

1. What is the difference between a Residential Building Designer and an Architect?

Most designers have practical work experience in place of advanced degrees and licenses. At **ALL-PRO HOME SERVICES**, this is particularly true. With both hands-on construction experience and designing custom homes, additions and remodeling, we can perform many services with confidence. As such, we have a proven track record that allows us to work closely with homeowners and builders. ALL-PRO HOME SERVICES offer virtually the same services that traditional architect's office would provide. 90% of all residential projects do not require architects. First, designers are not licensed architects. Designers may have similar education but usually to a much lesser degree but have not received graduate degrees or gone through the license exam procedures. In fact, we do frequently work with Architects when it is required depending on the size and type of project.

Note: It is very important that when we talk about the differences, the main factor to consider when deciding who to hire is contingent on current State laws that regulate what a Designer can and cannot do. Any good designer should know the law, the limits of their own ability and the wisdom to know the difference. I have referred many projects to Architects due to the scope of the project and/or State law. The ability to know when this is a necessity should never be questioned by a Designer.

2. So if you are not an Architect, who does the Structural and can the Architect provide this?

All-Pro Home Services can provide structural which meet the "conventional construction" criteria specified within the State Code as well as what Plan Examiners require. Buildings which do not meet these criteria- for example, buildings which do not meet the wall bracing (shear wall) requirements- are by definition "non-conventional construction" and require structural design by a state-licensed engineer. We work closely with several reputable engineers and an Architect would also have to acquire the same services from a Structural Engineer or other engineers as an example. There is no way around this requirement if needed so there are no differences between what All-Pro Home Services can provide regarding any engineering plans.

3. What is CAD?

Computer-aided design (CAD) which is also known as computer-aided design and drafting (CADD), is used by most architects and engineers in the use of computer technology for design and drawing. Prior to CAD all design and drafting was done on

the board (pencil and paper). CAD software has many advantages which allows for more precise drawing and it does make it easier for the designer to share plans with the clients. In addition, it is easier to send these CAD files to general contractors and engineers and allows secure archiving of this projects without taking up physical storage space.

4. What services do you offer that an Interior Designer does not?

There is a certain amount of overlap between what an architectural design firm does and what an interior designer can do. We have a primary responsibility to provide the architectural plans needed to obtain permits from local building authorities (e.g., planning approval and building permits). The working drawings we provide are needed for the builder or general contractor. At the owner's discretion, which is rarely done, we will specify the style, manufacturer and model number for products such as doors, windows, skylights, roofing, walls, floors, lighting, fireplaces, plumbing fixtures, kitchen appliances, etc. We rarely do this as the overall budget may be discussed with the contractor in how to minimize overall costs. We typically don't specify furniture, window coverings or interior color schemes. Some interior designers seem to want to change the overall floor designs which can be a disaster in the making as the overall construction methods and material application to build it have already been established. For this reason, interior designers should never be called in until final working drawings have been completed. Their role and priorities begin after the working drawings are completed and, in many cases, should begin after the structure has been roughed-in and possibly drywall installed.

5. What should I have available when meet?

It is very important that we discuss your budget, the goals and your specific needs. On-site visits allow us to address any issues with the site and the building envelope, whether it is an addition or a new home. If you have taken the time sketch or collect articles of things you like, have them available for review. I always suggest making a list of what you need, what you want and maybe a wish or two. This allows an initial evaluation of what can be done structurally as well as what can be built for the budget at hand.

6. What is livable square footage and how does this relate to total lot coverage?

Livable (Habitable) square footage is calculated on any area that is conditioned either by heat or air conditioning. Builders/Realtors calculate square footage from the outside of exterior walls. Non-livable square footage would be areas like garages, porches, patios, decks, etc. In all cases, unfinished/finished basements are

considered 'livable' areas. Lot coverage is calculated by any structure with a roof and this does include carports, covered patios. Total Lot Coverage can vary on how this is estimated so call your local Zoning officials to receive accurate information on how to compute.

7. What issues must I be concerned about to Zoning or Land Use regulations?

All-Pro Home Services confirms issues of setbacks, easements, flood plains, lot coverage, HOA CC & R's (if applicable) before any project is initiated. We must confirm the building envelope size and all existing buildings on site (if applicable) to determine what we can build. You can easily make a call to your local Planning Department by clicking here [AZ City-County Contacts](#).

8. Will I need a Structural Engineer?

This question is based on what we are going to design and how it will be constructed. Structural Engineers are usually called in when we are talking about large open spaces with beam, 2 story or more floors, second story additions, issues of load points, basements, etc. Again, it may be a requirement but depending on the scope of the project, a site review is needed to determine those services. Pre-Engineered Roof Trusses are automatically engineered and stamped, so there is no cost involved in this as Truss Calcs and Layout are provided for Building Permit application.

9. What are Building Codes and what do I need to know about them?

Building codes establish minimum standards that must be conformed to in residential construction. On any project, the requirements within the municipality your project is located will determine what standards they impose. Most use the International Residential Code "IRC" for one- and two-family dwellings. A new version is released every 3 years, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015, etc. Each municipality decides when to update to the latest version and as such, verification to what they are using is always done prior to any design concept or final construction documents. Again, click here to find out more information [AZ City-County Contacts](#).

10. How long does it take to do designs for a custom home or an addition?

The actual design process is usually 2 – 3 weeks depending on the project. The process can take as little as 30 days or 90 days to receive the final set of plans. This is all dependent on your reviews/changes as well as the current workload at All-Pro Home Services. No plan will ever be released without knowing that we have addressed all issues prior to drawing the final set of plans and that we have provided an accurate and comprehensive set for you and your contractor.

11. Why do I need a Building Permit, even if it is a small job?

Taking out a permit provides you the services of a plan check engineer who will make sure that the plans are complete, that the plans comply with accepted engineering principles, and that the plans meet State minimum construction standards. In addition, a building inspector will perform inspections to make sure that construction is consistent with the plans and minimum standards for construction technique. Construction is a substantial financial investment, which can be seriously jeopardized by non-complying construction. Work done without required permits is not only illegal but will create problems when you try to sell your property. Fire and homeowner's insurance coverage may not recognize work performed without permits or may be invalidated. A permit will also help you avoid headaches in the future and if building officials discover you have done work without a permit, you could be required to dismantle your remodel. If you sell your house, you are legally obligated to disclose that you have remodeled without a permit, and the buyer could demand that you bring work up to code. Realtors cannot market your property listing any 'habitable space' that was not permitted. In saying this, thinking that you want to increase the value of your home by not obtaining a permit because your taxes will be raised is foolish.

If you have doubts about needing a Building Permit, don't just ask a neighbor or a friend or a so-called contractor...call the Building Department to get the RIGHT ANSWER! This will be the most important call to starting your project by being Code Compliant. Also remember that if you are in an HOA, read the CC & R's completely. These always take precedent over municipality guidelines.

12. What about those plans available in magazines or plan book? They sound reasonable in cost!

I have been asked about our fees and that it would be so much cheaper to buy plans from these resources as well as on-line. It is important to note that those are considered 'Stock' plans and they are low in cost, BUT you must understand that these are not custom. They are all not acceptable for submission for a Building Permit as they do not have all the information required by each municipality. Many lack details and this is an issue that could cost you more money as lack of detail means that even a good contractor must assume different issues. The other is that it may not conform to your building site and again, the cost for revising the plans, through the same source as purchased, will be expensive. Lastly, the plans may not be totally conforming in floor plan layout which again requires revisions. Copyright

law regulates anyone other than the original creator in altering a set of plans and this is important to know.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED! NOT JUST WORDS BUT A PROMISE!

ALL-PRO HOME SERVICES provide a complete, thorough and accurate set of construction drawings. Each plan set contains comprehensive structural plans from foundation to roof framing. Final construction drawings are produced using the latest in computer drafting software to insure better accuracy. Our plans are drawn to comply with the latest edition of the IRC building code. Your plans will contain all the information needed to obtain a building permit, and all the detail necessary to work with various contractors. It is essential when we are doing any project, that if any information is needed, it must be provided in a timely manner to ensure that we are accurate in preparing the final set of construction documents.