Evolving AIA Governance

The path to strengthening our organization through role clarity, representation, and strategic focus

Governance Task Force

Governance Task Force Charge

Review and build upon the recommendations of the Member Voice Task Force findings to increase communication across the institute's volunteer groups

Audit the AIA governance structure to ensure effectiveness and efficiency for the organization and its members

Enhance collaboration and coordination across AIA governing bodies

Empower volunteers to make decisions while establishing norms for oversight across the organization

Build trust and transparency across AIA

Work with AIA staff to review AIA governing documents and provide recommendations for proposed amendments

Governance Task Force Members

Mickey Jacob, FAIA, Chair
Former President

Anne Hicks Harney, FAIA
Director at-Large

Anthony Rohr, FAIA
Member at-Large/LFRT

Carol Rickard-Brideau, AIA
Member at-Large/LFRT

Cheryl McAfee, FAIA
Member at-Large

Curt Wilson, AIA
Member at-Large

Darral Tate, Assoc. AIA
Young Architect/NAC/SAC Rep

Gabriella Bermea, AIA
Member Group

Heather Wilson
Component Representation

Jeffrey Gill, FAIA
Component Representation

Jessica O'Donnell, AIA
Strategic Council Moderator

Leah Alissa Bayer, AIA
Member at-Large

Nicki Dennis Stephens, Hon. AIA
Component Representation

Susan Chin, FAIA
Knowledge Community

Susan Wyeth, AIA
Resolution Sponsor

Timothy Hawk, FAIA
Past Board of Directors

Support:

Caitlin Couture, CAE
AIA Staff

Suzanna Kelley, MBA, FAIA
McKinley Advisors

Alexandra Isham, PMP
McKinley Advisors

The case for change

The challenges we face

Role clarity

Role confusion between the Board, Strategic Council, and other governance elements; lack of clarity around responsible and accountable parties

Member voice

Members feel disconnected from decision-making, and there is a lack of clarity on how members can feel “heard” and follow-up from decision-makers

Inefficiencies

Duplicative structures create inefficiencies and waste volunteer resources

Trust and transparency

Over the past several years, some members have felt unheard or disconnected from AIA’s governance processes, which has led to mistrust.

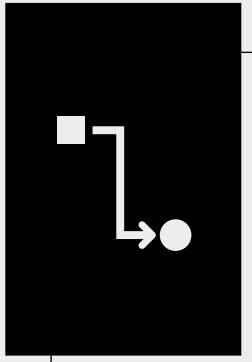
Preliminary recommendations

Working draft for feedback

RECOMMENDATION TYPES

Culture

Shifts in the shared norms and expectations that shape how AIA operates and makes decision



Process

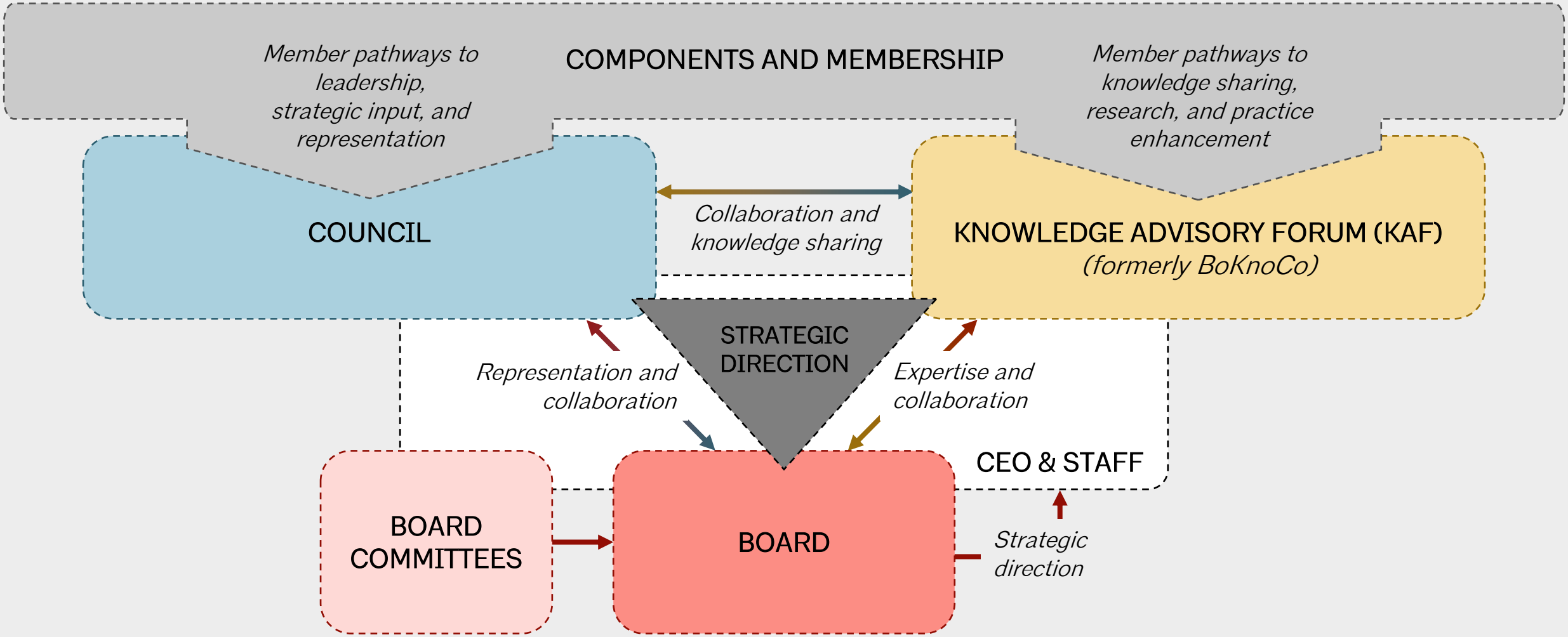
Modifications to the established procedures, workflows, and guidelines that dictate how governance tasks are carried out

Structure

Refinements to the formal composition, hierarchy, and configuration of the governance bodies within the organization

PROPOSED REVISED STRUCTURE

Working draft for feedback



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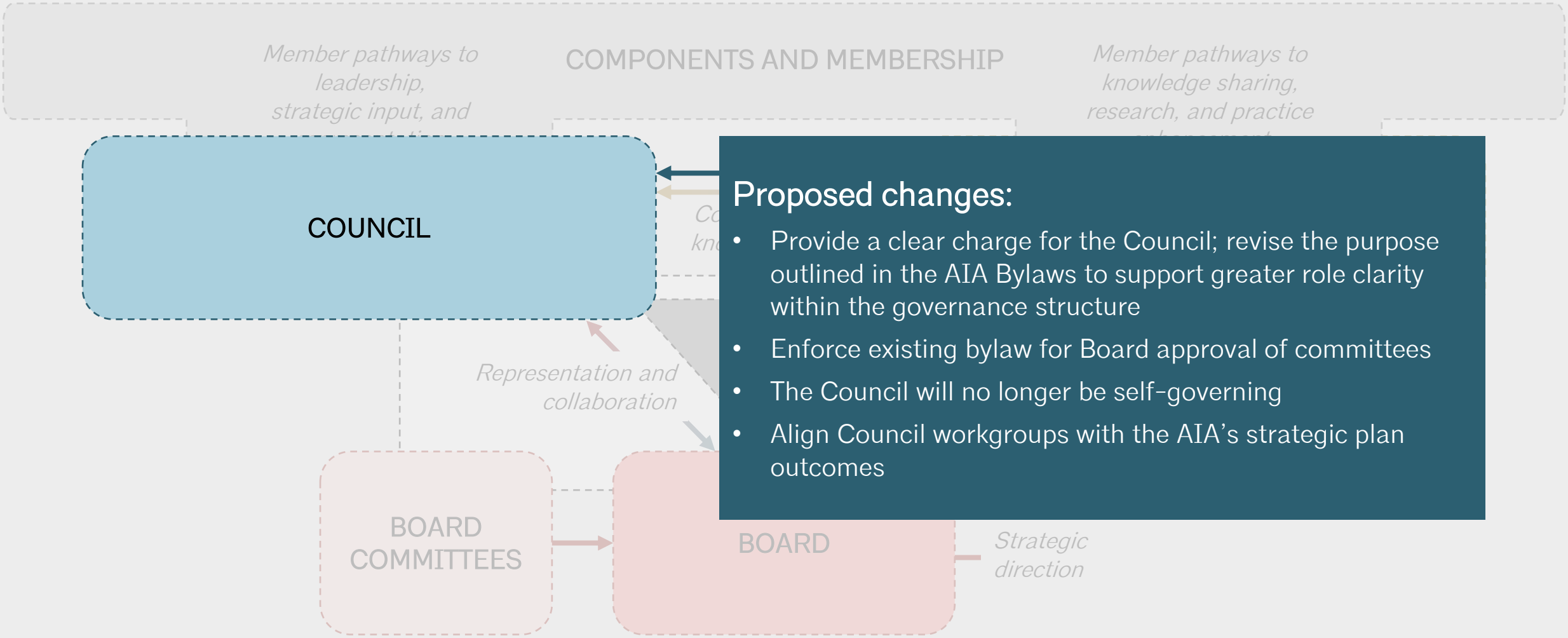
Working draft for feedback



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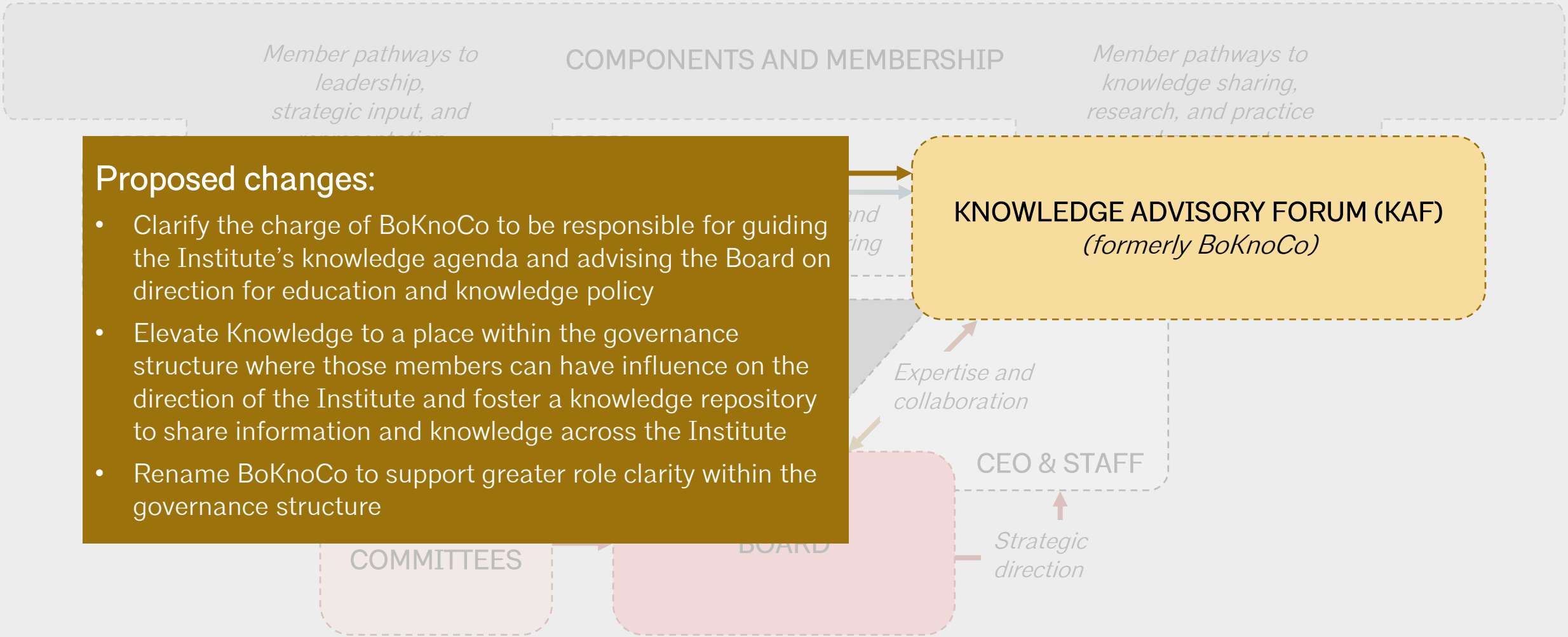
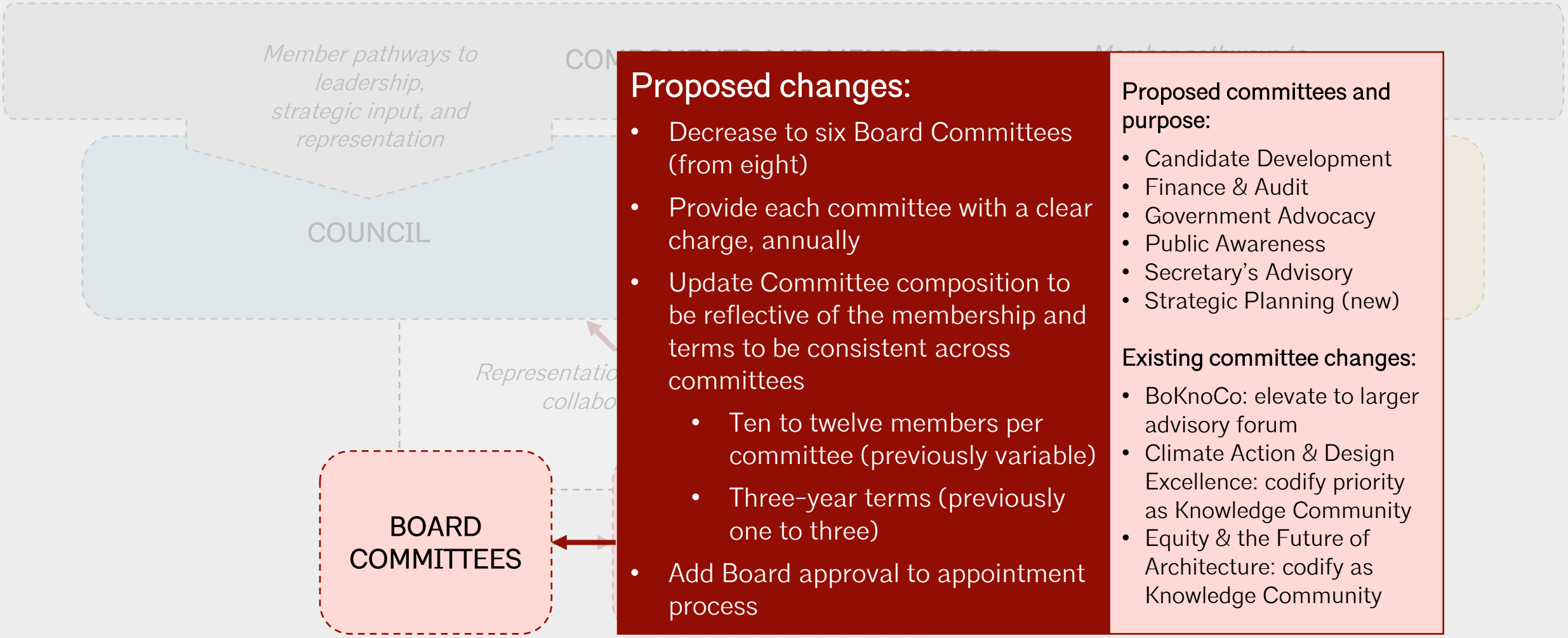


Proposed changes:

- Clarify the charge of BoKnoCo to be responsible for guiding the Institute's knowledge agenda and advising the Board on direction for education and knowledge policy
- Elevate Knowledge to a place within the governance structure where those members can have influence on the direction of the Institute and foster a knowledge repository to share information and knowledge across the Institute
- Rename BoKnoCo to support greater role clarity within the governance structure

PROPOSED REVISED STRUCTURE

Working draft for feedback



Proposed changes:

- Decrease to six Board Committees (from eight)
- Provide each committee with a clear charge, annually
- Update Committee composition to be reflective of the membership and terms to be consistent across committees
  - Ten to twelve members per committee (previously variable)
  - Three-year terms (previously one to three)
- Add Board approval to appointment process

Proposed committees and purpose:

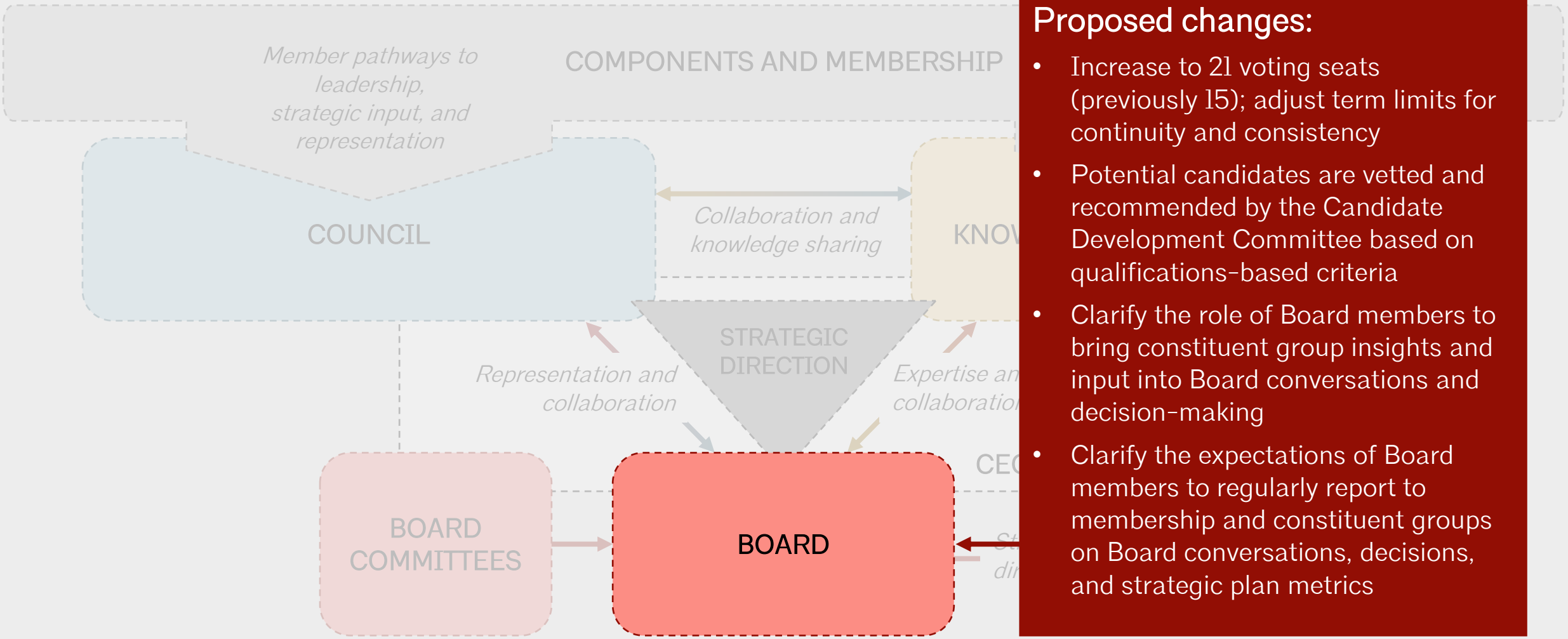
- Candidate Development
- Finance & Audit
- Government Advocacy
- Public Awareness
- Secretary's Advisory
- Strategic Planning (new)

Existing committee changes:

- BoKnoCo: elevate to larger advisory forum
- Climate Action & Design Excellence: codify priority as Knowledge Community
- Equity & the Future of Architecture: codify as Knowledge Community

PROPOSED REVISED STRUCTURE

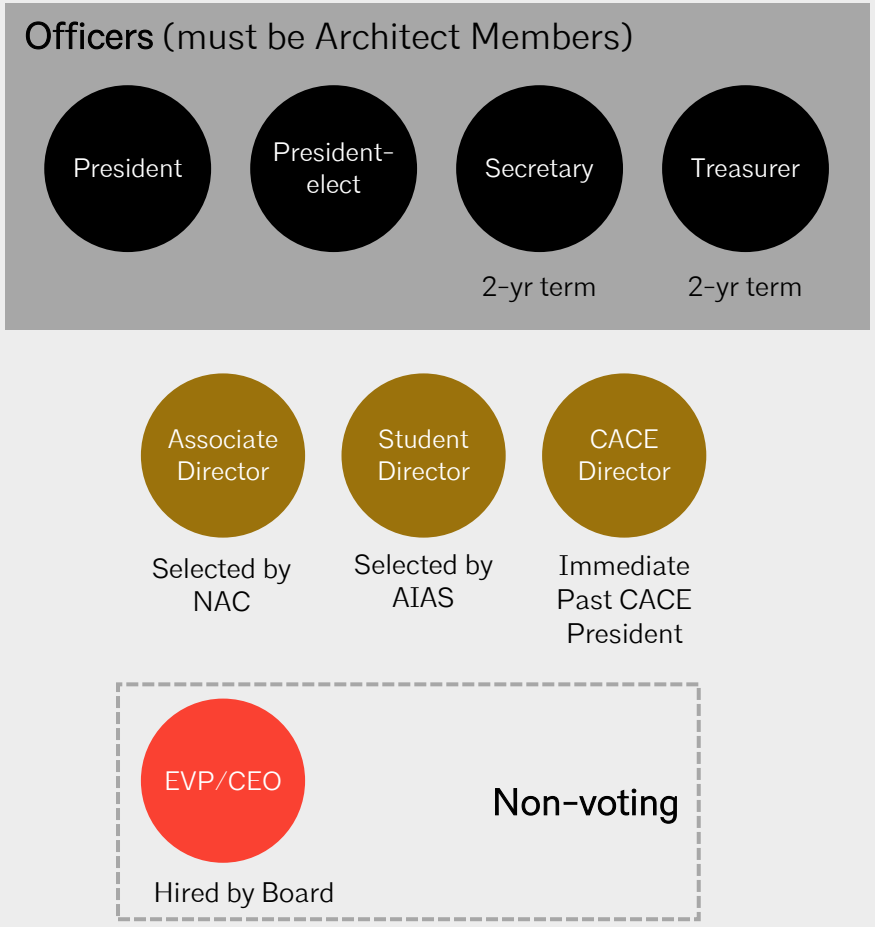
Working draft for feedback



Proposed changes:

- Increase to 21 voting seats (previously 15); adjust term limits for continuity and consistency
- Potential candidates are vetted and recommended by the Candidate Development Committee based on qualifications-based criteria
- Clarify the role of Board members to bring constituent group insights and input into Board conversations and decision-making
- Clarify the expectations of Board members to regularly report to membership and constituent groups on Board conversations, decisions, and strategic plan metrics

BOARD COMPOSITION: CURRENT



KEY:
Black: by Members
Blue: by Strategic Council
Yellow: by other groups
Gray: by President
Red: by Board

Majority of Board must be Architect Members
5 of the 8 At-large Directors must be Architect Members

BOARD COMPOSITION: PROPOSED

Working draft for feedback

KEY:
Black: by Members
Blue: by Council
Turquoise: by Knowledge Advisory Forum
Yellow: by other groups
Gray: by President
Red: by Board

- Majority of Board must be Architect Members
- 5 of the 8 At-large Directors must be Architect Members

Proposed addition

Officers / Executive Committee (must be Architect Members)

President

President-elect

Secretary — 2-yr term

Treasurer — 2-yr term

Knowledge Advisory Forum Officer

Council Officer

Associate Director — Selected by NAC

Student Director — Selected by AIAS

CACE Director — Immediate Past CACE President

Intl. Director — Selected by International Component

YAF Director — Selected by YAF

EVP/CEO — Hired by Board

Non-voting

Director Director Director — (3) Elected by members, 1 each year
3-yr term
2 must be Architect members

Director Director Director — (3) Elected by Council, 1 each year
3-yr term
2 must be Architect members

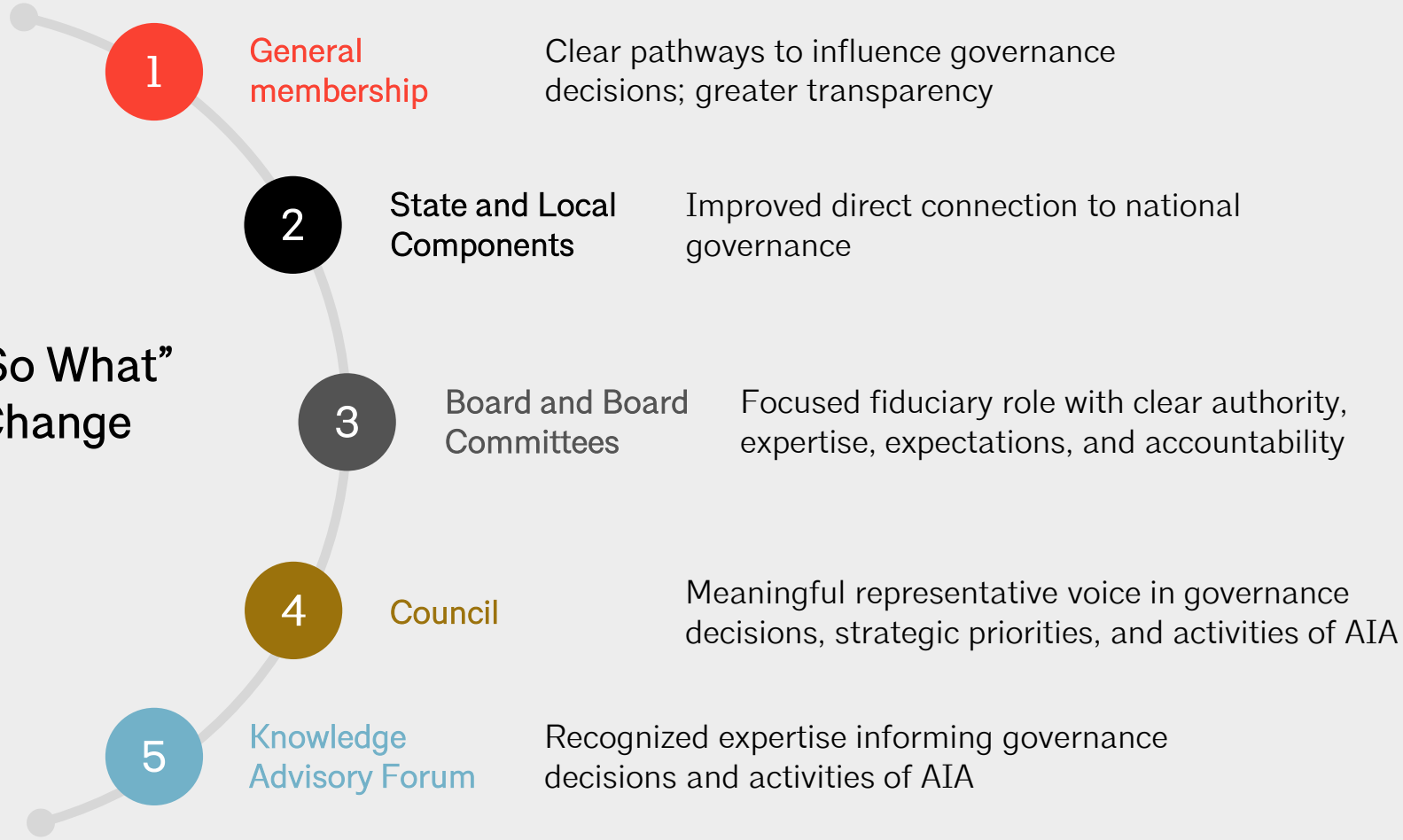
Director Director Director — (3) Elected by Knowledge Advisory Forum, 1 each year
3-yr term
2 must be Architect members

Public Director — (1) Appointed by President with Board approval (removal of one Presidential appointment, with option to renew for second 1-yr term)

What change means for AIA's governance

BENEFITS ACROSS AIA'S CONSTITUENT GROUPS

The "So What" of Change



Timeline and next steps

Timeline and next steps

Help us shape the future of AIA governance

Primary stakeholders	Inform (Nov 2025 - Jan 2026)	Engage (Jan – Mar 2026)	Refine (Jan – Apr 2026)	Adopt (Apr 2026-Jun 2027)	Implementation (Jun 2027 – June 2030)
• Board of Directors • Strategic Council • Volunteer leaders (YAF, FPs NAC, SFx, COF, KCs) • Components • Members • Staff	• Communicate changes. • Articulate the rationale. • Explain how they impact volunteers.	• Provide opportunity for feedback. • Engage in listening sessions. • Multifaceted approach to meet stakeholders where they are.	• Acknowledge and publicly share feedback. • Refine recommendations • Present Board with final recommendation.	• Phase adoption based on impact. • Update delegates. • Assess governing documents. • Develop tools and resources.	• Ensure smooth implementation. • Assess changes.

Collaborative on Feedback

01
- AIA.org
- AIA Architect Email
- Direct outreach
- Leadership Exchange

02
- Townhalls
- Component network
- Attend meetings
- Public comment

03
- Leadership Summit
- Townhalls
- Task force review

04
- Governance Task Force
- AIA Architect Email
- Stakeholder feedback

05
- Delegate outreach
- Annual Business Meeting (June 2026 and 2027)
- Phased implementation

Feedback and Next Steps

Stakeholder Engagement (Phase 1)
February – June 2025

Stakeholder Engagement (Phase 2) and Preliminary Adoption
June 2025 – June 2026

Phased Implementation
June 2026 – June 2030

Open comment

www.aia.org/aia-governance