



January 1, 2026

Welcome to 2026! Alas, we still don't have flying cars, space colonies, or bio-engineered replicants.

I want to begin the year by expressing my sincere gratitude to our past and current leadership team: Ben Barlage, AIA; Melinda Joseph-Dezarn, AIA; Tina Ash, Assoc. AIA; and Eric Zabilka, AIA. A special thanks also goes to Kelly Ives, AIA, CAE (EVP), and Josh Ives, AIA (Outreach Coordinator), whose dedication, and behind-the-scenes work keep AIA Kentucky running smoothly and effectively. Finally, I extend my appreciation to all our AIA Kentucky Board Members, who continually share their time, expertise, and passion to move our organization forward.

We closed out a strong 2025, and I'm energized by what lies ahead in 2026. Key upcoming events include the AIA Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C., February 11–14; Architecture Week, April 12–18; and the AIA Conference on Architecture & Design in beautiful San Diego—my old home—June 10–13. We also look forward to our signature state events: [Legislative Day](#), the AIA Kentucky Conference, our Code Webinars, and the continued success of the Christopher Kelly Leadership Development Program.

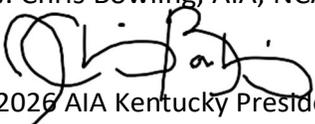
In late 2025, we completed a revision of our Strategic Plan. You should have received a postcard with the new plan last month, and it is now available on our website under [Resources](#). The plan covers 2026–2030 and focuses on three core priorities: **Voice, Value, and Visibility**. In today's changing professional landscape, our collective voice and presence are more important than ever.

AIA Kentucky remains financially strong, maintaining a balanced budget and continued growth in our investments. The ExCom has been responsible and thoughtful stewards of our resources.

In closing, I am honored to serve as your AIA Kentucky President for 2026. I welcome your feedback, your ideas, and your partnership as we work together to strengthen our organization. *You*—our members—are what make AIA Kentucky exceptional, and I look forward to all we will accomplish together in the year ahead.

Best Regards,

J. Chris Bowling, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP+B



2026 AIA Kentucky President