



***CORNERSTONE***  
***CONSTRUCTION GROUP, INC.***

## **WHAT IS DESIGN BUILD?**

Design and build is the team approach to a construction project. It marries the design, engineering and construction professional at the conceptual stage of a project, which becomes a single entity. This allows for value engineering, cost control, timely completion, quality control and effective risk management. In a nutshell, it allows for a design process to meet the owner's available time frame and budget, which puts them in control.

### **ADVANTAGES OF DESIGN-BUILD**

1. **Singular Responsibility** - Many owners have found that a contractual method of making a single entity responsible for all aspects of the design, specifications and construction produced a timely, cost efficient project. With both design and construction in the hands of one entity, there is a single point of responsibility for coordination, quality, cost control and scheduling. This avoids "buck passing" and blaming others for errors and shortcomings. Owners are able to avoid the role of referee between designers and builders and can focus on needs, job scope definitions and timely decision making.
2. **Quality** - The greater responsibilities and accountabilities implicit in the design-build process serves as motivation for high quality and proper performance of the design-builder. Once the owner's requirements and expectations are defined, it becomes the design-builder's responsibility to produce a product that meets or exceeds the owner's criteria. By contrast, with traditional "design-bid-build", the owner warrants to the contractor that the drawings and specifications are complete and free from error. Because of the owner's warranty for the construction documents, the traditional process must rely on restrictive contract language, extensive audit and inspection, and occasionally the courts to ensure final project quality. Under the terms of most design-build contracts, the design-builder is responsible, at least through the post-occupancy warranty period, for the design and product performance. This guarantee of performance, which the design-builder can now offer because it controls both design and construction, motivates the design-builder to assure the quality of both design and construction in order to mitigate the risk of performance failure.
3. **Cost Savings and Value** - Design professionals and construction personnel, working as a team; evaluate alternative materials, building systems and methods efficiently, accurately and creatively. Value engineering and constructability reviews are utilized more effectively when the designers and builders work as one body during the design process. Cost savings, however, is not a goal in itself, but rather a part of the design-builder's broader objective of creating value.

A comprehensive knowledge of labor and material costs coupled with an awareness of the cost relationships between the various project's components, and the ability to control design, allow the design-build team to increase a project's value while reducing its overall cost.

4. **Time Savings** - Because design and construction can be overlapped, and because general contract bidding periods and redesign time are eliminated, total design and construction time can be significantly reduced. In order to prudently enter into a design-build contract, an owner must clearly and accurately document their needs and objectives. This discipline requires the owner to organize and analyze their needs or desires, document them in a way to effectively allow for efficient budgeting and planning. The design process almost parallels construction. Any delays in the owner's design review and approval process ends up adding costs in construction. This process encourages organization and timely decisions.
5. **Early Knowledge of Firm Costs** - Because the design-builder is simultaneously estimating construction costs and can accurately conceptualize the completed project at an early stage in design development, guaranteed construction cost proposals is delivered sooner than is otherwise possible. This permits early establishment of financing and reduced exposure to cost escalation. The design-build process also avoids the risk of committing substantial time and money for architectural and engineering services, only to learn later that the cost of the project is prohibitive.
6. **Risk Management** - Project performance aspects of cost, schedule, and quality can be clearly defined and appropriately balanced risks are managed by the party best able and positioned to manage that risk. Change orders due to errors and omissions in the construction documents are eliminated because the correction of each is the responsibility of the design-builder. Changes become limited to either owner requested or unforeseen conditions.

### **Design Build Process**

The Design Build process usually begins with only a concept or an idea. An initial meeting is set to determine the scope and a feasibility study is prepared. From this the Design/Build contract is drafted and the design phase begins.

Design solutions are presented to you, and from approved schemes, cost options and project specifications are developed and solidified. Final documents are prepared along with the contract for construction.

This, of course, is only a simplified overview of what can be an involved process, depending upon the nature of the work and the variety of design solutions, but does provide an outline of the process.