The making of architecture is a complicated undertaking; it requires a synergy of science and art, overlaid with complex systems of laws, building codes, and industry standards. The work of architects is critical to human safety and well-being.

Architecture expresses the values of society and enhances the quality of life for current and future generations. Architects advocate for responsible design that results in beautiful and healthy places that respect and accommodate society’s diverse needs.

Regulation of the construction industry shapes the built environment. As stakeholders, architects participate and advocate for the development and application of appropriate regulations and standards.

Architects are motivated by education and professional ethics to offer their specialized knowledge, skills and experiences to enhance Iowa communities— a substantial challenge as design, construction and society undergo constant change.

Architects are a helpful resource to legislators with their expert knowledge on design, planning, construction, procurement and project delivery, among other subjects.

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) represents more than 90,000 architects across the nation. The Iowa chapter, AIA Iowa, includes over 1,000 members who reside in Iowa.

- Architect members of AIA Iowa reside in 45 of the 50 Iowa Senate districts.
- Architect members of AIA Iowa reside in 84 of the 100 Iowa House districts.
- For legislators without constituent architects, AIA Iowa will be pleased to be a resource on issues related to architecture, design, and construction.

AIA Iowa’s advocacy platform includes three major principles to enhance Iowa’s vitality and viability:

1. **Livable Communities**
   Attractive, invigorating and inviting to residents and visitors, assuring safety, promoting inclusiveness and providing choices. Well-designed communities provide a safe environment, a memorable and appealing “Sense of Place,” access to health and support services, and invite participation in civic, cultural and recreational activities.

2. **Resilient Communities**
   The creation and operations of the built environment require an investment of the earth’s resources. Architects strive for environmental responsibility and advocate for the sustainable use of those resources. Preserving Iowa’s rich natural resources for future generations requires a conscientious approach to energy efficiency, responsible utilization of assets, and the nurture of harmonious relationships between the built environment and nature.

3. **Quality Design**
   Design is both a process and a result. The process demands creativity, passion and attention to detail. The results speak for themselves... quality design creates memorable “places” with significant impact on the quality of life where we live, work and play. Investment in a well-designed Iowa benefits all Iowans in a multitude of ways.
Energy Efficiency

Energy infrastructure is slow to respond to change in policy and implementation because of its longevity and the limitations of new economic investment. Energy efficiency successfully reduces demand, increases resilience, contributes to stable energy prices, and allows for economic competitiveness. A holistic approach to building energy use encompasses the embodied energy that goes into creating a building.

Recommendations for Action:
- Adoption of Energy Codes consistent with the edition of the Building Codes adopted by the State of Iowa.
- Collaboration with building industry groups and authorities responsible for adoption and implementation of codes and standards.
- Foster education of energy efficiency benefits across the State with community leaders, building owners, and consumers.

Project Delivery

Architects play a vital role in the delivery of public projects in the State of Iowa. With the overriding responsibility to protect and safeguard health, safety, and welfare of the public, Architects are best positioned to understand the needs of our communities and efficiently connect them with the greater public good in a way that benefits all parties. AIA Iowa recommends that the State of Iowa upholds the current law, a system in place that has proven to serve taxpayers well. The Chapter remains open to discuss alternate delivery options with stakeholders to achieve positive outcomes as long as the following criteria are met:

Recommendation for Action:
- Qualifications Based Selection, an open selection of architects on the basis of qualifications.
- Direct collaboration, between an Architect and owner is vitally important to the success and safety of the building.
- Licensure and Qualifications, to Practice Architecture and Engineering in the State ensures professionalism and quality.
- Longevity of Materials and Systems, selected must exceed the length of time that the project is financed.

School Safety

We believe there is a need to establish and adopt comprehensive guidelines in the State of Iowa that develop and promote safer schools by design. Defining and establishing guidelines in Iowa is intended to assist school districts with this complicated issue, so district priorities can be determined. It is critical that educational buildings provide for an exceptional learning experience which recognizes and incorporates the physical and operational considerations that each of our learning environments has.

Recommendation for Action:
- AIA Iowa Safe Schools Initiative, establish the four essential considerations important to promote school safety across all Educational Facilities in Iowa.
- Continue to uphold SAVE Funds and new as well as existing funding streams to be dedicated to school safety facility improvements across Iowa.

Building Codes

The primary purpose of codes and standards is to protect the health safety and welfare of the public. Building code implementation can have a major influence on the economic well-being of a community and its citizens. AIA Iowa supports regulation by a single set of comprehensive, coordinated, and contemporary building codes and standards that establish sound threshold values of health, safety, and the protection of the public welfare throughout.

Recommendation for Action:
- Prompt adoption of updated Building Codes in a coordinated manner to provide uniformity and consistency. This includes bringing all codes, particularly the International Energy Conservation Code.
- Collaboration with building industry groups and authorities responsible for adoption and implementation of codes and standards.