

Renovate with a real estate frame of mind

Mario Fazio - April 2026

Before renovating your home, have an experienced realtor over to discuss your plans. The realtor can evaluate the home before you make changes and give you potential value after renovations.

It is important to get an experienced realtor to properly analyze and give you expert advice from real world experience on potential future value.

Too often I get a call to list the house and have to tell people that their major costly renovations add very little to the house value.

Before renovating, when called upon, I always ask how long do you plan on living in the home and how much use and enjoyment will you receive for the money you spend. If someone tells me they intend to spend many years in the home and will use the new renovation, upgrade or addition a lot, I'll tell them to do it because they will gain long term personal benefit. Now if their thoughts are of the latest fads trending, that is an entirely different story and they should tread carefully. Many additions and renovations are temporary trends or glamorous daydreams that end up costing too much money to install and maintain.

A recent example is all the extra money people spent in their backyards during the covid lock downs. Many have now become bored with those costly renovations and have resumed travelling to headache free resorts. Traditional backyard upgrades such as simple gardens and patios are fine, but outdoor summer kitchens, outdoor bars, outdoor bathrooms, elaborately built pizza ovens, big wood decks, stone patios, large pergolas, large firepits, fish ponds, fountains, sports courts, artificial putting greens, etc. will all add very little value. All these things can be enjoyed but not enough to justify the costs, and when you sell, buyers will not pay extra for trendy improvements. In fact, due to ongoing extra maintenance, buyers may deduct from the asking price for the cost to maintain or remove. Stick with the basics such as replacing roof shingles, new flooring, replacement windows, furnaces and central air conditioners, fresh paint, new bath fixtures and vanities, new modern kitchen hardware and new counter tops.

In today's current real estate market there are plenty of choices and many homes for people to choose from. You want to be in a comparable price range with your neighbours, without unnecessary costly improvements. Checking with an experienced professional with a proven track record is your best bet before you renovate.