

# Better Builder's Proven Roadmap to Create the Home of your Dreams



## INTRODUCTION

Author Simon Sinek is famous for inviting people to “find their why.” In creating your dream home this advice is well heeded. We love to help people discover not just what they want in a new home, but dig down to the why. What is missing from your current home? Are life changes – like kids moving out or parents moving in – causing you to think about renovating your home or even building a new home? Why are you sensing that this is the right time to make some big changes?

Finding your “why” will help answer the “what”. When you find your why, we as builders discover not just what you want your house to look like, but how it needs to function. The end result is a home that fits you rather than you having to bend and compromise to fit your home. Understanding your needs, wants, and especially your why is how we build a roadmap to the home of your dreams.

## FINDING YOUR ‘WHY’

You might think finding your “why” is easy, but often it is not. Clients can easily tell us what they want but sometimes they find it hard to tell us why. We have developed a process of discovery that revolves around a series of questions. Through asking questions we can help you discover your why. By asking these questions we determine what you are looking for, whether it is a major full-home renovation, kitchen or bath remodel, an addition, or a new home. The idea is to align your desires and values with your building team.

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*Through asking questions we can help you discover your why.*

Our goal is to develop a true partnership. Understanding your needs, wants, and goals is key in making sure we are a good fit to not just meet, but exceed your expectations in all those areas. Better Builders does not operate transactionally. With our extended warranty, we will be with you not just through the remodel or build, but through the 5 year warranty. Since your “why” is so tied to your values, it is important to understand our values too – to ensure a solid match.

## BETTER BUILDER'S VALUES

We feel strongly that environmentally safe building practices should be the norm in the industry, and we want to be at the forefront of the changes needed to make green building standard business. Here is what you can expect from us as we seek to minimize the environmental impact of the building process itself and the products that will remain with you in your home after our work is done.

All of what we do involves green building. We care about the safety and well being of our employees and homeowners. That is why we are committed to using low or no volatile organic compound (VOC) paints and adhesives, and no added urea-formaldehyde in materials we bring into your home. We run HEPA air scrubbers to keep the air free of dust and debris, and we reuse and upcycle materials whenever possible.

We acknowledge that the building industry historically and even today can be harsh on the environment, so we take steps to lessen that impact where we can. We use waste management companies that sort and recycle about 85% of the waste on a typical project.

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## OUR PROMISE RUNS DEEP

The philosophy of the company is not just doing what is easy, but always doing what is right.

Another standard we bear is the **Better Builder Promise**. This is our commitment to communicate in a regular and clear manner, use quality materials, communicate and maintain an accurate schedule, keep the project clean, organized and safe, and to treat you, your family, and property with respect and professionalism.

**How do we make sure that promise is more than a nice thing to hand out at the beginning of a project?** We use a survey with five weekly questions to check in with the client so we can make sure communication is as crystal-clear as possible, and we are meeting or exceeding expectations on our promises. **If we cannot successfully fulfill those promises, at the end of the job we give money back, at \$500 per promise.**

We understand also that expectations change along with changes to the scope or details of the project. As the needs of the homeowner change, they need to know we have a process that adapts with them.

For instance, we have found that clients' expectations for communication start out one way but may evolve as the project progresses. The weekly questionnaire allows us to discover these changes and respond to them. Good enough is not good enough.

You are inviting us into your home, often for an extended period of time. We want to establish a relationship of trust before, during, and after the process.



The relationship extends to our subcontractors too. We have an extensive vetting process. We require our trade partners to sign an agreement holding them accountable for reference and background checks for their employees, proof of insurance, licenses, and bonds.

We rely on an eclectic mix of design partners. There is no one singular style that defines the Pacific Northwest, so we match your style and personality with the right design team. To keep projects on track, we hold weekly meetings with design partners to review progress on every project.

Once you understand Better Builder's values and we understand your "why" the question quickly becomes, how do we make this happen? What does the process beyond this idea and understanding stage look like?



## BETTER BUILDERS SERVICE OFFERINGS

When we have a general sense of what your needs are through a discovery call, we'll set up a time to dig deeper. The goal, again, is to build a long term relationship, through the design and build process, all the way through the length of warranty and beyond. We are in this for the long haul.

### Custom Home Building

**Is your roadmap showing a custom home in your future?** While Better Builders has been in business for 11 years, our team has more than 35 years of experience helping clients build the right home for them.



*Learn about our custom home service*



If you have been looking for land in and around Seattle lately, you know that buildable lots are at a premium. More common is to tear down an existing home that is beyond saving and build your home on that land.

Zoning laws vary depending on what municipality you are building in. We'll help you navigate those local bureaucracies. We'll walk the property and sometimes even fly a drone over the property to get a clear lay of the land. Would a rooftop deck be a good idea? Where would the best views be? How about a walkout basement? What are you hoping for on the property now, and what will your needs be in the future? We want to build you a home that will not just last, but suit your needs for years to come.

For example, when a family wants to age in place, we would implement universal design principles to ensure they can. Custom homes can be very expensive but the right home builder can guide you through the process and ensure you maximize your investment, getting a balance of what you want and need.

When searching for the right contractor, make sure you are getting estimates on the full scope of your finished project, including all specifications. Working with a builder who is the right fit for you and shares your values is the best approach for successful collaboration.

## Home Remodeling

Remodeling can range in scope from a bathroom refresh, through updating the entire home including outdoor spaces. It may be more desirable to temporarily move out during your remodel. Should you choose to live in the home during a remodeling project, the building team will be sharing your personal space.

We have protocols around safety, security of your belongings, and keeping the areas where we are not working sectioned off from the dust and debris of the area being remodeled. Will children and/or pets be a consideration? We like to take into account any disruption that is possible during a remodeling project, and plan accordingly to minimize stress and complications.

Our goal is to be low-impact on your family as well as the environment. With our earth conscious approach to everything we do, we want a process that is better for the environment, the neighborhood, and you as the homeowner. We want what's best for our family members (Better Builders are a family) and we treat our clients as family too. Before the remodel begins, we set expectations with the client (both ours and theirs) and establish boundaries for the project.

## Auxiliary Dwelling Units (ADU) and Detached Auxiliary Dwelling Units (DADU)

Whether you are looking at the short-term rental market or just having extra space for multiple generations to visit or live, maximizing the comfort and design of ADUs and DADUs can add value and useability to your property. On the other hand, during consultation, we often find that a less costly addition (especially compared to a DADU) will accomplish your goals for more space for friends and family. We're here to help you make the best decision for your family, home, and budget.



Learn about our home remodeling service →

- [Whole Home](#)
- [Basements](#)
- [Kitchen](#)
- [Bathrooms](#)
- [Additions](#)
- [Patios & Decks](#)
- [Recreation Rooms](#)



Learn about our ADU service →

## THE BETTER BUILDERS PROCESS ROADMAP

Here is the process you can expect from us as you engage our services.



### 1. Consultation

This includes an overview on the design process, getting clear on pricing (both costs and your budget), and the overall feasibility of a project. An initial consultation allows you to explore your options to arrive at the best solution for your needs.

The consultation provides clarity about next steps. Once options are explored and a path is chosen, we are at the start of that roadmap to creating the home of your dreams.



### 2. Design Agreement

During this phase of the project, we will kick off the 3-steps of design by providing a free DiSC Assessment. At Better Builders, we use the DiSC profile to assess your preferred communication style to better guide you through the overall process.

- **Schematic design:** This is where your dream becomes visualized into an initial drawing of the new floor plan.
- **Design development:** This involves developing elevations, including interior details for construction, 3D renderings and finish selections (sinks, faucets, bathtubs, countertops, cabinets, etc).
- **Construction documents:** This includes structural engineering documentation (if necessary), surveys, geotechnical engineering, wetland delineation and any necessary permits.



### 3. Pricing 'Subparty'

There are two main types of agreements, **Fixed Price** or **Cost-Plus** which is time-and-materials. Fixed pricing involves an in-depth pricing phase to create a detailed package outlining the exact cost of your particular project. Fixed pricing can be seen as a guaranteed price for your project. Because we are the professionals, we believe it's our responsibility to estimate the costs correctly up front and our responsibility to complete the job within that number.

As part of acquiring the most accurate fixed cost pricing, Better Builders hosts a 'subparty,' which is a meeting at the client's home that includes the project developer, estimator, design team and any trade partners that need to see the existing conditions in order to provide the most accurate cost for their portion of the work. This is also a time where the design team can observe potential challenges with the design and problem-solve in advance of construction, saving the client time and money.



### 4. From Design to Construction

In this step, we sit down with the homeowner to review the final detailed scope of work, budget and design documents. Once expectations and detailed plans are aligned, the homeowner provides their approval to move forward with construction.

Construction Agreement: Once we've received a signed agreement and deposit, it sets the wheels in motion for the transition from design to production which includes an internal and external handoff of the project.



## 5. Project Handoff

The internal handoff is where the project development and estimating team meets with the production team to review and reconcile the details of the project as well as our client's specific needs, preferred communication style based on their DiSC Assessment, lifestyle, and habits. This is also when the production team begins identifying long lead time items and outlining the schedule.

The external handoff is the formal introduction of the production team to the homeowner onsite to begin developing their trusted relationship. In this step, the production team collects information from the homeowner. Questions could be:

- What are the names and schedules of the existing service providers to the home, like landscapers or cleaners?
- Who has access to the home to ensure the safety of the home and family?
- Who are the friendly neighbors and possibly not so friendly ones?

In an effort to direct any issues or questions away from the homeowner and instead to Better Builders, we hang 'pardon our dust' door hangers with our direct contact information on the neighbors' front doors.

This walk-through and introduction is the official 'passing of the baton' between project development and production.



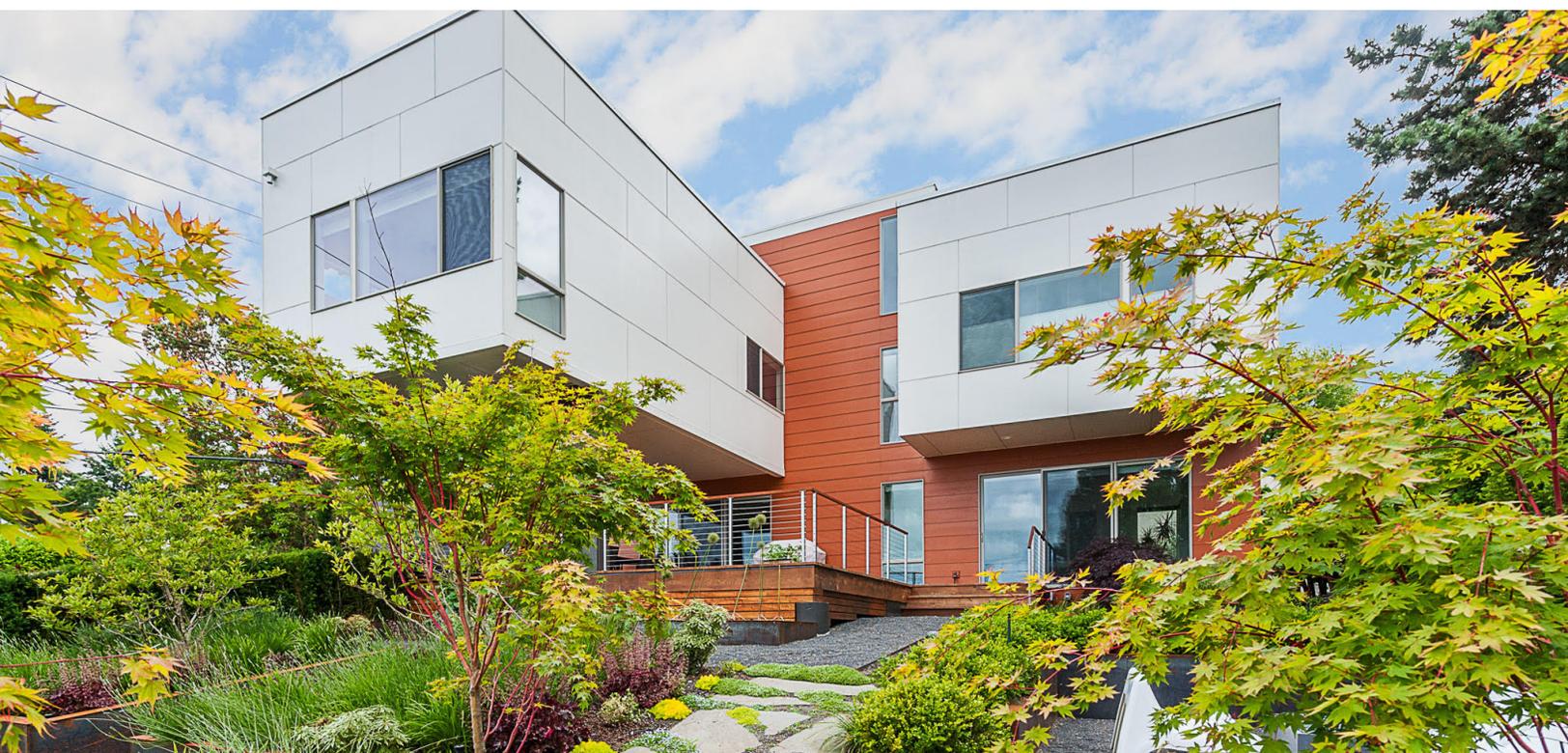
## 6. Project Mobilization

This is where the production schedule is written and items and materials with long-lead times are ordered. Our goal is to streamline the process as much as possible by having the schedule created so that the arrival of building materials/items coincide with the start of the project. This ensures an efficient project schedule and that the homeowner isn't inconvenienced anymore than they have to be.

## Common Project Timelines

While we are able to provide rough timelines for common project types, the estimated timeline for your specific project will be provided by production following the external handoff. Below are examples of common timelines, special orders and extenuating circumstances may cause these schedules to vary.

- **Kitchen:** ~12-14 weeks
- **Kitchen plus** (expanding kitchen into other rooms, take down walls, etc.): ~12-18 weeks
- **Shared bath** (guest or kids bathrooms): ~8-12 weeks
- **Ensuite bathroom:** ~10 -14 weeks
- **Finished basement** (ADU): ~14 -18 weeks
- **One-room addition with crossover work** (incorporating it with the rest of the home): ~16 - 24 weeks
- **Whole-home renovation:** ~6 -12 months
- **New construction:** ~12-24 months



## WE ARE CARETAKERS OF THE PROCESS

We take our role as caretakers of the roadmap to the home of your dreams very seriously. You are making dramatic changes, perhaps even designing an entirely new home for you and your family. Guiding you through that process to a beautiful new beginning is an honor and a privilege.

But don't just take our word for it. Here is the experience shared with us by recent client Elise K.

*"We were happy with our experience working with Better Builders. Once all of the budgeting was said and done, it did not change throughout the project. The final result looks great, and was done with quality in mind. They were not the least expensive company we could have gone with, but we feel good about the quality of the construction and the guarantee they provide going forward. We appreciated their communication and timeliness throughout the project."*

Reach out to **Better Builders** for remodeling or custom home goals. We are here to help guide you through the process of refining your wants and needs while maximizing your budget for the project. Better Builders is more than just a name, it's the way we do business.

