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Is it time to reconsider design build for signage projects?

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If you aren't aware of the advantages of design build for signage projects, you're not alone. There is a need for education on the design build process since many people are not yet familiar with its measurable benefits. For signage projects, it's a more efficient, cost-effective and faster approach than other processes. In fact, the Design Build Institute of America predicts that in the future more than 50% of all construction projects will take this approach.

What is design build? It is a method of contracting under which one entity performs both the design and construction for a project. From conception to completion, that entity takes overall responsibility. Under a different scenario, a client first selects an architect or designer to come up with specifications. Next the client separately selects a fabrication contractor. The relationship can become adversarial as the separate entities vie for control and profitability. Needless to say, that doesn't help the client. Still, this approach is more common than one might think.

To sum up the benefits of design build:

- * One point of responsibility and contact. This makes it easier for the client to keep control of the project.
- * Integrated approach throughout - Collaboration avoids the often adversarial relationships. There is no finger pointing with design build since the architect or designer, fabricator and client are all working together as one team.
- * Improved process - design build brings together all parties right from the start. The benefit is streamlined communication and less backtracking. Plus the collaborative team's wider range of experience and perspective is a client benefit not found with other approaches.
- * Improved economics - design build is cost-efficient for several reasons. The project cost is defined at the outset. The design build team, working closely with client, can more accurately control costs by monitoring the economics during the entire design process. The result is overall reduced costs in dollars and time

The design build approach makes sense for a variety of projects - from straightforward building and tenant projects to rebranding programs and wayfinding projects. If you haven't taken a close look at design build for your next signage project, you could miss out on significant benefits.

Bill McConaghy is president of Advanced Signing in Medway, Mass.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540