



OFFICE OF THE STATE BOARD FOR ARCHITECTURE
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**State Board for Architecture
Board Meeting**

1411 Broadway (between 39th & 40th Streets) - Tenth Floor – Regents' Room – Manhattan

Wednesday, November 4, 2026

9:00 am *(start time for exam)*

10:00 am *(start time for meeting)*

Members of the public may attend and observe the meeting outside of the Executive Session

AGENDA

1. Executive Session
 - Practical Exam (*Fred, Talisha, Joe – Bruce E. observing*)
 - Disciplinary Cases – Debrief with OPD
 - Research Review
2. Public Session
 - Introductions, Welcome New Board Member
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Board Chair Report
5. Board Office Report
6. Old Business
 - NCARB MBC/MBE Meeting Debrief
 - Future Regulatory Amendments
 - Architect's Seal Clarification
 - Endorsement Pathway with UK
 - NCARB Visit
 - Project Construction Cost Estimates – NYC
 - Architecture as STEM
7. New Business
 - 2026 NCARB September Board of Directors Meeting Summary
 - 2027 NCARB Regional Summit – February 25-27
 - 2027 NCARB Annual Meeting – June 24-26
8. Other Board Member Topics for Future Meetings

9. Adjournment

Next Meeting – *Wednesday, February 10, 2027 – NYC*

Minutes of the Meeting
State Board for Architecture
1411 Broadway; Regents' Room
New York, NY 10018

Present: Nicole Dosso, Chair
Greg Canaras, Vice Chair
Nicole Karpf
Giuseppe Lauro
Fred Mosher, Jr.
Anik Pearson
Joel Peterson (10:40)
Talisha Sainvil (10:04)

Staff: Robert Lopez, Executive Secretary
Gina Sacco, Assistant in Professional
Education

August 5, 2026

OPEN SESSION

1. **Motion:** *Pearson/Mosher:* That the Board enter Executive Session.
2. The Board resumed Open Session.
3. **Approval of Minutes**
Motion: *Sainvil/Canaras:* That the minutes of the May 20, 2026 meeting of the State Board for Architecture be approved.
PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.
4. **Board Chair Report**
Chair Dosso opened up a discussion about NAAB funding and asked Board members if they had heard of any updates on this topic. Members engaged in discussion surrounding the issue, with the commentary that college programs are having to pay increased costs for accreditation.
5. **Board Office Report**
The Executive Secretary delivered the Board Office Report, which included updated statistics, recent activities, and proposed legislation.

The bill affecting updated requirements for certified interior designers (A4840-A/S9673) was discussed. The State Board unanimously agreed that requiring a certificate of candidates and score reports to come from the national organization was excessively burdensome and added cost for candidates wanting to become CIDs in New York. The Board recommended that a technical amendment be considered by the Department to send to the Legislature to remove the certification requirement and the requirement that exam scores come from the national organization for interior design and its possible implications for related professions.

Board members had previous questions on the NYC DoB false documents bill that has not been introduced since 2021, and the Executive Secretary included the 2021 language in the board package for the Board's information.

6. **Old Business**

NCARB Annual Meeting Summary

Member Peterson described the results of elections for the NCARB Board of Directors, and shared discussions and questions that arose about the *Pathways to Practice* initiative. One question was related to the fee structure and how it would impact candidates. Member Peterson discussed the need for increased communication between NCARB and firms regarding future changes to experience assessments. He also noted that there has been a change in the AXP Licensing Advisors community, with a two-tier system now set up.

The Executive Secretary added that NCARB has hired consultants to help facilitate and communicate legislative changes that Member Boards may need to engage in to effect changes due to the *Pathways to Practice* initiative. The State Board discussed the need for NCARB to monitor the quality of future assessments and the need to focus on whether candidates are ready to independently practice architecture. Board members also commented on the need to have clarity in the licensure process, and that NCARB should not overcomplicate the process to the point where candidates become paralyzed when confronted with too many choices.

Future Regulatory Amendments

The Executive Secretary updated the Board on the technical corrections to an architect's seal and adding a new endorsement pathway for UK architects. These proposed regulatory amendments are still scheduled to be discussed by the Board of Regents in December with action by the Regents in early 2027.

Project Construction Cost Estimates - NYC

There is no update regarding this issue.

Architecture as STEM

The Executive Secretary spoke with Georgi Ann Bailey at AIA NYS and new staff at AIA NYS may assist with getting this effort launched.

Women in Architecture Series

Member Pearson updated the Board on the seminar held last month that was very well attended. This group is working on their upcoming 8th season that will begin with a network session that will be held in September at Member Pearson's office.

7. **New Business**

Proposed NCARB Visit

The Executive Secretary shared a list of potential topics for a future NCARB visit. Board members suggested asking NCARB if they will have a test run for candidates prior to *Pathways to Practice*'s official launch. Another question asking how the data NCARB has previously collected supports the changes that NCARB is pursuing with *Pathways to Practice* was suggested.

Research for Experience Credit

The Executive Secretary reviewed a memo to the Board that provided some guidance on evaluating research for credit. The Board agreed that the best way to determine how research should be evaluated is by creating an Ad Hoc committee. Members Sainvil, Lauro and Karpf volunteered for this committee. Member Pearson will contribute context as an Extended Member. The Board office will gather information and prepare a matrix based on past research for experience credit and will share this information with the Ad Hoc committee.

Disciplinary Spreadsheet Update

The Executive Secretary shared a spreadsheet that houses sortable information on all disciplinary cases from 1994 – present day that is shared with the State Board every 1-2 years. He will email the spreadsheet to the Board members.

NCARB by the Numbers 2026

The Executive Secretary shared the 2026 NCARB by the Numbers booklet with the Board.

2027 Meeting Dates

Dates for the 2027 Board meetings were agreed to as follows - February 10, May 12, August 4, and November 9

NCARB MBC/MBE Meeting – October 9/10

Since Member Pearson cannot make the November 2026 meeting of the State Board, Member Canaras will attend the MBC/MBE meeting in place of Member Pearson and report back to the Board in November.

2027 NCARB Regional Summit – February 25-27

Should approval be granted by New York State, Members Sainvil, Peterson and the Executive Secretary will attend.

Motion: *Sainvil/Mosher:* Moved to adjourn.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday, November 4, 2026 in NYC.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Lopez, RA
Executive Secretary

Minutes of the Meeting
State Board for Architecture
1411 Broadway; Regents' Room
New York, NY 10018

Present: Nicole Dosso, Chair
Greg Canaras, Vice Chair
Nicole Karpf
Giuseppe Lauro
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Anik Pearson
Joel Peterson (10:40)
Talisha Sainvil (10:04)

Staff: Robert Lopez, Executive Secretary
Gina Sacco, Assistant in Professional
Education

August 5, 2026

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. **Practical Exam:**

The Board conducted a practical exam and, after discussion, voted unanimously to recommend the candidate for licensure.

2. **Education Review:**

The Executive Secretary reviewed a proposal from a New York college's NAAB-accredited program that would add a practicum component for academic credit. After discussion, the Board recommended that the following questions be added to the list of comments and questions posed by staff that were included in the Board package:

- Does NCARB allow the simultaneous award of academic credit and credit towards AXP completion? The Executive Secretary will ask this question of NCARB.
- Why does the college want to institute this optional practicum component?
- Should the Department approve the college's proposal, the Board recommended that a warning be given to students that should they choose to take the optional practicum, they may not be able to count the experience towards NY licensure. Should NCARB respond that students cannot get academic credit and AXP credit for the optional practicum courses, the college should include that warning too.

The Executive Secretary suggested that a conversation between OP and the college is a logical next step so that staff and Board comments can be conveyed to the college.

Member Lauro recused from this conversation.

3. **Experience Review:**

The Executive Secretary reviewed a candidate's request for reconsideration of experience credit by the Board. After discussion, the Board unanimously agreed that the candidate's experience was not acceptable to the Board.

4. **Disciplinary Cases:**

The Executive Secretary shared that OPD has offered to attend State Board meetings and discuss the specifics of completed cases. The Board agreed that it would be helpful to have them come once a year, and the Executive Secretary will invite them to the November meeting.

The Executive Secretary reviewed and discussed two disciplinary cases.

5. **Practical Exam Candidate in November:**

Members Sainvil, Mosher and Pearson previously volunteered to facilitate the November practical exam. Member Lauro will replace Member Pearson as she is unable to attend the November meeting.

6. **Motion:** *Pearson/Sainvil:* That the Board resume the Open Session.
PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Lopez, RA
Executive Secretary

NEW YORK STATE BOARD FOR ARCHITECTURE
BOARD OFFICE REPORT

Registered Architects (RA)

Current Resident Registered Architects	12,104
Current Non-Resident Registered Architects	9,665
<u>Foreign Registered Architects</u>	<u>445</u>
Total Number of RA as of 7/1/26	22,214

Licenses Issued

2026 – 644 (thru 9/30); 2025 – 891; 2024 – 870; 2023 – 905; 2022 – 940; 2021 – 804

ARE Candidates	(July 16, 2026 – September 30, 2026)	-
Early Admit ARE Candidates	(July 16, 2026 – September 30, 2026)	123
NCARB Certification	(July 16, 2026 – September 30, 2026)	66
Endorsement	(July 16, 2026 – September 30, 2026)	3
Via Educ, Exp & Exams	(July 16, 2026 – September 30, 2026)	8

Candidate Admissions to ARE

2026 - 582 (thru 9/30); 2025 - 876; 2024 – 1,031; 2023 – 1,030; 2022 – 770; 2021 – 875

OP/Staff Activities

Along with Vice Chair Canaras, the Executive Secretary attended the NCARB Member Board Chairs/Member Board Executives meeting on October 9/10, 2026. A description of the outcomes of the meeting will be discussed in more detail during Old Business.

Along with NCARB, the Executive Secretary conducted a licensure seminar for 3rd year architecture students at Pratt Institute on September 23, 2026. Approximately 130 students along with educators attended this seminar.

Legislative / Regulatory Activity

The NYS Legislature is in its second year of a two-year session that will run from January 2025 December 2026. Legislation of interest follows:

A7561 / S7220 – Relates to continuing education requirements for landscape architects

Relates to continuing education requirements for landscape architects; provides that adjustments to such requirements may be granted for health reasons, active duty, or other good cause; limits the number of credit hours that may carry over to the next registration period.

Bill was signed Ch. 529 of the Laws of 2025 on November 21, 2025.

S9673 / A4840-A – Relates to the requirements for certification for certified interior designers

Relates to the educational and examination requirements for certification as a certified interior designer; provides an exemption from the education requirements for architects licensed under Article 147 of the NYS Education Law.

Bill is passed in the Senate and is passed in the Assembly but has yet to be delivered to the Governor. Board member comments regarding this bill has been sent to OP leadership.

S3268 / No Same as – Relates to comprehensive delivery of infrastructure delivered between a public entity and a development entity

Relates to comprehensive delivery of infrastructure delivered between a public entity and a development entity consolidating at least two or more of design, construction, finance, operations and/or maintenance work, including construction manager or construction manager at risk; authorizes a public entity to pursue certain authorized projects; provides for project funding and authorizes the public entity to accept from any source any grant, donation, gift or other form of conveyance of land, money; provides for labor and public interest protections; makes related provisions.

Bill is referred to Procurement and Contracts in the Senate.

A5838 / No Same as – Relates to pre-approved construction documents

Requires municipalities which issue building permits to provide pre-approved construction documents at no cost for the types of residential building permitted to be constructed in such jurisdiction.

Bill is referred to Governmental Operations in the Senate.

S1834-A / A11278 – Relates to the licensing of landscape architects

Relates to certain licensing exemptions for landscape architects.

Bill is passed in the Senate and referred to Higher Education in the Assembly

S3287 / A4942 – Relates to an engineering technology degree

Provides that an applicant with a bachelor's degree or higher in engineering technology and an applicant with a bachelor's degree or higher in engineering shall have the same number of education and experience credit requirements, shall have the same eligibility for an identification card as "an engineer in training", as well as examination and examination eligibility requirements.

Bill is referred to Higher Education in the Senate and is referred to Higher Education in the Assembly.

A483 / S5392 – Permits certain not-for-profit corporations engaged in engineering for certain conservation efforts to do business or provide professional engineering, land surveying or professional geology services in the state

Relates to permitting certain not-for-profit corporations engaged in engineering for certain conservation efforts to do business or provide professional engineering, land surveying, or professional geology services in the state.

Bill is referred to Higher Education in the Assembly and is passed in the Senate.

A2571-C / S620-C – Relates to the practice of geology

Adds the practice of geology to legacy corporations.
Bill is printed in the Assembly and is passed in the Senate.

S2146-A / A4907-A – Repeals and reenacts provisions on time limitations on certain actions against professional engineers, architects, other designers and construction contractors

Repeals and reenacts statute of limitation provisions on wrongful death, personal injury and property damage actions against professional engineers, architects, landscape architects, land surveyors and construction contractors to provide for a limitations period of ten years after completion of improvement to real property; "completion", which constitutes the accrual date for the limitations period, is defined; provides for a one year extension for injuries to person or property or wrongful death which occur during the tenth year after completion.

Bill is referred to Judiciary in the Senate and is referred to Higher Education in the Assembly.

A4680 / S8840 – New York Emergency Responder Act

Enacts the New York emergency responder act limiting the liability of certain emergency responders.

Bill is referred to Governmental Operations in the Assembly and committee to Rules in the Senate.

S4577 / A5520 - Requires public authorities to negotiate with most qualified architectural, engineering, geological, landscape architectural and/or surveying professional firms before negotiating with other firms

Requires public authorities and public benefit corporations to negotiate with professional firms providing architectural, engineering, geological, landscape architectural or surveying services in order from the most qualified to the least qualified with regard to the provision of services to the authority or corporation.

Bill is reported and committed to Procurement and Contracts in the Senate and is referred to Corporations, Authorities and Commissions in the Assembly.

S4877 / No Same as – Relates to the establishment of the water-based fire protection licensure act

Establishes water-based fire protection licensure act, setting forth licensure requirements for contractors engaged in the business of the layout, installing, repairing, inspecting, testing, or maintaining of water-based fire protection systems and components.

Bill is referred to Consumer Protection in the Senate.

S7104 / No Same as – NYC DoB False Documents

Relates to false statements in documents submitted to the department of buildings of the city of New York

Bill is referred to Cities in the Senate.

A5678 / No Same As – Increases to \$50,000 for cost of construction threshold

Increases to \$50,000 the cost of the construction of a building, structure or public work, above which a professional engineer, land surveyor or architect must be utilized to plan and supervise the construction thereof.

Bill is referred to Higher Education in the Assembly.

S7217-A / A7675-A – Relates to building permits

Authorizes a city, town or village to establish a program whereby a building permit may be issued based upon certification by a registered architect or professional engineer.
Bill is printed in the Senate and is printed in the Assembly.

Bills Not yet Introduced

S / A – Relates to public employees’ supervision, examination, review, and determination of acceptability of public works projects performed by contractors

Requires certain public employees to be on the site for the duration of public works projects completed by contractors; requires such certain public employees to review a contractor’s work on public works projects and determine whether the work performed is acceptable.

*Bill passed in the Senate and passed in the Assembly but was vetoed by the Executive in 2024.
Bill is not yet introduced this session.*

S / A – Relates to licensure requirements for professional geologists

Provides that the education requirements to be licensed as a professional geologist may be partially substituted by practical experience; relates to the issuance of an identification card as a geologist in training.

Bill is not yet introduced

S / A– Establishes a program where a municipal department of buildings may accept certain construction documents for code compliance

Establishes a program where a municipal department of buildings may accept construction documents required to be filed in relation to code compliance prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy with less than a full examination by such municipal department of buildings based on a professional certification of an applicant who is an architect or professional engineer; makes related provisions.

Bill is not yet introduced

S / A – Requires certain engineering plans that could pose a material risk to public safety to bear a stamp of approval of a professional engineer

Requires certain engineering plans or specifications for engineering work or services that could pose a material risk to public safety to bear a stamp of approval of a professional engineer and authorizes the public service commission to promulgate rules and regulations relating to such requirement.

Bill is not yet introduced

S / A – Interior Design/State Contracting

Adds interior design services as a type of contract that can be entered into and negotiated by the state

Bill is not yet introduced

S / A - Licensing consequences for serious abuse of self-certification privileges

Relates to licensing consequences for architects or engineers who seriously abuse their self-certification privileges

Bill is not yet introduced. See Board package for the language of this bill from the 2021/2022 NYS Legislative Session.

Office of Professional Discipline

No new cases this meeting.

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

NCARB MBC/MBE
MEETING
DEBRIEF

To: Architecture Board Members
From: Robert Lopez
Subject: NCARB MBC / MBE Meeting
In reply to:

Date: October 9, 2026

Vice Chair Canaras and the Executive Secretary attended the 2026 Member Board Chairs/Member Board Executives Meeting on October 9/10, 2026. 54 of 55 jurisdictions were represented.

Below is a summary of key conversations that occurred during this meeting.

Friday, October 9, 2026

Opening Plenary

- Recent Activities – John Rademacher
 - Pathways to Practice
 - *The Standards for NCARB's Competency Based Licensure Programs*
(NOTE TO BOARD MEMBERS – A summary of the Standards, the Standards document itself, and a Q and A regarding Pathway myths follows this memo)
 - Advocacy strategy
 - Review of assessment methods
 - Pathways to Practice Committee work
 - Work continuing from FY26
 - Programmatic committees
 - Policy Advisory Committee
 - DEI Committee
 - Practice Focused Curriculum Task Force
 - NCARB Certificate Task Force
 - Strategic Plan Refresh
 - Last updated in 2019
 - External engagements
 - AIAS Grassroots
 - FY27 NCARB Leadership Institute – 3rd cohort
 - CLARB Annual Meeting
 - Architecture Alliance Meeting
- Pathways to Practice: Moving Forward Together – John Rademacher / Miguel Rodriguez / Sylvia Kwan
 - Started in FY 2021 (5 years ago) with *Analysis of Practice*
 - FY27: Refine new programs (now)
 - Refine assessment prototypes
 - Begin advocacy and adoption efforts
 - Communicate transition with stakeholders

- Establish anticipated transition model
 - Gather and act on stakeholder feedback
- FY 28: Build and Advocate (calendar years 2027/28)
 - Build assessments to scale
 - Expand advocacy and adoption efforts
 - Support candidates to prepare for transition
 - Gather and act on stakeholder feedback
- FY29: Launch System (late calendar year 2028)
 - Launch competency assessments
 - Finalize adoption and advocacy efforts
 - Start transition process
 - Gather and act on stakeholder feedback
- Continuity planning - Mike Armstrong
 - A Season of Change
 - Jared Zurn – Is leaving NCARB and today is his last day – 18 years at NCARB
 - The Foundation is in Place
 - Why Pathways
 - Valid
 - Accessible
 - Fair
 - Accepted
 - *Competency Standard for Architects*
 - Identifies 16 essential competencies and related criteria
 - Involved 5,000 participants
 - Future assessment methods will measure candidates' demonstration of these competencies
 - The Structure Begins to Rise - Michelle Cohn / Jeremy Fretts
 - Goals of future licensure system
 - Must be modular
 - Must be accessible
 - Must be responsive
 - Balance of substantial equivalency in the licensure process
 - We are measuring same criteria
 - The system takes shape – evolving experience assessments
 - Evidence assessment prototype
 - What evidence will be required?
 - How will the evidence be evaluated?
 - What software vendors can support this?
 - Will architects be willing to review evidence?
 - Evidence assessment challenges
 - 39,000 active licensure candidates
 - Survey response was low – involved 5k architects
 - NCARB Board of Directors – low level of interest from architect reviewers will not allow launch of evidence assessments right now

- Opportunities
 - Maintain current program - naming AXP 2.0
 - Maintain broad acceptance of work settings
 - Tie to competency criteria
 - Reinforce supervised experience without increased burden on firms
 - Recognize multiple educational paths
 - Don't rely on hours alone to demonstrate competency
 - The anticipated system
 - ARE 2.0
 - AXP 6.0
 - Continued guidance from member feedback
 - Require a core set of exams
 - Require work experience prior to licensure
- Understanding the *Standards* Document – Josh Batkin, Caitlin Stromberg, Jeremy Fretts, and Michelle Cohn
- Role of Licensing Boards
 - Evaluate and license – review applications and issue and renew licenses
 - Establish Rules and Regs
 - Jurisdiction specific requirements
 - Enforcement and discipline
 - Investigate complaints
 - Adjudicated disciplinary matters
 - Section 5 of *Standards* – Competency Assessments and Licensing Program Requirements
 - Education becomes NAAB degree and preapproved course with assessment
 - AXP 2.0 - experience
 - ARE 6.0 – standardized assessment and guided learning with assessment
 - Competency Credit – official recognition, recorded by NCARB, that a person has proven one required competency
 - NCARB going back to NAAB to see if additional credit can be given beyond just Competency 5
 - Education for Licensure today
 - 17 jurisdictions always offered alternative to accredited education
 - Today, 22 jurisdictions allow alternatives to accredited education
 - Pre-approved course(s) with assessment
 - Opt-in for any interested school
 - Competency acquisition reported to NCARB separate from a course grade
 - Currently, in Education for Licensure
 - Wide variation in education
 - Validates the program, not the individual student
 - No guarantee that the student has achieved a competency

- No credit toward exam or experience requirements
- Pathways system
 - Some competency credit for NAAB
 - NAAB program contributes towards experience credit
 - Schools can opt in
 - Multiple competencies can be fully demonstrated through an education path
- Experience for Licensure
 - Maps competencies 1-13
 - Opportunities
 - Architecture
 - Architecture-related
 - School
 - Military
 - Public sector
 - Building design and research
- Experience credit for prior learning
 - Candidates can get potential hours credited for earning a degree from NAAB program
- Experience reporting
 - Candidates
 - Develop competencies
 - Record and submit hours
 - Attest to accuracy, relevance and active participation
 - Supervisor responsibilities
 - Provide oversight of experience and guidance
 - Reviews hours submitted by the candidate
 - Supervisor attests to accuracy of the report and authentic participation.
- Pre-Approved Course Assessment
 - NCARB doesn't expect to come up with a test on the assessment side for pre-approved course assessments
- Pathways System
 - Standardized assessment = test
 - Lots of exams – more assessments than current ARE 6.0 – possible of taking 13 assessments
 - Pathways system
 - Focused areas of content for ARE 6.0
 - Less seat time than current ARE 5.0
 - More accessible than current ARE 5.0
 - Experience + Assessment = Competency Credit
 - Guidance Learning with Assessment
 - Some candidates are spending up to \$10k on study materials to pass exam
 - This is a “standardized assessment”, meaning an exam

- Will be an option for competency credit
- Guided learning with formative assessment; with a final summative assessment (similar to the Alaska arctic exam)
- NCARB will use a robust LMS system
- Will be created by NCARB
- Self-paced
- Integrated formative assessment guides learning
- Developed using best practices in learning and instructional design
- Requires interaction with the course
- Available for competencies with either:
 - Lower cognitive levels for assessment and/or
 - Historically limited availability in education and experience
 - Concludes with final assessment
- NCARB went through various personas
 - NAAB degree; no pre-approved courses
 - NAAB degree with pre-approved courses
 - 4-year degrees
 - 2-year degrees

■ Advancing Adoption through Advocacy – Josh Batkin and Maurice Brown

- Provide insights into internal needs assessment including a statutory and regulatory review
- Share an executive summary of polling results, messaging testing, and viability study
- Present our strategy development and engagement planning
- Provide an overview of the key steps in the jurisdiction-level advocacy process
- What we've accomplished so far
 - Statutory and regulatory assessment
 - Government relations firm
 - Likely voter research
- Current licensure landscape
 - 30 jurisdictions will require statutory changes
 - 45 jurisdictions will require regulatory changes
 - 15 jurisdictions require NAAB education
 - Slightly less concerned about AXP and ARE
- Research Overview
 - Qualitative exploration
 - Message development and optimization
 - Quantitative survey
- Key Findings – regulation and licensing
 - Government regulation still viewed as important, but its perceived effectiveness is declining
 - Licensing's core benefits remain widely acknowledged, yet growing concerns about its perceived elitism

- Architectural regulation and licensure, specifically, are widely perceived as reasonable and effective
- Key Findings – Architectural Licensure
 - Public’s allegiance is to the outcome, not the process, when it comes to architectural licensure
 - New pathways are acceptable; but a rigorous process is non-negotiable
 - Change should be framed as proactive evolution; not reactive problem solving.
- Key Findings – Support for *Pathways to Practice*
 - Initial support for new *Pathways to Practice* is robust and resilient
 - Potential pitfalls raise concerns, but do not significantly dampen overall support
- Adoption Strategy
 - Jurisdiction by jurisdiction adoption strategy
 - Categorize jurisdictions based on key criteria
 - Build jurisdiction specific evidence – identify what needs to change and when
 - Develop jurisdiction specific statutory and/or regulatory language
 - Engage relevant stakeholders – coalition building
 - Prepare for the legislative process – secure lobbyists, sponsors, etc.
 - Evaluate progress and milestones
- Factors being used to influence NCARB’s roadmap
 - Strength of existing relationships within 50 state network
 - Legislative impact with neighboring states
 - Anticipated political continuity following 2026 elections
 - Legislative session timelines
 - Current regulatory language
 - Current statutory language
 - Jurisdictional history of licensure reforms
 - Jurisdictional engagement with NCARB
- NCARB is trying to have this done by end of calendar year 2028
- NCARB will start trying to get to State Boards at the beginning of next year
- Jurisdiction specific scenarios
 - Scenario 1 - NCARB-led effort
 - When a Board can engage
 - Professional societies in support or neutral
 - Scenario 2 - NCARB and Society-Led Effort
 - Board unable to engage
 - Professional societies in support and willing to help carry the water
 - Scenario 3 – Leverage Executive Branch support
 - Recent professional licensing reform initiatives by Governor align with *Pathways*
 - Support from Department/division
 - Scenario 4 – NCARB and Partner-led effort
 - Board unable to engage

- Professional societies in support or neutral
 - Jointly regulated profession partner is seeking similar changes (CLARB Uniform Standard)
- Scenario 5 – Regulatory Changes Only
 - Board able to engage
 - Support from Department/division
- Shaping your State Strategy – Mike Armstrong / Shannon Himes
 - The “How” Conversation
 - Need the Model to then push the law change
 - NYS just adopted competency-based model for education and is developing the details
 - How NCARB can help
 - Resources
 - Data
 - Strategy
 - Partnership
 - Mike mentioned that we will have something to react to before the 2027 Annual Business Meeting

Saturday, October 10, 2026

- MBE meeting – Strategic Plan Feedback – Tim Hopkins – McKinley Advisors
 - Desired Outcomes
 - Having data points is important for NCARB
 - Early meaningful voice for MBE/MBM
 - Which strategic themes resonate most with this group
 - What comes after *Pathways to Practice* – what else should NCARB be looking at
 - NCARB’s 3 goals
 - Facilitate licensure
 - Foster collaboration
 - Maximize value
 - 5 questions every strategy answers
 - What does success look like in 2030
 - Where will NCARB focus, and where will it step back
 - What value can NCARB uniquely deliver
 - What must NCARB be great at to deliver
 - What keeps the choices on track
 - Critical success factors
 - Leverage data
 - First ask why, then ask how
 - Make some hard choices
 - Clarify your intent
 - Integrate the plan

- Measure and adapt
 - Now looking at which ideas resonate with us as MBE's
- Future of NCARB - Doug Morgan / Alessia Stewart
 - NCARB in 2041 – 15 years from now

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

To: Architecture Board Members
From: Robert Lopez
Subject: Proposed NCARB Visit Agenda

Date: October 1, 2026

In reply to:

As discussed at the meeting of the State Board in August, I have invited NCARB leadership to the February 2027 Board meeting.

Expected in attendance will be:

Sylvia Kwan – Vice President
Mike Armstrong – Chief Executive Officer
Josh Batkin – Vice President, Council Relations

Below are the topics that the Board has asked NCARB to discuss:

- *Pathways to Practice*
 - How does the data that NCARB collects support the changes being considered by Pathways to Practice?
 - Essentials on *P to P*
 - How will this impact the State Board?
 - How will this impact our candidates?
 - Will candidates be able to do a “test run” of *P to P*?
 - Legislative efforts; conversations with AIA
- Importance of Volunteer engagement with NCARB
- Key Trends evolving out of NCARB by the Numbers
- Engagement with the NAAB
- New York’s updates to UK endorsement
- Architecture as a STEM profession recognized by DHS
- Update on current efforts and developments regarding Seal Theft / Fiverr

If there are additional topics that any Board member would like to discuss with NCARB, the topics can be raised during this November meeting and added to the above list.

The Standards for NCARB's Competency-Based Licensure Programs

SUMMARY

The [National Council of Architectural Registration Boards](#) (NCARB) is updating its licensure programs to align with a nationally recognized *Competency Standard* that reflects evolving practice while continuing to ensure public protection and the jurisdiction's role as the regulating authority.

- NCARB's competency-based licensure programs preserve **commitment to rigorous standards and public protection** while creating more accessible and responsive pathways to licensure.
- The proposed updated programs build on the existing foundations by **focusing more directly on the underlying competencies** that the current architectural licensure process has always been intended to develop and assess.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE NCARB COMPETENCY STANDARD FOR ARCHITECTS

- The [Competency Standard](#) establishes a framework describing the minimum competencies necessary for safe and effective professional practice.
- By organizing licensure requirements around competencies, NCARB gives jurisdictions a consistent method for evaluating readiness for professional practice.

EVOLUTION OF EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, AND EXAMINATION FOR INITIAL LICENSURE

- NCARB's educational programs will evolve to **recognize architecture-related education of all forms**, including demonstrated achievement of competencies through accredited degree programs or approved coursework.
- The Architectural Experience Program® (AXP®) will evolve from broad experience areas to a program that emphasizes **demonstrating and applying focused professional competencies** across work settings, while maintaining the important role of supervised employment and time in practice.
- The Architect Registration Examination® (ARE®) will evolve from a large-format model of six divisions into a suite of **more focused assessments** that include traditional standardized assessments and guided learning with a standardized assessment component.

By measuring outcomes, NCARB's competency-based licensure programs enable licensure candidates to develop competencies through education, professional practice, military service, apprenticeships, alternative educational experiences, and other validated learning, while ensuring every individual meets the same minimum threshold for independent practice.

This evolution reflects a simple but important principle: All candidates should meet the same standard of professional competence, regardless of how they acquire it.

Read the [Standards for NCARB's Competency-Based Licensure Programs](#).



The Standards

for NCARB's Competency-Based Licensure Programs

National Council of Architectural Registration Boards

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Contents

Executive Summary.....	4
1. Introduction and Overview	6
1.1 Purpose of This Document	6
1.2 Scope and Applicability	6
1.3 Public Protection.....	6
1.4 Enhanced Access	7
1.5 Enhanced Opportunities	8
1.6 The Development Process	8
2. Alignment With the <i>NCARB Competency Standard for Architects</i>	10
2.1 Overview of NCARB's Competencies	10
2.2 Required Competency Outcomes.....	10
2.3 Updating Competency Standards Over Time.....	10
3. Governance and Administrative Structure.....	11
3.1 Role of the Jurisdictional Licensing Board	11
3.2 Board Oversight Responsibilities	11
4. Eligibility Requirements	12
4.1 Education Requirement.....	12
4.2 Approval Requirement.....	12
5. Competency Assessments and Licensure Program Requirements.....	13
5.1 Education Program Requirements: NCARB's Education Programs.....	13
5.1.1 Competency Credit for Completion of a Degree from a NAAB-accredited Program.....	13
5.1.2 Pre-approved Course(s) with an Integrated Competency Assessment	14
5.2 Experience Program Requirements: Architectural Experience Program (AXP) 2.0.....	15
5.2.1 Required Experience	15
5.3 Examination Program Requirements: Architect Registration Examination (ARE) 6.0.....	17
5.3.1 Standardized Assessments.....	17
5.3.2 Guided Learning with a Standardized Assessment	18
5.4 The Assessment System and Potential Means of Demonstrating Competency	19

6. Administration of Assessments.....21

6.1 Candidate Registration and Scheduling 21

6.2 Identity Verification and Anti-Fraud Measures..... 21

6.3 Accessibility and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance 22

6.4 Retake Policies and Remediation Requirements..... 22

7. Evaluation, Review, and Quality Assurance 23

7.1 Setting the Passing Score..... 23

7.2 Psychometric Review and Quality Assurance..... 23

7.3 Appeal and Review Processes 24

7.4 Annual Reporting and Public Transparency 24

7.5 Data Governance, Privacy, and Security Requirements 25

8. Licensure Decision Process 26

8.1 Transparent Criteria for Granting Licenses..... 26

8.2 Verification of Competency Achievement 26

8.3 Transitioning to NCARB's Competency-Based Licensure Programs..... 27

Executive Summary

This document is for policymakers, legislators, regulatory boards, professional organizations, individual advocates, and other stakeholders evaluating, developing, or amending architectural licensure requirements. The recommendations herein are advisory and serve as a resource to guide decision-making and support the adoption of regulations that evolve and enhance public protection.

The [National Council of Architectural Registration Boards \(NCARB\)](#) is updating its licensure programs to align with a nationally recognized competency standard that reflects evolving practice while continuing to ensure public protection. A “competency standard” is a clearly defined description of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors that a person must demonstrate to perform a role, task, or responsibility successfully. The updates will build upon and modernize a longstanding approach to architect licensure programs. The term “architect” is defined by law in each state or territory, and a license granted by a state or territory is required to provide architectural services. Jurisdictions regulate architecture and other professions to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. NCARB's competency-based licensure programs will simultaneously advance public protection, expand access to the profession, and continue to provide professional mobility.

Rather than replacing the foundational elements of architectural licensure, the proposed system represents the next evolution of NCARB's education programs, the Architectural Experience Program® (AXP®), and the Architect Registration Examination® (ARE®), aligning each component to a nationally recognized competency standard.

NCARB's competency-based licensure programs preserve commitment to rigorous standards and public protection while creating more accessible and responsive pathways to licensure. For decades, architectural licensure has relied on three complementary mechanisms to prepare candidates for independent practice: education, experience, and examination. These elements have served the profession well by providing structured opportunities to acquire and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to protect the public. The proposed competency-based licensure programs build on these proven foundations by focusing more directly on the underlying competencies that education, experience, and examination have always been intended to develop and assess.

At the center of competency-based licensure programs is the [NCARB Competency Standard for Architects](#). Adopted in 2024, it represents a nationally validated benchmark developed through extensive research, engagement with regulators, practitioners, and educators, and rigorous psychometric analysis. The *Competency Standard* identifies the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors required for safe and effective independent practice and establishes a common national standard against which all licensure candidates are assessed.

NCARB's educational programs will evolve to recognize architecture-related education of all forms as well as recognizing demonstrated achievement of competencies through accredited degree programs or approved coursework. The AXP will evolve from broad experience areas to a program that emphasizes demonstrating and applying focused professional competencies across work settings, while maintaining

the important role of supervised employment and time in practice. The ARE will evolve from a large-format model of six divisions into a suite of more focused assessments that include traditional standardized assessments and guided learning with a standardized assessment component.

This evolution reflects a simple but important principle: all candidates should meet the same standard of professional competence, regardless of how they acquire it. By measuring outcomes rather than prescribing a single pathway, NCARB's competency-based licensure programs enable licensure candidates to develop competencies through education, professional practice, military service, apprenticeships, alternative educational experiences, and other validated learning, while ensuring every individual meets the same minimum threshold for independent practice.

Historically, policymakers and regulators have often viewed rigor and accessibility as competing objectives. NCARB's competency-based licensure programs demonstrate they can be achieved together. The proposed programs build on existing rigorous standards by evaluating individuals on demonstrated competency, improving confidence that individuals are truly prepared for independent practice. At the same time, the proposed programs create a more accessible licensure process that will allow all qualified individuals the opportunity to demonstrate competence and become licensed as architects.

Ultimately, NCARB's competency-based licensure programs represent the natural progression of NCARB's longstanding focus on removing unnecessary barriers to licensure. By integrating and updating the principles embodied in current education, experience, and examination programs, the licensing boards can preserve their commitment to public protection while creating a more accessible licensure process that evolves alongside architectural practice.

1. Introduction and Overview

1.1 Purpose of This Document

This document provides a comprehensive overview of the planned full integration of the *NCARB Competency Standard for Architects* (hereafter, the *Competency Standard*) into the existing licensure framework. This document provides details about the requirements, programs, and policies for updating architectural licensure statutes, regulations, and administrative policies related to initial licensure requirements. It establishes standards and guiding principles intended to support the consistent regulation of granting a license to practice architecture that protects public health, safety, and welfare.

The standards presented in this document reflect a commitment to protecting the public through rigorous yet accessible pathways to licensure. They are intended to promote consistency among jurisdictions while preserving the authority of individual licensing boards and legislative bodies to address local legal, regulatory, and public policy considerations.

As the practice of architecture continues to evolve in response to advances in technology, project delivery methods, and societal needs, regulatory systems must adapt to remain relevant and effective. This document provides jurisdictions with an overview of policy recommendations and implementation considerations that support regulatory modernization while maintaining the fundamental competencies necessary for the independent practice of architecture.

By promoting greater uniformity in licensure requirements and regulatory practices, this document seeks to advance mutual recognition among jurisdictions, reduce unnecessary licensure barriers, and support national professional standards that benefit regulators, practitioners, and the public.

1.2 Scope and Applicability

This document is designed for policymakers, legislators, regulatory boards, professional organizations, individual advocates, and other stakeholders engaged in developing, evaluating, or amending architectural licensure requirements. The recommendations herein are intended to help jurisdictions align with contemporary standards of professional practice, licensure, education, experience, examination, and mobility.

Approved by the NCARB Board of Directors, this document serves as an advisory resource. Its recommendations do not supersede existing statutory authority. Like all NCARB policy and program documents, it is intended to inform decision-making and encourage regulatory approaches that protect the public, promote professional mobility, and strengthen the architectural profession.

1.3 Public Protection

Public protection is the primary purpose of architectural licensure and the foundation for all regulatory requirements governing the profession. Any modernization of licensure laws, regulations, or administrative processes also can serve to preserve and strengthen safeguards that ensure architects possess the competencies necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of building occupants and the public.

Consistent with its underlying mission to protect the public, regulation focuses on validating the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors required for independent practice, while ensuring licensure standards remain responsive to changes in technology, project delivery methods, and society's evolving needs.

Competency-based licensure models strengthen public protection by focusing regulatory requirements on those key elements of knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors necessary for the safe and independent practice of architecture. However, rather than relying solely on fixed requirements such as required educational degrees or broad experience area requirements, competency-based approaches assess whether an individual has demonstrated the capabilities required to perform professional responsibilities in a manner that protects the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

NCARB's competency-based licensure programs enable regulators to evaluate individuals against clearly defined professional outcomes and performance expectations. This approach ensures that licensed architects possess the competencies necessary to exercise professional care, coordinate complex building systems, address regulatory requirements, and manage risks inherent in the design and construction process. By emphasizing demonstrated competence, jurisdictions can maintain rigorous standards while supporting pathways to licensure that reflect the wide-ranging educational and professional experiences individuals have acquired.

The *Competency Standard* establishes a nationally recognized benchmark for the minimum competencies required to enter the profession. Developed through a psychometrically rigorous process that included surveys of thousands of professionals and ongoing engagement with regulators, practitioners, educators, and subject matter experts, the standard identifies the core competencies necessary for the safe and effective practice of architecture at the point of initial licensure.

The *Competency Standard* serves as the foundation for NCARB's competency-based updates to existing licensure programs. By aligning existing programs with validated competency expectations, NCARB will provide jurisdictions with an improved, defensible, and data-driven mechanism for assessing whether individuals have achieved the minimum threshold for independent practice.

Importantly, a competency-based approach has been shown to not lower licensure standards. Rather, it provides as good as, or potentially even stronger, public protection by ensuring licensure decisions are based on demonstrated readiness to practice in addition to completing procedural requirements. The *Competency Standard* safeguards minimum competency thresholds by setting consistent expectations and giving jurisdictions reliable programs to evaluate qualifications. This approach lets jurisdictions support modernization and flexibility in licensure pathways while preserving the rigorous standards needed to protect the public and maintain confidence in the profession.

1.4 Enhanced Access

A competency-based approach enables regulators to evaluate all individuals against the same professional standards while providing flexibility in how those competencies are acquired. The integration of competency-based standards for architectural licensure into existing programs currently under development by NCARB is grounded in transparency, consistency, and accountability.

Licensure requirements, competency expectations, and evaluation criteria are clearly defined and readily accessible to applicants, regulators, employers, educators, and the public. Transparent standards promote confidence in the regulatory process by ensuring that qualification decisions are based on objective, measurable, and professionally validated criteria. Likewise, accountability mechanisms will enable jurisdictions to monitor outcomes, assess the effectiveness of licensure requirements, and make data-informed adjustments when necessary. A transparent, accountable regulatory framework supports public trust while ensuring licensure decisions are fair and defensible.

This updated framework will enable licensing boards to remove unnecessary impediments to licensure while also providing a valid pathway for qualified individuals pursuing non-traditional routes to licensure, including those with alternative educational backgrounds, military experience, apprenticeship-based learning, or other forms of validated professional development. By expanding access to licensure opportunities without compromising competency expectations, jurisdictions can strengthen workforce development, widen the pool of qualified candidates, and better position the architectural workforce to meet the needs of the communities it serves.

1.5 Enhanced Opportunities

The proposed updates to current licensure programs represent a logical evolution from a focus on educational pre-requisites, prescribed broad experience areas, and large-format standardized assessments to a more accessible process inclusive of substantially equivalent options that are psychometrically sound and equally rigorous.

Current national model approaches rely on completing specific academic degrees and accumulating prescribed experience as stand-ins for actual proof of skill. These measures support skill development, but there is an opportunity to move beyond this less flexible approach. NCARB's approach better recognizes that individuals acquire professional competencies through a variety of educational, experiential, and developmental pathways. NCARB's approach supports enhanced opportunity by allowing individuals to develop required competencies through multiple forms of learning, including accredited education, professional practice, alternative educational experiences, military service, apprenticeship models, and other forms of professional development.

The competency-based updates to architectural licensure programs currently under development by NCARB will ensure all individuals are evaluated against consistent competency expectations and professional standards. This approach expands access to the profession, supports workforce development, and accommodates the diverse ways in which aspiring architects acquire the capabilities necessary for safe and effective practice, while maintaining consistent standards for public protection.

1.6 The Development Process

NCARB's competency-based updates to its licensure programs result from a multi-year, data-driven, psychometrically validated effort to modernize architect licensure programs and expand access and opportunities to demonstrate qualification to be a licensed architect.

NCARB's 2022 Analysis of Practice, one of the most comprehensive studies of the architectural profession ever conducted, provided initial research findings that guided the development of the *Competency Standard*. The study engaged nearly 20,000 architects and other stakeholders to examine how architecture is practiced, the knowledge and skills required for professional performance, emerging trends affecting the profession, and the competencies necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. The findings provide empirical evidence regarding the capabilities required at the point of initial licensure and serve as the basis for the ongoing evolution of NCARB's licensure programs and standards.

Building upon the Analysis of Practice, NCARB convened a Competency Task Force composed of licensing board members, practitioners, and educators from across the profession. This task force conducted extensive research into professional competency frameworks, reviewed licensure models used by other regulated professions, evaluated emerging workforce and educational trends, and identified the competencies necessary for independent practice. Nearly 5,000 licensed architects further validated the draft competencies. This work resulted in the *Competency Standard*, developed in 2024, which establishes a nationally validated standard of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors required for initial licensure.

To determine the most effective way to integrate the *Competency Standard* into NCARB's licensure programs fully, NCARB convened a multi-year Licensure Process Research and Development Task Force composed of licensing board members, practitioners, and educators from across the profession. This task force researched licensing best practices in other U.S. professions and how other countries license architects. In collaboration with several NCARB committees, the task force refined a proposed update to the licensure process that would allow for individual assessment of each competency as defined in the *Competency Standard*. In addition, this task force researched a variety of assessment options and developed a preliminary set of potential assessment methods that could effectively assess architectural competencies.

Through further work by NCARB's program committees, multiple external consultants, and several iterations of licensing board and stakeholder feedback, the resulting proposed competency-based programs establish a common, rigorous competency-based licensure process that applies across multiple routes to licensure. Regardless of the pathway pursued, all individuals must demonstrate the same minimum level of competency required for independent practice, ensuring that modernization in licensure pathways does not compromise the rigor of the licensure process or the profession's responsibility to protect the public.

NCARB's competency-based licensure programs reflect a commitment to maintaining high standards of public protection while creating a licensure system that is more accessible, adaptable, and responsive to the needs of future generations of architects.

2. Alignment With the *NCARB Competency Standard for Architects*

The *Competency Standard* establishes a nationally recognized framework describing the minimum competencies necessary for safe and effective professional practice. These competencies provide a consistent benchmark against which NCARB programs can evaluate individuals, ensuring that licensure decisions are grounded in demonstrated capability rather than assumptions based solely on credentials or time spent completing requirements.

2.1 Overview of NCARB's Competencies

The *Competency Standard* is organized into three broad domains that reflect architects' primary responsibilities throughout the project lifecycle: Design & Documentation, Construction Administration, and Practice & Project Management. Together, these domains encompass the technical knowledge, professional care, and management capabilities necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

Within these domains, the *Competency Standard* identifies 16 distinct competencies, each defining the professional capabilities required. These competencies are further supported by detailed criteria that describe the specific knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors necessary to practice independently. These criteria clarify the abilities and the level of proficiency required for independent practice.

2.2 Required Competency Outcomes for Licensure

By organizing licensure requirements around validated competencies rather than solely educational credentials or fixed experience areas, NCARB gives jurisdictions a consistent, ability-based method for evaluating readiness for professional practice. The competencies establish a common standard against which all individuals are assessed, ensuring consistent expectations for professional competence and public protection while maintaining flexibility in licensure pathways.

2.3 Updating Competency Standards Over Time

As the profession evolves, the competency standard provides a scalable structure for updating licensure requirements to reflect emerging technologies, project delivery methods, and practice responsibilities while maintaining the fundamental competencies necessary for the independent practice of architecture. Through this approach, the *Competency Standard* supports regulatory modernization and NCARB's mission of safeguarding the public through rigorous, consistent standards for initial licensure, while ensuring professional mobility.

3. Governance and Administrative Structure

3.1 Role of the Jurisdictional Licensing Board

The jurisdictional licensing board serves as the regulatory authority responsible for administering and enforcing the jurisdiction's architectural licensure laws and regulations to protect public health, safety, and welfare. In some cases, the board's function is advisory to a jurisdictional agency or other entity. Acting under authority granted by statute, the board either establishes or provides advice regarding licensure procedures, evaluates applicant qualifications, issues licenses, investigates allegations of misconduct, and takes disciplinary action when necessary. The board's primary responsibility is not to advance the profession's interests, but to ensure that only individuals who have demonstrated the minimum competency required for the independent practice of architecture are authorized to offer professional services to the public. Through effective oversight and administration, the licensing board gives the public confidence that licensed architects have the qualifications to practice safely, ethically, and independently.

3.2 Board Oversight Responsibilities

Through NCARB, architect licensing boards shape and adopt nationally recognized standards that ensure consistent, rigorous evaluation of initial candidates for architectural licensure, as well as licensed architects seeking reciprocal licensure in their jurisdiction. While NCARB develops, administers, and maintains national competency standards and assessment programs, the jurisdictional licensing board retains the authority to grant, deny, renew, suspend, revoke, or otherwise regulate a license to practice architecture.

Where applicable, licensing boards will continue to establish jurisdiction-specific licensure requirements, issue licenses, enforce professional conduct standards, investigate complaints, adjudicate disciplinary matters, and oversee continuing competency requirements. Where applicable, Boards will also retain authority over matters related to practice regulation, firm registration, reciprocal licensure, and compliance with state statutes and administrative rules.

Jurisdictional licensing boards retain ultimate responsibility for ensuring that any assessment used to support architectural licensure decisions adequately protects the public health, safety, and welfare. Such approval is best based on proof that assessments are developed through accepted psychometric practices, informed by current analyses of professional practice, and designed to evaluate the competencies required for safe and effective independent practice.

This approach preserves the traditional balance between national standards and state regulatory authority while enabling greater consistency, mobility, and flexibility in pathways to licensure.

4. Eligibility Requirements

4.1 Education Requirement

To gain access to NCARB's licensure programs, an individual needs a high school diploma or its equivalent (such as a General Educational Development, or GED, credential). Unlike the current educational requirement, obtaining a specific college degree will no longer be the national model for commencing the journey through the licensure process.

Instead, individuals seeking entry into NCARB's competency-based licensure programs shall establish a record with NCARB and provide documentation acceptable to NCARB demonstrating successful completion of secondary education or an equivalent or greater credential. Acceptable documentation may include a high school diploma, general educational development (GED) credential, recognized secondary school equivalency certificate, or other documentation determined by NCARB to represent substantially equivalent or greater achievement.

Establishing a minimum educational threshold supports the integrity of the licensure system while providing a clear and accessible point of entry for all individuals who may be pursuing a variety of educational and professional pathways toward architectural licensure.

NCARB shall maintain policies and procedures for reviewing and validating education documentation and may establish standards for accepting domestic and international credentials. Jurisdictional licensing boards can rely upon NCARB's verification of this requirement in determining an individual's eligibility to participate in NCARB's competency-based licensure programs.

4.2 Approval Requirement

An individual must receive approval from the jurisdiction where they are seeking initial architectural licensure before participating in any NCARB-administered competency assessment. If an individual is undecided on a jurisdiction in which to seek initial licensure, the individual must receive approval from NCARB before participating in any competency assessment. Anyone approved by NCARB must still choose a jurisdiction before NCARB sends their results to a jurisdictional board.

The jurisdictional approval process recognizes the authority of architectural licensing boards to determine participation in the licensure process within their respective jurisdictions. By allowing individuals to select their preferred jurisdiction for initial licensure, the licensure system promotes appropriate regulatory oversight. In addition, allowing undecided individuals to be approved by NCARB to begin taking NCARB-administered assessments facilitates initial access to the licensure process. Undecided individuals must select a jurisdiction for initial licensure before NCARB transmits any competency information to a board of architecture, therefore maintaining jurisdiction-appropriate regulatory oversight.

This approval requirement establishes a consistent national entry point into the assessment process while preserving jurisdictional licensing boards' authority to oversee access to licensure within their respective jurisdictions.

5. Competency Assessments and Licensure Program Requirements

The assessment methods utilized in NCARB's competency-based licensure programs evaluate an individual's ability to apply professional competency in practice-relevant contexts. The system prioritizes performance-based measures that assess an individual's capacity to integrate technical knowledge, regulatory requirements, ethical responsibilities, risk management principles, and professional decision-making. Assessment outcomes will provide reliable and defensible proof that an individual can perform at the minimum level necessary to protect the public.

NCARB's competency-based licensure programs include education, experience, and examination components that validate readiness for licensure. The three primary components are evolving from today's requirements to an integrated system that allows applicants options for demonstrating their qualifications for licensure. As all assessments are being measured against the same competency standard, jurisdictional licensing boards can have confidence in each assessment decision, regardless of which assessment was used to demonstrate competency.

Using multiple assessment approaches allows NCARB to evaluate competencies in the most appropriate manner aligned with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors being measured. Regardless of the assessment method used, every individual must demonstrate achievement of the same minimum competencies established by the *Competency Standard*. The validity of the licensure system is grounded not in a single assessment instrument, but in the consistent application of a common competency threshold for all individuals.

By focusing on demonstrated competence and measurable outcomes, the system provides jurisdictions with confidence that all licensure candidates have met a common standard for entry into professional practice, regardless of the pathway through which those competencies were acquired and demonstrated.

5.1 Education Program Requirements: NCARB's Education Programs

Education plays a critical role in developing the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors required for the safe and independent practice of architecture. Consistent with a competency-based approach to licensure, NCARB will evaluate educational preparation based on demonstrated achievement of validated competencies that align with the *Competency Standard*. Rather than serving solely as a prescribed credential requirement, education functions as a mechanism through which individuals may acquire and demonstrate professional competencies necessary for licensure. Accreditation standards, program learning outcomes, and/or validated assessment practices provide evidence that graduates have achieved specific competencies and may therefore be awarded competency credit toward licensure requirements. This approach preserves the important role of architectural education in protecting the public while creating a more transparent, outcomes-focused system that recognizes demonstrated competency as the primary measure of readiness for professional practice.

5.1.1 Competency Credit for Completion of a Degree from a NAAB-accredited Program

This program lets a candidate earn competency credit for an earned degree from a National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB)-accredited program, rather than needing to redemonstrate those competencies again through a separate assessment. An accredited architecture degree still

carries value, as it can earn competency credit and develop candidates' abilities toward competency, but the lack of that specific educational credential is no longer a barrier to entry. A "competency credit" is official recognition, recorded by NCARB, that a person has proven one required competency.

NCARB shall recognize the successful completion of a NAAB-accredited professional degree program as confirmation of achievement of certain competencies within the *Competency Standard*. NAAB reviews and accredits professional architecture degree programs; a degree from a NAAB-accredited program meets nationally recognized quality standards. Competency credit awarded for completion of a degree from a NAAB-accredited program shall apply only to those competencies that have been determined to be adequately addressed and assessed through the accredited educational program.

As the NAAB updates its accreditation standards, NCARB will evaluate those standards to determine the specific competencies for which competency credit will be awarded to individuals graduating from programs accredited under the corresponding standards. Such validation shall be based on input from the NAAB and demonstrated alignment between program learning outcomes, accreditation criteria, and the *Competency Standard*.

Individuals seeking competency credit for completion of a NAAB-accredited degree program shall register their degree completion with NCARB. The candidate shall authorize the submission of an official transcript, degree verification, or other documentation to confirm the successful award of the degree and the accreditation status of the program at the time of graduation.

Upon receipt and verification of the required documentation, NCARB shall evaluate the degree for eligibility under applicable competency credit policies and record any associated competency credit(s) within the candidate's NCARB Record. An "NCARB Record" is a secure, official online file NCARB keeps for each candidate—approvals, competency credits, and results. NCARB shall maintain administrative procedures for transcript submission, credential verification, record maintenance, and periodic auditing to ensure the accuracy and integrity of degree-based competency determinations.

5.1.2 Pre-approved Course(s) with an Integrated Competency Assessment

Separate from degree-based competency, this NCARB program lets a candidate earn competency credit through a specific course or training program once NCARB has reviewed and approved that course as teaching and testing the relevant competency(ies). NCARB shall grant competency credit for the successful completion of a pre-approved course, pre-approved courses, or an educational program that includes an integrated competency assessment aligned with one or more competencies contained within the *Competency Standard*. To qualify for competency credit, NCARB or its designee must review and validate the educational curriculum and its associated assessment to ensure the learning objectives, instructional content, assessment methodology, and performance standards adequately measure the identified competency or competencies.

Competency credit shall be awarded only upon satisfactory demonstration through the integrated assessment and shall be limited to those competencies specifically approved by NCARB. Neither educational participation nor a passing course grade alone shall constitute achievement of a competency.

NCARB will require all pre-approved course(s) with integrated assessment to be completed through a post-secondary institution that holds accreditation recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. NCARB shall establish criteria for course approval, assessment validation, performance thresholds, quality assurance, and periodic review to ensure that competency credits awarded through approved coursework remain reliable, consistent, and aligned with current licensure standards.

Individuals seeking competency credit for completion of an NCARB-approved course that includes an integrated competency assessment shall supply documentation of competency completion to NCARB in accordance with procedures established by NCARB.

NCARB will maintain requirements for provider reporting, candidate documentation, identity verification, record retention, auditing, and quality assurance to ensure the accuracy and integrity of competency credit awards. Registration of a pre-approved course completion shall result in the award of competency credit only for the approved competencies successfully demonstrated through the integrated assessment and shall not, by itself, satisfy all requirements for architectural licensure.

5.2 Experience Program Requirements: Architectural Experience Program (AXP) 2.0

Professional experience plays a critical role in developing and demonstrating one's competence for the safe and independent practice of architecture. NCARB will evaluate one's competency based on documented hourly requirements and evidence of practice-level performance through associated and aligned standardized assessments.

This approach recognizes that meaningful competency development occurs across a wide range of professional, educational, military, research, public-sector, and practice environments while ensuring that all experience-based competency determinations are measured against consistent national standards. By focusing individual's development on demonstrating the underlying competency criteria requirements, the experience requirement encourages development of professional ability, creates greater alignment with required competency assessments, provides a more direct and transparent measure of readiness for independent architectural practice, and strengthens public protection.

5.2.1 Required Experience

This program provides a structured experience-based pathway through which individuals may demonstrate the development and application of specific competencies contained within the *Competency Standard*. This program recognizes the value of supervised experience in guiding competency development as well as the use of standardized assessments in validating an individual's competence.

Individuals seeking competency credit through this program shall document and report professional-level experience aligned to applicable competencies. In addition, to earn competency credit, the individual will need to pass an associated standardized assessment.

A candidate may begin demonstrating the minimum period of supervised employment at any time after they complete the secondary education required for eligibility in NCARB's competency-based

licensure programs, as outlined in Section 4. NCARB shall establish procedures to document, validate, and verify compliance with these requirements.

Experience reported under this program shall reflect activities that directly relate to the competency criteria established for the applicable competency. A minimum number of experience hours will be required from employment in an architecture firm that engages in the lawful practice of architecture under the direct supervision of a U.S. licensed architect. Additional experience hours can be acquired through public-sector employment, military service, academic or research activities, design-build organizations, or other qualifying environments approved by NCARB.

NCARB shall establish a minimum number of experience hours required for each competency. An individual seeking competency credit through this program shall record experience hours in accordance with NCARB-established procedures. When submitting experience hours, the individual must attest that the reported experience accurately reflects work performed by the individual and that the activities completed align with the applicable competency criteria. The attestation shall confirm that the candidate has personally participated in professional activities that contributed to the development and application of the identified competency.

To ensure the integrity and reliability of reported experience, all experience hours submitted by the individual shall be reviewed and approved by the individual's supervisor. The supervisor shall attest that the reported experience hours are accurate to the best of their knowledge and that the individual meaningfully participated in the activities being reported. The supervisor shall be responsible for providing oversight, mentorship, and for verifying that the individual has authentically participated in work involving the application of architectural competencies. Supervisory approval shall serve as verification of the authenticity of the reported experience but shall not, by itself, result in the award of competency credit. NCARB may establish additional validation, auditing, documentation, and review procedures to ensure the accuracy and integrity of reported experience.

This program will appropriately recognize how formal architectural education contributes to the development of professional competencies by providing experience credit for prior learning. The number of credited experience hours shall vary based on evaluation by NCARB of formal architectural education programs against the *Competency Standard*. NCARB shall establish a process and periodically review the applicable experience hour thresholds to ensure they remain aligned with formal architectural education programs and that all individuals, regardless of educational pathway, demonstrate the minimum competencies necessary for safe and independent architectural practice.

Individuals seeking experience credit for prior learning for completion of an architecture-related degree program shall register their degree completion with NCARB. The candidate shall authorize the submission of an official transcript, degree verification, or other documentation to confirm the successful award of the degree.

Competency credit shall be awarded only when the submitted documentation has fulfilled the required number of experience hours based on the candidate's education, and the candidate has

successfully completed an associated standardized assessment that has been developed, validated, and administered by NCARB.

Through this approach, the program recognizes multiple educational pathways while ensuring that all individuals demonstrate substantial experience applying critical professional competencies under appropriate supervision. The program promotes accessibility and flexibility while maintaining consistent standards for public protection and readiness for independent architectural practice.

5.3 Examination Program Requirements: Architect Registration Examination (ARE) 6.0

Assessment through examination remains an essential component of architectural licensure by providing a consistent, objective, and defensible means of verifying an individual's readiness for independent practice. Consistent with NCARB's competency-based approach to licensure, examination requirements are organized around the direct assessment of discrete competencies identified in the *Competency Standard* rather than solely through a broader comprehensive testing format.

NCARB is developing a modern competency assessment through a combination of standardized assessments and structured guided learning programs that culminate in validated standardized assessments. Standardized assessments provide reliable measures of an individual's ability to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors required for safe and effective practice, while guided learning pathways support competency development through flexible educational resources, formative feedback, and independent study before a summative evaluation.

Together, these assessment methods create a comprehensive examination suite that maintains rigorous and consistent standards for public protection while expanding opportunities for individuals to develop and demonstrate competency. By focusing on validated assessment outcomes and demonstrated achievement of professional competencies, the examination requirement provides licensing boards with meaningful evidence that all candidates have satisfied the standard of readiness for architectural practice.

5.3.1 Standardized Assessments

This program is an NCARB-built exam that licensure candidates can take to prove competence, independent of any specific school or course. NCARB shall grant competency credit for the successful completion of a standardized assessment that has been developed, validated, and administered by NCARB to measure achievement of one or more competencies contained within the *Competency Standard*. Standardized assessments shall be designed to evaluate an individual's knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors using objective and defensible evaluation criteria aligned with the competency or competencies being assessed.

Competency credit shall be awarded when a candidate achieves or exceeds the established performance standard for the applicable assessment. Each standardized assessment shall undergo appropriate validation, quality assurance, and periodic review to ensure assessment results are reliable, fair, and representative of the minimum competency required for safe and independent architectural practice.

Using standardized assessments, NCARB can provide a consistent, scalable, and objective means of evaluating competency while ensuring that all individuals are held to the same minimum standard regardless of educational, experiential, or professional pathway.

Individuals seeking competency credit through a standardized assessment shall schedule their assessment through NCARB or an assessment administration provider authorized by NCARB and pay any applicable fees established by NCARB. NCARB shall maintain procedures for assessment registration, scheduling, rescheduling, cancellation, candidate identification, and examination security. Individuals shall be responsible for selecting an available assessment appointment and complying with all applicable scheduling policies and assessment administration requirements. NCARB may offer assessments through testing centers, remote proctoring platforms, or other approved delivery methods designed to ensure the integrity, security, and accessibility of the assessment process.

Upon successful scheduling, NCARB shall provide individuals with confirmation of their assessment appointment and any instructions necessary for participation. Assessment results and any associated competency credits shall be recorded in the candidate's NCARB Record following completion of applicable scoring, validation, and quality assurance procedures. Scheduling an assessment does not guarantee competency credit; NCARB will grant credit only upon achievement of the established performance standard for the applicable competency or competencies.

5.3.2 Guided Learning with a Standardized Assessment

This program allows a licensure candidate to study on their own schedule using NCARB-provided materials, then earn competency credit by passing a standardized test at the end. NCARB shall grant competency credit for the successful completion of an NCARB-developed and administered guided learning curriculum that includes a final summative assessment, a comprehensive test at the end of the curriculum.

Such curricula may include structured learning modules, readings, case studies, simulations, practice exercises, and other educational resources designed to support independent competency development. The curriculum will include formative assessments throughout the learning process that provide feedback, guide individuals on their progress, reinforce key concepts, identify areas requiring additional development, and support successful competency attainment. Formative assessments are intended to facilitate learning and preparedness but shall not, by themselves, result in the award of competency credit.

To receive competency credit, individuals must pass the final summative assessment validated by NCARB. The summative assessment shall evaluate the candidate's ability to demonstrate the required knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors at the minimum proficiency level established for licensure. Competency credit shall be awarded only upon successful completion of the summative assessment and achievement that meets or exceeds the established performance standard.

NCARB shall establish requirements for curriculum approval, assessment validation, candidate identity verification, quality assurance, and periodic program review to ensure that competency credits awarded through guided learning remain consistent, reliable, and defensible. Through this approach, individuals can develop competencies through flexible, accessible learning opportunities while demonstrating achievement through a rigorous, standardized assessment process.

Individuals seeking competency credit through a guided learning curriculum with an integrated standardized assessment shall register for the program through procedures established by NCARB. Registration shall include identifying the competency or competencies to be pursued, confirming eligibility requirements, and paying any applicable fees established by NCARB.

Upon registration, NCARB shall provide individuals with access to the approved learning materials, curriculum requirements, formative assessment activities, and instructions for completing the associated standardized summative assessment. Individuals shall complete all required learning activities and formative assessments designed to support competency development before attempting the final summative assessment.

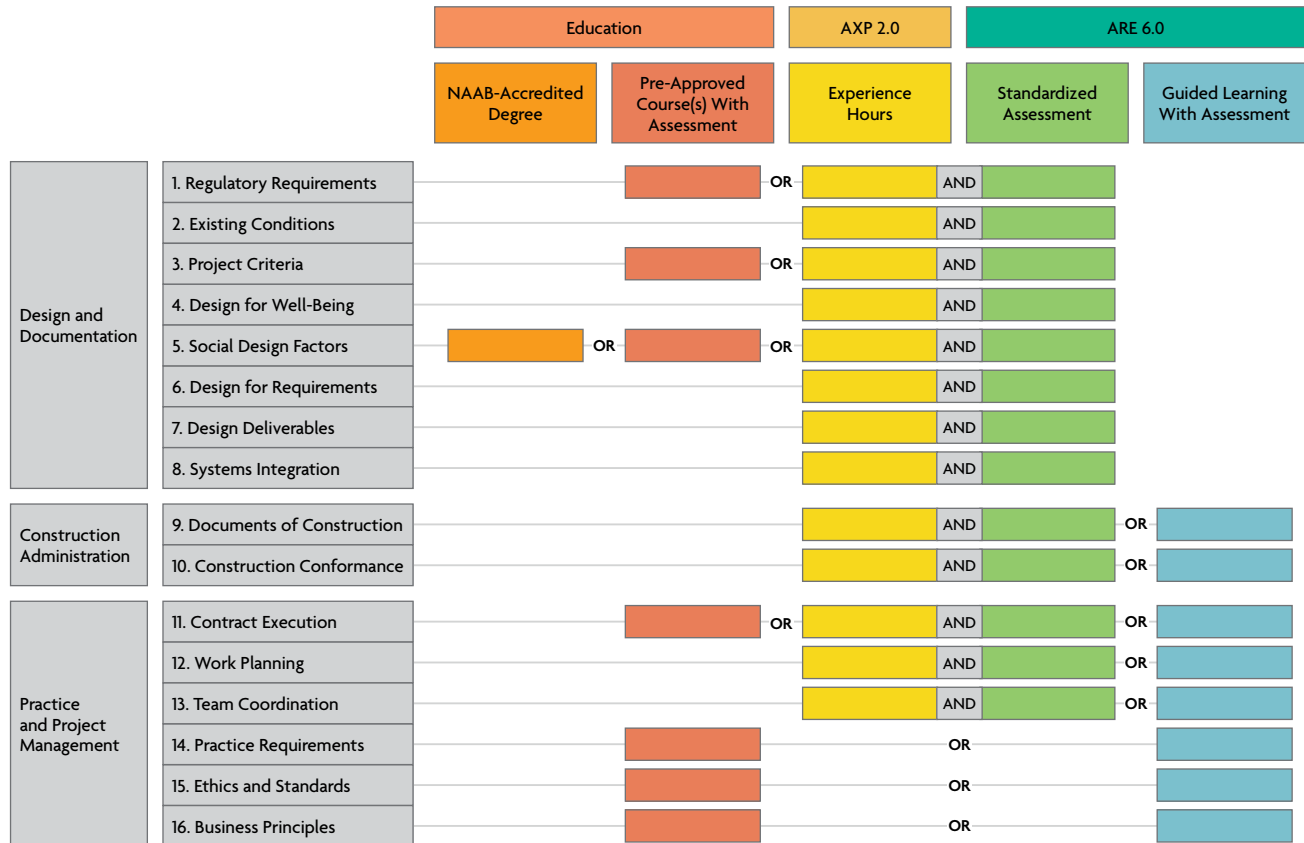
NCARB shall maintain procedures governing enrollment, candidate identity verification, progress tracking, assessment access and security, completion deadlines, and record retention. Upon successful completion of the required curriculum and achievement of the established passing standard on the integrated summative assessment, NCARB shall award the applicable competency credit and record such credit within the candidate's NCARB Record.

5.4 The Assessment System and Potential Means of Demonstrating Competency

[Figure 1](#) illustrates the assessment methods through which candidates may demonstrate achievement of the competencies required for architectural licensure. While all competencies are evaluated against the common benchmark established by the *Competency Standard*, a candidate may demonstrate competency through multiple assessment approaches depending on their preference. These approaches include competency credit awarded through completion of a NAAB-accredited degree program, pre-approved coursework with integrated competency assessments, experience assessments based on documented professional experience and accomplishments, standardized assessments, and guided learning programs that culminate in a standardized summative assessment.

The NCARB competency-based licensure programs include assessment methods that create a comprehensive system that recognizes the varied ways individuals acquire professional competence while ensuring every competency determination is based on validated assessment processes and consistent performance standards. The graphic provides an initial example of how multiple pathways and assessment formats will be integrated into NCARB's competency-based licensure programs, allowing all candidates to be evaluated against the same minimum standard for safe and independent architectural practice regardless of the path used to develop or demonstrate competency. The assessment methods available for each competency may evolve.

Figure 1. Assessment methods through which candidates may demonstrate achievement of the competencies required for architectural licensure



6. Administration of Assessments

6.1 Candidate Registration and Scheduling

To participate in NCARB's competency-based licensure programs, an individual must meet the eligibility requirements detailed in Section 4 and shall maintain an active NCARB Record in good standing. An active NCARB Record shall be required for registration, scheduling, administration, evaluation, and recording of any competency assessment.

Individuals are responsible for maintaining accurate, current information in their NCARB Record and for complying with all applicable NCARB policies governing eligibility, documentation, fees, conduct, and record maintenance. Failure to maintain an active NCARB Record in good standing will result in ineligibility to register for, complete, receive credit for, or otherwise participate in competency assessment activities.

NCARB shall use the NCARB Record as the official repository for candidate approval status, assessment registrations, acquired competencies, assessment results, and other licensure-related information. Maintaining a single, authoritative record promotes consistency, accountability, credential portability, and efficient communication among individuals, licensing boards, and NCARB throughout the licensure process.

6.2 Identity Verification and Anti-Fraud Measures

NCARB shall implement and maintain identity verification, security, and anti-fraud measures designed to preserve the integrity of the architectural licensure process and ensure that competency assessments accurately reflect the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors of the individual seeking licensure. Such measures shall apply throughout the licensure process, including candidate registration, eligibility determination, assessment administration, submission of evidence, recording of competency credits, and maintenance of candidate records.

NCARB shall establish procedures for verifying candidate identity through approved methods, which may include government-issued identification, secure authentication technologies, proctoring protocols, identity validation services, and other measures deemed appropriate to ensure the authenticity of candidate participation. NCARB may require identity verification at multiple stages of the licensure process and will implement additional verification measures when warranted by risk, assessment type, or delivery method.

NCARB shall also maintain policies and procedures to prevent, detect, investigate, and respond to fraud, misrepresentation, misconduct, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of records, examination irregularities, and other actions that compromise the validity of competency determinations. Individuals found to have engaged in fraudulent or unethical conduct may face denial of competency credit, invalidation of assessment results, suspension of assessment privileges, disciplinary action, or other sanctions as determined by NCARB and applicable licensing boards.

Through ongoing monitoring, security reviews, auditing, and continuous improvement of its identity verification and anti-fraud controls, NCARB shall ensure that all competency credits and assessment

outcomes are earned through legitimate demonstration of competency and that jurisdictional licensing boards can rely on them when making licensure decisions.

6.3 Accessibility and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

NCARB shall ensure that all components of the licensure process are accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities and are administered in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws relating to accessibility and equal opportunity. All competency assessments, registration processes, candidate resources, learning platforms, technology systems, and related licensure services shall be designed and administered to provide eligible individuals with a fair opportunity to demonstrate competency.

NCARB shall maintain procedures through which individuals can request reasonable accommodation for disabilities or other qualifying conditions. NCARB shall review accommodation requests through a consistent, confidential, and timely process based on appropriate documentation and applicable legal requirements. NCARB will ensure approved accommodations to the assessment process without altering the competency being measured, the validity of the assessment, or the minimum standards required for licensure.

NCARB shall periodically evaluate its assessment programs, technologies, policies, and candidate services to identify and address accessibility barriers. This evaluation may include reviews of testing platforms, instructional materials, communication methods, identity-verification processes, and assessment delivery systems to ensure individuals can participate in the licensure process regardless of disability status.

Through its commitment to accessibility and reasonable accommodation, NCARB shall promote access to licensure opportunities while maintaining the validity, reliability, integrity, and public protection objectives of its competency-based licensure system.

6.4 Retake Policies and Remediation Requirements

NCARB shall establish and maintain policies related to retake and remediation requirements that support candidate success while preserving the integrity, validity, and public protection objectives of the licensure process. Individuals who do not meet the required competency threshold on an assessment may pursue additional attempts in accordance with policies established by NCARB. Retake policies may include reasonable waiting periods or other measures designed to maintain assessment integrity without unreasonably limiting an individual's access to the licensure process.

NCARB shall provide individuals with appropriate feedback regarding assessment performance to help identify areas requiring further development.

NCARB shall apply all retake and remediation requirements consistently and design them to ensure competency credit is awarded only upon successful demonstration of the applicable competency at the established performance standard. Through these policies, NCARB shall promote continuous learning, support candidate progression, and maintain confidence that all competency determinations reflect the minimum level of proficiency required for safe and independent architectural practice.

7. Evaluation, Review, and Quality Assurance

7.1 Setting the Passing Score

NCARB shall establish and maintain scoring methodologies and competency thresholds that provide valid, reliable, and defensible determination of whether a candidate has achieved the minimum level of competency required for safe and independent architectural practice. Scoring models will measure performance against established competency standards rather than relative performance among individuals. Assessments shall be criterion-referenced, graded against a fixed standard rather than ranked against other test-takers—everyone who meets the bar passes. Criterion-referenced assessments ensure that competency determinations are based on demonstrated achievement of defined performance expectations.

For each competency and assessment type, NCARB shall establish minimum performance thresholds that reflect the proficiency level necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare. NCARB shall develop competency thresholds using accepted standard-setting methodologies and informed by professional practice analyses, subject matter expert input, assessment performance data, and other relevant documentation. NCARB shall periodically review and adjust thresholds as necessary to ensure continued alignment with the *Competency Standard* and the evolving practice of architecture.

Where multiple assessment methods are used to evaluate competency, NCARB shall employ validation and quality assurance processes designed to support comparable and consistent competency determinations across assessment formats. NCARB may use scaled scores, performance ratings, rubric-based evaluations, or other validated scoring mechanisms appropriate to the assessment method used. NCARB shall document, standardize, and support all scoring procedures with quality assurance measures designed to promote consistency and accuracy.

A candidate shall receive competency credit only upon demonstrating performance at or above the established threshold for the applicable assessment. Through these measures, NCARB will give jurisdictions confidence that competency determinations are based on rigorous, objective, data-driven evaluation standards.

7.2 Psychometric Review and Quality Assurance

This section explains how NCARB makes sure its tests are fair, accurate, consistent, and legally sound, guided by specialists called psychometricians, experts in the science of testing and measurement.

NCARB shall maintain rigorous standards to ensure that all assessment methods used within the licensure system are valid, reliable, fair, and legally defensible. NCARB shall develop each assessment and periodically review it using established professional, educational, and psychometric principles to ensure it accurately measures the competency or competencies it is intended to assess. NCARB will directly align assessment content, performance standards, scoring methodologies, and evaluation criteria with the *Competency Standard*, and future updates shall be informed by ongoing analyses of professional practice.

NCARB shall implement quality assurance processes designed to promote consistency and reliability across all assessment types. Quality assurance measures shall include standardized evaluation criteria, assessor training, calibration procedures, periodic audits, and continuous monitoring of assessment outcomes to ensure consistent application of competency standards.

NCARB shall ensure all individuals have a fair opportunity to demonstrate competency. Assessment programs will be designed to minimize bias, provide reasonable accommodation when required by law, maintain transparency regarding assessment requirements and performance expectations, and offer appropriate mechanisms for review and appeal. Regardless of the assessment pathway utilized, NCARB will ensure all individuals are evaluated against the same competency expectations and minimum performance standards required for safe and independent architectural practice.

Through continuous validation, data analysis, stakeholder input, and periodic review, NCARB shall maintain an assessment system that gives jurisdictions, individuals, and the public confidence that competency determinations are accurate, consistent, and aligned with the profession's responsibility to protect public health, safety, and welfare.

7.3 Appeal and Review Processes

NCARB shall maintain fair, transparent, and consistent processes that allow individuals to appeal administrative decisions and receive meaningful feedback regarding their performance. These processes will promote confidence in the licensure system while ensuring that assessment results and competency determinations are administered in accordance with established policies, procedures, and professional standards.

Individuals shall have access to procedures for submitting appeals related to eligibility determinations, assessment administration irregularities, scoring concerns, accommodation decisions, disciplinary actions, and other licensure matters identified by NCARB policy. NCARB shall maintain clear requirements governing the grounds for appeal, submission timelines, documentation requirements, review procedures, and final disposition of appeals. Appeals shall be reviewed by qualified individuals who were not directly involved in the original decision whenever practicable.

NCARB shall administer all appeal and review processes in a timely, impartial, and consistent manner to ensure fairness, accountability, and confidence in the competency-based licensure system.

7.4 Annual Reporting and Public Transparency

NCARB will maintain a commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement by publishing annual reports and other publicly available information on the operation and effectiveness of its licensure programs. At a minimum, NCARB shall periodically report aggregate information on candidate participation, competency assessment outcomes, pass rates, trends, program enhancements, and other performance indicators relevant to administering the licensure system.

Reports shall be presented in a manner that protects candidate privacy and confidential assessment information while providing jurisdictional licensing boards, policymakers, individuals, and the public with meaningful insight into the effectiveness and integrity of NCARB's competency-based licensure programs.

NCARB will also make available information regarding competency standards, assessment methodologies, governance processes, program changes, and quality assurance activities to promote understanding and confidence in the licensure process.

Through regular reporting and public disclosure of program outcomes, NCARB shall support informed oversight by jurisdictional licensing boards, facilitate ongoing evaluation of licensure programs, and demonstrate continued accountability for maintaining standards that protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

7.5 Data Governance, Privacy, and Security Requirements

NCARB will establish and maintain systems and processes to collect, store, transmit, and protect sensitive candidate and licensure information. NCARB will establish and maintain a formal data classification framework and apply controls commensurate with the sensitivity of the information maintained. In working with third-party providers, NCARB will require providers to establish and maintain controls of equal or greater magnitude. These functions will support the efficient administration of licensure programs while promoting consistency and mobility across jurisdictions.

As an assessment and credentialing provider, NCARB maintains comprehensive data governance, privacy, and cybersecurity controls, including the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework, NIST 800-53, ISO 27001, and SOC 2 principles. NCARB will require all assessment providers to maintain appropriate information security, privacy, operational resilience, and business continuity controls, and will subject them to periodic review.

Such controls include safeguards for data confidentiality, integrity, availability, access management, records retention, auditability, and incident response. NCARB employs appropriate technical, administrative, and operational measures to protect candidate information and assessment records from unauthorized access, disclosure, alteration, or loss.

8. Licensure Decision Process

Nothing within NCARB's competency-based licensure programs shall be construed as assuming the authority to grant, deny, renew, suspend, revoke, or otherwise regulate a license to practice architecture. The jurisdictional licensing board, acting under the laws and regulations of its jurisdiction, retains exclusive authority to make licensure decisions.

NCARB's role, in consultation with jurisdictional licensing boards, is to develop, administer, and maintain competency standards, assessment programs, credentialing services, and related licensure support functions that help jurisdictions evaluate applicant qualifications. Successful completion of NCARB's competency-based licensure program assessments, achievement of competency credits, or satisfaction of NCARB program requirements shall not, by themselves, entitle an individual to licensure. Final determination of an applicant's readiness for licensure, including compliance with all jurisdiction-specific requirements, shall remain the responsibility of the jurisdictional licensing board.

This structure preserves each jurisdiction's full authority over licensing while enabling nationally consistent competency standards and assessment processes. By maintaining jurisdictional authority over licensure decisions, the system ensures that accountability for public protection remains with the governmental entity charged by law with regulating the practice of architecture.

8.1 Transparent Criteria for Granting Licenses

NCARB shall support jurisdictional licensing boards by maintaining clear, objective, and publicly available standards for all NCARB's competency-based licensure programs, assessments, competency requirements, and credentialing processes.

NCARB shall maintain transparent criteria for the award of competency credits, assessment outcomes, program completions, and other qualifications included within an individual's NCARB Record. NCARB shall make information regarding licensure pathways, competency expectations, assessment requirements, policies, procedures, and program changes readily accessible to individuals, licensing boards, and other stakeholders.

NCARB shall also communicate any substantive changes to competency standards, assessment programs, or qualification requirements that may affect licensure decisions.

8.2 Verification of Competency Achievement

The NCARB Record will serve as the repository of an individual's verified qualifications, competency achievements, assessment results, and other licensure-related credentials maintained by NCARB. NCARB will document competency credits awarded through NCARB-approved assessments within the candidate's NCARB Record and maintain it as the authoritative record of the candidate's qualifications for licensure.

NCARB shall provide jurisdictional licensing boards with secure access to, or transmittal of, candidate record information necessary to evaluate applications for licensure. Information contained within the

NCARB Record shall constitute verified documentation that the candidate has successfully satisfied the applicable competency requirements and other qualification standards validated by NCARB.

Maintaining and transmitting competency information through the NCARB Record is intended to promote consistency, accuracy, efficiency, and portability within the licensure process. Jurisdictional licensing boards can rely on this information to determine whether an applicant has met the licensure qualifications established by the jurisdiction.

8.3 Transitioning to NCARB's Competency-Based Licensure Programs

NCARB recognizes that implementation of these changes will require thoughtful consideration of each jurisdiction's unique statutory, regulatory, and administrative framework. While the overarching objectives are national in scope, the specific actions needed to adopt and administer the changes may vary by state based on jurisdictional requirements and legislative or regulatory processes.

Drawing on its successful management of previous national licensure program transitions, including the evolution of the Intern Development Program (IDP) to the Architectural Experience Program (AXP) and the transition of its examination offerings from ARE 4.0 to ARE 5.0, NCARB will implement future competency-based licensure programs through a deliberate and candidate-responsive process. In each of these prior transitions, NCARB preserved candidate progress through clearly defined transition policies, extensive stakeholder engagement, comprehensive guidance resources, and sustained support for licensing boards, candidates, educators, and practitioners, while providing sufficient time for the transition.

Building on this proven approach, NCARB will develop a detailed credit model that maintains a consistent national standard allowing licensure candidates to receive appropriate competency credit based on their current progress toward licensure. NCARB will dedicate the necessary staff, technical expertise, and outreach resources to support boards, candidates, and policymakers throughout the transition, including communication materials, policy guidance, candidate transition plans, and ongoing consultation. The Council's objective is to ensure that existing candidates receive appropriate recognition for progress already achieved, that jurisdictions have the flexibility to address local requirements, and that the transition occurs thoughtfully, efficiently, and effectively to maintain public protection while ensuring candidate progress toward licensure.

Pathways Myths and Facts

OCTOBER 2026

General

Providing additional pathways to licensure doesn't guarantee increased diversity within the profession or more architects in the licensure pipeline.

True. The goal of Pathways to Practice is to increase access to licensure for all qualified applicants based on competence. While Pathways to Practice may impact diversity or the number of architects in the profession, NCARB is not using specific numbers or quotas as a measure of success.

Pathways to Practice could increase or decrease the time to licensure.

True. The goal of Pathways to Practice is not to increase or decrease time to licensure, but to create accessibility to licensure while maintaining validity and rigor of the licensure process. Under Pathways to Practice, candidates will be able to demonstrate competency at their own pace.

Candidates licensed through different pathways cannot equally protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

False. All future assessments will be tied to the *NCARB Competency Standard for Architects* published in 2024. By applying consistent assessment criteria based on the *Competency Standard*, NCARB can make sure that all candidates are required to demonstrate the same level of competency, regardless of what path they take to earn a license.

Changing education requirements does not necessarily impact the overall cost of licensure.

True. NCARB expects most candidates to continue to pursue higher education. However, NCARB recognizes that extensive higher education is not attainable for all licensure candidates due to financial or other barriers. Additional pathways to licensure must be accessible to all applicants, including those with four-year undergrad degrees and community college degrees, as well as individuals who didn't have the opportunity to pursue higher education.

NCARB is using Pathways to Practice to increase revenue.

False. NCARB is planning to ensure that exam and Record fees continue to be roughly equivalent to today's fees through Pathways to Practice, allowing for some increases related to the cost of delivery and economic inflation. NCARB plans to continue to run its candidate programs in the red, subsidized by revenue from NCARB Certificate holders.

Assessments

Under Pathways to Practice, community colleges, four-year degree programs, and NAAB-accredited programs will all support licensure progress.

True. NCARB intends to provide pathways to licensure from a variety of educational pathways—including four-year degree programs and community colleges. Individuals who

don't have the opportunity to demonstrate a competency through education will be able to demonstrate it through experience, guided learning, and assessments.

[Pathways to Practice will still require candidates to work under a licensed architect.](#)

True. Several of the competencies will require the candidate to gain experience working under a licensed architect, with the amount of time required dependent on the level of education the candidate attained.

[Pathways to Practice will shift an additional burden to firms and practitioners.](#)

False. Under the evolved experience program, practitioners will continue to act in a role similar to today's supervisors. Supervisors will continue to attest that a candidate's work is valid through reported experience hours.

[Pathways to Practice will require candidates to complete a standardized exam.](#)

True. All future licensure pathways will include assessments of a candidate's competence. Several competencies will require the candidate to pass a standardized exam. NCARB is evolving the delivery method for some assessments so that they are more accessible to candidates, but all candidates will need to complete assessments that validate their competency for licensure.

Timeline and Adoption

[Candidates who have already made licensure progress will continue to have a pathway to licensure.](#)

True. NCARB is planning to overlap the current and future licensure programs for at least two years, with clear transition pathways from today's AXP and ARE to the evolved versions of each of these programs.

[NCARB will support Member Boards in adopting and implementing this future licensure model.](#)

True. NCARB is committed to ensuring that licensing boards have the necessary communication and advocacy support and resources. NCARB is developing jurisdiction-specific strategies to engage with policymakers and advocate for any necessary legislative or regulatory changes that need to be made to ensure boards can adopt Pathways to Practice..

As with past evolutions in the licensure process, NCARB will also work collaboratively to develop and support an appropriate process that allows Member Boards and licensure candidates to smoothly transition.

MEMORANDUM

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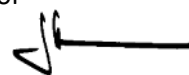
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To: Regional Directors, Public Director, and MBE Director
From: John Patrick Rademacher, NCARB, NOMA, AIA
President
Date: September 3, 2026
Subject: September 2026 Board of Directors Meeting



The FY27 NCARB Board of Directors will hold a three-day meeting on September 17-19 in Jackson, WY.

We are providing this summary of topics that will be discussed by the Board, along with brief descriptions regarding content and context to provide greater transparency and encourage collaboration between Board representatives and their member board constituencies.

Generative & Strategic Discussions

- NCARB Strategic Plan Refresh – Phase 2. Marketing, Communications & Data VP Andy McIntyre and Information Systems VP Roo de Guzman will conduct a data gathering discussion with the board as NCARB shifts into the second phase of a three-year approach to the refresh of the NCARB strategic plan. McIntyre and de Guzman are the staff leaders for the data-gathering phase of this effort.
- NCARB Advocacy Strategy. Council Relations VP Josh Batkin will provide an update on the Council's advocacy strategy including approaches relative to Pathways to Practice.

Program and Service Excellence

- Professional Conduct Committee - Recommendation (Action). The Professional Conduct Committee will provide a recommendation for reinstatement of an NCARB certificate.
- Pathways to Practice Status. Chief Programs Officer Jared Zurn will provide an update on the design and development status of the multi-year Pathways to Practice initiative.
- Workplace Evidence Assessment. The Board will do a deep dive into discerning the elements of this assessment method as part of the future licensure process.
- Feedback Surveys. The Board will hear a report on the outcomes of recent NCARB volunteer and member board satisfaction surveys.
- Pathways to Practice: Standards Document (Action). The Board will review and consider endorsing a Pathways to Practice Standards Document, created to serve as a resource for future implementation, advocacy and adoption efforts related to the evolution of the licensure system.
- Marketing, Communications, & Data Team. Marketing, Communications, & Data VP Andy McIntyre will provide an overview of NCARB's MC&D activities.
- Pathways to Practice Communications. The Board will continue with ongoing communications strategy discussions regarding the Pathways to Practice initiative.

- Committee Chairs Engagement. The Board will have a virtual engagement with the chairs of the Credentials Committee, Curriculum Task Force, and Certification Task Force, and will receive a progress update on respective FY27 charges.

Fiduciary Responsibilities

- Financial Update. Secretary/Treasurer Miguel Rodriguez and CEO Armstrong will preview unaudited financial results for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2026, and review the current state of the Council's Operating Fund, investment portfolios, and early performance of the FY27 budget. In addition, Past President Ed Marley will present the annual Historical Board Cost Analysis looking at spending on Board activities over a multiple year trend line in comparison with historical averages and inflation.

Informational items:

- Member Board Chairs/Member Board Executives Summit Preparation. VP Batkin will review the agenda for the October MBC/MBE Summit.
- President's Report. President Rademacher will update the Board on his activities since the June 2026 Board of Directors meeting.
- CEO Update. Armstrong will report on staff activities since the August 2026 Board of Directors call and provide a preview of upcoming events through the end of the calendar year.

cc: NCARB Executive Committee

Message from the President

September 2026

Dear Member Board Community,

In mid-September, I gathered the FY27 Board of Directors in Jackson, Wyoming, for our quarterly Board meeting. During our three-day meeting, the Board intentionally focused much of our time on discussions related to NCARB's Pathways to Practice initiative.

Of particular note was the Board's evaluation of research on the viability of the work evidence-based assessment method, which could become the next evolution of the Architectural Experience Program® (AXP®). We also approved a new *NCARB Standards* document that is intended to assist with the adoption of Pathways to Practice at the jurisdictional level. I am looking forward to sharing more information at the upcoming Member Board Chairs (MBC) and Member Board Executives (MBE) Leadership Summit in Memphis, Tennessee, this October, and providing clear guidance and next steps for our Member Board leadership.

In tandem with our work on the Pathways to Practice initiative, we received an update on our ongoing work to refresh NCARB's Strategic Plan, which will frame our goals and vision for the future of the organization. We heard valuable feedback from our member community at this year's Annual Business Meeting, which has informed the areas of focus that we will be exploring in the upcoming fiscal year.

This first quarter of my presidency has been busy and varied. It has provided many opportunities to interact with the broader NCARB community, including conversations with architecture students, engagement with our external partners, discussions with our volunteers, and more. I'm excited about the year ahead and look forward to connecting with you throughout FY27.

Best wishes,



John Patrick Rademacher, NCARB, AIA, NOMA
FY27 President



FY27 President Rademacher engaged with NCARB staff during a town hall event in Washington, DC.

This publication is designed to provide updates on the actions and discussions of the NCARB Board of Directors following meetings. Please remember that the information provided here may be confidential and will be indicated as such when necessary.

Executive Summary

President John Rademacher convened the September meeting of the FY27 NCARB Board of Directors on September 17-19, 2026, in Jackson, Wyoming. President Rademacher led the Board through a variety of topics, including updates on several milestones related to NCARB's Pathways to Practice initiative, next steps for refreshing the NCARB Strategic Plan, and results from the annual Member Board satisfaction survey.

The Board also received financial updates from Secretary/Treasurer Miguel Rodriguez and CEO Mike Armstrong, heard president and CEO updates, and prepared for the Member Board Chairs (MBC) and Member Board Executives (MBE) Leadership Summit in Memphis, Tennessee, on October 9-10.

Strategic Plan Refresh

On Thursday, the Board of Directors engaged with Vice President of Marketing, Communications, and Data Andy McIntyre and Vice President of Information Systems Rouel De Guzman for an update on FY27 efforts to refresh NCARB's Strategic Plan. So far in FY27, NCARB's membership has shared their opinions on potential areas of future focus related to the Strategic Plan at the 2026 Annual Business Meeting, with parallel activities at the staff and senior staff levels. McIntyre and De Guzman also explained the timeline and goals for the remainder of the fiscal year, working with the Board to refine which themes will likely be featured as part of the next Strategic Plan.

Pathways to Practice

Workplace Evidence Assessment

After a high-level Pathways to Practice status update, Chief Programs Officer Jared Zurn had an in-depth conversation with the Board of Directors regarding work evidence-based assessment for the future licensure process. Zurn shared the latest feasibility research from staff and feedback from architects through recent surveys, which has indicated that the model for the experience assessment method may need adjustments. More information will be shared at the MBC/MBE Leadership Summit in October.

Standards Document

The Board of Directors endorsed the *Standards for NCARB's Competency-Based Licensure Programs* document as the descriptive framework that will support Pathways to Practice advocacy efforts. This document is designed to provide a unified policy message and guidance that builds credibility when engaging with lawmakers and Member Boards on positioning jurisdictions to utilize the elements of the Pathways to Practice initiative. It also serves as a reference guide to promote consistent messaging and facilitate multi-state advocacy.

The document affirms the jurisdictional role of granting a license, confirms that future licensure assessments will align with the *NCARB Competency Standard for Architects*, defines eligibility requirements for licensure, and describes future competency assessments and their administration.

The Standards document will be shared with Member Board leadership in advance of the MBC/MBE Leadership Summit and discussed at the summit with Member Board attendees.

Advocacy Strategy

Vice President of Council Relations Josh Batkin shared an overview of the adoption strategy for Pathways to Practice at the jurisdictional level, including a summary of the research conducted to inform the strategy's direction and messaging. Batkin also highlighted key insights and considerations that shaped NCARB's advocacy approach.

In FY26, NCARB staff assessed each jurisdiction's statutes and regulations related to their suitability to adopt Pathways to Practice. NCARB worked with The Burson Group LLC to complete public opinion polling related to perceptions of professional regulation and reactions to potential changes in licensure pathways.

NCARB also worked with 50 State LLC to provide government relations support in developing and executing a strategy to pursue jurisdictional statutory and regulatory changes. As a result, NCARB will spend the upcoming fiscal year engaging with an initial set of jurisdictions on Pathways to Practice adoption. These jurisdictions were selected based on the extent of changes needed to adopt the future licensure program, individual legislative and political contexts, and overall political readiness. NCARB's Council Relations team will initiate contact with prioritized jurisdictions as Pathways elements come into further focus.

Communications

In preparation for the MBC/MBE Summit, Vice President McIntyre worked with the Board of Directors on their role in facilitating Member Board feedback regarding the Pathways to Practice assessment model, including reviewing likely questions that the membership might raise.

Member Board and Volunteer Satisfaction Surveys

CEO Armstrong and Vice President Batkin shared highlights from the most recent Member Board Satisfaction Survey. Released annually, the Member Board satisfaction survey gathers feedback from NCARB's membership on how effectively NCARB is meeting their needs across a variety of areas, including membership services, communications, and events.

Results from the FY26 survey demonstrated that overall member satisfaction and individual areas of satisfaction—such as sense of belonging, customer service, and advocacy—have increased from FY25. Technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) became the top priority for members, ahead of Pathways to Practice. In addition, seal fraud emerged as a new priority focus area. The Board will continue to use the results of the survey to ensure that NCARB is meeting member needs as effectively as possible.

The volunteer satisfaction survey addressed the culture of volunteer meetings, effectiveness of committee and task force leadership, and value of service. The results indicate improvement over FY25 results. In particular, a “gender gap” identified in last year’s survey has closed, with respondents indicating no difference regarding areas of inclusion, respect, and professionalism based on gender or other demographic categories. The overall results indicate a high degree of satisfaction regarding the NCARB volunteer experience.

Financial Update

Secretary/Treasurer Miguel Rodriguez provided a briefing on the state of the Council’s investment portfolios, the FY26 financial results from the fiscal year that ended on June 30, 2026, and an update on the first two months of the new fiscal year. Current trends suggest that NCARB is on track to meet its budgeted revenue and expense estimates for the year.

Additionally, the Board reviewed a report presented by Past President Ed Marley on trends in historical Board expenses, identifying key factors that contributed to higher and lower Board costs per fiscal year. The Board reflected on the fact that FY26 Board costs were below the established inflation-adjusted target due to several factors, including holding the April 2026 Board of Directors meeting at NCARB’s office in Washington, DC, and reducing travel overall.

Marketing, Communications, and Data Team

Closing out Thursday, Vice President McIntyre provided the Board of Directors with an overview of the functions and work assignments involving the Marketing, Communications, and Data team, explaining their contributions to the Council and areas of focus for FY27 and beyond.

Committee Chairs Engagement

To help keep the Board of Directors informed on the work of NCARB’s volunteer committees throughout the year, the Board received a read-ahead report on the progress of each committee’s charges, organized by Strategic Plan objective. In addition, several committee chairs joined the September Board meeting virtually or in-person for a more in-depth discussion on their work thus far. The Board heard from Janet Primiano, chair of the Credentials Committee; Bobbi Jo Duneman, chair of the NCARB Certification Task Force; and Ed Marley, chair of the Practice Focused Curriculum Task Force.

MBC/MBE Leadership Summit Preparation

On Saturday, Vice President Batkin prepared the Board for the upcoming MBC/MBE Leadership Summit on October 9-10, 2026, in Memphis, Tennessee. Leadership from 54 Member Boards (including a chair or chair’s representative, as well as a Member Board Executive) is expected to be represented at the summit—an event attendance record—which will create opportunities to clarify aspects of Pathways to Practice, including additional assessment tool details and implementation strategies. In addition, the biennial summit serves to strengthen relationships with Member Board leadership and gather insights related to NCARB’s priorities and future planning.

Professional Conduct Committee Recommendation

The Board approved a motion based on the Professional Conduct Committee's recommendation to reinstate a previously revoked NCARB Certificate under the reinstatement provisions in the *Professional Conduct Committee: Rules of Procedure*.

Reports

President's Report

President Rademacher provided the Board with an update on his activities since taking office, including: engagements with students at the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS) Grassroots Conference in Washington, DC; participation in the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB) Annual Meeting in Calgary, Alberta; and participation in the FY27 NCARB Leadership Institute meeting. Rademacher also led a town hall with NCARB staff in Washington, DC, and hosted the volunteer committee members kickoff, which provides an overview of NCARB's priorities for the year.

CEO Update

CEO Armstrong also fielded questions on topics covered in his view-ahead CEO Update video, providing an update on NCARB's programmatic activities, including the launch of the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) between NCARB and our counterparts in South Africa, Pathways to Practice updates, an upcoming continuing education webinar series for architects and NCARB Certificate holders taking place this fall, and more.