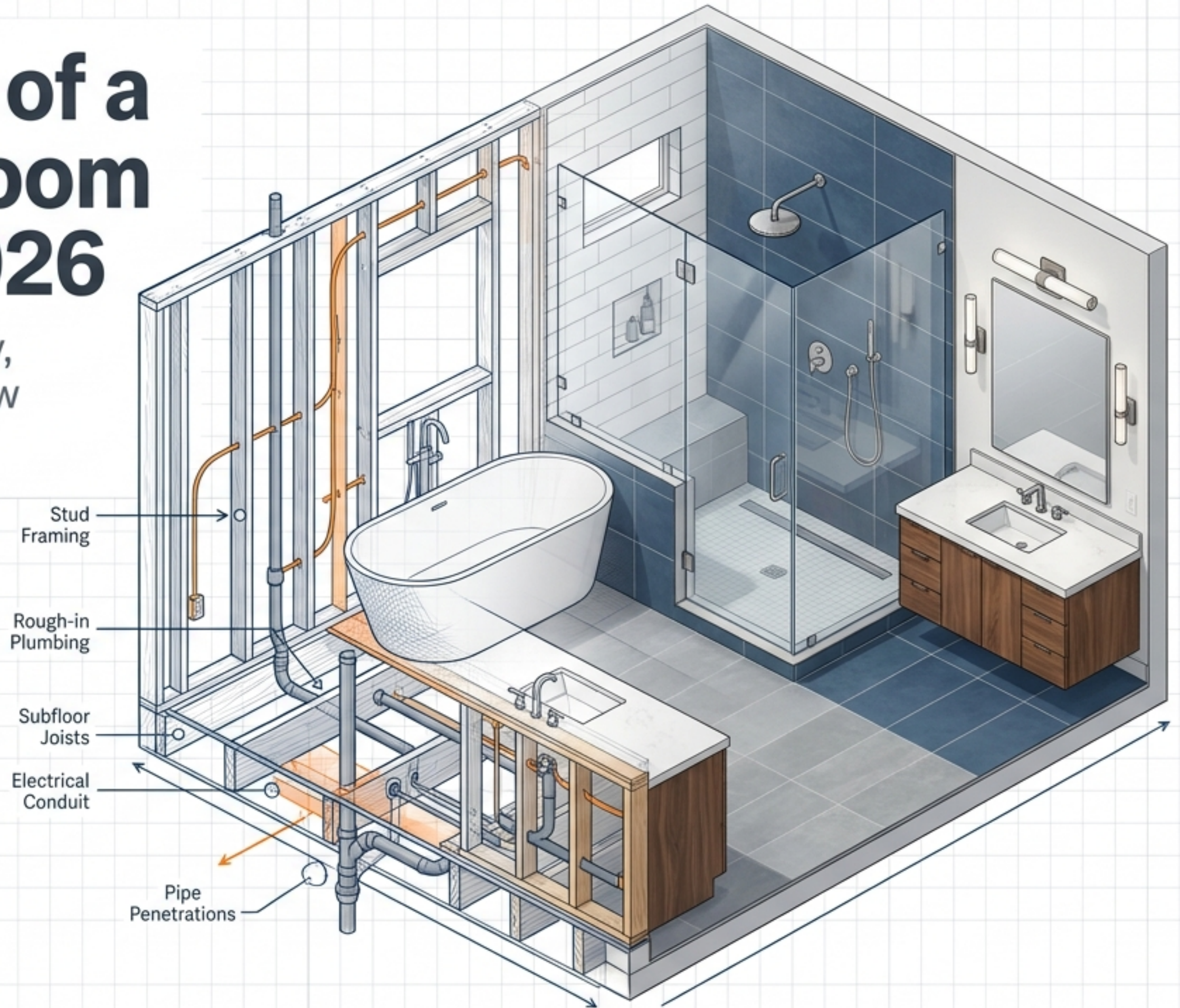


# The True Cost of a Seattle Bathroom Remodel in 2026

What homeowners actually pay, where the money goes, and how to protect your investment.



# The 2026 Seattle Financial Reality

Total Cost Range

**\$28,000 to  
\$95,000+**

The Mid-Range Sweet Spot

**\$45,000 to  
\$75,000**



Demolition



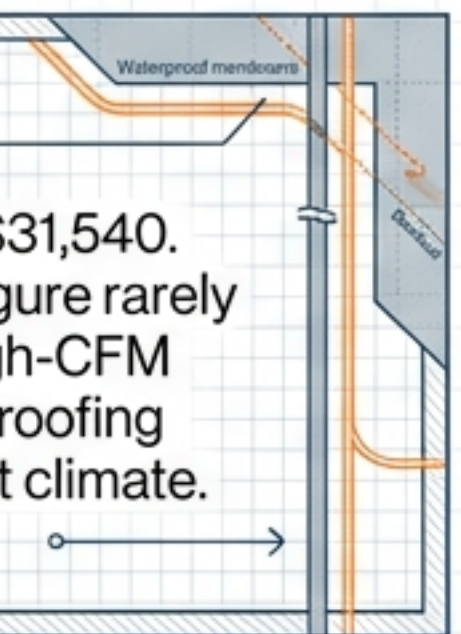
Typical Timeline: 4 to 9 weeks



Completion

## The Reality Check

The national median cost sits at \$31,540. However, in Seattle proper, this figure rarely covers the structural updates, high-CFM ventilation, and advanced waterproofing required for the Pacific Northwest climate.



# Defining the Scope, Materials, and Cost

## Basic / Refresh (\$18k - \$35k)

- **Layout:** 5x8 foot space, existing footprint.
- **Materials:** Builder-grade vanity from big-box stores, ceramic/porcelain tile.
- **Fixtures:** Prefabricated shower/tub insert, basic lighting.

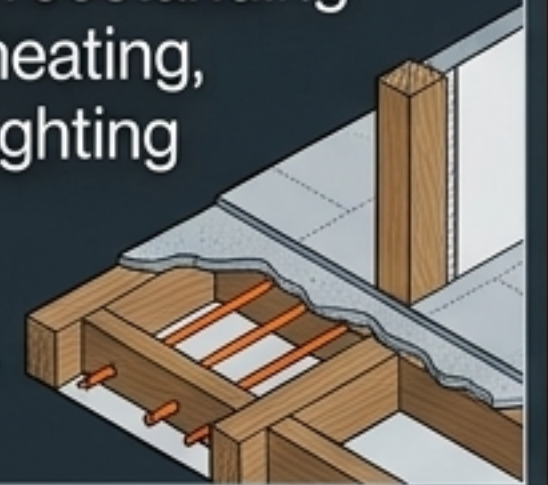
## Mid-Range (\$35k - \$75k)

- **Layout:** Expanded layout, minor plumbing/electrical relocation.
- **Materials:** Semi-custom vanity, stone countertops (quartz/granite), high-quality tile.
- **Fixtures:** Tiled shower with frameless glass, upgraded exterior-venting fan, recessed lighting.

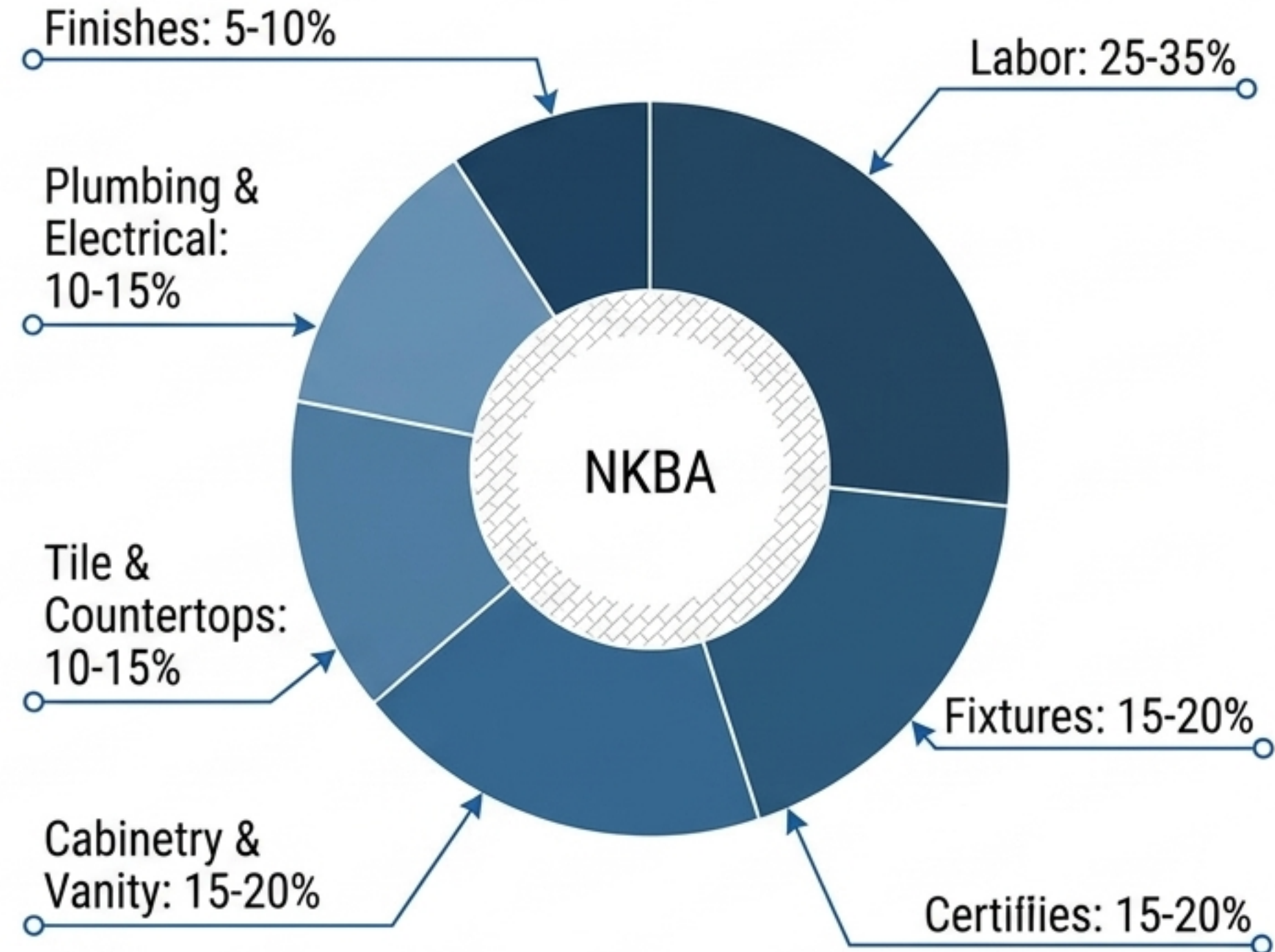
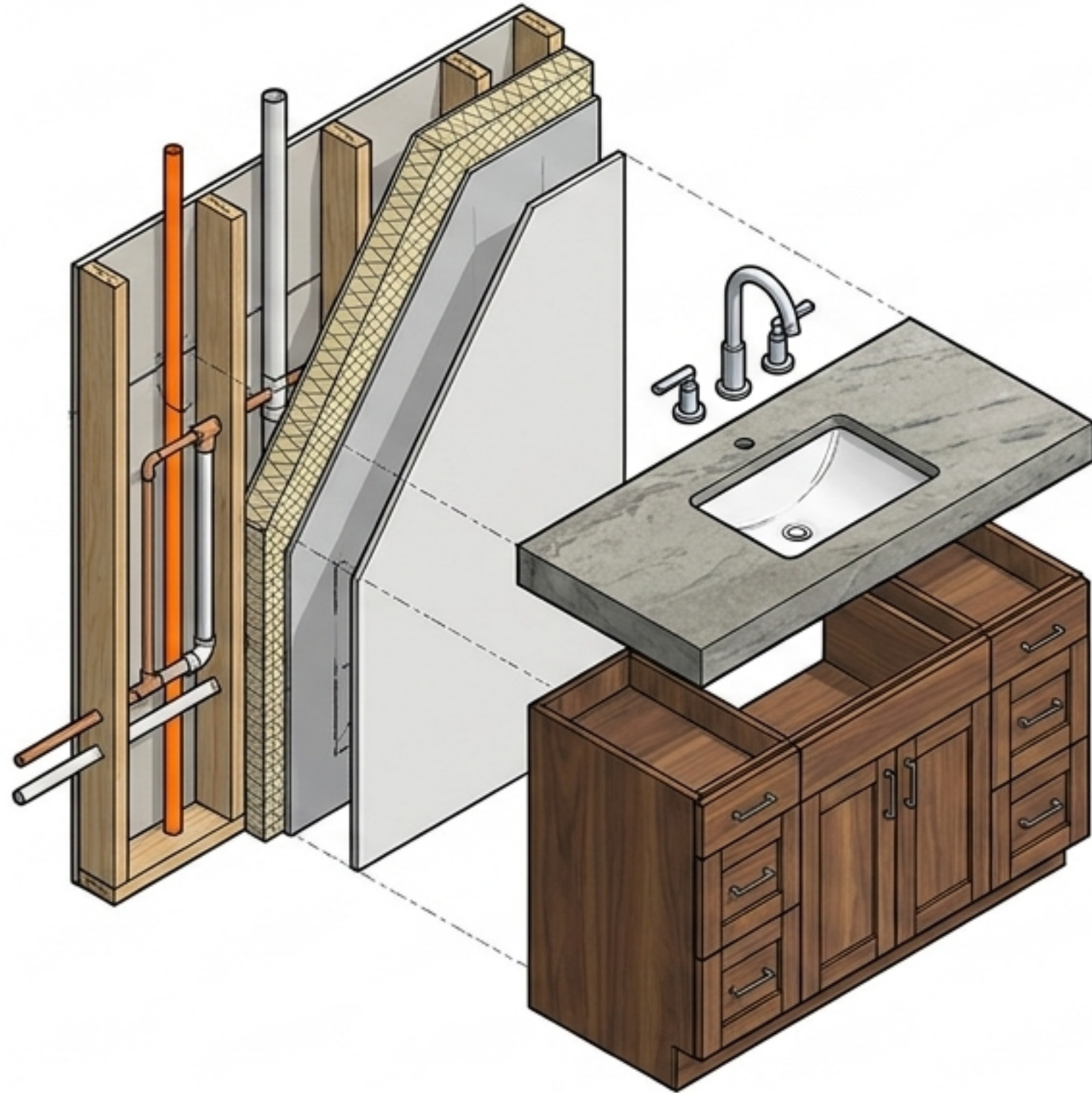


## Premium / Custom (\$75k - \$150k+)

- **Layout:** Major structural reconfiguration, moving walls and plumbing stacks.
- **Materials:** Fully custom cabinetry, high-end stone slabs, extensive custom tilework.
- **Fixtures:** Steam showers, smart toilets, freestanding tubs, in-floor heating, professional lighting design.



# The Visible Finishes Account for Less Than Half the Budget



**Takeaway:** The elements you interact with daily—the tile, the vanity, the fixtures—make up a fraction of the total investment.

# Deconstructing the Seattle Premium

## Premium Labor Rates



- Licensed plumbers command \$120-\$185/hr.
- Skilled tile setters bill at \$90-\$150/hr.
- Compound Effect: General Contractor overhead (15-25%) is calculated on top of these high base costs.

## Aging Housing Stock



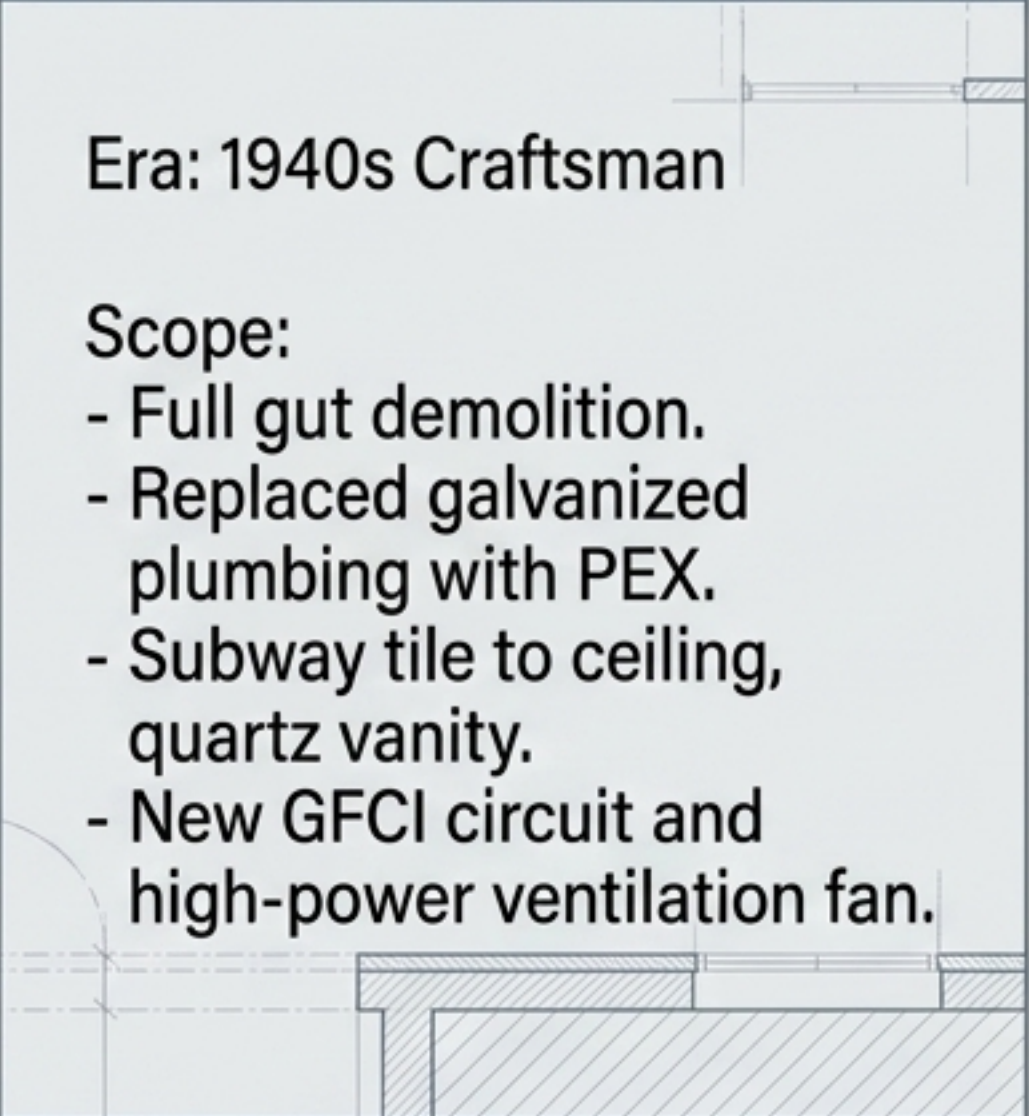
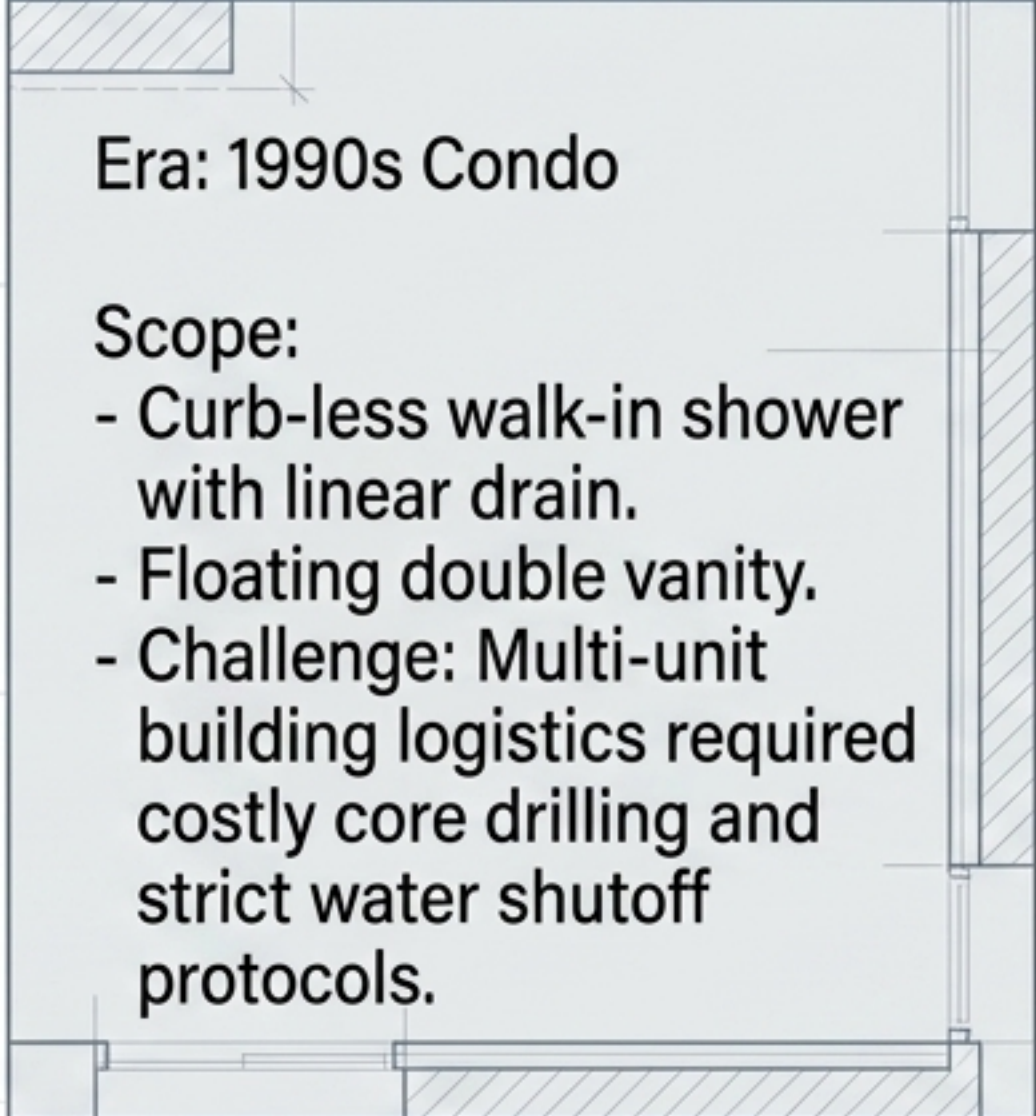
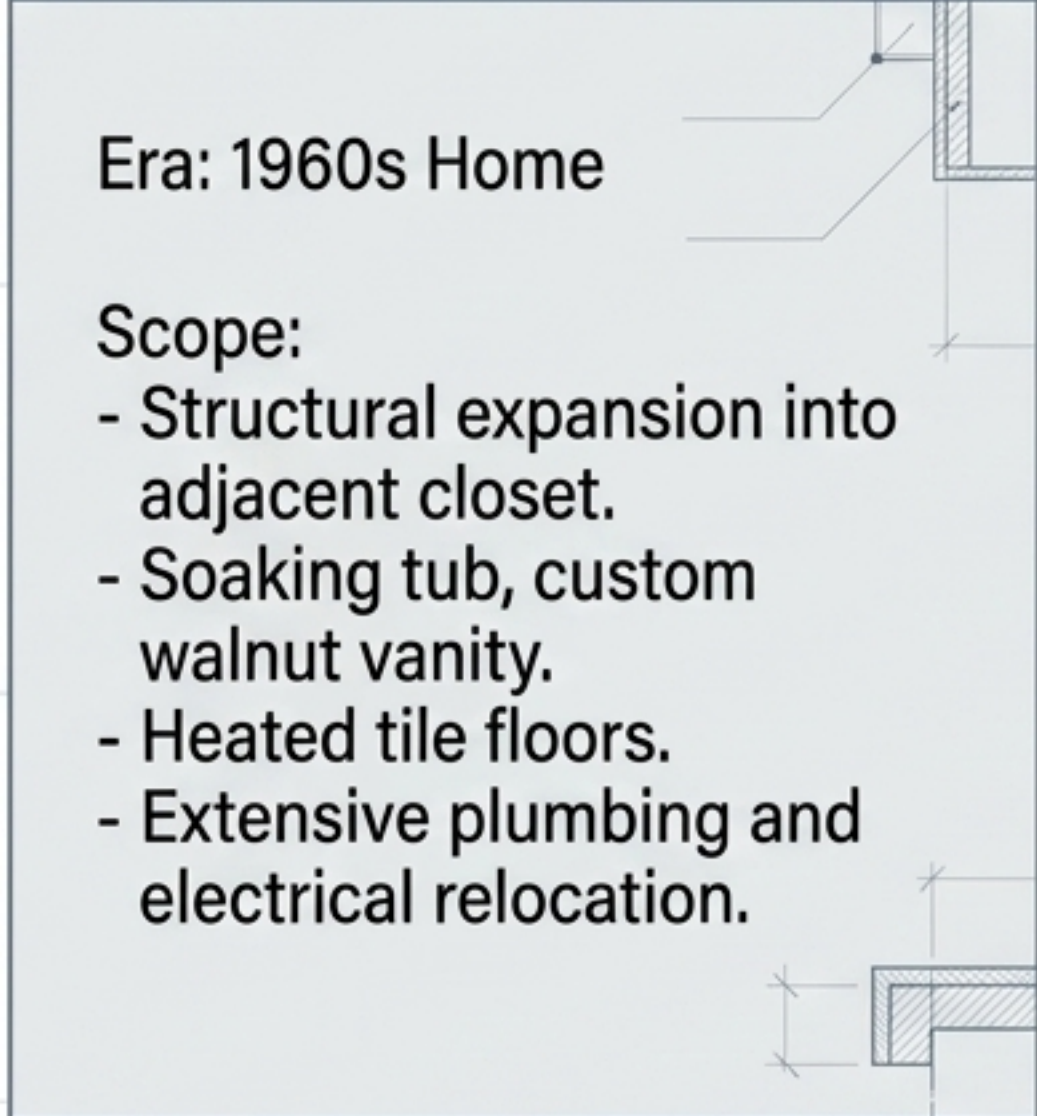
- Pre-1980s homes dominate the city proper.
- Requires total code updates to address galvanized pipes, knob-and-tube wiring, and historical structural rot.

## Neighborhood Logistics

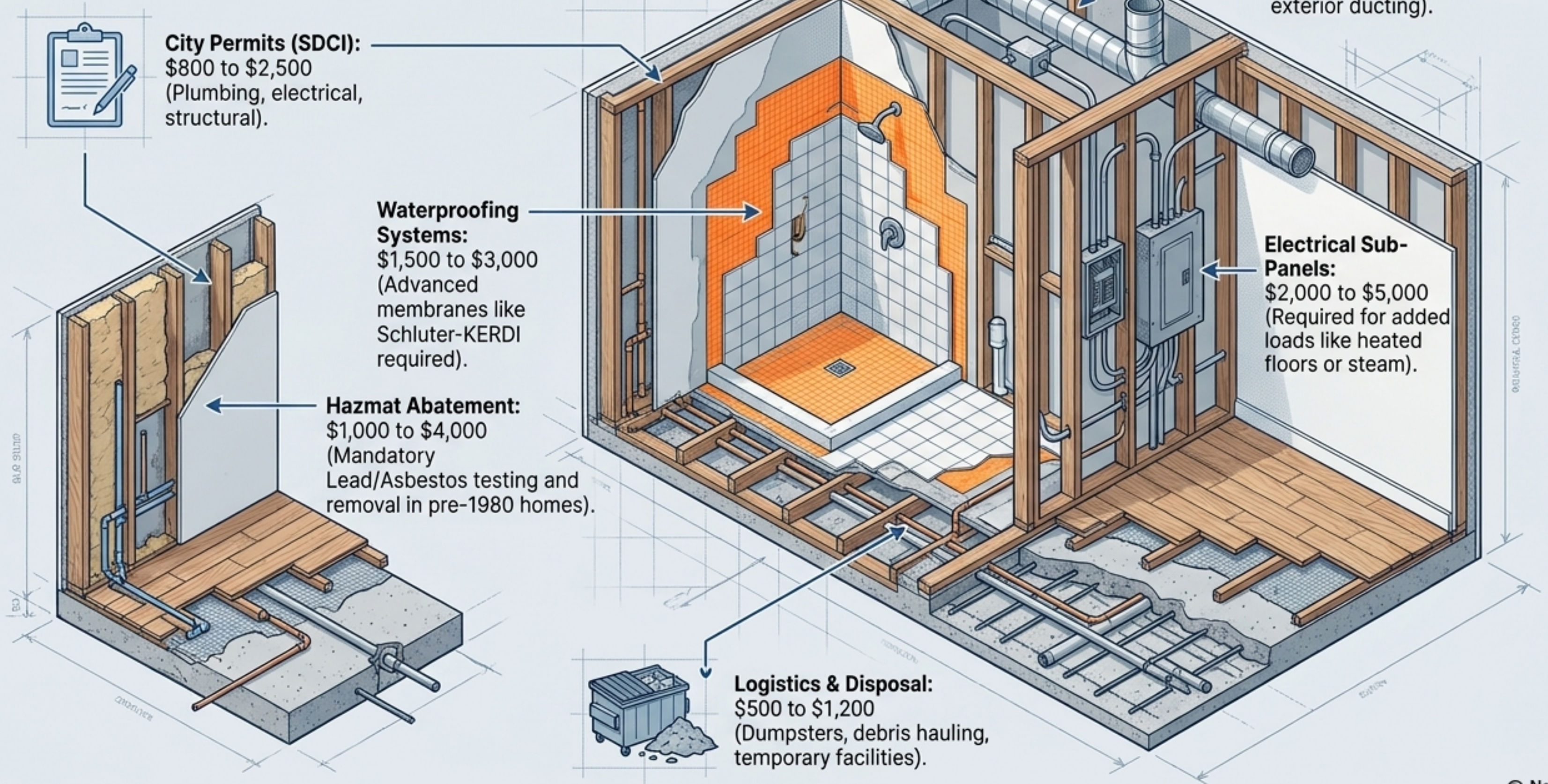


- Dense areas like Queen Anne or Laurelhurst carry premiums.
- Permitting, parking, and complex material delivery add 5-10% to total project costs compared to suburbs.

# Real Projects in the Wild

📍 \$48,500 - Ballard 🏠	📍 \$71,000 - Capitol Hill 🏢	📍 \$115,000 - West Seattle 🏠
<p>Era: 1940s Craftsman</p> <p>Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Full gut demolition.</li><li>- Replaced galvanized plumbing with PEX.</li><li>- Subway tile to ceiling, quartz vanity.</li><li>- New GFCI circuit and high-power ventilation fan.</li></ul> 	<p>Era: 1990s Condo</p> <p>Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Curb-less walk-in shower with linear drain.</li><li>- Floating double vanity.</li><li>- Challenge: Multi-unit building logistics required costly core drilling and strict water shutoff protocols.</li></ul> 	<p>Era: 1960s Home</p> <p>Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Structural expansion into adjacent closet.</li><li>- Soaking tub, custom walnut vanity.</li><li>- Heated tile floors.</li><li>- Extensive plumbing and electrical relocation.</li></ul> 

# The Iceberg of Hidden Costs



# Diagnosing and Preventing Budget Overruns

## The Trap

### Scope Creep

Mid-project changes (e.g., adding heated floors or wall-hung toilets after rough-ins).

### Unforeseen Conditions

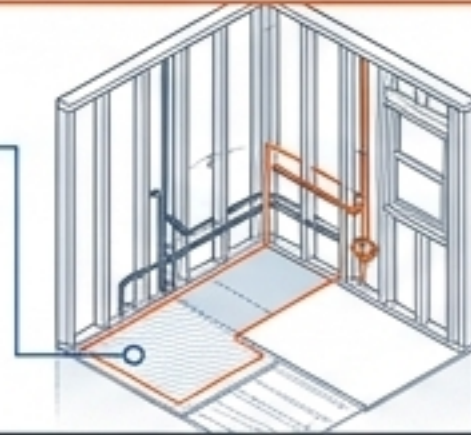
Discovering water damage, rot, or old wiring behind the walls of Seattle's older homes.

### Vague Scopes

Accepting a low-ball bid that omits critical details for waterproofing or trim work.

## The Cause

Mid-project changes (e.g., adding heated floors or wall-hung toilets after rough-ins).



Discovering water damage, rot, or old wiring behind the walls of Seattle's older homes.

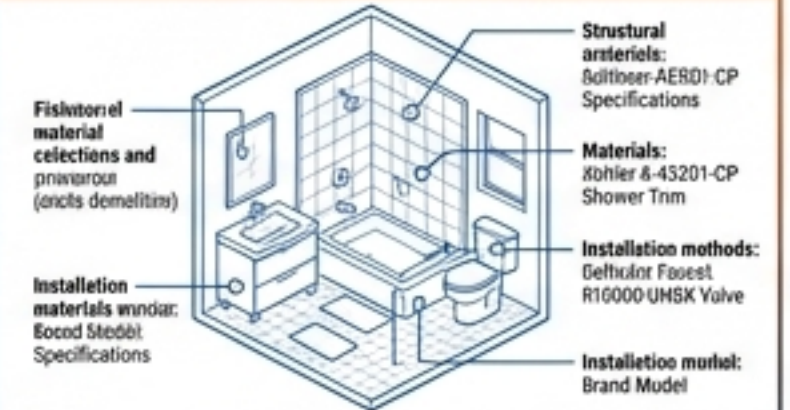


Accepting a low-ball bid that omits critical details for waterproofing or trim work.

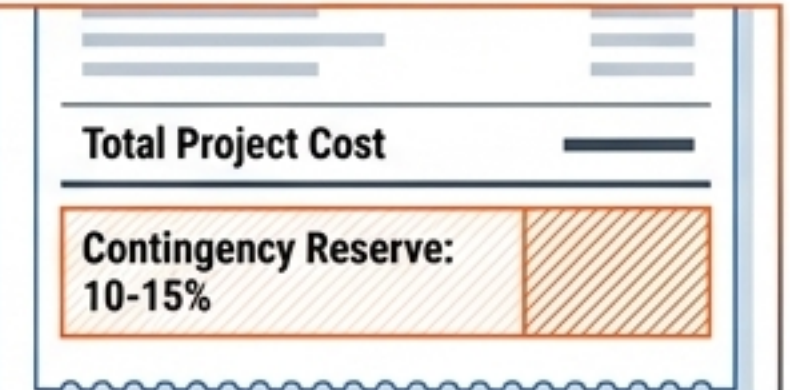


## The Defense

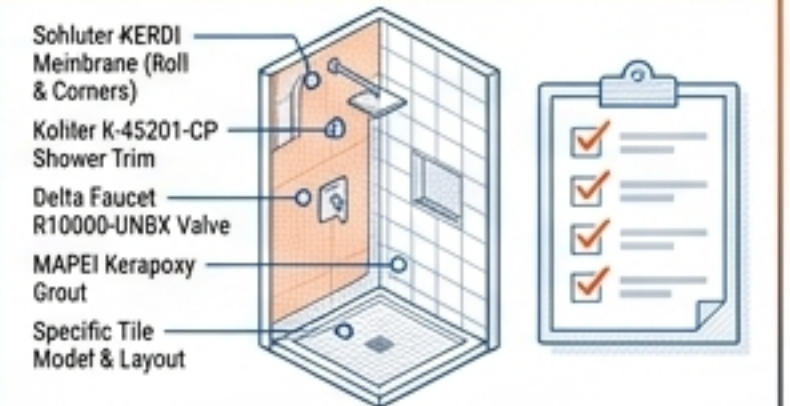
Finalize all **material selections and design choices** prior to demolition.



Hold a **10-15% contingency reserve** (e.g., \$6,000 to \$9,000 set aside on a \$60,000 project).



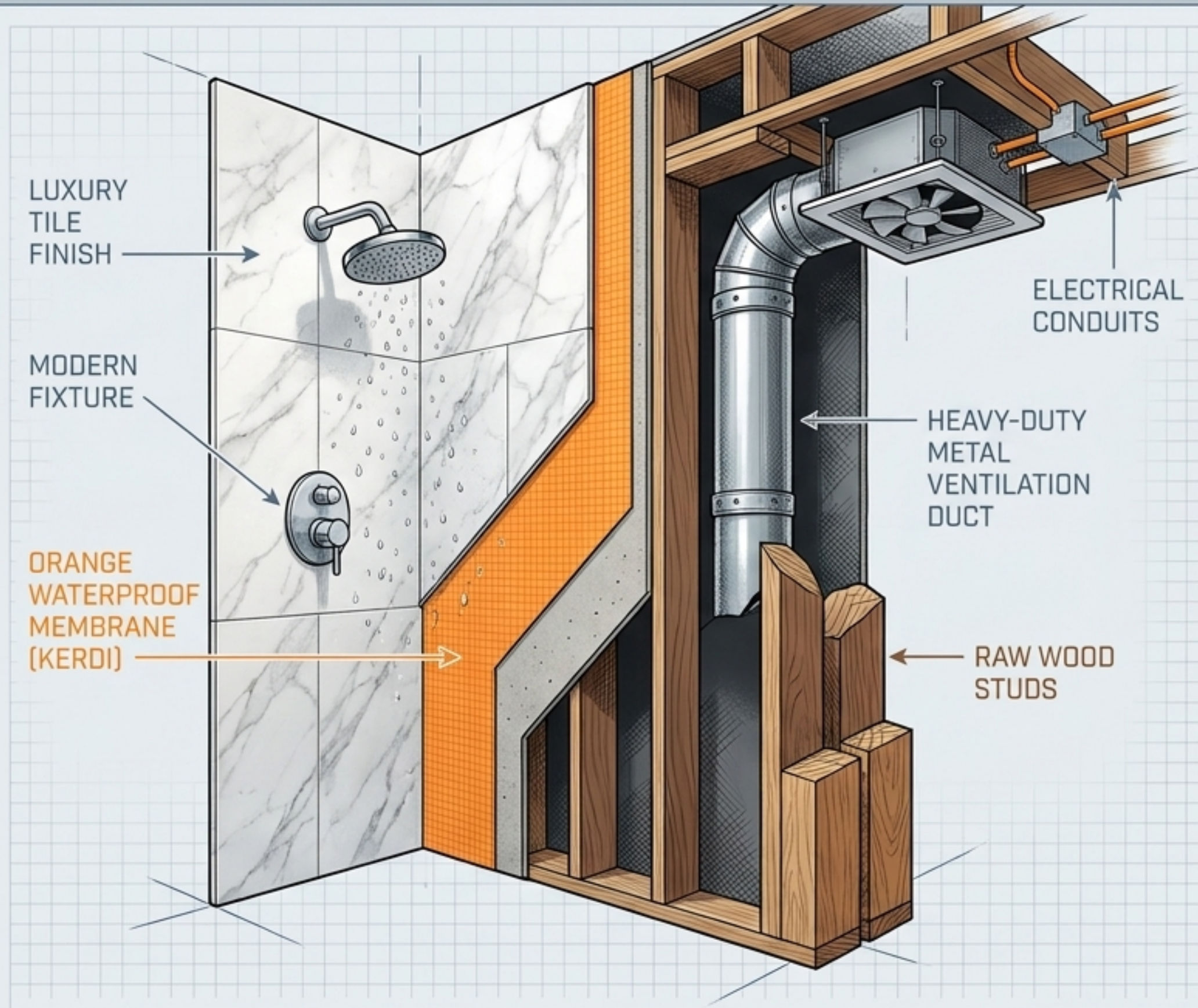
**Demand detailed quotes** specifying brands, model numbers, and installation methods.



# Securing a Bulletproof Contractor Quote

- ✓ Itemized demolition and disposal of all existing materials.
- ✓ All necessary permits (SDCI) and inspection scheduling explicitly included.
- ✓ Specific brands and model numbers for plumbing, fixtures, lighting, and fans.
- ✓ Specified waterproofing system (brand and application method, e.g., Schluter-KERDI).
- ✓ HVAC modifications explicitly outlining new exterior ducting.
- ✓ Clear payment schedule tied strictly to project milestones.
- ✓ Written warranty for labor and workmanship.

# The Most Important Investment is Invisible



## The Renology Take

**The Threat:** With 150+ days of precipitation annually, moisture management is the single greatest risk to a Seattle home.

**The Math:** Investing in a premium waterproofing membrane and a correctly-sized high-CFM fan costs \$2,000 to \$4,000 upfront. Remediating a failed shower pan and structural rot five years later costs \$15,000 to \$25,000.

**The Golden Rule:** A successful Seattle remodel prioritizes invisible infrastructure over decorative finishes. The best money you spend is on the parts you will never see again.