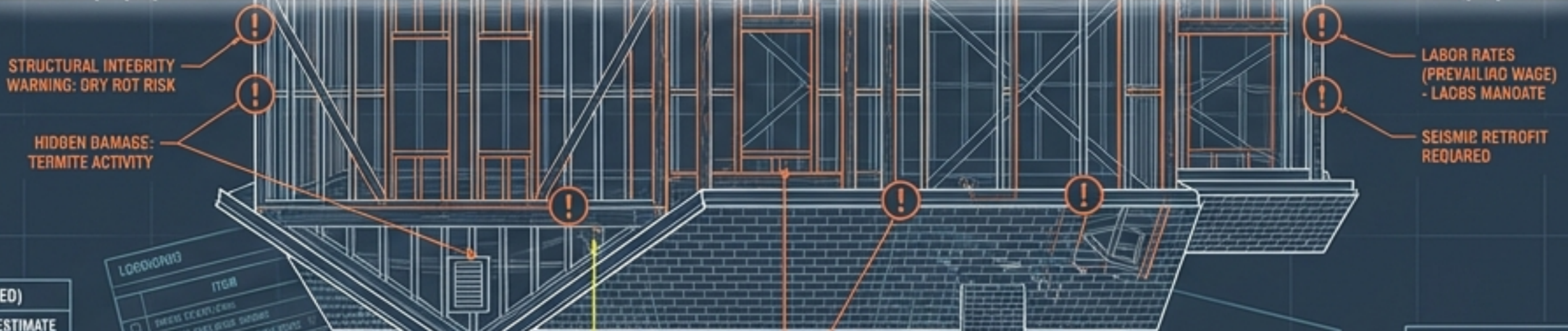


# Beneath the Surface: The True Cost of Siding in Los Angeles (2026)

## A Homeowner's Guide to Materials, Mandates, and the LADBS

MATERIALS & COSTS BREAKDOWN (ESTIMATED)		
ITEM	MATERIAL COST (PER 50 FT)	TOTAL ESTIMATE (TYPICAL LA HOME)
FIBER CEMENT SIDING	\$8.00	\$36.00
ENGINEERED WOOD SIDING	\$8.00	\$31.50
VINYL SIDING	\$4.50	\$17.50
VINYL SIDING	\$4.50	\$12.00
TOTAL ESTIMATE	-	\$1,90,000
VINYL: \$4.50 (29% MARKET SHARE)		
FIBER CEMENT: \$8.00 (55% MARKET SHARE)		

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE & FRICTION POINTS (LADBS)	
⚠️	HISTORIC PRESERVATION OVERLAY ZONES (HPDZ): HIGH FRICTION
⚠️	WILDFIRE INTERFACE AREAS (WUI): MANDATORY FIRE-RATED MATERIALS
⚠️	WILDFIRE INTERFACE AREAS (WUI): MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS
⚠️	ENERGY CODE (TITLE 24): INSULATION REQUIREMENTS



MATERIALS & COSTS BREAKDOWN (ESTIMATED)		
ITEM	MATERIAL COST (PER 50 FT)	TOTAL ESTIMATE (TYPICAL LA HOME)
FIBER CEMENT SIDING	\$1.50	\$15,500
ENGINEERED WOOD SIDING	\$2.60	\$15,500
VINYL SIDING	\$4.50	\$90,000
VINYL SIDING	\$4.50	\$3,300
FIBER CEMENT SIDING	\$5.00	\$50,000
VINYL SIDING	\$3.50	\$3,600
EXTRINSIC SIDING	\$1.50	\$1,900
MATERIAL COST	\$1.50	\$5,500
TOTAL	-	\$1,36,800

LOGBOOK	ITEM	DATE	STATUS
<input type="checkbox"/>	PERMIT APPLICATION	01/15/26	PENDING
<input type="checkbox"/>	DEMOLITION DISCOVERY	02/01/26	COMPLETE
<input type="checkbox"/>	STRUCTURAL REPAIRS	02/15/26	IN PROGRESS
<input type="checkbox"/>	INSULATION INSTALLATION	03/01/26	PENDING
<input type="checkbox"/>	FINAL INSPECTION	03/15/26	PENDING
<input type="checkbox"/>	PERMIT CLOSURE	03/30/26	PENDING
<input type="checkbox"/>	LABOR RATES (PREVAILING WAGE)	01/01/26	APPLIED
<input type="checkbox"/>	SEISMIC RETROFIT	02/01/26	REQUIRED
<input type="checkbox"/>	STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY	02/15/26	WARNING
<input type="checkbox"/>	HIDDEN DAMAGE	02/01/26	ACTIVITY
<input type="checkbox"/>	WILDFIRE INTERFACE	01/01/26	MANDATORY
<input type="checkbox"/>	ENERGY CODE (TITLE 24)	01/01/26	MANDATORY
<input type="checkbox"/>	HISTORIC PRESERVATION	01/01/26	MANDATORY

ITEM	STATUS	COMPLIANCE NOTES
PERMIT APPLICATION	✓	APPROVED
DEMOLITION DISCOVERY	✓	RECORDED
STRUCTURAL REPAIRS	✓	INSPECTION PASSED
INSULATION INSTALLATION	✓	COMPLETED
FINAL INSPECTION	✓	APPROVED
PERMIT CLOSURE	✓	COMPLETED
LABOR RATES (PREVAILING WAGE)	✓	APPLIED
SEISMIC RETROFIT	✓	COMPLETED
STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY	✓	MONITORED
HIDDEN DAMAGE	✓	REPAIRED
WILDFIRE INTERFACE	✓	COMPLETED
ENERGY CODE (TITLE 24)	✓	COMPLETED
HISTORIC PRESERVATION	✓	COMPLETED

**\$15,000**  
STRUCTURAL REPAIRS & MATERIALS

LABOR RATES (PREVAILING WAGE) - LADBS MANDATE

**LADBS**



# THE SIDING COST ICEBERG: EXPECTATIONS VS. THE 2026 REALITY

20%

ABOVE THE DIRT LINE



## WHAT YOU SEE

NEW MATERIAL & AESTHETICS  
(THE \$15,000-\$27,000 BASELINE).

## WHAT DRIVES THE COST

80%

### LADBS VALUATIONS

**PERMIT FEES:** Calculated on Total Project Cost (Not Material Price)

**PLAN CHECK:** Mandatory for Structural Changes & Title 24

### DIR PREVAILING WAGES (\$55-\$85/HR)

**MANDATE:** Projects over \$1,000 (Public Works/Multi-Unit Housing)

**IMPACT:** Labor Costs Increase by 40-60% vs. Market Rate

### WUI FIRE ZONE COMPLIANCE

**REQUIREMENT:** Class A Ignition-Resistant Siding & Trim

**MATERIALS:** Fiber Cement, Metal, or Treated Wood (Higher Cost Basis)

### TERMITE/DRY ROT REMEDIATION

**DISCOVERY:** Often Hidden Behind Existing Siding (Unseen Scope)

**SCOPE:** Structural Repairs, Fumigation & Code Upgrades (Uncapped Costs)

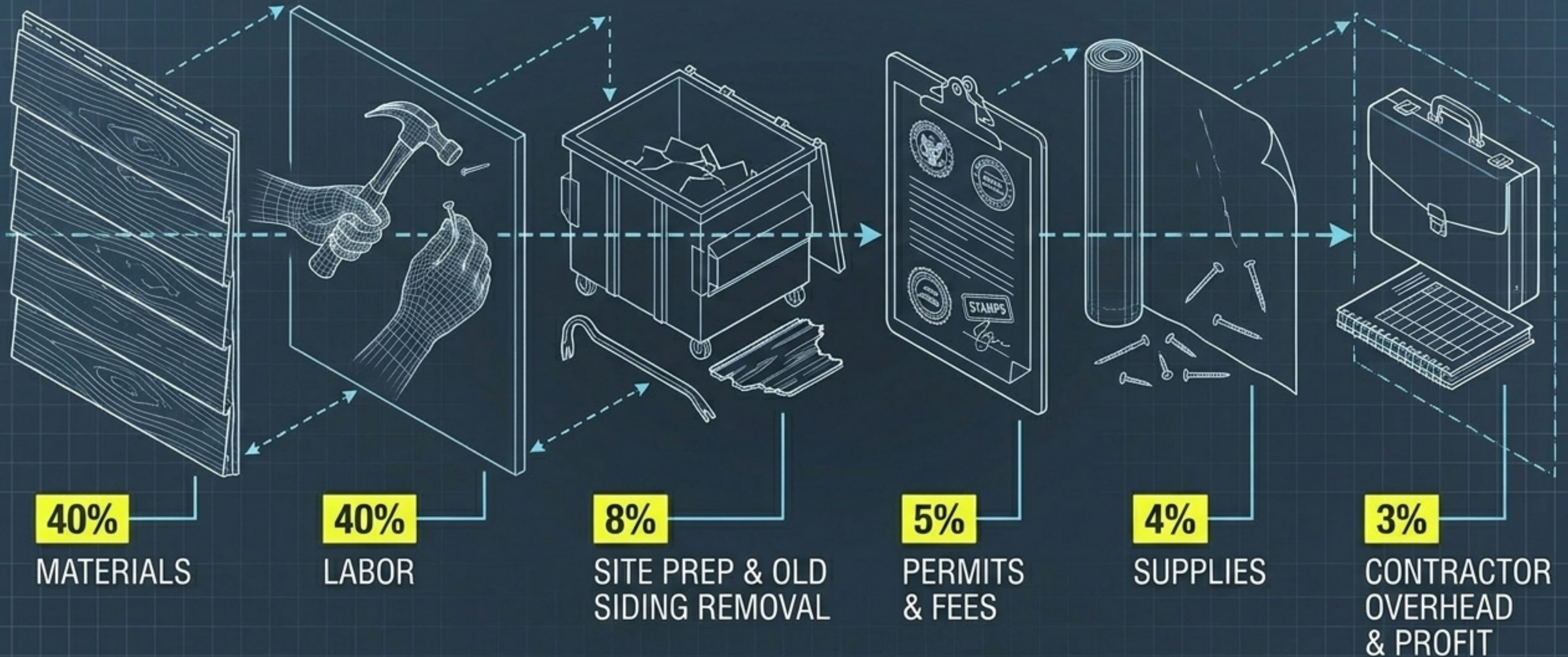
**THE PRIMARY MISCALCULATION IS FOCUSING ON THE COST PER SQUARE FOOT OF THE VISIBLE MATERIAL. THE REAL COST DRIVERS ARE INVISIBLE: REMEDIATION AND REGULATION.**

# THE 2026 MATERIAL MATRIX: BASELINE PROJECT TIERS

<b>BASIC VINYL</b>	<b>MID-RANGE</b> (FIBER CEMENT)	<b>PREMIUM</b> (WOOD / HIGH-END STUCCO)
<p><b>COST: \$10,500 – \$18,000</b></p> <p><b>BENEFIT:</b> Lowest initial cost.</p> <p><b>WARNING:</b> Illegal in LA WUI Fire Zones. ⚠️</p>	<p><b>COST: \$15,000 – \$27,000</b></p> <p><b>BENEFIT:</b> High durability, Class-A fire resistance (James Hardie).</p>	<p><b>COST: \$22,500 – \$45,000+</b></p> <p><b>BENEFIT:</b> Custom aesthetics, architectural preservation.</p>

TOTAL PROJECT COST RANGES REFLECT MATERIALS, PROFESSIONAL INSTALLATION, AND BASIC SITE PREPARATION. TIMELINE: 1 TO 3 WEEKS.

# Where the Money Goes: The 40/40 Split



# The Los Angeles Market Multipliers

## Labor: California DIR Prevailing Wages

Carpenters and trades require **\$55 to \$85/hour**—**20% to 35% above** the national median.



## Logistics: Hillside & Neighborhood Premiums

**Steep lot access, scaffolding needs, limited parking, and high general liability insurance rates.**

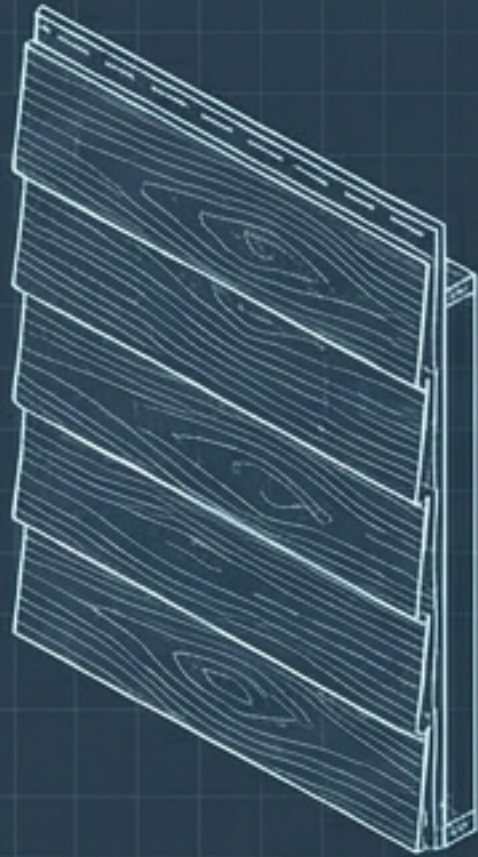
## Regulations: Wildfire Urban Interface (WUI)

Mandates **non-combustible materials** (fiber cement/stucco), **eliminating cheap vinyl options entirely.**

# The Deep Unknown: Why Demolition Changes the Budget

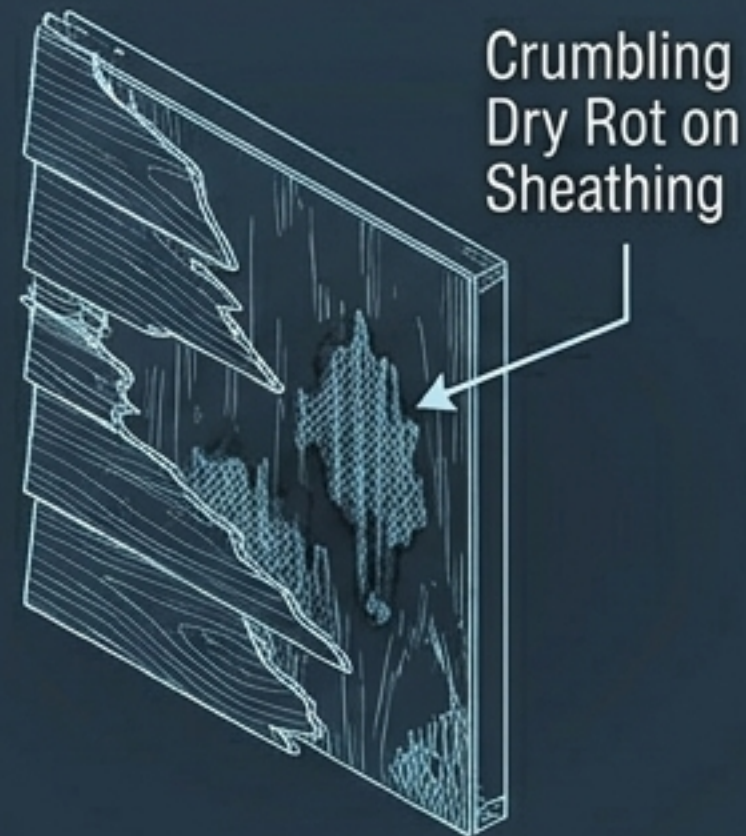
## The X-Ray Demolition Flow

### Frame 1: Intact Old Siding



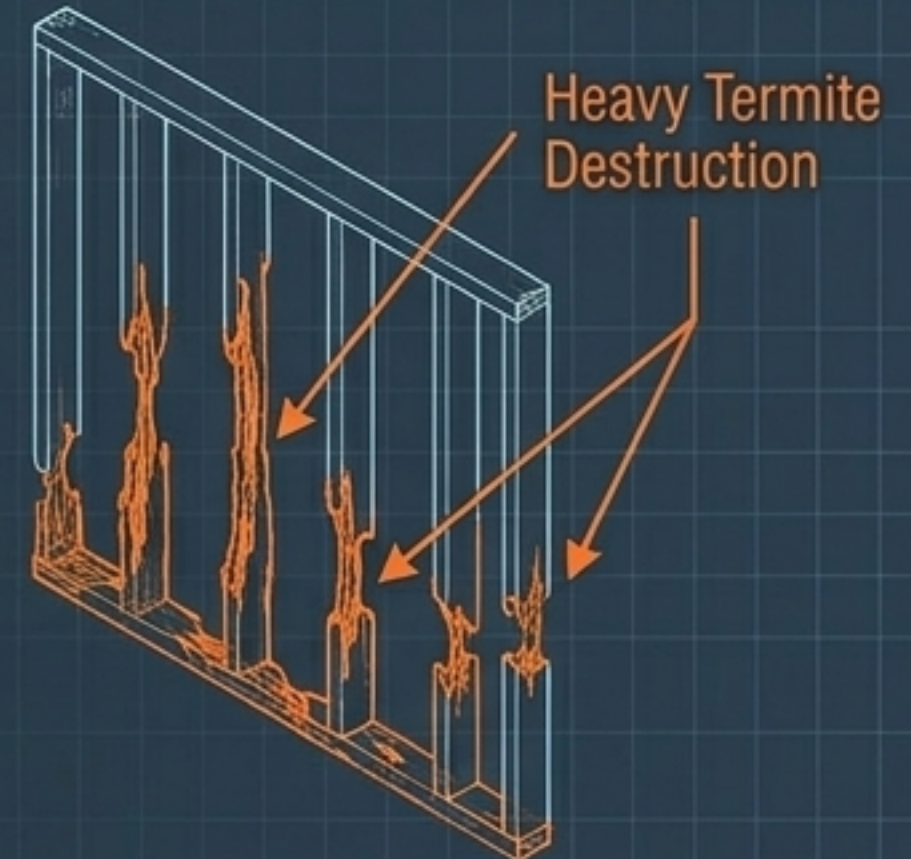
**Cost: \$0** (Baseline)

### Frame 2: Siding Stripped



**Cost: \$1.50–\$2.50/sq ft** removal.  
**Cost: \$1.50–\$2.50/sq ft** removal.  
Reveals dark, crumbling dry rot on sheathing.

### Frame 3: Sheathing Removed

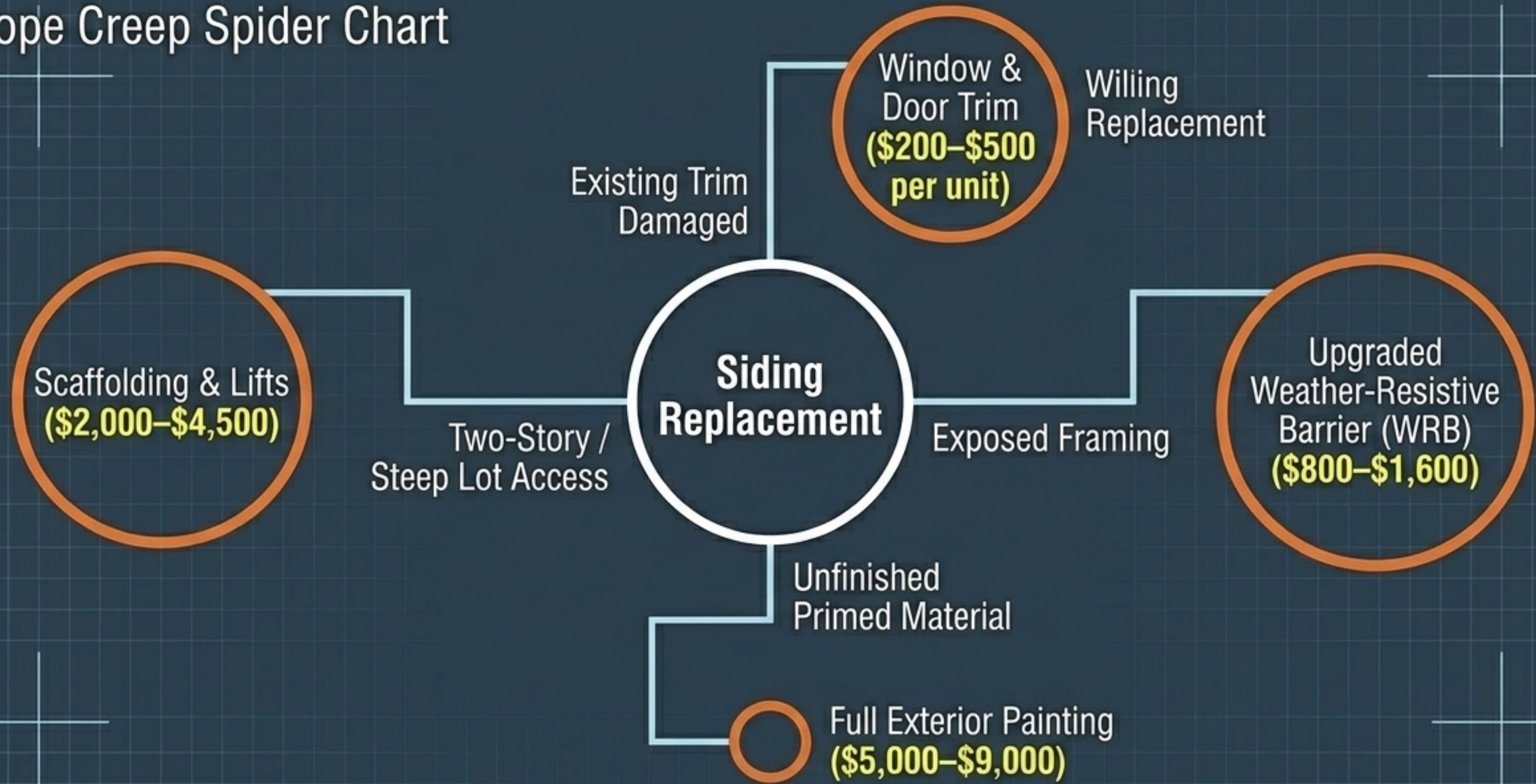


Reveals structural framing heavily damaged by termites.  
**Repair Cost: \$80–\$120/hr** + materials  
(\$1,000–\$5,000+ total)

**The NAHB Standard:** A 10–15% cash contingency is strictly recommended for homes over 30 years old.

# Beware the Branching Budget: Scope Creep

## Scope Creep Spider Chart



# 2026 Reality Check: Three LA Case Studies



**Sherman Oaks Ranch**  
(1,900 sq ft)

**Material:** Fiber cement  
(Class A fire rating).

⚠️ **Hidden Issues:** Discovered rotted sheathing & needed new trim.

**Final Cost: \$25,200**



**Eagle Rock Bungalow**  
(1,500 sq ft)

**Material:** Natural cedar  
tongue-and-groove.

⚠️ **Hidden Issues:** Removed failing stucco, intense installation labor.

**Final Cost: \$29,800**



**Culver City Two-Story**  
(2,300 sq ft)

**Material:** Insulated vinyl.

✅ **Hidden Issues:** No structural repairs needed. Larger home, but cheaper material offset costs.

**Final Cost: \$22,500**

# Navigating LADBS: The Path to Compliance

## Submission

File plans detailing materials, fastening schedule, and weather barrier via ePlanLA.

## Issuance

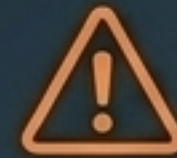
Project cleared to begin demo.

## Final Sign-Off

Project legally recorded.

## Valuation

LADBS calculates permit fees based on project valuation **(\$700–\$2,000)**.



## Milestone Inspections

Inspector verifies wall bracing, WRB, and flashing before siding goes up. **Delays here disrupt labor schedules.**

# Anatomy of a Bulletproof Quote

ITEM DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT PRICE	LINE TOTAL
1. James Hardie Lap Siding	100	\$2000	\$20,000
2. Demo & Haul Away	100	\$1500	\$20,000
3. Structural Repair Contingency	100	\$2000	\$20,000
4. LADBS Permit Coordination	100	\$1000	\$10,000
5. Fluid-Applied WRB	100	\$2000	\$20,000

Identifies specific WUI-compliant brand/color.

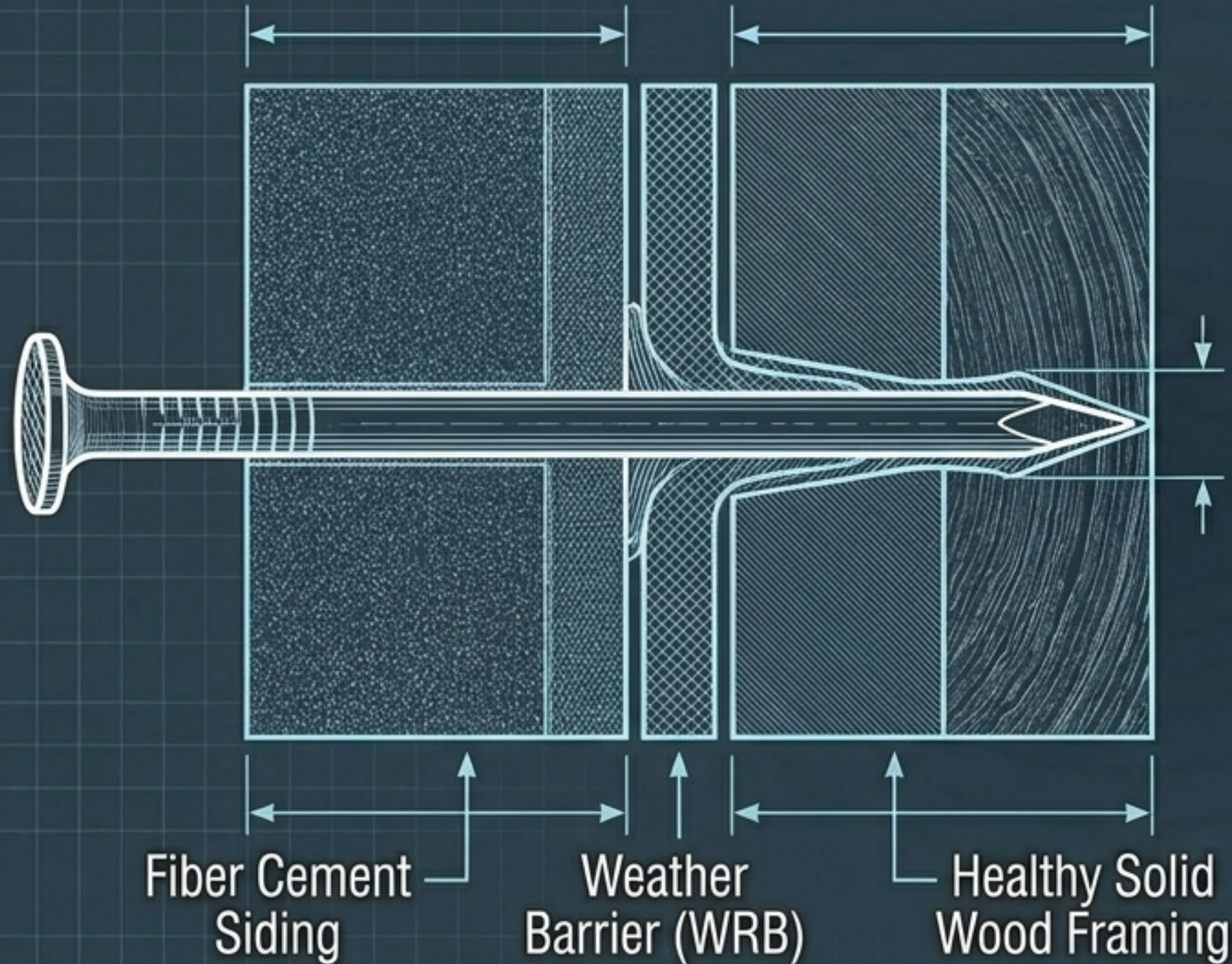
Specifies removal scope (high-vis yellow: \$1.50-\$2.50/sq ft).

⚠ Establishes hourly rate (high-vis yellow: \$80-\$120/hr) for hidden dry rot.

Confirms contractor takes responsibility for bureaucracy.

Upgraded moisture barrier specifically named.

# The True Valuation of an LA Siding Project



A quote that seems unusually low is likely omitting structural repairs or ignoring local fire codes.

The most accurate budget is not based on aesthetics, but on a realistic assessment of your home's age and its location on the **LA fire map**.