

THE IVTH REPORT

THE BUILDING PROCESS: LEADING WITH THE “A TEAM”

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QUOTES TO NOTE

“I love it when a plan comes together.”

- B.A. Baracus
A-Team

There are few efforts more complicated than the building process. The amount of thought and effort that goes into creating a space to work in, live in or both are tremendous. To start, a building is constructed from a countless number of parts and assembled by hundreds of people. Additionally, the project is constructed over months if not years. Seldom is the building paid for “in cash”; instead loans, investors and equity are mixed with grants, TIF funds, tax credits and/or cash. And along the way the building process will involve regulators and building code officials, municipal authorities, environmental agencies, energy considerations, construction sequence, technology, operational planning, maintenance, local incentives, supply and labor availability and even the weather. The most savvy in the building process will also add sustainability, work flow, future expansion, employee wellness, corporate image and return on investment to the list. *And that’s just the beginning* – because there is often more than one way to accomplish a goal.

So where does it all start? Simply stated, the building process typically starts with an observation or a goal, essentially sensing the need. What happens next is perhaps the most key steps in creating a sustainable, successful project. *Who do you call?* Is it the builder, because “something” needs to be built? Or the architect, because “something” needs to be thought through and then built? There is great value when the architect (or your “A-Team”) is that next step.

With the immense amount of effort and coordination required in the building process, “A-Team” efforts are organized into 7 distinct parts; each with a deciding point to continue or stop the project (until Step 6).

1. Define the Need and Goals: This CRITICAL STEP (architects call “programming”) requires analysis of what you have, what you need and what you would like against financial and business capacity, the community and other factors.
2. Optimize the Solution: We call this “schematic design”, the part of the process where alternatives and priorities are explored and the “scope” of the work is clearly established. (ALSO CRITICAL!)
3. Estimate the Budget: A clear scope allows for a preliminary estimate. The estimate is balanced against realistic financial constraints. The scope is revised and the budget set.
4. Develop the Plan: With a complete program, good solution and a realistic budget, the critical step of the building process are complete. Now plans are prepared for code compliance, bidding and/or construction. The final level of detail for the plans depends on method of delivery, which can be accomplished through bidding, negotiation or design build.
5. Finalize the Investment: Completed plans allow for final pricing, adjustments may be required to meet budget and coordinate with financing.
6. Build the Facility: Once construction starts, the project is as good as complete.
7. Transition into the Space: Often overlooked, this last step of the building process is to get the systems up and running, install “owner equipment” and move in. This too needs to be included.

As complicated as the building process is, working with a tactical team that breaks down the process makes the effort very manageable. No question the builder is an important team member, but every construction project starts with a plan. This means *leading with your “A-Team,”* to develop the plan that is right for you. The [Green Bay Botanical Gardens](#) did.

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