

***Regular Meeting of the
Building Inspection Commission
December 17, 2025***

Agenda Item 4



BUILDING INSPECTION COMMISSION DECEMBER MEETING: PERMITSF TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

DECEMBER 17, 2025

Agenda

1. What we are solving: current state
2. What we are delivering: future state
3. Coming soon to San Francisco: product demo

The City's outdated permit technology system creates major pain points for applicants, property owners and staff

Applicants & Property Owners

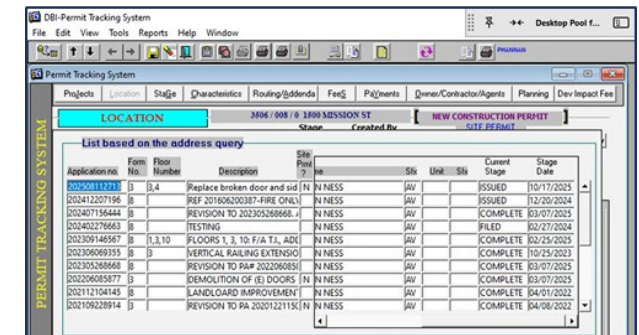
- Customer interface is outdated, confusing and unnecessarily complicated.
- City departments issue comments separately instead of in a packet.
- Difficulty tracking projects or knowing when permits will expire.
- Many permits and fees have to be filed or paid in person at 49 S.Van Ness.
- No user accounts for property owners or applicants.

Staff

- Current technology relies on manual processes, no built-in communication tools, permit expirations or deadline generation.
- No overarching workflow or management tools to coordinate project review, processing and assignments between departments.
- Limited holistic view of all permits under one project umbrella.
- Technology is no longer supported by Oracle.



Customer view online



Application No.	Form No.	Floor Number	Description	Site Plan	Fee	Status	Unit	Site	Current Stage	Stage Date
20201112138	3	3,4	Replace broken door and sidewalk	N	IN NESS	AV			ISSUED	10/17/2025
202412207196	3		REF 201606200387-FIRE ONCE	N	IN NESS	AV			ISSUED	12/20/2024
202407155444	3		REVISION TO 202305260668	N	IN NESS	AV			COMPLETE	03/07/2025
202402276663	3		TESTING	N	IN NESS	AV			FILED	02/27/2024
202309146567	3	1,3,10	FLOORS 1, 3, 10, F/A, T/L, ADE	N	IN NESS	AV			COMPLETE	02/25/2025
202306069355	3	3	VERTICAL RAILING EXTENSION	N	IN NESS	AV			COMPLETE	10/25/2023
202305248668	3		REVISION TO RAIL 2022060801	N	IN NESS	AV			COMPLETE	03/07/2025
202206080877	3		DEMOLITION OF (E) DOORS	N	IN NESS	AV			COMPLETE	03/07/2025
202112104143	3		LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT	N	IN NESS	AV			COMPLETE	04/01/2022
202106228914	3		REVISION TO RA 20201221151	N	IN NESS	AV			COMPLETE	04/08/2022

Staff view in-system

These pain points are not unique to DBI – they extend across the City

I'm a customer who does not know how to apply for a permit and get my project approved

My application has fallen into a black hole of City bureaucracy

The process is slow, and I am losing time and money

The system is not getting any better

- Lack of clear guidance on how to apply for permits
- No central intake portal to submit information
- Multiple forms, requirements, and payment systems

- No clear timelines or status updates
- No applicant ability to plan and predict for next steps and to take agency over their projects

- Duplicative, inefficient workflows wasting staff time
- Siloes and poor handoffs that slow down decisions

- No ability for leaders to identify specific pain points and delays
- Hard to drive accountability and improve performance
- Inflexibility to adjust system in response to code or ordinance changes

PermitSF has a plan to deliver four products that address these pain points and create a simple, unified, efficient permitting system

I'm a customer who does not know how to apply for a permit and get my project approved

Product 1: Centralized Online Intake for Permits

Why This Matters

- **For customers:** One stop shop for San Franciscans to apply for any permit online
- **For customers:** Clear requirements for all projects in one place, reducing confusion and resubmission cycles

My application has fallen into a black hole of City bureaucracy

Product 2: Real-Time Status Tracker

Why This Matters

- **For customers:** Transparency and visibility on permit status, timelines, and next steps
- **For staff:** Clarity on process ownership, Department roles, and deadlines

The process is slow, and I am losing time and money

Product 3: Integrated, End-to-End Permitting System

Why This Matters

- **For customers:** Faster decisions on projects and more time and money saved
- **For staff:** Better collaboration and clearer processes that enable staff to work together efficiently

The system is not getting any better

Product 4: Dashboards to Drive Accountability

Why This Matters

- **For customers:** Trust that City leaders are fixing problems and driving improvements
- **For city leaders:** Ability to address key bottlenecks and deliver continuous improvement

We plan to improve the permitting experience for homeowners and small businesses with a first wave of improvements starting in February 2026

Working list of permits for Phase I

- **Over the Counter** Doors, Windows, Siding, Reroofing
- Fire-only construction permits: **Sprinklers & Alarms**
- **Special Events**
- **Fire Operational**
- **Signs**
- **Instant Online Trade Permits**



Key customer experiences that we will improve

- Home remodels
- Commercial business improvements
- Installation/upgrades to fire systems
- Special event planning and launch

Key features that we will offer

- Applicants will be able to **request permits via a digital form** from any time/location
- Staff will have a **new system of record** to intake, process, manage inspections for and issue permits
- **Reporting dashboards** will enable applicants, the public, Staff and PermitSF leadership to track progress

We are using this valuable opportunity to transform customer and staff experience by improving data quality and business processes

Improvement	Description	Impact on Applicants	Impact on Staff and Departments
Addressing menu	Provides applicants with drop-down menu for all City addresses	✓ Confidence that addresses are valid and accurate	✓ Saving time by ensuring address accuracy (no more reading handwritten addresses!)

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Occupancy and use linkage	Links uses and occupancy via drop-down menu	✓ Accurate applications that do not require revision	✓ More efficient processing with auto-linked form entries

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Master structures dataset	Provides incentive and opportunity to develop comprehensive dataset of City structures	✓ Elimination of confusing questions like “existing construction type”	✓ Better base data on all existing structures that enables faster review

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Audit logs	Enables clear documentation of every application change	✓ Faster decisions from clear documentation and better staff coordination	✓ Clarity and documentation of key decisions, driving more accountability ✓ Better staff coordination

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Saving Plan Checker time	Eliminated redundant review steps in doors/windows/ siding permits	✓ More streamlined reviews and approvals	✓ Eliminating by allowing applicants to attest to code compliance for “no plans” permits saving Plan Check staff time for higher value work

We will deliver the key improvements that DBI customers and staff have been seeking for years

Improving Transparency

- Customer Status Tracker
- Automatic Routing
- Audit Logs
- Data & Reporting
- Performance Tracking
- Project Visibility/History
- ...And More!

Delivering Best in Class Customer Experience

- Online Application (anytime, anywhere)
- Auto-filled Information
- Dynamic Questions (if->then's)
- Help Text
- User Dashboard (all projects)
- Status Tracker
- ...And More!

Streamlining Staff Experience and Improving Staff Satisfaction

- Complete Applications
- Contemporary Software (no F7/F8, no crashing)
- Fewer Clicks/Systems
- Easy to Adjust
- Reduced Customer Frustration=Improved Work Environment
- Highest and Best Use of Skills
- ...And More!

We are on track to start launching the new system by February 2026

December - **Build, Test & Improve**

- Input and integrate final fee data
- Complete platform configuration
- Draft and finalize testing plan
- Draft internal reports and public dashboards for staff and leadership to improve transparency and accountability

January - **Testing, Training, and Standard Operating Procedures**

- Finalize SOPs based on staff testing and training
- Complete staff testing and integrate feedback into platform
- Complete staff training
- Hold customer feedback sessions
- Finalize internal reports and public dashboards

February – **Go Live**

- Soft launch to capture final learnings and fine tune
- Full launch of platform to the public

Appendix

PermitSF's five guiding principles frame our reform and modernization efforts to deliver a predictable, efficient permitting system

1. Customer Focused

Put the customer experience at the center of every decision and process design.

2. Use Technology to Drive Process Improvement

Leverage modern technology to eliminate inefficiencies, automate manual tasks, and create seamless digital experiences.

3. Transparency and Open Data

Provide comprehensive visibility into permitting processes, timelines, and decision-making.

4. Speed and Urgency

Prioritize speed and urgency to identify problems and implement iterative solutions.

5. Measurable Outcomes

Define clear systemwide success metrics and hold everyone accountable for results.