



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

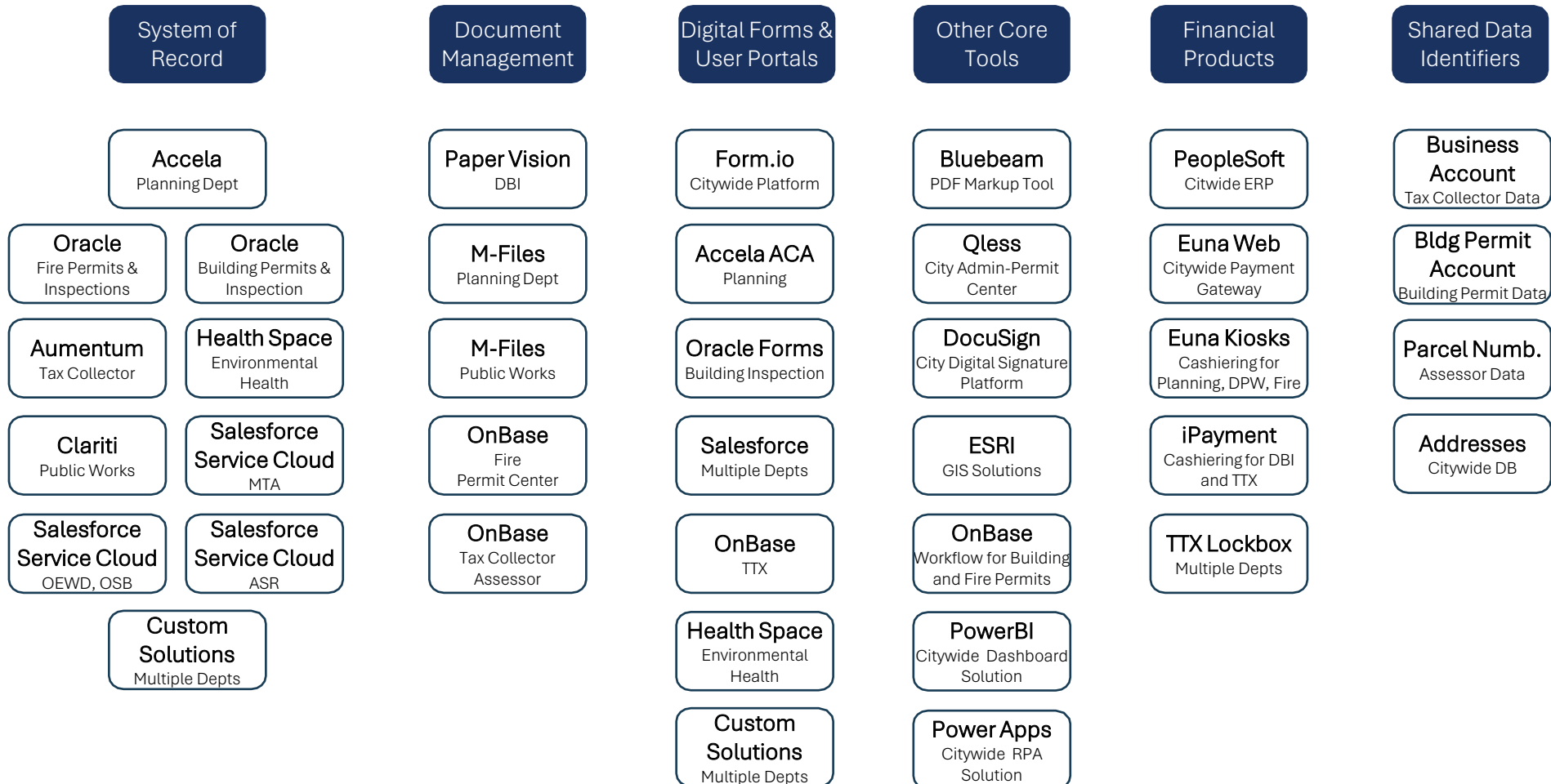
- Lack of clear guidance on how apply for permits
- No central intake portal to submit information
- Multiple forms, requirements, and payment systems

- 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

I'm a customer who does not know how to apply for a permit and get my project approved

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

My application has fallen into a black hole of City bureaucracy

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

The process is slow, and I am losing time and money

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

The system is not getting any better

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
Online permit applications	✓ Offers simple, convenient option for customers
Integrated Citywide system	✓ Enables staff to collaborate and streamline reviews with other Departments ✓ Provides customers with faster decisions
Simple user experience	✓ Saves time for staff and customers
Modern software that stays up to date	✓ Provides San Francisco with state-of-the-art technology ✓ Keeps software up to date with legislative and policy changes
Better data and analytics	✓ Unlocks opportunities for performance improvement and continuous improvement ✓ Keeps software up to date with legislative and policy changes
Faster permit processing capabilities	✓ 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.