

# Five Ways an Architect Can Save you Money



## **H**ow can an architect **SAVE** you money?

Making Architecture Personal

You probably believe that Architects **COST** you money rather than **SAVE** you money! But a good architect works with you as a steward of your investment potentially saving you money on your construction project whether it's a new building, an interior renovation, or an addition.

**Architects provide cost-effective design solutions.** As architects, our primary job is to listen to you. Our conversations help us discover what makes your business unique so we can provide solutions that works specifically for you and your employees. We are trained to think outside of the box, and look at the big picture, and provide cost-effective design solutions which may result in lower construction costs.

One client brought a floor plan he had drawn and wanted me just to “draw up what he had shown and get him a permit” for an interior renovation to accommodate an adult day care. I explained that I could do that, but that what he had drawn was going to require adding a fire sprinkler system which he hadn't budgeted for in his construction costs. After some research, I drew an alternate floor plan that met code and eliminated the need for fire sprinklers **saving him around \$30,000.**

**Architects research products to maximize your investment.** Architects generally specify the materials and products for your project, taking into consideration not only the initial construction costs, but also maintenance and replacement costs. Licensed architects are required to complete continuing education courses keeping up to date on the advances in building materials and products. We then use that knowledge to specify products that can save energy, lower maintenance costs, or provide the performance criteria that you require. Construction projects require



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you, as Owners to make numerous decisions. Architects can help with those decisions to ensure it's best for you and for your investment.

For example, did you know that 1'x1' Vinyl Composition Floor Tile (VCT) that's on the floor of most schools has the cheapest **INITIAL** flooring cost, but has a **VERY HIGH MAINTENANCE** cost. The tile requires several layers of wax every year as well as stripping the wax and re-waxing periodically.



**Solutions on paper are far less expensive than changes during construction.** In construction, time is money. Not only are you paying for the contractor's time, you may be losing business revenue. Making design changes during construction can be expensive and result in scheduling delays and construction budget overruns. Your architect can work out complicated construction details on paper before the first shovel hits the ground, minimizing questions and decisions made in the field which helps to avoid delays and additional costs.

**Thorough drawings result in competitive pricing and less guesswork.** An architect will be glad to show you a set of construction drawings. These drawings are the essential communication tool with your builder because neither you or the Architect can always be jobsite to answer questions. Drawings define how you want your project to look and how you expect it to be built. When contractors receive thorough drawings, they can provide competitive pricing without guesswork. If something is in the drawings and specifications, it should be in your contractor's price and in your final project.



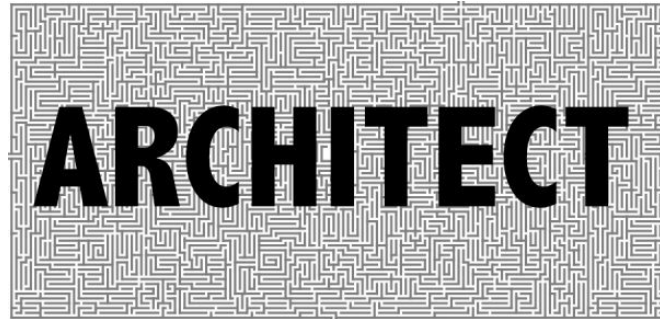
**Your architect is your representative during construction.** In the end, every Owner wants to feel that their final project meets their design and budget expectations. The architect's role during construction is to help make both of those things happen. Architects review contractor's invoices to insure you are not being charged for more work than has been completed. Architects review shop drawings, which are similar to a contractor's purchase order, to determine that the Owner's get what they are paid for. Your architect is available to





answer questions and solve problems related to unforeseen conditions in the field, which can help avoid additional costs or construction delays.

An architect has the training and skill to produce a detailed design based on your particular needs and desires. However, what truly makes an architect valuable is the ability to develop and refine a vision of the completed project that you can see and understand. Architects are experts at seeing not only the big picture, but also the hundreds of tiny steps between concept and completion. The complexity of the building process can be overwhelming, so it's good to have someone who "has your back" and will look out for you. Your architect can take care of the piles of paperwork, codes, regulations, ordinances, inspectors, permits and contractors that have to be dealt with during design and construction, which can prevent numerous problems.



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