

## **Message to the Membership from Council**

2016-11-17

*The 2014-2016 Continuing Education cycle concluded on June 30<sup>th</sup>, and we will soon have completed the first two quarters of the 2016-2018 period. As your Council, we would like to take this opportunity to follow up on the last reporting cycle and share some of the work of the Continuing Education Committee that is on-going.*

The province of Saskatchewan entrusts the SAA with protection of the public interest and safety through the regulation of the profession, recognizing our members' specialized knowledge and the capacity of architects to govern themselves. This means that in the Province of Saskatchewan, architecture is self-regulated. Our role as a Council is to strengthen our profession's capacity to self-regulate, ensuring that architects are the ones setting and maintaining standards of competency and conduct within the profession.

In reference to *The Architects Act*, the objects of the Association are:

- (a) To ensure for the public the proficiency and competency of members who practice architecture;
- (b) To promote and increase the knowledge, skill and proficiency in all things related to the practice of architecture.

As a regulator, the SAA is required to demonstrate that the profession is protecting the public by setting rules and requirements for the membership and following through with enforcement processes when the regulatory requirements are not being met. At the Council table, we are constantly reviewing our regulatory information with an eye to improvement and clarity. While it is our primary mandate to protect the public interest, we are also keenly aware of the need to guide our membership toward their own successful professional compliance.

A key component to self-regulation is continuing education. Continuing education is directly related the legislated public safety mandate, in which it is the SAA's responsibility to ensure our members have competent and current knowledge to practice architecture. The 2014-2016 cycle included requirements for continuing

education in core and self-directed categories. Furthermore, an audit was carried out of 3% of the membership for compliance. Detailed requirements for compliance were made available to the membership through the *Guide to Continuing Education*. Unfortunately, in this reporting period, some of our members were found to have not met the requirements outlined in the guide and received fines for noncompliance. Resulting from this, some of our members have identified concerns.

In Saskatchewan, we are fortunate to have a small and collegial Association. We understand that our members are *human*, and practice (and life) has its complexities. But, in the end we all have a professional responsibility to understand and follow the requirements for compliance under the *Architects Act* and the SAA Bylaws. Council must demonstrate that we are accountable, and that our members are following through with their professional responsibilities. The Association demonstrates accountability by adhering to the stated rules and processes, including the unenviable job of applying penalties when the rules are not followed. Failure to do so would exhibit negligence and the inability to regulate our own professional practice as legislated.

At completion of the 2014-2016 cycle, some members identified a need for further clarity or improvements to the Con-Ed process. Council have been, and will continue to monitor member transactions with assistance from our administration, in order to determine how processes can be better defined to steer our membership toward their own regulatory compliance. In aid of this, Council have committed to the following actions as we move forward into the 2016-2018 continuing education cycle:

- 1) Minor revisions for clarity to the *Guide to Continuing Education*, avoiding major changes mid-stream of the reporting cycle.
- 2) Distribution of a survey on the con-ed process, in order to gather information from a broader sampling of members prior to implementing significant changes.
- 3) Following a review of member feedback, develop revisions to the process and guide in preparation for the 2018-2020 reporting cycle.

Council believes that self-regulation is a privilege and we are all accountable as architects and members of the SAA to comply with our professional



requirements. As your elected representatives, Council are committed to work with the membership and our administration to continuously improve member processes while adhering to our legislative duty as a professional regulator.

We welcome your feedback. Please participate in our Continuing Education survey when it is released in the coming months.