



NARI MN 2026 ROTY AWARDS

Project: Timeless Modern

Category: Residential Kitchen \$100K - \$125K

CLIENT OBJECTIVES

HONOR THE SETTING

Perched above the Minnesota River Valley, this 1942 Bloomington, MN home offered a remarkable setting, but the kitchen did little to take advantage of it. Connected to a dated addition with bay window, the kitchen felt closed off, with dark finishes, limited natural light, and a layout that worked against both the home's flow and its surroundings.

Having recently purchased the home, the homeowners envisioned a kitchen that embraced its unique setting while modernizing the space in both looks and function. They desired an area that felt open and welcoming, with improved function, increased storage, and stronger connection between the kitchen, adjoining living spaces, and the landscape beyond.

Rather than pursuing a stark contemporary aesthetic, the homeowners requested a kitchen that felt warm and timeless. The design approach focuses on balancing clean lines with natural materials and layered textures.

Just as important, they felt the home should respect its 1940's character while balancing comfort and functionality expected in a modern kitchen.

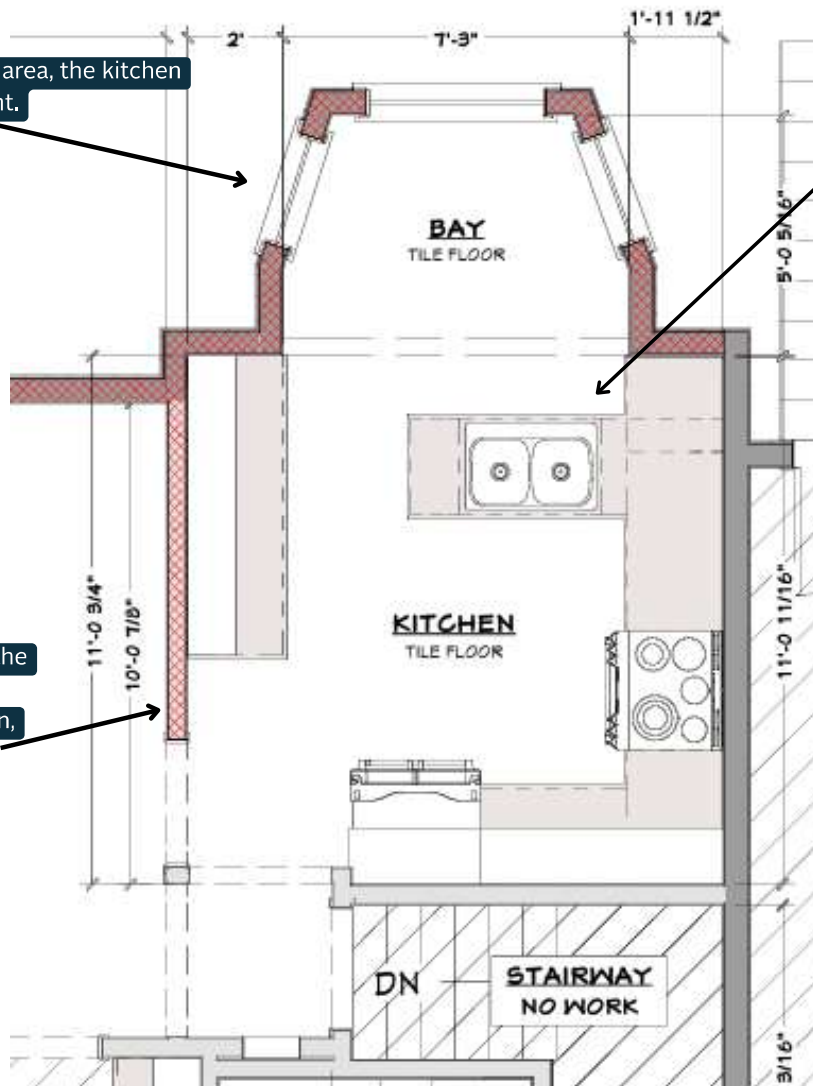


WHAT WASN'T WORKING IN THEIR EXISTING HOME

BEFORE FLOOR PLAN

The original kitchen reflected years of incremental changes, leaving the space feeling dark, dated and closed off

The existing bay area addition interrupted the home's original character and further separated the kitchen from the river valley beyond. Despite the home's exceptional location, the kitchen offered little connection to the views that drew the owners to the home.



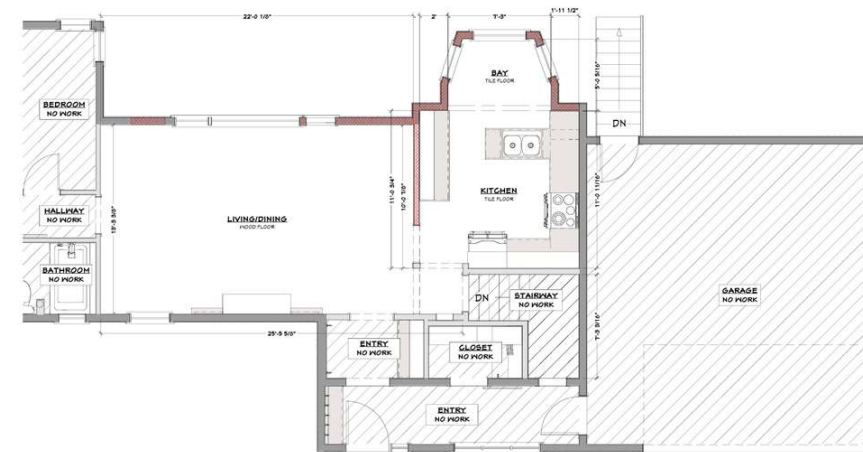
Connected to a dated bay area, the kitchen offered limited natural light.

Inadequate storage plagued the kitchen. A peninsula with a sink juttied out awkwardly.

Before

Closed in by walls on all sides, the cramped layout restricted movement between the kitchen, and surrounding areas.

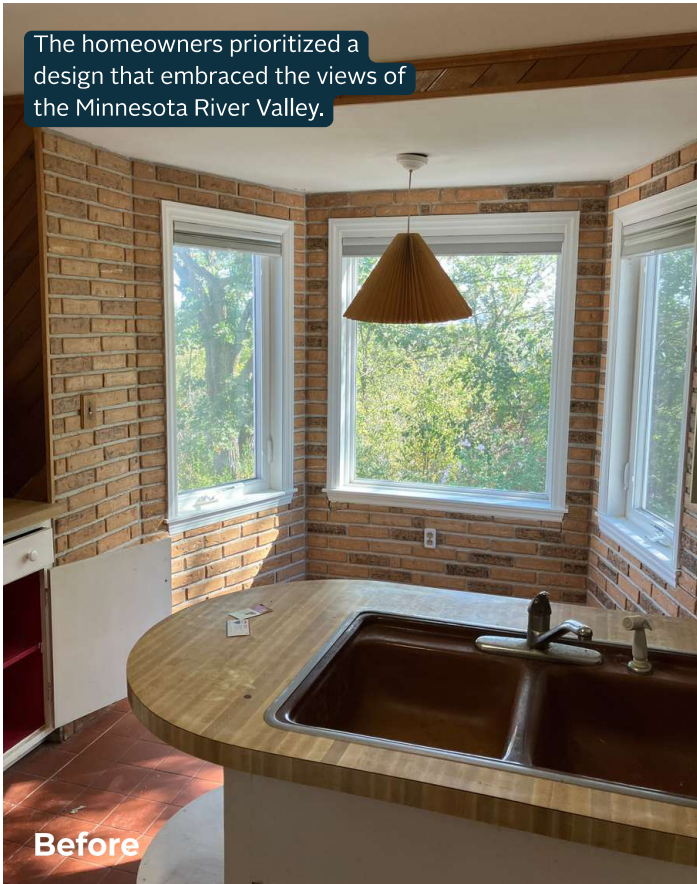
The space provided limited room for cooking and entertaining, making it difficult to function as the heart of the home.



CLIENT WISHES

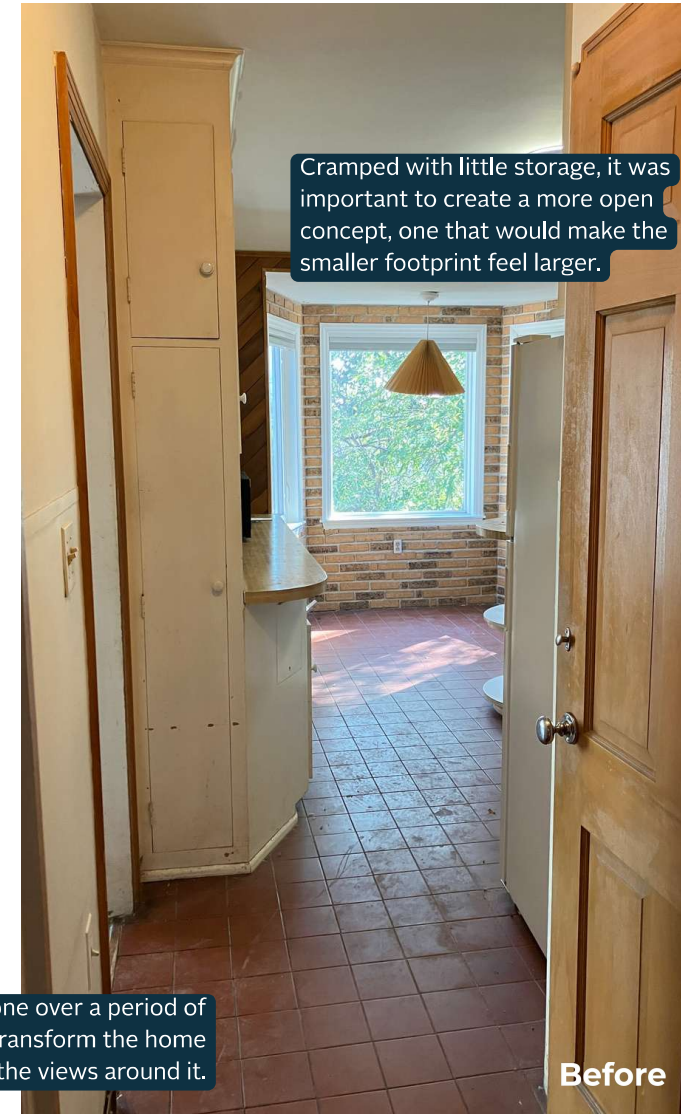
BALANCED LIVING

The homeowners prioritized a design that embraced the views of the Minnesota River Valley.



Dated finishes including the brick walls, scalloped trim and a wood backsplash and other features needed to go.

After what were clearly surface updates done over a period of years, they wished instead to start fresh to transform the home into a space worthy of the views around it.



Cramped with little storage, it was important to create a more open concept, one that would make the smaller footprint feel larger.

CHALLENGES ADDRESSED

AFTER FLOOR PLAN

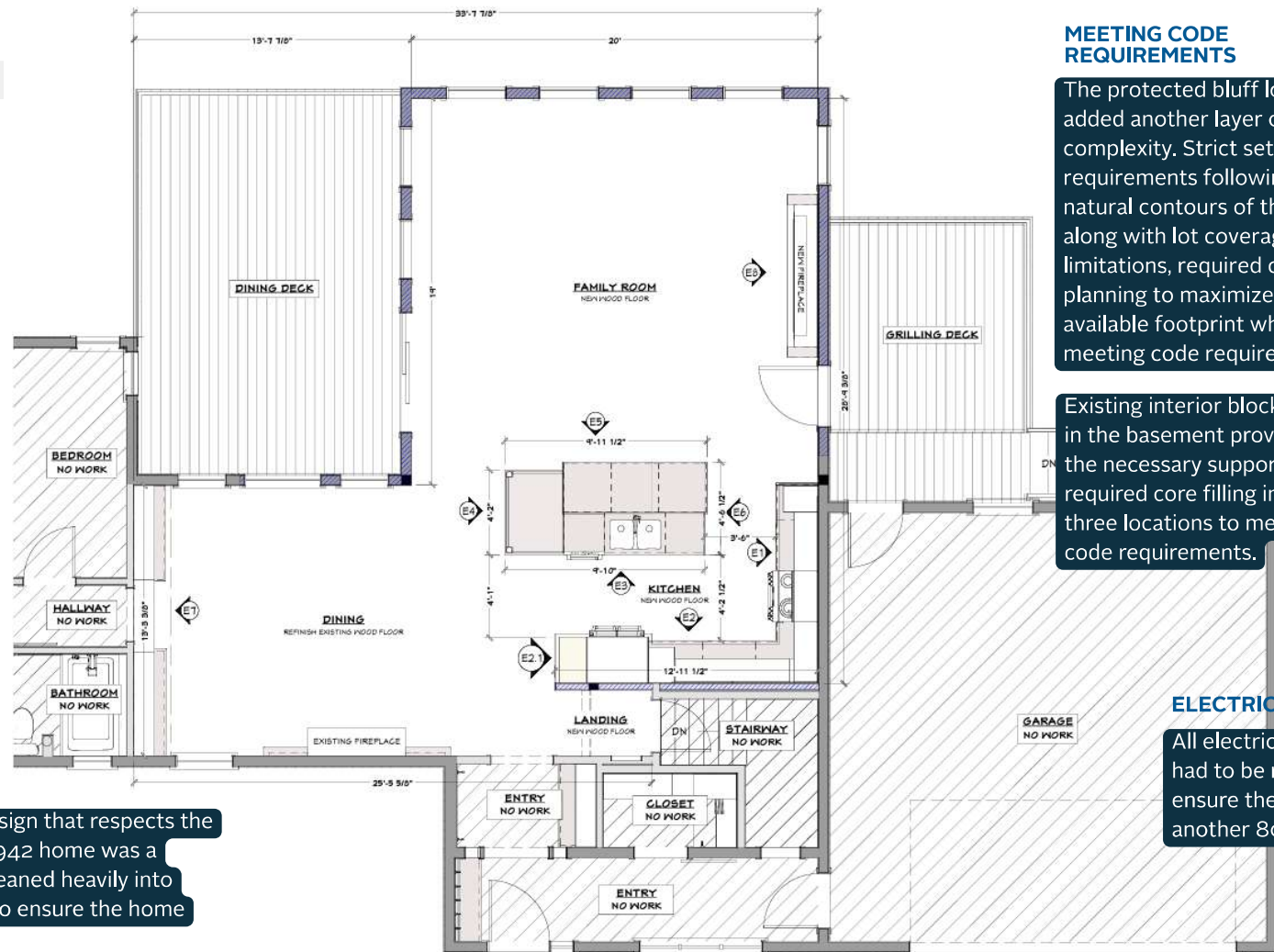
The kitchen remodel presented a series of challenges tied to both the home's age and its remarkable setting. Years of incremental changes had compromised the layout and left the kitchen disconnected from both the home's architecture and the surrounding river valley landscape.

MAXIMIZING SPACE

The kitchen footprint still needed to be compact, requiring a design that would maximize every inch of space.

BALANCING THEN AND NOW

Blending modern function with a design that respects the scale and character of the original 1942 home was a delicate balance. The design team leaned heavily into natural influences and warm tones to ensure the home retained its character.



MEETING CODE REQUIREMENTS

The protected bluff location added another layer of complexity. Strict setback requirements following the natural contours of the land, along with lot coverage limitations, required careful planning to maximize the available footprint while meeting code requirements.

Existing interior block walls in the basement provided the necessary support, but required core filling in three locations to meet code requirements.

ELECTRICAL UPDATES

All electrical in the kitchen had to be rewired to ensure the kitchen lasts another 80 years.

FUNCTIONALITY UPGRADES

EVERYDAY FUNCTION

The redesigned kitchen and dining area transforms the way the home functions by creating clear relationships between cooking, dining, and gathering. Defined work zones improve efficiency, while thoughtful planning maximizes storage, circulation, and flexibility.

Integrated features support everyday living while allowing the kitchen to comfortably accommodate larger gatherings, creating a space that is equally suited for daily routines and entertaining.



Before



Custom cabinetry maximizes storage through full-height cabinets, deep drawers, and integrated organization while maintaining clean, uninterrupted lines.

A kitchen wall adjoining the dining room was removed, with a header placed in the attic to open the connection between the spaces.

Built-in table adapts as a prep surface, casual dining space, or overflow gathering area.

FUNCTIONALITY UPGRADES (CONT.)

The now open floor plan creates stronger connections between the kitchen and surrounding spaces.



Before



Integrated storage and thoughtful planning maximize efficiency without expanding beyond the designated footprint.

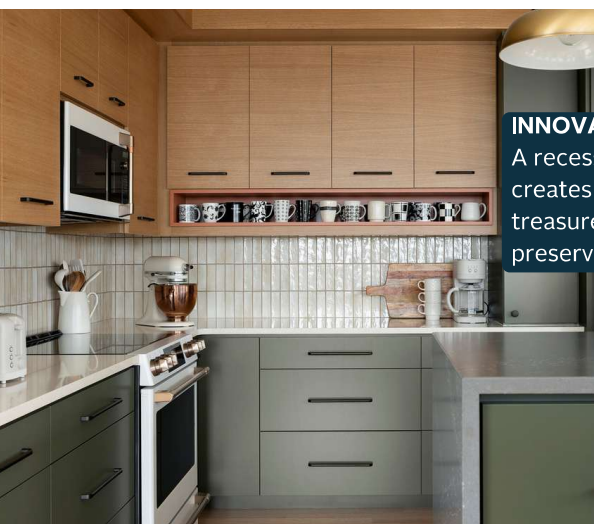
Cooking, prep and casual dining areas work together while maintaining clear circulation throughout the kitchen.

CRAFTSMANSHIP & INNOVATION

MASTERFUL DETAILS

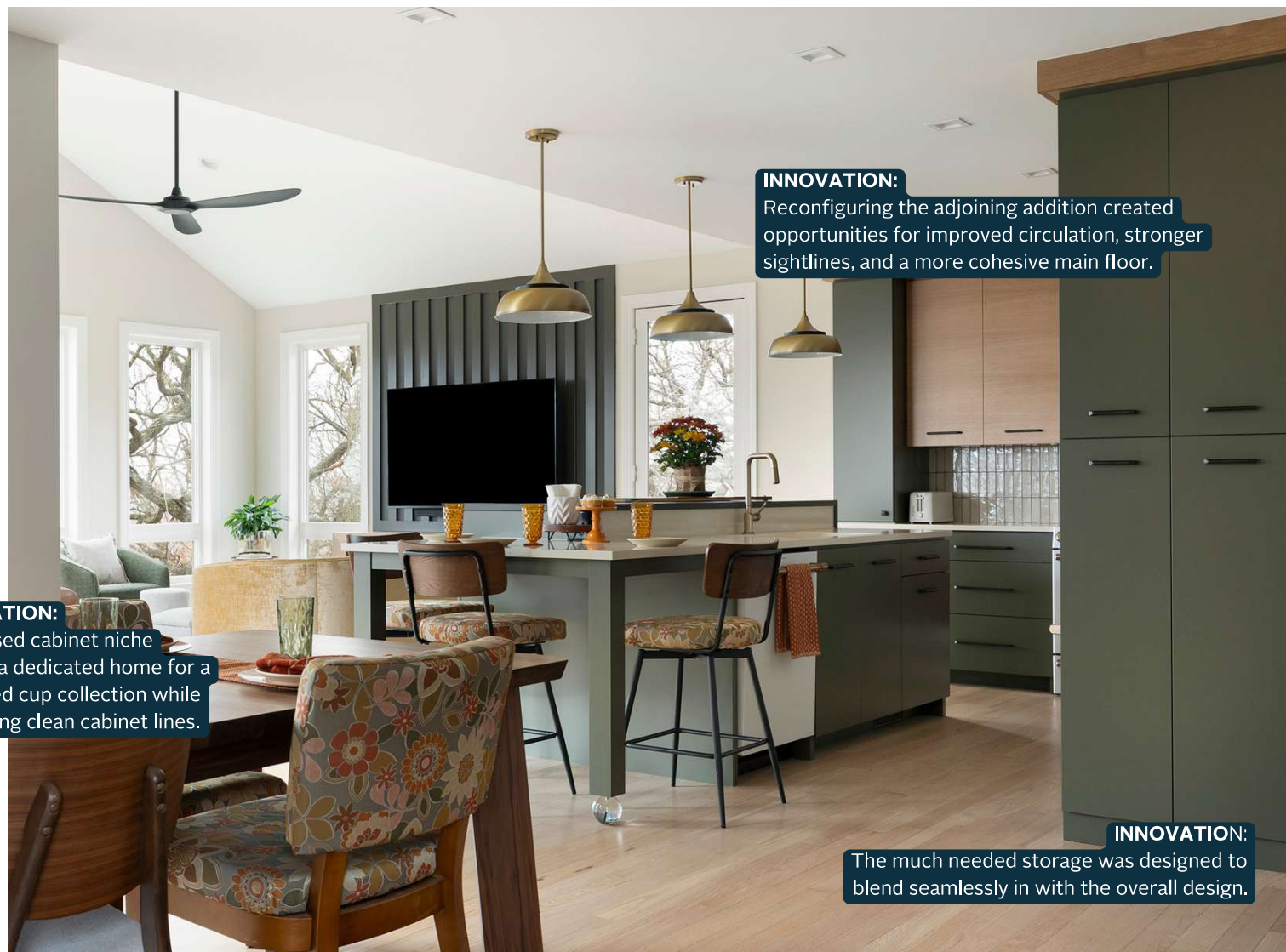
Every detail of the remodel was carefully integrated to balance craftsmanship, functionality, and lasting durability. Custom cabinetry, precision millwork, and thoughtfully coordinated materials work together to create a kitchen that feels seamless rather than assembled.

Innovative planning transformed every square foot into purposeful space while preserving the warmth and character that define the home.



INNOVATION:

A recessed cabinet niche creates a dedicated home for a treasured cup collection while preserving clean cabinet lines.



INNOVATION:

Reconfiguring the adjoining addition created opportunities for improved circulation, stronger sightlines, and a more cohesive main floor.

INNOVATION:

The much needed storage was designed to blend seamlessly in with the overall design.

CRAFTSMANSHIP & INNOVATION (CONT.)



Before

CRAFTSMANSHIP:

The custom tiered table extends from the cabinetry, adapting as prep space, casual dining, and additional gathering space.



CRAFTSMANSHIP:

Custom cabinetry, material transitions, and carefully detailed millwork create a seamless composition in the space.

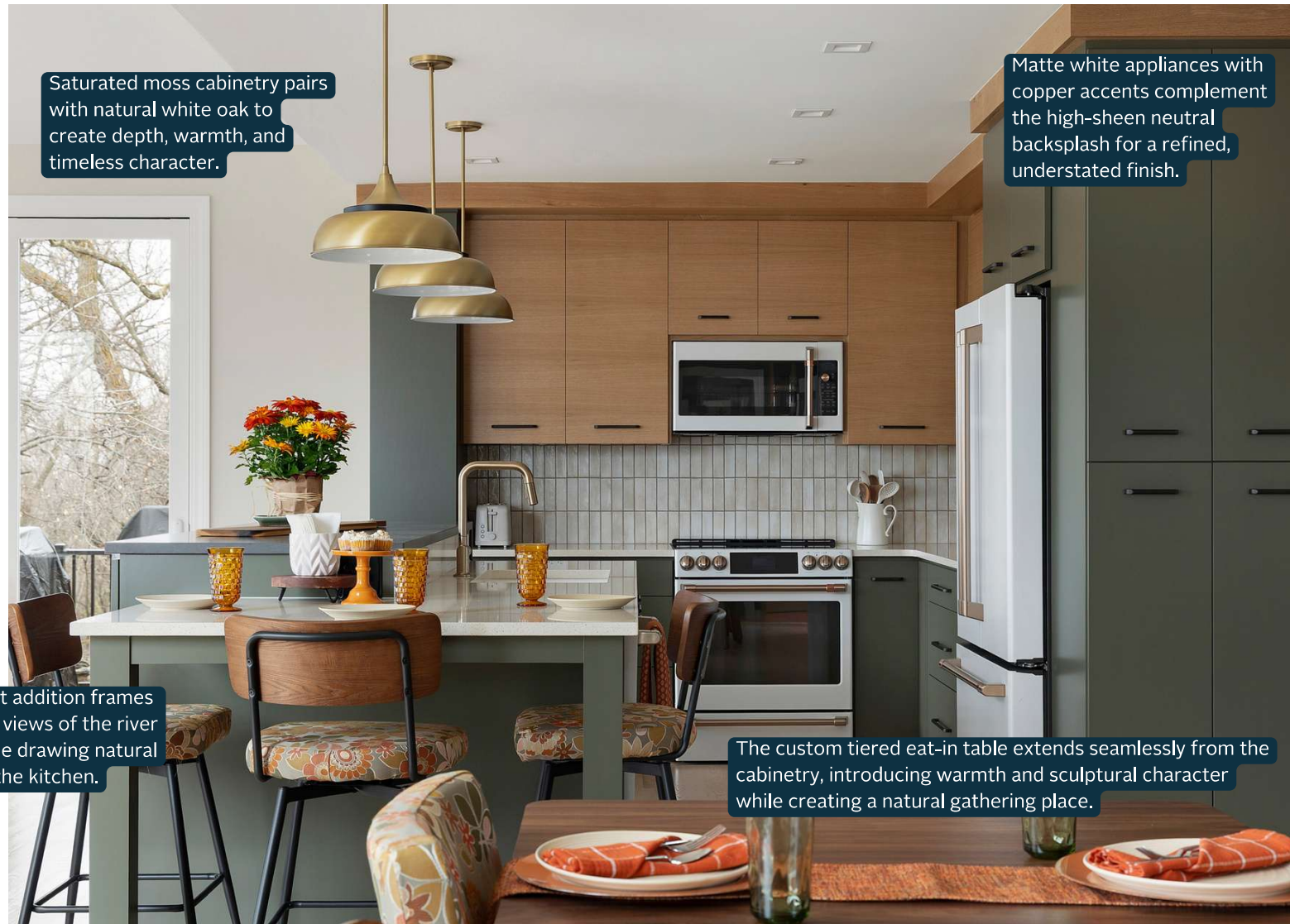
AESTHETICS & DESIGN DETAILS

NATURE INSPIRED

Inspired by the surrounding river valley, the natural palette blends warm natural textures with contemporary detailing to create a kitchen that feels timeless and welcoming. Rich moss cabinetry, natural white oak, layered finishes, and expansive views establish a strong connection between the interior and landscape while honoring the character of the original 1942 home.



Before



Saturated moss cabinetry pairs with natural white oak to create depth, warmth, and timeless character.

Matte white appliances with copper accents complement the high-shine neutral backsplash for a refined, understated finish.

The rebuilt addition frames expansive views of the river valley while drawing natural light into the kitchen.

The custom tiered eat-in table extends seamlessly from the cabinetry, introducing warmth and sculptural character while creating a natural gathering place.

AESTHETICS & DESIGN DETAILS (CONT.)



The high-sheen neutral backsplash introduces texture and light while providing a subtle backdrop for the cooking wall.



Corian® Quartz surfaces provide durable workspaces that complements the surrounding natural material.

Red oak flooring flows throughout the main level, visually connecting the remodeled space. Existing flooring was refinished, with new flooring carefully toothed into the kitchen and living room, then stained and finished together.