

RAW

Sustainability
Action Plan



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We Believe

Sustainable design is a necessary and powerful way to preserve Earth's ability to support humanity.

We Believe

Our Built Environment

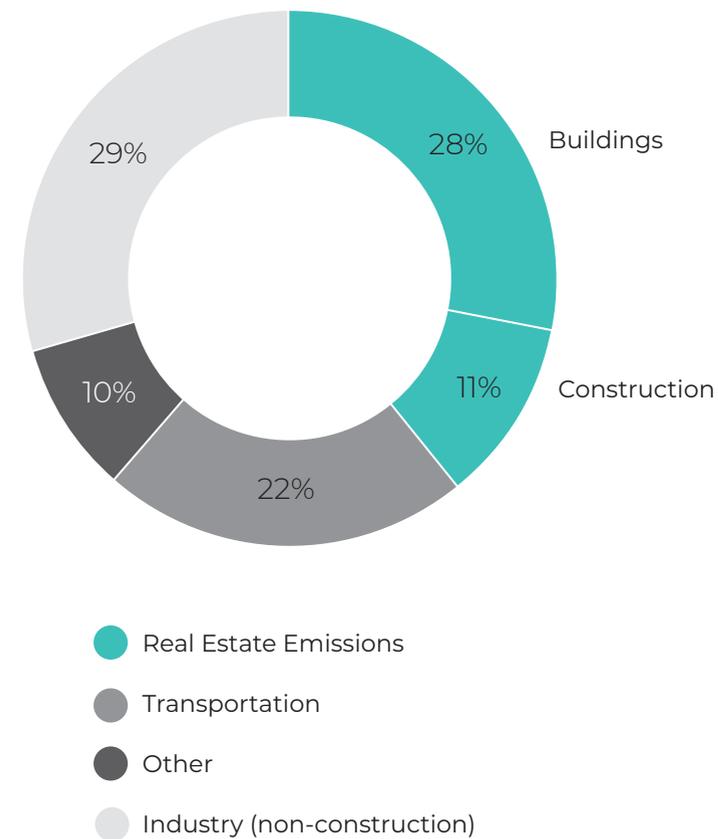
As architects of the built environment, we have a hand in shaping a more viable, equitable and enduring future.

Currently, the building sector is responsible for roughly 40% of CO₂ emissions. According to Architecture 2030, a nonprofit research and policy organization, **all CO₂ emissions must be eliminated from the built environment by 2040** to meet the Paris Climate Agreement's 1.5°C global warming target.

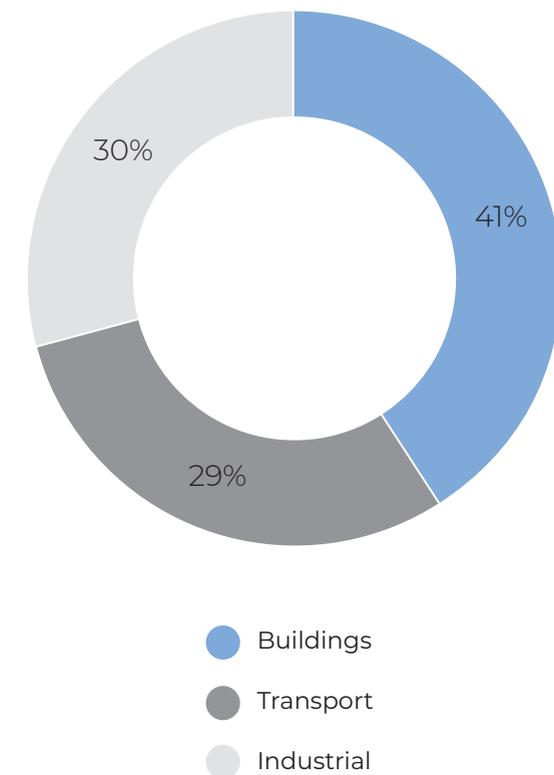
Reducing a building's carbon footprint through intelligent, eco-friendly building design and operation will play a major role in our goal to limit the building sector's greenhouse gas emissions.

Through thoughtful, iterative, and strategic implementation of resource and climate positive actions, RMW can have a measurable and lasting influence on the trajectory of climate change. Through its operations and projects, RMW hopes to empower individuals, ecologies, and communities to progress towards the realization of ambitious climate goals.

Share of Global CO₂ Emissions by Sector



Global Energy Use by Sector



Values

We understand the impact we have on the planet is inextricably linked to the impact we have on people. The climate positive actions we take in our daily work are an extension of our values and vision.

Values

Our Vision & Values

RMW's vision is to **make a positive impact through the power of design**. This deliberately broad statement pertains to the impacts that our work has on the planet, people, communities, and our client's business goals. Through this philosophy of connectedness, we understand that the impact we have on the planet is inextricably linked to the impact we have on people.

The embrace of sustainability in our practice evolved naturally from this vision and is further reinforced by our core values of **Synergy, Innovation and Success**.

When looked at through the lens of sustainability, these values already guide us toward climate positive actions in our daily work. As such, our pursuit of sustainability is ingrained in our approach to every project, regardless of the project's stated sustainability goals. As stewards of the environment, we work to maintain a strong knowledge base of easily achievable, low/no-cost interventions that can dramatically reduce a building's carbon footprint. When our clients wish to go farther, we are prepared and eager to push the boundaries of sustainable design, meeting or exceeding the carbon neutrality goals outlined in the AIA 2030 Commitment.



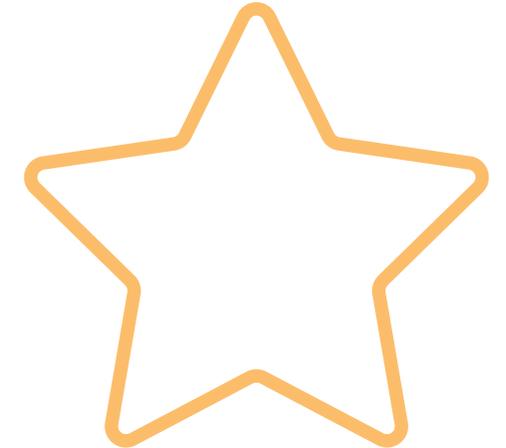
Synergy

- ~ Be a trusted advisor for our clients
- ~ Be a positive presence in our communities
- ~ Inspire excellence



Innovation

- ~ Encourage learning & creativity
- ~ Embrace a diversity of perspectives
- ~ Be fearless. Be bold.



Success

- ~ Foster environment for talent, enthusiasm & opportunity
- ~ Leverage our legacy and plan for the future
- ~ Support work-life balance

Values

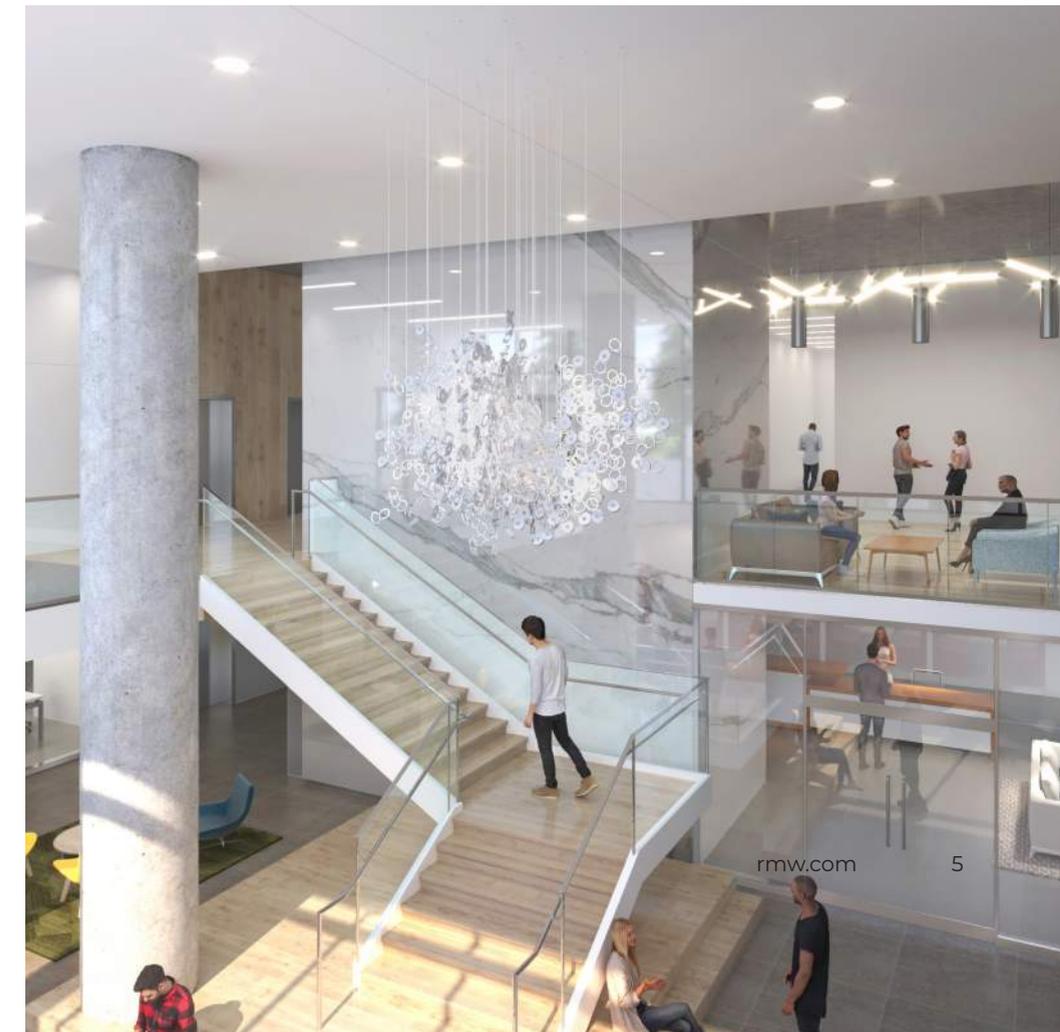
Our Commitments

RMW's early adoption and support of green building certification programs, our willingness to educate ourselves and our clients, our investment into researching novel technologies and strategies, and our commitment to sustained engagement –all of these actions, and a firm belief in the human cause of better for all, propel us forward. The most impactful work we can do will eliminate waste, regenerate resources, alter industry practices and offset others' less impactful work, operations and/or products.

We are committed to

- ~ Educating ourselves and others in order to enable forward progress towards environmental and climate goals.
- ~ Tracking, measuring, and acting with validated information to inform our work.
- ~ Recognizing and sharing outwardly our achievements in a way that supports our team's forward momentum in creating a climate positive world for the future.
- ~ Assessing and mitigating our own carbon footprint.

The climate dialogue has fundamentally shifted from being less bad to asking, how good can we be?



Actions

We believe that, at our best, we can create resilience, regeneration, and equity by leaving a positive wake through our operations and our work that will perpetuate a positive cycle of reconnection between people, place, nature, and the planet.

Actions

The Decarbonization of Buildings

Every project design is unique, but the principles that guide our approach remain constant. Good, sustainable design includes high-performance building envelopes, clean and efficient energy solutions, carbon emission reduction, water efficient strategies, and beautiful, healthy environments. Whether employing innovative new solutions or well-vetted known solutions, we recognize that building science is basic science, and by effectively applying the fundamental principles of heat, air, and moisture, we can create buildings and environments that are comfortable, healthy, and enjoyable, with the ultimate goal of making a positive impact on both people and the planet.

Reducing a building's Energy Use Intensity (EUI) is fundamentally the biggest driver in reducing emissions. We use EUI as a metric to inform and guide our designs, and after a project is completed, use it to inform us how well a building actually performs compared to the original design. This allows us to continually learn and improve. Concepts of air tightness, insulation, heat exchange, and ventilation support and guide energy efficient solutions that are paramount to reducing a building's EUI. Material selections and their associated embodied carbon also play a vital role in carbon reduction.

The desire to eliminate carbon emissions, and be sensitive to all our planet's natural resources, while creating healthy, beautiful, and functional places – guides us with every design.



Actions

Approach to Existing Buildings

With fewer new materials needed, the renovation, remodel, or repurposing of existing buildings almost always generates significantly fewer embodied carbon emissions than that of new construction. We view an existing building renovation as an opportunity to give new life and purpose. Through thoughtful evaluation and creative design, old things can become wonderfully new again, and this thinking guides us on each building renovation. With each opportunity we:



Reuse, Repurpose, Salvage, Recycle

- ~ Evaluate and determine the character-defining features (whether historic or not) that may want to be retained in place.
- ~ Inventory the materials, products, and assemblies anticipated for demolition. Some of which may include concrete, steel, timber, fixtures, glass, casework, doors, stone, and tile, among others.
- ~ Consider opportunities to re-use the materials, products, and other existing elements slated for demolition, within the new design, possibly in a new form and/or different function.
- ~ Look for ways to salvage materials and products, or opportunities to donate.
- ~ If demolished materials, products, and systems can't be reused, repurposed, or salvaged, then we try to maximize the ability to recycle, in order to divert from landfill, which is always the last resort.

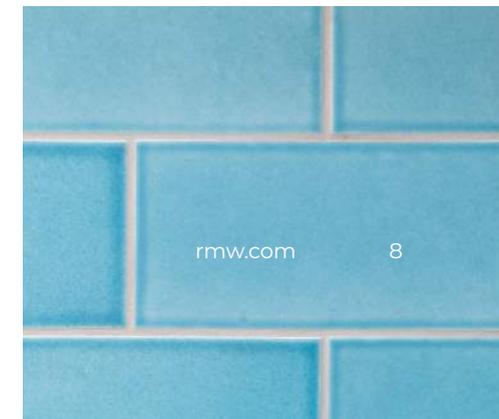
Energy

Explore strategies that will improve the energy performance of the existing building, including:

- ~ Conversion to all electric, with the addition of solar/renewables
- ~ Insulation strategies
- ~ High performance glazing/frames
- ~ Upgraded high performance/reflective roof
- ~ Passive ventilation strategies
- ~ Operable windows
- ~ Night flush
- ~ Ceiling fans
- ~ Upgrading to more efficient HVAC system
- ~ LED lighting using occupancy and daylight sensors

Health and Wellness

- ~ Strive to remove hazardous materials from the building including asbestos, lead, and mercury.
- ~ Increase access to daylight and exterior views for occupants
- ~ Improve air quality through ventilation and air filtration systems



Actions

Approach to New Buildings

The beauty of a new building is that it has endless possibilities. As a blank canvas, we have the opportunity to not only create a new, beautiful, highly functional building, but the ability to do so in a way that allows every part of the building design to positively influence its energy efficiency, its climate and environmental impact, and the health and wellbeing of its occupants.

Through collaborative efforts with like-minded partners, a new building is an opportunity for holistic design that thoughtfully integrates:

- ~ Shape and massing
- ~ Orientation
- ~ Envelope design
- ~ Mechanical and electrical strategies
- ~ Water efficiency
- ~ Occupant health and comfort strategies
- ~ Material selections

There is the potential within each and every new building design to create healthy and enjoyable spaces that are carbon neutral, and zero or positive net energy.

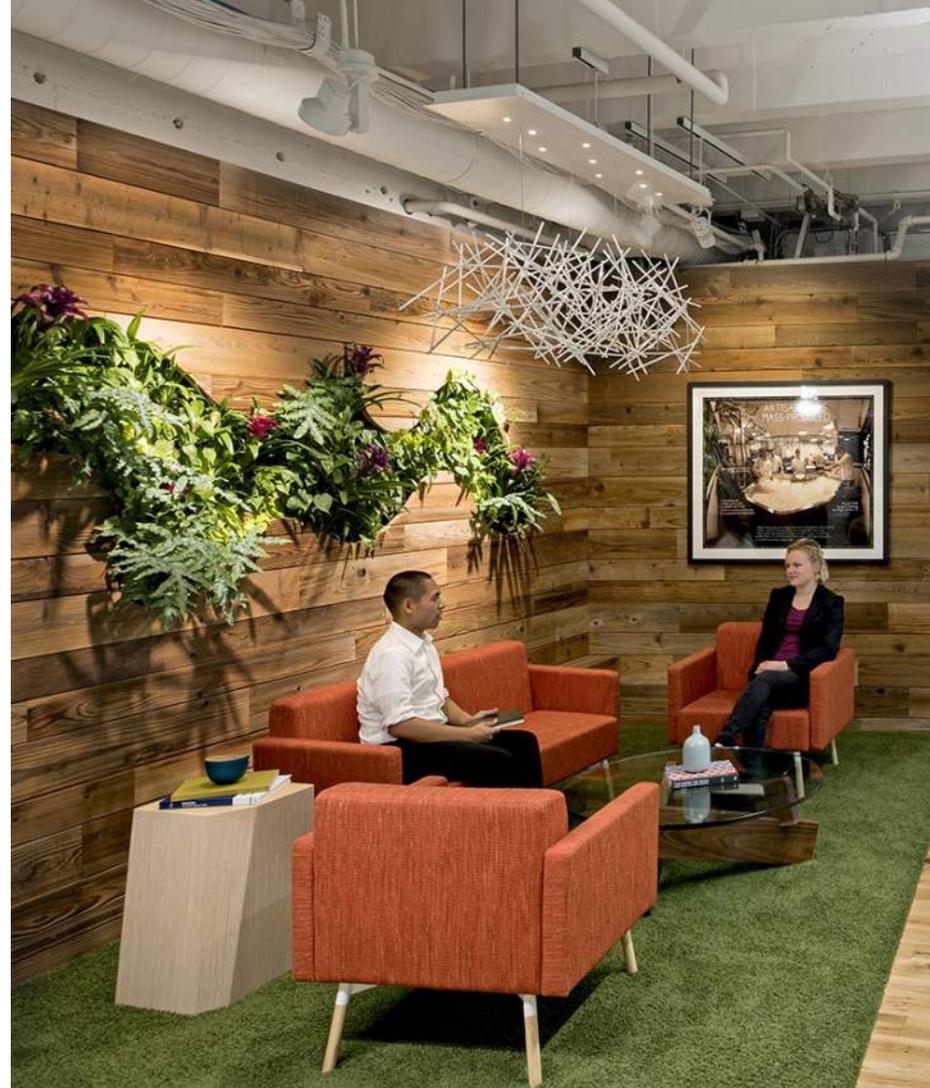


Actions

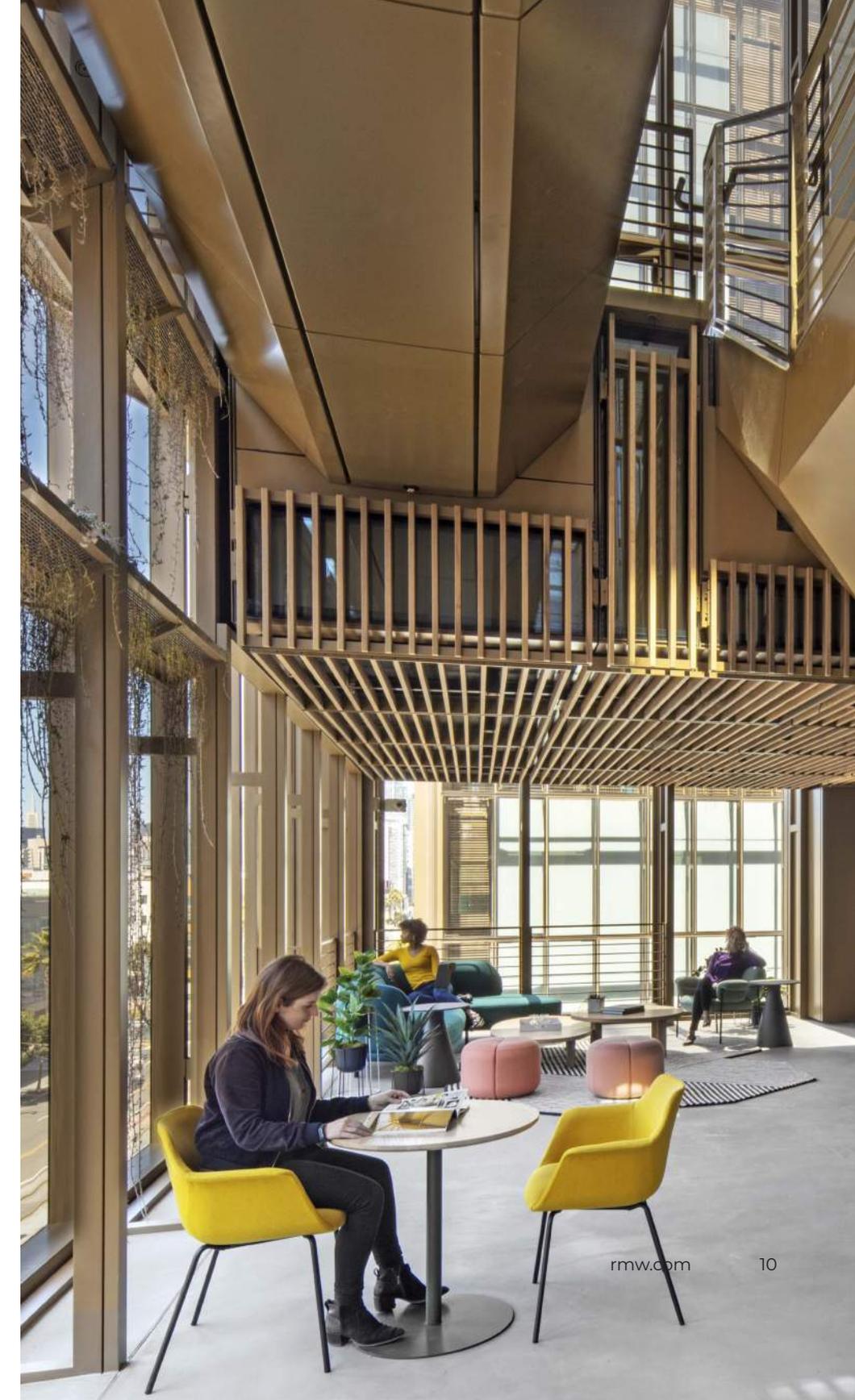
Approach to Interior Projects

On every custom interiors project, we align our design approach with our clients' goals. Conversations around health and wellness are part of the initial dialogue even if LEED or WELL certification is not part of the project vision. The established expectations/strategies carry through the project visioning and programming process, and the development of the design. The decisions we make on materials, surfaces and furniture and the access to light, fresh air, and views are carefully considered for their impact on the health of humans and our planet. Carbon reduction strategies include:

- ~ Repurpose materials where possible.
- ~ Design and select for efficiency and waste reduction.
- ~ Understand the life cycle of products and design for responsible end-of-life, deconstruction, and decommissioning.
- ~ Engage with our MEP partners early in the design to understand existing building systems to make them better.
- ~ Engage with construction team to manage waste and utilize best practices.



As designers, we collaborate with craftsmen, contractors, manufacturers, and artisans to challenge each other to eliminate any toxins and hazardous substances from the products that we specify.

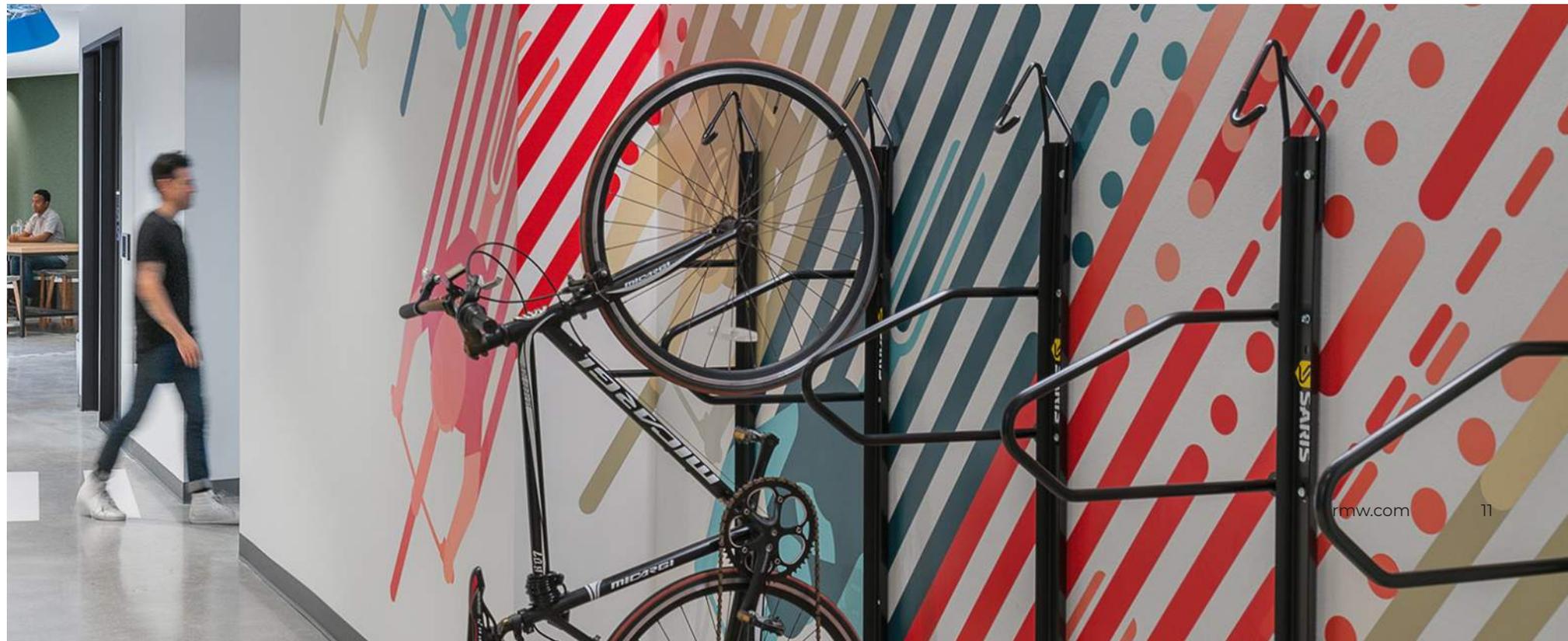


Actions

Approach to Landlord / Tenant Improvement Projects

Landlord / TI work is inherently sustainable by utilizing existing construction. The rapid pace for design/ construction, small spaces and limited budgets for tenant improvements compel us to:

- ~ Educate property owners on health & wellness awareness.
- ~ Create common building amenities program that promotes health and wellness.
- ~ Challenge manufacturers to produce cost effective sustainable materials to replace VCT, and rubber base for building standard finishes.
- ~ Utilize manufacturer take-back programs for demolished materials like ceiling tile and carpet.
- ~ Understand the challenges of existing MEP programs.
- ~ Create stretch goals for building (i.e., grey water system)



Actions

Firm Operations

RMW's commitment to sustainability begins internally. We see our office as a testing ground for innovative sustainable technologies and initiatives that have the potential to also inform our work on behalf of clients. Our goal is to assess and implement environmentally friendly business and procurement strategies that significantly reduce our carbon footprint.

As a major component of our Sustainability Action Plan, our firm operations will continue to identify and evaluate opportunities for improvement in the following areas:

- ~ Waste, Recycle, Compost
- ~ Procurement Policy
- ~ Office Supplies
- ~ Catering Practices
- ~ Energy Use
- ~ Commuting/Travel Policy
- ~ Company SWAG



Actions

Training & Education

Our ultimate goal is to be industry leaders in sustainable design, and to get there, we need to keep pushing ourselves. Continue to learn. Continue to share our knowledge with each other and our peers. Continue to find ways to make things better. Keep growing.

For our staff, we commit to providing abundant opportunities for education and training. If there is a cost and/or time commitment involved, the general approach is to encourage participation through financial reimbursement and/or paid time off, as determined with each opportunity.

Some of our education and training opportunities include:

Conferences. Firm-wide budgets are set to support those interested in attending workshops, conferences, and seminars outside the office. Staff is encouraged to share knowledge learned, in internal presentations.

Accreditation. We encourage staff to become LEED and/or WELL accredited, and the firm helps subsidize exam costs, test taking time, and study materials, as well as help coordinate and encourage study groups.

Lunch and Learns. We invite industry partners (consultants and subject matter experts) as well as product/material vendors to come share their knowledge and expertise with us. These are set up on a regular basis.

Internal Presentations. We have committed to implementing a bi-monthly sustainability education series for staff. Presentations include topics such as climate responsive design, healthy material choices, indoor environmental quality, and social responsibility.



Actions

Outreach & Advocacy

Creating a diverse, just, and equitable work environment where employees feel safe and supported to advance their knowledge outwardly into the community starts within our firm. In 2020, in addition to being an Equal Opportunity Employer, RMW formed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee leading to our first DEI Policy and a firm-wide training program.

Our staff engagement with the broader community is paramount to our mission of supporting a global sustainable economy. Since 1970, RMW has a rich history of volunteering in the communities in which we serve, and an essential goal for our sustainable action plan is to dig even deeper than we have in the past.

As part of RMW's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, each employee receives 8 hours of paid time off per annum to observe cultural or religious holidays of personal significance, or for volunteer efforts.

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

James Baldwin



Actions

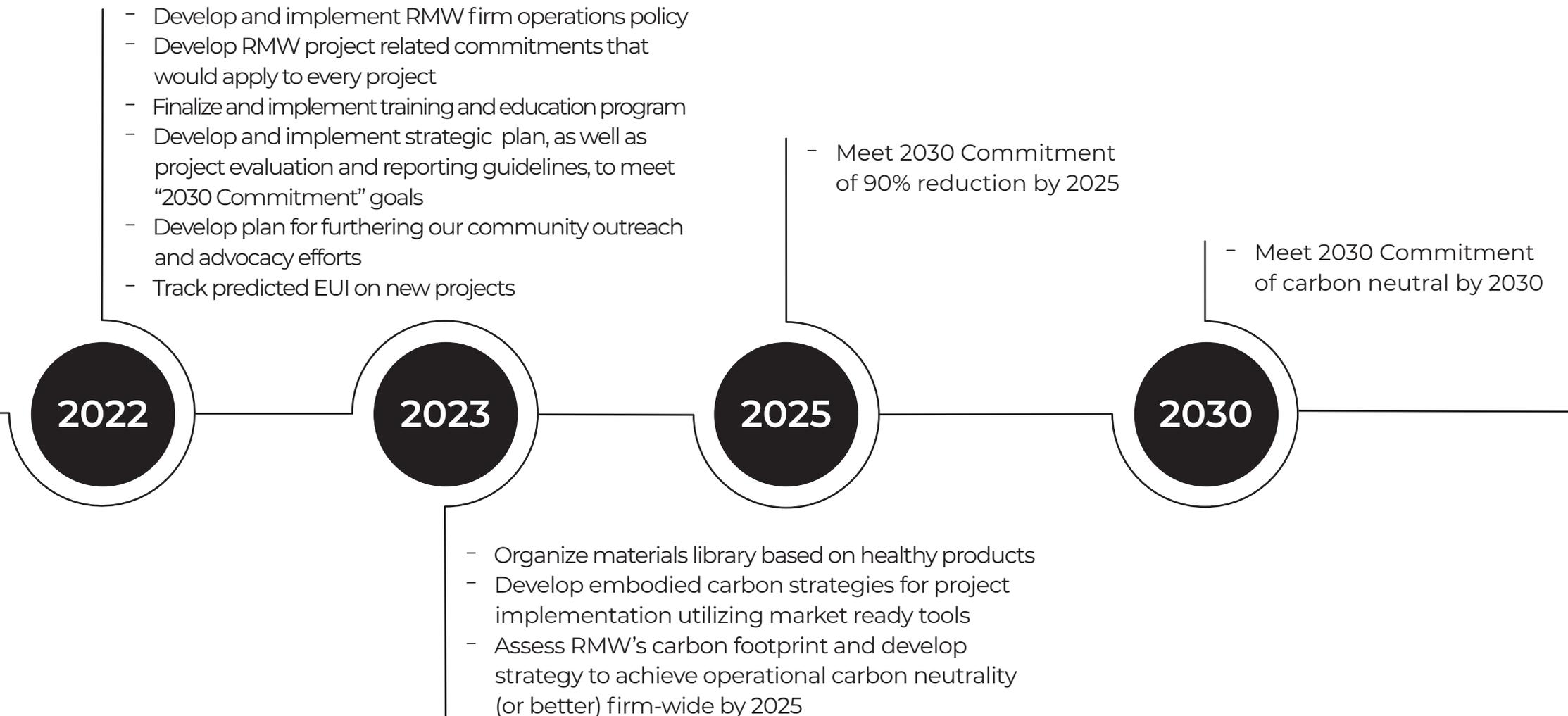
Evaluation & Reporting

Part of our journey in creating lasting, positive impacts includes being signatory to the American Institute of Architects' (AIA) 2030 Commitment. The AIA 2030 Commitment supports The 2030 Challenge by establishing goals to achieve carbon neutral operations in buildings by the year 2030. Reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from transportation, water use intensity (WUI) and energy use intensity (EUI) have been developed for The 2030 Challenge with incremental year-over-year improvements towards the 2030 goals. As signatory to the AIA 2030 Commitment, RMW has annually reported out performance data on its projects to aggregate with the AIA's Design Data Exchange (DDX) so total impact of the commitment can be aggregated for reporting.



Sustainability Action Plan Milestone Goals

Sustainability has long been a part of our design approach, but in order to meet the AIA 2030 Commitment of carbon neutrality, it must become the driving force. As our timeline indicates, the next two years of action are critical if we are to succeed.



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