



WILLOWS HOTEL & SPA AT VIEJAS

HOTELS / RESORTS / TRIBAL CASINOS

From inception to opening.

A considered approach to hospitality renovation,
interior design and FF&E procurement.



MORE THAN A NEW LOOK

A property with a purpose.

The best starting point is a clear question: what should this renovation do for your property?

A stronger guest experience. A more useful public space. A better operating layout. A required brand improvement. The priority will shape the scope, budget and team.

This guide brings the process into focus, from the first brief through design, procurement, installation and handover.



EVERY DECISION AFFECTS THE EXPERIENCE.

THREE QUESTIONS TO ANSWER EARLY

01

What matters?

Define the business goal and required improvements.

02

What is possible?

Align the scope, budget and available time.

03

Who decides?

Name the approvers and include hotel operations.

IGroup Design connects interior architecture, interior design and FF&E procurement so the approved design and the delivery plan can develop together.



FROM FIRST CONVERSATION TO FINAL DETAIL

Your renovation, in perspective.

Select a section to go directly to the planning tools and decisions that matter to you.

04	Define the brief	Discovery, priorities and existing conditions
05	Plan the investment	Costs, cash benefit and your calculator
06	Choose the team	Proposal, responsibilities and kickoff
07	Develop the concept	Experience, planning and materials
08	Resolve the details	Design development and model-room review
09	Coordinate procurement	Specifications, quantities and delivery
10	Connect the schedule	Documents, approvals and dependencies
11	Protect hotel operations	Phasing, access and installation
12	Hand over with confidence	Inspection, closeout and performance
13	Put your brief on one page	A fillable worksheet for your next conversation
14	Start a conversation	PIP reviews and project inquiries

BEGIN WITH CLARITY

Define the brief.

The first meeting should establish what the property needs and what the project must deliver.



LISTEN. INSPECT. CONFIRM.

- Purpose: describe the guest, operating or brand problem you need to solve.
- Property: share plans, room types, counts, current photos and any PIP.
- Constraints: identify budget, timing, operating periods and spaces that must remain open.
- People: name the owner approver and involve operations, engineering and finance.

BEFORE YOU MOVE FORWARD

Record a written brief. Separate required work from discretionary upgrades, then name the next decisions, responsible people and due dates.

Use a site walk to test assumptions against real conditions. Identify information that is missing and agree how it will be verified before design or purchasing decisions depend on it.



THE NUMBERS BEHIND THE VISION

Plan the investment.

Budget every cost and test realistic cash assumptions before committing.

Start with the whole cost

Budget for construction, FF&E, all fees, freight, warehousing, installation and applicable charges. Include contingency and one-time disruption costs without double-counting.

ANNUAL NET CASH BENEFIT

Cash added

Additional annual room revenue after added operating costs, plus other annual net benefits or costs.

SIMPLE PAYBACK

Time to recover

Initial investment divided by annual net cash benefit. Zero or negative annual benefit gives no finite simple payback.

Five-year cash ROI in the companion calculator

$$((5 \times \text{annual net cash benefit}) - \text{investment}) / \text{investment}$$

A cumulative five-year measure, not an annualized return.

A SIMPLE ILLUSTRATION

\$500,000 invested with a flat \$100,000 annual net cash benefit gives a 5-year payback and 0% five-year cash ROI. The initial investment has been recovered by year five. This is an illustration, not a forecast.

[Open your renovation calculator](#)



Choose File > Make a copy and edit the eight amber cells. Compare scenarios. The sample 40% cash assumption is illustrative, not an industry benchmark.

The model assumes a full stabilized operating year, 365 days, unchanged room count and flat annual benefit for five years. It excludes financing, tax, resale value, discounting and separately timed future capital spending. Have your finance team review project cash flows. Financial reference: page 13.



DEFINE THE PARTNERSHIP

Choose the team.

A useful proposal makes scope, deliverables, fees, assumptions and owner obligations clear.

Before you sign

- ☐ Relevant property and renovation experience.
- ☐ Clear services, deliverables and exclusions.
- ☐ A realistic staffing and milestone plan.
- ☐ Agreed approvals, fees and purchasing terms.



One responsible lead for each workstream

Owner / representative	Scope, budget, funding and timely decisions.
Design team & consultants	Agreed design, documents and coordination.
Procurement team	Sourcing, purchasing, tracking and FF&E logistics.
Contractor & installers	Construction, installation and site readiness.
Hotel operations	Guest communications, area releases and acceptance.

BEFORE YOU MOVE FORWARD

At kickoff, agree the responsibility list, reporting cadence, decision route, budget baseline and milestone schedule. Responsibilities must match the project agreements.

A CLEAR POINT OF VIEW

Develop the concept.



GUEST EXPERIENCE / OPERATIONS / IDENTITY

Make the space work as well as it looks.

Review the concept against the brief: how guests arrive, move, relax, work and interact. Evaluate the room or venue as a complete experience.

What to test

- ☐ Does the plan support guest and staff circulation?
- ☐ Does the design reflect the property and its market?
- ☐ Do the proposed materials and furnishings suit the budget and operating demands?

REFINE. COORDINATE. TEST.

Resolve the details.

The design becomes more specific as layouts, materials, FF&E and technical interfaces are coordinated.

Consider the whole room

- Dimensions, clearances and furniture fit.
- Lighting, power, technology and other interfaces.
- Durability, cleaning and replacement.
- Storage, maintenance access and housekeeping.



Use a model room or prototype

Where appropriate, review it with ownership, operations, engineering and the brand. Record accepted changes and carry them into production drawings, specifications and quantities.

BEFORE YOU MOVE FORWARD

Approve the coordinated design and current budget. Where a model room or prototype is required, document its acceptance and incorporate revisions before releasing the affected bulk production.

A physical review can reveal a repeated issue while it is still one issue. Give the review a clear checklist, a decision owner and a record of what changed.

FROM SELECTION TO INSTALLATION

Coordinate procurement.

Bring purchasing into the design conversation early. A shipment date is not an installed-and-ready date.



- Specifications: confirm item codes, materials, sizes and required samples or shop drawings.
- Quantities: reconcile current plans, room counts and approved revisions.
- Bids: compare quality, scope, price, lead time, terms and exclusions.
- Full cost: separate products, fees, freight, warehousing, installation and other charges.
- Release: secure written approvals and required funding before orders.
- Tracking: follow production, shipping, receiving, allocation and installation.

BEFORE YOU MOVE FORWARD

Confirm current quote validity, lead times and applicable charges. Plan receiving inspections, damage reporting, storage and staged deliveries before goods move.

FF&E is furniture, fixtures and equipment; OS&E is operating supplies and equipment. IGroup offers integrated design and procurement, plus procurement for projects designed by other firms. [Explore our approach.](#)

MAKE THE SEQUENCE VISIBLE

Connect the schedule.

Plan backward from the operational handover date, with approvals, funding and site readiness built into the sequence.



01 Confirm the document package

Agree which discipline provides each drawing, detail, schedule and specification. Coordinate the relevant interior, FF&E and consultant information.

02 Identify reviews and approvals

With the qualified project team, identify property, brand and authority reviews. Name who submits, who responds and what must be approved before affected work.

03 Connect the dependencies

Show owner decisions, shop drawings, deposits, manufacturing, freight, receiving, site work, installation, testing and handover in one milestone schedule.

BEFORE YOU MOVE FORWARD

Reconfirm lead times, available float and site readiness before promising a room-release or opening date. Keep one current schedule and name the owner of each critical decision.

AN OPERATING PROPERTY NEEDS A PLAN

Protect hotel operations.



- Phasing: agree floor or room releases and return-to-service criteria.
- Guest experience: coordinate noise windows, separation, housekeeping and communications.
- Logistics: reserve loading, elevators, staging and secure storage.
- Existing items: assign retention, protection, relocation, liquidation or disposal.
- Site readiness: confirm preceding work, access and correct materials.
- Changes: log questions, substitutions, cost impacts and required decisions.

BEFORE YOU MOVE FORWARD

Before each area release, confirm the prerequisites, installation resources and hotel acceptance criteria. Record the cost and schedule impact of a change before proceeding.

FINISH WITH THE SAME CARE YOU BEGAN

Hand over with confidence.



Inspect the completed work

- Verify installed items against approved documents and the room or area list.
- Test relevant items with the responsible trades and hotel team.
- Log missing, damaged or unfinished work with photos, owners and due dates.
- Collect warranties, care information, spares and final cost records.

Measure after reopening

Compare results with the original goals and baseline. Allow for seasonality, market changes, room availability and ramp-up. Review actual costs and net operating benefit, not revenue alone.

Separate operational acceptance from final closeout. Keep remaining work visible until completion is confirmed. Equip the hotel team to care for the finished space.



A USEFUL FIRST CONVERSATION STARTS HERE

Your project, on one page.

Download this PDF to complete the fields in a compatible PDF reader, or print it for your team.

PROPERTY / LOCATION

PRIORITY SPACES / SCOPE

TARGET HANDOVER DATE

WORKING BUDGET / CONTINGENCY

OWNER APPROVER / MAIN CONTACT

NEXT DECISION / RESPONSIBLE PERSON / DUE DATE

Open the renovation calculator



Have a brand PIP? [Request a review from Roger Storer](#). Include the property, location and timing so we can discuss the appropriate next step.

NOTES & REFERENCES

October 2026 edition. Adapted from IGroup Design's March 2024 workbook, with photographs and graphics reproduced from that guide. The identified cover property is Willows Hotel & Spa at Viejas. Individual project names are otherwise omitted where not identified in the source.

Financial concepts: [LBNL, Appendix A: Basic Financial Concepts, printed pages 26-28](#). The companion calculator's five-year cash ROI is defined on page 5. Apply the planning guidance to the property, agreements and qualified team. Financial estimates require owner review.



INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE / DESIGN / PROCUREMENT

Have a PIP? Let's make a plan.

Send your current Property Improvement Plan, property location and target timing. We can discuss the design and FF&E scope, budget assumptions and a practical path forward.

Request a PIP review



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