

DBIA DESIGN EXCELLENCE POSITION

Design excellence is integral to all successfully executed projects. Design excellence is not the exclusive domain of any particular contractual relationship or delivery system. Rather, design excellence reflects the practice of good judgment throughout project procurement, development and execution, as well as sound decision making within the limitations imposed by budget, scope and schedule.

The design-build delivery system is well positioned in every way to deliver design excellence. Under the traditional design-bid-build delivery system, design excellence is primarily advocated by the owner in the early phases of procurement. The responsibility for design excellence resides within the domain of the owner and architect/engineer. The foundation of the design-build delivery system is a culture of team alignment, open communication and mutual respect between the project owner, the architect/engineer and the contractor. Design-build delivery carries with it a team-wide responsibility to gain a full understanding of the owner's intentions and the factors that will drive value into the process and outcome. Because collaborative, integrated development of the design and construction program is the cornerstone of design-build delivery this methodology provides the best possible environment for design excellence to occur as it spreads the responsibility, and opportunities, for design excellence across the entire project team.

An atmosphere of trust and mutual confidence is essential to the realization of excellent results. The design-build delivery system is best suited to achieve this atmosphere. The development of this atmosphere requires that the team be selected concurrently, share mutual goals, have equal access to each other's expertise and a mutual respect for each other's opinions. All of these are foundations of the design-build delivery system.

Consequently, the design-build delivery system is well designed to meet the owner's needs and functional requirements while harnessing innovation and creativity aimed at the following objectives:

- Memorable design solutions that exceed an owner's vision and defined functional requirements;
- State-of-the-art structures and facilities that are high performance and sustainable; and,
- A holistic awareness that considers context, site and the environment.

POSITION

All owners and design-build team members should be mindful of the lasting impact they have on the built and natural environment and the stakeholders who will rely upon their work for generations to come.

While varying definitions and perspectives on design excellence exist, two things are clear to DBIA:

- Design excellence should be the goal of every design-build project, regardless of sector, budget, time or other constraints.
- Design excellence will have variations in definition within each sector and, equally important, design excellence will have an interpretation unique to every owner.

March 2014

