

# AIA Michigan Advocacy Agenda 2021-2022

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## AIA Michigan/Government Affairs Committee Legislative and General Advocacy Agenda

The Board of Directors of AIA Michigan, in conjunction with the AIA Michigan Government Affairs Committee and the components comprising AIA Michigan have created the following agenda for advocacy by the organization. The agenda is created to coincide with the 2021-2022 Legislative Session of the State of Michigan. The agenda is created at the behest of the components' issues of importance, and generally aligns with the national agenda important to architects comprising the American Institute of Architects nationally. The agenda has been approved by the Board of Directors of AIA Michigan.

### **CLIMATE ACTION AND RESILIENCY**

The nation and the world are faced with a threat posed by the changes in the world climate. The reasons for this climate change are still in debate, but AIA Michigan recognizes its need to lead the industry in advocating for building a better and more resilient built environment. Buildings account for up to 40% of the world's energy use, easily indicating the need to create and improve the efficiency of these buildings and other elements of the built environment.

AIA Michigan advocates for the design of buildings and communities to anticipate and adapt to the evolving challenge of climate change and supports the development of policies that further these concepts. By addressing the impacts of climate change in every design solution, our spaces, buildings, structures, and communities will become more functional and high performing. Every project that is built and retrofitted should be evaluated as an opportunity to evaluate vulnerabilities, choose resilience, mitigate risk, incorporate equity, improve occupant health, and further the research, evidence, and business case for climate action. Strategies to achieve this goal include the following:

- Educate government leaders and the public to provide training about the evolving impacts of climate change on the built environment and the ability to reduce risk and consequences.

- Developing resources and research to demonstrate the reduction climate risk, consequence, and vulnerability and demonstrate how projects can contribute to climate action and resiliency
- Demonstrating the connection between ambitious climate action, economic growth, and sustainable development.
- Create buildings that use and produce clean energy
- Create buildings that sequester carbon. Promote renovation of existing buildings to maximize the use of carbon already sequestered.
- Create healthy buildings that improve air and water quality, promote activity and fitness, connect people and nature, and support mental health and well-being.
- Create buildings that are resilient and adaptable.

In collaboration with our peers in the design and construction industry, AIA Michigan endorses strategies to deliver equitable access to resilient communities and spaces, with resilience defined as "...the ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to adverse events"\*. Please refer to the linked Building Industry Statement on Resilience for a better understanding of how each of us can foster resilience through our everyday practice.

<https://www.aia.org/resources/9336-building-industry-statement-on-resilience>

\* Source: Building Industry Statement on Resilience, May 28, 2021

AIA Michigan supports policies, programs, and practices that promote adaptable, resilient, and regenerative buildings and communities. This includes creating zoning and planning policies and practices that recognize historic patterns of discrimination, the impacts of climate change, and environmental justice concerns.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

AIA Michigan advocates for a policy of allowing for the evolution of our present that respects the contributions of our past by preserving our architectural foundations that have shaped our state and culture. State leadership should support the re-use of the state's building stock and support it by continuing and increasing the use of Historic Tax Credits available to the development community.

## **BUILDINGS AS INFRASTRUCTURE**

Infrastructure and the support to fund projects on both federal and local levels must include buildings. Horizontal infrastructure including roads, bridges, waterways tend to dominate the infrastructure advocacy movement, but building infrastructure – including schools, hospitals, civic centers, and affordable housing need to be discussed on the legislative agenda as well.

Per AIA National: “Architects know that that nation's public building stock needs significant investment to meet 21st century demands, and the American people agree... Promoting energy efficient building practices will lower energy bills for taxpayers and the government alike and generate millions of well-paying jobs. It's equally essential to adopt resilient building strategies to address disaster costs – which are both staggering and preventable... the building industry can be a leader in saving lives and reducing costs.”

AIA Michigan supports the emphasis on federal and local investment to our infrastructure for both horizontal infrastructure such as bridges, roads, stormwater, electrical grid, drinking water as well as vertical infrastructure including buildings (all types), affordable housing, occupant safety, school safety/security improvements and environmental resiliencies.

Other possible issues, taken from AIA Minnesota Issues Agenda:

**Public Procurement:** AIA Minnesota supports public policies, requirements, and administrative procedures in procurement processes – including the work of the State Designer Selection Board and any publicly-funded agency or organization in Minnesota – that mandate the open selection of architects on based on qualifications. AIA Minnesota opposes hiring of architects on the basis of fees. AIA Minnesota supports periodic review of the operations of the State Designer Selection Board to ensure the goals of qualifications-based selection are well implemented by the Board. The review completed in 2018 had several recommendations that require legislative and administrative changes, several of which were made in 2020 because of the need to work virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic. AIA Minnesota will continue to pursue additional permanent legislative and administrative changes based on the review recommendations.

**School Safety:** AIA Minnesota is committed to working with all concerned stakeholders to create healthy, safe, learning environments that serve all students and families. AIA Minnesota architects offer strategies and engage policymakers on ways to avert and restrict violence while preserving open learning environments that can positively influence student behavior and create more connected open school communities. AIA Minnesota also supports policies that make our schools safer in response to COVID-19 and future pandemics, and improve environmental health outcomes for students