

VANCOUVER PAINT CONTRACTORS

Commercial Painting

Commercial and industrial painting for Metro Vancouver offices, retail spaces, restaurants, warehouses, and strata common areas

21 Expert Answers from Paint IQ

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What is the cost of painting the interior of a small church or community hall in the Lower Mainland?

Painting the interior of a small church or community hall in the Lower Mainland typically costs \$8,000–\$25,000, depending on size, ceiling height, architectural details, and surface preparation needs.

Churches and halls present unique challenges including high ceilings, ornate trim, and large open spaces that affect both material and labour costs.

Size and Space Considerations

A small church or community hall usually ranges from 2,000–5,000 square feet of interior space, but the wall area requiring paint is often much larger due to high ceilings. Many Lower Mainland churches feature 15–20 foot ceilings or higher, which significantly increases the paintable surface area and requires scaffolding or specialized equipment. The cost per square foot for church interiors ranges from \$3.50–\$7.00 for wall surfaces, with ceiling work adding \$2.50–\$5.00 per square foot depending on height and access difficulty.

Architectural Complexity

Churches built in Metro Vancouver's established communities often feature detailed millwork, wainscoting, decorative beams, and ornate trim that requires careful brush work and multiple colours. Character churches in areas like Kitsilano, Mount Pleasant, or heritage buildings in New Westminster may have intricate woodwork that takes 2–3 times longer to paint than simple drywall surfaces. Modern community halls with basic drywall construction paint much faster and cost less per square foot.

Surface Preparation and Condition

Many Lower Mainland churches and halls were built 50–100 years ago and likely contain lead paint on interior woodwork and trim. Any scraping or sanding of pre-1978 surfaces requires safe lead paint practices, adding \$2,000–\$8,000 to the project depending on the scope of lead disturbance. Surface preparation in older buildings often includes repairing plaster cracks, addressing water damage from roof leaks, and treating any mould or mildew in areas with poor ventilation.

Access and Safety Requirements

The high ceilings common in churches require professional scaffolding or aerial lifts, which adds significantly to labour costs. WorkSafeBC regulations require proper fall protection for any work above 3 metres (10 feet), making this strictly professional territory. Scaffolding rental and setup can add \$2,000–\$5,000 to a church painting project, but it's essential for both safety and quality results.

Paint Selection for Religious Buildings

Churches and community halls need durable, washable paint that can handle high traffic and occasional cleaning. Premium acrylic latex paints like Benjamin Moore Regal Select or Sherwin-Williams Duration (\$55–\$85 per gallon) provide excellent durability and coverage. Many religious buildings prefer low-VOC or zero-VOC products to minimize odours during services or events. Ceiling paint should be ultra-flat to minimize light reflection, while walls typically use eggshell or satin sheens for easy maintenance.

Seasonal Timing and Scheduling

Church painting projects work best during summer months when windows can remain open for ventilation and the building isn't needed for regular programming. Many congregations schedule major painting during July or August when activities are reduced. The project timeline for a small church typically runs 2–4 weeks, requiring coordination with the building's regular use schedule.

Cost Breakdown Examples

A simple 3,000 square foot community hall with 12-foot ceilings and basic drywall construction might cost \$8,000–\$12,000 including prep, primer, and two coats of quality paint. A heritage church of similar size with detailed woodwork, high ceilings, and lead paint considerations could easily reach \$18,000–\$25,000. Additional costs include scaffolding rental (\$150–\$300 per day), specialty primers for stain blocking (\$40–\$60 per gallon), and potential mould treatment if needed.

When to Hire Professionals

Church and community hall painting should always be done by professionals due to the height requirements, potential lead paint issues, and the need for high-quality results in a public space. Professional painters have the scaffolding, spray equipment, and experience to handle large open spaces efficiently while maintaining the building's schedule and safety requirements.

Need help finding a painting contractor experienced with religious and community buildings? Vancouver Paint Contractors can match you with professionals who understand the unique requirements of these important community spaces.

Q2

How much does it cost to paint a small office space in Vancouver?

For a typical small office space in Metro Vancouver — say 1,000 to 2,000 square feet — you can expect to pay between \$3,500 and \$8,000 for a full interior repaint, depending on the scope. That price range covers walls and ceilings with a standard commercial-grade latex paint in two coats. If you need accent walls, trim work, or specialty finishes, costs can climb toward \$10,000 or more.

Several factors affect pricing in the Vancouver market. Offices in older buildings along Broadway or in Gastown heritage spaces often need extra prep work — patching plaster, dealing with lead paint abatement on pre-1990 buildings, or priming over dark colours. Newer offices in buildings around Metrotown or the Marine Gateway area tend to be simpler jobs with smooth drywall throughout.

Most commercial painters in Metro Vancouver will quote by square footage of paintable surface area rather than floor area. Expect roughly \$2.50 to \$4.50 per square foot of wall surface depending on ceiling height, paint quality, and how much furniture needs to be worked around. High-traffic areas like reception and hallways benefit from scrubbable eggshell or satin finishes that hold up better than flat paint.

To get an accurate estimate, have a painter do a walkthrough of your space and note any repairs needed. Ask whether the quote includes moving furniture or if you need to handle that beforehand — it can save you several hundred dollars.

Q3

Can commercial painters work after business hours so we don't have to shut down our restaurant?

Absolutely — after-hours and overnight painting is very common for restaurants and food service businesses across Metro Vancouver. Most experienced commercial painters offer evening and weekend scheduling specifically for hospitality clients who cannot afford to close during regular business hours.

After-hours work typically carries a premium of 15 to 25 percent over standard daytime rates, reflecting overtime labour costs and the logistics of working in off-peak hours. For a mid-sized restaurant — perhaps 1,500 square feet of dining area — you might pay \$6,000 to \$9,500 for a full repaint done entirely after closing, compared to \$5,000 to \$7,500 during business hours.

There are a few important considerations for restaurant painting specifically. Vancouver Coastal Health requires that food preparation areas be free from paint fumes and dust during operating hours, so after-hours work actually simplifies your compliance. Your painter should use low-VOC or zero-VOC paints, which are now standard in most commercial applications and dramatically reduce odour. With proper ventilation — opening doors and running

exhaust fans overnight — a restaurant painted in the evening can typically open by morning with minimal residual smell.

For best results, plan the project in phases. Many Vancouver restaurants tackle the dining room over two or three consecutive nights rather than trying to rush everything in one session. This approach produces a cleaner finish and lets each coat cure properly.

Ask your painting contractor for a phased schedule that aligns with your slowest nights to minimize disruption to your operations.

Q4

What kind of paint holds up best in a high-traffic retail store?

For high-traffic retail environments in Metro Vancouver, you want a commercial-grade acrylic latex paint in a satin or semi-gloss finish. These finishes resist scuffing, clean up easily, and stand up to the constant contact from shopping bags, carts, and customers brushing against walls. Flat or matte finishes might look elegant initially, but they show marks within weeks in a busy retail setting.

The top-performing products for Vancouver retail spaces include Benjamin Moore Scuff-X, Sherwin-Williams ProMar 700, and Dulux Diamond. These are all formulated for commercial durability and come with scuff-resistant or washable properties built in. They cost more per gallon than basic contractor-grade paint, but the longer lifespan means fewer repaints — a worthwhile trade-off for a retail space that needs to look fresh year-round.

Colour choice matters for durability too. Lighter neutral tones — warm whites, soft greys — show scuffs more easily but make merchandise pop. If your store has narrow aisles or tight corners where walls take a beating, consider using a darker accent colour or installing chair rail moulding at the height where most contact occurs.

For stores in high-humidity areas near the waterfront — think Granville Island, Steveston, or Lonsdale Quay — a mildew-resistant additive is worth requesting. The damp coastal air in Metro Vancouver can encourage mould growth on painted surfaces, especially on exterior-facing walls.

Discuss your store layout and traffic patterns with your painter so they can recommend the right finish and product for each area of your space.

Q5

Our strata council wants to repaint the common areas in our commercial building. What should we know?

Repainting common areas in a strata commercial building in Metro Vancouver involves a few layers of planning beyond a standard paint job. Under the BC Strata Property Act, maintenance and repair of common property is the strata corporation's responsibility, so the council will need to follow proper governance procedures before hiring a painter.

First, review your strata's bylaws and maintenance plan. Routine repainting typically falls under the operating budget and can be approved by council without a special resolution, provided the cost is within the approved budget. For larger projects — say repainting the entire lobby, hallways, parkade, and elevator interiors — you may

need a three-quarters vote at a general meeting if the expense exceeds your contingency reserve threshold.

Get at least three written quotes from commercial painters experienced with strata work. Your quotes should detail the scope clearly: which common areas, surface preparation, number of coats, paint brand and finish, and a project timeline. Many Metro Vancouver strata managers recommend painters who carry a minimum \$5 million in commercial general liability insurance, which is standard for strata contracts.

Scheduling is critical. Common area painting in a commercial strata means coordinating around tenant business hours, elevator access, and building security. Most painters phase the work floor by floor, completing hallways and lobbies during evening or weekend hours. Ensure your contract addresses ventilation, dust containment, and WorkSafeBC compliance for any work involving ladders or scaffolding in stairwells.

Start by requesting a condition assessment from a commercial painter who can identify which areas need immediate attention and which can wait another season.

Q6

How much should I budget for painting a 5,000-square-foot warehouse in Surrey?

For a 5,000-square-foot warehouse in Surrey or the broader Fraser Valley industrial corridor, budget between \$8,000 and \$18,000 for interior walls and structural steel, depending on the scope. If you only need the office area and front-facing walls done, you could be on the lower end around \$8,000 to \$11,000. A full interior including exposed ceilings, beams, and concrete block walls will push toward \$15,000 to \$18,000.

Warehouse painting has unique requirements that affect cost. Ceiling height is the biggest factor — most Surrey industrial units have 20- to 28-foot clear heights, which means scissor lifts or boom lifts are necessary. Equipment rental typically adds \$1,500 to \$3,000 to the project cost. The painter also needs to account for WorkSafeBC fall protection requirements when working at height, which adds time for safety setup.

Surface type matters too. Concrete block (CMU) walls common in older industrial parks along 192nd Street or in the Campbell Heights area absorb significantly more paint than smooth drywall. Expect to use a block filler primer plus two coats of industrial-grade paint. Metal deck ceilings and exposed steel require a rust-inhibitive primer if there is any corrosion present.

For warehouses storing food products or operating in temperature-controlled environments, you may need coatings that meet specific health or safety standards. Epoxy floor coatings for the warehouse floor are a separate line item — typically \$3 to \$6 per square foot.

Have your painter inspect the space in person rather than quoting over the phone, since warehouse conditions vary enormously even within the same industrial park.

Q7

We're doing tenant improvements on a leased space in Burnaby. Who's responsible for painting?

In most commercial lease arrangements in Burnaby and across Metro Vancouver, painting as part of tenant improvements (TIs) is the tenant's responsibility — but the specifics depend entirely on your lease agreement. There are a few common scenarios.

If you have a tenant improvement allowance (TIA) from the landlord, painting costs can usually be claimed against that allowance. A typical TIA in the Burnaby market ranges from \$20 to \$60 per square foot for office space, depending on the building class and lease term. Painting is one of the most cost-effective TIs you can do, often transforming a space for a fraction of your allowance.

For a standard shell condition space — bare drywall with tape and mud but no paint — you will need to prime and apply two coats. For a previously occupied space, one to two coats over existing paint is usually sufficient unless you are making dramatic colour changes. Many landlords require that you return the space to a neutral colour at lease end, so keep that future cost in mind when choosing bold brand colours for feature walls.

Your lease may also specify approved contractors or require that all TI work, including painting, be done by licensed and insured tradespeople. Buildings in the Metrotown or Brentwood area often have strict building management rules about working hours, elevator booking for material delivery, and protection of common areas during your renovation.

Before hiring a painter, review your lease's TI clause with your landlord or property manager and confirm what approvals are needed. Getting alignment upfront avoids disputes later.

Q8

How often should a commercial building exterior be repainted in Vancouver's climate?

In Metro Vancouver's wet coastal climate, commercial building exteriors typically need repainting every 7 to 10 years, though some exposures can shorten that timeline considerably. South- and west-facing walls that take the brunt of rain and UV exposure may need attention as early as 5 to 7 years, while sheltered north-facing walls can sometimes go 12 years or more.

Vancouver's combination of heavy rainfall, mild temperatures, and limited freezing creates specific challenges. Moisture penetration is the primary enemy — if paint starts peeling or bubbling, water is getting behind the coating and can cause wood rot, stucco delamination, or mould growth. Catching early signs of paint failure and addressing them promptly is far cheaper than dealing with substrate damage.

The type of exterior material affects repainting frequency. Stucco and concrete — common on commercial buildings in areas like Mount Pleasant, Main Street, and East Vancouver — hold paint well but are prone to hairline cracking that allows moisture in. Wood siding on older commercial buildings requires more frequent maintenance. Metal cladding and composite panels on newer buildings in the Olympic Village or River District need specialized coatings but generally last longer between repaints.

A quality exterior paint job using premium acrylic elastomeric coatings can extend your repaint cycle by two to three years compared to standard exterior latex. These flexible coatings bridge small cracks and shed water more effectively — a worthwhile investment given Vancouver's rainfall averaging over 1,100 millimetres annually.

Schedule an exterior inspection with a commercial painter every three to four years to catch problem areas before they require a full repaint.

Q9

What WorkSafeBC requirements do I need to worry about when hiring painters for my commercial building?

When hiring commercial painters in British Columbia, WorkSafeBC regulations are a significant consideration, and as the building owner or property manager, you have legal responsibilities too. Under the BC Workers Compensation Act, a "prime contractor" must be designated for any multi-employer workplace — and if you do not formally designate one, you become the prime contractor by default, taking on health and safety coordination duties.

At minimum, verify that your painting contractor has an active WorkSafeBC account and is in good standing. You can check their clearance letter, which confirms they are registered and have no outstanding assessments. If a painter works on your property without WorkSafeBC coverage and gets injured, you could be held liable for their claim costs.

For commercial painting specifically, several WorkSafeBC regulations come into play. Any work above 3 metres (roughly 10 feet) requires a written fall protection plan. Scaffolding must meet CSA standards, and workers on scaffolds need fall protection training. Scissor lifts and boom lifts — common in warehouse and parkade painting —

require operator certification.

If the building was constructed before 1990, there is a strong possibility of lead-based paint on surfaces. WorkSafeBC requires a hazardous materials survey before disturbing any suspect coatings. Lead paint abatement must follow specific containment and disposal procedures under the Hazardous Waste Regulation. Your painter should be able to provide documentation of their safe work procedures for lead paint if applicable.

VOC exposure is another consideration. Confined spaces like mechanical rooms or stairwells require ventilation plans and may need air monitoring. Ask your prospective painter for their safety program and site-specific safety plan before work begins.

Q10

Is it worth painting the parkade in our commercial strata building or is it just cosmetic?

Painting a parkade is far more than cosmetic — it is a maintenance investment that protects structural concrete, improves safety, and can extend the life of your parking structure. In Metro Vancouver's wet climate, parkade painting is especially important because vehicles track in enormous amounts of water, road salt, and de-icing chemicals that attack exposed concrete.

Uncoated concrete in a parkade absorbs moisture and chlorides, which eventually reach the reinforcing steel (rebar) inside. Once rebar starts corroding, you get spalling — chunks of concrete breaking away from the ceiling and walls. Spalling repairs in a Metro Vancouver parkade can cost \$50 to \$150 per square foot depending on severity, compared to \$1.50 to \$3.50 per square foot for a protective concrete coating. The math strongly favours prevention.

Beyond protection, a painted parkade dramatically improves lighting. White or light grey coatings on ceilings and walls can increase light reflectivity by 200 to 300 percent, making the space feel safer and reducing the need for additional light fixtures. Colour-coded traffic lanes, directional arrows, and clearly marked stall lines painted during the project improve traffic flow and reduce fender-bender incidents.

For strata buildings, parkade painting is typically a common expense funded through the contingency reserve fund. Your strata's depreciation report — required every three years under the BC Strata Property Act — should include parkade coating in its maintenance projections. If it does not, raise this with your strata council.

Request a concrete condition assessment before painting to identify any areas needing repair first — applying coatings over deteriorated concrete is a waste of money.

Q11

We need our new Langley retail unit painted before opening day in three weeks. Is that enough time?

Three weeks is generally enough time to paint a retail unit in Langley, provided you start the hiring and planning process immediately. For a standard retail bay — say 1,200 to 3,000 square feet — the actual painting typically takes three to five working days for a professional crew. The bigger challenge is usually booking availability, especially during the busy spring and summer seasons when commercial painters in the Fraser Valley are in high demand.

Here is a realistic timeline to work with. In week one, contact three to four commercial painters for walkthrough quotes, finalize your colour selections, and confirm your lease allows the work to proceed. In week two, your painter handles prep work — patching drywall seams, sanding, priming — and begins applying finish coats. By week three, final touch-ups and cleanup happen, leaving you several days as a buffer before opening day.

A few things can compress or extend that timeline. If your unit is a bare shell with fresh drywall that has never been painted, you will need a full prime coat plus two finish coats — add an extra day. If you want specialty finishes like an accent wall with a bold brand colour or a chalkboard wall, factor in additional coats and drying time. High-humidity conditions, common in the Langley and Cloverdale area during fall and winter, can slow drying times between coats.

To stay on schedule, have your paint colours chosen before the painter starts. Last-minute colour changes are the number one cause of delays on commercial paint jobs. Most paint suppliers in the Langley area — whether on Fraser Highway or in Willowbrook — can colour-match your brand guidelines if you provide a Pantone or hex code. Call painters today and be upfront about your opening date so they can confirm whether their schedule works.

Q12

Our strata council needs to repaint the hallways and lobby in a 120-unit highrise in Burnaby. What should we budget and how do we minimize disruption to residents?

Repainting common area hallways and lobbies in a 120-unit Metro Vancouver highrise typically runs \$35,000 to \$65,000 depending on the number of floors, ceiling height, and finish quality. That usually breaks down to roughly \$2.50 to \$4.50 per square foot for walls and trim, with lobbies on the higher end due to feature walls and more detailed millwork.

Under the BC Strata Property Act, common area maintenance like repainting generally falls under the operating budget and does not require a three-quarter vote unless the scope qualifies as a significant change in appearance. Your strata manager should confirm whether a simple council resolution is sufficient or if owners need to vote.

To minimize disruption, most commercial painters in the Lower Mainland schedule hallway work in sections, typically two to three floors per week. Low-VOC and zero-VOC paints are standard now and dramatically reduce odour complaints. Work is usually done weekdays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., with furniture and carpet protection laid down each morning and cleared by evening.

For lobbies, consider a more durable eggshell or satin finish on walls and semi-gloss on trim and doors. High-traffic areas benefit from scuff-resistant commercial-grade coatings that hold up far longer than standard residential paint.

A good next step is to request itemized quotes from two or three commercial painting contractors experienced with strata projects, and ask each for a phased schedule that your strata manager can share with residents in advance.

Q13

How much does parking garage line marking and floor coating cost in Vancouver, and do we need to follow any specific regulations?

Parking garage line marking in Metro Vancouver typically costs \$1.50 to \$3.50 per linear foot for standard traffic paint, or \$4.00 to \$7.00 per linear foot for epoxy-based markings that last significantly longer in underground or covered parkades. For a typical 80-stall underground garage, full re-stripping including stall lines, directional arrows, handicap markings, and fire lane designations usually runs \$3,500 to \$8,000.

If you are also coating the driving surfaces or stall floors, expect to add \$3.00 to \$6.00 per square foot for a quality epoxy or polyurethane floor coating system. This protects the concrete from salt damage, oil stains, and tire wear, which is especially important in Vancouver where vehicles track in significant moisture and road salt from winter driving in the Fraser Valley and North Shore mountains.

Regulations matter here. Accessible parking stalls must meet BC Building Code requirements for quantity, size, and signage. Fire lanes must be clearly marked and kept clear per the Vancouver Fire Bylaw. If your parkade serves a strata property, the maintenance falls under common property upkeep governed by the BC Strata Property Act.

WorkSafeBC requirements also apply to the contractors doing the work. Proper ventilation is critical during epoxy application in enclosed parkades, and the area typically needs 24 to 48 hours of cure time before vehicle traffic resumes.

Consider scheduling line marking and floor coating at the same time to reduce mobilization costs. Ask your contractor for a phased plan that keeps at least half the stalls accessible during the work.

Q14

We manage a commercial building in Gastown and keep dealing with graffiti on our storefront. Are anti-graffiti coatings actually worth it?

Anti-graffiti coatings are absolutely worth it for Gastown and other high-traffic Vancouver commercial areas like Chinatown, Commercial Drive, and parts of East Hastings. The City of Vancouver does offer graffiti removal assistance, but response times vary and repeated removal without a protective coating gradually damages the underlying surface.

There are two main types of anti-graffiti coatings. Sacrificial coatings are less expensive and create a clear barrier that gets removed along with the graffiti, then reapplied. Non-sacrificial or permanent coatings allow graffiti to be

wiped off with a solvent without damaging the coating itself. For a storefront that gets tagged repeatedly, a non-sacrificial coating pays for itself within a few incidents.

Application costs in Metro Vancouver typically run \$2.00 to \$5.00 per square foot for sacrificial coatings and \$4.00 to \$8.00 per square foot for permanent non-sacrificial systems. A typical Gastown storefront facade might cost \$1,200 to \$3,000 to protect, depending on surface material and area.

The coating choice depends on your surface. Brick, concrete, stucco, and painted surfaces each require different products. Heritage buildings in Gastown fall under the City of Vancouver Heritage Conservation Area guidelines, so any coating must be reversible and not alter the appearance of protected facades.

Beyond the coating itself, proper surface preparation is essential. Existing graffiti must be fully removed and the surface cleaned before application, or the coating will not bond properly.

A smart next step is to have a commercial painter assess your specific facade material and recommend the right coating system, then get the work done before the next tagging cycle.

Q15

What are fire-rated coatings and does our Vancouver commercial building actually need them?

Fire-rated coatings, also called intumescent coatings, are specialized paints that expand when exposed to extreme heat, forming an insulating char layer that protects the structural material underneath. They are most commonly applied to exposed steel beams, columns, and connections in commercial buildings to help those elements maintain their structural integrity during a fire for a rated period, typically one or two hours.

Whether your Vancouver commercial building needs them depends on the BC Building Code requirements for your specific occupancy type and construction classification. Buildings with exposed structural steel in areas that require a fire-resistance rating will need either intumescent coatings, cementitious fireproofing, or another approved assembly. The choice often comes down to aesthetics. Intumescent coatings look like regular paint and are the preferred option for exposed ceiling designs in restaurants, offices, and retail spaces where spray-on fireproofing would look industrial.

Application must be done by certified applicators, and the coating system must be tested and listed to CAN/ULC standards. This is not a do-it-yourself job or something a general painter should handle. WorkSafeBC also has specific requirements for the application environment, including ventilation and respiratory protection for workers.

Inspection is part of the process. The local building authority in Vancouver, Burnaby, Surrey, or whichever municipality your building is in will want to verify the coating thickness using a wet-film or dry-film gauge to ensure it meets the specified fire-resistance rating.

Your best next step is to check your building plans for fire-resistance rating requirements, then consult with a commercial painting contractor who specializes in intumescent coating systems and can coordinate the required inspections.

Q16

We're looking at epoxy floor coatings for our warehouse in Surrey. How long does it take and can we keep operating during the install?

Epoxy floor coating for a commercial warehouse in Surrey typically takes five to ten working days depending on the size of the space and the coating system selected. A standard 5,000 square foot warehouse floor usually takes about one week from surface preparation through final cure.

The process starts with concrete preparation, which is the most critical step. Industrial diamond grinding or shot blasting removes the existing surface layer and creates a profile for the epoxy to bond to. This generates significant dust even with vacuum systems, so the area being coated must be cleared of inventory and equipment. Then comes the primer coat, one or two coats of epoxy, and optionally a polyurethane topcoat for extra durability and UV resistance.

Can you keep operating during the install? Partially. Most commercial painters in the Lower Mainland will work in sections or zones, coating one half of the floor while you operate from the other half, then switching. This phased approach adds a few days to the timeline but avoids a complete shutdown. You will need to plan forklift and foot traffic routing carefully during the process.

Cure times matter. Foot traffic is usually safe after 24 hours, but heavy equipment and forklift traffic typically needs 48 to 72 hours of cure time per section, longer in cooler weather. Surrey warehouses without climate control can see slower cure times during the fall and winter months.

WorkSafeBC requires adequate ventilation during application, especially in enclosed warehouse spaces. Your contractor should have a ventilation plan as part of their proposal.

A practical next step is to map out your warehouse zones and identify the phasing sequence that causes the least disruption to your operations, then share that with prospective contractors when requesting quotes.

Q17

How long does a tenant improvement painting job usually take in a Vancouver office space, and what should I know before scheduling it?

Tenant improvement painting timelines in Metro Vancouver depend heavily on the scope, but a typical 2,000 to 5,000 square foot office space takes three to seven days for painting alone. If your TI project involves new drywall, the painting timeline extends because you need primer, two coats of paint, and proper drying time between coats,

plus the drywall compound needs to be fully cured before any paint goes on.

Scheduling matters more than most people realize. In Vancouver's commercial leasing market, tenant improvement work is usually squeezed between lease signing and occupancy, and painting is one of the last trades in. If drywall, electrical, or flooring runs behind, the painter gets compressed. Build in at least two buffer days before your planned move-in date.

Here is what to know before scheduling. First, coordinate with your flooring installer. If carpet or LVP is going in, painting should happen first to avoid overspray protection headaches. If polished concrete is the final floor, protect it thoroughly. Second, ventilation is critical, especially in sealed office towers in downtown Vancouver where windows do not open. Low-VOC paints are standard for occupied buildings, but even those need adequate HVAC airflow during application and drying. Third, elevator booking in commercial towers can become a bottleneck. Your painter needs to move ladders, equipment, and materials, and building management usually restricts freight elevator access to specific hours.

If you are a landlord providing a tenant allowance, get the paint specification in writing so the finish quality matches the building standard.

As a next step, share your full TI schedule with your painting contractor early so they can lock in crew availability and coordinate with the other trades on site.

Q18

Our condo building in New Westminster needs a full exterior repaint as part of the building envelope maintenance. What's involved and what does it cost?

A full exterior repaint on a condo building in New Westminister is a significant project that typically falls under building envelope maintenance in your strata's depreciation report. For a mid-rise building of four to six storeys with 60 to 100 units, expect to budget \$80,000 to \$200,000 or more depending on the building's total exterior square footage, access complexity, surface condition, and the coating system specified.

The process starts with a thorough inspection of the building envelope. Any failed caulking, cracked stucco, damaged flashing, or water intrusion issues need to be repaired before painting. In Metro Vancouver's wet climate, applying paint over compromised substrates leads to premature failure and trapped moisture, which can cause far more expensive damage.

Access is usually the biggest cost variable. Swing stages and boom lifts are standard for mid-rise buildings, and their rental and setup add significantly to project costs. Buildings with complex facades, balcony overhangs, or

limited ground access in tight New Westminster lots will see higher access costs.

The coating system matters enormously. A high-quality elastomeric coating designed for BC's rain-driven climate will outperform standard exterior paint by years. These coatings bridge hairline cracks and repel water while still allowing moisture vapour to escape from the wall assembly.

Under the BC Strata Property Act, this type of expenditure usually requires a three-quarter vote at a general meeting if it exceeds the contingency reserve fund threshold or falls outside the approved depreciation report spending. Your strata manager can advise on the approval process.

The best next step is to engage a building envelope consultant to assess the current condition and specify the appropriate coating system, then use that specification to get competitive bids from commercial painters experienced with multi-storey residential buildings.

Q19

We have a heritage church in Vancouver that needs interior and exterior painting. Are there special rules or techniques we need to follow?

Heritage churches in Vancouver come with specific requirements that go well beyond a standard commercial paint job. If your church is listed on the Vancouver Heritage Register or is in a heritage conservation area, any exterior changes including colour changes need approval from the City of Vancouver through a Heritage Alteration Permit. Even if you are repainting in the same colours, it is wise to confirm with the city's heritage planning department first.

The key principle with heritage building painting is reversibility. Conservation best practices favour lime-based paints, mineral silicate paints, or traditional oil-based formulations on historic masonry and woodwork, rather than modern acrylics or elastomerics that can trap moisture and damage old substrates. The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, which BC references in its heritage policies, provide detailed guidance on appropriate treatments.

Surface preparation on heritage buildings requires a gentle hand. Aggressive power washing, chemical stripping, or sandblasting can permanently damage historic materials. Hand scraping, gentle low-pressure washing, and careful surface profiling are the standard approaches. Lead paint is a real possibility in older churches, and WorkSafeBC has strict requirements for lead paint disturbance including containment, worker protection, and waste disposal.

Interior work in churches involves its own challenges. High ceilings, ornamental plasterwork, stained glass window protection, and pew relocation all affect the timeline and cost. Scaffolding inside a church nave is a major setup effort.

Insurance is also a consideration. Make sure any painting contractor working on your heritage church carries adequate commercial liability insurance and has experience with heritage projects specifically.

Your best next step is to consult with a heritage building specialist or conservation architect who can assess the existing coatings, recommend appropriate products, and help you navigate the permit process before you engage a painter.

Q20

I manage a strip mall in Langley and want to repaint the entire exterior to refresh the look. Do I need my tenants' permission and how much should I budget?

As the property owner of a strip mall in Langley, you generally do not need tenant permission to repaint the building exterior, since the exterior is typically the landlord's responsibility under standard commercial lease agreements in BC. However, you should review your leases carefully. Some tenants may have specific signage or storefront colour provisions, and repainting around tenant signage requires coordination so nothing gets damaged or obscured.

For budgeting, a single-storey strip mall exterior in the Langley area typically costs \$3.00 to \$6.00 per square foot for a complete prep and two-coat repaint system. A 10-unit strip mall with roughly 6,000 to 10,000 square feet of paintable exterior surface would run approximately \$25,000 to \$55,000. That includes pressure washing, surface repair, caulking, priming where needed, and two coats of commercial-grade exterior acrylic.

If you are changing the colour scheme significantly, check the Township of Langley or City of Langley sign and facade bylaws. Some municipalities have design guidelines for commercial properties, especially along major corridors, and a dramatic colour change might trigger a review.

Timing matters in the Lower Mainland. The best exterior painting window is May through September when rain risk is lowest and temperatures support proper paint curing. Scheduling outside this window is possible but adds risk of weather delays and may require moisture-tolerant coating products.

Give your tenants at least two weeks written notice before work begins, especially if scaffolding or access equipment will affect their storefront access or customer parking. Professional commercial painters will maintain clear paths to tenant entrances throughout the project.

A solid next step is to take current photos of the entire exterior and meet with two or three commercial painters on site to discuss scope, colour options, and scheduling around your tenants' peak business hours.

Q21

What kind of epoxy or coating system works best for a commercial kitchen floor in Vancouver, and what are the health and safety requirements?

Commercial kitchen floors in Vancouver need a coating system that handles constant moisture, grease, thermal shock from hot water and steam cleaning, and heavy foot traffic. The best option for most commercial kitchens is a polyurethane cement or urethane mortar system, which outperforms standard epoxy in high-temperature and wet environments. Standard epoxy can delaminate or yellow under the thermal cycling and chemical exposure common in commercial kitchens.

A polyurethane cement system with a textured non-slip finish is the industry standard for food service facilities. It is applied at a thickness of six to nine millimetres and creates a seamless, impervious surface that resists hot oil, cleaning chemicals, and constant water exposure. For lighter-duty kitchens like catering prep spaces or bakery areas, a high-build epoxy with a non-slip aggregate broadcast can be a more cost-effective option.

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority inspectors will look for seamless, non-absorbent, easily cleanable flooring in commercial kitchens. Coved baseboards where the floor coating transitions up the wall by 10 to 15 centimetres are typically required to eliminate the gap where the floor meets the wall. Proper slope to floor drains must be maintained during the coating installation.

WorkSafeBC regulations require that commercial kitchen floors provide adequate slip resistance. The coating system should meet or exceed the minimum coefficient of friction standards for wet environments. Your contractor should be able to provide test data for the specific system they propose.

Installation requires the kitchen to be completely shut down for three to five days including cure time. Some systems offer faster return-to-service times but at a higher material cost.

Your best next step is to have a flooring or coatings specialist inspect your current kitchen floor condition and drainage, then recommend a system rated for your specific kitchen environment and health authority requirements.

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