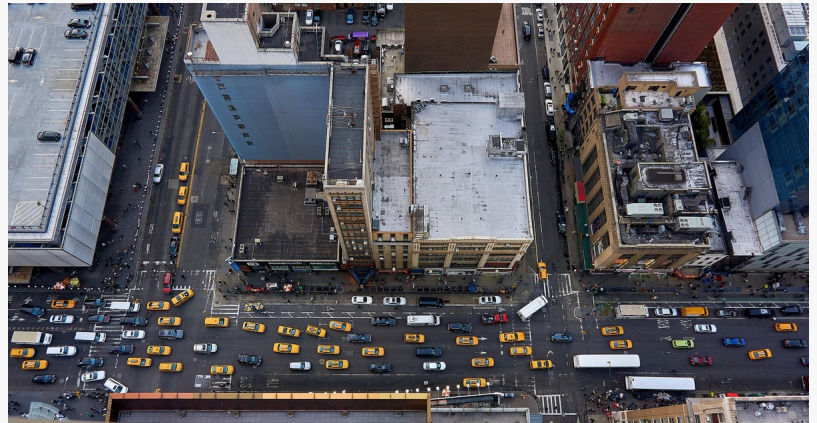


Raise the Rail and AIA New York Chapter to Address Suicide by Height in First-of-Its-Kind Roundtable

The Most Effective Suicide Prevention Tool Requires No Therapist, No Medication, and No One Else in the Room

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, September 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On September 10, 2026 — World Suicide Prevention Day — [Raise the Rail, Inc.](#) and the New York City Chapter of the [American Institute of Architects](#) will host Raising the Rail: Architectural Responses to Suicide by Height, a first-of-its-kind roundtable bringing together psychiatry, public health, and architecture to address one of New York City's most pressing and underacknowledged public health crises.



The only thing between this rooftop and the street is a building code that hasn't caught up. Raise the Rail is working to change that. www.raisetherail.org

New York City leads the nation in suicide by height, with a rate eight to ten times the national average — accounting for 20 to 25 percent of all suicides in the city. Yet no building code in the United States, including New York City's own, requires a guardrail higher than 42 inches. Window opening control devices are voluntary and apply only to apartments where children under ten reside. Small modifications to health and building codes will save lives.

The premise is both simple and counterintuitive: the most effective intervention in suicide prevention is passive, non-medical, and requires no one else to be present. It is lethal means safety — restricting access to objects, environments, and conditions people use to die by suicide. No therapist needs to be in the room. No medication needs to take effect. No one needs to dial a crisis line. A taller guardrail, a secured rooftop — these are silent, permanent, and indifferent to whether a person is in treatment or not.

This works because suicidal crisis is overwhelmingly [impulsive](#). Research shows that 24 percent of attempts occur within five minutes of the decision to act; 48 percent within 20 minutes; and 71 percent within an hour (Simon et al., Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior, 2001). Means

safety closes that window without relying on a person seeking help, accessing care, or responding to treatment.

The September 10 roundtable will bring this evidence directly to the architecture profession and the general public for the first time. Approved by the NYC AIA and submitted to AIA National for certification, the event carries 1.5 continuing education credits (HSW). Panelists include Michael Grunebaum, M.D., Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Columbia School of Medicine; Jill Harkavy-Friedman, Ph.D., SVP of Research at the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention; Kelli Peterman, Director of Suicide Prevention Initiatives at the NYC Department of Health; and Claire Weisz, FAIA, Cofounder of WXY Architecture + Urban Design. The roundtable is moderated by Ed Kopel, AIA, Founder and President of Raise the Rail, Inc.

The event takes place from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Center for Architecture, 536 LaGuardia Place, and is open to the public in person and via livestream.

The event is co-organized by AIA New York, AIA Brooklyn, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Hard Hat Courage, The Jed Foundation, Bridge Rail Foundation, SAVE-Suicide Awareness Voices of Education and CSPPI-Coalition for Suicide Prevention in Public Infrastructure.

To register, contact Ed Kopel at ek@raisetherail.org

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