

FILE NO. 040539

ORDINANCE NO.

1 [Requirements for Department of Building Inspection Permit Tracking System.]

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3 **Ordinance amending the San Francisco Administrative Code by adding new Chapter 78**  
4 **to direct the Department of Building Inspection to improve its permit tracking system to**  
5 **allow for open and public review of the status, routing and location of pending permits.**

6 Note: Additions are *single-underline italics Times New Roman*;  
7 deletions are *strikethrough italics Times New Roman*.  
8 Board amendment additions are double underlined.  
9 Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough normal~~.

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

10 Section 1. The San Francisco Administrative Code is hereby amended by adding  
11 Chapter 78, to read as follows:

12 **Chapter 78: Department of Building Inspection Permit Tracking System**

13 **Section 78.1. Purpose.**

14 *The people of the City and County of San Francisco are entitled to fair, open, publicly*  
15 *accessible and equitable processes for the review and approval of permit applications by City and*  
16 *County departments and have a right to expect that City and County departments will provide the same*  
17 *high level of service to all customers with properly filled-out and filed permit applications regardless of*  
18 *whether they hire permit consultants to facilitate approval of their permit applications. Public*  
19 *disclosure of efforts by permit consultants to obtain permits issued by City departments on behalf of*  
20 *clients is essential to protect public confidence in the responsiveness and integrity of government and*  
21 *will limit the ability of permit consultants to obtain or create the appearance of obtaining preferential*  
22 *treatment from City and County officers and employees during permit review and approval processes.*  
23 *Providing open, public access to a system that tracks the status of pending permits in the Department of*  
24 *Building Inspection (“DBI”) and the Planning Department will facilitate the public’s ability to know*  
25 *the status of permits as well as the speed and efficiency with which DBI processes those permits. An*

1 online tracking system and robust use of technology will make permit processing transparent for the  
2 citizens of San Francisco. DBI has engaged the services of the Department of Telecommunications and  
3 Information Services (“DTIS”) and has developed a management information services (“MIS”)  
4 strategic plan to assist DBI in meeting its three primary goals: effective enforcement; effective  
5 provision of services; and, the fair and safe enforcement of building codes and provision of services,  
6 including the promotion of fairness in all aspects of service delivery and administration of DBI. DBI  
7 shall coordinate with other departments, including the Planning Department, so that permits can be  
8 tracked when they are pending at either DBI or the Planning Department. The purpose of this Chapter  
9 78 is to require DBI to provide a transparent and publicly accessible permit tracking system, to ensure  
10 that DBI makes expeditious progress in making its permit processes transparent for the public and to  
11 track the progress of DBI’s implementation of its MIS strategic plan.

12 Sec. 78.2. Permit Tracking System

13 DBI shall improve its MIS to make its permit processing system as transparent and accessible to  
14 the public as possible so that applicants are treated fairly and permits are processed in an even-handed  
15 manner. DBI shall implement a system that includes information in the permit application file  
16 about the permit applicant, including without limitation identification of any architect, engineer,  
17 general contractor, attorney, permit consultant or expediter, or any other authorized agent  
18 associated with or working on the permit application. DBI shall implement information technology  
19 best practices and processes, necessary infrastructure upgrades and undertake business applications  
20 projects, to assist DBI in meeting its goals of providing fair, accurate and efficient enforcement of  
21 building codes, as described in the DBI MIS strategic plan contained in Board of Supervisors File  
22 No.040539. DBI shall consider implementing other clean-up projects, including but not limited to re-  
23 engineering for more accurate data collection, an application integration project to facilitate data  
24 sharing among applications, and expansion of web access to DBI services to facilitate public access to  
25 permit processing information. DBI shall consider implementing a system with as little manual

1 intervention as possible, including, for example, a system of bar coding permit applications that  
2 would track when any City employee worked on a permit and the amount of time that  
3 employee spent working on the permit, so that a true permit tracking system can be implemented  
4 with the potential for far fewer errors and omissions.

5 Sec. 78.3. Reporting Requirements

6 DBI and DTIS shall provide a report to the Board of Supervisors every four (4) months for the  
7 next two (2) years following the effective date of this Ordinance No. 040539 regarding the status of its  
8 MIS update projects and the improvement of public access to the permit tracking system.

9 Sec. 78.4. Compliance

10 DBI shall use best efforts to provide a publicly accessible and transparent permit  
11 tracking system as directed in this Chapter 78 no later than two (2) years from the effective  
12 date of this ordinance. In the event DBI does not provide such permit tracking system within  
13 such time period, the Board of Supervisors shall consider directing and funding another City  
14 department or provider to undertake such improvements to DBI's permit tracking system.

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16 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
17 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

18 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
19 Kate H. Stacy  
20 Deputy City Attorney