

12 MONTH BUILD PREP PLANNER



START DESIGN WORK ~12 MONTHS BEFORE BREAKING GROUND:

For a fully custom home, expect **6–8 months** of design + engineering, then **3–5 months** for permits, bidding, and builder readiness.

MONTHS 1-3 → PRE-DESIGN

- **Lot & Site Work:** Complete survey, soil test, perc test, check zoning and setbacks, decide on general build site (especially relevant for large parcels needing significant infrastructure considerations).
- **Budget & Financing:** Define budget ranges based on local build costs and your personal finances, consult a lender about construction loan products, apply for pre-approval. (fun fact: our clients receive a 100+ page planning guide and budget worksheets to help with this!)
- **Vision Gathering:** Collect design inspiration, ideas, wants, wishes etc.
- **Architect/Designer Search:** Decide if you want a fully custom plan, a stock plan, or a modified stock plan. Sign a contract with us, buy plans/place your deposit. (note: some clients choose to start this phase prior to financing)

MONTHS 4-7 → DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

- **Concept Plans:** Rough layouts, elevations, floor plan studies. At Back Forty, we will start with your doodles, inspo from stock plans, or by creating a space plan for you based off of a design discovery process (this phase depends on how strong of a vision you have coming in- but don't worry! We're pros at helping you drill down on what you want in your home design)
- **Feedback Loops:** We deliver a preliminary plan (the first set of plans usually takes us ~3 weeks from the time you sign your contract). After that, you'll iterate with us to refine layout and features. Usually, clients go through 2-3 rounds of revisions, with each cycle taking a couple weeks.
- **Renderings + Interior Models:** We'll create a virtual 3D walk through of your home to be sure that every detail is how you envisioned it! Depending on your design package, there may be additional interior or exterior renderings at this phase.



MONTHS 8,9 → CONSTRUCTION DOCS

- **Early Builder Input:** Structural or site considerations flagged early. We are happy to work with your building manufacturer or General Contractor during this phase to ensure your plans align with site or product-specific factors.
- **Permit-Ready Set:** Completed documents packaged for submittal/quotes from builder. It usually takes us 2-3 weeks to complete your full plan set, once your preliminary plan is approved.
- **Pre-Bid Discussions:** Start conversations with potential contractors.
- **Detailed Drawings, Engineering:** Plans finalized with additional structural inputs (truss manufacturer etc), MEP, engineering as needed. (note: some builders have a specific engineer, tradespeople, and suppliers they work with. If you plan to use a General Contractor, we recommend holding off on this phase until you've chosen your builder)



MONTHS 9-12 → BIDDING & PERMITTING

- **Contractor Bids/Contract:** Send plans out for pricing, review bids, and negotiate contract (note: some builders will require a deposit/retainer to produce full, itemized bids)
- **Permit Submittal:** Submit to local jurisdiction (can take 4–8+ weeks, and may require minor adjustments to your plans).
- **Selections:** Start choosing long-lead items and finishes/materials that will have the most impact your budget (windows, cabinets, etc).



MONTH 13 → BREAK GROUND

- **Permits Approved:** Final paperwork in hand. It's go time!
- **Builder Ready:** All contracts signed, loan/financing closed, schedule locked.
- **Site Prep:** Clearing, grading, and excavation begin.

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***Note: this is not intended to be a "one size fits all" planner. Please be aware that in some areas, timelines listed may be shorter or longer. Actual sequence of events may vary depending on your unique home, finances, builder, and goals.