

2023

# Remodeling Impact Report: Outdoor Features

National Association of REALTORS®  
Research Group





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**March 2023**





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# Introduction

This report takes a deep dive into why homeowners complete outdoor remodeling projects, the value of taking on lawn and landscape upgrades and enhancements, and the increased happiness experienced by homeowners once an upgrade is completed. The report covers the following:

- The typical cost of 11 outdoor residential projects as estimated by members of the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP). The costs were calculated by averaging the responses from the anonymous survey data.
- How much REALTORS® estimate homeowners can recover on the cost of the outdoor residential projects if they choose to sell the home and the share who recommended these upgrades before selling.
- The experience consumers had after taking on each of the 11 projects and their Joy Score with the finished project.

Curb appeal plays a significant role in tackling any outdoor project. Among REALTORS®, 92 percent have suggested sellers improve their curb appeal before listing a home for sale. When working with a residential seller, 97 percent of NAR members believe curb appeal is important in attracting a buyer (75 percent very important, 22 percent somewhat important). Ninety-eight percent believe curb appeal is important to a potential buyer (63 percent very important, 34 percent somewhat important).

Among NALP members, 92 percent found a greater demand for contracting in remodeling work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, 79 percent of NALP members cited the scope of the project increased in size since before the pandemic.

While most consumers (88 percent) cite they would have taken on the outdoor project regardless of the pandemic, 84 percent of consumers reported that after undertaking this exterior project, it made them want to remodel other areas of their home or yard.

# Introduction

When consumers remodel, it is to add features and improve livability (35 percent), to upgrade worn-out surfaces, finishes, and materials (24 percent), and because it is time for a change (18 percent). Most consumers are satisfied with the overall result, and 66 percent would tackle the project the same way, while 28 percent would make a few different choices, such as finishes or materials.

After remodeling, 68 percent of owners have a greater desire to be in their homes. Sixty percent have increased enjoyment in their home. Fifty-two percent feel happy, and 45 percent feel satisfied when they see their completed project, with a typical Joy Score of 9.7. Sixty-four percent feel a major sense of accomplishment when they think of their completed project.

For the purpose of costs collected, NALP members were told to expect the average size house according to U.S. Census data—a 2,500-square-foot house with a 14,000-square-foot lot—built after 1978 and without hidden issues. To ensure the most applicability, projects and materials represent standard or typical quality; a few projects feature “better-quality” materials. But there are no top-of-the-line projects.

Thirty-seven percent reported that the single-most-important result was beauty and aesthetics, 29 percent cited better functionality and livability, and 11 percent reported durable and long-lasting results and materials.

Forty percent of consumers did the entire project themselves, including labor and purchasing materials. Thirty-seven percent of the owners hired a professional for the whole job, 13 percent contributed some do-it-yourself (DIY) labor, and 10 percent hired the labor but purchased the materials.

This report provides a cost recovery estimate for representative outdoor remodeling projects. The actual cost of each remodeling project and cost recovery is influenced by many factors, including project design, quality of materials, location, age and condition of the home, and homeowner preferences.

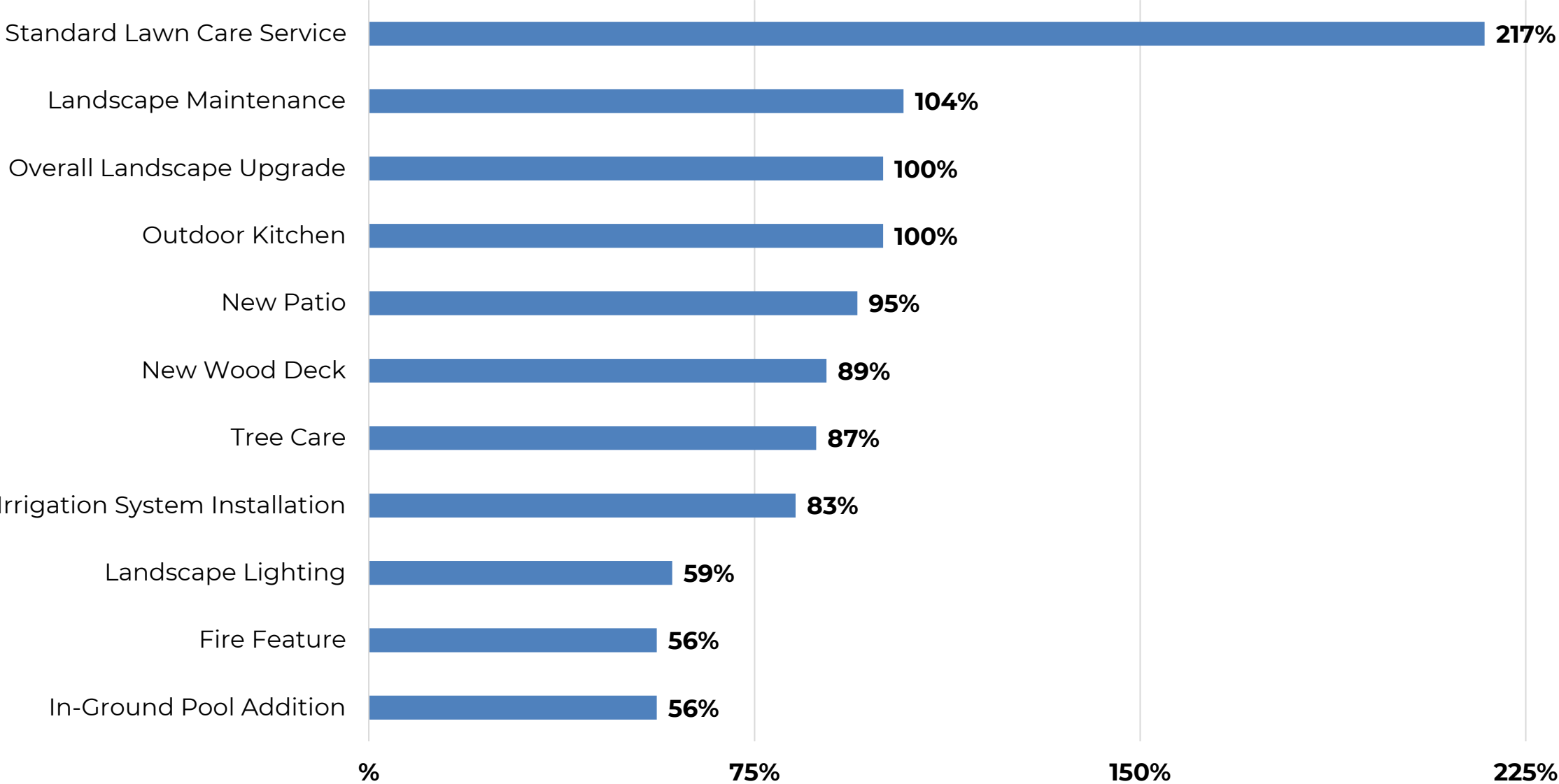


# Outdoor Remodeling Projects

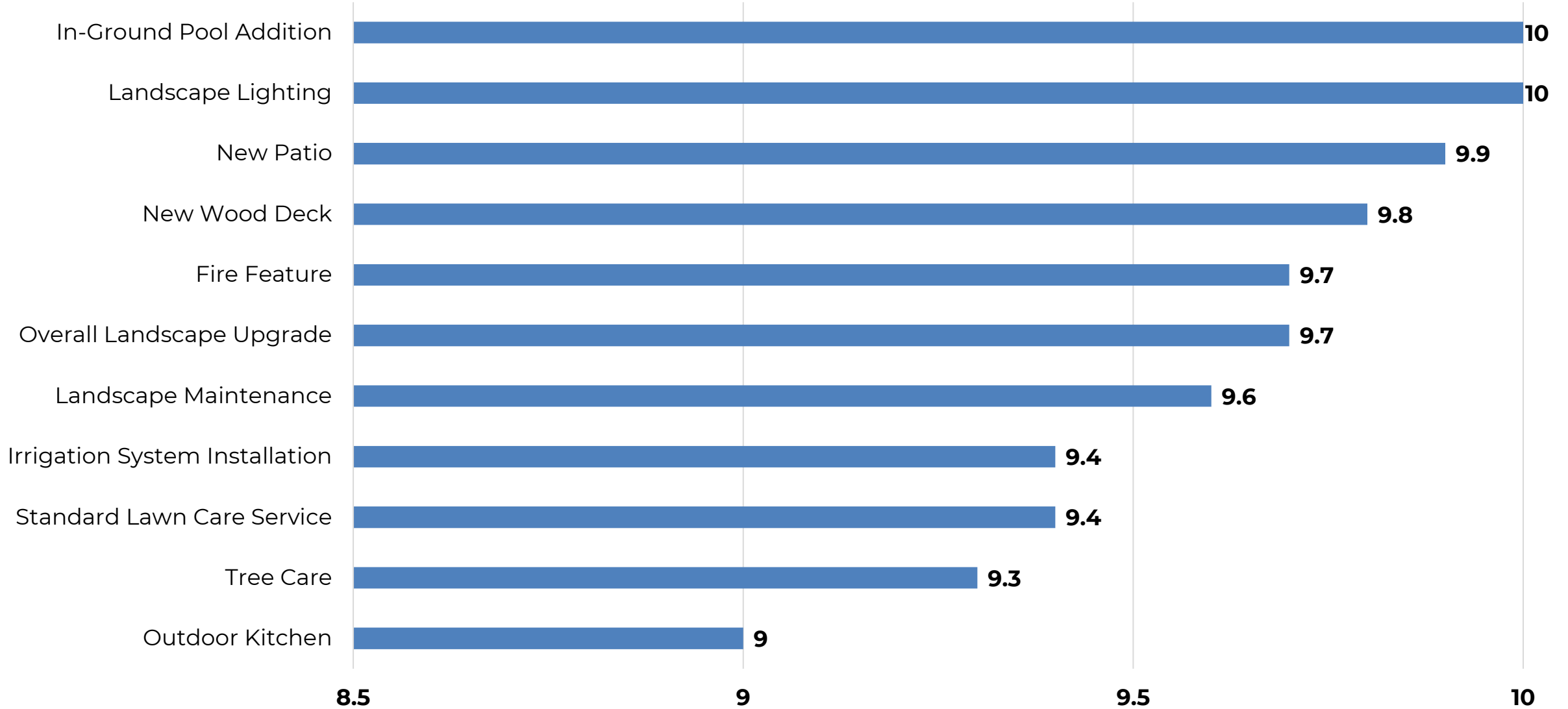




# Cost Recovery On Outdoor Remodeling Projects



## Joy Score for Outdoor Remodeling Projects (on a scale of 1-10)





# Standard Lawn Care Service

Consumers' Viewpoint After Completing the Project:

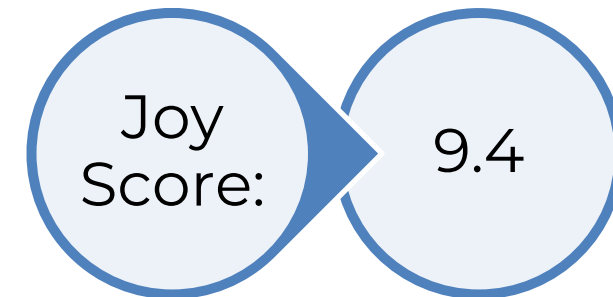
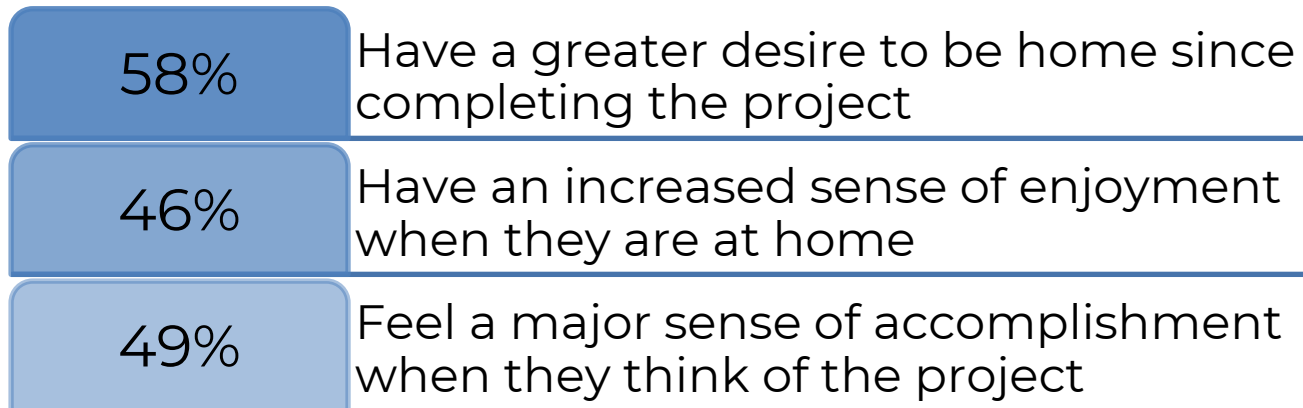
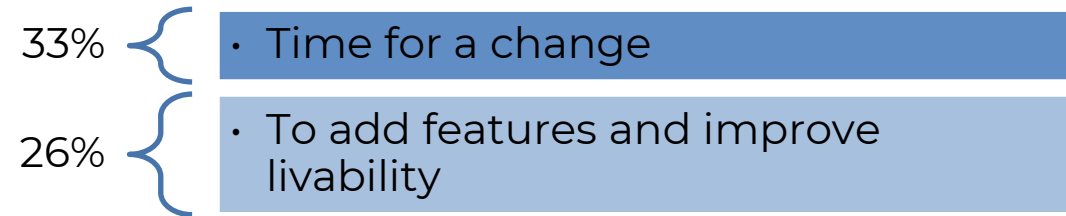
Most important result:



Project Description:

- To include six standard seasonal applications of fertilizer and/or weed control on 5,000 square feet of lawn.\*

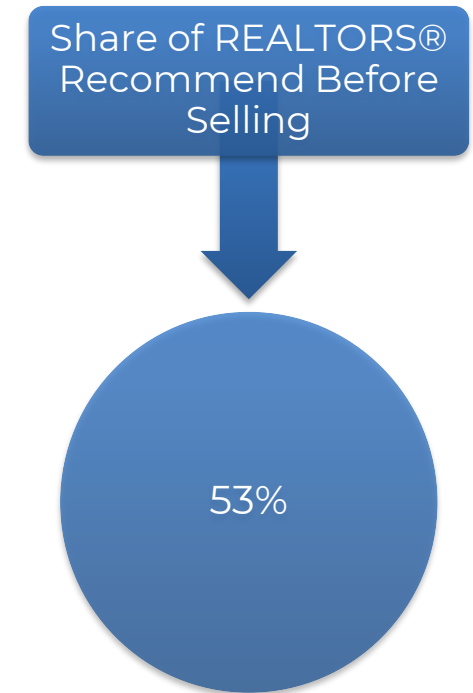
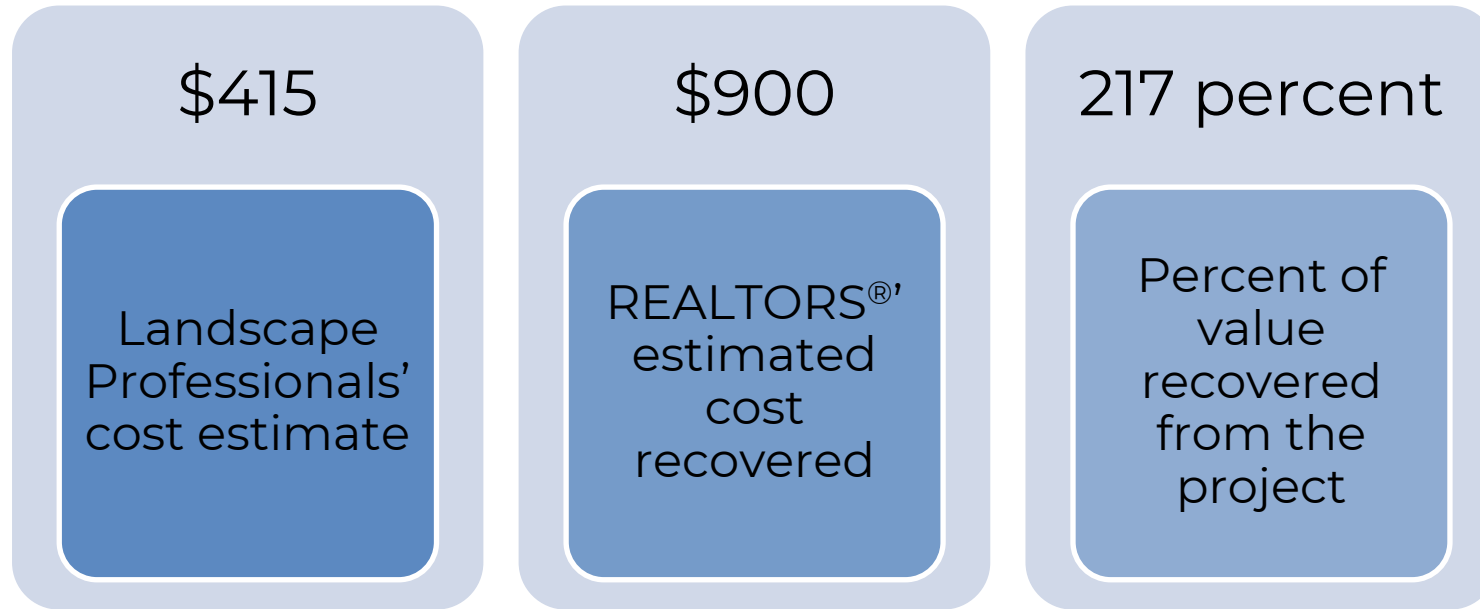
## Top two reasons for doing the project:



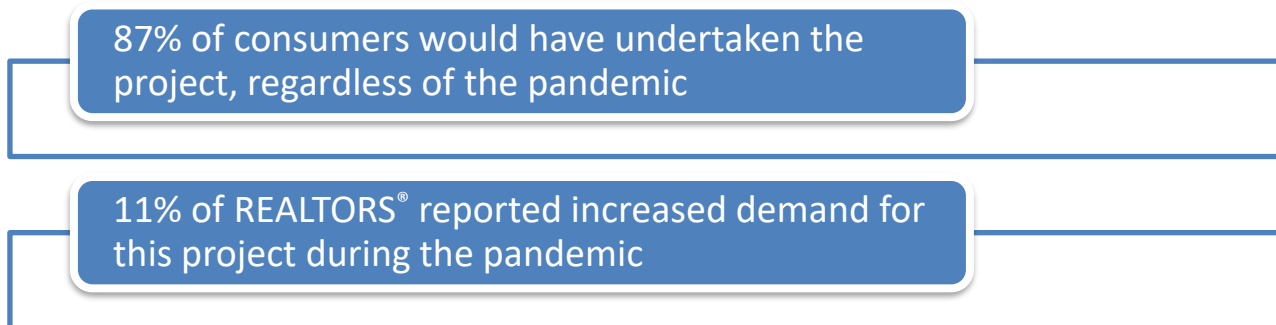
\*The costs estimates are aggregated from markets nationwide. Every project is unique. Prices will vary depending on geographic region, property, and scope of work.

# Standard Lawn Care Service

Cost Recovery:

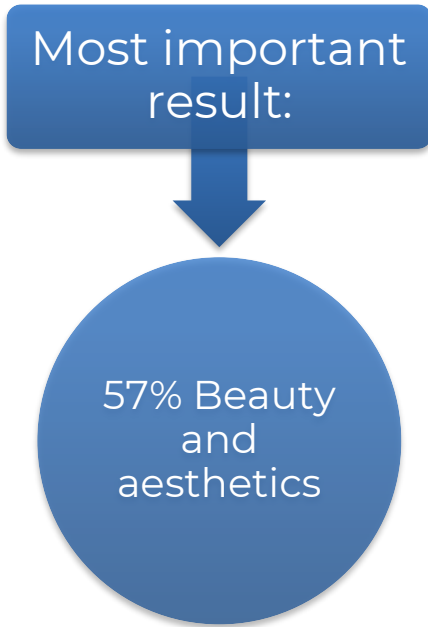


Pandemic Influence:



# Landscape Maintenance

Consumers' Viewpoint After Completing the Project:



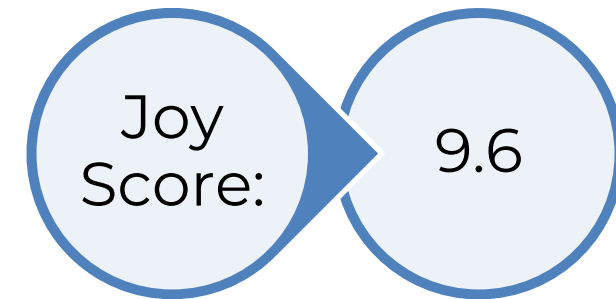
Project Description:

- Annual mulch application, mowing of 2,835 square feet of lawn, pruning of shrubs and planting of approximately 60 perennials or annuals.\*

Top two reasons for doing the project:

- 27% { • Time for a change
- 25% { • Upgrade worn-out surfaces, finishes, and materials

- 61% Have a greater desire to be home since completing the project
- 48% Have an increased sense of enjoyment when they are at home
- 55% Feel a major sense of accomplishment when they think of the project

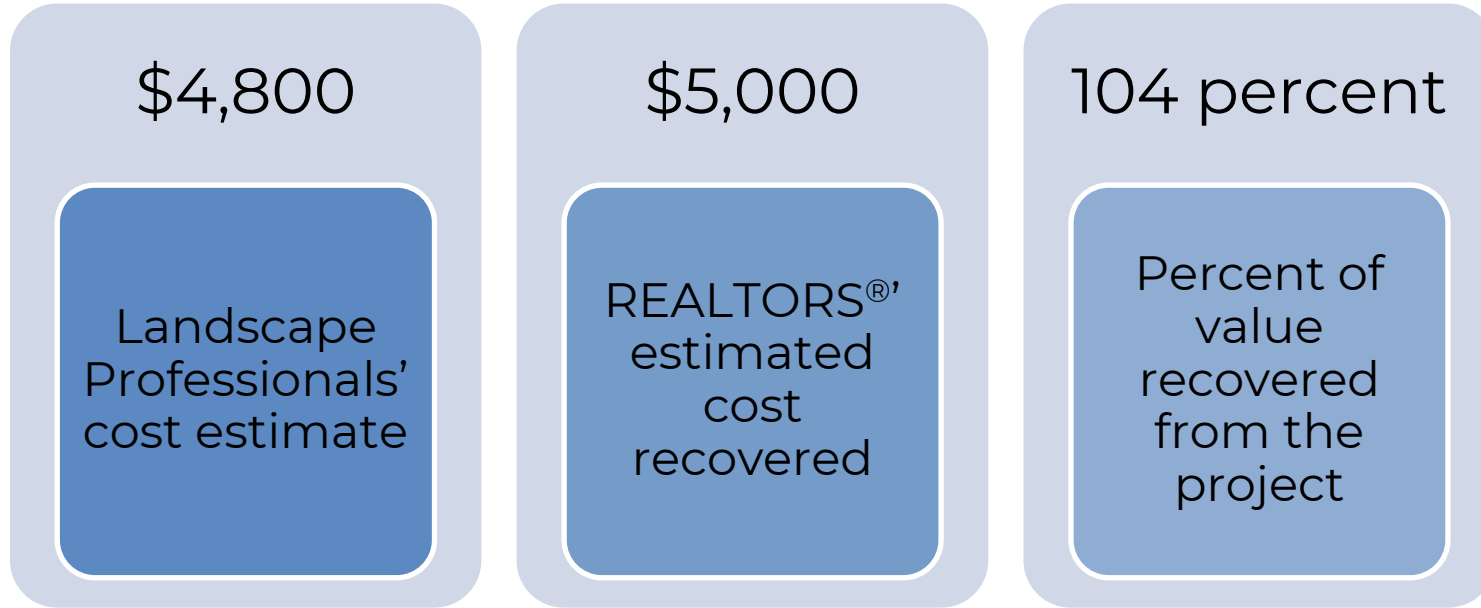


\*The costs estimates are aggregated from markets nationwide. Every project is unique. Prices will vary depending on geographic region, property, and scope of work.

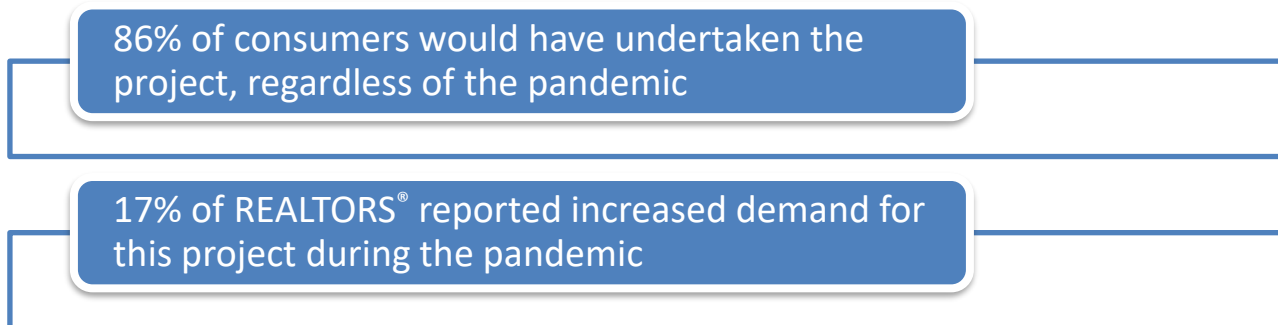


# Landscape Maintenance

Cost Recovery:

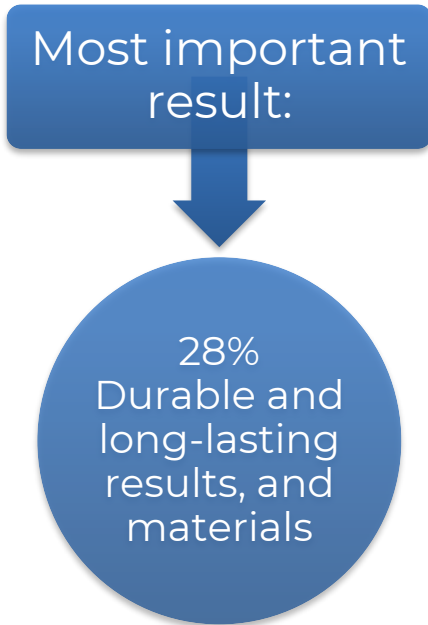


Pandemic Influence:



# Outdoor Kitchen

Consumers' Viewpoint After Completing the Project:



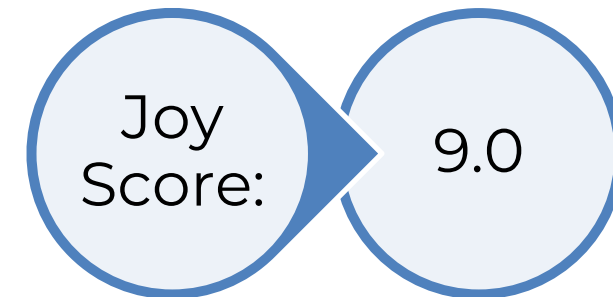
Project Description:

- Install one inset grill, stainless steel drawers, ice chest, sink, 60 square feet of concrete countertop, made from veneered masonry stone.\*

## Top two reasons for doing the project:

- 56% { To add features and improve livability
- 13% { Just moved into home and wanted to customize to personal taste

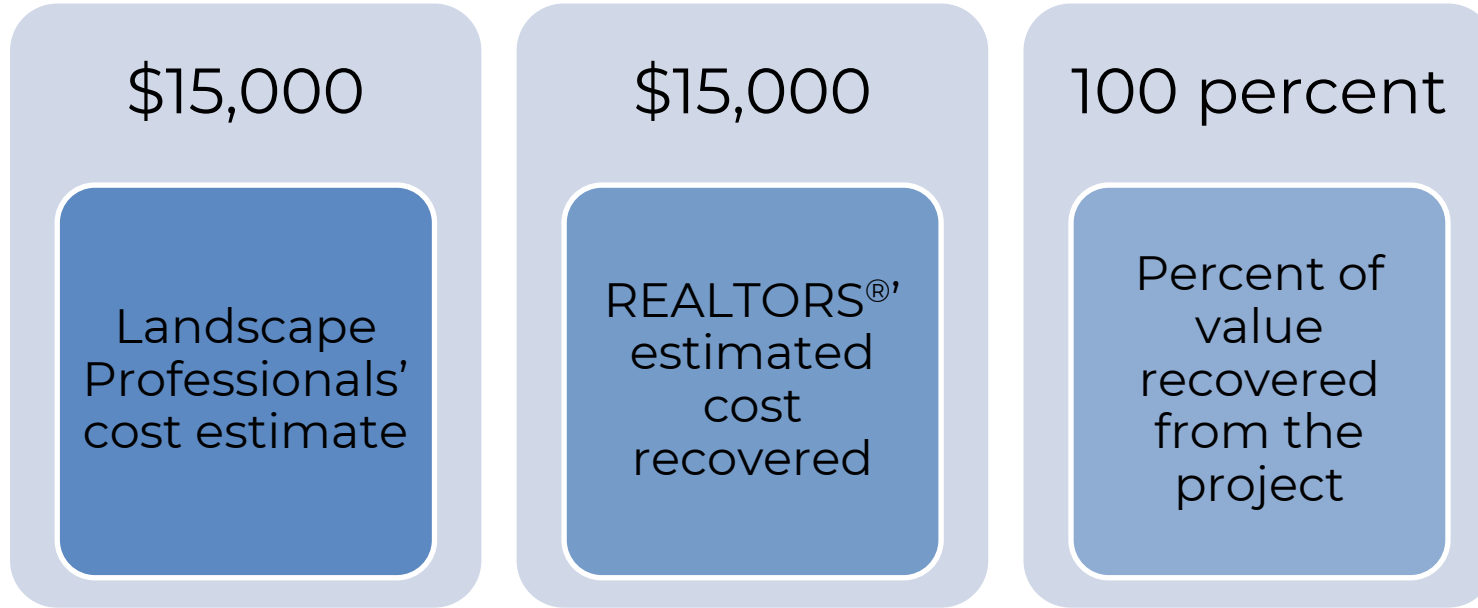
99%	Have a greater desire to be home since completing the project
71%	Have an increased sense of enjoyment when they are at home
81%	Feel a major sense of accomplishment when they think of the project



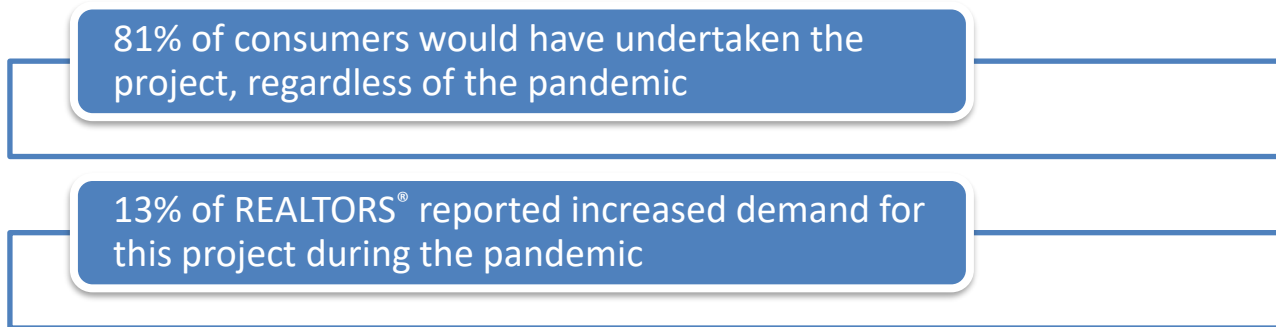
\*The costs estimates are aggregated from markets nationwide. Every project is unique. Prices will vary depending on geographic region, property, and scope of work.

# Outdoor Kitchen

Cost Recovery:



Pandemic Influence:





# Overall Landscape Upgrade

Consumers' Viewpoint After Completing the Project:

Most important result:



50% Beauty and aesthetics

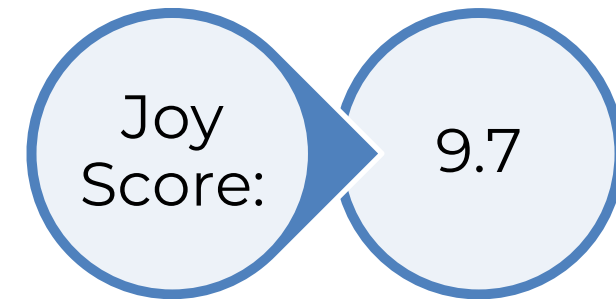
Project Description:

- Install a front walkway of natural flagstone 3 feet wide and 30 feet long. Add two stone planters 6 feet long and 2 feet wide. Install five flowering shrubs and one deciduous 15-foot-tall tree. Mulch with landscaping bark.\*

Top two reasons for doing the project:

- 29% { • Time for a change
- 23% { • Upgrade worn-out surfaces, finishes, and materials

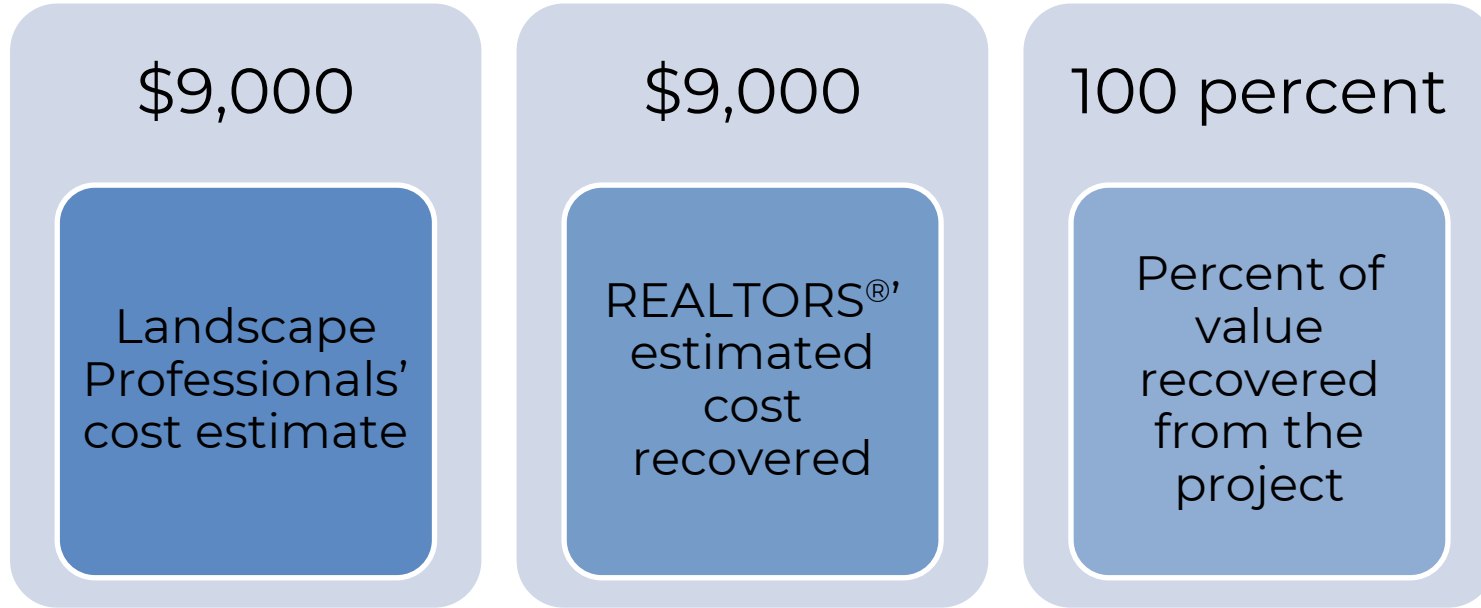
- 72% Have a greater desire to be home since completing the project
- 66% Have an increased sense of enjoyment when they are at home
- 76% Feel a major sense of accomplishment when they think of the project



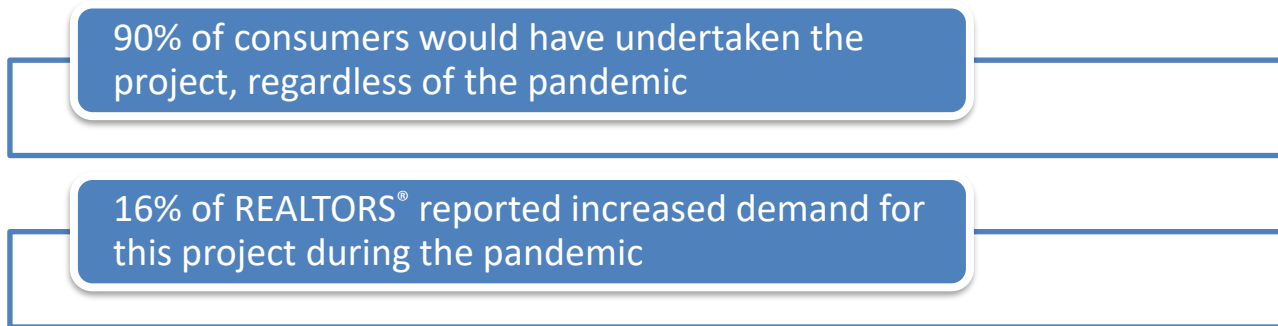
\*The costs estimates are aggregated from markets nationwide. Every project is unique. Prices will vary depending on geographic region, property, and scope of work.

# Overall Landscape Upgrade

Cost Recovery:

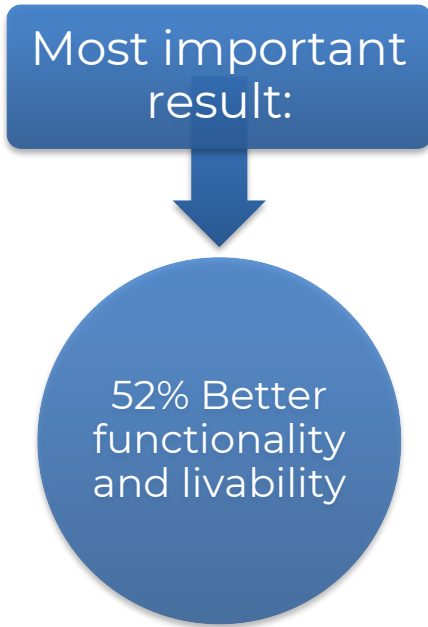


Pandemic Influence:



# New Patio

Consumers' Viewpoint After Completing the Project:



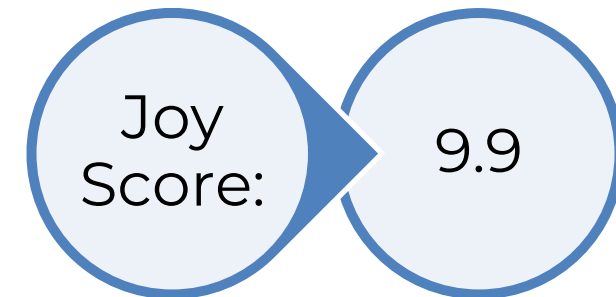
Project Description:

- Install a backyard 18-foot-by-16-foot concrete paver patio, dry set over compacted gravel and sand base. Paving material at \$7 to \$10 per square foot.\*

Top two reasons for doing the project:

- 52% { To add features and improve livability
- 21% { Upgrade worn-out surfaces, finishes, and materials

85%	Have a greater desire to be home since completing the project
85%	Have an increased sense of enjoyment when they are at home
73%	Feel a major sense of accomplishment when they think of the project

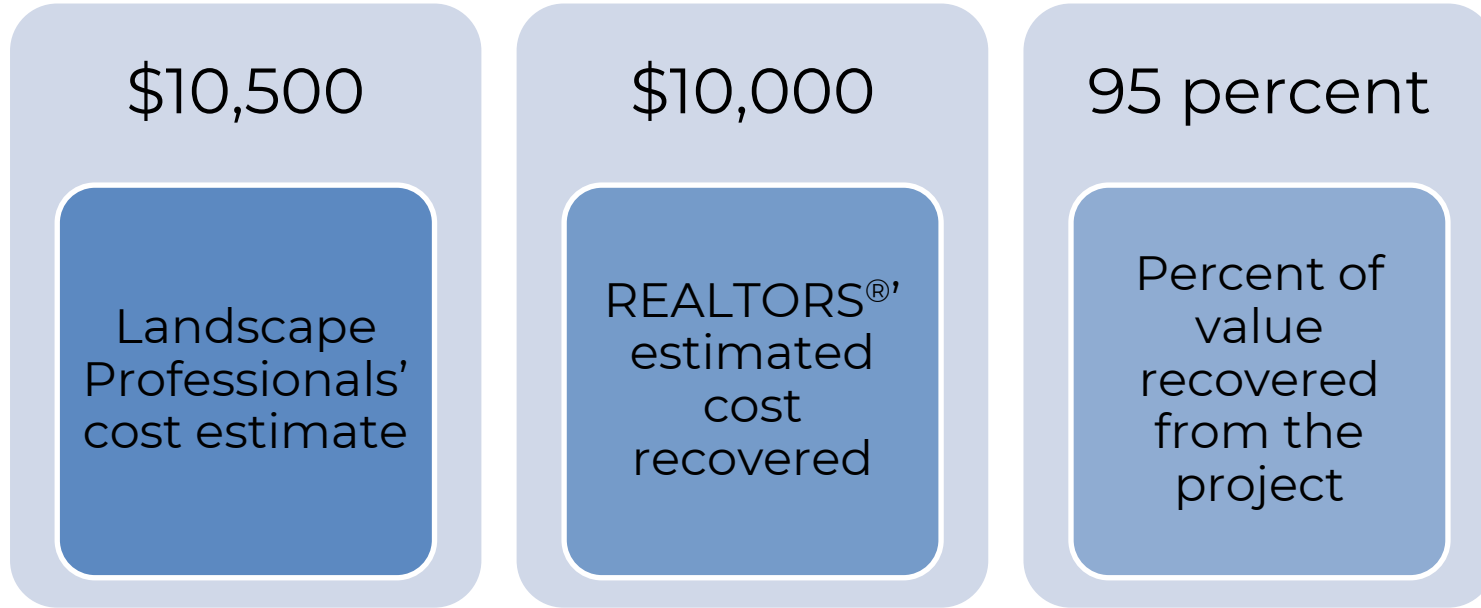


\*The costs estimates are aggregated from markets nationwide. Every project is unique. Prices will vary depending on geographic region, property, and scope of work.

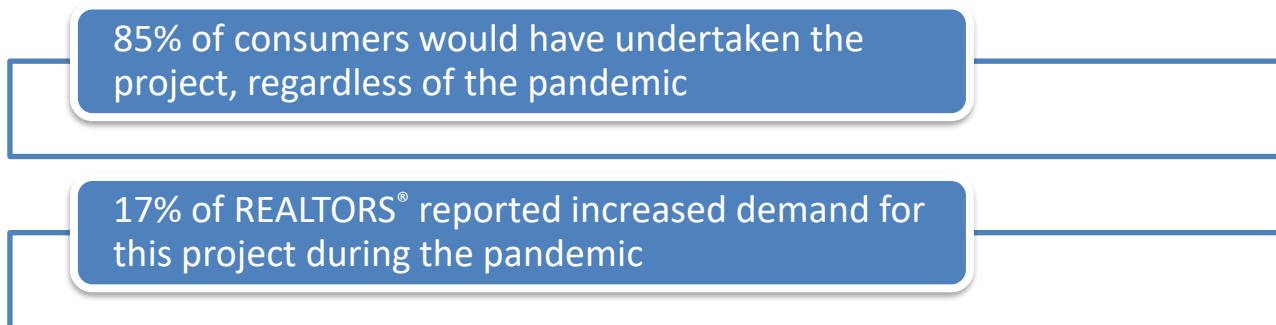


# New Patio

Cost Recovery:



Pandemic Influence:



# New Wood Deck

Consumers' Viewpoint After Completing the Project:

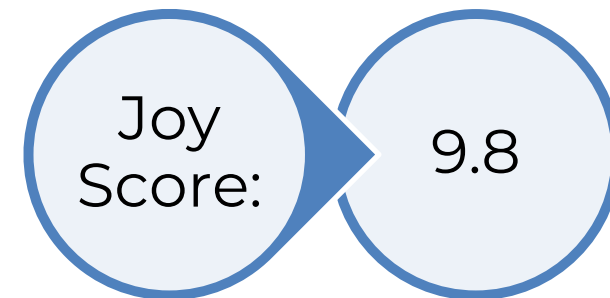
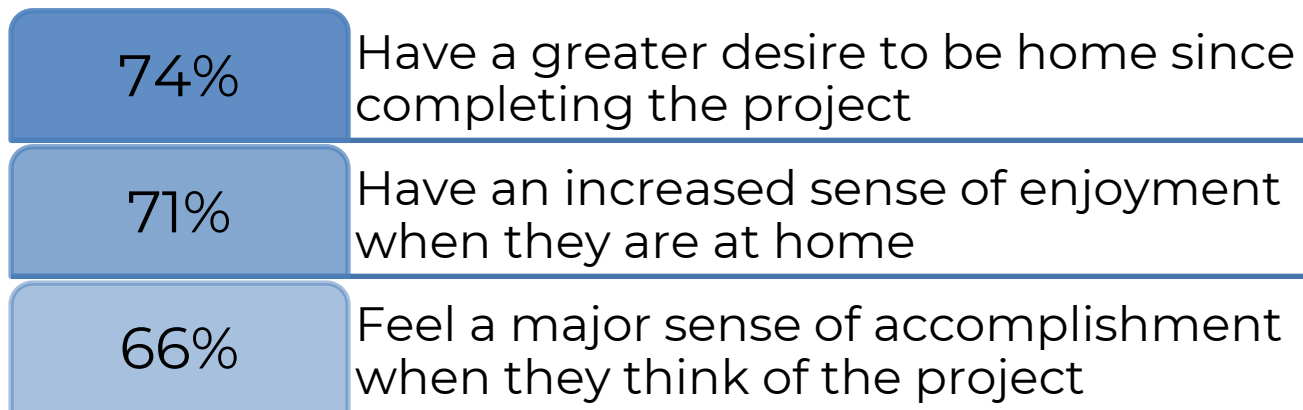
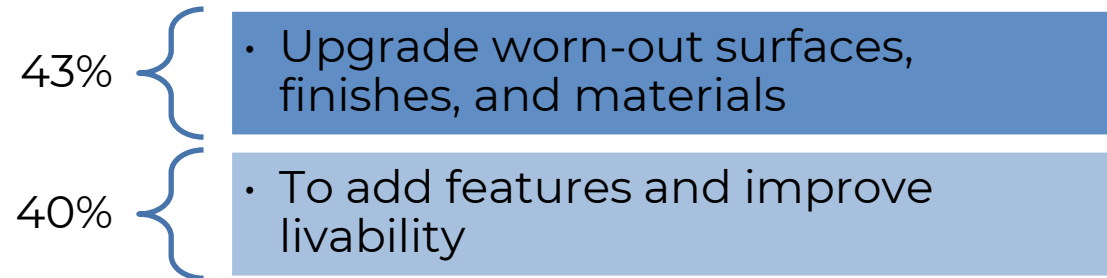
Most important result:



## Project Description:

- Build a 14-foot-deep-by-18-foot-wide wood deck attached to the house with a ledger. Decking, railing, and stair treads are constructed with cedar lumber. Stairs are 4-feet wide with an open riser. All cedar is finished with a clear deck sealer. The lower structure is covered with pine or fir lattice.\*

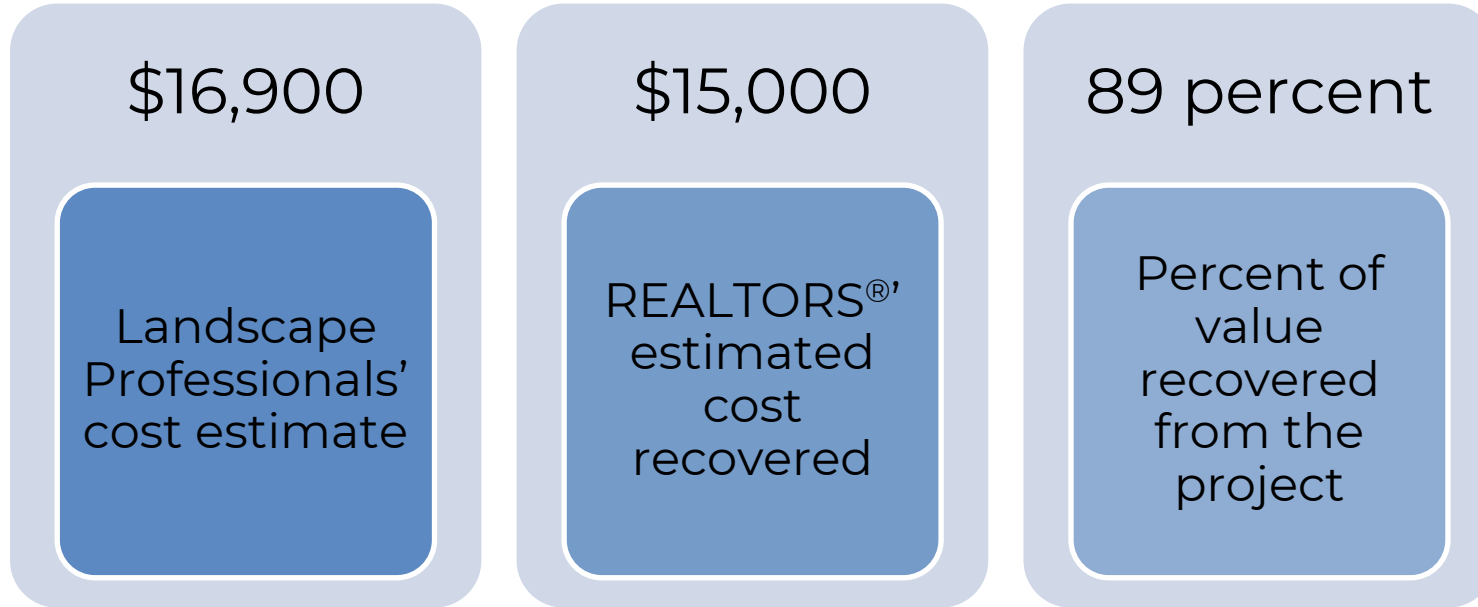
## Top two reasons for doing the project:



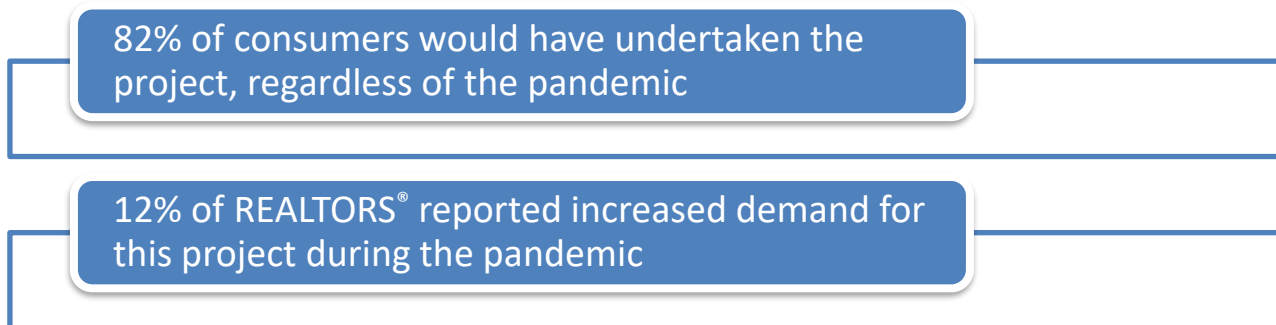
\*The costs estimates are aggregated from markets nationwide. Every project is unique. Prices will vary depending on geographic region, property, and scope of work.

# New Wood Deck

Cost Recovery:



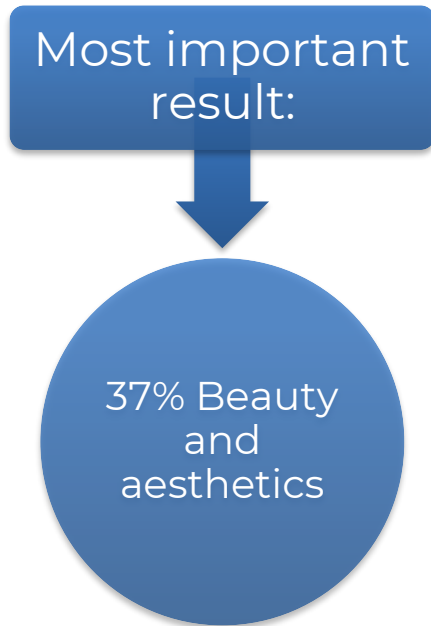
Pandemic Influence:





# Tree Care

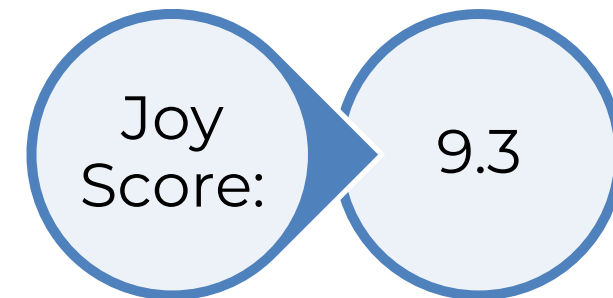
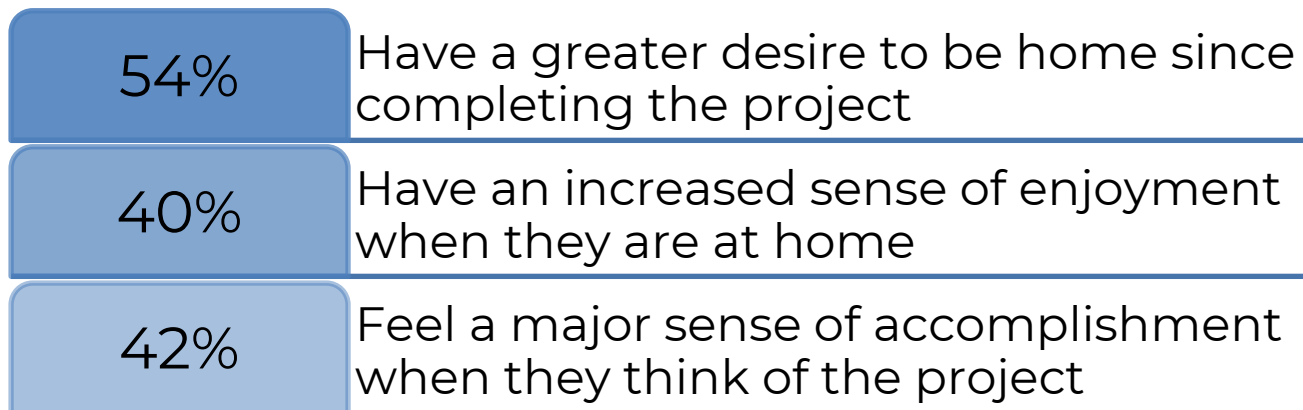
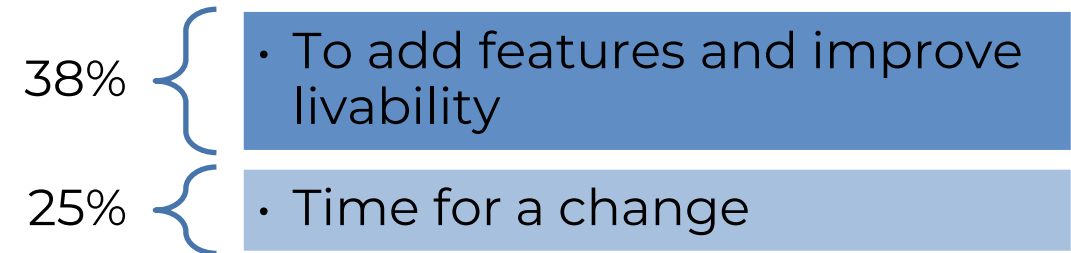
Consumers' Viewpoint After Completing the Project:



Project Description:

- To include three applications of tree fertilizer, regular spraying, trimming and pruning, as well as the removal of one 30-foot-tall tree.\*

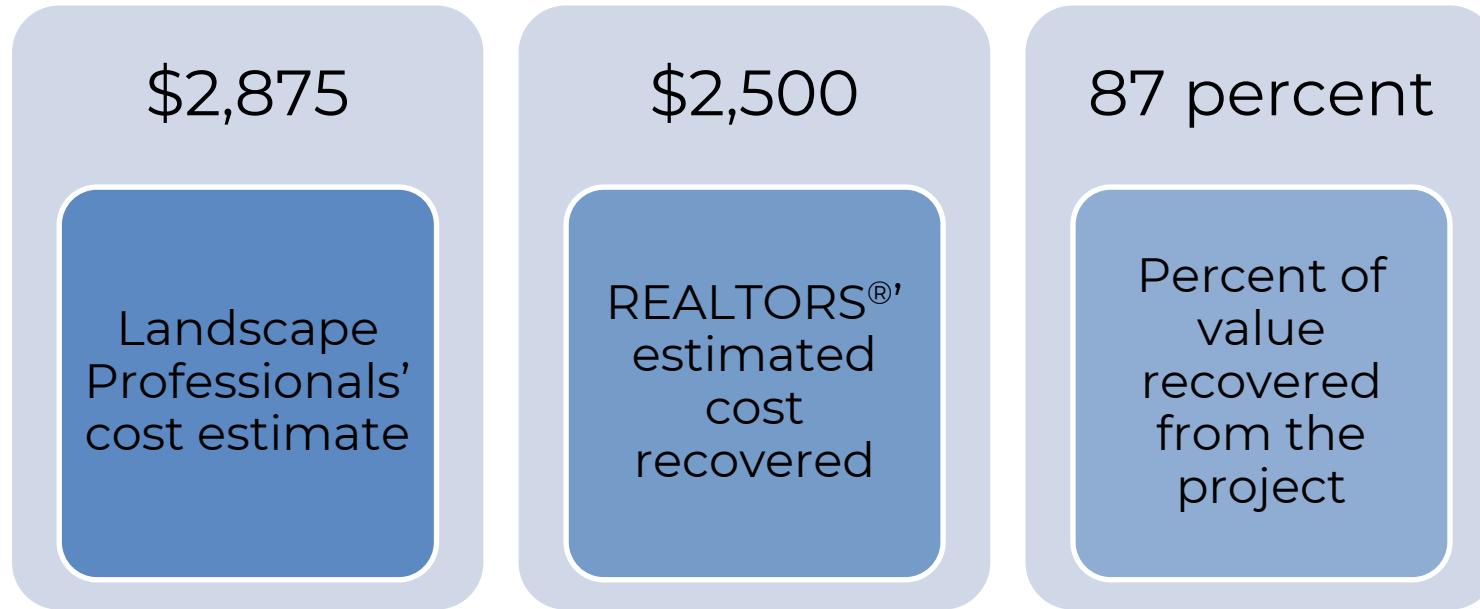
Top two reasons for doing the project:



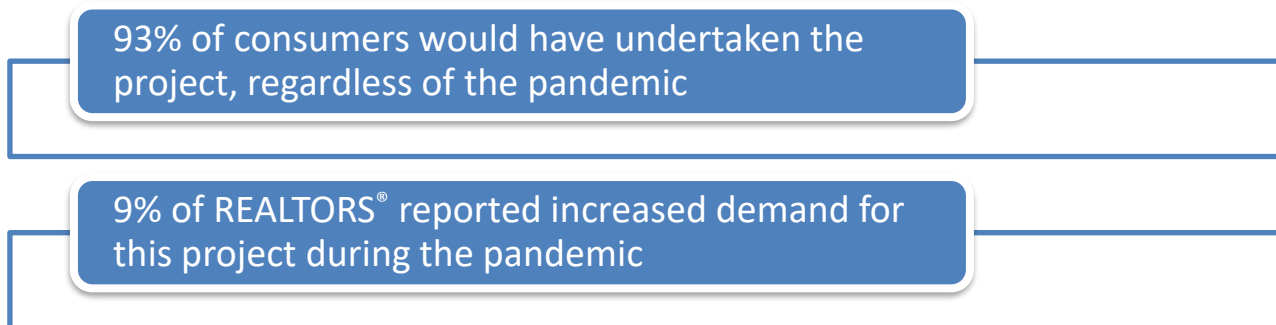
\*The costs estimates are aggregated from markets nationwide. Every project is unique. Prices will vary depending on geographic region, property, and scope of work.

# Tree Care

Cost Recovery:



Pandemic Influence:



# Irrigation System Installation

Consumers' Viewpoint After Completing the Project:

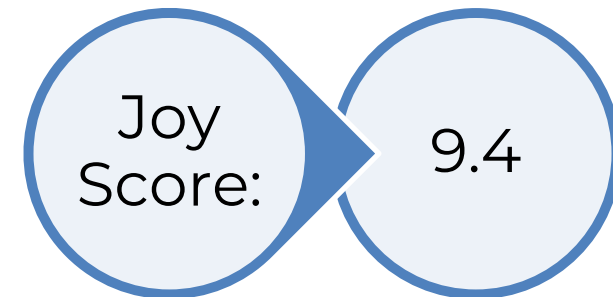
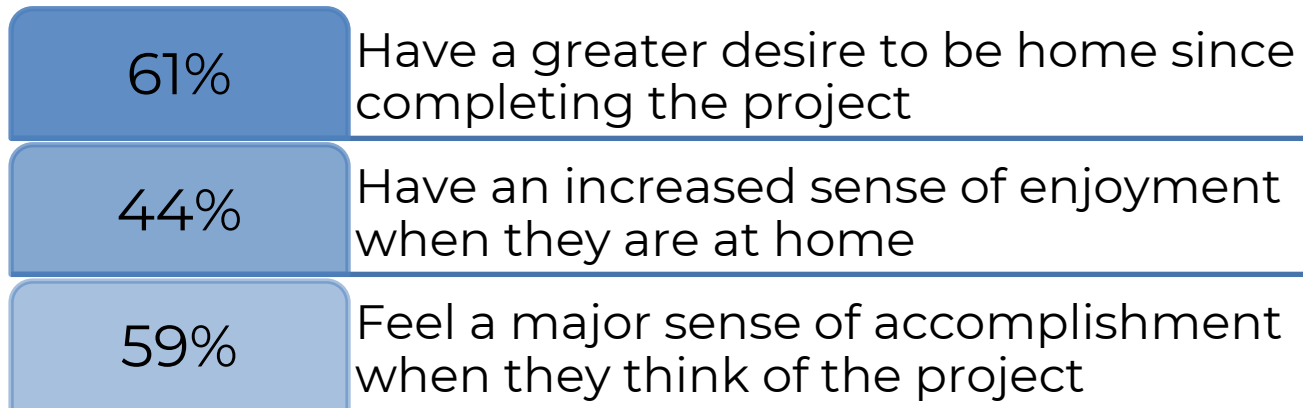
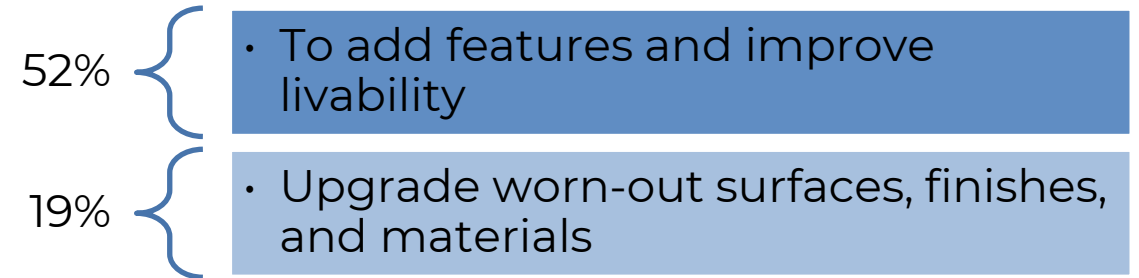
Most important result:



Project Description:

- Installation and management of irrigation system for a lawn that is 5,000 square feet. No boring required.\*

## Top two reasons for doing the project:

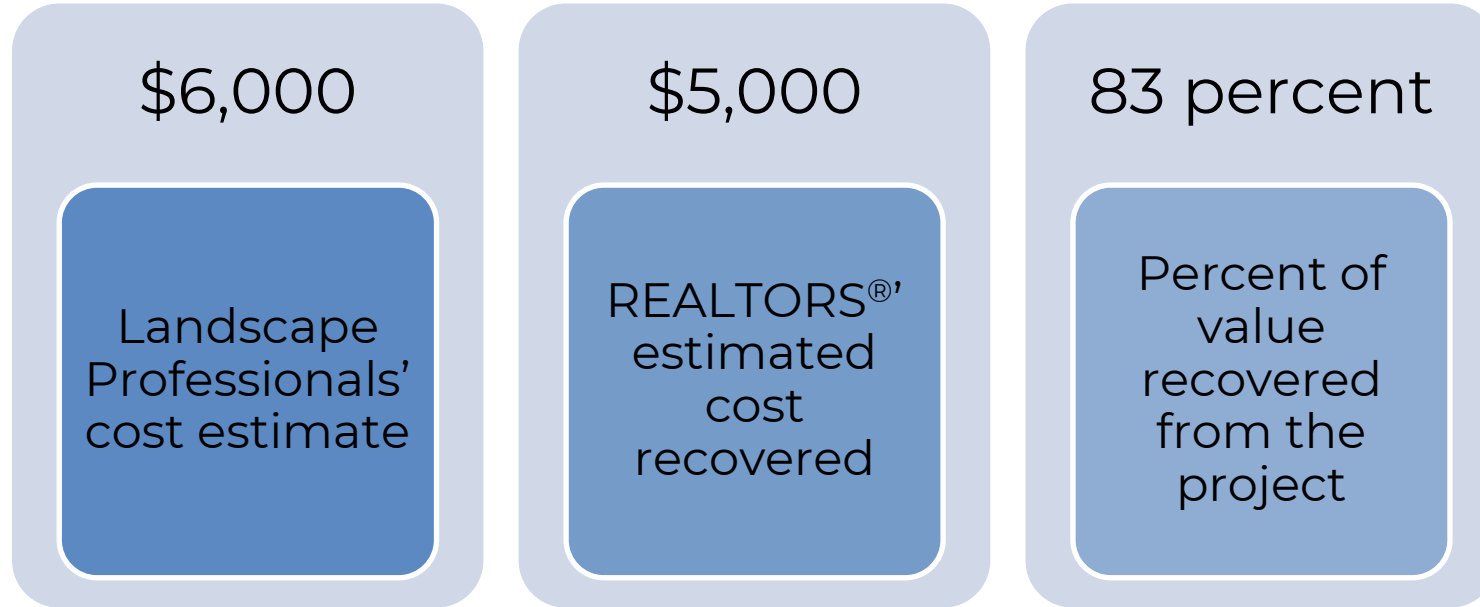


\*The costs estimates are aggregated from markets nationwide. Every project is unique. Prices will vary depending on geographic region, property, and scope of work.

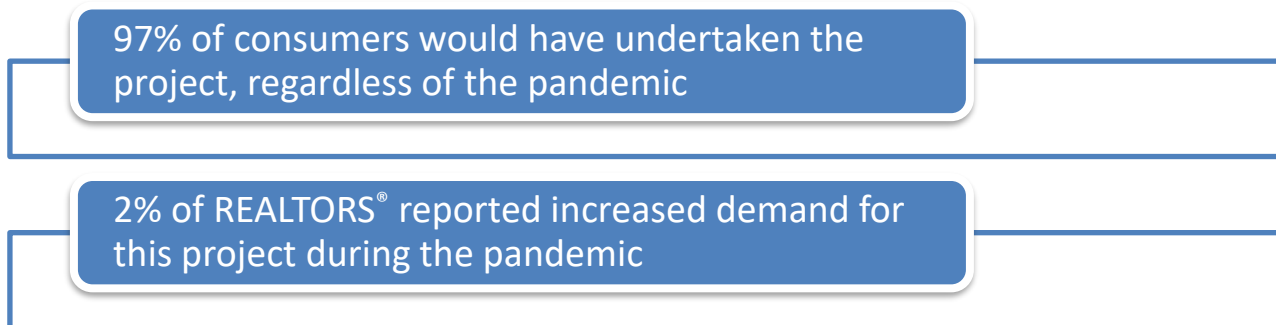


# Irrigation System Installation

Cost Recovery:



Pandemic Influence:



# Landscape Lighting

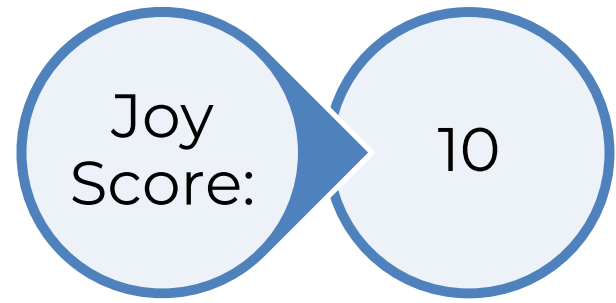
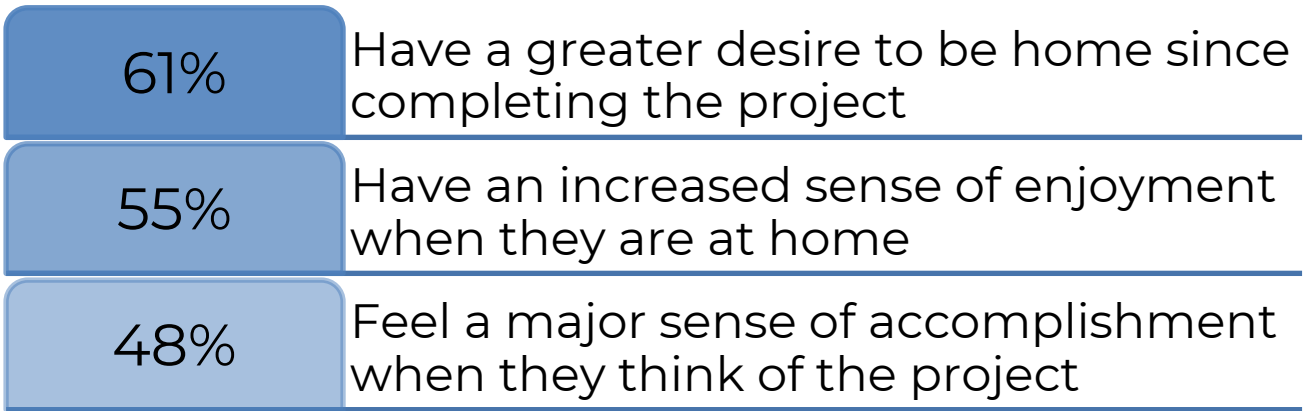
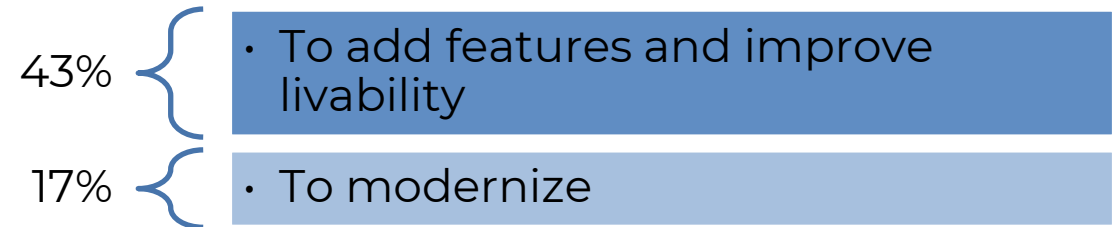
Consumers' Viewpoint After Completing the Project:

Most important result:



Project Description:  
• Installation of a standard 600W transformer and 20 LED lights.\*

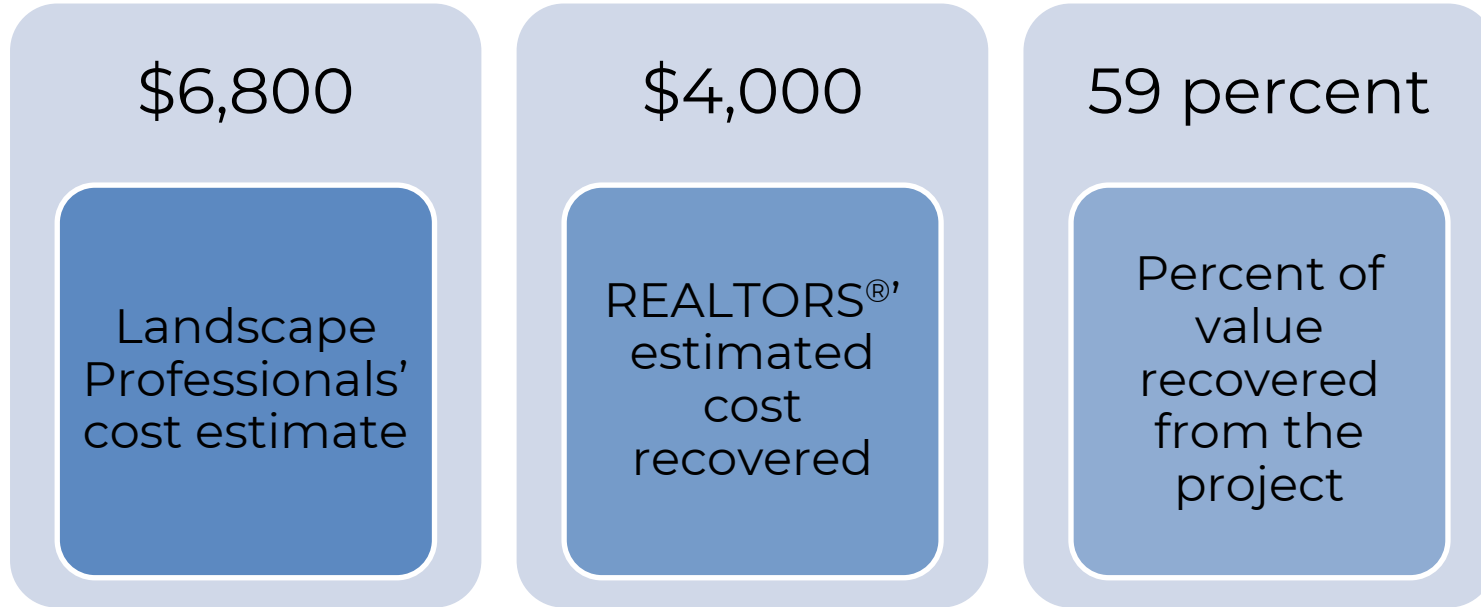
## Top two reasons for doing the project:



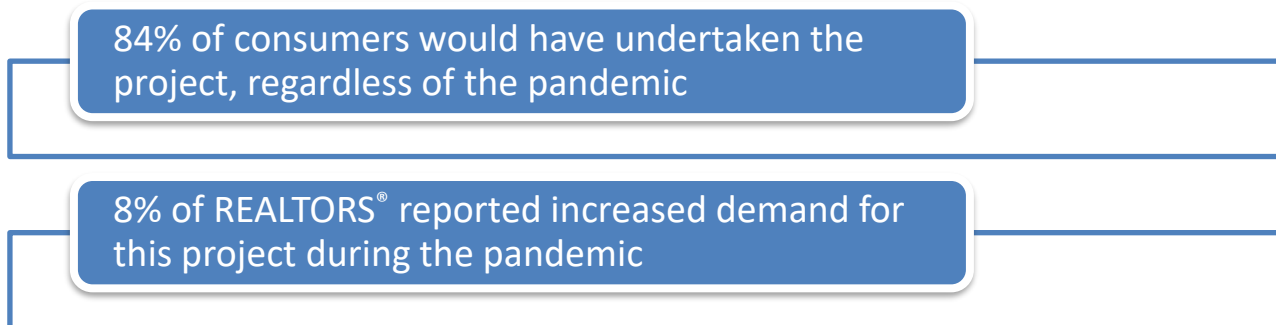
\*The costs estimates are aggregated from markets nationwide. Every project is unique. Prices will vary depending on geographic region, property, and scope of work.

# Landscape Lighting

Cost Recovery:

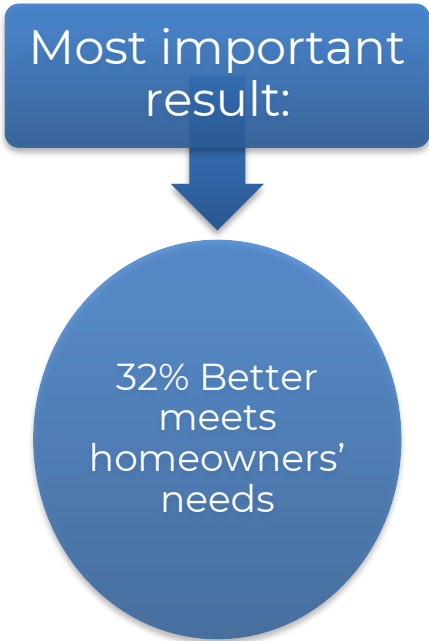


Pandemic Influence:



# In-Ground Pool Addition

Consumers' Viewpoint After Completing the Project:



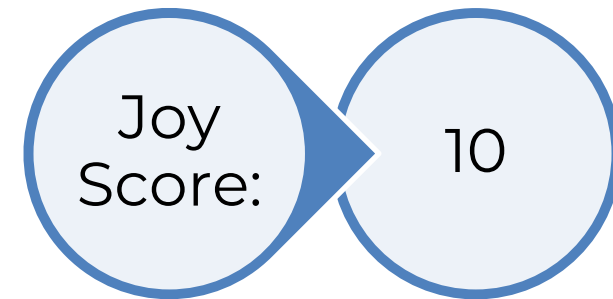
Project Description:

- Install an 18-foot-by-36-foot in-ground pool with gunite walls, 3-foot to 7-foot depth, standard filtration system. Include 3-foot-wide-by-4-inch thick concrete perimeter surround.\*

## Top two reasons for doing the project:

- 71% { To add features and improve livability
- 24% { Just moved into home and wanted to customize to personal taste

89%	Have a greater desire to be home since completing the project
90%	Have an increased sense of enjoyment when they are at home
84%	Feel a major sense of accomplishment when they think of the project

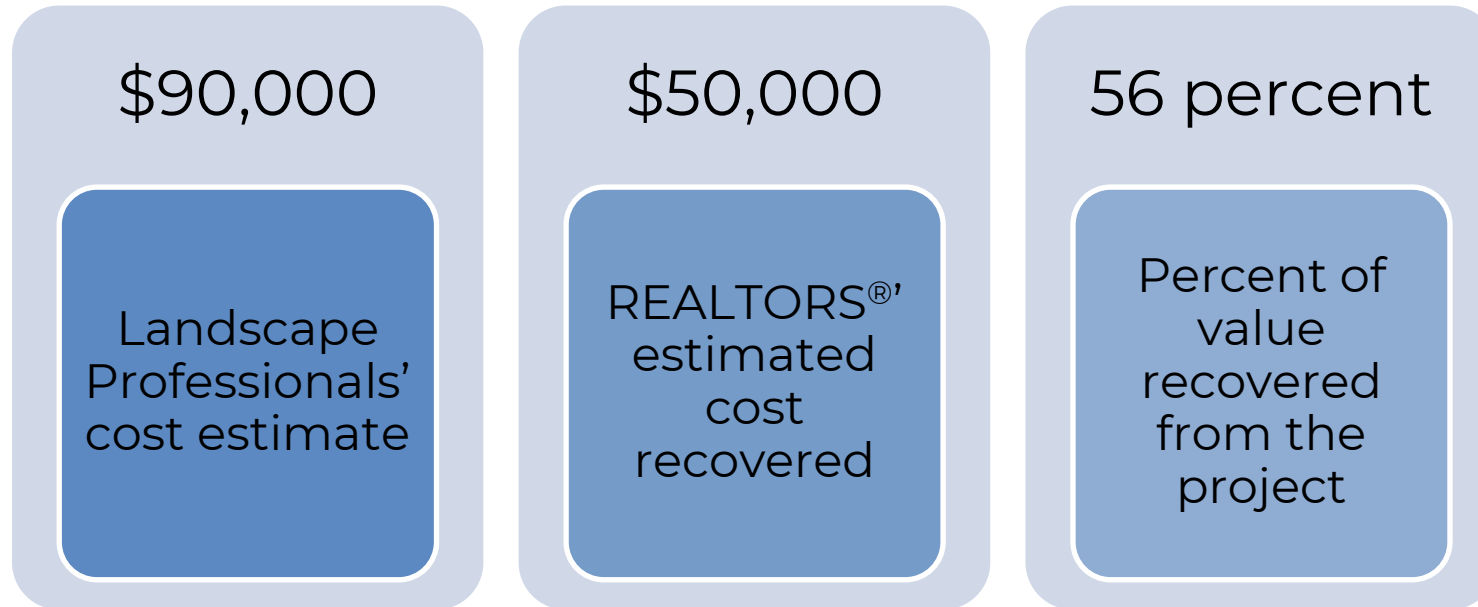


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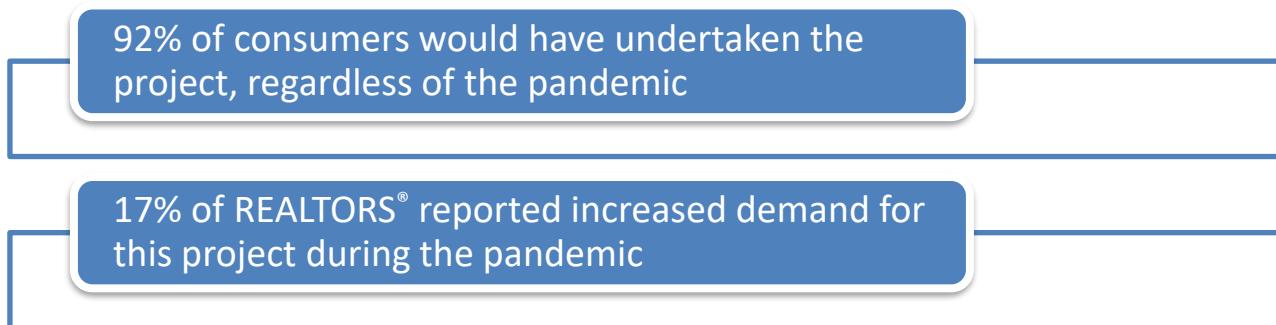


# In-Ground Pool Addition

Cost Recovery:



Pandemic Influence:



# Fire Feature

Consumers' Viewpoint After Completing the Project:

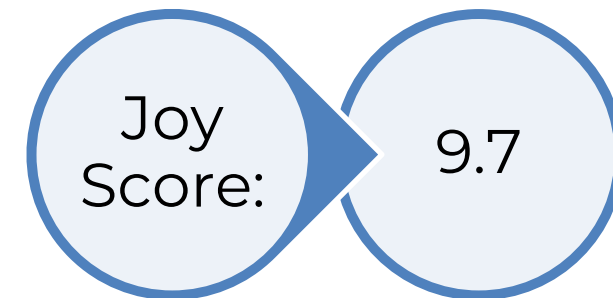
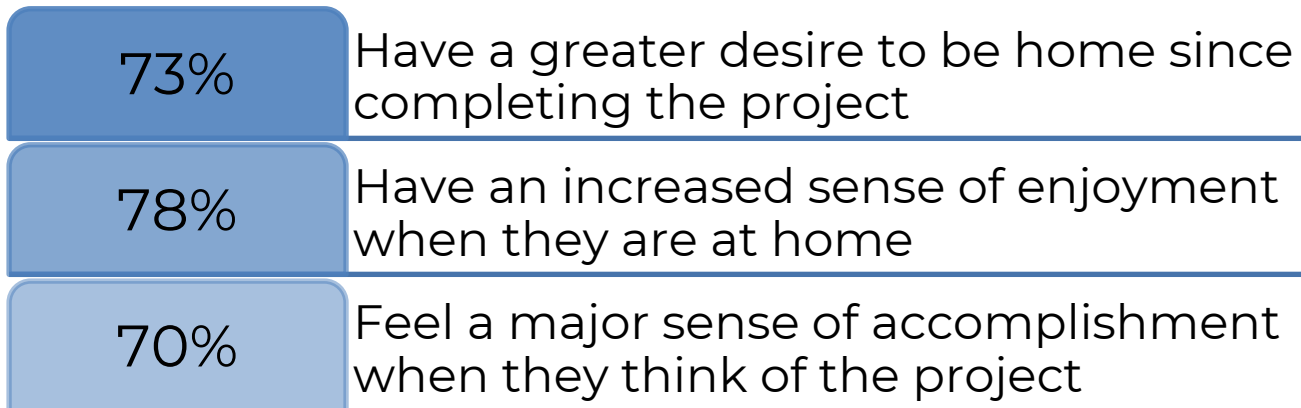
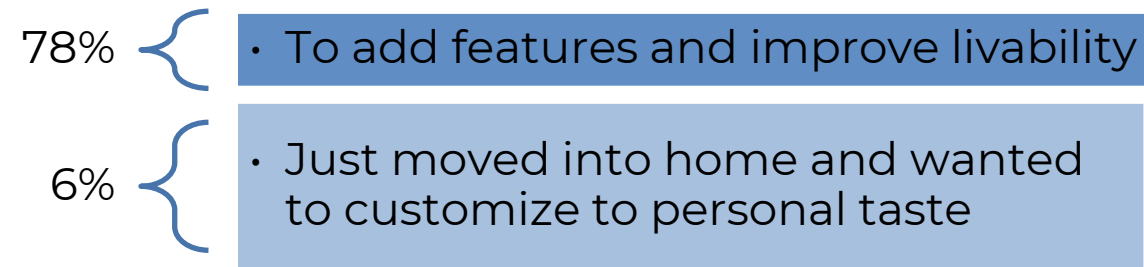
Most important result:



Project Description:

- Install dry stacked natural stone kits, gas burner with 10-foot diameter flagstone patio.\*

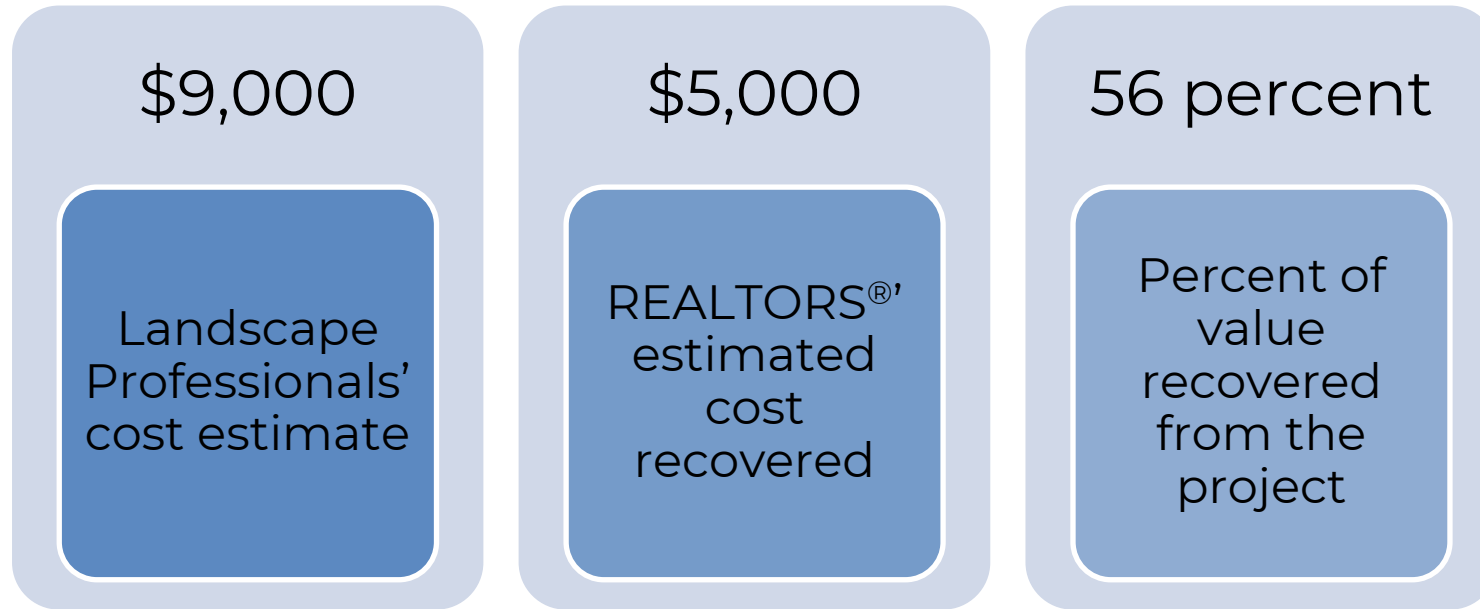
## Top two reasons for doing the project:



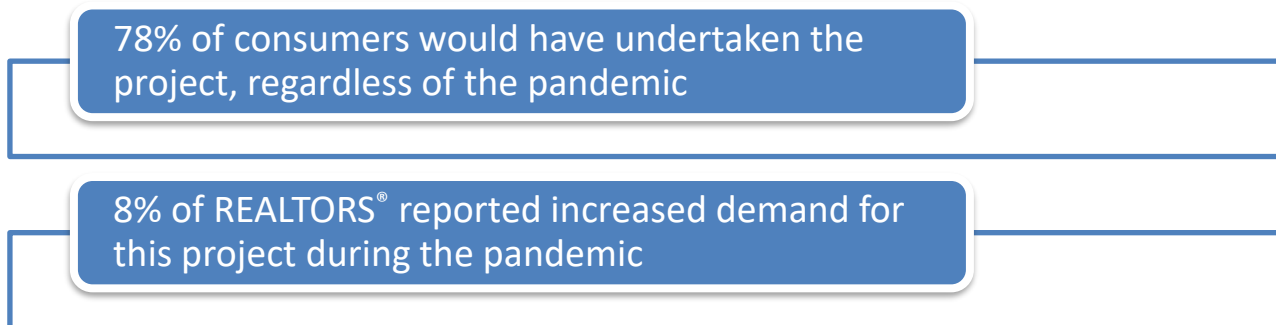
\*The costs estimates are aggregated from markets nationwide. Every project is unique. Prices will vary depending on geographic region, property, and scope of work.

# Fire Feature

Cost Recovery:



Pandemic Influence:



# Methodology

## Survey of Consumers Who've Completed Remodeling Projects:

In February 2023, the homeownership site HouseLogic.com surveyed consumers about the last remodeling project they undertook. Additionally, 48,342 NAR members were surveyed to ask if they had completed remodeling projects. A total of 2,620 respondents took the online survey. The Joy Score was calculated by combining the share who were happy and those who were satisfied when seeing their completed project and dividing the share by 10 to create a ranking between 1 and 10. Higher Joy Scores indicate greater joy from the project.

## National Association of Landscape Professionals Survey:

In January 2023, NALP emailed a cost survey to its 1,670 member companies. A total of 160 responses were received. The survey had an adjusted response rate of 9.6%. Respondents were asked to take the following into consideration: “For each project, please assume the house is in good condition. There are no surprises that will impact the cost. Generally, assume a 2,500-square-foot house with a 14,000-square-foot lot—the average size according to U.S. Census data. The house is a post-1978-built home with no hidden issues. To ensure the most applicability, projects and materials represent standard or typical quality; a few projects feature “better-quality” materials. But there are no top-of-the-line projects.”



# Methodology

## National Association of REALTORS® Value Survey:

In February 2023, NAR emailed a remodeling project survey to a random sample of 42,164 members. A total of 1,891 responses were received. The survey had an adjusted response rate of 4.5%. Respondents were asked to take the following into consideration: “Based on a survey from the National Association of Landscape Professionals “Generally, assume a 2,500 square foot house with a 14,000 square foot lot—the average size according to U.S. Census data. The house is a post-1978-built home with no hidden issues. To ensure the most applicability, projects and materials represent standard or typical quality; a few projects feature “better-quality” materials. But there are no top-of-the-line projects.”





The National Association of REALTORS® is America's largest trade association, representing more than 1.6 million members, including NAR's institutes, societies and councils, involved in all aspects of the real estate industry. NAR membership includes brokers, salespeople, property managers, appraisers, counselors and others engaged in both residential and commercial real estate.

The term REALTOR® is a registered collective membership mark that identifies a real estate professional who is a member of the National Association of REALTORS® and subscribes to its strict Code of Ethics.

Working for America's property owners, the National Association provides a facility for professional development, research and exchange of information among its members and to the public and government for the purpose of preserving the free enterprise system and the right to own real property.

#### **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® RESEARCH GROUP**

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#### **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®**

Research Group

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The National Association of Landscape Professionals represents an industry of more than 1 million landscape, lawn care, irrigation, and tree care professionals who design, create and maintain our nation's green spaces, which are vital to our planet's health.