



AIA Committee on the Environment: The COTE® Top Ten Toolkit

Limited access to high-quality, concise, and usable information is a major barrier to the universal adoption of sustainable design. The COTE® Top Ten Toolkit is a resource, accessible to all architects, that closes the information gap to designing high performing, equitable, beautiful buildings. The toolkit is designed to provide relevant, general guidance to architects incorporating deep green principles from the beginning of every project.

What is it?

- An interactive website created by AIA COTE®, the toolkit contains four resources:
 - Best Practice Design Guide
 - The Super Spreadsheet
 - Curated web tools and Resources
 - Case studies of COTE® Top Ten award recipients
- The Measures of Design Excellence are broken down into 56 focus areas and more than 400 best practices and strategies for high-performance design.
- The Super Spreadsheet is a downloadable calculation and teaching tool that architects, and others can use to generate and interpret building performance metrics.
- A curated list of valuable resources is available.
- Case studies present four projects that excel in each measure.

Why does it matter?

- Clients request and expect high-performance outcomes; the toolkit provides the knowledge needed to engage -- and deliver.
- Updated in 2018, the AIA Code of Ethics now requires an exploration of sustainable design strategies; the toolkit can help architects satisfy this requirement.
- Communities need sustainable, equitable, and resilient buildings, and architects can design these now (with available methods and materials).

How can you use it?

- To brainstorm with clients on strategies and set performance goals
- To incorporate high-performance strategies into a project
- To educate an office on sustainable design
- As a framework for design excellence

Where can you find it?

- Google “COTE Top Ten Toolkit”
- Go to aia.org/sustainability
- Or type in <https://www.aia.org/resources/6077668-the-cote-top-ten-toolkit>
- And please provide feedback to cote@aia.org

Measures of Design Excellence

AIA COTE MEASURES OF SUSTAINABLE DESIGN



Measure 1
DESIGN FOR INTEGRATION



Measure 6
DESIGN FOR ENERGY



Measure 2
DESIGN FOR COMMUNITY



Measure 7
DESIGN FOR WELLNESS



Measure 3
DESIGN FOR ECOLOGY



Measure 8
DESIGN FOR RESOURCES



Measure 4
DESIGN FOR WATER



Measure 9
DESIGN FOR CHANGE



Measure 5
DESIGN FOR ECONOMY



Measure 10
DESIGN FOR DISCOVERY

- **Measure 1: Design for Integration:** What's the big idea? How does the project demonstrate the intersection of design excellence and sustainable performance?
- **Measure 2: Design for Community:** How does this project make the most of its surrounding community, integrate with it, and give back?
- **Measure 3: Design for Ecology:** How does this project respond, connect, and contribute to the surrounding ecosystem?
- **Measure 4: Design for Water:** How does the project use water wisely and handle rainfall responsibly?
- **Measure 5: Design for Economy:** How does the design show that higher performance can be cost-effective?
- **Measure 6: Design for Energy:** How much energy does the project use, is any of that energy generated on-site from renewable sources, and what's the net carbon impact?
- **Measure 7: Design for Wellness:** How does the design promote the comfort and health of those who spend time in it?
- **Measure 8: Design for Resources:** How were the decisions about the materials used based on an understanding of their impact, especially carbon impact?
- **Measure 9: Design for Change:** How does the project design anticipate adapting to new uses, adapt to climate change, and support resilient recovery from disasters?
- **Measure 10: Design for Discovery:** What lessons for better design have been learned?