

February 20, 2025

Report

from the Strategic Council

From:

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To:

AIA Michigan

Mission: *The AIA Strategic Council advances the architectural profession by informing the AIA Board and other Institute bodies about important professional issues, opportunities, and threats. The Council has an outward and forward-focused vision with an emphasis on long-term goals and outcomes.*

What Does the Strategic Council Do? To learn more about the role and activities of the Strategic Council, click [HERE](#).

From the Councilor

I'm excited to share this report with AIA Michigan members as it includes 'Climate Corner: Designing for Urban Heat', a brief 2-page guide from the Strategic Council's group on Climate Responsive Design and Leadership. Each year the Strategic Council has evolved, becoming more organized and effective as a research group for the organization. Sharing the results of our studies directly with members for their use and benefit is a big step forward, and I hope you find it beneficial.

This year, I'm a member of the Architect of the Future study group. I'm also serving as the Strategic Council liaison to the Young Architects Forum (YAF) and had the opportunity to join their Annual Meeting in Dallas in early February. After spending time with this incredible group of talented, ambitious, and driven professionals it's impossible not to be optimistic about the future of our profession.

I am your representative on the Council – please reach out to me to share your thoughts and perspective on any of the study group topics.

From the Moderator + Vice Moderator

The Moderators and President-Elect Azaroff, FAIA recently reviewed Board feedback on the January Council Memos; that feedback has been distributed to the study groups to help enhance and refine their areas of focus. As we look towards the end of 2025-Q1, all study groups are finalizing their particular areas of study based on preliminary investigations and feedback from the Board.

As many of you know, 2025 is the 10th anniversary of the Strategic Council. We have a dedicated group of 2024 Bethune Fellows who have volunteered to strategize anniversary celebrations. Stay tuned for more information and ways you can share your Council stories.

We extend a heartfelt congratulations to Councilors Garfield Peart, FAIA and Jeffrey Seabold, FAIA, who were recently elevated to Fellowship!

The Council has onboarded liaisons from AIAS, NAC, and YAF - we are grateful for their participation and insights across our seven study groups!

We are looking forward to our upcoming Spring Council assembly on March 5th where we will continue to explore, collaborate, and refine each group's area of study.

Jessica M. O'Donnell, AIA 2025 Moderator + **Abigail R. Brown**, FAIA 2025 Vice Moderator

*Special thanks to our **committee chairs** who help guide our work and inform our decision-making process: **Jeff Seabold**, AIA (Best Practices Committee Chair), **Mary Womble**, AIA & **Marc Mondor**, AIA (Communications Co-Chairs), and **Mike Daly**, AIA (Elections Chair).*

Council News

THE COUNCIL WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU

One of our initiatives this year is to not only to continue sharing out what the Council is working on, but also provide increased opportunities for people to meaningfully engage in our work. The survey below will provide key data points to assist our study group's efforts. Please take 5 minutes to fill out this survey and feel free to share this with your networks!

The survey can be found [here](#).



STUDY GROUP UPDATES

****These updates are a current snapshot of each study group and are not all-inclusive of work done to date or work planned for the coming months****

AIA of the Future is wrapping up an informal SWOT analysis and obtaining feedback from various internal AIA sources, such as volunteer leaders and CACE, as well as external sources including NOMA and ASLA.

Architect of the Future is in the midst of their 'Discover, Gather, Inspire' phase to help them envision the profession 20 year from now. By integrating equity, wellbeing, and the business of architecture into their study group framework, they hope help AIA shape a future where architects are seen not just as designers but as key agents of societal progress.

Climate Responsive Design & Leadership is collaborating with CCADE, COTE, and other KCs to identify, curate, and amplify the information that practitioners need to realize the vision of Design

Excellence established by the Institute. Next steps include integrating 'what's on the horizon' within this climate lens.

Connected Communities is collaborating with the AIA Advocacy team and the Government Affairs Committee (GAC) to look at the impact and perspective Chief City Architects can bring to the topic of equity in housing. The group is also assessing the implications of technology on housing equity and potential collaboration opportunities with Communities by Design and AIA Trust.

Digital Architecture is advancing the AI Resolution to help ensure AIA takes a leadership role in shaping AI adoption, ethics, and industry guidelines. In the coming weeks, they will explore various avenues including AI ethics, authorship, contracts, and business implications.

Resilient Practice Models is exploring 'research in practice' and how firm culture catalyzes evolution of practice. They will be collaborating with the AIA Research department and the Digital Architecture study group as they outline their next steps.

10-year Valuation and Future Blueprint is utilizing AI to help synthesize past Council work and has reviewed both the Council bylaws and Members Voice Task Force findings. Next steps include analysis of this information and exploration of potential future improvements to the internal Council framework and final report outlines.

ENHANCE YOUR SUSTAIN-ABILITIES

The future is now when it comes to facing challenges related to extreme weather conditions around the globe. Our 2025 Climate Responsive Design & Leadership Study Group has created the attached 'Climate Corner' 2-pager to offer actionable steps anyone can take today and reminders of key resources that exist to assist your efforts. This month's topic: Designing for Urban Heat.

Institute News

AIA RESPONSE TO EXECUTIVE ORDERS THAT AFFECT OUR PROFESSION

The AIA responded to the recent executive orders from the White House that present challenges to the profession, including withdrawing from the Paris Agreement and ending federal EDI programs.

The complete response can be found [here](#).

AIA ELEVATES 93 ARCHITECTS TO THE COLLEGE OF FELLOWS

The AIA is elevating 83 member architects and 10 non-member architects to its College of Fellows. Less than 3% of AIA members hold the prestigious FAIA designation, which recognizes exceptional work and contributions to architecture and society. Congratulations to all the new Fellows!

The complete list can be found [here](#).

2025 AIA TRUST COMPONENT GRANTS PROGRAM

The [2025 AIA Trust Component Grants Program](#) supports component projects, conferences, and publications that help to foster leadership, advance management education, and increase the effectiveness of professional practice.

The deadline for completed applications to be received by the AIA Trust for consideration is close of business on **Monday, April 14, 2025**.

EIGHT AIA MEMBERS DECLARE CANDIDACY FOR THREE OFFICES

The following members have declared their intent to pursue the offices of At-large Director, Treasurer, or President-elect at the AIA Conference on Architecture & Design 2025:

At-large Director (one will be elected): Adam Viorel Pantelimon-Negrut, Intl. Assoc. AIA; Jason Takeuchi, AIA; Jeff Pastva, FAIA; Stephanie Leedom, AIA

Treasurer: Brad Benjamin, AIA; Lisa L. Kennedy, FAIA

2026 President-elect: Timothy C. Hawk, FAIA; Yiselle Santos Rivera, AIA

More information about the candidates and the AIA Annual Business meeting can be found [here](#).

Upcoming events

Date	Event	Location	Link
June 4-7	AIA Conference on Architecture & Design 2025	Boston, MA	Early Access for Tours
July 16-17	Architects in Action	Virtual	
November 3-5	Women's Leadership Summit	Atlanta, GA	
December 3-5	AIA Governance Week	Washington, D.C.	

For more events, visit the AIA events page at: <https://www.aia.org/community/events>

Feedback

We value your input! If you have questions or ideas for the Strategic Council, email us at StrategicCouncil@aia.org. To learn more about the work of the Strategic Council, please visit the [Strategic Council webpage at AIA.org](#).

Attachments

- Climate Corner: Designing for Urban Heat – February 2025 Edition