

## The Design/Build Process

This process is reserved for any client needing any level of design work in order to be able to provide them with an estimate on their project. It is this process that sets Darlington Designs apart from the competition. If you have not read over the “[What is Design/Build](#)” or the “[Landscape Design Services](#)” portion of the site, please do so.

We are very forthcoming in providing a clear and detailed overview of this process to all prospective clients before scheduling an appointment. We understand that both the customer’s time and our time is precious, and want to be certain that all parties understand the sequential timeline as well as the expectations of these meetings.

Here are the steps for a typical Design/Build Process. Click here to [print](#) this as a PDF. Please be reminded that at any point along this process we would be more than happy to provide you with some referrals should you like to contact some of our past customers directly:

1. **Customer Inquiry and phone pre-qualification** – Before we set an appointment, we want to be sure that we are a good fit for each other. Our staff will spend some time getting a sense of your project and asking some important questions. We will provide you with a clear understanding of our process and answer any questions you may have. If it seems like a fit, we will schedule an appointment to come to your home. You will be given some homework to complete prior to the appointment!!
2. **Homework** – As with life, nothing comes easy 😊 . Have fun with it and have it ready for your appointment.
  - a. Take digital pictures of projects from 2-3 homes in your area that you love. They do not have to be exactly what you think you are looking for, but may just have parts that you want to point out.
  - b. Make a 5-year wants & needs list for your home. Write it down. Inside and outside of home please.
  - c. Go online, fill out our Landscape Design Questionnaire and submit it at least a week prior to your scheduled appointment. You can print a PDF version also if you want to spend some time looking it over. All decision makers on this project should help in filling it out please.
  - d. Have a copy of your property survey or plot plan ready to hand over for your Designer to take with them. If you absolutely can not find it or do not have one, please notify us prior to the meeting.
3. **In-home consultation with ALL project decision makers (no charge for this service)** – The purpose of this consultation is to educate the client about our company, its values, and our beliefs. We will present you with our extensive portfolio. We ask many questions and listen to your ideas, wants, and needs. In return from this meeting, you can expect some great suggestions and ideas that you may not have heard yet to help further develop your thoughts. Before leaving, your Landscape Designer will discuss options for taking the next step as well as identify some of the design costs and you will be presented with a Design Proposal should you choose to proceed. Not all projects require both a Conceptual Design and Final Design. Needs are specific to your project and can be discussed with you at this time. It is required that all decision makers are present to discuss your project.
4. **Design Deposit 1<sup>st</sup> (\$75-\$200)** – Before proceeding with any design, we require a Design Deposit. The costs are minimal and do not cover the full time to be spent by your Designer in creating a Conceptual Design, but are critical in showing a certain level of commitment. The costs will range greatly depending on the scale of the project. Upon receipt an appointment for presentation of the conceptual design will be set 1-2 weeks out.
5. **Conceptual Design** – This is a meeting in your home that can be scheduled around your availability to meet with all decision makers to present the Conceptual Design. Depending on the complexity and specificities of your project we may provide budgetary costs or exact costs. Either way, before this meeting you will know what to expect. The sole purpose is to further develop the design or approve its success, as well as address costs and budget before proceeding the a Final Design should the client choose to do so. We may address specific product options, determine the final scale of the project, and discuss phasing options as needed. See the “[Landscape Design Services](#)” portion of the site to learn more about a Conceptual Design.

6. **Design Deposit 2<sup>nd</sup> (\$100-\$500)** – Before proceeding with a Final Design, we require the 2<sup>nd</sup> Design Deposit. The costs again are minimal and do not truly begin to cover the full time to be spent by your Designer in creating a Final Design, but are critical in showing a certain level of commitment. The costs will range greatly depending on the scale of the project. Upon receipt an appointment for presentation of the Final Design will be set 1-2 weeks out.
7. **Final Design** – This is a meeting in our office that can be scheduled around your availability to meet with all decision makers to present the Final Design and all associated proposals for work to be done. We can discuss projected construction dates and finalize on which portions of work will be performed at this time. See the “*Landscape Design Services*” portion of the site to learn more about a Final Design.
8. **Contracting and scheduling** – Last but not least is of course construction!! Once a proposal has been accepted by the client, an appointment will be scheduled in our office for you to meet with our Production Coordinator who will walk you step-by-step through the construction process and the contract. All decision makers must be present to sign the contract and to walk through all the details relating to construction that the client needs to know.
9. **Construction** – For this step, you just sit back and watch the magic of our production crews. It is an exciting process that certainly gets all of the neighbors’ attention!! Are crew are efficient and quality driven. You will have direct cell phone numbers to reach your Foreman and Job Supervisor throughout the installation, as well as the constant support of your Production Coordinator who will maintain a constant level of open communication. At the end of the project your Designer will perform a walk through to go over instructions and care of your new installation.