



PREDESIGN ACTIVITIES

Architecture
Planning
Interiors
Environmental
Design

You've made the decision to build the custom home of your dreams – Congratulations! Doing so will make a lasting contribution to your family life for years to come. At the outset, we have to be careful, and indeed very thorough, in our contemplation as to what this home should be; how it should represent your values and aspirations; how it should accommodate your needs through the passage of time. Consideration of the items presented in this document will help us along the path of the design for your home, start our communication process, and form the basis for the many decisions yet to come. The entire process is fairly time intensive, and the more thorough and programmatic we can be, all the better. Here are a few items that I would like you to consider as we get underway:

Budget and Schedule

Almost every project has one of these – a maximum cost, and a time frame. It will help immensely and speed our design process if you consider these items in advance, and consult with your financial advisor or banker – we'll make recommendations if you like. Consider that there are multiple costs for the project; see the list of typical expense categories below. We will help you to allocate your funds into the appropriate category. You'll just need to let us know what your limits are.

Design and Engineering	_____
Permits and Approvals	_____
Construction and Contingency	_____
Temporary Accommodations	_____
Interior Design and Furnishings	_____
Total Budget	_____

If you're a typical homeowner, your life is full of deadlines and commitments already. The process of design and construction is fairly time consuming, and construction can be somewhat intrusive. So, in your view, please consider when you would like to be done with the construction, and if you have some opportunities that would make your life easier that we can schedule around:

Background Information

To begin the work of designing a new home, there are some basic pieces of information that we will need.

First, we need to know much about the location for your new home. Have you authorized a surveyor to create a Boundary and Topographic Survey? This document will show the property lines of your building lot along with major design considerations, such as mature vegetation, major view corridors, easements, and the slope of the ground. This is important information to have so that we can begin design work on home and situate it in the correct and legal location. I would be happy to recommend a surveying company that can prepare one of these, for a nominal fee, if you are unable to locate yours.

Second, we will need any pertinent information that is specific to your home or location. For example, are you located in a community that has an architectural review committee? These organizations have a specific set of guidelines that further restrict what you can do to your home, usually concerning massiveness, exterior finish materials, driveways, landscaping, and other exterior features. It is the intent of these organizations to preserve the value and the ambiance of your community. They will usually have a key contact name, a regular meeting time and place, and a published set of regulations. You would have been informed of this when you purchased your home. If you have an active homeowner's association, then it is more than likely that you receive a periodic newsletter. Another location-specific criteria is a special development district, such as an Historic District. Are you aware of any associated with your home?

And, finally, what do you want your home to look and feel like? Have you considered architectural styles? Are there some examples, either in the community or in books / magazines of the image that you would like for your home? This is very important – we want to create a solution for you that will express your vision and interests. Consider the following short list:

- Colorado / Mountain style – Log and or timber construction, open spaces, exposed timber framing, view windows, varied exteriors with rustic materials.
- Victorian – lap and shingle siding, painted, detailed built up trim, steeply pitched roofs, tall and narrow windows, smaller rooms.
- Craftsman / bungalow – Tapered columns, mixture of exterior finishes, medium to low pitched roofs, dormers, built in woodwork, exposed framing, divided windows at top of sash.
- Cottage / farmhouse – Wood siding, Simple details, smaller rooms with interior doors, multiple window dividers, some higher ceilings, medium pitch roofs that contain space, with dormers.
- Contemporary / modern – multiple and varied forms and materials, flat and low pitched roofs, modern materials expressed.

Many other styles exist – we'll talk this through with you and present / discuss examples. You may have an opportunity to preview some examples of our work prior to our initial meeting.

The Scope of Work

You've probably been considering this project for some time now. You have some ideas about what it is you want to accomplish – what spaces will be contained in your final home – how those spaces relate to each other and to the rest of the site and neighborhood outside. This is critical information for us to know in order for us to make specific recommendations as how to create solutions for your problem. So, please be as specific as possible in considering your home. During our preliminary meetings, as well as throughout the course of your design project, we'll be assembling a document called the Building Program. This document records the information regarding the spaces in your home, and helps us to make decisions as we proceed along the path of design. We'll be contemplating this document a great deal during the process of design.

The following is list of some of the spaces that may find their place in your new home. Please

review the list, consider each space as to how it may apply to your family's lifestyle, and whether such spaces are necessary or just preferred for your new home.

<p>Public Spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Garage / open parking area ◇ Entry Porch ◇ Vestibule / Foyer ◇ Family Room / Great Room ◇ Media Room ◇ Formal Dining Room ◇ Kitchen ◇ Powder room ◇ Recreation room ◇ Music Room 	<p>Private Spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Breakfast Nook ◇ Office / study ◇ Library ◇ Craft room / studio ◇ Laundry ◇ Private Entry / Mudroom ◇ Master Bedroom (Main floor ?) ◇ Master Bathroom ◇ Guest Bedrooms / baths ◇ Family bedrooms / baths (#) ◇ Workshop ◇ Equipment rooms ◇ Storage areas and closets ◇ Fitness room ◇ Wine Cellar ◇ Pet care room ◇ Indoor swimming / aquatics ◇ Spa / sauna / whirlpool
<p>Exterior Spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Covered / open decks or patios ◇ Shelter / gazebo ◇ Pool / Spa ◇ Water features ◇ Gardens / yards ◇ Pet facilities 	

The arrangement of these interior spaces is important to how your home will feel. Will your home be informally arranged, with most spaces open and flowing into each other? Or would you prefer a home that has formally arranged space, with rooms to contain space. Your lifestyle is an important consideration when deciding on general spatial relationships such as these. Other factors include privacy, light control, sound transmission, among others.

In addition to the physical needs of space, are there any other criteria that you would like to address in your project? For example, do you want to enhance the energy efficiency of your home, and/or apply sustainable design principals such as natural heating/cooling, green materials, etc? Are you interested in applying esoteric construction methods and materials, such as SIP's, Rammed Earth, ICF's etc., understanding that these systems and techniques may increase the cost or extend the schedule?

Finally, what are your priorities? The process of design frequently involves making decisions that are the result of two conflicting issues. For example, your budget may not be adequate to cover the entire project cost and also add solar panels to decrease your reliance on public utilities. So, would you choose less space, or give up on the installation of solar panels? Having an idea about the level of importance for everything that you want to do is crucial to a project's overall success. Making these hard decisions is difficult at best, and is most appropriately derived from your sense of the most important items in the design, and the items that you may be able to live without.

Construction

Ultimately, the project that we design together will need to be built. Selection of a builder for

your project can be done either now or later, and there are a variety of ways to select one, and to contract for their services. You certainly don't need to have a builder selected yet, but here are a few things you should know:

1. All builders are not equal – some cost more, some are individuals verses medium to large companies, some are better than others. We've worked with many, know their strengths and limitations, recommend a few, and we are a good resource for referrals.
2. A builder is a valuable asset to be added to a design team early in the process. In that way, the builder can participate in the decision making process early on, providing detailed cost and schedule input to your design as it evolves. This would require your selection of a builder, and retaining them with a deposit, prior to completion of the building plans.
3. A builder can be selected after the plans have been completed as a result of a competitive bid, in which up to 3 bidders provide detailed cost and schedule breakdowns for their services. With a good set of drawings and specifications, there is frequently little variation in the bid amount, so, frequently, the ultimate selection of a builder will depend upon the builder's fee (usually a percent of the cost of construction), their availability to meet your schedule, the opinions of their references, and their personality.

Thorough attention to the items listed herein, and other program and design documents that we give to you will greatly enhance our communication, and help to ensure a successful project. Thanks for your time!