

Considerations
in **Making Paint
Selections** for Your
Condo Association
or HOA



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Introduction

In deciding what color to paint their condominiums, associations and the management company should follow the approved color chart set by their master association or rules/regulations set by the local municipality. However, other factors need to be considered when it comes to making color selections. Remember association or HOA by-laws, as well as climate, architecture, material texture, style of surrounding condos, etc., when considering color choice for your development.

If an association intends to repaint a property in the same color it was before, then membership approval of the board is usually unnecessary, as this is considered a form of maintenance. However, if the intention is to repaint the buildings in a different color than before, be sure to seek membership approval if needed, to avoid headaches at association meetings. Failure to obtain approval for an alteration may result in undoing of the change, meaning wasted time and money.

It would be very wise for community association managers to start the color selection process very early on when they know the property is going to be a paint project. It doesn't hurt sometimes to even start this process 6-8 months prior to when you actually intend on starting the work.

After approval from the Board of Directors as well as the rest of the homeowners within the association, the community association manager can start the planning process to decide how the painting will proceed.





Conditions Behind When and Why to Meet Repair Needs

Maintaining the “common property” of the building or buildings, but not within the confines of the actual homeowners unit. A homeowner is responsible for his/her upkeep regardless of the monthly fees they pay for maintenance. Associations and HOA's alike also may offer insurance to cover external damage to a homeowners condo, but most people sign up without knowing what repairs are covered by this insurance.

Association or HOAs execute repairs in the following situations:

- Any repair to ensure the safety of the homeowners or to prevent injury to the residents.
- A repair or maintenance that does not require consultation of homeowners.

Condo owners are responsible for the repair and maintenance of areas for their own use and should take charge for their repair when:

- They have not maintained their property well enough or have not allowed the association to maintain their property.
- They break an item or it is a repair that has to be carried out for safety purposes.
- A repair that results in their own doing e.g oil spill from repairing a car.
- A repair that results from mishandling of an item by a guest or tenant.

Condo Association or HOA Guidelines for Color Selections

1. Color selection should be based on improving aesthetic value.
2. Any and all improvements to the exterior of the building require submission of application to the association.
3. Requests for improvement without sufficient information will not be considered.
4. Every association has color schemes to be chosen from when a Board is considering repainting the exterior façade.
5. If a Board does not like the approved color scheme, they should submit an application with their desired color scheme, a photo of the building and where the colors will be applied.
6. If a community association manager is simply repainting the exterior of the building with the exact color, an application should be submitted to specify this.





Choosing a Color Scheme

Painting is usually done to increase value for all homeowners within the association or HOA. As the community association manager, it's time to consider painting, waterproofing and doing other external repairs before the substrates start to crack, chip or peel which decreases curb appeal. Painting should happen on a regular schedule and failure to do this might be damaging in the long run. When deciding what color to paint, there are factors that need to be considered.

Considerations Prior to Selecting a Color Scheme; *Light, Temperature, and Geographical conditions.*

Color schemes chosen by association or HOAs should be in line with pigments that are suitable for exterior finishing exposure. This is to ensure that the color chosen will protect the building from ultraviolet rays.

Light colors also play a part in the temperature of the building. They reduce temperature inside the condos while darker colors, which are heat absorbent, increase the temperature within the building.

Choosing a color scheme is also dependent upon the geographic location of the property. Locations of the country that have excessive heat throughout longer periods of the year are more susceptible to fading due to the UV rays. It's also important to note that when choosing a specific color that product that's specified may not be available in that color. Be sure to check with your paint manufacturer for what options are available prior to presenting color options to your Board.



Types of Finish

Finishes should be considered in selecting a color scheme, and will determine the appearance of your buildings.

Paint finishes affect how color appears on the walls. It also affects the ability to clean and scrub a painted surface. As sheen increases so does durability and ability to clean.

Coverage of paint also increases with decrease of sheen meaning more coats of paint will be needed.

There are 5 common types of finishes:

- **Flat** - normally advisable for walls and ceilings, but not for high traffic areas such as hand rails or entry doors.
- **Satin** - this finish, along with Flat, is among the most widely used when repainting the exterior of a property and is typically used for all exterior walls/vertical surfaces. It can be more easily cleaned than Flat with less risk of paint loss from a pressure washer.
- **Semi-gloss** - is a finish with a somewhat shiny appearance. It is durable and easy to clean. It's recommended to use this finish in high traffic or common areas given the durability it provides.
- **High gloss** - is a very shiny finish, with a fairly significant increase in sheen versus semi gloss. Best utilized in high traffic areas, drawbacks are that the surface almost looks to be wet and can highlight imperfections in the substrate that is being painted.



Resources for Picking Colors

Color Palettes

A color palette is a range of colors that determines what colors go well together. Choosing the right color for your association can be quite challenging, as picking the wrong color will possibly reduce the aesthetic value of the property.

Finding colors that blend well together can be hard, especially if you don't have available color scheme resources. A color wheel can be used as a guide for beginners.

The basic color wheel is made of three types of colors: primary colors, secondary colors and tertiary colors. Within each type of color there is a range of tints, shades and hues which will be instrumental in choosing a color for the condominium association.

Painting Calculators

It helps in finding out how many cans of paint will be used in painting and repainting. The dimensions of the surface area should be fed into the paint calculator but this only gives a rough estimate. Accurate paint needs will vary with method of application.

Professional Input

The color selection process is a hard task, and at times it is important if not necessary to consult a professional. Such professionals may assist in consulting with the association or HOA and advice on best finishes, depending on the by-laws, light and other factors. They can also provide sample colors in mock ups, where many types of paints are presented to allow viewing. It is advisable to start the color selection process early before painting. Selecting colors while approving contractor bids will only be messy.





Preparing a Bid Package

Paint Specification Package

A paint specification contains details about which products are to be used for which surfaces during the project. It should be clear and concise in order to avoid confusion and outline what the Board/Association expects.

It states necessary conditions of the paint process. The package specifies the contractor responsibility including their duty to supply necessary labor, materials and equipment.

It should be prepared by the manager who is familiar with the condo by-laws, and has inspected the condos carefully. It can also be prepared by a consultant or a contractor.

The manager or professional consultant preparing the paint specification package should then consult the association about the budget and give recommendations on what they think will be best for the building in terms of aesthetic appeal.

Elements of a Paint Specification Package

1. Insurance required for the contractor.
2. License of the contractor - This is to ensure the contractor has been fully approved by the correct authorities to carry out repair and finishing work.
3. Replacements involved - if there is need for wood replacement.
4. Waterproofing - Should any caulking or other work be considered a this time?
5. Agreement between the contractor and manager to follow laid down specifications.
6. Paint specification - this includes which type of paint will be used and number of coats required.
7. Presence of a supervisor to inspect progress of work.
8. Preparation work. The person preparing the specification package should inspect the condo and indicate any problems that may be associated with it. These problems need to be fixed before any painting work begins.
9. Paint application process. This needs to be clearly identified whether paint will be sprayed on or brushed.

Obtaining Contractor Bids

Once the paint specification package is prepared, it's time to get those bids. When looking for potential bidders, be sure to explain the job scale over the phone or email, before the painting contractor even arrives, to rule out those without the experience or the capacity to handle the work.

When you're looking for bidders, getting at least three is a smart idea, as you may see a large variance in price between two you acquire, with the third bid letting you see whether one company is far higher than the other two, or if one is abnormally low. Remember (and remind the association board) to look at the quality, reputation, and price when considering bids, rather than price alone. What might seem to save a few thousand now can cause you headaches later if the work is sub-par. Don't rush this process to find the perfect painting company to meet your needs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, color selection for association or HOAs is a complex process that may require professional advice and approval of the association or HOA. One cannot simply rush this decision, as there are many factors to take into account from geographical factors to aesthetic finishes to cost.

Color selection is, therefore, an important process that needs careful consideration before the giving the go ahead.



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