



## **CDAO Study Confirms the High Cost of Low-Quality Design Documents**

*A new study finds errors that cost \$100 in pre-planning can cost up to \$10,000 during construction.*

**NEWS:** March 3, 2022

TORONTO - Schedule delays and cost escalation continue to be a reality during the construction of public and private projects in Canada. To help the industry and project owners reduce schedule delays and cost escalation, a number of associations led by the Construction and Design Alliance of Ontario (CDAO) have released a report entitled *Impacts of Pre-Project Investment & Quality of Documents on Project Delivery Efficiencies*.

This report, the result of three years of study, including a comprehensive literature review, in-person interviews and a nationwide online survey of owners, design consultants, general contractors and subcontractors, highlights the critical relationship between project delivery efficiencies and project owners' investment in upfront pre-planning.

The study finds a direct and positive correlation between the amount of time and investment that owners spent in pre-planning – and the quality of design documents in terms of completeness and suitability of purpose. The study also found that design document quality issues are rooted in inadequate time provided, inadequate fees, and inadequate information about existing conditions.

“This study clearly shows that investment in pre-planning and design activity bears fruit when it comes to project delivery,” said Sharon Portelli CAE, CDAO Chair. “A project owner’s rush to get shovels in the ground must be tempered by better scoping and review. The CDAO looks forward to facilitating further collaboration and dialogue with owners on this issue.”

The report identifies the critical role of the project owner’s commitment to upfront investment during the pre-project planning, scope definition and early design stages on the quality of design documents. Considerable evidence shows improved design document quality would facilitate better collaboration and communication among project stakeholders leading to efficiencies, cost savings and better overall results.

The report and a comprehensive one-page summary are available for download on the [CDAO website](#).



**QUICK FACTS**

- The CDAO is an alliance of 19 associations with mandates related to Ontario’s built environment.
- New research by the CDAO shows that an error that costs \$100 to address during pre-planning could cost \$1,000 to address during the design phase and \$10,000 during construction.
- The survey finds improvement in pre-project planning is needed in the following areas: the existing condition investigation, clarity of the scope of work, and the accuracy of the initial budget.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- [Full Report - Impacts of Pre-Project Investment & Quality of Documents on Project Delivery Efficiencies](#)
- [Fact Sheet](#)
- [Construction Design Alliance of Ontario](#)

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