



# **STRATEGIC PLAN 2025 – 2027**

Strategic Planning Retreat | November 2024

Board of Directors Adoption | March 2025

Prepared by The Three Aspens, Ltd. | Helene Combs Dreiling, FAIA, President | November 2024

## Strategic Planning Process

This Strategic Plan sets forth a set of goals, strategies, and tactics to propel AIA Ohio toward an ever-more-vibrant future as a statewide component of the American Institute of Architects.

The 2025–2027 Strategic Plan was developed and adopted in five broad steps:

1. Prior to the strategic planning retreat, the AIA Ohio President, President–elect, and Executive Director corresponded via email and meetings over several months with consultant Helene Combs Dreiling, FAIA of The Three Aspens, Ltd. to plan the retreat and articulate what the process means for future accomplishment.
2. Pre-retreat research included one customized survey tool:
  - A Member Survey conducted by the component invited the full membership to define their preferences relating to component service and support. A large representative sample of member feedback was received.
3. A strategic planning retreat for selected members of the Board of Directors and key invitees was held November 14–15, 2024, where the consultant facilitated discussions on what is working well, challenges to contemplate, and future aspirations for the component. During this collective session, the goals, strategies, and tactics began to take shape.
4. Based on key themes from the Member Survey and primary retreat outcomes, the facilitator/consultant prepared a draft strategic plan, with opportunities for amendments, alterations, and additions to be suggested by component leadership.
5. The Board of Directors adopted the 2025–2027 Strategic Plan at its meeting in March 2025.

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## AIA Ohio’s Mission and Vision

### **The AIA Ohio Mission:**

AIA Ohio advocates for the profession of architecture.

### **The AIA Ohio Vision:**

Advancing AIA Ohio and the profession through advocacy, leadership, and increasing value to members.

### **The Goals of AIA Ohio:**

Advance public awareness and appreciation for the profession of architecture.

Elevate member engagement.

Support and expand the influence of members and components.

## Strategic Planning Retreat Participants

### 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Meegan, AIA | President

Dave Robar, AIA | Treasurer

John Orsini, AIA | Past President

Jonathan Morschl, AIA | Alt. Director, Akron

Ted Ferringer, AIA | Director, Cleveland

Mike Vala | Alt. Director, Columbus

Bruce Sekanick, FAIA | Director, Youngstown

Mark Hensler | Junior EP Director

Alex Oetzel, AIA | YAF Rep.

Eric Pros, AIA | President-elect

Charles Setterfield, AIA | Secretary

Kate Brunswick, CAE, Hon. AIA | Executive Director

Karen Planet, AIA | Alt. Director, Cincinnati

Phil Riazzi, AIA | Director, Columbus

Joe Bissaillon, AIA | Director, Dayton

Zach Herbst, AIA | Senior EP Director

Arsenio Rodriguez, Ph.D., AIA | Schools Director

Brett Wedding, Assoc. AIA | NAC Representative

### INVITED GUESTS

Matt Toddy, AIA | AIA At-large Director-elect

Maddie Swain | Assn. Services Coordinator

Angela Mazzi, FAIA | AIA Ohio Secretary-elect

Helene Combs Dreiling, FAIA | Facilitator

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## Implementation of the 2025-2027 Strategic Plan

The 2025-2027 Strategic Plan is both aspirational and inspirational; as such, it serves as an active guide for component volunteer leadership and staff team members in the coming three-year time horizon. All of the goals, strategies, and tactics are intended to refine the focus of AIA Ohio by advancing the chapter's Mission, Vision, and Goals.

“Communication” was a key theme from the strategic planning process. Referenced in multiple ways regarding AIA Ohio's preferred future as an organization, the term included:

- **Communication** :: Strategically share news and information with **members** to convey the actions and accomplishments of AIA Ohio on behalf of its membership and stakeholders.
- **Communication** :: Engage with **early professionals** to help them realize that belonging to the AIA is not only relevant – but also essential – to their career development.
- **Communication** :: Ensure that the full membership is aware of **government advocacy** activities and successes across the legislative and regulatory arenas affecting the profession.
- **Communication** :: Coordinate with the seven **local chapters** to promote collaboration in service to and support of members ... and to eliminate redundancy and overlap of effort.
- **Communication** :: Elevate **public awareness** of the power of design and the role architects play in enriching a community's quality of life.

This 2025-2027 Strategic Plan continues a three-year cycle of planning exercises and documents. The plan offers a high-level overview of goals, strategies, and tactics that form a call to action for which volunteer leaders, the staff team, and members of AIA Ohio should work together toward implementation. Tactics within the plan may be considered the framework for a three-year Action Plan as well as an annual Operating Plan, which become the foundation for metrics and measurements of success.

**GOAL I. ENHANCE MEMBER ENGAGEMENT – Foster a greater sense of engagement by members through resources, programs, professional development, and recognition.**

A. **Members First.** Increase the impact of our members in their communities by providing thoughtful, innovative, and uplifting member-centric programming. .

1. Member Networks. Study opportunities to promote and/or elevate local component programming addressing project types, practice areas, or career stages.
2. JEDI Commitment. Consider, in all that we do, AIA Ohio's impact on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
3. Member Communications. Develop a quality communications program that keeps members informed of the work and accomplishments of AIA Ohio.

B. **Member Programs.** Meet members where they are, providing them with meaningful and compelling content to become stronger design professionals and more successful practitioners.

1. Soft Skills. Consider methods to provide professionals with more learning opportunities relative to business development, communicating effectively, and firm management.
2. Professional Stewardship. Act as stewards for the professional aspirations of AIA Ohio members in developing and promoting statewide professional development opportunities offered at all three levels of the AIA.
3. Statewide Event. Create a statewide event that promotes networking, advances knowledge, and elevates the value of the profession. Develop and adopt an event format that increases participation, creates anticipation, and satisfies member needs.

C. **Member Resources.** Become an unfailing resource for new graduates, associate members, young architects, and members of all career stages to serve as a platform for them to acquire valuable skills to positively impact society.

1. Leadership Development. Provide opportunities and training to cultivate new leaders from various backgrounds and experiences to advance the profession, promote the organization, and benefit communities.
2. Micro Volunteerism. Create avenues for all members, especially early professionals, to become active within the organization by offering engagement opportunities that require smaller commitments of time and talent.
3. Allied Organizations. Support the efforts of the AIA Ohio Foundation and ally with organizations and educational institutions in the development of programs, activities, and events to create an environment of support for students at accredited programs, non-accredited, and community college architecture programs.

**GOAL II. EXPAND GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY – Magnify the organization’s key role in legislative and regulatory affairs on behalf of members, architects, firms, and profession.**

A. **Government Affairs.** Advance the architecture profession in Ohio through advocacy, legislation, and placing AIA members in positions to lead public discourse.

1. Member Voice. As the leading voice in Ohio’s AEC industry, function as an integrator of the built and natural environment industries and continue to proactively participate in policymaking.
2. Proactive Policymaking. In addition to reacting to politics shaping the built environment, continue to take assertive actions in advocating for issues of importance to architects.
3. Trusted Advisors. For policy makers, state agencies, and other government entities, become trusted advisors on matters influencing the built environment.

B. **Advocacy Matters.** Expand the existing government advocacy committee to affect the highest possible outcomes and communicate successes and challenges.

1. Targeted Participation. Expand the membership and make-up of the Government Advocacy Committee and provide news and information to members on the work of the committee on a regular basis.
2. Architecture Advocates. Empower, equip, and enable members to grow the skill sets and confidence necessary to advocate for a better built environment to diverse audiences.
3. Advocacy Network. Continue to build and foster connections with members, stakeholders, allied professionals, agency staff, state office holders, and legislative aides to advance the profession of architecture.

C. **PAC Engagement.** Formalize the structure, organization, administration, and function of the AIA Ohio Political Action Committee (Ohio Architects PAC) to align with AIA Ohio's directives and state PAC laws.

1. Committee Formation. Develop rules, policies, member responsibilities management responsibilities, and leadership structure for the creation of the Ohio Architects PAC Committee.
2. Committee Fundraising. Develop an actionable and sustainable PAC fundraising strategy that will provide long-term support for Ohio's advocacy efforts.
3. Committee Oversight. Provide oversight to the Ohio Architects PAC to ensure compliance with AIA Ohio's objectives, state law, and fiscal regulations. Review and approve disbursements of funds to candidates for state office.

**GOAL III. ELEVATE THE PROFESSION – Advance public awareness of and appreciation for architects, the profession of architecture, and the built environment throughout Ohio.**

A. **Public Outreach.** Act as the bridge for past, present, and future architects to members of the public striving to enhance the built environment.

1. Define Audiences. Given the broadness of potential audiences, define potential direction and decide on content for each placement, increasing over time.
2. Educate Widely. Using a “What an Architect Does” framework, create design stories as shared by architects, other designers, clients, and those along the architecture continuum.
3. Promote Architecture. Leverage the relationship with the seven AIA local components in Ohio to share the importance of design and stress how spaces influence healthy communities.

B. **Communicate Broadly.** Through a refreshed website, updated member directory, and social media strategy, communicate to the larger public about the value architects afford society.

1. Online Refresh. Curate a refreshed digital presence for AIA Ohio by updating the website, enhancing (or combining) current member and firms directories, and targeted video usage.
2. Social Media. Consistently use AIA Ohio’s social media platforms to communicate with varying audiences and ages.
3. Coordinate Locally. Working with the seven local components throughout the state, coordinate messaging that benefits the state chapter, local components, and all members.

C. **Leverage Relationships.** As the premier entity for architects and industry-adjacent stakeholders in Ohio, partner with other organizations to advocate for and enhance the built environment across the state.

1. Strategic Alliances. Beyond the design and construction industry, nurture strategic alliances with others to benefit populations, keeping these associations mutually beneficial.
2. K-12 Programs. To satisfy both workforce development and client cultivation objectives, support local components in their outreach efforts to K-12 schools and administrators.

**GOAL IV. ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL VITALITY – Govern and operate AIA Ohio in a manner that aligns with association management and non-profit best practices.**

A. **Fiscal Responsibility.** Maintain and enhance AIA Ohio’s strong fiscal position while supporting members by providing relevant programs and services.

1. Financial Plan. Develop a short- and long-term strategic plan specifically related to finances, which should include parameters for deploying reserve funds most effectively.
2. Membership Insights. Monitor, understand, and anticipate changing member demographics to position AIA Ohio for long-term stability through membership retention and growth.
3. Non-dues Revenue. Define, expand, diversify, and explore an expanded set of revenue streams beyond membership dues, setting a higher net percentage goal over time.
4. Evaluate Programs. Create and implement an annual evaluation of both the value performance and financial performance of AIA Ohio programs and services currently being offered as well as those being considered.

B. **Connected Organization.** Improve and sustain cooperation, communication, and collaboration within AIA Ohio by developing a strong, interconnected membership to support AIA Ohio’s mission and vision.

1. Improve Communications. Provide board highlights, program information, and summary briefs to each board member to share with component leaders and members to improve board communications, advocacy efforts, and committee updates.
2. Member Voice. Establish open forums, meetings, programs, or webinars lead by board members that allow for two-way communication on important topics and board activities.
3. Share Knowledge. Sustain AIA Ohio’s role as a statewide connector with components.

C. **Governance/Support.** Ensure that the board and management function effectively as leaders dedicated to the success of AIA Ohio and its local components.

1. Board Transparency. Make the work of the board, committees, task forces, and other groups more transparent and efficient to best serve members and the profession.
2. Leadership Development. Grow current and future leaders through engagement opportunities in committees and strategic roles.
3. Leadership support. Explore opportunities to diversify and optimize AIA Ohio leadership through financial assistance to encourage participation and engage leaders. Develop policies for support that align with AIA Ohio’s goals.