




SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

AIA 2030 Commitment

01.2022



**POSITIVELY
AFFECTING
PEOPLE IS THE
MOST IMPORTANT
THING WE DO.**

GBBN END OF YEAR MEETING

Living this belief means creating and restoring buildings where people thrive. We recognize our responsibility to design a better world and we delight in the opportunity to shape our environment for the future. Our vision is a practice where our passion for environmental stewardship, focus on human-centric design, and technical tenacity combine to foster a holistic culture of design excellence. People are at their best in healthy and supportive environments, and we have a plan to create the specific high performing space to meet each client's needs.

At GBBN, we've made a commitment to enhance the performance of our designs and business operations for all the people who use our spaces and our colleagues. By signing the American Institute of Architects' 2030 Commitment, we pledge to design all our buildings to be net zero energy by 2030. We're acting on the AIA's challenge and eager to collaborate with clients to create places that benefit both people and the planet.

As a member of the Cincinnati 2030 District, we are committed to reducing the energy use, water consumption, and transportation emissions of our office 50% by the year 2030.

GBBN's Sustainability Action Network

Each of us has a role to play when it comes to designing and advocating for a sustainable, resilient, healthy, equitable world. That's why we formed our Sustainability Action Network (SAN). Led by GBBN's Director of Sustainability and Resilience, SAN is an inter-office network of GBBNers (from design, to marketing, to operations) who work to disseminate their knowledge, experience, and expertise throughout the company, so our goals and best practices find every corner of our work. Signing on to the AIA 2030 and designing buildings that use less energy than they produce is a challenge GBBN is embracing.

Focus groups across all offices (with over 85% participation), client and consultant conversations, and a review of our current design process and business operations have informed this document. It will be updated every three years.



GOALS

As part of our goal to create sustainable and resilient buildings and meet our AIA 2030 commitments, we sought input from across GBBN to help define our sustainability values and translate those values into action through →



A Design Process that connects environmental metrics and design from a project's earliest stages through all phases of development.

Metrics that help us evaluate design strategies and inform decision making by revealing the impact design has on building performance, with an emphasis on carbon emissions and occupant well-being.

Community Engagement through an active voice for sustainability, resilience, and inclusion.

Training and Education to further expertise, support professional development, and meet building performance targets.

Firm Operations that reflect our commitment to sustainable design and resilience through environmental stewardship, staff well-being, and social justice



DESIGN PROCESS

1. Integrate Principles
2. Establish Goals
3. Model Performance

01 Integrate principles of “design excellence” into client communication and presentations

- Identify GBBN as a firm that views “sustainable design” as an integral component of “good design” and acknowledges the impact buildings have on people and their environment
- Advocate for sustainability and wellness opportunities in interviews and introductory meetings by sharing our sustainability approach and firm commitments to minimize our impact
- Devote time in pre-design phases to align GBBN and client goals regarding project performance and operations
- Create visual language (GBBN-specific graphics, diagrams, and icons) to support sustainability objectives for client presentations and interviews
- Follow GBBN Sustainability Integration Process document for specific tasks, team responsibilities, and timing

02 Establish clear, measurable sustainability goals and specific performance targets with clients and consultants on each project

- Perform climate analysis and opportunity assessment during Concept or Schematic Design phases
- Define sustainability, resilience, and inclusivity goals during Schematic Design and include in project documentation and narrative (target EUI/LPD, target gallons of water/SF/year, and daylighting metrics, etc.)
- SAN attendance at “milestone” team meetings
- Establish milestones for SAN review and incorporate benchmarks through our Quality Assurance, and Quality Control process

03 Model Performance on all projects

- Require early design energy modeling and building performance simulations (including daylight analysis, radiation, glare, energy use, and systems) on all projects
- Expand in-house modeling capabilities for early design phases
- Write design and compliance energy modeling scope into consultant contracts
- Establish what is measured and how feedback is processed as part of Project Architect’s workplan
- Share energy modeling processes and results with clients at project milestones



METRICS

1. Inventory Projects
2. Establish Road Map

01 Inventory current projects

- Gather predicted Energy Use Intensity (pEUI) on all applicable projects and model it on those where consultants cannot provide this data
- Track additional data as per AIA's Framework for Design Excellence and project goals

02 Establish road map for incremental improvement against goals

- Report project performance to AIA Design Data Exchange (DDX) and at GBBN quarterly all-company meetings
- Create methodology for sustainability feedback: data sharing, Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE), internal research
- Use Cove.tool and DDx data to benchmark the performance of our portfolio and set targets for improvement

The image shows a bright, modern interior space with large white structural columns and a colorful floor with blue, green, and orange patterns. A woman in red scrubs is walking in the distance, and children are visible near a large window on the left. A large black text box is overlaid on the left side of the image.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1. Broadcast Commitment
2. Collaborate for Innovation
3. Engage Organizations

01 Broadcast our commitment and look for opportunities to share progress

- Share methods for improving occupant well-being through design and operations strategies, including the application of third-party wellness certifications such as Fitwel and WELL
- Capitalize on in-house initiatives, such as the Design Issues Series (DIS), Design Expedition (DX), and Design Fellowship to demonstrate our approach to design for sustainability, resilience, and inclusion

02 Collaborate with like-minded consultants, community organizations, and municipal agencies to generate innovative thought and local opportunities.

- Develop a more active sustainability voice in conferences, and publications, social media
- Share projects, insights, and lessons learned regularly on our website and other digital platforms
- Support staff presentations of our work and ideas related to building performance and occupant well-being

03 Engage organizations that shape the built environment to advocate for sustainability

- Encourage staff to serve on advisory committees of nonprofit boards of local and national sustainability, wellness, and green building organizations
- Participate in local government committees and task forces that develop codes and policies



TRAINING & EDUCATION

1. In-house Advocacy
2. Connect Teams
3. Support Accreditations

01 SAN to lead in-house advocacy for sustainable design and high-performance buildings

- Conduct regular workshops, focus groups, and surveys
- Develop a Sustainability Integration Process for teams
- Share knowledge and engage staff by interacting with internal groups and departments like project managers, project delivery group, and markets.
- Provide regular updates via internal company website, external website, GBBN insights, market advances, project manager/project architect meetings, project delivery group meetings, and quarterly firm-wide meetings
- Use DIS, DX, and Design Fellowship to test ideas
- Share pEUI/LPD and other project performance data internally for healthy competition
- Exert “constant gentle pressure” on project teams to integrate sustainability design into our design and Quality Assurance & Quality Control process

02 Connect project teams to specific skills and expertise

- Create a library of climate data and simulations
- Create a materials database of contents and material disclosures of products

03 Support sustainable design and wellness accreditations

- Provide internal work sessions and study materials for exams
- Reimburse staff for achieving specific credentials



FIRM OPERATIONS

1. Measure Carbon Footprint
2. Develop Carbon Emissions Reduction Plan
3. Assess Waste
4. Focus on Well-being
5. Support Social Equity

01 Measure our Carbon Footprint

- Report 2021 greenhouse gas emissions generated to operate our offices
- Measure 2022 greenhouse gas emissions from power generated to operate our offices, business travel, and commuting
- Minimize waste

02 Develop Carbon Emissions Reduction Plan

- Establish firmwide targets for reducing our carbon footprint
- Create an implementation plan

03 Assess Waste

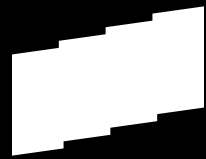
- Perform waste audits in each office
- Review procurement policies

04 Focus on well-being of staff

- Continued commitment to health and wellness initiatives
- Encourage active design in offices
- Improve office biophilia

05 Support firmwide social equity effort via sustainability lens

- Work with Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to develop a firmwide plan for justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Coordinate with human resources on sustainability related policies



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