

Overview of the Design-Build process

Design-build project delivery focuses on combining design, permit, and construction responsibilities to streamline the overly complicated *design-bid-build* environment. The **design-build** firm brings together design and construction professionals in a collaborative team to complete the individual tasks of creating construction documents, obtaining entitlements, creating cost breakdowns & budget analysis, working with financing & managing/performing the actual construction in an overlapping fashion. This 'compression' creates unique efficiencies and time-savings.

Enhanced communication between the *design-builder* and client,

Because the design parameters of a project are being developed along with the budgetary goals - construction methodologies and budget conditions being weighed simultaneously - a project is more likely to be realized than with a pure design approach. The owner has full and immediate access to the project "team" as the project is being developed.

Accountability focus

Rather than the de-coupled multiple levels of responsibility of the *design-bid-build* process, **design-build** provides an integrated entity to the client. This moves projects away from "finger-pointing" that is often commonplace in contemporary construction projects, and allows the owner to look to one entity with any questions or concerns.

Single source project delivery

Instead of having several companies & principals (contractors, consultants), an owner has just one entity to deal with. Design revisions, project feedback, budgeting, permitting, construction issues, change orders, and billing is all routed through the **design-build** firm in an expedited controlled manner.

Value-based project feedback

Typically, in order for a contractor to bid a project, very specific details relating to methods and materials must be given to avoid ambiguity and to make an "apples to apples" comparison of bids. In "plan & spec" bidding, contractors focus only on the construction docs provided, many times leading to missed items or unsatisfactory functionality. In a **design-build** context, the team works together to determine what methods and materials maximize the client's value and commits to a complete project. In instances where marginally more expensive materials, designs, or construction methods might yield a higher return on investment than those of lower cost, the client is free to adjust the project's program without having to re-bid the entire project. Clients see detailed breakdown of line-item costs as the budget & design move forward & can participate in the decision-making process to a greater level.

Interesting statistics

Almost 70% of traditional contracts end up over budget, compared to D-B, which is only around 25-30% over budget. The overage of a D-B project is generally owner driven, whereas the overage in the traditional method tends to be a result of the budget disconnect to which many architects and other design professionals are prone.

