

# Scaling High Performance

Strategies for Leveraging Net Zero Practices for Statewide Impact

2026-2030 STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN



## Who We Are and What We Do

For the past two decades, Illinois Green has brought together people who believe that better buildings can transform our communities. What began as a small but dedicated group of green building experts has grown into a statewide network of industry professionals and advocates united around one shared purpose to: **ensure every person in every community has access to healthy, resilient, high-performance buildings.**

We believe high-performance buildings improve health outcomes, reduce costs, cut pollution, and strengthen local economies. And yet many Illinois households, schools, workplaces, and public buildings still face

outdated systems, high energy burdens, and increasing climate risks. These challenges drive our work and inform the strategies of our 2026-2030 Strategic Plan.

That work is centered around people—our members, volunteers, sustainability advocates, policymakers, industry leaders, and more. We accomplish our mission by convening all of our stakeholders to educate them on the latest green building practices and innovations, promote sustainable policy solutions at the state and local level, and demonstrate the positive impacts of green buildings.

### Mission

Illinois Green Alliance is a member-driven non-profit that works collaboratively to promote green buildings and sustainable communities for all. Our network of sustainability professionals believes green buildings are critical to improving the quality of life for everyone in Illinois.

### Vision

To address climate change in Illinois, we envision a future where high-performance buildings are feasible, affordable, and so commonplace that every building contributes to a sustainable and resilient future for all communities.



## Progress to Date

We launched a five-year Strategic Plan in 2021 with a vision to make net zero mainstream by 2050. Since then, Illinois Green has made meaningful progress towards this vision by educating thousands of building professionals each year, helping advance statewide policies like the Clean and Equitable Jobs Act, and demonstrating that high-performance buildings are achievable and affordable anywhere through new projects like the Building Energy Hub.

For the first time, the organization set a long-term direction, and that foundation has allowed us to learn, test strategies, and grow our statewide presence.

## Building on Our Strong Foundation

“Scaling High Performance” builds on the success of the last five years. Our previous plan strengthened our capacity to diversify our education programs, advance green building policy, and grow community partnerships. With that foundation in place, we are ready to scale—not through internal expansion alone, but through network growth, shared leadership, and collaborative action across Illinois.

# 2026-2030 Strategic Plan: Vision and Development

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“Scaling High Performance” aims to enhance the organization’s impact and reach by focusing on key areas such as advancing decarbonization standards, broadening our reach to all Illinois communities, and extending education to the full spectrum of those working in the building industry.

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By empowering building professionals and community members, we aim to create a collective understanding of high-performance practices and technologies that drive the green building movement forward.

Through our initiatives we are committed to influencing policy, demonstrating the return on investment for sustainable practices, and ensuring equitable access to the benefits of green buildings for all communities.

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In order to craft this new Strategic Plan, we engaged our Board of Directors, members, and industry leaders, and heard that:

## 01

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**We must grow our reach to more communities, more sectors, and more building types.**



## 02

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**Policy is a critical pathway for expanding demand for high-performance buildings.**



## 03

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**Illinois Green’s strength is our membership and the trust they place in us.**



# Five-Year Strategies

Over the next five years, Illinois Green Alliance will advance four strategic priorities that directly align with our mission, vision, and member input. These priorities outline the most effective pathways to accelerate high-performance buildings and build resilient communities throughout Illinois.

## STRATEGY 1

### Champion High-Performance Building Practices

Reaching our net zero target will require deep transformation of both new construction and existing buildings. We will educate building professionals with the knowledge and tools to implement proven technologies and strategies in order to put every building on a path to net zero emissions by 2050.

## STRATEGY 2

### Support Green Building Policies

New policies at the local and state level are critical to advancing high-performance building practices and supporting market adoption of the best technologies. To do so, we will equip and mobilize building industry professionals to drive the development, adoption, and implementation of building decarbonization policy.

## STRATEGY 3

### Promote Sustainable Investment Strategies

High-performance building design is often viewed as costly, creating a barrier to wider adoption. We will align high-performance building strategies with financial viability, demonstrating that sustainable design and construction deliver lasting value in any market.

## STRATEGY 4

### Engage All Building Professionals Across Illinois

To ensure the presence of high-performance buildings in every community across Illinois, we must extend our outreach so that all building professionals—beyond just those focused on green building—are aware of our educational resources. This outreach needs to encompass all building stakeholders in every part of the State.