable design awards program. Along with an increased focus on health, comfort, and resilience, AIA's Committee on the Environment is encouraging the sharing of more metrics and one year of post-occupancy performance data so teams pushing the boundaries of efficiency can be rewarded for their efforts. [Read more >](#)

### Webinar: New Measures for Success

December 9 at 12pm ET

In this session, COTE Advisory Group members will take you through each of the new measures in detail and explain how this will impact your submission. [Register >](#)

### Start now: COTE Top Ten Submissions are open!

Submissions are due January 18 by 5pm ET. Visit the submission site and download a detailed guide to the new measures [Submit >](#)

## Eight factors to consider when designing solar-ready roofs

By Brad Gellert, AIA



The roof of the Bullitt Center in Seattle, the 2016 COTE Top Ten recipient. Designed by Miller Hull, it features 575 pv panels on the roof at 425 watts per panel. | PHOTO: Nic Lehoux

Energy use and production is one of the largest sources of carbon emissions in the US, as well as one of the costliest expenses for businesses and households. To improve efficiency of resources, many building owners have developed an interest in solar photovoltaic (PV) panels. Rooftop solar installations can provide long-term economic and environmental benefits for building owners, and future tax breaks, technological advances in solar panels, and caps on carbon production may further increase the return on investment (ROI) for renewable energy sources. [Read more >](#)

*This article also appeared in Techniques, the newsletter of the [Technical Design for Building Performance Knowledge Community](#).*



**AIA**

## Education Spotlight

### **Design Innovation: How Architects Can Lead in Building Resilient Communities**

1.00 LU

After natural disasters like Katrina and Sandy, experts present steps to move your practice into a community leadership role on smart growth, emergency planning, and responsiveness.

[Take the course >](#)

### **Defining an Agenda for Resilient Design**

1.00 LU

Cutting-edge content on how resilient design can improve how structures respond to impacts, from major disturbances like hurricanes to more subtle, gradual influences.

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