

## ARTICLES OF INTEREST

# What you need to know before renovating your condo.

Renovating your condo will provide a significant upgrade to your living experience, and add value. However, when you're sharing a building with other residents, there are more rules that come with the territory. Upgrading your unit is definitely a worthwhile endeavour – you'll just need to do a little extra homework and pre-planning before you begin. Here are a few suggestions for planning a condo renovation project.

## Rules, Regulations, and Permits

It doesn't matter if your friend, colleague, or neighbour had an easy time with building permits – every condo Board is different, so make sure you research the rules and regulations before you start. Your building will have a published list that outlines what's permitted and what requires you to obtain Board permission. Larger projects will require Management-approved certified plumbers and electricians, as well as insurance coverage. There may be a limit on the number of projects that can be active at the same, and on-site parking may be an issue. Even small cosmetic improvements are worth clearing with your Board and Property Manager beforehand to avoid a costly oversight.

## Contractors and Trades

While not a prerequisite, hiring a Contractor to manage your project brings several benefits. They will understand the renovation process, have a carefully curated team of qualified, experienced, and insured trades, and have access to the best prices on materials, fixtures, and finishes. Not every Contractor will have vast experience working with condo renos, so do your research before committing.

## Condo vs House

Unfortunately, things are much more complicated when you share walls, floors, and ceilings with neighbours. Noise by-laws usually restrict construction work from taking place outside of weekday working hours, meaning that hammering over the weekend is not permitted. There are also limitations on when materials can be brought in and out of the building. Residential corridors and suite entrances must not be damaged when moving materials in or waste out (a refundable Damage Deposit may be required before work begins). Renovation waste might not be allowed to be dumped on premises, and the service elevator will need to be booked in advance. As always, it's worth checking ahead of time.

## Living Arrangements

Renovations that require demolition, drilling, drywalling, tiling, sanding, and painting will be a disruptive, messy, and smelly process. Save your furniture, clothing, pets, and sanity by having your furniture stored off-site, and by staying with friends or family for the duration of the renovation. Or, ideally, renovate before you move in.