

How to Choose an Architect.

FRAME 1. Choosing an architect, just like any licensed professional, to design a public project, should be based on qualifications and price.

FRAME 2. Both considerations are important. It's the order in which they are considered that makes the difference. ..qualifications first, with price not far behind. If you *start* with price, you may hire the cheaper candidate, but you're gambling with taxpayer money. And it's a gamble where the odds are against you.

FRAME 3. architectural services are a very small part of the costs of getting buildings built. The vast majority of the costs relate to the construction and the long-term maintenance and operations. If the building design and the engineering systems within it aren't designed right from the beginning, you've lost the bet before construction even begins.

FRAME 4. Well before construction, an architect has to assess the client's wants, needs, the general functionality of the building, and space requirements. This involves an analysis of

FRAME 5. site conditions

FRAME 6. legal limitations for development including zoning and environmental regulations.

FRAME 7. the scale of the building – how it relates to the city and pedestrians and

FRAME 8. existing infrastructure like transit and utilities

FRAME 9. A circulation analysis is critical – architects think about how people circulate within the building, and get out of the building as a matter of routine or in an emergency.

FRAME 10. An architect analyzes building science issues like water management - keeping water out, directing it away from the building and potentially reusing for the surrounding landscape

FRAME 11. Architects consider wind loads, seismic activity, handicapped access and other factors that directly affect the health and safety of the public.

FRAME 12. architects want the building to capitalize on prevailing winds, air flow and air quality

FRAME 13. as well as maximizing daylight to lower operational costs

FRAME 14 To construct the design, architects prepare comprehensive documents for the contractor and for obtaining all required approvals. These are the

instructions to build and they start with the architectural plans, elevations, construction details and detailed technical specifications. Architects work with their engineering consultants to develop coordinated plans for the engineering systems such as the structural, mechanical, electrical and plumbing.

FRAME 15 Integration of the systems is key- architects have to think about integration in all four dimensions including how the systems are installed to help detect clashes in the systems before costly construction begins.

FRAME 16. Once the instructions for construction are completed and all permits are issued, architects help their clients

FRAME 17 Interview contractors and discuss the technical aspects of the project.

FRAME 18 They coordinate numerous inspections to ensure the building complies with code and regulations and conforms to the architectural plans and specifications

FRAME 19 they manage change order requests and monitor associated costs

FRAME 20 architects can help their clients develop maintenance and operations plans to keep the building operating efficiently to retain its value. Because without a maintenance and operations plan, you're missing a critical opportunity to optimize performance.

FRAME 21. So what makes an Architect qualified to do all of these things for your project? You want to consider their experience in designing public projects, and managing local permitting and codes issues, especially relating to projects similar to your project. Strong references for on budget and on time delivery are another consideration. Design skill is a must. It's important to remember: good architecture isn't just about functionality and safety – it's about beauty. Review their project portfolio to assess this skill and their technical expertise in the building sciences.

FRAME 22. There's a lot to consider when you review qualifications before price, but it's worth the investment and it maximizes your odds to achieve a high rate of return.

FRAME 23. Studies show that a low bid process nets the taxpayer a low return on investment...odds are you'll end up with poor design documentation and execution, a protracted building schedule, and cost overruns OR

FRAME 24 ... the scope of work will have to shrink to accommodate the unfair price, which doesn't serve the public well in the long-run.

FRAME 25. By choosing your architect wisely -- quality first...and price not far behind, you'll get

FRAME 26. ...a high quality public building with high quality design that saves taxpayers dollars.