



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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# City of San Diego Accepts Electronic Plans for All New Development Projects

## E-PERMITTING APPLICATION PROCESS ROLLED OUT AHEAD OF SCHEDULE IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

SAN DIEGO – Starting May 4, the City of San Diego Development Services Department (DSD) will start accepting permits online for all new projects, expanding the existing digital permitting process that is currently available for a limited number of permits.

The conversion to a fully cloud-based permitting system is scheduled to launch later this year. In the meantime, electronic plan submittal has been expedited – including the ability for customers to review project status and comments on Open DSD – to help meet safety protocols for customers and employees in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Online access was previously limited to projects that didn't require plan review, including simple no-plan mechanical, electrical and plumbing permits, news rack and right-of-way permits, and [residential solar photovoltaic projects](#), which launched last month.

The move to electronic plan submittal is part of [Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer's push](#) to create more efficient and effective City operations by using data and technology to improve transparency and performance.

**“This move to fully embrace online permitting is needed now more than ever as our builders navigate their way through a global health pandemic,” Mayor Faulconer said. “We still face a major statewide housing crisis that will only get worse if construction slows down so we’re trying to make it easier to get shovels in the ground. This change also keeps residents and employees safe during COVID-19 and beyond by eliminating the need to exchange thousands of paper documents in person.”**

While accepting applications electronically, DSD will continue regulating land use and building development throughout the city, a process that can reach up to 50,000 approvals each year. Also,

electronic submittals will help wireless communication carriers to more quickly expand 5G network infrastructure on City property and rights-of-way by shortening the review and approval process time.

Changes to this submittal process mean that after it's permissible for DSD to reopen its doors to the public in the future, DSD customers will no longer need to travel downtown to the Development Services Center to drop off paper plan sets. The difficulties of finding and paying for parking will be eliminated, as now the submittal and issuance process can all be performed with online customer interactions. After uploading electronic applications and required documents in the Open DSD system, customers will select from 15 different permits and approval types, which include:

- Aboveground and Underground Right-of-Way Permits
- Building Permits and Construction Changes
- Discretionary Approvals and Permits
- Electrical Permits
- Fire Permits
- Grading Permits
- Mapping Permits
- Noise Permits
- Plumbing Permits
- Residential and Commercial Solar Photovoltaic Permits
- Right-of-Way Permits
- Sign Permits
- Traffic Control Permits
- Transportation Permits

Available by visiting the most frequently-used services section at [sandiego.gov/DSD](http://sandiego.gov/DSD), customers can check the real-time status of applications on Open DSD, see plan review comments, confirm development process timelines and receive official stamped electronic approvals on plan sets.

**“The transition to electronic applications has been desired for years by the construction industry to save time and money,” said DSD Director Elyse W. Lowe. “I am proud of the City employee teams who have worked tirelessly over the last six weeks to create this enhanced electronic format and improved customer options. As a courtesy, DSD will maintain current projects in paper format but will provide options to convert resubmittals to digital reviews and approvals.”**

Typical printing costs for construction projects can differ based on the complexity of the project, with printing costs for simple projects averaging several hundred dollars and complex discretionary project printing exceeding more than \$25,000.

**Lowe added: “This solution – which will be improved later this year to fully cloud-based permitting – is an integral part of the City’s commitment to #DigitalDSD, a DSD initiative to modernize all workplace systems and cost-effectively leverage technology to increase productivity and improve service delivery to our customers. May the 4<sup>th</sup> be with you!”**

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