

ARCHITECTURAL **ALLIANCE**

Sustainability Action Plan

AIA 2030 Commitment



Leadership Letter

Architectural Alliance recognizes our opportunity and responsibility as design professionals and community leaders to reduce the built environment's impact on climate change and to lessen our strain on finite natural resources. With our Sustainability Action Plan we are committing the firm's time, expertise and resources to creating a more sustainable future.

To respond to this complex challenge we are advancing a comprehensive and holistic plan to advocate for and execute sustainable design. To ensure success we include actionable goals for all facets of our practice. Our action plan expands on current goals related to sustainability, knowledge building, design excellence, business strategy and operations.

Embedded within this plan is a deeper commitment by Architectural Alliance to evidence based design, collaboration with our allied partners, research and innovation, and advocacy for higher performing buildings and environments. The challenge before our profession is both sobering and exciting. Embracing this complex reality will yield a richer designed environment and livable, sustainable communities. This is the future that Architectural Alliance is committed to creating.

Sustainable development is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs .” - Brundtland Report



Since 1970, Architectural Alliance has provided planning, architectural and interior design services at the local, national and international level. We are industry leaders in collaboratively developing environments that are functional, attractive and sustainable. We are committed to advancing our clients' goals through sustainable design, strategic partnerships and superior project delivery.





Action Plan

Architectural Alliance acknowledges that sustainability must be a holistic process touching every aspect of our business and operations.

- **Sustainable Design Goals:** Develop environmentally responsible designs that create healthy buildings and sustain a healthy world.
- **Staff Training and Education:** Maintain a current and deep base of sustainable design knowledge among all design staff.
- **Design Process:** Integrate sustainability throughout the office and in collaboration with our partners.
- **Sustainable Operations:** Reduce impacts of firm operations regarding energy, water and resource use, transportation, etc.
- **Business Strategy:** Communicate, internally and externally, the impact of buildings on the environment and how Architectural Alliance can help create designs that are at once practical, beautiful, and sustainable.



“Architectural Alliance will develop environmentally responsible designs that create healthy buildings and sustain a healthy world”
- Architectural Alliance Vision Statement

Sustainable Design Goals

- Integrate sustainability in all design work, business practices and firm culture. Sustainability must be a part of routine practice alongside, and integrated with, function, aesthetics, budget, etc.
- Lead our profession in transforming the building industry and the built environment to serve today’s needs while preserving the ability of future generations to serve their needs.
- Maintain a current and deep knowledge of sustainability issues among all design staff.
- Benchmark all projects against green building evaluation frameworks, whether seeking certification or not, and to the extent possible seek a minimum level of LEED Silver.
- Design projects to reduce fossil fuel use in alignment with the goals of the 2030 Challenge.



Staff Training & Education

Maintain a current and deep base of sustainable design knowledge among all staff.

- Provide an annual allowance of dollars and hours for all design staff to use toward continuing education.
- Require all design staff to engage in AIA- or GBCI-certified sustainable design related education to a specified annual level.
- Support all design staff to be LEED Professionals.
- Maintain membership in the U. S. Green Building Council, and support staff involvement in USGBC-MN and other sustainability-related organizations and activities.
- Sponsor participants to attend GreenBuild and similar conferences, with the expectation that attendees share knowledge gained via in-house presentations.
- Host noon-time presentations by in-house or visiting experts focusing on sustainability topics, fostering an open exchange of ideas. Conduct design-phase project pin-ups for all office staff, promoting understanding of how sustainable strategies and ideas are applied.



Design Process

Promote a holistic approach to sustainability throughout the firm and in collaboration with our partners.

- Follow an integrated design process, engaging the whole Design Team and all Stakeholders from early in the process.
- Track building performance from initial targets through conceptual and advanced design, and when possible into occupancy.
- Utilize energy modeling, internally and in collaboration with partners, increasing our understanding of expected energy performance and conservation opportunities.

Initial Design:

- Identify green building opportunities and establish baselines and performance goals, in concert with Stakeholders and the Design Team.

Early Design:

- Explore and develop green building focus areas, and integrate them into metrics such as LEED or the Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines.
- Document green design strategies to communicate with the Design Team and Stakeholders.

Advanced Design:

- Track designed performance against established benchmarks. Report Energy Use Intensity and/or Lighting Power Density to the AIA 2030 program.
- Develop life cycle analysis of materials and systems.
- Analyze return on investment with advanced modeling to help facilitate decision-making.

Post Design:

- Track actual performance as compared to designed performance, and follow up with commissioning as needed.
- Conduct post-occupancy evaluations.



Operations

Establish sustainable operations plans aimed at reducing the impact of firm operations on energy, water and resource use, transportation, etc.

Energy Use:

- Collect and compile annual gas and electricity usage data to calculate our annual Energy Use Intensity (EUI) using Energy Star. This provides feedback on energy conservation efforts and helps inform planning.
- Purchase only equipment and appliances that meet Energy Star qualifications.

Waste Reduction and Supplies:

- Reduce paper consumption by having network printing defaults on all printers to print double sided.
- Purchase only office furniture that conforms to LEED CI standards.
- Purchase only cleaning supplies that conform to LEED O&M standards.
- Leverage digital communications to reduce use of paper.

Transportation:

- Reduce the use of private cars for project meetings and staff errands by providing bicycles for staff use.
- Reduce the use of private cars for commuting by providing shower and changing rooms to encourage bicycle and pedestrian commuting options, increasing staff health and well-being through exercise.
- Facilitate carpooling by means of a staff carpool map, and by allowing use of company cars to travel to meetings.

Meetings:

- Subscribe to and utilize video conference services to reduce air travel and private car use.

Business Strategy

Communicate, internally and externally, the impact of buildings on the environment and how Architectural Alliance can help create designs that are at once practical, beautiful, and sustainable.

Communication:

- Develop marketing materials that promote our green building portfolio and highlight our sustainable design experience and abilities.
- Prepare materials to assist design staff with communicating sustainable building strategies and the benefits of green design.
- Communicate Architectural Alliance's sustainable design philosophy, operational and design efforts in external and internal communications.

Awareness:

- Ensure all staff are familiar with the firm's efforts and vision regarding sustainability.
- Engage in studies and research to advance green building and promote awareness among staff and clients.

Advocacy:

- Educate clients regarding the importance of sustainable design and the opportunities present in every project.
- Promote staff involvement in professional, building industry, and community organizations that promote environmental responsibility.



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