

2022 Home of the Month Look Book



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Home of the Month Look Book

Find Inspiration on Every Page



PHOTO: Harris Kenjar Photography. See page 28 for home details.

AIA Minnesota is pleased to present a look book featuring architect-designed homes throughout the Midwest region that showcase the innovation and skill of Minnesota architects. The projects on the following pages were each submitted for the 2022 Home of the Month program, a 20-year collaboration between AIA Minnesota and the *Star Tribune* that highlights a different architect-designed home each month in the Sunday Homes & Gardens section.

Among the pool of 24 projects submitted this year, a panel of experts selected 12 that best represent the pinnacle of architect-client collaboration and demonstrate the innovation, problem-solving, and creative design skills that architects bring to a project. These 12 distinguished homes are identified with a corner ribbon icon. Watch for the projects to be featured over the next 12 months in the *Star Tribune*, both in print and online.

Among the cabins and urban upgrades, new builds and renovations, we hope you'll find inspiration for ways to make your own living spaces more comfortable, efficient, and beautiful. Contact information for each project's design team is included. Enjoy the beauty found in the following pages, and let inspiration find you.

About Us



The *Star Tribune* is Minnesota's #1 local source for news, information, and community events. Throughout its 150-year history, the *Star Tribune's* focus has remained the same: delivering more of what matters to Minnesota. All day. Every day.



The American Institute of Architects Minnesota is the professional association for architects in Minnesota. As a state component of AIA National, with three local chapters, AIA Minnesota has nearly 2,300 members. AIA Minnesota produces a regional convention, publishes the digital biweekly *ENTER*, lobbies on behalf of the profession, and more.

Projects By Architecture Firm

Use the table of contents below to browse projects by the firm that designed them. Page numbers in bold indicate that the project has been selected as a Home of the Month feature for 2022–2023.

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Two Tips for Getting the Most Out of the Residential Design Process

By Michael Roehr, AIA

ENTER asked RoehrSchmitt Architecture’s Michael Roehr, AIA, for a few insights on the design process for homeowners who are working with an architect for the first time. His answers may surprise you.

Set Aside Your Preconceptions. Come to the design process with as few preconceptions as possible. Start with a clean slate. You should spend some serious time talking with your architect about everything except architecture—thoughts, feelings, experiences, dreams. What keeps you up at night? What helps you fall asleep? What do you think about as you’re getting ready for your day?

What do you say when you talk to yourself?

Collecting images of features and finishes you like can certainly be helpful, but you won’t make the most of your design opportunity by simply listing the specific items you’d like to see incorporated into the design. Instead, talk about how the images make you feel—it will help you develop a shared vocabulary and frame of reference with your architect. Use your inspiration folder or Pinterest board to help generate a design that uniquely integrates the qualities you want in your home, not one that cobbles together a collage of features from other houses. (*cont.*)

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PHOTOS: Wang (Ta) Ho

Compact Conversion Remodel

This Minnetonka home was dated, with a cramped kitchen not suited for entertaining and no storage near the garage. The remodel utilizes every corner of the small home to maximize storage, improve flow, and connect spaces, and creates a modern midcentury vibe.

The existing double-sided wood-burning fireplace between the living and dining rooms was converted to gas, and its dining room side was covered up so the kitchen could move into that space. A coffee bar with bright blue penny tiles is hidden in the opening between the living room and kitchen, and a narrow island with seating at one end allows the focus of the kitchen to be on the sliding glass doors to the deck. A window was also added to the left of the stove to bring in additional light.

The original kitchen space became the dining room, featuring new plywood wall paneling that cascades down and becomes a space-saving bench. A wall of deep storage along the garage side provides a place for coats, boots, and overflow kitchen storage. Small design touches in the rest of the main floor complete the project, including a new handrail at the stairs, an updated wood mantel at the fireplace, and new wood flooring in the sunken living room.



Albertsson Hansen Architecture

aharchitecture.com • (612) 823-0233

Design team: Christine Albertsson, AIA; Jim Kuipers, Assoc. AIA



Home of the Month
Selected Project

PHOTOS: Spacecrafting

Eye-Land at White Oaks Savanna

New build

Situated amongst rolling hills, gentle valleys, and quiet ponds, the windows are the eyes of this home. The owner's three-year-old daughter named this home "Eye-Land" because it made her eyes happy.

Eye-Land resides in a beautiful residential community near Stillwater, developed in collaboration with the city of Grant, Brown's Creek Watershed District, and Washington County. One hundred-fifteen development acres are reserved for organic farming and farm-to-table enterprises, with the goal of preserving the idyllic setting for future generations. All homes require a critical design-review process with digital exterior modeling and the consideration of secondary viewsheds from inside each home. Eye-Land's site is an open savanna with 360-degree exposure and few trees, which required the architects to think about animating all four sides of the home rather than focusing only on a front and rear elevation. To meet this need and the construction budget, the architects relied on simple ingredients: scale, color, and proportion.

The house is defined by scale and, despite its 5,200-square-foot size, nestles gently into a landscape that slopes down to a wetland. It is important to the community that the house blends into the savanna. This was accomplished by situating the house in the hill, minimizing its height with a one-and-a-half story form, and keeping the first floor as near to the ground as possible. The architects opted for a quiet gray exterior and black-framed windows. A couple of strategically placed windows with a light blue pop of color add interest without additional cost. A covered front door surrounded by natural wood warmly greets guests.

Throughout each room, window placement and layout were considered with near- and long-range views. The dining room has windows on three sides to offer an immersive view of the wetland and sweeping views across the prairie. In the owners' suite, the bed was intentionally placed on the same axis as a distant 200-year-old oak tree. The result is a home that feels at ease in the open savanna because it uses simple ingredients to create a quiet yet confident exterior and an interior that embraces the expansive landscape.

Christopher Strom Architects

christopherstrom.com • hello@christopherstrom.com

Design team: Christopher Strom, AIA; Eric Johnson, AIA; Elizabeth Akkerman, Assoc. AIA



Home of the Month
Selected Project



PHOTOS: Farm Kid Studios

Red Cedar Lake Home

New build

After years enjoying summer weekends on Red Cedar Lake, the homeowners purchased a larger piece of land closer to the lake to build a modern, open cabin that connected to the surrounding nature and provided opportunities for private time and togetherness. While never intending the cabin to become their permanent residence, the lake and home have since won the family’s hearts; a St. Paul home will soon be for sale and Red Cedar Lake will gain a new family.

The house has a simple east-west organization with a low, masonry-clad wall to the north, providing a sense of security and privacy from the courtyard while supporting a simple roof on beams that rise to the lake and views. A charred wood box separates the private and public spaces of the home. Blackened steel and wood stairs lead to a guest loft with Douglas fir bunks, cork floors, and birchbark wall covering.

Living spaces lie to the west to take advantage of the natural grade and flow out to a expansive patio, screened porch, and down to the lake. A large fireplace with a custom blackened steel hearth anchors one end, while the dining and kitchen areas can be opened to the screened porch via large swinging doors and a window to the porch bar.

Around the house, there is a small, intentional, modern landscape, and the remaining site was left as natural as possible. People can proceed off the patio down a natural slope to the firepit and family beach or head down a path to the boathouse and hidden water toy dock. Outside the home, trails lead to little surprises such as a hidden dock in a quiet inlet bay, a family volleyball court, and a storage shed.

Lundin Architects

lundinarchitects.com • (612) 616-7015

Design team: Richard C. Lundin II, AIA; Mike Bader, AIA





PHOTOS: Chad Holder

Nordic Shift

Remodel

With a full exterior recladding and a substantial interior remodeling, this remodel uncovered the best traits of a 40-year-old home that featured wonderful spaces but an awkward entry and tired aesthetics, demonstrating how a home can be wholly transformed without adding square footage.

The exterior's upper half was redone in white monolithic panels, creating a sense of lightness and lift. These smooth panels contrast with the weathering cedar below, which add character and scale.

Laser-cut aluminum panels add a focal point to the home, and the pattern is a variation on traditional folk art. These panels provide beautiful sweeping shadows that glide across the front facade, bringing to life a wall of bright color.

Inside, a custom-formed metal handrail at the entry stair echoes the exterior panels. A large glass backsplash visually connecting the entry space to the kitchen is laminated with the same modern rosemaling pattern. Clean lines articulated in white oak, steel, fresh white, and splashes of color reflect the owners' Scandinavian heritage.

The owner, an avid baker, wanted the redesigned kitchen to be an open and connected space where family and friends can gather. The cabinetry twists and turns to define features of each space. Upper cabinets turn and become the stair landing. The appliance cabinet becomes the base for a living room art display. Island cabinets wrap around a center table, providing support for seating and a place to work. In all directions, windows were added to bring the outdoors in. The same aesthetic was drawn through the home to unify the primary bedroom suite, as well as a new playful powder room and main floor laundry.

CityDeskStudio

citydeskstudio.com • (651) 644-1106
Design team: Ben Awes, AIA; Chris Bach





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PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL CROSBY



Home of the Month
Selected Project

Stitch in Time

Remodel

Built in 1989, this home beautifully followed through with its rotated square parti. No room was a completed rectangle and all rooms had triangular features, creating interesting and unexpected spaces indoors and out that connected and flowed into and through each other. This was true everywhere except in the center of the house, where it was most needed; The kitchen locked itself into a square with one access point and little visual connection to the living room, dining room, family room, or entry.



For this young family of four, the kitchen is the center around which most daily life rotates. They love to cook and remain close and accessible to each other. By thinking of the kitchen not as a separate space but as a way to stitch it all together, the design team expanded the footprint beyond the original walls, reaching across thresholds to adjacent rooms to link them together. Flooring changes were replaced with continuous flooring to reinforce the idea of the space becoming less defined.

The centerpiece is a monumental island that plants a foot in both the family room and the atrium, allowing the kitchen to bleed into the surrounding spaces, claiming the dramatic space of the atrium to the south while allowing those preparing meals to have a stronger connection to the family space on the north end.

The angled island works with the direction of the room's walls while providing different spaces for sitting, washing, or prepping. Around this island, family life can occur. Rose-painted accent elements are included in each of the larger kitchen pieces that surround the island. Providing a splash of color, these painted elements create a cohesive language that binds the different elements of the kitchen into one cohesive space.

CityDeskStudio

citydeskstudio.com • (651) 644-1106
Design team: Ben Awes, AIA; Chris Bach



PHOTOS: Alyssa Lee Photography



PHOTOS: Scott Amundson

Lake Harriet Classic Remodel

This classic 1916 Craftsman house located just east of Lake Harriet in south Minneapolis had beautiful, unaltered bones and details in the formal front half of the house. But in the late 1980s, the kitchen was remodeled and an old attached garage was converted into a family room—both lacking details consistent with the original home. It also left the upstairs with two disproportionate bathrooms: a cramped owners’ bath, and much-too-large family bathroom, which used to be the sunroom.

This new design reorganized the kitchen and reshaped transitions between spaces to incorporate the existing old house trim. Cabinetry details now match the adjacent dining room’s original built-in buffet and could be mistaken as vintage. A second pair of windows added in the family room balances the light and now completely belies its former life as garage. Space on the second level was reallocated without shifting exterior windows, resulting in two comfortably sized bathrooms. This sensitive remodel brought the kitchen, family room, and bathrooms up to a consistent level of design without adding a square foot. Sometimes less is more.

Rehkamp Larson Architects

rehkamplarson.com • (612) 285-7275

Design team: Jean Rehkamp Larson, AIA; Laurel Johnston, AIA





Gull's Rest

New build

The owners of this East Gull Lake property had a small guesthouse on the site and wanted to add a larger main house built in the spirit of the original structure. Many details of the new building mirror those of the guesthouse, such as the arched openings and window patterns, roof and bracket details at the gables, and the rolled canvas that protects the screen porches.

The floor plan is splayed with two sections, one holding more private spaces and the other, public. The angled design, with its balanced asymmetry, allows the cabin to be more open toward the water and more compact on the entry side.

The design creates a balance of modern and traditional elements. The stone fireplace is tapered along one side with bisecting mantel, black bay windows frame views in the dining room and primary suite, and warm wood interiors are paired with brightly colored cabinetry. Client priorities also included key locations for artwork, a centrally placed library with bookshelves framing the lake view, and a screen porch integrated into one of the cabin's gables. The result is a fresh expression of the classic Minnesota family cabin.



PHOTOS: Scott Amundson

Rehkamp Larson Architects

rehkamplarson.com • (612) 285-7275

Design team: Mark Larson, AIA; John Kirk



Home of the Month
Selected Project



Midcentury Primary

Remodel

This Minneapolis house, designed by an architect in 1963, needed the help of a historically sensitive architect to clarify and accentuate the midcentury era of the home while bringing function and beauty to the spaces the homeowners use every day. Light, form, color, and texture are purposefully composed into a livable and artful family home in the city.

The material palette was limited to simple elements found in the original design: clear grained wood, square black steel rods, accents

of primary red and blue, and simple grid lines. A two-story ceramic installation by a local artist near the floor-to-ceiling foyer windows brings an ever-changing play of light and shadow into the home.

The kitchen renovation was an opportunity to bring more light into the home. An eight-foot-wide window mimics the large sliding glass doors found in the other symmetrical bays. The refrigerator was moved down the wall while the laundry moved upstairs. An induction cooktop and stainless-steel hood helped open the room to the rest of the house and provide a spot to pull up for pancakes. Custom red powder-coated shelves display delightful collected objects. The ash upper cabinets recall the grain of the classic oak floor-to-ceiling built-ins but are softened to complement the cedar around the corner.

A jewel-box powder room features handmade, vibrant blue elongated hexagon tiles that immediately draw the eye. A simple wall-hung toilet and sink with wall-mounted faucet make the narrow space maneuverable and fresh. Custom cabinetry bookends the space with slatted walls carved out to create display shelving and hidden compartments. Each niche is sized and placed for a specific function; even the doorknob gets its own spot.

SALA Architects

salaarc.com • (612) 379-3037

Design team: David O'Brien Wagner, AIA; Marta Snow, AIA



PHOTOS: Corey Gaffner

Architecture by dSPACE Studio / Interiors by Ruth Johnson

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design and site inform one another





After the Fire

New build

After a devastating fire destroyed their late-1800s home, the owners decided to rebuild. Carefully situated on a 2.5-acre rural site with views to a nearby marsh, the new house's design takes full advantage of the rural setting and creates space for the owners' self-described quirky collection of contemporary and antique furnishings.

The rebuild respected the natural setting by not allowing flow into the wetlands or flood plain or disturbing the surrounding natural vegetation. The compact, square footprint also minimizes site disturbance



and building a detached garage enabled the design team to preserve mature trees.

A modern, rustic, lived-in vibe with natural materials and open, light-filled spaces are paired with sustainable features, including roof-mounted solar panels. Inside, there is a combination of wood, metal, and concrete finishes and textures. Slab-on-grade concrete floors include in-floor heating. Open-concept public spaces are separated from private spaces, including a smaller second floor with space for guests. Age-in-place design solutions, such as the primary living spaces on the first floor, will enable the occupants to stay in their home for the remainder of their lives.

On the exterior, the earthen color of the cedar siding ties the structure to the land, and an upper band of corrugated steel mirrors the sky. Asymmetrical, bold forms with steep roofs work with a variety of window sizes and placement to create a playful and informal exterior. A covered front-entry porch welcomes visitors, and covered side and screen porches further connect occupants to the outdoors.

McMonigal Architects

mcmonigal.com • (612) 331-1244

Design team: Rosemary McMonigal, FAIA; Kyle Thrapp, AIA; Nick Dellwo; Phil Hofstad





Pied-à-Lac

Remodel

This 1980s apartment had been meticulously overhauled nearly 20 years ago with concrete masonry walls, exposed steel angle detailing, stucco interior finish, and an acoustic ceiling. The new owners sought to open up the sight lines, soften materials, increase daylight, and create flexible spaces for work, retreat, and visiting children.

The embodied energy inherent in the existing materials implied a responsibility to work with the preexisting industrial aesthetic as much as possible. The design team opted to remove reusable and

recyclable materials that soaked up precious daylight, including room dividers and storage systems assembled from angle-iron and corrugated steel. These materials, along with stainless commercial kitchen counters and equipment, were deconstructed and collected for reuse by Better Futures Minnesota.

By removing existing partitions, the design team was able to drastically increase daylighting in the apartment. The span of the day is now marked by light and shadow shifting through living, dining, kitchen, his and her studies, and bedroom spaces.

New materials were selected to be warm and muted. Accents of vertical-grain Douglas fir appear throughout the apartment in warm, tactile contrast to the neutral beige laminate. Other accents include built-in wardrobes, cabinet niches, a dining buffet, and a custom headboard. Back-painted glass is used for light-reflecting desk surfaces and a night-light between rooms. Bright white walls were modified only where needed to conceal plumbing and large pocket doors. Remaining unchanged are the lightweight concrete floor finish and corrugated acoustic ceiling.

SALA Architects

salaarc.com • (612) 379-3037

Design team: Bryan Anderson, AIA; Marta Snow, AIA



Home of the Month
Selected Project



North Shore Overlook

New build

Located on a ridgetop, this North Shore cabin prioritizes the panoramic views of Lake Superior while staying nestled in the trees, maintaining a deep connection to the surrounding landscape.

The main level steps down with the topography of the bedrock; the entry hall is two steps above the main living spaces and primary bedroom suite, while the mudroom and garage are two steps above the entry hall. The upper level is home to bunk rooms and a loft, which is tucked into the main roof form with dormers and treetop views. The screened porch and deck located close to the ground on the west end of the cabin leads to a trail-worn through the woods—to the owner's friend's neighboring cabin, allowing bonfire meetups.

Inspired by the owners' European industrial aesthetic and the nearby Lutsen Resort designed by Edwin Lundie, the overscale, traditional, divided-lite windows engage a unique sense of scale and larger-than-life views of the trees and lake beyond. Exposed steel and dark window sashes contrast the more traditional wood tones throughout the cabin, creating a timeless blend of modern and rustic cabin materials.



PHOTOS: Corey Gaffler

Albertsson Hansen Architecture

aharchitecture.com • (612) 823-0233
Design team: Todd Hansen, AIA; Ian McLellan, AIA; Abbie Seba, AIA; Sarah Hughes





Minnehaha Refined

Remodel & Addition

Originally built in 1921, this Minnehaha Parkway grande dame retains much of its original character and allure, notably the charming woodwork throughout. Poised to improve main level flow and functionality, the owners invested in a thoughtful remodel of the kitchen, as well as an attentive addition of a breakfast room, mudroom, and powder room at the rear of the house. The former back of house was a major pinch point between backyard, basement, kitchen, and front of house. The additional space allows this family of four easier movement, as the added space completes a circular flow at the core of the floor plan.

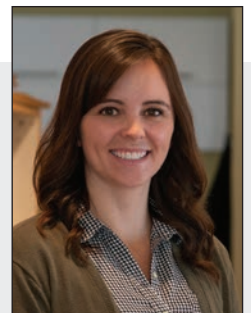
Millwork details original to the home, such as Tudor arches and scroll stair brackets at the main stairway, were brought into the remodel and addition at moments including the range hood detail and upper cabinet bracketing. A redivision of square feet in the owner's suite reduced the bedroom size to provide for a larger main bath and closet, while maintaining era-appropriate charm with well-curated finishes. Overall, the original language of the house remains present while improving upon functionality.



Rehkamp Larson Architects

rehkamplarson.com • (612) 285-7275

Design team: Jean Rehkamp Larson, AIA; Kathleen Freiderich, AIA;
Ryan Bicek, AIA





REHKAMP LARSON ARCHITECTS

rehkamplarson.com 612.285.7275

Builder: Kevin F. Russo
Interiors: Anne McDonald
Photo: Scott Amundson

More Than 18 Percent of Americans Live in Multigenerational Households

By Chris Hudson

A new study from the Pew Research Center highlights the continuing rise in multigenerational living in the U.S. The study's analysis of census data from 1971 to 2021 shows that the number of Americans living in multigenerational family households quadrupled over that span, reaching nearly 60 million last year. Over those 50 years, the share of the population living in multigenerational households rose from less than 8 percent to more than 18 percent. The report links the steady climb in both numbers to the growth of U.S. Asian and Hispanic populations, among whom living with extended family is more common than it is among White Americans.

The study also includes findings from a survey conducted last fall. Survey respondents cited financial benefits and caregiving needs as leading reasons for choosing multigenerational living arrangements. More than half of the respondents who live in multigenerational households described the arrangement as "convenient" (58 percent) or "rewarding" (54 percent), while 23 percent said it was "stressful." (*cont.*)

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ENTER's Design Data department highlights a compelling data nugget or survey finding related to the built environment.

Home of the Month
Selected Project



Rural Retreat

New build

Nestled in southwestern Wisconsin's unique Driftless Area of sweeping farmland and river valley, this rustic retreat is a true getaway from the city. Materials are durable, raw, and authentic: Corten steel wrapped around the base of the house will change to a rusty patina as it weathers, the metal roof draws inspiration from local barns, and the exterior siding is reclaimed Ipe wood from an old highway sound barrier in Chicago. Salvaged siding is carried through to the interior and mixes with locally milled Douglas fir, darkened steel, and concrete tile floors to create a modern, refined space with a utilitarian aesthetic.

The main level's open floor plan flows outside, with stunning views from the porches and access to all sides of the site—perfect for weekend gatherings. A workshop tailored to the homeowner's passion for biking and Nordic skiing is equipped with an overhead glass door for great natural light and easy in-and-out. Personal elements are thoughtfully incorporated throughout the house: a much-loved road bike as art above the main stair; a side pantry for organic cooking; places for books; and firewood storage for the living room's wood burning stove. This is a house meant to settle into the landscape for generations.



PHOTOS: Scott Amundson

Rehkamp Larson Architects

rehkamplarson.com • (612) 285-7275

Design team: Mark Larson, AIA; Ryan Bicek, AIA; Laurel Johnston, AIA





PHOTOS: Corey Gaffner

Katherine Lake Retreat

New build

This refined rustic retreat is a comfortable summer home for a family of four, as well as a gathering place for extended family and friends. After renting a cabin on Katherine Lake for several years, the owners purchased this wooded, lakeside, two-acre site. The house was situated so that two sides of the cabin face the lake, while leaving a flat lawn area free for yard games and a firepit.

The cabin's exterior was deliberately kept low-key with monotoned siding and trim, charcoal-toned asphalt, metal roof, and traditional exterior details. The plan was organized around the lodge room, aligned with the lawn and a lake view. A wrap-around porch terminates in a large screened porch with access to the breeze and a 270-degree view of the lake. The exterior of the freestanding garage was remodeled to match the finishes of the main house while preserving its authentic old garage ambience and smell on the inside.

The owners wanted enough room to occasionally welcome extended family and friends. Through a creative combination of double bedrooms, a lounge/guest room, built-in beds, and a children's bunk room, the cabin can sleep 17. The layout also enabled the two main bedrooms to have lake views, and the lower-level playroom to feature a walkout.

Stained, knot-free cedar tongue and groove paneling was used in the main living spaces, including the vaulted living room and a wall of seven-foot-tall windows facing the lawn and lake. A long bench in the front hall accommodates luggage and coolers upon arrival, and the lift-top storage below stores an extensive collection of board games and beach towels. The kitchen, sized for multiple cooks, faces the main living room and is backed up by a service pantry. The primary bedroom suite includes a freestanding tub in the bedroom with lake views.

Albertsson Hansen Architecture

aharchitecture.com • (612) 823-0233

Design team: Todd Hansen, AIA; Abigail Merlis; Emily Pressprich; Mark Tambornino, AIA





Slip 'N Slide Remodel

The owners of this midcentury split-level loved their home and location and did not need many more square feet. The house already had a remodeled kitchen and opened-up living area, although the space would benefit from additional daylight. The family's favorite room in the house was the rickety screen porch overlooking the backyard. They also hoped for a primary bedroom remodel.

Through the design process, three rooms along the back emerged needing additional space. Three new boxes "slipped" out the back to meet these needs. The first was a redesign of the screen porch into a new retreat, keeping them in the trees with wide open views and great connection to the backyard while doubling as an entertaining space. The second was a much-needed new primary bath that maintained privacy but also brought in northern light from up high through the use of transom windows. Third was an extension of the primary bedroom to create room for a reading area and a skylight that connected them to the sky directly from bed. All three rooms reached for a connection to the outdoors, all in different ways. For the young family with two active girls, a simple stair would not suffice to connect the main floor to the backyard. A new slide was designed launching directly from the back door, giving the whole family a fun way to engage the yard.

Additional features include a newly configured entry, an internal mudroom off the lower-level garage entry, and a slice of sunlight via a skylight through the middle of the living and dining rooms to brighten up the space. This sensitive remodel dramatically demonstrates how whole new experiences can be achieved inside and outside of a house with simple moves.

CityDeskStudio

citydeskstudio.com • (651) 644-1106
Design team: Ben Awes, AIA; Nate Dodge



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Home of the Month
Selected Project



Parkway Update Remodel

This radical transformation demonstrates that innovative and beautiful design is available to homeowners with smaller-scale projects in dense urban neighborhoods. This remodel was a close collaboration between the client—a landscape designer—and the design team.

Views from the main living spaces were carefully designed to frame vignettes of the landscape, maximizing connection to the outdoors despite the tight urban lot. Entering from the street, a terraced rain garden and stone path leads guests to a welcoming facade of wood and glass. The warm material palette and building scale helps the home blend into the surrounding neighborhood. The exterior colors were informed by the natural colors of the environment. Inside, centralized circulation organizes the open plan and creates a strong link to the backyard.

An outdoor sitting area is perched at the terrace. The pergola offers shelter and distinguishes the entryway. The large deck has terraced landscaping that respects the existing topography and offers multiple areas of refuge and nodes for socializing. The new detached garage on the alley also offers a more public space for neighbors to come and enjoy refreshments in the summer.



PHOTOS: Matt Munson
LANDSCAPE DESIGN: Shaw Design

Locus Architecture

locusarchitecture.com • (612) 706-5600

Design team: Paul Neseth, AIA; Wynne Yelland, AIA; Mariah Major





Browndale Renovation

Remodel

This 1940s Colonial in Edina's Country Club District neighborhood was full of potential but in need of refinement. Previous renovations had converted exterior rooms to interior spaces and filled the home with awkward level changes, hard surfaces, and disjointed rooms. The kitchen stood behind a brick wall, and the sunroom and family room were divided by a thick brick indoor grill.

The remodel opened up rooms, widened circulation paths, and transformed the kitchen into the hub of the house. Tongue and groove paneling tie the rooms together and built-ins capture empty space where wall thickness needed to remain. Off the garage, a new mudroom, larger powder room, and side-entry cubby maximize storage and functionality.



PHOTOS: Scott Amundson

Rehkamp Larson Architects

rehkamlarson.com • (612) 285-7275
 Design team: Jean Rehkamp Larson, AIA;
 Angela Taffe Wingate, Assoc. AIA



Home of the Month
Selected Project



Linden Hills Renewal

Remodel & Addition

On a well-known boulevard of beautifully kept and updated larger homes, this 1901 house had always been charming in its details, but lacked the size needed for today's families. A remodel and addition transformed the home from a set of small, inefficient spaces to a light-filled, cohesively designed house that blends in with the neighborhood by presenting the same charming facade that has faced the avenue for over 100 years.

The existing footprint was reconfigured, and a seamlessly integrated addition was built entirely behind the original house. The remodeled portion within the original house encompasses a new entry hall, powder room, cloak room, larger dining room, reworked stair and landing, and replacement of the sagging front porch. The addition features a new kitchen, pantry, mudroom, and family room on the first floor, and a new laundry room and owner's suite on the second floor.

Attention was paid to the home's existing traditional design elements, such as reinterpreting the arched opening of the original fireplace for the new family room fireplace. A fresh coat of gray and white exterior paint was applied, closely following the original color scheme.



PHOTOS: Corey Gaffler

Albertsson Hansen Architecture

aharchitecture.com • (612) 823-0233

Design team: Todd Hansen, AIA; Jim Kuipers, Assoc. AIA; Paul Harms, Assoc. AIA





Sunfish Lake Nordic Traditional

New build

Despite its narrow lot, this home's site afforded wonderful potential views of Sunfish Lake and a number of old-growth white pines. Charged with maximizing the views while preserving the mature pines, the design team developed a thoughtfully composed home in the traditional Norwegian vernacular aesthetic. Considerations when positioning the home on the site were its walkout basement potential and strict local height requirements, which required a room-in-attic approach to the second-level spaces.

On the upper level, the ceiling starts at shoulder height in certain locations and slopes upward. This contributes to an intimacy with the architecture and a nostalgic association with traditional notions of "home." Significant care was taken to design around large white pines that brought exceptional beauty to the site. Aesthetically, patterns found in Scandinavian architecture can be seen in detailed timber columns, brackets, and trim on the exterior, and multiple areas throughout the interior, including the front entry stair as the highlight (see page 2 for stair photo).



PHOTOS: Harris Kenjar Photography

PLAAD

plaadoffice.com • (612) 388-6588

Design team: Mark Stankey, AIA; Matthew Byers, AIA; Anne McDonald



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Design for Aging in Place Is Simply Good Design, for All Ages

Thoughtful design can make homes safe, pleasing, and user-friendly for every stage of life

By Amy Goetzman

Originally published in *ENTER* on February 4, 2021

This year, the oldest baby boomers turn 75, and most of them want to age at home. They have invested in a house and neighborhood they love, and they have no desire to leave. Or perhaps they “podded up” with family during the pandemic and discovered they liked having grandchildren underfoot. Unfortunately, most housing stock isn’t designed well for people to age in place, either in their own homes or those of other family members. But often, modifications can be made that benefit people of all ages.

Invisible Design

“In 2005, I started reading about aging in place, and I realized that after all these years of designing homes, I’d been doing it wrong,” says Gene Nicoletti Jr., AIA, a Twin Cities residential architect and Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist. He looked at the demographics and the prevailing housing design trends and saw a big disconnect. “I wanted to design homes that people wouldn’t have to remodel or leave when they faced a health crisis or became older.” He also wanted to design homes that didn’t feel institutional. Universal design, a concept that emphasizes equity and flexibility across a diverse range of users, gave him the tools to create living



spaces designed for aging in place without sacrificing aesthetic appeal.

“Universal design is a set of subtle, invisible design considerations that make a space work better for older people, people with disabilities, young children and parents—anybody can benefit from it,” says Nicoletti. “You don’t know it’s there. The house adapts to the inhabitants and their needs. Aging in place is the objective; universal design makes it possible.”

A graded walkway instead of stairs makes a home’s entry accessible for a stroller, walker, or wheelchair. A main-floor bedroom can serve as an office—until stairs become a challenge for the owners. Rollout drawers in the kitchen and handrails on both sides of a stairwell are helpful for everyone, but for people with strength and stability issues, they make all the difference. The bathroom is one of the most dangerous places in a home for unsteady or older people, and a curbless shower is a safer design choice. Add grab bars? Even better. It’s all subtle but effective.

The trick is getting people to plan ahead. (*cont.*)

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Image: A ramp integrated into a screen wall leads to a wide entry porch walkway in this home designed by Gene Nicoletti Jr. Rendering by Jeff Trish/POGO3D.



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Vernacular Modern

New build

The homeowners wanted a home for their young family that created connections between indoor and outdoor in the quiet of a restored prairie. This house, barn, pool, and pool house are situated on rolling prairie west of the Twin Cities. Organized into crossing wings, the floor plan is splayed to create outdoor courtyards and take advantage of long views in all directions. The main level contains the more public spaces for daily living—kitchen, dining room, family room, and porch—as well as support spaces of mudroom, wine cellar, dog room, and owner’s suite. The owner’s suite is directly below the kids’ bedrooms, which are easily accessed by a private stair. A bridge connects the kids’ rooms to the other wings of the house, which contain guest suites and a loft with built-in bunks.

The house connects to a new barn and pool via a curved gravel path and low dry-stacked stone wall, which also serves as a border between manicured lawn and restored prairie. The barn contains fly-tying and potting rooms, which look out onto the vegetable garden, and has a large open space for equipment. A raised patio with a pool and pool house lies just outside the wall and path, reaching out into the tall prairie grass.



PHOTOS: Scott Amundson

Rehkamp Larson Architects

rehkamplarson.com • (612) 285-7275

Design team: Mark Larson, AIA; Ryan Lawinger, AIA, Kari Nelson, AIA



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Home of the Month
Selected Project



PHOTOS: Corey Gaffner

Blue Note Remodel & Addition

When this architect and his family found their house, they knew it was a diamond in the rough—but with its square footage and great yard, they could see the potential. A multi-phase renovation project included expanding the upper floor and converting a small kitchen, bath, and bedroom into a combined kitchen and family room and powder room.

A front porch, living room, stair, and dining room retain much of the home’s original charm with warm, aged birch flooring and trim, and painted box beam ceilings. The remodeled back side frames the original doorways with a wall of cabinets and bookshelves. The new family and kitchen area is opened up into a single space with the aid of a steel beam and column, which are painted white to echo the historic box beams in the front of the house. The architect also brought touches of warm wood to the new space, while using whitewashed floors, white cabinets, and whitewashed wood paneling to keep this north-facing room as bright as possible.

In the kitchen zone, a large expanse of windows and doors now visually connects the home to the backyard. Replacing the awkward peninsula, a new island provides both a generous workspace and a place for the family to gather for casual meals. To create a connected family space, the architect removed series of dysfunctional spaces and created a place that combines meal preparation, dining, and living. A screen porch, built on the foundation of an old back deck, expands the living space by another 50% in the summer and immerses the family in their garden. Sustainability efforts included low global-warming potential spray foam insulation, triple-pane windows and doors, LED lighting, low-VOC paints and sealers, an electric oven, induction cooktop, and efficient in-floor radiant heat.



SALA Architects

salaarc.com • (612) 379-3037
Design team: David O'Brien Wagner, AIA



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New Craftsman on the Block

New build

The clients wanted their new home to fit into St. Paul's Highland Park neighborhood and be integrated into its beautiful, wooded site. The house is small enough to feel comfortable for the owners yet large enough for family gatherings. The main floor includes a guest bedroom with age-in-place design attributes that allows for one-level living in the future.

The character and details of the owners' previous 1904 home were carried forward into this new home through art-glass windows, mill-work, cabinetry, and defined rooms. Prairie Style design cues influenced the low-pitched hip roofs with broad overhangs, an interplay of stucco and side, strong horizontal lines, ribbons of windows, and more.

An open front porch creates a welcoming facade. A sunroom, deck with pergola, and upper balcony extend living spaces to the outdoors. By detaching the garage and shop, the design team was able to place windows on all sides of the home. Energy efficiency and sustainability were important to the client and design team. Green features include the use of structurally insulated wall panels, energy-efficient windows that allow for cross-ventilation, and a concrete insulation sandwich foundation.



McMonigal Architects

mcmonigal.com • (612) 331-1244

Design team: Rosemary McMonigal, FAIA; Kyle Thrapp, AIA; Nick Dellwo; Phil Hofstad



PHOTOS: Chad Holder

River Rock

New build

Having grown up on the banks of the Mississippi in southern Minnesota, the river was deeply embedded in the clients' lives. One of the owners, an entrepreneur and designer, brought with him a vision for a home with age-in-place living, a large garage, and a family room/activity wing. With three young children, he and his wife wanted an area of the home with loft space for small bedrooms and a common area for play and hangout, large enough for family movies and indoor sports.

Situated on the edge between the rock bluffs and the Mississippi River, the house took the form of two fractured boulders, tumbled down off the bluff. Up river sits a large garage for car and boat storage, and down river, there is the aptly named "warehouse" wing for children's rooms and wide-open play. In the void between and wrapped around the base is the age-in-place living with entry, kitchen, dining, sunken living room, and primary suite. Naturally aging materials of concrete, corten steel, and charred cedar were used, echoing the texture, tones, and aging presence of the rocky bluffs.

The house flows left to right and front to back. The entry is beneath a wide and heavy "outcropping" between the large flanking stones. Inside, the house opens toward the river across layers of shoreline, over the sunken living room to three decks, two raised grass patios, and a lower lawn. Left to right, the house moves from the tranquil stream of the spa-like owner's suite, through the rapids of a modern and minimal main living space, to the wide-open estuary of the industrial warehouse with exposed bar joists, waxed steel railings, and end grain laser cut plywood stair.

CityDeskStudio

citydeskstudio.com • (651) 644-1106
 Design team: Ben Awes, AIA; Chris Bach







PHOTOS: Troy Thies

Park Nest

Remodel & Addition

This fully renovated home reveals the potential of an existing 1940s walkout rambler to become the perfect empty nest. Situated on a park-like, south-facing, sloping lot, all 2,100 existing square feet were renovated down to the studs for improved function, performance, and views. Only 216 square feet were added in the form of a screened porch (with storage “shed” below) nestled into existing pine trees.

The main level was reconfigured to improve circulation and open views between the living and kitchen areas, add a half-bath, and convert a second bedroom into walk-in closet, completing an owner’s suite. New high-efficiency mechanicals supplement a new high-performance building envelope wrapped around the existing structure, including triple-pane windows and R-10 continuous insulation.



SALA Architects

salaarc.com • (612) 379-3037

Design team: Bryan Anderson, AIA; Marta Snow, AIA; Jessica Wilder



Questions to Ask Your Architect

Are you ready to hire an architect? Learn what questions to ask so you know you're making the best choice.

Asking the right questions before hiring an architect for your dream home project is essential for avoiding headaches down the road. While the substance of the answers to these questions is important, how they are answered is just as important. You want to work with an architect who makes you feel comfortable and understands your goals.



PHOTO: Ryan Siemens

- **Do you have references?** Speaking to an architect's references, typically past clients and contractor partners, will not just reassure you you've found a reputable architect, but will also give insight into their work style and approach.
- **How much time and feedback do I need to commit?** Do you want to be involved in the tiniest details, or do you plan to be relatively hands-off? How does this fit in with the architect's timeline and workflow? Being honest up front about what kind of client you are in this regard—which includes when you're best able to meet and how—and learning what the architect expects from you will keep things running smoothly.

- **What's your fee structure, and what sort of costs can I expect?** Make sure your architect is open with you about any additional costs that may accrue outside of the contract. You may also learn more about your architect's track record regarding cost estimation and completing projects within budget by talking to their references.
- **What are the biggest design challenges and considerations of my project?** The architect may have insights or knowledge that you may not be aware of.
- **Do you have a signature style?** Architects may have a style preference that they inevitably bring to every project. Make sure any specialization fits your vision for your home.
- **What will you show me along the way to explain the project?** Can you expect models, renderings, or drawings before the construction process starts? Don't be afraid to ask for sketches of alternative designs, samples, or showroom visits.
- **Are you insured (and if so, what level of insurance), and do any clients have open claims against you?**



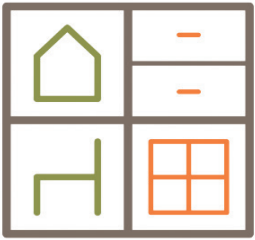
PHOTO: Brandon Stengel

- **What's your relationship with the contractor?** Will you be expected to deal with the contractor directly, or will the architect work with them?
- **Who is on my team?** Unless you have chosen a solo practitioner, there are many people at an architecture firm who will contribute to your project. Who will you be dealing with directly? Is it the same person who is designing your project? Ask for introductions!
- **How can we reduce the environmental impact of the home and the construction process?** Ask the architect what sort of sustainable design experience they have, about the energy performance of their previous designs, and the pros and cons of environmentally responsible design.

Ready to start interviewing architects for your home design project?

Begin your search by going to aia-mn.org/firm-directory, where you can filter search results by building type, firm location, and more.

Sources: curbed.com, culturestone.com, houselogic.com



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