

State Repositioning Results in Lower Dues and Enhanced Advocacy

AIA members in the state of Washington will soon start seeing big changes. AIA leaders across the state have been focused on the goal of improving the AIA for all members. These changes will directly benefit members in Seattle, and launch a new era for AIA in Washington State.

What has happened?

Representatives from across the state have met regularly over the past two years, supported by a grant from AIA National, to refocus and restructure AIA Washington Council. The Council Board of Directors has unanimously voted to support these changes, as has a full membership vote at the Council's special meeting in May.

A new, more focused mission for AIA Washington Council. The Council has revised its mission to focus exclusively on advocacy at the state level.

A new structure for the Council Board of Directors. The Council Board has been reduced from 16 positions to 8. Four of these board members represent AIA Seattle members, who are the majority of members in the state. The remaining four board members represent AIA Spokane, AIA Central Washington and AIA Southwest Washington.

Creation of Seattle's Northwest Washington section. Across the state, smaller chapters are consolidating with larger ones to reduce the number of separate corporate entities representing members. In January, AIA Northwest Washington will relinquish its separate corporate status and become a section of AIA Seattle. This consolidation reduces bureaucracy and overhead, but still allows members in the Northwest section (Whatcom, Skagit, Island and San Juan) to host their own programs, awards, and member events.

Relocation of the Council offices. In January, AIA Washington Council moved its offices to the new Center for Architecture & Design in Seattle. This puts the Council closer to members than it was in Olympia, and takes advantage of the efficiencies of a shared office space and collaborative staff.

How do these changes benefit AIA Seattle members?

AIA Seattle has advocated for changes to better serve our members, and to build stronger relationships with members across the state. Improvements to AIA Washington Council were part of AIA Seattle's five-year strategic plan. AIA Seattle members will benefit in several ways:

Effective advocacy. With a renewed and singular focus on state advocacy, AIA Washington Council is free to pursue a honed legislative agenda without distraction. A new Government Affairs Council, comprised of interested members from across the state, will advise the Council on positions and actions about a raft of issues, from energy

and carbon regulations to taxation to design services procurement. Working with a professional lobbyist, and supported by the AIA Washington Political Action Committee (PAC), Washington Council is poised to make major progress on the state issues that matter most to members.

Efficient organization. The new AIA Washington Council is significantly streamlined, with a smaller board, leaner staff, and reduced overhead. New leadership has invested time and energy to ensure that the Council is fiscally stable, efficiently run, and purposeful.

Lower dues. A leaner, more efficient organization allows the AIA Washington Council to lower dues by \$45 per registered architect member in 2017.

Equitable representation. AIA Washington Council's new board composition means that AIA Seattle members, who comprise 80% of statewide membership, are more proportionally represented. At the same time, the new structure ensures that local chapters within our state collaborate and reach consensus on major policy issues.

Consistent member service. By combining chapters within the state, members of smaller chapters will benefit from the vast array of member services and support that larger chapters can offer.

What's next?

By-Laws revisions. AIA Seattle members need to vote on changes to our By-Laws to allow our new Northwest Washington Section to have a seat on our Board of Directors. Revised By-Laws will be sent to the members for a special online vote in October.