



Custom Home Planning Guide

Andrew Signature Homes — Planning Your Build the Right Way

Why Most Custom Home Builds Go Wrong

Most custom home projects don't fail during construction — they fail before a single foundation is poured. The decisions made in the planning phase determine whether your build stays on budget, on schedule, and on vision.

Poor Planning

Rushing into design or land purchase before financing is secured leads to costly reversals and delays.

Misleading Price Per Sq Ft

This number almost never reflects the true cost of a completed home. It's the most misunderstood figure in home building.

No Process Guidance

Homeowners are left to navigate permits, engineering, and subcontractors without a clear roadmap or experienced advocate.

Communication Breakdown

When builders go silent mid-project, homeowners lose control of timelines, budgets, and decision-making.

Unexpected Costs

Site work, utility hookups, and finish upgrades surface late — turning a "manageable" budget into a financial strain.

Planning Your Build the Right Way

Pre-approval is non-negotiable. Before you design a floor plan or make an offer on land, you need to know exactly what you can borrow and build. Every decision downstream depends on this number.



Financing & Pre-Approval

Secure a construction loan or pre-approval first. Know your real ceiling before falling in love with a design.



Land

Not all land is created equal. Soil conditions, slope, access, and utilities all affect your build cost significantly.




Budget

Build a realistic total budget — not just construction. Include land, site work, permits, and contingency reserves.



Timeline

Custom builds typically take 10–18 months from contract to completion. Plan your life around a realistic schedule.



Understanding the True Cost to Build

Price per square foot does not reflect your total project cost. It's a starting point, not a finish line. The number builders quote rarely accounts for what it actually takes to get your home ready to live in.

What's Usually Quoted

- Framing and structure
- Interior finish work
- Basic mechanical systems
- Standard fixtures

What's Often Left Out

- Site work and grading
- Utility connections and septic
- Permits and engineering fees
- Driveway and site access
- Upgrades and custom finishes

- ❏ The gap between a quoted price and your final invoice can be \$50,000 to \$150,000 or more. Know what's included before you sign anything.

How to Budget for Your Custom Home

A complete home budget has three distinct buckets. Treat each one separately and build in a contingency of at least 10–15% across all categories. Site work, in particular, is the most unpredictable cost in any build.



Land

Purchase price plus due diligence costs — surveys, soil tests, title work, and any HOA or deed restrictions.



Construction

Custom homes: **\$200–\$275+ per sq ft**

Barndominiums: **\$200–\$275+ per sq ft**

Varies by finishes, complexity, and market.



Site Work + Hidden Costs

Budget **\$20,000–\$100,000+** for grading, utilities, driveway, and permits. This number is land-dependent and highly variable.



Site work is the most unpredictable cost in your entire build. It must be evaluated on your specific property — not estimated from a spreadsheet.

Designing Your Home the Right Way

A beautiful design that doesn't work with your land, your budget, or your actual lifestyle isn't a good design — it's an expensive problem waiting to happen. Great custom home design starts with constraints, not inspiration boards.



Fits Your Lifestyle

How you live every day should drive every square foot. Flow, function, and future needs matter more than trends.



Aligned With Your Budget

Design without a budget ceiling is guesswork. Every design decision has a cost implication — know it upfront.



Works With Your Land

Slope, orientation, drainage, and access points must inform your floor plan — not fight against it.



Actually Buildable

A design must survive engineering review, permitting, and real-world construction. Looking good on paper isn't enough.

What to Expect During Your Build

A well-managed custom build moves through six clear phases. Knowing what happens — and when — keeps you informed and in control from groundbreaking to move-in day.



Where Most Builders Fall Short

Not all builders operate the same way. Many enter projects with vague commitments and leave homeowners managing confusion, surprises, and cost overruns alone. Here's what a subpar builder experience looks like — and why it matters.

Vague Pricing

Broad estimates with no line-item detail leave you exposed to cost surprises at every phase of construction.



No Full-Process Guidance

Homeowners are handed a contract and left to figure out design, permits, and decisions on their own.

Poor Communication

Weeks without updates. Unanswered calls. Finding out about problems after they've already affected your timeline.



Surprises During Construction

Change orders and unplanned costs pile up when the planning phase is rushed or skipped entirely.

Why Choose Andrew Signature Homes

We built our process around the mistakes we've seen other builders make. From your first consultation to the day you receive your keys, every step is deliberate, documented, and communicated clearly.

We Plan Before You Build

No design work starts until financing is confirmed and your land is fully evaluated. This protects your time and your money.

No Guesswork Pricing

You receive a detailed, line-item estimate — not a rough range. Transparency is built into every proposal we deliver.

Full Design + Build Guidance

We walk with you through design, permitting, selections, and construction. You always know what's happening and what's next.

Strong Communication

Regular updates, direct access to our team, and no surprises. We treat your project like it's the only one that matters.

Focus on Long-Term Value

We build homes that are designed to last, hold value, and serve your family for decades — not just pass inspection.

Start Your Build

The best custom homes start with the right conversation — not a rushed estimate or a generic floor plan. Let's talk about your vision, your land, and your budget before anything else.



Schedule a Consultation

Sit down with our team and walk through your goals, timeline, and property details — no obligation required.



Get a Real Build Estimate

We'll put together a transparent, detailed estimate based on your specific land, scope, and finish level.



Talk With Our Team

Ask every question you have. We're here to guide you — not to pressure you into a decision.

"We don't just build homes — we help you build the right way from the start."

— Andrew Signature Homes

