

## DO YOU NEED A CONSTRUCTION MANAGER?

As you progress through the architectural design process, and especially when the construction documents are being prepared on a major construction project, you may want to have a construction manager consult with your development team. A construction manager can supplement your architect's construction knowledge with more detailed expertise about how design decisions can increase or decrease the cost of the project. An experienced construction manager can review the architect's plans periodically during the design process and suggest ways to reduce construction costs. After construction begins, the construction manager may also assume day-to-day project management responsibilities.

- **Punch list** preparation is when the architect, accompanied by you as the client, carefully tours the almost completed construction project and compiles a detailed list of things the builder must do before the project is considered to be complete and the disbursement of the final contractor payment can be approved. Punch list items might include: fixing a lighting fixture that was incorrectly mounted; correcting uneven paint coverage; replacing a window cracked during construction, etc. It can take the better part of a day to assemble the list.
- During the **final walk-through** you and your architect (and construction manager, if you have one) accompany the contractor on the final inspection of the finished project. If you believe that all the required work has been completed to your satisfaction, the contractor will turn over all of the operating instructions and warranties for the equipment and components installed in the building.

■ **Construction Draws:** After construction begins, the contractor submits monthly invoices or “requisitions” to draw down construction payments. See the box on Managing Construction Funds on page 62 for more information on how to manage this process.

■ **Change Orders:** The construction contract will include a procedure for dealing with the inevitable changes that occur during construction, called “change orders.” A

change may be required because the architect made a mistake, the contractor encountered an unforeseen problem, or you overlooked something you feel is important to include in the center. A change order is like a contract amendment that describes the change, and adjusts the construction and payment schedule accordingly.

### ■ **Documentation:**

- **Written Record:** Someone representing the owner or tenant (often the project manager) needs to maintain a written record of the construction process, including minutes of site meetings. This supports good communication and minimizes misunderstandings. If a contract dispute leads to legal action, this documentation provides a factual foundation for its fair resolution.
- **As-Built Drawings:** The architect and contractor should provide a revised set of “as-built” drawings for the client that reflects the completed project. These drawings reflect changes made during construction and can be useful for future maintenance and repairs and future renovations.

While you need people with construction expertise to help oversee construction, you or someone very senior in your organization needs to keep close tabs on what is going on. Visit the site frequently. Ask questions if something doesn't make sense. Attend weekly site meetings. You may surprise yourself by catching mistakes overlooked by the design and construction professionals.