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Beyond the Obvious

Everyone knows that having an updated kitchen and bathrooms increases the value of a home, but there are many other factors that contribute to a home's value and enjoyment. While some of these might be projects to consider when moving into or preparing to sell your home, all help make a home feel more updated and pleasant to live in.

Maybe it is because summer is fast approaching, but we have seen some really lovely **landscaping and hardscaping** recently. While this improvement doesn't come cheap, homes with terrific landscaping really do look polished and command a premium on price. In fact, buyers will sometimes overlook a significant flaw in a home when it is offset by a great feature such as high quality landscaping. Trees and plants that grow edibles are very popular these days. After all, if you are going to water something it's nice to make it count!

If you are looking at replacing some of the **flooring** in your home, think uniformity! While it is certainly acceptable to have multiple types of flooring, maintain consistency in related areas of the home. For example, it is not uncommon for us to see a home in which each bedroom has different flooring (hardwood, Pergo, carpet, etc.). The subconscious message it sends is that the home hasn't been maintained with attention to detail.

In our recent remodel one of the areas we paid special attention to was **lighting**. Simply adding 2 LED can lights in our bedroom converted a poorly lit room into a well lit room. Likewise, the light fixture in our dining room now matches the style of our home (Eichler) which makes a surprising difference in the character of the room. While the cost of lighting can add up, we enjoy the benefits of our upgraded lighting every day and the cost savings from all of those LED lights has helped lower our monthly utility bills.

On the less costly side, making sure all of your **outlets and light switches** are the same color and style helps "finish" a room. Did you know they now make power outlets that include built-in USB ports for charging devices? We have been able to say goodbye to several power strips by selectively upgrading a few outlets in our home. Talk about a space and clutter saver!

Another reasonably priced finishing item is **door hardware** (knobs, hinges, etc.). Try to pick one style and color, say brushed nickel, and use it everywhere. One word of warning though –replacing cabinet hinges is very tricky. Save yourself some headaches by making sure the screw holes and hinge mechanisms are in the same places when swapping hardware. It is best to establish fit with one cabinet door before buying the entire lot of hardware that you need.

Lastly some advice to live by - don't fight the style of your home...work with it!

Best Regards,

Janie and John Barman
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