

Committee on the Environment

AIA Knowledge Communities



Letter from the Chair

Hello COTE Community!

When the AIA earlier this year published the "[2016 Presidential Candidate Profiles](#)," it was disappointing but not surprising that sustainability didn't top any of the four primary candidate's priorities lists. In fact, the word "climate" doesn't even appear in the document. Fortunately, there is significant work happening at AIA in spite of this short-shrift.



In October, [Habitat III](#), the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, took place in Quito, Ecuador. With currently 54.5% of the world's population living in urban areas and a predicted 80% doing so by mid-century, the quality and sustainability of urban development is a key priority. Russell A. Davidson, FAIA, 2016 AIA President and Thomas V. Vonier, FAIA, 2017 AIA President joined over 25,000 attendees to "secure renewed political commitment to sustainable urban development." The resulting action-oriented outcome document, the "[New Urban Agenda](#)" should play an important role in making cities more "equitable, prosperous, just, equal, and safe."

China is certainly leading the urbanization movement and is predicted to grow by 350 million people and 1.5–2.5 billion SM of new buildings annually over the next few decades. On September 3, 2016, the United States and China [ratified](#) the Paris Agreement on climate change and committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including those from the built-environment and increasing urbanization. In October, Carl Elefante, FAIA, 2018 AIA President, joined Ed Mazria, FAIA and leading experts in [Wuhan, China](#) to explore ways to achieve these goals and make Net Zero Carbon (NZC) a reality. The practices and principles emerging from the conference should help set the bar for making NZC buildings a global reality.

The US elections will quickly be a thing of the past. We must continue to make sure that all of our elected officials understand the impact of our work on the environment and the importance of acknowledging the issues and finding solutions to positively address them. I'm proud of AIA's leadership in these two endeavors and look

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forward to continuing these commitments.



Paula McEvoy, FAIA, LEED Fellow

2016 Chair, AIA Committee on the Environment Advisory Group

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“I’m excited about the rebirth of the **COTE Top Ten Criteria** for a new era.”

By Mary Ann Lazarus

On October 6, sixty lucky attendees at the AIA's booth at Greenbuild in Los Angeles got a sneak peak into the completely revised metrics for the AIA Committee on the Environment's signature Top Ten Award program. Here's what a few said:

*"The revised Top Ten metrics provide a **powerful framework** for documenting great design—design that integrates outstanding esthetics, occupant experience, and socio-environmental impact. The emphasis on documented outcomes, as opposed to design intentions, reflects how COTE Top Ten is evolving as a **leadership model for the profession.**"*

Nadav Malin, President, BuildingGreen

*I'm excited about the rebirth of the COTE Top Ten Criteria for a new era. Although the core values of sustainable design remain the same, the addition of relevant issues like wellness, resilience and economic value as well as **new metrics speak to the increasing depth of knowledge in the profession.***

Margaret Montgomery, FAIA, Principal NBBJ



*The COTE Top 10's revamped measures for 2017 drive the **integration of excellence performance and design with a new understanding of critical metrics**. These new metrics focus on issues like resiliency and human health, providing emphasis on the crucial issues for architecture in this century.*

Betsy delMonte, FAIA, Principal Transform Global

*"The new COTE Top Ten measures signify a **much deeper integration** of building systems, both internal and external of the building. Building metabolism, community engagement, regionality, adaptability and toxicity are factors, and the measures help keep these top of mind. The measures are very useful as a reference."*

Marc Mondor, FAIA, Principal evolveEA

In addition to updates to the metrics, the revised requirements emphasize the importance of completed project performance. While newly completed projects may be submitted, project teams are strongly encouraged to submit projects for which performance and occupant satisfaction data are available a period of 12 months or more with at least 75% occupancy. There is no time limit for submission after project completion.

The COTE Top Ten design award receives the most media attention of all of the AIA design awards with mainstream press attention from Fast Company National Geographic and others. It's time to identify one or more (why not!) projects from your firm's portfolio that is worthy of this important design award. The submission process begins on November 14 and closes January 18.

[View the new measures >](#)

Learning from the Leaders: Collective Wisdom & Feedback Loops (Part 3)

By Kira Gould



The Josey Pavilion is a multi-functional education and meeting center that supports the mission of the Dixon Water Foundation to promote healthy watersheds through sustainable land management. | Decatur, TX | ARCHITECT: Lake|Flato Architects | PHOTO: Casey Dunn

[Read part 1 of this series >](#)

[Read part 2 of this series >](#)

The "Collective Wisdom & Feedback Loops" section of the AIA COTE Top Ten recognition program has always been one of my favorite aspects of this unique design awards program. It used to be called "Lessons Learned," and I have always felt that it is the part of the entry that invites reckoning and speaks directly to the realm that is most wanting in this sector. [Read more >](#)

More news



Is materials transparency gaining traction on your team?

Check out two new AIA resources to help you manage risk while promoting materials transparency on your projects.

[Read more >](#)



AIA President on the New Urban Agenda

"The United States government and the AIA are well represented [at Habitat II], and it is clear that we have a responsibility to continue to lead in implementing this plan for sustainable urban development."

[Read more >](#)

Download the 2030 Report

In 2015 the number of 2030 signatories grew to 366 firms; the AIA also saw a record 152 firms report, an 8.6 percent increase from 2014. [Learn more](#)



about the past year's efforts in the full report.

[Download the report >](#)

Upcoming Events

November 17, AIASC Resilience: By Design Conference

Charleston, SC

This one day "mini-conference" will allow architects from across the state and region to gather, learn, and discuss the vital role that architects play in both Reactive and Proactive Resiliency Planning and Design.

[Learn more >](#)

December 9 at 12:00ET, COTE Top Ten Measures webinar

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

February 10-12, Taliesin West Colloquium

Scottsdale, AZ

Join the Historic Resources Committee at Taliesin West to learn about and discuss inspiring and unexpected case-studies that will make you rediscover the potential within your own community.

[Sign-up to receive Taliesin email updates >](#)

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AIA Knowledge Communities



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