10 Rules of Successful Land Development Design

No matter the type of land development, there are 10 basic rules to live by for a successful project. 

1. **Master engineering** – Consider sewer, water, transportation, storm sewer, gas, electric, telephone and fiber, earthwork (grading), lot configurations (lot width), trails and amenities at the beginning, not as the project progresses.

2. **Listen to the land and understand it** – There’s much to learn walking the property with the owner. Knowing what you’re facing can have direct cost/benefit effects.

3. **Use space wisely** – Three common examples of wasted space are:
   - **Intersections** – They’re costly and take up valuable space.
   - **Stormwater management** – Rainfall is increasing; Incorporate a stormwater plan from the beginning to reduce overall costs.
   - **Home setbacks** – Vary property lines to create more lots/acre with less street.

4. **Match talent to the task and be clear of roles and responsibilities** – Make sure the developer, contractor, and city officials are in sync, as they all have different priorities.

5. **Save streets for last** – People live in homes. Start there. Then move onto the street design.

6. **Design from the outside in** – Design backyards to the property boundaries and front yards to the street. This reduces earthwork (one of the most costly elements in land development).

7. **Don’t ignore topography** – Topography is essential for learning the geologic and hydrologic characteristics of a property.

8. **Design each element for the greater whole** – Always design with the end-user in mind. Create a destination that people will flock to. Turn obstacles into elements.

9. **Explore creative ideas** – Routines help get projects done quickly, but they’re not always best in every situation. Community amenities may be just the thing to lure the buyers you’re looking for.

10. **Be flexible and know your market and product** – Listen to the market. Housing design trends change and consumer demands ebb and flow. Know what your clients want and bring it to them.

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**Do you have a land development project on the horizon?**

Contact Randy Jenniges to help maximize your project’s ROI 320.333.5951