

COURT TO COMMAND CENTER

Residential Interior: \$100,000 to \$250,000



2026 NARI ROTY MINNESOTA AWARDS

UNLOCKING VOLUME

BACKGROUND

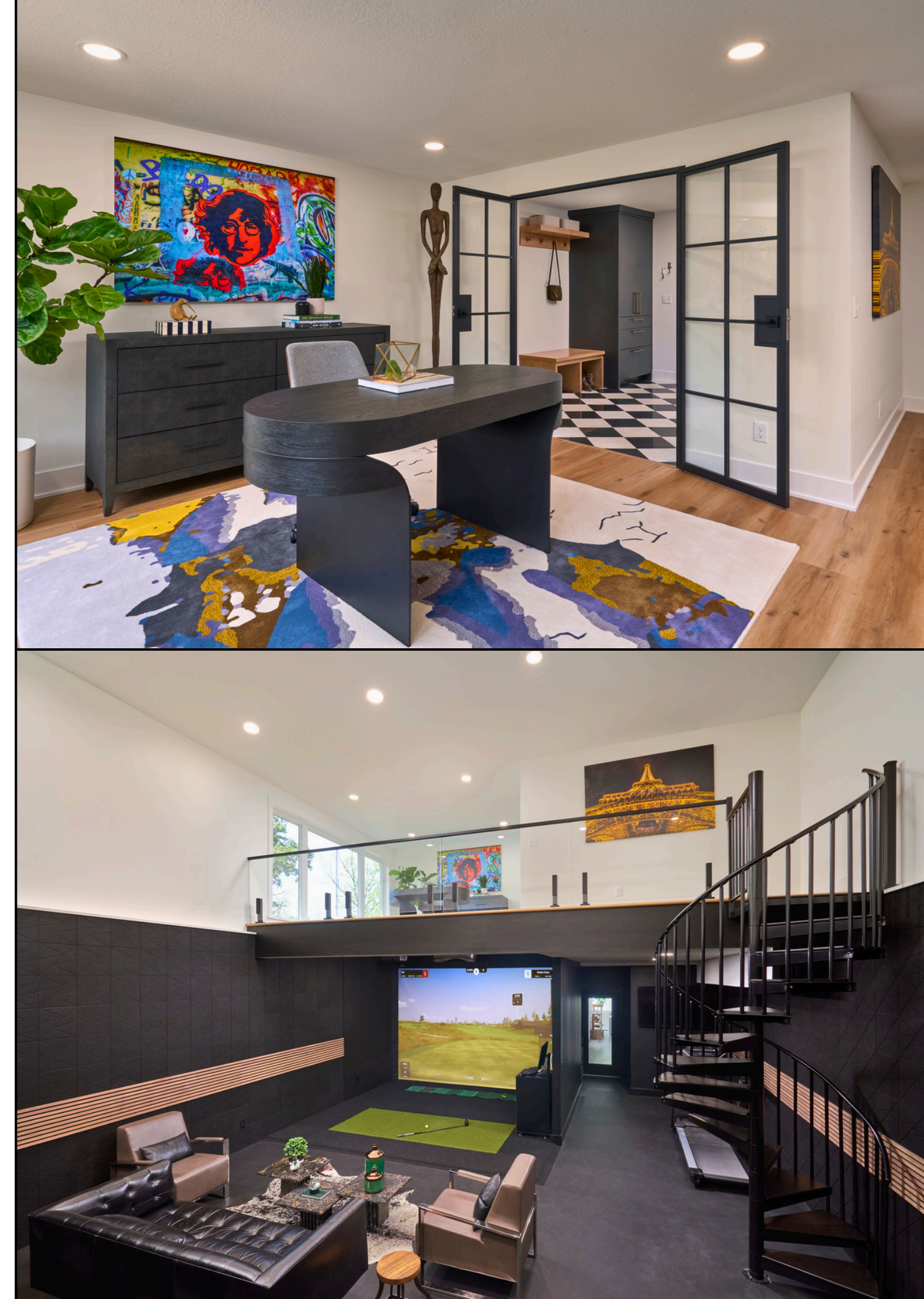
An unused two-story sports court, an awkward mudroom, and an outdated laundry room left the lower level significantly underperforming. Mid-design, the clients announced they were expecting their first child—transforming an open-ended remodel into a high-stakes, 9-month due-date-driven project to prepare for their growing family.

GOALS

Maximize the vertical volume, establish a work-from-home sanctuary with clear sightlines to activity areas, create an adaptable space that balances adult amenities (golf, workout, mudroom) with evolving family play, and establish flow and visual connection between the main living floors and lower-level activity zones.

STRATEGY

Carve the two-story volume into two distinct levels connected by a custom wrought-iron spiral staircase. The upper level houses an everyday mudroom and a feature home office with a floor-to-ceiling glass wall framing backyard sightlines; the lower level features a golf simulator, gym, and an adaptable play space beneath the new balcony, including a dedicated corner reserved for future vertical play as the family matures.



PLANS

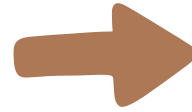
As-Built Main Level

The floor plan for the As-Built Main Level includes the following areas and dimensions:

- Open Below:** 31'-7" x 23'-2" (731 sq ft)
- Garage:** 31'-4" x 22'-11" (728 sq ft)
- Screen porch:** 12'-10" x 13'-0" (167 sq ft)
- Bench:** 5'-0" x 5'-5" (40 sq ft)
- Laundry:** 6'-1" x 8'-0" (48 sq ft)
- Hall:** 6'-1" x 5'-10" (29 sq ft)
- Closet:** 5'-11" x 3'-7" (21 sq ft)

Additional dimensions and features include:

- Overall width: 31'-9 3/8"
- Overall depth: 23'-4"
- Staircase labeled "UP"
- Door width: 9'-9 1/2"
- Various smaller dimensions for alcoves and openings: 5'-5 1/4", 6'-0 3/4", 3'-7 1/4", 3'-3", 6'-0 1/4", and 1'-2 3/4".



New Main Level

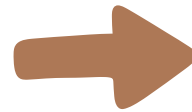
This architectural floor plan illustrates the proposed layout for the New Main Level. The plan includes several rooms and common areas, with dimensions and annotations for proposed changes. Key features include:

- Garage:** Located at the bottom left, with a note to "Relocate garage service door here New steps 3".
- Open Below:** A large open area on the left, with a note "Running the LVP parallel with the railing with black metal edge railing".
- Corridor:** A central corridor with a "Glass rail" and a "New door to be flush with main level floor".
- Mudroom:** A room with a "New door, new tile New cabinets HVAC duct new ceiling smooth ceiling".
- Balcony/office:** A room with a "New door, new LVP New cabinets HVAC duct new ceiling smooth ceiling".
- Laundry:** A room with a "New fire New cabinets ceiling patch HVAC duct new ceiling smooth ceiling".
- Screen:** A room on the right side, with a note "Screen patch 134 sq ft".
- Stairs:** A set of stairs labeled "D01" and "D02" with dimensions "4'-0" x 4'-0" and "10'-6" x 10'-6" respectively.
- Other rooms:** A "Closet" (30 sq ft) and a "Hall" (66 sq ft) are also shown.

The plan uses various line styles and colors to indicate existing and proposed elements. Dimensions are provided for most rooms and corridors. Annotations provide specific details about proposed changes, such as new doors, cabinets, and ceilings.

As-Built Basement Level

The diagram is a detailed architectural floor plan of a basement level. The primary feature is a large rectangular room labeled "Gym" with dimensions of 31'-7" x 25'-1" and a total area of 736 sq ft. The gym's dimensions are explicitly labeled: the width is 31'-11 11/16" and the depth is 25'-4 5/8". To the right of the gym is a smaller room labeled "TH" (Towel Room). A set of stairs is located between the gym and the towel room. The plan includes various wall types, indicated by different line styles (solid, dashed, and thick solid lines), and a door with a double swing. The overall layout is enclosed within a dashed boundary line.

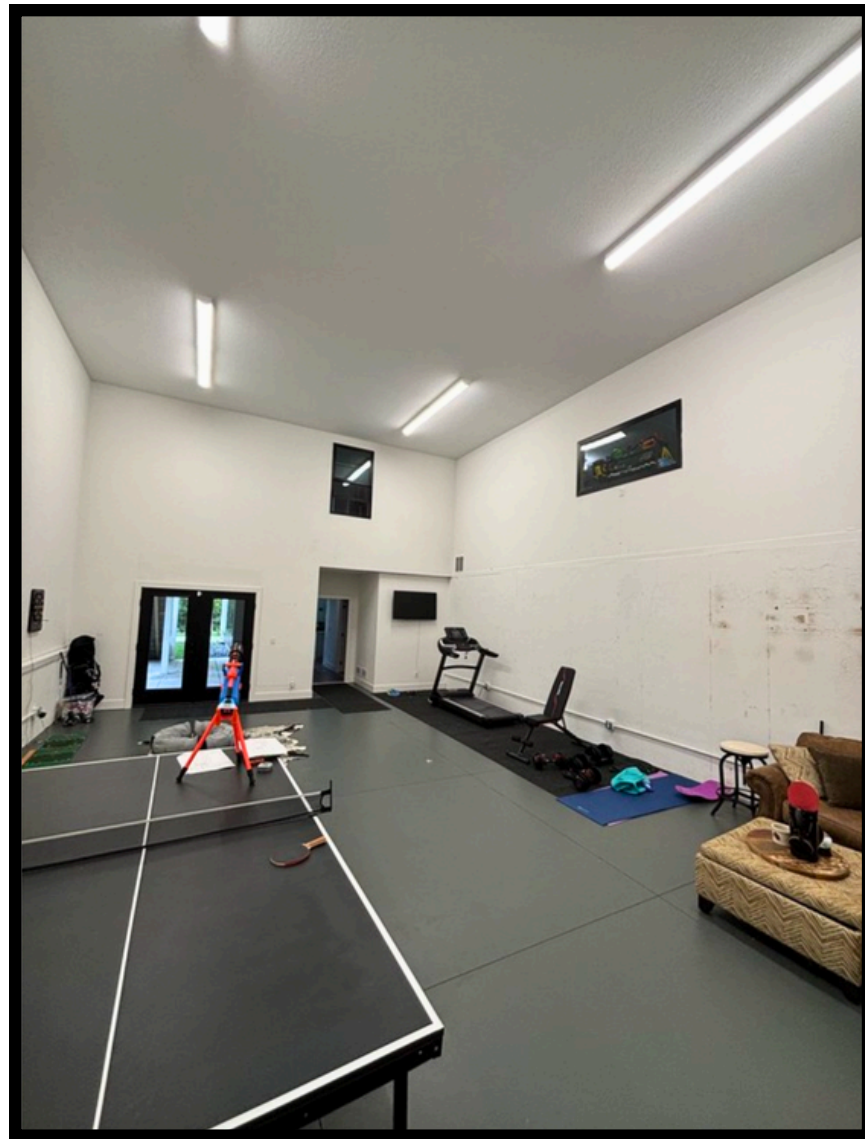


New Basement Level

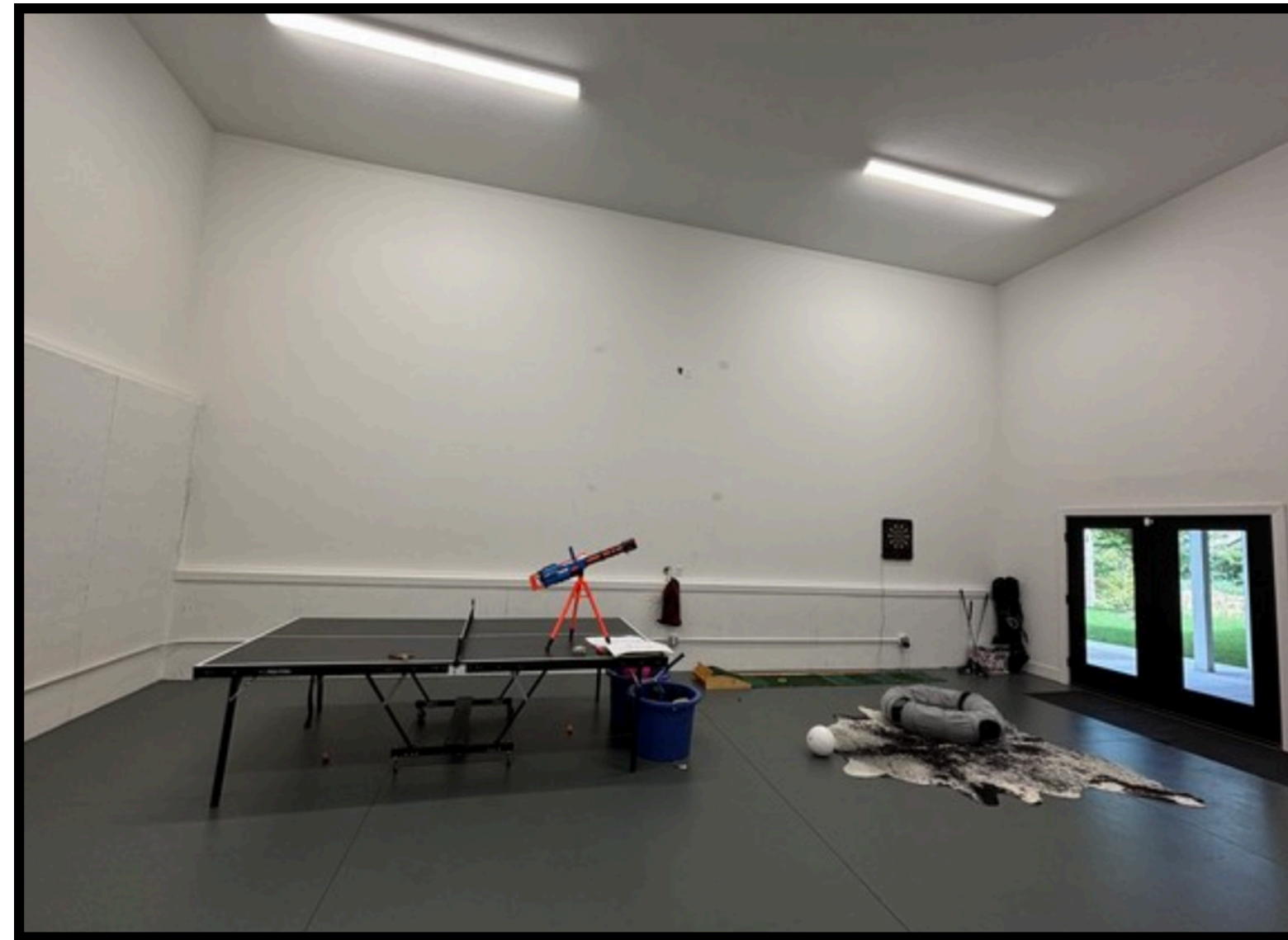
Architectural floor plan of the New Basement Level. The plan shows a large room with a 'NEW GOLF SIMULATOR SPACE' (12'-4 1/8" x 13'-4 5/8") and a 'Mixed media' area (136 sq ft). The main room has 'acoustic walls treatment' (24'-3 3/4" x 22'-3 1/2") and 'Rubber flooring'. A circular staircase is labeled 'UP' and '32'-0 5/8"'. The ceiling is smooth with new ceiling lights. The plan also shows a 'Mixed media' area (340 sq ft) and a 'Mixed media' area (136 sq ft). The total area is 1,000 sq ft.

FROM EMPTY VOLUME...

A dark, underutilized 2-story indoor sports court, a cramped mudroom, and a dated laundry room with inadequate storage and a single un-zoned HVAC trunk.



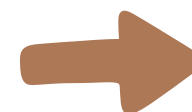
The unused sports court before renovations – a bare, double-height volume over the garage.



Existing recreation equipment filled the space without a defined purpose.



The existing laundry room – cramped and lacking storage space.



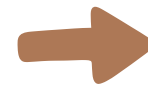
...TO PURPOSEFUL LIVING

A light-filled, two-level retreat featuring a column-free loft office, custom mudroom and laundry millwork in Iron Ore, a golf simulator with acoustic paneling, and a custom spiral staircase linking both floors.



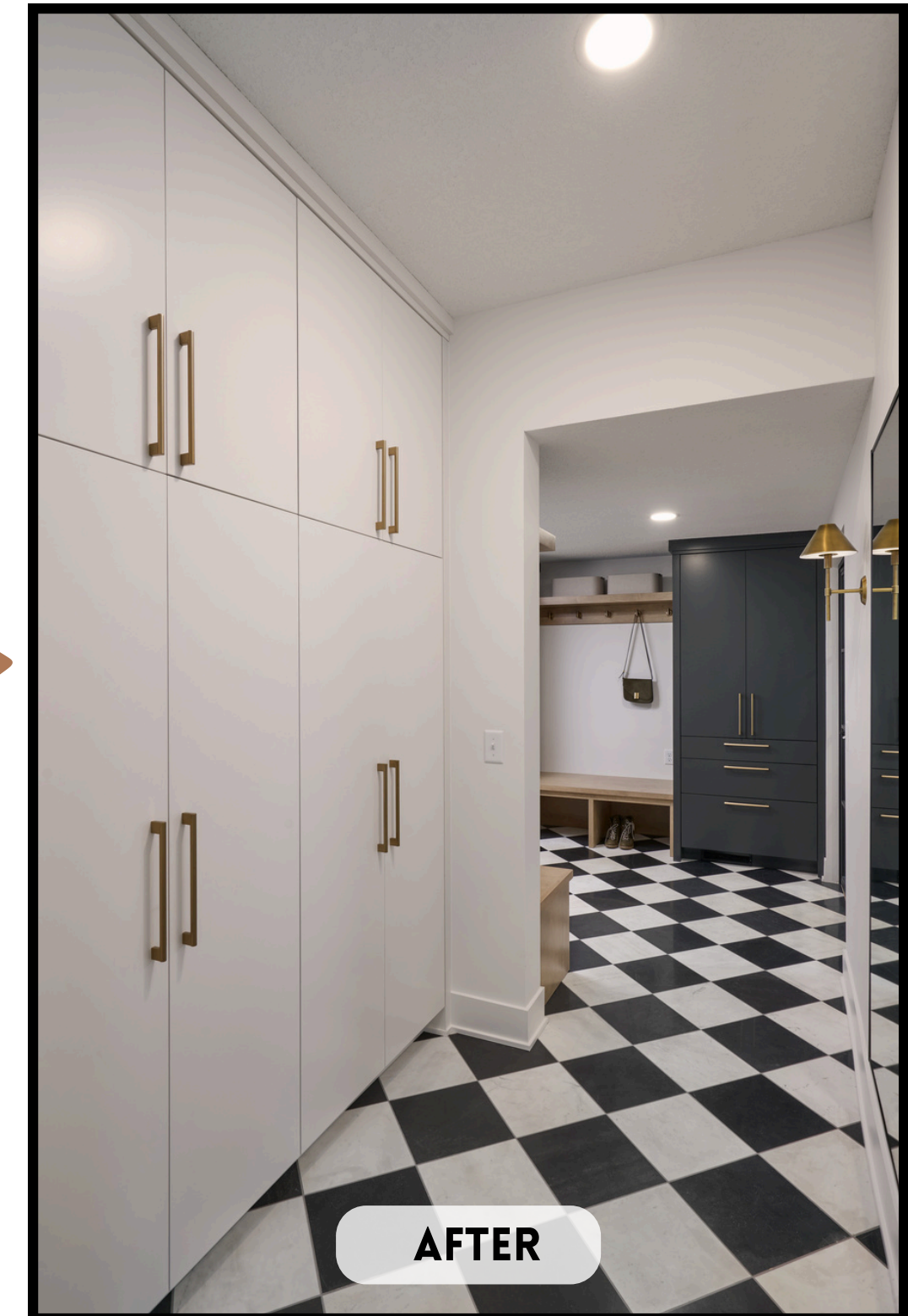
FROM EMPTY VOLUME TO PURPOSEFUL LIVING

Before-and-After Comparison – Basement Level



FROM EMPTY VOLUME TO PURPOSEFUL LIVING

Before-and-After Comparison – Laundry Room



CHALLENGES & ENGINEERING

A strict 9-month pre-baby timeline transformed an open-ended renovation into a high-stakes sprint.
Three complex engineering challenges drove the structural execution:

- **Clear span, no columns:** To keep both levels entirely unobstructed, we suspended a 14' flush steel beam wall-to-wall, carrying new 9 1/2" TJI joist set 16" on center above it. Built-up 2x8 posts on both sides of the beam carry the load straight down to the footing, so the open vibe upstairs doesn't structurally hinder the space.
- **Getting an oversized beam into an undersized opening:** Lacking overhead crane access and standard entry clearance, we pierced the garage exterior wall to feed the heavy 14' steel beam in horizontally, directly onto its bearing points.
- **One system doing three jobs:** We converted a single sports court supply trunk into dedicated supply/return branches, giving the mudroom, loft, and lower activity zones independent climate control.



SPATIAL & DESIGN INNOVATIONS

Two-Level Spatial Split: Doubled the functional square footage by converting a single high-ceiling volume into an upper owners loft and a lower active entertainment zone.

Seamless Sightlines: A frameless glass balcony rail with black metal edge nosing and floor-to-ceiling glass office walls maintain an unbroken visual connection and shared daylight from the new mulled backyard window unit down into the simulator and playroom.

Integrated Circulation: Relocated the garage entry door, added new entry steps, and installed a custom spiral staircase to create natural traffic flow between the garage, main level, and lower-level amenities.

Built-In Adaptability: Designed a dedicated corner in the lower playroom with structural backing reserved for a future climbing wall and kid-scaled vertical play as the child grows.



AESTHETIC & MATERIAL FINISHES

Tailored Storage & Surfaces

Modern tile flooring, integrated bench seating, custom gear storage in the mudroom, and a dedicated folding counter with a utility sink elevate daily function.



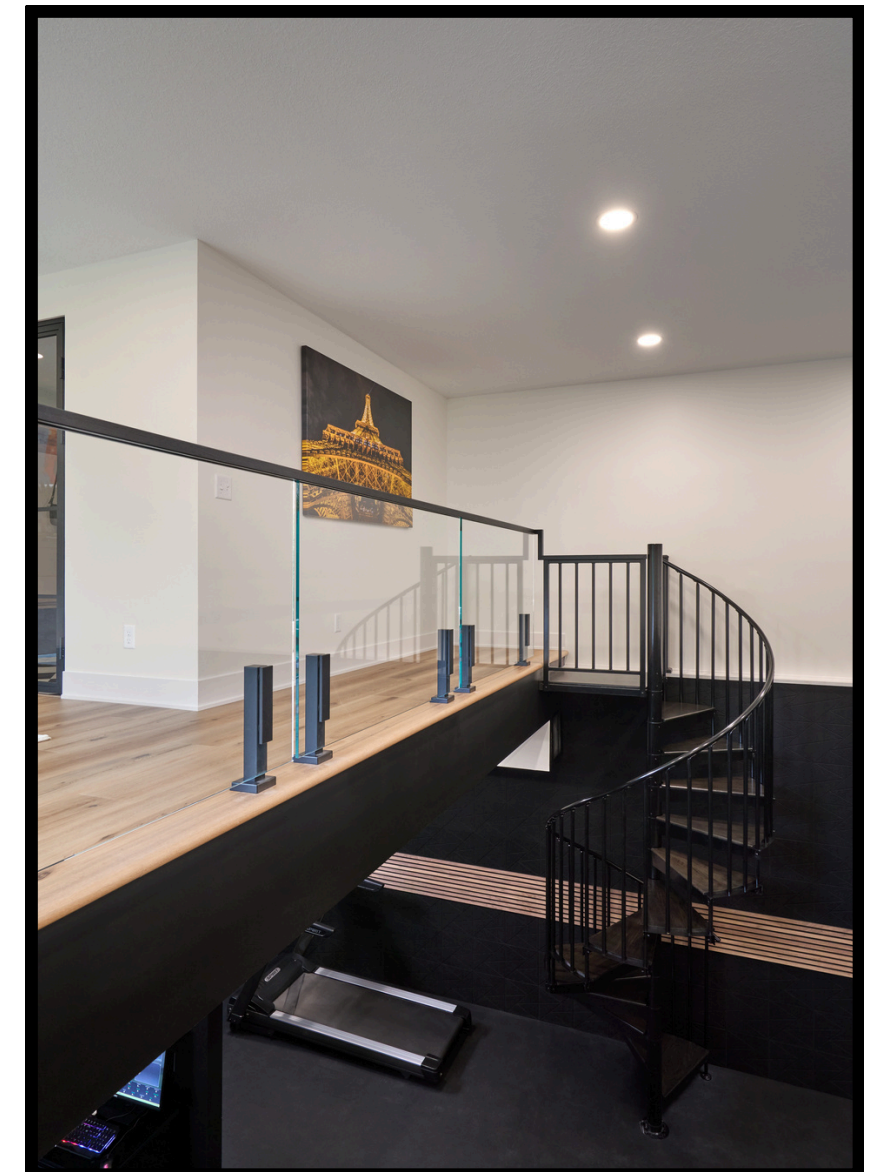
Rich Material Contrast

Warm wood-slat accents, acoustic wall paneling, and custom laundry cabinetry in deep Iron Ore bring depth and acoustic dampening to the active zones.



Architectural Anchor

A custom wrought-iron spiral staircase serves as the central physical and visual feature uniting both levels.



END RESULTS

By re-engineering structural volume and mechanical systems on a strict 9-month deadline, the project doubled the home's usable footprint—delivering a sophisticated, multi-generational space tailored for work, play, and family growth for years to come.



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