

# home equity & value-add projects

*a practical guide for north texas homeowners*



Home equity is the difference between your home's market value and the balance you owe on your mortgage. As values rise and you pay down your loan, your equity grows. Your equity increases in three ways: over time as you pay down the principal balance on your mortgage; over time as the home value appreciates; and when you make strategic improvements that enhance the home's condition, efficiency, or market appeal.

## Improvements vs. Maintenance

Improvements are projects that enhance function, efficiency, or design and can increase market value (i.e. kitchen and bathroom updates, new flooring, or energy-efficient windows). Maintenance includes repairs and replacements that keep the home in normal working order (i.e., roof repair, exterior paint, HVAC replacement, fence repair). These don't typically raise value, but they protect the value you already have.

## High-ROI Projects Checklist

Use this checklist to highlight projects that may make sense for your home and neighborhood.

### ***Kitchen & Bath***

- Refresh cabinets (paint, hardware)
- Update countertops (quartz or solid surface)
- Improve lighting (can lights, pendants, under-cabinet)
- Replace outdated appliances with modern, energy-efficient models
- Update bathroom vanities and fixtures
- Replace fiberglass tubs/showers with tiled surrounds (where appropriate)

### ***Exterior & Curb Appeal***

- Refresh exterior paint or trim where needed
- Improve front landscaping and add fresh mulch
- Repair or replace damaged fencing and gates
- Update exterior lighting and house numbers

### ***Flooring & Interior***

- Replace worn or dated flooring with LVP, hardwood, or modern tile
- Create more consistent flooring between main living areas
- Repaint with light, neutral interior colors
- Update interior lighting and ceiling fans

### ***Energy & Systems***

- Upgrade to a more efficient HVAC system when needed
- Add attic insulation (as recommended)
- Consider energy-efficient windows in select areas
- Replace old water heater with a more efficient model

**Have questions about which projects make the most sense for your home and neighborhood?**

We're always happy to talk through options and timing.

Call or Text The Dunnican Team at 972-679-1789 or Visit [TheDunnicanTeam.com](https://TheDunnicanTeam.com)

# home equity & value-add projects

*a practical guide for north texas homeowners*



## Higher-Risk / Low-ROI Projects (Use Caution)

Some projects are more about personal preference than broad market appeal. These can be enjoyable but often return less of their cost at resale, especially if they push your home above neighborhood norms.

- Highly customized built-ins that limit how a room can be used
- Converting a garage into living space in neighborhoods where most homes have functional garages
- Adding a pool in areas or price points where pools are uncommon or buyers prioritize low maintenance
- Very high-end finishes in a mid-priced neighborhood that make the home much more expensive than nearby comparables

## Maintenance vs. Improvements – Protecting vs. Building Value

Maintenance items don't typically increase value on their own, but buyers expect them to be in good condition. Taking care of these items protects your equity and prevents costly surprises during an inspection.

- Roof is in good condition (no active leaks)
- Exterior paint and trim are sound (no peeling or rot)
- HVAC is serviced regularly and functioning properly
- Plumbing is free of known leaks or recurring issues
- Drainage moves water away from the foundation
- Fences are stable and safe, even if not brand new

## Planning Your Projects

- Match the neighborhood standard rather than far exceeding it.
- Prioritize repairs and system updates before cosmetic changes.
- Evaluate potential return, not just project cost.
- Consider your timeline (living in the home vs. selling in 2-5 years).
- Talk with a local real estate professional before major renovations to understand what buyers in your area value most.

notes and project ideas...

**Have questions about which projects make the most sense for your home and neighborhood?**

We're always happy to talk through options and timing.

Call or Text The Dunnican Team at 972-679-1789 or Visit [TheDunnicanTeam.com](http://TheDunnicanTeam.com)