Identification of Design and Development Priorities

This content was prepared by, and shared courtesy of, [Design Core Detroit](https://designcore.org/) from their [*Design Guide: Real Estate Development*](https://designcore.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/DDC-DesignGuide-RealEstate-v8-LR.pdf) from the section “Preparing for the First Meeting with Your Design Team”

The design process starts with discovery. To realize your vision and help achieve your goals for the project, the designer needs to fully understand what they are. You can expect a lot of questions about what you need and want, so the entire team can be on the same page about constraints and opportunities in the design. To best prepare for those early conversations, please detail your answers to the questions below:

What is the intended use of the space(s)? Be sure to include each individual area in and around your building, including any residential or commercial units and outside spaces.

Click or tap here to enter text.

What do you know about the residents, businesses, employees, or customers who will occupy the space(s)? Provide as much detail as you can about your target end user.

Click or tap here to enter text.

What functions will be performed in each space? Will apartments need individual washers and dryers, for example? Will commercial tenants require specific areas or zones for point of sale, food preparation, or employee meetings? Can some of these activities share space?

Click or tap here to enter text.

How much room do you anticipate end users needing for each activity they will perform?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Will the space need to accommodate any short- or long-term future plans or changes, such as project phasing, future development, sustainability goals, or evolving tenant needs?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Which will you use to make decisions and measure the success of this project?

Bottom Line Double Bottom Line Triple Bottom Line

► financial outcome ► financial outcome ► financial outcome

► social impacts ► social impacts

► environmental outcomes

What are the primary priorities you’re seeking in the project? Think about what you want your building to be exceptional at and let that guide your selection process. Number in order of importance.

Choose an item. Economic (lowest possible construction costs and simple design)

Choose an item. Low Maintenance (quality construction details and energy efficient design)

Choose an item. Inclusive (adheres to inclusive and / or universal design principles)

Choose an item. Aesthetic (striking and unique design)

Choose an item. Sustainable (design that is good for the environment)

Choose an item. Cooperative (created with contractors you regularly work with)

Choose an item. Unique (custom design that requires lots of research to create special solutions)

Other Click or tap here to enter text.

You can also help your designer begin working on the project by clearly and quickly articulating your vision. Consider bringing the following to the first meeting:

► Images of what you like and don’t like. Use magazines, newspapers, advertisements, and the internet for inspiration. It helps if you can say what you specifically like about the image or specifically what you don’t.

► Any pictures, floor plans, or other documentation you have for the property or building, both inside and out. Include specific boundaries of the property and any zoning or site restrictions you may already be aware of. Discuss aspects you would like to preserve or change.

Share existing assets, documentation, or constraints that are relevant to the design of the project. This could include whether you’re still seeking site control, if the building or lot is in a historic district, or anything else that could impact material selection, timeline, or budget.

Documents: Information:

Property Survey  Ownership Information

Legal Property Description  Zoning Designation

As-Built Drawings  Historic District Designation

Geotechnical Reports  Sustainable Objectives

Environmental Reports  Other Click or tap here to enter text.

Other Click or tap here to enter text.

The documents listed above are required to start most projects, and are (by AIA contract) the client’s responsibility to provide. Prospective developers may not have all of them when selecting a designer, but will have to obtain them eventually. The information items listed above would all be helpful for a prospective developer to be aware of or thinking about prior to hiring a designer, though they can be discussed throughout the process