



2026–2029 STRATEGIC PLAN

CHAPTER GUIDE

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

This guide helps APWA chapters translate the 2026–2029 Strategic Plan into practical, local action. It provides a clear framework, tools, and expectations to help chapters align their work, engage members, and deliver meaningful impact in their communities.

Chapters are the primary delivery mechanism for APWA’s mission—connecting members, providing local value, and bringing the Strategic Plan to life.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK [\(CLICK HERE TO VIEW\)](#)

All chapter work aligns to three pillars.

PILLARS



PEOPLE

Create a welcoming and engaging membership experience.



PURPOSE

Provide excellence in workforce development, education, and credentialing.



PRESENCE

Promote the value of public works to government leaders, the public, and the media.

APWA’s strategy is designed to produce measurable outcomes and impact:

- **People** build a strong professional community.
- **Purpose** equips the profession with knowledge and workforce capacity.
- **Presence** elevates visibility and advocacy influence.

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WHAT THIS MEANS FOR CHAPTERS

Chapters are not expected to address every strategic goal. Instead:

- Focus on priorities that are most relevant to your members and region
- Align your efforts to the pillars while maintaining flexibility to meet local needs
- Contribute by:
 - o Delivering impactful local programs and events
 - o Engaging and growing membership
 - o Supporting education and workforce development
 - o Promoting the value of public works in your community

ROLE OF CHAPTERS IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Chapters are responsible for local execution and member engagement.

Chapters:

- Deliver programs and services at the local level
- Engage members across the full membership lifecycle
- Provide education, networking, and professional development opportunities
- Promote the value of public works within their communities
- Serve as the key connection between members and APWA

ROLE OF DELEGATES IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN

- Facilitate the free flow of communication between APWA and your chapter, as well as collaboration and information sharing with other chapters.
- [Promote best practices and resources by sharing key information from the monthly Chapter Leader Announcements with your chapter leadership and members.](#)
- [Participate in APWA monthly Chapter Leader Trainings to stay informed about new programs, resources, and initiatives, and share relevant updates with your chapter.](#)
- [Support your chapter's PACE Award efforts by encouraging participation, coordinating information, and assisting with the annual PACE nomination submission.](#)
- Engage your Chapter Advocacy Ambassador by inviting them to provide advocacy updates during chapter meetings.

ALIGNING CHAPTER STRATEGY TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Many chapters already have established strategic plans. These plans do not need to be replaced but should be reviewed and updated as needed to align with APWA's 2026–2029 Strategic Plan. Chapters should conduct a targeted alignment process to ensure consistency while maintaining local priorities.

Step-by-Step Alignment

1. Review your current chapter strategic plan.
 - Identify existing goals, priorities, and initiatives.
 - Confirm what is working well and should continue.
2. Map current goals to APWA pillars.
 - People
 - Purpose
 - Presence
3. Identify gaps and opportunities.
 - Where is your plan not aligned?
 - Where could you better support APWA priorities?
 - Are there priorities that are no longer relevant locally?
4. Update and refine to reflect:
 - APWA strategic priorities
 - Local chapter needs and capacity
 - Language that aligns with the strategic plan framework
5. Integrate into annual planning.
 - Ensure annual work plans reflect the updated strategy.
 - Align committees, events, and communications accordingly.

INTEGRATING THE PLAN IN CHAPTER OPERATIONS

The Strategic Plan should be integrated into routine operations—not be a separate effort.

Where to integrate:

- Board meetings (agenda alignment to pillars)
- Annual planning sessions
- Conferences and events
- Communications and member outreach
- Committee activities

Add a standing question to agendas: "Which pillar does this activity support?"

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METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Chapters are not expected to track every metric but should identify the key measures that best reflect their local impact.

People (Membership and Engagement)

- Membership growth and retention
- Event participation
- Volunteer engagement

Purpose (Education and Workforce Development)

- Number of education events/programs
- Participation in training and credentialing
- Workforce outreach initiatives

Presence (Advocacy and Awareness)

- Outreach to local officials
- Community engagement activities
- Participation in advocacy initiatives

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT AND EXPERIENCE

Chapters are central to delivering the **People** pillar.

Key Actions:

- Member recruitment and onboarding
- Retention and engagement
- Volunteer development and leadership
- Creating a welcoming environment

Best Practices:

- Use your chapter's membership reporting tools within Fonteva
- Establish clear onboarding processes
- Provide regular engagement opportunities
- Create pathways for member involvement

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Chapters play a key role in delivering APWA's **Purpose** pillar locally.

Key Actions:

- [Host or support education programs](#)
- [Promote APWA training and credentialing](#)
- [Partner with APWA committees for local delivery and share chapter insights](#)
- [Support workforce development initiatives](#)

Examples:

- Local workshops or training sessions
- Conference programming aligned to strategic priorities
- Partnerships with schools or agencies

ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

Chapters are essential to advancing the **Presence** pillar at the local level.

Key Actions:

- [Engage local officials and stakeholders](#)
- [Share the public works story](#)
- [Promote National Public Works Week and campaigns](#)
- [Participate in advocacy initiatives](#)



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COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT

Successful implementation of the Strategic Plan depends on strong connections across APWA, including leaders, staff, committees, and other chapters. Engaging with this network helps chapters strengthen their work, share perspectives, and access tools that support local success.

Chapters should actively engage with APWA partners, including:

- Regional Directors
- Chapter Delegates
- APWA Committees
- APWA Chapter Concierge Team

APWA Support Available:

- Strategic planning guidance
- Training and workshops
- Templates and toolkits
- Communication and marketing resources

Examples of Collaboration:

- Sharing chapter success stories and case studies
- Participating in cross-chapter or APWA workgroups
- Partnering with APWA committees on education programs or conference sessions
- Contributing to APWA resources, toolkits, or publications

Chapters play an important role not only in implementing the Strategic Plan locally, but also in informing APWA's broader efforts through shared insights and experiences.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Successful chapters will:

- Make the Strategic Plan relevant locally
- Focus on a small number of high-impact priorities
- Embed strategy into everyday operations
- Engage members actively across the membership lifecycle
- Leverage APWA resources, support, and partnerships
- Participate in collaboration and knowledge exchange across APWA
- Measure and communicate impact and outcomes

Regularly review and update your chapter's strategic plan to maintain alignment with APWA priorities while reflecting local needs.

The Strategic Plan is not separate from chapter work—it is a framework to guide and strengthen what chapters already do. When chapters align their local efforts to shared priorities, they strengthen APWA's collective impact across the profession and the communities it serves.

