

2024

SUSTAINABILITY PROGRESS REPORT



RSP ARCHITECTS

LOOKING BACK | MOVING FORWARD

Developing real-life, sustainable solutions to global challenges is never an easy journey, and it is one that cannot be taken alone. That's why RSP continues to work with a network of colleagues, companies, and advocates to advance our efforts to make our work a force for good in people's lives—and give the communities most impacted by climate change a seat at the table.

As a result, this has been a year of progress powered by collaboration. As a company, we moved ahead with greater urgency than ever before to create a stronger, healthier future for our planet. And we continue to look for ways to move forward, like our continued participation in the AIA 2030 Challenge and our efforts to apply best practices whenever and wherever we can.

In our work, we focus on technical quality as much as design excellence—what we do is informed by environmental performance, while providing a positive impact on the planet. From interiors to urban spaces, we use advanced technologies to design resilient environments that provide health, comfort and well-being to their occupants. Our projects are informed by nature, designed around living beings, and integrated with the environment, reducing consumption of non-renewable resources, and minimizing waste, while moving towards the creation of carbon positive and regenerative environments.

We believe in the stewardship of our planet and its resources so that we leave things better than how we found them. Yes, materials and systems are important but so are new ideas, innovation and technology.

We believe collaboration and the work of the team accomplishes more than the efforts of the lone genius. This is why the respectful exchange of ideas and multiple perspectives leads not only to better solutions and clearer perspectives but to a shared purpose and a common vision. And, because we work in an organization that predates each one of us, we respect all that came before even while we drive an impatient search for whatever is next.

The work highlighted in this year's report is definitive proof that the fight against climate change is also a fight for local economies, for the rights of indigenous peoples, and for the communities whose lives and livelihoods are most threatened by the climate crisis.

These are intractable issues, of course, and we don't pretend to have all the answers. What we do have are goals to strive for, and a community of businesses and professionals committed to doing the right thing.

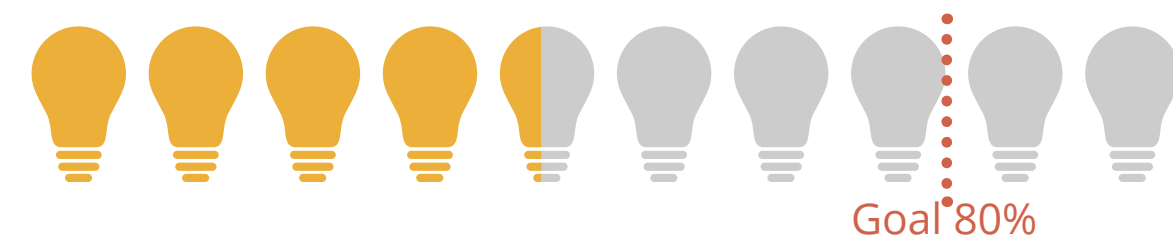
We are proud of the progress we made last year, but it is deep in our DNA to focus not on the accomplishments but on the journey ahead. We have a great deal of work to do.

2030 CHALLENGE CHECK-IN

2024 was a year of steady progress. While we exceeded our sustainability goals in some areas, others require more focus in the coming year.

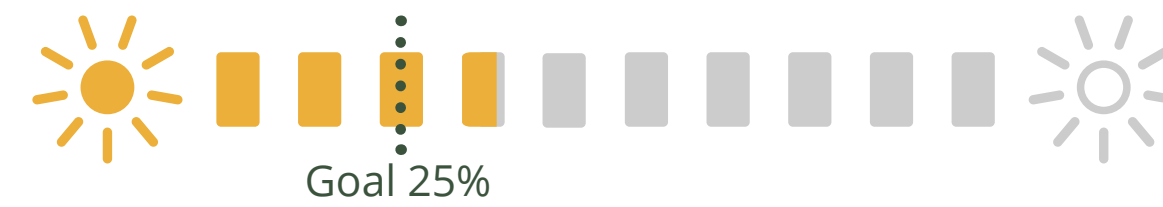


2022 Predicted EUI Reduction



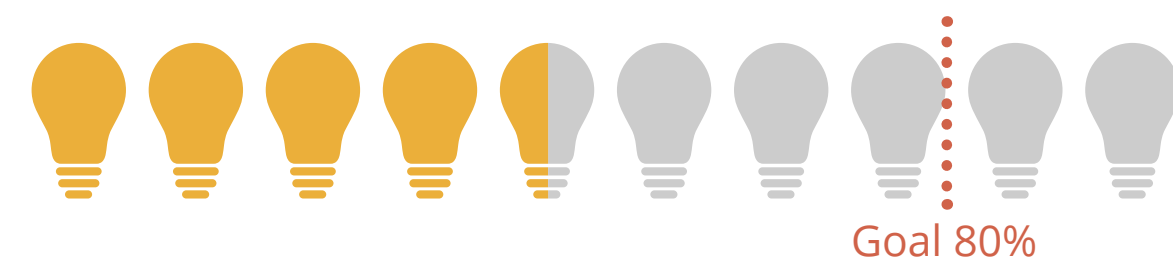
52%
6% improvement
from previous year

Embodied Carbon Data Points

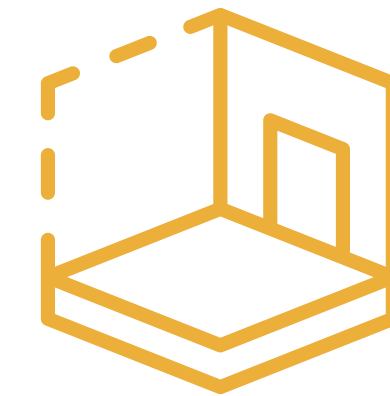


38%
average reduction in embodied
carbon vs CLF baseline in latest
design standards

2023 Actual EUI Reduction



45%
1% reduction from
previous year

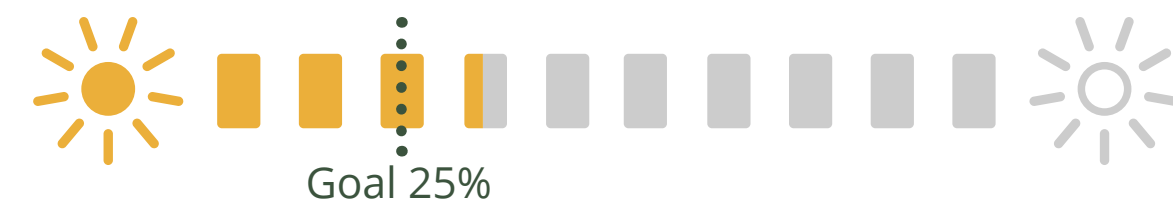


100%
interior projects met
or exceeded the 25%
pLPD reduction target,
a 2% increase over
last year



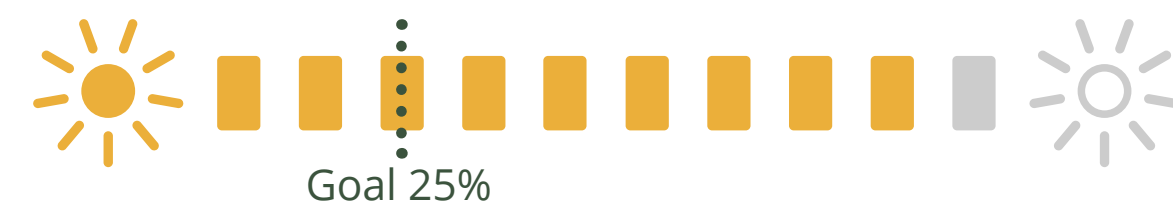
68%
additional reduction in
lighting power density
(LPD) beyond the 2030
goal of 25% on average
across all submitted
interior projects

2022 Predicted LPD Reduction



35%
10% lower lighting
power density average
across tracked projects

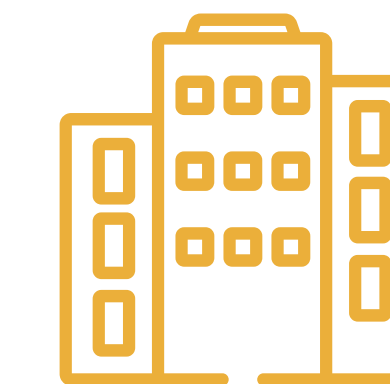
2023 Actual LPD Reduction



93%
20% lower lighting
power density average
across tracked projects



Completed energy
audits on nearly
3MSF
of space, including
6MW of solar and
battery storage



<10%
submitted projects
were energy modeled,
a data point that must
be improved

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) outlines a collaborative path toward global peace and prosperity, focusing on both people and the environment for present and future generations. Central to this vision are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which urge nations—both developed and developing—to unite in a global effort. These goals highlight the importance of addressing poverty and inequality while also promoting health, education, and economic growth, alongside efforts to combat climate change and protect vital ecosystems like oceans and forests.

At RSP, we recognize the interconnectedness of these global challenges and are dedicated to contributing where we can. While addressing all 17 SDGs simultaneously isn't always feasible, we use them as a foundational framework for our projects. In this report, we've identified areas where the SDGs directly align with our efforts.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

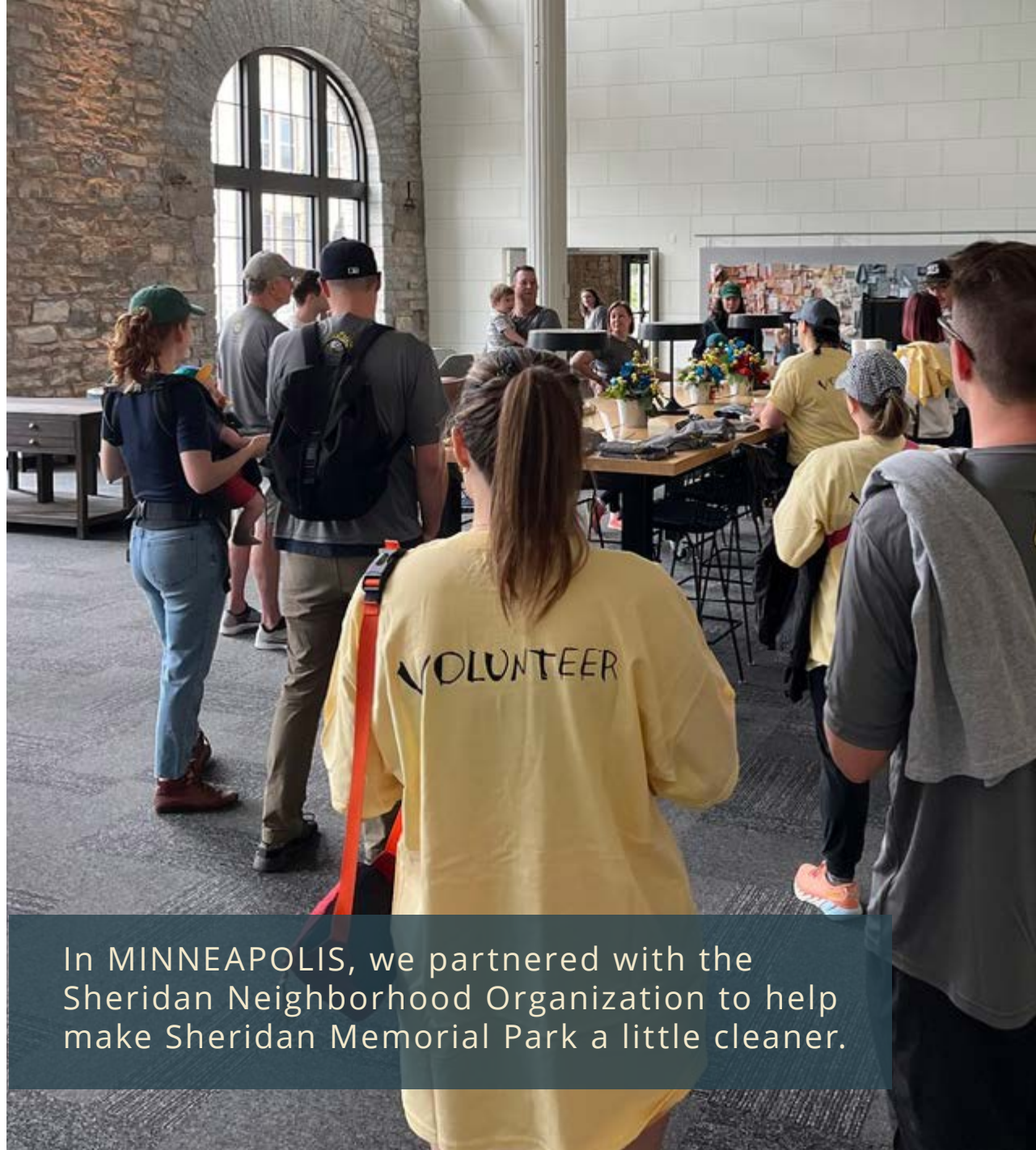
True resiliency touches every aspect of our lives. As we strive to reduce our impact on the planet and move toward net zero and net positive design strategies, we are also always looking at how we can make our communities better. Through service projects, donations, collection drives, and pro bono design work, RSP and our people are dedicated to enhancing our corners of the world, wherever they may be.

RSP volunteers help make Miami's Rickenbacker Causeway a little nicer than they found it.





In BALTIMORE, we teamed with the Back River Restoration Committee to restore the health of the tidal portion of the Back River.



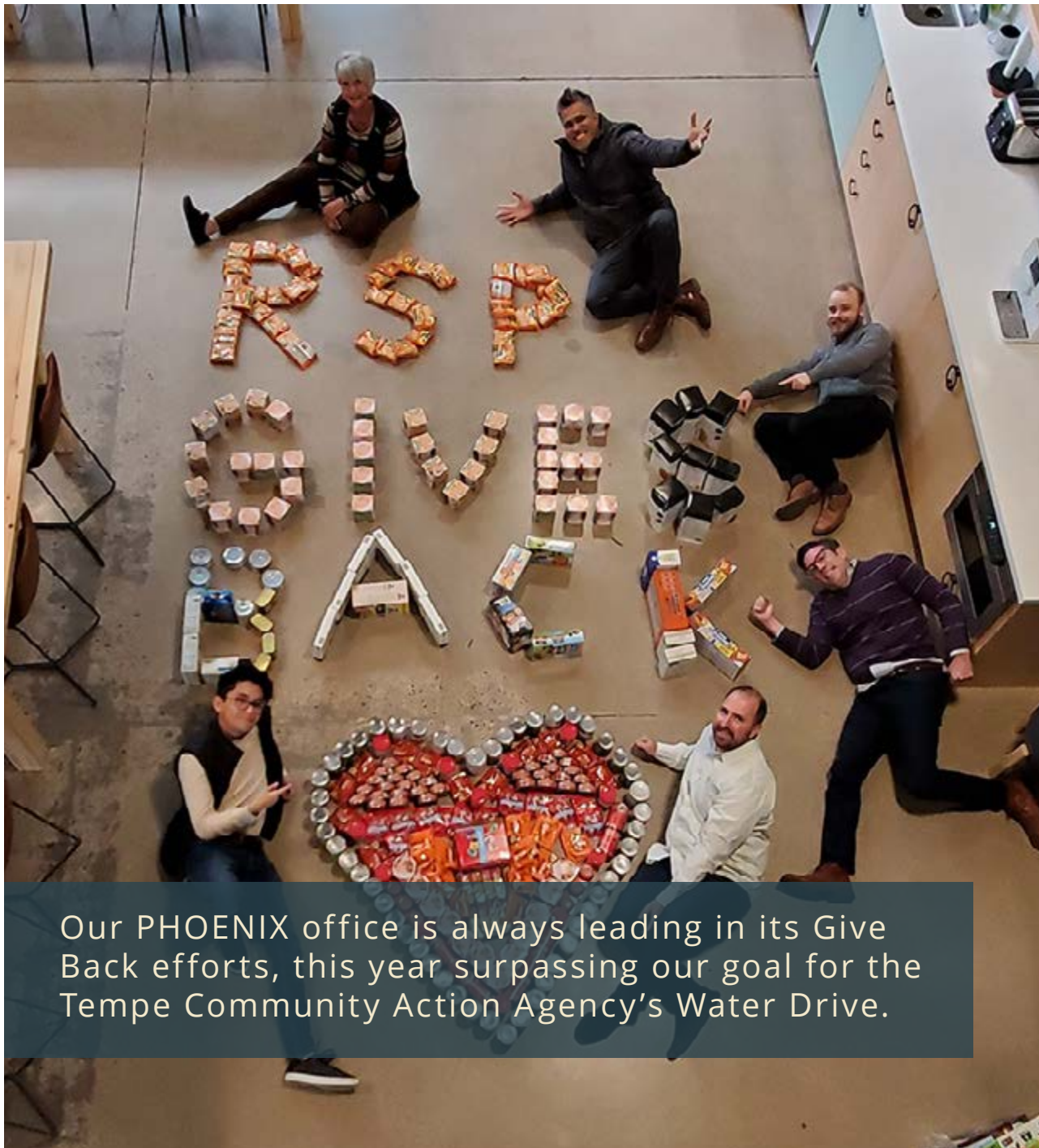
In MINNEAPOLIS, we partnered with the Sheridan Neighborhood Organization to help make Sheridan Memorial Park a little cleaner.

LIVING OUR VALUES

RSP GIVES BACK

RSP's "Give Back" program is our way of nurturing a culture of compassion, advocating for social justice, and encouraging everyone to play a meaningful role in our communities. In addition to our commitment to donating 5% of our pre-tax profit, we have a number of initiatives throughout the year to do more. At our Supply Drive event in the spring, we collected and donated more than 700 pounds of food and supplies to at-risk individuals.

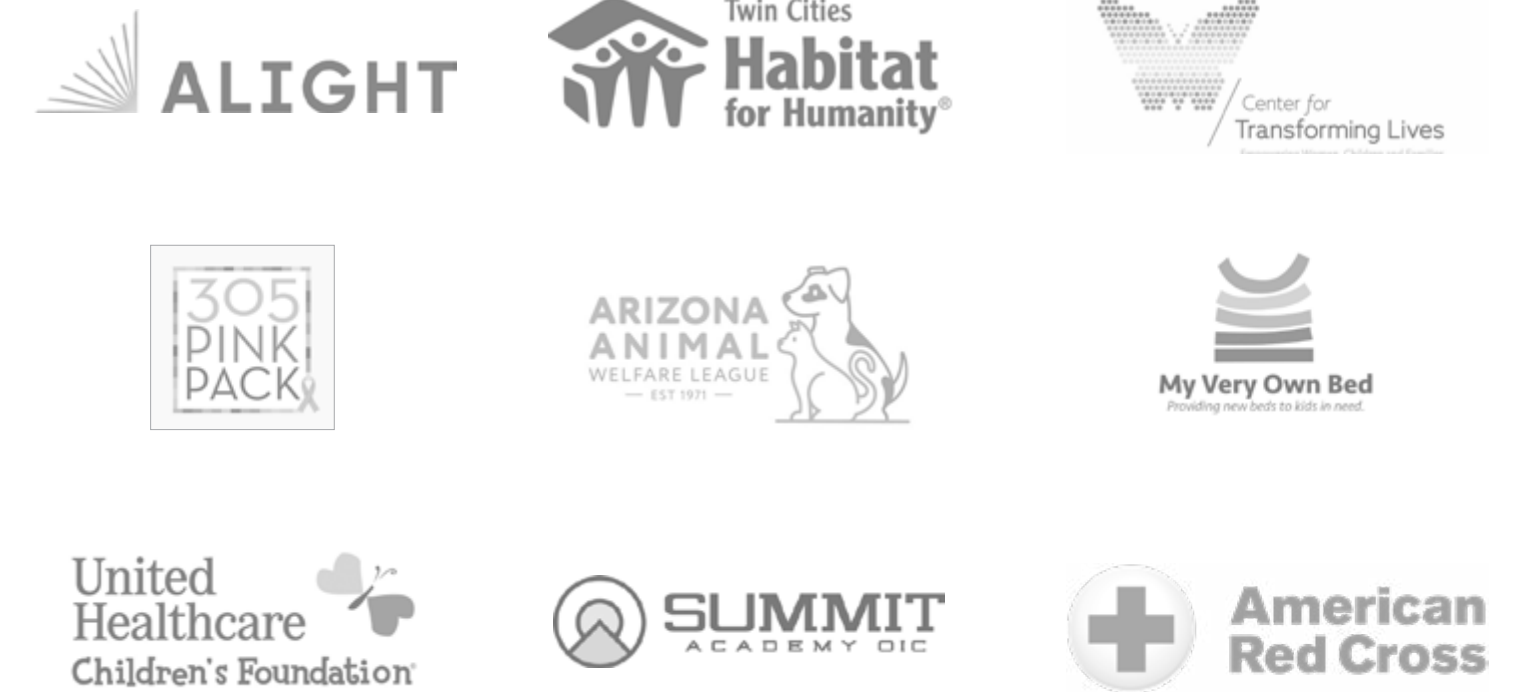
We're proud of the partnerships we've developed and have highlighted a few below.



Our PHOENIX office is always leading in its Give Back efforts, this year surpassing our goal for the Tempe Community Action Agency's Water Drive.



Our team in ROCHESTER filled nine wagons of weeds and debris at the Quarry Hill Park and Nature Center's Butterfly Garden.



COMMUNITY IMPACT

PRESERVE, INTEGRATE, INNOVATE

RSP's Jason Ploszaj (second from right, below) joins a ULI Arizona panel on how private and public sector collaboration is reshaping the way communities connect with mall redevelopments and how the balancing act of "preservation, integration, and innovation" is critical to ensure these spaces align with the surrounding community and evolving environment.

There is a transformation underway—promoting sustainable redevelopment strategies for malls while creating dynamic, inclusive urban landscapes that benefit all members of the community.



PEDAL FASTER

Here at RSP we're all about eco-friendly transportation, and we're proud to be recognized as a bike-friendly business by the League of American Bicyclists.

Whether it's cruising through the city streets or enjoying scenic routes, you'll spot our team pedaling their way to the office today and every day.

LAND OF THE GIANTS

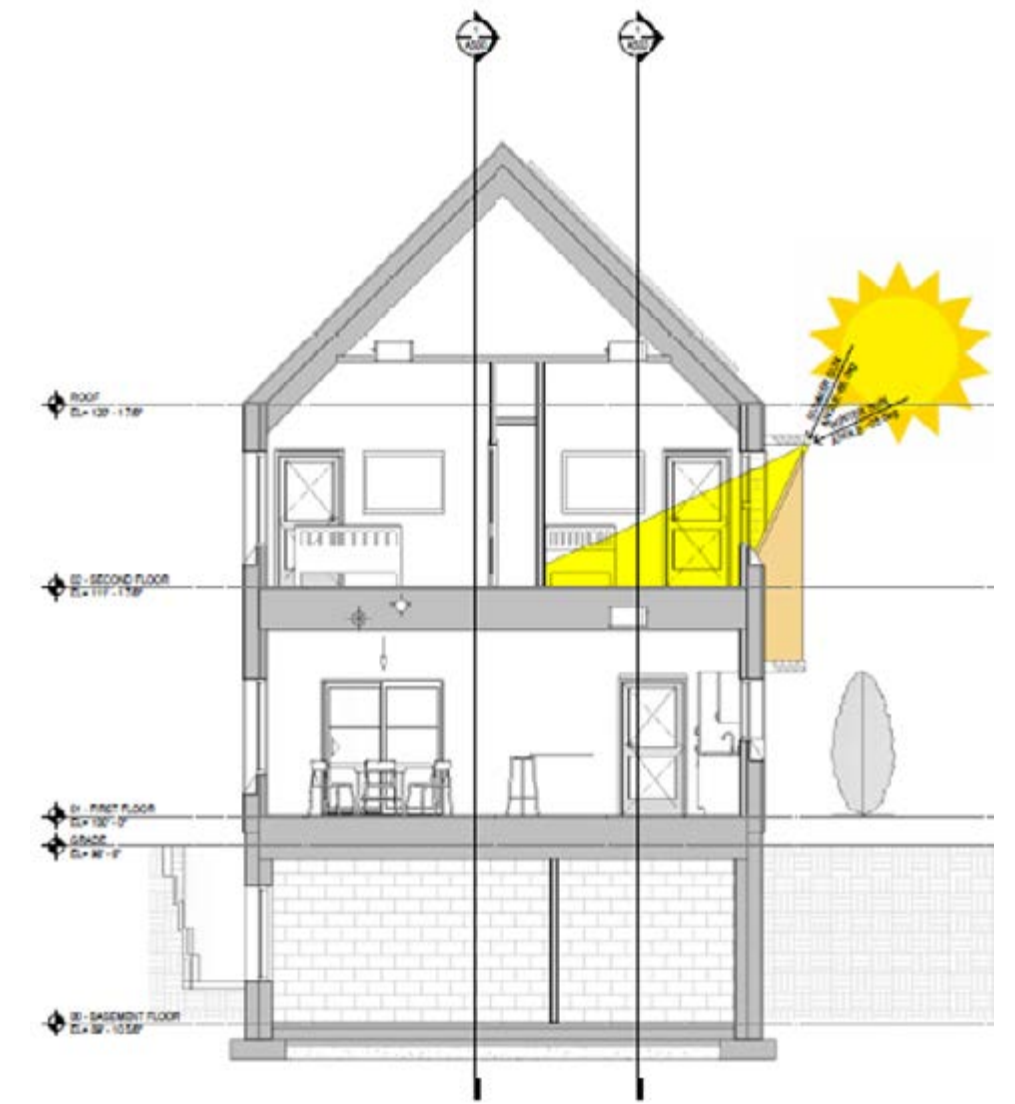
INTERIOR DESIGN

SUSTAINABILITY GIANTS OF DESIGN 2024

RSP was listed on the Interior Design Sustainability Giants list for the first time in 2024, and we look forward to making our mark again in 2025.

COMMUNITY ART

Vibrant cities with a strong sense of place don't just happen—they are formed by the collective cultures, histories and creative ideas of the people who live there over time. Public art plays an important role in this type of organic growth of history and culture. RSP's Liz Taylor is driving our work in this area, incorporating beauty, culture and history into her projects using every form of art, from art installations and murals to bold, large-scale sculptures. By drawing from the unique traditions of each place, her art becomes a landmark, sparking conversations and enriching the cultural fabric of the area, creating a foundation of resiliency in the most holistic sense of the word.



PASSIVE HOUSE

RSP explored a series of concepts for the design of an affordable, easily constructed and energy-efficient residential prototype using Passive House principles. The concept would be used as a "test case" for Habitat for Humanity to assess feasibility.

RSP designed an adaptable 2,000-SF single-family passive house in the Minneapolis region using the Phius standard and benchmarked against a conventional single-family product.

The effort brought together RSP's multi-family design studio and Baltimore-based engineers under the auspices of our Give Back program, who will present the work to the Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity.

Q & A WITH OUR SUSTAINABILITY EXPERTS



BRANDON BURROWS

Mechanical Designer

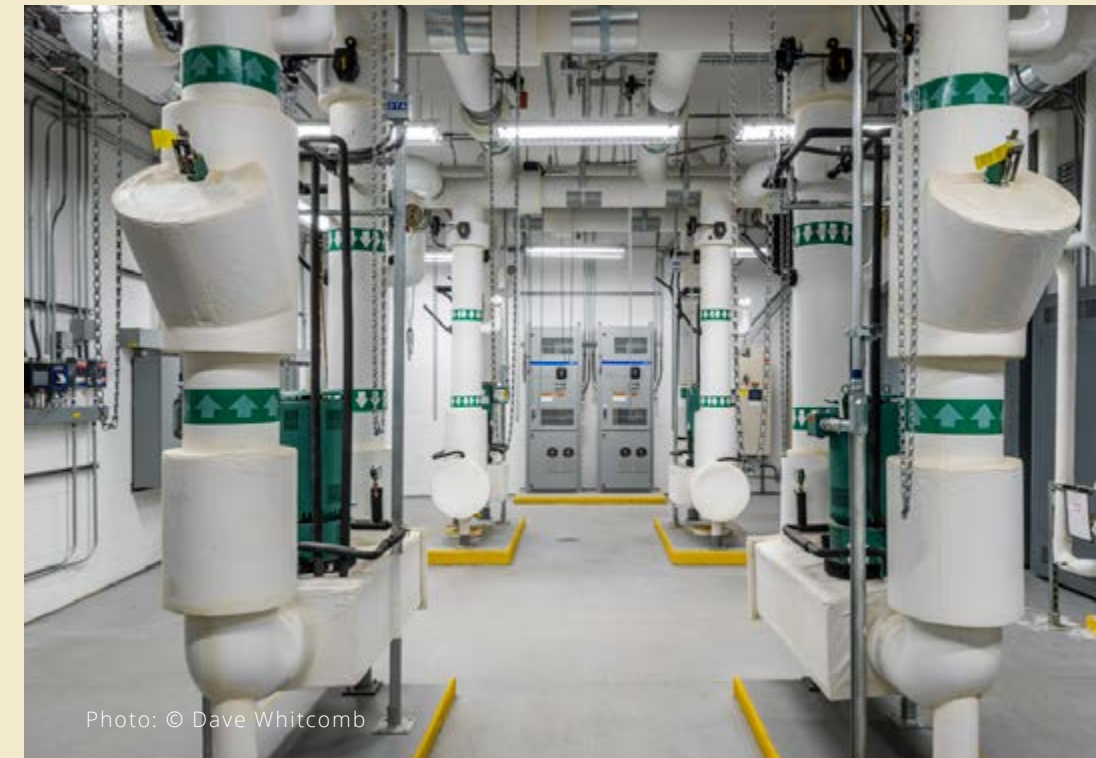
Brandon is a mechanical designer at RSP Architects and a recent graduate of the University of Delaware with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. He has designed the mechanical systems on a variety of project types, focusing on complex data centers and investment-grade energy audits.

Q. How are new policies and codes changing the way we think about carbon emissions and how is it impacting our clients?

A. Over the last five years, many cities and state legislatures across the country have implemented regulations to encourage clean energy programs hoping to hit specific targets by a certain date. The recently enacted Inflation Reduction Act, for example, includes rebates and tax credits for energy-efficient systems that help reduce Greenhouse Gases (GHGs).

While this is good news for the environment, the transition from natural gas to an all-electric solution is much more complex than simple equipment replacements. Even recently installed mechanical and electrical systems typically need major modifications or total replacement to support these new systems, and those initial capital outlays can be prohibitive.

Still, all-electric systems provide many benefits, and that's something we can advocate for.



Q. If an owner wants to switch to an all-electric solution, what are the practical implications? And how can RSP help?

A. There are a number of issues to consider. The first is an honest assessment of the existing infrastructure and what it would take to make a switch. Is there enough power on site? What do we do with existing gas piping? Can we secure the rebates and credits? But the biggest issue, of course, cost.

When assessing costs, it is important to understand the difference between initial or upfront costs versus life-cycle costs, which cover expenses over a period of time. While the electric boiler is a more cost-effective design, over the lifetime of the boiler they tend to be more expensive. Solar infrastructure, for example, is a great way to offset some of the higher electrical load associated with these systems.

Because all-electric systems have a simpler design, the average costs of annual maintenance go down.

Q. This sounds more complicated—and more expensive—than it needs to be. So, why make the switch?

A. The main driving factor for total electrification is to reduce carbon emissions from natural gas systems. According to the Department of Energy, a boiler plant accounts for an average of 28% of a facility's energy usage, so converting the boilers to all electric provides significant emission savings.

Switching to an all-electric system saves more than 700 tons of CO₂ equivalent emissions per boiler, which is comparable to the carbon output of 153 cars over the course of one year.

As dated systems approach the end of their practical life-cycles, and for new construction or major renovations, switching to all-electric solutions may not just be an environmentally sound path to take, it may be the only path to take.



SUSTAINABLE LIVING IN THE LAST FRONTIER

USCG Base Kodiak Family Housing at Nemetz Park | Kodiak, AK

The U.S. Coast Guard Family Housing project at Nemetz Park represents a significant commitment to sustainable and resilient development. As part of the Tutor Perini Design Build team, RSP is providing design and construction administration services for this new housing community.

The 23-acre site, previously home to housing developments from the 1970s, will be transformed into a modern, sustainable neighborhood featuring 50 new housing units in duplex configurations.

These units include 38 three-bedroom and 12 four-bedroom homes, designed to meet the needs of Coast Guard families stationed in Kodiak. The scope of work includes extensive site preparation, such as demolition, clearing, grading, and the installation of essential infrastructure like curbs, sidewalks, roadways, and utilities. A playground canopy structure will be relocated to better serve the new community.

The project, already under construction, is expected to be completed by 2025. A key goal for this development is to achieve LEED for Homes v4 Certification, underscoring its commitment to sustainability. O'Brien 360, the project's LEED Green Rater, has been instrumental in guiding the design process to ensure that all sustainability goals are met. This includes on-site verification, energy modeling, and thorough documentation to meet LEED criteria. Once the review process is complete, the project will be submitted to the USGBC for certification.

The design incorporates several sustainable features, such as water-conserving plumbing fixtures, a comprehensive waste management plan, and the use of materials that meet or exceed EPA's recycled content standards. The project also emphasizes indoor environmental quality by selecting low-emitting products

and eliminating ozone-depleting substances. Energy efficiency is achieved through advanced systems, including air-to-water heat pumps, hydronic floor heating, and LED lighting, aiming for a minimum 30% reduction in energy use. The site is also designed to minimize environmental impact, with no outdoor irrigation and

the majority of the buildable area being previously developed land. Additionally, the project is located outside the floodplain, further enhancing its resilience for future generations.



SUSTAINABLE PRINCIPLES AT-A-GLANCE



Pursuing LEED for Homes v4 Certification



Water-conserving plumbing fixtures, LED lighting and Energy Star appliances



Waste management plan to minimize waste and allow the reuse of waste products in the local marketplace.



Achieve a minimum of 30% energy use reduction



Enhanced whole house ventilation



Efficient hot water distribution



ON THE BOARDS: IN THE COMMUNITY



BUILDING RESILIENCE AND HOPE

Tempe Community Action Agency Community Services Center | Tempe, AZ

In the heart of Tempe, a new beacon of hope and resilience is taking shape. The Tempe Community Action Agency (TCAA), a local non-profit dedicated to addressing homelessness and poverty, is expanding its impact through a thoughtfully designed, sustainable facility. This project, rooted in over a decade of collaboration with TCAA, stands as a testament to the power of community and the enduring spirit of those working to uplift the most vulnerable among us.

The new TCAA facility, a 24,000-SF, two-story building, is more than just a shelter; it's a comprehensive community hub designed to support individuals facing economic insecurity, food instability, and health challenges. The ground floor is a vibrant, multifunctional space that serves as the nexus of community engagement and support. Here, visitors will find a welcoming intake area, a grocery-style food pantry offering fresh produce, and a multipurpose room for meals and activities. The space also includes the Thrive Center, a resource hub for financial and stability services, providing resume assistance, job training, and other critical support to help individuals regain their footing.

The second floor houses the shelter and transitional housing components, with a focus on dignity and privacy, created using trauma-informed design principles. The shelter offers 80 beds in both communal and semi-private settings, ensuring that each resident has a space that feels secure and respectful. The transitional housing, with its micro-unit apartment style, provides a bridge for those moving toward permanent housing, offering the privacy of personal bathrooms and shared communal dining areas.

Sustainability is at the core of the TCAA project. The building's design incorporates natural light through skylights and clerestory windows, reducing the need for artificial lighting and creating a warm, welcoming environment. The use of wood construction and metal panels not only ensures durability but also reflects the project's commitment to economical and environmentally conscious building practices.

A unique aspect of the design is its trauma-informed approach, which emphasizes the importance of creating spaces that foster healing and empowerment. The building features visual transparency—large windows and open spaces—that allows for passive observation, ensuring safety without compromising the dignity of those served. At the same time, careful attention has been paid to providing employees with areas of retreat, balancing the need for interaction with moments of respite.

The TCAA project is more than just a building; it's a catalyst for change for Phoenix's East Valley Community. Located along the light rail, the facility is poised to serve a broad demographic, extending its reach to both Tempe and Mesa residents. With its central gathering spaces, thoughtful design, and sustainable construction, the TCAA facility is set to become a vital hub for those in need, offering not just shelter, but a path to stability, dignity, and hope.

Q & A WITH OUR SUSTAINABILITY EXPERTS



KYLE TORNOW AIA, NCARB
Senior Associate

Kyle Tornow AIA, NCARB, is a Senior Project Manager at RSP, where he plays a pivotal role in shaping resilient retail spaces. Specializing in large-portfolio retail clients, including Target, Kyle's expertise lies in adapting design strategies to address the challenges of climate and social change. He leads a diverse team through all project phases, ensuring that each new store is not only functional but also sustainable and future-proof. Kyle believes that success in architecture hinges on building trust and empowering his team to innovate, helping clients navigate an evolving landscape with confidence.

Q. Retail big boxes seem especially vulnerable to natural disasters and the consequences of climate change. What are retailers doing to help weather the storm, as it were?

A. Successful retailers are, by their very nature, adaptable organisms. That's exactly what is happening—they're adapting. There's no denying that the incidence of natural disasters, like cataclysmic floods and hurricanes, is on the uptick, so smart retailers are rethinking their standards and adopting new procedures that bring enhanced levels of resilience, protection and preparedness.

Some of this is architecture best practices, of course, but a lot comes from improved building science, technology and better materials. Curtain wall and glazing are just two examples of building components that now have greater tolerances for impact protection of wind-borne debris.

What's interesting is that many national retailers are adopting these heightened standards in more of their locations and not just in high-risk zones or regions prone to natural disasters. In fact, these types of building systems have proved useful at protecting against more than just hurricanes. Without a doubt, though, we are designing for more extremes in more places.

Q. Is this making what is essentially a very basic and inexpensive structure into something overly complex and costly?

A. Well, yes...and no. Retailers tend to have a deep understanding of value. The good ones draw a straight line between the quality of their store, for instance, and the quality of the shopper

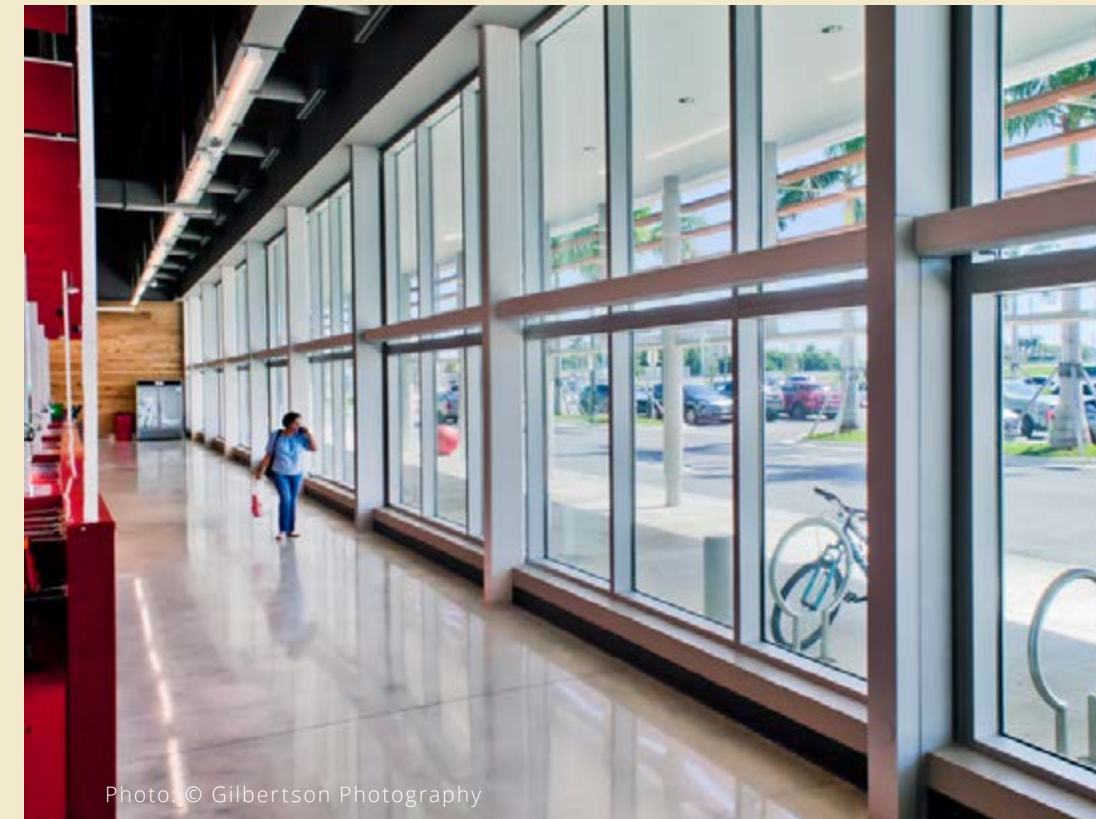


Photo: © Gilbertson Photography

experience. They also understand that any disruption to that experience imperils their brand and could compromise their relationship with their customer.

Of course, we have to be smart about how we spend our clients' money and invest in those things that bring us long-term benefits, which is why we sweat the details. Like ensuring the installed systems and materials meet the design requirements as well as the sustainability targets. And that brings me back to the idea of value. This type of thinking adds value...not cost.

Q. Do you get the sense that retail design has changed dramatically the last few years?

A. Yes, of course it has. Because the markets have changed. And the shopper has changed. And how we all buy things has changed. The smarter retailers tend to be focused on their customers,

and that always comes out in the retail space, but we're also seeing them take a more holistic approach to sustainability and resilience. Yes, it means more to their customers but it also has to add something to the equation.

This includes getting smarter about issues like low-carbon concrete, rooftop solar arrays and tighter, more efficient building envelopes, and that's where RSP can really bring value. A few years ago, these sorts of initiatives were often one-off items that sounded good in a year-end report but, lately, they've become part of more comprehensive strategies that also include supply chain management, renewable energy systems and hyper-efficient operations.

Q. Where do you think this will go in the next five to ten years?

A. This is not a static industry, so I think the move to more sustainable, efficient facilities—stores, distribution warehouses, etc.—will only accelerate and become the standard. Systems and materials will continue to improve and focus on renewable sources as well as hyper-efficient operations. Though some would argue we are not moving fast enough, we are approaching a Net Zero future. We will also get better at preparedness, especially as our weather becomes more erratic and more severe, because we have to.

I think we will also start to see a few of the national chains begin to step to the fore in both operations as well as physical facilities. The changes may take longer than we hope, but we are moving in the right direction.



COMMUNITY RESILIENCY REVOLUTION

Microgrids Masterplan: Resilient Energy Hubs Report | Tempe, AZ

As climate change accelerates and power grids face mounting pressure, the urgency for resilient, sustainable infrastructure has never been clearer. Last year, Arizona’s Maricopa County reported nearly 650 heat-related deaths—the highest ever recorded. As part of their response, the City of Tempe is spearheading the Tempe Microgrids Masterplan project, an initiative to enhance community resiliency by integrating renewable energy solutions across approximately 20 critical sites.

Partnering with Quest Energy and Azimuth Energy, RSP is assessing the feasibility of solar power, battery backups, and other sustainable practices to transform these spaces into safe havens during emergencies—places where residents can find refuge if the grid fails.

The project covers a diverse array of sites, from community-owned buildings like churches to city-owned resources like libraries, as well as police and fire stations. Each location poses unique challenges—some have existing solar arrays that could be made more efficient; others require a cost/benefit analysis on replacing or upgrading diesel generators; still others could be made far more resilient and efficient through ASHRAE

improvement recommendations. For sites like those in the iHelp program, which already serve vulnerable populations, ensuring resilience is crucial to preventing heat-related injuries and deaths in the increasingly harsh Arizona climate.

Although the masterplan is still in its early, data-collection stages, RSP is approaching this project through a comprehensive lens—considering the urban fabric, public transportation, and community design. The goal is not only to provide engineering recommendations but to create a potential model that other cities can replicate, weaving these sites into a more sustainable urban landscape. Our final deliverable will include detailed analysis and a compelling narrative, helping to distill the findings into easily-understood recommendations, while being rooted in a highly-technical report. The hope is that the comprehensive Microgrid Masterplan could become a roadmap for other communities in their quest to protect their most vulnerable residents in a rapidly changing climate.

Watch this space for updates in the coming months.



CAN TODAY'S INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVER TOMORROW'S INNOVATION?

The University of Minnesota Carmen D. and James R. Campbell Hall | Minneapolis, MN

America's universities face the challenge of meeting today's research demands with yesterday's fading infrastructure, limited space and budget, as well as inter-departmental impediments. The University of Minnesota's (UMN) Campbell Hall stands as a road map for resilient, integrated planning to deliver a consolidated, mission-driven, and cross-functional research facility.

Located on the historic Knoll Campus of the University of Minnesota's East Bank and overlooking both the Mississippi River and downtown Minneapolis, the existing Institute of Childhood Development (ICD), comprised of a 27,200-SF historic building (circa 1913) and a 1960 addition, needed a dramatic update. RSP's design team worked closely with the State Historic Preservation Office to demolish the 1960s addition, thoughtfully reconstruct the interior of the 1913 building, and add a new 42,400-SF modern facility.

Blending the historic with the new always presents challenges, especially on a university campus, but the team relied on a connection to nature and a rhythm of cohesion and contrast to strike the right chords.

The design team was deeply inspired by the oak trees surrounding the ICD—in the northeast corner of the addition, a four-level glass tower known as the Treehouse features a grand staircase with 180-degree views,

heightening the building's sense of connection to both nature and the community.

Inside, the team took a research-oriented approach to space planning. Each component of the building supports the center's user groups, from ICD staff, faculty and students to children and families. Movement, pattern and light—all elements of the researcher's toolkit—create sensory experiences and moments of interest that feel playful, but not childish. A sculpture of violet acrylic butterflies hangs above the main entrance, reflecting and refracting light to create a sense of wonder.

The Institute of Child Development was designed to meet MNB3 standards and green design principles. This includes bird-safe glass, a rain garden that connects to an existing rainwater retention system, LED lighting features, chilled beam air handling systems, and low-e glazing to reduce thermal gain.

Campbell Hall is now a state-of-the-art facility that reflects the critical research that takes place within, while recognizing the legacy of the program and the historic context of the University of Minnesota campus. Today, all members of the program—from faculty and staff to researchers and visitors—have a welcoming space to do their best work.



Photo: © Gaffer Photography-Corey Gaffer

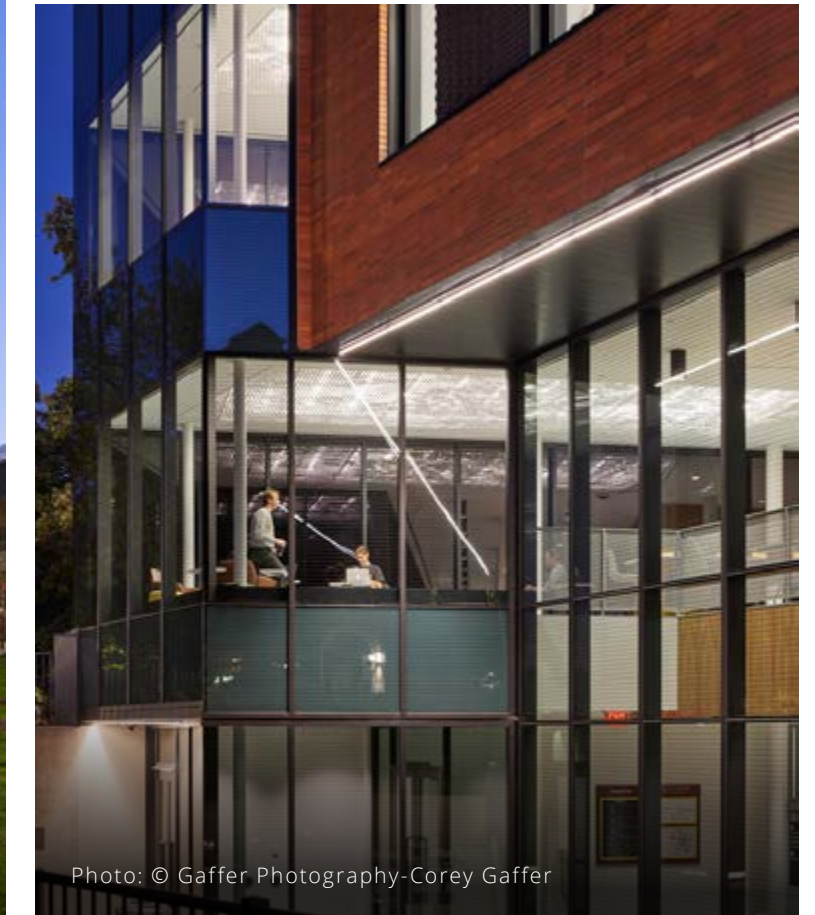


Photo: © Gaffer Photography-Corey Gaffer

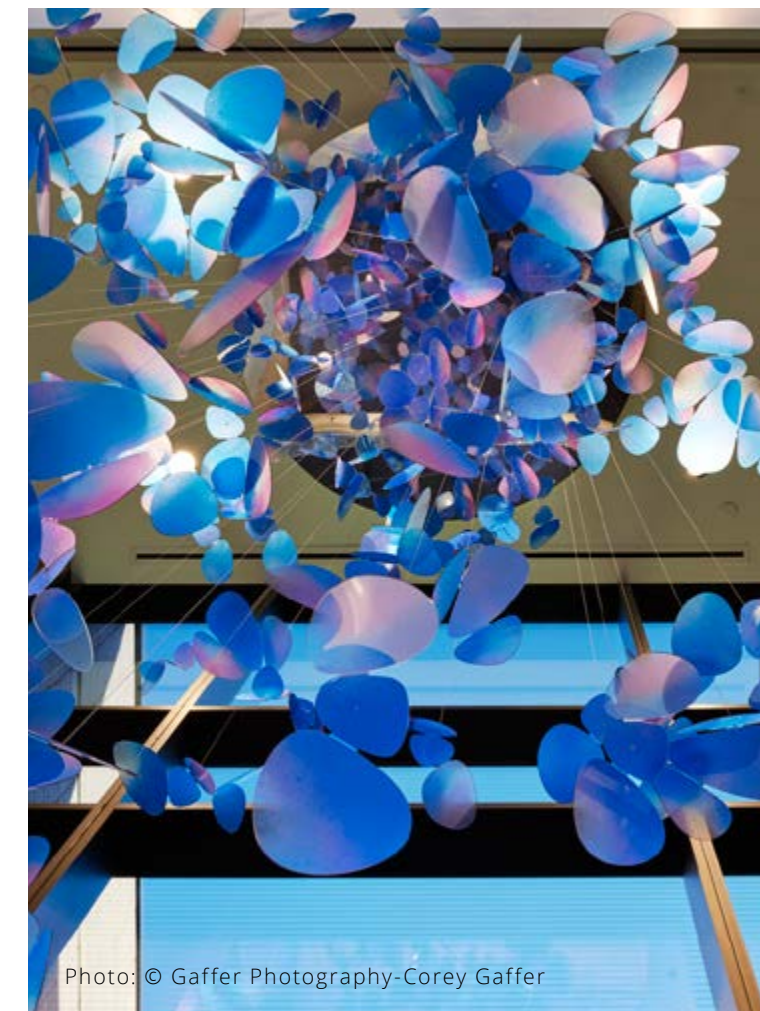


Photo: © Gaffer Photography-Corey Gaffer

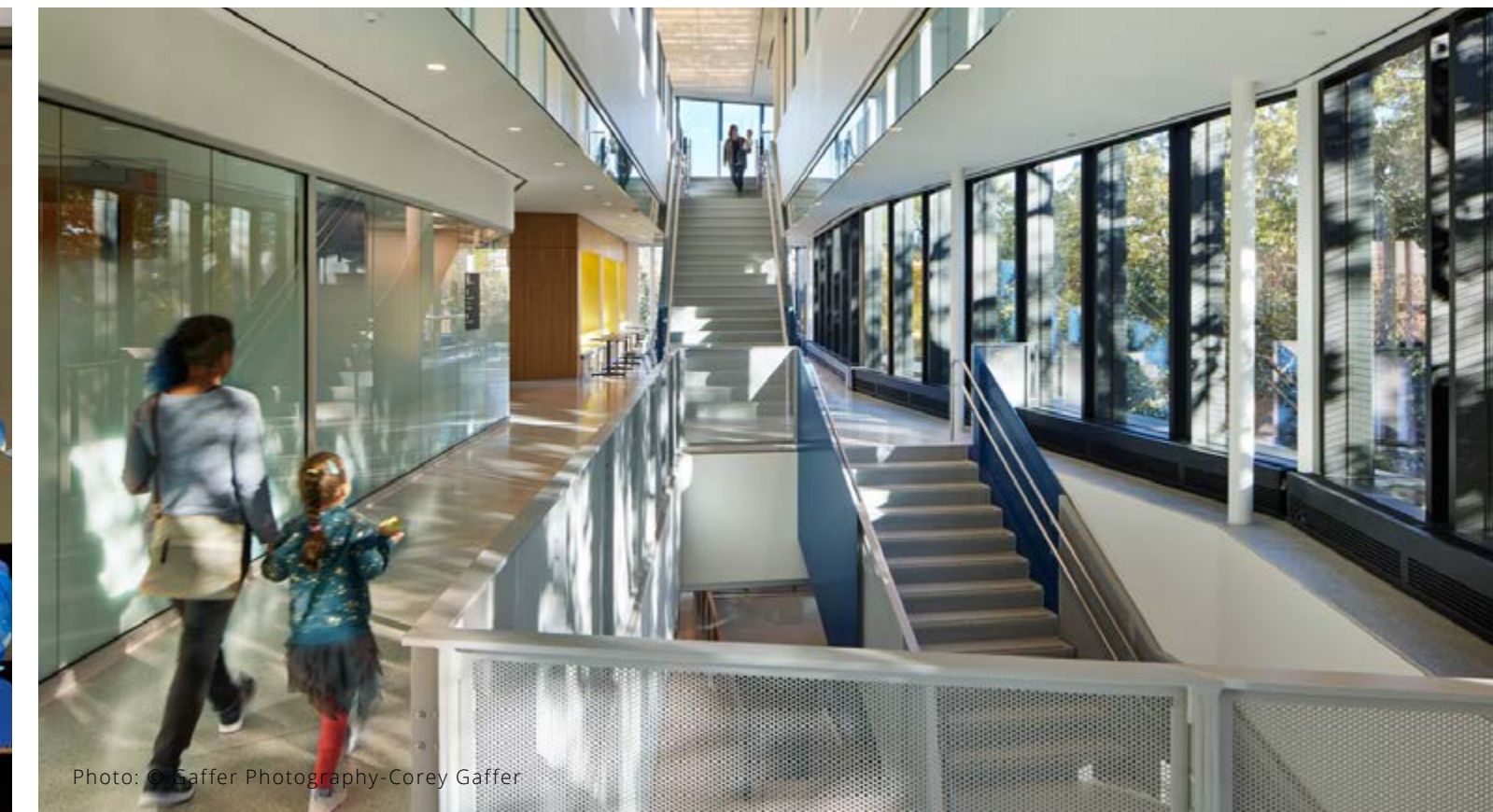


Photo: © Gaffer Photography-Corey Gaffer

“This space makes it easier for collaboration and cross-talk between students. The physical space now matches more of the department values and culture.”

Emmy Reilly | Graduate Student

Q & A WITH OUR SUSTAINABILITY EXPERTS



ABBY PAUL CID, WELL AP
Senior Project Interior Designer

As a WELL-accredited professional, Abby is most satisfied as a designer when she has the opportunity to make lives better, healthier, and more inspired by creating the types of workplace environments that draw in employees every day. Based in Minneapolis, she has extensive experience in developing workplace design standards and implementing change management strategies.

Q. How does your WELL Certification change how you design workplaces for your clients, especially in terms of sustainability and wellness?

A. The WELL Certification gives me a more holistic perspective to focus on the health and well-being of employees and other building users. One key factor is giving people more control over their environment—whether it’s adjusting the lighting in a focus room or choosing seating options that support comfort and productivity.

It’s not just about meeting sustainability goals; it’s also about creating spaces that are welcoming, appealing and engaging for everyone, including neurodivergent and neurotypical workers. Lately, we’ve been incorporating warmer colors, softer lines, and more privacy-focused elements, which are adaptable to different needs. This, in turn, helps clients provide better environments for their teams, leading to increased satisfaction and well-being.



Photo: © Jason Roehner



Photo: © Jason Roehner

Q. What are some of the latest trends and materials you’ve noticed at NeoCon or Design Days and in the industry when it comes to resiliency?

A. One of the biggest shifts I’ve noticed is that sustainability is becoming less of a “special feature” and more of an industry standard. At NeoCon / Design Days, I saw major manufacturers being very clear about their sustainability goals. They’re reducing embodied carbon and greenhouse gases, making sustainability mainstream rather than an add-on. We’re seeing innovations like eelgrass in felt or recycled materials in powder coating processes, something that would have been associated with much smaller, niche manufacturers in the past.

Everyone’s showing that they’re meeting more of their environmental goals, and that’s good. Even in something as standard as carpet, companies are making strides with sustainable materials, and it’s showing up in all the showrooms. Clients are also more attuned to these changes, so we make sure that the materials we specify are having less of an impact on the planet. Since we work with companies with huge real estate portfolios, specifying an eco-friendly material as a brand standard can have a massive ripple effect in terms of reducing environmental harm.

Q. What would you like to see in the future when it comes to sustainable and resilient interior design?

A. While we’re making progress, I’d love to see more emphasis on flexibility and adaptability. Spaces should evolve as standards and needs change. For instance, many companies are still in testing mode with their RTO policies and building flexibility into projects allows for minor modifications based on employee feedback.

I’d also love to see more investment in materials that balance durability and timeless design with environmentally responsible attributes.

At the same time, I hope we never lose sight of the social aspect of design—creating workplaces where people want to be, that foster community while still allowing privacy and personal control over things like sound, lighting, and workspace configuration. The social aspect of the workplace is the one thing that work-from-home can’t offer, and we should consider that a strength.



Photo: © Jason Roehner

FAR LEFT: Furniture can be used to encourage impromptu conversations and meetings.

CENTER TOP: Flexibility is everything, allowing spaces to have multiple functions and atmospheres.

LEFT: Intimate focus areas give employees more control over how and where they work.



A WORKPLACE WITH VALUES

Miami Association of Realtors Global Headquarters | Miami, FL

The new global headquarters for the Miami Association of Realtors is a model of sustainability, achieving both LEED and WELL certifications and reflecting a commitment to environmental stewardship and well-being.

Resiliency and sustainability are embedded in every facet of the project, from energy-efficient systems and eco-friendly materials to ample daylighting and air quality standards that promote a healthy environment. After opening earlier in 2024, this five-story facility now serves as a landmark for the nation's largest local Realtor association, with features designed to adapt to changing environmental conditions as well as industry changes for the professional members the association serves.

Spanning 140,000 SF, the building integrates Class-A office space and flexible event venues, including a 50-person computer lab, a 200-person conference room, and an 80-person training room. The first three floors house an 82,500-SF parking garage with 160 spaces and 33 EV charging stations. The building's exterior is a striking blend of full-height glass, architectural concrete, metal wall paneling, and wood ceilings, complemented by a landscaped patio and stunning views of Miami.

Inside, high-end finishes like glass walls, wood paneling, and acoustical clouds create a refined aesthetic, while hospitality-driven elements such as a welcoming Club Lounge, concierge services, and a monumental stair elevate the user experience. The building also incorporates cutting-edge technology, like digital screens for wayfinding and resource access, ensuring it is as functional and future-proof as it is visually striking.

Photo: © RSP / Roberto Linhares

Q & A WITH OUR SUSTAINABILITY EXPERTS



LUIS CRUZ-MARTINEZ AIA, NCARB, NOMA

Senior Project Architect

Based in our Phoenix office, Luis is a tireless advocate for design. His work spans higher education and institutional buildings to placemaking public art, always advocating for environmental and community resiliency.

Q. Sustainability is a core theme in your work. How do your experiences influence your architecture practice?

A. Environmental resiliency is crucial, especially in a place like Arizona, where the climate demands sustainable strategies. My architectural studies started in San Juan, but I moved to Arizona in 2000 to pursue my master's degree. What drew me to the desert was how different it felt from the tropical island I grew up on—the wide sky, the unique landscapes. After spending some time back in Puerto Rico, I realized Arizona had become my second home, and I've been here ever since.

My background continues to influence my approach to architecture, especially in terms of sustainability. Growing up in a small town, you learn the importance of community and resourcefulness, and that informs the work I do today. I have seen firsthand how fragile infrastructure can be when it's not built with long-term resilience in mind. I bring this experience into my work by focusing on designs that not only serve communities today but are prepared for the challenges of tomorrow. It's about creating spaces that can withstand environmental stresses while also contributing positively to the community's health and well-being.

RIGHT: The Arizona climate is one of the country's most extreme, but it has left a lasting impression on Luis' work and approach to sustainable design.

FAR RIGHT: Luis plays an active role in NOMA, helping young architects navigate the licensure process.

Q. You've been heavily involved in the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA). What is the most impactful aspect of your involvement?

A. I felt driven to find a space where architects from diverse backgrounds could feel supported and heard. I connected with NOMA and eventually became the Parliamentarian of the Arizona chapter. I'm now serving in a broader capacity.

My goal has been to create opportunities for younger architects who don't feel represented, especially when it comes to navigating the licensure process. I helped launch the ARE scholarship, which pays for licensure exams upfront for minority designers, removing some of the financial barriers to becoming licensed architects. I think this is crucial work because we need the most diverse group of voices possible in the profession if we hope to solve the complex challenges surrounding the climate crisis.



Q. How do your experiences as both an educator and an architect inspire your approach to designing resilient spaces that foster community connection?

A. Teaching at Arizona State University allows me to connect with the next generation of architects and share not just technical knowledge, but also values like sustainability and community impact. It's a full-circle moment for me. I try to instill in my students the same sense of responsibility I carry—to design with purpose and to think beyond aesthetics. In my work, I focus on creating spaces that aren't just functional but are also resilient and capable of bringing people together.

Great architecture doesn't always have to be grand; sometimes, it's about creating environments that foster human connection, even in modest spaces. That's what I aim for in all my projects—spaces that serve the community and the planet now and in the future.

“Grove Central is a shining example of a what mixed-use, transit-oriented development can do for a growing community. Projects like this are the future of Miami-Dade, and a key part of making our community more livable and walkable.”

Daniella Levine Cava | Mayor, Miami-Dade County



PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES

Grove Central | Miami, FL

Grove Central is a transformative transit-oriented development (TOD) that has shifted the center of gravity of one of Miami’s most dynamic and evolving neighborhoods, Coconut Grove. The project has come to exemplify smart growth in South Florida, converting what was once a vacant surface parking lot beside a Metrorail station into a multi-modal hub that stands as a prototype for future development.

Grove Central embraces and, in many areas, exceeds the City of Miami’s sustainability, efficiency and green building requirements. The project received an Emerald certification, the highest designation offered by the National Green Building Standard (NGBS) for Multi-family and Mixed-use.

TOD’s, by definition, decrease automobile reliance while increasing the use of public transit, and Grove Central takes full advantage of this idea. The project stands immediately adjacent to the Metrorail, separated by a landscaped, shaded linear plaza that accommodates pedestrians and bicyclists as well as shoppers and residents out for a stroll.

The plaza, lined with storefronts, cafes and public art, features mature canopy trees and a generous overhang that reduces ambient temperatures and directs breezes down to the pedestrian level. It is simply a pleasant place to stroll in a climate that is not exactly conducive to strolling.

Grove Central aligns with the Miami Forever Climate Ready strategy and will significantly reduce the increasing risks of flood, heat and storm impacts over the next 40 years.

RSP served as the Architect of Record on Grove Central. Touzet Studio was the Design Architect.

FUTURE-READY ELEMENTS



Water-resilient plantings, rain garden and run-off swales



A 25,000-gallon cistern to capture roof runoff for water reclamation



Roof designed to accommodate an urban microgrid



Unused site reclamation



Water efficiency design for 45% above Florida Plumbing Code



Heat island reduction through various design elements

Q & A WITH OUR SUSTAINABILITY EXPERTS



RHONDA SMALL FM, SFP
Associate Principal

Rhonda is an industry-leading expert in Integrated Workplace Management System (IWMS) implementation and project management. She offers clients keen insights into solving facility and space management challenges, evaluating a company's processes and goals and matching them with software and data management capabilities.

Q. How is the role of facility managers evolving in relation to sustainability?

A. Facility managers are increasingly being pulled into the sustainability conversation, largely driven by ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) pressures. Building owners are pushing for sustainable practices, motivated by the demands of their tenants, faculty, staff, or students who want to know that they're making a positive impact. In organizations like universities, there's a growing need to provide concrete sustainability metrics. Take the Minnesota Twins, for example—they might have a LEED-certified stadium, but their focus on sustainability often centers on specific metrics like waste reduction. This is where facility managers come in, balancing the cost of these initiatives with the value they provide to the people in the building.

Q. What challenges do facility managers face when implementing sustainability initiatives?

A. The biggest challenge is tying sustainability to cost savings. Many of these initiatives require upfront investment, whether it's in tracking systems or personnel to manage the data. Facility managers often see these costs as a burden, whereas the occupants view them as a value add—a way to achieve that 'do good, feel good' mentality in their environment.

Another challenge is the shrinking budgets for facility management, making it difficult to justify these investments even when the long-term benefits are clear. Moreover, the push towards doing more with less has led to an increased reliance on building automation and AI. These systems are now firing alarms and tracking usage, but the process is often still manual.

Facility managers have to check the issue, create a ticket, and follow up until it's resolved. Building automation is streamlining this, reducing the hours and steps needed to fix problems, but the initial setup can still be seen as a cost rather than a value.

Q. Are we seeing progress in the adoption of sustainable practices?

A. Absolutely, but the focus is shifting. The appeal of third-party certifications like LEED has diminished; it's not about the plaques on the wall anymore. Instead, sustainability is gaining traction because people are increasingly aware of the importance of these practices. The field of facility management is evolving—new professionals are coming in with a deeper understanding of sustainability and are more motivated to push these initiatives forward. It's less about certifications and more about embedding sustainability into the everyday operations of a building.

The rise of AI and environmental sensors allows facility managers to gather detailed data on building performance, helping them make more informed decisions. However, the real challenge lies in interpreting this data. At RSP, we help our clients cut through the noise. They often have vast amounts of information—like badging data that tracks every in-and-out movement within a campus—but they don't know how to analyze it. We can distill this data, identify trends, and provide actionable insights that enhance building utilization and sustainability.

Q. Can you share any examples of how technology is aiding sustainability efforts?

A. Technology is playing a crucial role in this evolution. Environmental sensors, for example, are becoming more common, allowing facility managers to monitor space usage and building performance in real-time. This data helps us identify why certain areas of a building might be underused—whether it's temperature, lighting, or even air quality—and make adjustments to create a more comfortable and efficient environment. Building automation systems are also streamlining processes by automatically tracking usage metrics, reducing the time and effort needed to manage these systems manually.

AI is becoming a buzzword in the industry, with its potential to help facility managers do more with less. These systems can now alert managers when something is amiss before anyone even notices. For instance, an automated alert might indicate that water usage on a piece of equipment is higher than usual, prompting immediate action. This proactive approach not only saves time but also prevents larger, costlier issues down the line. It's all about making sustainability a seamless part of building operations, rather than an add-on.

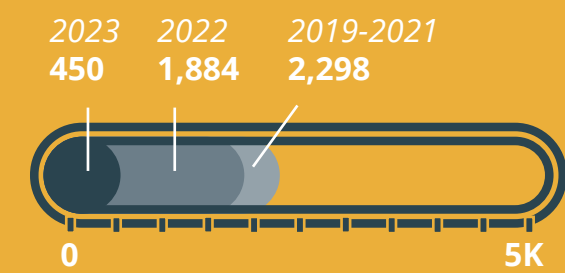
MATERIAL BANK DATABASE

RSP's role in Carbon Impact Program

Architects and designers go through a lot of material samples—we compare, contrast, and make sure we're giving our clients exactly what they need. The carbon emissions behind shipping all these samples across the country, however, can really add up.

The Material Bank eliminates excess carbon shipping emissions and reduces packaging by combining samples from different brands into a single package. Since signing up to the Material Bank, RSP has saved 4,632 packages, part of the more than 3.5 million packages saved through aggregation across the entire program.

RSP's Impact



4,632

Total Packages Saved Firm-Wide (Since 2019)



11k+

shipping miles not driven

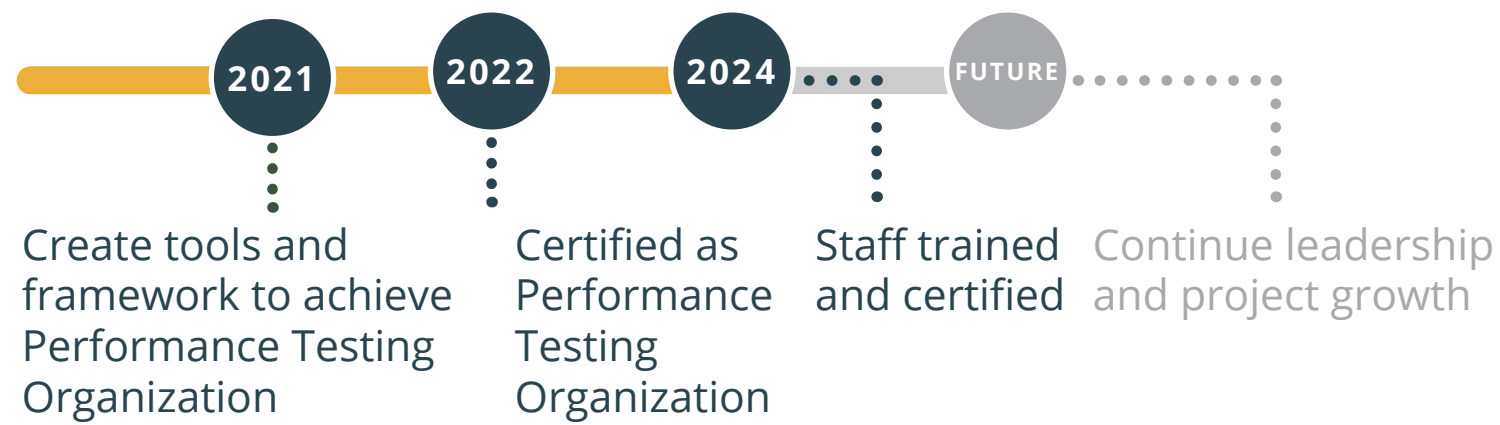
MAKING OUR VOICES HEARD

There are many ways to foster resilience. Sustainable design on individual projects is one way. Thought leadership and sharing ideas on sustainability with the wider design community is another. Over the last year, some of our leading designers have published their insights and influenced the sustainable design conversation. Here are a few examples.

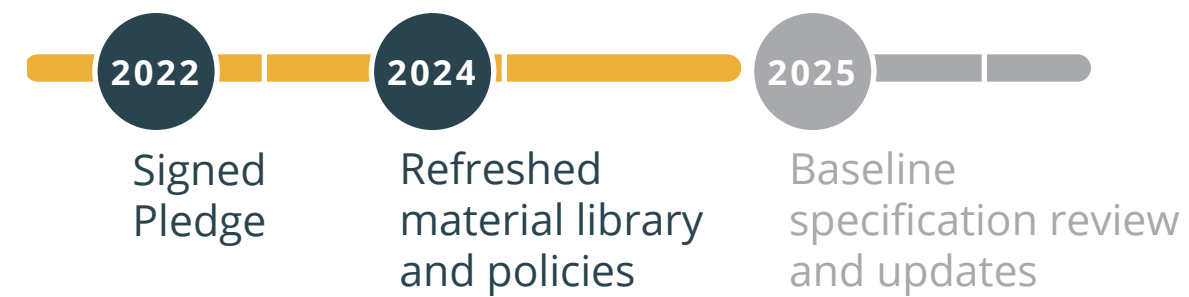
TARGETS AND PROGRESS SUMMARY

Last year we set out a number of challenges and targets. We also kicked-off a number of initiatives that we felt were important to the work we are doing and the practice we want to be. We're pleased to share our progress.

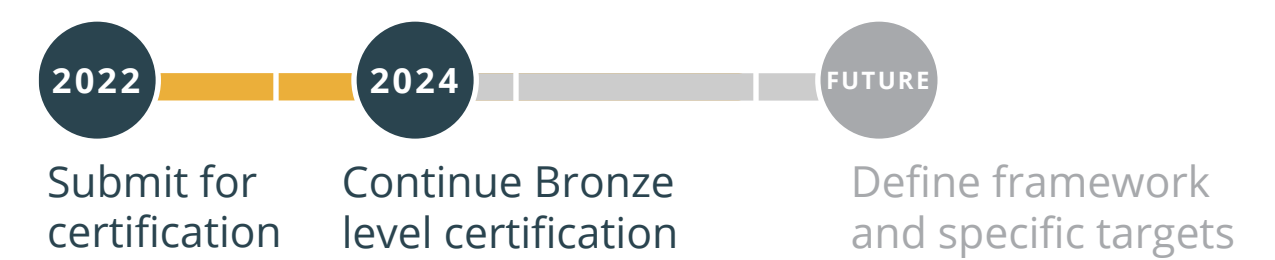
WELL Performance Testing



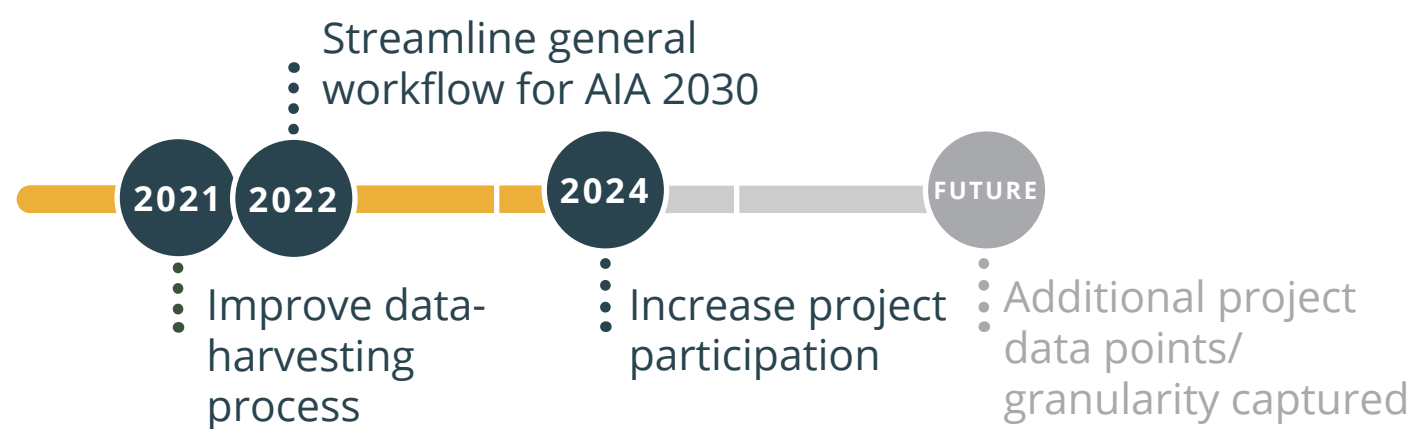
AIA Material Pledge



Bike-Friendly Workplace



AIA 2030



Professional Development



Thought Leadership in Wellbeing, Sustainability and Resilience





WE ARE SHARING HOPE SC | Charleston, SC
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