



# FIRE COMMISSION JANUARY MEETING: PERMITSF TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

JANUARY 14, 2026

# The current permitting system is painful and confusing for San Franciscans...

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

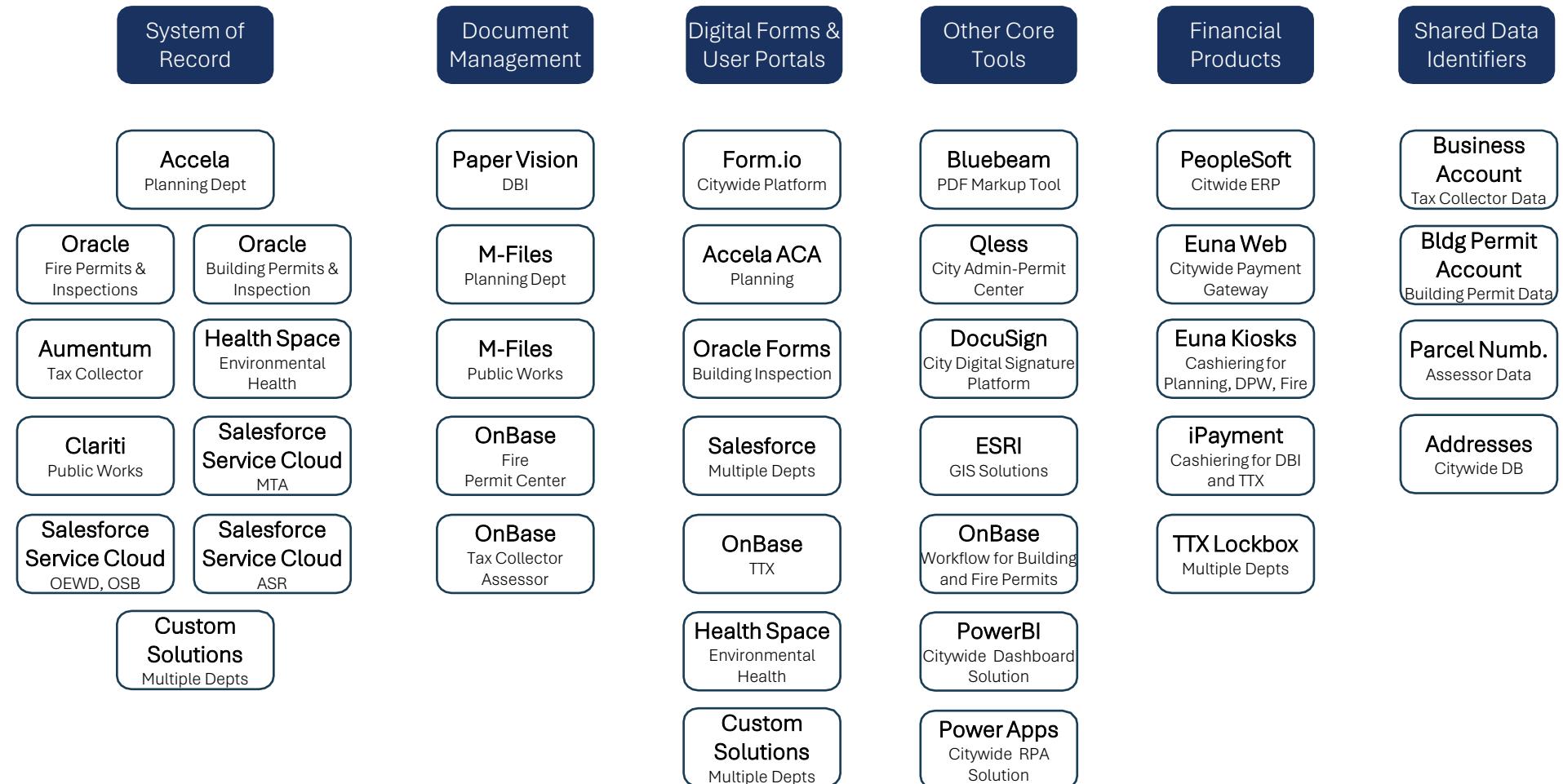
- Lack of clear guidance on how apply for permits
- No central intake portal to submit information
- Multiple forms, requirements, and payment systems

- No clear timelines or status updates
- No ability to plan and predict for next steps

- 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

# ...And the fragmented permitting technology landscape is a big part of the problem



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

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## 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

## 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

## 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

## 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 businesses with a first wave of improvements starting in February 2026

### Working list of permits for Phase I

- Fire-only construction permits:  
**Sprinklers & Alarms**
- **Fire Operational** permits
- **Over the Counter** Doors, Windows, Siding, Reroofing
- **Special Events**
- **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 will deliver the key improvements that Fire customers and staff have been seeking for years

Improvement	Impact
<b>Online permit applications</b>	✓ Offers simple, convenient option for customers
<b>Integrated Citywide system</b>	✓ Enables staff to collaborate and streamline reviews with other Departments ✓ Provides customers with faster decisions
<b>Simple user experience</b>	✓ Saves time for staff and customers
<b>Modern software that stays up to date</b>	✓ Provides San Francisco with state-of-the-art technology ✓ Keeps software up to date with legislative and policy changes
<b>Better data and analytics</b>	✓ Unlocks opportunities for performance improvement and continuous improvement ✓ Keeps software up to date with legislative and policy changes
<b>Faster permit processing capabilities</b>	✓ Shortens timelines for San Franciscans to take on key economic revitalization projects, such as building housing and opening restaurants and businesses ✓ Increases fees and permitting revenues for Fire Department

# 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.