

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.

Do you have a land development project on the horizon?

Contact Randy Jenniges to help maximize your project's ROI

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