

## **BASEMENT FLOOR LOWERING AND CRAWLSPACE CONVERSIONS**

A large number of homeowners are embarking on alterations to lower their basement floor or their crawlspace to create more habitable space. In most cases, the final design creates more usable space in their home at a cost much lower than the square foot market value represented in the balance of the dwelling. So, in essence, the project if performed correctly increases value in their home.

In performing this sensitive alteration, the homeowner is responsible for having the following tasks performed:

- 1) Engineering design and structural evaluation as per the International Residential Building Code.
- 2) Hiring of a third-party Special Inspector. This cannot be the contractor. The contractor is not allowed to be a party to the inspection process. The agreement is required to be between the homeowners and the Special Inspector.
- 3) Notification of the project to any property attached to the property where work is being performed. Homes with shared 'party walls' must adhere to this notification rule.
- 4) Submittal of a building permit to the municipality.
- 5) Hiring of a contractor.
- 6) Review of the third-party inspections with the inspector during the project.

It is important to note; any contractor who informs you that the engineering design is not necessary, or for that matter Special Inspections is not necessary, is simply misinformed or attempting to ignore strict construction rules. Failing to have the project inspected by an underpinning engineer is a serious violation in most cases. Homes are falling due to contractor negligence. We have cases to share should you be interested. If you purchased a home where this was recently performed, we recommend you gather all of documented details to ensure work was performed to code.

**To Prospective Clients:** Foundation Experts, LLC will often perform a relatively brief cursory visit in your home to review your ideas in altering your basement. We will point out key details of the process. At your request, we will submit a proposal for design services. This applies to homes in our area of practice and in most cases there is no charge for the initial consultation.