

Request for Information (RFI)

Technology Solutions to Support PermitSF

ISSUED BY: City and County of San Francisco, Mayor's Office of Innovation

RFI ISSUE DATE: May 20, 2025

RESPONSE DUE DATE: June 13, 2025, 3:00 PM PST

1. PURPOSE

The City and County of San Francisco ("City") is seeking information from interested parties regarding technology solutions that can support the City to modernize and streamline its permitting system. Through this Request for Information (RFI), the City aims to better understand available tools that can simplify the applicant experience, improve coordination across departments, increase transparency, and provide real-time insight into permitting performance. The City welcomes proposals from vendors on how to deliver these technology solutions on an accelerated timeline (i.e., by early 2026). This RFI's purpose is to gather data and insights to inform planning and procurement efforts.

2. BACKGROUND

San Francisco's permitting system plays a critical role in enabling residents to build and improve buildings, open and operate businesses, and perform other functions for those who live, work in, and visit San Francisco. Yet today, the permitting process is fragmented and difficult to navigate. Applicants must work across multiple departments with different requirements, forms, and review timelines. They often re-enter the same information into separate systems, follow unclear instructions, and struggle to track the status of their applications. These challenges lead to costly delays and uncertainty for residents and small businesses and limit the City's ability to meet urgent housing and economic development goals.

To confront these challenges, Mayor Daniel Lurie's [February 13, 2025 Executive Directive](#) called for bold, transformative action:

We must create a permitting process that holds us accountable to our customers, embraces technology, and is fast, predictable, and transparent.

This [Executive Directive](#) launched [PermitSF](#), a priority initiative to centralize and modernize San Francisco's permitting system. PermitSF's leadership includes leaders from the Planning Department, the Department of Building Inspection, Office of Small Business, and the Permit Center, with support from the Fire Department, Department of Public Works, City Administrator's Office, Treasurer and Tax Collector, and Department of Technology.

PermitSF is focused on building a centralized system that simplifies the applicant experience, coordinates departmental workflows, and provides real-time transparency into performance. The goal is for anyone applying for a permit to be able to start in one place, follow a simple and predictable process, and receive a timely decision from the City.

To achieve these outcomes, the City must address key structural challenges:

1. **Fragmented and Confusing Application Process:** Applicants often do not know which permits they need or how to prepare a complete submission. They must navigate separate systems across departments, re-enter information, and manage conflicting requirements.
2. **No Centralized Access or Applicant Login:** Applicants benefit from having a single place to log in and manage their projects. Without a single user account linking together department experiences, applicants must manage multiple user IDs and navigate numerous customer portals to track progress of their permits for each department.
3. **Siloed Systems:** The City's permitting departments each use different systems, often customized or legacy software (*see systems list in Appendix A*). These systems are not integrated and are configured independently, resulting in fragmented workflows and inconsistent data structures that make it difficult to track the end-to-end permit journey.
4. **Lack of Shared Workflow and Payment Tools:** The City's permitting process does not use one unifying tool to comprehensively manage workflows and payments across departments. Staff often rely on emails, spreadsheets, or paper forms to assign and track work. Applicants must also pay through different systems, increasing the risk of error.
5. **Limited Transparency and Accountability:** Applicants need a better view into the status of their permits, what steps remain, and who is responsible for moving them forward. Internally, staff and leadership need better real-time insights into permit delays and overall system performance. Consistent tracking and reporting tools are critical to set expectations and hold teams accountable.
6. **Foundational Data Challenges:** Separate departments manage critical datasets, such as addresses and building attributes, but these datasets are not consistently structured or integrated across systems. This lack of standardization creates friction when permits span multiple departments and limits the City's ability to link and automate permitting processes.

Effective technology partnerships are essential to overcome these structural challenges and deliver on PermitSF's directive. This RFI is a critical step in identifying the technology partners and tools that will help San Francisco build a permitting system that works for applicants, staff, and the future of the City.

3. AREAS OF INTEREST

The City is seeking information on technology solutions that can contribute to any of the goals below, whether in full or in part. Joint partnerships to drive more comprehensive solutions are welcome. The

City's goal is to launch and deliver technology solutions rapidly to address the urgent need to streamline permitting.

3.1 Technology Goals to Support Improved Permitting Outcomes

- **Simple, Consistent Applicant Experience:** Residents and businesses can start and complete any permit in one place. They clearly understand requirements and next steps without navigating multiple siloed systems.
- **Transparent Permit Processing:** Applicants and the public can quickly view the real-time status of any permit. Information is accurate and transparent. Applicants have certainty on permitting and project timelines.
- **Coordinated Staff Operations Across Departments:** City staff collaborate effectively across departments to process permit applications. Workflows avoid unnecessary handoffs, confusion, and redundancy.
- **Performance Accountability:** Department leaders and City executives monitor system performance in real time. They allocate resources efficiently and hold teams accountable to deliver timely decisions.
- **Long-Term Flexibility:** The permitting system adapts to future needs. As policies change, departments expand, or new permit types emerge, the system continues to perform without major disruption or costly rework.

3.2 Long-term System Vision

The City is interested in technology solutions that can deliver a centralized system that seamlessly unifies all stages of the permitting process. Accelerated delivery and implementation of this system is a key priority.

- **Integrated, End-to-End Permitting System:** A platform that connects all stages of the permitting process, from intake and plan review through inspections, post-permit activities, and final sign-off, while enabling departments to collaborate within a shared system. The system should deliver a simple, seamless experience for applicants and streamline decisions for City staff.
- **Comprehensive Task and Workflow Management:** Tools that enable departments to assign and complete tasks with clear ownership and deadlines. Workflow automations that flag and reject incomplete applications up front and include automated triggers, validations, and routing logic to ensure permits move efficiently through each stage. Payment functionality should integrate with the City's centralized payment systems.
- **Centralized Reporting Dashboards:** Real-time dashboards with role-based access to permitting data for City staff, department leadership, applicants, and the public. Dashboards should display key metrics such as application volumes, review durations, bottlenecks, and outcomes across departments and permit types.

3.3 Working Towards Key Milestones

A key milestone for PermitSF is the February 2026 [one-year mark](#). At that point, the City seeks vendor support to deliver the following components of a centralized system.

- **Single Front Door:** A centralized online portal where applicants can submit any permit application for any project, consistent with the Mayor's directive to allow all permits to be filed online through a unified, cross-departmental intake.
- **Real-Time Status Tracking:** A public-facing tool that allows customers and staff to check the real-time status of specific permits without login credentials. The tool should display meaningful status labels (e.g., "Under Review by Planning," "Awaiting Inspection") and clearly show the current responsible department and next steps in the process.

4. VENDOR SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This RFI seeks technology solutions that enable a faster, simpler, and more transparent permitting experience. Joint vendor responses are welcome, particularly from teams that bring together technology, service design, user-research, change management, and implementation expertise.

What's in Scope for Respondents:

- Technology that supports PermitSF goals, including centralized intake and transparent permit tracking.
- Integration capabilities with existing City systems and workflows. *(See Appendix A)*
- Tools that improve coordination, transparency, and user experience.
- Optional service design, user research, or process improvement expertise your team brings (or partners with) that helps align technology with more efficient permitting procedures.

What's Out of Scope:

- Direct responsibility for regulatory reform or interdepartmental governance.

5. RESPONSE GUIDELINES

5.1 Guiding Principles

- The integrated data should reside in the City's Unified Data Platform, leveraging Snowflake data cloud.
- Software tools should integrate with existing systems (e.g. Identity Access Management, PeopleSoft, City's payment gateway, 311 system, Snowflake data environment) and facilitate a centralized space for collaboration across Departments.
- Off the shelf enterprise solutions that require minimal configuration will reduce the City's technology debt and enable more standardized, efficient implementation.
- The City welcomes advice and best practices from respondents on streamlining decisions and instituting process improvements to accelerate service delivery.
- Tools should support transparency and open data that enables all City residents to have visibility into the City's performance.
- Tools must adhere to the City's standards and incorporate industry best practices on data privacy and data security to safeguard data with strong, reliable protections.
- Technology teams under contract with the City may be expected to collocate with an internal team for a defined time period to accelerate product delivery.

5.2 Format and Content

Responses should be submitted electronically in PDF format to moi.rfis@sfgov.org with "Technology Solutions for PermitSF" in the subject line.

Responses should be brief (preferably 10 pages max) and include:

1. Respondent Information

- a. **Company Overview:** Contact information, years in operation, company profile.
- b. **Government Experience:** Brief description of relevant experience or expertise.

2. Solution Overview

- a. **Product Description:** Description of proposed technology solution and how it meets the City's permitting needs.
- b. **User-Centered Approach:** Explain how your team uses user research and service design to inform product development and permitting workflows. Include any examples of how applicant feedback has shaped past solutions and outline your plan to conduct user research.
- c. **Implementation Considerations:** Technology interoperability, data security & privacy, ability to scale, and customization needs. Approach to onboarding, change management, and user training.
- d. **Estimated Timeframes:** Describe how you would phase system development and implementation, including key milestones, timeline estimates, and your strategy for sequencing work. For relevant responses, outline your plan to meet PermitSF's One-Year Minimum Requirements by February 2026, and specify what resources, decisions, or conditions would be needed to accelerate delivery (e.g. to shrink the schedule by 30-50%).
- e. **Resource Requirements:** Staffing and budget required from respondent and from the City.
- f. **Estimated Cost:** Include all software, hardware, implementation, and ongoing maintenance costs. If your team offers related services such as process improvement or system optimization support, indicate whether these services are included and whether they are provided in-house or through partners.
- g. **References:** Provide contact information for at least two public sector clients who can speak to your experience delivering technology implementations at a similar scale to San Francisco. At least one reference should be able to speak to the speed and effectiveness of your implementation.

6. NEXT STEPS

The City will host the PermitSF Solution Showcase on July 7 & 8, 2025, featuring final presentations from selected vendors at 49 South Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA, 94103. This event will provide selected respondents an opportunity to present their solutions to key City stakeholders.

6.1 Showcase Selection Process

Based on review of RFI responses, the City will invite select respondents to participate in a Solution Showcase.

The City welcomes submissions for comprehensive or partial solutions. Respondents may propose technology tools that address one or more of the problems or goals outlined in this RFI.

- Respondents proposing comprehensive, end-to-end solutions may receive invitations to participate in the full Solution Showcase process, including scenario-based prototyping and a final presentation on July 8th.
- Respondents submitting targeted or partial solutions (e.g., tools addressing a subset of goals or specific problem areas) may receive invitations to deliver a condensed presentation on July 7th.

Respondents interested in presenting targeted or partial solutions should indicate this in their submission and include a brief (1–2 paragraph) summary of their proposed presentation focus.

6.2 Comprehensive Solution Showcase Presentation Guidelines

Comprehensive Solution Showcase participants will receive a set of City-designed permitting scenarios and mock data by June 20th. They will then have until July 8th to prototype solutions using their own technology. At the July 8th Showcase, participants will present their solutions to key City stakeholders. Showcase presentations should be concise, visual, and focused on practical applications rather than theoretical concepts.

6.3 Product Testing Access

To support evaluation after the Showcase, all participating vendors must provide the City with temporary Administrator access or test licenses to their proposed solutions for a minimum of two weeks following final presentations. This access will allow City staff to explore system functionality, test usability, and assess how well each solution addresses the City's permitting needs in practice.

7. IMPORTANT NOTES

- This RFI is issued to assess respondent capabilities and readiness to contract with the City on permitting data and technology solutions.
- This is not a Request for Proposals (RFP) or solicitation.
- Information provided may be used to develop future solicitations.
- The City is under no obligation to issue a solicitation or award a contract based on this RFI.

8. TIMELINE

Activity	Date
RFI Issuance	May 20, 2025
Webinar for RFI Respondents	May 30, 2025, 2:00PM PST (join by clicking here)
Deadline for Questions	June 9, 2025, 12:00PM PST
RFI Responses Due	June 13, 2025, 3:00PM PST
Showcase Participants Notified	June 20, 2025

Showcase Presentations
Follow-up Discussions (if necessary)

July 7 – 8, 2025
July 9—20, 2025

9. CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions regarding this RFI, please use the [Microsoft Form for Technology Solutions for PermitSF](#).

10. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This RFI is issued solely for information gathering and planning purposes. All submissions shall become the exclusive property of the City and County of San Francisco, and shall be subject to public inspection and copying under the California Public Records Act (Cal. Govt. Code Section 7920.000 et seq) and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance (Admin. Code Ch. 67) unless exempt from disclosure under federal, state or local law, including laws protecting trade secrets. Therefore, it is important for respondents to clearly identify in their responses those records or other information that the respondent in good faith believes to be a trade secret or confidential proprietary information protected from disclosure under applicable law. To the extent permitted by law, the City will attempt to reasonably maintain the confidentiality of such information.

Respondents to this RFI shall be solely and fully responsible for their own costs associated with the development, preparation, and transmittal of their submissions. The City may, in its sole discretion, ask selected Respondents to present their material in person to City's representatives at the City's offices, and the costs of such presentations shall be solely the responsibility of the Respondent. The City assumes no contractual or other obligations as a result of the issuance of this RFI, the preparation or submission of materials by a Respondent, the evaluation of materials, the Respondent's conducting of presentations, or the selection of any Respondent for negotiations. There may be no claims whatsoever for reimbursement from the City for such costs.

In addition, this is not a Request for Proposals (RFP). It does not constitute a solicitation or offer to contract, and participation in this RFI is not required to be considered in future solicitations or offers and does not guarantee any future business with City. The City will determine at its sole discretion whether to issue an RFP or other competitive solicitation at a later date, and any such RFP may differ significantly in content from the applications and services described in this RFI. This RFI is to be used solely for the purpose of this industry review and the City assumes no responsibility for any other use of this document. The City expressly reserves the rights to:

1. Waive or correct any defect or informality in any proposal, response or response procedure;
2. Reject any or all responses and re-issue a new RFI;
3. Prior to submission deadline for responses, modify all or any portion of the schedule for receiving responses;
4. Procure any materials, equipment, products or services specified in this RFI by any other means;
or
5. Determine that no project will be pursued.

Please contact moi.rfis@sfgov.org with any questions regarding this RFI.

11. APPENDIX

- [Appendix A: Permitting Processes and Systems Landscape](#)
- [Appendix B: Digital Accessibility & Cybersecurity Standards](#)

Appendix A: Permitting Processes and Systems Landscape

This appendix outlines the major categories of permitting processes and systems the City expects to address through this initiative. This is not an exhaustive list but is intended to help vendors understand the scale and integration needs of the solution.

In-scope process areas may include:

Construction Processes

- [Building permits requiring plan review](#)
- [Accessory dwelling unit permits](#)
- [Kitchen and bath remodel permits](#)
- Creation of new addresses

Business Support

- [30-day business permit view \(Prop H\)](#)

Special Events

- [Shared Spaces \(parklets\) permitting](#)
- [Event permitting](#)

City systems that may need to be integrated or replaced include:

The following represents core integrations that will need to be contemplated for integration with the new permitting system

#	Name of Integration	Description	Vendor / Product Owner	Comments
1.	Permit Tracking System (PTS)	Dept of Building Inspection System of Record for permits	Oracle	Prioritized for replacement
2.	Fire Inspection System	Fire Department Fire Prevention system of record	Oracle	To be replaced
3.	Accela	Planning Department System of Record	Accela	Prioritized for replacement
4.	Clariti	Public Works System of Record	Clariti	Launching 2025
5.	HS GovTech	Environmental Health System of Record	HS GovTech	Rolling implementation
6.	OnBase	Document management and workflow	Hyland Technologies	Fire and all post-entitlement permits
7.	PaperVision	DBI document management system	Digitech Systems	
8.	M Files	Planning document management system	M-Files	SFPW launch late 2025
9.	Bluebeam Revu, Bluebeam Studio Prime	PDF markup tool for construction permitting	Bluebeam	
10.	CSLB (CA contractor license)	Validate contractor license number	State of California	Out of scope for replacement

11.	EAS (Enterprise Addressing System)	City's addressing system and GIS solution	CCSF Dept of Technology, ESRI	Used for all construction and land use departments
12.	Property Information Map (PIM)	GIS tool providing a holistic view of parcel information	Planning Department	
13.	SF Customer Inquiries	Public works Salesforce customer inquiries lookup to Clariti	Salesforce	
14.	311	City's main customer call center	Verint	Out of scope for replacement
15.	Unified Data Hub	Central data hub used to limit point-to-point integrations between systems and centralize/democratize a greater volume of information for internal and external use	Snowflake	Use Cases 1. Tax Collector business lookup 2. DBI Building Permit lookup 3. Performance monitoring data for building permits
16.	Identify Access Manager		Oracle	Out of scope for replacement
17.	PeopleSoft Financials	All collections should be reconciled daily through the Account Receivable (AR) Interface	PeopleSoft	Out of scope for replacement
18.	Online Payment Processor	City's payment processor for online payments	CityBase (EUNA)	
19.	Kiosk Payment Processor	Point-of-sale solution for Public Works, Planning, Fire, and Permit Center	CityBase (EUNA)	
20.	iPayment Cashiering	Point-of-sale solution for DBI	CORE Technologies	

Appendix B: Digital Accessibility & Cybersecurity Standards

Digital Accessibility Standard

1. The product will need to meet [San Francisco's Digital Accessibility and Inclusion Standard](#).
2. We would also consider an API-based product that delivers information for display in SF's existing secure, accessible dot-gov web platform.

Cybersecurity Standards

Cybersecurity Risk Assessment

Should the City elect to proceed with a procurement process at the conclusion of this RFI, bidders will be required to participate in the City's Cybersecurity Risk Assessment (CRA).

CRA may be performed for each entity manufacturing the product, performing technical functions related to the product's performance, and/or accessing City's networks and systems. Where a prime contractor or reseller plays an active role in each of these activities, CRA may also be required for the prime contractor or reseller. To conduct a CRA, City may collect as part of this Solicitation process one of the following two reports:

1. **SOC-2 Type 2 Report:** Report on Controls at a Service Organization Relevant to Security, Availability, Processing Integrity, Confidentiality or Privacy; or
2. **City's Cyber Risk Assessment Questionnaire:** Bidder's responses to a City's Cyber Risk Assessment Questionnaire.

The above reports may be requested at such time City has selected or is considering a potential Bidder. The reports will be evaluated by the soliciting Department and the City's Department of Technology to identify existing or potential cyber risks to City. Should such risks be identified, City may afford a potential Bidder an opportunity to cure such risk within a period of time deemed reasonable to City. Such remediation and continuing compliance shall be subject to City's on-going review and audit through industry-standard methodologies, including but not limited to: on-site visits, review of the entities' cybersecurity program, penetration testing, and/or code reviews.