

### How do I find the right builder?

Great question. Here are the most important things to look for when selecting a builder for your project:

- 1. Price is important, but Value is king (or queen)!** Of course you want a great price. But regardless of price, you want the best results for your money – whether you are spending five thousand or five hundred thousand dollars. At Gage Construction, we'll show you exactly how you'll get the most value for your dollar. And, because we're confident in what we do, we offer a five year guarantee on our work.
- 2. There's no substitute for Trust.** This is your home we're talking about. You want a builder that values it and protects it like you do. You want someone that will go out of their way to make it easier to live in your home while it's under construction. And you'll want somebody that you can count on to look after your needs and your wallet for the entire length of your project. How do you measure trust? Ask to speak to our past customers!
- 3. You need a builder with Experience.** Not all builders are the same, especially when you're talking about renovations. You need a builder that's been there before, that knows what's likely to happen, and knows how to make it work for you. Ask about the projects we've done that are similar to yours. With more than 50 years experience, there's a very good chance that Gage Construction has done quite a few!
- 4. Find a builder that Listens.** Even though we've probably done lots of projects similar to yours, we know that every job is unique. We believe that we'll learn the most and serve you best by listening. Most of our business comes from referrals, and referrals happen when the client's needs and wants are met. So we're highly motivated to make your project successful for you.
- 5. Do it once, do it Right.** For the vast majority of families, their home is their most valuable investment. Many builders will offer you a lower price by cutting corners – sometimes where you can't see it. And many will use inferior materials that look great for a few months, but then show their true value. Gage Construction follows all building codes and uses only quality materials so you can keep your family safer, enjoy your renovations for longer and get more

money for your house when you go to sell it. How do you know? Ask the building inspectors that have inspected our work!

6. **Verify Performance.** From the first time you meet your builder, look for on-time, on-budget performance. Did they arrive on time? Did they spend enough time with you to get a clear picture of what you need? How well did they listen? Did they carefully inspect the existing conditions in your home? Look carefully at the builder's proposal for your job: Did they address all of your needs? Is their proposal complete? Then ask their past clients how whether their project was started and completed on-time and on-budget.

## **What should I be aware of when considering an older home remodel?**

It's nearly impossible to guess what you might find in the walls, ceilings or floors when you go to alter your home, especially with older homes. Many, many years of experience have taught Gage Construction where to look and what to look for, so that we can minimize surprises and their impact on budget and scheduling. Experience has also taught us to know that some secrets will defy even our years of experience, and will remain hidden until walls are opened or come down. So, when remodeling or renovating older homes, we always recommend that money be set aside for contingencies. When we work on your project, we'll be able to tell you the likelihood that your home may have such surprises.

## **How much will my remodel cost?**

Each project is different in its complexity and material selections. As a general rule of thumb, your investment should be appropriate for your home and neighborhood. Going too lightly on a valuable home may actually bring down the value of your property. And, sometimes, it doesn't make sense to spend more money on a particular home than you are likely to recoup when you sell the home - unless you plan to live there for a long time, and that's what you want.

Gage Construction will provide expert advice on how to set a value for your remodel. And, what we can say with certainty is, your dollar will go farther with Gage Construction whatever your budget.

## **How long will the remodel take?**

This is a three-part answer that has nothing to do with those 30-minute shows on cable TV.

**1. Planning / designing / shopping.** This will depend on your availability, as well as your designer's. It will also depend on the complexity of the project. In some instances, you're keeping your existing appliances, so you don't need to spend time choosing and shopping for new ones. That can certainly shave days or weeks off the process. In other instances, you're opting for a complex wall and floor tile design. This can add days, in terms of choosing each element of the design and approving layouts. Typically, a full-scale kitchen or bath remodel will take one to two months to plan, including showroom visits, design plan and revisions, contractor bid preparation and consultations.

**2. Ordering your selected materials.** Cabinetry can take from two weeks to 12 weeks to arrive, depending on whether they're stock or custom. Special order tile from overseas can take weeks, as well. If you're not planning major structural changes, you can wait until the new cabinets arrive and are inspected before tearing out your old ones.

**3. On-site work.** This will vary from days to weeks, depending on the extent of work to be performed. Your contractor can (and should!) advise you on the time line in advance. Chances are, by the time the project is completed, you'll be about four to eight months later than when you wrote your first check, longer for major additions.

## **Is there an average price-per square-foot for a room addition or other remodel?**

Many variables must be considered when remodeling or adding a room to an existing home to arrive at an "average" square-foot price. These include:

- The home's current engineering/structural aspects along, with the potential impact of any proposed changes
- The age of the home (many older homes do not meet current building code requirements) and what is required to bring the home into current code requirements
- Location and condition of existing plumbing and electrical wiring, and how any additions will impact the system's overall integrity
- Required changes to the roof line
- Zoning requirements and setbacks currently enforced
- Types of finished materials and hardware to be included
- Interior surface choices (Corian, granite, natural stone or tile?)
- Plumbing and light fixtures (spa shower or hot tub, recessed lighting?)

In short, unlike new construction, there is no “average” square foot price when it comes to remodeling. However, based on many years of experience, Gage Construction is usually able to provide an approximate budget upon conducting an initial site visit.

### **“Should I stay or should I go?”**

Many factors will influence your decision to stay and renovate, or to move to a new home. The most important is usually location. The current location may be so ideal that it may be an easy decision to stay. The lack of availability of suitable building lots in the desired area may also dictate staying in your existing home.

Economic factors will also likely play a role. Over-improving a house for the neighborhood may dissuade some people from renovating, while improving the house to match a more sophisticated neighborhood may drive the decision to stay.

Sometimes a particular requirement just won't be economically feasible in an existing home. For example, if your vision demands 9' ceilings for a balanced look and feel, and your current home has 8' ceilings, it is probably more economical to choose a new location over renovation.

Living through a large-scale renovation can be a substantial interruption to your day-to-day life. And you'll want your project to go as quickly as possible, which might require more access by the builder. This is a crucial factor when selecting a construction company. Gage Construction works with you to find a proper balance to make your project go as smoothly as possible. Be sure to talk to your builder about your concerns right up front to be sure that you are on the same page.

### **How do I know that you are insured?**

Great question. As a consumer this is a vital thing to have before you begin a project. All builders should carry worker compensation and liability coverage. If they do not and an accident were to occur on your property, you could be liable for injuries and damages. Gage Construction is fully insured to protect you and our workers. We are always happy to have a copy of our insurance certification sent directly to you from our insurance carrier. We can also show proof of insurance for any of our subcontractors that work for us.

