



The American
Institute
of Architects

AIA Build America Summit Executive Summary

The future of America's
communities, cities, & towns

November 29-30 | New York City



Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Welcome & opening remarks

BUILD AMERICA SUMMIT HOST

Russell A. Davidson, FAIA, President, AIA

Russ Davidson opened the Build American Summit explaining that the AIA convened this inaugural gathering of like-minded stakeholders and thought leaders to raise awareness about the critical role that public buildings and spaces play in our nation's communities. The first step in doing so requires broadening the traditional definition of infrastructure—and the public narrative—to include the vital aspects of communities such as schools, libraries, parks, cultural facilities and community centers. Davidson stressed the importance of a shared vision among all stakeholders and the need for everyone to work together to achieve holistic improvements in American communities.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Now is the time to renew and reinvest in America's social infrastructure (public buildings and spaces).

The public discourse about America's infrastructure has been typically limited to the "horizontal" or "transportation" infrastructure. But it's time for the conversation to change, to expand, to include the public buildings and spaces that comprise the cornerstone of public lives. The Summit was intended to bring key stakeholders together to help make the case—economically, socially, and politically—of why America needs to reinvest in public buildings, and to share tools and recommendations with attendees of what they can do at the local level to advance the argument.

“We will truly make progress in giving voice to the issues of renewing our communities for the twenty-first century.”

Russell Davidson



Key messages to help advance the discussion about social infrastructure:

- **The needs are significant.** Many existing community buildings were constructed during the post-World War II building boom. While renovations have extended the typical life cycle of many of these schools, libraries, and facilities, these institutions are in dire need of modernization and investments.
 - While a 2011 congressional study identified annual spending on schools at \$55 billion, the investment falls far short of an earlier American Federation of Teachers study that identified the total need for school construction nationwide at \$255 billion.
 - In addition to schools, updates and replacements are needed for libraries, arts facilities, public parks, and other community buildings. The costs are estimated in the hundreds of billions of dollars.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

- **The problem is fragmented.** Roads, bridges, and transit systems receive funding from the federal government, which leads to frequent discussion and media attention of horizontal infrastructure on the national stage. In stark contrast, the public projects are typically funded at the state and local level and as such, their needs are discussed in relative isolation. Each community struggles to build consensus for necessary improvements on a case-by-case basis.

Because of the fragmentation of the problem, it is essential to align on a common message that can be delivered broadly about the importance of social infrastructure in renewing communities.

- **Progress is achievable.** The architects, planners, developers, public health officials, community and civic activists, policymakers, and educators gathered here will share first-hand accounts, case studies, and evidence that by giving voice to the issue, progress is feasible.

History tells us this is possible, from public buildings constructed as a result of the New Deal to the 3,500 libraries built thanks to the grant funding inspired by Andrew Carnegie.

Sustainable approaches must be part of the DNA of twenty-first-century planning and design.

Architecture 2030 has changed the trajectory of energy use in our country through sustainable design, reducing our carbon footprint in communities and saving us trillions of dollars. Going forward, renewed buildings with sustainable approaches will be more cost effective, healthier, more resilient, and more effective in helping address serious environmental challenges.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Actively engage in the infrastructure discussion to broaden the definition and the narrative to include public buildings and spaces.
- Work to promote a common message with allied thought leaders about the value of “social” infrastructure in communities.
- Advocate with policymakers for appropriate projects and funding.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

AIA public survey highlights

PRESENTER

Robert Ivy, FAIA, Chief Executive Officer, AIA

Robert Ivy shared highlights from AIA's recent survey polling Americans on their attitudes regarding public buildings and spaces. Survey results found that respondents see public buildings as important to the future, and support new investments in social infrastructure. Citizens care about their communities and have a sense of urgency to take action and invest.

BACKGROUND

AIA commissioned a Harris Poll of 2,100 U.S. adults across all geographies and demographic groups to get a national perspective on the public's perception of public buildings and spaces such as schools, parks, libraries, cultural facilities, and the like. The full report is available [here](#).

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The most important takeaway is that Americans agree that public buildings matter. The public is clear about the need for well-maintained schools, libraries, affordable housing, cultural and community centers, and parks. These elements are part of the core of vibrant, healthy communities.

Specific findings from the survey found:

- 82 percent of Americans see essential public buildings as part of their community infrastructure. Eight out of ten survey respondents agreed that investment in these public buildings is just as important as investment in roads and bridges.
- 94 percent of survey respondents said having well-maintained public buildings is important to the future of their community.
- A majority of Americans believe that the condition of public buildings can lead to notable benefits, particularly higher property values (60%) and improved quality of education (62%).
- Nearly 80 percent of the public supports new investment in public buildings, with the belief that federal, state, local, and private sources should all be considered.

For the first time, there's data that Americans are interested and concerned about the state of public buildings in their communities. The survey offers evidence that the public supports broadening the infrastructure discussion to include public spaces in community renewal and reinvestment efforts, that these spaces are not merely nice to have; people see them fulfilling critical needs. This research also confirms a sense of urgency to take action and invest.

“Citizens care about the communities they live in. . . . They expect their public buildings to improve the quality of their lives.”

Robert Ivy

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Become familiar with the key data points from this survey that confirm Americans consider public buildings and spaces as vital elements of their community.
- Share these findings to advocate for policy and funding.
- Poll members of your community to ascertain what public spaces have the greatest value.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Neglect, decline, and consequence

PANELISTS

Russell Davidson, FAIA, President, AIA (Moderator)

Dr. Mindy Fullilove, Hon. AIA, Professor of Urban Policy and Health, Urban Policy Analysis & Management Program, Milano School of International Affairs, The New School for Public Engagement

Dr. Richard Jackson, Hon. AIA, Hon. ASLA, UCLA Fielding School of Public Health

Kathryn Madden, Ph.D., AICP, International Development, Community and Environment, Clark University; Principal, Madden Planning Group

Kevin McQueen, AIA, Board Chair, Partners for the Common Good; Partner, BWB Solutions, LLC; Adjunct Faculty Member, Milano School of International Affairs, The New School for Public Engagement

Jeff Vincent, Ph.D., Deputy Director, Center for Cities and Schools, University of California, Berkeley

Russell Davidson moderated this panel discussion that examined the state of public buildings in America. Representing a broad spectrum of expertise, the panelists included a physician; a psychiatrist; experts on schools, urban policy, and planning; and a financier. These thought leaders shared their perspectives on how the failure to address current needs of public buildings and spaces can compound a community's problems such as the economic base, civic participation, affordable housing, health, education, and poverty.

A community's social infrastructure impacts the health and well-being of citizens. For decades, in many communities, this vital infrastructure has not been a societal or financial priority, resulting in drastic underinvestment and neglect. With little attention, the maintenance and renovation of these spaces has suffered, affecting the quality and equity of education, health, and the fabric of society. Understanding these realities is necessary to develop smart policies, advance a call to action, and advocate for funding to restore core public facilities.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Cities today are increasingly fractured and fragmented.

Dr. Mindy Fullilove asserted that mental health is affected by the social environment. The current environment is problematic because we are living in a fractured system, caused by decades-old policies and practices. Cities are stratified and many communities have been neglected, especially those with disenfranchised populations. Investment has been concentrated in more affluent areas, with other communities experiencing disinvestment. Shared sentiments are required to sustain our society and provide an environment for positive mental health. One solution is community centers where people can come together and know each other.

“We say ‘sound mind in a sound body,’ but it’s ‘sound mind in a sound body in a sound city.’”

Dr. Mindy Fullilove

The built environment has a significant impact on health.

Dr. Richard Jackson provided data on the dramatic increase in America's obesity and diabetes rates. A key part of the problem is lack of physical activity. In the early 1990s, 17 percent of U.S. adults ages 46–64 reported getting no physical activity, but by 2010, 52 percent of adults got no physical activity.¹ The built environment hasn't helped. Many people endure long commutes, and many neighborhoods lack walkability.

The built environment needs to promote activity and health. An Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, *Accelerating Progress in Obesity Prevention*, called for making physical activity an integral and routine part of life. The IOM recommended: Communities, transportation officials, community planners, health professionals, and governments should make promotion of physical activity a priority by substantially increasing access and opportunities for activity. The Urban Land Institute offered principles for building healthy places, including: put people first and make healthy choices easy. Evidence has shown that when communities are highly walkable, obesity and diabetes rates decline.

“Creating good building, creating good communities, is the thing that seems to work [in decreasing the incidence of obesity and diabetes]. . . . As you build, make the healthy choices the easy choices.”

Dr. Richard Jackson

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

There is a structural problem of underinvestment in public schools.

Jeff Vincent described the decline in the country's school infrastructure, which accounts for about one fourth of all state and local infrastructure investments. He emphasized, "Where we learn matters," and confirmed, "We know how to build great schools. We know how to renovate great schools."

There are currently about 100,000 school buildings in the United States with 7.5 billion square feet of space, serving almost 60 million students. Many children learn in fabulous facilities, yet millions attend schools in extremely poor condition, undermining students' health and academic achievement. The most problematic facilities often serve low-income and/or minority children, making this a civil rights issue. Most states keep no inventory of their school facilities and condition.

The problem is due to sustained underinvestment in public school facilities. There is an estimated annual shortfall of \$45 billion per year for maintenance and operations, and for capital budgets to replace old or build new schools. This funding gap has persisted for years. Since school funding is largely local, with states providing about 18 percent of the capital for schools and the federal government providing almost none, the funding is not distributed equitably, with more affluent districts faring better while less affluent districts struggle.

"We have an ongoing structural pattern of underinvestment in our public school facilities that harms student health and achievement, and undermines community vitality."

Jeff Vincent

A vocal and engaged public is required to champion the necessary investments that will improve our schools, along with policy reforms, practice innovations, and technical tools.

Regulatory support and an investment ecosystem are needed to secure capital for social infrastructure.

Kevin McQueen's mission is to use financial capital for social good. His organization is a capital aggregator that has created a secondary market for social investments, aiming to create more liquidity to get more done. He believes regulatory roadblocks need to be removed to allow resources to be targeted for specific social objectives and an ecosystem of investing that involves all stakeholders (financial institutions, nonprofits, philanthropists, and governments) in getting capital to the right places.

"We have to use resources to address some of the deep disparities that exist among different communities in our country."

Kevin McQueen

Mr. McQueen sees four "C's" of effective community infrastructure investing:

- **Community Development Block Grants.** This is a primary way of securing capital from the federal government to invest in parks, community centers, and cultural facilities. Funding is controlled by Congress through the appropriations process.
- **Community Reinvestment Act.** This federal law requires banks to demonstrate they are investing in the communities where they operate. It is administered by the Treasury Department.
- **Community Development Financial Institution Fund.** This fund within the Treasury Department provides resources to support organizations focused on creating social good using capital from public and private sector investors.
- **Tax incentives for affordable housing.** The low-income housing tax credit has been the most important vehicle for creating affordable housing in the past 30 years. The new markets tax credit has helped catalyze millions of dollars of investment in community infrastructure.

The neglect of social infrastructure is a result of conscious decisions.

Kathryn Madden said the deterioration of social infrastructure is based on willful decisions, particularly failure to invest in industries to keep communities strong, while overinvesting in highways and infrastructure in certain areas. Four particular challenges Ms. Madden sees are:

- **Difficulty in reaching political agreements.** There are many voices in the political debate, and cities and states rarely agree.
- **Fragmented communities.** In many communities, smaller populations exist, making it hard to get people to the table. When people do come to the table, there is great divisiveness.
- **Lack of funding.** There is too little funding and accessing it is highly political.
- **Governance.** Because cities often cannot take on new infrastructure projects, oversight falls to nonprofits, highlighting the need for good leadership and governance.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

As a result of these challenges, social infrastructure projects are extremely difficult and often take decades.

“Where there is not a strong federal source of funding, things really get driven to the ground . . . in terms of local districts, that is the rise of things like business improvement districts and small taxing entities that say we can get something done.”

Kathryn Madden

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Understand the facts and realities about public buildings and spaces in your community.
- Learn about the real consequences from neglect and underinvestment in “social” infrastructure.
- Understand the policies that impact local public buildings and spaces.
- Learn about the various funding sources available and the challenges in securing funding.
- Support federal policies that promote community investment.

¹Speaker's slide of “The Status of Baby Boomers' Health in the United States: The Healthiest Generation?” JAMA Internal Medicine, February 4, 2013, citing data from NHANES – National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Keynote – Jonathan Rose

PRESENTER

Jonathan Rose, Jonathan Rose Companies, author of *The Well-Tempered City*

Jonathan Rose described megatrends shaping the future of cities and offered thoughts on how to address society's most significant challenges.

Population growth, urbanization, and resource scarcity present enormous challenges for cities and civilizations. To address these challenges, communities will need to develop visionary strategies, adopt a circular economy where resources are recycled and reused, and integrate solutions to tackle affordable housing, healthcare, and education issues. Vocal social networks, a systems optimization perspective, and recognition that we are all in this together will also be essential to work toward solving these problems. While government has an enormous role to play in funding and implementing social infrastructure, government is unlikely to develop a larger, cohesive strategic vision to continue to make America the land of opportunity; that strategy must come from civic groups and national and local advocates like the AIA, ULI, and the ASCE working together with other key stakeholders.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

In a world shaped by megatrends, the United States needs a strategic plan to equalize the landscape of opportunity.

Several megatrends are shaping the world and the work of architects and developers.

- **Rapid urbanization.** By the end of the twenty-first century more than 80 percent of the world's population will live in cities.
- **Population growth.** The global population is projected to grow to 10 billion by 2050, which the world's infrastructure cannot accommodate.
- **Increasing wealth.** The global middle class is growing, billions are being lifted out of poverty, and people are consuming more, putting enormous strain on the world's resources.
- **Climate change.** There is too much water in some areas and increasing drought in others.
- **Increased financial volatility.** The world is increasingly interconnected and volatile.

- **Increased social disparity.** There are extreme differences in poverty and opportunity in the United States and elsewhere, leading to civil unrest, protests, and riots.
- **Increasing refugees.** There are more than 65 million refugees around the world.
- **Shifting global cities.** In 2007 McKinsey identified 600 top global cities, with 190 in the United States. By 2025, only 125 of the top global cities are anticipated to be in the United States, a loss of 65 top cities.

These megatrends create increased uncertainty and a more dynamic world. Mr. Rose emphasized, "The leverage point is cities," as indicated by urbanization and economic development trends. With the projected opportunity in American cities, the United States needs a strategic plan that equalizes the landscape of opportunity, which today is poorly distributed in America. This strategic plan must lay out goals, priorities, and outcomes to be measured. Such a plan will help achieve greater alignment, cohesion, and integration. It's unlikely that government will create such a plan, requiring other stakeholders to do so.

Cities and societies thrive based on integration of diversity.

In the earliest civilizations, a city was built around a temple (social infrastructure) to harmonize humans and nature. Early cities were fueled by agriculture, where people traded different crops or objects. Cities were interconnected and integrated diversity. Trade wouldn't work if everyone had the same items; it required diversity. The healthiest societies struck a balance between control and chaos.

In the United States, silos of funding and political control have undermined cities. It's time to break down the silos and move toward vast integration. Things like affordable housing, schools, parks, open space, and mass transit must be tied together.

Mr. Rose suggests that progress has been impacted by the 1970 National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), which was enacted to create and maintain conditions under which people and nature can coexist. NEPA introduced environmental impact studies (EIS), which became an important planning tool. In

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

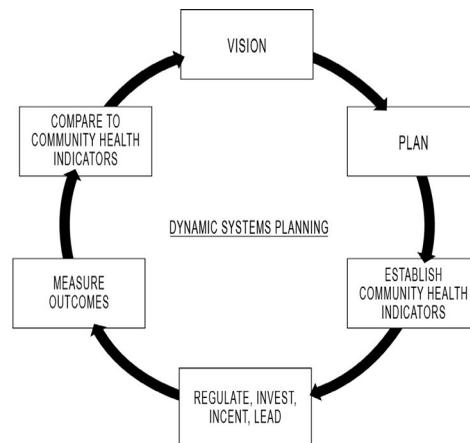
Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

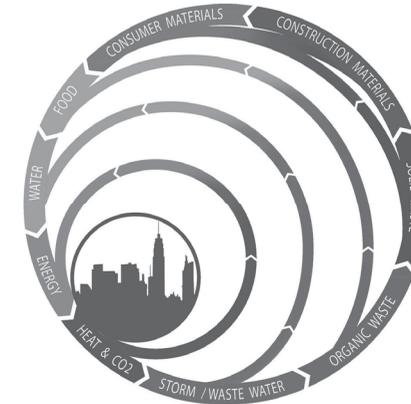
planning a building, it was first necessary to study the environmental impact. An unintended result has been that environmental lawyers can use EISs to sue to stop development. He envisions a more holistic process (shown below) consisting of:

- **Vision.** Every community is doing good things, but none are doing enough to meet their needs. Most communities don't know what it will take to solve their problems because they lack a vision equal to their challenges. Often effective visions are created not by city governments but by outsiders. Visions must involve a rethinking of infrastructure, with an eye toward the future, and consider things like light rail and autonomous vehicles.
- **Plan.** A vision is translated into action through a specific plan. This includes design, permits, and environmental improvements. While there is talk of \$1 trillion in infrastructure spending, there are not \$1 trillion in shovel-ready projects. The only projects already planned are repair projects, as communities don't ready projects without committed funding.
- **Establish community health indicators.** These are metrics to measure progress.
- **Regulate, invest, incent, lead.** Cities have tools, including building and zoning codes, tax breaks, leadership, and investment. These levers must be cohesively integrated. Often master plans are not tied to social, health, and environmental objectives.
- **Measure outcomes.** This can now be done in real time by big and small data.
- **Compare to community health indicators.** Indicators can be compared to ensure progress toward the vision.



We need to move from a linear economy to a circular economy.

Today, 98 percent of what goes into a city leaves within 6 months as waste. A circular economy captures that waste and reuses it, turning it back into energy, for example. This can be done using organic waste to grow food, turning solid waste into various materials, and recycling wastewater. Green buildings that collect rainwater, use solar, or recycle wastewater are circular in nature. A circular economy can also involve “loops” for electricity, water, and heat, which recycle to provide enormous increases in efficiency.



Enhancing the social and cultural infrastructure of cities requires integration and system optimization.

Today, not all citizens have the same opportunities. In America there are 20 million families who spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing and more than 20 percent on transportation, leaving little for good nutrition, clothing, or education. The concept of “communities of opportunity” focuses on equalizing the opportunity for all. Key elements are affordable housing, education, healthcare, arts and culture, transit, jobs, and spiritual centers.

“Too often when we have a communal responsibility, we find an individual solution for it. We really need collective solutions.”

Jonathan Rose

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Making progress requires recognition that we're all in it together. As such, individual maximization does not work; the only thing that works in such complex situations is systems optimization. The goal is integration, which means collective solutions for problems such as affordable housing, healthcare, and education. Arriving at solutions requires rethinking how society allocates funds, perhaps by increasing funds for prenatal care and family support and affordable housing, and decreasing the funds spent on healthcare.

“The most important message that we all need to communicate to each other is we're all in this together, and we all have to act like we're in it.”

Jonathan Rose

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Get engaged with AIA and other organizations to help create a cohesive strategic vision for the nation's social infrastructure that lays out aspirations for solving key societal problems.
- Advocate with local stakeholders not for “shovel-ready” projects, but for “pencil- or CAD-ready” projects that still need to be designed.
- Think and act as integrators that tie together multiple solutions for communities, including affordable housing, education, healthcare, and more.
- Ensure that projects are part of a circular economy, with reuse and recycling of resources.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Buildings that define a community

PANELISTS

John Dale, FAIA, Chair of the Committee on Architecture for Education, Harley Ellis Devereaux (Moderator)
Margaret Castillo, FAIA, LEED AP, Chief Architect, New York City Department of Design and Construction
Dr. Julie B. Todaro, Dean of Library Services, Austin Community College; President, American Libraries Association
Nan Whaley, Mayor, Dayton, Ohio

This panel, moderated by John Dale, focused on the role that different types of public buildings play in a community. The panelists included a mayor (Nan Whaley), an architect (Margaret Castillo), and a librarian (Dr. Julie B. Todaro).

The panelists were in agreement that public buildings offer tremendous social value in providing spaces that bring communities together. They highlighted important trends taking place that include adapting public buildings and spaces to be more flexible in serving multiple purposes.

This group of experts also agreed that massive federal infrastructure spending should include investments in community infrastructure. These investments should be based on principles such as equity and have a long-term outlook that creates or renovates public buildings and spaces to strengthen communities now and in the future.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Public buildings provide enormous social value.

The panelists strongly supported the Summit consensus that public buildings and spaces provide a sense of foundation in a community. Nan Whaley emphasized the importance of providing connectivity and accessibility to buildings, such as schools, rec. centers, and libraries. Future building must focus on developing multifunctional assets that provide opportunities to connect a community, rather than simply quantity and scale of projects. Julie Todaro encouraged a future view of libraries as being flexible, hybrid buildings that meet the broad educational needs of communities.

“We think of public building as spaces to build community . . . in terms of the social value of what our public buildings do, it’s really incalculable.”

Margaret Castillo



Dayton—a community investing in social infrastructure.

Dayton resoundingly passed a tax increase that connects investments in community infrastructure (improved roads) with investments in the community like education. The universal pre-K initiative will provide a diversity of choice for parents, which may include offering pre-K at a community center that also provides opportunities for recreation and social services for adults.

“The diversity of options . . . fills out what neighborhoods are going to look like and how they connect to each other.”

Nan Whaley

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

The role of libraries is changing to serve multiple community needs.

While libraries continue to evolve to meet the needs of communities amid changing technologies and shifting populations, libraries remain the heart of communities. Those who oversee libraries undertake environmental scans to find out what people want—now and in the future—and engage in extensive planning with architects. Libraries will continue to be sources for printed materials and other types of information, in multiple forms. Libraries will also provide flexible space within communities for meetings and other services.

Dr. Todaro described a trend of libraries being part of an integrated delivery of community services, which might include childcare, healthcare, literacy education, job training, and entrepreneurial space.

“Shared spaces and shared destinations with contiguous walls is really what I push for in an environment.”

Dr. Julie B. Todaro

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Ensure new infrastructure investments have a set of guiding principles. The principles used in New York City can serve as a good guide: equity, sustainability, resilience, and healthy living.
- In making infrastructure investments, be guided by a long-term strategic plan. There is great interest in massive federal investments in infrastructure, but if investments aren't part of a long-term comprehensive strategic plan, delivered projects can have limited, short-term value.
- Ensure maintenance and sustainability of a building or space are given necessary consideration. Often new public buildings or spaces are built without ongoing funding for maintenance.
- Educate and engage with the public about new projects. This includes the purpose and use of a building or space, and the reason all key elements make sense.
- Balance beauty and usefulness with safety and risk prevention.
- Ensure that libraries are eligible for any social infrastructure funding programs.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places

PRESENTERS

Inga Saffron, Architecture Critic, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Moderator)

Dan McCoubrey, FAIA, President and Principal, Venturi Scott Brown and Associates

Lindsey Scannapieco, Managing Partner, Scout Limited

Inga Saffron moderated a discussion on creative hybrid spaces in Philadelphia that bundle diverse users. She set the stage for the discussion by observing that federal support for civic spaces and public works is extremely uncertain, leaving American cities on their own and almost certainly leading to more privatization. She noted that Philadelphia has been a master of doing a lot with a little, exemplified by the two examples highlighted.

These two examples—the South Philadelphia Community Health and Literacy Center and redevelopment of the shuttered BOK school—are creative hybrid uses of space that bring together multiple stakeholders to provide important services and increase the vitality of the community.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The South Philadelphia Community Health and Literacy Center is an exceptional example of a successful public-private partnership.

The city of Philadelphia partnered with the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) to create a new facility at a public transportation hub that co-locates a city health center, a CHOP primary care facility, a new city library, and an outdoor city recreation facility. The city health center provides a variety of healthcare services, including radiology and dentistry, mainly to citizens with lower incomes who often lack insurance. CHOP's delivery system is completely different, though both healthcare components share a common lobby. The library is flexible and configurable, with many computer stations and community meeting rooms. The recreation center is essentially a park, with a playground, basketball courts, and play areas for kids.

Multiple government agencies participated in this undertaking and the community was actively involved. Inclusion of the recreational facility and the library were of great interest to the community. The city contributed the land and \$2.2 million in financing. The balance of the \$42 million for this project came from CHOP, which received tax credits.



“Retail combined with healthcare and a library, these are all things that people like, so why not combine them? I think anything that enables our facilities to be used more intensively so that we get extended hours of operation is a great benefit of co-location.”

Dan McCoubrey

BOK is a creative, diverse use of an old public space.

BOK was a vocational high school that opened in 1938 in a residential area in South Philadelphia. It is nine stories, 340,000 square feet, and had a peak enrollment of 3,000 students. It was a fully functioning vocational high school until 2013, when it was closed along with 31 other schools in Philadelphia. In 2015, BOK was sold to raise funds. Scout Urban LLC acquired this space without public funding, but at the low cost of \$5 per square foot.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Scout saw an opportunity to use existing assets to provide what this neighborhood desperately needed: affordable work spaces. The building is in the process of being lovingly restored, and today nearly 26,000 square feet is filled with 52 tenants, including artists, small businesses, nonprofits, jewelers, architects, a furniture maker, a hat maker, fashion designers, glass blowers, a band rehearsal space, ESL classes, and even a local boxing club. A rooftop bar with a great view has become a community hot spot. Nearly 80 percent of tenants are residents of South Philly. The scale of the building provides further opportunity for growth and offers the ability to accommodate a wide diversity of users. Civic and community leaders have embraced this project.

“New ideas must use old buildings.”

Lindsey Scannapieco

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Engage communities and multiple stakeholders to understand what is needed.
- Consider diverse hybrid uses for public spaces that provide multiple flexible solutions for what communities need.
- Work with relevant government organizations in a collaborative fashion on financing, tax credits, publicity, and more.
- Look for opportunities to reuse existing assets.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote — Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote — Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote — Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote — Richard Swett p27

Current examples leading the way

PANELISTS

Carol Loewenson, FAIA, LEED AP, partner at Mitchell, Giurgola (Moderator)

Shannon Kraus, FAIA, FACHA, MBA, Principal, HKS

Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP, Commissioner, New York City, Department of Parks & Recreation

David Trevino, FAIA, LEED AP, Senior Program Manager, Facilities Architecture & Engineering Division, City of Dallas

Moderated by Carol Loewenson, the panelists shared case studies, success stories, and lessons learned from their involvement in major community projects focused on public places and spaces. Projects included a major hospital in Cleveland, a new park in Dallas, the “Parks Without Borders” initiative in New York City, and a women’s health center in Uganda.

Learnings from these projects included the importance of convening and listening to numerous groups within a community to gain perspective on their needs and on how to use resources most efficiently and effectively. Based on their experiences, the speakers advised thinking broadly, creatively, and beyond the limited scope of a specific project; and having loftier goals than merely designing a public space, such as improving the quality of life in a city or the health of the community. Panelists also emphasized the need to maintain public spaces after they are built, which is often overlooked.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

A project initiated to build a hospital turned into a comprehensive community health initiative.

Metro Health in Cleveland is a 175-year-old safety net hospital that serves many poor, uninsured individuals. This hospital experienced financial hardship and had been characterized as a forgotten stepchild in a city with other high-quality hospitals. Hospital leaders even contemplated selling, merging, or closing Metro Health.

But a new CEO changed Metro Health’s mission to be focused on creating a healthier community. When a solicitation came out to build a new hospital, Shannon Kraus with the architecture firm HKS decided not to design a specific limited-scope solution, but to work with Metro Health in figuring out a new way of delivering healthcare to the community that was anchored in health, wellness, and prevention.

After deciding to focus on a new way of delivering community health, HKS and Metro Health uncovered 32 existing local groups that were each working on some individual health-related activity in the area. For example, one group was working on a bike path

and another was focused on a basketball court. Metro Health, which was planning to invest \$1 billion, decided to convene a conversation on how best to invest its capital to maximize community benefit, working in conjunction with these existing groups.

“We asked, ‘What is it from a design perspective that would be the right investments for the community?’ We brainstormed with the community to identify those things.”

Shannon Kraus

Lessons from this experience for architects include: don’t necessarily respond to RFPs with detailed answers; be willing to work creatively with clients to figure out comprehensive solutions that meet broader community needs. Try unique approaches to convene the community and stakeholders. Think outside of traditional property lines, and widen your lens to solve the problem.

The Dallas deck park is a visionary, game-changing project.

Dallas faced a challenge with a downtown separated by a major roadway, creating issues in how different parts of the city were able to grow. The city tackled the problem with a public-private collaboration that started almost a decade ago. Following feasibility studies for a deck park that would connect Dallas’s downtown, Dallas’s deck park was conceived. A “deck park” is a park built on a deck or a bridge. In Dallas, the 5.2 acre deck park is a concrete deck built over an active freeway. The park has a Great Lawn, a promenade, a children’s garden, a botanical garden, a fountain, and various plazas and pavilions—all built on a concrete deck. The city of Dallas contributed \$20 million; the Texas Department of Highways pitched in \$20 million; a foundation provided \$16 million; and private donors also contributed.

Now complete, the deck park has connected downtown neighborhoods and is a center of activity. It has spurred economic development, produced increased rents for surrounding buildings, and is seen as a model by other cities. It is a huge success for

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote — Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote — Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote — Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote — Richard Swett p27

Dallas and a second deck park is being considered. This project is one of many efforts to make Dallas more walkable, to encourage open space, and to improve the quality of life.

“This is a great example of an urban project, a park project that not only brought two segmented areas together, but also brought neighborhoods together.”

David Trevino

New York City’s “Parks Without Borders” is changing how the city thinks about public spaces.

In New York City, there are 30,000 acres of parkland, with parks representing 14 percent of the city’s footprint. Much of that parkland had been isolated behind fences or walls. Another 26 percent of the footprint includes streets and sidewalks, making 40 percent of the city’s land within the public realm. However, historically the city has not thought about all public land in a seamless manner.

The concept of Parks Without Borders is to look at the edges, entrances, and adjacent park spaces to create seamless public grounds. This has involved collaboration among parks, planning, transportation, environmental protection, and other groups to rethink the public realm. Lowering or eliminating fences increases access to parks.

This effort to rethink and expand access to parks is essential as cities become more densely populated. Parks and public spaces are a vital part of infrastructure; they make cities livable and “let your brain breathe.”

“These [public spaces] aren’t just nice amenities. Parks aren’t just for picnics; they are now a vital part of our infrastructure . . . it is what makes a city livable.”

Mitchell J. Silver

Designing a women’s health center in Uganda offers lessons for the United States.

HKS engaged in a pro bono project that involved working with a nonprofit physician’s group in Uganda to design a new women’s health facility. Local constraints required that HKS adapt to design a facility that was “off the grid.” It had to be naturally ventilated, have passive cooling, use local materials, and be built and used by minimally trained local labor.

In the United States, resources tend to be abundant. But, the experience of designing in Uganda offered a lesson in making do with what is available, and being innovative, resourceful, and creative. Perhaps designers in the United States can be encouraged to find creative ways to do more with less.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- When undertaking public projects, convene, engage, and listen to the community.
- Think broadly outside of traditional property lines about the overall impact of projects on neighborhoods and communities. Widen your lens to solve problems.
- Conduct analyses to look at the economic returns of public spaces, which are often extremely compelling.
- Don’t just improve the infrastructure; also improve the process used to improve the infrastructure.
- When building or renovating public spaces, don’t overlook the ongoing effort and expense to maintain these places and spaces, which is often not adequately considered.
- Be attuned to unique local barriers, such as the local culture or unique local regulations.
- At the inception of any project, look carefully at the demographics of the community.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Keynote – Tyler Duvall

PRESENTER

Tyler Duvall, Partner, McKinsey & Company

Tyler Duvall works with state and local governments on urban transformation. He discussed the challenges with capital project portfolios and the need for government agencies to transform the delivery approaches for infrastructure projects. Significant cost savings are possible, but only if the public sector improves execution systems, project controls, and resource optimization. He stressed also that procurement reform is imperative.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Institutions face common challenges with capital projects.

In the United States there is general agreement that more capital investment is needed, particularly in metropolitan areas. Communities are supportive and excited about local capital projects, but are disappointed when little progress is accomplished. A McKinsey analysis of capital projects shows that delays and cost overruns are common, which result from poor management and execution issues. The analysis also found that there are common challenges that affect capital projects including:

- **Project roles and responsibilities are unclear.** America's complex web of federal, state, and local agencies leads to confusion and lack of clarity around project responsibilities.
- **Insufficient strategy alignment.** Government agencies don't systematically develop or communicate an overall capital investment strategy with clear metrics.
- **Insufficient project optimization.** There are inadequate execution systems in place, and government project managers lack basic "blocking and tackling" skills.
- **Lack of an ownership mindset.** Responsibilities and accountability are unclear, resulting in massive finger pointing. People don't behave as owners and accept responsibility.
- **Lack of rigor in evaluating projects.** Cost-benefit analyses and basic return on investment metrics are common for projects globally, yet not in the United States.
- **Insufficient project controls.** Adequate controls are not in place to course correct when projects go off track, which they invariably do. Lack of controls erodes trust in delivery.

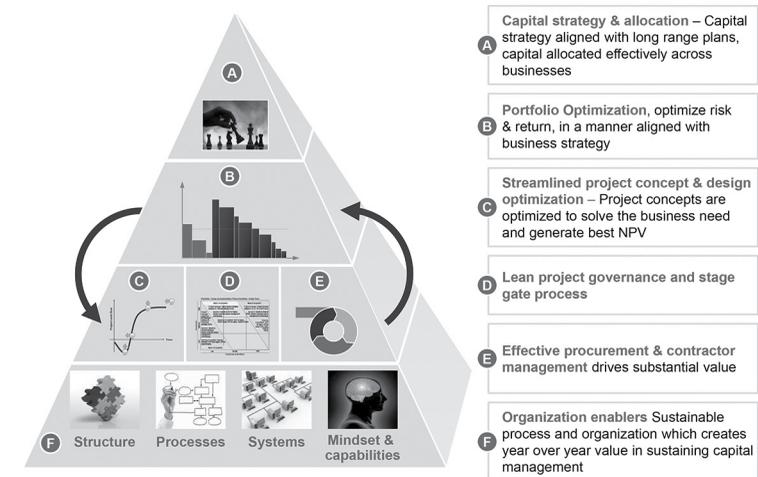
- **Missing resource optimization.** Without a clear strategy, clear responsibilities, accountability, and controls, resources are not optimized.

"It is incumbent on the pro-development, pro-community, rehabilitation crowd to really emphasize that these project controls are important. They're central to sound delivery."

Tyler Duvall

McKinsey has proposed building blocks for achieving excellence in capital programs.

The building blocks (shown below) are:



- **Capital strategy and allocation.** Governments need a strategy to guide capital allocation decisions.
- **Portfolio optimization.** Most projects focus solely on benefits, but portfolios must be optimized for cost and risk, as well as benefits.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

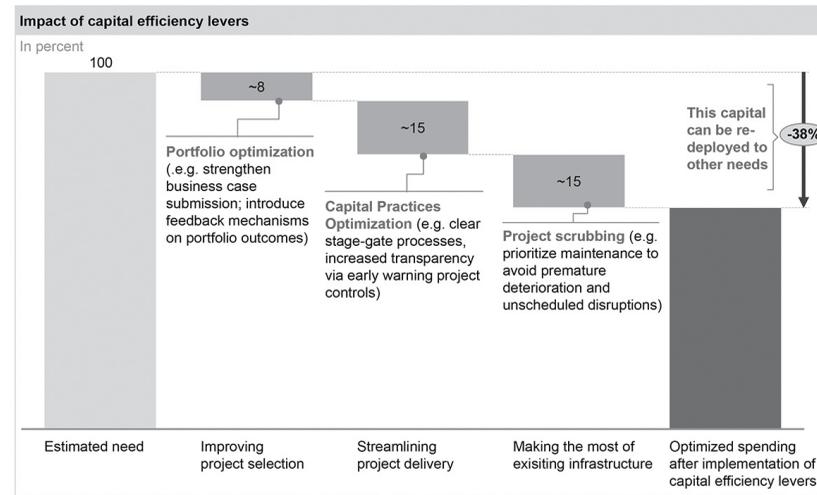
Keynote – Richard Swett p27

- **Streamlined project concept and design optimization.** Projects often involve bidding out individual pieces instead of the entire project, forcing players to work together as a consortium.

Other key building blocks are project governance, procurement, and a culture of execution.

Improved project execution could yield tremendous savings.

McKinsey research found that improved project selection, streamlined project delivery, and optimized use of existing infrastructure could deliver savings of 38 to 40 percent on America’s infrastructure projects. This would lead to more coherent infrastructure conversations and less fighting for resources.



Public-private partnerships are a promising solution for some social infrastructure projects.

Public-private partnerships (P3s) are a common project delivery model worldwide. They allow for off-balance sheet financing, which reduces pressure on public sector budgets. P3s establish powerful incentives for better design and construction because long-term cost consequences are transferred to other entities. While P3s are a promising option for many projects, they aren’t ideal for all. For some urban social infrastructure projects, the complexity of negotiating a P3 deal may outweigh the benefits.

Procurement reform is essential.

Procurement suffers from three fundamental problems:

- **Speed.** Sequential review leads to slow government decision making.
- **Insufficient qualifications-based procurement.** The United States must procure based on value.
- **Lack of talent and capability.** The public sector routinely underinvests in team capabilities. Significant work is needed to revitalize the procurement function.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Understand and use capital efficiency best practices to reduce costs by around 40 percent.
- Emphasize that project controls are central to sound project delivery.
- Shine a light on the shortage of skilled construction workers. The 40 percent savings from infrastructure projects could be even greater if labor productivity increased.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote — Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote — Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote — Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote — Richard Swett p27

Meeting local need with local solutions

PANELISTS

R. Steven Lewis, FAIA, NOMAC, Urban Design Director for the Central District, City of Detroit (Moderator)

Brian Depew, Executive Director, Center for Rural Affairs, Lyons, Nebraska

David Dixon, FAIA, Urban Places Group Leader at Stantec

Stephen Goldsmith, Daniel Paul Professor of the Practice of Government and Director of the Innovations in American Government Program, Harvard University Kennedy School of Government

Kurt Weigle, President and CEO, Downtown Development District of New Orleans

Steven Lewis moderated this panel discussion highlighting case studies and examples of local communities achieving success with local solutions. The panelists all agreed that local leaders can't be fully reliant on the federal government and must lay out clear narratives and visions, that use tools at their disposal, such as public-private partnerships. Those narratives must be based on a deep understanding of what communities need, communicated through effective outreach including social media.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Local solutions can be effective without federal funds but federal programs are extremely important.

The panelists differed in their responses to the question, "Is it possible to generate local solutions that don't rely on federal support?" Two of the panelists believe some form of federal support is extremely important:

- Brian Depew of the Center for Rural Affairs—which is in the business of community development strategies and deploys capital at the local level—said that while local leaders want to say they can succeed without federal support, it isn't true. From his perspective, even those invested in creating local solutions are reliant on state and federal sources of capital and programmatic support. He believes local solutions would not be possible without programs like the CDFI Fund, the SBA micro-enterprise program, or tax policies. What matters most to Mr. Depew are the linkages between local community efforts and federal and state programs.

"We all want to sit here and say, 'Sure we could do it without the federal government.' Or at least there is an inclination to say that. The truth of the matter is even when we're very rooted in our local place and very invested in creating local solutions, we are reliant upon state and federal sources for capital, for investment, and for direct support for programmatic pieces."

Brian Depew

- Federal support in the form of the historic tax credit and new market tax credits is extremely important everywhere, especially in cities like New Orleans. Kurt Weigle said tax incentives work better than direct spending. The private sector can have tremendous impact, but needs the right incentives, which come from government policies.

However, the other panelists don't believe communities should sit back and rely on federal support, and believe communities can be successful even without it.

- In the view of David Dixon, every city wants to become more livable, more walkable, healthier, more fun, more desirable, more appealing to knowledge workers, and more valuable. However, due to anticipated ongoing pressures on the federal budget, access to federal funding is uncertain. Therefore, out of necessity, cities have to find local solutions. Dixon sees enormous potential in tapping the increase in urban wealth to pay for things the public needs, and sees mixed income housing as perhaps the "issue of our era in cities that can afford it."
- Having served in multiple capacities in community development projects, Stephen Goldsmith shared that many successful local leaders aren't dependent on federal funds. Progress and success are the result of leveraging an overarching narrative and vision for their communities. Local leaders must draft a plan using the assets and tools at their disposal (such as public-private partnerships) and allocating resources based on priorities to produce maximum leverage. If the federal government provides any support, that's a bonus.

As an example, Indianapolis did 83 public-private projects and used the proceeds from them on the most important social capital issues in urban neighborhoods.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

“Build a narrative, use public-private partnerships . . . and then if you get a check from the federal government, more power to you.”

Stephen Goldsmith

- Mr. Weigle, who sees an important role for federal policy and support, places even more importance on local leaders having master plans and working to create neighborhoods that are complete places, combining residences, places to work, retail shops, schools, and places to worship. Creating neighborhoods is the role of local leaders, not the federal government.

Local leaders must understand what communities want and need, and must engage in outreach.

Mr. Dixon cited a longstanding axiom that “Nothing about us, without us, is for us” and emphasized that before huge investments are made in communities, it is imperative to first ask people in neighborhoods, “What do you need?” This question must be posed to all stakeholders, from public housing residents to everyone else who lives in a community. Questions must focus on, “How does this [development activity] enhance the quality of life for everyone?”

Mr. Depew told how every small community has its own unique personality and local vernacular, including his town of Lyons, Nebraska, with a population of 851. Yet, when building a new community center in Lyons, there was not one public meeting where the architects asked the local community what they wanted in their community center. The result was a generic community center that is not reflective of the local vernacular.

In engaging the community in the planning of a development project, Mr. Goldsmith has concluded that the larger the frame or the scope of the project, the more intentional the outreach needs to be. He also believes that most communities need to step up their engagement on social media, which is currently underleveraged.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Have a narrative and vision for the local community. Start with the narrative, not the plan or process.
- As local leaders, understand all assets available to catalyze and leverage, including eminent domain, land aggregation, special tax districts, and the ability to convene and form public-private partnerships.
- Prioritize the community’s needs and determine how best to use the assets available to address these needs.
- Determine how and where federal support can fit with the narrative, including tax policies, various programs, and funding.
- Engage the community by conducting active, intentional outreach and using social media. Understand the community’s needs and the unique local vernacular.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu

PRESENTER

Mayor Mitchell Landrieu, New Orleans, Louisiana

Mitchell Landrieu, who is vice president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, has overseen the rebuilding of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. He feels strongly that America needs to make massive investments in social infrastructure and that federal funds should be sent to cities because mayors know how to get things done in fast, practical ways that best serve communities. While post-Katrina aid came from the federal government, much of the success in rebuilding New Orleans is attributable to local vision, leadership, partnerships, and collaboration, which can serve as a model for the rest of the country.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Mayors are problem solvers who get things done.

Nationally, there is tremendous politicization, uncertainty, and gridlock. Cities are different. Many are led by non-ideological problem solvers who are focused on fixing things by building relationships. Mayors must be accountable and govern in real time. Mayor Landrieu believes local government can be a change agent when acting in partnership with federal and state government, the private sector, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations. His theme is “One team. One fight. Once voice. One city.”

America must make massive infrastructure investments and execute wisely.

While political agreement between parties is rare, there is consensus about the need for massive infrastructure investments to rebuild the crumbling infrastructure, create jobs, and grow the economy. Plans for \$700 billion to \$1 trillion in infrastructure spending are significant, but fall short of the \$3.6 trillion that some have said is needed. And, that fails to consider necessary investments in social infrastructure, like libraries and public spaces.

Questions that need answers include how much will be spent, who gets the money, and what it will be spent on. Mayor Landrieu argued that if funds are spent federally or provided to states, the process will be slow and inefficient. A better approach is for funds to be provided to cities where they can quickly be put to use on what matters most.

“Mayors have a much better track record of getting stuff into the ground much, much quicker. There are less hoops and much more direct accountability.”

Mayor Mitchell Landrieu

Mayor Landrieu argued that cities don't have the capacity to make adequate infrastructure investments on their own; without massive federal investment, critical infrastructure work won't get done. Without federal funds, wealthier cities will prosper, while poorer cities will decline.

New Orleans is a poster child for rebuilding infrastructure.

Hurricane Katrina was the canary in the coal mine, signaling the dangers of decaying infrastructure. The devastation in New Orleans resulted not from a natural disaster (New Orleans has survived over 1,000 hurricanes), but from an infrastructure failure when the levies broke.

Post-Katrina, New Orleans came back to life with the help of the federal government by not just rebuilding, but by re-conceptualizing the city. Since Katrina, New Orleans has constructed dozens of twenty-first-century learning centers and 88 new primary healthcare clinics, has redesigned the housing infrastructure, and is rebuilding the airport and two medical centers. Public investment has spurred massive private investment.

“[New Orleans] is a great model for what the country needs and can do. . . . It took clear vision, a willingness to work together, money, thought, coordination, and cooperation.”

Mayor Mitchell Landrieu

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Mayor Landrieu has high expectations for architects.

Cities are where things are happening and where people want to be. Mayor Landrieu emphasized that function and design need to go hand in hand. He called on architects to respect a neighborhood's character and design buildings that fit in the neighborhood's context. He also stressed that if architects want to work in New Orleans, projects need to be on time, on task, and under budget.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- As leaders, be principled, thoughtful, practical, optimistic, and hopeful.
- Advocate that infrastructure funds flow to cities.
- Work closely in collaboration with mayors, cities, and all key stakeholders.
- Create designs that fit with the context of neighborhoods.
- Deliver on time, on task, and on budget.

- Welcome & opening remarks p02
- AIA public survey highlights p04
- Neglect, decline, and consequence p05
- Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08
- Buildings that define a community p11
- Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13
- Current examples leading the way p15
- Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17
- Meeting local need with local solutions p19
- Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21
- Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23**
- Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25
- Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics

PANELISTS

Alan Greenberger, FAIA, Drexel University Distinguished Teaching Professor, Department of Architecture & Interiors; Distinguished Visiting Fellow, Lindy Institute for Urban Innovation
 Kermit Baker, PhD, Hon. AIA, Chief Economist of the AIA
 Christopher Leinberger, Chair, Center for Real Estate and Urban Analysis, George Washington University
 Patricia Saldaña Natke, AIA, Founding Partner, UrbanWorks, Chicago
 Jess Zimbabwe, AIA, AICP, LEED AP, Executive Director, Daniel Rose Center for Public Leadership, National League of Cities

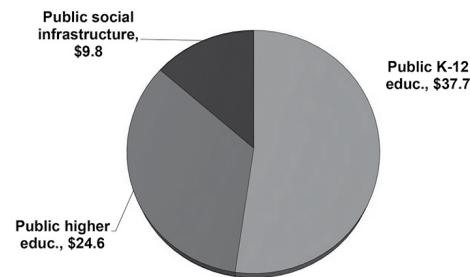
Alan Greenberger moderated this panel discussion focused on how communities can tackle reinvestment issues and how to find ways to pay for it. Typical barriers to funding social infrastructure projects include broken or antiquated public processes, and the lack of a persuasive narrative and business case for the project.

However, cities are choosing not to rely on federal or state funding and are devising creative solutions to raise capital locally through taxes and bonds, and by attracting private capital. Success in cities such as Detroit, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia all show what is possible. Still, there are inequities among cities and the challenges are even greater for communities experiencing poverty.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Total spending on social infrastructure is relatively small.

AIA's chief economist Kermit Baker shared data on private infrastructure spending. Last year, spending totaled \$72 billion, which is only six to seven percent of the \$1.1 trillion spent on construction. Of the spending on social infrastructure, the majority is on education, with almost \$38 billion on K-12 and about \$25 billion on public higher education. Only \$10 billion is spent on other types of social infrastructure, accounting for less than half of one percent of the total economy.



Notes: Public social infrastructure consists of sports facilities, performance and meeting centers, social/neighborhood centers, and parks and camps.
 Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and U.S. Census Bureau

Most cities have an aging social infrastructure; some are doing something about it.

Per Mr. Greenberger, it is likely that every American city, big or small, has a collection of aging social infrastructure, including libraries, parks, recreation centers, schools, and public buildings. Patricia Saldaña Natke said that cities and towns suffer from “endemic problems.” And, Christopher Leinberger agreed that “many cities are in that very position.”

But, Mr. Leinberger pointed out, there is another set of cities that have had the political will, leadership, and creativity to fundamentally rebuild their schools, parks, and social infrastructures over the past decade. He cited Washington D.C., as an example of a city where 80 to 90 percent of all development in the last several years has been high density, mixed use, urban, and walkable. These privately funded developments now generate more than one billion dollars in net profit for the city each year through tax revenue, which has funded schools, parks, and other social infrastructure. Similar examples exist elsewhere, in cities such as Detroit and Chattanooga.

Cities can't rely on state or federal funding.

Mr. Greenberger quoted Bruce Katz from the Brookings Institute, who said, “There is no more federal white knight.” Jess Zimbabwe concurred, saying it's no longer smart for cities to count on funding from their state. Ms. Zimbabwe sees cities turning inward and looking at self-funding, either from private individuals, foundations, or their own tax bases.

“It's up to us locally to make this happen. There is no white knight. . . . It's going to be at the local level that we're going to have to make these things happen. Now it would be nice if the feds came in, but I wouldn't hold my breath.”

Christopher Leinberger

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

In many instances, citizens are passing tax increases to fund local infrastructure investments. In the recent election a proposal passed in Los Angeles to provide \$120 billion in funding over the next 30 years for public transit. Across the country, 68 of 86 ballot measures for open space passed and over the past 15 years, 70 percent of rail transit measures have passed.

“Voters are willing to tax themselves for these amenities on a localized basis where they know where the funds are going.”

Jess Zimbabwe

In Philadelphia, a major foundation just committed \$100 million to a program called Rebuild. This augments a \$300 million city bond issue and an additional \$100 million from existing city sources over multiple years. This provides \$500 million for neighborhood parks, recreation centers, libraries, and public places that have not been upgraded in decades. In Detroit, \$4 billion in private money has helped transform the downtown area, resulting in \$13 billion in increased GDP over the past five years. Similar developments, using creative financing from the private sector, have occurred in places like Seattle, Cincinnati, and Boston.

These examples show that with vision and private sector support, it is possible to raise funding that can transform communities without relying on the federal government. However, concerns were raised about lower-income communities that lack the tax base of a city like Los Angeles or the philanthropic support of Philadelphia. Some panelists believe that federal support is needed for these markets, while others suggested learning from local models that are working and not relying on the federal government.

“There needs to be creative financing, creative ways to support these efforts which show tremendous results. Without that kind of funding to help underserved areas, it’s only going to get worse.”

Patricia Saldaña Natke

The obstacles to progress are formidable.

In addition to funding, other obstacles that stifle progress on social infrastructure include:

- **Broken public processes.** Processes are often slow, highly political, and painful. In the absence of strongly committed, sustained leadership, it is hard to get anything done. Also, efforts to involve the community can devolve into controversy.
- **Lengthy implementation cycles.** Mr. Leinberger described a 2012 conversation with a transit official in Seattle who mentioned a light rail project—scheduled to be completed in 2024, 12 years later. This is representative of projects across the country which take too long due to broken processes and lack of urgency.
- **Lack of a business case.** Traditional infrastructure, like roads and bridges, is often seen as economic development. But social infrastructure is seen as “building civil society.” When times are good, investments are made in social infrastructure, but when times are bad, budgets are cut, compared to traditional infrastructure where spending is sustained.

“Public works infrastructure—roads, bridges, things like that, we’ve made a better economic argument for that, that it helps propel the economy. We haven’t really made the same level of argument; we don’t have the same narrative for social infrastructure.”

Kermit Baker

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Develop a strong narrative, “a business case,” for the economic value of social infrastructure investments.
- Study and learn from those local communities that have been successful in raising private capital and leading successful ballot initiatives.
- Develop strategies to overcome barriers that slow development, like speeding up project execution and expediting broken public processes.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings

PRESENTER

Robert Ivy, FAIA, The American Institute of Architects (Moderator)

Mark A. Focht, FASLA, The American Society of Landscape Architects

Charrisse Johnston, ASID, IIDA, LEED AP, The American Society of Interior Designers

Brian Pallasch, CAE, Managing Director, Government Relations & Infrastructure Initiatives, American Society of Civil Engineers

Patrick Phillips, Urban Land Institute

Carol Rhea, FAICP, The American Planning Association

Dominic Sims, The International Code Council

AIA's Robert Ivy moderated this final panel discussion involving key stakeholders in the architecture, design, engineering, and construction industry. He provided a brief recap of the Summit, and asked each panelist to share their organization's perspective as it relates to discussions over the last day and a half. Attendees also offered recommendations on major Summit themes and ideas.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Social infrastructure is critical to communities and has been neglected. Collaboration among multiple stakeholders is needed to advocate for social infrastructure as a societal priority.

Mr. Ivy provided a Summit overview, highlighting the following:

- There is agreement that America's social infrastructure has been neglected and has suffered from disinvestment. Bad policies have also resulted in unintended negative consequences.
- There is an urgent need to reinvest in America's social infrastructure, including schools, libraries, community facilities, and public housing.
- This task needs to be undertaken together, by all stakeholders working with a common purpose.
- AIA's survey results show that the public agrees with defining infrastructure to include public buildings and spaces, and supports new investment in social infrastructure.
- The Summit also focused on the timely trend of the urban future, as this is the direction in which the country and world are trending.
- Sustainability permeated most discussions, along with reuse and rethinking spaces.
- Despite the challenges there was hope about making a difference.

- Jonathan Rose laid out a holistic vision about building smarter cities and combining elements to create the whole.
- The need for and importance of community engagement was a prevailing theme.
- Public leadership is necessary by designers, architects, and colleagues.

Each discipline has its own unique perspective about the importance of social infrastructure and how best to proceed.

Various priorities included:

- **American Society of Interior Designers:** Integrating health and wellness, as well as designing for an aging population.
- **American Society of Landscape Architects:** Redefining and broadening the definition of infrastructure to include community spaces, along with incorporating the concept of sustainability. Also, further expanding infrastructure to include environmental areas and outdoor recreation.
- **Urban Land Institute:** Redefining and expanding the term "infrastructure" to include social or civic infrastructure. Major issues include affordable housing, strategic public investment, and public-private partnerships.
- **American Planning Association:** Educating members and public officials about all forms of infrastructure, as well as affordable housing, sustainability, and building stronger communities.
- **American Society of Civil Engineers:** Advocating for solutions to infrastructure problems, with a renewed focus on sustainability and resilience. The organization is also focused on lowering the life cycle cost of projects.
- **International Code Council:** Assuring public health and safety by adapting codes to reflect new thinking.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

Summit participants agreed on the importance of concrete actions including shaping a compelling narrative about social infrastructure, advocating for funding, focusing locally, and working together.

Perspectives shared include:

- Leverage the consequences of neglect and a sense of “loss of community” in America to serve as a catalyst for taking steps to restore and reinvest in social infrastructure and reconnect.
- It is important to engage in **advocacy** at all levels, particularly with local boards and commissions, to shape policy.
- To create a clear, compelling, relevant **narrative**, it was suggested that messages convey the transformational opportunities that are possible for communities including the positive economic and social impact.
- With new elected leadership at the federal, state, and local levels, it is the right time to engage with a sense of urgency and come forward with a compelling, impactful narrative.
- Unable to rely on state and federal funding, local communities must become **more financially self-reliant**. One participant shared an observation that, “The action is happening at the local level.”
- **Financing is not funding**. In addition to creative financing options, infrastructure needs a funding stream to support it.
- **Analytical tools** are necessary to measure the short- and long-term value of social infrastructure. Metrics can also ensure greater accountability. While insightful data exists for traditional infrastructure, the lack of metrics for social infrastructure creates challenges in “making the case.”
- **There is a role for architecture and design in traditional infrastructure projects**. For example, there is an enormous difference in bridges created by engineers only versus those involving architects and designers. If future funding is invested mainly in “horizontal” infrastructure, then designers and architects must advocate to play a role.
- Future success will require engaging with the **next generation** of leaders. Students and young professionals also need to be considered.

In addition to these takeaways, there was significant interest in continuing the collaboration and conversation among these stakeholders—and potentially involving others—perhaps with a compact focused on advancing civic infrastructure. Also, because of the reality of greater success and progress taking place at the local level, these stakeholders agreed to help create action-oriented solutions to help local constituencies and audiences more effectively advocate for investment in social infrastructure.

Welcome & opening remarks p02

AIA public survey highlights p04

Neglect, decline, and consequence p05

Keynote – Jonathan Rose p08

Buildings that define a community p11

Philadelphia hybrids: Bringing together constituencies to create new civic places p13

Current examples leading the way p15

Keynote – Tyler Duvall p17

Meeting local need with local solutions p19

Keynote – Mitchell Landrieu p21

Opportunities, obstacles, and economics p23

Strategies to renewing communities' essential buildings p25

Keynote – Richard Swett p27

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PRESENTER

Ambassador Richard N. Swett, Former Congressman; CEO and Co-founder, Climate Prosperity Enterprise Solutions

Ambassador Richard Swett believes architects can play a meaningful role in America's communities. The profession must take proactive steps to engage with the public about what solutions should look like and we have to be collaborative with others to successfully rebuild the country. Architects must also expand their horizons to pursue opportunities as civic leaders.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Architects must earn a seat at the table.

People have been extremely critical of governmental institutions. Only 9 percent of Americans believe Congress is doing a good job and 50 percent have no feeling of connection with the government.

Architects, designers, and builders are responsible people. For architects to play a key role in rebuilding America, we must work with our elected leaders, nationally and locally. This requires a seat at the table, which entails earning respect from civic leaders and politicians.

In addition to providing design expertise, architects can be civic and social leaders.

Many famous architects have served as civic leaders, such as Frederick Law Olmsted and Raoul Wallenberg. These individuals' accomplishments within and outside of architecture are inspiring. Ambassador Swett encouraged today's architects to aspire to leadership in society.

“Who are the leaders in the profession today? Are there people who have the national or international stature our predecessors achieved? If you can't think of anybody, dig a little harder, or work harder and become that person.”

Ambassador Richard N. Swett

When Swett ran for the House of Representatives (campaigning with “Every House needs a good architect”), he communicated the reason architects are well suited for politics: Architects think strategically, unite competing interests, meet budget requirements, and help people succeed.

Architects must explore creative ways to help the nation.

Six ways architects can improve Americans' lives are:

- **Apply successful models in new places.** The Alaskan Land Claims Act, for example, lifted Native Alaskans from sub-poverty to the middle class. This model can be reapplied.
- **Understand the economics of energy conservation.** Architects must identify how to bring offshore private money to the United States for programs like rooftop solar panels, energy conservation equipment, and building insulation.
- **Launch a Solar Decathlon competition in a U.S. community.** Pick a community that needs housing and do a solar decathlon. The best prototypes can be replicated to build a new community.
- **Invest in foreign aid, rather than granting it.** Foreign aid dollars wisely invested overseas return to the United States in the form of increased economic development.
- **Help the new administration do more for less.** Swett estimates the construction industry has 20 percent waste, and building energy costs can be reduced 30 to 50 percent.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Instead of drawing the solution, architects need to engage with the public about what the solution must be.
- Get a seat at the table for designing social infrastructure by working collaboratively with local and national policymakers and elected leaders.
- Go beyond the profession to serve as civic leaders.
- Reapply successful models.