

NARI MINNESOTA - 2026 RotY AWARDS

PROJECT: VERDE

CATEGORY: RESIDENTIAL INTERIOR UNDER \$100,000



Client Objectives

five years in the making

When the clients built their Lakeville home in 2020, they left the mudroom and powder bath largely unfinished, a deliberate decision, knowing both spaces would eventually be redone. Five years and a fully active household later, the timing was right. The goal was to build a space that finally matched how the family actually lived.

- Create a dedicated landing zone that absorbs the daily drop-off routine without overflow into the kitchen
- Remove the wall between the closet and garage entry to open the storage footprint
- Install a purpose-built storage system with designated zones for shoes, gear, and outerwear
- Build a family command center for mail, charging stations, and household schedules
- Update the powder bath with a vanity, storage, and a distinct design personality
- Carry the homeowners love for mid-century-inspired design, something woven throughout home, into these two spaces



Client Frustrations

before plan

The mudroom was the first and last space the family touched every day, and nothing about it was set up to handle that role. The closet and garage entry were divided by a wall and door that no one ever closed, creating two disconnected half-solutions instead of one organized whole.

Shoes stacked inside and outside the closet with no dedicated system

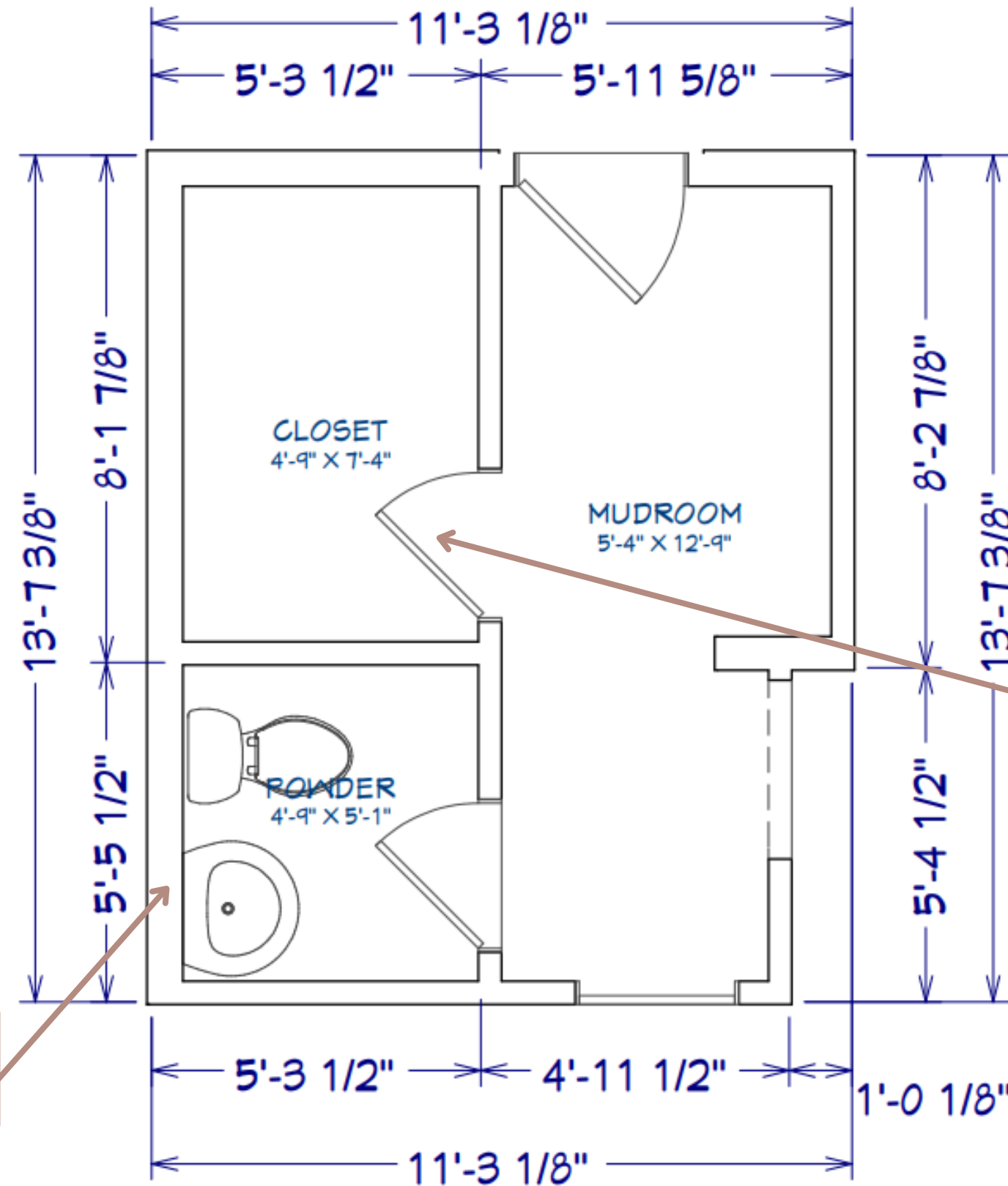
A basic cubby shelf was the only storage in the garage entry zone

Backpacks, sports gear, and dog food had no designated home

The powder bath was build-spec only: a pedestal sink and toilet, no vanity, no storage

With no where to drop anything, mail, charging cables, iPads, and household schedules ended up spreading into the main living area, stored on kitchen countertops.

The two spaces shared a wall but with no built in storage and a door that was always left open, it was little more than wasted space, serving no clear, unified purpose.



EXISTING FLOOR PLAN

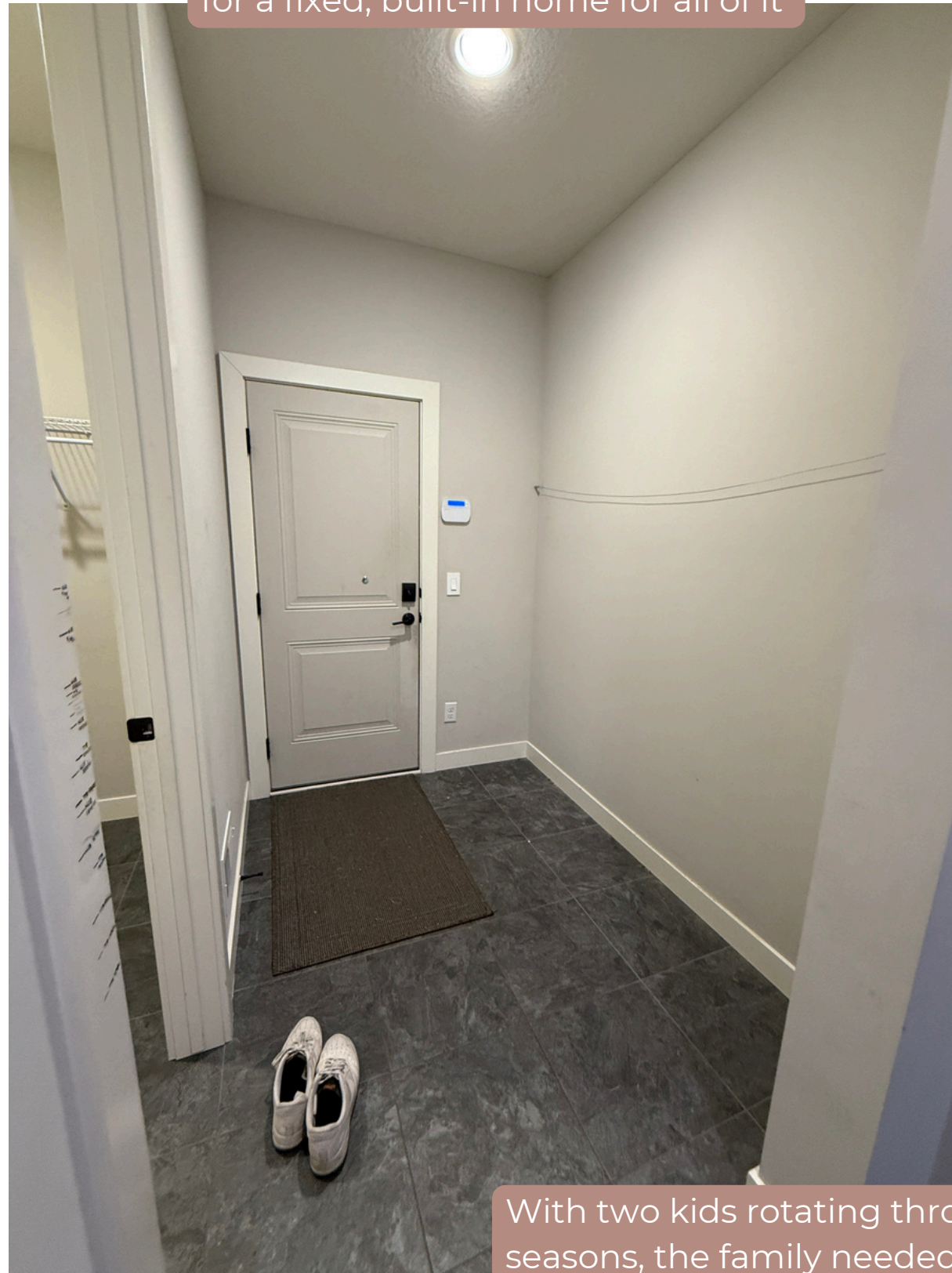
3/8" = 1'

Client Wishes

a system that actually works



Eliminating the wall between the closet and garage entry was the first request. The goal was a single, continuous storage zone.



The clients wanted mail, iPad charging, and household calendars relocated out of the kitchen entirely. The request was for a fixed, built-in home for all of it.



The original pedestal sink and toilet were placeholder finishes from the build. The clients wanted a proper vanity with storage, distinctive fixtures, and a design that felt intentional.

With two kids rotating through multiple sports seasons, the family needed a shoe and storage system built for volume and variety.

Challenges Addressed

after plan

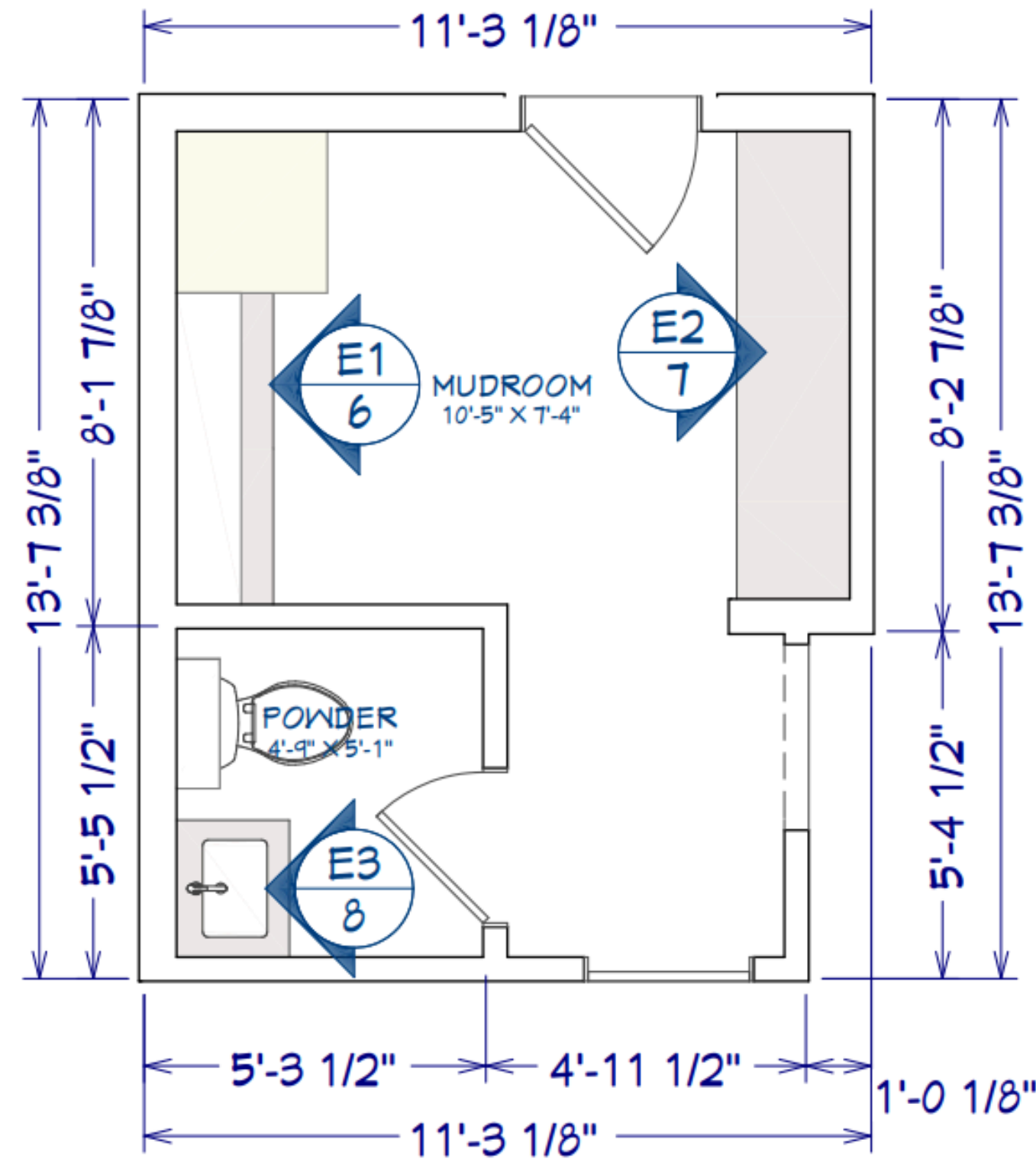
Removing a wall required attention to what was inside it, including an active HVAC cold air return that couldn't simply be capped. The scope involved mechanical relocation, drywall repair, ceiling refinishing, and finish carpentry coordination across a space the family used daily.

Cold Air Return Relocation

The wall between the mudroom and closet contained an active cold air return. Eliminating it required rerouting and repositioning the return into the toe kick of the new cabinetry, keeping the HVAC system fully functional within the new layout without introducing a visible grille into the floor plan or sacrificing cabinet depth.

Designing in Reverse

This project was designed unconventionally. The floor tile was selected first, before any cabinetry, countertops, or color. A terracotta-and-cream checkerboard was on hold before the project was formally underway, and every subsequent material decision was made in response to that anchor. This required a design process built around compatibility confirmation at each step, rather than the standard sequence.



PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN

3/8" = 1'

Wall Removal and Ceiling Repair

Demo of the partition wall left exposed framing and raw drywall on both sides of the new opening. Ceilings were scraped, patched, and resprayed with knockdown texture to match the existing finish throughout the home. New baseboards were installed across both the mudroom and powder bath to align with the home's established millwork profile.

Functionality

one space, multiple systems

This renovation converted two disconnected, underused spaces into a single organized entry system. With the dividing wall removed, the mudroom and former closet now operate as one continuous zone, each section serving a defined function without overlap.



Before

FUNCTION

The cold air return was repositioned into the cabinet toe kick, maintaining airflow without requiring a standalone grille or visible wall disturbance..



FUNCTION

Removing the wall between the closet and garage entry create a continuous run of visible and hidden storage.

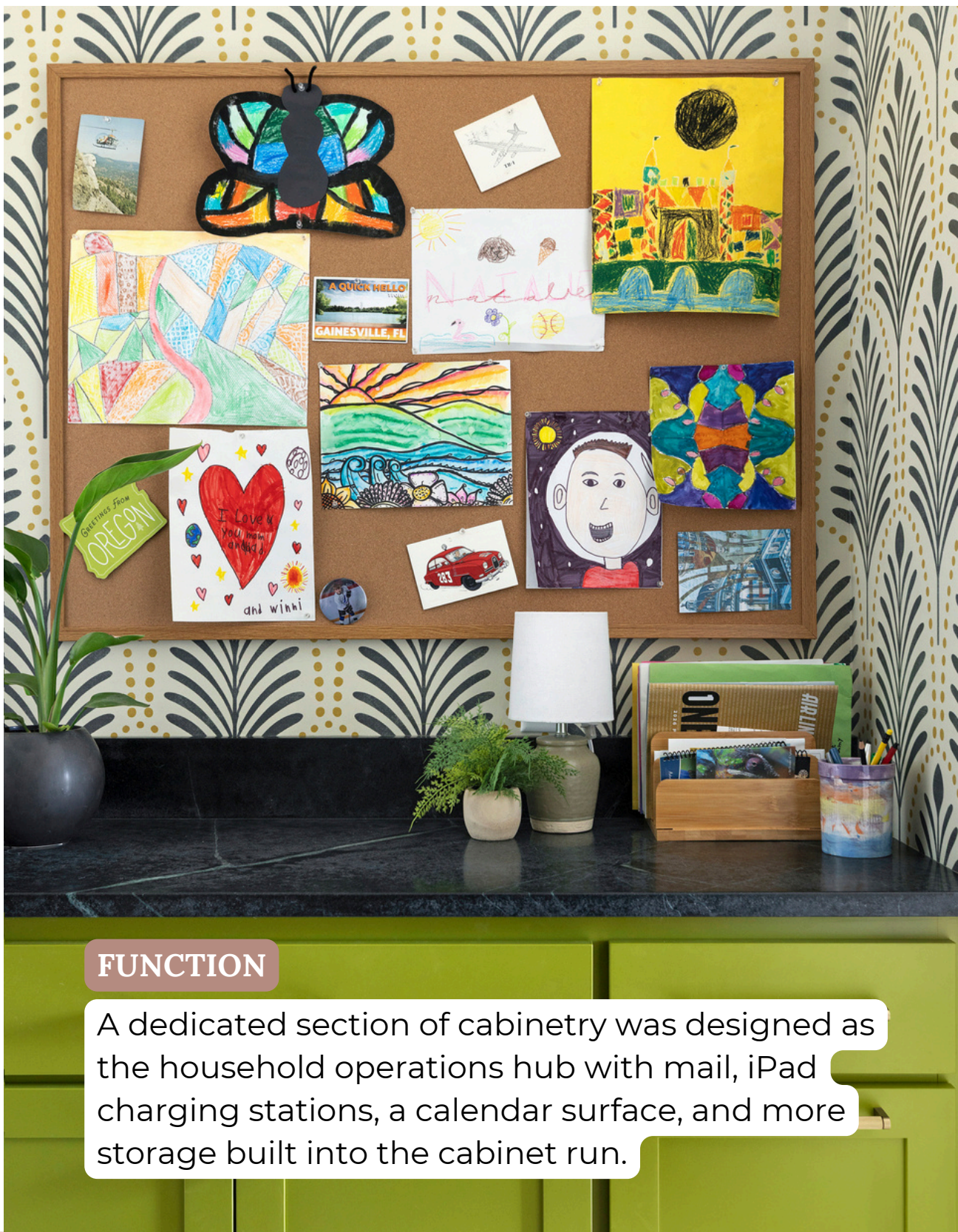


FUNCTION

Custom-stained maple shelving was sized for the family's footwear volume, configured for the rotation of cleats, sneakers, and everyday shoes

Functionality

one space, multiple systems



FUNCTION

A dedicated section of cabinetry was designed as the household operations hub with mail, iPad charging stations, a calendar surface, and more storage built into the cabinet run.

FUNCTION

The powder bath moved from a pedestal sink with no storage to a hairpin-leg vanity with an enclosed cabinet.



Craftsmanship & Innovation

precision in a practical space

This project was modest in square footage but demanding in scope, involving mechanical relocation, custom cabinetry installation, wallpaper hanging, countertop fabrication, and finish carpentry all within a space the family used every day throughout construction.

CRAFTSMANSHIP

Soapstone was selected for its resistance to moisture, salt, and impact, a material decision calibrated to the actual demands of a daily garage-entry surface.



CRAFTSMANSHIP

Two distinct Spoonflower wallpaper patterns were installed across the two spaces. Each required precision seam alignment and careful trimming.



INNOVATION

Relocating the cold air return from a demolished wall into the toe kick of the new cabinetry keeps it functional and fully concealed.



CRAFTSMANSHIP

The mudroom cabinetry required precise layout within a reconfigured footprint that no longer had its original wall.



Aesthetics

setting the direction

This project started at the floor. A checkerboard in warm terracotta and cream was selected before cabinetry, countertops, or color, the single decision that set everything else in motion. The palette that followed runs from deep soapstone to fresh Verdant green, anchored by a consistent mid-century thread carried through both spaces

AESTHETICS

The mudroom cabinetry in Sherwin Williams Verdant makes a statement without competing with the wallpaper or floor pattern. The accompanying stained finish shelves balance the green, keeping it from becoming ‘too much’.



AESTHETICS

The wallpaper brings a bold statement that's not often applied to utilitarian spaces.



AESTHETICS

The checkerboard floor, the detail that started it all, provides the perfect grounding statement for all that surrounds it.

Aesthetics

collected, not constructed

The powder bath was designed to feel like a room assembled over time — not a spec bathroom. Each selection was made to add character to a tight footprint without overcrowding it.

AESTHETICS

The undermount lavatory in Fresh Green is the primary color statement in the powder bath — a celadon tone that carries the green thread from the mudroom into the smaller space.

AESTHETICS

The custom-stained maple vanity on hairpin legs reads as furniture rather than millwork, a silhouette that opens the floor visually in a compact room.

AESTHETICS

The mirror, faucet and accessories in a single finish family tie the space together with the updated light fixture providing the finishing touch.

AESTHETICS

The powder bath wallpaper is quieter than the mudroom pattern, scaled for a smaller room without retreating to a neutral..