



## The COVID Renovation... know the steps



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**B**elieve it or not, in the middle of this pandemic the building and renovation market in Winnipeg is booming! Inquiries and new project bookings are way up for this time of year and its all being driven by the effects of COVID-19. Home improvements and upgrades of amenities are the focus of many these days because homeowners realize this is where they are going to be spending the majority of their time in the foreseeable future. Try to buy a hot tub or get a pool installed these days. Impossible!

The same holds true for a major renovation to your home. You need to plan well in advance and know that there are a lot of steps to go through before construction can even begin. Let's take for example one of the most common inquiries we get these days, which is the home office addition or conversion of a three season room to a four season room. Both are relatively easy to build, but the timeline isn't what most of you may be expecting when you call.

In the case of the home addition, no matter how small, you first need to have a current representational survey, building location certificate. This is the starting point needed by any structural designer to start working on your plans to ensure that density allowance and setbacks are all achievable on your property for your vision. From start to finish, if you do not already have one, this process could easily take up to a month.

Now the design can start, and to do this properly you should allow at least six weeks, bearing in mind designers

have a current backload of projects already in the hopper. With project documentation in hand, and after you have worked through the budget with your chosen professional builder, you need to apply for your building permit. You will be going through a couple of months on this process as well, so all tolled before you even start the build you are likely in the four month time frame to get your project to the starting line.

Then in consult with your builder, you should give some real consideration to that start date. How will it affect your day-to-day life? Will it be happening during a holiday period, like Christmas, when you may not want contractors at your home or when you're in a mid-construction state? My advice to clients on this is usually to work backwards from the date you need to have it completed and pick your start date approximately three to four months before that.

Good luck and stay well and safe!

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**Wayne Sage** is the owner and President of Harwood Design Builders, a multi-National and Provincial award-winning Winnipeg Design - Build contracting firm, winning 18 top five placements for best renovations in Canada, including a Best in Canada win.