



FARMERS BRANCH
TEXAS

Garage Conversion Amnesty Program Update

Study Session Meeting | January 20, 2026

Requested By: Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Roger Neal

Program Background

- July 16, 2024, 18-month “Amnesty Program Permit” established for unauthorized garage conversions in existence prior to July 16, 2024. Set to expire on January 31, 2026.

Objectives

- Ensure unpermitted garage conversions comply with health, safety and minimum building codes
- Validate garage conversions
- Remove the non-conforming status of the home, and thus allow permits to be issued for expansions or additions for homes in the future

Community Outreach Efforts

Flyers created in English and Spanish

- Mailed out with all residential water bills
- 2 mailings directly to residents with potential garage conversions
- Past and current posting on City social media channels and website
- Handed out with resident engagement at City events by Community Services staff
- Hand-delivered to remaining homes with potential garage conversions that had not applied

Publication in the Branch Bulletin and Branch Review

Validation/Research

Initial Listing

- Initial list of 1,393 addresses identified with potential garage enclosures
- Subsequent assessment by staff via Tyler-Munis, MyGov and Laserfiche data bases
 - 358 homes with garage conversions removed from list (garage conversion permits identified)
 - List reduced to 1,035 potential garage enclosures
 - List of 1,035 potential garage enclosures reduced to 907 (new Amnesty Program permits issued)

Subsequent Reductions

- 907 potential garage conversions further reduced to 731 (additional staff research-owner occupied vs renter occupied (DCAD), Google street view verification)
- 731 potential garage conversions further reduced to 714 (homeowners request for permit verifications, on-site visits of questionable conversions and new Amnesty Program permits)
- To date a total of 679 garage conversions validated

Compliant Homes With Validated Garage Conversions

- Issuance of building permits for future expansion or an addition to the existing home allowed without the need to construct a new 2-car garage to replace the converted garage



Non-compliant Homes Without Validated Garage Conversions

- Issuance of building permits for future expansion or an addition to the existing home prohibited without either:
 - Converting the converted garage area into a garage, or
 - Constructing a new 2-car garage to replace the converted garage

Next Steps

- Continued assessment of the remaining potential garage locations to ensure all possible avenues have been utilized prior to the January 31, 2026, expiration date of the Garage Conversion Amnesty Program.
 - On-site visual inspections on questionable garage conversions
 - Requests by homeowners for permit verifications
- February 1, 2026 – All remaining unauthorized garage conversions for which Amnesty Program Permits were not applied for will be deemed to be non-conforming structures. As a result, building permits will not be issued for any future expansion or addition of the non-conforming structure in accordance with 6.6 “Nonconformities” of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.
 - No fines will be assessed because staff did not observe the activity. Assessing a fine would penalize those that did not perform the garage conversion themselves or bought a home with an already existing converted garage.

Questions



FARMERS BRANCH
TEXAS