



UNION STUDIO
ARCHITECTURE & COMMUNITY DESIGN

HOW UNION STUDIO WORKS AT A DISTANCE

Union has developed a national reputation for distilling the nuances of local character combined with a traditionally inspired view of economy and simplicity. Through our experience working on projects in Texas, Washington State, New York, Arkansas, South Carolina, California, and across the Northeast, we have developed tools to effectively manage long distance client relationships that might seem challenging at first. Principal Douglas Kallfelz, who has a specialized degree from Harvard University in the management and quality control of an architectural design firm, has developed streamlined internal management and communications processes in response to the variable workload that many of our projects require. Due to our small size and unusual breadth of services, Union is a nimble partner in the design and development process, able to quickly shift staff and priorities to meet our clients' needs.

WORKING "ON RETAINER"

For many of our long-distance clients, the services for which we are retained span from pre-design through entitlement and often into construction documents. Given the length of time we are involved and the variable nature of the workload as projects move through the natural course of design and permitting, clients effectively need our firm to be "on retainer" in terms of staff availability but without the risk of incurring costs when the workload is light. At Union, we both understand and accept the variable nature of early design and permitting phase work. In response to this reality we have developed a facility for managing staff and work requests in a way that has proven effective for us and for our clients.

UNCOMPROMISED ON-SITE PRESENCE AND STAFFING

As a byproduct of the large regional and national scope of our work, Union understands that local community, planning board and technical review meetings (among others) are essential to both the design and the entitlement process and that our presence at these events is often critical to the outcome. Both Partners at Union Studio travel frequently for precisely these reasons and as a firm we are committed to being present as needed to meet the needs of the client and the process. In addition to the Partners, there are always at least two people who are intimately involved with any of our projects, ensuring that a capable professional familiar with the project is nearly always available to represent Union and our clients as necessary.

VIDEO CONFERENCING, DOCUMENT REVIEW & THIRD PARTY DOCUMENT SHARING

Knowing that in many cases there is no substitution for sitting around the table and



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working through the details, Union Studio takes full advantage of video conferencing technology to enable us to work face to face with our clients and their consultants as necessary to ensure seamless project coordination. We also recognize that the most current work must always be available to the project team at any time. By utilizing easily accessible centralized document storage, Union Studio often facilitates and manages a central drawing / BIM model repository for use by team members who may be geographically distant from one another. Working on projects throughout the U.S. has required Union Studio to develop systems and techniques for communication that work for us and our clients, while enabling us to bring the full value of our team to projects wherever they may be located.

PROVIDING SMALL SCOPE PROPOSALS

One of the most important tools that Union uses is a *small scope proposal document*. This is used when Union has an overriding contract with a client that establishes our role and overarching responsibilities, but where all aspects of the specific work product are not known up front. This is often the case with large projects / clients who need masterplanning services, permitting assistance, marketing requirements, site design, construction documents and construction oversight without knowing when and how much effort on any one of these will be required. With our small scope proposal, Union is able to quickly respond to specific work requests with a specific fee proposal and schedule attached. This structure gives clients the flexibility to engage Union Studio on an “as needed” basis with a clear understanding of their anticipated costs.

REGULAR PROJECT UPDATES

After work begins on a project phase, Union traditionally provides either weekly or bi-weekly project updates that apprise the client of work recently completed, work ongoing, as well as a “look ahead” for upcoming tasks, deadlines and goals. This has proven to be an exceptionally valuable project management tool, as it reflects a well-managed process while giving the client the opportunity to see what is on the horizon and make adjustments as necessary. We have found that with longer distance relationships, regular updates of this type allow projects to run smoothly and efficiently – giving the client comfort in the process and reminding the whole team about progress and upcoming deadlines and deliverables. This habit has proven to



Union's project locations to date

be one of the most important components of working at a distance and we feel strongly that our continued success throughout the region and the U.S. is due to the effectiveness of our communication skills.