

2015-2017



STRATEGIC >>>> PLAN

BUILDING ON OUR SUCCESS >>>

Since 1993, Green Building Alliance (GBA) has served the Pittsburgh region as a national leader in healthy and high-performing buildings and places.

GBA has built upon our exceptional track record, renewed our focus on program innovation, and moved beyond just buildings to expand our work's impact on a community scale. GBA is demonstrating the value of "going green" to an increasingly broad market, advancing the goal of making healthy, high-performing buildings available to everyone. Our successes during these past three years have enhanced GBA's legacy as a national innovator in the green building sector, expanded our impact in the Pittsburgh region, and strengthened the organization.

What We've Accomplished

In 2012, based on an in-depth and comprehensive strategic planning initiative, we reworked our vision and mission, as well as developed a set of core values to guide our work. With a renewed focus, GBA successfully implemented several key new initiatives, including the Pittsburgh 2030 District, Green & Healthy Schools Academy, Knowledge Network, and Inspire Speakers Series.

What We've Learned

During 2014, we worked with Jackson/Clark Partners to develop an updated strategic plan. The planning process included interviews and collaborative sessions with our staff and board, key external partners, and both local and national thought leaders.

During the process, we determined that GBA's current direction remains inspiring, provides important focus, and allows an opportunity to leverage our accomplishments, credibility, and organizational strengths to broaden the impact of our work. Over the next three years, we will pursue the following goals that further our existing vision and mission:

About GBA >
Green Building Alliance is a nonprofit organization that inspires the creation of healthy, high-performing places for everyone. One of the oldest regional green building organizations, GBA was founded in 1993, was the first U.S. Green Building Council affiliate, and is now a USGBC chapter. Headquartered in Pittsburgh and serving the 26 counties of Western Pennsylvania, we advance our mission through four main initiatives: Knowledge Network, Pittsburgh 2030 District, Green & Healthy Schools Academy (GHSA), and Policy & Advocacy efforts.

2015–2017 GOALS >>>

- **Advance the region's standing** as a green building leader with GBA as the "go-to" provider for green building education, knowledge, and support.
- **Provide leadership** by integrating issues of health, resiliency, and innovation in the building product industry into GBA's key initiatives (Green & Healthy Schools Academy, Pittsburgh 2030 District, Knowledge Network, Policy & Advocacy).
- **Increase our effectiveness** by expanding the scale of GBA's impact from buildings to neighborhoods, communities, cities, and regions.
- **Influence the development of local and statewide policies and the direction of local projects** by renewing GBA's policy and advocacy efforts.
- **Innovate within the context of Pittsburgh's sustainability and resiliency efforts** by elevating one of GBA's early-stage projects to a larger aspirational effort.

Our Vision

The places where we live, work, learn, and play will be healthy and high-performing.

Our Mission

GBA inspires the creation of healthy, high-performing places for everyone through leadership that connects knowledge, transformative ideas, and collaborative action.

In short, we Educate, Collaborate, and Advocate on behalf of healthy and high-performing buildings. As you succeed, we Celebrate your success stories.

Our 2015–2017 Strategies

- Strengthen our position as the “go-to” regional resource regarding healthy and high-performing buildings.
- Stay focused on healthy and high-performing spaces, both new construction and existing buildings.
- Simplify, define, and communicate what healthy and high-performing buildings are, as well as their impact on the people and communities who use them.
- “Package” the organization’s existing expertise to allow GBA to reach broader/larger audiences.
- Build alliances. Develop a systems- and community-level vision with organizational partners centered around common goals.
- Increase GBA participation in important regional conversations, engage more actively in the community, create leverage through relationships.
- Maintain a local/regional focus on projects, while connecting national and international best practices, expertise, and innovation.
- Be bold. Drive change.

In the coming years, our organization will evolve by:

Placing additional focus on specific topics:

- Health
- Resiliency
- Green building products and services

And consciously recognizing the scale of our impact on:

- Buildings
- Neighborhoods and communities
- Cities, regions, and systems

WE ADVANCE OUR MISSION THROUGH FOUR MAIN INITIATIVES:

1. Knowledge Network (Education, Networking, Support)
2. Pittsburgh 2030 District
3. Green & Healthy Schools Academy
4. Policy & Advocacy (newly revived for 2015)



Inspire Speakers Series networking

Gardens at Market Square Hard-Hat Tour

GHSA Sustainable School Culture Program

Pittsburgh 2030 District Progress Report event

KNOWLEDGE NETWORK >>>

GBA always intends to be the go-to organization for all things related to healthy and high-performing buildings in western Pennsylvania. The Knowledge Network provides the programming and content that makes this happen. Over the next three years, GBA will rebrand and strengthen the KN's offerings (educational events, Inspire Speakers Series, technical assistance, and original content development) to achieve the same recognition as other core GBA programs (2030, GHSA, Policy), while continuing to support those initiatives with excellent operations, logistics, and communications.

Moving Forward

At the Building Scale:

- Gain clear recognition as the go-to organization for all things related to healthy and high-performing buildings in western Pennsylvania.
- Provide useful content for all building industry stakeholders (owners, developers, architects, engineers, builders, contractors, designers, property managers, brokers, financiers, elected officials, government policymakers, and students).
- Place a greater focus on reaching out and going to where our stakeholders are instead of expecting them to come to us.
- Increase the number and type of education events targeted to building owners and developers. Get owners to care. Increase the pool of owners who actively support healthy and high-performing places.
- Serve as a trusted guide for a range of quality, third-party, effective building certifications, providing knowledge and technical support regarding LEED, Living Building Challenge, Passive House, Energy Star, WELL Building Standard, SITES, and other such programs.
- Deliver more thought-leading content regarding emerging best practices in health, building materials, air quality, resiliency, WELL Building Standard, university research, trade organization research, etc.
- Support, incubate, and grow grassroots interest groups (e.g., Passive House Western Pennsylvania, Living Building Collaborative, etc.). Work with those groups to provide 10 percent of GBA's educational programming annually.
- Increase information about and educational events centered on:
 - Health in the built environment (e.g., 15 percent of GBA-produced content)
 - Green building products (e.g., 15 percent of GBA content, including maintenance of GBA's *Pennsylvania Green Building Products Directory*)
 - Resiliency

CURRENT STATUS >
The Knowledge network is the hub that produces, delivers, and connects knowledge throughout the GBA network. This includes keeping GBA stakeholders up-to-date about green building industry trends, happenings, and results through regular classes, tours, panel discussions, speakers, web resources, communications, social media interaction, and other GBA programs.



Members-Only Tour of Google Offices

At the Neighborhood/Community Scale:

- Evolve and improve GBA's Inspire Speakers Series (ISS) as a platform to grow GBA's audience, reach underserved audiences, and publicly demonstrate GBA's leadership position. Use ISS to drive action related to green buildings, healthy communities, and sustainability.
- Show up more and have a voice at more tables regarding community/neighborhood projects – bring GBA's building expertise to the conversation on a more regular and consistent basis.
- Work more closely with partners (other nonprofits, local governments) to leverage GBA's voice on community and neighborhood projects. GBA brings building-level expertise that complements community partners.

At the City/Regional Scale:

- Educate the public about green building codes and the value of adopting them.
- Offer more education events related to regional concerns and opportunities (water, energy, transportation, zoning, financing, and tax incentives).
- Target government and regulatory officials for GBA education and inspiration.



Inspire Speakers Series event with Majora Carter, including the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, Homewood Children's Village, Ujamaa Collective, GTECH Strategies, and Mount Washington Community Development Corporation

PITTSBURGH 2030 DISTRICT >>>

What seemed like a risky project in 2011 now anchors GBA's strategic plan, but plenty of work remains. GBA will expand District participation, develop new tools and baselines, leverage collected data into actual decision-making, and provide additional tools and services to District partners while continuing to share best practices and helping to expand the network of 2030 Districts worldwide.



Moving Forward

At the Building Scale:

- Continue to advance, quantify, and promote building performance improvements in Downtown Pittsburgh and Oakland.
- Expand District offerings to accommodate long-term participation and inspire building investments beyond low-hanging fruit.
- Develop additional educational events to equip District Property Partners (and interested parties) with the best available information about building performance, technology, products, design, and financing.
- Grow participation and reporting by properties in Downtown and Oakland; explore boundary adjustments and expansions as appropriate.
- Use the indoor air quality pilot and developing standard to identify, publicize, and increase investment in health-related efforts.

At the Neighborhood/Community Scale:

- Finish and publish transportation benchmarks and surveys for use as a city and regional planning tool.
- Engage with Lower Hill redevelopment, Uptown EcoInnovation District, and other adjacent community sustainability initiatives.
- Expand programmatic services to support growth of the Pittsburgh 2030 District as a community of high-performance building owners; specifically investigate joint purchasing strategies for District Partners.

At the City/Regional Scale:

- Develop collaborative projects and analysis related to building performance benchmarking, especially in partnership with District Partners, City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, local universities, and the Regional Data Resource Center.
- Transfer best practices developed by Property Partners beyond the boundaries of the Pittsburgh 2030 District to inspire buildings throughout the region; explore the integration of affiliate properties (buildings outside the District) into the program.
- Identify, create, and disseminate more financing tools for Partners.

CURRENT STATUS >
The Pittsburgh 2030 District is comprised of a group of building owners and managers, community partners, and resource partners who are committed to the aggressive building performance goals of the 2030 Challenge. Collectively, these 417 buildings representing 64 million square feet of real estate in Downtown Pittsburgh and Oakland are actively working to achieve 50% reductions in energy use, water use, and transportation emissions by the year 2030.

These dramatic reductions are being accomplished in conjunction with improved indoor air quality, increased returns on investment, and growing regional successes. Pittsburgh 2030 District Property Partner commitments make this GBA program the largest of the ten established 2030 Districts.

GREEN & HEALTHY SCHOOLS ACADEMY >>>

GHSA will explore ways to reach schools “where they are” with a variety of programming approaches and active working relationships, while continuing to align with the U.S. Department of Education’s Green Ribbon Schools program that promotes three pillars for sustainable and healthy schools:

1. Reduced environmental impact and operational costs.
2. Health and wellness of students and staff.
3. Effective environmental and sustainability education to promote civic skills, environmental stewardship, and a strong foundation for career and college pathways.

Moving Forward

At the Building Scale:

- Continue GHSA School Sustainability Culture Program, including the launch of a third schools cohort; document and publicize impact.
- Deliver new environmental impact and technical assistance offerings to reach and inspire schools not participating in the School Sustainability Culture Program.
- Create a more influential voice in regional school building projects.
- Provide technical assistance to help schools set high standards and build to those standards.
- Create a fund/develop alternative financing mechanisms to support better design and implementation first costs.
- Increase delivery of health-related education and technical assistance to schools.
- Secure dedicated funding and sponsorships to expand GHSA activities.

At the Neighborhood/Community Scale:

- Use schools as a form of community acupuncture. Build a stronger network to take advantage of the reciprocal relationship between thriving schools and thriving communities.
- Expand GHSA technical assistance and develop expanded program support focused on healthy and high-performing school environments.

At the City/Regional Scale:

- Use GHSA results and school participants to influence state curricula and standards.
- Use GHSA results to influence Plan Con requirements.
- Replicate the GHSA model in other regions and establish GHSA as a leading national example.

CURRENT STATUS >
GBA assists schools with integrating sustainability into their buildings, curriculum, and culture through inspirational, comprehensive, and transformative education. Core Green & Healthy Schools Academy (GHSA) programming revolves around an intensive two-year School Sustainability Culture Program that works with a small cohort of six to eight schools/districts. Recognized by the USGBC Center for Green Schools as the “2013 Best of Green Schools Award for Transformation,” GHSA graduated one cohort and launched a second in fall 2014. In the same year, it expanded to incorporate the Healthy Schools Collaboration, providing additional program support and education for schools to take concrete steps toward healthier environments.



Green Apple Day of Service event at Pittsburgh Langley K-8.

POLICY & ADVOCACY >>>

Policy describes municipal, county, and statewide legislation and regulations. Advocacy defines GBA's voice in important regional projects. GBA believes in the long-term impact that results from successful policy and advocacy efforts, and will assert its influence and credibility as the "go-to" organization for healthy and high-performing buildings, neighborhoods, and the highest-quality development projects in western Pennsylvania.



Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto and Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald at the Pittsburgh 2030 Progress Report event

Moving Forward

GBA will engage its members and community stakeholders to develop a shared policy agenda and active participation among the local green building community. Based on national best practices, local need, and coordinated community/stakeholder input, GBA will work with other agencies to create state, county, city, municipal, and project policy agendas with clear vision, priorities, and measurable standards of successful impact. GBA will leverage this policy work to increase membership and sponsorship – an easy way to show GBA's added value.

GBA will emphasize the following across all scales (building, neighborhood/community and city/region):

- Stronger building codes.
- Third-party-verified health and high-performance building standards.
- Active engagement with local development and planning efforts.
- Greater access to financing for healthy and high-performance investments.



Millcraft Investments Leads a Hard-Hat Tour of The Gardens at Market Square

CURRENT STATUS >
From 2012 through 2014, GBA engaged in limited Policy and Advocacy work. This was a conscious decision to focus on core deliverables, use resources efficiently, and gain a deeper understanding of the industry and its priorities before engaging in policy and advocacy initiatives. GBA did undertake targeted advocacy/policy efforts from time to time: at the city level when topics influenced 2030 District goals; in small advocacy groups (Construction Legislative Council, Pittsburgh Climate Initiative); related to specific projects (Lower Hill redevelopment, Almono, Larimer, etc.); and by issuing position papers to candidates in the last Pittsburgh mayoral and Pennsylvania gubernatorial elections.

POSSIBILITIES FOR AN ADDITIONAL LARGE ASPIRATIONAL PROJECT >>>

GBA aspires to boldness and thought leadership. We want to have impact locally, regionally, and nationally. We want to embrace positive change. To do so, we will explore one or two large initiatives that will challenge both the region and GBA with new behaviors, uncertain outcomes, and potentially exceptional results.

Healthy Building Initiative

GBA would serve as a lead partner to convene community partners and create a focus in defining and communicating the role of green buildings in healthy communities. The project would provide data collection and analysis tools for healthy buildings and community health indicators. GBA would partner with place-based organizations to define goals, coordinate a regional plan, lead key components of the plan, and support property owners working to meet the goals. GBA would coordinate and execute in ways similar to the Pittsburgh 2030 District, based on clear and simple goals, voluntary participation, dedicated funding, and a sense of community.

Green Bank/Cleantech Greenhouse

Access to capital remains a key obstacle to the development and adoption of green building products and practices. Leveraging past success with its Green Building Products Initiative and Product Innovation Grant program, and considering best practices in states such as New York, Vermont, and Oregon, GBA would partner on the creation of a Green Bank and/or a Clean Technology Greenhouse/Incubator. Investments would potentially span the spectrum from new product development to credit enhancements and direct loans to support the deployment of sustainable technologies and services. GBA would partner as appropriate with local organizations such as Innovation Works, Alpha Lab, Pittsburgh Technology Council, Catalyst Connection, Bridgewater, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, Oregon Trust, Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development, and others.

Pittsburgh Building Performance Institute

This undertaking would harness GBA's existing capacity from past DASH (Database for Analyzing Sustainable and High-Performance Buildings) work and current Pittsburgh 2030 District efforts for larger-scale building performance data collection and analysis. Initially focusing on the needs of the Pittsburgh 2030 District and possible mandatory city building performance reporting, GBA would leverage "big data" from local and national universities, healthcare institutions, and commercial real estate companies into empirically-driven recommendations for achieving healthy and high-performing buildings.

Merger/Consolidation with Complementary Organization

Consolidate or merge with another strong nonprofit that serves complementary constituencies (e.g., residential, community, local government) to deliver increased value to a wider, growing audience that increasingly embraces sustainable development; achieve greater recognition as a sustainability expert and "go-to" organization; gain increased influence in political and regulatory circles; and leverage financial support for increased impact and greater efficiencies.

While working on our four main initiatives, GBA will pursue one or more additional large, aspirational projects. Possibilities include:

- **Healthy Building Initiative**
- **Green Bank/Cleantech Greenhouse**
- **Pittsburgh Building Performance Institute**
- **Merger/Consolidation with Complementary Organization**



Natalie Jeremijenko addresses a GHSA session

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