

*Regular Meeting of the
Building Inspection Commission
November 20, 2024*

Agenda Item 6a



Director’s Report for November 2024

To: Building Inspection Commission
From: Director Patrick O’Riordan, C.B.O.
Date: 11/15/22

We have two developments to share with you this month.

1. After an open hiring process, we’ve appointed a new Chief Building Inspector, Chief Building Inspector for Code Enforcement and a Chief Building Inspector for Plan Review.

Kevin Birmingham has been promoted to Chief Building Inspector. He is a collaborative and practical leader who leverages his past experience as a general contractor to ensure that inspections go smoothly and projects keep moving. Kevin started with DBI as a building inspector in 2016 and was promoted to senior building inspector in 2021. He’s been the Acting Chief Building Inspector for the past eighteen months.

Mauricio Hernandez has been promoted to Chief Building Inspector for Code Enforcement, a position he temporarily held in the past. Mauricio is a good mentor, a strong problem-solver and has just the right mix of patience and urgency to lead Code Enforcement. He started as a building inspector with DBI in 2013 and was promoted to senior inspector in 2015. Prior to his time with DBI, Mauricio spent thirteen years as a general foreman running projects throughout the city.

Mark Walls has been promoted to Chief Building Inspector for Plan Review. Mark’s deep understanding of San Francisco’s building codes and willingness to generously share that knowledge has long been a valued asset in Permit Services. After nearly two decades as a B licensed contractor, he joined DBI as a building inspector in plan review in 2006 and served as a field building inspector from 2009 – 2013 before returning to plan check in 2013.

2. You’ve seen the many operational changes we’ve made at DBI over the past four years. Some, like the pre-plan check process and electronic plan review for all In-House Review projects, have significantly reduced our permitting times. For example, in 2024 to date, housing-related In-House Review permits are being issued a median of 162 days faster (34%) compared to 2022.

But there have been a host of other, less visible improvements, such as changing how projects are assigned to plan review staff, empowering inspectors to make notes in the Permit Tracking System from the field, and issuing change-of-use permits without plans when no construction will be performed.

A modest change occurred last month when we introduced a new permit issuance stamp featuring some of the iconic buildings in the city’s skyline – see below. The old stamp lacked unique identifying features and could be easily replicated, so we designed this new stamp with a mix of old and new hand-drawn building silhouettes. This new stamp will also be used in the new Permit Issuance Report we’ll be launching soon.



While this is not the most important improvement we’ve made this year, we believe it is important to highlight the big and small improvements alike as we continue our efforts to provide our customers with better service.