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City of Vancouver Achieves Major Milestones in Permitting Improvement Program

VANCOUVER, BC – This week, City Council received a detailed report from City staff outlining significant progress toward its ambitious 3-3-3-1 Permit Approval Framework goals. This latest development highlights Council's continued efforts to eliminate the home permitting backlog to build more homes faster throughout Vancouver.

In June 2023, Council formally adopted the 3-3-3-1 framework to streamline permitting approval processes: 3 days for a renovation, 3 weeks for detached home, 3 months for multi-family and mid-rise projects, and 1 year for high-rise and large-scale projects. These ambitious targets signal Council's commitment to speeding up the delivery of housing across the city.

“Permitting backlogs has been a long-standing challenge for our city,” said Mayor Ken Sim. “By embracing new technology, like AI, and continuously seeking ways to improve, we’re not only making significant strides towards meeting our 3-3-3-1 goals, but also making Vancouver a more efficient and attractive place to live and do business.”

Highlights from today's report include meeting the 3-day target for Residential Renovation Fast Track permits, which account for 63% of all home renovation permits. Approvals for detached homes, including laneway homes and duplexes, have also seen significant improvements. Through the use of the new Project Requirements Exploration Tool (PRET), laneway home permits are being issued 60% faster, now taking 13 weeks compared to 32 weeks in 2023. Duplex permits are being processed 25% faster, signalling a promising future for increased missing middle housing throughout our city.

To address permitting backlogs, the City has leveraged AI and other technologies to streamline processes and enhance service delivery. This includes the 3-3-3-1 Permitting Dashboard, which tracks progress toward these targets with key metrics, especially for simpler permits. Additionally, the ePlan system, now encompassing all application types, has significantly reduced manual processes and improved overall efficiency.

“We’re thrilled to see this significant movement towards our 3-3-3-1 targets,” said Mayor Ken Sim. “We know there is much more work to be done, but the reduction in wait times and adoption of innovative tools signal that we’re on the right path.”

Looking ahead, several initiatives are on the horizon to further accelerate the permitting process, including the eComply pilot, which will help applicants better understand regulations to correctly submit their applications from the start. These advancements not only address longstanding challenges but also pave the way for a more streamlined and efficient permitting system that supports Vancouver’s growth and success for generations to come.

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