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# SHELDEN ARCHITECTURE

## LET'S TAKE A WALK

BY STAN SHELDEN, PRINCIPAL OF SHELDEN ARCHITECTURE

Sometimes it starts as a simple vision. It could be an idea or a sketch on a napkin. Or sometimes, it begins as a casual conversation. I am the owner of Shelden Architecture and in my experience, starting up a conversation is a great way to brainstorm and gather ideas for a project before anything is ever put on paper. I prefer to do it while taking a walk.

By that, I mean walking down the project path and exploring for a while. What do you see for the future of your banking business? That initial research phase is a fun and exciting time. It's a "shoot-for-the-moon" kind of stage and absolutely nothing is off-limits. We love to take time to walk and dream alongside our clients.

First, we start by asking questions about our client's business plan. A banking facility should be more than a building. It should reflect who the company is, what they stand for, and where they

see their financial institution going into the future. How do they want their bank represented? What are they trying to tell the world about their company?

It's important to uncover these ideas to be on the same path as our client and their ultimate vision. Some banks have a very clear picture of the kind of structure and environment they seek to create. Some want to feel very cutting-edge or super sleek — like an Apple Store, but for banking. Other institutions prefer to create a friendly, hometown or coffee-shop vibe. Still others take the traditional route.

In this raw conception phase, we recommend visiting different facilities and spaces with our clients. Sometimes that means taking a trip to Kansas City, Denver or Chicago. And sometimes that means taking an actual walk down the street. We'll look at the buildings we've created. We'll go to structures designed by other firms. There's something truly invaluable to experiencing



a building firsthand beyond blueprints on a computer screen. A client can uncover what they don't like, what they might need, and what they really love by visiting real-life spaces. These are steps we happily take with our clients. We want to reassure them that we are genuinely in this process together.

The next step is to walk through options and uncover possible hurdles. Every project has some obstacle to overcome, whether it's budget, time or some other limitation. With a new build, zoning and codes can take up time at the start of the project. At Shelden Architecture, we don't see limitations as a negative. We actually view a limitation as an exciting challenge!

From our experience designing and renovating banks over the years, we've learned that financial institutions generally seek a long-term structural solution. Some architectural firms like to go along with trends, but we like to look at the long game as we partner with clients. Can this new facility be flexible? Can it evolve as our client's business plan grows?

As our walk progresses, our clients' relationship as compassionate advocates for their growing business is strengthened. Collaboration is at the heart of what we do here. That enables our team of designers and architects to empathetically lead each project. Part of that means making sure our clients understand every aspect of the process. It is vitally

important to have a transparent relationship. We want our clients to feel welcome to express their thoughts, ideas and concerns throughout the project. There are a lot of decisions being made, so clear communication is essential. After all, this is their building. This is their environment and should reflect their vibe. This is their dream.

Through well-thought-out function, beauty, and meaningful form, each project becomes an incredible reality. A banking environment should be designed in such a way that it elicits a positive and inspired reaction in your customers, employees, and everyone that steps foot into it. When you envision your dream banking project, we would like to do it with you. We love what we do and cannot imagine doing anything else. Let's take a walk together. ✨



*Stan Shelden is the owner and principal of Shelden Architecture. With over 30 years of experience, he and his team have designed dozens of financial institutions. Some of his clients include Equity Bank, Fidelity Bank, Intrust Bank, MB Foundation, Corner Bank (now RCB), Lyons Federal Bank, Kanza Bank, Halstead Bank and many others.*