



AIA HONOLULU

2026 – 2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Overview

In July 2025, the American Institute of Architects, Honolulu Chapter (AIA Honolulu) contracted Nā Hopena Consulting LLC as a partner to renew the organization’s four-year Strategic Plan. Through a six-month planning process, AIA Honolulu developed goals, objectives, and key activities in support of its mission and members. The planning process was led by the Strategic Planning Committee and incorporated an all-member survey, two planning sessions, and a review process.

AIA Honolulu’s strategic goals are centered around the three priority areas described in the organization’s purpose language.

Goal 1 | Community: AIA Honolulu inspires the community to take pride in architecture.

Goal 2 | Knowledge: AIA Honolulu fosters engagement around sharing expertise.

Goal 3 | Advocacy: AIA Honolulu positions architects as thought leaders in all aspects of the built environment.

Considerations

The following key factors were taken into consideration throughout the process:



Alignment with mission and purpose



Reflective of what members need and value



Staff and volunteer capacity



Avoid duplication of efforts

Terminology

Goal: A high-level, aspirational statement about what AIA Honolulu aims to achieve in the next four years.

Objective: A key effort that will contribute to a corresponding goal (may have an internal and/or external focus).

Key Activities: Activities that support achieving an identified objective, which in turn supports a goal.

ORGANIZATION

Structure

AIA Honolulu is a Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. A 501(c)(6) non-profit corporation, AIA Honolulu represents and serves over 800 member architects, associates, and allied design professionals across the islands of O’ahu, Hawai’i, and Kaua’i. AIA Honolulu and AIA Maui are local entities, overseen by the AIA Hawai’i State Council (AIA Hawai’i).

Mission

AIA National: AIA is Architects — the community of architects, joining together to accomplish things individual architects cannot do alone.

AIA Honolulu: AIA Honolulu strives to meet the needs of our members and in doing so to shape our communities through good design. We view thoughtful planning and collaborative leadership as critical to our shared successes.

Purpose

AIA Honolulu exists to help each other put our talents to work to create better places for people to live, work and play through:

Community: Building a healthy and welcoming profession

Knowledge: Sharing experience and wisdom

Advocacy: Extending the influence of our profession’s values



Context

As 2026 marks the AIA Hawai’i’s Centennial, this is an exciting time to sketch out the next iteration of the membership organization’s work. With 100 years of experience and a new generation of emerging architects, AIA Honolulu is poised to continue its legacy of shaping Hawai’i communities through good design.

PLANNING PROCESS

Approach

AIA Honolulu's Strategic Plan is responsive to a range of themes that arose throughout the planning process. Amidst a wide variety of member perspectives and interests, the Strategic Plan articulates high-level, shared priorities that will reinforce the value of AIA Honolulu and the value of the profession.

2025 July

To inform the planning process, the Strategic Planning Committee and Nā Hopena Consulting LLC reviewed existing AIA Honolulu documents such as the 2022 – 2025 Strategic Plan and previous member input.

2025 August

A 15-question survey was released to all members in late August. Members were given one month to respond. AIA Honolulu issued various reminders throughout the survey period, and elevated the survey at the Annual Meeting. The survey closed with a total of 94 respondents, approximately 12% of membership. Survey results were used to inform planning sessions.

2025 November

AIA Honolulu's planning process incorporated two planning sessions. The first session, held in November, included the Strategic Planning Committee as well as the 2025 and 2026 Board of Directors. The second session, held in December, consisted of the Strategic Planning Committee and the Executive Committee.

2025 December

A draft of the Strategic Plan was shared with the Board of Directors and additional stakeholders to solicit feedback for incorporation.

2026 January

The final draft was presented to the Board. As in previous years, AIA Honolulu's Executive Vice President will work with the Board of Directors and Committee Chairs to develop action plans that will support implementation of the Strategic Plan.

STRATEGIC GOALS

COMMUNITY

GOAL #1: AIA Honolulu inspires the community to take pride in architecture.

KNOWLEDGE

GOAL #2: AIA Honolulu fosters engagement around sharing expertise.

ADVOCACY

GOAL #3: AIA Honolulu positions architects as thought leaders in all aspects of the built environment.

Goal #1: AIA Honolulu inspires the community to take pride in architecture.

Objective 1.1

Increase feeling of belonging and connection amongst existing members and the next generation

Key Activities

- Build an inclusive culture that values every voice
- Celebrate professional milestones throughout members' careers
- Strengthen onboarding pathways for new members
- Recognize and elevate emerging talent
- Create diverse opportunities to connect based on varying engagement styles
- Expand geographic reach to unite practitioners across all islands

Objective 1.2

Improve leadership engagement at the Committee and Board levels

Key Activities

- Refine committee structures to maximize impact and value
- Empower chairs to shape meaningful committee initiatives
- Create intentional pathways from committee work to Board leadership

Objective 1.3

Expand creative opportunities for the public to experience architecture and the profession

Key Activities

- Host engaging public events that showcase architectural excellence
- Build collaborative experiences with cultural and civic partners
- Create impactful public installations that inspire community pride
- Foster meaningful connections with K-12 students and youth

Objective 1.4

Build out external partnerships

Key Activities

- Connect with professional organizations for shared learning opportunities
- Collaborate with educational institutions/organizations to engage the student community
- Strengthen collaboration with Hawaii Architectural Foundation to expand community impact
- Enhance scholarship programs that support future architects

Goal #2: AIA Honolulu fosters engagement around sharing expertise.

Objective 2.1

Provide forums for emerging and experienced voices

Key Activities

- Create dynamic forums for exploring emerging topics and technologies (e.g., AI)
- Foster intergenerational dialogue where diverse voices share mana‘o and experience
- Establish knowledge-sharing platforms that highlight member expertise and innovations

Objective 2.2

Strengthen a culture of cooperation and collaboration to benefit the profession as a whole

Key Activities

- Build awareness of AIA’s mission across public and private sectors
- Launch collaborative workshops that demonstrate the power of collective action

Objective 2.3

Provide cross-professional exchange opportunities

Key Activities

- Build strategic partnerships for unique cross-professional experiences
- Strengthen relationships through shared professional development events (e.g., PBX)
- Sustain meaningful mentorship programs that connect across experience levels

Objective 2.4

Increase internal awareness of AIA Honolulu’s priorities and successes

Key Activities

- Communicate organizational priorities transparently to the broader membership
- Celebrate member achievements through consistent newsletter communications

Goal #3: AIA Honolulu positions architects as thought leaders in all aspects of the built environment.

Objective 3.1

Prepare members to be advocates

Key Activities

- Equip members for meaningful civic leadership roles
- Engage County and State legislators on critical issues affecting the profession
- Advance architectural advocacy through State Advocacy Day

Objective 3.2

Serve as an advocate between government bodies and architecture professionals

Key Activities

- Build meaningful relationships with government officials and agencies
 - Establish regular dialogue with planning departments and civic leadership (e.g., mayors and county department heads)
- Support government agencies with development of proposals

Objective 3.3

Elevate the voice of architects to the public

Key Activities

- Provide expert perspective on critical built environment issues
- Demystify the profession by helping the public understand what architects do
- Establish visible community touch points that make architecture approachable (e.g., design 101 sessions)

SUMMARY

AIA Honolulu Strategic Plan 2026 – 2030

MISSION:

AIA Honolulu strives to meet the needs of our members and in doing so to shape our communities through good design. We view thoughtful planning and collaborative leadership as critical to our shared successes.

PURPOSE:

AIA Honolulu's strategic goals are centered around the three priority areas described in the organization's purpose language:

Community - Building a healthy and welcoming profession

Knowledge - Sharing experience and wisdom

Advocacy - Extending the influence of our profession's values

GOAL 1 | COMMUNITY

AIA Honolulu inspires the community to take pride in architecture.

Objective 1.1: Increase feeling of belonging and connection amongst existing members and the next generation

Objective 1.2: Improve leadership engagement at the Committee and Board levels

Objective 1.3: Expand creative opportunities for the public to experience architecture and the profession

Objective 1.4: Build out external partnerships

GOAL 2 | KNOWLEDGE

AIA Honolulu fosters engagement around sharing expertise.

Objective 2.1: Provide forums for emerging and experienced voices

Objective 2.2: Strengthen a culture of cooperation and collaboration to benefit the profession as a whole

Objective 2.3: Provide cross-professional exchange opportunities

Objective 2.4: Increase internal awareness of AIA Honolulu's priorities and successes

GOAL 3 | ADVOCACY

AIA Honolulu positions architects as thought leaders in all aspects of the built environment.

Objective 3.1: Prepare members to be advocates

Objective 3.2: Serve as an advocate between government bodies and architecture professionals

Objective 3.3: Elevate the voice of architects to the public

CLOSING

The Chapter Centennial presents an opportunity to reflect back on the successes, joy, and growth of the architecture community while also looking forward to serving the local community through design.

As part of the planning process, session participants were asked to bring a photo of a project that is reflective of creating better places for people to live, work, and play, harking back to AIA Honolulu's purpose language. Participants shared a variety of photos, ranging from smaller community spaces to mid-sized headquarters to large, multi-purpose public projects.

These examples served as "Blueprint Inspiration" for the planning process. As a result, AIA Honolulu's approach emphasizes community access, celebrates transformational projects, and is driven by collaborative efforts. While the Strategic Plan may evolve in response to shifting conditions, it serves as a strong foundation for AIA Honolulu's work.

While AIA National has not yet released its official Strategic Plan, initial information suggests there is strong goal alignment between AIA Honolulu and AIA National. This Strategic Plan enables AIA Honolulu members, committees, leadership, and partners to move forward together, as they celebrate 100 years of working to create better places for people to live, work, and play across Hawai'i.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AIA Honolulu Members

AIA Honolulu extends a warm mahalo to its 800+ members - who bring the organization's work to life - and in particular to individuals who were able to complete the member survey, sharing valuable input to help guide the strategic planning process.

Additional Contributors

Special thanks to those who participated in the review process, providing feedback on the draft Strategic Plan: Committee Chairs, Student Representatives, State Council, and the Hawaii Architectural Foundation.

Board of Directors

Mahalo nui to both the 2025 and 2026 Board of Directors for the mana'o they shared in the planning sessions as well as the review process.

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