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### **6 Steps You Must Know Before Starting Your Construction Project**

#### **Step 1: Programming/Deciding What to Build**

The homeowner and the architect discuss the requirements for the project (how many rooms, the function of the spaces, etc.) testing the fit between the owner's needs, wants and budget.

#### **Step 2: Schematic/Preliminary Design Sketches**

The architect prepares a series of rough sketches, known as schematic or preliminary design, which show the general arrangement of rooms and of the site. Some architects also prepare models to help visualize the project. The homeowner approves the sketches before proceeding to the next phase.

#### **Step 3: Design Refinement**

The architect prepares more detailed drawings to illustrate other aspects of the proposed design. Floor plans show all the rooms in correct size and shape.

#### **Step 4: Preparation of Construction Documents**

Once the homeowner has approved the design, the architect prepares detailed drawings and specifications, which the contractor will use to establish actual construction costs and build the project. These drawings and specifications become part of the building contract.

#### **Step 5: Hiring the Contractor**

The homeowner selects and hires the contractor. The architect may be willing to make some recommendations. In many cases, homeowners choose from among contractors they've asked to submit bids on the job. The architect can help you prepare bidding documents as well as invitations to bid and instructions to bidders. Other options include hiring an architect who can design and build your home or to enter into a negotiated bid with a contractor.

#### **Step 6: Construction Administration**

While the contractor will physically build the home or addition, the architect can assist the homeowner in making sure that the project is built according to the plans and specifications. The architect can make site visits to observe construction, review and approve the contractor's applications for payment, and generally keep the homeowner informed of the project's progress. The contractor is solely responsible for construction methods, techniques, schedules, and procedures.

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