

CORWYN:

Most homeowners believe that renovation risk begins when construction start. Bad contract is a poor material, bad timing. But in reality, the biggest financial loss usually happens before a single hammer even swings. When rushed decisions, vague scopes, and unclear comparisons quietly drain equity and inflate costs.

Good morning, good morning, and great morning, guys. Welcome to another fabulous episode of [Exit Strategies Radio Show](#). Hey, I am your host, Corwyn J Melette, broker and owner of [Exit Realty Lowcountry Group](#) in beautiful North Charleston, South Carolina. Hey, if it's your first time listening to this show, you, sir, or ma'am, are in for a treat because our mission here is very simple. That is to empower. Look here, we're going to focus on that word. We're going to dig in on that word. We're going to empower our community through financial literacy and real estate education. Guys, we are legacy building. That is what we do. So I always got to give a shout out to those who listen to us faithfully. You guys rock. Evans, Elvin West Ashley, Pastor Vanderbilt Evans Sr. and his beautiful bride, Miss Sandra Evans, my mom out there in Moncks Corner, y'all. Look here, I even got to give a shout out there in Moncks Corner to FedUp Postal Unit. You guys are tuning in. You guys are sending us feedback. We really appreciate it. So you guys need to get something mailed out. Go see FedUp Postal Unit out there in Moncks Corner, guys. So look, for our folks in Marin and Mullins, thank y'all so much for tuning in. The Troys always love you. Always love you. And our family and extended friends there. Look, let's get it. So today we got an amazing show set up for you. And I'm super excited about it because one, it ain't every day that you get, quote unquote, a founder and CEO. I like those titles. CEO means the boss. That's what that means. So I want to set the tone here for you this way, which is most homeowners believe that renovation risk begins when construction start. Bad contractors or poor material, bad timing. But in reality, the biggest financial loss usually happens before a single hammer even swings when rushed decisions, vague scopes, and unclear comparisons quietly drain equity and inflate costs. The real mistake isn't overspending on materials. It's entering construction without finished decisions, documented inspections, or true cost clarity. So the proposal bid founder and CEO RoDevia Brigham explains why renovation outcomes are driven by decision quality, not construction activity and how upstream clarity can protect long-term property value and financial stability. So I want to introduce to you again, RoDevia Brigham, the founder and CEO proposal bid a platform focused on governance and accountability in property repair bidding. He's a former fireman, firefighter, and former cyber security analyst. Look here. I love this. Advocate for treating renovations as capital protection decisions, not emotional events. So if you guys please would join us in welcoming RoDevia to the show. RoDevia, how are you doing?

RODEVIA:

Good. Thank you for having me. I've been following you for quite some time and it's an honor to be here and to talk with your audience about the decision layer that happens even before the money's even moved around renovations and capital projects. So hopefully the audience has some patience with me. This is an infrastructure topic, not necessarily tips and how to and do it yourself, but more of a thought process that happens for audibility, consistency, and the

documentation piece even before the first bids and estimations are picked or before the vendors are even sourced. So thank you so much for having me.

CORWYN:

Well, you're quite welcome. Thank you so much for taking time out of your business schedule to be here. So I'll have an overview, who you are, what you do.

RODEVIA:

So I'm RoDevia Brigham, the founder of ProposalBid, and we focus on the decision layer of capital projects. And what that is, is that it's the upstream structure that determines whether renovation outcomes behave predictably once the construction begins. So we don't manage construction, we structure the decisions. But secondly, ProposalBid also produces structured scopes, bids, and estimations. We standardize those. We do defensible estimations, not on the execution services, but on the governance artifacts. So basically, we exist as the capital decisions that can be comparable, and it's explainable, and it's reviewable before the money is even committed. Because once the construction begins, most of those financial trajectories have already been hard-coded in and set in. So I believe this conversation is more about where the renovation outcomes are actually formed and why construction reveals the decisions and not actually makes decisions once those decisions are made.

CORWYN:

One of the things, and if you don't mind, let me, I'll jump in, but I got a question for you because one of the things we opened with is about the mistake happens before the hammer swings. So let's peel that back a little bit and give some insight there.

RODEVIA:

Yeah, so construction is where the renovation outcomes appear, but they aren't really created there, right? So most renovation stresses is blamed on the contractors or the construction long before the work is even done. So that does feel logical because it's visible, it's loud, you can point to it, it's expensive, but construction is where renovation outcomes actually appear. So it's not where they're actually created. So by the time construction remodels, rebuilds, repairs begin, most of those renovation outcomes have already been constrained by the budgets, by the timelines, by the guidance. And so the scope has already been implied if you have a scope that's ready for the audience that you currently have. And the expectations have been, how do you say, already assumed. So the budget tolerance has already been mentally set. This is what we're going to spend. And then the construction does not invest or it doesn't invent those actual conditions. Construction and the remodels operate inside of those constraints. So if renovation outcomes are largely shaped before the work begins, what exactly are homeowners managing?

CORWYN:

So what I heard was, we have a vision of what it is that we want a renovation to look like. But long before that, in the very beginning, we also have basically what we budgeted, what we've allocated financially for this to take place. So if we don't get those two things right on the front end, you know, in the hiring of a contractor and the scope of work, which is defining what is

going to be done to give us that outcome that we envision. If we don't get those things right, then one, we won't achieve budget and we won't get to what the end project, what we envisioned it to look like. Is that fair?

RODEVIA:

That is fair, right? Because what you have is, you might have a clear budget and defined scopes, but that's all interpreted at the end. So if you don't have the decision framework set up before the money even moves, those are already hardcoded in.

CORWYN:

Makes perfect sense. So you want to be clear is what I'm also understanding as well, as far as what it is that you are asking for and make sure that what you've asked for is embedded in your quote for your project costs, scope or whatever you put there, your deliverables. For those who think about this stuff a little differently, what is there so you can make sure you get where you're going. So what have you seen like some of the financial impacts of having, if you will, an ambiguous scope of work or ambiguous list of deliverables versus a very clear one? Let's take a short break.

AD:

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RODEVIA:

Yeah. So for the scopes, what we find is that ambiguity is typically the definition that's happening. It's not the contractor performance that determines the financial trajectory. So what isn't clearly defined before the pricing will be interpreted during the construction. So the renovation budgets, the remodel budgets rarely encode because of the execution. They actually erode because the key decisions were never fully defined in the first place. **So most homeowners believe that they're managing construction. In reality, they're actually managing a sequence of decisions.** So they're managing the scope, they're managing the finishes, they're managing the boundaries, and also the timing. So what isn't clearly defined before the pricing will be interpreted during that period of construction. So if the interpretation isn't malicious, it's actually mechanical. So when something is unclear in the budgets and all that, someone has to fill the gap. They have to make assumptions, they have to take on those risks, and they must decide what happens in that particular motion. And the decisions made in the motions behave differently than the decisions that are made in clarity, outside of ambiguity. So renovation budgets rarely erode because of the execution. They typically erode because key decisions were never fully defined in the first place. Now, those definitions are quantifiable based on the actual project that's made, based on the key assumptions that are made, the risks that you're willing to take on or not take on. Construction doesn't struggle because people are

incompetent. They struggle because the clarity ran out in the very beginning, and that's at the beginning of the process.

CORWYN:

Makes perfect sense. So let me stay on this vein of ambiguity, but I'm going to kind of back this into those things that change on us. The hitting costs. If you don't have a clear outline, if you will, scope of work or deliverables, how does that get us to quote unquote change orders or otherwise get us out of line with our budget?

RODEVIA:

Yeah. So for change orders, construction and change orders that are done in the construction period or remodel period doesn't create most of the problems. It actually reveals the definition, the level of definition that existed before there was actual commitment. So when something isn't fully defined before pricing, it has to be interpreted later. And then interpretations behave unpredictably, and that's why we have change orders in the first place. And then the price variations doesn't automatically signal disagreement, but often signals different interpretations of the same exact request. So if you have bids and estimations out there, they're actually solving each individual problem based on the scope that was actually submitted in the first place. That's if you even submitted scope. So your vendors and contractors are answering just one level of questioning. They're not actually answering the framework that was put in the first place. So therefore, the change orders typically are blamed in the visible phase, but the visible phase isn't the origin phase, if that makes sense. So if the boundaries are incomplete, the outcomes reflect that, and it's not incompetence. Even excellent contractors operate inside the boundaries they're given, and you still have change orders that happen in the end. So if budgets are overrun, they're often overrun because it's framed as a spending problem, and it's usually a definition problem. And that definition problem then translates into the change order itself. That's what we found anyway.

CORWYN:

So let's get this to, this is the one that always gets most people, right? And it is the lowest bid, why it isn't, or sometimes isn't, the lowest call. We watch people in all phases, whether they be mom and pop investors that are looking to do a renovation on a property, or whether it's another larger scale project or something of that nature, sometimes always looking for, I mean, I literally just had this conversation explained this a few days ago, a client that decided to choose the cheapest contractor, and in turn, work wasn't as well. So why is that? And because apparently their deliverables and that agreement didn't reflect what it is that they expect on the back end. So comparison of apple to apples, or apples to oranges, lowest bid to lowest cost. How do you see that? Yeah.

RODEVIA:

So the original question that I always get is, like you said, why choosing the lowest bid often leads to higher total costs or might not be the right choice. And the way ProposalBid likes to frame it is why price variance is usually the definition of failure and not the contractor disagreement or the agreements, right? So bids do not disagree. They answer the question they

were given. Large price differences usually reflect different interpretations, right? Not different pricing philosophies. So that refrains what bids represent without advising behaviors. So when you have the three bids that come in far apart, most homeowners assume contractors disagreed, but bids don't disagree. They answer the questions they were given. So if a project was loosely defined, each contractor solves those definitions by slightly different versions of it. So that creates different assumptions, different boundaries, exclusions, terms and conditions. And large price differences usually reflect different interpretations on the vendor's parts, not different pricing philosophies from the vendors. So the numbers are not necessarily fighting. They're just the definitions that were created based on the scope that was put out there based on what the homeowner had requested. So instead of it becoming an analytical aspect, it becomes an emotional aspect because there was no definition to begin with. I was actually on a call on another podcast with someone else and they were like, well, I just went out and got three bids and I just chose this one vendor. And I said, well, why did you do that? And he really couldn't answer why he says, well, it's just the price was lowest. I said, so what was the other comparisons that she made in order to make that determination? And what were the decisions that were set up in the beginning to go ahead and choose that vendor in the very end? And he really couldn't answer that. And I said, so five years from now, when you, and this is from an institutional setting, I said, so five years from now, when the artifacts are being presented, how do you determine why you made the decisions that you made in the first place versus why? I just don't know. I just went with the lowest bid. That doesn't mean it's the correct bid to begin with. So that's something that we found and proposed a bit, quite a bit. And the way we structure the bids and estimations is not only in the terms of conditions and the comparability and does it meet the budget, but does it also meet the decisions that were made in the first place on what the risks, the assumptions are, and then how those bids and estimations fit into the actual scope that was provided by the client.

CORWYN:

So let's delve into, you know, ProposalBid. How does it work? How does it help to mitigate some of these potential issues? Like what is the advantage of people utilizing the platform?

RODEVIA:

So ProposalBid originally started out as a bids and estimations platform, being able to source quality bids on client behalf, starting out with property management. So that's the second piece, right? That's not the governance piece. What most people are concerned about currently is how do we source the bids? So ProposalBid has the capability of creating customized scopes of work based on the condition of the project itself. And that's done through an intake. That intake is then created into an RFP that's customized. That RFP is then marketed out across the United States in which vendors are able to answer that RFP based on their workload, their materials, the season. And when those bids and estimations come back, we are able to do a comparison apples to each vendor and also to the actual scope of work itself. On the client's behalf, we're able to request changes to that bid, the estimations to meet the RFP, and the RFP is actually marketed out in such a way that vendors will then be able to collaborate, not necessarily together, but as a consensus on the answering of that RFP versus let's say you have a remodel and you want architectural and the owner wants architectural drawings to be done with the bids

and estimations and you put this out into the ecosystem. Vendors are going to come back and say, well, we're not going to give you architectural drawings when we haven't even won the bid yet. So that's also a correction and a learning experience for the owner's behalf too, or on the institution's behalf. So once those bids and estimations come back, we are able to do a comparison apple to apple and then create a customized grid and decision making framework for the customer so that they can go ahead and choose the best bids that matches the scope, the RFP, and also any other decisions that they may have had that's outside of the RFP itself. Currently ProposalBid is able to source seven plus bids per project in less than 14 business days, which is not done in the industry. If you look at the industry itself, if you're doing homeownership, property management, institutional rates, most businesses and owners are only able to source one to two bids within 30 days and those bids don't match up. And to get that third and qualifying bid might take 45 days. And so ProposalBid has a system and ecosystem to be able to source those bids and estimations within those 14 business days. We do give a 45 business day window. So that's the first part that ProposalBid started out with. And what we found is that that's the tools that ProposalBid is able to use to help owners and institutions and homeowners to be able to source the bids. But what we found is that what determines the renovation outcomes have to have predictability to begin with before the construction begins. And so that's where that decision layer for the capital projects moved up the chain. And so that's what we're exploring now. So if your clients are interested in the bids and estimations, we're able to do that for them. But we do start out with the framework of the decision layer itself. And of course, that's customized based on the project, based on the team, based on a timeline, and then based on what their risks and assumptions and their frameworks are. And if they even have frameworks to begin with, we built those out for them so that when the bids and estimations do come in, they have a guidance and guardrails to be able to choose the best bids that come in at a later time.

CORWYN:

So what I keep picking up is that you all have built an amazing ecosystem, if you will, that consumers can tap into to help them manage their projects better. So instead of the random one-offs in this, you all are able to get multiple people in an essence competing for their business, which I'm assuming that has some influence on overall cost. Am I right?

RODEVIA:

Oh, does the workflow influence cost? Does it keep costs down? Does it keep costs in line? Yes, it does. Now, cost is, it's fleeting. And what I mean by that is that you have a set idea and a set budget, and you're probably emotionally tied to that. Someone is, right? And with that cost, the cost is actually what is the decisions that are going to be made in order to not have to come back five years from now, four years from now, 18 months from now, and your budget has ballooned 150K because the assumptions, the boundaries, the exclusions weren't determined in the first place on what the risks were by not choosing a particular bid or by choosing a particular bid based on the decisions that were made and the frameworks that were made in the beginning. So we can't guarantee that the client is going to make the right decision because it's the client decision. What we can guarantee is that we will have a framework set up so that you can come back and trace the decisions that you had made. And that's why the costs are the

way they are in the future. And so that's something that doesn't sit well with people currently because they have to take ownership and authorship of the decisions that they made even before the costs were implemented and either were reduced or were increased in the first place because now you have a traceable framework to say, well, yeah, we deployed \$6 million for your audience, maybe \$30,000 in capital, but we knew that there was no definitive scope to begin with in the first place. And now you're 18 months in and you ballooned \$100,000. And so that's the narrow, that's the chasm that we're crossing there that most people just jump over and they fall into eventually at some point. And so those thought processes and those frameworks that we tackle to begin with and then move to what is the best bid and estimation, the best contractor, the best vendor to go with. And then you have something to stand on 18 months, 24 months, five years from now, and that's not really talked about in the industry. And that's what Proposal Bid is tackling. And these frameworks are things that people can try to build on their own too, but we specialize in that.

CORWYN:

You always want to use an expert. That's why they want to call you because this is what you all do and you have a process in order to do it. The reality is, and RoDevia, please disagree, but the majority of people don't spend a lot of time shopping contract estimates when they have need. They have one, they get one, that's it, and that's the end of it. And they go with it unless it's astronomical or what have you. And the time it takes to go across multiple people sometimes sets them back on their original plan or their goal. So having a streamlined operation and system such as Proposal Bid to assist with this makes perfect sense in my opinion. Do you disagree?

RODEVIA:

No, it does make perfect sense. And I think the other piece that we're really honing in on is the documentation, right? Why documentation is a governance function and not necessarily administrative tasks. So we're talking about choosing a vendor. We go with our preferred vendor. That doesn't mean we're getting the best prices. That doesn't mean we're getting the highest quality materials, that we're actually making the correct decision. And in that, what Proposal Bid specializes in is helping our clients do the documentation because documentation is a governance function. What we like to say is what is written down determines what gets executed. And renovation outcomes are constrained by what was defined, not by what was hoped for. So documentation is often treated as paperwork, but what is written often determines downstream that execution. And construction does not build on conversations. It builds on instruction. It doesn't build on expectation. It builds on specifications. And renovation outcomes are typically constrained by what was defined, not by the hope.

CORWYN:

So RoDevia, I want to make sure we get your contact information out so people know where to reach you. I've been on your website, but I'm going to let you tell them. But I've been on the website. It's beautiful, well put together. So how can people reach out to you, get connected to you?

RODEVIA:

Yes, thank you. [Proposabid](https://proposabid.com), P-R-O-P-O-S-A-B-I-D dot com. That's proposals and bids. We just jammed it together. You can reach me at RoDevia. That's rodevia@proposabid.com. On our abouts page, there's my email address, my phone number. I'm on LinkedIn. I think it's RoDevia Brigham slash RoDevia Brigham on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/rodeviabrigham). Yeah, give me a call. Would love to talk with you about what projects you currently have. We are able to, how do you say, plug in into any part of a project that you may have started, you're coming to an end to, you need reviews of. Or you're thinking about a project that you need to have done and you want that framework set in place so that you're not just choosing out of three bids. You're choosing the most quantifiable decision, financial decision, so that you can create long-term, so that you can avoid long-term headaches. That's what we have for Proposabid. So I thank you so much.

CORWYN:

Awesome. So look, guys, as we close out today's show, first of all, listeners, guys, before you renovate, finish your decisions, before you finish your budget, what do you want? Clarity protects equity more than speed ever will. Trying to do it fastest or just getting to it sometimes is going to cost you more money. And RoDevia, my takeaways from what you said to me today was when owners define their projects clearly, they compare truly comparable work and move decisions upstream. They don't just avoid those costs overruns. They protect their upside and preserve the value they've already built that is huge. So guys, renovations don't just change a property, change the financial trajectory attached to it. Better decisions before construction begins often determine whether equity grows or if it quietly slips away. So guys, we want to make sure we do this the right way. Please make it a point. Go to [Proposalbid.com](https://proposabid.com). Check them out. Engage. Ask questions. Make sure that you do it the right way. It'll help you all the more. So guys, as we close, you know how we do this. You know how I feel. You know what I say. You know, let's put the two of those two things together and I give it to you this way, which is to tell you that I love you. I love you. We're going to see you guys out there in those streets.