

WORKING WITH AN ARCHITECT

A GUIDE TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND THE ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN PROCESS



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ARCHITECTURE | PLANNING | STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING

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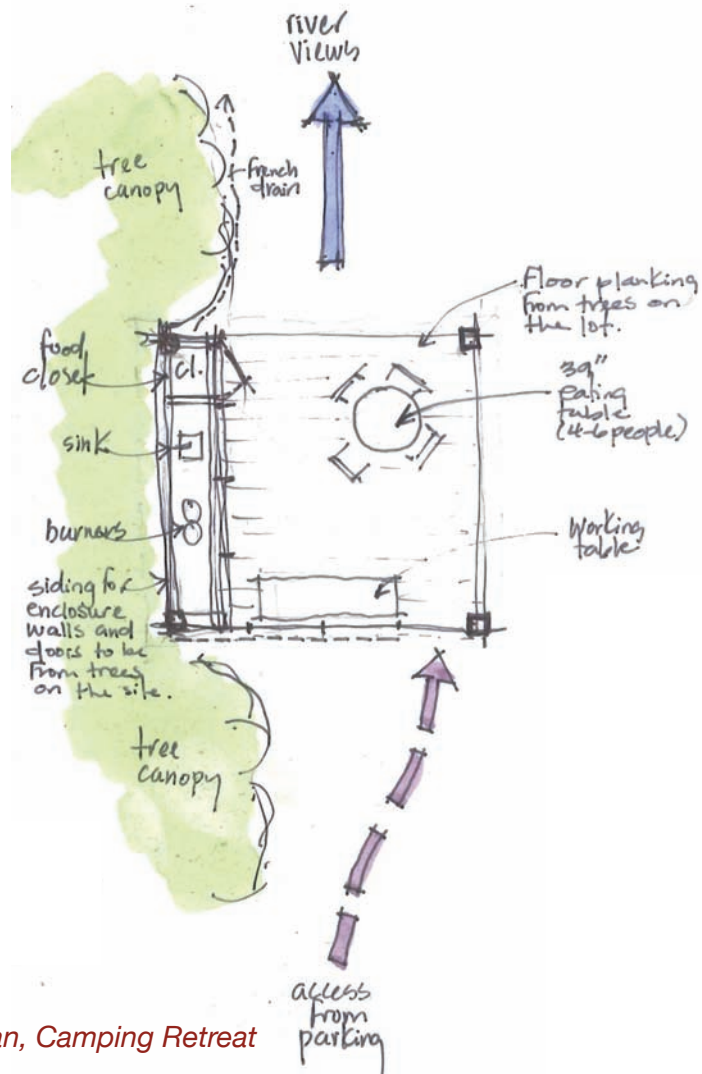
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WHERE TO BEGIN?

It is a misconception that Architects only provide “blueprints.” Often, most of the work takes place long before the blueprints are ready. In some cases, we may help you decide whether to buy or build a house by evaluating, with you, your current and future needs. Then, we may review with you potential properties for remodel or lots upon which to build a new home. Oftentimes, we will explore for you specific zoning and local jurisdictional building codes that may directly affect which property to purchase. This allows us to best serve you in transforming your dreams into reality.



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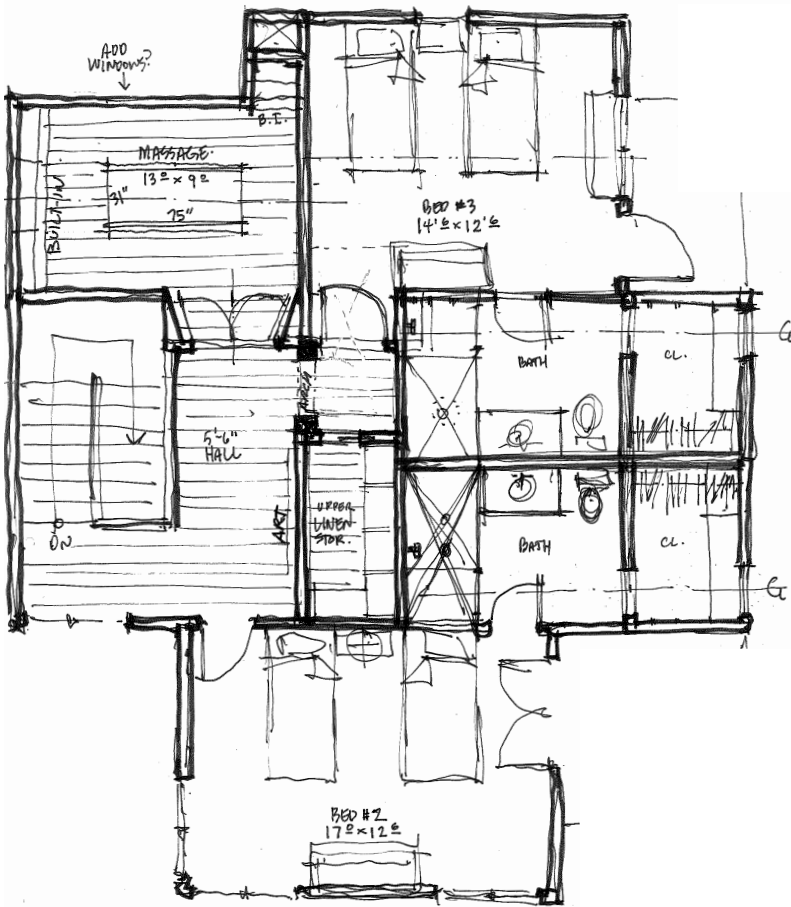


Site Plan, Camping Retreat

CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

Once a property or lot is found, we begin to identify with you how your property can be transformed into your dream. This phase of our work is generally called **Conceptual Design**. Within this phase of work is programming, site analysis, and initial conceptual sketches. Conceptual Design is critical and valuable because it uncovers many of the “**big picture**” needs and desires you may have and balances them with all the attributes of your site.

How do we do this? First of all, we do a lot of listening; you provide the inspiration. Then, we visit the site with you to understand what it is that drew you to it. We prepare and discuss an **Owner Survey** to bring to the foreground how you live daily. And, we develop a site analysis to optimize the site’s attributes and minimize its deficiencies. Finally, **we sketch!**



Upper Level Plan Sketch, Residence

SCHEMATIC DESIGN

During **Schematic Design**, we take our conceptual ideas and transform them into a home design. This phase often includes floor plans, exterior elevation sketches showing the home's **general character**, a site plan illustrating how the home sits on the property, and often computer models to help you grasp what the home will look like when you drive up or move in.

Also during this phase, we evaluate together any **special features** you may want to add. These features would have been discussed in the Owner Survey. They could include something as simple as a dog door to something as complex as accessibility needs of an elderly parent; or, storing a wine collection, adding a water feature, or charging an electric car. When we are done with this phase, we will know all of the parts and pieces of your home, although they may not all be resolved.

THE FUN PART

Once we have heard your dreams for your home and have conceptually figured out how best to organize the pieces of your "house puzzle" on the site, we start giving some form to your home. This is where an Architect can add value to your living experience.

Working with you, we will create a unique expression for your home that best describes you and your lifestyle and optimizes your experience on your site and reflects your budget.

We will also start discussing if any additional team members, like an Interior Designer, Landscape Architect, or other Engineers are needed. Finally, we will start discussing and meeting various contractors who are best suited to fill out the team and execute your dreams.

FUN PART TOO

Depending on the home and jurisdiction, a set of schematic design drawings and some limited structural engineering may be enough to build your home.

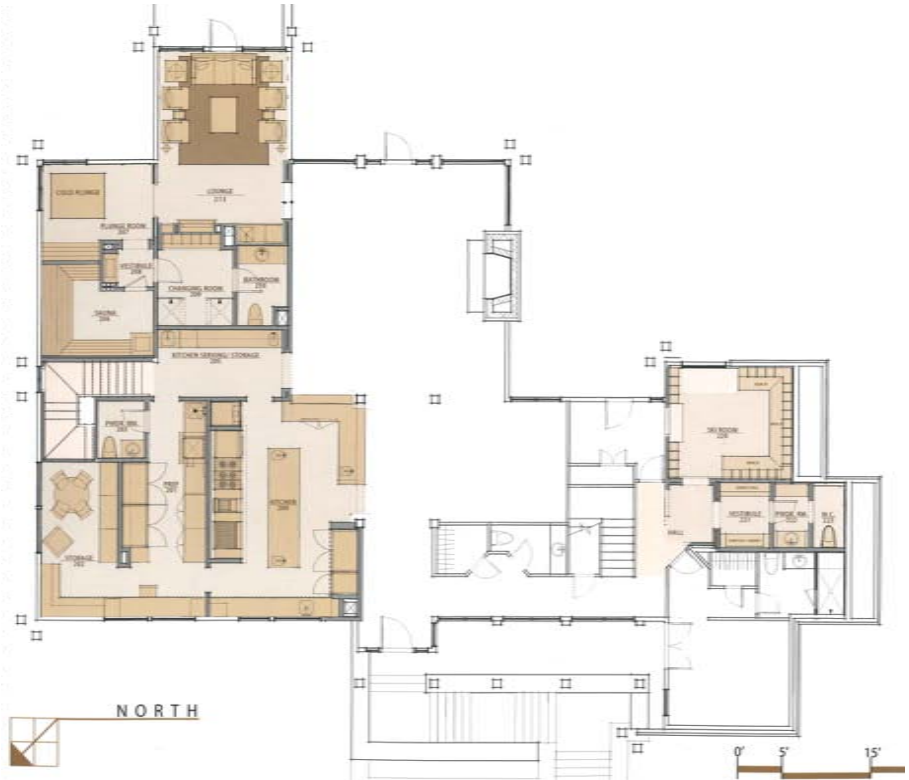
If you would like further refinement of the design, then we can work together to more fully design/document your dreams. How?

First, we study all of the components of the house (architecture, structure, mechanical and electrical) to make sure they are talking to each other and conflicts are resolved.

Then we look at the design in more detail, resolving finish details and the “quality” of the spaces. This is where the design really takes on your personality.

Finally, we review it all with you, just to make sure it’s what you wanted.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT



Main Level Computer Plan, Residence

Design Development is the part of our work where we “fill out” the design of the house. We often will **refine** our floor plans, elevations, and site plan during this phase. We also will **create** some new drawings including building sections through the house that describe what is happening on the inside of special rooms, reflected ceiling plans that show the types of ceiling shapes and any special details that occur in the ceiling plane. We will **select** exterior and interior finishes, materials, and products. Finally, we will start to **resolve** the construction details and finish details that make your house special.

This phase of work is often when we work with other team members, **consultants**, to enhance the mechanical, electrical, lighting, low voltage, acoustic, landscaping, and sustainability of the home.

The type and amount of consultants varies from project to project depending on the complexity of the project, your budget, and the type of services provided by your Architect.

Some projects do not need any consultants at all, while others may need one or many, like a civil engineer, a mechanical/electrical engineer, an interior designer, a landscape architect, a lighting consultant, a low-voltage audio-visual consultant, a sustainability consultant, a kitchen consultant or even an acoustics consultant.

These consultants play an important role in making sure your home performs the way you want it to when you move in. Each person is an **expert** in their own niche and our role as the Architect is to coordinate their efforts so that when all of their design thoughts become real on site, they all work together, fit together and perform together in a way that meets your expectations.

Just like hiring your Architect, and later your Contractor, picking the right consultants for your project is crucial. When they have a history of working with your Architect more often than not, **a positive, collaborative working relationship exists, increasing the chances of success for your project.** It can also save time - since knowing how the other works can reduce the time needed to become productive partners. Finally, working with **local** consultants can save time and effort since they will have the best understanding of their local subcontractor market, environment, and local building codes.



Computer Massing Models



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DOCUMENTING THE DESIGN

Once we have resolved the design, then we need to document it so it can be built in a way that accurately reflects your design intentions. This process can take many forms depending on your budget and is often confusing to clients. We often hear, “we have decided everything, why can’t we build from here.” The problem is two-fold. First, the information created often isn’t in a format acceptable to your local jurisdiction. Second, it also isn’t adequate enough for a quality contractor to re-create our visions accurately or give you an accurate price.

So, we need to add information to our drawings and specs to demonstrate that your house meets/exceeds applicable codes and that your contractor can construct your dreams accurately.

CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

Construction Documents are the drawings and specs that we create describing, “what to build.” The drawings are visual diagrams we create to show your Contractor where to put things, how large they should be, and how various things relate to each other. Drawings come in two forms, general drawings and details. Specs are a written description of the products you would like to use. They also come in two forms. General specs describe exactly the product you would like and prescriptive specs share the qualities of the product you would like, but do not specify a specific one.

We prefer to develop a full set of drawings, details and specs for you. This is important for two reasons. First, your quality expectations are more clearly understood by the Contractor because they have been chosen and drawn prior to the Contractor’s selection. Second, the more information that is documented prior to pricing and construction, the better chance the Contractor has to construct the house for the price he/she quoted and you have a better chance of the Contractor knowing exactly what you want. We call this a “**full set**” of drawings. This includes the selection of finish materials and colors, the design and detailing of cabinetry, the selection of fixtures, appliances, and equipment, and possibly the design of some furniture. Our drawings will often be supplemented by our other consultants as well to complete the set.

If you are on a limited budget, we can create what is typically called a “**builder set.**” This includes the basic drawings and details necessary to submit your house for a building permit and allows the Contractor you select to construct the basic house concept. Often, finish details and specs are left for you and the Contractor to resolve without our involvement so that the overall cost of the design is less.

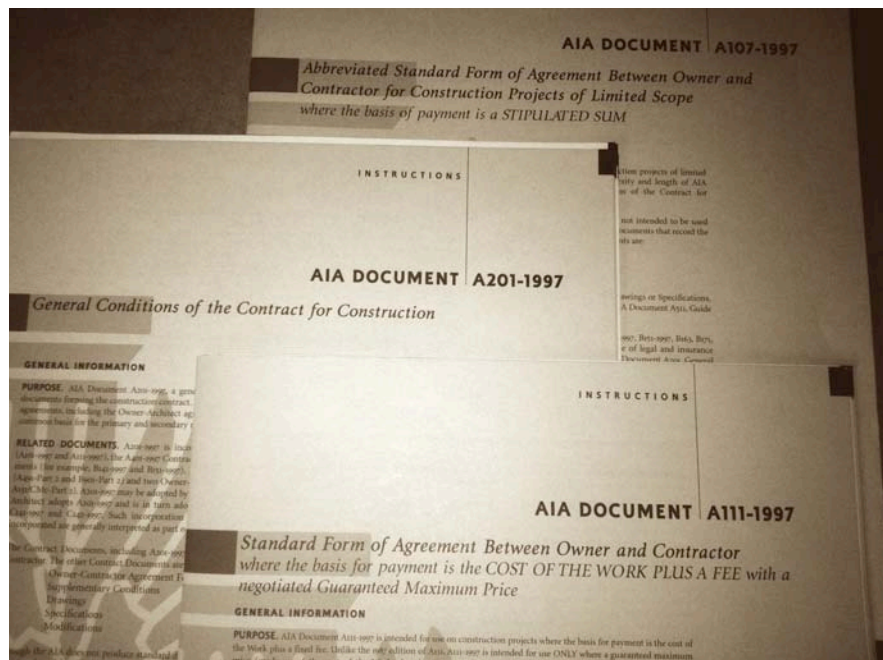
CHEMISTRY MATTERS

Contractors come in many varieties and choosing the right one for your project can seem daunting. During the design process, we can help you evaluate potential contractors to find the right one for you and your home.

There can be many factors that contribute to the selection of a contractor including their estimate of construction costs, their current workload, their communication style or even how they propose to manage your project on site and in their office.

Even though it is often over looked, positive chemistry with your Contractor can also play a very significant role in defining the success of your project.

Architects can assist you in evaluating this wide variety of choices in the building market.



CONTRACTOR SELECTION

Bid Negotiation is a critical aspect in determining whether your project will be successful or not. The first hurdle is the type of construction Agreement that you will have between yourself and your Contractor. **And yes, you should always have one - in writing!** Construction Agreements come in a few basic formats. They can be a standard Agreement written by the American Institute of Architects (AIA), or by a national Contractor's association, or they can be written by the Contractor himself, usually with the assistance of an attorney. In any case, since you are going to be spending a substantial amount of financial capital, you should have an attorney review the Agreement prior to signing.

These contracts will contain the type of fee arrangement that you will have with your Contractor. They come in a couple of typical forms including "Cost Plus a Fee," "Cost Plus a Fee with a Guaranteed Maximum Price," and a "Stipulated Sum." Each of these fee arrangements are different. Which one is best for you will depend on several factors like your financial wherewithal, if you are using a lender for some or all of your construction budget, how much you have set aside for construction contingencies, and how much access you would like to the Contractor's support/backup on your project.

Administration of the Construction Contract is one of the most valuable phases of our work together. It is also one of the most misunderstood. This is where your dreams and the Architect's drawings merge to become a real building.

The primary role of the Architect during construction is to **monitor the Contractor's progress** to assure you that the work being completed conforms with the drawings and specifications. This is done by making visits to the construction site at pertinent points throughout the construction schedule, but may also include phone calls, supplemental drawings, shop drawings, material and/or sample reviews, or reviewing requests for design changes.

The Architect is also there to **answer questions** and provide clarifications to the drawings for your Contractor. Even the best drawings and specifications may include some unresolved or conflicting information, or at least provides some room for interpretation. If your Architect is involved, **he/she knows the intent** of the drawings and can offer an interpretation that is consistent with the original design idea.

In addition, the Architect can provide other services like reviewing your Contractor's construction draws, keeping you appraised of the construction progress or reviewing shop drawings.



Construction Photo, Residence

BUILDING YOUR HOME

Most people have not built a home from scratch. Being able to participate during the construction of your home assures you that your home is constructed with the same care that it was drawn and your design intentions are executed in the way in which you intended.

The Architect is your representative during the Construction process. As questions, issues or changes arise, we have the professional training and experience to represent you during the complex building process.

Again, if your budget is tight, we can work with you on a limited basis, although our preference is to stay with you and your home until your dream is complete.

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ARCHITECT'S TOOLS

Architects have many visual tools at our disposal to aid you in visualizing your future home. These tools range in complexity and sophistication: from very simple hand drawn sketches or renderings to cardboard or foam-core models, to very complex 3-D computer models. We can even allow you to experience a real time virtual walk through of your home. In addition, we have our traditional tools of 2-D drawings as well as our verbal skills to communicate our translation of your ideas into an understandable built form. Not every project will warrant our full array of tools and not every budget allows us to use them. But they are there and they are useful tools to help translate your dreams into an understandable reality.

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RENDERINGS & MODELS



Computer Model, Residence



Hand-drawn Color Rendering

PROFESSIONAL FEES

The professional fee is an Architect's livelihood. The amount of the professional fee will vary depending on the level of service provided by the Architect on behalf of the Client. The form of that fee varies depending on the Client, the Architect, the type of project and the scale of the project, but in any case, should be clearly stated in your Client-Architect Agreement.

Architect's will sometimes work for a **"stipulated sum,"** meaning that their price is fixed for the work they agree to complete for the project. This method can be great for a Client who needs to know how much their design services will cost prior to starting the work.

Architects also may set their fees based on a **"percentage of construction"** cost. The percentage charged is determined by the level of the Architect's involvement throughout the various phases of the project and by the overall scope of the project.

Or, sometimes the Architect may even provide services on an **"hourly"** basis. Hourly fees are more commonly used on smaller projects or when the full scope of the work required is not fully known in advance.

Architects also have **"reimbursable expenses,"** which they charge in addition to their professional fees. These are for various hard costs that the Architect pays for during the normal course of business related specifically to your project. They may include photocopies, blueprints, travel, phone and fax charges, etc.

VALUE ADDED!

Architects are professional problem solvers with imagination. We are educated, trained and tested to collect, discern, and disseminate vast amounts of information. Then we reassemble it in a three-dimensional, cohesive, efficient, safe and beautiful way that we share with your Contractor through our drawings and specifications. You are paying for professional experience in executing all of these services described in this Guide and you are paying for your Architect to be your advocate in this complicated process, we call "building."

This is what makes us unique, and how we add value to your project.

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ABOUT US

Listen first, talk second.

Work directly with Principals.

Design solutions should be simple, contextual, functional, and beautiful.

Respect the surrounding environment.

Use **all** resources as responsibly as possible.

Enhance the living experience.

Provide integrated building solutions.

Approach all projects with a team mentality.

Provide excellent service.

Enjoy the process.



Theodore K Guy Associates PC is a full service professional corporation providing architecture, planning and structural engineering services in the resort markets of the Rocky Mountains and beyond.

Founded in 1983, TKGA's design team has over 50 years combined experience in all phases of design from planning to construction. As you visit our website, please note our wide range of projects, the diversification of styles created with our clients, and the various locations of our work.

We are proud to have a large number of repeat clients and satisfied owners. We look forward to working with you and your dreams to create exciting architecture to compliment the beauty of our surroundings.

Mike Bucchin AIA

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