



YOUR DREAM HOME PLANNING GUIDE

FIRST THINGS FIRST

CONGRATULATIONS ON EMBARKING ON ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING AND REWARDING JOURNEYS. CREATING YOUR DREAM HOME!

Planning, designing, and renovating or building a new custom home can be both an exciting and a daunting process. Many of our clients find difficulty in navigating the whole process, and are left feeling overwhelmed trying to organize all the conflicting information that they find on the internet and elsewhere. They feel like they are going around in circles and don't know how to move forward.

Sound familiar?

We have created this planning guide to simplify the process and provide information to confidently start the journey of designing your new dream home. You will find in this guide, an overview to help you gather the right information to get started and move you forward. You will get answers to key questions and the importance of following a systematic architectural process to achieve your goal of building and enjoying your dream home.



01. SUMMARY SHEET

Project Planning Guide For The Research Phase



If I had six hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend the first 4 sharpening the axe.

-Abraham Lincoln

The #1 Project Problem

Projects going over time and over budget.

Frequently, we see people moving projects into the design phase **BEFORE** the research is started. This is like a doctor starting surgery without a thorough diagnosis or trying to build a house on a bad foundation.

That is why we created this planning guide. Now, you have a simple process to help you move through the **RESEARCH PHASE**.

If you follow this tool, you will reduce project risk and improve project design.



1. Summary Sheet

Once you have ticked all the boxes below, you are ready to move to the Analysis Phase



2. Project Roadmap

Review the roadmap and identify where you are on your journey



3. Dream Home Cost Estimator

Simple do-it-yourself worksheet to estimate your building costs



4. Interviewing An Architect

Frequently-asked questions you need to know about working with an architect



5. Myth vs Reality

Some things architects do outside design to complete a project
How to Create a Design Brief Using Only 7 Questions
Answer the Big Picture Thinking questions to get you started



6. Readiness Assessment

Gauge of how ready you are to move to the Design Phase

02. PROJECT ROADMAP

Major Steps Required For Designing and Building Your Dream Home

The Roadmap

The process for planning, designing and constructing your dream home is meant to be fun, engaging, and collaborative. The best outcomes are the result of following each of the steps outlined here to completion.

Right now, you are likely in the **Research Phase**. This is where you are gathering information and playing around with ideas. At the point you want to get serious, you will want to check the feasibility of your ideas and understand what the project constraints are. When you work with us, we move to the **Analysis Phase** by conducting a NEEDS AND OPTIONS REVIEW to eliminate assumptions, identify constraints and find your best options. You will receive a document that will ensure you reduce project risk and have the best options for your site and budget.

The remaining phases, Design through Construction are important steps in producing a successful project. The end result is a thoughtfully designed home created together. How exciting is that?

01. Research

- Architects
- Builders
- Magazines



02. Analysis

- Needs & Options
- Review proposals
- Select an architect



03. Design

- Concept development
- Design development
- Consultant coord.



06. Build

- Builder builds
- Architect advises



05. Bid

- Bids from builders
- Select builder



04. Documentation

- Planning approval
- Construction doc.



When you are ready to review the feasibility of your project,
email or call us >>

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03. DREAM HOME COST ESTIMATOR

The Simple, Do-It-Yourself Way To Estimate Your Building Costs

One of the first questions that architects and builders hear is:



How much will my project going to cost to build?

Construction cost is a function of the price per square foot of air-conditioned space. The price per square foot varies greatly depending on several variables including, but not limited to these:

- Building shape, size and height
- Extent of site works
- Topography and soil conditions
- Quality of finishes and appliances
- Features and amenities
- Outdoor spaces

Getting the budget right is important. Following the architectural process helps us to get to a fine level of detail required for a reliable budget.

This guide will help you to determine an estimate of overall costs to build your dream home. Your actual number may be more or less, but it can be helpful to see an estimated figure.

New Home Cost Estimator

New Home Cost Estimator				Estimate Your Cost	
	Standard	Medium	Luxury	Area	Cost
Cost per Sq Ft	\$300	\$350	\$400		
1000	\$300,000	\$350,000	\$400,000		
2000	\$450,000	\$525,000	\$600,000		
3000	\$600,000	\$700,000	\$800,000		

Renovation Cost Estimator

Renovation Cost Estimator				Estimate Your Cost	
	Standard	Medium	Luxury	Area	Cost
Cost per Sq Ft	\$200	\$250	\$300		
1000	\$200,000	\$250,000	\$300,000		
2000	\$400,000	\$500,000	\$600,000		
3000	\$600,000	\$750,000	\$900,000		

This chart is for planning purposes only. The cost estimates cover general construction cost ranges only. They do not include architect fees, the architect's consultants, land costs, taxes and other soft costs.

04. INTERVIEWING AN ARCHITECT

When Hiring an Architect, It's Helpful To Have A Process To Make Sure You Get The BEST Person For The Project.

Asking The Right Questions

Although extensive schooling and training are required for all architects, that doesn't mean all architects are created equal.

Finding the RIGHT architect for you depends on several factors, including: personality, design style, building for taste or to make money, budget and even whether your project requires a specialist skill set.

Choosing the right architect can mean the difference between an enjoyable experience and one plagued with problems and hassles the whole way through once a project moves into the BUILD PHASE. How will your project go?

The questions are the answer...

A great architect is your Designer, Advocate, Teacher, Project Leader and Coordinator

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> What unique value do you have for our specific type of project? | <input type="checkbox"/> How would you like me to share my ideas, images, needs, wants and research? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How can you add value to our home so that we maximize the return on investment when/if we sell? | <input type="checkbox"/> What can I do to help you deliver the best work for us? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do you offer a pre-design analysis service to help move us safely and efficiently towards the design phase? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you have a team game plan that outlines how we will all successfully work together, even under pressure? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What are the specific challenges for our type of project and how have you overcome these in the past? | <input type="checkbox"/> Will you bid the negotiation process to find and select the best construction team? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> If my budget, timeline and scope of project are unrealistic, will you let me know? | <input type="checkbox"/> What educational material do you provide so we can understand the requirements of our specific type of project? |

Hiring the RIGHT architect is the single most important decision to make on your project.

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05. MYTH VS. REALITY

What Do Architects Actually Do?

An architect's role is a lot larger than most people realize. When an architect manages your project, they ensure that every part of the process below (and more) is handled to ensure that the biggest investment in your life is safe and secure.

Myth

Architects only sketch the plans that a builder uses to construct your home. Anyone can do that

Reality

Architects oversee the entire process from the research phase to move in. They ensure that the home they have so carefully detailed for their clients becomes reality. It would be impossible to list all of an architect's responsibilities. However some of the key ones are:

- Architects have a thorough and proven process to determine the wants, needs, hopes and dreams that you have for your home.
- Architects visit your building site, or help select a building site, and complete an analysis to ensure that your home takes full advantage of the property. They also review any easements or restrictions on the property.
- Architects ensure compliance with building codes, energy codes and life safety regulations.
- Architects design and detail the interior or exterior of your home—everything from general massing and shapes to the fine details and selection of materials.
- Architects lead the team of professionals working with you to create your dream home, including the contractor, structural engineer, landscape architect and interior designer.
- Architects submit drawings for Permit and manage the process.
- Architects provide construction documents and specifications for the contractor to use during the construction phase.
- Architects review bids to ensure accuracy and completeness during the bidding phase.
- Architects do site visits and meetings overseeing the construction and validating quality of work, negotiating with contractors, dealing with and resolving any problems that may arise.
- Architects create a final list of deficiencies and ensure they are completed prior to move in.

In summary, the architect is the conductor of the project orchestra.

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06. How To Create A Design Brief Using Only 7 Questions

Big Picture Questions

Planning, designing and building your custom home begins with answering these foundational questions:

Your Question

Answer

1. Outline your current situation?

2. How do you live? Is that changing or about to change?

3. What will you need to see to know your project has been a dramatic success?

4. How do you want to FEEL as you move through your new space?

5. Who are the important people this home needs to be designed for?

6. What are the budget, timeframes and boundaries we need to work within?

7. What does your home really mean to you?

07. READINESS ASSESSMENT

Are You Ready To Move To The Design Phase?

This exercise allows you to assess how ready you are to move to the **Design Phase**. If you are not close to 10 on ALL scales, then it's best to seek help from an expert to do this research.

If you rush into the design phase without this information available, you'll run the risk of making too many assumptions, which is the # 1 reason projects go over budget and over time.



Measure twice, cut once,

-Builders Mantra

Question

Answer (circle one)

(0= I'm Not Sure, 10= I'm Very Confident)

On a 1-10 scale, how clear are you on exactly what you need?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a 1-10 scale, how aware are you of all the various options your site will accommodate?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a 1-10 scale, how confident are you that you are aware of all the legal requirements?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a 1-10 scale, how aware are you of the process you will need to have in place to get the project completed on time and on budget?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a 1-10 scale, how confident are you that your budget will achieve your needs?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Give yourself a current overall rating for readiness.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Don't worry if you are not at 10 on all scales yet. The Needs and Options Review process allows you to fill in the knowledge gaps and gets you ready to move to the Design Phase.

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