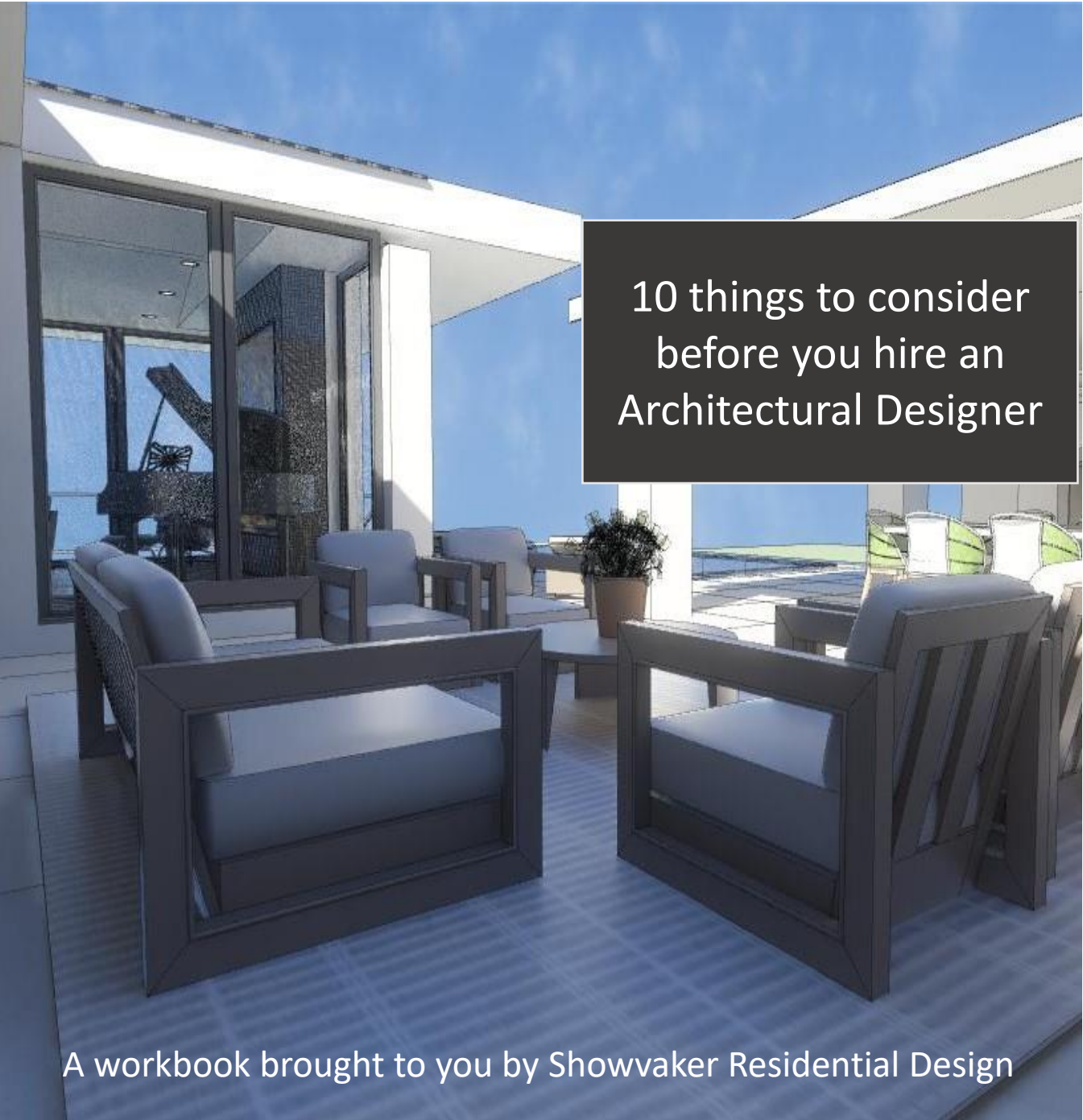


Planning to Build Your Dream Home?

Your Project Planning Guide for the Research Phase of the Process



10 things to consider
before you hire an
Architectural Designer

A workbook brought to you by Showvaker Residential Design

Summary

What's in this Project Planning Guide?

What you learn in this guide will help you achieve success in your new design project. Once you've answered the questions listed below, you'll be ready to hire an Architectural Designer.

Here's what's inside:

01. How do we avoid the #1 problem?

Projects going over time and over budget

02. The Building Project Roadmap

A step-by-step guide to the Design and Construction Process

03. What's a Project Brief?

7 Big-picture questions to get you started

04. What's most important?

The top priorities for your new home

05. What happens where?

Let's explore your space requirements

06. How much will our project cost?

There's more to it than dollars per square foot

07. Frequently Asked Questions

Ask the right questions to find the right architectural designer for you

08. What can our architectural designer do for us?

Myth vs. Reality

09. Are we ready for the Design Phase?

A gauge for your readiness to begin designing your project

10. What's the next step?

Book a free Project Possibilities Call with your architectural designer

01.

How do we avoid the #1 Problem? (Projects Going Over Time and Over Budget)

People often move projects into the design phase without doing proper research beforehand. This is like a surgeon beginning an operation before getting a proper diagnosis first.

Often, the unfortunate result is a very costly and very time-consuming re-work to correct the oversight. We want to help you avoid a situation like that.



That's why we created this Project Planning Guide. We want to help people who are considering building a new home or renovating their existing home to do the proper research up-front.

It's a simple process to help you make informed decisions about your new project.

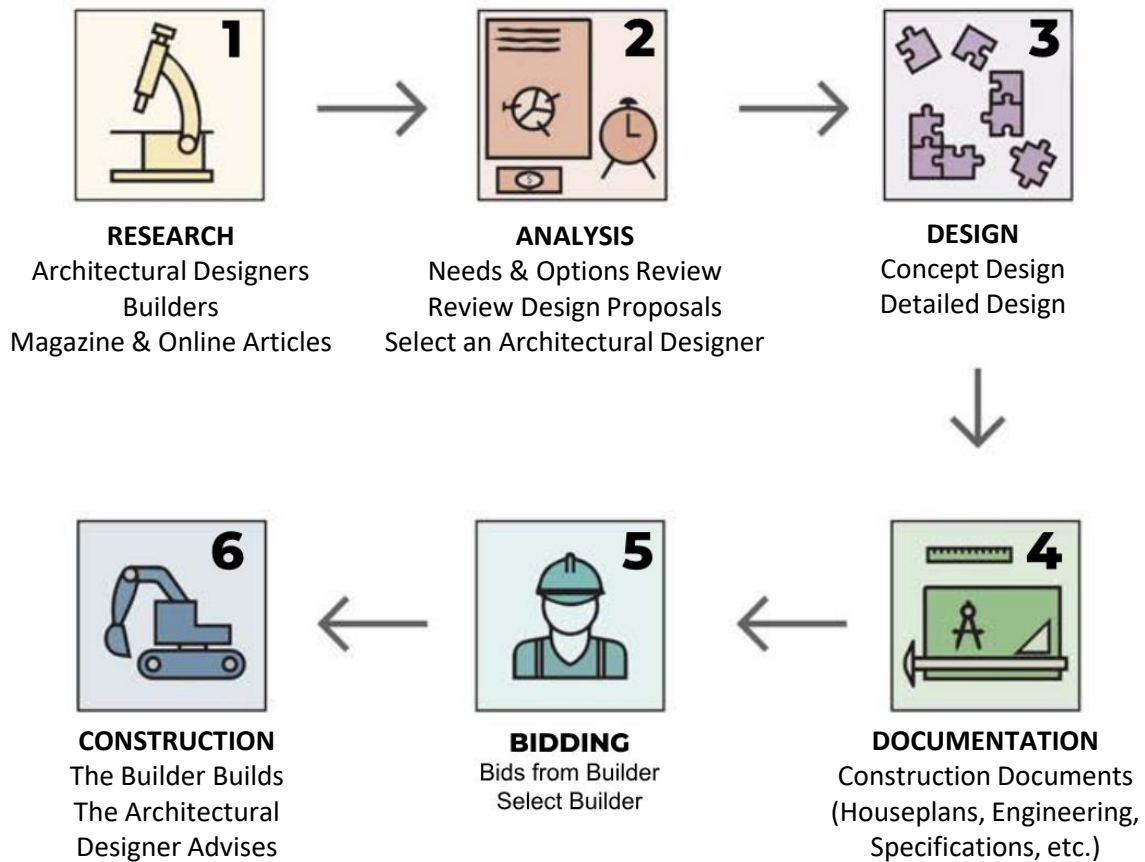
If you use this tool, you'll reduce your risk and improve the design of your home.

"You can use an eraser on the drawing board or a sledgehammer on the construction site"
- Frank Lloyd Wright

02.

Building Project Roadmap

A Guide to the Design and Construction Process



Right now, you should be in the **Research Phase**. This is where you're gathering information and exploring ideas. Before you begin the journey of building your project, you should check the feasibility of your ideas and understand what the project constraints are.

If you work with us, we'll get you to the **Analysis Phase** by conducting a **Needs and Options Review** to eliminate assumptions, identify constraints and find your best options. You'll receive a document that can be used by us or any other design professional that will ensure you reduce your project risk and get the best options for your site and your budget.

Ready to review the feasibility of your project? Contact us.

03.

What's a Project Brief?

7 Big-Picture Questions to Get You Started

Planning, designing, and building your new home begins by creating a **Project Brief**, which gathers your most important needs, desires, and goals. It's a key process to help you and your architectural designer begin the wonderful journey of designing your new home or renovation project.

Typically, most homeowners don't know where to begin, or how to decide what they really want or need.

Answering these 7 key big-picture questions will help you establish an overview of your project and give us a head start toward creating your formal **Project Brief**.

Who are the important people (and pets!) the home needs to be designed for?

What works and doesn't work about your current home?

When do you want to start and complete your project?

Where do you see yourself in 10 years? Is this your forever home?

Why is this project important to you? What goals are you aiming to achieve?

How much are you comfortable investing in your perfect home?

How do you want to feel in the home of your dreams?

"Before anything else, preparation is the key to success."

- Alexander Graham Bell"



04.

What's Most Important?

The Top Priorities for Your New Home

To determine what's most important for your new home, we need to identify what's negotiable and what's not. This will provide your project team with clear direction.

Setting priorities will guide us toward the best outcome with the available resources and away from expensive misunderstandings.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how important are each of the following?

- Natural light & connection to nature 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Energy efficiency 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Low-maintenance materials 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Entertaining & gathering spaces 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Working from home & homework spaces 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Rental income 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Generous spaces & luxurious finishes 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Compact, cost-efficient design 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Special spaces for children & pets 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Organized storage for tools, toys, & sporting items 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Accessibility/Aging in place 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Passive House/Net Zero certification 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Which 3 items scored the highest?
Which 3 items scored the lowest?

05.

What Happens Where?

Let's Explore Your Space Requirements

To determine what's most important for your new home, we need to identify what's negotiable and what's not. This will provide your project team with clear direction.

Setting priorities will guide us toward the best outcome with the available resources and away from expensive misunderstandings.

Use this square footage calculator to determine what size house you need

Room	Amenities	Dimensions	Qty	Area (SF)
Subtotal of all rooms = Net Floor Area: _____ SF Net Floor Area x 1.4 = Gross Floor Area: _____ SF				
Unsure what size your house needs to be? Here are the averages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-bedroom house = 1000 to 2000 SF • 3-bedroom house = 2000 to 4000 SF • 5-bedroom house = 4000 to 6000 SF 				
What size house do you want to build? Between _____ SF and _____ SF (Gross Area – 500 SF) (Gross Area + 500 SF)				

06.

How Much Will Our Project Cost?

There's More to it than Dollars Per Square Foot

There are many “soft costs” beyond what the builder quotes, including architecture, engineering, interior design, surveying, landscaping, utilities, furnishings, inevitable unknowns, and more.

Regardless of your target budget, there are 3 answers to the question of total project cost:

1. It depends on so many factors that a definitive answer is literally impossible.
2. Your entire wish list likely exceeds the amount you are comfortable spending.
3. The project cost will go up if we discover more options and constraints that cause changes *unless* we plan for them in advance.

The question of cost is critically important and should not be avoided.

Use this calculator to gain a sense of the starting cost of your project

A	Gross Floor Area			
B	Quality Level of Finishes	Essential \$250-\$300/SF	Midrange \$350-450/SF	Luxury \$500+/SF
C	Construction Cost (A x B)			
D	Professional Services (C x 20%)			
E	Contingency (C x 5%)			
F	Other Soft Costs (C x 5%)			
G	Project Cost (C + D + E + F)			

Prefer to start with a budget and work backward to determine the SF that fits your budget?
(Budget ÷ 1.3 = C), then (C ÷ B = A)

What size house do you want to build?

Between _____ SF and _____ SF

To design the right size project for your budget, we address the question of cost at least 3 times during the project. Most others do it once at the end.

To apply for the first cost estimate in the process, call 864-580-8789
 or email curtis@showvakerdesign.com

07.

FAQ & SAQ (Should-Ask Questions)

Ask the Right Questions to Find the Best Architectural Designer for Your Project

Extensive experience and ongoing training are required for an Architectural Designer to become a Certified Professional Building Designer. See this web page for more information: [Why Hire A Certified Designer?](#)

Finding the right Architectural Designer for you depends on several factors, including personality, design style, budget, and whether your project requires a special skill set.

Choosing the right design professional can mean the difference between an enjoyable experience and one plagued with problems and hassles the whole way through once a project moves into the **Construction Phase**.

How will your project go? The answer lies within these questions ...

1. **Do you offer a pre-design analysis service to help us move responsibly to the design phase?**
2. **How would you like us to share our ideas, images, needs, wants, and research?**
3. **How can you add value to our home so we can maximize our return on investment when/if we sell?**
4. **Can you create our design in 3D so we can feel what the house will look like before it's built?**
5. **What can we do to help make our project a success?**
6. **Do you have a game plan that outlines how we will successfully work together?**
7. **What are the specific challenges for our type of project and how have you overcome them before?**
8. **Will you help us find and select the best construction team?**
9. **If our budget, timeline, and scope of the project are unrealistic, will you let us know?**

A great Architectural Designer is not only your Designer, but is also your Advocate, Teacher, Project Leader, Problem Solver, and Construction Administrator

08.

The Architectural Designer's Role

Let's Separate Myth from Reality

An Architectural Designer's role is a lot greater than most people realize. In addition to producing a great design for you, when an Architectural Designer manages your project, they ensure that every part of the process below (and more) is handled to ensure that the biggest investment in your life is safe and secure.

Myth:

All we need from the Architectural Designer is a set of blueprints that the town needs for a permit and the builder uses to build our house.

Reality:

An Architectural Designer ...

- **Is legally responsible** to design buildings that are structurally sound, healthy to live in, safe to escape in an emergency, and compliant with all the codes and regulations that apply, including life, safety, welfare, energy efficiency, accessibility, local zoning & planning, etc.
- **Tailors** the design to meet your specific wish list and budget needs
- **Prepares** construction documents that become part of your contract with a builder and explain the project to your local jurisdiction issuing the building permit.
- **Interviews** builders and helps you compare builder quotes apples-to-apples
- **Observes** the builder's progress to make sure they are building what was ordered in construction documents
- **Saves you money** by strategically planning the building to optimize your expenses so you get the most bang for your buck on the spaces you need and enjoy most
- **Is your agent**, representing you to third parties and protecting your interests
- **Is your resource** for the lifetime of the building to troubleshoot its performance over time and make changes as your needs grow

The Architectural Designer is the conductor of the project orchestra.

For all of these services and more, call 864-580-8789
or email curtis@showvakerdesign.com

09.

Are You Ready for the Design Phase?

Here's a Gauge to Help You

This exercise allows you to assess how ready you are to proceed to the design phase of your project. If you're not close to a 10 on all the scales, it's best to seek help from an expert to do this research.

If you rush into the design phase without this information available, you'll run the risk of making too many assumptions, which is the #1 reason projects go over time and over budget.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident are you in each of the following?

How clear are you on exactly what you need? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How aware are you of all the various options your site will accommodate?..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How confident are you that you're aware of all the legal requirements?..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How aware are you of the process to get the project completed on time and on budget?..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How confident are you that your budget will achieve your needs?..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What's your current readiness rating..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Don't be discouraged if you aren't at 10 on all the scales yet.

The Needs and Options Review that we offer allows you to fill in the gaps and get ready to move to the Design Phase.

"The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today." - Franklin D. Roosevelt

10.

What's the next step?

Book a free 30-minute Q&A session with your Architectural Designer

Congratulations!

You've begun the process to set up your project for success.

Proper research and preparation are the foundation for our design process, and we are committed to the success of your new home or renovation project.



Curtis Showvaker has a lifetime of experience in residential, commercial, and industrial design and construction.

In 2020 he launched Showvaker Residential Design to leverage his diverse expertise to create the perfect home design for you.

Curtis guides you through the entire design process, ensuring every detail aligns with your vision.

His comprehensive understanding of the construction process enables him to provide valuable insights to ensure the proper execution of your project.

Showvaker Residential Design is dedicated to transforming your vision into a beautifully designed and meticulously crafted reality.

Book a free 30-minute Project Possibilities call with Curtis

Call 864-580-8789 or email curtis@showvakerdesign.com