

The project budget is separated into key areas: construction costs, furniture costs, operations expenses, consultant fees, and incidental expenses. In the schematic design phase, the budget is considered a preliminary estimate. Past experience, expertise, and current industry knowledge inform estimating the preliminary costs of the key components.

The design team provides a list of recommended options to the client. This allows the client to participate in the decision-making process. Decisions on the scope of the base costs must be agreed on, then other items can be selected that have estimated additional costs.

Furniture and construction budgets can either be prepared as an estimate or as a high/low range. High/low-range furniture budgets list the item, the quantity required, and the pieces' cost range. High/low construction budgets break out each of the individual construction trades line by line, with a range given for each of these line items. A client can use a high/low range to target its priorities at a more focused level.

Careful manipulation in the planning of spaces and volumes can produce an exceptional product, regardless of budget limitations. In refining the project budget and client goals, overall values and qualities help allocate additions or reductions in budget. Goals are prioritized. Yet, the high/low budget allows that the visual concept will be carried through even if an item is of low priority. For example, high contrast on feature walls may receive high or low priority: the low-range option might be dark paint on drywall, the high might be a dark veneer or stone. The visual concept stemming from the client's goals is met either way.

CONCLUSION

After the preliminary schematic design presentation, the design team comes back together and evaluates the initial client response in order to make revisions or secondary proposals. The design team explores plan revisions and alternate furniture and finish recommendations. The team then prepares for a final review meeting. The goal at the end of this meeting and the schematic

design phase is to have an approved plan, finish direction, mutual agreement as to the overall aesthetic of the project, and approved preliminary cost estimate and schedule. Following the meeting, minutes are prepared that confirm the decisions reached. In addition, an end-of-phase client sign-off form is completed that acknowledges approvals and allows the design team to move on to the next phases of the project.

Bibliography

Ching, Francis D.K. *Architecture: Form, Space & Order*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996.