

***Regular Meeting of the Building
Inspection Commission***

October 21, 2026

BIC Agenda Item 4



Planning/DBI Merger Update



San Francisco
Planning

Planning Director
Sarah Dennis Phillips
October 21, 2026
Building Inspection
Commission

Background

On January 15, 2026, Mayor Lurie announced his intention to merge departments:

“I am excited to announce that we will begin the process of combining the Planning Department, the Department of Building Inspection, and the Permit Center into one entity.

For residents and small businesses alike, this will mean better coordination, time and cost savings and a more predictable permitting process, easing the way to build more housing and continue our economic recovery.”

Why Change?

To ensure our planning, permitting and inspection teams develop a unified permitting process to increase efficiency and enhance the customer experience for the communities we serve



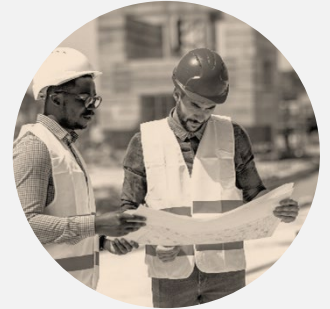
Operate as “One City” with a centralized process and digital-first services.



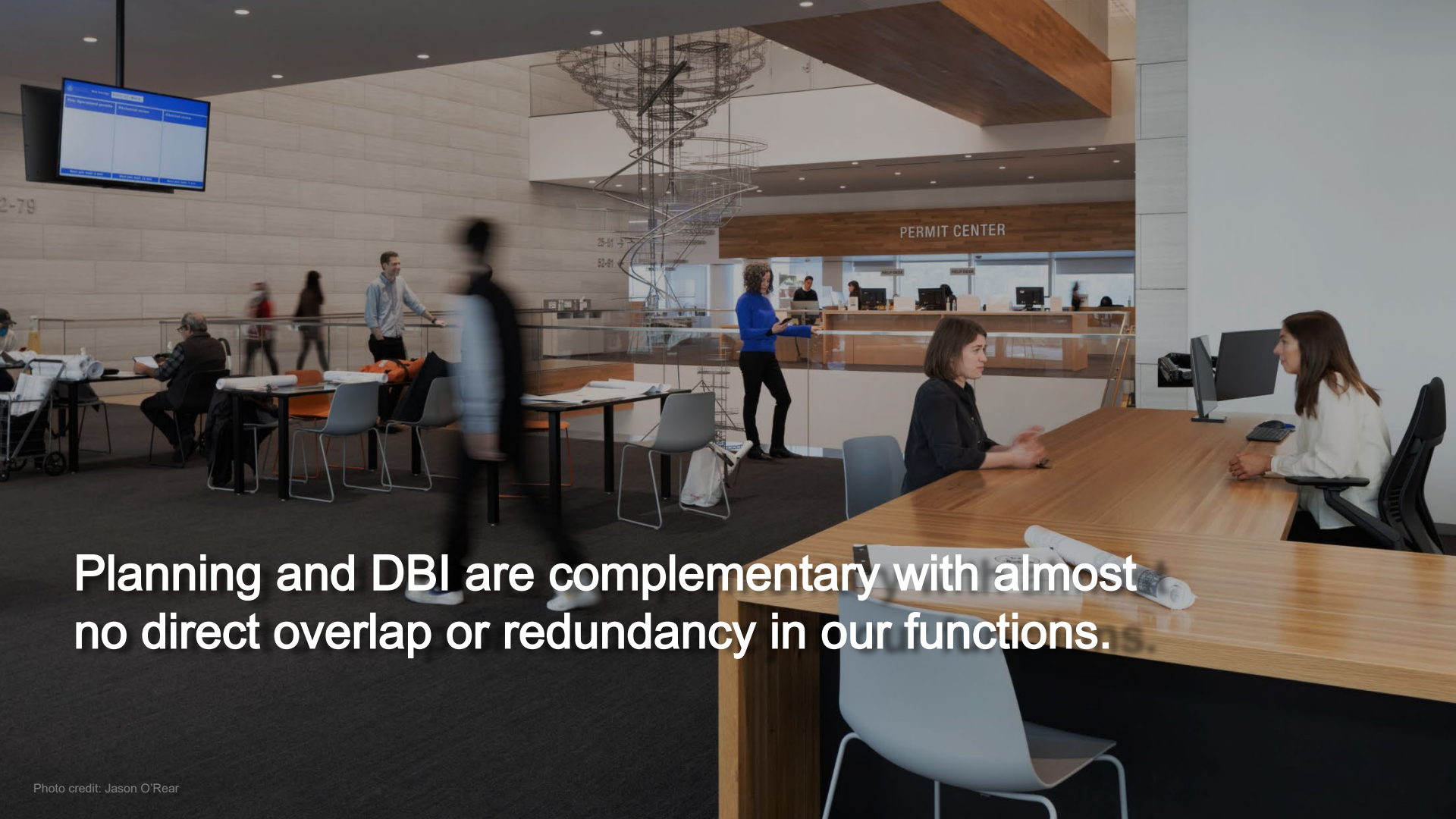
Make permitting predictable, and transparent for our **customers** with efficient and integrated processes.



Better integrate our **planning and building reviews** so they are related parts of the same process.



Strengthen safety and **compliance** by aligning planning entitlements with building codes and inspections under one coordinated workflow.



Planning and DBI are complementary with almost no direct overlap or redundancy in our functions.

Opportunities – What We've Heard

- Unified intake and pre-plan check process – create a simplified and complete intake process
- Improved customer service – provide comprehensive guidance
- Comprehensive housing policy, preservation and production – align planning/building codes and enforcement
- Joint enforcement – improve coordination and joint inspections
- Joint technology development – align software systems and technology
- Consistency with fees – adopt a holistic approach to development fees and cost recovery

Implementation Roadmap



Phase 1 – Information Technology and Permit Center

First phase of employees transferred to Planning on February 28, 2026

- DBI's MIS group and the Permit Center (approx. 35 employees in total)
- Created the Joint Technology Group with four new integrated teams
 - User Experience
 - Infrastructure
 - Solutions
 - Data and Analytics

Phase 2—Administration, Finance, Records, Policy & Public Affairs

Second phase of employees transferred to Planning on July 1, 2026

- Administration and Finance
- Records Management Division
- Policy and Public Affairs
 - Government Affairs
 - Communications
 - Policy and Strategic Initiatives

Phase 3 – Core Services

- Goal is to fully merge the two departments by July 1, 2027
- Full integration will likely require legislation, including commission review
- DBI core services include:
 - Inspections divisions (building, plumbing, electrical, code enforcement, housing inspection)
 - Permit Services (plan review, technical services)
 - Permit Services and Inspection Services administrative and support staff

Timeline – Now to July 2027

- Fall/Winter 2026: Consultation and planning for new organization
- Winter 2027: Budget proposed for new organization
- Winter/Spring 2027: Legislation introduced for new organization
- Spring 2027: Commission/Committee/Board of Supervisors hearings on legislation
- July 1, 2027: Integrated department launch



THANKYOU



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