WHICKER
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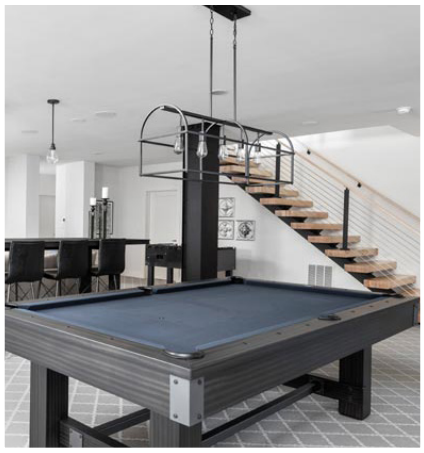
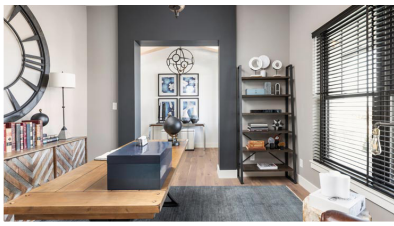
WHICKER CONSTRUCTION PLANNING GUIDE





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Planning for a new home can be an exciting and challenging experience. Whicker Construction is committed to taking your vision and bringing it to life, detail by detail, in a timely fashion, with the utmost integrity.

These are many of the questions that prospective clients ask us. If you have a question that isn't included here, please do not hesitate to contact us at 317.839.8353 or bwhicker@whickerconstruction.com.

ABOUT WHICKER CONSTRUCTION

The kind of experience you can expect:

Whicker Construction is a custom design/build firm that has been serving Hendricks and surrounding counties since 1989. We create between 6 and 10 high-quality custom homes and 4 to 8 remodel/restoration projects, as well as several small projects each year. By handling a limited number of projects and maintaining a steady workload, we are better able to uphold our exacting standards for quality and keep the best trade contractors working on our projects.

What price range do you work within?

Most of the new homes we design and build are valued between $600,000 and $2,000,000+ range. Our remodeling/insurance projects are typically within the $100,000 to $500,000+ range.

Who will I work with?

Brad Whicker will be personally involved in the construction of your home. That's important to Brad, because each completed home stands as evidence of the quality of craftsmanship and workmanship that Whicker Construction provides.

Your day-to-day contact will either be with Brad or our Project Coordinator, who will work with you on all technical and building-specific questions, keep you up-to-date on the home's progress, and work with you on scheduling and selecting design details.

How involved will I be in the process?

A well-built home begins with a solid foundation of concrete. Similarly, we believe that our working relationship requires a solid foundation, and we've found that the most effective is one built upon strong communication. We will keep you informed at every stage of the project and make sure you're fully aware of everything that is important to you. We have developed a system of regular progress reporting and change order summaries, as well as regularly scheduled onsite meetings with the Superintendent and/or Brad Whicker.

YOUR DESIGN OR OURS?

What if we have ideas and examples but no design?

Our design/build approach is ideal for you. We will work directly with you and our draftsman to create a one-of-a-kind design tailored specifically to your lifestyle and needs. We will enter into a Design Services Agreement with you that will cover our draftsman's time and the involvement of our staff. This will include up to two revisions of the design, with the option to add revisions for an additional fee.

Can you work from blueprints that we've already obtained?

Our team will sit down with you, look over your blueprints, and give our thoughts and any concerns about the function and value of the design. We'll use this opportunity to learn exactly what it is that you need from your home before we begin the building process.

If the blueprints prove to be a good fit for you, and we believe that they meet our standards, we'll develop an estimate of the building costs. If one of us isn't satisfied, we will even offer suggestions on how you can move forward, whether it's with us or another company.

HOW BUILDERS ARE USUALLY COMPENSATED

How do we pay for your services?

Custom home builders usually use one of two basic compensation agreements – Cost Plus or Fixed Cost. Whicker Construction advocates a Fixed Cost approach.

What is Cost Plus?

Through a Cost Plus arrangement, the builder establishes a flat fee or percentage for the construction of the home, and simply passes along all of the expenses for materials, subcontractors, and other items as they are incurred. It's a very transparent approach.

When is Cost Plus the best choice?

If there is a good possibility that your project will involve significant changes during the construction process, this may be the right option for you. When there are many changes during construction or when a home is large and distinctive enough to warrant a higher cost, the selections and allowances can vary widely from the initial estimate through the building stage.

Are there any disadvantages to this method?

You'll be responsible for all cost overages and (in some cases) paying all of the trade contractors. In addition, it's up to you to verify the validity of all the costs. Banks may be more hesitant to finance a home built this way, and there may be questions as to whether the builder or the contractors are responsible for warranty issues. In addition, you may not have a clear understanding of your project's total cost until completion or after you have exceeded your comfort level.

What is Fixed Cost?

Working from detailed specifications, the builder estimates the cost to build your home and agrees to take responsibility for any overages that are not related to change orders or allowances.

When is Fixed Cost the best choice?

If you want to know exactly what you're getting for your money and how much you are going to pay, Fixed Cost is probably the best choice for you. This approach gives the builder the incentive to satisfy you by keeping the project on time and on budget and the builder is responsible for the warranty on your home after completion.

Are there any downsides to Fixed Cost?

Because the builder's expenses and profit margins are not transparent, you have no way of knowing how much of a markup the builder is taking. In addition, if your details and specifications are not comprehensive and clear, the estimate may vary widely depending on the amount of allowances and the quality and grade of the products the builder uses. For example, if you do not specify a particular type of wood trim, the builder may use a lesser grade than what you expected. Changes to the original design can also add up quickly, so the more you know about what you want before you start, the better off you'll be.

OUR APPROACH TO THE BUSINESS OF BUILDING

How do you approach the estimating and building process?

It may sound simple, but our goal is to design and build your home exactly how you want it, so you are ready to move in without having to spend another penny. We develop realistic estimates for our clients' homes, based on real-world costs. If a client isn't sure about a particular selection, we will include allowances so there are no surprises.

In addition, we refuse to pinch pennies by specifying or using low-grade materials. We've worked too hard to build up our company's reputation – and you are investing too much in your home – for us to cut corners. Sometimes, that approach means our estimates may seem a little higher at first, but in the long run, you'll find them to be far more accurate.

Do you provide any documentation?

Our proposal package includes a detailed estimate and set of specifications allowing you to see exactly what materials were selected for your home.

What if we decide to make changes?

That's not unusual. After all, seeing a house on paper is very different once you begin to see it going up in three dimensions. For example, you may decide that adding a window would give you a beautiful view of sunsets. Or, you may become aware of an appliance that suits your needs better than the one you initially selected. We've been there, and we understand.

When you ask us to make a change, we will draft and submit a change order form that details your request, how it differs in price, and the revised contract amount. If you decide to proceed with the change, simply sign the change order and pay any additional amount for the change. We will then handle all of the modifications to the trade contractors' contract specifications.

While your home is being built, we will provide regular summaries of change orders, listing accepted, rejected and outstanding change orders, as well as their effect on the total price.

ONCE YOUR HOME IS FINISHED...

Will we have an opportunity to review the home before we move in?

When the build is complete, you'll get a detailed walk-through and demonstration of every facet of your new home, including its warranties. We'll also schedule a 60-day follow-up appointment to address any issues or questions that might arise.

Will you finish punch list items before we move in?

We always try to, but it's impossible to promise. Sometimes, specialty items needed to complete the work may be on backorder, so we won't be able to finish until after you have moved in. However, we will do our best to complete the work as soon as possible with the least amount of inconvenience.

When will you schedule our closing?

We know that timing is critical when it comes to locking in a loan rate, so we try to set your closing date as far in advance as possible. Once construction reaches a point at which weather and other factors outside our control are unlikely to affect the completion date, we can determine a specific date. Usually, we set that date two to four weeks before the actual closing, giving you time to finalize any financial matters or other loose ends.

What if we find things that need to be done after we move in?

Once you are settled in, you may discover minor issues such as misaligned drawers, doors or windows. That is one reason we schedule a 60-day follow-up with you. We will walk through your home and address any issues you've found, as well as answer questions about any of the systems or other items.

Do you fix paint and drywall at the follow-up?

We don't recommend that we touch up paint and drywall that soon after completion. It takes time for a new home to settle and adjust to changing seasons. For that reason, we recommend that you schedule an appointment with us on your home's first birthday so that we can correct any minor cracks and other issues that have cropped up during the year.

Do you stand behind the homes you build?

Absolutely! While we strive to build defect-free homes, we know that mistakes and problems can happen. We personally stand behind our craftsmanship and refuse to sell or sub-contract your warranty to any third-party vendors.

Your home is backed by a two-year warranty against defects caused by faulty workmanship, defective materials,or faulty installation of plumbing, electrical, heating, cooling, and ventilation systems, exclusive of fixtures, appliances or items of equipment. The roofing system is backed by a four-year warranty for any defects caused by faulty workmanship or defective materials. We also warranty against major structural defects for a period of ten years following your closing date. At the time of move-in, we will describe your coverage in detail and explain how to request warranty service.

TESTIMONIALS

"We had a great time working with you through the building process. It was a very positive experience for us both. The bonus is that we get to call you and your family neighbors. Thanks again for all your help, especially on those rainy days!"

~ Ken and Lauri

"Thank you for doing such a wonderful job on our new home. We are enjoying it immensely."

~ Rich and Rhonda

AWARDS

» 2019 Pemberton of Zionsville Home-A-Rama Participant
» 2017 Voted Among the Best in Hendricks County Builder of the Year
» 2015 Voted Among the Best in Hendricks County Builder of the Year
» 2014 Voted Among the Best in Hendricks County Builder of the Year
» 2013 Voted Among the Best in Hendricks County Builder of the Year
» 2009 Certified Green Professional
» 2007 Voted Hendricks County Builder of the Year
» 2006 Top Three Candidate: The Builders Association of Greater Indianapolis MAME AWARD "Best Remodel over $100,000"
» 2004 Voted Best Home Builder in Hendricks County
» 2002 The Builders Association of Greater Indianapolis MAME AWARD "Best Basement over $40,000"
» 2002 Home-A-Rama "Best Master Bedroom Suite"
» 2001 The Builders Association of Greater Indianapolis MAME AWARD "Best Second Story Addition Under $100,000"

OUR ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

» Past President of the Hendricks County Council for Builders Association
» Member of the Plainfield Chamber of Commerce
» Member of Indiana Home Artisans
» National Association of Home Builders
» Builders Association of Greater Indianapolis
» Professional Builders Council Builder 20 Group
» NAHB Certified Green Builder
» NAHB Certified Graduate Remodeler
» NAHB Certified Graduate Builder
» NAHB Certified Graduate Aging In Place (CAPS)
» NAHB Certified Graduate Master Builder