

## HOW TO PLAN A SUCCESSFUL RENOVATION

The prospect of a major renovation can often be more intimidating than the idea of building a new clubhouse. Because clubs frequently need to remain operational during construction, the unpredictability of a renovation combined with the scheduling conflicts that naturally occur can make the process overwhelming.

If however, you have made the decision to proceed with a renovation, **FIVE KEY STEPS can help you to bring order to this often chaotic process** with the ultimate goal being to minimize risk and eliminate surprises.

**Before you begin, it is important to outline your main objective to insure that your goals are clear.** This objective could include the need to capture increased opportunities for revenue as well as to refine the operational issues of the club.

Once your goals and objectives are defined, you are ready to begin the **FIRST STEP**– which is to answer the key question:

### ***Who are we and how do we realistically compete in our local market?***

Your **SECOND** step will be to **assemble your team of CLUB EXPERTS**. Remember that the club environment is unique. Because members choose their clubs largely based on the appearance, your club should have the warmth and personal touch of a home - while operating like a machine. Club design experts understand the nuances of **day-to-day club operations**. They will ensure that your club is visually pleasing, operationally efficient, and furnished for long term use. You do not want your team to obtain their learning curve with YOUR club!

Depending on the level of renovation, your team of club experts could include:

- Club architects and designers
- Engineers with clubhouse experience: structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing
- Kitchen consultants with clubhouse experience
- ADA and code specialists
- Experienced club construction managers

The **THIRD** step in this process will be to gather information. All records (including drawings of original buildings as well as any modifications) are important and will save tremendous amounts of time and money. Old photographs can also provide valuable history as well as document original design intent.

Your team will then thoroughly document existing conditions, identify challenges, and outline potential opportunities.

One of the issues that should be noted in this site documentation is the condition of the furnishings and finishes. Are they worn and simply need re-polishing or cleaning, or has overuse and neglect diminished the quality – requiring complete replacement?

Your team's research will also identify the condition of the infrastructure. Examples of this investigation include the following:

- Are the mechanical and plumbing systems adequate, or is there a total breakdown and failure of these systems – requiring partial or complete equipment replacement?
- Is the roof leaking? If so, it should be replaced or repaired before an investment is made in new finishes and furnishings.

**Step FOUR is to develop your plan.** This will include the preparation of the scope, the development of the drawings, and the refinement of the budget.

The scope should be clearly outlined and carefully articulated to insure that expectations are understood. Often times, the temptation is to concentrate on the areas that are visible to the member rather than to address the crucial "gut" components of the club. If you're tempted however, to take shortcuts, you must expect the unexpected. We've all heard about the club down the street that invested millions of dollars to update their club, only to watch it burn to the ground because of faulty equipment.

Before full architectural and engineering drawings are completed, key communication and marketing tools, such as artist renderings and 3-D computer modeling, should be submitted. Now is the time to peek inside the spaces and study the rooms at every angle. These tools allow you to further understand and refine the design, eliminating the element of surprise.

Cyber boards – or computer generated presentation boards – are additional tools that help to illustrate the interior design concept and again, permit changes at the preliminary stage before changes become too expensive to implement.

Line item FF&E budgets (illustrated by photo image) should itemize each individual product, confirming quantities and product costs. This provides complete clarity and eliminates unexpected purchases. The Best Practices Network for Interior Designers encourages transparent pricing – with *actual* product costs, freight estimates, sales tax, and fees clearly outlined. This ensures full disclosure and promotes an unwavering level of trust between the client and the designer.

Providing a contingency is essential for renovation projects. Although your team is committed to minimizing surprises, some "unknowns" must be expected. Uncovering mold or a deteriorated infrastructure behind the walls can not always be predicted. It makes good business sense to "expect the unexpected" and provide a contingency to accommodate these issues. Larger contingencies should be given to older properties – or those that have fallen into disrepair.

**Once the scope is established, the interior design, architectural, and engineering drawings are complete, and the budget is confirmed, Step FIVE – or implementation of your plan - begins.** For construction, this will include obtaining construction bids, negotiating construction bids, awarding construction contracts, managing and implementing the building of the project, and documenting a punch list of areas that need attention prior to completion of construction. Interior design implementation will include the purchase and expediting of FF&E. Both construction and FF&E will include project reconciliation.

At the minimum, weekly updates should be expected from your team. Architects, engineers, and contractors should be expected to provide written and photographic updates to document progress and address any new concerns. Designers should provide product and budget updates, alerting you to any changes in product availability or product costs. As the project nears completion, expediting reports will track all shipments and notify you of any freight damage or delays due to shipping issues. The project reconciliation will bring the project to a close.

**Above all, remember that the club environment is unique.** Successful renovations are successful because the objectives are clear, the team of club experts are carefully selected, the design of the club is thoughtfully planned, the construction is properly implemented, and the project is meticulously managed.