



## **Capital Design Associates Group, LLC**

doing business as

### **CDA Group**

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March 21, 2019

#### **FORM ADV PART 2A BROCHURE**

This Brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Capital Design Associates Group, LLC. If you have any questions about the contents of this Brochure, please contact us at 864.235.1428. The information in this Brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any state securities authority. Additional information about Capital Design Associates Group, LLC is also available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). The searchable IARD/CRD number for Capital Design Associates Group, LLC is 151838.

Capital Design Associates Group, LLC is a registered investment adviser. Registration with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or any state securities authority does not imply a certain level of skill or training.

## **Item 2 Summary of Material Changes**

Form ADV Part 2 requires registered investment advisers to amend their brochure when information becomes materially inaccurate. If there are any material changes to an adviser's disclosure brochure, the adviser is required to notify you and provide you with a description of the material changes.

Since our last annual updating amendment dated March 24, 2018 there are no material changes to report.

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## Item 4 Advisory Business

### Description of Services and Fees

Capital Design Associates Group, LLC, doing business as CDA Group, is a registered investment adviser based in Greenville, South Carolina. We are organized as a corporation under the laws of the State of South Carolina. We have been providing investment advisory services since 2009. Joseph D. Schofield, III and Jeffrey K. Giguere, Jr. are the owners of our firm. Currently, we offer the following investment advisory services, which are personalized to each individual client:

- Financial Planning Services
- Portfolio Management Services
- Selection of Other Advisers
- Other Services

The following paragraphs describe our services and fees. Please refer to the description of each investment advisory service listed below for information on how we tailor our advisory services to your individual needs. As used in this Brochure, the words "we", "our" and "us" refer to Capital Design Associates Group, LLC and the words "you", "your" and "client" refer to you as either a client or prospective client of our firm. Also, you may see the term Associated Person throughout this Brochure. As used in this Brochure, our Associated Persons are our firm's officers, employees, and all individuals providing investment advice on behalf of our firm.

### Financial Planning Services

We offer broad-based, modular, and consultative financial planning services. Financial planning will typically involve providing a variety of advisory services to clients regarding the management of their financial resources based upon an analysis of their individual needs. If you retain our firm for financial planning services, we will meet with you to gather information about your financial circumstances and objectives. Once we review and analyze the information you provide to our firm, we may deliver a written plan to you, designed to help you achieve your stated financial goals and objectives.

Financial plans are based on your financial situation at the time we present the plan to you, and on the financial information you provide to our firm. You must promptly notify our firm if your financial situation, goals, objectives, or needs change.

We may meet with your other professional advisors (financial, legal, real estate, tax, etc.) at your expense for a series of information gathering and/or implementation meetings. We may act as project manager to coordinate the work of the appropriate parties in a manner consistent with your long-term desired outcome. As your financial situation, goals, objectives, or needs change, you are encouraged to notify us promptly.

We offer broad-based planning at a fixed fee ranging from \$4,000 to \$10,000 and modular-based planning at a fixed fee ranging from \$250 to \$1,000. Financial planning fees of \$10,000 or less are due in advance.

In special circumstances where you require financial planning beyond our typical scope of services, the negotiated fixed fee may exceed our \$10,000 fixed fee price-ceiling. In these instances, we require advance payment in three installments. All fees, payment obligations, and terms will be reflected in the advisory agreement executed by you and our firm.

Our financial planning fees are negotiable depending on the scope and complexity of the plan, your financial situation, and your objectives. In all cases, an estimate of the total time/cost will be determined at the start of the advisory relationship.

All payments made in advance will be for services to be performed within six months of receipt of payment. Under no circumstances will we require prepayment of a fee in excess of \$1,200 for services that are not performed within 6 months. You are responsible for providing requisite financial information, participating in financial planning meetings/conference calls with our Associated Person assigned to your account, and any other follow-up items that may be necessary to facilitate the financial planning process.

You may act on our recommendations by placing securities transactions with any brokerage firm you choose. You are under no obligation to act on our financial planning recommendations. Moreover, if you elect to act on any of our recommendations, you are under no obligation to implement the financial plan through us.

Either party may terminate the financial planning agreement within five days of the date of acceptance without any penalty. After the five-day period, upon written notice to the other, either party may terminate the financial planning agreement. Upon termination of financial planning services, any prepaid but unearned fees will be refunded, and any earned but unpaid fees will be due and payable.

### **Portfolio Management Services**

We offer non-discretionary portfolio management services. Our investment advice is tailored to meet our clients' needs and investment objectives. If you retain our firm for portfolio management services, we will meet with you to determine your investment objectives, risk tolerance, and other relevant information (the "suitability information") at the beginning of our advisory relationship. We will use the suitability information we gather to develop a strategy that enables our firm to give you continuous and focused investment advice and/or to make investments on your behalf. As part of our portfolio management services, we may customize an investment portfolio for you in accordance with your risk tolerance and investing objectives.

Once we construct an investment portfolio for you, we will monitor your portfolio's performance on an ongoing basis and will only execute transactions in your account after obtaining your prior approval. Moreover, the acting custodian will automatically rebalance your portfolio based on the custom allocation assigned to your account that was agreed upon in the executed wealth management proposal and investment policy statement.

Our fee for portfolio management services is based on a percentage of your assets we manage and is set forth in the following fee schedule:

| <b>Assets Under Management</b> | <b>Maximum Annual Advisory Rate*</b> |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| First \$500,000                | 1.25%                                |
| Next \$500,000                 | 1.00%                                |
| Next \$500,000                 | 0.85%                                |
| Over \$1,500,000               | Negotiable                           |

\*Generally, we require a minimum account size of \$500,000. However, in our sole discretion, we may waive or reduce this minimum.

Our annual portfolio management fee is payable either quarterly in advance or quarterly in arrears based on the value of your account on the last day of the previous quarter or based on the value of your account on the last day of the quarter, respectively. The advisory agreement that you enter into with us will reflect the terms of your payment obligations.

If the portfolio management agreement is executed at any time other than the first day of a calendar quarter, our fees will apply on a pro rata basis, which means that the advisory fee is payable in proportion to the number of days in the quarter for which you are a client. Our advisory fee is negotiable, depending on individual client circumstances.

At our discretion, we may combine the account values of family members living in the same household or your retirement plans to determine the applicable advisory fee. For example, we may combine account values for you and your minor children, joint accounts with your spouse, and other types of related accounts. Combining account values may increase the asset total, which may result in your paying a reduced advisory fee based on the available breakpoints in our fee schedule stated above.

We will deduct our fee directly from your account through the qualified custodian holding your funds and securities. We will deduct our advisory fee only when you have given our firm written authorization permitting the fees to be paid directly from your account. Further, the qualified custodian will deliver an account statement to you at least quarterly. These account statements will show all disbursements from your account. You should review all statements for accuracy.

The fees charged are calculated as described above, and are not charged on the basis of a share of capital gains upon, or capital appreciation of, the funds, or any portion of the funds of an advisory client.

You may terminate the portfolio management agreement upon 30-days' written notice to our firm. You will incur a pro rata charge for services rendered prior to the termination of the portfolio management agreement, which means you will incur advisory fees only in proportion to the number of days in the quarter for which you are a client.

We encourage you to review the statement(s) you receive from the qualified custodian. If you find any inconsistent information with the statement(s) you receive from the qualified custodian, please call our main office number located on the cover page of this Brochure.

### **Selection of Third Party Advisers & Sub Advisers**

We may recommend that you utilize the services of a third party investment adviser ("TPA") to manage a portion of, or your entire portfolio. All TPAs that we recommend must either be registered as investment advisers with the Securities and Exchange Commission or with the appropriate state authority(ies).

After gathering information about your financial situation and objectives, an Associated Person of our firm will make recommendations regarding the suitability of a TPA or investment style based on, but not limited to, your financial needs, investment goals, tolerance for risk, and investment objectives. Upon selection of a TPA(s), we will monitor the performance of the TPA(s) to ensure their performance and investment style remains aligned with your investment goals and objectives.

We may share in the fee paid by you to the TPA. If you are referred to a TPAs you will receive full disclosure, including services rendered and fee schedules, at the time of the referral by delivery of a copy of the relevant TPA's Form ADV Part 2 or equivalent disclosure document. In addition, if the investment program recommended to you is a wrap fee program, you will also receive the Appendix 1 or equivalent wrap fee Brochure provided by the sponsor of the program. Certain TPA(s) may require a minimum account size, minimum fees, or other portfolio conditions as outlined in their disclosure statements. Our firm or the TPA will provide you all appropriate disclosure statements, including disclosure of solicitation fees paid to our firm and our Associated Persons.

The fees paid by you to the TPA are established and payable in accordance with the Form ADV Part 2 or other equivalent disclosure document provided by each TPA to whom you are referred and these fees may or may not be negotiable. Our compensation may differ depending upon our individual agreement with each TPA. As such, our firm or our Associated Persons may have an incentive to recommend one TPA over another TPA with whom we have less favorable compensation arrangements or other advisory programs offered by TPAs with which we have no compensation arrangements. You may be required to sign an agreement directly with the TPA(s) selected. You, our firm, or the TPA, in accordance with the provisions of those agreements, may terminate the advisory relationship. If the TPA is compensated in advance, you will typically receive a pro rata refund of any prepaid advisory fees upon termination of an advisory agreement.

### **Miscellaneous Services**

As part of our services, we offer advisory clients access to our eMoney and/or LBS aggregation platforms. These services enable users to access secure online vaults capable of storing a myriad of documents, including financial statements and legal documents, and also enable users to view up-to-date account balances for linked accounts. We offer the eMoney service for a fixed fee range from \$49 to \$149 annually depending on your financial circumstances. In certain circumstances and in our sole discretion, we may offer this service on a complimentary basis if your account has at least \$2 million in assets under management. Regardless of accounts size, we offer the LBS aggregation platforms at no charge to all our clients.

We also provide advisory clients' access to Compass Group where business owners have the ability to maintain corporate records. We typically offer these services for \$1,250 per year.

Additionally, we may, in our sole discretion, include retirement plan monitoring and recommendation services as part of the advisory services for which you have engaged our firm.

### **Types of Investments**

We may advise you on any type of investment that we deem appropriate based on your stated goals and objectives. We may also provide advice on any type of investment held in your portfolio at the inception of our advisory relationship.

### **Assets Under Management**

As of December 31, 2018, we manage approximately \$398,778,793 in client assets on a non-discretionary basis. Our firm does not currently have any client assets managed on a discretionary basis.

## **Item 5 Fees and Compensation**

### **Additional Fees and Expenses**

As part of our investment advisory services to you, we may invest, or recommend that you invest, in mutual funds and exchange traded funds. The fees that you pay to our firm for investment advisory services are separate and distinct from the fees and expenses charged by mutual funds or exchange traded funds (described in each fund's prospectus) to their shareholders. These fees will generally include a management fee and other fund expenses. You will also incur transaction charges and/or brokerage fees when purchasing or selling securities. These charges and fees are typically imposed by the broker-dealer or custodian through whom your account transactions are executed. We do not share in any portion of the brokerage fees/transaction charges imposed by the broker-dealer or custodian. To fully understand the total cost you will incur, you should review all the fees charged by mutual funds, exchange traded funds, our firm, and others. For information on our brokerage practices, please refer to the "Brokerage Practices" section of this Brochure.



Persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm are licensed as independent insurance agents. These persons will earn commission-based compensation for selling insurance products, including insurance products they sell to you. Insurance commissions earned by these persons are separate and in addition to our advisory fees. This practice may present a conflict of interest because persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm who are insurance agents may have an incentive to recommend insurance products to you for the purpose of generating commissions based on your needs. However, you are under no obligation, contractually or otherwise, to purchase insurance products through any person affiliated with our firm.

## **Item 6 Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management**

We do not accept performance-based fees or participate in side-by-side management. Performance-based fees are fees that are based on a share of capital gains or capital appreciation of a client's account. Side-by-side management refers to the practice of managing accounts that are charged performance-based fees while at the same time managing accounts that are not charged performance-based fees. Our fees are calculated as described in the *Advisory Business* section above, and are not charged on the basis of a share of capital gains upon, or capital appreciation of, the funds in your advisory account.

## **Item 7 Types of Clients**

We offer investment advisory services to individuals, pension and profit sharing plans, trusts, estates, charitable organizations, corporations, and other business entities.

In general, we require a minimum of \$500,000 to open and maintain an advisory account. At our discretion, we may waive this minimum account size. For example, we may waive the minimum if you appear to have significant potential for increasing your assets under our management. We may also combine account values for you and your minor children, joint accounts with your spouse, and other types of related accounts to meet the stated minimum.

## **Item 8 Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss**

### **Our Methods of Analysis and Investment Strategies**

We may use one or more of the following methods of analysis or investment strategies when providing investment advice to you:

- Long Term Purchases - securities purchased with the expectation that the value of those securities will grow over a relatively long period of time, generally greater than one year.
- Modern Portfolio Theory which is a theory of investing which attempts to maximize portfolio expected return for a given amount of portfolio risk, or equivalently minimize risk for a given level of expected return, by carefully choosing the proportions of various assets. MPT is a mathematical formulation of the concept of diversification in investing, with the aim of selecting a collection of investment assets that has collectively lower risk than any individual asset. The risk, return, and correlation measures used by MPT are mathematical statements about the future. In practice investors must substitute predictions based on historical measurements of asset return and volatility for these values in the equations. Very often such expected values fail to take account of new circumstances which did not exist when the historical data were generated.



Our investment strategies and advice may vary depending upon each client's specific financial situation. As such, we determine investments and allocations based upon your predefined objectives, risk tolerance, time horizon, financial horizon, financial information, liquidity needs, and other various suitability factors. Your restrictions and guidelines may affect the composition of your portfolio.

Our strategies and investments may have unique and significant tax implications. While we consider tax efficiency, among other factors, in the management of your assets, we recommend that you continuously consult with a tax professional prior to and throughout the investing of your assets.

Moreover, as a result of revised IRS regulations, custodians and broker-dealers will begin reporting the cost basis of equities acquired in client accounts on or after January 1, 2011. Your custodian will default to the FIFO (First-In First-Out) accounting method for calculating the cost basis of your investments. You are responsible for contacting your tax advisor to determine if this accounting method is the right choice for you. If your tax advisor believes another accounting method is more advantageous, please provide written notice to our firm immediately and we will alert your account custodian of your individually selected accounting method. Please note that decisions about cost basis accounting methods will need to be made before trades settle, as the cost basis method cannot be changed after settlement.

### **Risk of Loss**

Investing in securities involves risk of loss that you should be prepared to bear. We do not represent or guarantee that our services or methods of analysis can or will predict future results, successfully identify market tops or bottoms, or insulate clients from losses due to market corrections or declines. We cannot offer any guarantees or promises that your financial goals and objectives will be met. Past performance is in no way an indication of future performance.

### **Recommendation of Particular Types of Securities**

As disclosed under the "Advisory Business" section in this Brochure, we may recommend any type of investments as appropriate for you since each client has different needs and different tolerance for risk. Each type of security has its own unique set of risks associated with it and it would not be possible to list here all of the specific risks of every type of investment. Even within the same type of investment, risks can vary widely. However, in very general terms, the higher the anticipated return of an investment, the higher the risk of loss associated with it.

## **Item 9 Disciplinary Information**

Capital Design Associates Group, LLC has been registered and providing investment advisory services since 2009. Neither our firm nor any of our Associated Persons has any reportable disciplinary information.

## **Item 10 Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations**

In addition to being registered as an investment adviser, Capital Design Associates Group, LLC is also licensed as an insurance agency with the State of South Carolina. Therefore, persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm are licensed as insurance agents. These persons will earn commission-based compensation for selling insurance products, including insurance products they sell to you. Insurance commissions earned by these persons are separate from our advisory fees. Please see the "Fees and Compensation" section in this Brochure for more information on the compensation received by insurance agents who are affiliated with our firm.

Our firm also provides accounting and tax preparation services, and we may recommend these services to our advisory clients when appropriate. Accounting and tax preparation services are separate and distinct from our firm's advisory services, and are provided for separate and typical compensation. Clients are under no obligation to use our firm for accounting and/or tax preparation services.

### **Recommendation of Other Advisers**

We may recommend that you use a third party adviser ("TPA") based on your needs and suitability. We will receive compensation from the TPA for recommending that you use their services. These compensation arrangements present a conflict of interest because we have a financial incentive to recommend the services of the third party adviser. You are not obligated, contractually or otherwise, to use the services of any TPA we recommend.

## **Item 11 Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading**

### **Description of Our Code of Ethics**

We strive to comply with applicable laws and regulations governing our practices. Therefore, our Code of Ethics includes guidelines for professional standards of conduct for our Associated Persons. Our goal is to protect your interests at all times and to demonstrate our commitment to our fiduciary duties of honesty, good faith, and fair dealing with you. All of our Associated Persons are expected to adhere strictly to these guidelines. Persons associated with our firm are also required to report any violations of our Code of Ethics. Additionally, we maintain and enforce written policies reasonably designed to prevent the misuse or dissemination of material, non-public information about you or your account holdings by persons associated with our firm.

Clients or prospective clients may obtain a copy of our Code of Ethics by contacting us at the telephone number on the cover page of this Brochure.

### **Participation or Interest in Client Transactions**

Neither our firm nor any of our Associated Persons has any material financial interest in client transactions beyond the provision of investment advisory services as disclosed in this Brochure.

### **Personal Trading Practices**

Our firm or persons associated with our firm may buy or sell the same securities that we recommend to you or securities in which you are already invested. A conflict of interest exists in such cases because we have the ability to trade ahead of you and potentially receive more favorable prices than you will receive. In efforts to mitigate this conflict of interest, it is our policy that neither our Associated Persons nor we shall have priority over your account in the purchase or sale of securities.

## **Item 12 Brokerage Practices**

### **Brokerage Recommendations**

We typically recommend the brokerage and custodial services of SEI Private Trust Company (whether one or more, the "Custodian"), a wholly-owned subsidiary of SEI Investments Corporation. In certain instances, we may recommend another qualified, independent broker-dealer / custodian if appropriate for the client's individual circumstances. In all cases, the recommended Custodian is a securities broker-dealer and a member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority ("FINRA") and, generally, the Securities Investor Protection Corporation ("SIPC"). We believe that the recommended Custodian provides quality execution services for you at competitive prices. Price is not the sole factor we consider in evaluating best execution. We also consider the quality of the brokerage services provided

by the Custodian, including the value of the Custodian's reputation, execution capabilities, commission rates, and responsiveness to our clients and our firm. In recognition of the value of the services the Custodian provides, you may pay higher commissions and/or trading costs than those that may be available elsewhere.

### **Brokerage for Client Referrals**

We do not receive client referrals from broker-dealers in exchange for cash or other compensation, such as brokerage services or research.

### **Directed Brokerage**

We routinely recommend that you direct our firm to execute transactions through Fidelity. As such, we may be unable to achieve the most favorable execution of your transactions and you may pay higher brokerage commissions than you might otherwise pay through another broker-dealer that offers the same types of services. Not all advisers require their clients to direct brokerage.

### **Block Trades**

We do not combine multiple orders for shares of the same securities purchased for advisory accounts we manage (the practice of combining multiple orders for shares of the same securities is commonly referred to as "block trading"). Accordingly, you may pay different prices for the same securities transactions than other clients pay. Furthermore, we may not be able to buy and sell the same quantities of securities for you and you may pay higher commissions, fees, and/or transaction costs than other clients.

### **Soft Dollars**

Our firm does not maintain any soft dollar relationships with any broker-dealer.

## **Item 13 Review of Accounts**

If you utilize our portfolio management services, you may contact us at anytime to schedule a quarterly review of your account. Reviews are conducted for the purpose of evaluating, reporting, and implementing your investment objectives. Your account may be reviewed more often depending on market conditions. We may reallocate your portfolio with your consent to keep the allocation consistent with your investment objectives. Accounts are reviewed by Joseph D. Schofield, III, CCO/CEO/Partner/Investment Adviser Representative, and/or Jeffrey K. Giguere, Jr., COO/Partner/Investment Adviser Representative. You will also receive reports from the custodian holding your funds and securities on at least a quarterly basis.

If you are a financial planning client you may receive written financial plans, which are designed to achieve your stated financial goals and objectives.

## **Item 14 Client Referrals and Other Compensation**

We do not receive any compensation from any third party in connection with providing investment advice to you nor do we compensate any individual or firm for client referrals.

Please refer to the *Brokerage Practices* section above for disclosures on research and other benefits we may receive resulting from our relationship with Fidelity.

As disclosed under the "Fees and Compensation" section in this Brochure, persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm are licensed insurance agents. For information on the conflicts of interest this presents, and how we address these conflicts, please refer to the "Fees and Compensation" section.

## **Item 15 Custody**

As paying agent for our firm, your independent custodian will directly debit your account(s) for the payment of our advisory fees. This ability to deduct our advisory fees from your accounts causes our firm to exercise limited custody over your funds or securities. We do not have physical custody of any of your funds and/or securities. Your funds and securities will be held with a bank, broker-dealer, or other independent, qualified custodian. You will receive account statements from the independent, qualified custodian(s) holding your funds and securities at least quarterly. The account statements from your custodian(s) will indicate the amount of our advisory fees deducted from your account(s) each billing period. You should carefully review account statements for accuracy. If you have a question regarding your account statement or if you did not receive a statement from your custodian, please contact us directly at the telephone number on the cover page of this Brochure.

## **Item 16 Investment Discretion**

If you enter into non-discretionary arrangements with our firm, we will obtain your approval prior to the execution of any transactions for your account(s). You have an unrestricted right to decline to implement any advice provided by our firm on a non-discretionary basis.

## **Item 17 Voting Client Securities**

### **Proxy Voting**

We will not vote proxies on behalf of your advisory accounts. At your request, we may offer you advice regarding corporate actions and the exercise of your proxy voting rights. If you own shares of common stock or mutual funds, you are responsible for exercising your right to vote as a shareholder.

In most cases, you will receive proxy materials directly from the account custodian. However, in the event we were to receive any written or electronic proxy materials, we would forward them directly to you by mail, unless you have authorized our firm to contact you by electronic mail, in which case, we would forward any electronic solicitation to vote proxies.

## **Item 18 Financial Information**

We are not required to provide financial information to our clients because we do not: require the prepayment of more than \$1,200 in fees and six or more months in advance; take custody of client funds or securities; or, have a financial condition that is reasonably likely to impair our ability to meet our commitments to you.

## **Item 19 Requirements for State Registered Advisers**

We are a federally registered investment adviser; therefore, we are not required to respond to this item.

## **Item 20 Additional Information**

### **Your Privacy**

We view protecting your private information as a top priority. Pursuant to applicable privacy requirements, we have instituted policies and procedures to ensure that we keep your personal information private and secure.

We do not disclose any non-public personal information about you to any non-affiliated third parties, except as permitted by law. In the course of servicing your account, we may share some information with our service providers, such as transfer agents, custodians, broker-dealers, accountants, consultants, and attorneys.

We restrict internal access to non-public personal information about you to employees, who need that information in order to provide products or services to you. We maintain physical and procedural safeguards that comply with regulatory standards to guard your non-public personal information and to ensure our integrity and confidentiality. We will not sell information about you or your accounts to anyone. We do not share your information unless it is required to process a transaction, at your request, or required by law.

You will receive a copy of our privacy notice prior to or at the time you sign an advisory agreement with our firm. Thereafter, we will deliver a copy of the current privacy policy notice to you on an annual basis. Please contact our main office at the telephone number on the cover page of this Brochure if you have any questions regarding this policy.

### **Trade Errors**

In the event a trading error occurs in your account, our policy is to restore your account to the position it should have been in had the trading error not occurred. Depending on the circumstances, corrective actions may include canceling the trade, adjusting an allocation, and/or reimbursing the account.

### **Class Action Lawsuits**

We do not determine if securities held by you are the subject of a class action lawsuit or whether you are eligible to participate in class action settlements or litigation nor do we initiate or participate in litigation to recover damages on your behalf for injuries as a result of actions, misconduct, or negligence by issuers of securities held by you.