

2026 NARI ROTY MINNESOTA AWARDS



BREAKING OUT OF THE BOX

Residential Interior: \$250,000 to \$500,000

FROM BOXY & DATED TO FLOWING & PURPOSEFUL

BACKGROUND

Untouched for over 30 years, this massively closed-in, boxy home suffered from a dark, heavily partitioned layout with zero spatial flow. The rigid floor plan offered no functional hosting space, a cramped 155-sq-ft owner's bedroom, and no room for personal hobbies.

GOALS

Create a bright, open-concept main floor with plenty of space to entertain, establish an expanded and dedicated owner's suite on the second floor, and design a specialized studio space for crafting—all while staying strictly within the existing exterior footprint.

STRATEGY

Remove all internal main-floor partitions to unify living, dining, and kitchen zones into a continuous 455-sq-ft great room. Reconfigure underutilized upstairs bedrooms into a 236-sq-ft owner's retreat and transform a secondary bedroom into a dedicated dinosaur crafting studio.

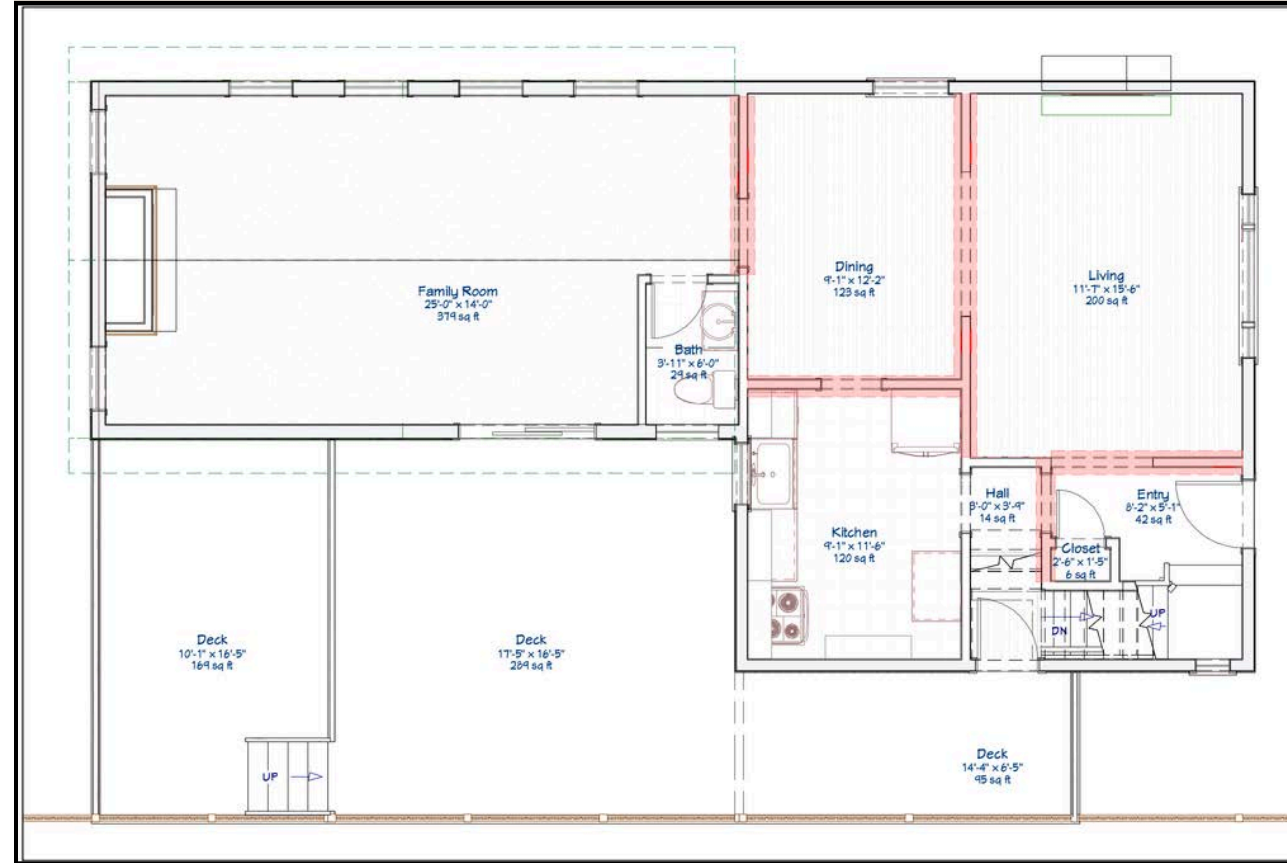


PLANS

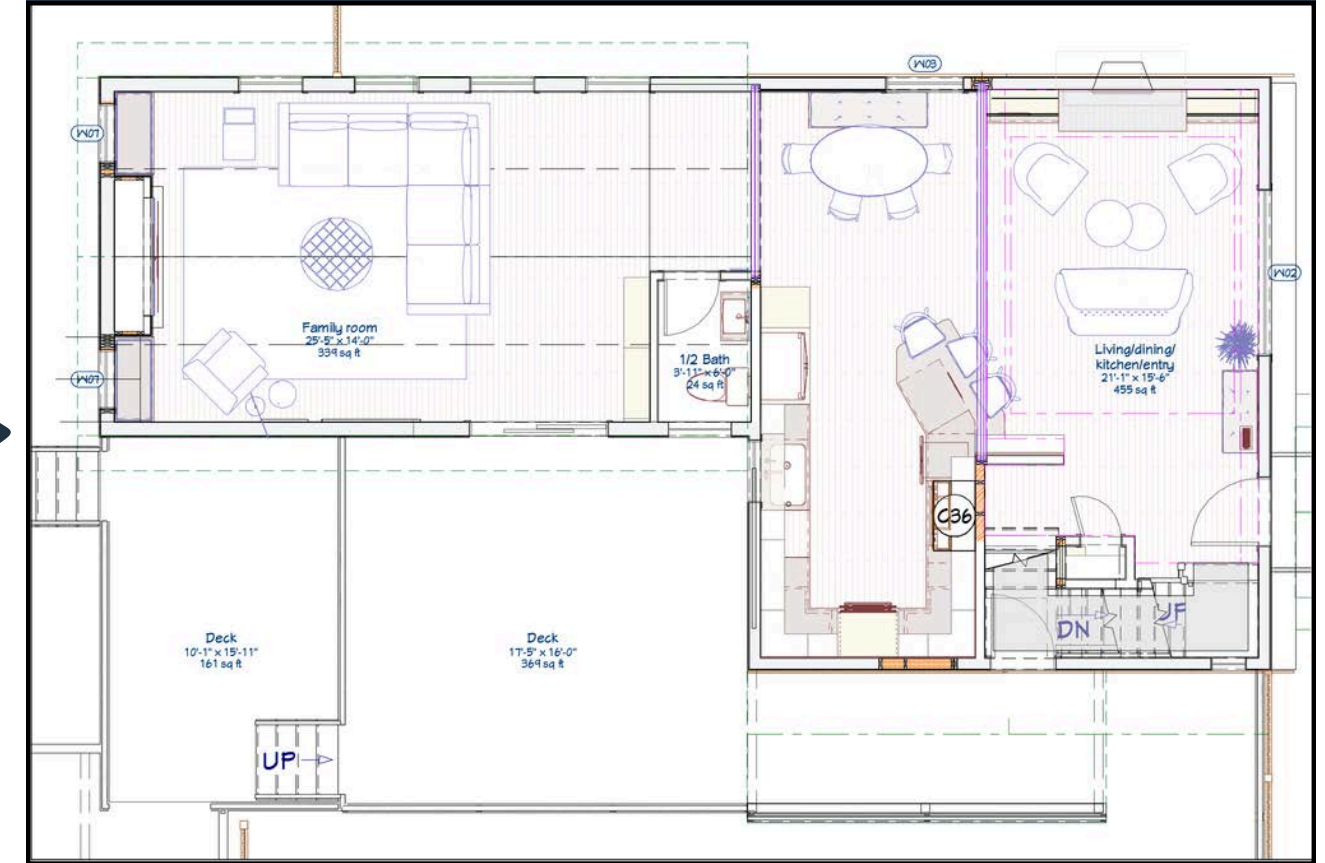
The boxy, closed-in main level opens into one connected living / dining / kitchen space, with a matching transformation upstairs into a dedicated owner's suite.

Removing walls on both levels — while keeping the existing exterior footprint and deck dimensions unchanged — is what let the plan open up without becoming an addition.

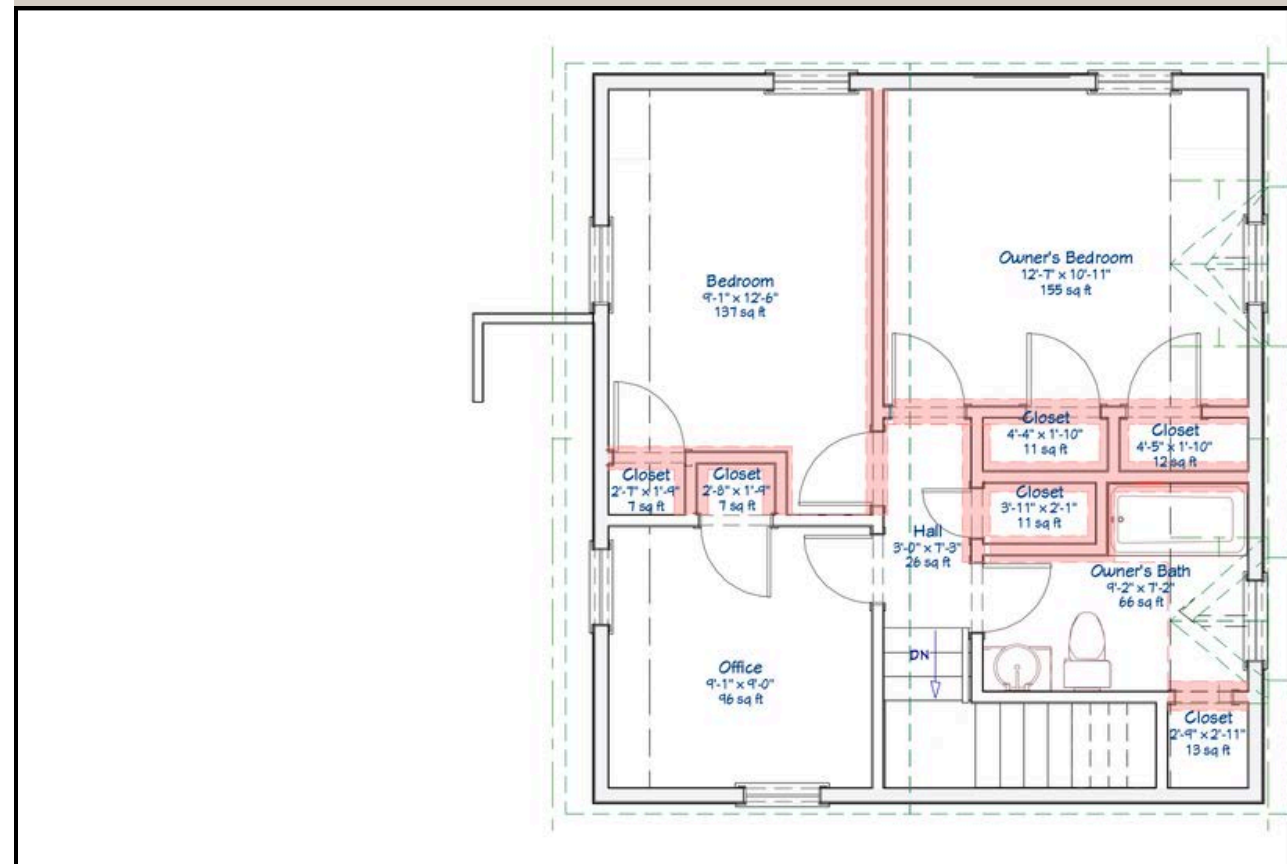
As-Built Main Level



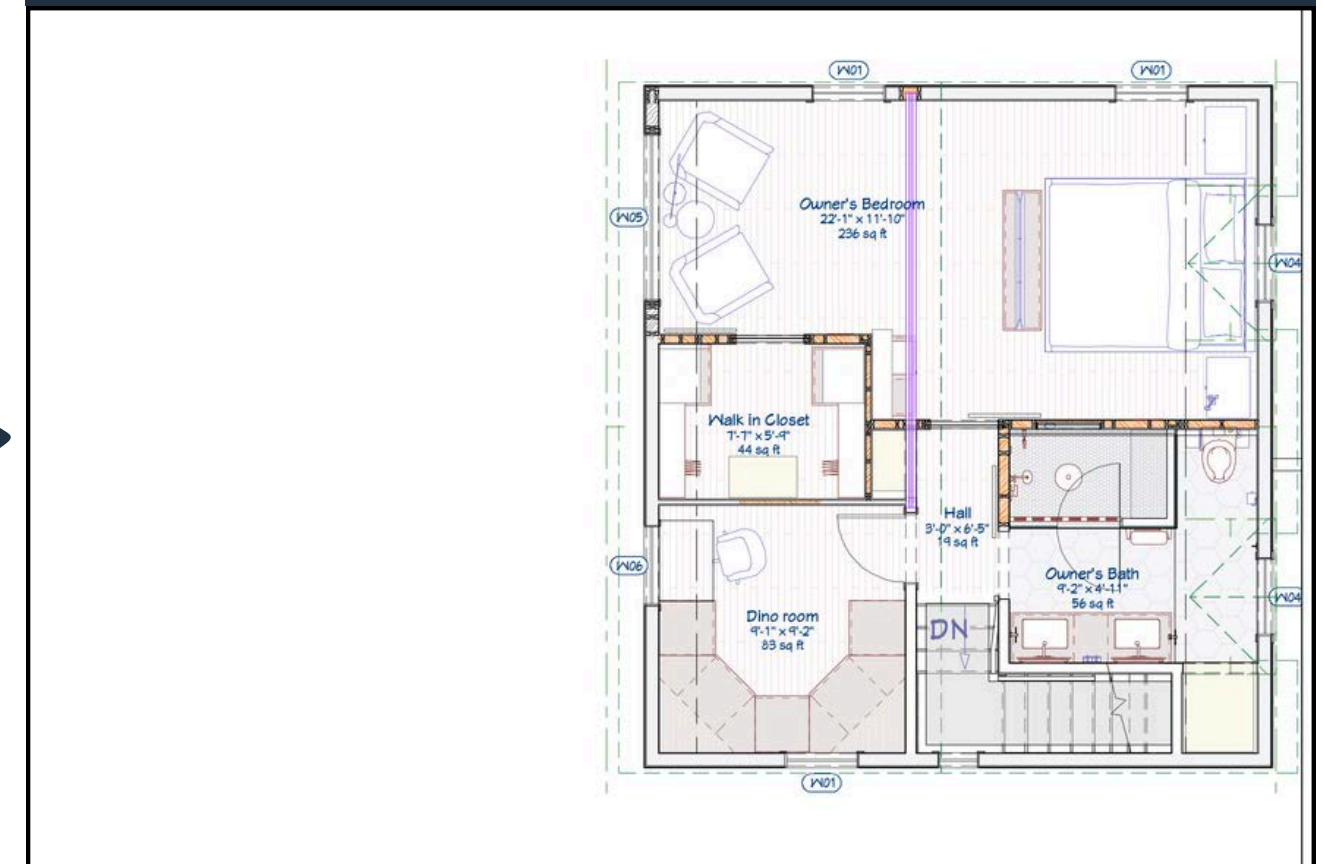
New Main Level



As-Built Second Level



New Second Level



Original Entry



Original Living Room



FROM BOXY 1990S...

MAIN LEVEL - BEFORE

Defined by a dark, compartmentalized 1990s floor plan, small partitioned rooms severely restricted movement, blocked natural light, and offered no functional space for entertaining.

Original Kitchen



Original Bar/Dining Area



Original Living Room



...TO TAILORED FLOW

MAIN LEVEL - AFTER

Demolishing dark partition walls opened a continuous 455-square-foot great room that flows seamlessly into the vaulted family room. Anchored by a feature-tile fireplace and custom built-ins, the open floor plan maximizes natural light and creates an effortless layout for everyday living and hosting.



FROM BOXY 1990S...

OWNER'S SUITE - BEFORE

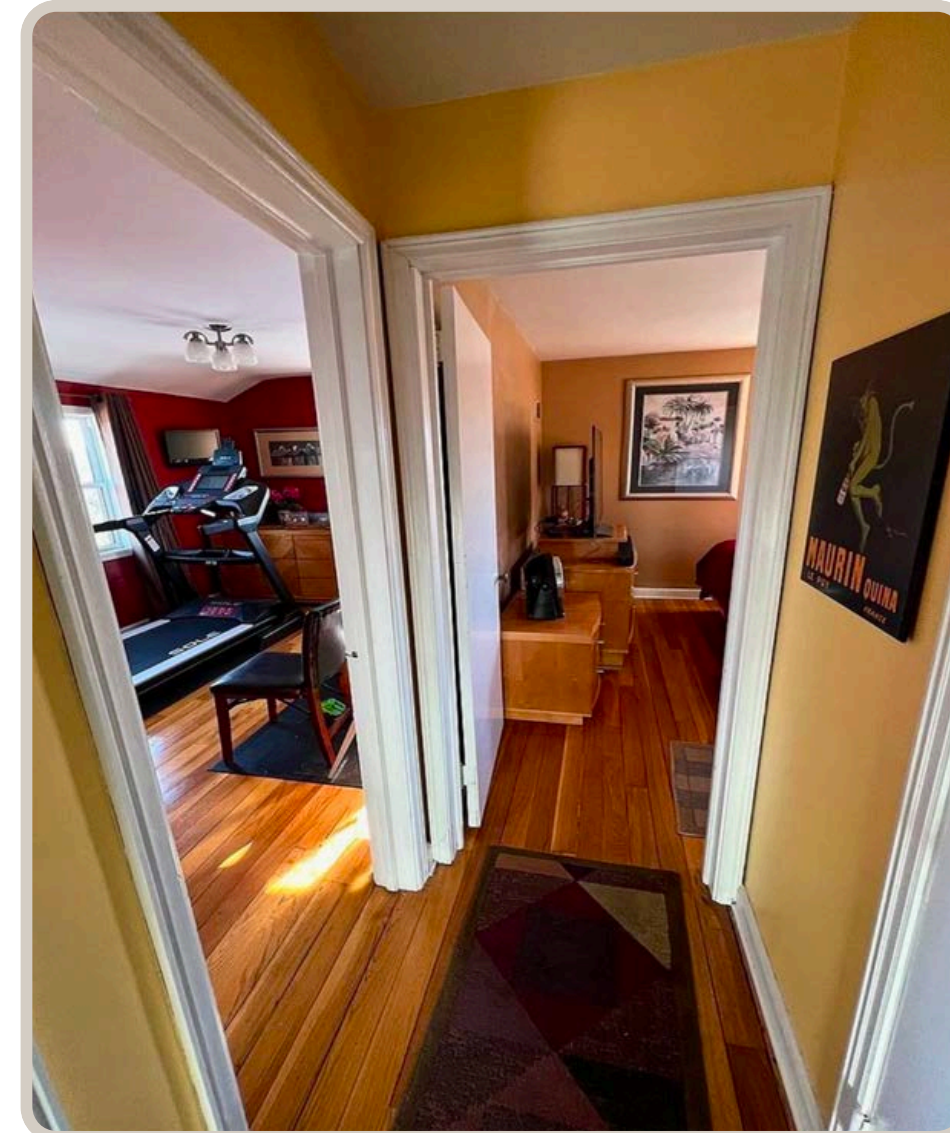
A cramped 155-sq-ft primary bedroom and dated, enclosed bathroom suffered from inefficient layouts, inadequate storage, and zero modern amenities.



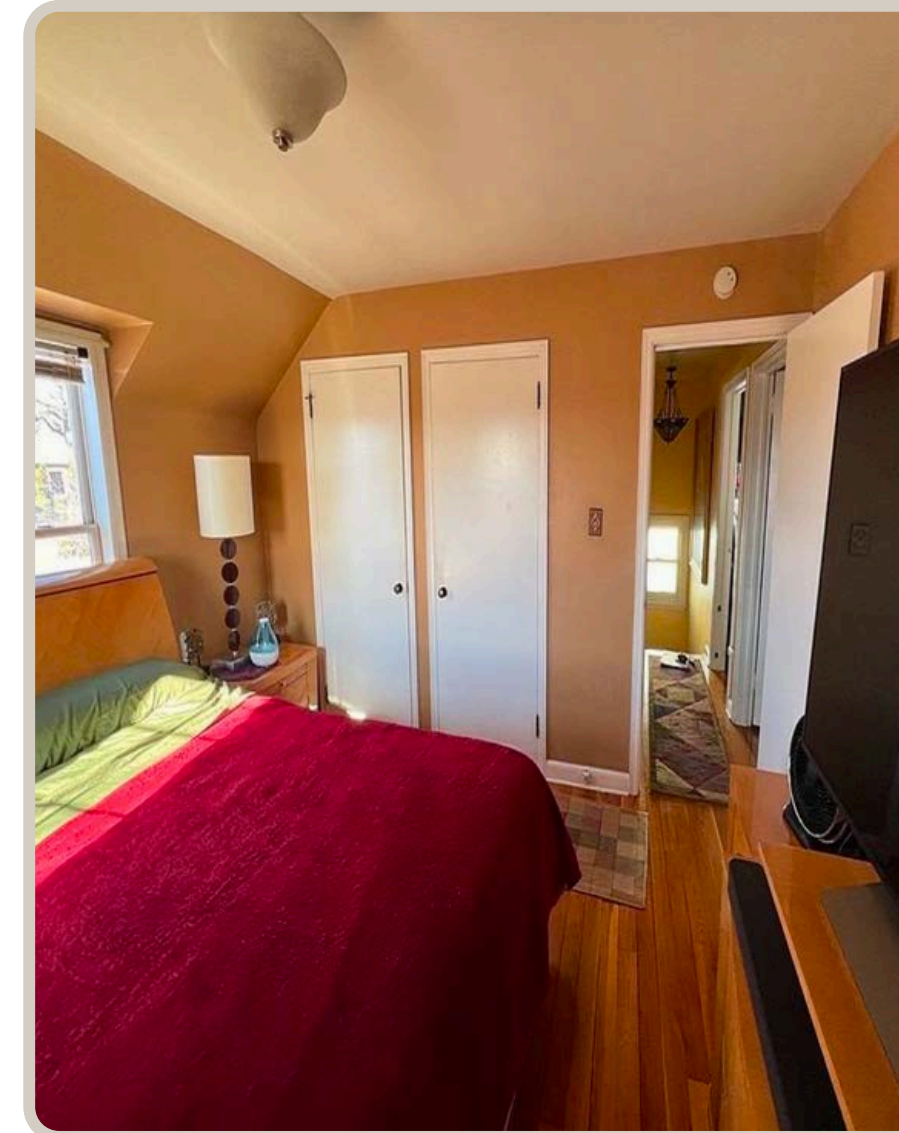
Original Hallway



Original Owner's Bath



Upstairs Bedrooms – Boxed Off
from Each Other



Original Owner's Bedroom



...TO TAILORED FLOW

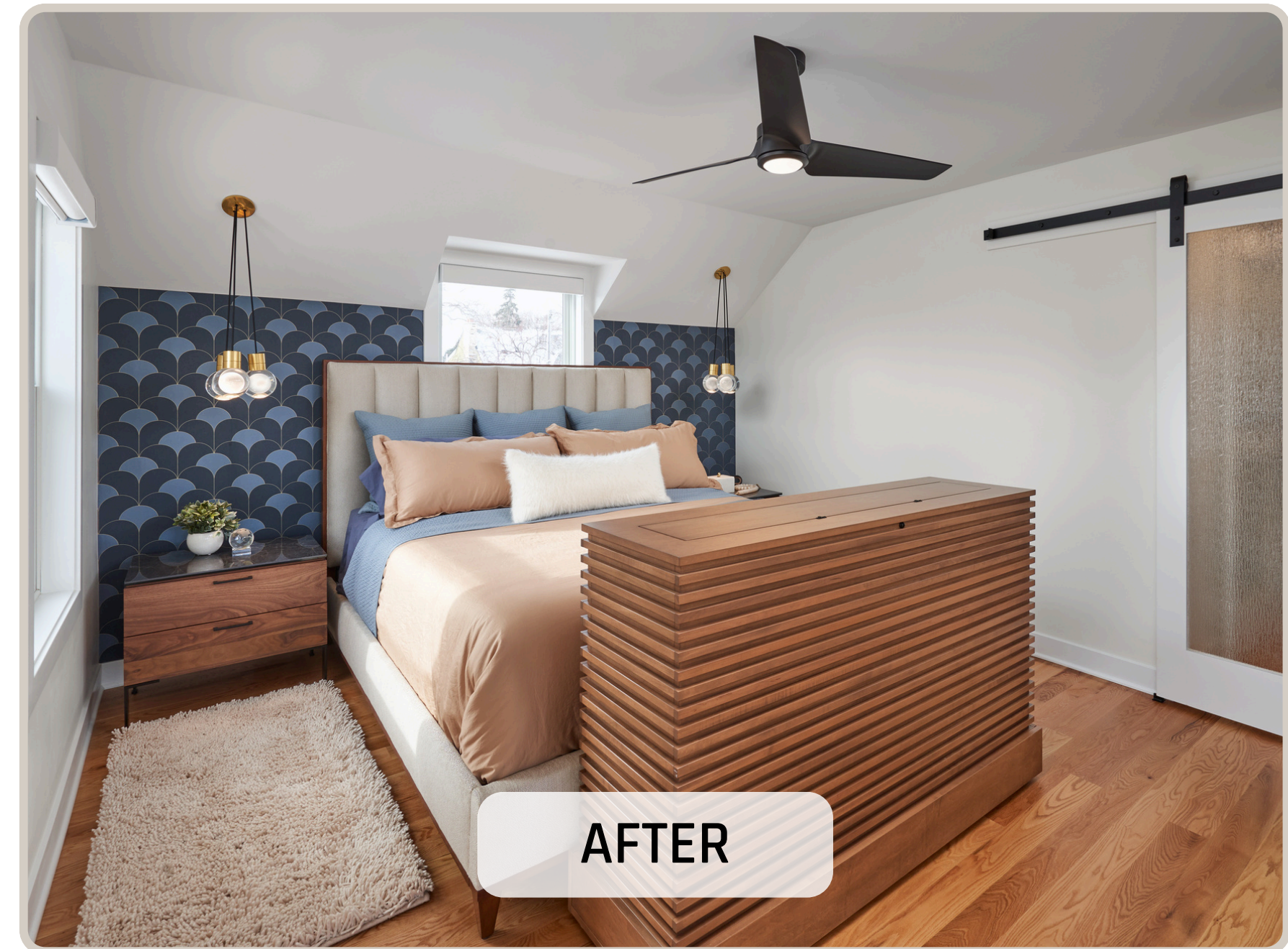
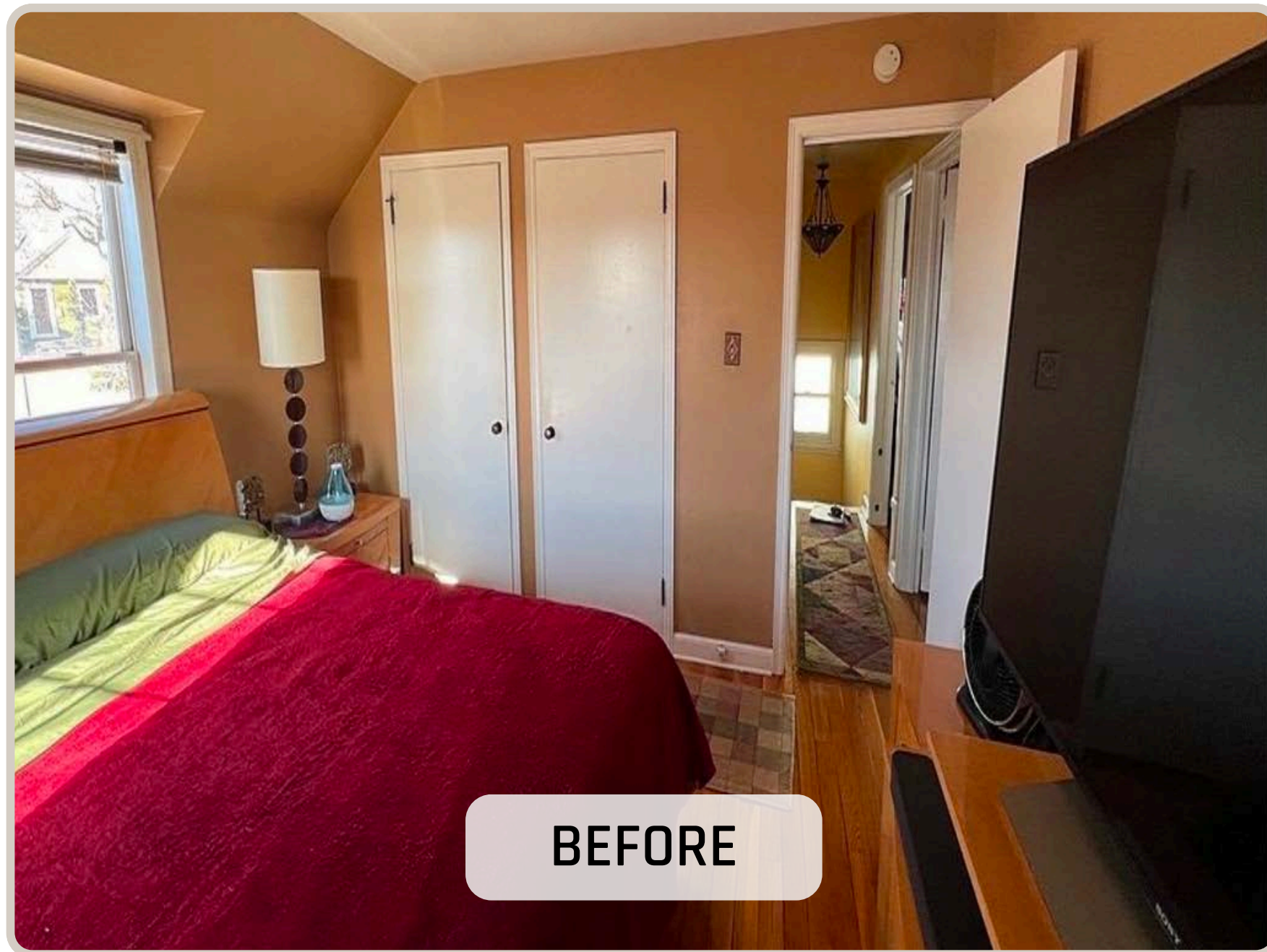
OWNER'S SUITE - AFTER

Reclaiming upstairs space yielded an expanded 236-sq-ft sanctuary featuring a walk-in closet, dedicated craft studio, and spa bath with double vanities, radiant heat, and a curbless steam shower.



FROM BOXY 1990S TO TAILORED FLOW

Side-by-Side Before-and-After: Owner's Bedroom

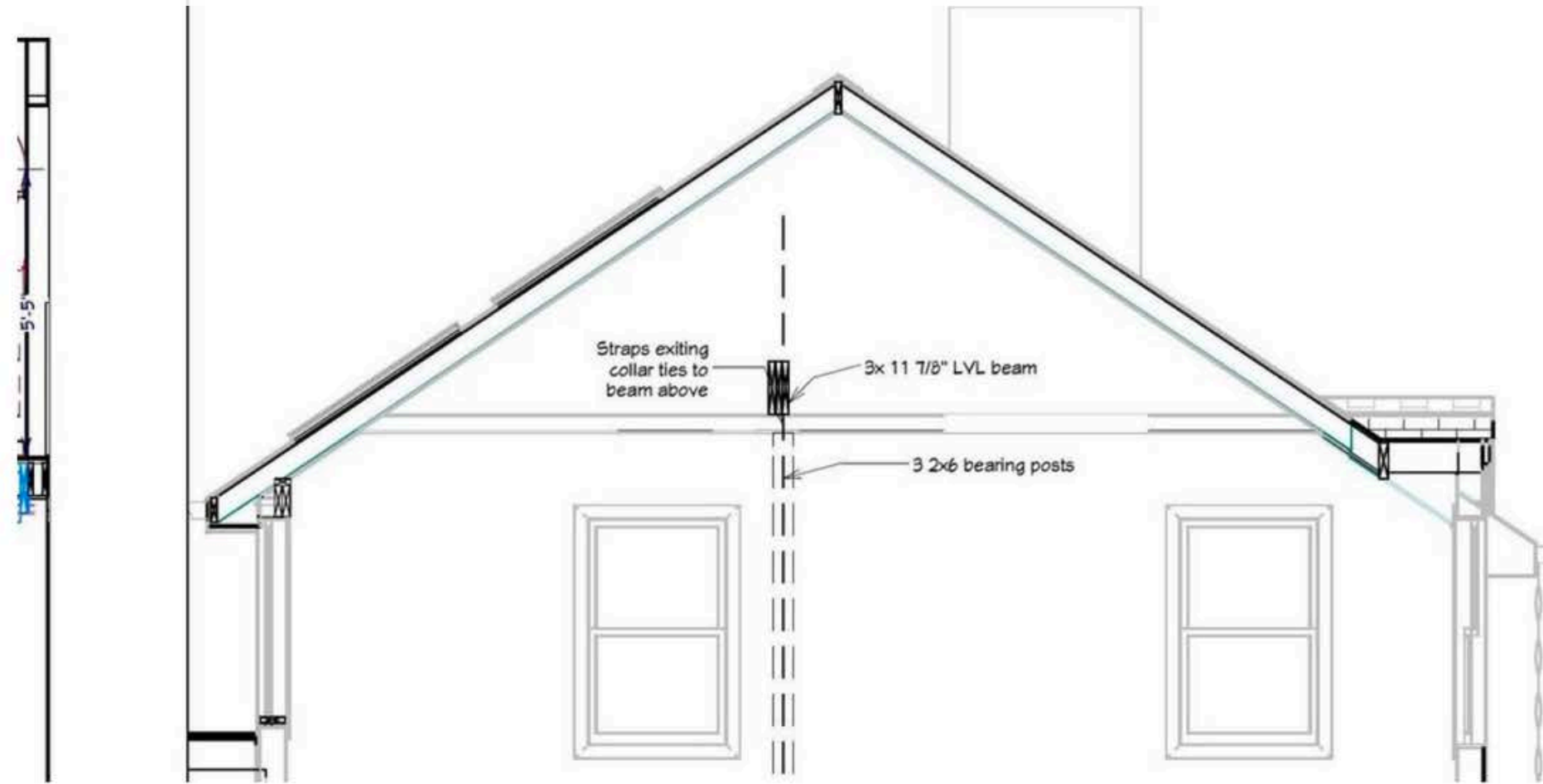


FROM BOXY 1990S TO TAILORED FLOW

Side-by-Side Before-and-After: Living Room



Cross-section detail: the upper-level LVL beam that keeps the roofline clean.



Open framing before the new ceiling and beam work closed it back up.



STRUCTURAL & MECHANICAL PROBLEM SOLVING

Hidden Upper Roof Support

Removing second-floor walls required bearing roof loads without creating dropped beams that break sightlines. The team framed a 3 x 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ " LVL beam hidden within the upper ceiling plane for a flush finish.

Architectural Main-Level Framing

Eliminating main-floor load-bearing walls required managing point loads and shifting ceiling heights. Instead of hiding the required beam, it was intentionally integrated into multi-level tray ceiling transitions dividing the living, dining, and kitchen areas.

Concealed Multi-Level HVAC Routing

Removing interior walls meant finding new homes for vertical ductwork chases — worked into both existing and new wall cavities, and hidden behind cabinetry.

TAILORED SPACES & FINISHES

THE DEDICATED “DINO” ROOM

A custom-designed hobby studio equipped with built-in corner cabinetry, specialized high-CRI task lighting, and open display shelving tailored specifically for dinosaur diorama crafting — built into the same second-floor reconfiguration that created the owner's suite.



TAILORED SPACES & FINISHES

FIREPLACE & LIBRARY FOCAL POINT

Custom built-in cabinetry and floating display shelves flanking a textured feature-tile fireplace surround anchored by a quartz hearthstone mantel.



AESTHETIC & ACOUSTIC HARMONY



High-Contrast Palette

Crisp uppers, deep navy cabinetry, blue herringbone accents, and Iron Ore trim.

Cohesive Tile Strategy

Geometric bath tile, textured fireplace surrounds, and tactile backsplashes.

Warm Earth Tones

Natural hardwood floors, warm wood hood details, and brass hardware throughout.

Layered Lighting

Multi-scene RGB cove lighting, under-shelf task spots, and backlit vanity mirrors.

Integrated Multi-Zone Audio

In-wall and in-ceiling high-output audio components engineered to transform the main floor into an immersive, high-volume entertainment space.

END RESULTS

Completely unlocked a house untouched for 30 years—delivering a high-functioning main level designed to entertain, a luxury owner's suite, and a personalized craft studio within the existing exterior footprint.



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