

***Regular Meeting of the
Building Inspection Commission
August 20, 2025***

Agenda Item 10

Department of Building Inspection Five Year Strategic Plan Update

August 20, 2025

DBI Strategic Plan – Overview

Developed in 2023-2024, the five-year plan features the department's mission, vision, core values, and six strategic goals and strategies supported by 44 tactics identified through stakeholder interviews, opinion surveys and executive workshops.

In May 2024, each DBI assistant/deputy director was assigned responsibility for at least one goal, and senior managers led teams of DBI staff charged with implementing the supporting tactics.

These goals and strategies touched nearly every part of the organization, from reducing permit review and issuance times, to increasing revenue, to enhancing our internal communications, to finding new strategies for retaining and supporting our most productive staff members.

DBI Strategic Plan – Mission & Vision

Mission

The Department of Building Inspection protects our community by ensuring code-compliant construction, building safety, resilience, and habitability, and by supporting economic development in San Francisco.

Vision

Our dedicated and knowledgeable staff will provide professional, effective customer service using clear processes and consistent standards to build trust, provide accountability, and safeguard the public.

DBI Strategic Plan – Core Values

Core Values	DBI Commitments
Customer Focus	Be a customer-centric organization that provides timely, efficient, predictable, and consistent services to our customers; effectively communicates with them; and responds to their information needs.
Professionalism	Leverage our highly qualified and knowledgeable staff to deliver high-quality services with competence and skill.
Integrity	Adhere to our ethical obligation to the public and protect the integrity of our services.
Supportive Work Environment	Maintain a desirable workplace that encourages organization-wide communication and collaboration, empowerment of our managers & supervisors, and professional development and training of personnel at all levels of our department.
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging	Foster a culture of respect, inclusion and belonging and promote diversity and equity at all levels of the organization.
Transparency & Accountability	Be a data-driven organization that establishes and utilizes relevant metrics and measures our performance; communicate the results (favorable or unfavorable) to internal and external stakeholders.

DBI Strategic Plan Progress

DBI made good progress in the first year of the five-year strategic plan. The implementation teams meet regularly, work has begun on every tactic, and a number of tactics have been completed and/or established as standard work.



We made notable progress in:

- **Permitting** – New digital permit and application report, automated routing.
- **Supervision** – Creating dashboards to help oversee quality control, permitting, inspections and code enforcement.
- **Management** – Identifying what policies and procedures need to be drafted or updated.
- **Human Resources** – Improved hiring planning, new recruiting tools and onboarding processes, templates for career maps and refocused internal communications.
- **Emergency Preparation** – Disaster response and service continuity plans complete, training ongoing.

Projects Delivered – Permit Application Streamlining

Launched a new In-House Review building permit, application report and digital approvals.

Benefits

- Applicants now get one document with all the important project and permit information.
- Reduced staff administrative tasks and speedier plan review and issuance times.

[illegible]

Automated application routing for In-House Review projects.

Benefits

- Provides greater consistency in plan check.
- Reduces staff administrative tasks and speeds plan review and issuance times.

[illegible]

Full & Site Permit routing table.

Projects Delivered – Dashboards

Built management dashboards for inspections, code enforcement and plan review.

Benefits

- Allows for greater oversight and support for frontline staff.
- Encourages more efficient service.
- Provides more data for performance evaluations.

Building Quality Assurance & Quality Control (QA/QC) dashboards.

Benefits

- Helps ensure consistency in our services.
- Allows for greater oversight and support for frontline staff.
- Helps identify areas where customers need additional guidance or staff need additional training.



Plan Review Management Dashboard



Complaint Management Dashboard

Projects Delivered – Office Policies and Procedures

Created a matrix of Office Policies and Procedures needing development or updating.

Benefits

- Develops clear processes applied consistently.
- Empowers staff to operate more independently while adhering to City policies.
- Encourages ethical behavior.

City and County of San Francisco
Department of Building Inspection

Daniel Lurie, Mayor
Patrick O'Riordan, C.B.O., Director

Office Policy and Procedure

Title	OPP Number	Effective Date
Inspection Scheduling and Inspector Assignments	OPP-81.31	February 14, 2025

1. PURPOSE
The purpose of this Office Policy and Procedure (OPP) is to formalize the process for advanced and same-day inspection scheduling and corresponding inspector assignments.

2. SCOPE
This OPP will:

- Identify the primary methods for members of the public to schedule inspections with DBI.
- Establish process for standard advanced inspections and same-day inspection scheduling.
- Establish guidelines for inspection assignments and when inspectors are permitted to perform inspections outside their district.
- Define roles of Floating Inspector, Senior Inspector, and Chief Inspector.
- Establish compliance monitoring of inspection assignments.

3. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- Deputy Director of Inspection Services
- Chief Building, Electrical, and Plumbing Inspectors
- Senior Building, Electrical, and Plumbing Inspectors
- Building, Electrical, and Plumbing Inspectors
- Compliance Manager

4. PROCEDURE

a. Standard Advanced Scheduling
Members of the public with permit(s) can schedule inspections in advanced via one of the options listed below.

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Office Policy and Procedure for Inspection Scheduling.

Prefix	No.	Effective Date	Office Policy & Procedure (OPP)	Deadline	Status / Notes
HR			DBI Staffing Level Determination and Justification	2024	work in progress
HR			DBI Personnel Request and Justification	2024	work in progress
HR			New Employee Recruitment	2024	work in progress
HR			New Employee Onboarding	2025	presentation/training completed
HR			Probation Period Training	2024	work in progress (surveys)
HR			Certification and Recertification	2024	work in progress (surveys)
HR			Work Hours and Work from Home	2025	see Working Hours in Gray Team folder
HR			Professional Development	2025	see Yellow Team meeting #8 notes
HR			Succession Planning	2025	work in progress on initial database
HR			City & County of San Francisco Employee Handbook	2026	see SF Employee Handbook in Yellow Team folder
HR			Paid and Unpaid Time Off	2026	
HR			Use of City Vehicles (with Drivers Guide attachment)	2026	see Drivers Guide in Gray Team folder
RMD			Digital Intake of Documents	2026	see project charter for Digital Intake 2.0 in Blue Team folder
RMD			Customer Retrieval of Documents and Costs	2026	https://www.sf.gov/departments/deptment-building-inspection/records-management-dbi
RMD	1.01	2/14/25	Record Retention and Destruction	done	
RMD	32	8/26/25	Unit Count Verification Based on Current 3R Report	done	
RMD	32.06	8/26/25	Accepting and Responding to Subpoenas	done	
FIN	FIN-02	3/12/25	Returned Checks Policy	done	
MIS			MIS Services Request	2026	
PER			On-line Permits	2026	https://www.sf.gov/topics/instant-online-permits
PER			Over-the-Counter (OTC) Permits	2026	https://www.sf.gov/topics/over-counter-otc-permits
PER			San Francisco Permit Center (SFPC) Collaboration	2025	work in progress
PLR			Pre-Application Plan Review	2026	see Admin. Bulletin AB-028 dated 10/2/2024
PLR			In-House Plan Review (includes priority & premium reviews)	2026	

Office Policy and Procedure Matrix.

Projects Delivered – HR Improvements

Adopted best practices in human resources planning and hiring.

Benefits

- Recruit top-tier candidates from broad pools of applicants.
- Ensure continuity in service in critical functions.

Implemented a new onboarding process.

Benefits

- Properly prepare new employees for their positions.
- Maintain 98% annual retention rate.



Social media job advertising.



Projects Delivered – Career Maps and Internal Communications

Created a template for DBI career maps.

Benefits

- Empower high-performing employees to proactively obtain the training and experienced needed for promotion.
- Encourage professional development for all employees.

Refocused internal communications to emphasize customer service and employee development.

Benefits

- Establish common goals, facilitate cross-divisional coordination, promote operational improvements.
- Cultivate an new internal culture reflecting DBI's stated values.

DBI Career Map (6321-0922)			
ENTRANCE 6321 Permit Technician I	JOURNEY 6322 Permit Technician II	SUPERVISOR 6323 Permit Technician III	MANAGER 0922 Manager I
Required Minimum Qualifications Two (2) years of verifiable clerical experience including interacting with the public, preparing and maintaining a variety of records and/or documents, filing, use of office equipment, public contact and processing of incoming and outgoing mail.	Required Minimum Qualifications Two (2) years of administrative and technical building, electrical, plumbing and related permit and plan processing experience equivalent to the level of class 6321 Permit Technician I with the City and County of San Francisco. Duties include reviewing applications for accuracy and completeness, logging records requests, maintaining inspection records and providing routine permit-related information concerning permit requirements, codes, ordinances and procedures.	Required Minimum Qualifications Four (4) years of verifiable, building permit and plan processing experience, of which two (2) years of experience must have involved building permit and plan processing functions equivalent to the level of class 6322 Permit Technician II with the City and County of San Francisco. Possession of a Permit Technician Certification issued by the International Code Council or an equivalent issuing agency is required within two (2) years of appointment.	Required Minimum Qualifications Possession of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university, and four (4) years of verifiable professional experience in related area/field.
Training to Support Promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service Communication. • Emotional Intelligence. • Completes City-required trainings (e.g. Citywide onboarding, workplace violence prevention plan, etc.). 	Training to Support Promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attends job-related conferences, such as California Building Officials (CALBO). 	Training to Support Promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 Plus Training for Supervisors/Managers. 	Training to Support Promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City and County of San Francisco and Municipal Executives Association Leadership & Change Management Program.
Desirable Qualifications for the Next Level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently coachable and open to feedback. • Is flexible and willing to take on projects. • Consistently maintains competent and effective performance. • Demonstrates professionalism and respect. • Ensures accuracy and quality of work. 	Desirable Qualifications for the Next Level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides recommendations and problem solving. • Navigates challenging situations in a fair and ethical manner. • Participates in projects/acting assignments when needed. • Guides staff and leads projects. • Maintains effective communication (verbal/written) with supervisor and teammates. • Models professional and ethical behavior in work environment. • Effectively manages time to meet deadlines. • Remains accountable. 	Desirable Qualifications for the Next Level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidently makes decisions and follows through on actions. • Remains knowledgeable about city and department policies and effectively applies them daily. • Commits to partnering with staff and leaders to fulfill the mission of the department with excellent communication skills. • Supports respectful dialogue across different viewpoints. • Uses emotional intelligence to make ethical decisions. • Tracks and analyzes data to prepare recommendations based on performance and metrics. • Serves as a subject matter expert and provides advice on operations. • Contributes to the development of policies and procedures. • Identifies problems and recommends solutions. 	Desirable Qualifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves as the representative and subject matter expert to develop and implement policy and operational changes for the program/division. • Makes decisions which require discretion and impact the daily operations and implementation of established procedures and policies within related units/sections. • Evaluates policies and procedures and analyzes problems and issues.

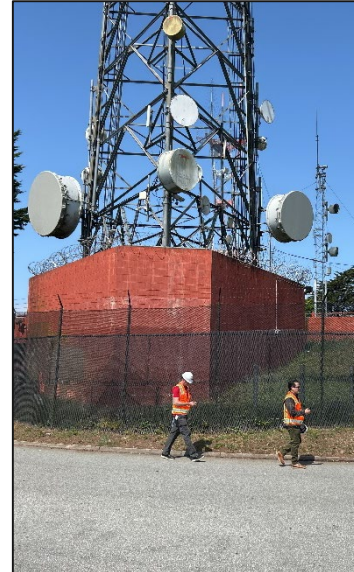


Projects Delivered – Resilience and Safety

Enhanced emergency preparation and training.

Benefits

- Staff better trained and ready to respond to a major emergency.
- Clear disaster management roles and processes.
- Better interdepartmental coordination.
- Continuity in service in critical functions.



Emergency response training on Twin Peaks.



Disaster training in preparation for Fleet Week.



DBI's Disaster Response Plan.

Goal: Ensure building safety and resilience

Team Lead: Joe Reilly, Disaster Coordination Unit Manager

STRATEGY: Oversee code-compliant building design, construction and habitability to modify, preserve and expand the functionality of San Francisco's built environment.

TACTICS

1. Sustain and enhance emergency preparation, training and response planning.
2. With the City's Department of Emergency Management, expand DBI's Disaster Coordination Unit capabilities and planning to identify, train and prepare responsible disaster response staff for an emergency, including efficiently designing and implementing emergency preparation plans and program.
3. Collaborate with the Office of Resilience & Capital Planning (City Administrator's Office) on development and efficient implementation of the Concrete Building Safety Program, Soft-Story program, Façade Maintenance Program, Tall Building Facade Program, Building Occupancy Resumption Program and other safety and resilience initiatives.

Goal: Improve building permitting

Team Lead: Mary Wilkinson-Church, Permit Services Manager

STRATEGY: Collaborate with other City departments to identify and implement means to improve building permitting using consistent standards, transparent processes, performance benchmarks, good customer service and clear feedback while ensuring full compliance with the building codes.

TACTICS

1. Collaborate with PermitSF and the SF Permit Center to define roles and responsibilities. Identify and recommend process changes to reduce permitting times and implement new policy and regulatory mandates.
2. Identify and propose additional technology investments outside of the Permit Tracking System to:
 1. Increase operational efficiency in permitting, inspections, code enforcement and records management.
 2. Improve the customer experience and allow for more self-service.
3. Work with other City departments to develop and implement a new topology to improve the addressing process.
4. “Standardize post-entitlement review requirements and develop & measure against performance benchmarks for the permitting processes to reduce subjectivity in construction permitting.” (CA Housing Community and Development required action 4.1)
5. Systemically review, coordinate and consolidate codes, Administrative Bulletins and Information Sheets to more closely align with state codes.
7. In collaboration with Inspection Services and City Planning, develop a detailed project management plan for replacing the Permit Tracking System and integrating the replacement system with legacy systems of DBI and other applicable City departments.
8. NEW - Expand and improve Over-the-Counter service.
9. NEW - Improve the efficiency and consistency of plan check.

Goal: Enhance inspections processes

Team Lead: Matt Luton, Senior Housing Inspector

STRATEGY: Improve internal processes to validate code compliance and conduct enforcement.

TACTICS

1. Analyze existing and develop new protocols to conduct field inspections and establish an effective code enforcement process.
2. Improve metrics to evaluate field inspections, housing inspections and code enforcement divisional and staff performance.
3. Establish new internal performance metrics and increase transparency around the efficacy of the grant programs for community based organizations.
4. NEW - Develop fleet assignment and tracking process.

Goal: Increase public trust

Team Lead: Chris Vergara, Compliance Manager

STRATEGY: Maintain and expand the department's reforms initiative and compliance programs to ensure the integrity of the department's services. Complete the compliance audit and perform additional audits as necessary.

TACTICS

1. Complete and maintain the department's reforms initiatives and associated department controls. Augment and implement additional reforms as part of the department's continuous improvement.
2. Conduct an annual risk assessment and set up staff trainings on conflict-of-interest, Form 700s and other compliance topics to ensure that staff understand rules governing public integrity.
3. Institutionalize quality assurance / quality control processes for inspections and permit services.

Goal: Cultivate a highly effective workforce

Team Lead: Melissa Cayabyab, Human Resources Manager

STRATEGY: Build a culture of trust, expertise and continuity through hiring, training, succession planning, coaching, and communications.

TACTICS

1. Identify and deploy best practices for recruiting top-tier job candidates, including video and online advertising.
2. Develop and promote clear career advancement paths in every division.
3. Develop an organization-wide, rolling succession plan for anticipated “mission critical” retirements during the next three years.
4. Develop a template for more collaboration between DBI divisions, including conducting regular, organization-wide managers meeting and cross divisional training.
5. Develop or update existing plan review, inspections, code enforcement and records management operating policies and procedures to provide clear guidelines to staff on work expectations, protocols and accountability measures.
6. Train staff on how to use the operating policies and procedures to ensure consistency.

Goal: Produce sufficient revenue to fund optimal operations

Team Lead: Junko Laxamana, Finance Manager

STRATEGY: Develop a plan to fully recover costs and identify key areas for investment in personnel and technology.

TACTICS

1. Identify additional revenue opportunities beyond those analyzed by the 2023 fee study and develop a business plan to fulfill spending targets identified below.
2. Staffing levels required to meet operational targets.
3. Develop a fee structure, a fee model and a policy for annual adjustments.
4. Develop and institutionalize a policy for reserve funds.
5. Establish effective, efficient administrative and financial management practices. Identify and implement process improvements to increase efficiency and oversight.

Questions?

Thank you!