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To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)
Date: 6/8/2022 1:24:02 PM
Subject: [Revised: Upcoming News Release: Permit Task Force achieves progress after one year \(June 8, 2022\)](#)

Dear Mayor and Council,

Following your approval and amendment of the Permit Task Force Council Report yesterday, I am writing to inform you that the City shortly will be issuing the below news release. This replaces the earlier version shared with you late yesterday afternoon.

Best,
Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

Permit Task Force maintains steady progress after one year

The City's Permitting Task Force has continued its progress towards reducing permit and licence wait times over the past year, despite a historic high number of new permit and licence applications that doubled between May 2021 and May 2022.

Staff have addressed the application backlogs and are now processing more than 35% more applications across all permitting streams compared to May 2021 through a number of process improvements made over the past year.

While steady progress has been made, there are still a number of areas to improve, including reducing the wait times for single family home, duplexes and laneway applications.

However, now that staff have processed the surge in permit and license applications from 2021, homeowners, home builders and businesses can expect wait times to continue to improve with faster turnarounds for applicants, and will continue to report back on progress through the Task Force.

The latest Task Force improvements are:

- ☐ **Businesses** can now expect to receive their business licence in as little as six weeks, compared to 16 weeks last year.
- ☐ **Homeowners and businesses** can now expect to receive a permit for low-complexity renovations in as little as two weeks.

Key improvements over the past year

- ☐ Commercial renovations are two weeks faster per application

- ❑ Applicants are contacted within two-three business days of their application
- ❑ Reduced requirements for many businesses changing a space or occupancy, with permits issued 8-16 weeks sooner
- ❑ Commercial spaces can be subdivided into multiple suites without expensive building improvements
- ❑ The City has introduced the ability to pay online, check application status online, and download permits electronically

Next steps

Over the next two years, staff will build on the many improvements made to date, and undertake an extensive review of the Development Permit process.

Staff have been directed to assess the implications of guaranteed permitting timelines, including automatic approval or a fee waiver program, and report back to Council in 2023.

To continue making improvements, Council has extended removing extra conditions and reviews for one- and two-family homes in specific neighbourhoods for another 24 months.

Staff will also conduct a comprehensive review of the Protection of Trees Bylaw, following a 12-month pilot of its partial relaxation. The maximum tree size permitted for removal without a permit will revert back to 20cm, and lessons learned from the pilot will inform the review.

More information and a complete list of actions to [streamline the permit and licensing process](#) is available online.

Background

In a motion in spring 2021, [City Council made improving wait times and clearing the application backlog a priority](#) and established the City Manager's task force with a dedicated \$1 million dollars in funding.

- ❑ In June 2021, [Council approved an initial set of regulatory and policy changes](#).
- ❑ In September 2021, Council approved a '[ground-breaking](#)' improvement to help build social and rental housing faster.
- ❑ In October 2021, [Council approved additional actions to support business recovery](#).
- ❑ In March 2022, Staff advise Council that [Permitting Task Force changes speed up application process](#).

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