

From Concept to Breaking Ground: The Ultimate Guide to Preconstruction

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Preconstruction involves assessing the project's feasibility, creating detailed cost estimates, and developing strategies to manage timelines and risks. Addressing potential challenges early ensures the build stays on track and within budget while minimizing delays and unexpected expenses.

The importance of this process lies in its ability to drive project efficiency, enhance cost management, and reduce risks. It allows you to create a clear roadmap and thoroughly plan all aspects. Preconstruction sets the foundation for a successful build by aligning resources, managing expectations, and providing a comprehensive strategy that guides the entire construction.

WHAT'S PRECONSTRUCTION?

Preconstruction is the critical planning phase before any physical work begins on a construction project. During this phase, you assess the build's viability, create a detailed budget, and outline the scope of work. Taking this time upfront allows you to ensure cost certainty. Furthermore, you can anticipate potential changes and seek the best value for your clients.

Planning helps identify risks, streamline processes, and fine-tune designs. This contributes to minimizing unexpected challenges during the build phase. Essentially, it sets the stage for smoother, more efficient construction that'll save time and money in the long run.



7 STEPS IN THE PRECONSTRUCTION PROCESS

The preconstruction process involves several steps to help ensure a project is well-planned and set up for success. Here's how to effectively manage costs, anticipate potential challenges, and keep projects on track from the beginning.

Feasibility Study

Analyzing the practicality of a project involves thoroughly reviewing environmental, zoning, and regulatory factors. It ensures that your project complies with local laws and fits the intended site. This step is crucial because it helps identify potential hurdles – such as environmental restrictions or zoning limitations – early in the process.

Addressing these issues upfront helps you avoid costly design changes or delays later. Ultimately, this allows you to keep the project within budget and on schedule. Identifying these challenges early also allows for more strategic planning. It helps you find solutions to minimize disruptions and keep the build moving smoothly.

Jobsite Analysis

Evaluating jobsite conditions is critical to preconstruction. This phase involves geotechnical assessments and surveys to understand the land clearly. It addresses vital factors such as accessibility, drainage, and potential logistical challenges that could impact the project.

Thoroughly assessing the jobsite allows architects to understand the land's accessibility, natural topography, and the sun's movement and shadows throughout the day. This information is invaluable in optimizing design choices. It ensures the build makes the most of the area's features. It also mitigates any environmental or logistical hurdles that could arise during construction.

Design Development

Collaborating with architects and engineers to develop preliminary designs is vital in preconstruction to ensure all aspects of the project are aligned. Using jobsite management software can significantly enhance this collaboration by increasing accountability and transparency among team members.

For example, Fieldlens by RedTeam allows you to capture daily jobsite reports, helping to organize and streamline the design process. This level of oversight is crucial as it allows for real-time adjustments. Continual refinement of plans ensures you meet budget constraints and regulatory requirements.

Bid Solicitation and Vendor Selection

When soliciting bids from trade partners and vendors, finding the right balance between meeting your project's needs and sticking to a budget is important. Assessing qualifications, experience, and value helps you choose the right partners for success.

Several bid solicitation methods – open, selective, and negotiated tendering – can help you select the most appropriate contractor. Carefully comparing bids and using the

right tendering method allows you to choose partners that fit your budget and deliver quality work on time.

Leverage construction management software to easily request bids from potential vendors to create a strong and realistic estimate. With every confirmed vendor, you're able to build your schedule of values (SOV) and project budget.

Budget and Proposal Creation

Developing a detailed budget is crucial to ensuring your project meets financial expectations. The square meter method is one of the most popular procedures for approximate estimation, especially in the early design stages.

As you receive quotes from vendors and the budget takes shape, you'll also need to consider different types of proposals. Some of the most common proposal types are:

- » Construction manager at-risk (CMAR)
- » Time and materials (T&M)
- » Fixed-price contracts

CMAR allows for more flexibility and collaboration, while T&M is ideal for projects with unpredictable scopes. On the other hand, fixed price offers a set cost that helps minimize budget overruns. Choosing the right proposal type facilitates a seamless match between your project's needs and financial goals.

Value Engineering

Evaluating alternative materials, processes, and design options is a practical way to cut costs without sacrificing quality. Value engineering becomes crucial when about 70% of a construction project's budget consists of hard costs like brick-and-mortar expenses.

Exploring more affordable materials or efficient methods can reduce expenses while maintaining the build's integrity. This approach saves money and optimizes the project. It ensures you get the best value without compromising performance or client satisfaction.

Scheduling

When you create a detailed timeline for procurement to completion, it's important to remember your baseline schedule can be vulnerable to unexpected delays and costs. There's always some uncertainty about how long certain activities will

take or how much they'll cost. That's why coordinating trades, trade partners, and project milestones is crucial.

Staying on top of these moving parts lets you better manage any surprises. Moreover, it keeps the plan on schedule and ensures everything flows smoothly. Flexibility and smart coordination are imperative to avoid costly delays down the road.

CONSIDERATIONS IN PRECONSTRUCTION

Several factors can impact the success of your build as it moves through the preconstruction phase. Here's how to mitigate risks, ensure compliance, and maintain smooth execution.

Risk Management

When planning a construction project, identifying and mitigating risks like safety issues, budget overruns, and scheduling delays is essential to staying on track. Spotting these risks early can avoid costly surprises down the road.

Containment plans also give you a backup strategy if things don't go as expected. Meanwhile, insurance acts as a financial safety net. Both of these tools help protect your build from unexpected setbacks. This keeps everything running smoothly and ensures the safety of everyone involved.

Regulatory Compliance

Ensuring your project meets all local, state, and federal regulations avoids headaches later. Regular consultations with legal experts can help you catch any issues early, reducing the chance of costly post-construction changes or legal disputes.

Consider environmental impact assessments and permitting and zoning laws immediately at the beginning of a project. Stay proactive and address these areas upfront, so you can keep your project on track and avoid scenarios that could slow things down.


Collaboration and Communication

Aligning your stakeholders ensures smooth construction. When there are gaps or ambiguities in the plans, it can lead to issues with quality, unexpected costs, and delays. That's why clear communication from day one is essential.

Use regular updates and project management tools to keep everyone informed and on the same page throughout the

process. This way, you can avoid miscommunication and ensure your plan stays on track with no surprises along the way.

SETTING THE FOUNDATION FOR A SUCCESSFUL BUILD PHASE

Thorough planning, attention to detail, and strong collaboration during preconstruction prevent costly issues during the build phase. Investing time and resources into this critical phase can set the foundation for a smoother, more successful project from start to finish. 



About the Author

Evelyn Long is the Editor-in-Chief of [Renovated Magazine](#). She is a construction writer who is passionate about making the industry more accessible for all construction professionals.

About the Article

The [Builder Blog by RedTeam](#) was launched in 2023. It serves as a resource for construction professionals with industry insights, in-depth articles about solutions, and helpful customer stories. From best practices to workflow guides, the blog builds on RedTeam's expertise and knowledge of the industry to help create a better tomorrow for everyone in construction. You can learn more about RedTeam at [redteam.com](#).

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