Module 5 - Terms and Abbreviations

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The *Terms and Abbreviations Module* establishes guidelines for consistent terminology used in the construction industry. Consistent terms ensure clear and concise communication among the architect, owner, contractor, and consultants. The purpose of this Module is to provide a standard for construction document terms and abbreviations.

The *Terms and Abbreviations Module* provides the following:

- A consistent standard of communication in construction documents.
- A searchable list of common terms and abbreviations used in the construction industry.
- Consistent spelling of terms and abbreviations.
- Notes on common use and non-preferred terminology.

5.1.1 Uses

The Module provides a standard for the use of terms and abbreviations. A standard gives the professional office an efficient way to quickly determine the proper term and its abbreviation. It also helps intern architects and designers become familiar with the industry standards.

5.1.2 Objectives

The objective of the Module is to provide a standardized resource for construction terms and their abbreviations. It is not the objective of the Module to encourage the use of abbreviations. *The Project Resource Manual - CSI Manual of Practice* states that, whenever possible, terms should be spelled out and abbreviations should be used only to reduce time and space or where appropriate to improve clarity. The increased use of computer-aided drafting (CAD) has reduced the time required for writing text and notes on drawings, and the need for abbreviations. The use of obscure or undefined abbreviations results in a flawed project. When the meaning of an abbreviation is in doubt, spell it out!

5.1.3 Methodology

The terms included in this Module were selected using the following criteria:

- The term has six or more letters. Terms with five letters or fewer should not be abbreviated. However, certain commonly used terms (such as "build" and "center") have been included.
- Trade association acronyms, such as UL, ASTM, and NFPA, have been included if the organization publishes standards likely to be referenced on drawings.
- Common English language terms have not been included. Some examples are "afternoon" (PM) and "Central Standard Time" (CST).
- Abbreviations representing professional licenses, certifications, or memberships associated with a person's name are not included. It is assumed that the professional, whose name is on the documents, will define and control the proper format of his name. American Institute of Architects (AIA), Professional Engineer (PE), and Certified Construction Specifier (CCS) are examples.
- Terms in conflict with industry-accepted terminology do not have abbreviations. The proper term is shown in

the "Notes" column and its abbreviation is in the Module.

- Symbols that contain letters are not abbreviations.

5.1.4 Guidelines

- Do not abbreviate words of five letters or fewer, except in schedules. A schedule column heading may need an abbreviation to reduce the size of the column and the overall size of the schedule.

- Avoid the use of abbreviations with more than one meaning. Generally the shared abbreviations in *Abbreviations, UDS section 5.3* are from different disciplines. Therefore, the context or the location within the drawing set should make the intended term obvious. However, if it does not, spell out the term.

- Show the source or a list of abbreviations on the General sheets. Two ways to accomplish this are:
  - Reference the *Terms and Abbreviations* Module.

  - Include a selected list derived from the Terms and Abbreviations Module. The organization and location of the General sheets are included in *UDS Appendix B - Sheet Identification Examples, UDS section 1.7*

- If any doubt or confusion exists about the meaning of the abbreviation, do not use the abbreviation. Clarity is paramount and must not be sacrificed.

5.1.5 Organization of Terms and Abbreviations

Terms and abbreviations are presented in two easily accessible formats. The first format is in alphabetical order by term and the second in order by abbreviation. Terms, and their abbreviations, are listed with any other term that shares the same abbreviation. Terms that should be avoided are also included with a listing of the preferred term in the "Notes" column. These terms do not have an abbreviation because they should not be used.