



COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Date: June 30, 2026
Contact: Karen Levitt
Contact No.: 604 873 7251
RTS No.: N/A
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: July 6, 2026

TO: Mayor’s Budget Task Force Implementation Oversight Committee
FROM: City Manager
SUBJECT: Final Report of the Mayor’s Budget Task Force Implementation Oversight Committee

Recommendations

- A. THAT the Mayor’s Budget Task Force Implementation Oversight Committee receive the Final Report of the Mayor’s Budget Task Force Implementation Oversight Committee contained in Appendix A of this report for information.
- B. THAT the Committee recommend Council receive this report for information.

Purpose and Executive Summary

This report presents the Final Report to the Mayor’s Budget Task Force Implementation Oversight Committee that shows progress against each of the seventeen recommendations contained in the [2024 Mayor’s Budget Task Force Report](#).

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

On January 23, 2024, Council received the Mayor’s Budget Task Force Report for information, and convened the Budget Task Force Implementation Oversight Committee ... *“to explore the recommendations outlined in the Task Force Report ... and bring recommendations for implementation back to Council”*

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

* * * * *

APPENDIX A
FINAL REPORT OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER
MAYOR'S BUDGET TASK FORCE IMPLEMENTATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Prepared by the City Manager's Office

This report provides an overview of key actions the City has undertaken and outcomes achieved between 2024 and 2026 that relate to the seventeen recommendations contained in the [2024 Mayor's Budget Task Force Report](#).

CONTENTS

- Recommendation no. 1 – Define core services
- Recommendation no. 2 – Manage spending beyond the City's core jurisdiction
- Recommendation no. 3 – Collaboration protocols with other levels of government
- Recommendation no. 4 – Modernise the City's funding model
- Recommendation no. 5 – Create a Council Finance Committee
- Recommendation no. 6 – Adopt a long-term financial planning horizon/ shorter budget cycle
- Recommendation no. 7 – Drive Council priorities through performance indicators
- Recommendation no. 8 – Implement a City-wide continuous improvement program
- Recommendation no. 9 – Centralised functional leadership and resource sharing
- Recommendation no. 10 – Regionalised approach to procurement
- Recommendation no. 11 – Proactively manage absenteeism
- Recommendation no. 12 – Leverage technology to optimise operations
- Recommendation no. 13 – Implement a rigorous capital asset management framework
- Recommendation no. 14 – Optimise the City's Capital Fund portfolio
- Recommendation no. 15 – Enhance value generated by the Property Endowment Fund
- Recommendation no. 16 – Optimise land use and transform social housing operating model
- Recommendation no. 17 – Create an Office of Strategic Partnerships
- Attachment 1 – City of Vancouver Permitting and Licensing Process Improvements, 2022 to 2026

Recommendation no. 1 – Define core services

“In the short term, develop and approve a policy that defines the City of Vancouver’s core jurisdiction. The policy should explain how decisions and investments may be made in respect to matters outside of the core jurisdiction to ensure that such approvals are made only after the City’s interests have been carefully considered.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Evaluation report.** Staff delivered a report, “*Context for Defining Core Municipal Services*,” to the Task Force in September 2024. Key elements included (a) a jurisdictional analysis of seven Canadian and one US city, finding that none have a formal definition of “core municipal services,” and (b) a list of key services added to City budget over past two decades, based upon the November 2022 memo from CFO to Council. Following this report, the Task Force opted to not pursue the development of a formal policy to define the City’s core jurisdiction.

Recommendation no. 2 – Manage spending beyond the City’s core jurisdiction

“If Council is considering a decision in respect of a service or investment that is outside of the scope of Vancouver’s core jurisdiction as set out in a Council policy, then it must undertake a rigorous evaluation and due diligence exercise in advance of approval. This could include sufficient analysis related to program alternatives, benefits and risks, cost implications, long-term funding strategies, and service capacity limits.”

Once Council decides, it must implement special monitoring and controls to ensure full accountability and transparency. If Council does adopt a policy that outlines its core jurisdiction, complete with appropriate controls to ensure full information and monitoring, we expect a reduced number of decisions that extend beyond the City’s core jurisdiction. In cases where decisions do extend beyond the City’s core jurisdiction, we expect that they will be accompanied with enough discipline to ensure an offsetting source of funding or managed spending.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Evaluation and due diligence to inform resource allocation decisions.** While the Task Force did not advance the development of a policy that defines the City of Vancouver’s core jurisdiction per Recommendation no. 1, much of the work proposed in Recommendation no. 2 has been implemented. Staff provide to Council on an ongoing basis the referenced analysis and due diligence in support of capital and operating funding allocation decision-making. Of particular note:
 - *Enhanced capital planning process.* In service of developing the upcoming 2027-2030 Capital Plan, the City’s longstanding capital planning process has been redesigned. As compared to past years, the new approach incorporates a much greater focus on program alternatives, benefits and risks, cost implications, long-term funding strategies, and delivery/service capacity considerations.
 - *Explicit workload prioritisation.* In March 2026, Council approved a first-of-its-kind report entitled “*Outstanding Council Motions Update*,” that directed staff to pause/postpone a set of in-queue work, in order to ensure that staff resources were aligned to current-day highest priority work. Much of the work that was paused/postponed through this report is being addressed through related City

initiatives, or is awaiting funding or action from senior governments or other public agencies. Alongside these reprioritisations that were specific to outstanding Council motions, the City Leadership Team is advancing efforts to prioritise other work to ensure more generally that the City's services, projects, initiatives, policies and regulations are aligned with current priorities.

- *Supporting Council decision-making.* When providing Council feedback, e.g., concerning potential future Council-led member motions, or via the weekly distribution of staff responses to Council questions, staff as a matter of consistent practice explicitly identify proposed areas of work/services/initiatives that are outside of the City's jurisdiction, and recommend Council consider advocacy to the appropriate level of government rather than direct investment or involvement.

Recommendation no. 3 – Collaboration protocols with other levels of government

“Establish a set of clear protocols for collaboration between the City of Vancouver and regional, provincial, and federal governments, as well as First Nations. These protocols should be specific to Vancouver, recognizing its economic importance and unique needs as Canada’s largest port and Western Canada’s metro-centre. The protocols should set consultation expectations, provide an ongoing and standardized discussion forum for decisionmakers, and address approval processes for decisions that could affect other jurisdictions and Nations.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Intergovernmental protocol.** An established City of Vancouver intergovernmental relations protocol is in place, and guides the City's interactions with other governments.
2. **Many platforms for intergovernmental communication/collaboration.** The City regularly interacts with provincial and federal governments through bilateral conversations and project-specific work, as well as through forums such as the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), the Lower Mainland Local Governance Association, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), and the Big City Mayors' Caucus. Recent notable examples include:
 - *FIFA World Cup 26.* The FIFA World Cup 26 event is being delivered via a unique multi-party collaboration and governance model, with the City, the Province of BC, PavCo, and YVR serving as the primary hosting partners. This collaborative model takes the place of a single special purpose event delivery vehicle (such as VANOC for the 2010 Winter Games). Alongside these primary hosting partners, there are approximately 100 public agencies that have been involved in planning for and delivering the event – with contributions spanning from safety and security to transportation and mobility to health services to power supply.
 - *Senakw Services Agreement.* Staff are delivering on the 2022 City of Vancouver-Squamish Nation Senakw Services Agreement, that articulates how the City will deliver services and amenities to the new Senakw development that is sited on Squamish land near the south end of the Burrard Bridge, and each parties' respective related rights and obligations.
3. **Indigenous relations referrals process.** The established City of Vancouver Indigenous Relations Referrals Process guides the City's interactions with the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh nations. This process includes a clear mutual understanding of engagement expectations, leverages standardised templates for requesting/undertaking

intergovernmental referrals, and involves monthly coordination meetings with staff from each nation. Over the past year or so, this process has been further refined through improved information tracking/reporting, and the introduction of an online real-time referrals portal.

4. **UNDRIP Task Force.** The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) Intergovernmental Task Force was established in 2021. It is comprised of elected officials from the City of Vancouver and the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh nations, and is supported by the UNDRIP Action Group, comprised of staff from all four organisations. This group continues to advance the work that is laid out in the June 2024 City of Vancouver UNDRIP 2024-2028 Action Plan.

Recommendation no. 4 – Modernise the City’s funding model

“Use empirical evidence to demonstrate the critical importance of modernizing the municipal funding model. This effort should advocate for practical redistribution of taxes based on principles of equity. The City should create formal controls and reporting structures that isolate and track the following data to support its advocacy efforts:

- *Disproportionate contributions to provincial revenue by City of Vancouver taxpayers*
- *Services absorbed by the City of Vancouver that could be the jurisdiction of other levels of government*
- *Lack of revenue contribution from senior levels of government compared to other urban metropolitan municipalities in Canada*
- *Economic contributions to the wider economy stemming from the City of Vancouver*

... Over the long-term, and using evidence-based advocacy, the City and other levels of government have an opportunity to modernize the tax system and ensure the effective delivery and funding of public services for the taxpayers of Vancouver.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Non-tax revenues.** Under direction from both City Council and the Board of Parks and Recreation, the City has substantially increased revenues from sources other than property taxes over the past several years. These increased revenue sources have included a new sponsorship and naming rights program, and the delivery of market rental housing on City land.
 - Revenues from new non-tax sources has increased by \$40 million budgeted in 2026 as compared to 2023 actuals.
 - The Property Endowment Fund dividend contribution to the City’s operating budget increased from \$9 million in 2022 to \$23 million in 2026.
2. **Advocacy for changes to funding municipal growth.** City is participating in the Federation of Canadian Municipalities [Municipal Growth Framework initiative](#), which seeks to secure sources for funding cities’ growth other than charges associated with new construction.

3. **Advocacy for a regional infrastructure plan.** City staff are participating in efforts to advocate for Metro Vancouver to lead the development of a regional infrastructure plan to support housing delivery, supported by a viable financial strategy.

Recommendation no. 5 – Create a Council Finance Committee

“Appoint a Finance Committee composed of Council members with financial expertise and a strong interest in budgetary matters. This committee would report to Council and engage fully with staff in all aspects of the budget process to ensure that Council’s priorities and directions are appropriately reflected. The Committee and staff would be jointly responsible for briefing Council in advance of the budget approval process to ensure that all Council members are confident about the budgetary decisions that had been made, along with the financial and service implications of those decisions. In upholding the Vancouver Charter’s requirements that the Council provide budgetary directive in public forums, the Committee would act as a consistent intermediary between Council and City staff, where all decisions related to budgetary matters would remain reserved for Council Chambers in public.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. This recommendation was not implemented by City Council.

Recommendation no. 6 – Adopt a long-term financial planning horizon/ shorter budget cycle

“Adopt a four-year rolling budgetary plan to ensure that Council, staff, and budget outcomes are aligned to the City’s long-term priorities. This plan should integrate with existing budgetary processes and require the same level of Council engagement and diligence as is necessary for the development of the annual operating budget.

The City should also look to execute a more concise budget schedule to improve budget quality, including improved financial analysis, training, decision-making support, and the efficient use of staff resources. When built upon solid principles of cost and risk management and asset allocation, a shorter budget development process can yield a budget produced more quickly, yet without compromising quality.

The above recommendations should be incorporated into the Budget Policy document which Council uses to govern and guide the budget process.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Cost-savings and efficiencies.** In 2025 and 2026, the City Manager’s Office and senior executive have focused on the development and implementation of “back to basics” budgets, which were developed through detailed reviews of all budget lines in order to identify efficiency opportunities, while generally maintaining front-line service levels. For 2026, the operating budget was reduced by \$120 million, which resulted in a 0% property tax increase in this year.
2. **Four-year rolling budget planning.** Over recent years, staff have developed a four-year rolling budget outlook to inform budget planning, and to use as a communication tool with staff, Council and the public.

3. **Driver-based budgeting.** Over the past year, the City's GM, Finance and Supply Chain has initiated a move toward cost- and revenue-driver based budgeting, starting with parks, recreation and permitting service areas.
4. **Financial planning transformation.** Over the past two years, the City's Financial Planning and Analysis team has implemented meaningful improvements to the City's budgeting, forecasting and reporting processes, leveraging recent substantive updates to the City's SAP enterprise software. There have been many benefits arising from this work, including:
 - a more efficient, cost-effective budget development process for the 2025 and 2026 budget cycles, through elimination of manual tasks and greater staff self-serve processes,
 - end-to-end budget development process shortened from 7 weeks to 3 weeks, freeing up very large staff contingents in both Finance and operating departments to dedicate this time to high priority work, and
 - the establishment of an enhanced position control process enabled by the April 2026 commissioning of a modernised SAP human resources information system, that is anticipated to drive significant, sustained annual cost-savings.
5. **Capital planning and delivery processes.** As noted under Recommendation no. 2, staff have recently redesigned the City's end-to-end capital planning process, and this new process is being used to develop the upcoming 2027-2030 Capital Plan. This new approach incorporates a greater focus on program alternatives, benefits and risks, cost implications, long-term funding strategies, and delivery/service capacity considerations. All of this results in a process that is markedly more robust, efficient and agile, that ultimately leads to better-informed and data-supported capital funding allocation decisions.

Recommendation no. 7 – Drive Council priorities through performance indicators

“Council and staff must agree on a set of performance measures that will be used directly for service planning, budgeting, and performance monitoring. The chosen performance measures must include cost-of-service metrics to ensure that resources are used efficiently, and departments are accountable for controlling spending. These performance measures should be agreed upon as part of the budget process to form an executive-level ‘dashboard’ for decision-making and monitoring.

The performance measures should be regularly reviewed and updated by both Council and staff. As the annual budget is adjusted quarterly, the performance measures should be reviewed and evaluated on a similar timeline to ensure the goals and measures they set out are integrated into the City budgetary and planning processes.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Metrics to inform business unit management.** The members of the City's executive management team and each of their leadership teams use a centrally-created dashboard which provides current data concerning operational, financial and human resources that is tailored to each manager's specific lines of service. This dashboard is updated quarterly.
2. **Data-driven decision-making.** The City's management and staff currently use a wide array of metrics to manage operations, which vary horizontally across business units, and vertically among executive, management, technical and operational decision-makers. One such set of metrics is the City's service metrics, which are published annually in the City's

Budget Book. The City's Chief Strategy Officer has initiated initiative to update the City's approach to metrics and data-driven decision-making, with phased implementation anticipated through 2026/27.

3. **Cost-of-service metrics.** Related to the discussion of driver-based budgeting in Recommendation no. 6, the City's GM, Finance and Supply Chain is leading work currently underway to develop a robust set of cost-of-service metrics related to the parks, recreation and permitting lines of service.

Recommendation no. 8 – Implement a City-wide continuous improvement program

“Formalize the Six-Sigma Lean Process program and implement it City-wide. This program should be championed by senior City and Council leaders (i.e., the City Manager and Mayor), and include a broad-based team including labour leaders (i.e., union representatives). The program should follow a rigorous application of the CIP methodology, and include considerations for the following:

- *Development of performance targets, monitoring, and rewards consistent with the aforementioned performance measure recommendations.*
- *Reward and recognition of staff who embrace and promote practical change, through a non-financial incentive program that may include various forms of recognition, as deemed appropriate.*
- *Regular integration and reporting to Council, enabling consistent monitoring and oversight of progress and priorities.*
- *Leveraging evidence-based decision-making through the use of process optimization models for delivery of City services, such as refuse collection.”*

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Continuous improvement centre of excellence.** In 2024, the City's continuous process improvement and other previously disparate functions were consolidated into a single department under the City's Chief Strategy Officer, creating the new Strategy and Project Support Office – resulting in an enhanced centralised corporate focus on efficiency and operational/customer service effectiveness.
2. **Refined continuous improvement program.** Work is being led by the Chief Strategy Officer, working with the City Manager's Office, to develop an enhanced continuous improvement program that will reflect much of these Task Force recommendations.
3. **Staff training.** Since 2024, 109 City staff members have completed Six Sigma Yellow Belt training, 18 have completed Agile training, and 138 staff have attended a series of Engineering Services business improvement knowledge sessions. Since 2024, Engineering Services have delivered eleven lean/agile business transformation projects.

Recommendation no. 9 – Centralised functional leadership and resource sharing

“Continue to promote efficiencies across departments, with a renewed focus on centralizing functional leadership and interdepartmental resource sharing and collaboration. For example, centralizing lease management leadership could give the City stronger negotiating power across all departments, significantly reduce costs, and create efficiencies in the use of space across City departments.

This approach would enable departments to better coordinate people in other departments for certain tasks, where appropriate and when they are performing similar functions, to save costs.

Similarly, the City may promote interdepartmental collaboration by creating a centralized resourcing program that identifies specialized resources across departments, and matches needs with existing resources within the City. For example, other departments should use engineering expertise inherent in the Engineering Department to fulfill their respective mandates. This approach promotes knowledge sharing, cost-effectiveness, and efficient project execution.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Strategy and Project Support Office.** The City’s Strategy and Project Support Office was established in 2024, consolidating a number of previously-disparate corporate functions – including strategic business advisory, performance measurement, continuous improvement, and change management – under the Chief Strategy Officer, resulting in operating savings of approximately \$2 million pa.
2. **Capital delivery project management.** Staff have significantly enhanced capital delivery project management effectiveness/efficiency in the Board of Parks and Recreation and the Real Estate, Environment, and Facilities Management department, by leveraging the expertise of the internal Engineering Services Strategy and Standards Branch.
3. **Parks and recreation operations.** As part of the 2026 budget process, Park Board staff identified \$11 million of annual savings, through a combination of increased revenues and operational efficiencies within Park Board operations.
4. **Parks and recreation service efficiencies.** Substantial work was undertaken by the City over 2023/2024 to identify up to \$7 million in potential annual cost savings related to the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation – via operational efficiencies and resource-sharing with the City, reduced contracting, increased operational effectiveness, and cost avoidance (noting that some of these projected savings opportunities have not yet been validated by the Park Board staff). Staff are advancing initiatives to realise some of these savings.
5. **Integrating corporate functions into operations.** A number of previously single-focus functions have been integrated into regular business practices across the organisation with resultant cost-savings, as these offices have achieved their original objectives of building awareness, developing practices and modelling new behaviours across the organisation ... this includes the areas of equity, older persons, environmental sustainability, and the music sector.

Recommendation no. 10 – Regionalised approach to procurement

“Investigate the opportunity to collaborate with neighbouring municipalities on the procurement of significant items and services. The development of a centralized regional procurement office would leverage economies of scale, streamline contracts, and align prices across the region for the benefit of all municipalities and ultimately their residents. The City should take a leadership role in developing such an office and ensuring that targeted efficiencies be set, measured, and objectively reported to Council.”

This office may also explore opportunities to coordinate collective bargaining and develop a standardized compensation framework for municipal staff across various union agreements. This initiative should look to create consistency across the region, enhance equity and fairness for employees, and realize the potential for greater efficiencies in the delivery of services.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Fuel and lubricant purchasing group.** The City is a member of the BC Petroleum Product Buying Group, comprised of Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island municipalities and other government agencies, and in 2025 spent approximately \$9.3 million through this channel. In 2025 the City led a market call for fuels for the buying group, that culminated in a contract with a new supplier which will result in \$600,000 in annual cost savings for the City.
2. **Provincial contracts.** The City regularly leverages the Province of BC’s Goods and Services Catalogue, which allows the City to streamline public procurement processes, e.g., for office supplies, Oracle technical support, a Microsoft enterprise agreement, and IT industry intelligence services. In 2025, approximately \$10.4 million of the City’s purchases were made through this channel, resulting in substantial cost savings and procurement effort/time efficiencies.
3. **Canoe Procurement Group.** City is a member of [Canoe Procurement Group of Canada](#), one of the largest public sector buying groups in the country – comprised of over 5,000 public and not-for-profit organizations, In 2025, the City purchased excavating equipment valued at approximately \$110,000 through this channel.
4. **Purchasing forums.** The City is a member of the Metro Vancouver Municipal Purchasing Group, the BC Procurement Services Branch Procurement Community of Practice, as well as several other nationwide organizations; these are regular meetings of procurement professionals to exchange best practices and benchmarks, and to share opportunities.

Recommendation no. 11 – Proactively manage absenteeism

“Implement a strategic initiative to proactively manage absenteeism. This should include a number of interrelated activities (for example, ensuring holistic employee supports are in place, updating safety and health programs, and implementing time-tracking, etc.), and should include labour leadership working with department leaders in developing and implementing the necessary changes.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Decrease in workplace injuries.** From 2022 to 2025, workplace injuries among City staff have decreased by approximately 39%.
2. **Focused absenteeism management.** Targeted efforts to decrease absenteeism rate are currently focused on the Vancouver Fire and Rescue Service (VFRS) and the Board of Parks and Recreation. These efforts are being collaboratively led by departmental leadership, Human Resources leadership, and the Office of the Chief Safety Officer. Over

the past several years, VFRS has created a dedicated attendance management program, and increased focus on supporting cancer detection/reduction and mental health supports for firefighters. As a result of the foregoing efforts, from 2022 to 2025 absenteeism rates within the VFRS department have declined by 18%. A dedicated Attendance Management Advisor has been put in place to support the Park Board in advancing progress in this area.

3. **Absenteeism management.** The Chief Human Resources Officer stewards a robust attendance management program that supports leadership across all departments in managing absenteeism due to illnesses and injuries. The City's absenteeism management program and WorkSafeBC claims management program provide executives with reliable monthly data, enable timely access to modified work for employees that have been on longer-term sick leaves, and generally support sustainable return-to-work outcomes for these employees.

Recommendation no. 12 – Leverage technology to optimise operations

“The City should investigate the benefits of significantly increasing the speed of adoption of advanced technology to improve its business processes, building on existing initiatives. A comprehensive approach to unlocking this opportunity would include assessment and training for workforce readiness, upskilling initiatives, documenting processes, undertaking cost benefit analyses, and benchmarking against global best practices.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Licensing process.** Digital transformation of the City's licensing process over the past three years has substantially enhanced customer experience and staff efficiency, resulting in reduced work backlogs, shorter processing timelines, and higher customer satisfaction, and progress in this space is ongoing.
 - 86% of all business license now renewed online.
 - Average processing times for new business licenses has decreased from over 10 days to within 1 day – a decrease over 90% (despite a 10% increase in the overall volume of licenses over the same period, from 52,000 to 57,000).
 - The advent of digital license processing allowed staff to eliminate a previous 20-week backlog, with applications for processing now assigned in the same week they are received.
 - Customers are now able to instantly download a copy of their license, replacing a manual process that used to take an average of 33 hours between the request and the fulfilment of the request.
 - The City of Vancouver is the first municipality in Canada to issue digital business licenses through the BC Wallet, enabling secure, real-time verification and more opportunities for automated service delivery.
2. **Permitting process.** Over the past three years, a number of digital tools that simplify permit application preparation and processing have been implemented, and work continues to enhance and expand this suite of tools for greater efficiency and customer service gains.
 - A new guided online application experience allows applicants to explore eligibility and understand requirements for permits, fees and sequencing for new low density housing projects (laneway homes, single-detached homes, duplexes and multiplexes) – this

portal puts valuable information into the hands of potential permit applicants, and at the same time greatly contributes to applicants' ability to submit complete and accurate applications, thereby reducing overall application process times.

- Instituted a new concurrent processing approach for development and building permits for multiplex projects, which has reduced median building permit issuance timelines by half.
 - Over the past four years, substantial progress has been made to streamline and simplify the City's permitting processes, with details contained in Attachment 1 of this report.
3. **Financial planning and HR systems.** The substantive work has been completed to leverage the City's SAP enterprise resource planning system to transform the City's budget development, management and reporting processes, through improved human resource data to support financial planning and budget decision-making. More information about these changes can be found under Recommendation no. 6.
 4. **License plate recognition.** A new AI-supported solution to digitally recognize license plates of parked vehicles was implemented 2022-2024, optimising enforcement practices for all on-street parking, resulting in greater efficiencies and increased revenue.
 5. **Garbage cart management.** In February 2024 a new customer portal was implemented to enable self-service for property owners to manage garbage and green bins, which has resulted in increased revenues and decreased delivery costs, streamlined service delivery, enhanced customer experience, and reduction in 311 calls.
 6. **Accounting work intake.** In Q3-2024, the email intake workflow for accounts receivable and accounts payable was automated using the ServiceNow platform, resulting in optimised workflows and enhanced data/metrics.
 7. **Freedom of information requests case management.** In Q2-2025, the City's Freedom of Information (FOI) case management system was automated, resulting in increased transparency and efficiency, enhanced timeliness of FOI responses. This system was updated in Q1-2026 has allowed the entire end-to-end system including request submission, fee payments, time estimates, internal record collection, and secure delivery of information packages to applicants to be automated. These changes have resulted in significantly improved service quality for the public, greater application processing efficiencies, and reduced operational risks.
 8. **AI support for knowledge workers.** In Q2-2025, AI-powered features were added to the City's Microsoft suite (M365 Copilot and TEAMS Premium), enhancing knowledge worker efficiency in many ways – such as generating documents and presentations, creating meeting summaries and action items, summarising emails and documents that require actions, providing executive briefs of large and/or complex documents, and, analysing financial trends and forecasts.
 9. **Connecting off-network workers.** In Q3-2025, a solution was implemented to address the longstanding challenge faced by City management of communicating with off-network employees (e.g., those that do not have access to a City computer or mobile phone). 2,200 such employees were provided an M365 account to connect them to the City's core information systems, allowing them to access City e-mail, newsletters and cloud-based applications. This has resulted in better team coordination and communication, employee engagement, and improved efficiencies.

10. **Urban forestry management.** In Q3-2025, the new VanTree urban forestry operations management system was commissioned, allowing staff to digitally track/manage tree assets, resulting in reduced risk for the City and for Vancouver’s citizens, and enhanced efficiencies.
11. **Route optimisation.** From 2022 to 2025, a suite of technology tools were implemented to perform vehicle route generation, analysis and optimization for a variety of City vehicles, including those used for garbage/green bin collections, public realm litter container collections, street sweeping, and snow and ice clearing services. These tools have collectively resulted in higher efficiencies and cost savings associated with fuel and drive times.
12. **Various AI-supported workstreams.** Over the past three years, the City has applied AI to a variety of workstreams to improve service delivery, operational efficiency, and decision-making.
 - *Development permit reviews.* A new digital conditions library has been put in place, to support staff groups that review land use development permit applications. This library of standard conditions has greatly simplified the permit review process. Further, with the support of AI, it has enabled the automated production of a single “prior-to letter” for applicants that articulates in one document all stipulated development permit conditions. These tools have reduced the median processing time and increased the on-time completion of application reviews. Details can be found in Attachment 1 of this report. Further gains are anticipated as the use of these tools is expanded to more internal review groups.
 - *Emergency Operations Centre situational awareness.* Implemented in Q4-2025, AI-supported tools have been put in place to enhance the City’s Emergency Operations Centre information distribution and situational awareness, resulting in a reduced need for manual monitoring of data streams, and improved operational efficiencies.
 - *Job analysis and description engine.* The City’s Job Analysis and Description Engine launched in Q4-2025 uses AI to convert position descriptions into a standardized format for input into the City’s digital hiring platform, ensuring compliance and reducing processing time by 50%.
 - *Empty Homes Tax audit automation.* Implemented in Q4-2025, the automation of the Empty Homes Tax process has resulted in streamlined compliance verification and reduced the need for manual verifications.
 - *3331 dashboard.* In November 2024 an internal dashboard to track the City’s progress toward Council’s 3331 permitting targets was put in place, leveraging AI used to organise/analyse the underlying data, thus eliminating substantial manual data processing.
13. **Point-of-sale system.** Vancouver Civic Theatres and the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation are jointly implementing an upgraded point-of-sale system developed by Vancouver-based Squirrel Systems, leveraging the company’s deep expertise in hospitality technology. This systems upgrade will deliver improved operational efficiency through integration with SAP for financial processing, reduced risk of systems interruptions and down time, and enhanced service reliability.

Recommendation no. 13 – Implement a rigorous capital asset management framework

“Establish a tailored version of a Capital Asset Management Framework to streamline decision-making and enhance financial oversight of the City’s capital plans. This framework should include a particular focus on determining appropriate service levels or standards and optimizing lifecycle costs when evaluating capital projects. In addition to providing guiding investment principles, the CAMF could also encompass the following elements:

- *Criteria for Prioritizing Capital Projects would be designed to align with the City’s strategic priorities, ensuring a cohesive approach.*
- *Standardized Service Levels established within each area would provide a uniform baseline for decision-making. If deviations occur, a comprehensive costing analysis of alternative service levels should be developed.*
- *Business Case Analysis includes integrating the full lifecycle cost of assets and analyzing the long-term financial implications.*
- *Project Execution and Governance Plans includes elements such as risk assessment and mitigation, procurement options, resource planning, and project reporting and oversight.*
- *Funding Strategy should also consider the potential need for supplemental external funding, such as from donors and sponsors, to cover costs exceeding standardized service levels.*
- *Post-Delivery Operating Strategy addresses the strategic plan for operations following project delivery.*

As part of CAMF, any capital projects exceeding a specified dollar amount should undergo a rigorous review by the newly proposed finance committee (discussed earlier in this report) before being presented to City Council. This will ensure that high-value capital projects are scrutinized and meticulously evaluated.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Capital planning improvements.** The modernised capital planning process being used to develop the 2027-2030 Capital Plan will result in greater reliance on data-based decision-making, and result in a more efficient process – taking into account both new and renewal capital projects.
2. **Standardised, data-driven service levels.** In adherence with new, provincially-mandated requirements, the City has developed the City of Vancouver Public Infrastructure Investment Framework (PIIF), that establishes service levels that are achievable within the City’s financial capacity, and will be used to inform the development of the 2027-2030 Capital Plan, as well as for Amenity Cost Charge (ACC) and Development Cost Levy (DCL) rate-setting.
3. **Capital renewal needs.** The City’s Real Estate, Environment and Facilities Management department has led the development of a robust ten-year facilities renewal plan, to be to inform capital planning.
4. **Capital delivery oversight.** In 2025, staff implemented a new, modernised capital delivery oversight process that clarifies capital delivery accountabilities, and ensure timely course-correction of off-track projects. As a result of this improved capital delivery oversight process, resulting in an improvement in capital project budget spend rates, from 70% in 2022 to 97% in 2025.

Recommendation no. 14 – Optimise the City’s Capital Fund portfolio

“Conduct a formal and comprehensive review of the Capital Fund’s asset portfolio, categorizing assets based on their strategic importance and alignment with the City’s core mandate. Then it would treat the assets in the following way:

- *Core Assets: The City should retain ownership of those assets that are critical to the City’s core mandate and long-term strategies, including essential infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer systems, parks, and emergency services facilities.*
- *Non-Core Assets: Consider private sector ownership of non-core assets, and/or private management or public-private partnerships for them, enabling the City to better prioritize resources and focus on operational excellence within core areas.*
- *Underutilized Assets: Identify underutilized assets, whether core or non-core, then sell, redevelop, or modify them, ensuring they bring the City maximum benefit.*

With over \$20 billion in assets in the Capital Fund, even a small improvement in asset use or capital efficiency could provide the City with a meaningful benefit. Moreover, the City should further explore ways to generate additional revenue from civic assets through expanding sponsorships and naming rights as will be discussed later in the Enhancing Strategic Partnerships for Greater Impact section of this report.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Strategic asset development.** Focused efforts underway to optimize the City’s Capital Fund assets, particularly through co-location and functional integration of public amenities, where feasible/appropriate.
2. **Monetisation of City’s surplus land and airspace.** Real Estate staff are advancing opportunities to generate revenues from commercial leases and market rental housing development.
3. **Partner service delivery.** Over the past several years, the City has adopted a policy of enabling community partners to own and operate public amenities/services where appropriate, which transfers responsibility for development and ownership of these assets. Notable examples include public amenities delivered by the MST Development Corporation in the Heather Lands and the Jericho Lands.

Recommendation no. 15 – Enhance value generated by the Property Endowment Fund

“Establish robust governance and operating structures to optimize and safeguard the enduring value of the PEF. Key components should encompass:

- *Mandate: Update and formalize the PEF’s mandate, outlining the fund’s vision, strategies, risk tolerance, asset mix, roles and responsibilities, target returns, and other pertinent elements.*
- *Ownership Structure: Consider transferring the PEF assets into a distinct entity earmarked for the City’s benefit. For individual assets or projects within the PEF,*

consider using special-purpose entities when involving external partners, employing varying ownership levels and financial leverage as needed.

- *Operating Structure: Ensure the availability of adequate resources essential for effective PEF management. Explore collaboration or outsourcing options with external parties, leveraging their expertise and resources. This approach will not only expedite the PEF's transformation but will ensure that the PEF's assets are clearly segregated and safeguarded for the City's benefit.*

The acceleration of the transformation of the PEF should bolster cash flows, thereby helping to narrow the City's infrastructure funding deficit while concurrently safeguarding and augmenting the PEF's overall value."

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Significantly increased PEF dividend.** The Property Endowment Fund's (PEF) dividend to City's operating budget has increased from \$9 million in 2022 to a budgeted \$23 million in 2026.
2. **Middle income housing on City land.** Created the Vancouver Housing Development Office (VHDO) in 2024, with a mandate of generating financial returns on PEF land assets through the development of market rental housing; anticipating approximately 4,200 middle-income housing units to be delivered through first five VHDO projects.
3. **PEF portfolio optimization strategy.** Substantial focus on modernising and optimising the management of the PEF, with key strategies and tactics including the following.
 - *Industrial development.* Have advanced several significant industrial acquisitions/assemblies, including the Kaslo and Broadway site.
 - *Optimising PEF leases.* Have focused on optimising PEF leases, resulting in a 22.5% increase in overall lease revenues between 2021 and 2024.
 - *Dispositions.* Have strategically sold select surplus PEF properties and strategically reinvested proceeds, with a recent example being the sale of 1004 West Broadway in 2024 for \$9.6 million, which was originally purchased for \$5.1 million in 2014.
 - *Market rental acquisitions.* PEF is currently acquiring a number of purpose-built, newly completed market rental properties that generate financial returns, as a recent example acquired a 47-unit market rental building at 41st Avenue and Main Street in January 2024, which is anticipated to generated 4.2% yield.
 - *Synergies across real estate funds.* Substantial effort has been invested in creating efficiencies and aligned opportunities across the City's various real estate portfolios – the PEF (the City's investment real estate portfolio), the Vancouver Affordable Housing Endowment Fund (VAHEF, the City's non-market housing real estate portfolio), and the City's Capital Fund (the City's civic-purpose real estate portfolio).

Recommendation no. 16 – Optimise land use and transform social housing operating model

"Optimize the land use for social housing sites to drive down per-unit costs. For example, redeveloping existing sites that are currently underdeveloped, particularly those nearing the end of their lifecycle, would be a more cost effective approach to providing more social housing units than would acquiring new land for housing projects. However, while

optimizing land use is laudable, the City will also need to manage the delicate balance between cost considerations and the importance of fostering social integration within our communities when selecting the locations for social housing sites.

Furthermore, the City should contemplate transforming its operating model by engaging professional property management firms to consolidate the building maintenance requirements of the City's portfolio of housing assets. This would help streamline operations, realizing economies of scale and improving the overall efficiency of social housing initiatives. The not-for-profit housing societies would continue to oversee the non-building maintenance aspects of the housing sites, including interfacing with tenants.

Optimizing our social housing dollars can ultimately deliver much more affordable housing to Vancouver residents."

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **VAHEF portfolio optimization strategy.** Substantial focus on optimising land use for social housing via the VAHEF, with key strategies and tactics including the following.
 - *VAHEF portfolio review.* A strategic review of all VAHEF properties for redevelopment potential has been completed for all properties with leases expiring within the next five years, and review is underway for the next tranche of properties with leases expiring within ten years.
 - *Redevelopment planning.* Initiated redevelopment planning for multiple City sites with significant redevelopment potential that are currently leased to non-profits and co-ops; as part of the delivery approach, executed a memorandum of understanding with the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC and the Community Land Trust to replace and expand co-op housing on these sites.
 - *Co-location projects.* Advancing several co-location projects that combine on the same site one or more specific civic uses with housing, which creates synergies and allows land outside of the VAHEF portfolio to be leveraged, e.g., childcare and housing at 960 East 7th Avenue, an economic hub and housing at 525 Powell Street, and a firehall, childcare and housing at 990 Beatty Street.
 - *Shovel-ready planning.* Advancing development planning for all undeveloped VAHEF sites, to ensure they are immediately ready for senior government funding once available.
 - *Alternative delivery approaches.* Exploring alternative delivery approaches for undeveloped VAHEF sites in order to advance development when senior government funding may be scarce.
 - *Strategic site acquisition.* Undertaking limited site acquisitions with a focus on properties adjacent to existing City sites, in order to improve redevelopment potential of aging City buildings, e.g., the Balmoral, firehall/housing in Mount Pleasant, and childcare/housing in Railtown.
 - *CHIP modifications.* Recalibrated the City's Community Housing Incentive Program (CHIP) that allows the City to invest in non-profit projects to deliver social housing sited on third-party-owned land, with multiple grant applications currently under review.
2. **Driving down costs.** Substantial effort has focused on driving down per-unit costs for VAHEF's existing non-market housing assets.

- *End-of-life analysis.* Through a rigorous end-of-life analyses, have identified a priority set of City-owned non-market housing to be replaced, with construction of first replacement site recently completed.
- *Ensuring non-profit lessees have the capacity to manage costs.* As co-op and non-market housing leases are being renewed, VAHEF leadership is evaluating the operating cost-effectiveness of each incumbent lessee, and where appropriate, requiring as a condition of lease renewal that the lessee forms a partnership with a scaled-up property management firm or merges with another operator.

Recommendation no. 17 – Create an Office of Strategic Partnerships

“Centralize coordination with philanthropic, business, and non-profit communities through the creation of an Office of Strategic Partnerships. This office should focus on increasing the funding for essential services while also aligning with stakeholders on shared challenges and priorities, including:

- *Naming Rights/Sponsorship Campaigns: Generate revenues by selling naming rights and running sponsorship campaigns for various City assets.*
- *Program Recognition: Allow donors to fund specific programs or initiatives over a project’s duration.*
- *Large-Scale Philanthropic Partnership Projects: Collaborate on transformative initiatives involving government, community entities, and philanthropic organizations as was the case in a recent housing project in Burnaby that includes child care spaces for women and children leaving violent situations.*
- *Website Online Portal: Establish a portal to showcase partners, individuals, and initiatives, and to facilitate crowdfunding and provide an online system for matching residents, volunteers, partners, and funders with the programs they are interested in.*
- *Ongoing Relationship Development: Foster and cultivate relationships with strategic partners and bridge intergovernmental coordination.*

The City has many opportunities to enhance its engagement with strategic partners through targeted campaigns and comprehensive strategies that are aligned with Council’s strategic priorities. This strategy may also include investigating infrastructure delivery through private-public partnerships.”

Responses/key achievements, 2024 to 2026

1. **Sponsorships and naming rights revenues.** Have established the City’s first-ever dedicated sponsorship and naming rights function, with TTG Canada (now SponsorPulse) engaged as the City’s sponsorship agent, an updated Council-approved Sponsorship and Sponsorship Naming Rights Policy approved by Council in October 2024, and the first tranche of sponsorship revenues anticipated in 2026.
2. **Donations.** The Sponsorship and Sponsorship Naming Rights Policy updated in 2024 allows for both commercial and philanthropic naming rights, and consideration of the latter is currently being incorporated into some of the City’s large capital projects underway.
3. **Advertising.** Over the past three years, the City has advanced a number of initiatives that will generate new advertising revenues for the City and for key partners.

- a. For the first time in over two decades, the City has gone to market to secure a street furniture provider; it is anticipated that this new contract will generate substantially increased advertising revenues for the City.
 - b. In 2026, Council approved regulations that will allow a limited number of large format digital billboards on the City's street rights-of-way.
 - c. In 2026, Council has approved regulations that will allow for three large format digital billboards on PNE-Hastings Park land.
4. **Office of Strategic Partnerships.** As activity in the sponsorship, advertising, naming rights and donations space increases, the optimal staff structure and need for a standalone office will be evaluated.

**ATTACHMENT 1
CITY OF VANCOUVER PERMITTING AND
LICENSING PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS, 2022 TO 2026**



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager

MEMORANDUM

June 15, 2026

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: City Leadership Team
Donny van Dyk, City Manager
Jason Twa, City Clerk
Mellisa Morphy, Acting Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Karen Levitt
Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: 3331 Update: Permitting and Licensing Process Improvements, 2022 to 2026

RTS #: N/A

Purpose

This memo provides an update to Council concerning achievements since 2022 and work underway to improve the City's permitting and licensing processes and customer experience. The last update on this topic was delivered to Council in December 2025.

Background

Staff initiated work to improve the City's permitting and licensing processes and customer experience in 2021, and in June 2023 Council adopted the "3331 Permit Approval Framework," which established the following targets:

- **Target A. Home renovations.** Three days to approve home renovation permits
- **Target B. Detached homes.** Three weeks to approve single-family home and townhouse permits
- **Target C. Multi-family and mid-rise homes.** Three months to approve permits for professionally designed multi-family and mid-rise projects where existing zoning is already in place
- **Target D. Highrise and largescale projects.** One year to approve permits for a high-rise or large-scale project

Progress to date

Since this work started, substantial progress has been to address the City's various permitting backlogs, and to make permitting simpler, easier and faster. Across all time-to-issue metrics pertaining to the City's permitting issuance are significantly faster now than they were in 2022.

A substantial reduction in the number of required regulations, studies, and reports have made permitting processes simpler, and a wide range of digital and operational improvements have made the application process easier.

While important gains have been achieved there is still much more work to be done, and focused cross-departmental permitting improvement efforts are continuing.

Customer feedback

The City has received substantial positive feedback from permitting and licensing applicants concerning improved processing times and customer experience, with a couple of examples shared below.

- *“Thank you for giving me the opportunity to recognize several members of the City’s team that have been exceptionally helpful and responsive over the past couple of years. My Company just completed a multi-family infill under the West End Community Plan. My consultants did most of the work, but I did step in from time to time and engaged City staff to deal with some narrow permitting and development services issues. Corrie Okell was my initial point of contact and on one occasion she referred my matter to [City staff members].*

On each occasion those team members were unfailingly responsive, helpful, knowledgeable, and resolved several of my time- sensitive permitting and covenant issues. I am very grateful to those team members for their help and guidance and the professional manner with which my concerns were resolved.”

Jeff Hayes, LLM, Lantern Properties Ltd

- *“I am genuinely pleased and impressed with the City of Vancouver’s performance in issuing building permits. The well-organized process and swift turnaround have delivered significant financial and personal benefits. Their ability to minimize delays and lower carrying costs enables projects to progress smoothly — allowing builders to provide homes to families in a timely and meaningful way.”*

Haute Living Homes

3331 permit application processing targets

The following table provides an overview of the City’s progress against the 3331 targets since 2022.

TABLE 1. PROGRESS AGAINST 3331 PERMITTING TARGETS, 2022 TO 2026

<p>Target A. Home renovations TARGET = 3 DAYS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · In 2026 YTD, 92% of simple renovation permits are meeting target (109/118 applications)
<p>Target B. Detached homes TARGET = 3 WEEKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Laneway houses</i>: Processing times cut in half, from ~ 200 days in 2022 to ~ 100 days in 2025, currently 21 out of a total of 258 applications meeting the 3-week target in 2025 · <i>New detached homes, excluding laneway houses</i>: Permits issued 36% faster in 2025 vs 2022, from a median 250 days to 160 days
<p>Target C. Multi-family and mid-rise projects TARGET = 3 MONTHS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Multi-family and mid-rise (including multiplex)</i>: Development permits issued 46% faster in 2025 vs 2023, with median time to process a development permit having decreased from 18.1 months to 9.8 months · <i>Multi-family and mid-rise (excluding multiplex)</i>: Removing multiplexes (which are processing more quickly than others in this category), development permit issued 14% faster in 2025 vs 2023, with median time to process a development permit having decreased from 18.1 to 15.6 months · For Target C metrics, the reductions in processing times are attributable primarily to the City processing time (as opposed to applicants' processing time)
<p>Target D. Highrise and largescale projects TARGET = 1 YEAR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · As permit application volumes for high-rise and largescale projects are significantly lower than those for Targets A, B and C, and include a set of projects with a wider range of complexities, comparisons of processing time metrics among various periods of time are less meaningful/reliable than they are for the other three targets · That said, there has been a downward trend in processing times for these projects, with median processing time approximately 10% lower in 2025 vs 2023
<p>Non-3331 metrics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Commercial renovations</i>: Permits issued 40% faster in 2025 vs 2022 · <i>Business licenses</i>: Currently processed in 2 days vs 16 weeks in 2022 (98% improvement)

Customer experience, 2022 vs 2026

The following three tables compare the customer's experience applying for a permit today versus a few years ago, demonstrating the substantial progress that has been made across several permitting streams.

TABLE 2. HOME RENOVATION PERMITTING EXPERIENCE (3331 TARGET A)

2022	TODAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No distinction between simple and complex applications. Simple renovations such as a bathroom remodel and highly complex structural overhauls all went into the same queue • Long processing times. Standard home renovation permit took 8 to 9 weeks to process, even for a simple bathroom remodel • Expensive upgrade triggers. Applicants frequently apprised of surprise and disproportionate upgrade triggers, e.g., a minor renovation could force a \$30,000 sewer and water connection upgrade, mandatory energy upgrades and sprinkler installation • Expensive ancillary requirements. Homeowners performing small renovations were required to acquire a street-use permit and associated insurance naming the City as an insured party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple applications fast-tracked. Dedicated queue to fast-track simple renovations, skipping internal reviews entirely and evaluated directly by inspectors in the field • 20x faster processing times. Simple renovation permits issued in under 3 days (City's median processing time, excluding applicants' processing time), versus 60 days in 2022 • Meaningful cost savings. Projects valued at under \$255,000 are exempt from all upgrade triggers, street use permits and separate insurance requirements

TABLE 3. DETACHED HOMES PERMITTING EXPERIENCE (3331 TARGET B)

2022	TODAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-directed navigation of complex documents. Applicants required to navigate a complex web of policy documents and checklists to determine which permits and documents were required, upload documents into an outdated pdf-based system, and communicate via disjointed email chains • High rejection rate. Over 40% of applications were rejected due to errors in the application or missing information that wasn't clearly requested upfront or errors in the application • Long processing times. Took on average 200 days to process a permit application for a laneway home, and 250 days for a detached home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplified digital concierge process. Applications are received through a digital portal, in which applicants enter their address, and are instantly provided with verified allowed housing types (e.g., multiplex, laneway) • Up-front list of permit requirements and fee estimates. Portal then generates a custom project plan based on a series of questions, that includes exact permit requirements and upfront fee estimates • Substantially faster processing times. Laneway applications are processed in 100 days (median combined City and applicant time) and detached homes in 160 days (50% and 36% improvements, respectively)

TABLE 4. MULTI-FAMILY, MID-RISE AND HIGH RISE PERMITTING EXPERIENCE (3331 TARGETS C/D)

2022	TODAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large number of review groups. A standard multi-family development permit involved up to 45 different process reviewers across the City organisation • Enormous number of potential conditions. Reviewers relied on a list of almost 1,200 possible conditions that, at times, would conflict with each other • Expensive ancillary requirements. Applicants required to submit costly studies and reports that in some cases were outdated and/or onerous to complete • Prior-to letter issued in 16 weeks. The “prior-to-letter” that is issued to indicate project approval with a set of conditions took an average of 16 weeks to issue, starting at complete application intake (against a target of 12 weeks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminated 1/3 of all conditions. 35% of all development permit conditions eliminated • Simplified most of remaining conditions. Two-thirds of the remaining development permit conditions substantially simplified • Meaningful cost savings. Eliminated requirements for several studies and reports without impacting community fit and liveability • Prior-to letter issued in 12 weeks. Prior-to-letter issued in under 12 weeks, 26% faster than in 2022

Other notable permitting and licensing improvements

Alongside the specified 3331 target areas addressed above, the City has implemented several other meaningful improvements to permitting and licensing, listed below.


- **Sprinkler permit auto-issuance.** The City shifted sprinkler permit issuance to a risk-based approach that relies on industry professionals to design sprinkler systems, as compared to the previous approach in which City staff reviewed applications and inspected installations. This modernised approach now allows over 90% of sprinkler permits to be auto-issued within 24 hours.
- **Deregulated simple commercial use changes of use.** Abolished the requirement for property owners/tenants to secure development and building permits for straightforward commercial use changes, instantly saving small businesses 8 to 12 weeks of processing time.
 - Initially launched as a pilot, the program processed over 150 applications in its first year – triple the projected volume – revealing significant pent-up demand for this.
 - This model has also been adapted to create the Downtown Eastside Temporary Occupancy Permit Pilot (DTES TOPP), to rapidly activate vacant storefronts in this neighbourhood.
 - This deregulation for all straightforward commercial changes of use and for vacant storefronts in the DTES have now been transitioned from pilot projects to standing City policy.
- **Online booking for in-person development/building consultations.** The City established an online booking system for in-person consultations at the Development and Buildings Service Centre, thereby creating a fourth support channel alongside existing digital, phone, and email access. Allowing residents and professionals to resolve complex zoning and

building questions through direct staff contact, has made the customer's permitting journey significantly easier, faster, and user-friendly.

- **Business Licensing.** Consolidated 600 license categories down to 92 and digitised the end-to-end process, cutting wait times from 16 weeks to 2 days.

Staff remain focused on improving the City's land use permitting and regulation processes, and look forward to continuing to update Council on achievements and outcomes as more progress is made.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen R. Levitt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent "K" and "L".

Karen Levitt

Deputy City Manager

604.873.7251 | karen.levitt@vancouver.ca

**APPENDIX A TO 3331 UPDATE: PERMITTING AND LICENSING
PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS, 2022 TO 2026
KEY PERMITTING IMPROVEMENT ENABLERS**

Improvement initiatives specifically related to Target A: Home renovations

1. **Residential renovation fast track.** Creating a dedicated queue for simple projects that skipped all internal reviews enabled 3-day permit processing.
2. **Increased upgrade trigger thresholds.** Council raised the construction value threshold that triggers upgrades (sewer, water connection, sprinkler, and energy) from \$95,000 to \$250,000. This threshold is now indexed to inflation (e.g., \$255,000 in 2025) to prevent smaller projects from being forced into higher-complexity queues.
3. **Elimination of street use permits and insurance requirements.** For renovations under \$250,000 that do not require placing a temporary dumpster on a City street, the City eliminated the requirement for a street use permit and separate City-named insurance, removing a major administrative bottleneck and lowering applicants' costs.

Improvement initiatives specifically related to Target B. Detached homes

1. **Online low-density housing portal.** Launched the City's low-density online housing portal in Q4-2025, replacing a fragmented, email-based communication application process with a transparent, guided digital workflow. By automating manual steps like document uploads and centralizing status tracking, the portal ensures higher-quality application submissions, reduces back-and-forth clarification cycles, and ultimately accelerates review times.
2. **Service level agreements.** Strict turnaround timelines established for internal review groups (e.g., within Engineering Services), holding teams accountable to turnaround targets and ultimately reducing specific review times by up to 60%.
3. **R1-1 zoning consolidation.** Consolidated nine separate single-family zones into a single R1-1 zone, radically simplifying regulations and reducing the time staff spend confirming height and design compliance.
4. **Risk-based plan checking.** Plan reviews streamlined by moving to a risk-based approach, reducing the number of compliance items staff checked by 64%, from 99 to 36.
5. **Combined salvage/abatement and demolition permits.** The previously sequential and redundant salvage/abatement permit, and demolition permit were combined into one, saving applicants 10-20 days of waiting time.

Improvements initiatives specifically related to Target C. Multi-family and mid-rise homes and Target D. Highrise and largescale projects

1. **Development permit conditions simplification.** Following a comprehensive review of the City's prior-to conditions library, approximately 70% of potential development permit conditions were either eliminated, simplified, or shifted to risk-based reviews.
2. **Elimination of onerous/outdated requirements.** Following a comprehensive review of the development approval process, the City removed several mandatory studies, reports, and plans that added time and cost without driving value. The most significant eliminations include:

- **Eliminated acoustical reports.** Removed the outdated requirement for acoustical reports at the development permit stage, saving applicants thousands in consulting fees.
 - **Eliminated traffic demand management plans.** Eliminated substantial traffic demand management plan requirements, thereby shortening application review times and reducing costs by up to \$4,300 per dwelling unit.
 - **Removed community benefit agreements.** Removed the community benefits agreement requirement on targeted projects, eliminating a substantial hurdle that in some cases stalled housing delivery and increased costs.
 - **Eliminated traffic impact studies.** Eliminated the need for traffic impact studies during the development permit application phase, saving applicants an average of \$10,000 per project and weeks of City review time.
3. **Rainwater management shift to the VBBL.** Eliminated the requirement for complex rainwater management plans to be submitted at the development permit stage, and shifted downstream to the Vancouver Building By-law (VBBL) building permit stage. The result of this that a process that averaged 56 weeks to process has been replaced with one that takes roughly 3 weeks.
 4. **Streamlined sewer capacity reviews.** A new rules-based policy introduced "no review" and "low impact" thresholds for small/mid-scale projects, eliminating costly off-site upgrades and cutting the number of Engineering Services reviews by roughly 75%.
 5. **Pre-zoning to bypass rezoning.** Leveraging new provincial legislation and Vancouver Charter changes, for projects proposing to increase zoning, the City is transitioning away from site-specific, negotiated rezonings, in favour of proactive pre-zoning, which removes the discretionary rezoning phase entirely, and reduces total project timelines by approximately 12 months.

General improvements, customer experience

1. **Project Requirements Exploration Tool (PRET).** A digital self-serve portal that allowed applicants to easily explore project feasibility, zoning requirements, and fee estimates upfront, thereby dramatically improving the quality and completeness of incoming applications.
2. **Electronic plans submission (E-plan).** Have now fully transitioned to digital application submissions for all permit types. Among the many benefits of this evolution, it is estimated that the elimination of paper-based applications is saving the building industry over \$1 million annually in printing costs.
3. **Development and Building Services Centre pre-application support.** Restructured the Development and Building Services Centre operations to allow/encourage applicants to seek staff advice and review prior to officially submitting their application, resulting in a reduced the rate of incomplete submissions.
4. **Digital conditions library.** Established a centralised, automated digital conditions library to standardize requirements imposed by the City for development permit applications, eliminating hours of manual processing time per application, and preventing the inclusion of conflicting policy requirements imposed by separate City review groups.
5. **Consolidated application deficiency communications:** Applicants now receive a single deficiency letter via a single communication channel that contains consolidated feedback

concerning what items must be rectified before a building permit is granted, replacing a series of disjointed deficiency notices delivered individually from various City departments.

6. **Scope-limited reviews.** Stopped penalizing applicants for previously unpermitted work; inspectors now only review the specific scope of the proposed renovation.

General improvements, streamlined processes

1. **Combined multiplex permitting.** Created a concurrent development permit/building permit application stream for multiplex developments, with these permits processed by a dedicated review team. This has resulted in processing times being approximately halved for these applications.
2. **Green demolition streamlining:** By removing the green demolition permit from the permitting workflow, applicants save approximately 2 weeks of processing time, with no impact to the policy objective of diverting waste.
3. **Key plan requirement realignment.** Shifted the requirement for submission of the “key plan” – a detailed schematic of utility connections – from the early stages of the permitting process to the later Building Permit stage, better aligning with when applicants have the appropriate level of architectural detail finalised.
4. **Oakridge Tenant Improvement Pilot (TIPs).** Developed and launched a pilot process to efficiently handle a very concentrated high-volume influx of approximately 100 tenant improvement permits for the Oakridge development.
5. **Streamlined storage space renovations.** Zoning and Development Bylaws have been amended to allow storage spaces in multi-unit buildings to be renovated without requiring applicants to seek lengthy approvals from the City’s Board of Variance.

General improvements, policies/regulations

1. **Elimination of redundant design guidelines and policies.** Through a focused policy rationalisation project systematically identified and proposed the repeal of 73 outdated Council-approved design guidelines and policies, plus repealed an incremental ten policies through the “missing middle” initiative. These reductions collectively represent a 28% reduction in the number of policies related to land use permitting, resulting in a significant decrease in time staff spends on reviewing applications.
2. **Elimination horizontal angle of daylight regulations.** Removed the highly complex “horizontal angle of daylight” regulation for multi-family developments across all zoning district schedules that was intended to ensure that all rooms had a minimum specified amount of daily sunlight. This was replaced with a straightforward, universal requirement that all bedrooms and living rooms simply include a window on an exterior wall. By eliminating the need for intricate daylighting calculations and the subsequent subjective design negotiations, the review process for multi-family developments has been simplified and sped up.
3. **MIRHPP housing simplification.** Deleted outdated and restrictive unit mix conditions for the Moderate Income Rental Housing Pilot Program (MIRHPP) projects in order to expedite affordable housing delivery.

Digital enablement of permit and license processing

1. **eComply pilot project.** Many of the permitting and licensing process improvements the City has delivered over the past four years that are detailed in this appendix have been enabled by digital solutions.
 - Staff described to Council in past updates a pilot project with the software provider Archistar for a public-facing tool called eComply, that provided real-time online automated plan checking for applicants.
 - After an evaluation of this pilot project, a decision has been made to not renew this contract with Archistar, and redirect resources to initiatives that demonstrate a stronger, more immediate return on investment with respect to customer experience and process efficiencies/effectiveness.
 - These include the digital application portal, creating digital rules and the Permit Requirements Exploration Tool (PRET).