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## DESIGN IDEAS

### DINING ROOM

Is there room for your furniture, or do you want a built-in hutch for your special dishes? What about a boxed-up ceiling, a vaulted ceiling or dropped beam ceiling? Perhaps a see-thru fireplace shared with the great room? Do you need a formal dining room and an eating nook for day-to-day meals, or will one space accommodate both? Is there a view – perhaps large windows in a turret-type space is a good idea. What about access to a deck (covered or uncovered)?

### KITCHEN

Do you prefer an L-shape cabinet arrangement, a U-shape arrangement, or something different? Is a square or odd-shaped work island required, and is it large enough for a separate sink? Will you need a cabinet pantry, a walk-in pantry, or a walk-thru pantry to the garage entrance area? Is there a view to be taken advantage of, and/or is natural light important? What kinds of appliances do you want – a standard set, or a cook top and separate oven? Do you want an economical kitchen, or something that is eye-catching? Talk to a kitchen cabinet specialist to get some unique ideas for your home.

### OFFICE

Most people have a computer, so it does make sense to have a home office area for it (if clutter isn't an issue, perhaps a desk near the kitchen is a better solution)? Do you want it to be a larger room with double french doors, or is a small room adequate? Is it on the main floor, or on the upper storey that is open to the great room below? Should there be a built-in desk or some built-in bookshelves here? Will this space also be used for guest accommodations, and if so, is there a bathroom nearby for their usage?

### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

8', 9' or 10' ceilings, and are they flat or vaulted? Do you want or need a 9' basement? Is there a possibility of a walk-out – bring your grade certificate along to verify. Are you planning a two-storey, bi-level or bungalow? Do you prefer the standard 2x6 wall construction, or the insulated concrete form style for energy efficiency and long-term benefits? What about the new Built-Green construction methods – is that important? And what about resale – if you're planning to sell in a few years, you may need to put your own ideas aside in favor of what the general public is looking for.

### MASTER SUITE

How big do you want your bedroom to be – first measure the space you have so you know what you are working with. Do you want a separate sitting area with a view – what about a covered deck? Do you want your room separated from the other bedrooms or in close proximity for small children? What type of closet do you want – a standard strip closet, his & hers closets, a walk-in closet, or dual walk-ins? Close to the ensuite?

### GREAT ROOM

Do you want a fireplace (natural gas or wood?) and location for a big-screen TV (if so, you need to plan ahead for furniture placement, as there are two focal points to consider). What about a higher ceiling height in this area? Is it open to the kitchen and eating area, or a separate space? Is there a view to take advantage of with some larger windows? Is there a need for storage (kids' toys, games, movies, blankets, etc.)?

### ENSUITE

First, is an ensuite in the budget, or would you prefer to have one bathroom on that floor to share? What type of fixtures do you want – a tub/shower combination, a shower instead of a tub, a tub and separate shower? Do you want a corner tub? Is the shower made out of fiberglass for easy cleaning, or is it a tiled walk-in shower? One sink or two – one vanity or two? Should the toilet be in the room, or in its own room?

### ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS...

Spend time looking in plan books, magazines and the internet for neat ideas to consider. Take pictures of houses you admire - draw sketches of things you've seen. Visit showhomes, take a brochure, and make notes on it with things you liked and didn't like about the house. Keep it all together in a home design scrapbook, and bring this along when you meet with the designer you've chosen to pull these ideas together into your next house – this will be a handy reference tool for your meeting.