

From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
Date: 6/13/2023 12:41:01 PM
Subject: News release: Permitting Improvements (June 13, 2023)

Good afternoon Mayor and Council,

I apologize that we did not provide you with an advance copy of the City's news release regarding the latest permitting improvements that were reviewed in your meeting this morning. Due to an internal miscommunication, we inadvertently issued a draft version that did not incorporate the additional direction from Council regarding 3-3-3-1 targets.

As you heard from the team this morning, the release focuses on ongoing efforts to improve customer service and streamline the permitting process. The team will be direct pitching to media and sharing this work across social media, which we welcome you to amplify to your networks.

If there is anything our Communications team can provide to support you in sharing this information, please let us know.

Best,
Paul

City of Vancouver
News release
June 13, 2023

City to launch Project Requirements Exploration and eComply digital permitting tools

As part of the ongoing efforts to improve customer service and streamline the permitting process, the City of Vancouver is launching a Project Requirements Exploration Tool (PRET) and eComply. These two new digital tools will reduce staff manual review time and provide residents and businesses with confidence that their application is compliant and complete.

- PRET will allow applicants to explore and understand regulations and requirements for locations throughout Vancouver. Applicants can identify potential costs, map out timelines, and determine project feasibility — all before they pursue a potential application.
- eComply is an online design compliance check tool, developed by Archistar, an industry leading technology company. eComply will allow applicants to upload their designs and drawings, check if they meet City of Vancouver regulations, and receive a compliance report.

The City is the first in North America to partner with Archistar and improve its permitting process using this technology. The first iteration of PRET is slated to launch later this summer, while eComply's initial component will be available early next year. [Watch a sneak peek of eComply.](#)

"Embracing technology for permitting will have a huge impact for Vancouver's residents and businesses," said Mayor Ken Sim. "Applicants will receive feedback on any items that are incomplete, missing or not permitted so they can resolve it before they submit their application."

The complexity of some applications can result in multiple rounds of manual review between staff and

applicants. The interactive PRET and eComply will help to reduce this complexity.

“Our partnership with the City of Vancouver will help Vancouver residents and businesses to assess land potential at the click of a button,” said Dr. Ben Coorey, Archistar Chief Executive. “Anyone will be to instantly pre-check their plans for compliance, ultimately making the approval process faster, easier, and cheaper.”

Simplifying regulations

“On average, more than 70% of the processing time for laneway and low-density homes remains outside of the City with applicants,” said Andrea Law, General Manager, Development, Buildings and Licensing. “To help applicants, we continue to simplify policies and guidelines so the application process is less complex.”

To help make it easier to build new housing across Vancouver, the City is:

- Exploring options to simplify and align existing regulations across all low-density (RS) zones by removing 17 design and administrative requirements so housing can be built faster.
- Streamlining engineering review requirements in all development permit (DP) applications, including removing 20 per cent of conditions and moving an additional 25 per cent to risk-based review.
- Proposing shifting rainwater management requirements from the DP application process to the plumbing permit for new complex buildings in Vancouver so that applicants begin work on their projects sooner.
- Providing in-person permitting info sessions at the Development and Building Services Centre for applicants to meet with staff about their specific project.
- Creating supports to help applicants quickly pay and resolve deficiencies so their application can be processed.

“Feedback from some members of late have noted improvements on permit processing with one member citing a turnaround for comments from City of Vancouver in less than 16 days,” said Ron Rapp, CEO of the Homebuilders Association Vancouver. “With the recent [announcements](#) from the Province the need to develop effective and positive working relationships between the City and our members is more important than ever.”

While staff prepare to launch the PRET and eComply, applicants are encouraged to [book an appointment with the Services Centre](#) to address any questions or concerns before submitting their application. Future info sessions for those interested in learning more about commercial and residential renovations, laneway homes, secondary suites, and mutiplexes will be available in early fall.

Business licensing

To support businesses and simplify licensing in Vancouver, staff are undergoing a review to update and modernize the business licensing by-law. Last month Council approved streamlining [nearly 600 business license types into 88](#). Businesses with existing licensing will be transferred into their new license type for their 2025 licence renewal.

Building on the success of the online pilot for home-based businesses launched earlier this year, effective June 30, commercial and out-of-town businesses can apply, track, pay, and receive their business licence electronically.

More Information

View the complete list of the City’s actions to help [improve the permitting process](#).

Media contact:
Civic Engagement and Communications
media@vancouver.ca

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Snw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.