

# Sustainability Action Plan

HPZS

January 1, 2023





# HPZS

Dear valued clients, colleagues, and friends:

As the CEO of HPZS, I am excited to share with you our latest development: a comprehensive Sustainability Action Plan (SAP). As a socially responsible organization, HPZS finds itself at the forefront of adaptive reuse, historic preservation, sustainable design, and affordable housing in Chicago and throughout the Midwest. We firmly believe that integrating environmentally conscious principles into every aspect of our day-to-day is crucial to designing a better Chicago for all.

The curation of this Action Plan was a moment of firm-wide introspection. Our team deliberated critically and systematically on how to further transform our practice and portfolio. This process allowed us to identify and implement metrics that are essential to evaluate our progress, ensuring we hold ourselves accountable for our actions. While every project has challenges and opportunities, our team takes on multiple roles to best serve our clients: as students and stewards of history, curious investigators, valiant protectors of neighborhood character and treasures, champions of equity, building scientists, and passionate, innovative activists for change. At HPZS, we align ourselves with our clients' missions to understand their needs and work collaboratively to develop a shared vision delivering thorough and creative solutions.

Together, we work to "Preserve a Sustainable Future" for the built environment and the diverse Chicago community we call home; putting our values into practice. We look forward to collaborating with you and bringing these principles to life in our ventures. We can create spaces that not only inspire, but also uplift and nurture the communities we serve. HPZS is confident our Action Plan will serve as a framework for achieving our shared vision of a more sustainable and equitable future.

Sincerely,



**April Marie Hughes, AIA**

Owner, Managing Principal  
Director of Sustainability





At HPZS, we believe sustainability is a critical component of our work as Chicago architects. As a full-service, 100% woman-owned and led architecture firm with unique expertise at the nexus of adaptive reuse, historic preservation, and sustainable design, we are committed to designing and restoring environmentally responsible, socially equitable, and economically viable structures.

To achieve these objectives and measure our progress, we developed the following Sustainability Action Plan.



**HPZS**



## Sustainable Design Principles

At HPZS, we believe every project is a chance to progress towards a more sustainable future. We aim to challenge our design partners and clients to think bigger during our time of necessary action.

To achieve these goals, we will:

- I. Encourage the WELL Building Standard certification for sustainable projects to prioritize occupant health and well-being by focusing on elements such as air, water, nourishment, light, movement, and community.
- II. Achieve Living Building Challenge certification by creating net-zero waste and net-positive energy producing structures, prioritizing humane places, social equity, and beauty.
- III. Conduct Integrated Design Workshops early in the design phase to bring together all project stakeholders and develop preferred approaches to best fit the project's budget, needs, and aspirations.
- IV. Prioritize human health and well-being by conducting Material Charrettes on all projects to understand the impact building materials can have, as well as examine indoor environmental quality and material chemical composition. Develop a material palette direction and benchmarks for material specification across all disciplines.
- V. Optimize operational practices through the design process and incorporate systems that reduce the need for ongoing maintenance, promoting the longevity of the project.





## AIA 2030 Commitment

HPZS pledged to the AIA 2030 Commitment in 2020, joining 1,200 firms nationwide dedicated to reaching net zero emissions in the built environment. This pledge provides the strategies and community support to help us improve our capability and validate our approach. We can access anonymous, confidential data from leading AIA firms' projects worldwide to benchmark viable metrics, set targets, and track progress.

As a firm dedicated to Preserving a Sustainable Future, this connects us to a growing cadre of firms advocating for a carbon-neutral world. We recognize that periodic reviews of our documentation and methods are necessary to maintain accountability and advance towards our goal, and we encourage other firms to do the same.

To continue our involvement in the AIA 2030 Commitment, we will:

- I. Submit our data on projects in phases using the AIA's 2030 DDX reporting tool annually and publicly publish our results.
- II. Update our Sustainability Action Plan on a bi-annual basis.
- III. Commit to sharing information and lessons learned on our projects with the design community to help move the building sector towards a carbon-neutral future.





## Just. 2.0 Certification



Currently, HPZS is the only Woman-Owned Illinois architecture firm and one of two organizations headquartered in Chicago to have a Just 2.0 label. Administered by the International Living Futures Institute (ILFI), the JUST™ program is a system of metrics intended to measure organization's performance on a range of issues relative to their policies and business practices.

The JUST™ program outlines 22 specific social and equity indicators that are housed with six general categories: Diversity and Inclusion, Equity, Employee Health, Employee Benefits, Stewardship, and Purchasing and Supply Chain. The result of participation in this program is the JUST™ label, a publicly accessible scorecard transparently declaring the firm's current performance measured against these metrics. HPZS is proud to be included in these endeavors, marking the beginning of a new era of corporate transparency.

# Just.

**Organization Name:** HPZS  
**Organization Type:** Architecture  
**Headquarters:** Chicago, Illinois  
**Number of Employees:** 11

### Social Justice Indicators:

#### Diversity & Inclusion

- ■ ■ ■ Gender Diversity
- □ □ □ Ethnic Diversity
- □ □ □ Inclusion
- ■ ■ ■ Engagement

#### Employee Benefits

- □ □ □ Health Care
- ■ □ □ Retirement Provision
- ■ ■ □ Family/Medical Leave
- ■ ■ ■ Training/Education

#### Equity

- ■ ■ ■ Full-Time Employment
- ■ ■ ■ Pay-Scale Equity
- ■ □ □ Freedom of Association
- □ □ □ Living Wage
- ■ ■ ■ Gender Pay Equity

#### Stewardship

- □ □ □ Local Communities
- ■ ■ □ Volunteering
- □ □ □ Animal Welfare
- ■ □ □ Charitable Giving
- ■ □ □ Positive Products

#### Employee Health

- □ □ □ Physical Health
- ■ □ □ Well-Being

#### Purchasing & Supply Chain

- □ □ □ Equitable Purchasing
- □ □ □ Supply Chain

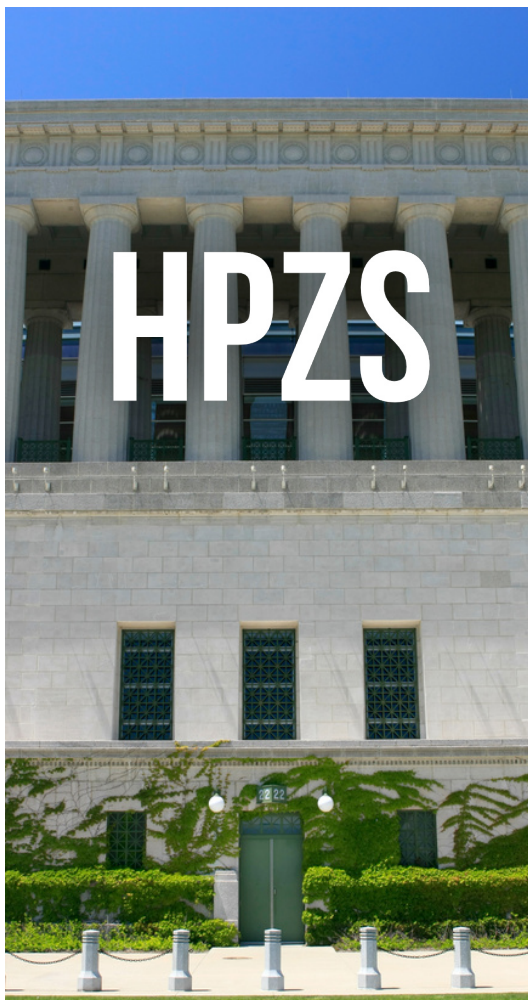
THE SOCIAL JUSTICE LABEL 2.0

HPZ-001

EXP. 01/01/2025

INTERNATIONAL LIVING FUTURE INSTITUTE™







"This project stands alone in a 14-state region for its ability to reach contractors with buildable solutions that they can pull off with a run to a local home improvement store, and everyday home buyers with all the necessary elements of sustainability, incorporating technology in a transparent way.

- Todd Szwajkowski President, SwakeGroup

Yannell PHIUS+ Residence  
Chicago, Illinois

We are building scientists;

We are experts on how buildings are put together, however complex, from foundational to transformative methods, focusing on resiliency.





## Energy Efficiency

HPZS is committed to designing and restoring buildings to be energy-efficient and reduce greenhouse carbon-dependency.

To achieve this goal, we will:

- I. Conduct energy audits on existing buildings to identify opportunities for energy savings.
- II. Utilize energy modeling to optimize building design for energy efficiency.
- III. Specify high-efficiency HVAC systems and lighting controls.
- IV. Design buildings with an emphasis on passive solar design strategies.
- V. Calculate embodied carbon throughout the design process.
- VI. Minimize window-to-wall ratio and thermal bridges in envelope design.
- VII. Test multiple envelope and mechanical systems to optimize performance through integrated design.
- VIII. Evaluate feasibility for renewable energy and battery storage on all projects.
- IX. Encourage behavioral changes and shared amenities that drive down energy demand.
- X. Encourage clients to activate utility-driven incentive programs.





We are thoughtful conservationists;

We believe that design should celebrate and protect all that is essential for a healthy and prosperous cohabitation amongst all species.

South Shore Beach House  
Chicago, Illinois



## Water


We view each project as a unique opportunity to implement innovative solutions that integrate the processing of water and promote the use of non-potable water to reduce freshwater consumption.

To achieve this goal, we will:

- I. Specify only low-flow plumbing fixtures on all projects.
- II. Evaluate all projects for rainwater, greywater, and blackwater reuse strategies.
- III. Select low energy-consuming wastewater technologies that clean more than they pollute.
- IV. Design buildings with an emphasis on passive solar design strategies.
- V. Advocate for code changes in permittable water reuse strategies and technologies.







Chicago Temple  
Chicago, Illinois

**We are curious investigators;**

**We enjoy exploring existing buildings and their stories  
to best inform our design approach for their sustainable livelihood.**



## Health & Human Experience


At HPZS, we strive to foster environmental awareness and prioritize diverse spaces to encourage community engagement and improve accessibility.

To achieve this goal, we will:

- I. Implement Active Design Guidelines to encourage mobility and social interaction.
- II. Utilize Red-List free materials wherever possible that contain zero chemicals to improve indoor environmental quality and advocate for future market change in manufacturing.
- III. Design for on-site food production/edible landscapes where possible, and advocate for healthy food options for occupants.
- IV. Connect people to nature through biophilic design principles.
- V. Design for well-connected, diverse, human-scale places.







Cambridge Manor  
Chicago, Illinois

**We are champions of equity;**

**We believe all people deserve opportunity for growth and success, as well as dignity and pride in the places they call home.**



## Social Equity

We believe that architecture has a significant impact on social equity, and we are committed to designing buildings that are accessible to all.

To achieve this goal, we will:

- I. Incorporate Universal Design principles into all projects.
- II. Design, restore, and preserve buildings to be accessible to people with disabilities, regardless of age or ability.
- III. Prioritize projects that serve under-resourced communities and support affordable housing initiatives.
- IV. Engage with community stakeholders to ensure that our designs are responsive to the needs of the community.
- V. Prioritize projects that are public transit-served or planned to be, and embrace all types of mobility.
- VI. Advocate for affordability and accessibility to human-based rights for all.

Dearborn Homes  
Chicago, Illinois





**We are valiant protectors of neighborhood character and treasures;**

**We believe that cultural identity is paramount for thriving places,  
whether that is preserving an icon, or introducing a new community anchor.**

Museum of Science & Industry  
Chicago, Illinois

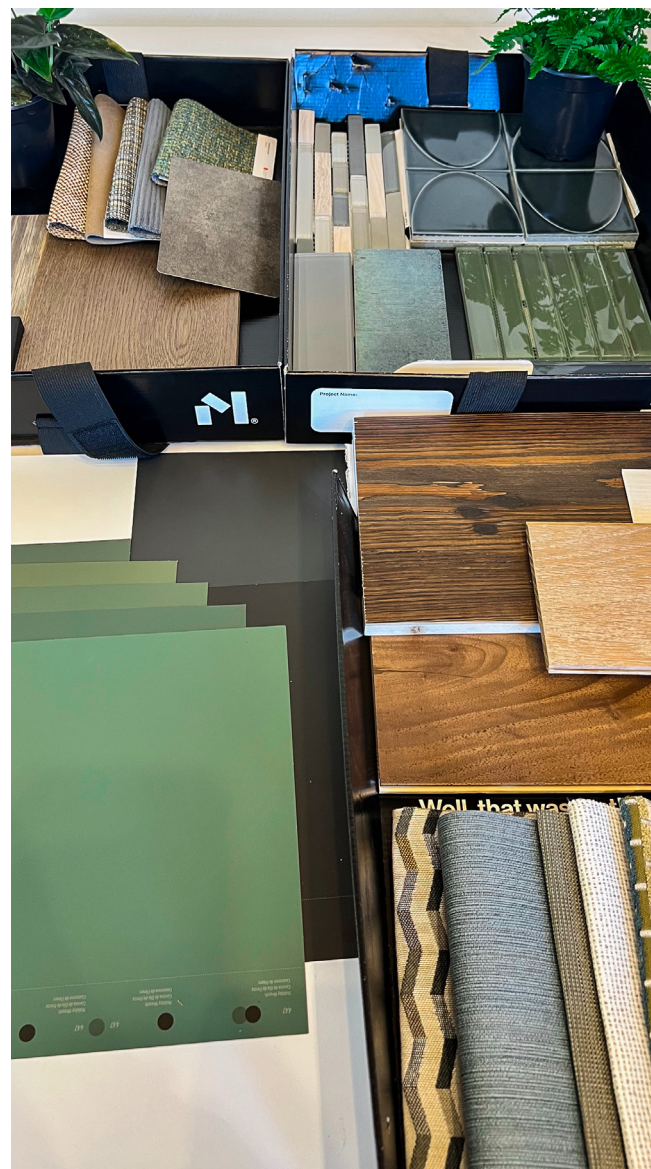


## Waste Reduction

HPZS recognizes the importance of reducing waste and minimizing the carbon footprint of our projects.

To achieve this goal, we will:

- I. Prioritize adaptive reuse and historic preservation projects to reduce the amount of waste generated.
- II. Specify materials that are recyclable or compostable.
- III. Implement a construction waste management plan for all projects.
- IV. Prioritize reclaimed materials or repurpose existing building elements.





**We are passionate, innovative activists for change;**

**While understanding and learning from former typologies and building methods, we are committed to redefining building envelopes, systems, energy sources, to be carbon-neutral.**



University of Chicago Health and Wellness Center  
Chicago, Illinois



## Progress Reporting

To measure our progress towards our sustainability goals, we will develop and report on key performance indicators (KPIs), including:

- I. Energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
- II. Use of renewable and low-carbon materials.
- III. Percentage of projects that incorporate Universal Design principles.
- IV. Waste reduction and diversion rates.
- V. Community engagement and impact.





## Conclusion

HPZS is committed to implementing sustainable practices in all aspects of our work. Our Sustainability Action Plan outlines a clear and comprehensive approach to achieving these goals, including reducing our carbon footprint, promoting diversity and inclusion, and engaging with the local community.

By tracking our progress and regularly evaluating our practices with the AIA 2030 Commitment and the firm's JUST certification, we are confident we will continue to improve and make a positive impact for our planet. As a 100% woman-owned and led firm, we believe these attributes and dedications set us apart as a leader in Chicago's architectural industry and continues to **Preserve a Sustainable Future.**



Jackson Lake Lodge - Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming



**April Hughes, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C**

President, Managing Principal

**HPZS**

213 W Institute Place, Suite 502

Chicago, IL 60610

Main: 312 944 9600 x 1001

Direct: 312 366 2731

[www.hpzs.com](http://www.hpzs.com)