

Low Income Investment Fund
Affordable Buildings for Children's Development
Constructing Connections
Expert Pool Tool – Roles of an Architect

Role of an Architect

An Architect is a licensed individual experienced in architectural design, facility development processes, and construction. These professionals typically spend several years studying Architecture, both at a collegiate level and as an apprentice within a practicing professional group. An architect typically provides service in the areas of functional and space programming, site-use practices and due diligence, the conduct of utilities studies, environmental analyses, planning and zoning applications, the preparation of materials for public referenda, special cost or energy analyses, tenant-related design solutions, presentation models/special drawings, the coordination of post-construction furniture, fixture and equipment requirement definition, and tenant-improvement services.

Types of Activities

Whereas architects are typically associated with the creation of design and construction documents, they often also are instrumental in site control, contractor selection, and construction management. Architects are a valuable resource to owners in coordinating due diligence activities, including but not limited to soil surveys, geo-technical studies, and the identification of the myriad of regulatory requirements and constraints. Effectively, architects operate much like the quarterback of a football team; responsible for the management of the work of a larger team endeavoring to keep numerous elements of a project moving harmoniously with one another.

Project Specificity v. Capacity Building

In keeping with the spirit and intent of both ABCD Constructing Connections and the Expert Pool to build the capacity of the child care and community development sectors, it is important to distinguish between project-specific knowledge and information that genuinely promotes capacity building in specific technical areas. Relative to architectural design, capacity building is promoted through the greater understanding of the types and methods data (e.g. demographics, required spatial capacity specifications, and internal and external adjacency relationships within a project) used as inputs to the programmatic and pre-design phases of a project. For example, whereas an architect may be retained to conduct a functional and space program for a site renovation or new construction, the capacity of the collaboration is better served by learning why the collection of specific data is relevant to the process. By strengthening collaborative partners' understanding of the processes and information used by architects to site and design child care

facilities, partners will be better equipped to support pipeline projects and advocate for enhanced policies and resources for child care facility development.

Examples

Other examples of opportunities to increase the collective understanding of the collaborative include, but are not limited to, instruction focused on any of the following topics:

- Pre-development due-diligence processes
- Project Delivery Methods
- Project Management Resources, Concepts, and Techniques
- Construction methodologies and education on advantages and liabilities of various construction types
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Americans with Disabilities Act, and other land use and building code regulations
- California Health and Safety Title 24 requirements

Additionally, if an architect incorporates appropriate capacity building strategies into their scope of work for a pipeline project, collaborative partners will gain key insight into real projects and be able to apply that knowledge to support future projects and local system-building work. If managed properly, the following are some examples of types of activities an architect could perform and share methodology and strategies to help strengthen the capacity of a collaborative. However, keep in mind that these project-specific activities would not be capacity building in the context of Expert Pool guidelines if the architect were not using the project as a learning tool.

- Design drawing solutions
- Site specific consultation
- Site due diligence
- Project-specific design programming
- Project/Design Cost Estimating
- Plan checks for regulatory compliance

Conclusion

As individuals experienced in the areas of architectural design, physical development process and best construction practices, architects represent a valuable resource to the goals and objectives of your local project. The Expert Pool process provides a vehicle in which this wealth of knowledge can be harnessed and used to build the capacity of ABCD partners. Whereas architects are generally the lead individuals for specific facility development projects, their inclusion within the Expert Pool provides sites with the opportunity to increase the capacity of the collaborative relative to the development of quality childcare facilities.