



Strategic Council Update

Leadership Exchange Call - March 2025



The Strategic Council

72

Council Members

- Representative from each state + DC, Puerto Rico and International Region
- 9 At Large Representatives
- CACE President-Elect
- AIA President-Elect & Past President
- NAC Representative
- AIAS President-Elect

“The Council identifies upcoming industry opportunities, helping AIA stay at the forefront of global conversations while empowering members with the resources to navigate the future.”

<https://www.aia.org/about-aia/leadership/aia-strategic-council>

The Strategic Council


Upcoming Elections:

- 2026 Strategic Council Moderator, AIA Board At-Large Director
 - Nominations open Late May (Voting by Council in July).
- Strategic Council At-Large Representatives
 - Nominations open Late July (Voting by Council in September).
- Details posted to Council KnowledgeNet & aia.org once finalized.

Goals:

- Increase awareness and engagement in elections.
- Improve campaign processes and accessibility.
- Ensure transparency and equity in the process.

Our Ask of you:

- Share nomination opportunities.
 - Encourage diverse candidates to apply.
- 

The Strategic Council

- Emphasis on communicating out and engaging members throughout the year
 - Please help share the Council work updates.
- Focus on sharing past initiatives and study reports more broadly
- Continuing to strengthen connection to AIA Board
- 2025 is the 10th anniversary of the Council!
 - For all Bethune Fellows: keep an eye out for a short survey from Muza Conforti. Please respond to that survey promptly.

AIA Strategic Council Year In Review 2024

Explore a full breakdown of the AIA Strategic Council's progress and initiatives in 2024, including study group executive reports on climate, AI, equity, well-being, and the value of architecture.

[Download the report](#)

Progress and initiatives

Explore the AIA Strategic Council's initiatives over the years:

[2024](#)

[2023](#)

[2020](#)

[2019](#)

[2018](#)

2025 Study Groups

AIA of the Future

Paolo Campos

Robert Easter

Ashley Thornberry

Heather Wilson

Ignacio Reyes

Nathan Kalaher

Sarah Broughton

Scott Gaudineer

Thierry Paret

Winston Thorne

YAF-Chelsea Davidson

NAC-Rachel Wiesbrook

AIAS-Hudson Meyn

Architect of the Future

Trevor Anderson

Tony Rangel

Angie Brooks

Brien Graham

Eugenio Ramirez

Greg Galbreath

Kathy Hancox

Leah McMillian

Patty Boyle

Randy Palculict

Steven Alano

Stephen Panzarino

Saakshi Terway (NAC)

YAF-Alex Oetzel

AIAS-Vivian Rendon

Climate Responsive Design & Leadership

Gwen Fuertes

Matthew Green

Ben Ward

Corey Squire

Jean Carroon

Kimberly Dowdell

Rebecca Fletcher

Richard Polk

Sheldon Pennoyer

Tim Lock

Verity Frizzell

Gilberto Lozada Báez (AIAS)

YAF-Erin Agdinaoay

NAC-Ifreet Rahima

AIAS-Juanita Libreros Foronda

Connected Communities

Bruce Herrington

Stephanie Leedom

Andre Brumfield

Galen Lif

Jamie Crawley

Jason DeMarco

Matt Hutchins

Marc Mondor

Mary Womble

Ryan Morse

Trey Wheeler

YAF-Brady Laurin

NAC-Cooper Moore

AIAS-Kody Cheung

Digital Architecture

Michael Daly

Leap Chear

Ayo Yusuf

Lewis Miller

Matthew Breakey

Melissa Schulteis

Nathalia Ellis

Peter Wehner

Tommy Watts

Wellbe Bartsma

YAF-Matt Jennings

NAC-Chien-Yi Chu

AIAS-Kinda Hawash

Resilient Practice Models

Leah Bayer

Laura Wake-Ramos

Leanne Meyer-Smith

Molly Jacobs

Peggy McDonough-Jan

Tom Hysell

Rex Cabaniss

YAF-Andrew Gorzkowski

NAC-Christine Olshan

AIAS-Emily Yeow

10 Year Valuation & Future Blueprint

Matthew Barnett

Garfield Peart

Gloria Kloter

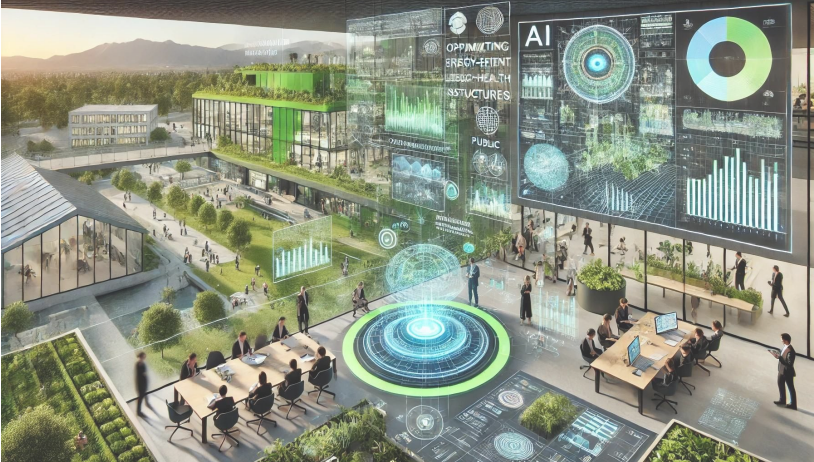
Hallie Crouch

Jeff Seabold

Shannon Christensen

Tim Lock

Strategic Council: Updates & Engagement



AI-generated image with Chat GPT prompted by Wellbe Bartsma. "AIA of the Future" study group captures a visionary AIA headquarters where architects and leaders collaborate on strategic planning, sustainability, and inclusivity, shaping the profession for the years ahead."



*Paolo Campos
Robert Easter*

Ashley Thornberry
Heather Wilson
Ignacio Reyes
Nathan Kalaher
Sarah Broughton
Scott Gaudineer
Thierry Paret
Winston Thorne

*YAF-Chelsea Davidson
NAC-Rachel Wiesbrook
AIAS-Hudson Meyn*

The Big Idea:

To elevate the relevance of AIA to our members, to the profession, and to society at large, so the voices and work of architects lead the way towards the development of a more sustainable and equitable built environment.

Work in progress

- Receiving and analyzing **SWOT** analysis surveys conducted with members, components, and component executives, as well as allied organizations.
- Requested member surveys and reviewing the Members' Voice Task Force Recommendations.
- Looking outside the profession at the structures, missions and strategies of other professional organizations.

What's on the horizon...

- How do we position AIA and our members to thrive in an era of disruption and uncertainty?
- How does AIA broaden its umbrella of influence through expanded membership opportunities and core services? (Collaboration with Staff)
- Influence the development of the next AIA Strategic Plan- how does the work of this study group impact that Plan and the next five years of the AIA.
- How will this group's efforts shape AIA beyond the next five years?

AI-generated image with Chat GPT prompted by Wellbe Bartsma. "Architect of the Future" study group envisions a futuristic architectural think tank where architects evolve into societal leaders, leveraging history, technology, and new roles to shape the profession over the next 20 years."

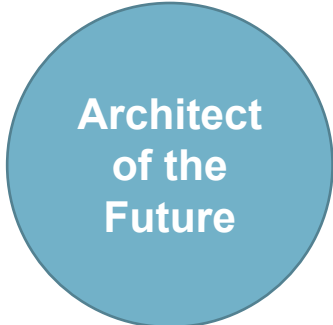


Architect of the Future

- Trevor Anderson
- Tony Rangel
- Angie Brooks
- Brien Graham
- Eugenio Ramirez
- Greg Galbreath
- Kathy Hancox
- Leah McMillian
- Patty Boyle
- Randy Palculict
- Steven Alano
- Stephen Panzarino
- Saakshi Terway (NAC)

- YAF-Alex Oetzel
- AIAS-Vivian Rendon

The Big Idea: Redefining the 'Architect of the Future,' by envisioning the profession 20 years from now through a multi-generational lens. To illuminate how architects can better serve communities, adapt to emerging challenges, and enhance their value in an ever-changing world. To shape a future where architects are seen not just as designers but as key agents of societal progress.

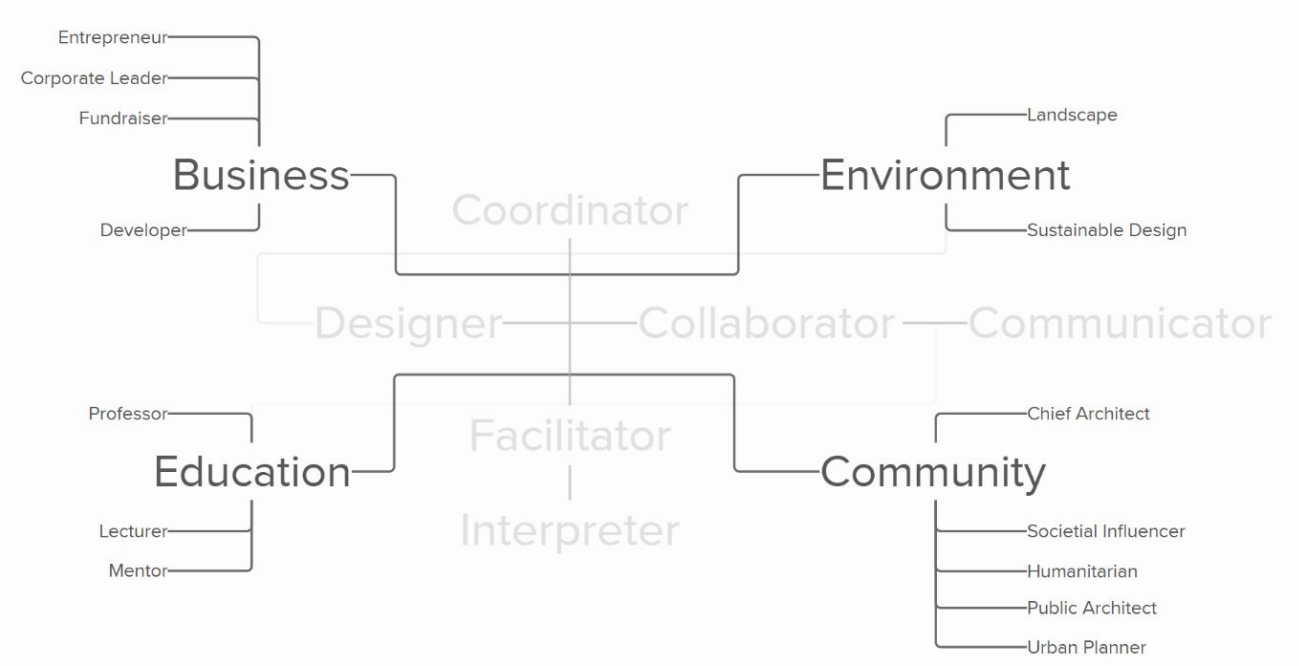


Work in progress

Prior to looking forward, we must first research and understand the present and the past. This will provide different “perspectives” or lenses in which we not only focus our work this session but provide guidance to future efforts.

- How have architects impacted the profession in a unique or new way?
- What services have been provided that are non-traditionally viewed as “the role of the architect”
- How have others paved the way for new opportunities where an architect can make a difference.

What’s on the horizon...





Climate Responsive Design & Leadership

- Gwen Fuertes
- Matthew Green
- Ben Ward
- Corey Squire
- Jean Carroon
- Kimberly Dowdell
- Rebecca Fletcher
- Richard Polk
- Sheldon Pennoyer
- Tim Lock
- Verity Frizzell
- Gilberto Lozada Báez (AIAS)
-
- YAF-Erin Agdinaoay
- NAC-Ifreet Rahima
- AIAS-Juanita Libreros Foronda

The Big Idea: Identify and curate the information that practitioners need to realize the vision of Design Excellence. Address multiple relevant and important topics simultaneously, enabling and nourishing climate-responsive design and leadership within firms, forecasting future impacts. Amplify and collaborate with other AIA KCs to deliver information to members through the Strategic Council communication network.

Work in progress


February issue of “Climate Corner” is available on aia.org (March issue is forthcoming!)

https://www.aia.org/sites/default/files/2025-02/Climate%20Corner%20-%20Designing%20for%20Urban%20Heat_Feb%202025%20%281%29.pdf

What’s on the horizon...

Multiple topics will be addressed this year that address current strategies and forecast future impacts; urban heat, water sufficiency, adaptive reuse and many others.

CLIMATE CORNER



Addressing urban heat through design is an equity issue as much as it is a health issue.

The impact of extreme heat is more pronounced in urban areas and vulnerable populations are most at risk.¹

Designing for Urban Heat

Heat waves are on the rise, posing a risk to nearly everyone

Incidences of heat waves are on the rise around the world, posing a risk to nearly everyone. This invisible extreme weather event does not have the dramatic imagery of hurricanes or floods, but the impact is far more deadly.

More weather-related fatalities are caused by extreme heat than all other events combined.

In 2022, Europe experienced more than 70,000 excess deaths² over that hot summer and in 2023, the United States attributed more fatalities to heat than to all other extreme weather events combined.³


The impact of extreme heat is more pronounced in urban areas where the heat island effect of hard surfaces further increases the temperature and holds onto heat through the night, limiting the ability of our bodies to recover before the next hot day. Like other extreme weather impacts, vulnerable populations are most at risk, including older adults, those who live alone or in unstable housing, and people



| Weather Event | 2023 | 50-Year Average (1984-2023) | 90-Year Average (1948-2023) |
|---------------|------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Heat | ~450 | ~150 | ~100 |
| Other | ~100 | ~100 | ~100 |


who live in the hotter (typically lower income) parts of a city. For this reason, addressing and mitigating urban heat through design is an equity issue as much as it is a health issue.⁴

Luckily, the design strategies that effectively address urban heat are simple and easy to deploy at both the site and building scales. It's essential that architects understand and leverage these strategies to project the health, safety, and welfare of the public, especially those who are most vulnerable.




Holgate Library, Portland OR
BORA Architecture & Interiors

Heat reduction strategies include a tight, well insulated enclosure, 0.29 WWR, and minimal glazing on the East and West facades.



Site & Community Strategies

- Plant trees! Trees will cool the air through evapotranspiration, shade windows to decrease cooling load, and shade hardscape to decrease heat island effects. Choose native species that will provide a shade canopy. The more and larger trees, the better.
- Minimize onsite hardscape in favor of planted areas and provide shading where hardscape is necessary.
- Significantly minimize paved surface parking, which is especially problematic when dark and unshaded, as is the current norm. Use light surface colors and shade necessary parking, but first find ways to cut down on parking area.
- Avoid artificial turf which can get as hot as asphalt in sunny conditions and contribute to heat island effect.
- Incorporate new green spaces into the urban fabric, particularly in low-income or minority neighborhoods, and provide park amenities to encourage their use.⁵



Building Strategies

- Select windows with solar heat gain coefficient (SHGC) and reflectivity matched to the local climate and keep window-to-wall ratios in check, particularly on west-facing facades.
- Provide and locate operable windows to maximize night-time natural ventilation potential during cool night hours.
- Choose a massing design that minimizes envelope area or provides self-shading.
- Provide exterior and/or interior shading for glazed openings.
- Choose exterior roof finishes and colors with a high solar reflective index (SRI).
- Provide continuous insulation and air barrier around the thermal envelope and properly air seal.

Additionally, in multifamily projects:

- Provide occupant education on how to operate housing units during an extreme heat event and on the resources that are available to occupants during a blackout.
- Provide a community resilience hub with back up cooling, supplies, and refrigeration in case of a blackout during a heat wave.⁶

How to Track Progress

The AIA Framework For Design Excellence⁷ already offers several measurable criteria to help designers assess the heat implications of their work. While it may seem counterintuitive, Measure Three, Design For Ecosystems holds the key to leveraging many beneficial site strategies. Keep in mind, humans are also part of the ecosystem, and many of the same interventions that benefit other species benefit us as well! Paying attention to the percentage of paved area, particularly asphalt; vegetated area is paramount.

Additionally, many of the strategies which effectively yield positive-impact results in Measure Six, Design For Energy, help combat urban heat. Architects should pay close attention to the quantity of windows and the type of glass used, along continuity of the thermal envelope and shading of the building itself. If well-orchestrated, a design tuned to reduce energy use will also reduce urban heat.

Designing for Urban Heat Conclusion


None of the strategies that protect the public from extreme heat is novel, complicated, or expensive. Most are just a rehashing of what we already know to be the foundation of good design, but this should not detract from their importance. Over the previous half century, architects have often disregarded these best practices, resulting in hot cities and dangerous buildings.

As temperatures continue to rise over the life of the buildings that we're designing today, it's up to architects to respond and anticipate accordingly. Protecting the public from the risks that we know are coming is one of the primary responsibilities of design today.

AIA

Climate Corner
February 2025 Edition
Developed by the AIA Strategic Council





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AI-generated image with Chat GPT prompted by Wellbe Bartsma. "Connected Communities" study group captures architects working collaboratively with public agencies and private organizations to create equitable, walkable, and tech-integrated communities. The image highlights the architect's role in leading public infrastructure and urban development while ensuring technology benefits all.



Connected
Communities

Bruce Herrington
Stephanie Leedom

Andre Brumfield

Galen Lif

Jamie Crawley

Jason DeMarco

Matt Hutchins

Marc Mondor

Mary Womble

Ryan Morse

Trey Wheeler

YAF-Brady Laurin

NAC-Cooper Moore

AIAS-Kody Cheung


The Big Idea: Architects use 'design thinking' to address challenges. By engaging public agencies, the public at large, and private sector organizations, architects advance overall well-being and create well-connected communities through: Planning and design of **housing** with equity; Application of **technology** to help (not harm) communities & Advocate and facilitate the community's vision as **Chief Architect**.

Work in progress

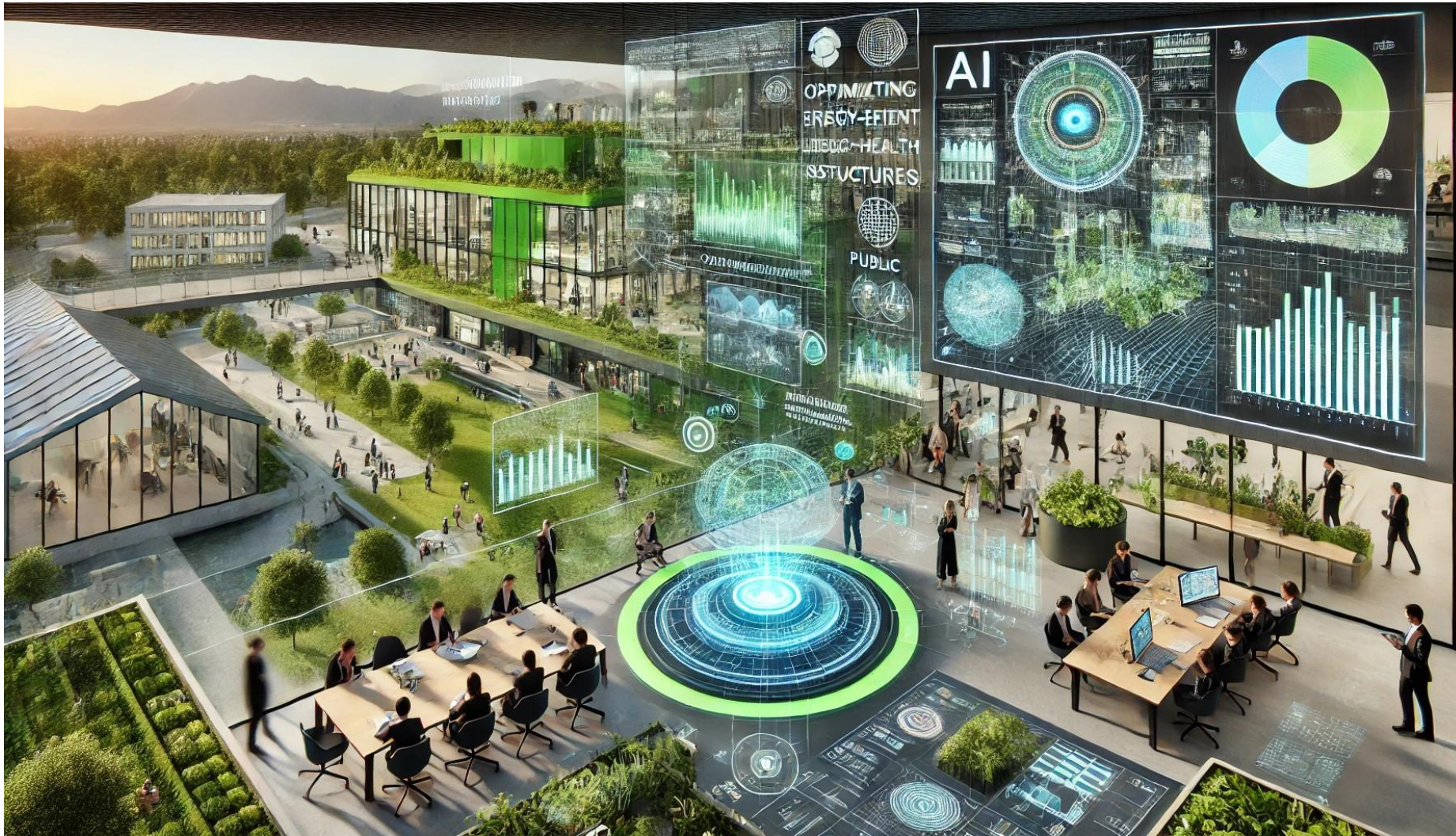
- **Housing/Equitable Communities** – Collect case studies of communities with broad-based equity programs, and develop a planning process, tools, or technology applications that enable equity, livability and walkability
- **Technology** – Investigate the benefits & burdens of artificial intelligence, and apply them to present & future communities
- **Chief Architect** – Enhance value to communities (of all sizes) by advocating and facilitating public realm and infrastructure projects to meet the community's vision

What's on the horizon...

Architects should continually search for means to improve cities and communities...

- To ensure the initiatives/developments equitably benefit all
 - To balance the positive/negative aspects of technology as the use of AI becomes more prevalent
 - To establish and maintain the architect's role as leaders in community governance and decision-making
- 

AI-generated image with Chat GPT prompted by Wellbe Bartsma. "Digital Architecture" study group illustrates AI and architects working together on sustainable design, firm structures, and urban planning, while also touching on ethical and regulatory challenges.



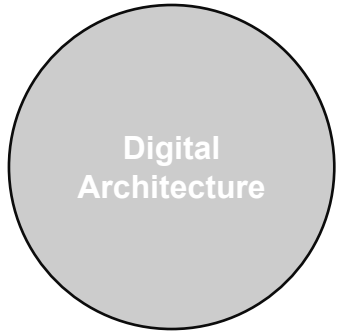
Digital Architecture

*Michael Daly
Leap Chear
Ayo Yusuf
Lewis Miller
Matthew Breakey
Melissa Schulteis
Nathalia Ellis
Peter Wehner
Tommy Watts
Wellbe Bartsma*

*YAF-Matt Jennings
NAC-Chien-Yi Chu
AIAS-Kinda Hawash*

The Big Idea:

AI is reshaping architecture and we are identifying ways AIA should and can lead in ensuring its ethical, equitable, and sustainable adoption.



Work in progress

In addition to submitting an AIA Resolution on AI in Q1 2025, our focus is on the impact of AI on workforce structures, human-centered design, and industry policies while aligning with AIA's forthcoming 18-month AI Action Plan.

Cross-Collaboration Opportunities:

- Resilient Practice Models: Exploring AI-driven firm structures and workflows
- Climate Responsive Design: Assessing AI's sustainability impact
- Connected Communities: Using AI for public health and urban planning insights

What's on the horizon...

Over the next 2-5 years, AI will redefine design, business, and regulation in architecture.

- AI as a Design Partner: *Enhance creativity or replace roles?*
- Licensing & Liability: *Who owns AI-generated designs?*
- Workforce Disruption: *Impact on entry-level architecture jobs?*
- Sustainability vs. Energy Demand: *Is AI's footprint a net benefit?*
- Big Data & Urban Planning: *Can AI predict and shape communities?*
- AI Governance: *Will AIA regulate AI or leave it to firms?*

We are tackling these questions to ensure AIA (and architects) proactively drive AI's future within our industry.



Resilient Practice Models

Leah Bayer

Laura Wake-Ramos
Leanne Meyer-Smith
Molly Jacobs
Peggy McDonough-Jan
Tom Hysell
Rex Cabaniss

YAF-Andrew Gorzkowski
NAC-Christine Olshan
AIAS-Emily Yeow

The Big Idea:

Support practice evolution to help firms thrive amidst some of the largest economic, environmental, and social challenges facing the profession in the next 20 years through three areas of focus: External Pressure, Internal Pressure and Professional Pressure



Work in progress

- **External Pressure:** Research history and trends in *regulation* impacting practice on federal, state, and local levels, and governing bodies. Studying *drivers for service* needs/demand, *reduction of economies*. Evaluating impact of *fast culture* on client expectations.
- **Internal Pressure:** Exploring how firms navigate *leadership transitions* and *cultural continuity* via research, engagement, and case studies to identify *best practices*, common *challenges*, and *innovative strategies*.
- **Professional Pressure:** *Hosting a roundtable* of practitioners and academics leading research in practice to *identify trends, challenges, and opportunities* for AIA to support, advance & make research accessible, leverage AI, and advance the Architectural Research Agenda

What's on the horizon...how might we...

- Become a go-to voice and experts in land-use & environmental policy?
- Steer regulations to protect HSW while also streamlining processes?
- Claim architecture adjacent services as our own “basic services”?
- Change the narrative/reality around our value?
- Entice more (and more diverse) people into the profession, and keep them throughout their careers?
- Create firm cultures that are supportive, healthy, equitable, and fulfilling?
- Develop well-rounded, successful business leaders?
- Secure a reputation as leaders in science & tech on par w/ other STEM?
- Leverage real, current data to back up our design decisions?
- Form stronger partnerships and collaborations to elevate the whole?

AI-generated image with Chat GPT prompted by Wellbe Bartsma. "10-Year Valuation and Future Blueprint" study group. It captures a council of architectural leaders reflecting on past progress while shaping a strategic vision for the next decade, with holographic displays, data analysis, and governance discussions.



10 Year Valuation & Future Blueprint

Matthew Barnett

Garfield Peart

Gloria Kloter

Hallie Crouch

Jeff Seabold

Shannon Christensen

Tim Lock

The Big Idea:

Assess the Strategic Council's original intent, ongoing effectiveness, impact, challenges, and aspirations to strengthen and align the expectations of members, leaders, and councilors, paving the way for a prosperous strategic future. In short, we will define the "Who - What - Why" of the next 10 years.

Work in progress

ACCESS

- Review organizational structure and current by-laws
- Review the past 10 years of Council recommendations
- Review membership surveys (MVTF and 2025 AIA Member Survey)
- Conduct interviews of current and previous leaders (perception vs reality)
 - key stakeholders: Board, Strategic council & State leadership

ANALYZE

- What does it all mean? Successes and challenges.

RECOMMEND

- Define the future of the Strategic Council & coordinate with Governance Task Force

What's on the horizon...

The future Strategic Council