

# HOME REMODELING TIPS

## A guide to budgeting construction costs for a bathroom remodel

By Philip Anderson

Calculating construction costs isn't a simple science, but years of experience has allowed us to accurately forecast costs. So, if a gleaming, spa-inspired bathroom is part of your future, here's how to budget for your Piedmont bathroom remodel.

Renovation costs for a bathroom, one of the home's most highly trafficked rooms, can vary wildly depending on its size, materials, your tastes, and your neighborhood. In the East Bay, you can expect to spend between \$35 - \$85k or more. Working with a reputable licensed contractor can help to anticipate the costs upfront with no hidden surprises.

### Demolition Budget

The "demo" phase is usually the bit you see on home improvement TV shows where the crew gets a little overzealous with their sledgehammers. A good Project Manager will ensure your home is treated with care and respect throughout the project, removing and disposing of waste and construction debris properly. This is all factored in. Allocate 10–15% of the project estimate for your demo budget.

### Plumbing and Electrical

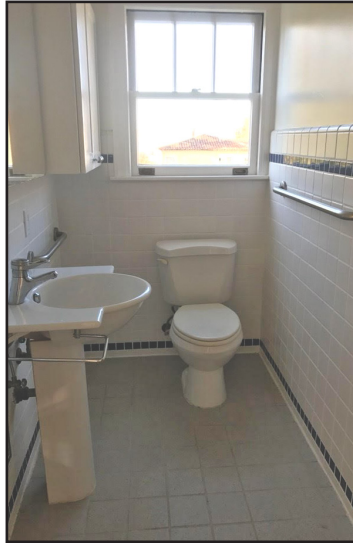
Many Piedmont homes are approaching or past their centennials. For these historic homes, a bathroom remodel will likely involve changes to its footprint and the relocation of plumbing and electrical. This typically constitutes one of the largest portions of your budget, anywhere from 20%–35%. For luxury bathrooms with high-end fixtures and finishes, expect to use all of it.

### Framing Budget

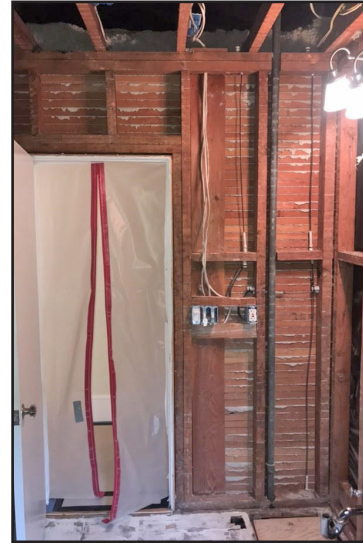
To the uninitiated, the framing is a confusing forest of 2x4s, with conduit snaking through it. But to a builder, this is when the design comes alive. Allocate 10–20% of your budget towards framing.

### Shower Stalls, Fixtures, & Hardware

This is where the big picture comes into sharper focus. Depending on your tastes, you can use up to one-third of your budget on high-end luxury bath fixtures and finishes. A good Design/Build firm can assist in selecting quality pieces that won't exhaust your budget. Try to keep these



Before bathroom renovation



Demolition and electrical phase



After bathroom renovation



Bathroom finish designed with reclaimed oak.

costs between 20–35% of your total budget.

### Fine Finishes

Once your bathroom has reached this phase, finish carpenters, painters, and tile and flooring professionals are called in to bring your bathroom remodeling project to its beautiful conclusion. While each of these elements may vary due to the size and scale of your bathroom remodel, these guidelines can assist you in determining how much of your budget goes to these specialists:

**Flooring:** 5–10%

**Carpentry & Cabinets:** 5–15%

**Countertops & Backsplash:** 5–15%

**Paint:** 5–10%

**Project Management & Scheduling**

Many homeowners think they

can save 5-10% of their budget by managing the construction project themselves, but with so many moving parts, a general contractor who provides you with a dedicated Project Manager can be the best money you've ever spent. A general contractor schedules your work to avoid delays and acts as the liaison between vendors and suppliers, so you have a main point of contact who's an expert on your bathroom project.

So, if it's past time to bring that funky old bathroom into the 21st-Century, or you're ready to indulge in a spa-inspired sanctuary, use these guidelines to make your bathroom remodel vision a beautiful reality while staying on budget.

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