Introduction

As sustainability has evolved from an emerging trend to a mainstream global movement, architects are uniquely positioned to play a leadership role in influencing and advancing the future through their work as creative design problem-solvers for the built environment.

Today’s dynamic business climate and shifting regulatory environment combined with changes in climate, growing resource limitations, and rapid urbanization reinforce the fact that we are part of a changing world.

With its Repositioning initiative, the AIA seeks to strengthen its role in driving leadership opportunities for architects. This scan identifies four priority issues for the AIA to achieve this outcome – two issues that are CORE to architects and two EMERGING issues. It provides a multi-year roadmap that is both aspirational and actionable in delivering the greatest value to all AIA members, the profession, and the world at large.

Process Summary

The recommendations were shaped through an extensive research process that included a series of interviews with over 40 different AIA and non-AIA entities, web research, and surveys conducted with a broad array of individuals and organizations over a five-month period. A 12-person advisory group representing a wide range of AIA constituents and sustainability advocates helped guide and refine the recommendations. In September 2013, the AIA Board validated these recommendations and agreed to move forward with implementation, subject to the Board’s operating plan and budget approvals.

The AIA plays a unique role in promoting sustainability leadership for ALL of its members, wherever they may sit in the “bell” of interest and understanding. Unlike more mission-driven organizations, the AIA must address the needs of all of its members to advance the profession.
Priorities + Trends Analysis

To determine the best role for the AIA in strengthening sustainability leadership for architects, we reviewed the current state of sustainability priorities and emerging trends across a wide spectrum of organizations, firms, and institutions. Seven principal trends and priorities emerged from the research, informing the scan’s recommendations:

1. **DRIVE FOR MEASURED PERFORMANCE**
   The global design and construction industry is transitioning from loose, aspirational sustainable goals to measured performance expectations and requirements.

2. **INTERSECTION OF DESIGN AND HUMAN HEALTH**
   There is a rapidly growing understanding of the important role that the built environment plays on human health and wellness.

3. **FOCUS ON EXISTING BUILDINGS AND URBAN AREAS**
   In developed countries, the greatest design need and opportunity lies in the renovation and upgrade of existing buildings and urban centers. At the same time, rapid urbanization is taking place across the globe, with the majority of the world’s population now living in cities, many in informal settlements.

4. **DEMAND FOR MATERIALS TRANSPARENCY**
   The building industry is moving from a focus on single attributes of building materials, such as recycled content or rapidly renewable resources, to requiring a comprehensive life cycle analysis approach and disclosure of health characteristics in material assessment selection.

5. **IMPORTANCE OF WATER**
   As potable water shortages are becoming common and more infrastructure systems are challenged, design for water conservation, a more resilient infrastructure, and onsite rainwater management is now a mainstream priority in many parts of the U.S. and world.
6. NEED FOR RESILIENCE IN DESIGN
Regions affected by natural and man-made disturbances are promoting a transition from a reactive disaster assistance to a proactive resilient design role where architects participate in planning and design for long-term resilience and adaptation.

7. GROWING GREEN BUILDING DEMAND
The demand for “green building” did not wane during the recent recession in many regions, and according to McGraw-Hill’s most recent sustainability survey, as the economy continues to recover, there is an expanding demand for green building throughout the globe.

Leadership Perspectives
To identify those issues that offered the greatest opportunity and importance to architects, we asked a broad range of AIA and non-AIA leadership representatives for their perspective on the most important sustainability priorities and trends to meet the current and future needs of their clients and communities.

Combined, the top priorities and trends the leaders identified were:

- Performance Metrics
- Design + Human Health
- Climate Change + Resilience
- Energy
Four Priority Issues

The challenge for the AIA is to define the best use of its limited resources by focusing on a few issues that will deliver the greatest benefit to architects as well as to clients and communities. In recognition of this challenge, we recommend four priority issues for the AIA to implement over a multi-year period. These fall into two areas, CORE and EMERGING. Together, they offer a way to align the entire AIA organization around important strategic issues where everyone has a role to play based on their strengths and interests.

**CORE** issues are central to the architect’s role in the built environment.

These are issues that architects touch every day in their work. Because of the scale of their combined work, architects have an opportunity to positively impact the “triple bottom line” outcomes of economy, social equity, and environment.

**Goal:** that architects are able to apply a deep understanding of these issues in their work.

We have identified two CORE focus issues, with clear outcomes:

**ENERGY**
Drive building energy efficiency and use of renewable energy toward meeting the AIA 2030 goals.

**MATERIALS**
Make material selections that are informed by full life cycle and health-related criteria that lead to healthy and sustainable environments.

**EMERGING** issues are rapidly escalating at the community scale, where architects can provide a wide range of design solutions that will contribute to a better environment for current and future generations.

By becoming engaged and recognized as a leader in these topics, architects enhance their value to their communities and clients.

**Goal:** that architects expand their role and understanding of these issues, gaining a leadership position.

We have identified two EMERGING focus issues, with clear direction:

**DESIGN & HEALTH**
Improve human health and wellness through the design of the built environment.

**RESILIENCE**
Design to adapt to changing conditions and to maintain or regain functionality and vitality in the face of disruption due to natural or man-made causes.
Each issue is at a different place in its evolution. The following pages summarize the recommended priority actions for each over a three-year period to maximize their impact. The recommendations were developed based on an analysis of the current state at the AIA and identification of where efforts would have the greatest benefit to Repositioning. This involved regular reviews with AIA National, the Design and Health Leadership, and the scan’s advisory group.

**Energy Priority Actions By Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop AIA 2030 Database; Increase Reporting</td>
<td>Rollout AIA 2030 Database; Expand Signatories</td>
<td>Improve AIA 2030 Database Functionality; Expand Signatories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain Strong Advocacy + Codes Role</td>
<td>Maintain Strong Advocacy + Codes Role</td>
<td>Maintain Strong Advocacy + Codes Role</td>
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</tbody>
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**OUTCOME GOALS**

- **PROMOTE** architects’ adoption of the AIA 2030 Commitment and reporting.
- **FACILITATE** architects’ integration of energy benchmarking, energy modeling, passive design, deep energy retrofits, post occupancy evaluations, and measurement and verification.
- **REPOSITION** from energy efficiency to energy resource management and understanding of full life cycle of environmental impacts.
## Materials Priority Actions By Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implement Introduction to</td>
<td>Rollout Materials Curriculum</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials Program</td>
<td>Framework</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Form Advisory Group; Refine</td>
<td>Develop Convention Materials</td>
<td>Initiate Convention Materials Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials Agenda</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish Introductory Guide to</td>
<td>Publish Priority Tool/Resource for Small</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Firms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host Materials Roundtables;</td>
<td>Develop Materials Resources for Small</td>
<td>Implement Materials Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Policy Discussions/</td>
<td>Firms with Components</td>
<td>for Small Firms with Components</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Components</td>
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### OUTCOME GOALS

- **PROMOTE** architects’ role in market transformation through materials resource management.
- **FACILITATE** architects’ material selection based on health impacts, material sourcing, use and re-use characteristics and after-use impacts.
- **REPOSITION** architects’ promotion of life cycle that extends beyond costs to resource management and health impacts.
### Design & Health Priority Actions By Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Host Health Summit; Share Results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expand BRIK Content; Develop Research Agenda and Role</td>
<td>Expand BRIK Content; Implement Research Agenda</td>
<td>Expand BRIK Content; Enhance Research Agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rollout Component Toolkit</td>
<td>Publish Guide for Local/Regional Use</td>
<td>Expand Design &amp; Health Resources Based on Research</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop Communications and Partnership Plan</td>
<td>Implement Communications and Partnership Plan</td>
<td>Improve Communications and Partnerships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### OUTCOME GOALS

- **PROMOTE** architects’ contributions to public health, wellness, wellbeing, and productivity.
- **FACILITATE** architects’ role at the scale of the building, neighborhoods, city, and region.
- **REPOSITION** from healthcare design to applying design & health knowledge to design of all scale and types.
## Resilience Priority Actions By Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct Disaster Assistance and Resilience Trainings</td>
<td>Implement Introduction to Resilience</td>
<td>Implement Comprehensive Resilience Curriculum Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>Host Resilience Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distribute Academic Research Grants with ACSA</td>
<td>Identify AIA Research Agenda and Role</td>
<td>Share ACSA Research; Implement AIA Research Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement Component Resilience Grant Program</td>
<td>Publish Resilience Guide</td>
<td>Publish Community-Based Resilience Resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop Communications and Partnership Strategy</td>
<td>Implement Communications and Partnership Strategy</td>
<td>Improve Communications and Partnership Strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### OUTCOME GOALS

- **PROMOTE** architects’ role beyond disaster recovery to proactive, resilient design.
- **FACILITATE** architects’ contribution to planning & design of resilient buildings and communities.
- **REPOSITION** to codes that address both resilience and adaptability standards.
Alignment With Repositioning

By maintaining a clear focus on the four priority issues, the AIA can realize many of its Repositioning goals:

**ENHANCE ARCHITECT’S LEADERSHIP ROLE AND IMPACT**

An integrated design process with architect in the leadership role brings a new level of focus, connectivity, and vitality across the entire team and with the client. Architects who actively participate in planning and design on public health and resilience generate new respect from community and business leaders while making valuable connections.

**RAISE ARCHITECT’S VISIBILITY**

Architectural designs that integrate performance-based strategies are winning design awards and garnering mainstream media attention. In 2013, the AIA COTE Top Ten awards received outstanding media attention, reaching a readership of 52 million individuals.

**ENGAGE MEMBERS, NON-MEMBERS, AND EMERGING PROFESSIONALS**

The four focus areas resonate with the values of many architects, especially younger professionals, who are concerned with issues such as urbanization, social equity, and climate change, and seek relevance from the AIA.

**EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ARCHITECTS**

New service offerings, with expanded revenue opportunities, include deep energy retrofits, sustainable consulting, design analysis, performance evaluations, building systems research and planning, and policy-related work. These issues also expand opportunities for architects to take on leadership roles in their communities serving on planning commissions or in government, and as educators influencing the next generation of design professionals.

**DELIVER VALUE TO CLIENTS**

Building owners and operators benefit from long-term operating savings, improved occupant productivity, and increased attraction and retention of tenants. Buildings will meet new codes and regulations or be positioned ahead of the market to be ready for future requirements and changing conditions.

“A highly integrated approach to planning and design excites and energizes people throughout the office. It provides a greater awareness of sustainability as a key entry point to a more creative and responsible design process.”

– Buzz Yudell, FAIA
Moore Ruble Yudell
2006 AIA Firm Award Recipient

“I believe that collectively the architect community membership of Architecture for Humanity and the AIA membership touch 90% of the architectural profession.”

– Eric Cesal
Architecture for Humanity
PROVIDE VALUE TO OCCUPANTS
The occupants will experience a more human-centered built environment that promotes health and wellness and is able to adapt to change with reduced immediate and long-term disruption.

IMPROVE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF ARCHITECTS’ CONTRIBUTION
By communicating the connection between energy use, public health, resilience, and the built environment, the public gains an increased appreciation of the value of the architect.

STRENGTHEN THE AIA’S LEADERSHIP ROLE AND VALUE
By providing a clear, bold path forward, the AIA will escalate its role as sustainability leader. In addition, opportunities for monetization can be generated through the creation of high-quality AIA programs, tools, and resources to be shared across the industry. A focus on promoting translational research will bring new content and raise AIA’s profile as a knowledge provider.

“A focus on human health and wellness is very positive – it resonates with many like-minded clients. It is much more human and understandable than BTUs.”
— Phil Harrison, FAIA
Perkins + Will
1999 AIA Firm Award Recipient
## Research Participants

### WITHIN AIA
- AIA Chicago
- AIA COTE
- AIA Dallas
- AIA Houston
- AIA National Staff and Leadership
- AIA New York
- AIA San Francisco
- AIA Seattle
- AIA Small Firm Roundtable
- AIA Sustainable Large Firm Roundtable
- Board Advocacy Committee
- Board Communications Committee
- Board Community Committee
- Board Knowledge Committee
- Boston Society of Architects
- CACE Executives
- 13 Knowledge Communities

### OUTSIDE AIA
- 10 recent Firm Award Recipients
- American Planning Association
- American Society of Interior Designers
- American Society of Landscape Architects
- ASHRAE
- Architecture for Humanity
- Associated Builders and Contractors
- Association of General Contractors
- International Living Future Institute
- National Academy of Environmental Design
- National Institute of Building Sciences
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Department of State
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. General Services Administration
- U.S. Green Building Council

## Advisory Group

**Betsy del Monte, FAIA**
Texas Society of Architects

**Carl Elefante, FAIA**
AIA Board

**Jeffrey Fewerda, AIA**
Small Firm Roundtable

**Melissa Gallagher-Rogers**
U.S. Green Building Council

**Suzanna Wight Kelley, AIA**
AIA National

**Bill Leddy, FAIA**
AIA COTE Advisory Group Chair

**Vivian Loftness, FAIA**
Past AIA COTE Chair

**Rico Quirindogo, AIA**
AIA Seattle President
AIA Board Communications Committee

**Lisa Richmond**
Executive Director. AIA Seattle

**Bill Roschen, FAIA**
Design and Health Leadership Group Chair

**Colin Rohlfing, Assoc. AIA**
AIA Chicago

**Bill Wilson II, FAIA**
Emeritus AIA Board