WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

DESIGN BUILD

How to Create A Better
Remodeling Experience

6 Myths
About The Costs of
Bidding vs. Design Build

10
Questions to
Ask *Your* Contractor

What to Expect
When You Remodel

Design is not just what it looks like & feels like. Design is how it works.

- Steve Jobs, Co-founder of Apple, Inc.

Introduction

Once you decide to remodel your home, you are not only making a substantial investment, but you are selecting the contractor you will **live and work** with, side-by-side, for the coming months. This is not a decision that should be entered into quickly or without careful consideration.

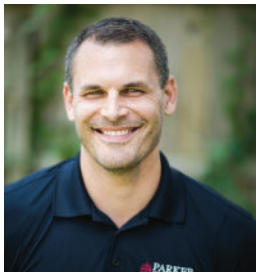
The remodeling industry is full of come-and-go contractors and after more than 15 years in the industry, we have literally seen the good, bad, and the ugly. For this reason, we have developed a unique process that allows us to serve as your partner throughout the remodeling project.

This approach provides consistently high levels of service and is the #1 reason why we have an A+ rating with the Better Business Bureau (BBB).
We have developed this guide, to:

- Introduce you to Parker Design Build Remodel,
- Help you understand the value of processes in remodeling,
- Help you benefit from transparency and partnership in remodeling,
- Help you avoid common mistakes,
- Create an enjoyable remodeling experience on ***Your Journey to a Better Home.***

Although many homeowners may be tempted to go with the lowest bid, we'll discuss why this is an ineffective approach to remodeling and often costs you more in the long run. More important we'll show you how we can ensure your project stays on-time and, more importantly, on-budget while creating an experience you'll fondly reflect upon for years to come!

So, if you are contemplating a home improvement or remodeling project, here is what we believe you should know to save yourself time, money, and headaches. Most importantly, we want you to have the best remodeling experience possible!



CHRIS PARKER, OWNER
PARKERDESIGNBUILD.COM

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris began his career as a carpenter's helper and was consistently promoted and given more responsibility serving as a Master Carpenter and Project Manager. In 2012, Chris created Parker Design Build Remodel with the goal of providing a better client experience by enhancing communication, utilizing technology, personally managing each project to provide a level of service that is unmatched.

PARKER
DESIGN • BUILD • REMODEL

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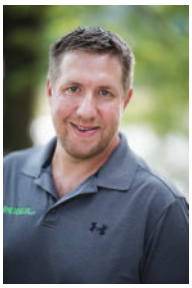
Our Team

Owner Chris Parker is personally involved in, and serves as the primary point of contact for, every project. Parker Design Build Remodel takes great pride in consistently earning an A+ rating from the Better Business Bureau. We understand that remodeling your home can be a disruptive process, so we take great care to assure that we understand your goals, your budget and your lifestyle. Then, we implement a systematized process to deliver your vision in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible. Parker Design Build Remodel is a family-owned business that has been serving the Baltimore metropolitan area for over 15 years and was awarded by SmartCEO as the winner of the Family Business Award for Small Business.

CHRIS PARKER, Owner
Chris founded Parker Design Build Remodel in 2012 and brings over 15 years of industry experience. Today, Chris personally manages each project and works directly with the homeowner from concept to completion. He takes pride in providing each client with a remodeling experience that is truly unique and rewarding.

MIKE STACK, Project Coordinator & Craftsman
Michael is our right-hand man who helps coordinate many of the daily job site activities and sub-contractors. Mike performs much of the carpentry work on each project. Mike especially enjoys seeing the transformation he can make to people's homes and likes the diversity of each day. Michael brings over 20 years of industry experience.

ALINA PARKER, Office Manager
Alina manages all administrative and bookkeeping tasks and assists with job-costing, project setup, employee and sub-contractor on-boarding.



RYAN BREDLOW, Architectural Designer
Ryan is our go-to full-time architectural designer with a genuine passion for designing and creating beautiful living spaces. Ryan takes pride in his abilities as a designer, with practical hands-on construction experience, that provides a unique perspective on the many facets of home building - a perspective that many designers/architects do not possess.

DAVID RATTI, Loan Officer
NMLS# 532652
David has over 30 years experience in construction and renovation financing and works with you, to provide financing options for many of the renovations we perform. David serves as a valuable resource to our clients.

In addition to our team, we can provide interior design services to assist you with the selection process, if desired.

We also have have established long-term relationships with specialty trade contractors who are true craftsmen that support best practices and are trusted partners for our projects. These contractors are specialists in their field and can also ensure the most advanced and efficient products are incorporated into the design.

Our Qualifications

Parker Design Build Remodel is a reputable professional remodeling firm. We carry all required insurance, as recommended by national industry associations and required by Maryland law. These policies are current and include:

- **General Liability $1,000,000**
- **Commercial Auto $1,000,000**
- **Workers Compensation Insurance**
- **MHIC# 100001 & MHBR# 7694**
- **Lead Paint Safe Certification from the EPA**

Parker Design Build Remodel has also been recognized as:

- **Baltimore's Best Design Build Firms**
- **BBB A+ Rating**
- **Consistent Google 5 Star Reviews**
- **Winner SmartCEO Family Business Award: Small Business**

How to Create A Better Experience

Consistent 5 Star Reviews and an A+ Rating by the Better Business Bureau!

After working for a number of years in the construction industry, for ***other*** contractors, Chris Parker realized there was something inherently wrong with the traditional approach to remodeling. The most common scenarios were:

1. Clients would begin the process of design and/or selecting a contractor. They would often get 3-4 bids, sometimes pay a design fee, and end up with a wide variance of pricing between one bid and another. They spent tremendous time and energy trying to get clear answers and decipher between apples and oranges. Ultimately, many of these clients would select a contractor and end up paying far more at the end of the project, than what was initially bid.
2. In many other circumstances, contractors and homeowners would start out on the right foot, excited to begin remodeling their home! Days or weeks into the project, the timelines and budgets became a distant memory. The project was falling behind and the homeowner just wanted to get through the project, no matter what the cost, or in some cases, abandoning the project altogether.

A Dream Without the Process is a Nightmare.

Chris believed the core problem really boiled down to the overall approach most contractors utilize for remodeling. Most contractors and homeowners get distracted by a bid process and fail to consider the value and importance of creating a **partnership** with **transparency** and the impact of **processes** to execute consistently every time. Let's explore these factors:

PARTNERSHIP

When a contractor's ***primary*** focus is to 'win the bid,' their ***secondary*** focus becomes the actual client, right? Is that the type of partnership you desire?

We believe this is ***not*** how a true partnership in remodeling should begin. After all, your home is your biggest asset. Your contractor will live and work with you, side-by-side, for the coming months. It's a big decision to invest in remodeling and you'll want to enter into a relationship with someone you like and trust. Our approach puts the client's needs first by focusing on a win/win scenario. Make no doubt, we want to win the job, but we also want to work with clients who understand the value of a collaborative partnership with their contractor. This kind of relationship assures your primary goals are met while also ensuring the contractor can serve as your trusted guide throughout the process, and at the end of the day, ensure the business model is viable for sustainability. We seek out projects where the partnership is just as important as the job. This provides a win/win scenario that provides a better experience for you... and us!

TRANSPARENCY

Most contractors are worried they will lose the job

based on price, so many contractors cut corners to get the job. They make lower-quality substitutions, omit key components, under staff a job to cut costs - whatever it takes to bring the cost down and win the bid! The most common practice, in the industry as a whole, is to figure out a way to make up the difference later. This often happens during the middle of the project, when the client is too far in to do anything about it.

This lack of transparency creates a shell-game where the contractor is focused on making up the difference. The homeowner doesn't trust anything they say, and the remodeling industry has the most complaints, according to the Better Business Bureau.

Transparency is key to establishing the partnership, trust, and type of exceptional remodeling experience we provide.

PROCESSES

Process is defined as, "a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end." By creating a proven, repeatable process, we can ensure something reaches a particular end. Most remodelers do not understand this simple concept. They fail to invest in the time or technology required to have a consistent outcome.

These remodelers are easy to spot - ask them to outline their process. It's not on paper, it's not on their website and most of the time, they are 'winging-it,' project by project. Unfortunately, the client's are often the guinea pigs. Failure to establish clear processes leads to inconsistency, mistakes,

miscommunication,and mismanaged expectations. How can a project possibly stay on-time and on-budget when there are no clear processes to guide every aspect of the project? At Parker Design Build Remodel, we thrive on processes. It's the core of what helps us consistently deliver time after time.

THE PINK ELEPHANT? *PRICE!*

As a homeowner, you no doubt want to get a good price on your remodeling project. If all things are equal, and you know you're comparing apples to apples (and this is a big IF), then the cost of labor and materials should be in the same ballpark, But, when a homeowner makes price the top priority, the shell-game is on! This is the approach many remodelers use to win the job, but it's a terrible approach, for the average homeowner, who doesn't understand how the numbers can be changed, throughout the project, resulting in a higher cost to you and very little leverage.

The contractor may substitute lower-quality products, omit or low-ball key specifications, utilize unreliable or un-vetted sub-contractors, and more! Review the case study on the following pages to see how this shell-game works when a contractor does not follow a process, low-balls a bid, and is less than transparent.

At Parker Design Build Remodel, our approach is to work with you, from the start, to determine a reasonable budget that will accommodate your needs and preferences. By approaching the design process in this manner, our clients often are provided additional design considerations, selections, or ways to value-engineer the project to meet your budget and time requirements. This approach also allows you to make thoughtful decisions during the design, with consideration for their impact on your budget, before construction begins. This kind of partnership aligns our goals with your goals and creates a much more satisfying partnership for us both.

The Parker Design Build Remodel **a**pproach incorporates these four concepts into a repeatable process. The process helps ensure client satisfaction and far more on-time and on-budget projects.

Our team is committed to the transparency and processes required to ensure the time, resources, and talent to execute the design and construction of every remodeling project.

This approach drives every project and has resulted in consistently phenomenal Google Reviews and an A+ by the Better Business Bureau. Parker Design Build Remodel is one of the only remodelers in Maryland with these consistent ratings of performance. We know that this approach delivers the best value for the best client experience! Check out our reviews for yourself at www.ParkerDesignBuild.com!

MYTHBUSTERS

When we compare the **Bid**-Build process to the **Design**-Build process**,** we have to debunk the preconcieved myths often associated with bidding a project. An educated homeowner will explore these differences to help create a better overall remodeling experience!

Myth #1: An architect can create a design that will be within my budget and provide comparable bids. If utilizing an architect and/or designer, remember that they are only responsible for putting ideas and visions on paper but **not** for ensuring the project can built for the budget you have. Often, actual costs provided by the contractor are much different than those estimated by the architect. It's much better to have the architect working directly with your contractor, as the designs are created, to ensure the design is compatible with your budget.

Myth #2. Bids Produce Better Pricing: When contractors are bidding for a project, they may cut costs wherever possible to 'get the job.' Contractors who operate under this model often provide lower quality products in their bids to reduce costs and often utilize low-bid, low-quality trade contractors. The results can be less than desirable. Sometimes, these contractors rely on costly change orders, later in the process, which end up costing the homeowner more, in the long run.

Myth #2. Failed Concepts: Many remodeling projects never make it past the planning stage because of poor planning, erroneous information, substandard quality or inaccurate cost assessments. Although the homeowner has plans in their hands relatively quickly, the costs of the project are not thoroughly evaluated until the selection process. This means that a lot of money may be invested in design concepts before anyone responsible for the overall project is involved. In this process, there is a much higher percentage of failed concepts. When a homeowner spends time and money on the design of a remodeling project without involving the contractor, you may end up with a failed concept.

Myth #3. Costs: Although many people mistakenly think the Bid-Build process will save money, it has been proven time after time, to often cost more! While the homeowner is focused on saving money (by bidding the project), the contractor is focused on cutting costs to win the bid, sometimes sacrificing quality or omitting specifications. During the Design-Build process, however, the contractor and homeowner are aligned and working towards the same goal - to build the project within the specified budget. Costs are discussed and agreed upon before the project begins and there are far fewer surprises.

Another way costs can be compromised is when a contractor gives a vague estimate. Be wary of any estimate that is vague, contains general allowances without detail, or is overly simplistic. Ultimately, you want your contractor to be fully accountable and responsible for the project being on-time and on-budget.

Myth #4. Feasibility: Is the construction of the project feasible? Has a structural engineer been involved in the design process and able to confirm that the existing structure will handle the proposed design changes? Is the design going to present any challenges with permitting? Are the costs for permitting (which vary greatly by county) and any impact fees included?

Myth #5. Value Engineering: This part of the process should occur **during the design phase** by someone who is proficient in estimating costs and responsible for adhering to the budget. Many contractors make assumptions and provide bids that are little more than rough estimates with loopholes, often based on TBD final selections. We believe **value engineering should occur as part of the design process**, not as part of the construction process.

Myth #6: Who Is The Point of Contact?
In the Bid-Build process, the homeowner potentially has multiple contracts with different providers. Accountability is spread across multiple providers and finger pointing can be a real problem for budget and time constraints. More importantly, no one has clear responsibility for overall project management, reining in costs, and keeping the project on track. This type of project often experiences far more delays, unexpected costs, and a poor remodeling experience.

Our Process

Below is an overview of our design build process and the approach we have found mos
expectations, and the most effective way to keep your remodeling project on-budget a
during the project development phase.

INITIAL CONSULTATION SOW, DESIGN & BUDGET

Review Client Goals
Preview Existing Conditions
Discuss Scope of Work
Determine Budget
Value Engineering Options
Deposit for Design Development

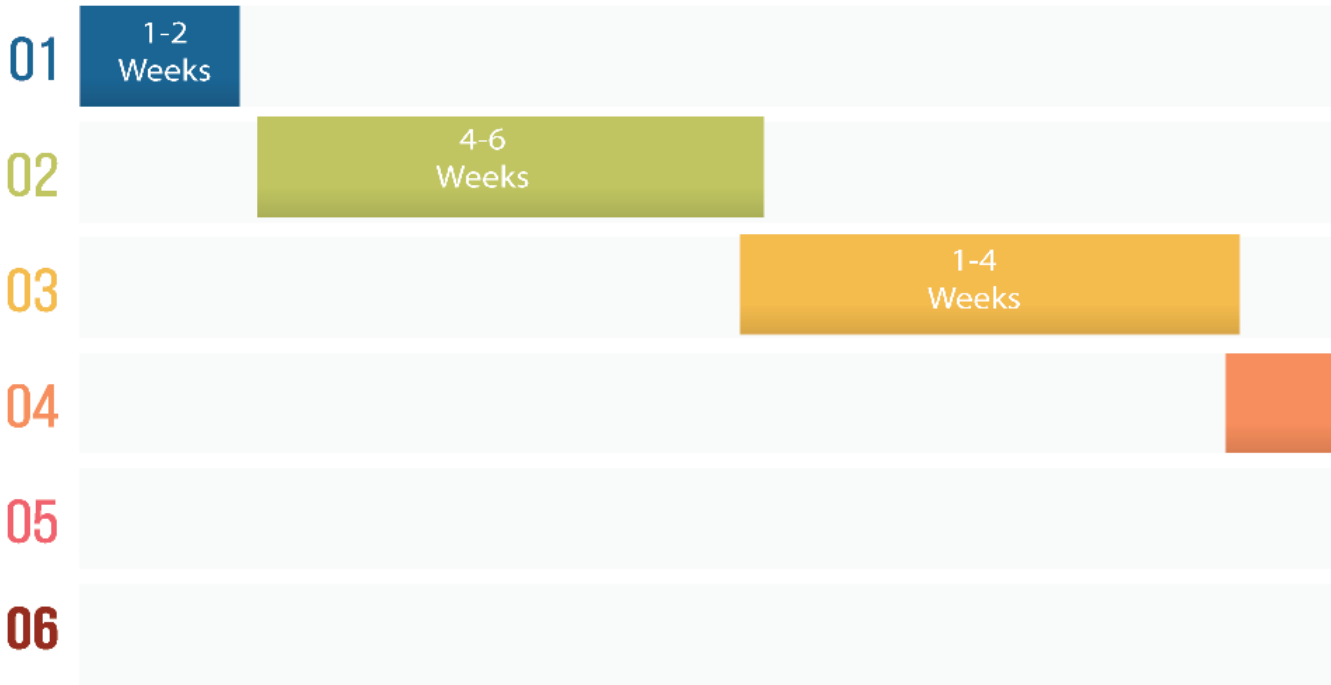
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Preliminary Plans Review
Finalize Scope of Work
Evaluate Existing Conditions
Finishes & Fixutres Selections
Budget & Value Engineering
2nd Payment for Design Development

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Finalize Construction Plans
Execute Construction Agreement
Permit Application
Develop Project Timeline
Access & Construction Scheduling
Order Special Order Items
Deposit for Construction to Begin

TIMELINE FOR AN 'AVERAGE' PROJECT



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st successful to creating an enjoyable remodeling experience, exceeding customer
nd on-time. Time frames shown are for an 'average' project. Your timeline will be created

CONSTRUCTION PHASE 1

Site Setup:
- Floor Protection
- Plastic Zip Walls
- BuildClean System

Demolition & Discovery
Delivery of Materials
Exterior Construction
Mechanicals & Rough Ins
Rough-In Inspections
Progress Meeting

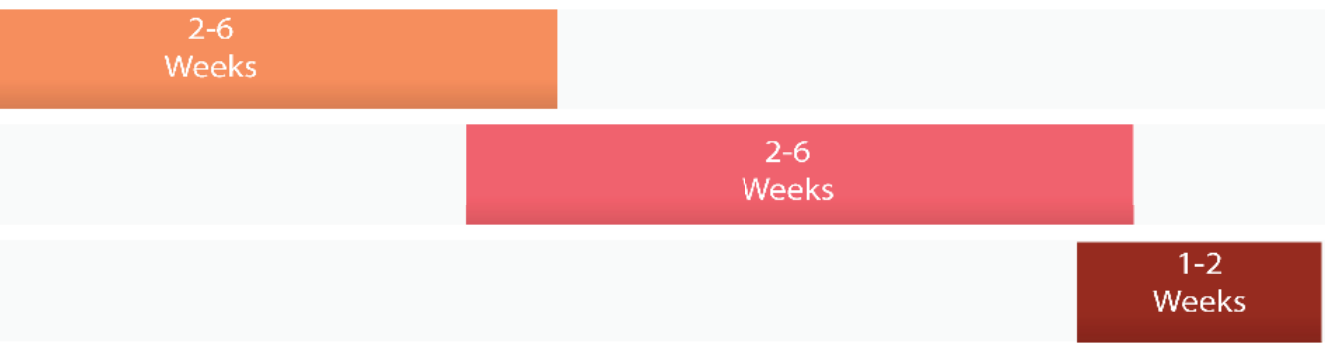
CONSTRUCTION PHASE 2

Interior Finishes
- Drywall
- Cabinetry or Millwork
- Flooring
- Finishes & Fixtures

Final Inspections
Progress Meeting

PROJECT COMPLETION

Construction Clean-up
Walk-Through
Punch Out
Workmanship Warranty
Final Payment Upon Completion



Design Details

RIGHT: Our design team can help you incorporate unique design elements like this sliding barn door that reveals a hidden pantry or an elegant lighting fixture that adds warmth to the dining room.
BOTTOM: A coffered ceiling adds a touch of class to the family's living area.

Comparing Design-Build to Bidding

Design-Build Typically Costs Less Than Bidding

Every homeowner wants to get the best value for their remodeling dollars. Very few people start the remodeling process by saying, "I don't care what it costs." However, almost every homeowner has their own ideas about what the finished project will look like and a rough budget to achieve their vision. Unfortunately, one of the biggest misconceptions about remodeling is that you must bid the project out. Let's examine why this logic is flawed, as it relates to the type of process used by the contractor. There are two main types of business models used in the remodeling industry: **Bid Build and Design Build.**

Let's use an analogy to help you understand why the business model matters. If you walked into three different car dealers, or shopped on-line, and asked for a price on a Ford Explorer, you are going to get three different salespeople give you three different answers. Why? Each dealer has different incentives, processes, price structures, and efficiencies, right? One dealer may explain the benefits of adding better tires and wheels (for an additional cost), another may ask if you'd like a sunroof, so you add that on. The third dealer may offer you no suggestions, but present the final invoice, where you realize that a dealer fee, taxes and tags are additional and have to be added to every price you received. Three different contractors will almost certainly provide three different answers because the "options" on a remodeling project are far more complex than a car. This complexity makes it even harder to compare apples to apples.

This is why the business model can help even the playing field and provide you the best remodeling experience possible. Understanding the difference between these business models will help you understand the scope, costs, and overall management of the project.

In this section, we'll review the advantages and disadvantages of the Bid-Build model compared to the Design-Build model. While many contractors and homeowners continue to use the old 'Bid-Build' process, we have found that the ***Design-Build Model far exceeds our client expectations on every level for price, quality, and overall remodeling experience.***

Let's explore these two different business models in further detail, on the following pages:

- **Bid Build**
- **Design Build**

The Design-Build method gives the homeowner one team to work with, from concept to completion, and often ***costs less*** than a typical Bid-Build project.

Bid Build Model (BB)

Also Sometimes Referred to as Design-Bid-Build

The Bid Build model (also sometimes referred to as Design-**BID**-Build or DBB) has been used for years. Why? Quite honestly, we believe this model is still used because there is a distinct advantage to the contractor. We believe this model leaves much to be desired, for the average homeowner, and largely contributes to an industry known for low customer satisfaction and complaints. Here's why:

This business model often begins when the homeowner decides to remodel and asks several contractors to give them a bid on the project. It may also begin when a homeowner secures an architect to create plans, and then seek bids on the project. This approach has some serious drawbacks. (See our Case Study and special section on Mythbusters for even more information).

The first thing to understand about the Bid Build model is that it incents the contractor to focus on price. While you may think this is good for your budget, it means that quality and the overall remodeling experience are secondary, This approach often provides far more questions than answers as homeowners struggle to compare apples to apples.

In many cases, bids may be provided with vague allowances or "to be determined" specifications. This can leave a big gap when trying to compare apples to apples. Some contractors vaguely specify lower quality products, as part of the allowances so when the homeowner begins to make selections for plumbing fixtures, lighting fixtures, countertops, or trim work, they realize that their choices are limited. Often, a homeowner will have to spend far more money than budgeted, to select the items they want in their home. In this case, the lowest bid often ends up costing much more than the client anticipated.

The bid process also doesn't provide for a collaborative design process because the contractor and homeowner are focused on the price, rather than the project's design, feasibility, or construction elements. You may wonder why this is important?

A remodeling project should be a collaboration between you, the architectural designer, and teh contractor. The bid process does not foster that collaboration. As a matter of fact, in most cases, structural or permitting issues won't be addressed under this model, until after a project has been awarded. So, if any changes are required, more money is invested for re-design, construction drawings, and/or value engineering. Since this takes place after you've selected the contractor, your bid is not worth the paper it's written on because the contractor will likely have to re-estimate the project anyway.

The Bid-Build process is full of surprises that are often not included in the original scope of work. After all, when a contractor takes a day or two to create an estimate, there is no way to factor in all of the elements needed to give you a price that can be guaranteed. Without a comprehensive design process, many elements of the project are left "To Be Determined" which is easily translated into "More Money Later."

We believe this model makes it challenging to navigate the process, maintain accountability, and ensure your project stays within your budget. But, if you're thinking you'll get a better price by bidding your project, just remember, you'll probably pay more in the long run.

Design-Build Model (DB)

The Design Build Model is a more modern, ***collaborative*** process where the homeowner typically hires a Design Build firm to oversee the entire remodeling project, from concept to completion. This is a turn-key process and sometimes perceived to be "more expensive," but the facts prove otherwise. Chris Parker, owner of Parker Design Build Remodel believes, "Once our clients truly understand the Design-Build process, the benefits are indisputable, from a cost, time, and client experience perspective." Here are some reasons why:

1. *Complete Accountability & Cost Efficiency:* In the Design Build model, the contractor or remodeling company firm, takes full responsibility for the entire project. Typically, the firm quarterbacks the entire project team from concept to completion. The Design Build firm will generally provide, or work collaboratively with, an architect or designer to oversee and ensure that all drawings are feasible from a construction and cost view. It also means that the Design Build firm has complete involvement in the design phase, the budgeting phase, the scheduling phase, the entire construction phase, and the completion phase. The homeowner has one primary point of contact and assurance that one firm has complete accountability for the project's success. Finger pointing is eliminated. "This one element makes the entire remodeling process a much smoother experience for our clients. It is a dramatic contrast from the old Bid-Build model," says Parker. There are cost-efficiencies too! Instead of spending time and money on designs that are not feasible, the homeowner can invest those funds in the project itself.

2. *Feasibility & Value Engineering:* Since the Design-Build firm is involved in the design process from the beginning, they are often able to point out areas that need to be considered or evaluated further, which saves time and money. The firm often makes recommendations to keep the project in line with the customer's budget before the drawings are finalized. Since the firm is involved at the very onset of the project, permitting and other related

factors can be planned and prepared for, to keep the project on-budget and on-schedule. Special order items that can have extended lead times can be ordered as soon as the project is approved, which reduces project delays. All of these factors save the homeowner time and money.

3. Costs: Since the Design Build Firm is responsible for providing the customer a complete project cost based on clear specifications, there are fewer surprises. Change orders are reduced, unless the homeowner actually changes something along the way, and the overall remodeling experience is more transparent. Since the contractor is involved from the beginning of the design process, there are many efficiencies gained. There is no back and forth between design and estimating, as it is done collaboratively, and there is no need to pay for re-designs when the estimates exceed the budget because these items can be value-engineered during the design phase.

4. Trade Relationships: Often, the Design Build firm works with specialty trade contractors who are true craftsmen and who support best practices. By establishing long-term relationships with these contractors, rather than choosing low-ball bids, they create a steady stream of business and incent the contractors to provide consistent high quality service to maintain that relationship. These contractors are specialists in their field and can also ensure the most advanced and efficient products are incorporated into the design. They also work hard to ensure the project stays on-time and on-budget.

So, as you can see, your contractor's business model is a critical part of the overall success of your remodeling project. But, let's take this one step further... another big misconception is that the Design Build process costs more. But the facts point out just the opposite. There are a multitude of case studies on the advantages of the Design Build vs. Build Build (or in some cases referred to as Design-Bid-Build or DBB) process. According to the CII, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), and independent research conducted at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Texas A&M University, the University of North Carolina, the University of Texas and other institutions showed that "Design Build projects took less time, had less cost growth, and were less

expensive to build in comparison to Bid Build or DBB projects."

The Design Build firm holds the homeowner's hand and takes ultimate responsibility for every aspect of the project. The project is run smoothly and efficiently with high levels of collaboration and communication. It's easy to see why this process can provide a much better experience than the older Bid Build model.

Parker Design Build Remodel has utilized both methods and now ***exclusively*** utilizes the Design Build approach. Why? Chris Parker, Owner of Parker Design Build Remodel explains, "We know how disrupting the home remodeling process can be. We do everything we can to minimize the impact to your family. We have seen, firsthand, dramatically different results in costs, efficiencies, and our ability to keep the project on-time by using the Design Build approach. We promise to provide our customers an empathetic approach to this process and a pleasant remodeling experience so we will never go back to the old way."

Case Study:

Why Bidding Your Project Is A Shell-Game!

Nick and Carrie decided to add an addition to their home to expand their kitchen and living area. They interviewed contractors and selected the contractor that was the lowest bid and agreed to complete the project in about 6 weeks. He assured them that he could work within their budget so they felt comfortable with his estimate and were ready to get started! The contractor agreed to begin the following Monday.

When Monday came, the contractor sent out a crew to demolish the existing space. After demolition, the contractor informed Nick and Carrie that, to his surprise, after demolition, they realized the electric would need to be upgraded, for an additional cost of $1200. The electrical sub-contractor was unreliable, didn't show up when expected, and took much longer to complete the project. This resulted in a two week delay while the homeowner continued to live without a kitchen.

Plumbing work began and the cabinets were ordered, but the contractor didn't realize that some cabinets would need to be special ordered, so there was an additional 3-4 week lead time, causing another delay in construction. Finally, the cabinets were delivered, plumbing work was completed, and the homeowners were beginning to see a light at the end of the tunnel.

They were sent out to make selections for their appliances and countertops with a budget from the contractor of $12,000, as per the original bid. They quickly realized the budget was far too low to possibly get anything but low-grade appliances and it only offered them 1-2 selections for granite countertops.

Even though they had discussed their preferences with the contractor as part of the initial consultation, the contractor's bid and estimate was far too low to make the selections they desired. They would need to come up with $1500 more for countertops and $2200 more for mid-grade appliances from LG.

The surprises continued when they chose paint colors for the walls. The contractor informed them that flat paint was specified in the bid, so if they wanted to go with a satin or semi-gloss, there would be an additional cost of another $500.

By this point, the homeowners had lived without a kitchen for 9 weeks, had spent more than $7500 in change orders, and were frustrated and ready for the project to be over!

There was a long list of punch-list items, including an issue with one of the kitchen cabinets, several defects or issues with trim and paint, and one minor electrical problem. The contractor had to juggle staff and sub-contractors to complete all of the punch work. It took the contractor weeks to finish the project.

The bidding approach to remodeling is a shell game - there is no transparency, no process, no accountability and no partnership! It puts the remodeler in the driver's seat and the homeowner's strapped in for a bumpy ride. It is in stark contrast to the partnership approach of ***Design Build.***

Technology

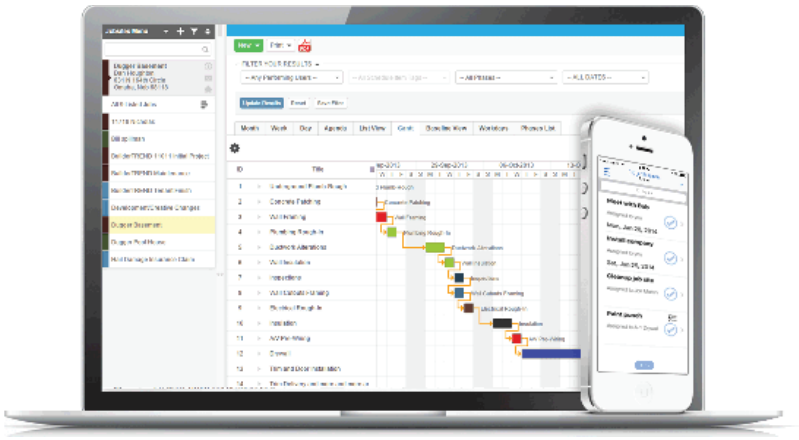
WHY IS TECHNOLOGY IMPORTANT FOR REMODELING?

Parker Design Build Remodel invests in technology to enhance communication and improve performance for our construction team and the customers we serve. Our construction software provides clients, vendors and our team with project management information, tasks and outstanding items needed throughout the construction process and progress photos that keep everyone on the same page. In addition, this technology can be accessed from a smart phone, providing information anytime, anywhere.

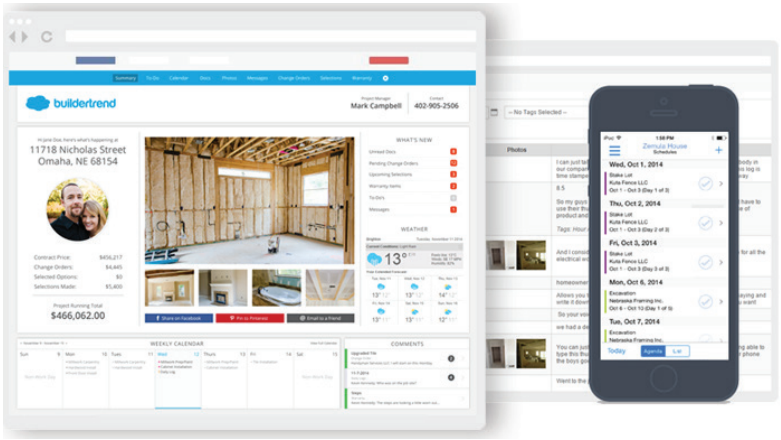
Many remodeling contractors don't invest in this kind of technology and communication. It's just another way that Parker Design Build Remodel is a 'cut above' most contractors. Contact us today to experience the difference when you work with Parker Design Build Remodel.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The remodeling process is fluid. Products may be out of stock or back-ordered. Weather may cause site work or construction to be delayed. Each of these elements can impact other portions of the job. By utilizing a comprehensive project management software platform, we are able to stay on top of every change, and anticipate it's impact on other portions of the project.

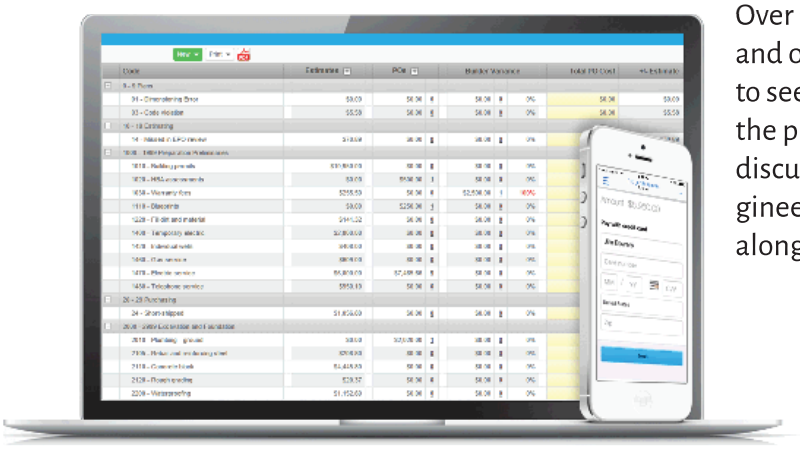


ENHANCED COMMUNICATION



Our processes are built around technology and communication. Our software provides a hub for communication and information to keep our project manager, you, our trade contractors, and our administrative office in the loop on every aspect of the job. Communication is key!

COST CONTROL



Over 98% of our projects are on-time and on-budget. Our software allows us to see when and if variances occur, as the project progresses, so we can clearly discuss areas of concern or value-engineering that needs to be discussed along the way.

Before & After

ABOVE & RIGHT: This 1 bedroom, 1 bath cottage had a prime waterfront location, but lacked functionality. Parker added a second floor to the existing home, while maintaining the existing footprint due to strict critical area guidelines. BELOW: This 1960s family home would require major updates and a modern design to meet the needs of the next generation.

Read the full stories and view the photos at ParkerDesignBuild.com

Clean Remodeling

Are you concerned about dust during remodeling? Make sure your contractor is too!

As a homeowner, a major remodeling project can be a stressful undertaking. You already know you'll need to adjust your life, but are you prepared for the conditions that the home construction will have for you and your family? While no project can be dust-free, we have found a cleaner remodeling solution.

Awareness of indoor air quality (IAQ) among homeowners has heightened in recent years, especially when someone in the home has asthma, allergies, heart disease or other serious long-term conditions. To combat indoor pollution problems, Parker uses a variety of tools to help reduce dust and improve IAQ during a remodeling project.

During your remodeling project, there is no way to completely eliminate dust, but there are ways to ***dramatically reduce it***! Make sure your contractor is respectful of your home and provides a clean approach to remodeling which, ultimately, creates a better remodeling experience.

If you're concerned about clean remodeling, make sure you and your contractor have discussed a plan and a process for **cleaner remodeling.**

Selecting A Contractor

When you choose to remodel your home, ask the right questions before you choose a remodeler or contractor to make your renovations.

When you choose a contractor, you're committing to live and work with them for the foreseeable future. Begin the conversation with a contractor by discussing these questions.

WHAT ARE YOUR CREDENTIALS & RATINGS?
The construction industry is one of the highest complaint industries so this is a very important step. You can usually find a contractor's industry certifications and credentials by visiting their website or the Maryland Home Improvement Contractor's Licensing website. Any reputable contractor should have federal, state, and community licenses in good standing. Ask what industry associations they belong to? Contractors who are part of industry associations agree to abide by best practices and a code of ethics. The Better Business Bureau (BBB) tracks consumer complaints and rates businesses accordingly. Make sure you check the BBB rating for each contractor you interview.

HOW MANY REMODELS HAVE YOU COMPLETED?
You may find a perfectly reputable contractor, but they may have not have experience with the type of remodeling project you're planning. For example, if you're knocking down or moving walls, you'll want to make sure your contractor has structural and mechanical experience.

HOW MANY TESTIMONIALS DO YOU HAVE?
Ideally, you want your contractor to have a diverse client base with lots of testimonials and references for projects like yours. Make sure they provide email and phone numbers for references so you can communicate directly and ask appropriate questions.

DO YOU SUPPORT MY PROJECT?
One of the best things a contractor can do is listen to his or her clients – and one of the worst things a contractor can do is try to convince you to change your vision or offer unsolicited advice. Make sure the contractor you choose is willing to listen to your plans and implement them as well as provide sound guidance..

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR COMPANY PHILOSOPHY.
When searching for contractors, you will need to ask about company philosophies, policies, processes, and other factors to ensure you're choosing someone that is aligned with your core values.

HOW ARE YOU INSURED?
Accidents can and do happen on the job, so ask about insurance coverage and get a certificate of insurance before any work commences.

MAY I SEE YOUR CONTRACT?
Ask to see the contract before signing it. A well written contract will protect both parties in the event of a disagreement and provide fair resolutions, in the state where the work is being done, through arbitration or other means.

CAN YOU WORK WITHIN MY BUDGET?
Be sure the contractor understands your budget constraints. Be prepared to have a 5-10% contingency for any unforeseen issues that typically arise, behind the walls, during a remodel.

YOUR RELATIONSHIP IS JUST BEGINNING
Choose a contractor who will respect your home and with whom you can build a good rapport. You will

be working with this company for weeks or months, so a good relationship, built on trust and integrity, is crucial.

WHAT BUSINESS MODEL DOES YOUR CONTRACTOR USE?

This is the million dollar question and unfortunately one that many homeowners fail to consider! First, you want to understand how long the contractor has been in business and how they run their business - the contractor's process for estimating your project, quality of construction materials used, and how they will manage the project. Next, you want to understand how they are going to keep your project on-time and on-budget. Far too many contractors bid low, to get the job, with the anticipation that vague specifications or 'unknowns' will allow them to 'make up the difference' along the way. The homeowner often ends up with a project that falls way behind schedule and may cost significantly more. We believe this is an area where many homeowners are taken advantage of.

We devote significant discussion to the two main business models (Bid-Build & Design-Build) in our next chapter, so that you can understand how your contractor operates their business and the pros/cons of each model.

IS YOUR CONTRACTOR A 'CLEAN' REMODELER?

Dust in the home can subject you and your family to irritants that can trigger allergies, asthma or other issues. Remodeling your home will definitely stir up these irritants. So, be sure that your contractor will take extra steps to minimize the disruption and the associated dust. New innovative equipment can dramatically reduce the dust in your home, during your remodeling project. Be sure the contractor you select has invested in such equipment and can provide you the cleanest experience possible.

WILL YOUR CONTRACTOR TAKE FULL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE PROJECT BEING ON-TIME AND ON-BUDGET?

Finger pointing and lack of accountability is one of the biggest complaints about remodeling. We believe this issue can be easily resolved with the Design-Bid business model approach we discuss later. Ultimately, you want to make sure your contractor is willing to take on this responsibility and be sure their past clients attest to this fact too!

Frequently Asked Questions

1 **Do you provide financing?**
Yes. We have worked with the same lender for many years to provide renovation financing to homeowners who want to finance their larger remodeling projects.

2 **Do you have someone who can help me make selections?**
Yes. We work with several interior designers who are adept at assisting you with the selection process. This service can be included in your overall budget, if you so desire.

3 **Does Parker Design Build Remodel utilize sub-contactors or in-house personnel?**
We have established long-term relationships with a select group of sub-contractors. These trusted partners provide the expertise and reliability to be the master of their trade and meet expectations, time after time.

4 **Should I get plans from an architect first?** We believe collaboration is the key to a great remodeling experience. When you sit down with an architect first, without the input of the contractor, it's important to remember that an architect is primarily responsible for putting the homeowner's vision to paper. The architect is focused on the **design** aspects of the project, while the final or actual **cost** of the project is secondary. Too often, a beautiful set of architectural plans is created without proper consideration for budget and value-engineering. Even more often, additional money has to be spent re-engineering the plans to meet the homeowners desired budget. Save yourself time and money by utilizing the Design-Build process.

5 **I already have plans - will you submit a bid for my project?**
Not typically. There are two reasons for this. First of all, since we take ownership of your project, we want to ensure the design, measurements, and feasibility are sound. If you already have plans, we will be happy to have them reviewed by our architectural designer, before proceeding, at a reduced price. Secondly, as discussed elsewhere throughout this guide, the Design-Build approach offers a far superior collaborative process than a typical bid process allows. Any contractor can respond to a bid and give you a price that is within your range. Unfortunately, for many contractors and homeowners, this generally leads to surprises and unexpected change orders down the road. We have found this to be a big challenge in providing a truly enjoyable remodeling experience, so we generally do not participate in bid projects.

6 **How long will my project take?**
Every project has it's own unique timeline and yours will be finalized during the Project Development phase. You can help keep the project on-time by making your selections in a timely manner.

The Stories Behind the Projects

RIGHT: This garage addition was added to the existing home to create a loft apartment, workshop, and space for two cars.
BELOW: This whole house renovation required a complete redesign of the original home's fragmented living space. By opening up the floor plan, the dining area is now a welcome space for homework or family gatherings.
Read the full stories and view the photos at ParkerDesignBuild.com

TOP: This home had historic roots and their updates included relocation of the kitchen, coffered ceilings, and exquisite millwork.
LEFT: This first floor renovation totally renovated the layout and design to provide the clients with a home that has modern elements that are practical for everyday use. Read the full stories and view the photos at ParkerDesignBuild.com

Why risk such a big investment?

When you make the decision to remodel your home, you are making a substantial investment with the goal of enhancing your lifestyle and potentially increasing the value of your home. Don't trust this decision, and the next few months of your life, to any contractor.

What kind of remodeling experience do you want?

Our mission is to create an experience that you will fondly reflect on, for years to come. Before you begin the remodeling process, check out our reviews and ratings. We believe you'll quickly see the difference in our approach and the value we provide.

Our award-winning projects have been featured in local and national publications:

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