

Committee on the Environment Charter

Mission

The mission of the Committee on the Environment is to accelerate the Minnesota architecture community's implementation of sustainable design, and to shape and advocate for policies that meet the urgent need for climate action, environmental justice, and a regenerative future.

For the purposes of this document, the Committee on the Environment defines "sustainable," "sustainable design," and "sustainable future" as referring to design and practice that shapes the environment, guided by the need for climate action, environmental justice, and a regenerative future.

Purpose

- To provide guidance and education to AIA members and committees, clients, and elected officials on sustainable design, and environmental justice.
- To build a base of sustainable design subject matter experts from across Minnesota to support education and advocacy activities.
- To expand and connect the statewide community of sustainable design practitioners and allied disciplines.
- To serve as a convener of interrelated high-performance building collaboratives and provide opportunities for knowledge sharing and cooperation.
- To empower COTE members to shape and advocate for climate action policy at all levels of government.
- To empower and support Minnesota architects and design professionals to accelerate their practice toward a zero-carbon, equitable, resilient future.
- To share a vision of a sustainable future with our communities.

Type of Group

Standing Committee (serving a continuing purpose).

Authority Delegated or Retained

The American Institute of Architects

AIA Minnesota
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No financial authority is delegated to this committee by the AIA Minnesota Board of Directors.

Area(s) of Focus (organizational activity area, program(s) and/or topics):

The main areas of focus are facilitating the connection of sustainable design practitioners across the state, coordinating ongoing knowledge sharing efforts around implementing sustainable design, and coordinating the development of materials and messages to shape policy.

Topics of focus include:

- Climate action and regenerative design;
- Environmental justice;
- Sustainable design in practice, including zero-carbon and zero-emissions design;
- Tools for high-performance building; and
- Building codes, standards and rating systems.

Membership/Volunteers

The composition of the Committee should include architects and individuals from related disciplines. COTE will work to actively recruit AIA Minnesota members, and members of related fields, to engage in the Committee and its activities.

Leadership

Leadership consisting of two (2) co-chairs and a co-chair elect, who are AIA Minnesota members in good standing – and at least one of whom has the designation of Assoc. AIA or AIA, with the others potentially Allied members – and selected in accordance with the AIA Minnesota Policy on Committees. Facilitation of the Committee meetings will be regularly led by the outgoing co-chair, with the incoming co-chair or the co-chair elect serving as facilitator, if necessary.

Staff Support

The Executive Vice President will allocate AIA Minnesota staff time in the support of regular Committee meetings and related efforts,

including communications to AIA Minnesota members, communities and other past, current and potential volunteers from disciplines outside architecture; website content maintenance; supply storage; and other assistance as needed and appropriate. AIA Minnesota staff will also ensure that a physical meeting space is available and that opportunities for remote participation (via conference call, video-based, or Internet-based remote technology) are pursued for all Committee meetings, and information related to these remote opportunities are shared with Committee members, and with others, as appropriate.

Activities, Duties, and Responsibilities

The AIA Minnesota COTE committee will utilize meetings, educational programming and other methods to convene its stakeholders and accomplish its goals, including, but not limited to:

- Facilitate the connection and collaboration of sustainable design practitioners across Minnesota within the architecture community, other design professions and aligned organizations;
- Develop knowledge sharing efforts to elevate AIA members' understanding of sustainable design;
- Support AIA Minnesota's policy initiatives related to climate action and sustainable design in practice;
- Provide mentoring, learning, and leadership opportunities for sustainable design professionals; and
- Envision and communicate elements of a sustainable future for our communities.

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Date this charter was approved initially by the AIA Minnesota Board of Directors: June 2020

Anticipated date of charter review / potential revision by the AIA Minnesota Board of Directors, with input from group leadership and staff: 2024