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Orlando Foundation for Architecture (OFA)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Center for Architecture and Design Coming to Orlando

(Orlando, FL) Lede: AIA Orlando and the Orlando Foundation for Architecture (OFA), have finalized a lease agreement and are actively proceeding with plans to develop the 1st phase of The Orlando Center for Architecture and Design (OCAD). The center will be a multi-disciplinary hub for design professionals, students, and the community to explore **WHY DESIGN MATTERS**. OCAD Phase I will occupy a prime space on the ground floor of the newly renovated Fulcrum Building at 150 N. Orange Avenue in Downtown Orlando's Main Street District. While uniquely rooted in Central Florida's culture and community, OCAD will be inspired by globally recognized models such as the Chicago and Miami Centers for Architecture. The Center will address the evolving identity and issues of Central Florida while leveraging proven frameworks for public engagement, education, and design excellence. Our purpose is to foster dialogue, inspire innovation, and deepen public appreciation for the power of design in building a more inclusive, sustainable, and vibrant community.

"Developing a Center for Architecture and Design in our region achieves a monumental goal envisioned over a decade ago by a team of architects, other design professionals and key community leaders. Having a space where design is not only appreciated but becomes a catalyst for dialogue, connection, and impact has been a long time coming," said Debra Lemons, AIA, Chair of the Orlando Foundation for Architecture 2022–2025.

OCAD will offer dynamic programming including:

- Rotating exhibits
- Multi-disciplinary programs, lectures, design labs, and workshops focused on the issues around sustainability, inclusivity, and smart growth in our community
- K–12 educational programming
- Mentorship and access to professional resources for college students studying architecture and design, including those enrolled in the 2+2+2 professional degree program through Valencia, UCF, and UF CityLab.
- Public tours featuring historic landmarks and innovations in design, sustainability and new technologies in the built environment.

“Orlando is a city on the rise, and OCAD represents our collective ambition to build not just better buildings—but stronger, smarter, and more connected communities,” said Alexander Straughn, 2025 AIA Orlando President.

With this milestone, AIA Orlando and the OFA invite the community to join us in shaping a future where design is accessible, celebrated, and central to the growth of our region.”

For more information on how you can get involved, please visit

<https://www.orlandoarchitecture.org/ocad>

About the Orlando Foundation for Architecture and AIA Orlando

The Orlando Foundation for Architecture (OFA) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to public education that inspires everyone to discover WHY DESIGN MATTERS. Established in 2014, OFA has been intentional in its growth and purpose by providing relevant educational programming including tours, panel discussions, and events, that promote public awareness and appreciation of architecture, design, and positive impacts of the built environment on the Central Florida region.

www.orlandoarchitecture.org

AIA Orlando, with over 900 members, is a local chapter of the American Institute of Architects. The organization is committed to supporting architects and allied professionals by fostering professional growth, advocacy, and a vibrant architectural community. AIA Orlando is the 2025 recipient of The Anthony “Tony” Pullara Chapter Award, a prestigious distinction that celebrates local Florida AIA chapters that strive to exceed Core Member Services as established by AIA and its members' expectations, particularly in the areas of Public Awareness/Outreach, Political Effectiveness, and Membership Development. This award is a testament to the passion, collaboration, and leadership of our members, who continue to elevate the architectural profession throughout Central Florida.

www.aiaorlando.com

Together, OFA and AIA Orlando are shaping a cultural and educational hub where creativity, innovation, and community converge.