

Create your Vision Planning Guide

The adage "form follows function" generally holds true. By responding to these questions, we obtain a basis for understanding your needs and can assist the Architect or Designer in preparing rough sketches.

ABOUT THE OWNER:

How many years do you plan to live in this home?

Which architectural styles are you attracted to?

What do you like about your current home?

What frustrates you about your current home?

Who will live in this home? Will children be regular guests? If so, how many?

Will they need rooms close to where the adults are?

Who are the family members and their ages?

Are there any special needs regarding accessibility (ramps, wider hallways and door entries, elevator, special door knobs or provisions in the tub and shower)?

Where does your family spend the most time together?

Does an older relative live with you?

Will you have regular houseguests? If so, how long do you estimate they will stay?

Do you have pets? If so, what are their needs?

Where does your family eat meals together?

Does your family enjoy any hobbies together, or do you engage in family activities in separate areas?

How do you entertain?

How important are formal living areas to you?

How do you plan to use your yard?

What amount of money did you pre-qualify with your construction lender, and are you using this dollar figure as the basis for proceeding in the Design/Build process?

ABOUT THE PROPERTY:

What are the dimensions?

What is the topography?

Are there any special features, such as views, water, trees, adjacent property, steep slope, historic preservation, and home association?

Are there any owner requirements, such as driveway access, parking, ramps, outdoor living areas, decks and patios?

Is the utility infrastructure available to the building site, such as water, power, gas, sewage, cable, and storm water?

Is the site buildable according to the standards of the agency having jurisdiction over the issuance of building permits?

If you're building in a master plan community, what limitations does your Homeowners Association pose?

ABOUT THE HOUSE:

What is the anticipated square footage of heated/cooled space?

From the above list, what is the preferred architectural style?

How many levels in the house?

Do you want balconies, window seats or patios?

How much sun exposure do you want in your home?

If two-story, where will the staircases be located? How many?

Will there be a full or daylight basement?

What are the preferred window and door styles?

What are the number and location of bedrooms?

What are the number and location of bathrooms?

In which rooms to you want fireplaces?

Where is the preferred laundry location?

ABOUT ROOM REQUIRMENTS:

Describe the foyer: size; style; ceiling height?

Describe the living room: location; formal or informal; use; furniture; special features; ceiling height?

Describe the dining room: location; formal or informal; use; furniture; special features; ceiling height?

Describe the kitchen: location; formal or informal; use; furniture; special features; ceiling height?

Will there be an outdoor eating area adjacent to the kitchen?

Describe the family room: location; entertainment area; fireplace; furniture; wet bar; furniture; special features; ceiling height?

Describe the study or home office: location; formal or informal; use; furniture; special features; ceiling height?

Describe the bedrooms: location; formal or informal; use; furniture; special features; ceiling height?

Describe the bathrooms: location; formal or informal; use; furniture; special features; ceiling height?

DEFINING ROOMS, SPECIFICALLY:

DINING

Do you cook? How many people usually cook in your kitchen at one time?

Will the kitchen be used for serious meal preparation or for quick, convenient meals?

What kinds of appliance do you want in the kitchen?

Do you want to be able to hide small appliances or see them all?

Do you want a kitchen island?

Where will you eat? How many people will sit around the kitchen table?

Do you want a bar or counter for informal dining?

Do you want a walk-in food pantry or a butler's pantry?

Where will you store entertaining items?

How will you handle trash and recycling?

Do you have any special food-preparation needs?

Do you have wine-storage needs?

Do you want a wet bar and/or temperature controlled humidor?

Do you want the kitchen to be separate from or part of the living space?

Do you have special furniture that you need to accommodate?

What are your material choices for counters? Floors? Cabinets?

LIVING SPACES

How will the family room be used?

Do you want toy storage?

Do you want a built-in unit for electronics?

Will you use a living room? If so, what should this room feel like?

MASTER SUITE

What do you want the master suite to feel like?

Do you want bookshelves or space for a desk?

Will you store all your clothes in the closet?

Do you want more than one closet?

How large or small do you want your closets?

BEDROOMS

If you have children how many bedrooms will they need?

Do you want those bedrooms to be near or far from the master suite?

Depending on your children's ages, will they want space for play, homework or entertainment?

Will you designate space for guests? If so, will it be a room or an attached suite?

FUNCTIONAL SPACES

Where will you organize family schedules, bills and lists?

Will you want a desk in that area?

Do you want an office? What kind of equipment and furniture will it have?

Do you work from home?

Do you want a separate entrance for clients?

Do you want additional storage in your laundry room?

Do you want a built-in ironing station, a sink or a drip-dry hanging area?

Do you want rooms for other activities like crafts, reading or meditation?

Do you want an exercise room or gym? If so, how big should it be?

How will you ventilate this space?

Should your exercise room or gym have access to a bathroom and/or sauna?

TECHNOLOGY

Do you want automation in your home? If so, what functions do you want to automate?

Audio/video? Lighting? Drapes? Awnings?

What kinds of lighting do you want in your home?

How do you want to control the lighting? Do you want one-button control for pre-established settings?

In which rooms will you watch television?

What are your viewing habits in each space?

Do you want a home theater?

Do you listen to music in certain rooms?

Do you want to be able to listen to it throughout the house? What about outside?

Do you want a communication or intercom system?

Do you want central-vacuum system?

Do you want a security system?

Do you want filtered or purified water to be available throughout the house?

How many phone lines will you have?

Do you need special outlets?

OUTDOOR LIVING

Do you dine outside? Do you grill?

Do you want a pool or a spa?

Do you want access to a bathroom from the backyard?

If you have children, what kinds of outdoor amenities would they enjoy?

What safety precautions are necessary for children around the pool?

Do you play lawn games? Do you want a putting green?

What kinds of amenities do you want for outdoor entertaining?

What kind of landscaping will you have? Will there be a water feature?

What kind of outdoor furniture will you have? Do you want outdoor heaters?

What type of outdoor lighting do you want?

Do you want outdoor electrical outlets for holiday or special-event lighting?

Will your pets need special provisions outdoors?

GARAGE

How many garages do you want? Where will the garages be situated?

What kinds of vehicles do you own?

Are any of them oversized?

Will you need to store a boat or jet skis?

Would you like workspace in the garage?

How much storage do you need?

Where will you keep the garbage and recycling cans?

INTERIOR DESIGN DECISIONS

What sort of mood do you want to evoke in your house?

Will it be the same throughout, or will it change depending on the room?

WALL AND CEILING FINISHES

These are places to express your individuality. From one-of-a-kind paint colors to wallpaper to faux finishes, your walls and ceilings can help define each room's function and style. Be sure to keep your home's architecture in mind when choosing your finishes.

CLOSETS

You can include every organizational built-in imaginable in a custom closet. Do you need tie, belt and shoe racks; folded-shirt drawers; jewelry drawers?

PLUMBING FIXTURES

Whether in the kitchen, bathrooms, laundry room or wet bar, fixtures can turn an ordinary sink into a work of art. This is a great place to pay attention to detail, from designer faucets to multiple showerheads. Also consider how high or low you'd like your sinks and vanities to be, and whether you're interested in pedestal sinks, above-counter or vessel sinks.

FIREPLACE MATERIALS

Fireplaces are great mediums for creating visual impact, and they can often serve as a focal point for a room or series of rooms. Materials range from masonry to ceramic brick, and patterns can be as simple or ornate as you see fit.

DOORS AND HARDWARE

Solid wood and custom-designed steel doors by metal artists are just two examples from a wide spectrum of options. If you decide to install wood doors, think about the color you'll want to stain them.

Hardware is a great way to dress up an ordinary door. Also think about the finish of the hardware.

EXTERIOR DECISIONS

MOLDINGS AND DOORFRAMES

As with many of your decisions, your home's architectural style should guide you toward the right moldings and doorframes. Materials include wood, plaster, bronze and stone among others.

PAINT AND EXTERIOR FINISHES

Much like interior finishes, a house's exterior appearance depends on the structure's architectural makeup. What are the preferred exterior materials and color?

What are the preferred window and door styles?

What does the architecture dictate?

ROOF

Cement, clay tiles, slate, copper or zinc?

DRIVEWAY

It's the first thing people will set foot on when they arrive at your home, so let it make an impression. For a rustic look, try decomposed granite. Another popular choice is stone or pavers.

GARAGE DOOR

In order to keep the look of the garage consistent with the rest of your home, clad it with an appropriate material.

Additional notes:

Thank you for taking the time to identify the needs, wants and visions of your custom home. This exercise will help you envision your next home and guide us to create a home for your lifestyle.