

One of the first questions people ask an architect about a new project is “How does this work?” The process is a bit of a balancing act. A client’s excitement is often mixed with anxiety about the complex process of turning ideas and visions into an actual building. There are so many decisions to make that it may be difficult to know where to begin, and large amounts of money are in play. That’s why we try our best to be sensitive to your expectations and concerns while efficiently managing your project.

At Identity Design, we start with you. We get to know who you are and what’s important to you. Then step-by-step, space-by-space, what you communicate to us will develop into the home you envision.

We want to be responsive to your unique needs, and since no two clients or projects are alike, the amount of service and our fee structures are flexible. We can help you determine the level of service that is most appropriate for your project: Design Set, Builder Set, or Bid Set. However, the basic steps in the design process remain the same:



When you first contact Identity Design, PLLC, we will set up a time to visit you in your home. There is no charge for this initial meeting. You should be prepared to discuss your needs and goals, and have some idea of what you can afford to spend on the project.

After the initial meeting, we will determine the cost of providing you with the necessary design drawings and documents. We will present you with a design contract, fee, and schedule.

If drawings of your home are not available, we will measure your home and create any drawings necessary for the new work. Design concepts will be completed and presented for discussion. At this point, the design concept is loose and flexible – we expect to manipulate it until it meets your goals. You will also receive a construction cost estimate so that you will have a much better idea of the scope of your project – physically and financially.

Once you approve the schematic design, the Design Development / Construction Documentation phase of the project begins. At this point detailed drawings showing structural components, necessary details, and elevations are developed. We can assist you in making project selections, and will update the construction cost estimate to help you keep your budget on track.

After you approve the construction documents, Identity Design, PLLC will meet with the builders who will prepare proposals with the actual cost of construction. We will work with you to determine the best option from the proposals submitted.

Once a Builder is selected, there will be a pre-construction meeting with all parties so that we can work through the details for beginning construction. Throughout the construction phase, Identity Design will continue to consult with you to oversee any necessary adjustments to the project design or product sections.

FLEXIBLE SERVICES

Identity Design, PLLC offers the following levels of design services for residential projects:

Design Set

The Design Set provides you with assistance to define what your project will include, but not the detail required to build it. You will be able to get rough “per square foot cost” from the finished product. We communicate the design through various sketches and/or computer models. This service is also useful for projects where you would like some design ideas, but don’t require a building permit for construction. This is effectively the Schematic Design phase of the project.

Builder Set

The Builder Set builds on the Design Set by adding basic construction drawings. These drawings will have the information required to obtain a building permit and communicate the general design intent to a builder. However, there will still be many details to resolve and material choices to be made, and the builder’s pricing may reflect these unknowns. The successful completion of the project relies on typical methods of residential construction, as well as the builder’s experience. You will work with the builder to determine the details and specifications required to build the project, and your significant involvement will be necessary during construction to make decisions and answer questions as they arise.

Bid Set

The Bid Set expands upon the Builder's Set by adding thorough construction detailing and material specifications. These drawings will more fully communicate the design solution that you and the architect have developed. Significantly more information is provided, which allows the builder to prepare much more accurate pricing for your project. The intent of these drawings is to provide the builder with the majority of the information necessary to complete the project. Therefore, it should not be necessary for you to be overly involved during construction.

We offer a fully integrated approach for your entire project's needs. We provide the services you need or coordinate with other professionals to ensure that design integrity is maintained throughout every aspect of your project. In addition to architectural design and construction documentation, we can provide or coordinate services such as construction observation, interior design, and landscape architecture, as well as civil, mechanical, electrical, and structural engineering.

INTERIOR DESIGN

Interior design (not to be confused with interior decorating) includes helping you select all of the materials attached to the inside of your home, including millwork, tile, flooring, hardware, cabinetry, countertops, plumbing fixtures, light fixtures, and more. Material selection can also be an overwhelming task. For example, a kitchen remodel may include over one hundred decisions regarding material, color and style!

As you've read in the descriptions of the bid sets, some amount of interior design is included when your project involves a new home, an addition, or overall remodeling.

Identity Design, PLLC also provides interior design services for clients who want to redo their kitchen or bathrooms, or just update the finishes in their home.

Thank You

Thanks for taking the time to read this description of some of the services we provide. Now that you have an idea of the level of service you need to build or remodel your home, consider reading the document entitled *Considerations on Hiring an Architect – Architectural Fees*. There are several ways architects determine the fee for a project, and this document describes the more common methods.

If you're ready to get started on a project you've been thinking about, we're ready to help. Please contact Identity Design, PLLC with any questions you may have about this process or anything architecture/building related. Please don't hesitate to [contact us](#) for some friendly advice.

RECOMMENDED READING

Johnston, Amy. *What Your Contractor Can't Tell You: The Essential Guide to Building and Renovating*. [S.I.]: Shube Pub., 2008. Print.

Krapf, Richard D. *Considerations on Hiring An Architect: How The Design Process Works*. N.p.: n.p., 2013. Print.

Krapf, Richard D. *Considerations on Hiring An Architect: Architectural Fees*. N.p.: n.p., 2013. Print.