

KALLI GEORGE INTERIORS



12 WAYS TO
AVOID
RENOVATION
MISTAKES

the ULTIMATE GUIDE to
RENOVATING any room



You have lovingly maintained your home. When realtors speak of 'Pride of Ownership' they are thinking of you. As with most things, time marches on. The kitchen is seriously outdated. You think the bathrooms are silently leaking. The messy cluttered foyer has always bothered you. You love your home You're not thinking of moving, but the entire house needs an overhaul.

You're ready to renovate, but you've never done this before. Your sister-in-law has nothing good to say about her general contractor. Your neighbour's renovated home is leaving you cold. The concept of renovating is making you uncomfortable.

- You're constantly thinking about the money.
- How much does it cost?
- What are the timelines?
- Who is going to do this for us?
- How do we know we're not going to run out of money?
- What you do know is that you don't want the sister in laws all white look throughout the house.
- You have a folder full of dream images, but how do you make that a reality? Are those images even current?
- Are you about to spend a crazy amount of money, stress and worry only to end up hating what you did?

A home renovation isn't an insurmountable task. It's a process. Each step builds on the next until you have a roadmap of sorts. If you follow them, your home improvement project will have a smoother trajectory.

With this roadmap, you leave nothing to the imagination. You know your renovation costs down to the dollar. Your general contractor quotes are referring to the same scope of work. You know the material costs of what you like. With a design concept at hand, you know the end result - no surprises.

Happy reading!

Kalli





1. BUDGET VS INVESTMENT

You say 'budget'. General contractors and design professionals say 'investment.' You will hear us say "what is your investment in the project?" Why? Because you invest in your home. You budget for groceries and entertainment. Any money you sink into a renovation project will enhance your home in the present and the long run. Money you spend on groceries or entertainment is a one-time occurrence. When you start referring to renovations as investments, it changes the dynamic. The extraordinary expenses aren't as far-fetched anymore. The value of a renovation is long-term. Not a fleeting expense.

2. DESIGN CONCEPT

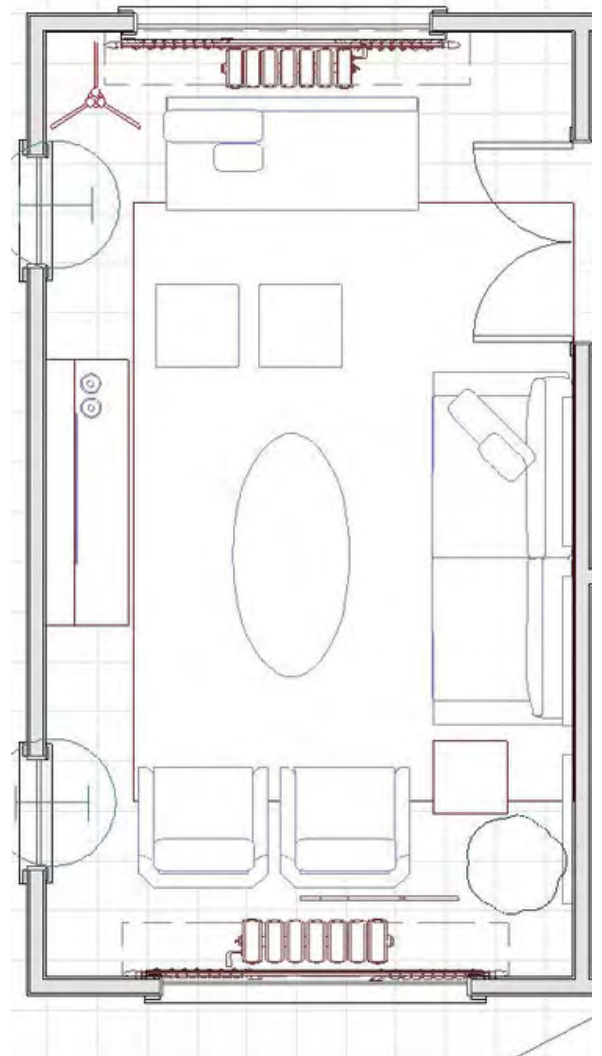
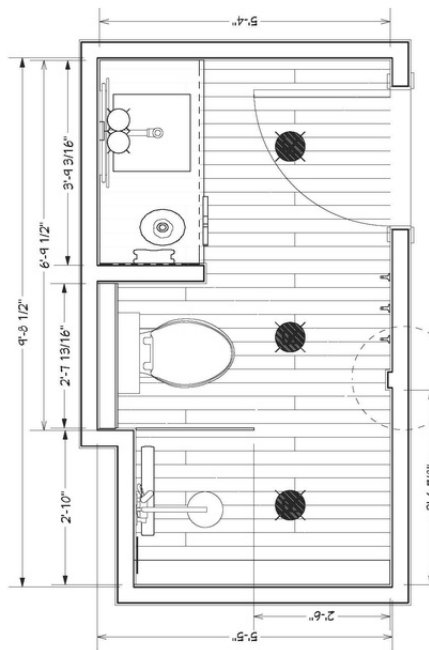
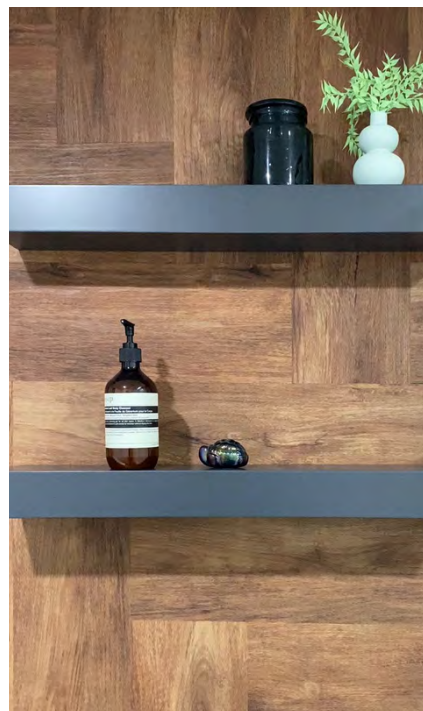
Those 3D home design images you love, all started with a design concept and a floor plan. They are expensive to produce and time-consuming. Do you need that 3D image before you begin your renovation? No. Do you need a design concept before you start a renovation? Yes. Why? It drives the renovation process. Very much like a road map. You love a herringbone floor throughout the house? Add that to your design concept. You will need this information when you build your scope of work. Same with tile layout in the bathroom. Done with the simple tile placement. Looking for something different?

The general contractor will need to know this for accurate project pricing. This applies to a one-room renovation or an entire home. For design-built homes, this step is crucial. What are the colors and patterns that will run through the home? What fabrics will you introduce? At this point, you are visiting suppliers and showrooms. You should be picking up samples and writing down costs. A tray to organize these samples will help you coordinate a cohesive vision.

3. FLOOR PLAN

The floor plan is a technical and time-consuming exercise, but it pays off in the long run. Once you've plotted the room(s) on paper, you can see if there are opportunities for improvement. Maybe there is enough room for a double vanity if you rearrange the toilet and shower. Perhaps, a larger shower. The eye isn't always able to see what is possible from a direct view. When you look at a paper floor plan, the bird's eye view gives you a different perspective of what is possible.

Again, you can play around with layouts until you are happy with the outcome. This is especially useful with decorating projects. It's one thing to move a couch on paper. Quite another to physically move it around the room.



4. SCOPE OF WORK

If you completed the design concept and the floor plan, you have a pretty good idea of what needs to happen. You can communicate this through the scope of work. If you would like to see a herringbone pattern on the floor, you mention it here. If you would like a particular backsplash tile pattern, you add it here. 'Tile the bathroom floor' implies a simple brick pattern. It will be quoted accordingly. On install date, you and the general contractor will have a conversation. He may ask for more money or you may settle for something you didn't want. Your design concept is the foundation for this document. Write everything down so there are no surprises mid-project.



BE SPECIFIC ON WHAT YOU WANT

The request for price is a reflection of your scope of work.



5. REQUEST FOR PRICE

Your scope of work document is your definitive renovation document. It's what you use for your request for price. It outlines the changes that will need to happen for your vision to come to life. Renovating your bathroom? Include items like “remove existing tile”, “install new tile”, “install new stand-alone bathtub.” Line by line, it outlines what you want. You provide the same document to every general contractor you interview. This way every general contractor is quoting you on the same thing. Renovation prep work can be stressful. The scope of work keeps you organized when it comes time to request pricing. It is not uncommon for general contractors to sometimes propose alternate ideas. You can attach these to the proposal. Your review process will be easier because everyone was quoting from the same sheet. No misunderstandings. The job is not to go out and seek 100 quotes. Reach out to a few reputable general contractors and/or builders. Their pricing should come close. Question large variances in quotes. An extraordinarily low bid in comparison to the others requires attention. Did the general contractor not understand the scope of work? Will he be using low quality materials and/or crew? Question. Question. Question. Experienced teams will cost you more but save you headaches and problems in the long run.



6. MATERIALS + FINISHES

This section is more about introspection and lifestyle. A renovation is expensive. You don't want any regrets at the end of that journey. If your life is busy enough, is a marble countertop and backsplash the right material for you? For your bathrooms, you may choose a porcelain tile. Porcelain tiles come in various finishes – honed, matte or polished. Polished tile and water is not a good idea especially with children or mature adults. The same thought process for decorating projects. You love a white fabric but it's a busy room. A little bit of research into performance or treated fabrics and you can still have your 'white' look. This is a more elevated approach than simply choosing tile or fabric because it's 'pretty'. Your selections are based on function and safety. The pretty comes last.

-Meetings as required with vendors/suppliers

-Oversee the delivery of goods + installation

PH-3

STORAGE / MILLWORK:

- Review the existing floor space to provide recommendations
- Provide preliminary drawings
- Send millwork drawings to our trusted partners for quote

PH-1

- Coordinate the trades people involved in executing the design concept
- Manage all aspects of project: includes ensuring the design concept is implemented, administrative tasks, procurement of product + installation
- Site meetings as required with trades

PH-2

-Oversee the delivery of goods + installation

PH-3

MAIN FLOOR POWDER ROOM:

- Refresh while maintaining the current footprint
 - include a 3D rendering
- Source, recommend and present: vanity, floor tiles + grout colour, toilet, light, mirror, handles, towel bars/racks
 - price retail and custom vanities
- Ceate digital presentation board showing how product selections work together
- Visit show rooms with client to discuss and refine design
- Provide general contractor with design documentation to execute the design concept

PH-1

- Coordinate the trades people involved in executing the design concept
- Manage all aspects of project: includes ensuring the design concept is implemented, administrative tasks, procurement of product + installation
- Site meetings as required with trades

PH-2

-Oversee the delivery of goods + installation

PH-3

MAIN LEVEL LAUNDRY AREA:

- Explore the possibility of redesigning this space to include a mudroom (access from garage) + laundry space
 - include a 3D rendering to show this new area
 - obtain quotes and estimates for cabinetry
- Source, recommend and present: backsplash, hardware, sink, faucet, flooring and light
- Provide general contractor with design documentation to execute the design concept

PH-1

- Coordinate the trades people involved in executing the design concept
- Manage all aspects of project: includes ensuring the design concept is implemented, administrative tasks, procurement of product + installation
- Site meetings as required with trades

PH-2

-Oversee the delivery of goods + installation

PH-3

THE MASTER ENSUITE:

- Refresh the bathroom while maintaining the existing footprint
- Create and review the preliminary design concept with clients
 - include a 3D rendering to show this new area
- Source, recommend and present: vanity, faucet, shower system, tiles, toilet, mirrors, lighting & accessories
 - vanity: wall hung or floating | custom or retail
 - toilet: comfort, floor or mounted
 - shower : bathtub or walk in/step in
 - vanity faucet: single or double lever, 1
 - shower system: single, handheld, jett
- Complete comprehensive scope of work for
- Visit showrooms and/or bring selections to c
- Provide general contractor with design docu

PH-1

- Coordinate the trades people involved in ex
- Manage all aspects of project: includes ensu
- Site meetings as required with trades

PH-2

ent of product + installation

EXCERPT:
SCOPE OF WORK

Working out the expenses ahead of time - boring.
NOT EXCEEDING YOUR BUDGET - PRICELESS.



7. RETAIL VS CUSTOM

By its very nature, a renovation is a costly endeavour. Once completed, you do not want regret to set in. If you worked on your design concept and floor plan, you should know if you can go the custom route. If costs are already high, can you find savings in other items? For example, a must component for a bathroom is a vanity. When working on the floor plan, you noticed that a larger vanity could fit in the space. It would also provide more storage. However, when you looked at ready made vanities, they were either too big or too small.

The exact size just wasn't available. A millworker or kitchen cabinet maker would be the person to talk here for a price.

8. PURCHASES

This renovation process is the kindest to your pocketbook. There is no money that flows out until all the costs have been tabulated and an agreement has been reached. As you created your design concept and floor plan, you also looked at products and costs. You were able to add, delete and swap to your heart's content without leaving your home. If the final renovation costs are above your comfort level,

this were you adjust – on papers there a substitute that can work without compromising the integrity of the design? You keep reworking the 'real' numbers on paper not your bank account. Again, you can play around with layouts until you are happy with the outcome. This is especially useful with decorating projects. It's one thing to move a couch on paper. Quite another to physically move it around the room.

9. YOUR RENOVATION COSTS

Your renovation costs formula = request for price + purchases + custom items. This total reflects



the actual cost of your renovation. The beauty of this formula is that it encompasses the wants, needs and preferences. This is the real cost of the renovation. Alternatively, you can set a renovation investment amount. You will then work the formula in reverse to meet that dollar amount. This method works best if you are familiar with product and renovation costs. Or willing to concede that you may have underestimated your costs. This is the time to adjust. Do you adjust the scope of work or the material selection? Or bite the bullet and invest the money required to complete the renovation the way you see fit? Only you know the answer to this. Fair warning. The costs are what they are. You can renovate

You can renovate according to an inspiration image. You cannot realistically expect \$100K of finishes and materials with a \$10K investment.

10. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

When the project management phase kicks in, the renovation is in high gear. No matter how prepared or organized you are, this one will test your resolve. Your organizational skills will be king here. Answers are required immediately. Access to your documentation at all times will be necessary. The unforeseen will also pop up here, so keep your cool. Walls are being opened up. Existing pipes have a wonky placement. Previous owners cut into the existing beams. You can't fight any of this. You can only roll with the punches. Your contingency fund will resolve most of these. If the costs exceed that, then you need to make decisions. Add more dollars to the project or

tweak the design. If you created the design concept and floor plan, you will know the space inside out. Pivoting in design choices may hurt, but won't be a problem.

11. SCOPE CREEP

Asking the general contractor to complete work not outlined in the scope of work. It's human nature to stack similar problems. Since the general contractor is in the house, perhaps he can fix something in a different room. Except that was not part of the original agreement. Fixing it will extend the project, add costs to the project and he may not have the right people on the job. Scope creep equals more money. To avoid this, you want to stick to the original scope of work. Having said all this, you can still discuss the new fix. It might be added to the original contract as a change order or he may draw up a new contract.



12. PUNCH LIST

Sounds like a summer drink ingredient list, doesn't it? Sadly not. But it is a list. Once the renovations are complete and the dust has settled, it's time to review the work. You're on the hunt for deficiencies in the renovation work. A reputable general contractor will ask you to go through this exercise. If he doesn't, it's your job to go through the work. Although, the work is guaranteed, you want fixes completed immediately. So what goes into a punch list? Is the work completed properly? Are the walls dripping with paint? Are the electrical plates aligned? Are there areas that require sanding down? A bumpy new dry wall? Document everything on paper and take pictures. One is the story of what is wrong while the other is a visual reminder of the problem.



*It goes without saying
that we'd love to get started
and have you on board
as a client.*



With offices in Toronto, Kalli George Interiors' award-winning interior design team manages the design, build and decor of residential projects across the GTA including, Mississauga, Etobicoke and Brampton.

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Studio: Etobicoke, ON
Phone: 416-420-0197
Email : info@kalligeorgeinteriors.com

Studio Hours: M-F, 9:00am-5:00pm
*by appointment only