

Clipper Construction Discusses the Challenges of Design-Bid-Build Construction Projects in a Blog Post

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Clipper Construction, a leading commercial general contracting company in Baltimore, MD, has recently published a comprehensive blog post that provides insights into the challenges inherent in design-bid-build construction projects. The post serves as a guide to this method and offers valuable knowledge to industry professionals who are navigating this construction approach. The blog post covers various aspects of the construction process and sheds light on the unique difficulties encountered within design-bid-build projects.

The design-bid-build construction method involves three sequential phases: design, bidding, and construction. In this method, the owner hires an architect or engineer to create a detailed design of the project. Once the design is completed, the owner solicits bids from contractors to construct the project based on the provided design. After selecting a contractor, construction begins according to the agreed-upon terms and schedule. This method is characterized by a clear separation of responsibilities among the parties involved, with the owner primarily responsible for the design, the contractor responsible for construction, and the architect or engineer overseeing the project.

Design-Bid-Build is commonly used in the construction industry due to its straightforward and traditional approach. It provides a clear and structured process for completing construction projects, making it easier for owners to manage and for contractors to understand their roles and responsibilities. Additionally, since the design is completed before the bidding process begins, owners have the opportunity to review and refine the design to meet their specific requirements and budget constraints. This method also allows for competitive bidding, which can help owners secure the best value for their projects.

According to Clipper Construction, design-bid-build projects face several challenges despite its widespread use. These include issues such as single responsibility, rigid plans, limited design feedback, lowest bid issues, and market changes. Single responsibility poses a challenge as accountability rests mainly with the primary builder, rather than individual workers. Legal agreements between builders and workers often protect the former, leaving little recourse for addressing problems caused by specific workers.

Rigid plans present another hurdle in design-bid-build projects. Once contracts are signed, there's minimal flexibility to alter plans or costs, unlike other construction methods. This lack of adaptability can hinder improvements without incurring additional expenses, constraining project development. Limited design feedback further complicates matters. Builders have limited input during the bidding phase, while architects may resist altering their plans. Consequently, valuable insights from builders may be disregarded, potentially impacting project efficiency and quality.

The lowest bid issue is also a significant challenge in design-bid-build projects. Contracts often go to the cheapest bidder, which may compromise project quality as builders cut corners to save costs. It's imperative to scrutinize builders' competency to ensure optimal outcomes. Moreover, market changes, especially during periods of rapid economic growth, may lead to skilled workers being diverted from ongoing projects to new ones, causing increased costs or delays. Such fluctuations can disrupt project timelines and budgets, necessitating careful management to mitigate adverse effects.

"When working as a general contractor, it's important to communicate clearly with both designers and bidders. This ensures that everyone is on the same page. It's also important to keep a close watch on the budget and timeline by planning carefully and monitoring progress. Unexpected issues can arise, so it's important to be flexible and adapt quickly. Finally, quality should be a top priority throughout the project to ensure the final result meets or exceeds expectations," advises Clipper Construction.

To learn more about Clipper Construction, visit their website for comprehensive details on services offered, ongoing projects, and contact information.

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For more information about Clipper Construction, contact the company here:Clipper ConstructionClipper Construction(443) 323-1880info@clipper.construction1354 Cooksie St, Baltimore, MD 21230

Clipper Construction

Clipper Construction is a tech-enabled Commercial General Contracting firm providing construction services across several verticals including retail/office fit-out, adaptive reuse, historical restoration and mixed-use development.

Website: https://www.clipper.construction/

Email: info@clipper.construction

Phone: (443) 323-1880