

## **Design and Construction Services**

Property owners can procure design and construction services through a number of processes. The two most common are known as *design-bid-build* and *design-build*. The following brief definitions describe these processes. For more information see *Primer on Project Delivery* developed by a joint committee of the American Institute of Architects and the Associated General Contractors of America.

### **Design-Bid-Build**

With this process, the owner contracts with an architect to design the building and prepare the construction documents. The architect oversees the entire design process by subcontracting with engineers and other design firms to complete the mechanical, electrical, plumbing and site engineering documents, along with landscaping and interior design drawings. The property owner then uses the completed design documents to obtain bids from building firms, and chooses a contractor to construct the building. The building contractor works with subcontractors to provide the electrical and plumbing work, mechanical systems, controls installations and other specialized skills.

Key Characteristics include:

- Three project roles – owner, designer, builder
- Two separate contracts – owner-designer and owner-builder
- Final contractor selected based on lowest reasonable bid or total contract price
- Linear process for design, bid and construction, with no functional overlap
- Different companies doing design and construction can make communication difficult

### **Design-Build**

In this process the property owner contracts with a single firm that provides both design and construction services. The design-build firm may be led by an architect or a general contractor, but the company provides all services including on-staff engineering and construction management staff. Property owners who chose this approach need to consider the overall experience and capabilities of the firm, especially if their project has special design or construction issues. Also, owners should be aware that the design-build firm may work with subcontractors to obtain special skills not available on-staff.

Key Characteristics include:

- Property owner contracts with one firm for the entire project
- Project has a single point of responsibility for all design and construction issues
- With one firm, design and construction phases can overlap allowing for faster delivery of the project
- Property owner may use lowest bid approach to overall project, similar to design-bid-build
- Communication between the design and construction functions tends to improve when the entire team is included from beginning, which can reduce overall project costs