

# DESIGN IS GOOD BUSINESS

*It doesn't just add value; it multiplies it.*



## Design is Good Business Firm Toolkit

*Your building can do much more than keep the rain off your business; it can advance your business plan. To capture the full value of your capital program, you will do well to engage your architect in a discussion of your business goals, with your business leaders.*

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## *What Services Do Architects Provide?*

Architectural services vary from firm to firm. Offerings can range from design alone to construction monitoring to post-completion services like building systems commissioning and optimization. The architect's fee should reflect the level of responsibility assumed by the architect for each project phase.

### *Typical Services*

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While the client may opt to limit architect involvement, there are well-tested reasons for including the architect in each of the traditional phases of the design and construction process:

- **Schematic design:** The architect, through detailed discussions with the client, prepares diagrams and a general overview of the components and scale of the project.
- **Design development:** The architect prepares drawings and other forms of presentation, such as physical and 3-D digital models, to flesh out the design concept with

## **Library**

- [Savings by Design](#)
- [The Business Case for Green Building](#)
- [Green Schools Investment Guide](#)
- [The Technical Feasibility of Zero Net Energy Buildings in California](#)
- [The Dollars and Sense of Green Retrofits](#)

more precise dimensions, specific materials, and electrical, mechanical, and structural systems.

Depending on the selected project delivery method, this may be when the architect prepares an estimate of probable construction costs.

- **Construction documentation:** The architect prepares construction drawings, also known as working drawings, describing in detail the layout and assembly of the building; and specifications, which are explicit, written requirements for the materials and components shown in the drawings. Together, drawings and specifications form the construction documents, the purpose of which is both to define precisely what is to be built and to provide the basis for a construction contract with the builder; for this reason, construction documents are also referred to as "contract documents."
- **Agency approvals:** Due to an increasingly regulated building environment, designs must be approved by a variety of agencies, including building, planning, public works, water resources, environmental health, air quality, and zoning. The architect makes sure that the documents clearly demonstrate that the design satisfies all requirements, to facilitate agency approvals.
- **Bidding/contract negotiations:** The architect is an excellent resource when selecting contractors and negotiating construction contracts, tapping industry experience and contacts to expedite the process and reduce costly mistakes.
- **Construction administration/post construction:** Once the project moves to the construction phase, the architect makes regular site visits to monitor progress and insure that the construction is adhering to the contract documents.

## *Services Not Typically Included*

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Among the items that are typically not part of the architect's standard scope of services are pre-design needs assessment and programming; engineering (civil, structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, acoustical, etc.); interior design and landscape design; detailed construction cost estimating; and construction site management. Your architect can help identify the areas in which you may require additional assistance and can offer referrals. Any of these services, whether performed by the architect or by another consultant, can be added to the architect's scope of services; the advantage of giving the

architect contractual authority over the whole team of consultants is that it insures better coordination of the design effort.

## *Comprehensive Expertise*

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The architect brings to each phase the specialized knowledge that it demands, while keeping an eye on the big picture and making sure that each decision not only serves its immediate purpose, but also supports and enhances the other goals of the project.

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## **2015 AIACC Honor Award for Architecture, Edison Language Academy, Santa Monica, Kevin Daly Architects.**

The design for a pre-K through 5th grade public school employs innovative "solar chimneys" for natural ventilation.



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