

NARI Minnesota 2026 RotY

NE MINNEAPOLIS BASEMENT FOR FOUR

Category: Basement Over \$250,000

When the homeowners purchased their Northeast Minneapolis home, the basement's unusually tall ceilings revealed the potential for a truly livable lower level. Ten years later, with two young kids and a need for more space, the family transformed the underutilized basement into a functional extension of their home.

The remodel introduced a dry bar with pantry storage and beverage refrigeration, a flexible playroom that can convert to a guest room, and a dedicated mudroom at the family's primary side entrance. The bathroom and laundry room were also reconfigured to support the family's backyard hot tub and cold plunge use, creating a seamless transition between indoors and out.

The Client's Needs

- Make better use of the partially finished basement to expand functional living space for a family with two young children.
- Resolve ongoing water issues and create a finished environment that reflects the homeowners' style.
- Add dedicated shoe and jacket storage near the side entrance, the family's primary point of entry.
- Provide additional kitchen storage.
- Create a comfortable area where the children can play and spend time together.
- Include a bathroom that conveniently serves the backyard hot tub.
- Design a multipurpose room for occasional guests, play, and homework. That is also a legal bedroom, for resale considerations.

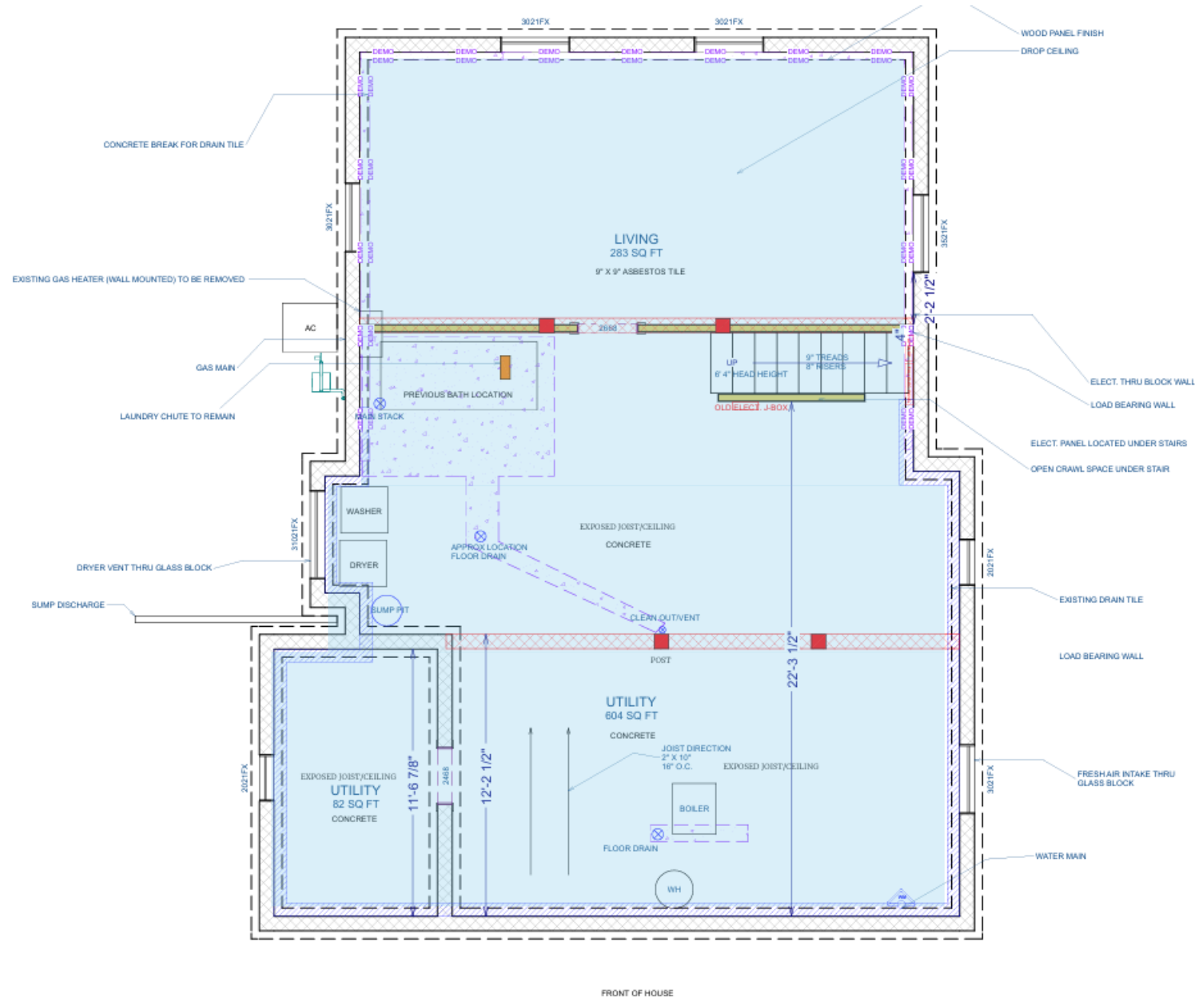


BEFORE PHOTOS



969 sq. ft. Existing
Unfinished Basement

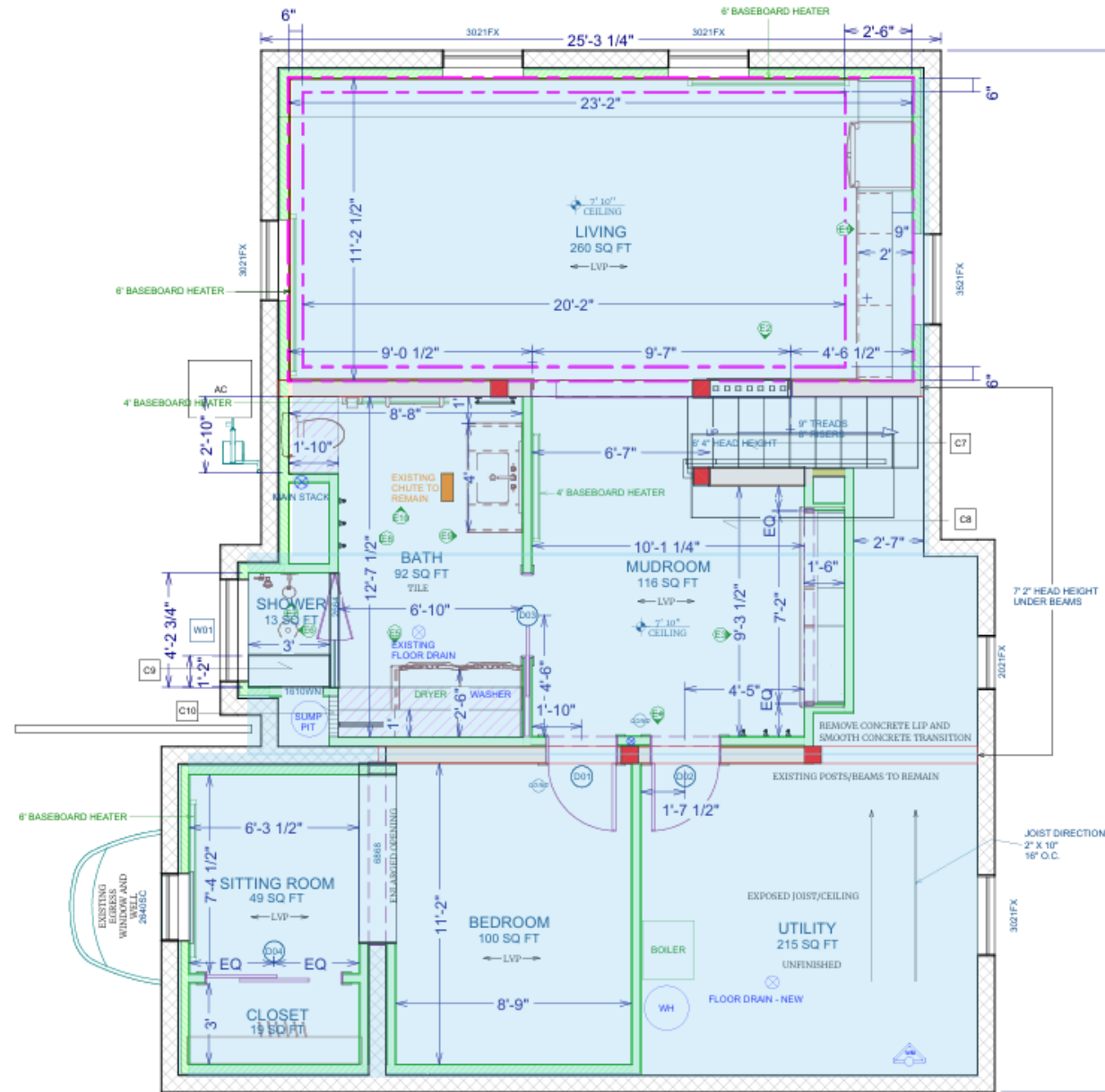
There was also an old bathroom down there that was no longer usable, which included a large electrical junction box exposed in the wall!



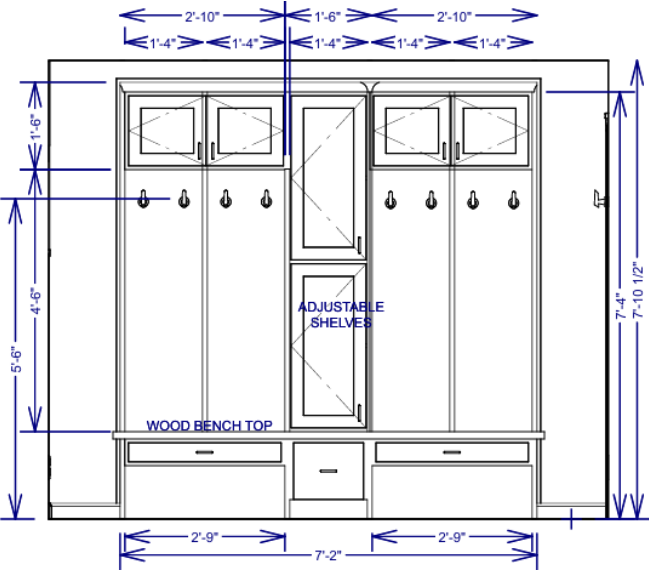
PROPOSED BASEMENT PLAN

864 sq. ft. Proposed
Mudroom, Bath, Bedroom, Sitting
Room, Utility and Living Space

Having a space that functioned well for everyday life, and entertaining, was top priority for these homeowners. The living room captures the south facing sunlight, bathroom/laundry/mudroom are easy access at the bottom of the steps & the kids space/guest space is close by but private.



3D RENDERINGS & DESIGN DEVELOPMENT



BEFORE VS AFTER REMODELING



PROJECT CHALLENGES



The renovation began with an uneven concrete slab that required extensive floor preparation before construction could proceed. Existing structural posts also presented a challenge, particularly because the homeowners wanted an open staircase. To create a cohesive design, custom wood post wraps and integrated railing and slat wall details transformed these necessary structural elements into intentional architectural features.

The existing posts influenced nearly every aspect of the layout, requiring careful wall placement to maximize functionality while maintaining a clean, balanced aesthetic. In the new bedroom, a portion of the foundation wall was opened with a structural beam to accommodate an egress window and bring the space into compliance with current code requirements.



Utility constraints added another layer of complexity to the design. Access to the electrical panel behind the stairs had to be preserved, requiring careful planning to maximize the adjacent mudroom while maintaining required clearances. The locations of the sump basket and main plumbing stack further complicated the bathroom and laundry layout, limiting fixture placement and circulation options. There were also boiler lines that were raised, gas lines rerun, electrical junction boxes relocated & the AC line-set adjusted. Through thoughtful space planning and coordination, these necessary mechanical and service elements were seamlessly integrated into the design, allowing the new mudroom, laundry, and bathroom spaces to function efficiently without compromising aesthetics or everyday usability.

A soffit was needed along the structural beam in the living room to hide a boiler line. By carrying the detail around the perimeter of the room & creating a lit tray, the now required soffit is an intentional design detail.



Aesthetics and Style



The new bedroom and sitting room provide flexible space for both everyday living and overnight guests, doubling as a playroom and retreat for the family's young children. Throughout the project, thoughtful design details bring warmth and character to the basement, including a tray ceiling, custom slat wall, wrapped wood posts, and bold wallpaper selections that showcase the homeowners' fun, personal style. Traditional penny tile pays homage to the age of the home, while brass fixtures create continuity with the rest of the house. Large-format shower tile introduces a modern touch, and layered wood tones add warmth, texture, and a sense of timelessness throughout the space.



The lower level was designed to maximize both functionality and personality. At the base of the stairs, a spacious mudroom provides a practical landing zone for the family's daily routines, with four custom lockers giving each family member their own dedicated storage space. Motion sensing lights were installed in the top of each cubby to help light the space when coming & going after dark. Nearby, a dry bar with beverage refrigeration and pantry storage offers valuable kitchen overflow space while creating an inviting area for entertaining.

A combined bathroom and laundry room efficiently serves multiple needs. Positioned for easy access from the backyard hot tub area, the space also fulfills the homeowners' wish for a spacious walk-in shower complete with a rain shower head and in-floor heat under the tile. Careful planning ensured the room functions seamlessly while maintaining a sense of comfort and luxury.





