

2026
GUIDE



CIR REALTY

CIR Home Renovation Guide

PLAN SMART
RENOVATE WITH CONFIDENCE

A practical guide to renovation costs,
ROI, and smart upgrades for
homeowners and real estate
professionals.

WE MAKE REAL ESTATE EASY



Introduction

Why It Matters

Renovating your home goes beyond new paint or the latest design trend. It's about shaping a space that reflects your lifestyle, improves daily comfort, and protects one of your most important investments. The right renovation enhances how you live today while strengthening your home's value for tomorrow.

Not all projects create value in the same way. Some deliver a clear financial return, while others are driven more by personal enjoyment. Knowing the difference can be challenging, especially in a market where buyer expectations and property values are constantly evolving.

That's where CIR REALTY comes in. With decades of experience in our local market, our REALTORS® understand what buyers are looking for, which upgrades consistently add value, and how to balance personal preferences with smart resale decisions.

This guide provides practical insight into renovation costs, potential returns, and common pitfalls, from full kitchen remodels and basement developments to simple updates like paint and lighting. Use it as your roadmap, and remember at CIR REALTY, we make real estate easy.



How to Use This Guide

The costs and returns you'll see throughout this guide are based on averages. They're meant to give you a realistic starting point, but it's important to remember that every home and renovation is different. Contractor pricing can vary widely depending on the season, availability, materials, and even the economy. Likewise, returns are estimates based on past market data. The actual impact on your home's resale value will always depend on location, timing, and what buyers are looking for in your area.

Not all renovations create value in the same way. Most projects fall into three categories. Value Add projects can increase your home's resale price, such as kitchens, garages, and finished basements. Buyer Appeal projects help your home show better and sell faster, such as paint, flooring, and landscaping. Value Protection projects prevent issues, reduce buyer concerns, and help preserve your home's value, such as roofing, mechanical systems, and structural repairs. Understanding the role of each project will help you make more informed decisions.

That's why this guide should be used as a planning tool, not a guarantee. It can help you compare different projects, set priorities, and build a budget that balances your lifestyle goals with long-term value. Some upgrades may not increase your home's price directly, but they can improve how quickly it sells and how confidently buyers make offers. To get the clearest picture, pair these insights with advice from your CIR REALTOR®, who can help you understand which renovations make the most sense in your specific neighbourhood.

Top 5 Renovation Mistakes to Avoid

- **Not having a plan.** Starting renovations without a clear design and timeline often leads to delays, stress, and costly changes along the way.
- **Forgetting about the unexpected.** Failing to set aside extra funds for surprises, like hidden wiring issues or structural fixes, can quickly derail a project.
- **Relying on vague quotes.** A rough estimate isn't enough. Make sure your contractor provides a complete written quote so you know exactly what's included.
- **Trying to do it all yourself.** Some jobs require professional expertise for safety and quality. Skipping the right help can end up costing more in the long run.
- **Ignoring resale value.** It's easy to renovate for personal taste alone, but if selling is in your future, it pays to consider how your choices will impact buyers.

Remember that renovations are about more than just dollars and cents. They're about creating a home you love while also protecting your investment. Use this guide as your roadmap, and lean on your CIR REALTOR® for guidance every step of the way.

Interior Renovations

Interior renovations deliver the biggest day-to-day impact. These are the spaces you live in, show off to guests, and where buyers focus most of their attention. Smart updates to kitchens, bathrooms, flooring, and basements can transform your home and positively influence resale value.



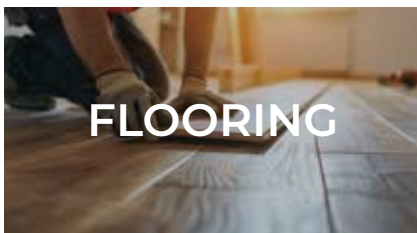
KITCHENS

The kitchen is the heart of the home and often the first place buyers look. Even small updates like counters, lighting, or appliances can make a big impact. A full remodel with quality finishes can elevate the entire home. Kitchens consistently deliver some of the strongest returns and buyer interest.



BATHROOMS

Bathrooms may be small, but they carry huge weight. Outdated fixtures or dim lighting instantly age a home. Fresh vanities, modern faucets, and bright lighting make them shine. Big upgrades such as walk-in showers, double sinks, and stylish tile add comfort and appeal. An updated bathroom is one of the most important features buyers evaluate.



FLOORING

Floors set the tone the moment you walk in. Worn carpet or vinyl can drag a space down, while new hardwood, luxury vinyl, or tile instantly refreshes it. Even new carpeting can make bedrooms or basements feel clean and inviting. Flooring is one of the simplest projects with some of the fastest visible impact.



BASEMENTS

Finished basements dramatically expand usable space such as family rooms, home offices, guest suites, or rentals. Buyers see them as a major plus. The best basements feel like they're part of the main home: bright, comfortable, and functional, not dark and forgotten. In many neighbourhoods, a finished basement helps bring a home in line with buyer expectations.

CIR INSIGHT

Kitchens and bathrooms drive the strongest buyer decisions. Flooring and finished basements also deliver big value, especially when they add family-friendly or income-generating space. If you're choosing where to start, these are your high-impact projects.

Exterior Renovations

The exterior sets the tone before anyone steps inside. It shapes first impressions, boosts curb appeal, and reassures buyers that the home is well maintained. A solid roof, fresh siding, efficient windows, and inviting outdoor spaces can make all the difference when it comes to resale and how quickly a home attracts interest.



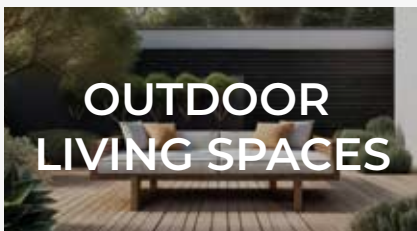
Siding protects your home and defines its style. Affordable vinyl, premium stucco, hardie board, or stone veneer all send different signals, but even a modest update can modernize curb appeal. Buyers notice fresh siding, and they'll pay more for a home that feels well cared for and move-in ready.



The roof is often one of the first things buyers ask about, and one of the quickest ways a deal can fall apart. A worn or aging roof raises red flags, while a new one offers peace of mind. Asphalt shingles are the most common choice, while metal or rubber roofing adds long-term durability. Regardless of material, a solid roof is less about adding value and more about protecting it and avoiding buyer concerns.



New doors and windows improve efficiency, brighten interiors, and update a home's look. A bold front door creates a welcoming entry, while modern windows signal comfort and lower utility costs. Because replacements are expensive, buyers see them as high-value upgrades that reduce future maintenance and improve confidence in the home.



Decks, patios, porches, and landscaping extend a home's living space outdoors. Our local markets, where summers are short, these spaces are highly prized. Even smaller upgrades such as fencing, tidy driveways, fresh grass, or flowers help create an emotional connection and boost curb appeal.

CIR INSIGHT

Exterior upgrades often determine how quickly a home sells. Buyers want reassurance that major systems like the roof, siding, and windows won't demand immediate attention. Outdoor spaces also help families imagine themselves enjoying the property. First impressions matter, and they often influence both interest and offer strength.

Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing

The systems behind the walls keep your home running. Heating, cooling, electrical, and plumbing may not be flashy, but they have a huge impact on comfort, efficiency, and buyer confidence. When they're new, buyers see value. When they're outdated, they become deal-breakers. Investing in the core systems of your home pays off in both daily comfort and resale peace of mind.

Heating & Cooling

A reliable furnace and air conditioning system are essential for many buyers. High-efficiency furnaces lower bills and improve comfort, while air conditioning, once a luxury, is now expected in many homes. New systems mean one less major expense for buyers, which increases confidence and reduces negotiation risk.

Water Systems

Water heaters, softeners, and filtration systems may not wow buyers, but they're essential. A new hot water tank or tankless system is a selling point, while an older unit can raise concerns. Tankless units add modern appeal, and water treatment systems are a bonus since water quality is often top of mind.

Electrical

Homes today demand more power than ever. Modern breaker panels and safe, updated wiring give buyers confidence. Outdated panels or old wiring often show up in inspections and lead to costly negotiations. Electrical upgrades make a home feel safe, reliable, and ready for modern use.

Plumbing

Leaks, old pipes, or outdated fixtures quickly scare buyers off. Replacing old lines, adding efficient fixtures, or even small upgrades like low-flow toilets and new faucets reassure buyers that the home is well maintained and won't come with expensive surprises. These updates rarely increase price directly, but they help prevent issues during inspection.

CIR INSIGHT

Buyers may not see these systems right away, but they always ask about them. “How old is the furnace? When was the hot water tank replaced? Is the electrical up to code?” Homes with updated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems not only show better, they often sell faster and with fewer conditions attached. These aren’t glamorous projects, but they deliver buyer confidence and help protect your home’s value.

Additions & Extras

Additions can completely reshape how a home functions. They require more planning, permits, and investment, but extra space often means extra value, especially when it's well designed and seamlessly integrated into the home. The key is ensuring the addition matches the home and neighbourhood, not overbuilding beyond what buyers expect.

Garages

A garage is more than a convenience. It's protection from the elements, storage, and even workspace. A new insulated or heated double garage is a major selling feature. Adding a secondary suite above can increase both value and income potential. Even updating an older garage with insulation, a new door, or heating makes a home more appealing.

Sunrooms

Sunrooms extend living space while connecting to the outdoors. A three-season sunroom adds casual space at a lower cost, while a four-season version provides year-round versatility. Buyers often respond emotionally to sunrooms, picturing coffee in the morning or cozy evenings in a bright, open space. These projects are driven more by lifestyle appeal than direct resale return.

Family Room Additions

Adding a family room can redefine the flow of a home. Open layouts, vaulted ceilings, and fireplaces create welcoming gathering spaces buyers love. Though costly, a well-designed family room addition often becomes the heart of the home. Value depends heavily on how well the space integrates with the existing layout.

Specialty Additions

Not all additions are large. Mudrooms, home offices, and hobby spaces are increasingly popular as buyers look for function and flexibility. Remote and hybrid work keep demand for home offices strong, while practical mudrooms appeal in our local markets climate. Even smaller extras can tip the scale in a competitive market when they improve everyday functionality.

CIR INSIGHT

In our market, garages are consistently high-value, offering storage and protection from harsh weather. Sunrooms and family room additions may not deliver the same ROI, but they create lifestyle appeal that makes a property memorable. Smaller additions like mudrooms and home offices are growing in demand as buyers look for homes that adapt to busy, flexible lifestyles. The key is that additions feel like a natural extension of the home, not an afterthought.

Landscaping

Landscaping is one of the simplest ways to boost both enjoyment and value. Buyers see it before they ever step inside, and a well-kept yard signals pride of ownership. Where outdoor seasons are short, making the most of every sunny day with usable, attractive space is a smart investment that can influence both first impressions and buyer interest.

Curb Appeal

First impressions start at the curb. Trimmed hedges, colorful flowers, modern lighting, and a clean driveway instantly lift a property's look. These small updates create a positive emotional response that sets the tone for the entire showing.

Decks and Patios

Outdoor living is a must for many buyers. Decks and patios extend usable space for family gatherings, barbecues, and relaxation. Wood options are affordable, while composite and stone provide durability with less upkeep. Buyers see these spaces as natural extensions of the home and a key part of everyday lifestyle.

Fencing and Privacy

A solid fence provides privacy, security, and definition. Families with kids or pets often see it as non-negotiable. Material choice matters; wood, vinyl, or ornamental fencing adds more style than chain link. Well-maintained fencing reassures buyers they won't need to take it on themselves and removes a common objection.

Landscaping Features

Pergolas, garden beds, stonework, and outdoor kitchens can elevate a yard into something memorable. While not all deliver a direct ROI, they add emotional appeal and help buyers picture themselves living in the space and enjoying it immediately.

Maintenance Matters

Overgrown trees, weeds, or neglected lawns drag down a home's value. A tidy, well cared for yard tells buyers the property has been maintained. Even if they plan changes, they're more comfortable buying a home that doesn't start with a major project or visible neglect.

CIR INSIGHT Outdoor spaces are highly prized for the lifestyle they offer, even if ROI isn't as strong as some interior projects. Homes with curb appeal, functional decks or patios, and low-maintenance yards sell faster and generate more interest. The best landscaping projects balance beauty, function, and ease of upkeep while making a strong first impression.

The CIR Advantage

Renovations can feel overwhelming. Between costs, contractors, and resale value, there's a lot to consider. Every homeowner wants the same thing: a home that feels great today and holds its value tomorrow. The challenge is knowing where to spend, where to save, and how to get the most out of every dollar.

That's where CIR REALTY makes the difference. We don't just help you buy and sell homes, we help you make informed decisions at every stage of homeownership. We know which upgrades buyers notice, which projects deliver the strongest returns, and which are best left for personal enjoyment. With CIR, you don't have to guess. You can make decisions with clarity and confidence.

What sets us apart is local expertise backed by real support. Our REALTORS® live and work in the same communities as you. They understand what buyers are looking for right now and how those preferences shift over time. With access to a network of trusted contractors, inspectors, and service providers, you're supported every step of the way. Most importantly, renovations are about more than money. They're about creating a home that fits your lifestyle, supports your family, and gives you pride every day. A kitchen remodel or basement finish isn't just an ROI calculation. It's Sunday dinners, movie nights, and spaces that make your life better.

At CIR REALTY, we believe your home should work for you now and in the future. With our guidance, tools, and insight, you can make every renovation decision with confidence. You're not just upgrading your house. You're investing wisely in your home, your future, and your peace of mind. We make real estate easy, so you can focus on what matters most.



CIR INSIGHT

Renovations aren't just projects, they're opportunities. With CIR by your side, you can approach every decision with confidence, knowing you're guided by experts who care about your success and your lifestyle. That's the CIR Advantage.

Your Next Move



Every home has a story, and every renovation adds a new chapter. Whether it's a bold transformation or a small update, the choices you make today shape the way you'll live tomorrow.

At CIR REALTY, we celebrate homeowners who invest in their spaces and take pride in creating lasting value. This guide is just the beginning. Your REALTOR® is ready to help you turn plans into reality. Renovate with confidence, invest with purpose and let us make real estate easy.

Notes & Disclaimer

The cost and return figures presented in this guide are based on a combination of industry research, market trend analysis, and CIR REALTY's experience in our local housing market. Values reflect typical costs for single-family homes in our region and are intended as planning tools, not guarantees. Actual costs and returns will vary depending on property type, location, scope of work, and market conditions.

This guide was developed using a combination of industry data, internal expertise, and technology-assisted analysis to present information in a clear and accessible way. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the information should be considered general in nature and not a substitute for professional estimates. CIR REALTY assumes no liability for decisions made based on this information. For project-specific advice, consult qualified contractors and your CIR REALTOR®.



Detailed Cost & ROI Breakdown

COSTS, VALUE & SMART DECISIONS

Interior

Project	Present Day (\$)	Present Day (ROI%)	Unit / Notes	CIR Insight
Interior Paint (Whole Home)	5500 – 6000	95 – 100	~2,000 sq. ft homes, walls & trim	One of the simplest, cheapest, highest-impact update. Can exceed 100% ROI.
Remodel Kitchen Completely (Midrange)	45000 – 50000	75 – 80	Typical full remodel (midrange)	Mid-range scope returns best; align finish level to neighbourhood norms.
Remodel Kitchen Completely (Upscale)	120000 – 130000	50 – 55	High-end materials /appliances	Upscale projects face diminishing returns; keep layout efficient.
Remodel Bathroom Completely (4-pc)	2200 – 2500	60 – 70	Standard 5x8 to mid-size bath	Focus on fixtures, lighting, tile refresh; keep plumbing locations if possible.
Install Modest Basement Bathroom	16500 – 18000	60 – 65	3-pc basement bath	Adds functionality; pairs well with basement development for higher ROI.
Add Drywall over Plaster	2800 – 3000	50 – 55	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 300 sq.ft.	Modernizes surfaces; ROI depends on scope/visibility.
Sand & Refinish Hardwood Floors	5200 – 5600	65 – 70	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 600 sq.ft.	Low cost, high impact; great pre-sale refresh.
Install Replacement Windows (Vinyl)	16500 – 18000	60 – 70	Whole-home average package	Energy efficiency + comfort; highlight in features list.
Install Storm Windows (each)	425 – 475	45 – 50	Per opening	Incremental comfort; low standalone ROI.
Install Skylight	3800 – 4200	45 – 50	One unit, installed	Lifestyle upgrade; watch thermal performance in winter climates.
Install Factory-Built Fireplace (gas)	5000 – 5500	40 – 45	Unit + venting (cosmetics extra)	Comfort & ambiance feature; limited dollar ROI but marketable.
Install Glass Doors on Fireplace	400 – 450	25	Accessory	Minor upgrade; aesthetics more than value.
Install Masonry Fireplace (flue roughed-in)	5000 – 5500	25 – 30	Assumes flue is ready	Niche appeal; limited ROI unless expected for price point.

Exterior

Project	Present Day (\$)	Present Day (ROI%)	Unit / Notes	CIR Insight
Install Aluminum/Vinyl Siding	22000 – 26000	60 – 70	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 1,800 sq.ft.	Modernizes curb appeal; insulation options lift appeal.
Install Aluminum Soffits & Fascia	3600 – 4200	50 – 55	\$/lin.ft. placeholder for 200 lin.ft.	Maintenance-free update; complements new roofing/siding.
Install Gutters & Downspouts	2300 – 2800	50 – 55	\$/lin.ft. placeholder for 200 lin.ft.	Function + curb appeal; prevents water issues.
Repoint Exterior Wall (Soft Mortar)	3600 – 4200	40 – 45	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 500 sq.ft.	Maintenance/heritage care; ROI mainly preserves value.
Parge Foundation Walls	2200 – 2600	40 – 45	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 300 sq.ft.	Cosmetic & minor moisture management.

Exterior

Project	Present Day (\$)	Present Day (ROI%)	Unit / Notes	CIR Insight
Dampproof Foundation + Weeping Tile	30000 – 34000	50 – 60	\$/lin.ft. placeholder for 100 lin.ft.	High impact on moisture control; reduces inspection flags.
Install Deck (Wood)	11000 – 13000	60 – 70	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 200 sq.ft.	High lifestyle value; great listing photos.
Resurface Asphalt Driveway	4500 – 5200	45 – 50	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 800–1000 sq.ft.	Curb appeal & maintenance; modest ROI.
Interlocking Brick Driveway	12500 – 14500	45 – 50	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 700 sq.ft.	Premium look; cost-heavy, limited payback.
Build Detached Garage (Double)	80000 – 95000	60 – 70	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 24x20 (480 sq.ft.)	Highly desired in AB; structure ROI moderate, door upgrade high.
Exterior Doors – Entry Door (Steel)	2800 – 3500	85 – 100	Front door replacement	Big curb-appeal win for modest spend.
Asphalt Shingles – Overlay	9500 – 11500	60 – 70	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 2,000 sq.ft. roof	Lower cost but shorter lifespan than full tear-off.
Asphalt Shingles – Strip & Reshingle (Standard)	11000 – 13500	65 – 75	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 2,000 sq.ft. roof	Removes buyer objections; highlight 'New Roof (Year)'.
Premium Asphalt Shingles – Strip & Reshingle	20000 – 24000	55 – 65	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 2,000 sq.ft. roof	Better look/longevity; diminishing returns on spend.
Reflash Skylight or Chimney	1050 – 1300	45 – 50	Typical unit	Maintenance item; prevents leaks and inspection issues.
Repoint Chimney Above Roof Line (per row)	650 – 800	30 – 35	Per row of bricks (placeholder 12 rows)	Maintenance for safety/weathering; modest resale impact.
Rebuild Single-Flue Chimney Above Roof (per lin.ft.)	2500 – 3200	25 – 35	Placeholder 6 lin.ft.	Safety/code driven; preserves rather than adds value.

Structure

Project	Present Day (\$)	Present Day (ROI%)	Unit / Notes	CIR Insight
Underpin One Corner of House	9000 – 11000	40 – 50	Foundation repair	Critical repair; protects value and financing eligibility.
Lower Basement Floor (Underpin/Bench)	18000 – 22000	45 – 55	\$/lin.ft. placeholder 60 ft	Adds headroom/utility; ROI depends on finish plan.
Repair Minor Crack in Poured Foundation	1000 – 1300	40 – 50	Typical crack repair	Removes inspection concern; small direct ROI.

Mechanical/Systems

Project	Present Day (\$)	Present Day (ROI%)	Unit / Notes	CIR Insight
Upgrade Electrical Service to 100A (incl. new panel)	3500 – 4500	90 – 100	Panel + service upgrade	Often required for insurance/-modern loads; removes financing obstacles.
Upgrade Electrical Service to 200A	4000 – 5500	90 – 100	Panel + service upgrade	Future-proofing for EV/renos; strong value preservation.
Install New Circuit Breaker Panel	1800 – 2500	80 – 90	Panel only	Safety/code; increases buyer confidence.
Replace Receptacle with GFCI (each)	160 – 200	35 – 40	Per device	Code/safety compliance; small cost, small direct ROI.
Replace Knob & Tube Wiring (typical 3BR)	14000 – 18000	70 – 85	Whole-home rewiring	Enables financing & insurance; removes major buyer objection.
Install High-Efficiency Forced-Air Furnace	7500 – 9000	60 – 65	Supply & install	Buyers value efficiency & new equipment.
Add Central Air Conditioning (existing FA system)	6500 – 8000	55 – 60	Condensing unit + coil	Increasingly expected; widens buyer pool.
Install Ductless Mini-Split (per zone/system)	7500 – 9000	50 – 55	Single/dual-zone typical	Great for homes without ducts; modest resale ROI.
Install Heat Pump on Existing Forced-Air	9000 – 12000	50 – 55	Add-on to furnace system	Efficiency/comfort; adoption growing, ROI still moderate in AB.
Insulate Open Attic Area to Modern Standard	2200 – 2800	55 – 60	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 1,200 sq.ft.	Energy savings + comfort; noted by savvy buyers.
Install Factory-Built Fireplace (gas)	5000 – 5500	40 – 45	Unit + venting (cosmetics extra)	Comfort & ambiance feature; limited dollar ROI but marketable.
Blow Insulation into Walls/Cathedral/Flat Roof	3600 – 4500	50 – 55	\$/sq.ft. placeholder for 800 sq.ft.	Retrofit efficiency; ROI via bills + comfort.
Improve Attic Ventilation (per vent)	550 – 700	35 – 40	Placeholder 8 vents	Prevents moisture/ice dam issues; extends roof life.
Replace Galvanized Piping with Copper/PEX	7000 – 9000	60 – 70	2-storey/1 bath typical	Reduces leaks/low pressure; removes buyer concern.
Replace Water Line to House	4000 – 5500	55 – 60	Service line	Solves brown water/low flow; avoids inspection flags.
Replace Toilet (each)	800 – 1000	35 – 40	Per fixture	Cosmetic/efficiency bump; minor ROI.
Replace Basin w/ Faucets (each)	950 – 1200	35 – 40	Per fixture	Small but visible upgrade in baths.
Replace Bathtub incl. Tile & Faucets	4000 – 5500	45 – 50	Tub/alcove retile	Part of cohesive bath update for best ROI.
Retile Bathtub Enclosure	1800 – 2500	45 – 50	Surround only	Clean, bright tile reads “well-maintained.”
Rebuild Tile Shower Stall	6000 – 8000	45 – 50	New pan + walls	Popular buyer wish; ROI tied to overall bath refresh.
Hot Water Tank / Tankless	2800 – 4500	60 – 70	Standard or tankless	Longevity/efficiency; note install year in listing.

Landscaping

Project	Present Day (\$)	Present Day (ROI%)	Unit / Notes	CIR Insight
Deck/Patio – Wood (repeat category view)	13000 – 15000	60 – 70	Typical 10x14 to 12x16	Cost-effective outdoor living; strong lifestyle value.
Fencing – Wood (Typical Lot)	8000 – 10000	45 – 50	Standard perimeter segment	Privacy & safety; expected for families/pets.
General Landscaping Refresh (Curb Appeal)	8500 – 11000	50 – 60	Beds, sod, light shrubs	First impressions drive offers; low direct ROI; big emotional impact.



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