



Washington Architectural Foundation
Community Design Services

Volunteer 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. CDS enables non-profits to take the their first steps toward reaching new goals, providing conceptual design services at a very low cost.

Starting with a request from a qualifying non-profit client, CDS assembles a team of professionals and coordinates the relationship through client meetings, design review, and document presentation. The client may use the conceptual documents for a variety of purposes including:

- Fundraising for project development;
- Seeking further professional design services (paid) to complete the conceptual project.

In this way CDS serves as a catalyst for projects that might not otherwise become realities.

This Guide was developed to help volunteers understand what services are made available to CDS clients, and what volunteer responsibilities are when working on a CDS project. A full list of completed projects is available from the Foundation office.

Questions? Contact the Foundation at www.wafonline.org or call 202.667.1798.

PROJECT PROCEDURES

Volunteer Assignment

Once an application has been approved, WAF staff and the Project Manager will put together a team of volunteers through information in our database and through contacts with our professional organization partners such as AIA, APA, ASLA, IIDA, etc.

Project Team Meetings

Once volunteers are assigned, the team will organize a full team meeting with the client. At this first meeting, a timeline and scope of work will be developed. Initial project assignments may also be developed.

Scope of Work

All projects done through CDS are **conceptual** only. Volunteers are encouraged to use the latest standards for design, while keeping in mind their client's budget and program—in other words, approach each project as if it were a paid commission. CDS does not provide construction drawings or any work that can be used for obtaining permits of any kind.

ANALYSIS AND PROJECT WORK

The following general checklist can be used by CDS volunteers to assure that a design solution is complete. Much of this information can be obtained with the help of CDS, the client organization, municipal agencies, and on-site investigations. If the project requires more precise information or an in-depth evaluation, such as a survey or structural analysis, the Project Manager should be notified. Although volunteers are preparing conceptual documents only, they should address the comprehensive range of issues that determine the long-range success of a project.

Project Initiation and Development

- Schedule initial client meeting and site visit. WAF/CDS staff will assist with this, as well as provide you with analysis from previous client/staff meeting.
- Identify overall project objectives and plan for development.
- Establish that the contracted scope of services can be accomplished in an agreed upon timeline.

Programming

- Identify specific client needs, required uses, minimum and optimum goals, and budget and time constraints.
- Analyze required spaces and uses, space functions, required adjacencies, circulation, and minimum and optimum square footages.

Project Research

- Review all applicable codes: building codes, ADA requirements, zoning, environmental and historic district codes.
- Identify agency reviews that will be required: building code/zoning office, fire department, planning and community development departments, historic commission, zoning board, city or county council and special design review organizations.

Concept Development

- Develop alternative concepts and design solutions, testing against all of the above.

- Prepare presentation documents, which may include site plans, floor plans, cross-sections, elevations, and perspective drawings as necessary to illustrate the intent of the conceptual design solution.
- Prepare the preliminary budget estimate if needed.
- Present documents to Project Manager and client and refine as required until final sign-off.

CLIENT PRESENTATION

Volunteers will notify CDS staff prior to client presentation. CDS projects must include acknowledgement of the role of WAF/CDS in all written and presentation materials. Logos are available from the WAF office or online at www.wafonline.org.

IMPORTANT PAPERWORK

Meeting Record Outline

Project name
 Meeting date and location
 Client(s) attending
 Volunteer(s) attending
 General topics discussed and actions taken
 Next scheduled meeting

Client Evaluation Outline

Project name
 Client name
 Volunteer name(s)
 Project Manager
 Topics to be addressed:

- Degree to which the project agreement was fulfilled
- Strengths and weaknesses of the volunteer(s) and Project Manager involved
- Suggestions for changes in our process for delivery of services
- Any additional comments
- Direction the project will take from this point forward

Volunteer Evaluation Outline

Project name
 Client Name
 Volunteer Name(s)
 Project Manager
 Volunteer names and hours worked on this project.
 Topics to be addressed:

- Degree to which the project agreement was fulfilled
- Strengths and weaknesses of the Project Manager involved
- Suggestions for improvements in our process for delivery of services
- Any additional comments

GENERAL INFORMATION

Intern Development Credit (IDP)

Credit hours for CDS work can be used in Category D Related Activities, Professional and Community Service, of which 10 units are required (1 unit = 8 hours of service). CDS is an excellent way to accumulate these needed hours.

Tax Information

Volunteers may be able to deduct travel and supply expenses on itemized personal income tax returns if not reimbursed by WAF or client. The IRS does generally not allow volunteer time as a tax deduction; please consult your tax advisor.

Volunteer Hours

It is very important that volunteers keep track of all hours expended on a project. WAF/CDS can count these hours as in-kind contributions towards requirements for matching funds awards to continue the vital work of this program. This is especially important for those volunteers seeking IDP credit hours.

Questions?

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