Construction Documents

Documents generated by designers intended for use by contractors are called Construction Documents. This can include drawings as well as written specifications outlining proposed products, materials, and quality standards. The important thing to remember is the interconnected nature of all the documents. A single drawing cannot contain everything needed to build a project so each different item often references another document for additional information. It is a collection of information with nothing able to stand alone.

Generally speaking, architectural drawings representing construction documents, would include:

**Plans**
Depicts a horizontal view of the building cutting through the walls. Includes:
- Floor plans
- Enlarged plans
- Roof plans
- Finish plans
- Typically 1/8" = 1'-0" in scale

**Reflected Ceiling Plans**
Depicts a ceiling view looking straight up. Includes:
- Materials
- Lights
- Soffits or bulkheads
- HVAC items
- Sprinkler heads
- Typically 1/8" = 1'-0" in scale

**Exterior Elevations**
Depicts the exterior of the building in two dimensions. Includes:
- Building height
- Materials
- Exterior features
- ALL exterior surfaces of the building should be shown
- Typically 1/8" = 1'-0" in scale
Interior Elevations
Depicts the interior of the building in two dimensions. Includes:
- Ceiling heights
- Materials
- Cabinetry
- Doors
- Windows
- Interior features
- Typically ¼” = 1'-0" in scale

Building Sections
Depicts a two-dimensional cut-thru of the building. Includes:
- Floor-to-floor heights
- General construction of the building
- References to more detailed wall sections
- Can vary in drawing scale

Wall Sections
Depicts a two-dimensional piece of a wall. Includes:
- Floor-to-floor heights
- General construction of the roof and floors
- Window and door heights
- Stair sections
- Elevator sections
- Cabinetry sections
- Exterior or interior features relevant to that specific part of the building
- References to more descriptive construction details
- Can be a variety of drawing scales depending on the height of the building
Details
Depicts a two-dimensional piece of the building in the highest detail provided. Details can be horizontal or vertical in nature (detailed view of a floor plan or wall section). Includes:

- Key dimensions
- Materials
- Relationship of materials to each other (specifically relating to the exterior)
- Key features specific to that part of the building
- Description of material assemblies
- Any other items needed to convey the design intent to trade contractor building the project
- Can be a variety of drawing scales but typically 1-1/2" = 1'-0" or 3" = 1'-0"

Other
Additional items typically included within a set of construction documents include:

- Life-safety code applications
- Fire-rated wall and floor assemblies
- Exiting requirements for the building
- Door and window dimension with construction detailing
- Door hardware requirements
- Tables/spreadsheets showing all interior finishes for floors, walls, and ceilings
- Again, all other information deemed necessary to construct the building.
- If required information is missing, you can be assured the contractors will ask for it at some point during construction!