

# CUSTOM DESIGN GUIDE



# WHAT IS A CUSTOM FLOOR PLAN?

## AND, DO I EVEN NEED ONE?

So, you want to build a home!? How exciting! Your home is one of the biggest, most important investments you'll make in your lifetime.

Typically, the "first stop" in planning your build is finding house plans. There are lots of sites online (ours included!) that have great stock plans. Most stock plan sites will even make minor customizations of the floor plan for a small fee.

However, a lot of people also opt for something totally custom...a "one-of-a-kind" home that was thoughtfully designed at every corner to suit their exact needs and tastes. *We often find folks contact us for custom design for one of four reasons:*

01

YOU CAN'T FIND A STOCK PLAN YOU LOVE, OR THAT YOU ARE INTERESTED IN MODIFYING

02

YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE WORKING THROUGH THE THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU IN A HOME, AND NEED HELP VISUALIZING HOW BEST TO LAY OUT AND DESIGN YOUR HOME TO SUIT THEIR NEEDS, BUDGET, AND STYLE.

03

YOU HAVE DRAWN A FLOOR PLAN YOU LOVE, BUT NEED FORMAL CONSTRUCTION SETS DRAWN TO BE STRUCTURALLY AND DIMENSIONALLY ACCURATE AND VALID FOR PERMITS, OR FOR FABRICATING A BUILDING

04

YOU HAVE FOUND LAYOUTS OR PLANS THAT YOU LIKE, BUT THAT ARE NOT TRANSFERABLE TO STEEL OR POST-FRAME STRUCTURES, OR NOT COST EFFECTIVE FOR A STEEL OR POST-FRAME BUILDING.

MEET BACK FORTY BUILDING CO.

# WHO SHOULD DESIGN MY FLOOR PLAN?

Yes, we will admit, we're a bit biased here! However, there are some tried-and true guidelines for making the important decision of who will help you to design your home! Here's some things to consider:

## EXPERIENCED DRAFTING AND ARCHITECTURE TEAM

A great drafting and design team will understand building code, have expert structural knowledge, and a background in residential/home design. Our staff has over 30 years of architectural design experience and our design team is led by a full-time barndominium builder!

## GREAT LISTENING SKILLS

Your home is about YOU. Working with a team that is able to listen and bring your unique vision to life is critical. Our top priority is to take your ideas, and provide creative solutions to make your floor plan functional, beautiful, and everything you pictured!

## DESIGN + SPATIAL SAVVY

You want a design team that can take your list of, say, features you want in a master bath, and turn those in to a functional, well-thought out space. You'll be spending a lot of time in your home, so it's important that your design team can help you get the features and the "feel" you're dreaming of!

## COLLABORATIVE ATTITUDE

You want a design team that can communicate with your builder, or any other person or company working on your home project! Our only goal is to "wow" you with a fun, stress-free experience, and get your GC, bank, or building department the documents they need to complete your home!

*Liv & Tanner Berg*

*Paul + Emily Marshall*





# WHAT TYPES OF HOMES CAN YOU DESIGN?

## POST FRAME OR POLE BARN

Designed to your specs, typically based on 8' on-center posts

## STEEL BUILDING

Including tube-leg, hybrid buildings, open-web truss, and rigid-frame or "red-iron" I-beam structures

## STICK BUILT

Traditional stick framed home, designed using vertical lumber framing, and wood trusses

## SIP PANELS

Utilizing wall systems that combine both structure and insulation

"3 months into our barndo design with another company, we switched to Liv at Back Forty Buildings. She helped us redesign and added the creativity and professional insight we needed. We LOVED working with her and love the home we will be building!."

-Amberly D, Via Google Review





**FROM MR POST FRAME-**

As a barndominium builder, I understand the challenges that come with designing and building a quality home.

From day one I have been committed to helping our clients realize their dreams by providing high quality barndominium plans and industry-leading resources you won't find anywhere else.

We don't just sell plans, **we provide a process!** Ready to build your barndo? Let's go!

*-Paul*

Co-Owner, Back Forty Buildings

## INCLUDED WITH YOUR PLANS:

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

In this guide we will cover:

1. Is a Barndo For Me?
2. Land Acquisition
3. Financing
4. Insurance
5. Permits + Engineering
6. Site Prep + Utilities
7. Budgeting + Estimating
8. General Contracting
9. Design
10. Foundations + Storm Shelters
11. Insulation
12. Plumbing + Electrical
13. HVAC + Energy Sources
14. Final Info

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## The barndominium budget worksheet

The most comprehensive budgeting tool for your barndominium project. It can be used with post, steel/hybrid, or stick frame construction.

## The barndominium planning guide

THE definitive barndominium build resource!


Over 100 pages of information, answers to the most commonly asked barndo questions, workbook materials, organizational resources, construction knowledge and building tips! There are also QR codes throughout the guide pointing you to additional videos and helpful info



**PREPARATION**

Design  
Permits + Fees  
Utility Costs


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**STRUCTURE**

Costs associated with the foundation + type of barndominium you're choosing to build.


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**WHO'S IN CHARGE**

Keep tracking of who is managing each part of your project, subs, suppliers, + more.

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**TRACKING**

See your price per square foot, budgeted total, + actual running total as the project moves forward.

# Your home, brought to life

Perhaps the most exciting part of custom house plans is the ability to truly visualize your new home! We offer several tools and services to help clients do this (and it's all included!)

## PHOTOREALISTIC EXTERIOR RENDERINGS

A gallery of hi-res renderings of what your home will look like on completion, designed to your finish tastes and specifications

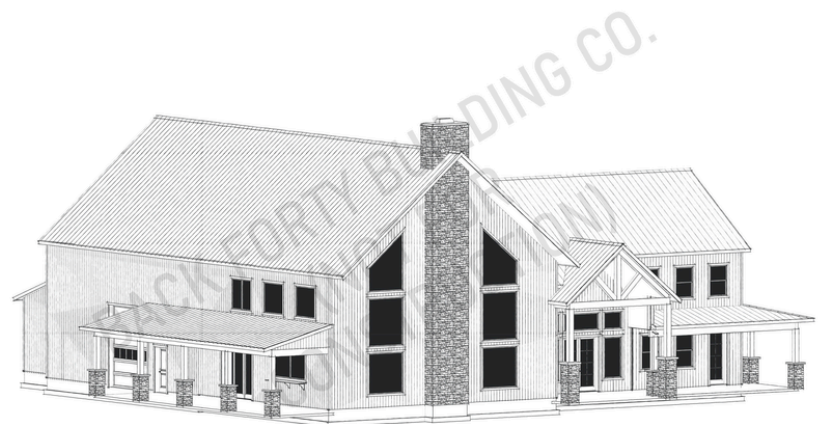


## NAVIGABLE 3-D MODEL

Visualize your layout in 3D with a model of your entire home that you can navigate in real time! This unique perspective is helpful with space planning and understanding how various rooms in your home will feel "in real life"

## 3-D EXTERIOR SKETCH

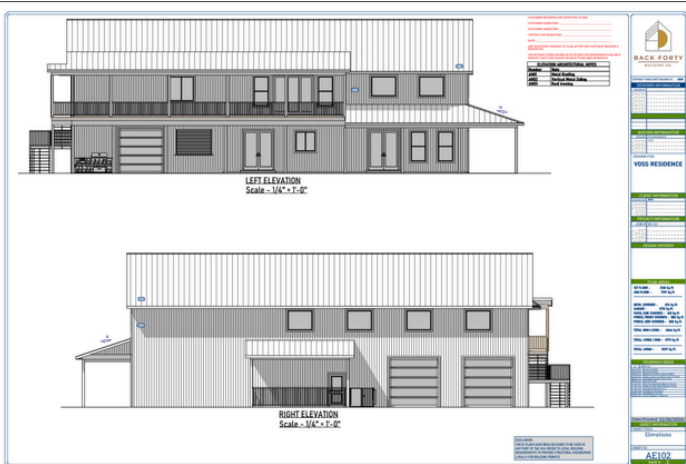
The 3D exterior sketch helps you focus on the architectural features of your home without being distracted by colors and materials. We've even had clients print their 3D sketches and frame as keepsakes!



# What do my plans include?

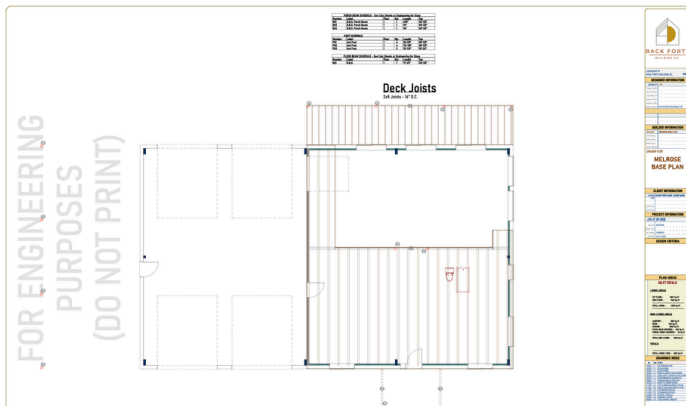
## EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS

Exterior elevations are drawings that show how the finished home will approximately look. In this section, elevations of the front, rear and left and right sides of the home are shown. Exterior materials, details and heights are noted on these drawings.



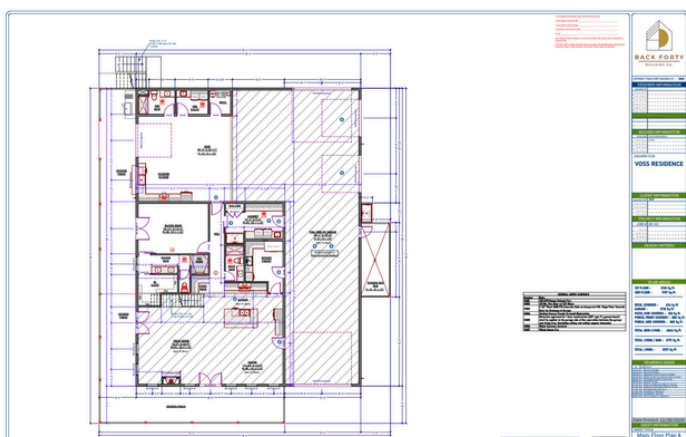
## FLOOR FRAMING REFERENCE

This document is used specifically for engineering and floor framing purposes, showing the type of truss or joist that is recommended, spacing etc.



## DETAILED FLOOR PLANS

This section provides detailed floor plan drawings and descriptions of all the elements that will be included on each floor of the home. The home's exterior footprint, openings and interior rooms are carefully dimensioned. Important features are noted including built-ins, niches and appliances. All doors and windows are identified. This section also includes the square footage information.



# PRELIM-STRUCTURAL FOUNDATION PLAN

The foundation plan shows the location of footings, piers, columns, foundation walls, and other slab details. The foundation plan is drawn from the information presented on the floor plan, and also notes locations of plumbing fixtures. Some clients provide this sheet directly to their experienced foundation/concrete sub, and some clients take this to a structural engineers.

# ROOF PLAN

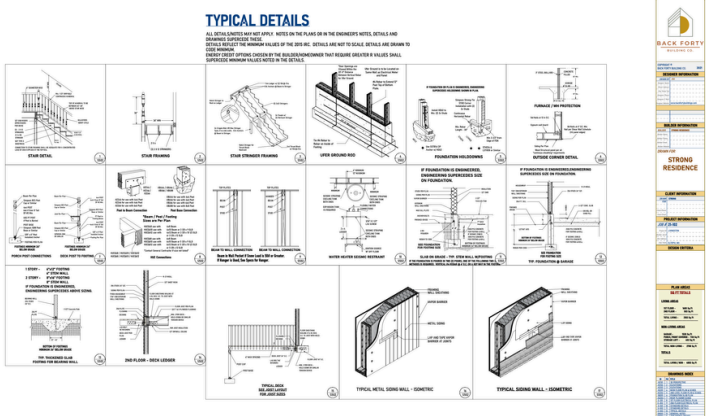
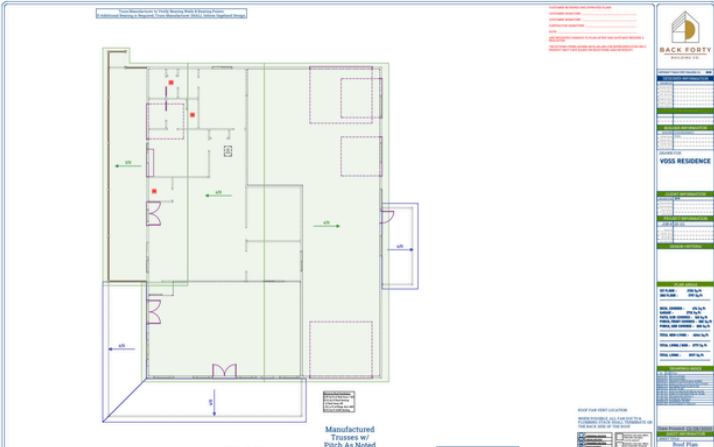
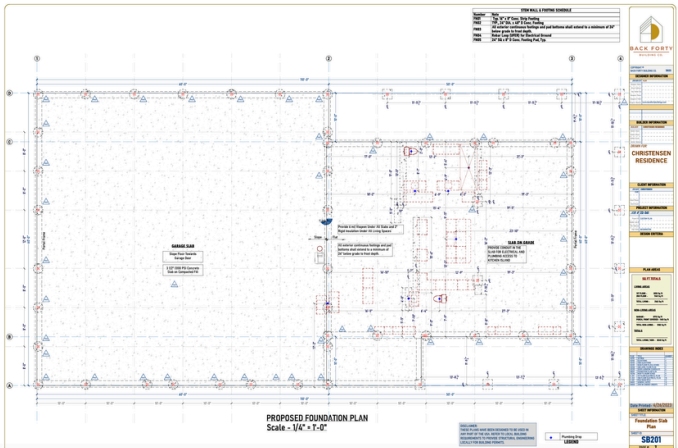
The overall layout and necessary details for roof design are provided in this section. If standard trusses are used, you'll take this to your local truss manufacturer to design your roof trusses to comply with your local code and engineering requirements.

# LIGHTING PLAN

This section shows an electrical lighting plan that will enhance functionality and highlight your style and features of the home that you want to draw out. Bear in mind that while your electrical plan is designed to meet building code, many clients will end up making modifications to this plan with their electrician, as well as placing their outlets.

# DETAILS AND NOTES

This section addresses all the facets and typical details you will want to include in your home, with the exception of local building code requirements. Architectural and structural elements are detailed, including steel or pole barn specific notes (which most plans and design firms will not provide!)





## WE'RE ALL ABOUT TRANSPARENCY...

Each plan is designed to be consistent with the International Residential Code (IRC) in effect at the time the plan was created. Determining and complying with all applicable local codes is the responsibility of you and your builder.

We provide all of the information needed on our plans for your trade professional to do their job. This includes things like showing drain/ drop locations and fixtures for your plumber, and ensuring there is ample space for your HVAC installer to run your duct work or place mechanicals. We provide a lighting and circuit plan (see previous page) and any in-slab or specialty receptacles for your electrician. It is standard to use our plans to then create specific schematics with the licensed subcontractor that will be installing your HVAC plumbing, or electrical (typically, this is included in their services). Features are highly variable and customizable, according to your aesthetic preferences, budget, energy code, geographic location, and install techniques of your subcontractor

Additionally, while most post-frame, SIP, and steel building manufacturers will stamp your building envelope, they do not typically stamp the interior framing. If your building department requires a stamp on your interior portion, they will only accept a stamp from an engineer licensed in the state where you plan to build. We can provide CAD files for a small fee to assist in engineering (or for your subcontractors).

Architectural Design and Engineering are two different disciplines (both important in building a custom home). While we provide buildable plans that are ready for construction, some jurisdictions may require engineering, site evaluations, soil studies etc. (all outside of the scope of our plans). Many clients build homes we design without engineering, but if your county requirements necessitate engineering, we can facilitate that in most states!

What  
isn't  
included  
in my  
plans?



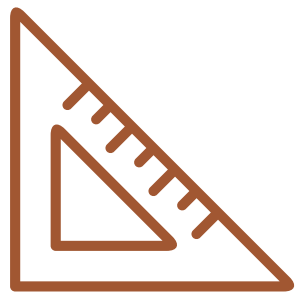
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BUILDING CO.

*Check out some of our work!*



# STEEL OR POST FRAME BUILDING?

HERE'S WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO WORK WITH A STEEL-EXPERT HOME DESIGNER:



While we design all types of barndominiums, steel and post-frame buildings are **very different** than most homes. Their structural support members, framing requirements, etc. make a big impact on the layout of your home and your house plans. Most "stick built" plans are not inherently transferrable to a steel or post frame building, and often require moving windows, doors, changing rooflines etc.

It's far easier and more cost effective to start designing your plans specifically for a steel or post frame building, with a design agency that understands how those structures work.

There are lots of questions that need answered when building a steel or post-frame home: How are your primary columns or posts going to be placed so that they are minimally invasive to your interior? What opportunities do we have to save costs by X-bracing or maintaining bay spacing rather than portal framing? Where can we adjust openings to maintain 8' on-center post spacing? These are not questions a stick-built home designer will ask, but ones that can save you money and time if answered on the front end.

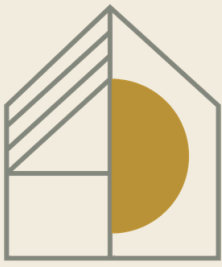
What is more, there are a number of different ways to go about "building out" the interior of a steel or post frame home, as well as different building codes that often govern steel homes and post-frame buildings. At Back Forty, we not only design barndominiums, but we also build and live in them, and can help ensure clients have access to the most up-to-date build methods.

We are also able to work with our network of steel manufacturers to **price your building design in "real-time"** and help create the ideal steel envelope for your home. When you work with Back Forty, your plans are true steel or post frame plans, which call out column/post placement, and use building details specific to your desired structure type.



"Liv was amazing to work with! When it came to customizing one of their stock floor plans to meet our wants but also budget and size restrictions, she listened to our ideas, provided honest feedback and her and the Back Forty Building team worked quickly to creatively give us everything we had hoped for."

-Lauren D, Via Google Review



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BUILDING CO.

# OUR CUSTOM-DESIGN PROCESS

## PROPOSAL AND DEPOSIT



If you decide to work with Back Forty, we send you a simple proposal and a deposit for 50% of the estimated cost of your project. Like most design firms, we calculate this by square foot. **We charge \$1.50 per sq. ft. for living space, and \$0.35 per sq. ft. for non-living space like garages, shops, and barns. Porches, overhangs, patios, and breezeways are free.**



## ONBOARDING

Everyone has a different starting point, and our process is custom tailored to YOU! Your project manager may employ a variety of tools as we prepare to work on your project, including our Design Questionnaire, virtual meetings, concept/space plan, etc! We keep the process fun, informative, and efficient.



## PRELIM CONCEPT + PLAN

Once your deposit is paid, we get to work! You'll get a design questionnaire from us, as well as an introduction to your dedicated Project Manager. You can expect a preliminary floor plan ready for you to review in 7-14 business days (depending on size, current lead times, etc.).



## REVISION AND EDITING PROCESS

Take your time! Ask a lot of questions! Don't hold anything back! During this phase, we will be making requested changes, offering suggestions, and providing new plans for your review. **Your design package comes with three major revision cycles, after the initial prelim.** There is a \$150 fee for each *major* revision cycle beyond the included four preliminary plans.



## FINALIZED PLANS + RENDERINGS

Woo hoo! Now we celebrate! Your complete construction sets are finalized, and we provide you with your renderings and 3D model...your home has officially come to life!



# A DESIGN AS UNIQUE AS YOU

At many design firms you're just a project number, getting "passed off" to other designers (or even outsourced to independent contractors). At Back Forty our in-house team works collectively on all projects, and you receive a dedicated Project Manager, in addition to our experienced designers!

We take immense pride in ensuring each and every plan meets strict quality standards, and that our clients have an experience that aligns with our "Five E's":

**Easy**  
**Enjoyable**  
**Educational**  
**Exceeds Expectations**

It's a huge honor to be trusted with your home design, and we can't wait to work with you!

# ASSEMBLE YOUR DREAM TEAM, FOR YOUR DREAM HOME!

We recognize the importance of working collaboratively with your building manufacturer, and offer a level of expertise and service AFTER your plans are completed, that is unmatched by any other design firm in the U.S.

We offer an in-house network of manufacturers who provide competitive pricing and 5-star service to Back Forty Clients. We also are happy to work directly with the building manufacturer of your choice.

We also have an extensive network of builders, lenders, suppliers, and other industry professionals that we are happy to recommend to our clients.

"The Back Forty Team, is such a great business to work with. They went above and beyond trying to meet our needs and requirements to help us meet code for our county so that we can build our home. If your looking for a great designer for your home and have any questions about barndos Liv is your gal, she is great! Thank you so much for making our dream a reality"

-Alison S, Via Google Review



[backfortybuildings.com](http://backfortybuildings.com)

