

“True” Integrated Project Delivery Relies on Trust-based Collaboration

By Christopher P. Trotta, AIA

Array HFS

Array Healthcare Facilities Solutions has been promoting Integrated Project Delivery (IPD) throughout the country over the past two years as a recommended design and construction project delivery method. We view IPD as a positive evolution of design-bid-build, CM at Risk, and design/build models, capitalizing on their benefits while addressing weaknesses proactively through characteristics of delivering projects to reduce process waste, gain early involvement by all participants, and to share risk and reward.

We have found that when jointly developed project goals are established, collaborative decision-making occurs and liability waivers among key participants are acknowledged, that the opportunity for increased value to our clients can be recognized and innovation and significant savings can result.

In short, IPD is a process mechanism to bring out the best talents and resources from all project team participants and utilize these individuals at the right time to positively impact a project's outcome and better serve and support our building owners. IPD is certainly the latest trend for the construction industry and has been the subject of numerous national articles and conference agendas; however “practicing what you preach” has been a true eye-opener for Array and our partners, providing us incredible insight beyond theory and speculation.

Array's President Carl Davis believes “architects and contractors have been placed in silos by our contracts. The industry develops contract documents, bids projects and implements construction with a risk-shifting mindset. We need to embrace collaboration and expect project outcomes that far exceed the basics of just delivering a project on budget, on time and of high quality.”

Currently, Array is in design of the region's first “true” healthcare IPD project and starting to commence a second

project under this delivery model. “True” being solely defined as engaging the majority of IPD characteristics of this delivery approach, from the project's inception, wrapped up into a single contract between the owner, architect and contractor. Our two projects are very similar in nature and provide us one answer to the most frequently asked question we receive relating to IPD: “what is the right-sized project for IPD?” Our IPD projects are for healthcare clients, work that impacts multiple areas of the facility, and the majority of the scope is renovation in nature. They are respectively \$15 million and \$30 million in construction value.

Array and Donley's Inc (contractor for the initial IPD project) engaged the client from the beginning. Establishing trust at the outset was important and beneficial for support of a new delivery process and approach. Both companies were part of developing a strategic facility master plan and project due diligence. Formulation of a team, accountable from the beginning, was a key success and consistency measure. Both companies developed RFPs to select engineers and subcontractors to join the project and process early in the criteria design phase. Never before has such an actively participating talent pool been established so early, for either Array or Donley's. The team established project goals that



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included scope, schedule and quality milestones, but also went beyond the basics to include sustainability, client operational needs, patient satisfaction, inclusion requirements and other more unique targets.

“Chris [Trotta] and I have served as fellow project executives with our client and have worked hard to jointly support each team member’s success which has ultimately transcended into a unified voice regarding decision-making and keeping our project within the defined scope,” says Don Dreier, executive vice president with Donley’s Inc. “It has been truly unique to witness and participate within this IPD framework.”

Early benefits of the IPD process have included proactive management of scope creep and project contingencies, being nimble to adjust to ever-changing client needs and requirements, a built-in QA/QC process that transcended typical lines of party responsibilities, and creation of an open forum for issue identification, debate and resolution. All team members are part of the solutions and we capitalize on their specific knowledge and industry experience early. Generally in the past, unforeseen conditions, constructability issues, means and methods of construction, infrastructure alternatives, phasing identification and realities of the owner’s operational protocols were not considered in any great detail, early. Acknowledging these items upfront provides enough time to impact design and documentation that will result in a reduction of project costs, tighter bids, and reduction in RFIs (request for information), change orders and process waste.

Ray Corby, senior project manager for Array, consistently reminds the team that “there is no more money! In these tougher economic times we must be greater stewards of our client’s capital and maximize the scope within their finite budgets. Our team’s value is doing more with less.”

As a unified team of architects, engineers, contractor and subcontractors (mechanical, electrical, general trades)

we have designed and priced all work together and this has resulted in more comprehensive and reliable estimates. Other team initiatives have included identification of value alternatives in real-time, tandem field investigation of plenum, infrastructure, and site conditions, development of mock-up requirements and multiple design solutions to provide realistic options, and jointly determined project schedule in a round table forum with the client in the room as a side-by-side partner and facility user.

Patrick Canada, project manager with Donley’s, views IPD this way: “Estimates and re-estimates – a non-stop process of just-in-time pricing. The initial design phase is rigorous, however, the rewards of our upfront efforts will surface later with everyone focused on building the project rather than challenging the contract documents.”

Integrated Project Delivery may not be right for every organization or project. However, the collaborative and accountable premises that underscore the process certainly can apply unilaterally. A participating organization needs to assess whether they can provide decision-makers at the table with an intuitive mindset for best practices. All parties need to be comfortable with an open-book process identifying fees, profits and pricing, and have a real understanding of sharing risk and reward and the positive outcomes that result from having “skin-in-the-game.” The goal of IPD is to be accountable for meeting all project expectations and the owner’s business strategies, while creating the best project possible incorporating design excellence, the highest quality of construction implementation, operational return on investment, and creating benefits for our clients for years to come. **P**

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