



Step 1 **Planning**

The Planning Phase of any project is the most critical, and care must be taken to not rush through it in order to 'get building'. While it's exciting to see 'real' things happening, they lose their lustre once you begin to understand the cost of not thinking things through at the beginning.

“DESIGNING YOUR HOME - Measure Twice, Cut Once”

“It is never more important to understand this, than now: during the design phase of your project. In fact, the cost, timing, and success of your homebuilding adventure will be determined right here, right now. If you spend the majority of your time analyzing and designing your home from the ground up, you can help to ensure a hassle free and successful experience.”

- Kent Lester & Dave McGuerty - *“The Complete Guide to Contracting Your Home”*

- Planning -

Conceptual Design

con·cep·tion

/kən'sepSHən/

Noun

1. The action of conceiving a child or of a child being conceived.
2. The forming or devising of a plan or idea.

Synonyms

idea - notion - concept - apprehension

In architectural planning, the term 'conceptual design' refers to the process of taking your ideas and getting them down onto paper... although many times it can feel like it is 'your baby'!

There can be several components to this phase:

Programming

- This is the information-gathering step. We'll be asking lots of questions!

Sketch Plans & Elevations

- These will be the first attempts to get your ideas onto paper. Expect to see lots of things you like, and some that you don't. This is a normal situation, it's the only way to figure out what you really want.

Landscaping Plans

- Sometimes, we need to consider what's happening outdoors as well as indoors, to make sure that everything works together. At the very least, we're going to make sure that the home fits on the lot, or that your addition conforms to regulations.

3D Modeling

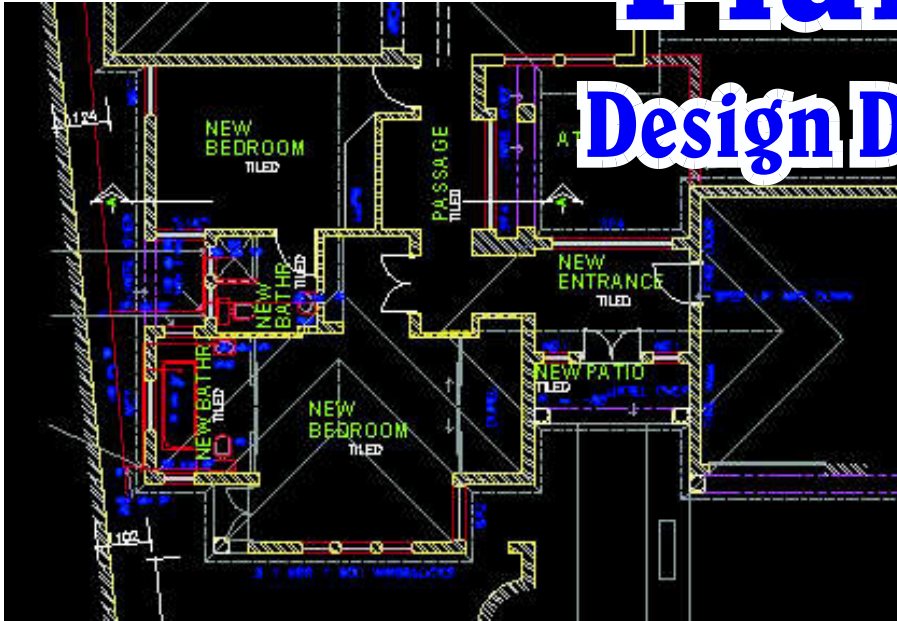
- If conventional drawings aren't providing enough clarity, we'll use computer modeling software to give you a 3-dimensional perspective.

Budget Estimate

- There's no point in creating detailed designs and drawings if the project is too expensive to build. We can provide an approximate cost-to-build once the plans and elevations are done, and it should be within -25% / +25% of the expected cost.

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Design Development



It's time to pay close attention to the design details. Lots of 'tweaking' will be happening to the design now, to make sure that everything will be put together as efficiently as possible, that we're able to maximize on cost-savings through material choices and construction practices, and that we still stay consistent with the intent of the original conceptual design. It's also possible that this stage may include an application for Development Permit, if required.

In this phase, you can expect to see some or all of the following:

More Detailed Plans and Elevations

- The plans and elevations will be carefully laid out and dimensioned. Complex areas like the kitchen will be more clearly defined. The exterior elevations will be virtually completed.

Building Cross-Sections

- It's time to make all of the structural considerations, to make sure that we can hold everything up. The cross-sections will provide a glimpse into what it's going to take.

Site Drawings

- Detailed layout of the home on the lot, as required by municipal regulations. If this project requires a Development Permit, a survey engineer must be retained to provide the necessary prerequisite information.

Preliminary Estimate and Cost Plan

- Now that the design has progressed to a much more refined state, it could be time to perform another estimate. This one should be within -10% / +10% of the expected cost.



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Building Permit Drawings

The design has been finalized and scrutinized, and has not been found wanting. It's time to apply for your building permit with the local municipality. These drawings will contain all of the detailed information required to satisfy the building safety codes.

In this phase, you can expect to see some or all of the following:

Detailed & Dimensioned Plans, Elevations, Building Cross-Sections, Site Plan

- The plans, elevations and cross-sections will be carefully laid out and dimensioned. Started during the design development and completed during the building permit stage, the material and fixture selections will have been completed (see 'Using Co-construct for Project Management'). This phase also includes the revised Energy Code requirements that were introduced in 2015.

Electrical Plans

- After consulting with you on your personal preferences, we'll do an electrical plan for each floor of your home that will conform to the building code requirements.

Detailed Quantity Takeoffs for Final Pre-bid Estimate

- Using the detailed permit drawings and the information provided during the selection process, we will prepare a detailed quantity takeoff and final pre-bid estimate. This estimate should fall within 5% of the actual construction costs.

Construction Schedule

- Now that we know most of what's needed to build your project, we're able to create a construction schedule with targeted milestones.

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Release-to-Construction Drawings



While building-permit drawings are sufficient to satisfy the building safety regulations, they're not enough to provide enough detailed information to tradespeople on-site so that errors can be minimized. The RTC drawings contain all of that extra information that we feel is important to have on hand.

In this phase, you can expect to see some or all of the following:

Detailed Structural Plans

- These could include footings, structural floor and roof layouts.

Mechanical Plans

- These could include heating, ventilating and air-conditioning layouts, as well as detailed plumbing layouts.

Door, Window and Exterior/ Interior Finish Schedules

- These are compiled lists of required windows, doors and finishing materials, including quantities, opening specifications, cladding, etc.

Finishing Details

- For those special areas of your home where attention to detail is critical, these drawings will provide all of the necessary information.

Incorporation of 'Green' Technologies

- Additional specialized drawings may be required for the integration of newer technologies.

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Possible Additional Expenses

There are some additional expenses that may be necessary to incur, due to the nature of your project. As we progress into the design, we'll attempt to flag these to your attention as soon as possible.

Some of these additional expenses you could expect to see are:

Engineering Requirements

- These could be for geodetic, geologic, structure, building envelope, sound, lighting, etc., depending on the specifics of the situation.

Printing

- There may be additional printing costs involved, depending on how many hardcopy sets of the plans are required throughout the planning and building process.

Permit Applications

- There are a number of applications that need to be made with the municipality, and you can choose to have us take care of all of those for you.

Additional Research

- If you have decided to incorporate some unconventional technologies in your project, we may need some extra time to figure out how to implement and integrate it with everything else.