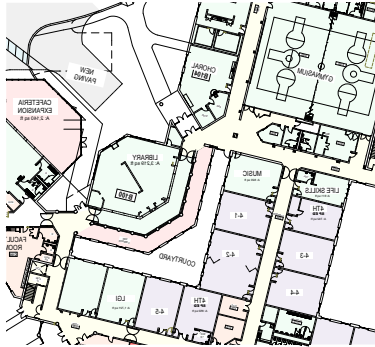


Design-Build Defined, and the Top Three Team Structures



Architectural project delivery methods include Design-Bid-Build, Design-Build, Construction Management, and Partnering, but which method is right for your project?

Design-Build is one of the fastest growing architectural project delivery methods.

FIRM STATS AT-A-GLANCE

- 11 PERSONNEL
- 6 LICENSED ARCHITECTS
- 3 LEED ACCREDITED PROS
- + CONSULTANT SERVICES

SUSTAINED RECORD OF EXCELLENCE

- **AIA:** Award of Special Citation, Institutional/Commercial; Fostering Emerging Professionals Recognition; Architectural Design Award for Merit (Eastern chapter)

- **Architects & Engineers:** Presidential Award of Excellence, Innovative Energy Efficient Design

- **Associated Builders & Contractors:** Award of Excellence

- **Central PA:** Forevergreen Award, Suburban Renewal School of the Year

- **Masonry Contractors of Central PA:** Excellence in Masonry Design; Judges Award for Craftsmanship

There are four typical types of project delivery in the design and construction field: Design-Bid-Build (DBB), Design-Build (DB), Construction Management (CM), and Partnering (P).

While Design-Bid-Build is still the traditional method, the Design-Build (DB) project delivery method is probably the fastest growing of the four methodologies.

WHAT IS DESIGN-BUILD, AND HOW IS IT STRUCTURED?

Design-Build is essentially design and construction combined in one contract. Typically, the project Owner will employ a Builder/Contractor, and the Builder will contract an Architect.

A Design-Build team can be structured in many ways, but the top 3 ways to organize a Design-Build team are:

Single Organization

One Design-Build firm with architects, engineers and builders all employed within a single organization.

Builder Prime

Most firms are organized with a Builder or Contractor as the Design-Build entity, and architects and engineers are hired as subcontractors. The Builder Prime structure is generally the most typical arrangement for Design-Build project delivery.

In this type of contract, the Architect's contract is with the Builder, not the Owner. In this way, the Architect is no longer an impartial advisor to the Owner, and will not be in a position to judge the Builder's performance. This is an important distinction to make between the traditional Design-Bid-Build project delivery and Design-Build project delivery.

Designer Prime

It is possible, but not common, for the Designer/Architect to be the prime Design-Build entity, and the Builder to be subcontracted directly through the Architect.

To further clarify, in a Design-Build arrangement, the Design-Build entity warrants to the Owner that it will produce construction documents that are free from error, thereby assuming the risk.

This is contrary to the traditional Design-Bid-Build arrangement, where the Owner warrants to the Builder that the construction documents, produced by their contracted design firm, are complete and free from error, thereby assuming the risk.

As with any of the project delivery methods, there are advantages and disadvantages to Design-Build contracts, and it is up to the Owner to decide if it is right for their project. For more information on the mechanics of project types, download our white papers, *The Five Key Issues to Consider Before Embarking on a Design-Build Project* and *The Traditional Delivery Method: Design-Bid-Build*.



LEFT: An image of one of our renderings, from a Design-Build project. RIGHT: Final project photo.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dennis W. Rex, AIA, NCARB, Principal, serves as the firm's chief administrative officer. He brings over thirty-five years of architectural experience in the planning, design and rehabilitation of residential, commercial, institutional and industrial buildings.

Project experience includes both foreign and domestic research laboratories, transportation facilities, educational buildings, maintenance facilities, manufacturing structures, office complexes, medical facilities, housing, and, most recently, places of worship. Dennis is involved in all phases of projects from programming through construction administration.



**Dennis W. Rex, AIA, NCARB
Principal**

MUHLENBERG GREENE ARCHITECTS

Based in Berks County, Pennsylvania, our firm has been committed to a better built environment for over a century. To review a sample portfolio of our completed projects, and rich history, please visit our website listed below.

Have an upcoming project and need some advice?

We'd love to hear from you! Send an email to MGA@MG-Architects.com or give us a call to discuss your upcoming project.