AIA Ohio 2026 Conference
Nov. 12-13 | Columbus Hilton Downtown
Schedule of Events

Thursday, Nov. 12

10:00-11:00 a.m. Registration Open, 4th Floor Pre-function

11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. **Opening Session: Beauty Matters**, Kojo Kamau AB; *1.0 LU*

Beauty is often treated as something added after the fundamental problems of architecture have been solved. This presentation argues instead that beauty can emerge directly from how architects address health, safety, resilience, equity, affordability, and environmental performance. Through built work and research ranging from affordable and supportive housing to climate-adaptive buildings, streets, and public landscapes, Jeffrey Huber examines how daylight, shade, natural ventilation, landscape, material selection, social space, and resilient infrastructure can improve human well-being while responding to increasingly complex environmental and economic constraints. The presentation demonstrates how design excellence and public health, safety, and welfare can reinforce rather than compete with one another.

Presented by: Jeffrey Huber, FAIA, Brooks Scarpa Huber Architects

12:00-1:15 p.m. Lunch and TableTalks, Kojo Kamau C

Enjoy a casual lunch while learning about AIA committees, knowledge communities, collaborators, and allied organizations. Participating organizations include:

AIA Ohio Advocacy Program
AIA Ohio Disaster Assistance Program
AIA Ohio Early Professional Friendly Firm Program
AIA Ohio Honor Awards Program
AIA Ohio Valley College of Fellows
Cincinnati and Columbus COTE
NCARB/Ohio Architects Board
NOMA Columbus
Ohio Small Firm Exchange (SFx)

1:30-2:30 p.m. ***Designing Pathways: Community Benefits Agreements in Architectural Mentorship***, Kojo Kamau AB

How can the profession create greater awareness of architecture and provide meaningful mentorship and early exposure for those who may be interested in the field? Join AIA Ohio members with experience in mentorship and community engagement as we explore how Community Benefit Agreements can be used in collaboration with local governments, project owners, and communities to create opportunities for mentoring, career exposure, internships, and other pipeline initiatives. Learn how these agreements can connect architectural projects with broader community goals while introducing more students and emerging professionals to careers in architecture. Presenters: Marcus Henry, Implementation Vendor and Director of Programming, Next Generation Construction; Dave Robar, AIA, ACE Mentor Cleveland and AIA Ohio President-elect 1.0 LU/HSW

2:45-3:45 p.m. ***Municipal Sustainability in Action: How Ohio Architects Can Drive Local Climate Policy,*** Kojo Kamau AB

How can architects help communities turn ambitious sustainability goals into meaningful change in the built environment? Join municipal leaders, design professionals, and AIA Committee on the Environment advocates as AIA Ohio explores how local climate policies are shaping building standards, project opportunities, and design decisions across the state. Panelists will discuss how architects can respond to evolving municipal priorities, align sustainable strategies with client and community goals, and serve as trusted partners in advancing resilience, reducing carbon impacts, and strengthening communities through thoughtful design and civic engagement. Panelists: Ally Balmer, Assoc. AIA, Sustainability Specialist, MA Design; Cameron Gutherie, Assoc. AIA, Co-Chair, AIA Columbus COTE; Cassie Johnson, Columbus City Buildings & Energy Coordinator; Oliver Kroner, City of Cincinnati Director, Office of Environment & Sustainability 1.0 LU/HSW

4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. **LUs & Brews**, 4th Floor Pre-function

Join us at the Hilton for this fun event that includes snacks, drinks, and learning units! Participants choose to visit with different sponsors during the two-hour event, earning a nano CE credit and a drink ticket with each visit. It's a win-win! 2.0 LU

6:00 p.m.- 9:00 p.m. Awards Celebration, Kojo Kamau AB

6:00-6:45 p.m. – Dinner
6:45-8:00 p.m. – Awards Presentation including AIA Ohio Design and Honor Awards
8:00-9:00 p.m. – AfterParty Reception/Social Hour

Friday, Nov. 13

8:30-9:45 a.m. **Breakfast and AIA Ohio Annual Business Meeting**, Kojo Kamau AB

10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Offsite Tours

Tour 1: Walking Sketch Tour | 2.0 LU

On this tour, participants will explore the downtown area and work alongside seasoned Ohio sketch artists, developing sketches of area buildings and sites. Taking advantage of the urban setting, participants will receive tips and feedback on sketching techniques and how quick and simple sketches can be used to convey ideas and concepts as part of the design process. Revisiting this long-valued design tool, participants will gain a new respect for this traditional skillset.

Tour 2: Tower at North Market | 2.0 LU/HSW

Visit the Merchant Building, a new mixed-use high-rise that expands and reimagines Columbus's historic North Market district. Rising adjacent to the existing market, the project integrates residential, hospitality, retail, and expanded market uses within a dense urban site. The tour will explore the architectural and construction challenges of building a 32-story tower next to an active historic marketplace while creating a strong connection between new development, public space, and the existing North Market. Note: Participants for this tour ***will walk*** *to the Tower at North Market for the tour. It is approximately three-tenths of a mile, or a six minute walk. Additionally, Participants* ***will walk from the level 32 roof deck down to the ground floor****; some walking upstairs may also be required. Appropriate footwear is required. Other PPE will be provided.*

Tour 3: AEP Riverside Plaza Renovation | 2.0 LU

The AEP 1 Riverside Plaza Renovation effort celebrates 40 years of innovation and history in downtown Columbus and re-imagines the employee experience as we look towards the next 40 years. Catalyzed by the organization's return to office, key stakeholders at AEP partnered with BHDP, Korda, and Ruscilli to modernize the infrastructure of the building and to update the existing office design. The new floorplates will situate offices on the interior of the plan, filling the workspace with natural light, collaboration zones, and residential inspired lounge spaces. On the ground level, Employees and guests will be welcomed by a bright lobby and invited to explore the newly activated space. A new café, world class conferencing center, and countless meeting spaces are among the amenities that will energize team members and get them excited to come into work! Note: Participants for this tour ***will walk*** *to AEP for the tour. It is approximately six-tenths of a mile, or a twelve minute walk.*

Tour 4: Kroger Bakery Redevelopment | 2.0 LU/HSW

Explore the transformation of the former Kroger Bakery and Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant into a new mixed-use neighborhood. The project combines historic preservation and adaptive reuse with new residential construction, wellness uses, structured parking, and public open space. The tour will focus on the challenges of rehabilitating large industrial buildings, addressing existing conditions and environmental issues, integrating modern building systems, and preserving the character of historically significant structures. **Note: Transportation to the Kroger Bakery Redevelopment (457 Cleveland Ave.) is on your own. Participants are encouraged to rideshare, as there is very limited parking available.**

Tour 5: Continental Tower | 2.0 LU/HSW

The Continental Tower redevelopment transformed an approximately 550,000 SF historic office tower in downtown Columbus into a 409-unit mixed-use residential community. As construction manager, HGC Construction brought its solutions-oriented approach and experience in historic preservation and adaptive reuse to help navigate preservation requirements, modern building systems, structural improvements, and complex high-rise construction logistics. The tour will explore how the project team approached the technical and collaborative challenges of adapting an existing historic structure for a new use while contributing to the continued revitalization of the surrounding downtown. Note: Participants for this tour ***will walk*** *to the Continental Tour for the tour. It is approximately seven-tenths of a mile, or a fifteen-minute walk.*

Tour 6: Riverside Methodist Hospital | 2.0 LU

Opening in late Spring 2027, the new 595,000 SF Women's health center on OhioHealth's Riverside Campus in Columbus, Ohio is a single destination for women's inpatient, outpatient and community health services that brings together maternity, NICU, fourth trimester, OB/GYN, breast health and specialty care covering all stages of life. Using the concept of Woven, individual elements are brought together to create something stronger, combining structure and flexibility, strength and comfort. Woven expresses the interconnected nature of women's health, bringing people, care and community together to create a holistic experience of healing and well-being. NOTE: There is bus service arranged to take participants for this tour to Riverside.

12:00-1:45 p.m. **Lunch with Keynote Speaker: T+E+A+M: Academic / Practice,** Kojo Kamau AB
T+E+A+M is an architecture and design practice known for transforming unconventional materials, overlooked sites, and experimental research into new forms of building. This lecture traces the practice's development from academic inquiry and speculative work to constructed projects, community-based initiatives, and product development. Through projects such as Building in a Building *and* Post Rock*, the partners will discuss how existing buildings, material waste, and inherited conditions can become resources for new design approaches. Projects including* Community Build Kit *will examine how fabrication, assembly, and different forms of labor influence affordability, feasibility, and participation in the building process. Together, the work presents an expanded model of architectural practice in which the partners' internal design collaboration extends outward through participatory construction, industry research, product development, and teaching.* Presenters: Adam Fure and Meredith Miller, 1.0 LU

2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. ***Advocacy and Civic Leadership in the Built Environment***, Kojo Kamau AB
How can architects and community leaders advocate for stronger communities and a better built environment? Join elected officials, candidates, architects, and civic leaders as AIA Ohio explores the many ways individuals can advance the goals of the profession through public service and community involvement. From serving as a citizen architect or elected official to participating on boards, commissions, and local initiatives, panelists will discuss why they choose to lead, how the built environment influences the decisions they make, and how architects and community members can use their experience, perspective, and voices to shape the future of their communities. Presented by: Bob Fiala, AIA, Mayor, Willoughby, Ohio; Shannon Hardin, Columbus City Council President; Lyndsey Stough, AIA, Candidate, Ohio's 44th House District; Moderated by Bruce Sekanick, FAIA; 1.0 LU

3:15 p.m.-4:15 p.m. ***Pathways to Practice: Exploring the Future of Architectural Licensure,*** Kojo Kamau
How might new pathways to licensure expand opportunity while maintaining rigorous professional standards? Join representatives from NCARB, Ohio's licensing board, education, and architectural practice for a panel discussion on competency-based licensure. Explore how candidates could demonstrate readiness for practice through different combinations of education and experience, what these changes could mean for aspiring architects and firms, and the questions our profession must address as this work moves forward. Panelists: Christi Amato, Ph.D., Dean of eLearning, Sinclair Community College; Michelle Cohn, Assistant Vice President, Programs: Assessments; Shannon Himes, Executive Director, Ohio Architects Board; John Rademacher, AIA, President, NCARB; and TBD; Moderated by Charlie Setterfield, AIA, President, AIA Ohio 1.0 LU/HSW

4:30 p.m. **Informal Happy Hour**