



RESIDENTIAL GARAGE CONVERSION

PLANNING DIVISION REQUIREMENTS

Conversion of residential garages into habitable living space is permitted only if all current zoning regulations are met. Please call or ask planning staff for specifics based on lot size, zoning setbacks, off street parking etc. **Converting your garage may not be possible.**

BUILDING INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS

A building permit is required for all garage conversions and shall be obtained prior to start of any construction. The converted garage must meet all the requirements of the Building Codes currently in effect. The following general code items refer to 2019 California Building, Electrical, Energy, Mechanical, and Residential Codes:

These include:

1. Method of sealing the garage floor (CRC R506.2.3)
2. Raised flooring framing must be pressure treated or naturally decay resistant. Under floor space must be ventilated. (CRC R408.1) See http://www.eastbayicc.org/images/Tri-Chapter/TUCC_Policy_16_-_Underfloor_Clearance_and_Ventilation.pdf for an exception to ventilation requirements.
3. Six (6) inch high concrete curb with minimum 12"x 12" foundation at the garage door opening epoxy doveled into existing foundation at both ends. (CRC R403.1, R317.1)
4. If existing "garage" was originally a carport with posts and pad footings along the exterior side, provide a new 12"x12" minimum continuous foundation with 6" curb similar to above and doveled to each existing pad footing. (CRC R403.1, CRC R317.1)
5. The area of windows (or doors) in the habitable area shall be not less than 8% of the floor area. The openable area of these windows (or doors) shall be not less than 4% of the floor area for natural ventilation. (CRC R303.1)
6. Existing windows may need to be replaced when converting from garage to living space.
7. Maintain minimum 7' ceiling height from finish floor to finish ceiling. (CRC R305.1)
8. Install insulation per California Energy Code Table 150.1-A or as modeled per the Title 24 calculations for your climate zone.
9. Provide smoke and/or carbon monoxide alarms as required. (CRC R314)
10. Provide heating, 68-degree minimum at 3' above the floor in all habitable rooms. (CRC R303.9)
11. Emergency egress windows must have an opening to the exterior of the building of at least 5.7 sf with a minimum clear opening width of 20", a clear opening height of not less than 24", and a finished sill height of not more than 44" above the floor. (CRC R310)
12. Electrical receptacle outlets will need to be installed in habitable living spaces so that no space along the wall will be more than six feet from an outlet. (CEC R210.52)
13. An existing gas water heater or furnace may have to be relocated, modified, or replaced to meet code.

PERMIT PROCESS

Building Permit Review

1. Apply online on our ePermits Center at <https://epermits.cccounty.us>. You will first need to register for an account. Contractors and Contractor agents must connect a CSLB license to their online account and can apply for permits after staff have approved the license. Further information may be required, please see [Residential Checklist](#).

Inspections

1. A rough electrical inspection is required after the electrical boxes are installed and before any devices are connected.
2. Any other structural, mechanical, or plumbing alterations should be scheduled for a rough inspection.
3. The final inspection is required after all work is complete.

Building Permit Application Requirements

- Apply online on our ePermits Center at <https://epermits.cccounty.us>.
- A site plan.
- An existing and proposed floor plan showing the existing and proposed walls indicating if any existing load bearing walls will be removed (additional plans may be required if bearing wall will be removed or relocated) and the use of all adjoining rooms/areas. Also include the size and location of existing windows and note if they will be replaced.

Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development

Application and Permit Center-30 Muir Rd., Martinez, CA 94553 - 925-655-2700, FAX 925-655-2744

Building and Planning Staff are available 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday and 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday

G:\DCD Resources\How To Guides\Website Documents\Current\Residential Garage Conversion_Rev Sep 2021.docx