

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

Agenda Item 7



August 13, 2025

Building Inspection Commission
49 South Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94103

Re: Building Code – Building Permit Expiration Timelines

Honorable Members of the Commission:

On August 13, 2025, the full Code Advisory Committee (CAC) met to consider adoption of File No. 250811, which would revise the timing of expiration of certain building permits and building permit applications. After a review and discussion of the proposed changes, the CAC voted to unanimously make a recommendation to the Building Inspection Commission to approve File No. 250811 as written.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Fessler
DBI Technical Services
Secretary to the Code Advisory Committee

cc. Patrick O'Riordan, C.B.O. Director
David Kane, Deputy Director
Mary Wilkinson-Church, Permit Services Manager
Christine Gasparac, Assistant Director
Tate Hanna, Legislative Affairs Manager
J. Edgar Fennie, Chair, Code Advisory Committee

Attach: File No. 250811

[Building Code - Building Permit Expiration Timelines]

Ordinance amending the Building Code to revise the timing of expiration of certain building permits and building permit applications; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

NOTE: **Unchanged Code text and uncodified text** are in plain Arial font.
Additions to Codes are in *single-underline italics Times New Roman font*.
Deletions to Codes are in ~~*strikethrough italics Times New Roman font*~~.
Board amendment additions are in double-underlined Arial font.
Board amendment deletions are in ~~strikethrough Arial font~~.
Asterisks (* * * *) indicate the omission of unchanged Code subsections or parts of tables.

Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

Section 1. General Findings.

(a) The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this ordinance comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq.). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. _____ and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board affirms this determination.

(b) On _____, 2025, the Building Inspection Commission considered this ordinance at a duly noticed public hearing pursuant to Charter Section 4.121 and Building Code Section 104A.2.11.1.1.

(c) No local findings are required under California Health and Safety Code Section 17958.7 because the amendments to the Building Code contained in this ordinance do not regulate materials or manner of construction or repair.

1 Section 2. Chapter 1A of the Building Code, Section 106A is hereby amended by
2 revising Sections 106A.3.4, 106A.3.7, and 106A.4.4, to read as follows:

3
4 **106A.3.4 General Permit Procedures.**

5 * * * *

6 **106A.3.4.2.3 Addenda to site permits.** The site permit must be issued prior to
7 submittal of the first addendum. Plans for construction may be divided and submitted in
8 accordance with an addenda schedule submitted on the site permit drawings or on the first
9 addendum drawings. See Section 110A~~1~~, Table 1A-B – Other Building Permit and Plan
10 Review Fees – for applicable fee.

11 The holder of such permit and addenda shall proceed with approved addenda work
12 at the permittee's own risk, without assurance that approvals for the remaining addenda or for
13 the entire building or structure will be granted.

14 Each addendum must be approved and issued before work shown on that addendum
15 may commence. The time allowed for review, approval, and issuance of all addenda is
16 governed by the maximum time allowed ~~under~~ Section 106A.4.4 ~~and Table B – Maximum Time~~
17 ~~Allowed to Complete All Work Authorized by Building Permit.~~ The extension times may be applied
18 upon payment of a fee per Section 110A, Table 1A-J – Miscellaneous Fees. If all required
19 addenda are not approved and issued by the maximum time allowed, the site permit, all
20 previously approved addenda, and all remaining addenda shall be deemed to be canceled.
21 When a site permit has been canceled, an alteration work application shall be required to
22 resume processing. The provisions of Section 107A.3.3 shall apply to such alteration work
23 application.

24 * * * *

106A.3.7 Application expiration. The Building Official may hold in abeyance or reject any application, plans, or specifications filed which in the Building Official's opinion, do not provide the necessary information in a clear and concise manner as required in Section 106A.3.3, and shall cancel such an application 365 days after submittal~~upon the expiration of the time period set forth per Table A.~~

At the time the application has been deemed acceptable for building plan review by the Department ~~of Building Inspection~~, any corrections, additional information, plans, or documents that are necessary to complete the processing by the Department ~~of Building Inspection~~ shall be submitted and approved within 365 days~~the following time limitations:~~

~~TABLE A – APPLICATION EXPIRATION~~

<i>Valuation</i>	<i>Time Limitation</i>	<i>Extension Limitation</i>
<i>\$1.00 to \$1 million</i>	<i>360 calendar days</i>	<i>360 calendar days</i>
<i>Over \$1 million</i>	<i>720 calendar days</i>	<i>720 calendar days</i>

The 365-day time limitation shall apply until the application has been approved and permit is issued. A one-time extension of 180 days~~per Table A~~ may be granted by the Building Official at any point during the approval process, upon written request by the applicant and payment of fee. Additional extensions may be granted by the Building Official prior to extension expiration upon written request from the applicant and payment of fee. See Section 110A, Table 1A-J – Miscellaneous Fees – for applicable fee. In the event an extension of time extends the life of an application beyond the effective date of the adoption of a new code, the Building Official may require that all or part of the application be subject to the provisions of the new code and payment of an additional plan review fee per Table 1A-A – Building Permit Fees. In the event the application has not been approved and issued within 60 days before

1 the end of the ~~stated~~ time periods set forth in this Section 106A.3.7-in Table A, the Department
2 shall notify the applicant that the application will be canceled in 60 days unless the application
3 is extended. An application which exceeds the stated or extended time period after such
4 notice shall be deemed canceled without further action by the Department.

5 **EXCEPTIONS:**

6 1. For applications resulting from enforcement actions initiated by the Building
7 Official to abate code violations, the above time limits shall be reduced to 30 days and 10
8 days, respectively. The Building Official may grant an extension for hardship or procedural
9 error. Upon cancellation, such cases shall be referred to the City Attorney for legal action.

10 2. The above time limits shall not apply to applications which are subject to the work
11 without permit investigation fee per Section 110A, Table 1A-K – Penalties, Hearings, Code
12 Enforcement Assessments. Such applications shall be canceled only through specific action
13 by the Building Official.

14 3. The above time limits shall be suspended whenever an application is returned to
15 the Planning Department for review due to a design change that the Building Code(s)
16 requires.

17
18 **106A.4.4 Permit expiration.** Every permit issued by the Building Official under the
19 provisions of this code, including any site permit or site permit addendum~~unless an extension of time~~
20 ~~has been specifically approved by the Building Official~~, shall be valid from the date of issuance,
21 provided that any permit shall expire and become null and void 365 days from date of issuance if the
22 work authorized under any permit associated with the current scope of work has not been commenced;
23 or shall expire and become null and void whenever the Department determines that the work
24 authorized by any permit has been suspended, discontinued, or abandoned for a continuous period of
25 365 days. ~~expire by limitation and become null and void when the time allowed in Table B is reached,~~

1 ~~or when any of the following circumstances is applicable:~~ For purposes of the expiration date for a site
2 permit under this Section 106A.4.4, submittal of a site permit addendum shall constitute commencement
3 or continuation of authorized work.

4 ~~1.— For Building Official initiated code compliance permits, the work shall start within~~
5 ~~30 days from the date of such permit.~~

6 ~~2.— If the building or work authorized is suspended or abandoned at any time after the~~
7 ~~work has started, for a period as follows:~~

8 ~~2.1.— Thirty days for Building Official initiated code compliance permits.~~

9 ~~2.2.— One hundred eighty days for all other permits.~~

10 ~~Expiration Exceptions~~ **EXCEPTIONS:**

11 ~~13. The Building Official may approve one~~ An extension of 180 days ~~time~~ from the
12 stated periods ~~may be permitted for good reason~~, provided such requests for an extension are
13 submitted to the Building Official in writing prior to the end of the time period and accompanied
14 by payment of a fee. ~~Unless approved by t~~ The Building Official, no more than one may approve
15 additional extensions ~~of time may be granted~~ if, in the judgment of the Building Official, the permit
16 holder demonstrates justifiable cause for such extension.

17 ~~3.1.— For all other permits, see Table B—Maximum Time Allowed to Complete~~
18 ~~All Work Authorized by Building Permit. The maximum time allowed for Building Official initiated~~
19 ~~code compliance permits shall be 12 months for all permits exceeding \$25,000 total valuation.~~

20 ~~4.— A demolition permit shall expire 180 days after issuance. Only one extension of time~~
21 ~~of 180 days shall be granted upon written request to the Building Official, accompanied by payment of~~
22 ~~a fee. If there is a permit for a replacement structure, the demolition permit shall expire concurrently~~
23 ~~with the permit for that replacement structure.~~

24 ~~25. The Building Official may administratively authorize the processing of~~
25 applications involving compliance actions initiated by the Department, in a manner other than

set forth in this code, so as to effect said compliance most expeditiously; provided, however, that due process is assured all applicants. In this regard, the Building Official may reduce the time periods set forth in this section as they apply to a second application and permit required by the Building Official to effect full compliance with this code and other applicable laws and regulations if by doing so code compliance would be more expeditiously accomplished.

~~3. EXCEPTION:~~ In order to avoid repetitive filings and processing of applications to effect code compliance, the Building Official is hereby authorized to establish alternate procedures and extensions of time from cancellation pursuant to Section ~~106A~~.106A.4.1 and from expiration pursuant to this section; provided, however, that the Building Official, in establishing alternate procedures and extension of time, shall proceed as expeditiously as possible toward abatement of the violations.

When a permit is issued but delayed due to actions before the Board of Appeals or other City agencies, or cases in any court of competent jurisdiction, or is under review by a State or regional regulatory body, the time allowable shall be computed from the date of the final action of the agency or court of jurisdiction.

~~**TABLE B — MAXIMUM TIME ALLOWED TO COMPLETE ALL WORK AUTHORIZED BY BUILDING PERMIT**~~

<i>Valuation</i>	<i>Time Allowed (1)</i>	<i>Extension Limitation</i>
\$1.00 to \$100,000	360 days	360 days
\$100,001 to \$2,499,999	1,080 days	720 days
\$2,500,000 and above	1,440 days	720 days

~~**NOTES:**~~

~~(1) For site permits with a valuation of \$2,500,000 or more, the time allowed to complete work authorized by the building permit may be increased by 50 percent. For site permits with a valuation less than \$2,500,000, use Table B.~~

* * * *

Section 3. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 180 days after enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board of Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

Section 4. Scope of Ordinance. In enacting this ordinance, the Board of Supervisors intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles, numbers, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Municipal Code that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions, deletions, Board amendment additions, and Board amendment deletions in accordance with the “Note” that appears under the official title of the ordinance.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
DAVID CHIU, City Attorney

By: /s/
PETER MILJANICH
Deputy City Attorney

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File No. 250811 – Expiration Timelines

Department of Building Inspection
August 20, 2025

Existing Law

Currently, San Francisco utilizes estimated construction valuation to determine the time a permit application, as well as an issued permit, remains active.

San Francisco is the **only major jurisdiction** utilizing a valuation-based system.

Applications

Valuation in \$	Time in Days
1 – 1,000,000	360
1,000,000 and more	720

Permits

Valuation in \$	Time in Days
1 – 100,000	360
100,001 – 2,499,999	1,080
2,500,000 and more	1,440

Proposed Ordinance

File No. 250811 seeks to amend San Francisco's application and permit timelines by providing **one calendar year** before an application or permit will expire, **regardless of estimated valuation**. This timeline is restarted when specified actions are logged with the Department, such as responding to comments or scheduling an inspection.

This alteration, which closely **follows the California Building Code (CBC)**, will create further alignment between San Francisco and established state processes that are utilized by the majority of California jurisdictions.

File No. 250811 - Applications

Under File No. 250811, once an application is submitted, an applicant has 365 days to provide all necessary information.

Once an application has been deemed acceptable for building plan review, the applicant has 365 calendar days to provide any additional information or corrections as requested by the Department.

A one-time, 180-day extension may be granted by the Building Official.

File No. 250811 - Permits

Under File No. 250811, once a permit is issued, an applicant has 365 days to commence work. Work is considered commenced once an inspection is logged with the Department.

Once work has commenced, the permit remains active so long as work is not suspended, discontinued, or abandoned for 365 days.

A one-time, 180-day extension may be granted by the Building Official.

File No. 250811 – Site Permits

Similar to regular permits, site permits are subjected to a 365-day timeline to commence work.

For the purposes of a site permit, submittal of addendum is considered a commencement or continuation of work.

So long as addenda are being submitted within that timeframe, site permits will remain active.

CAC Recommendation

The Code Advisory Committee reviewed the ordinance on August 13, 2025 and **unanimously recommended approval**, with the request for an information sheet detailing the actions an applicant can take that result in the application or permit expiration timeline being reset to 365 days.

Potential Amendment

State law allows applicants to utilize the building code cycle in which they submitted their application. However, if the application must be renewed, and that renewal extends beyond the adoption of a new code cycle, San Francisco allows the Building Official to request that the application be brought up to modern code standards. This discretion causes confusion for applicants and goes beyond state allowances.

The Department recommends approval of the ordinance with the inclusion of an amendment to remove the discretion of the Director with regards to renewed applications, as detailed above.



THANK YOU