

AIA New York 2024 Legislative Agenda

American Institute of Architects New York (AIANY) is thrilled to present our 2024 Legislative Agenda for New York City and New York State. AIANY represents over 5,000 architects and design professionals committed to positively impacting the physical and social qualities of our city. The purpose of this document is to share an overview of the top policy priorities of the architecture and design community for the coming year and present recommendations to improve the built environment. Our attention in 2024 will be set on affordable housing, sustainability, public realm, transportation and infrastructure, and procurement policy. New York City is facing crises like never before with affordable housing being out of reach for many New Yorkers, more frequent extreme weather events, and an uncoordinated use of public space. This document presents a number of recommendations to remedy these persistent challenges for New Yorkers and details opportunities to take legislative action.

Housing

State

- Create a tax incentive program for affordable housing production that replaces and improves on the expired 421-a real property tax rebate
- Facilitate office to residential conversions with incentives for including affordable housing units (S05080); eliminate state floor area ratio (FAR) cap and give authority to NYC to determine FAR
- Legalize accessory dwelling units and create incentive program (S05172-A/A05342-A); establish an amnesty program for reporting basement apartments to bring units up to code without penalization (S02276-A/A01075-A)
- Encourage transit-oriented development (S05560/A2508 & A06670)

City

- Support City of Yes for Housing Opportunity – specifically proposals to incentivize affordable housing with Universal Affordability Preference, make office to residential conversions easier, encourage transit-oriented development, legalize housing above businesses on commercial streets to encourage mixed-use communities, eliminate parking mandates, and allow for accessory dwelling units.

Sustainability

State

- Support the NY HEAT Act (S2016-A)
- Investment in decarbonizing and increasing energy grid capacity
- Establish an incentive program to reduce embodied carbon in new development and encourage material reuse

City

- Support City of Yes for Carbon Neutrality – specifically the elements that enable and reward energy efficient design and retrofits, building electrification and associated equipment, rooftop and other elevated solar, battery storage, electric vehicle charging, and infrastructure to support bicycles and other micromobility options
- Support Local Law 97 implementation as the first emission limit goes into effect for buildings over 25,000 square feet
- Invest in citywide resiliency measures to protect at-risk communities from extreme weather events

Transportation and Infrastructure

State

- Support congestion pricing without excessive exemptions
- Maintain robust and reliable funding for MTA Capital Program
- Assure funding for ongoing state-of-good repairs for local transportation infrastructure to maintain and protect critical assets
- Secure funding for critical transportation projects during the planning, design, or construction phases – specifically, Penn Station Redevelopment, Penn Access, Gateway, Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, Cross Bronx Expressway, Inter-Borough Expressway, and Second Avenue Subway Phase Two

City

- Full fund expansion of citywide bike network and busway to improve NYC streetscape as recommended by the NYC Streets Plan to meet City Council mandates
- Amend zoning to allow for higher density development within ¼ mile of subway or commuter rail stations and major bus interchanges

Public Realm

City

- Support Dining Out NYC program implementation and Kit of Parts design guidelines
- Support City of Yes for Economic Opportunity – specifically proposals that would allow for more mixed-use potential in neighborhoods, permit more adaptive reuse, and develop a commercial streetscape framework that is pedestrian friendly
- Develop comprehensive and thoughtful approach to curb management on issues ranging from micro-distribution hubs to commercial loading zones to on-street charging
- Increase public bathroom access and improve maintenance of existing facilities
- Create a comprehensive citywide waste plan to address waste distribution and reuse of compost on the building and neighborhood level; reduce trash by containerizing waste for commercial buildings

Government Agencies, Policies, and Rules

State

- Eliminate low bid procurement for capital projects and use quality-based selection (QBS)
- Improve and reform project delivery methods and procurement reforms
- Support alternative delivery methods, such as CM-at-risk, CM-build, and progressive design build
- Streamline and modernize SEQRA

City

- Fill agency staffing vacancies and reduce vacancy rate at key agencies (DOB, DDC, DCP, HPD, LPC)
- Amend city procurement rules to follow Best Value Procurement in lieu of lowest first cost (low bid) awards
- Support Get Stuff Built to streamline and modernize CEQR
- Encourage SCA to provide a reference for fee rates for design contracts and pay a stipend for required design services prior to contract award
- Improve MWBE and small firm accessibility to DDC contracts

For more information about AIANY's Legislative Agenda, please contact Bria Donohue (bdonohue@aiany.org)