



Washington Architectural Foundation

Community Design Services

Client Guide

Welcome to Community Design Services

A program of The Washington Architectural Foundation

Founded in 1991, Community Design Services (CDS) provides local non-profits with pro-bono design services from design professionals.

Starting with a request from a qualifying non-profit client, CDS assembles a team of professionals and coordinates the project relationship through meetings, design review, and document presentation. The non-profit may use the conceptual documents for a variety of purposes including fundraising for project development or in seeking further paid professional design services to complete the conceptual project. In this way, CDS serves as a catalyst for projects that might not otherwise become realities, saving non-profits' resources for community programs.

This Guide will help potential clients understand what services are available through CDS. CDS clients range from well-known groups such as Food and Friends, So Others Might Eat (S.O.M.E.), and North Capitol Neighborhood Development, Inc. to smaller organizations such as Washington Parks and People. A full list of completed projects is available from the Foundation office.

Questions?

Contact Washington Architectural Foundation 202.667.1798 or www.wafonline.org

PROJECT PROCEDURES

Application for Services

CDS project application forms are available to non-profit organizations and community groups in the D.C. metropolitan area by calling the WAF office at 202.667.1798, by fax at 202.667.4327, or online at www.wafonline.org.

Conceptual Work Defined

CDS provides conceptual work for clients. CDS does not produce working drawings which might be used for construction or gaining permits. Conceptual work may take the form of drawings, models, or reports that give a general idea of the outcome but can not be used for construction. Should they wish to take the project further, the client may use the conceptual drawings to hire a licensed professional.

CDS CAN

- Put clients' dreams on paper in drawings or reports to be used to gain community support or for fundraising;
- Assist in preparing a design program for your project to be used to help hire a licensed professional;
- Evaluate buildings to determine whether the structure can accommodate the client's program;
- Design logos and other fundraising materials.

CDS CANNOT CREATE WORKING DRAWINGS.

Application Process

Upon receipt of application from a qualified non-profit (501(c)3), the application is subject to the following:

- Application review by WAF staff and an initial meeting at the client site for WAF staff to discuss project potential;
- Determination of scope of work by WAF staff;
- WAF staff review of project with CDS Advisory Committee to determine project feasibility.

Please Note: WAF/CDS does not accept projects that otherwise would be paid work for design professionals. If your organization has already raised funds for a project, a portion

of those funds should be set aside to hire design professionals to prepare the necessary working drawings to fulfill your building needs.

If project is accepted:

A letter of confirmation and contract will be sent to client, along with appropriate administrative fee assessed. This fee must be paid prior to start of work.

A Project Manager will be assigned to the project, as well as volunteer team appropriate to the project scope.

Administrative Fee

An administrative fee of \$100-\$500 applies depending on project scope. This fee is collected from the client before work begins. The client is also responsible for minimal reimbursable expenses (not to exceed \$50 without approval from client).

Volunteer Assignment

WAF staff and the Project Manager determine the professional services and expertise required for the project, and search the current pool of volunteers to identify those whose interests and experience match the needs of each client's project.

Project Team Meeting

Once volunteers are assigned to your project, your Project Manager becomes your main contact. A meeting will be scheduled with your Project Team soon after application approval.

Prior to this meeting, you will be advised if additional materials are needed for the meeting. These items may include:

- Drawings of the existing structure;
- Plat of the property (available from the survey office);
- Program of what will happen in the space, e.g. dental clinic, playground, childcare, music classes, street facade plan, etc.
- Clear idea of what you are trying to convey, either through a logo, brochure, sign, etc.
- Fundraising plan or outline for project completion

All meetings are documented and kept on file at the Foundation office via your Project Manager. The Project Manager serves as an advisor and supervisor for volunteers and is the primary contact for the client.

Design

Volunteers are encouraged to aim for the highest standards of design in their projects, keeping in mind the budgetary constraints of their clients – and most importantly that work performed under WAF/CDS auspices is conceptual only.

Timeline

In your project team meeting prior to application approval, a general timeframe for your project is discussed. When the Project Manager schedules your first Project Team meeting, this timeline will be refined.

Client Presentation

Volunteers will make project presentations to the client in an appropriate format, i.e. reports, sketches, etc. Following the client's final approval of all design work, the Project Manager will obtain a client signature on a copy of all documents, and then forward a copy to the WAF office for archiving purposes. Please call WAF staff prior to client presentation.

Acknowledgement

Each WAF/CDS Project must include the WAF/CDS logo.

Evaluation

When your project is completed, WAF/CDS conducts an evaluation to assess our service. Your input is crucial to help maintain high standards of service to all clients.

THE NEXT STEPS

Once your WAF/CDS volunteers finish the agreed scope of services, there are several options for follow-through.

Request for Proposals (RFP)

This is a key element to fulfilling your plans. When approaching design professionals or contractors for working drawings or construction, they will want as much detailed information as possible on which to base their proposals. A typical RFP may include the following:

- Appropriate conceptual drawings;
- Program requirements, design guidelines, or work items;
- Existing conditions—photographs/reports;
- Project budget;
- Site survey or building location plat (from deed).

WAF's RFP Template is included in the Appendix to this Guide

Paying For It

Depending on your organization's program for the space or site to be constructed, renovated, or reconfigured, grant funding may be available to help pay for it. Check the Internet or libraries for information on governmental agencies and private foundations that offer funding for your type of project. Of course, traditional funding is available through banks. The Community Reinvestment Act requires banks to lend, at reduced rates, a certain percentage of loans each year, which may prove helpful in the financing of your project.

You may also want to send your RFP to selected design professionals and contractors (see Need Help?), asking for services on a pro-bono basis or at a reduced rate.

Building Consensus

Meeting with you local Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) and civic association(s) will help you build consensus for your project. You can find phone numbers for each ANC in the D.C. Government blue pages of the phonebook. This serves two purposes: it *breaks the ice* if your organization is new in the neighborhood; and b) it may prevent future misunderstandings to explain your plans and answer

questions ahead of time. Building consensus among your neighbors may also help to ease the way for zoning or code changes.

NEED HELP?

CDS-produced documents are preliminary and conceptual only and are not intended to be used for bidding, construction, or permit applications. You will need to hire professionals to carry out the final design and construction. To find a licensed professional who is right for you, contact one of the following:

Washington Chapter/ American Institute of Architects www.aiadc.com

American Society of Landscape Architects www.asla.org

American Institute of Graphic Artists www.aiga.org

APPENDIX

Request for Proposals (RFP) Guide for Non-Profits Seeking Design Services

Introduction

- Introduce your non-profit with basics including name, contact, etc.
- Summarize the services you provide, community you serve
- Project summary—brief including timeline, budget (as close to reality as possible)

Goals

- List goals of your project, dreams for what it could achieve when completed
- What are your related business goals? (“Our new space will provide us with 10 new classrooms from which we will be providing after-school programming to 1000 students per semester.”) Use this portion of your description to engage service providers in the real-time use of your space, mission, and dream.

Full Project Description and User/Space Requirements

- Demographics of your audience and users
- Space requirements (i.e. 10 new classrooms, office space for 10-15 administrators, etc.).
- Durability of space (“Our users are mainly children; therefore, surfaces must be durable and lasting.”)

Design Requirements

- How should the project feel when it is complete?
- Describe design of space using adjectives such as friendly, welcoming, etc.
- Any similar buildings that you would compare your project to? Sites to visit?
- Do you have partners in the venture?

Functional and operational requirements

- Immediate and future needs
- Any aspects of current space that need to carry over? Art work? Renovation only?
- Staffing and maintenance needs