



# FOR OWNERS

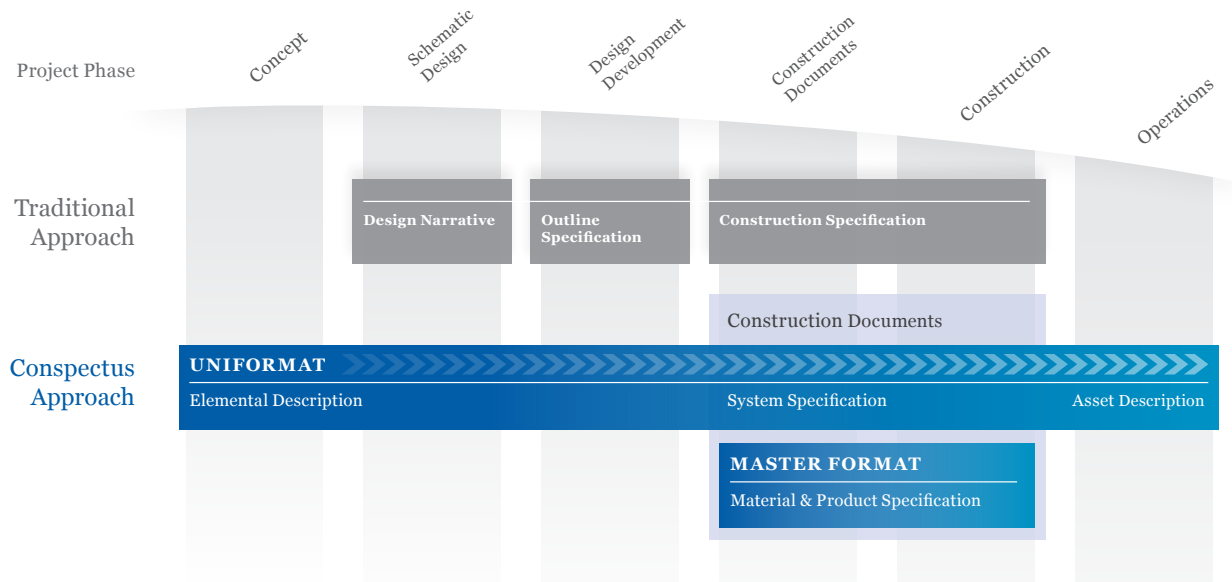
# Our Approach

Far too many owners of a newly constructed building discover too late as they're "unpacking" the new property just how little they actually know about the performance, operation, and maintenance of the building's complex systems — from waterproofing and curtain wall to HVAC, building controls, and much more — much less why a particular system was chosen.

This is the point at which they also begin to realize the consequences of having relied on inadequate or incorrect information — or none at all —when design decisions were being made, decisions that would not only impact the building's functionality and operations, but also dramatically affect the project schedule and budget.

More concerning to owners and their representatives is how the complexity and volume of project documentation can deter closer inspection of the quality and functionality of a proposed design solution or contribute to decisions that negatively impact the efficiency and overall control of a project's costs, schedule, and risks.

There is a solution: The Conspectus approach to construction specifications and documentation. It's an approach that focuses from the start on clearly documenting and communicating the owner's requirements and expectations and enabling the entire extended project team to work in concert to meet them. What's more, owners can ensure this happens either by partnering directly with Conspectus or making sure the architect or design-builder does.



## CLOSING THE GAPS. REDUCING THE RISKS.

Traditionally, specifications are developed sequentially as discrete documents, a disjointed process resulting in critical information gaps that often increase risk. Conspectus approaches specifications as a seamless continuum of information gathering, analysis, and documentation that closes the gaps, reduces risk, and adds value for owners and other stakeholders alike.

## A MATTER OF TRANSPARENCY

In most construction projects today, no mechanism exists for definitively capturing the information the owner needs to make informed decisions during the design and construction phases or to operate the occupied building at optimum efficiency and effectiveness.

Architects don't provide it; they're focused on the design intent. Traditional construction specifications processes don't provide it; they're focused on translating the design into discrete documents that contractors need to put the bricks and mortar in place. Contractors and construction managers don't provide it either. Their job is to fulfill their contract by following the construction specifications and to turn over the keys to the owner and leave once the job is complete.

To an owner's detriment, almost all of design process decisions that have an impact on project cost and building operations are or can remain hidden from the owner. Unfortunately, obfuscation of information has become an acceptable practice, and many in the industry have perpetuated the myth that owners just have to accept it as a fact of life. The Conspectus approach busts that myth.

## RECOGNIZE THE RISKS

Owners should carefully examine the consequences of the lack of transparency and resulting inadequate and poor documentation. They are serious and potentially costly.

### MISSED DEADLINES

Staying on schedule is a challenge for every construction project, and the blame for delays extends across the full project team. Consider, for example, when downstream contractors can't understand or execute on a poorly written specification during construction, they issue an RFI — a request for information to clarify the documents. Resolution can take days or weeks and often consists of little more than a noncommittal, pass-the-buck response from design leaving the contractors to make a best-guess fix.

### COST OF CARRYING CAPITAL

The time cost of delaying the opening of a building is measurable in real dollars lost to the owner. Owners make heavy up-front investments. The longer occupancy is delayed, the longer it takes for that investment to deliver the expected returns, not to mention the opportunity costs of not having access to the asset.

### VALUE ENGINEERING ISSUES

Any number of factors — poor design, insufficient documentation, flawed specifications, or inaccurate estimating — can trigger value engineering (VE), a process, which can occur during design or between bidding and signing the contract, to reduce project costs to meet budgets. It can also create long delays and sometimes force the design team to choose between working in the owner's best interest and doing what's expedient to minimize their own financial impact.

## LOSS OF CONFIDENCE

As a result of inadequate documentation, bid and construction documents often include a massive addendum. In such instances, the contractor can lose faith in the quality of the documentation and owners lose faith in both the design and construction team. Once this loss of confidence occurs, it encourages opportunistic behavior from all the parties and increased costs to resolve differences.

## LITIGATION

RFIs very often result in change orders, which trigger schedule disruptions, project delays, unanticipated costs, or all three. Change orders are the breeding ground for litigation, the costs of which can be staggering. Also, faulty documentation embeds permanent risk for litigation, which can have long-tail impacts well after the one-year warranty period provided by the contractor for workmanship provided by the contractor(s).

# WHY THE CONSPECTUS APPROACH WORKS

## TRANSPARENCY, ACCESS, AND COLLABORATION

The Conspectus approach helps ensure that owners or their representatives can know at every point what decisions are being made, the rationale behind them, and the implications for budget, schedule, and operations. They can also interact directly with the team members who make and implement critical design decisions, translate design into construction documents, and manage the construction.

## FOCUSED ON QUALITY

The Conspectus approach naturally integrates quality assurance from the start as part of our broader role in monitoring processes and raising critical issues along the way to make sure inconsistencies, discrepancies, and errors don't go unnoticed or unresolved or get permanently forgotten.

## INFORMED DECISION MAKING

The Conspectus approach comprehensively documents design requirements and designed solutions, allowing comparative analysis of their potential impact on the functionality, quality, and cost of the project. This enables owners to make optimized decisions instead of best-guess choices.

## DEEP INSIGHTS

The comprehensive nature of the Conspectus approach captures deep insights that owners can integrate into optimizing their building's operation and that of future buildings if they are serial asset builders. Conversely, the collaborative potential built into our approach enables owners to contribute their own experience and expertise in what will work and what won't to the design and specifications process.

## OWNER'S STANDARDS

Many owners have pre-established standards for their facilities, which may not be fully understood or appreciated by the extended project team. The Conspectus approach integrates an owner's standards into the communications continuum from the start, and can provide analytics to verify that the designed solution complies, and helps ensure that the owner's vision is realized.