



THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

FACT SHEET RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE TERMS

Approved Equal

Material, equipment, or method proposed by the contractor and approved by the architect for incorporation in or use in the work as equivalent in essential attributes to the material, equipment, or method specified in the contract document.

Architect

A designation reserved, usually by law, for a person or organization professionally qualified and duly licensed to perform architectural services.

Building Codes

Regulations, ordinances or statutory requirements of a government unit relating to building construction and occupancy, generally adopted and administered for the protection of public health, safety, and welfare.

Change Order

An amendment to the construction contract signed by the owner, architect, and contractor that authorizes a change in the work or an adjustment in the contract sum or the contract time or both.

Construction Budget

The sum established by the owner as available for construction of the project, including contingencies for bidding to contractors and for changes during construction.

Construction Documents

Drawings and specifications created by an architect that set forth in detail requirements for the construction of the project.

Design/Build

A method of project delivery in which the owner contracts directly with a single entity that is responsible for both design and construction services for a construction project.

Design Development

The architect prepares more detailed drawings and finalizes the design plans, showing correct sizes and shapes for rooms. Also included is an outline of the construction specifications, listing the major materials to be used.

Life Cycle Cost Analysis

The architect calculates expected future operating, maintenance, and replacement costs of desired designs and features to assist homeowners in developing a realistic design and budget estimate.

Programming

The architect and homeowner first discuss the goals, needs and function of the project, design expectations and available budget, pertinent building code and zoning regulations. The architect prepares a written statement setting forth design objectives, constraints, and criteria for a project, including special requirements and systems, and site requirements.

Project Budget

The sum established by the owner as available for the entire project, including the construction budget. land costs, costs of furniture, furnishings, and equipment; financing costs; compensation for professional services; cost of owner-furnished goods and services; contingency allowance; and similar established or estimated costs.

Schematic Design Phase

The architect consults with the owner to ascertain the requirements of the project and prepares schematic studies consisting of drawings and other documents illustrating the scale and relationships of the project components for approval by the owner. The architect also submits to the owner a preliminary estimate of construction cost based on current area, volume, or other unit costs.

Specifications

A part of the construction documents contained in the project manual consisting of written requirements for materials, equipment, construction systems, standards and workmanship.

Square Footage

Can be calculated as both gross and net square footage. No uniform standard for computing a residential square foots yet exists. Architects, builders and realtors each measure square footage differently. Square footage is not always an indication of the livable space available in a structure. Buyers are encouraged to ask for an explanation of which spaces were included in the square footage calculation.

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