



Hunt Hale Jones' Alabama Street Lofts in San Francisco consist of three separate loft apartment buildings in a mixed-use neighborhood.

HUNT HALE JONES ARCHITECTS

Residential firm breeds quality and suitability for worldwide clientele

BY CHRISTOPHER CUSSAT

AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

AREA OF SPECIALTY:
RESIDENTIAL
PROJECTS

EMPLOYEES:
22

AVERAGE ANNUAL
SALES:
\$6 MILLION

FOR MORE THAN 16 YEARS, HUNT HALE Jones Architects (HHJ) has been providing inspired architectural designs for clients throughout California and beyond including states like Hawaii, Nevada, Illinois, and Louisiana. HHJ also has done work in countries like China, India, Japan, and Russia. Although the San Francisco-based firm's initial focus was on single-family communities, HHJ's expertise has greatly expanded in recent years to include larger-scale, multifamily projects.

After Dick Hunt and Dan Hale left Dahlin Group in San Ramon to pursue their own work, they allied themselves with Ron Jones in order to fully complement and enhance their overall technical

capabilities. Since the merge, the three founding principals of HHJ have enjoyed a long and successful history consistently working with developers and builders on a repeat basis.

Over the years, HHJ has assembled varied expertise to handle a uniquely wide range of projects—this also mirrors the diversity of product types being produced by its clients. As a result, the firm continues to provide its architectural services for developers of many scales and specialties. In fact, the base of HHJ's work encompasses all types of residential projects—including luxury homes, neighborhood development, land planning, and high-density multifamily housing. “We also work on projects

that relate to residential communities, including clubhouses and recreational facilities,” Hunt says.

HHJ takes pride in its competitive advantage in relation to its carefully calculated expansion, directed customer service, and client relationships. “Rather than growing for the sake of growth, we have maintained a scale that allows clients to work directly with our founding principals or one of our associate principals,” Hunt says. “We also put an extreme emphasis on understanding what makes a project successful from our clients' perspectives, and on recognizing what we can do to add value to their projects.” Because of this, HHJ continues to maintain an outstanding reputation for gaining project entitlements in the complex and often hostile approval environment of California.

HHJ has also established its international reach and currently has what Hunt refers to as an “outpost” office in Shanghai, China, as well as having invested in and partnered with a firm in Aurangabad, India. He feels that expansion in



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Dick Hunt, Founding Principal

the international market is central to HHJ’s future.

In addition, HHJ plans to do everything it can to continue providing strength to its colleagues and clients as they weather a very difficult period. Hunt explains, “We are making introductions as never before—investors to developers; consultants to clients; land owners to builders—all in hopes that they can utilize new relationships to find short-term successes.”

Also on the horizon, Hunt envisions a successful future that is connected to city development and multifamily housing. “We will see sustained growth by

working on projects of a caliber worthy of our first-rate design efforts, particularly within the urban core,” he says. “It has also been heartening to see some of our larger, single-family home developers recognize that their future is likely to be in high-density products.”

In preparation for HHJ’s next phase, the firm has been developing a strategic plan for the last year and a half. Hunt explains, “We have placed a premium on developing a superior group of architects and designers who are capable of creating inspiring and appropriate designs.” The core of this plan will mold and prepare the next generations of architects not only to continue HHJ’s

good work, but also to forward the thinking of architectural design by establishing proactive connections between designers and production teams.

To achieve this, HHJ hopes to erase the hard division between design and production that has traditionally existed within architecture firms. “I think many architects feel frustrated that their design is never going to be better than the day they hand it off to the production team,” Hunt says, “It seems that too often good production only equates with simply trying not to devalue the design too much.” In an ideal world, he adds, the production team would always expand upon the design, enhance it, and develop it even further.

HHJ plans to accomplish its goals by utilizing its younger staff within the design process not just to draft, but also to brainstorm with the project team. “What we are looking to do is create a way for the project to keep getting better right on through the entire process,” Hunt says.

Through its commitment to service and quality, its new strategic plan, and an aggressive marketing campaign, HHJ is strengthening its business model and ensuring continual success by inspiring, designing, and creating high-quality and lasting architecture. *ABQ*

Bottom: Hunt Hale Jones has been involved in several projects throughout China, including Da Shi Ba hillside village in Chongqi, China. The keys to this project are the landscaped terraces designed to break up the masses and obscure the views of the surrounding homes.

