JT CUSTOM BUILDERS

new homes + remodeling

HOMEOWNER PLANNING GUIDE

PLANNING AN ADDITION

IN CENTRAL MARYLAND

A practical guide to budget, design, timing & construction

$200K-$500K+

COMMON INVESTMENT RANGE

2-4+ MONTHS

PRE-CONSTRUCTION

4-8 MONTHS

CONSTRUCTION

START WITH CLARITY

The problem, the budget and the timeline should be understood before the project gets too far.

1 START WITH THE PROBLEM, NOT THE ADDITION

It is easy to begin with square footage: *"We think we need a 700-square-foot addition."* But square footage is not really the goal.

Maybe you need a larger kitchen and gathering space, another bedroom, a first-floor primary suite, a home office, a mudroom, or simply more room for a growing family. A good planning process starts by identifying **what isn't working about your current home** and then determining the best way to solve it.

Before designing anything, ask:

- What problems are we trying to solve?
- Which spaces matter most?
- What would make us want to stay in this house another 10-20 years?
- What are our must-haves versus nice-to-haves?
- Are we willing to modify existing spaces to make the new addition work better?

> **The best addition isn't necessarily the largest one.**
> **It's the one that makes your entire home work better.**

2 UNDERSTAND THE REAL PROJECT BUDGET

One of the biggest misconceptions about additions is that they should cost roughly the same per square foot as building a new home. **They usually don't.** An addition requires a builder to carefully connect new construction to an existing structure while protecting and modifying the home around it.

- Excavation, foundation and structural work
- Removing exterior walls and temporary support
- Roofing, siding and finish integration
- Electrical, plumbing and HVAC modifications
- Kitchens, bathrooms, flooring and trim
- Permitting, engineering and repairs to disturbed areas

Don't start with a cost-per-square-foot number. Two 700-square-foot additions can have dramatically different costs depending on foundations, structural work, kitchens, bathrooms, windows, finishes, mechanical systems and site conditions.

BUDGET + TIMELINE

The two questions almost every homeowner asks - answered directly.

SO, HOW MUCH DOES AN ADDITION COST?

$200,000-$500,000+

While every project is different, substantial home additions in Central Maryland commonly require an investment in this range. JT Custom Builders does not typically build additions for less than $200,000, though smaller projects can occasionally make sense depending on the full scope and size.

Smaller, straightforward additions may fall below that range, while larger additions involving kitchens, primary suites, multiple bathrooms, extensive structural modifications, or significant renovation of the existing home can exceed it.

Size makes a difference, but **what is inside the addition often matters just as much as how large it is.** A 600-square-foot primary suite addition can cost substantially more than a similarly sized family room.

3 HOW LONG DOES AN ADDITION TAKE?

Most homeowners are really asking two different questions: **How long until we can start?** and **How long will construction take?**

2-4+

MONTHS PRE-CONSTRUCTION

Design, engineering, selections, pricing, permitting, financing and planning.

4-8

MONTHS CONSTRUCTION

Typical for a substantial addition; larger or more complex projects may take longer.

Weather, permitting and inspections, utility work, long-lead materials, unforeseen existing conditions and owner-requested changes can all affect the schedule.

We recommend starting the process up to a year - or more - before you hope to be moved in.

PLAN WELL. BUILD WELL.

Design, site conditions, selections and the builder relationship all matter.

4 DESIGN AND BUDGET SHOULD DEVELOP TOGETHER

One of the most common mistakes homeowners make is completing an entire architectural design before receiving meaningful construction pricing. The plans may be beautiful. They may also be substantially over budget. Then comes redesign.

A better process allows **design, selections, construction knowledge and budgeting** to inform one another. This is why JT Custom Builders places significant emphasis on pre-construction planning. The goal isn't simply to produce drawings. The goal is to develop a project that is **designed well, clearly defined and realistically buildable.**

Whether you already have plans or need plans developed, we strongly recommend having JT Custom Builders involved as early as possible.

5 THE SITE AND EXISTING HOUSE MATTER

Can you legally build it? Setbacks, septic systems, wells, easements, lot coverage requirements and zoning can affect what can be constructed.

Can the existing house support the plan? Removing walls, extending rooflines or adding a second floor may require structural engineering and modifications.

Can your existing systems handle it? Electrical service, HVAC, plumbing and septic systems may need evaluation or upgrades.

Can we actually get to it? Excavators, concrete trucks, deliveries, dumpsters and crews need access. Tight or difficult sites can affect logistics and cost.

6 PLAN BEFORE YOU BUILD

Construction naturally involves hundreds of decisions. Making those decisions while the project is underway can create delays, unexpected costs and frustration. Whenever practical, major decisions should be made **before construction begins.**

- Windows and exterior doors; roofing and siding
- Cabinetry, countertops and plumbing fixtures
- Flooring, tile, appliances and lighting
- Interior trim, paint selections and other major finishes

CHOOSE THE RIGHT PROJECT TEAM

Price matters. So do planning, communication, trust and execution.

7 CHOOSE THE RIGHT BUILDER - NOT JUST THE LOWEST NUMBER

When comparing builders, make sure you're actually comparing the same project. A lower proposal isn't necessarily a lower price if important items haven't been included.

Ask:

- How detailed is the scope of work, and what is included versus excluded?
- How are selections handled, and are included allowances realistic?
- How are changes handled?
- Who manages the project, and how will communication work?
- What planning happens before construction?
- How does the builder handle completion and punch-list items?

BEFORE YOU MOVE FORWARD

You don't need to have everything figured out.

1. **What problem are we trying to solve?**
2. **What are our must-haves?**
3. What investment are we realistically comfortable making?
4. If the project makes sense, when would we ideally like to build?

BUILDING WITH EXCELLENCE

Successful projects begin well before construction.

At **JT Custom Builders**, our process emphasizes thoughtful pre-construction planning, clear expectations, detailed scopes of work and a commitment to completing projects well - including our goal of a **Zero Punchlist** at completion.

If you're considering an addition in Central Maryland, we'd be happy to help you determine whether your ideas, property and budget align before you take the next step.

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