



AIA Southwest Washington

May 27, 2012

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

Chapter Purpose

To advance the profession of Architecture for the purpose of improving our practices and our communities

Advocacy Purpose

*As one of the three core purpose areas of the Chapter, AIASWW places high value on **Advocacy** within our communities. As “Citizen Architects” working together within the Chapter area, we seek to provide a collective, trusted voice, advocating for issues that not only affect the way we practice the business of architecture, but that can positively affect the quality of life for the citizens of our local communities and the State of Washington.*

Committee Mission

To advocate for principles of livability and sustainability within the communities of the Chapter

Committee Goals

In support of the Chapter Purpose and Committee Mission, the following Committee Goals are set forth:

- **Provide a Trusted Voice on Design:** Provide a trusted voice regarding the livability and sustainability of our communities, helping to define and articulate community values that promote vibrant, safe, and desirable urban environments for all citizens;
- **Be a Partner:** Work in partnership and forge effective working relationships with local governmental agencies, departments, neighborhood groups, community advocacy groups, and elected leaders, acting as a key resource of experience and expertise, promoting and integrating principles of livability and sustainability;
- **Promote Awareness:** Promote and facilitate greater design awareness within our communities, increasing public awareness of the benefits of thoughtful, integrated planning and design and the necessity for citizens to participate in decision-making processes;
- **Influence Policy:** Participate in influencing local and state regulatory policy related to the built and natural environments such that our communities are strengthened.

Principles

The Committee on Community Advocacy approaches issues and initiatives by drawing on the experience of our local design membership, and by debating and testing the ideals of compelling urban design and planning principles. A primary resource articulating such principles and providing a framework for the Committee’s approach is **Livability 101** as published by the AIA’s Center for Communities by Design, containing the **Ten Principles for Livable Communities:**

- Design on a Human Scale
- Provide Choices
- Encourage Mixed-Use Development
- Preserve Urban Centers
- Vary Transportation Options
- Build Vibrant Public Spaces
- Create a Neighborhood Identity
- Protect Environmental Resources
- Conserve Landscapes
- Design Matters



Strategies and Actions

- **Resource Network:** Individual Chapter members willing to serve will be included within a network of individuals who will participate in discussions, initiatives, testimonials, and other activities associated with community advocacy.
- **Partnerships / Collaboration:** AIASWW will partner with other organizations with compatible interests in community advocacy in an effort to explore diverse view points, expand knowledge and understanding of issues, and leverage resources to achieve desirable advocacy outcomes. AIASWW also partners with governmental agencies and local leaders to advance and facilitate the implementation of urban planning and design principles. In all of our efforts, we strive to continually educate and inform ourselves to further improve own awareness and ability to contribute.
 - **Tacoma Advocacy Coalition:** Specifically within the City of Tacoma, active AIA participants and people representing the broader community of design professionals (engineers, landscape architects, etc) and community advocacy organizations for the "Tacoma Advocacy Coalition", a loosely-held network that seeks to:
 - Actively advocate for a strong and visible public planning process with Tacoma, connecting the broader community of Tacoma to the planning process, acting in facilitation roles to advocate for principles of livability and articulate value of the community.
 - Provide a trusted resource to City leadership (IE City Manager, City Council members, department directors, etc), for reviewing initiatives, issues, proposed policies, and specific projects.
 - Participate in the process of integration between public agencies, advocating for coordination among departments (IE Public Works, Planning (Community & Economic Development), Planning Commission, etc.), to promote principles of livable communities.
- **Workshop/Charrette Facilitation & Sponsorship:** Through volunteer participation, support opportunities through engagement with and facilitation of community stakeholder conversations and charrettes with regard to community or neighborhood planning, infrastructure changes or improvements, and policy considerations.
- **Discussion Forums:** Provide and facilitate forums to generate thoughtful, informed discussions among Chapter members, the extended community of design professionals, and other contributing individuals regarding community planning, policy, and specific projects affecting the livability, sustainability, and future quality of our communities.
- **Sub-Committees:** Through open invitation to the Chapter membership, and with Board approval, create sub-committees or tasks forces formed around specific initiatives and issues.
- **Position Statements:** Prepare written position statements and opinion editorials regarding specific community issues for the distribution to, and the influencing of local policy makers, and to advocate on behalf of local communities.
- **Local Community Testimonials:** Drawing from the network of participating members, provide verbal testimony at council and planning commission meetings on behalf of advocacy positions. Testimonials may be individual (not necessarily representing a specific Board of Directors position), or as a stated Board resolution.
- **State Policy Resource Groups:** Encourage Chapter members to participate with the various AIA Washington Council Resource Groups offering expertise and informed opinion to our APAC lobbyist, contributing to written policy statements, and testifying in committee hearings at the State legislature.
- **Resources:** Provide web-access links to resources for Chapter members, coalition partners, and the general public