



AIA
Michigan

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Hello Everyone,

It is August 21, and the sounds of late summer are in the air. The last week saw cooler nights allowing us to open our windows> Great for sleep! Schools are open or about to open, whether in person or virtual or a hybrid version. We are all recalibrating and reassessing on just what plan to move forward with. Many of our businesses will be working primarily from home, at least through the end of the year and likely into next year. School, the need for day care, and lingering uncertainty on how safe it is to return to school or work or even social gatherings are what we will continue to cope with.

I have been fortunate to participate in a round table of six architecture firms from different parts of the country. We started meeting in late April in response to the pandemic. The collaboration has been extremely valuable. We meet every three weeks, and the format allows all to bring topics for discussion. Most topics are pragmatic, but we do delve into philosophical areas. Political discussions have been minimal. Back in April we already knew that this challenge would be more of a marathon than a sprint. How long will this marathon last? It does feel like we are recalibrating again. I think we had hopes that the pandemic would be waning by fall. At the beginning of our last meeting, many expressed that their hope for fall has dissipated into disappointment. Even so, many shared there is much they were grateful for and that this situation has provided opportunities for growth, a new perspective and even innovation.

I recently read an article about James Stockdale and John McCain. Both were held captive in the same prison of war camp. Stockdale said his fellow soldiers who suffered the most were those who were the optimists. Hoping to be out by Christmas or summer or then the following Christmas, eventually crushed their spirit. Our current situation is nowhere near as dire as that, but there is continued uncertainty, and hardship. The key is to focus on the things we can control, accepting hardship as a pathway to peace. I appreciate the support the roundtable group has given us as we all try to navigate. I have seen this support from the AIA as well, through the townhall meetings and webinars, where many firms share information and resources that benefit all firms in Michigan. I encourage you to continue supporting one another.

I also encourage you to participate in two of AIA Michigan's premier events. The Design retreat on September 12th, and the AIA Honor Awards on October 9th. The design retreat has a nominal fee and is worth 8 HSW credits and the Honor awards is free. Please register for the design retreat now!

Finally, I would like to thank everyone involved with planning and implementing the 77th Annual Mid Summer Conference. It was a well-organized and relevant conference slate. A couple of the sessions including the economic update from AIA and AGC national are available with links to be posted on the AIA Michigan website. Special thanks to Alex Ivanikiw, Cathy Mosley and Evelyn Dougherty for their ability to anticipate and adapt to the unexpected with grace.

Stay safe!

Norman Hamann Jr. AIA, NOMA