

2026 NARI RotY Awards

Minnesota

CATEGORY: Residential Interior Over \$500,000
PROJECT: Contemporary Minnetonka Remodel



PROJECT SUMMARY

This renovation turned a dated, traditional home into a bright, contemporary haven. Walls were removed to open the kitchen, dining, and sitting areas, creating an expansive main floor with a statement island that now functions for dining, homework, and gathering. Matching oak cabinetry and flooring ground the modern design in warmth, while accents and the family's art collection bring personality. Upstairs, nearly every wall was reconfigured, adding a walk-in closet, heated bathroom floors, custom built-ins for the kids, and a jack-and-jill bath. With upgraded mechanicals, insulation, and structural reinforcements, the result blends aesthetic transformation with lasting functionality.

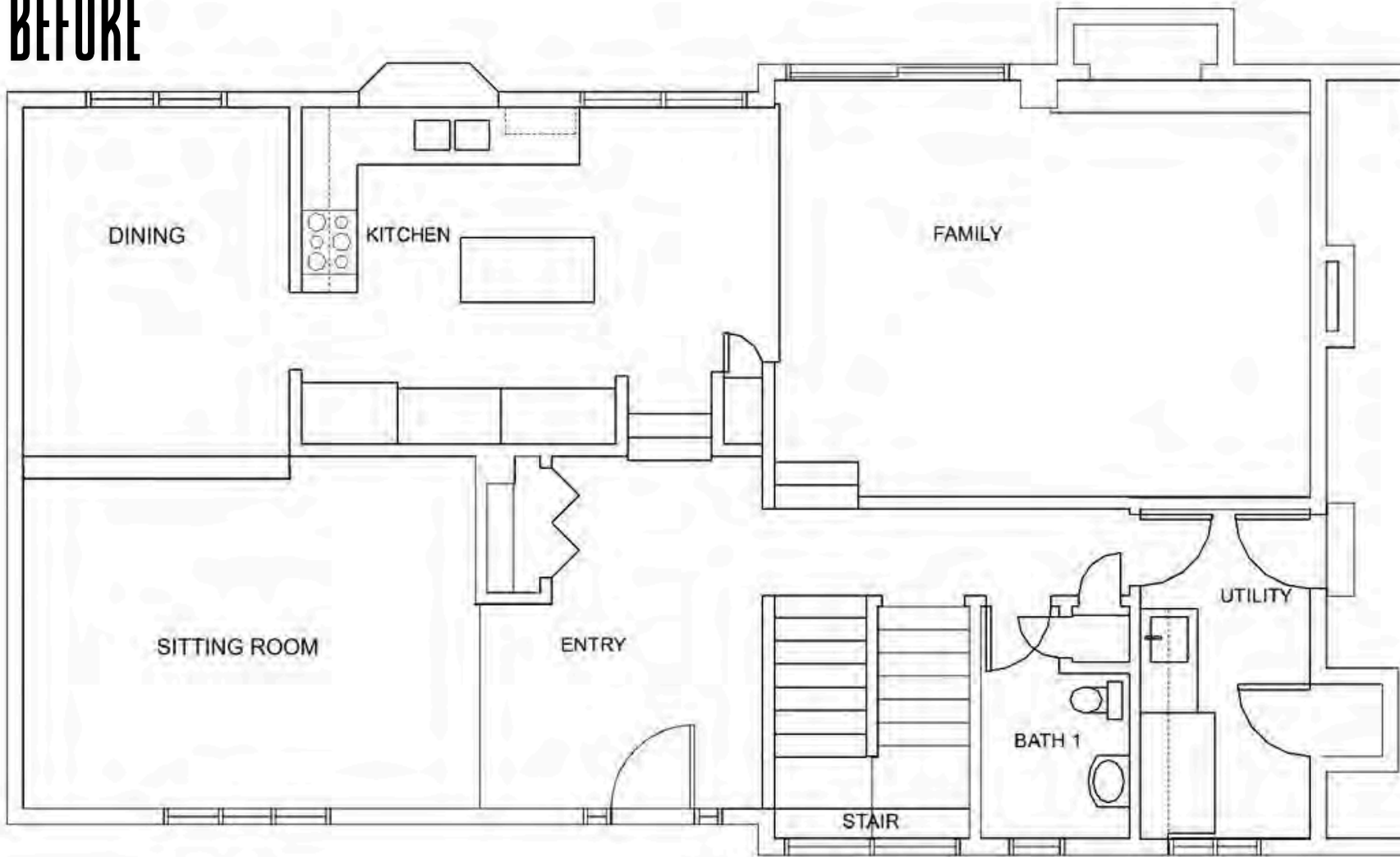


WHY THE CLIENT REMODELED

- **Disconnected floor plan**
 - The home's choppy layout isolated rooms on the main level, making family interaction difficult.
 - Basement-level laundry created many inconveniences.
- **Growing family needs**
 - With two young children, the family wanted more functional, durable spaces with added storage.
 - A sitting room on the main level became unused as the need for more kitchen space became more prominent.
 - Kids needed more bedroom space for hobbies.
- **Undersized kitchen**
 - The kitchen wasn't able to act as the centralized gathering space our clients wanted it to be. It lacked the necessary square footage and island space, and was disconnected from the rest of the main level.
- **Privacy for the parents**
 - Primary suite had no doors leading into the closet area and bathroom. Adding the option to have privacy was essential in the remodel.
- **Outdated style**
 - The traditional aesthetic no longer matched the family's preference for contemporary, open-concept living.

Main Level

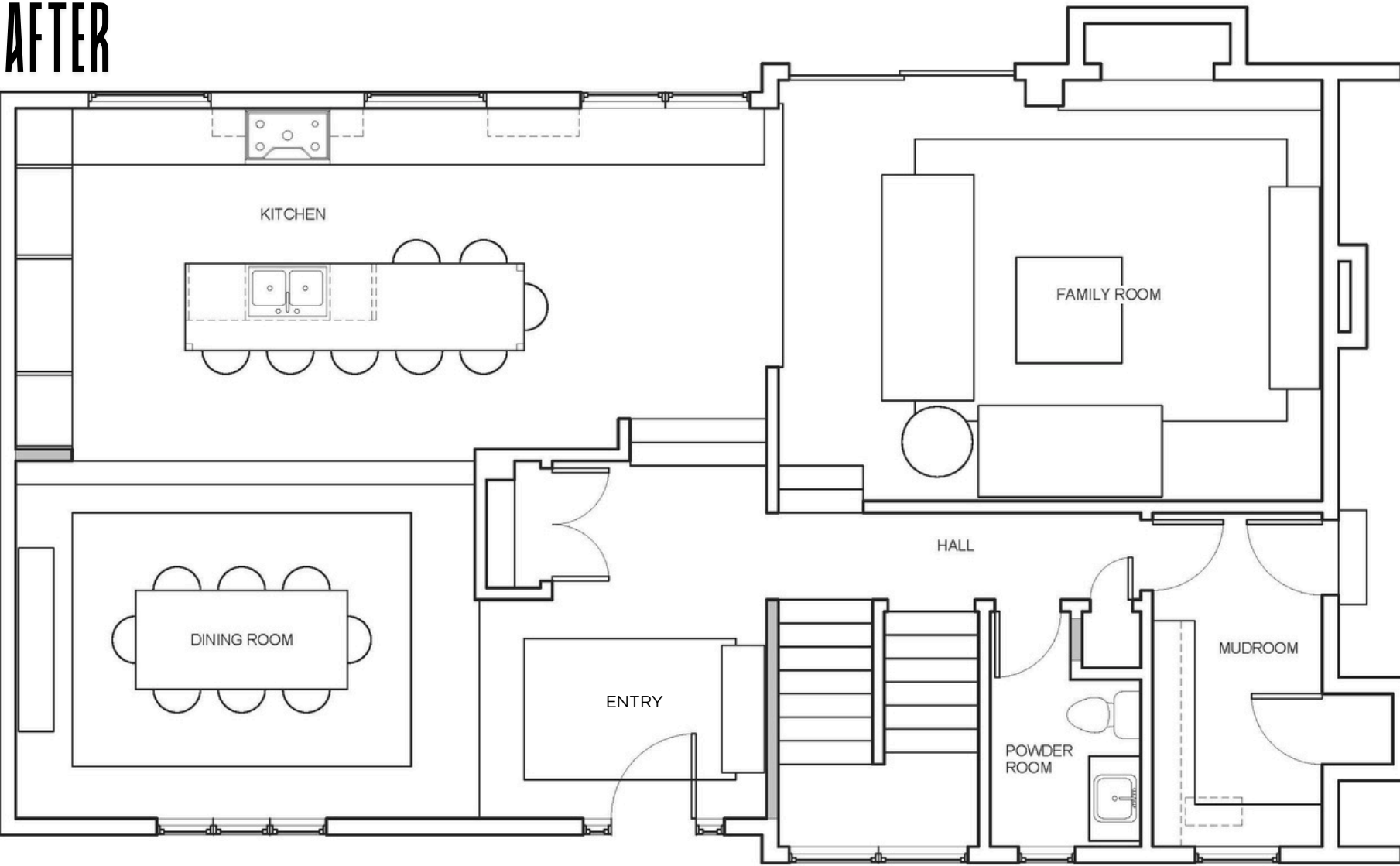
BEFORE



Client pain points

- The closed-off floor plan left the kitchen isolated, making it difficult for the clients to keep an eye on their young children.
- The undersized center island couldn't support both meal prep and homework, forcing the kids into the disconnected dining or sitting rooms.
- Because the dining and sitting rooms felt separate from the home's natural hub, they were underutilized and lacked a true sense of purpose.
- The home's traditional layout and styling didn't reflect the clients' preference for contemporary design and open living.
 - The clients' art collection couldn't be fully displayed within the fragmented floor plan, limiting opportunities to showcase it as part of the home's character.

AFTER



How our team helped

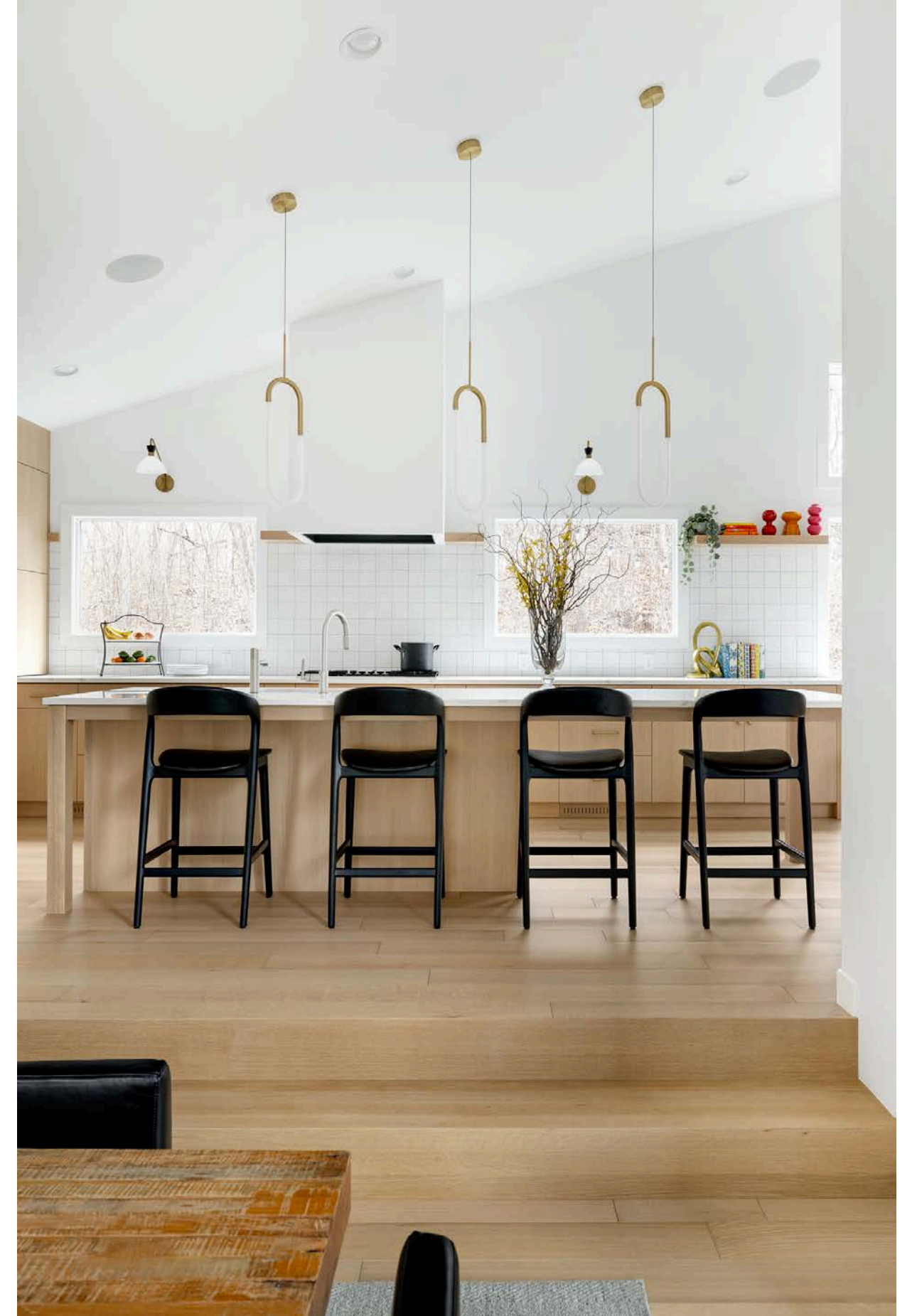
- Walls were removed between kitchen, dining, and sitting area to create an open, connected layout.
- The kitchen island expanded to over twice its size, offering generous prep space, added storage, and created a central gathering spot.
- The dining area was relocated into the former sitting room, creating a multi-functional space where children can do homework within view from the kitchen.
 - Two steps define the dining space naturally, providing separation without reintroducing walls.
- Ceiling height was expanded, opening the space further and creating additional wall space for artwork.

KITCHEN - BEFORE & AFTER



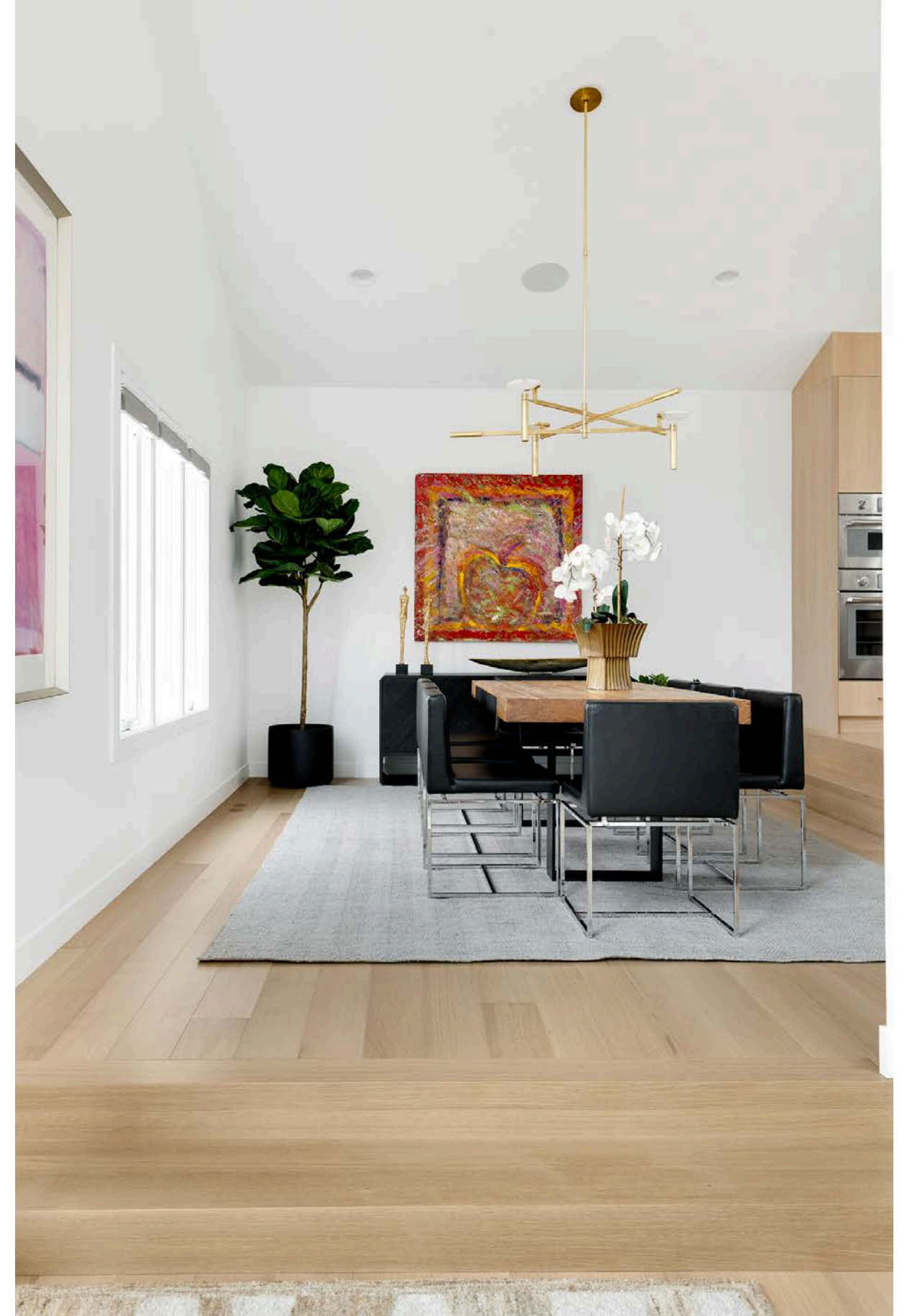
KITCHEN & DINING - BEFORE & AFTER

Old dining room (left) turned into kitchen space.



DINING - BEFORE & AFTER

Previous sitting room (left) is now used as the dining room.



KITCHEN & DINING - DETAILS

Aesthetic transformation

- 6" White Oak floors + matching flat-panel cabinetry.
- Straight-stack backsplash.
- 3 CM polished Difiniti Arabescato Oro Quartz countertop.
- Satin Brass and Brushed Nickel hardware for warmth.

Function enhancements

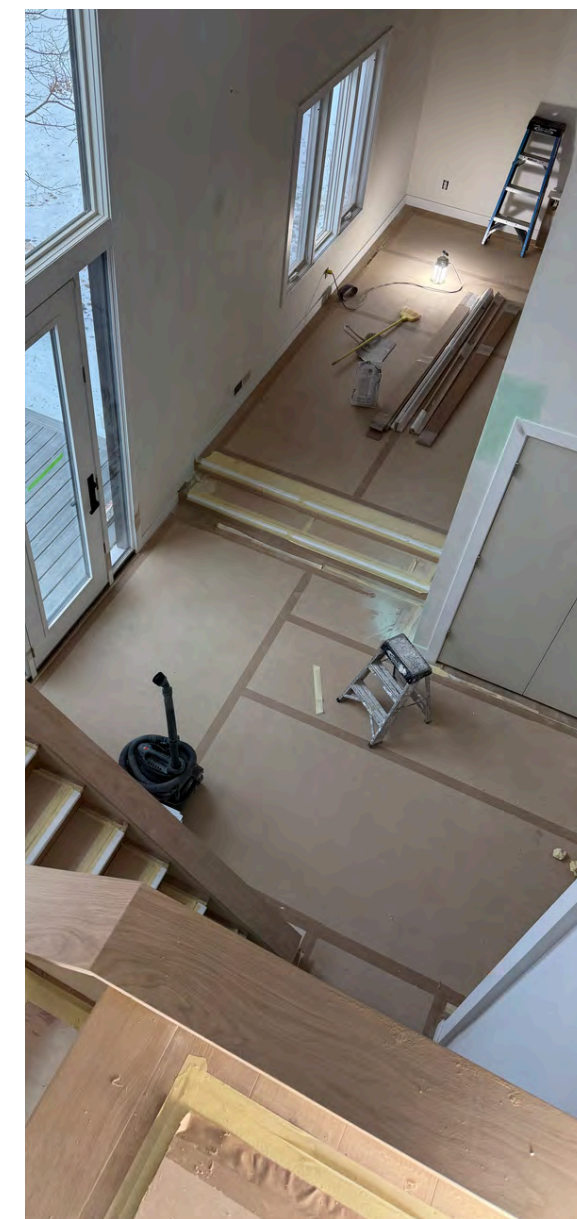
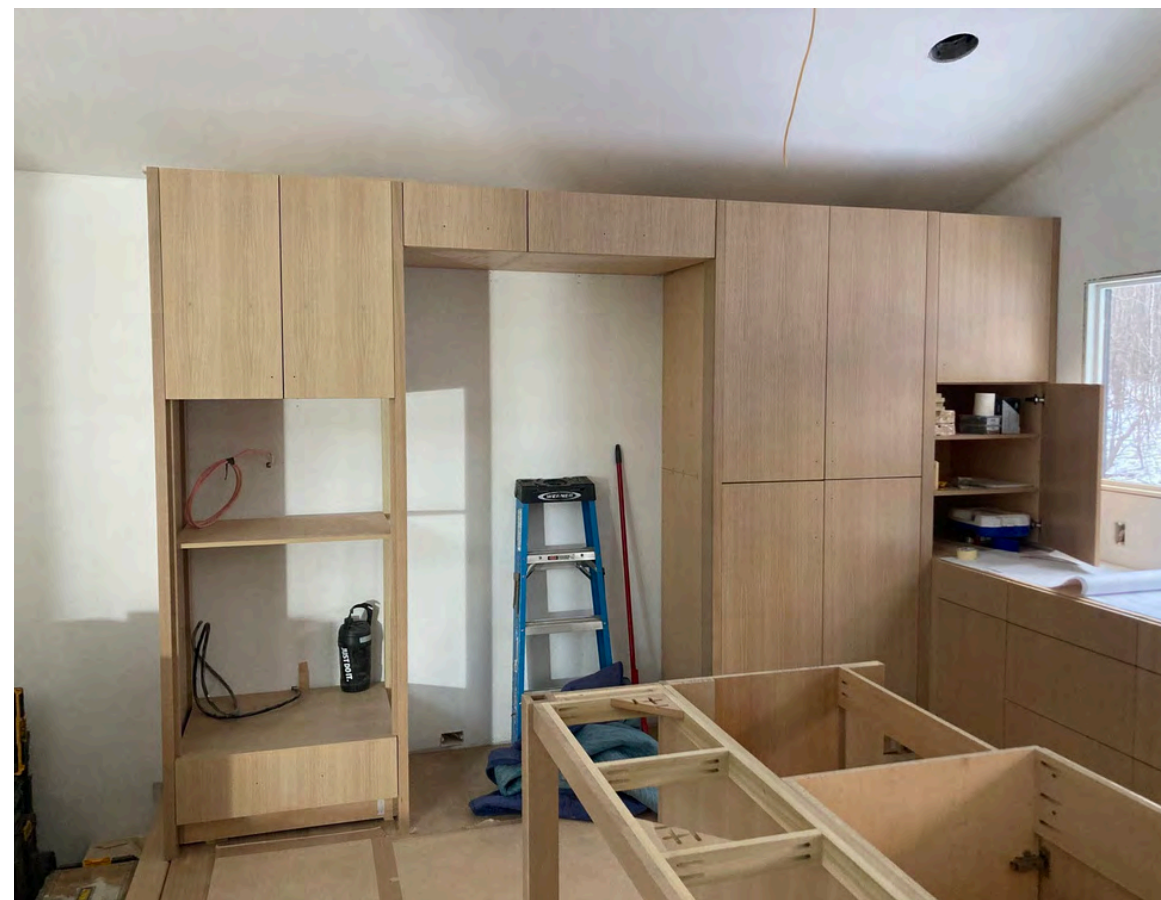
- Removal of walls unified three rooms into one open, light-filled space.
- Expanded kitchen footprint supports family living and entertaining.
- Doubled island size provides prep space, casual dining, and homework station.

Innovation & craftsmanship

- Minimal window changes preserved exterior character while maximizing daylight.
- Quartz countertops extended in front of window for added workspace + uninterrupted views.
- Angular ceiling design enhances openness without major structural changes and allows clients additional space to showcase art collection.
- Gold hardware and black accents sustained warmth amongst contemporary elements.



KITCHEN & DINING - CONSTRUCTION PHOTOS



POWDER BATH - BEFORE & AFTER

Client pain points

- Clients wanted to give the powder bathroom an updated and modernized look. They felt like it didn't represent their style preferences and lacked interest.
- Removal of popcorn ceiling was a must.

How our team helped

- **Aesthetic changes**
 - Mr. Blow in Goldfinger wallpaper from Abnormals Anonymous.
 - Same 6" White Oak flooring as the rest of the main level.
 - New updated plumbing features:
 - Novak 36" Freestanding Mahogany Vanity, light fixture, and mirror.
 - Removal of popcorn ceiling.
- **Innovation**
 - Client allowed the opportunity to get creative with this space. Collaboration between all parties gave the powder bathroom a fresh look that perfectly fit the clients' design preferences, while staying functional.



STAIRWELL - BEFORE & AFTER

Client pain points

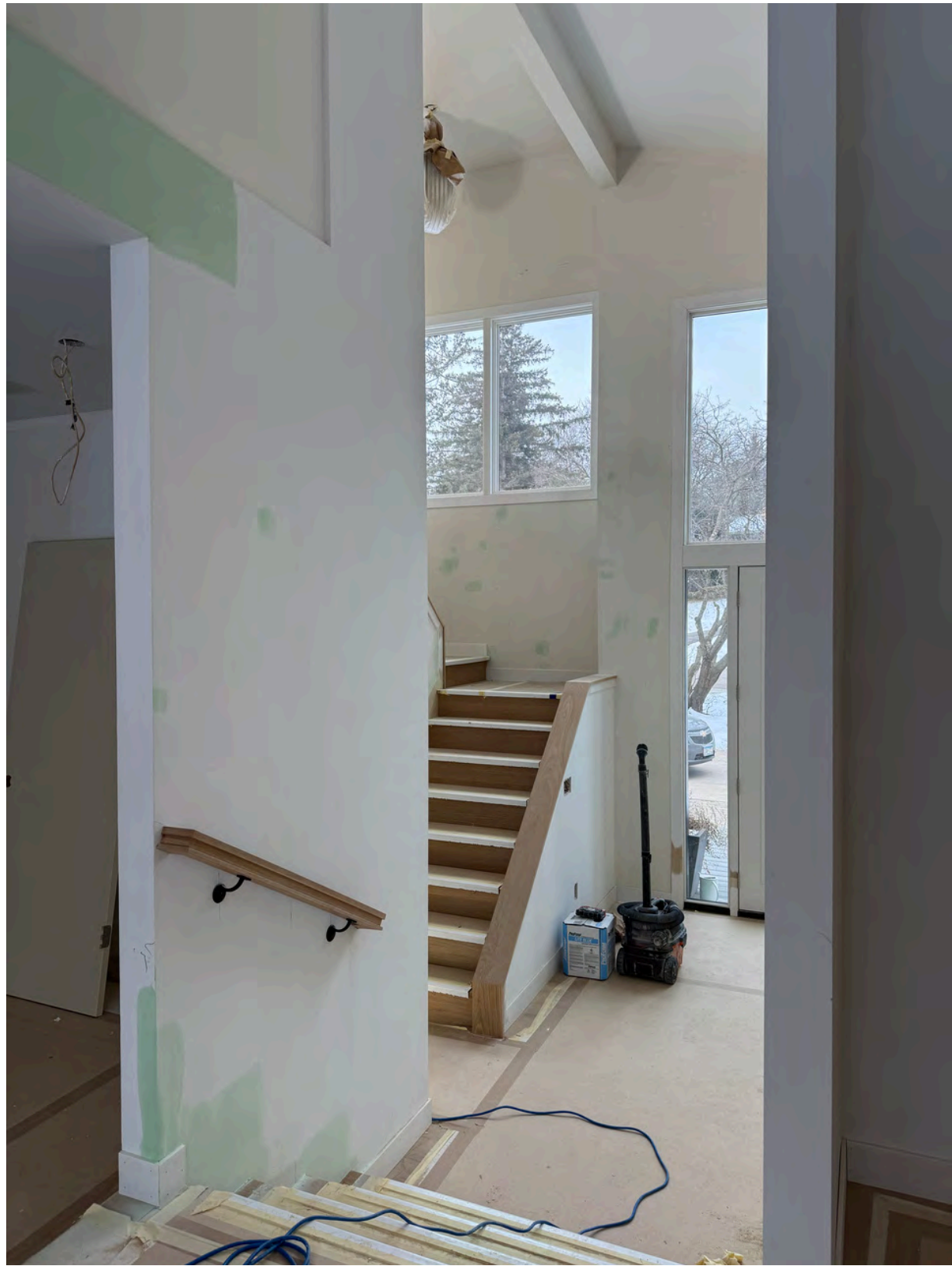
- Previous stairwell did not match clients' design preferences.
- Large gaps in railing became dangerous with the introduction of children.
- Unused landing at the top of the stairway required the use of large, unattractive support beams.

How our team helped

- **Aesthetic changes**
 - Removal of landing and support beams allowed for major design upgrades which helped create an impressionable entryway.
 - Rift White Oak on stairs stained to match flooring.
 - Added carpet runner.
 - Railing bracket: Heavy duty round aluminum handrail bracket in matte black.
- **Functionality**
 - Added carpet runner helps prevent kids from slipping and falling.
 - New railing has less space between brackets, reducing the risk of injury or accidents with the young children.
 - Removal of landing allowed for the space to truly open up to the rest of the house.

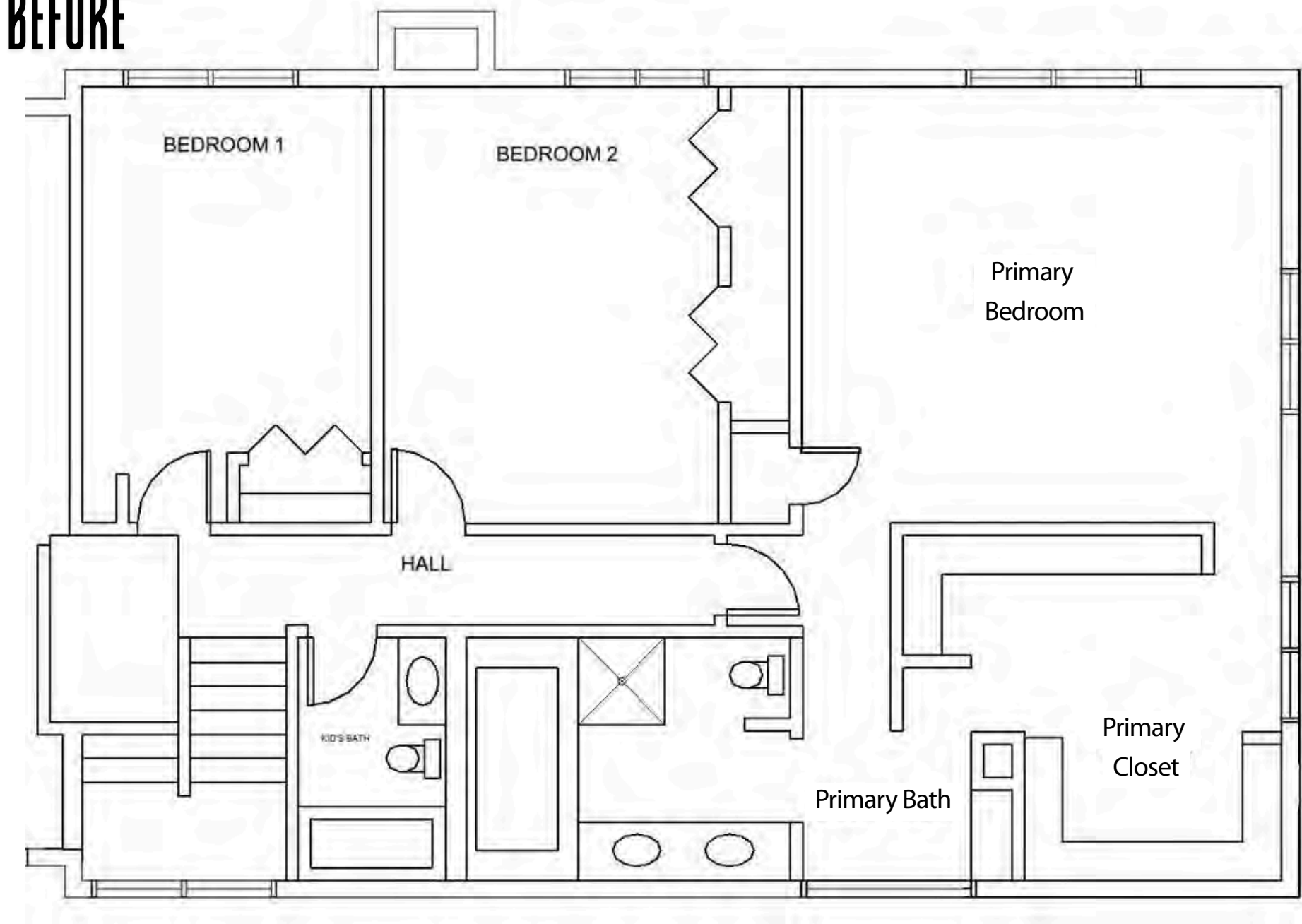


STAIRWELL - CONSTRUCTION PHOTOS



Upper Level

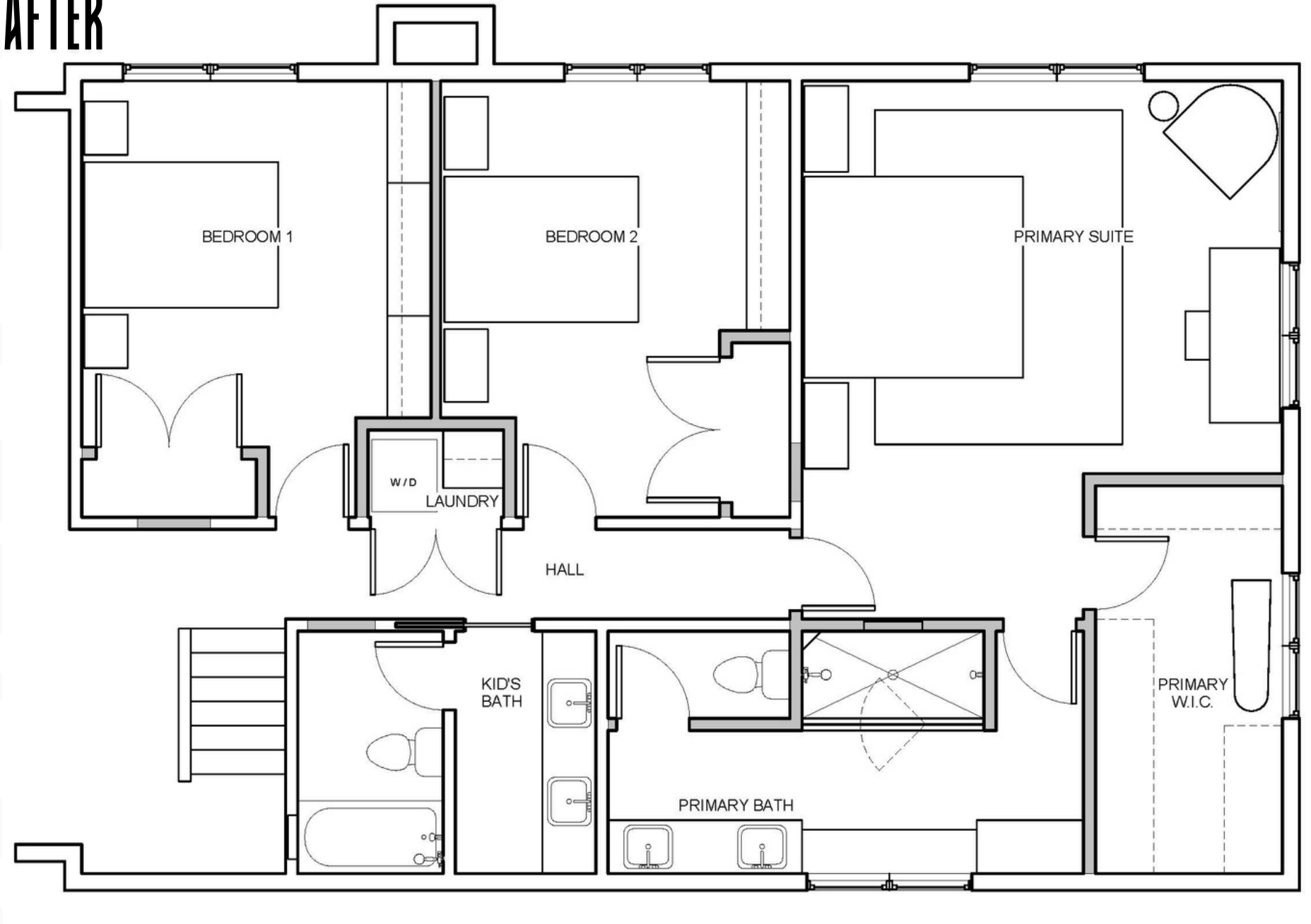
BEFORE



Client pain points

- Primary bathroom and closet had no doors, lacking any sort of privacy for the adults.
- Primary bathroom was outdated aesthetically and received minimal natural light.
- Clients did not want a bathtub in primary bath. Old bathtub took up a lot of space.
- Bedrooms 1 and 2 had minimal space for kids belongings and hobbies.
- Structural issues created sloping in primary bedroom (more details on page page 19).

AFTER



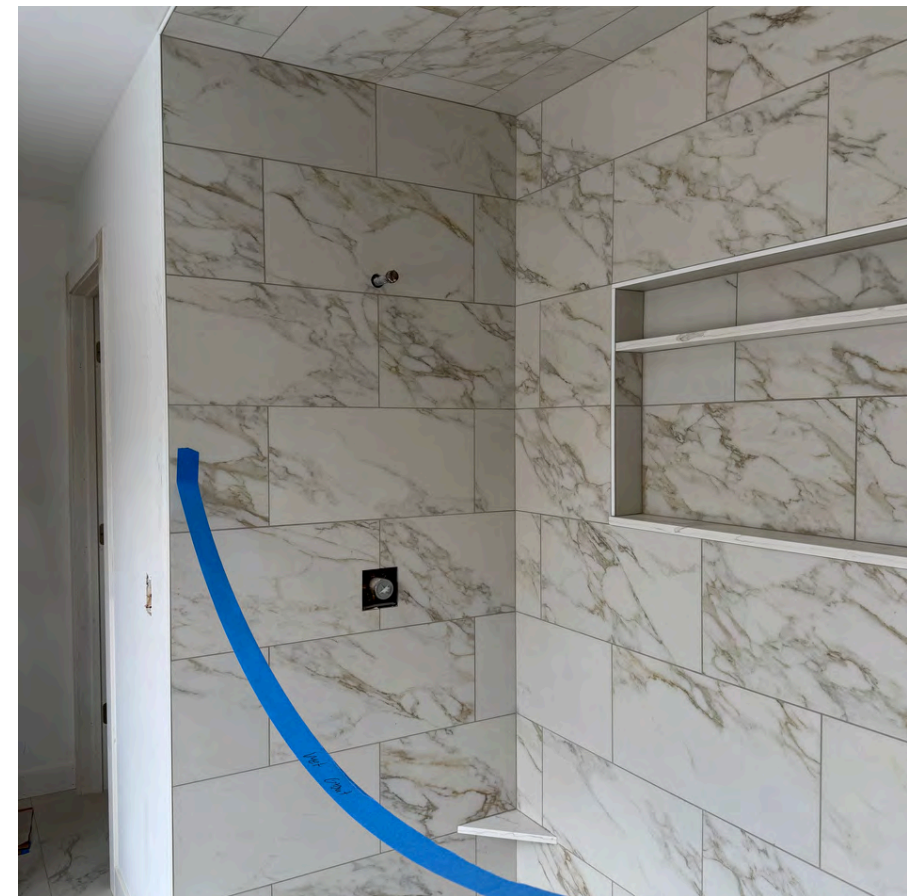
How our team helped

- Our team created a primary walk-in closet with a door.
- Primary bathroom was expanded by borrowing space from kids bath and previous closet area.
 - Our team built a large walk-in shower and added a door to the toilet room.
 - Incorporated the exterior window to be a part of the bathroom. Doing this allowed us to build a bench-seat and add extra cabinet storage into the bathroom layout.
- Upper-level laundry was added in the hallway between bedroom 1 and bedroom 2.
- Wall separating bedroom 1 and bedroom 2 was pushed further into bedroom 2, allowing built-ins to be constructed in bedroom 1.
- Closets in both bedroom 1 and bedroom 2 were adjusted and made larger.

PRIMARY BATHROOM - BEFORE & AFTER



UPPER LEVEL - CONSTRUCTION PHOTOS



New door to walk-in closet.

Vanity to left and toilet room & shower to right.

Primary shower tile installation.

Built-ins and new closets in kids rooms.

UPPER LEVEL - DETAILS

Aesthetic transformation

- Primary Bathroom
 - All tile is Marble Experience Calcutta Gold.
 - Mostly in size 12"x24" with the exception of the shower floor, which is mosaic-style 2"x2".
 - Cabinetry in primary bathroom matches kitchen.
 - Brizo and Delta hardware throughout primary bathroom.

Function enhancements

- Clients now feel a sense of privacy with the newly added doors in bathroom and walk-in closet.
- Adding washer and dryer to upper level was a huge improvement as previously the only washer and dryer was in the basement.
- Kids rooms got bigger and newly added built-ins now accommodate hobbies: music for him, and makeup for her.

Innovation & craftsmanship

- The primary bathroom and closet layout reconfiguration was a large task spearheaded by our team. Coming up with creative ways to maximize the current spaces and rearrange them to fit the needs of our clients was an undertaking spearheaded by our team.
- We added heated floors into the primary bathroom for an extra layer of comfort.



Challenges

Before presenting the unforeseen challenges that came up during the project, it's important to note that our clients requested an aggressive timeline of 4 months.

Despite the tight timeline being a challenge in itself, each additional challenge was discovered after construction started. Solutions to these challenges had to be woven into the timeline as they couldn't cause delays.

Our team took an "all-hands-on-deck" approach, where Superintendents not assigned to the job stepped in to assist wherever possible, ensuring deadlines were met without compromising craftsmanship.

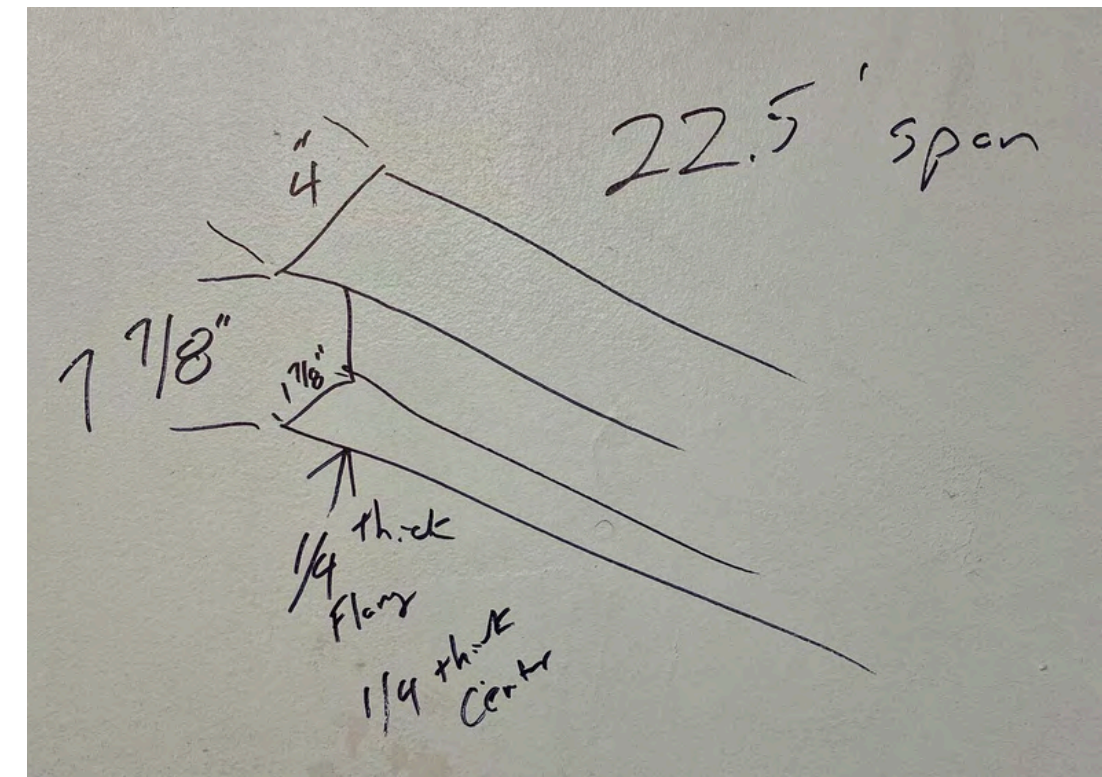
UNFORESEEN STRUCTURAL BEAM CHALLENGE - THE ISSUE

Finding the problem

- When we first walked through the house, one of our team members noticed a significant downward slope in the primary bedroom.
 - *See top right image for sloping*
- This prompted him to analyze the space below (garage) for structural cracks and issues.
- From the investigation, our team discovered the posts supporting the structural beam were bearing weight on the garage door and sliding off the cracked foundation below.
 - *Two left images*

The problem

- Our team member illustrated the existing beam dimensions and sent the illustration to the structural engineer.
 - *Bottom right image*
- The structural engineer responded with two clear messages:
 - Everyone working in the primary bedroom and garage need to get out as soon as possible since the floor could collapse.
 - The structural beam was "3x critical undersized".
- Issues with the structural beam, supporting beams, and cracked foundation all contributed to the significant downward slope initially felt in the primary bedroom.



UNFORESEEN STRUCTURAL BEAM CHALLENGE



Innovation & solving the issue

- Our team immediately put up temporary shoring to support the structure.
 - *Two left photos*
- A correct size beam was promptly ordered.
- In the meantime, team properly sealed off areas to ensure safety and keep the cold winter weather out of the rest of the house.
- The new beam was installed and the appropriate reinforcements were made to ensure the upper level was safe for many years to come.

UNFORESEEN STRUCTURAL BEAM CHALLENGE - BEFORE & AFTER



Old support configuration over garage.



New support installation over garage.



Old support configuration leading into mudroom.



New support installation leading into mudroom.

ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES



Outdated mechanicals

The challenge:

- The home's existing HVAC system was outdated, undersized, and unable to properly heat and cool the residence.

Innovations & solutions:

- We upgraded all mechanical systems and installed additional HVAC units. By zoning the systems, we achieved consistent and efficient heating and cooling throughout the home.



Insufficient insulation

The challenge:

- During construction, we uncovered insulation that was outdated and highly ineffective, compounding the HVAC challenges and contributing to energy loss.

Innovations & solutions:

- We replaced the existing insulation with spray-foam, significantly improving the home's efficiency, comfort, and long-term performance.

Thank you