

ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN**NO. AB-004**

DATE : October 6, 2006 (Updated 01/01/08 for code references)

SUBJECT : Permit Processing and Issuance

TITLE : **Priority Permit Processing Guidelines**

PURPOSE : This bulletin establishes guidelines to assure that permit applicants receive equal treatment and that permits are reviewed in the order received by the Department of Building Inspection except for certain designated priority applications.

It is the intent of the Department of Building Inspection that the permit review process proceed in an orderly, fair and efficient manner with sufficient flexibility to allow the reasonable resolution of problems that may occur on a day-to-day basis. This bulletin is issued in conjunction with similar bulletins from the Department of Public Works and the Planning Department.

REFERENCES : 2007 San Francisco Building Code, Section 106A, Permits.
San Francisco Campaign and Government Conduct Code, Section 3.400
"Permit
Application Processing".
Ethics Commission "Permit Processing Code of Conduct"
San Francisco Planning Department, Director's Bulletin #2006-02.
Department of Public Works, Director's Order #175,487.

DISCUSSION : This Administrative Bulletin provides guidelines for the implementation of legislation adopted by the Board of Supervisors to assist City permitting departments in assuring that no appearance of, or actual, preferential treatment is given to any permit applicant. Policy is adopted in accordance with the requirements of San Francisco Campaign and Government Conduct Code Section 3.400, effective December 15, 2004, and supplements the Permit Processing Code of Conduct adopted by the Ethics Commission on January 10, 2005.

These procedures relate to assignment, initial processing, review and issuance of permit applications; as well as to permit revisions, addenda, and corrections submitted to the Department of Building Inspection subsequent to initial permit application.

General Policy: In accordance with the City's adopted "Permit Application Processing" regulations, the Department of Building Inspection has determined that there is a compelling public policy basis to provide priority review and issuance for each of the following designated types of permit applications.

Department of Building Inspection employees are encouraged to exercise reasonable judgment in all permit review and issuance activities in order to fulfill our customer service responsibilities. This exercise of reasonable judgment by employees is considered an important component in meeting the intent of the legislation to avoid preferential treatment. In all cases when questions arise regarding potential issues of preferential treatment, employees are required to consult with their supervisors.

PROCEDURES

Subject to the reasonable judgment of employees, permit applications shall be logged-in, separated into various permit types, assigned to staff for review, and reviewed in the order in which they are received, except for certain designated priority permits as detailed below. The Department of Building Inspection may assign as many different permit types as necessary to assure the efficient operation of that department. For example, the Department of Building Inspection may separate permits for one type of work, such as office tenant improvement construction, from other types of work, such as re-roofing or new building construction.

Case A addresses initial permit submittal, assignment, review and issuance. Following such initial priority action, permit applications may be placed on hold, routed to other divisions or other City agencies, issued, or expired pursuant to other code requirements and other adopted policies and procedures.

Case B addresses issues related to priority processing of permit revisions and of other materials submitted after initial permit acceptance and review, as well as to issues related to final processing and issuance of permits.

Case A - Applications for Permits

Permit applications for the following types of work may, upon request of the permit applicant, be given priority assignment for plan review and issuance:

1. Permit applications for necessary emergency work to secure the health or safety of building users or the public, either on private property or on the public right-of-way;
2. Permit applications for work on City owned or City leased properties when such priority permit review is specified in a written agreement between the Department of Building Inspection and such other City agencies;
3. Permit applications for work consisting solely of disabled access improvements;
4. Permit applications for work consisting solely of solar photovoltaic systems;
5. Permit applications principally for maintenance or preservation of designated historic buildings and/or sites;
6. Permit applications for building construction projects that meet or exceed a Gold Rating (very high efficiency "green building" projects) using the LEED Building Rating System® adopted under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program of the U.S. Green Building Council or other approved "green building" guidelines. Compliance with green building standards is to be assured through conformance with "Performance Assurance for Green Buildings" requirements noted below;

7. Permit applications for projects that provide new affordable housing (meeting the affordability levels defined in Planning Code Section 315 and in the Procedures Manual adopted by the Mayor's Office of Housing) in 100% of the on-site dwelling units. Conformance with these standards shall be confirmed by Planning Department staff;

8. Permit applications to respond to a delay caused by an earlier procedural error by a City agency in processing the permit or processing another permit for the same project;

9. Permit applications submitted to comply with Notices of Violation, abatement notices, or any other official Department of Public Works, Planning Department or Department of Building Inspection enforcement or abatement notices which require immediate action; or

10. Permit applications for other work for which, in the reasonable judgment of the Director of the Department of Building Inspection, urgent or extraordinary circumstances exist that would lead to a significant public benefit or necessity, when such circumstances are documented in written findings.

Case B - Revisions and Addenda to Permits

Subject to the reasonable judgment of staff, revisions and other materials submitted to the Department of Building Inspection during the permit review process must be reviewed in the order in which they are received, except as detailed below. Such submittals may include revisions, corrections, addenda, and other permit materials. Exceptions to the strict chronological review and processing sequence are allowed and permit submittal documents may be given priority review, upon request of the permit applicant, when any of the following conditions is met:

1. Permits meet the priority permit qualifications of Case A, above;
2. Permit revisions are submitted pursuant to a decision of the Building Inspection Commission, Board of Appeals, Board of Supervisors, or other review or appeals body where such body has directed that the permit revisions be given priority review, or where required revisions are minor in nature and would not require substantial time to review and process;
3. Revisions, corrections or other submittals are minor in nature and would not require substantial time to review and process;
4. Revisions, addenda and other permit submittals for work in which, in the reasonable judgment of the Director of the Department of Building Inspection, urgent or extraordinary circumstances exist that would lead to a significant public benefit or necessity, when such circumstances are documented in written findings.

Documentation of Priority Processing

Priority processing for permits meeting the above criteria is to be undertaken at the request of the permit applicant. All cases of priority permit application processing shall be documented using a standard form, Documentation of Findings for Priority Permit Processing (Attachment A), that includes written findings of conformity with one of the priority types described in this bulletin. This document shall be prepared and submitted by the applicant. Department of Building Inspection, Division managers may approve the form where the permit is in clear conformity with the standards for priority processing. All other requests for priority permit processing should be reviewed and approved by a Deputy Director or other senior manager.

One copy of the form approving priority permit processing shall remain with the application, one copy shall be microfilmed or otherwise retained as part of the approved permit documents, and the original shall be retained in a chronological file in the office of the Deputy Director for Permit Services or in another designated location and shall be available for review by any person at any time during normal Department working hours. Permit applications that are approved for priority processing should be so noted in the Department of Building Inspection's permit tracking system.

Performance Assurance for Green Buildings

Where priority processing for a permit application is requested for building construction projects that meet or exceed a LEED Building Rating System® Gold rating or other approved "green building" program, such permit applications must be accompanied by an agreement in a form prepared and executed by the Department of the Environment. The agreement shall be accompanied by the LEED® or other approved checklist that specifies the elements of the project required to obtain the required rating. As part of the application process, the applicant shall meet with a designated SF Green Team, comprising technical staff from the affected reviewing agencies, to confirm that the project complies with all requirements. Plan review fees per San Francisco Building Code Section 110A, Table 1A-B will be charged on an hourly basis for all SF Green Team staff time related to an individual project.

The applicant's obligations under this agreement shall be memorialized as Conditions of Permit Approval, which shall become part of the approved permit documents and shall be recorded with the County Recorder's Office in a form approved by the Director. Conditions of permit approval shall require that the project's site permit application or other permit application(s) be accompanied by a Design Phase Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, and that a final LEED® Gold Rating Certification be obtained within six months of issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy, Certificate of Final Completion, or permit sign-off. The Director may approve alternate documentation and compliance programs to confirm that all required work is properly completed.

Quality Assurance Procedures

The assignment of permit applications for priority review and these procedures shall be reviewed by the Department of Building Inspection on an annual basis to confirm that the intent of this policy is being fulfilled and to make changes as necessary to optimize the efficient and fair operation of the permit process.

Approved by Building Inspection Commission October 2, 2006

Originally signed by:
Amy Lee, Acting Director
Department of Building Inspection
October 6, 2006

Attachment A: Documentation of Priority Permit Processing
Attachment B: SF Campaign and Governmental Conduct Code, Section 3.400
Attachment C: Permit Processing Code of Conduct
Attachment D: Planning Department, Director's Bulletin #2006-02
Attachment E: DPW Director's Order #175,487

ATTACHMENT A



DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION
City & County of San Francisco
1660 Mission Street, San Francisco, California 94103-2414

**Documentation of Findings for Priority
Permit Application Processing**

This form shall accompany all requests for priority processing of permit applications. A copy shall be maintained in the office of the Deputy Director for Permit Services, a copy shall accompany the permit application, and a copy shall be recorded as a permit document

Note: Boldface items are to be completed by the Permit Applicant.

Received Date: _____ Time _____

Permit Application # _____

Property Address: _____

Block and Lot: _____ / _____ **Occupancy Group:** _____ **Use:** _____

Description of Proposed Work

I hereby declare that the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I intend to undertake and complete the project described herein in compliance with the requirements for Priority Permit Processing detailed in DBI Administrative Bulletin AB-004.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Print Name of Applicant

Phone Number

Findings/Basis for Priority Permit Review (based on AB-004)

Case A, Case B, Other (circle one) Item # _____

Comments/Findings: _____

Approved by: _____

Signature of DBI Supervisor or Manager

Print Name and Title

Date

ATTACHMENT B

THE SAN FRANCISCO CAMPAIGN AND GOVERNMENTAL CONDUCT CODE**CHAPTER 4: PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESSING**

Sec. 3.400. Permit Application Processing.

SEC. 3.400. PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESSING.

(a) **EQUAL TREATMENT OF PERMIT APPLICANTS.** It shall be the policy of the Department of Building Inspection, the Planning Department, the Department of Public Works and the officers and employees of such departments to treat all permit applicants the same regardless of the relationship of the applicant and/or the applicant's representatives to any officer or employee of the City and County and regardless of whether the applicant hires a permit consultant to provide permit consulting services. Intentional preferential treatment of any permit applicant and/or the applicant's representatives by any officer or employee of the Department of Building Inspection, the Planning Department, or the Department of Public Works shall subject the officer or employee to disciplinary action for official misconduct.

(b) **APPLICATION PRIORITY.** It shall be the policy of the Department of Building Inspection, the Planning Department, the Department of Public Works and the officers and employees of such departments to review, consider, and process all applications, revisions, corrections and other permit-related material in the order in which that type of material is received unless there is a written finding of a public policy basis for not doing so, such as the involvement of public funds in the project for which the permit is sought, or the response to a delay caused by an earlier procedural error in processing the permit or another permit for the same project. Absent such a finding, any officer or employee of the Department of Building Inspection, the Planning Department, the or Department of Public

Works who intentionally fails to review, consider and process all applications, revisions, corrections and other permit-related material in the order in which that type of material is received shall be subject to disciplinary action for official misconduct. The Department of Building Inspection, the Planning Department, and the Department of Public Works shall each adopt written guidelines for determining when there is a public policy basis for processing permit material out of order.

(c) **PERMIT PROCESSING CODE OF CONDUCT.** No later than 60 days after the effective date of this Article, the Ethics Commission shall adopt a code of conduct for permit processing (the "Permit Processing Code of Conduct") containing ethical guidelines for permit applicants, permit consultants, and officers and employees of the Department of Building Inspection, the Planning Department, the and Department of Public Works. The Permit Processing Code of Conduct shall be posted in a conspicuous place in each department, and a copy shall be distributed to each officer of the City and County who makes or participates in making decisions related to permit applications.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.** The provisions of this Section shall take effect December 15, 2004. (Added by Ord. 115-04, File No. 040907, App. 7/1/2004)

ATTACHMENT C

**ETHICS COMMISSION
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO**

Permit Processing Code of Conduct
(adopted by Ethics Commission January 10, 2005)

Preamble

The people of San Francisco are entitled to fair and equitable processes for the review and approval of permit applications by City departments. To this end and pursuant to Section 3.400(c) of the San Francisco Campaign and Governmental Conduct Code, the Ethics Commission adopts this Permit Processing Code of Conduct to guide the Department of Building Inspection, the Planning Department and the Department of Public Works, and members of the public who use their services.

For the Staff

As an employee or officer working on matters related to permits issued by the Department of Building Inspection, the Planning Department or the Department of Public Works, I will be honest in my dealings with permit applicants, permit consultants, members of the public and my colleagues. I will enforce compliance with Building, Planning and Public Works Codes and requirements in a consistent manner.

For the Public

I will be sensitive to the fact that officers and employees of the City must adhere to laws and rules that govern their conduct and I will respect their procedures. I will provide full, clear and accurate information to the officers and employees of the City.

SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

1660 Mission Street, Suite 500

San Francisco, California 94103

www.sfgov.org/planning

DIRECTOR'S BULLETIN No. 2006-02

- DATE** : September 28, 2006 (Revised)
- TITLE** : **Planning Department Application Processing Guidelines**
- PURPOSE** : **This Bulletin provides Planning Department guidelines to ensure that no appearance of or actual preferential treatment is given to applicants, except for certain priorities identified in this policy, in accord with legislation adopted by the Board of Supervisors.**

The guidelines established herein are meant to ensure that all project applicants receive equitable treatment, and that the Planning Department reviews applications in the order received, except for certain designated priority applications described below. This is in accordance with the requirements of San Francisco Campaign and Government Conduct Code Section 3.400, effective December 15, 2004, and with the Permit Processing Code of Conduct adopted by the Ethics Commission on January 10, 2005.

This Bulletin is issued in conjunction with similar Bulletins from the Department of Public Works and the Department of Building Inspection. It is the intent of the Departments implementing this policy that the review of applications be conducted in an orderly, fair and efficient manner, yet with sufficient flexibility to allow the resolution of problems that may occur in the course of the process.

REFERENCES: Ordinance 115-04
San Francisco Campaign and Government Conduct Code, Section 3.400 "Permit Application Processing"

DISCUSSION:

These policies and procedures relate to assignment, initial processing, review and analysis of all project applications, and to revisions, addenda and corrections submitted subsequent to initial applications. In general, the Planning Department will process applications of all types in the chronological order received. However, because the Department's organizational structure utilizes geographic sections that have different workloads and staffing levels, applications that were filed consecutively may have different processing times. Further, under the guidelines provided herein, some applications may be expedited in order to advance identified policy goals of the City, or to remedy procedural errors.

PRIORITY CRITERIA

All applications received by the Planning Department shall be assigned, reviewed, and completed in the order received, except in the following cases:

Type 1: Applications for Green Buildings

Building construction projects that meet or exceed a Gold Rating using the LEED Building Rating System® adopted under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program of the U.S. Green Building Council (or that achieve high sustainability standards under other "green building" rating systems approved by the Director) qualify as Type 1 Applications.

Type 2: Applications for Certain Affordable Housing Projects

Applications for projects that provide new affordable housing in 100 per cent of the on-site dwelling units (where such units are rented or sold at the economic levels defined in Planning Code Section 315 and in the Procedures Manual adopted by the Mayor's Office of Housing) qualify as Type 2 Applications.

Type 3: Applications for Large Grocery Stores

Applications to construct retail grocery facilities with gross floor areas of 25,000 square feet or larger qualify as Type 3 Applications.

Type 4: Other Applications

Type 4 Applications are those requiring review for:

1. Necessary emergency work to secure the health or safety of building users or the public, either on private property or on the public right-of-way, as determined by the Director.
2. Work consisting solely of disabled access improvements.
3. Work consisting solely of maintenance or repair of designated historic buildings and/or sites that are subject to the requirements of Article 10, or defined as Category I or II buildings in Article 11, of the Planning Code.
4. Work consisting solely of the installation of renewable energy features.
5. Work consisting solely of applications previously delayed due to procedural errors by a City agency in processing the application.
6. Work solely to comply with official Department of Public Works, Planning Department, or Department of Building Inspection actions to abate public nuisances as identified by those Departments.
7. Work on City owned or leased properties when such priority application review is specified in a written agreement between the Planning Department and such other City agencies.
8. Revisions and corrections that are minor in nature and would not require more than one staff-hour to review and process.

9. Submittals of applications, revisions and addenda pursuant to decisions of the Planning Commission, the Board of Appeals, the Board of Supervisors, or other review or appeals body that are minor in nature and would not require more than one staff-hour to review and process.

10. Applications for other projects, whether administrative or discretionary, for which, in the judgment of the Director, urgent or extraordinary circumstances exist such that review of the application could lead to a significant public benefit or necessity, when such circumstances are documented in written findings.

PROCEDURES FOR TYPE TYPES 1, 2 AND 3

Documentation of Findings for Priority Application Processing

All type 1, 2 and 3 Types of priority application processing shall be documented using a standard form developed by the Planning Department (see Attachment A) that includes written findings of conformity with one of the Types described above. This document shall be prepared and submitted by the applicant.

A copy of the documentation of priority processing shall remain with the Planning application, and the original shall be maintained in a chronological file under the supervision of the Zoning Administrator's Office and shall be available for review at the Public Information Counter at any time during normal Department working hours.

Applications approved for priority processing shall be so designated in the Department's case editing and permit tracking system(s).

The applicant's obligations to provide the proposed use or features described in the application shall be memorialized as Conditions of Approval, and shall be recorded as Notices of Special Restrictions with the County Recorder's Office, in a form approved by the Zoning Administrator.

Performance Assurance for Green Buildings

Type 1 building construction projects are those that meet or exceed a Gold Rating using the LEED Building Rating System[®].¹ The initial application for such projects must be accompanied by an agreement, in a form prepared and executed by the Department of the Environment. The agreement shall be accompanied by the LEED[®] checklist to specify the elements of the project required to obtain the LEED[®] Gold Rating, and shall include a processing fee as required by the Department of the Environment. Prior to the Department's determination of acceptance or rejection of the project for Priority Processing, the applicant shall meet with the SF Green Team, comprising technical staff from the affected reviewing agencies, to describe the project.

The applicant's obligations under this agreement shall be memorialized as Conditions of Approval, and shall be recorded as Notices of Special Restrictions with the County Recorder's Office, in a form approved by the Zoning Administrator. Those conditions shall require that the project's site permit application be accompanied by a Design Phase Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, and that Final LEED[®] Certification be obtained with a Gold Rating within six months of issuance of the first Certificate of Occupancy, Certificate of Final Completion, or permit sign-off signifying completion, if such certificates are not issued.

¹. The LEED[®] Gold Rating shall apply to New Construction (NC), Existing Building (EB), Commercial Interior (CI) and other categories adapted by the United States Green Building Council.

Assignment and Initial Review Times

For Priority Application Processing of Types 1, 2 and 3, target time lines of two weeks shall be established for assignment (the elapsed time between arrival of an application at the Department and its assignment to and receipt by a Planner). Target time lines of two weeks shall be established for initial review, the elapsed time between assignment, and the planner's first review of the application for project scope and application completeness.

If the volume of qualified applications approved for priority processing and the level of the Department's staffing preclude meeting the required time limits for assignment and/or review, then the Applicant will be informed that the expedited review program has reached its capacity, and will have the option to apply for review under normal time lines, or to have the application placed on a priority review waiting list, until staff becomes available for assignment to a priority application.

Applicants with projects approved for priority processing, who have submitted incomplete applications, shall be notified in writing following initial review. Priority applications, once complete, shall be processed efficiently, with as little delay as possible, based on staff availability.

PROCEDURES FOR TYPE 4

The majority of Type 4 applications may be approved at the Planning Information Counter, and in those instances, no special procedures would be employed. In instances where more detailed review is required, Planners may process Type 4 applications out of order where the project is in clear conformity with the standards for priority processing, or when the project scope is minor in nature and would not require more than one hour to review and process.

When questions arise whether a specific project qualifies for the applicability of those standards to, Planners should refer the priority-processing request to their supervisors for a determination.

QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES

The assignment of applications for review by the Planning Department shall be subject to periodic review, not less than quarterly, by senior staff as designated by the Planning Director. The Director shall review these procedures on an annual basis, to confirm that the intent of this policy is fulfilled, and to make changes as necessary to optimize the efficient and fair review of applications submitted to the Department.

Approved:
Dean L. Macris
Director of Planning

Attachment A: Documentation of Findings for Priority Application Processing
Attachment B: SF Campaign and Governmental Conduct Code, Section 3.400
Attachment C: Permit Processing Code of Conduct

Attachment A: SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT
1660 Mission Street, Suite 500 San Francisco, California 94103 www.sfgov.org/planning

Documentation of Findings for Priority Application Processing

This form shall accompany all requests for Priority Application Processing. (NOTE: **Boldface** items to be completed by the Applicant) A copy shall be maintained at the Planning Departments's Planning Information Counter as part of the permanent records of the findings for priority application processing.

Received Date: _____ Time _____

Type &/or Permit Application Nos. _____

Property Address: _____

Block(s) & Lot(s): _____

Zoning: _____ **Height & Bulk District** _____

Bldg Code Occupancy Group: _____ **Proposed Use:** _____

Description of Proposed Work _____

APPLICANT'S DECLARATION: I hereby declare that the information I have provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I intend to complete the project described herein in compliance with the requirements for Priority Processing of Applications described in Director's Bulletin 2006-02.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT **DATE**

PRINT NAME OF APPLICANT **PHONE NUMBER**

Findings/Basis for Priority Application Review (conformity with Director's Bulletin 2006-02)

circle Type: 1 2 3 4 Other

Item # & Description _____

Findings: _____

(circle one:) Accepted Rejected by: _____

SIGNATURE OF PLANNER

PRINT NAME OF PLANNER **DATE**

PRINT TITLE OF PLANNER **PHONE NUMBER**

PLANNER(S) ASSIGNED TO APPLICATION(S)

Date

ATTACHMENT E

Department of Public Works
Office of the Director
City Hall, Room 348
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102-4645

DPW ORDER NO. 175,487**ESTABLISHING POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS PERMIT PROCESSING PRIORITY.****I: PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Order is to establish guidelines to ensure that permit applicants receive equal treatment, that permits are reviewed in the order received by the Department of Public Works, or reviewed in conformity to a policy that allows for alternative, priority processing of applications. This Order is in accordance with the requirements of San Francisco Campaign and Government Conduct Code Section 3.400, effective December 15, 2004, and supplements the Permit Processing Code of Conduct adopted by the Ethics Commission on January 10, 2005. This Director's Order recognizes the need for a policy that addresses such priority, necessity, efficiency and/or practical feasibility necessary to deliver customer service founded upon a basis of equal treatment to all applicants.

II: REFERENCE

San Francisco Public Works Code
Standing Director's Orders
Ordinance 115-04, Amends San Francisco Campaign and Government Conduct Code, Section 3.400 "Permit Application Processing."

III: MANDATE OF POLICY

This Director's Order provides guidelines for the implementation of legislation adopted by the Board of Supervisors to ensure that DPW, as a City Permitting Department, conducts its operations so that no appearance or actual preferential treatment is given to any permit applicant while allowing for a policy that considers priority, necessity, efficiency, and practical feasibility in the issuance of permits.

IV: PROCEDURAL APPLICABILITY

These procedures relate to assignment of permit applications and initial processing as well as to permit revisions and/or corrections submitted to the Department of Public Works through to the final permit issuance. The Department of Public Works recognizes that strict chronological review is infeasible for all permits following initial acceptance and, further, that employees need to exercise reasonable discretion in all permit review and issuance activities in order to fulfill the Department's customer service responsibilities.

When questions arise regarding this process, employees shall consult with their supervisors. Adherence to this Order allows alternatives to the strict chronological order of permit processing and issuance.

V: GUIDELINES FOR PERMIT PROCESSING AND ISSUANCE

Permit applications shall be entered into the permit database, assigned to staff for review, and reviewed in the order in which they are received in accordance with Rule 1, except as detailed for priority permits as set forth under Rule 2, 3, and 4A & 4B. A determination by Department of Public Works' Senior Staff as to whether priority permit review is acceptable will be made upon request by project sponsors, their representatives, or at such times as the Department becomes aware of a potential priority situation, such as clerical error or cases of less complexity, whereas the applicant's request is not required.

DEFINITIONS:

Rule 1 All permits shall be processed and approved in the chronological order of date and time received.

Following an initial review in accordance with the guidelines established in this Order, permit applications may be placed on hold, routed to other divisions of DPW or other City agencies, issued, or disapproved pursuant to the Public Works Code and other adopted Orders, policies and procedures.

Rule 2 provides a listing of categories of permits eligible for consideration for priority review.

Rule 3 addresses issues related to the priority and review of revisions and of other materials submitted after initial permit acceptance and review, as well as issues related to final processing and issuance of permits.

Rule 4A recognizes the concept of "lesser" permit complexity review requirements and "greater" permit review complexity, including listing types of permits.

Rule 4B allows consideration be given due to the availability of qualified and/or authorized personnel to review and issue permits.

DETAILED INFORMATION:

Rule 1 Permit application, data entry, assignment to staff, and review shall be chronologically assigned for plan review and processing by Department of Public Works staff based on date/time of permit filing, except as detailed in cases below.

Rule 2 Permit applications for the following types of work may be given priority assignment for plan review and issuance. Each such case must be individually evaluated and approved in writing by the DPW Director or his/her designee:

1. Permits for necessary emergency work to secure the health or safety of building users or the public related to or occupying the public right-of-way (PROW).
2. Permits for construction work that utilizes public funds for any part of such work.
3. Permit for work on City-owned or leased properties when such priority permit review is specified in a written agreement between the Department of Public Works and such other City agencies.
4. Permits for work consisting solely for disabled access improvements.
5. Permits for maintenance or preservation of designated historic publicly owned areas.

6. Permits for work in the PROW in conjunction with buildings that meet or exceed LEED rating high efficiency “green” building under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program of the U.S. Green Building Council).
7. Permits to respond to delay caused by an earlier procedural error by DPW in processing the permit or processing another permit for the same project.
8. Permits submitted to comply with Notices of Violation, Orders of Abatement, or any Notices to Repair, other official Department of Public Works enforcement, or abatement notices.
9. Permits for other work for which there is a significant public benefit or necessity.

Rule 3 Revisions and other materials submitted to the Department of Public Works during the permit review process must be reviewed in the order in which such types of materials are received. Such submittal materials include revisions, corrections, addenda, and other materials related to an active permit. Certain exceptions to the strict chronological review and processing sequence are allowed when:

1. Procedural errors by DPW cause a processing delay in the permit review.
2. Materials lost or misplaced by DPW are being replaced.
3. Permit revisions are submitted pursuant to decision of the Board of Appeals or other review or appeals body.
4. Revisions, corrections or other submittals are minor in nature and do not unreasonably delay the review, consideration, or processing of other such materials that are in queue.
5. Revisions for permits for work for which there is a significant public benefit or necessity.

Rule 4A Applications related to the use of the public right-of-way (PROW) encompass more than 22 distinct permits where the process time between review and issuance may vary from minutes to years. “Less” complex permits may be reviewed and issued prior to “greater” complexity as a matter of Department efficiency and service to the public. The following categories classify several DPW permits into the appropriate “lesser” and “greater” groupings based upon typical review times. Permits not listed are subject to Rules 1, 2, and/or 3.

LESSER COMPLEXITY		
Temporary Occupancy	Excavation Side Sewer	Café Tables/Chairs Renewals
Street Space Occupancy Additional Street Occupancy	Underground/Tank Removal	Street-Use Banners
Mobile Storage Container Municipal Excavation Permits	Boring/ Monitoring Well	Minor/Sidewalk Encroachment Related to Existing Conditions
Debris Box Sign Posting Registration	Display Merchandise Renewal	Permit Renewals/Extensions

GREATER COMPLEXITY
Major Encroachment
Sidewalk Underground Vault Encroachment

Rule 4B DPW employees may possess various professional licenses necessary to perform the duties of their job classification. Also, DPW employees are granted differing levels of authority to process and approve a variety of permits. Rule 4B recognizes that the availability of licensed or authorized person may restrict the Department’s ability to process and approve a variety of permits in strict chronological order. Thus, this policy allows that permits may be processed and issued considering the availability of authorized personnel to do so.

DOCUMENTATION OF FINDINGS OF BASIS FOR PRIORITY PERMIT PROCESSING

All rules for priority permit processing, except procedural correction, lost document replacement, and Rules 4A and 4B, shall be documented [See Attachment A], including written findings demonstrating conformity to one of the listed provisions. The documentation may be approved only by the Director of the Department of Public Works, a Senior Manager, Deputy Bureau Manager or other designated Staff person. The documentation of priority permit processing shall be maintained in a chronological file at the DPW Permit Manager’s Office located presently in Room 460, 875 Stevenson Street. Records are available for review to any member of the public or staff at any time during regular business upon request.

QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES

The assignment of permit applications for review by Department of Public Works staff shall be subject to periodic monthly review, by a Senior Staff person, Bureau Representative or persons designated by the Director. Documentation of actions that do not conform to this Order, or other procedures issued by the Director, or other official policies of the City shall be investigated and, if deemed appropriate by the Director, disciplinary action shall be taken as detailed in the Civil Service Rules.

APPROVED:
Edwin M. Lee
Director of Public Works

RECOMMENDED:
Barbara L. Moy
Bureau Manager
Street Use and Mapping

RECOMMENDED:
Robert P. Beck
Deputy Director for Engineering

APPROVED: JUNE 22, 2005

EDWIN M. LEE, DIRECTOR

- Attachment A: Document of Priority Permit Processing
- Attachment B: SF Campaign and Governmental Conduct Code Section 3.400
- Attachment C: Permit Processing Code of Conduct

ATTACHMENT A

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

City and County of San Francisco
875 Stevenson Street, Room 460

Documentation of Findings for Priority Permit Processing

A copy of this form shall be maintained in the DPW Permit Office as part of the permanent records of the findings for priority permit processing at 875 Stevenson Street, Room 460.

Received on Date: _____ Time _____

Permit Application #: _____

Property Address: _____

Block and Lot: _____ / _____ Permit Type: _____ Use: _____

Description of Proposed Work:

Findings/Basis for Priority Permit Review:
Other (circle one) Rule 2, or Rule 3

Item #: _____

Comments:

Priority Permit Review Requested By: _____

Approved By: _____

Print name: _____ Title: _____

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