

Rodney Harvey

Subject: Your September 2024 Real Estate Update



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Dear Valued Client,

I hope you had a wonderful summer filled with happy memories and lots of vitamin D. With fall quickly approaching, cooler days begin to creep up on us. As the weather begins to cool, studies have shown our productivity increases, since our bodies don't need to work as hard to maintain their internal temperature, freeing up our energy to be productive.

Maybe that productivity has you considering a fall reno project. The fall is a good time to scan your home and ask yourself what repairs or replacements are needed before they pile up on each other. Or maybe you have been considering a home improvement that has been on your wish list, like an updated bathroom.

Whether it's a necessary home maintenance project or more of an improvement project, you can always count on me for contractor recommendations for any number of renovation projects, as well as information about what kind of return on investment you could expect from it. I can also provide insights into what buyers are looking for these days. Please feel free to call or email me. I'm always happy to help.

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Defending Your Data: Keeping Your Wi-Fi Secure

As smart technology becomes more prevalent, so too does our use of Wi-Fi, increasing our vulnerability to cyberattacks. So how do you keep your Wi-Fi secure?



- **Use strong passwords** (i.e., at least eight characters using upper and lowercase, numbers, and symbols, and don't re-use passwords – use a password management software to keep track), change them regularly, and enable two-factor authentication where possible.
- **Use a VPN**, which encrypts your connection.
- **Enable auto updates** on your devices, and ensure your modem and router are updated, replacing them at least every 5 years.
- **Change default modem and router passwords** so no unauthorized user within signal range can access your network.
- **Disable remote router access**, which can leave the door open to hackers.
- **Change your network name**. Avoid using the default provider name or a name with personal information, which provides vulnerability clues.
- **Enable a Wi-Fi guest network** to segregate devices (e.g., put your computer devices on the main network and your smart devices on a guest network), limiting the scope of potential breaches.
- **Enable Wi-Fi Protected Access 3 (WPA3)** if available on your device, for increased data protection.

A simple online search can guide you through making the above changes if you are unsure.

Cybercrime is only expected to skyrocket in the coming years, so doing everything you can to protect your personal information will help you not become a victim.

How to Create a Fur-Friendly Home

A living space that is both functional and aesthetically pleasing requires some creativity, especially if you have four-legged family members, but with some thought it can be done. Consider these tips:



Petproof your home. Keep electrical cords, medicines, and cleaners out of reach, trash cans covered, gate off “no-go” areas, and put childproof latches on cabinets.

Choose **scratch and stain-resistant flooring** such as hardwood, laminate, vinyl, and tile. Avoid carpets, which can trap odours and are prone to stains. As for rugs, choose options that are washable, or are forgiving of stains and pet hair.

For **storing pet paraphernalia** like toys and grooming supplies, think stylish bins or baskets, or an ottoman with storage. For cats, you can hang a sisal scratch pad cover over the arm of a sofa for a stylish option.

Seamlessly incorporate pet furniture into your décor. Think litter boxes hidden with custom cabinetry or a room divider, a bench with a pet bed underneath, or a pull-out kitchen drawer for pet dishes. Pet furniture that mimics regular furniture, like a mini sofa is also an option.

As for your furniture, opt for **machine-washable slipcovers or fabrics resistant to stains, fur, and odours** like leather, velvet, microfiber, and canvas. Protect fabrics with spray-on stain guard.

Finally, wherever you like to sit in your home, the resident fur babies probably do too, so include throw blankets for them, or place their pet bed nearby.

AI Home Makeover

With AI rapidly infiltrating every area of our lives, home design inspo is no exception. There are a variety of AI interior design programs or apps to choose from, many with free versions or trials, and for a fee, you can access advanced features.



So how can you use AI for home decorating? It depends on the program you are using, but with some, you can upload a picture of your existing room, select a design style you like, and it will provide you some renderings for ideas.

With some programs, you can also visualize a specific piece of furniture in a room, or get suggestions for furniture layout, lighting, paint colours, and space optimization.

To get other fellow human opinions, some programs have community boards where you can post your designs to get feedback and suggestions.

If you want to take it a step further, there are programs where you can work virtually with an AI program and an interior designer at a fraction of the in-person cost.

Just remember, AI capabilities are brought to their fullest potential if used properly, meaning:

- Be as specific as possible with your prompts.
- Have measurements, photos, and links to current furniture.
- Experiment with different AI design programs for different ideas.

And, of course, don't forget human creativity. Since AI relies on pre-existing data, it's best used as a supplementary tool to human imagination.

Notable, Quotable, Quotes!



“Nothing is impossible. The word itself says ‘I’m possible.’”

Audrey Hepburn

“Don’t count the days, make the days count.”

Muhammad Ali

“In three words I can sum up everything I’ve learned about life: It goes on.”

Robert Frost

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