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SUMMIT
COUNTY

REAL ESTATE & MOUNTAIN LIFESTYLES | FEBRUARY/MARCH 2015

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HOME
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MARKET
REPORT

DESIGN
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BUILDER'S *brief*

NOT ALL HOUSES OF THE SAME SIZE COST THE SAME TO BUILD

The amount a home will cost starts with the design. Here is an example of how two similar homes can vary by 100s of thousands of dollars in building cost.

For the sake of argument we'll assume excavation costs, driveway, landscaping, interior finishes, and bed/bath count are identical in two different 4,000 sq/ft homes.

The first difference we'll use is the foundation footprint, in general the more corners a foundation has the more the foundation will cost, and that carries up to the rest of the structure. So needless to say a rectangular house with four corners will cost less than one with many bump outs or angles.

As the framing and roofing become more complex the cost of materials and labor generally increase. It is easy to visualize the difference in the difficulty of framing: visualize assembling a cardboard box, and then visualize folding an origami swan. One is easy, the other takes more time and experience. For instance, a roof that is composed of all trusses (prefabricated roof members) can be assembled much quicker than a roof that has to have each individual

rafter cut to size.

Windows can also add considerable cost, the amount, size, and function of windows can vary greatly in costs. Obviously less windows cost less than more windows, but there are the less obvious ways prices increase. Windows are the same as houses, angled and arched windows cost more than square and rectangular. Operable windows cost more than fixed, and well insulated (triple pane) cost more than standard double pane.

One of the latest popular designs are operable window walls. These consist of entire walls of glass that open to one side, and on the other in the form of bi-folds or sliders.

These are excellent ways to utilize the outdoors to create large indoor/outdoor connected areas and provide a great open feeling. The price however will easily double if not triple what conventional windows for the same area would cost.

Outdoor living spaces such as decks, patios, and covered areas will all add costs, and depending on how elaborate or extensive the areas are, these costs can be quite dramatic without adding any square footage to the home.

So if your budget has limitations, let your architect know your order of priorities when it comes to your home's design.



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