

**IT'S AMAZING WHAT A SPLASH OF PAINT CAN DO, BUT WHEN YOU LISTEN TO THE CLIENTS AND TURN THEIR NEEDS INTO THE END PRODUCT, THEY'RE PRETTY AMAZED.**



**How do your designers personalize the projects to the nonprofits?**

Our rule of thumb goes back to creating healing and soothing environments. When it's an interim housing shelter, a domestic violence safe house, or a counseling center, we find that more muted palettes of soothing pale greens and neutral colors create an automatic sense of calm and settlement. In contrast, a youth development center might have brighter colors for creating activity or engagement. But we are also very keen to listening to clients, what their needs are, and what they envision the space to look and feel like.

On the flip side, we want our talented designers to look at the donated resources we have in our warehouse and come up with designs. We're still presenting options to the nonprofit, but we're leveraging our resources to ultimately ask the designers to incorporate them into the design for the organization.

**Is there a team of designers that you use?**

Depending on the scope of a project, we try to outfit a team so that we can spread out the workload. If we have a project that needs a garden, we'd bring landscape designers into the fold. If there's a larger firm that wants to have a few of their designers lead the charge, then we might set the team up that way. Residential and commercial designers might work together, and so on. Because

the designers are volunteering their time and expertise amongst their already busy work schedules, we want to make sure we're not overstepping our bounds.

**How long do these projects usually take?**

A quick turnaround can be a couple of months, depending on whether there's any construction going on, whereas a larger-scale project could take two to three years, depending on the predevelopment, from construction to getting city permits to the final implementation.

For every project, we stick with the organization from beginning to end while also awarding new projects. Over the past year and a half, we've doubled our project load, and I think we'll continue to do so. One of our overarching goals is to try to become that go-to resource for the nonprofit community when it comes to pro bono design.

**Do you have any stories about people who have been impacted by Designs for Dignity's work?**

Every project is so different, but one underlying thread is the response of "Wow. I never knew that this space could look like this." There's almost a sense of disbelief. It's amazing what a splash of paint can do—when you listen to the clients and turn their needs into the end product, they're pretty amazed.