

May 15, 2025

TO: David W. Louie, Chair  
Elvin W. Moon, Vice Chair  
Yolanda Duarte-White, Commissioner  
Pam O'Connor, Commissioner  
Michael R. Hastings, Commissioner

FROM: Mitch Glaser, AICP, Assistant Deputy Director  
Current Planning Division



**MAY 21, 2025, REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING – AGENDA ITEM 5(b):  
PRESENTATION REGARDING THE COUNTY'S DISASTER RECOVERY EFFORTS**

On behalf of LA County Planning's Disaster Recovery Team, I am sharing two documents in advance of our presentation. The first document is a report from Chief Executive Officer Fesia A. Davenport to the Board of Supervisors dated May 12, 2025. The second document is recommendations provided by [Code for America](#) after they collaborated with the County Family to create a Service Blueprint at an in-person meeting on April 22, 2025. The Service Blueprint is available at [this link](#).

We look forward to sharing our experiences with you and answering your questions next week. If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact me at [mglaser@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:mglaser@planning.lacounty.gov).

MG:mg

SHAPING  
TOMORROW



## Chief Executive Office.

### COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES


Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 974-1101 [ceo.lacounty.gov](http://ceo.lacounty.gov)

#### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Fesia A. Davenport

May 12, 2025

To: Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell  
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath  
Supervisor Janice Hahn

From: Fesia A. Davenport   
Chief Executive Officer

### **REPORT BACK ON ESTABLISHING A UNIFIED PERMITTING AUTHORITY FOR THE ALTADENA ONE-STOP RECOVERY PERMITTING CENTER (ITEM NO. 5, AGENDA OF APRIL 8, 2025)**

On April 8, 2025, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion directing the Chief Executive Officer, in coordination with County Counsel and the Directors of Public Works (PW), Regional Planning (DRP), Public Health (DPH), and Fire to establish a Unified Permitting Authority (UPA) for making final determinations on residential rebuilding permit applications in the Eaton Fire area for the duration of the Los Angeles County's (County) emergency declaration; execute a Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) outlining the scope of delegated authority to the UPA; report back in 30 days with the name and qualifications of the appointed UPA and additional recommendations to expedite the process for assisting survivors with rebuilding; and direct all participating departments to assign senior-level liaisons at the Altadena One-Stop Recovery Center to ensure decisions are implemented without delay.



## **SUMMARY**

Input sessions were held in February 2025 with residential building experts and front-end users to identify opportunities for streamlining the County's permitting process so that disaster rebuild permits are approved within 30 business days. As a result, several process improvements have been or are in the process of being implemented by DRP, PW, DPH, and Fire (Permitting Departments) in both the Altadena and Calabasas disaster areas for disaster rebuild permits:

### Completed

- Executed an MOU to establish a UPA and identified the UPA Coordinator;
- Developed a single unified application for customers rebuilding in Eaton and Palisades fire areas to receive all needed permits using a simplified process;
- Established the use of pre-approved design plans that will significantly shorten the permitting approval process; and
- Implemented a series of process improvements that have significantly reduced the number of steps and time needed to complete reviews.

### Underway

- Installing a digital plan pre-check solution using Archistar to reduce time and costs by decreasing back-and-forth between plan checkers and customers;
- Upgrading the County's Electronic Permitting and Inspection Portal (EPIC-LA) system to electronically route plans across departments to eliminate the need for customers to engage with each department separately; and
- Redesigning the County's Recovery website and developing additional communication tools to make the process simpler and easier to understand.

## **BACKGROUND**

County staff, experts, and users alike have long shared concerns about the complexity of the County's permitting process. For new construction of single-family homes, typical reports are that it took anywhere from six months to a year to apply for and receive a building permit. Customers needed to obtain permits from multiple agencies, and due to the lack of alignment of processes across agencies, any delay from one agency had negative downstream effects on the approval process of the other agencies.

On April 18, 2024, the Board adopted the Disaster Recovery Ordinance (DRO), which is part of the County Planning and Zoning Code. The DRO "expands existing regulations allowing for temporary housing and rebuilding single-family residences, as well as for the replacement of buildings/structures and the re-establishment of

uses in the unincorporated areas after a disaster.”<sup>1</sup> DRP implemented the DRO shortly after the Board proclaimed a local emergency on January 7, 2025.

### Expert and User Feedback

The extraordinary fire and windstorm events in January 2025 served as a call to action for County departments to determine a better process for issuing permits going forward, particularly for fire survivors in both the Eaton and Palisades fire areas wanting to rebuild.

The Permitting Departments and other key stakeholders collectively hosted a “Rebuilding Together Workshop” on February 13 -14, 2025, for 784 industry professionals to share feedback on how public and private sectors can better work together to facilitate rebuilding. Feedback about what is needed included:

- A more efficient permitting process;
- A way to pre-screen plans for major issues before accepting them for review;
- An in-person help desk with plan checkers available to answer questions;
- A simple agency referral form so people can visit the agencies simultaneously while the plans are being reviewed and know where to go;
- A one-stop shop that will cut down on the back-and-forth across agencies;
- A simple checklist of all the steps and requirements associated with getting a project plan approved and obtaining all necessary permits;
- Communicating clearly defined process requirements;
- Supporting the use of pre-approved design plans; and
- Supporting the use prefabricated housing, modular housing, and other innovative construction techniques.

### **PROCESS ANALYSIS: WHAT WE MUST DO TO MAKE THE PERMITTING PROCESS EASIER TO UNDERSTAND AND FASTER TO COMPLETE**

The Permitting Departments completed a process improvement analysis with the Chief Executive Office (CEO) and the non-profit organization, Code for America. During this process, we identified and/or confirmed sticking points within the existing permitting process that can be fixed.

Some process improvements have already been implemented for those rebuilding in fire-affected areas and these fixes will significantly reduce the permitting process timeframe from the original six to twelve month timeframe noted above. These improvements include:

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://planning.lacounty.gov/long-range-planning/disaster-recovery-ordinance/>

- Eliminated unnecessary steps from the existing process;
- Reduced amount of time for departments to complete their review;
- Deferred the need to grant clearances which are not needed to begin construction;
- Established over-the-counter review and approval processes; and
- Increased the number of staff dedicated to serving these customers.

Assuming that a rebuild project complies with all local regulations (e.g., setback requirements, garage/driveway requirements, oak tree protections, etc.) and a public hearing is unnecessary, the revised timeline for Eaton and Palisades customers is currently between 28 and 51 business days,<sup>2</sup> in addition to any time that a customer needs to complete his/her part of the process. This reduced timeline is based on the process fixes and enhancements implemented to date, as described below under "Expedited Process" (pp. 7 – 8). Additional improvements currently underway will likely further reduce this timeline, with the goal being to approve disaster rebuild permits within 30 business days of receipt of a complete and accurate application.

While this analysis identified a number of additional areas that could speed up the disaster rebuild permitting process, two main pain points emerged, which if addressed, will further reduce processing time:

1. Avoid the time delay caused by reviewing applications multiple times by ensuring that plans are complete and accurate the first time they are submitted.

Subject matter experts noted that many submitted permit applications require multiple reviews due to incomplete or inaccurate submittals. When this happens, plans are returned to the customer with needed corrections noted. The customer must then resubmit plans, re-pay fees in some cases, and await another review process. The process of correcting, returning, and reviewing the resubmitted application adds time to the overall approval process. DRP stated that about half of their applications must be re-reviewed at least once, and other departments stated it is common for plans to require two to three re-reviews due to incomplete or inaccurate information.

These reviews often took months to complete before departments streamlined their processes and cut review times down to 10 business days for the first review. Even with the expedited timeline, each review cycle adds time, as zoning, building, and code reviews can each take up to five more business days per re-review – and this does not include time needed for the customer to correct plans and resubmit them. This process can and must be improved.

---

<sup>2</sup> Business days is defined as Monday through Friday, excluding weekends and public holidays.

For example, DRP calculated that for the 261 disaster rebuild permit applications returned to the customer over the last four months (about half of total applications received), 132 (51%) were returned because of a correction needed to meet zoning code compliance. This issue could be minimized if plan pre-check guidance and/or tools were provided to customers before they submit their applications. Under the "Pre-Check Review" section below (p. 8), we describe a solution underway, in partnership with the State, that addresses this issue.

2. Simplify communication by clearly explaining what customers can expect: What is needed, why it is needed, and when it is needed.

Both users and subject matter experts shared that numerous issues found in rebuilding applications most likely occur over confusion about what is needed in each type of document, when documents are needed, and simply what payments are due when. This lack of clarity contributes to preventable plan resubmissions and re-reviews, which adds to the overall permit processing time and drives customer frustration.

DRP also indicated that for the 261 applications returned to the customer over the last four months, 146 (56%) were returned because the application was incomplete, an issue that could have been addressed with clearer communication and better user interface with the electronic application. Additionally, 42 applications (16%) could not move forward because the customer had yet to pay a required fee, possibly because they were unaware a fee was due.

Included within the data noted above, 60 applications (23%) had overlapping issues and were returned for being both out of zoning code compliance and for being incomplete.

**PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO DATE HAVE RESULTED IN PROGRESS WITH MORE ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT**

Based on the feedback received from users and subject matter experts, the Permitting Departments are implementing revised processes designed to expedite and simplify the disaster rebuild permit approval process from start to finish. The remainder of this memo details what improvements have been operationalized and describes additional improvements that are underway that should further reduce the time to complete rebuilding timelines.

### **Better Coordination and More Accountability**

#### *Established One-Stop Centers to Provide Customers What They Need in a Single Location*

In early March 2025, the County established a One-Stop Recovery Permitting Center (One-Stop Center) in Altadena to better support impacted residents with rebuilding their homes in nearby unincorporated areas. The One-Stop Center brings together key permitting departments into one location for a single point of interaction with the County for those wanting to rebuild. This offers customers direct in-person contact with staff to answer questions, receive over-the-counter assistance, and obtain timely approvals without compromising health, safety or code compliance. The One-Stop Center houses staff from DRP, PW, DPH, Fire, Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), Federal Emergency Management Agency, and now Southern California Edison. The Department of Mental Health will be added shortly, as well as other departments and agencies, as needed. A One-Stop Center was established in Calabasas at first to respond to the Woolsey fire and then the Palisades fire, and it now serves as our model for how best to provide those impacted by disasters with critical information and services needed for the rebuilding effort. Additionally, the County is currently streamlining the amount of information provided at the One-Stop Centers to make it much more digestible and easy-to-understand, so that our residents feel supported as they rebuild their lives.

#### *Established a Unified Permitting Authority Exclusively Dedicated to Streamlining the Permitting Process and Resolving Bottlenecks*

The CEO and County Counsel worked with DRP, PW, DPH, and Fire to develop a MOU to establish an integrated permitting center with a Unified Permitting Coordinator (Coordinator) to further streamline the recovery process and create a single point of public contact to coordinate final permitting decisions, in compliance with applicable State and local law, and considering the various permitting requirements of each department. The Coordinator will also implement procedures for internal consultation, documentation, and appeal, if needed.

The departments committed to implement the terms of the MOU and quickly resolving any problems or concerns that may develop. The MOU was executed on May 7, 2025.

The CEO designated the Director of PW to identify the Coordinator to act as a general manager in this capacity. Ciara Barnett, P.E., an Assistant Deputy Director at PW, has been designated to serve as the Coordinator. Ms. Barnett has more than 25 years of experience working at PW, including 18 years in the Building and Safety Division, focused on private property development. She has served as a Principal Engineer and managed various aspects of a wide and diverse portfolio

including permitting, plan check reviews, inspections, community services, public engagement, and improving the customer experience. Ms. Barnett will further support ongoing work across the departments as they collectively work towards a seamless process in both fire disaster areas.

*Established an Easy-to-Use Application That Speeds Up the Permitting Process*

Collaboration among these departments has led to an important development—the creation of a unified permitting application for residents wanting to rebuild in the Eaton and Palisades fire areas. The LA County Disaster Recovery Permit (CDRP) application simplifies the process because the customer only needs a single permit that covers all permitting needs. This unified application is currently available at the Altadena and Calabasas One-Stop Centers or online through the County’s electronic permit portal, EPIC-LA. The CDRP has been a game-changer in streamlining the application process since going live on February 27, 2025. Even with the number of applications received more than tripling (from 37 in February to 118 in April), it has helped the permitting departments streamline their reviews by speeding up their access to information and allowing for simultaneous departmental reviews, once zoning clearance has been obtained. An improved version of the CDRP is scheduled to go live this month.

**Expedited Process Enabling the County to Complete Necessary Processes Faster**

DRP, PW, DPH, and Fire worked together to implement the improvements listed below for customers rebuilding in Eaton and Palisades fire areas. Collectively, they significantly reduce the time it takes to receive a permit—from the original six to twelve months timeframe to the current 28 to 51 business days—not including the any time a customer needs to complete his/her parts.

*Eliminated Unnecessary Steps, Requirements, or Information Requests and Changed the Sequence of Others*

- Deferred the need for solar, internal fires sprinklers, and fuel modification reviews until after the building permit is issued;
- Removed the requirement for a Certificate of Compliance for most projects;
- Removed the requirement for a Debris Removal Form since the County can verify this information internally;
- Confirm pre-existing residential conditions using Assessor records, aerial photography, or the County’s Geographic Information System technology, instead of relying on customers to produce this information; and
- Determined the requirements for “Like-for-Like” rebuilds do not need to comply with current zoning codes.



*Reduced Review Timelines to Start the Rebuilding Process Faster*

- DRP, PW, and Fire reduced review periods from months to 10 business days for the first review and five business days for each subsequent review; and
- Authorized plan checkers to start the review process before fees are paid.

*Established Over-the-Counter Reviews and Approval Processes to Provide Needed Information and/or Approvals in Real-Time*

- DRP and PW outstationed zoning and plan reviewers at both Calabasas One-Stop Centers to answer questions and offer approvals on the spot.

*Increased Dedicated Staff Resources to the Recovery Effort and Increased Overall Capacity to Support the Permitting Process and Rebuilding Effort*

- Permitting Departments have dedicated staff at the Altadena and Calabasas One-Stop Centers and to the recovery effort to keep up with demand and expedite reviews;
- Permitting Departments have also dedicated teams to disaster recovery efforts including consultation, assistance, and community outreach and engagement; and
- DRP is hiring additional staff funded by a State grant.

**POTENTIAL ACCELERATORS UNDERWAY**

All innovations and/or reforms mentioned below address ideas that emerged during our user feedback sessions held in February 2025.

**Establish a Pre-Check Review to Detect Common Compliance Issues Early in the Process and Avoid Delays Caused by Rejected Plans**

The State is working with philanthropic partners to provide to the County and Los Angeles City, at no cost, an artificial intelligence tool that can pre-screen site and building plans to check if the plans meet code requirements and provide feedback to the user if changes are needed in order to comply with applicable requirements. The voluntary service would be offered to rebuilding customers in fire-affected areas free of charge.

As noted above, DRP found that 51 percent of applications returned to customers were due to a needed correction to meet zoning code compliance. Subject matter experts from PW and Fire also shared that they typically need up to three re-reviews because the building plans do not meet requirements when first submitted.

This solution has the potential to **reduce the permitting approval process by up to 15 business days** at no additional cost for customers choosing to use it.

**Offer Pre-Approved Design Plans Which Can Dramatically Reduce the Time to Complete the Permitting Process**

The Permitting Departments held workshops with architects and building professionals to encourage development of pre-approved design plans that customers could purchase. The process to obtain plan pre-approvals began April 26, 2025, and it is anticipated that these plans will be available for customers to use in the Eaton and Palisades fire areas in about 30 business days from the date of submission. Customers choosing to use one of these pre-approved design plans will need to add only a site plan and energy calculations that are specific to their property. Use of these plans will significantly speed up the permitting process and it is anticipated that customers submitting these design plans could **cut down their total permit approval time to as few as 20 business days**.

**Launch a Self-Certification Pilot to Expedite the Disaster Rebuild Process**

As directed by the Board on May 6, 2025, PW is piloting a program for architects and engineers to self-certify on residential rebuild projects for unincorporated area customers affected by the fires to shorten review times. This would allow licensed professionals to certify that building plans meet code requirements that could significantly accelerate the permitting process while maintaining safety and accountability.

**Simplify Communication About the Permitting Process to Avoid Misunderstanding and Delays**

*Condensed Agency Referral Form*

The Agency Referral Form currently shared with permit-seekers is a three-page document that lists extraneous information required for both commercial and residential builds, without specifying the information needed for either category (Attachment I). Customers have understandably expressed feeling overwhelmed and confused after trying to decipher what is required of them.

The Permitting Departments have reduced the Agency Referral form to a one-page form that includes only the information needed for disaster rebuild residential projects (Attachment II). Once implemented, this should help customers get the information they need faster.

*Revise LA County Recovery Website Making It Easier to Navigate and Understand, Increasing the Likelihood of a Faster Permitting Process*

The County will work with Code for America to optimize the LA Recovers website to provide clear, concise, plain-language information that helps customers easily understand their options, navigate County processes, and make informed decisions at every step of the rebuilding process. This will include providing content and design improvement recommendations for the homepage; the five rebuild landing pages; additional webpages related to debris removal, rebuilding, resources, damage maps; and the EPIC-LA Account Creation page.

As noted above, DRP found that 38 percent of applications were returned for being incomplete, an issue that could have been addressed with clearer upfront communication. Providing customers with clearer information about required documents in the application process can potentially **reduce the permitting approval process by up to 15 business days.**

*Optimize the County's Electronic Permitting Portal to Lower Barriers to the Successful Completion of the Permitting Process and Reduce the Overall Permitting Timeline*

LA County's EPIC-LA is being upgraded in several important ways. These include:

- Making it easier to apply using the unified application;
- Electronically routing plans across departments to eliminate the need for customers to separately engage with each department;
- Adding the capability for all inspections to be requested in one place (e.g., by adding DPH and Fire to the system); and
- Providing customers an option to complete the permitting process faster by requesting simultaneous plan reviews instead of the current sequential process.

We will continue to use customer and other feedback to re-evaluate every aspect of our process with an eye toward making the system work better and faster for our customers.

## **CURRENT DATA**

The Permitting Progress Dashboard is now publicly available at: <https://recovery.lacounty.gov/rebuilding/permitting-progress-dashboard/>. As of May 12, 2025, permitting data for the two unincorporated areas are as follows:

Permitting Progress Step	Eaton Fire Area	Palisades Fire Area
Zoning Reviews Received	429	50
Zoning Reviews Cleared <sup>3</sup>	209	33
Building Plans in Review	104	23
<b>Building Permits Issued</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Avg. Length of Time to Approval</b>	<b>38 Business Days</b>	<b>33 Business Days</b>

The County issued its first disaster rebuild permit on April 9, 2025, 48 business days after the first application was submitted on January 30, 2025.

As the existing improvements are in place longer, we expect to see the numbers of reviewed and cleared applications to increase and the average days to application approval to decrease considerably. We hope that as planned enhancements are brought online, we will strike the right balance between the workload increases driven by higher application volume and the reduced timelines for permit approvals gained through enhancements. For example, DRP completed full zoning reviews in an **average of five business days** for the first two weeks of April 2025, which will lead to significantly faster processing times in the coming months. The average length of time for approval is already trending down for the Eaton fire area, with the last rebuild permit approved **within 25 business days**.

Additional data will be added to the Permitting Progress Dashboard to provide more transparency, including the average length of time to process applications and other benchmarks, as they become available.

## NEXT STEPS

We recommend that the following actions be explored to further expedite the disaster rebuild permit process in the Eaton and Palisades fire areas:

- Simplify the process for securing a “Will Serve” letter from the applicable water company serving the property;
- Clarify with the Water Quality Control Board the rebuilding process for homes that are on cesspools;
- Use pre-fabricated and manufactured housing options;
- Consolidate the process for paying multiple fees to different departments and/or, as directed by the Board on May 6, 2025, potentially waiving fees where applicable;

---

<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that a number of customers choose to submit applications for building plan clearance sometime after zoning code clearance has been received. There are a variety of reasons for this, including not being ready to submit building plans, concerns about potential additional costs incurred if zoning plans require modifications, etc.

Each Supervisor  
May 12, 2025  
Page 12

- Refine estimates for necessary staffing levels needed to cover surge times, as current levels may not be sustainable with workloads continuing to increase; and
- Set-up virtual appointments for customers to ask questions.

All partners will continue to assess areas to further expedite practices. A critical next step will be determining which of these revised processes can be applied to the entire Countywide permitting process so that all County customers can benefit from these streamlined operations.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me or Carrie Miller at (213) 262-7823 or [cmiller@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:cmiller@ceo.lacounty.gov).

FAD:JMN:CDM  
KH:KY:kdm

#### Attachments

c:     Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
       County Counsel  
       Economic Opportunity  
       Fire  
       Mental Health  
       Public Health  
       Public Works  
       Regional Planning



LOS ANGELES COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS  
BUILDING AND SAFETY DIVISION  
**AGENCY REFERRAL**  
<https://dpw.lacounty.gov/general/servicelocator/>  
[Customer Service Survey](#)

VHFHSZ	Y / N
Waste	Sewer / Septic
Hwy. Ded.	Y / N _____ ft.
Geology	Fault / Liq / LS
Methane	Y / N
Code Enforce.	# _____
(N) Address	Y / N

Attachment I



**SAN GABRIEL VALLEY DISTRICT OFFICE**

125 South Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia, CA 91107  
Telephone: (626) 574-0941, FAX: (626) 446-4425  
Office Hours 7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-Th, 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Fri  
Plan Checker Hours: 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Mon – Thur.  
**Appointments are recommended**

Prepared By	HNM	OM Initial	Date

Applicant's  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Plans for (Grading/ Structure) at \_\_\_\_\_ (Address) \_\_\_\_\_ (Locality)

Plan Check No. \_\_\_\_\_ was submitted on \_\_\_\_\_

Land Use Zone \_\_\_\_\_ Proposed Occupancy \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Construction \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Proposed Work: \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS NOTICE IS TO INFORM YOU THAT APPROVAL FROM THE AGENCIES MARKED BELOW, IN ADDITION TO BUILDING PLAN CHECK APPROVAL, MUST BE OBTAINED PRIOR TO PERMIT ISSUANCE. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65913.3, if review of the permit application is required by a State Agency or Other Agency, as marked below, the applicable time limits for review of the application are tolled until the applicant provides Building and Safety with a copy of the Agency approval. Issuance of this referral sheet shall serve as formal notice of tolling.** You may need to submit the pertinent plans, plan check number, calculations, reports, etc., directly to these agencies. To assist you, we have listed below the information which you will need to contact these agencies. **Follow-up is your responsibility.** Please be aware that some items resulting from these agency plan reviews may affect your building plan check. These should be communicated to your Building Plan Check Engineer as soon as possible to prevent unnecessary delays. Submit all agency approvals 48 hours prior to permit issuance. Notify the Plan Check Engineer once all agency approvals have been submitted. Request to verify approvals.

**ADDITIONAL AGENCY CLEARANCES MAY BE REQUIRED BY YOUR BUILDING PLAN CHECK ENGINEER**

**Submit all agency approvals 48 hours prior to permit issuance**  
**LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENTS**

**PUBLIC WORKS DIVISIONS**

\_\_\_\_\_ **AVIATION DIVISION**

1000 S. Fremont Ave., Bldg. A9 East, 1<sup>st</sup> Fl., Alhambra, CA 91803  
(626) 300-4600 - Mon-Thurs 7:00 a.m. - 5:45 p.m.  
<https://dpw.lacounty.gov/avi/airports>

\_\_\_\_\_ **BUILDING AND SAFETY DIVISION**

Headquarters M-Th 6:45 - 5:30 (626) 458-3173  
900 S. Fremont Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl, Alhambra, CA 91803-1331  
<https://dpw.lacounty.gov/building-and-safety/>

Approval for the following sections is required as noted below:

- ☐ **BUILDING SECTION**
  - ☐ Casp Specialist Required
  - ☐ Permit Viewer go to:  
<http://dpw.lacounty.gov/bsd/bpv/>.
- ☐ **ELECTRICAL SECTION**

900 S. Fremont Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl, Alhambra, CA 91803-1331  
(626) 458-3180 - Approval is required for:

  - ☐ Energy Plan Check ☐ Electrical Code Check
  - ☐ Emergency Egress Illumination (O.L. ≥ 100)
  - ☐ Methane Mitigation required in Methane Zone  
<https://dpw.lacounty.gov/epd/swims/online services/search-methane-hazards-esri.aspx>
  - Visit [epicla.lacounty.gov](http://epicla.lacounty.gov), under "Permits" tab to apply for an Electrical Permit (Complex) – County
  - ☐ Solar for new SFR or detached ADU  
→ Visit [epicla.lacounty.gov](http://epicla.lacounty.gov), under "Permits" tab to apply for a Roof Mount Residential Solar permit
  - ☐ Solar for new Commercial / Industrial  
→ Visit [epicla.lacounty.gov](http://epicla.lacounty.gov), under "Permits" tab to apply for a Roof Mount Non-Residential Solar permit
- ☐ **MECHANICAL SECTION**

900 S. Fremont Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl, Alhambra, CA 91803-1331  
(626) 458-3182 - Approval is required for:

  - ☐ Energy Plan Check ☐ Mechanical Code Check  
→ Visit [epicla.lacounty.gov](http://epicla.lacounty.gov), under "Permits" tab to apply For a Mechanical Permit (Complex) - County
  - ☐ Plumbing Code Check ☐ Roof Drainage
  - ☐ Green Building Check ☐ Graywater for new constr.  
→ Visit [epicla.lacounty.gov](http://epicla.lacounty.gov), under "Permits" tab to apply for a Plumbing Permit (Complex) – County
- ☐ **RESEARCH SECTION**

900 S. Fremont Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl, Alhambra, CA 91803-1331  
(626) 458-3170  
(Alternate Materials, Methods of Construction, SMRF...)
- ☐ **GRADING AND DRAINAGE SECTION**

Wein Chu - Regional Drainage/Grading Engineer  
San Gabriel Office: Wednesday 7:00-11:00 a.m.  
(626) 574-0941 [wchu@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:wchu@dpw.lacounty.gov)

<https://dpw.lacounty.gov/building-and-safety/content/publications.aspx>

- ☐ **Grading Plan Check (NPDES/LID COMPLIANCE)**
  - ☐ "Rough Grade" approval is required prior to issuance of building permit
  - ☐ Disturbed Area ≥ 1 Acre
  - ☐ Commercial or Industrial Development
  - ☐ Hillside Development (i.e. slope ≥ 25%)
  - ☐ Adjacent to an Environmentally Sensitive Area
- ☐ **Drainage Plan Check (NPDES/LID COMPLIANCE)**
  - ☐ Drainage approval is required

\_\_\_\_\_ **GEOTECHNICAL AND MATERIALS ENGINEERING DIVISION (GMED)**  
**GEOLOGY/SOILS SECTIONS** - Plan approval is required for site stability and geologic hazard.  
(626) 458-4925 M-Th 6:30-5:15 pm  
Email: [GMEDSubmittals@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:GMEDSubmittals@dpw.lacounty.gov)  
Upload *plans, reports, GMED fee receipt, this Agency Referral Sheet* to: <http://epicla.lacounty.gov/SelfService/#/home>

<b>GMED Referral for:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Seismic Hazard Zone</b> Liquefaction / Seismically Induced Landslide / Fault Study
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Slope Stability</b> Over-Steepened Slopes / Landslide / Debris Flow
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Retaining Walls or Systems</b> Basement / Tiered / Soldier Piles / Tie-Back / Geo-Grid
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Foundation Recommendations</b> Piles / Caissons / Mat / Repairs / Soil-Cement Columns
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Temporary Conditions</b> Shoring / Steep Excavations / Slot-Cuts / Tie-Backs

\_\_\_\_\_ **ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS DIVISION**  
Plan approval is required for most commercial and industrial buildings for:  
<https://pw.lacounty.gov/epd/cleanla>

☐ **INDUSTRIAL WASTE / UNDERGROUND TANKS / STORMWATER**

<b>San Gabriel Office</b> 125 S. Baldwin Avenue Arcadia, CA 91007-2652 (626) 458-3517 8:00-9:30 a.m. Mon-Fri  <a href="mailto:iw@pw.lacounty.gov">iw@pw.lacounty.gov</a> Industrial Waste / LID <a href="mailto:ust@pw.lacounty.gov">ust@pw.lacounty.gov</a> Underground Storage Tanks <a href="mailto:sw@pw.lacounty.gov">sw@pw.lacounty.gov</a> Stormwater	<b>Headquarters (HDQRTS)</b> 900 S. Fremont Ave., Annex 3 <sup>rd</sup> Fl Alhambra, CA 91803-1331 (626) 458-3517 6:45 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon-Thurs
--	---

- ☐ **NPDES/LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT (LID) Approval Industrial Waste Unit (HDQRTS)**  
(626) 458-3517 7:00am-5:00pm Mon-Thurs
- ☐ **DUMP AREAS/METHANE MITIGATION/OIL & GAS WELLS/CONTAMINATED SOIL HAZARDS** (structure within 1,000 ft from a landfill) (HDQRTS)  
[Methane@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:Methane@pw.lacounty.gov)  
(626) 570-2810 7:00am -5:00pm Mon-Thurs



- ❑ **SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT (TRASH ENCLOSURES)**  
[TrashEnc@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:TrashEnc@pw.lacounty.gov) - (HDQRTS)  
(626) 570-2810 7:00am -5:00pm Mon-Thurs
- ❑ **CONSTRUCTION & DEMOLITION DEBRIS RECYCLING AND REUSE PLAN – (HDQRTS)**  
(626) 458-3517 [www.CleanLA.com](http://www.CleanLA.com) 6:45-5:30 Mon-Thurs  
Instructions on how to apply are available at:  
[pw.lacounty.gov/epd/cd/](http://pw.lacounty.gov/epd/cd/) - Email at: [CND@pw.LACounty.gov](mailto:CND@pw.LACounty.gov)  
(626) 458-3517 7:00am -5:00pm Mon-Thurs

**LAND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION**  
900 S. Fremont Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl, Alhambra 91803-1331  
(626) 458-4921 Mon - Thurs 6:45 AM to 5:30 PM  
<https://dpw.lacounty.gov/ldd/web/>

- ❑ **SUBDIVISION PLAN CHECK SECTION**  
→ Visit [epicla.lacounty.gov](http://epicla.lacounty.gov), under “Plans” tab to apply for a Street Plan application
- ❑ **LANDSCAPE** (Residential or Non-Residential landscaped area > 500 square feet or rehab landscape > 2500 sf)  
→ Visit [epicla.lacounty.gov](http://epicla.lacounty.gov), under “Plans” tab to apply for a Landscape Water Efficiency Plan application
- ❑ **HIGHWAY DEDICATION Form "48-0040-DPW"**  
Should be filled out when plan approval for street improvements and/or dedication is required for commercial and multiple residential buildings. "Bridge & Major Thoroughfare (B&T) Fee" is also required for commercial, multiple residential buildings and designated tracts. May need “ATI” Agreement to Improve at time of permit issuance.  
(626) 458-4915
  - 3 or more residential units on a single lot (SFR and duplex). ADUs excluded.
  - New commercial buildings
  - Additions to commercial buildings that increase total area by 50% or more
  - New multi-family residential buildings
  - Additions to multi-family residential buildings that increase total area by 50% or more
  - Additions to SFR or new detached buildings used for daycare, when total building area is increased by 50% or more
- ❑ **PERMIT SECTION**  
**Road Right-of-Way Permits Section**  
Permits are required for road excavations and encroachments within County roads and Flood Control easements.  
  
**San Gabriel Valley Office**  
14747 E. Ramona Blvd, Baldwin Park, CA 91706  
(626) 338-9509  
  
900 S. Fremont Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl, Alhambra, CA 91803-1331  
(626) 458-3129 Mon–Thurs 7:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.  
→ Visit [epicla.lacounty.gov](http://epicla.lacounty.gov), under “Permits” tab to apply for a Road Construction or Road Encroachment or Road Excavation permit

- MAPPING AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**
- ❑ **ADDRESS ASSIGNMENT:** New address is required for a new building/pedestal & optional for an accessory dwelling unit. New address must be assigned prior to permit issuance. Address request must be sub-record of Ministerial Plan or Building Permit. JADUs do not receive new addresses.  
Manual: [Address Request Manual](#)
  - ❑ New address for new SFD
  - ❑ New address for new ADU w/ electric service meter
  - ❑ New address for new ADU due to a separate driveway or street access from the main house

**OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS**

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH – Environmental Health Division**  
5050 Commerce Way, Baldwin Park, CA 91706  
(626) 430-5380 Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m.  
<https://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh/>

- Approval is required for:
- ❑ **PRIVATE SEWAGE DISPOSAL**
  - ❑ **WATER SOURCE APPROVAL LETTER**  
Proof of an “Environmental Health Dept. Approved Water Source” is required for areas without public water system
  - ❑ **FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS**  
(626) 430-5400
  - ❑ **PUBLIC SWIMMING POOL – RECREATIONAL HEALTH**  
(626) 430-5360

- ❑ **X-RAY MACHINE INSTALLATION Radiation Management**  
3530 Wilshire Blvd., 9<sup>th</sup> Fl, Los Angeles, CA 90010  
(213) 351-7897-Mon-Thurs 7:00-5:30 pm- Fri 8:00-4:30pm

**COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
Payment of Library Facilities Mitigation Fee is required. A Certificate of Payment or a Certificate of Clearance must be obtained from the Public Library. Bring Plan Check Fee Receipt from Building and Safety.  
7400 E. Imperial Highway, Downey, CA 90242  
(562) 940-8430 M-Th 7:30 am - 5:30 pm

**PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**  
Approval for building plans is required for construction adjacent to "Designated Trails"  
**Planning Division, Research & Trails Section**  
510 S. Vermont Ave. 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl, Los Angeles, CA 90020  
(213) 351-5098 M-Th 7:00 am – 5:30 pm

**REGIONAL PLANNING DEPARTMENT**  
San Gabriel District Office for General Information:  
125 S. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA 91007  
Public Counter: M-F 7:00 am – 11:00 am  
(Must sign in before 10:30 a.m.)  
Call (213) 974-6411 to speak to a planner  
[info@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:info@planning.lacounty.gov)  
**Virtual Counseling:** Tues.- Thurs. 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
<https://planning.lacounty.gov/online>

Please provide the Department of Regional Planning (DRP) RPAP or RPPL case number with an approval. If you have not submitted to DRP, please apply for “DRP- Base Application – Permits & Reviews” on EPIC-LA through the Sub-Records tab on your Building Permit Application.  
Please Refer to the Guide to EPIC-LA Sub-Records for more information. Please see link below:  
[https://epicla.lacounty.gov/help/doc/Guide\\_Sub-Records.pdf](https://epicla.lacounty.gov/help/doc/Guide_Sub-Records.pdf)

**ARTS AND CULTURE**  
Compliance of the Public Art in Private Development Ordinance is required.  
Pat Gomez (Phone or email inquiries only) [PAPD@arts.lacounty.gov](mailto:PAPD@arts.lacounty.gov) or  
213-315-9972 M-Th 9:00am-5:00pm

**COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
Recordation of affordable housing land use covenant is required and must be recorded senior to all existing deeds of trust on the property. Payment of monitoring fee is required at time of covenant recordation.  
[landuse@lacda.org](mailto:landuse@lacda.org)

**STATE AGENCIES**

**CALTRANS**  
Permits are required for excavation, encroachment (including driveway aprons) and improvements (including grading or structures that affect drainage) on State Highways:  
100 S. Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl., Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 897-3631 <https://dot.ca.gov/obtain-permits>

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
Manufactured Homes & Alterations to Manufactured Homes  
3737 Main St, Suite #400, Riverside, CA 92501  
(909) 782-4420 M-F 8:00-5:00 pm - (951) 680-6870  
<https://www.hcd.ca.gov>  
  
20201 Sherman Way, Suite 106 Winnetka, CA 91306  
(818) 717-5267 M-F 8:00-5:00 pm

**STATE DEPT. OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS - CAL/OSHA DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH**  
Permit is required for excavation of trenches which are 5 ft. or more deep into which a person is required to descend or for the construction or demolition of any structure 4 or more stories. Brick-lined seepage pits may require permit.

1906 W. Garvey Ave. S., Ste. 200, West Covina, CA 91790  
(626) 472-0046 <https://www.dir.ca.gov>

**STATE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION DIVISION OF OIL AND GAS**  
Obtain clearance for the requirements of abandonment of oil wells.

5816 Corporate Ave, Ste 200, Cypress, CA 90630-4731  
(714)816-6847 <https://www.conservation.ca.gov>

**ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST – Parcels ending in 3XX**  
  
701 N. Santa Anita Ave., Arcadia, CA 91006  
(626)574-1613

OTHER AGENCIES

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU OF THE CONSOLIDATED FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

https://fire.lacounty.gov

- Plan approval is required
- Building Release is required.
- "HAZMAT" form must be submitted to and approved by the Fire Department for non-residential occupancies if **hazardous materials are being handled**. Obtain form from Building and Safety and submit to:

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU – Hazardous Materials Section

5825 E. Rickenbacker Road  
Commerce, CA 90040-3027  
(323) 890-4000  
→ Visit [epicla.lacounty.gov](https://epicla.lacounty.gov) under “Plans” tab to apply for a Fire Engineering application

- FIRE PROTECTION ENGINEERING  
5823 E. Rickenbacker Road, Commerce, CA 90040-3027  
(323) 890-4125
  - Azusa, Duarte, Covina, Mt Baldy, West Covina, 231 Mountain View, Glendora, CA 91741  
(626) 963-0067 Tue.-Fri. 7:30am-10:30am  
[fire-fpazusa@fire.lacounty.gov](mailto:fire-fpazusa@fire.lacounty.gov)  
[fire-fpglendora@fire.lacounty.gov](mailto:fire-fpglendora@fire.lacounty.gov)
  - Claremont, La Verne, San Dimas  
560 S. Park Ave, Pomona, CA 91766  
(909) 620-2216 Mon. – Thur. 7:30am-10:30am  
[fire-fpdiamondbar@fire.lacounty.gov](mailto:fire-fpdiamondbar@fire.lacounty.gov)
- OTHER APPROVALS (Sprinklers <20 Heads, sprinklers: Residential & Remodel, Pool draft Hydrant, Hoods, Restaurants with new cooking, Tanks, and TI < 2500 sq. ft.)  
  
125 S. Baldwin Ave. Arcadia 91007  
(626) 574-0949 - Tue-Fri 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
- FUEL MODIFICATION  
Brushing Clearance Office, Fire Station 32  
605 N. Angeleno Ave., Azusa 91702  
(626) 969-5205  
→ Visit [epicla.lacounty.gov](https://epicla.lacounty.gov) under “Plans” tab to apply for a Fire Engineering application

COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT

Payment of sewer connection is required  
1955 Workman Mill Road, Whittier, CA 90691  
(562) 908-4288 ext. 2727      [engineeringcounter@lacsdc.org](mailto:engineeringcounter@lacsdc.org)  
[www.lacsdc.org](http://www.lacsdc.org)

- La Crescenta / Montrose Area Only:  
Crescenta Valley Water District  
2700 Foothill Blvd., La Crescenta, CA 91214  
(818) 248-3925

SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (SCAQMD)

Applicants for non-residential buildings must fill out "Air Quality Permit Checklist" furnished by Building & Safety. If "Yes" is marked, a written release will be required before occupancy is allowed. Notification form required for demolition and alteration permits where **ASBESTOS** is involved.  
[www.AQMD.gov](http://www.AQMD.gov)

- South Coast Air Quality Management District  
21865 E. Copley Dr., Diamond Bar, CA 91765-4182  
(909) 396-2000,      (800) 288-7664  
(800) 388 - 2121      Tues - Fri. 7:00-5:30 pm

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Development fee must be paid to the Local School District for residential and commercial construction. A "Certificate of Payment of Developer Fee" must be submitted to Building and Safety prior to obtaining a building permit.

- Obtain “Certification Form” from B&S District Office.  
→ Visit <https://dpw.lacounty.gov/general/servicelocator/> for school district

Obtain “Certification Form” from B&S District Office or go to:

- Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)  
Obtain "Certification Form" from Santa Clarita B & S Office  
[developerfee@lausd.net](mailto:developerfee@lausd.net)  
333 S. Beaudry Ave. 27th flr      Mailing address: LAUSD  
Los Angeles, CA 90017      Developer Fee Program Office  
(213) 743-3670      P.O. Box 513307  
For Boundary Information      Los Angeles, CA 90051  
(213) 241-0715

LOCAL WATER COMPANY

→ Visit <https://dpw.lacounty.gov/general/servicelocator/> for local water company

- Provide a copy of the Fire Flow Availability letter (**Form 195/196**, available from B&S District Office) completed by the water company serving the site. (Please be advised that fire dept. approval may be required based on the results of the fire flow test.)  
[FORMS \(lacounty.gov\)](https://forms.lacounty.gov)
- Provide a “**Will Serve**” letter from the water company for all new residential and commercial buildings (including additions that will create new units) prior to permit issuance

LA COUNTY ASSESSOR OFFICE

Find Los Angeles County residential property records including property owners, sales & transfer history, deeds & titles, property taxes, valuations, land, zoning records & more.  
<https://assessor.lacounty.gov/contact/officelocations>  
<https://portal.assessor.lacounty.gov/>

Headquarters

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 W. Temple Street, Room 225  
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2770  
Phone: (213) 974-3211  
(888) 807-2111 toll-free  
Si necesita asistencia en Español, por favor llame gratis al (888) 807-2111 y oprima "2" al escuchar el mensaje.  
Office Hours (except County holidays):  
Monday - Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm  
*Must be in line by 4:45pm*

East District Office

1190 Durfee Avenue  
South El Monte, CA 91733  
Phone: (626) 258-6001  
Office Hours (except County holidays):  
Monday - Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm

LA COUNTY REGISTRAR-RECORDER/ COUNTY CLERK OFFICE

Request a vital record, real estate record, or record a property document.  
**To contact the Recorder/County Clerk please call: (800) 201-8999**  
[Branch Office Locations \(lavote.gov\)](https://branchoffice.lavote.gov)

COVENANTS & AGREEMENTS (must be notarized & recorded)

- Manufactured Home      □ Sewage Disposal
- LID Covenants

Main Office

Norwalk  
12400 Imperial Hwy.  
Norwalk, CA  
M-F, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
**By Appointment Only**

Branch Office

East Los Angeles  
4716 E. Cesar Chavez Blvd., Bldg. B  
Los Angeles, CA 90022  
M-F, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
**By Appointment Only**

USEFUL WEBSITES LINKS

- Use our Epic LA website to submit permit applications:  
<https://epicla.lacounty.gov/>
- Epic LA step-by-step guide:  
<https://epicla.lacounty.gov/help/doc/BSDPPermitGeneralGuide.pdf>
- For technical assistance or general Epic LA questions, send an email to [epiclahelp@lacounty.gov](mailto:epiclahelp@lacounty.gov)
- Virtual appointments:  
<https://dpw.lacounty.gov/landing/onlineappointments.cfm>
- For Regional Planning and Zoning questions, email [info@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:info@planning.lacounty.gov) or call 213-974-6411

OTHER





**LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
EATON FIRE  
RESIDENTIAL REBUILD AGENCY REFERRAL**



Project Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Plan Check #: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Proposed Work: \_\_\_\_\_

This agency referral form details the clearances that will need to be obtained for your project during the permitting process. Additional clearances may be required upon detailed review of your plans.

**All clearances can be uploaded online via EPIC-LA or submitted in person.** To speak with a professional about your specific project needs, or to submit agency clearances in person, please visit our [One-Stop Permitting Centers](#).

**Before your permit can be issued:**

*The following are clearances that you will need to secure prior to your permit being issued. You or your applicant can complete these requirements while your plans are being reviewed.*

**LOCAL WATER COMPANY**

Visit our [service locator](#) to find your local water company

- Provide a copy of the [Fire Flow Availability Form 195](#) completed by your water company
- Provide a “Will Serve Letter” from your water company for all new residential buildings

**SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Fee payment required only for projects which add more than 500 sq ft from the prior permitted structure

**COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT**

Clearance is required only for new connections to public sewer

**MAPPING AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT – NEW ADDRESS ASSIGNMENT**

For accessory dwelling units a new address may be required. Discuss with your plan checker.

**During construction:**

*After you have received your permit, these additional clearances will be required. Construction may begin before these steps are taken, but must be completed before the project is finalized.*

**ELECTRICAL SECTION SOLAR REVIEW**

Solar is required for rebuild residences or detached ADUs

Visit [EPIC-LA](#) to apply for a Roof Mount Residential Solar permit

**FUEL MODIFICATION**

Fuel Modification is only required for parcels located in Fire Hazard Severity Zones

**FIRE SPRINKLERS**

Interior fire sprinklers are required by the state fire code for all new single-family dwellings, ADUs and duplexes.

PREPARED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

May 1, 2025

---

# Takeaways from Developing a Service Blueprint of Getting a Permit to Rebuild

Recommendations to improve the LA County Wildfire Response



**Minnar Xie**

Design Manager & Service Designer



**Jon Truong**

Sr UX Designer



**Kate O'Connell**

Sr Director of User Experience



**Gwen Barker**

Sr Director of Delivery



**Thank you everyone for taking the time to join us  
in-person last Tuesday, April 22!**



And, you've made a lot of improvements quickly! 🎉

Identified **one person** who can potentially resolve issues quickly across departments

New progress dashboard place for data on submitted

Stationed Department of Public Works staff at the one-stop centers who can resolve issues and approve plans over-the-counter

Department of Regional Planning increased their staffing levels at the one-stop centers

Setting up agreement with Archistar to voluntarily conduct pre-checks on plans before they are submitted

EPIC-LA has been updated to provide **one complete plan** for each property

# You all clearly have a passion for human-centered outcomes, and possess a shared dream for the future.

Plans are 100% complete when submitted  
(or require only one round of revisions!)

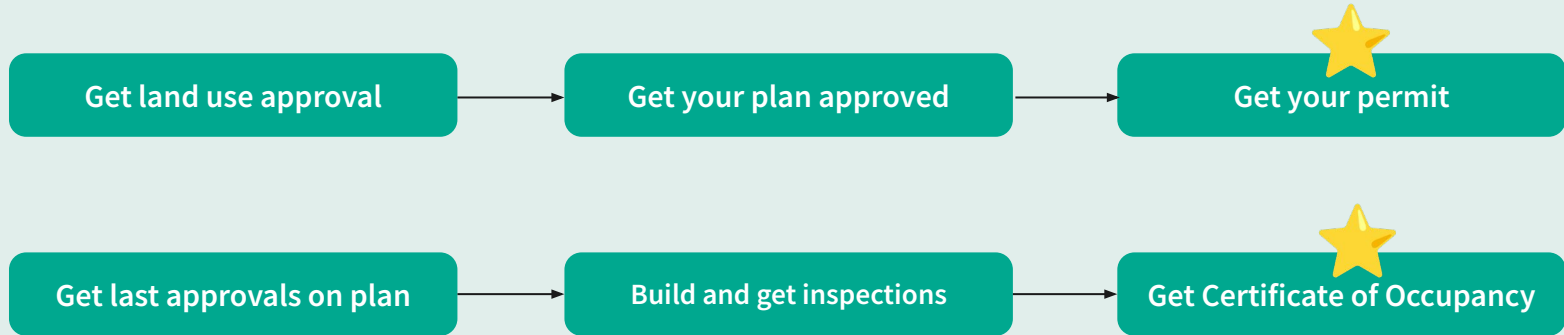
We act like a  
“single line of business”  
focused on our customers’ goals

We surprise customers with how easy and seamless the process is!

Customers understand why these requirements exist, and can appreciate the reasons for it

We don’t just solve this once, but have a repeatable process for future wildfires

# Overview of the Service Blueprint



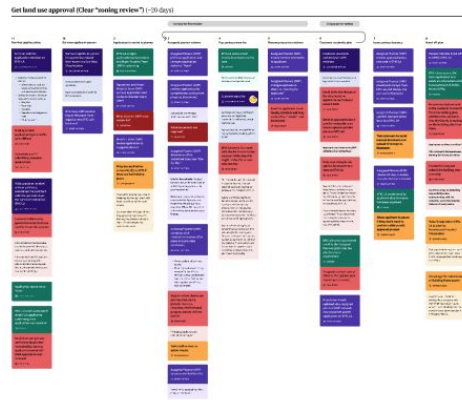


# Phases in the rebuild permitting process

1

## Get land use approval

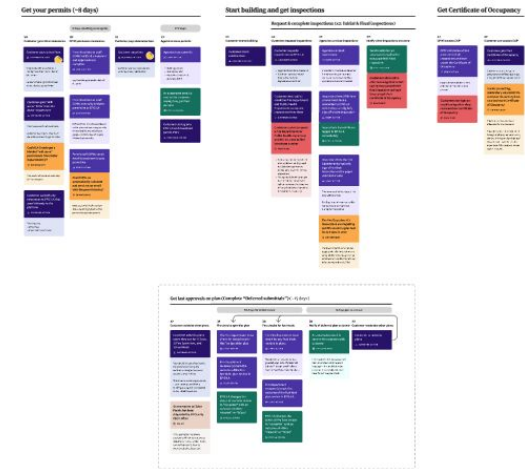
Clear “zoning review” (Dept. of Planning)



~20 days:

10 days for initial review

5 days per re-review, avg. ~2



# Phases in the rebuild permitting process

2

## Get your plan approved

Get referred to relevant agencies and clear “plan check”  
(Dept. of Public Works and Health, Fire as needed )



# Phases in the rebuild permitting process

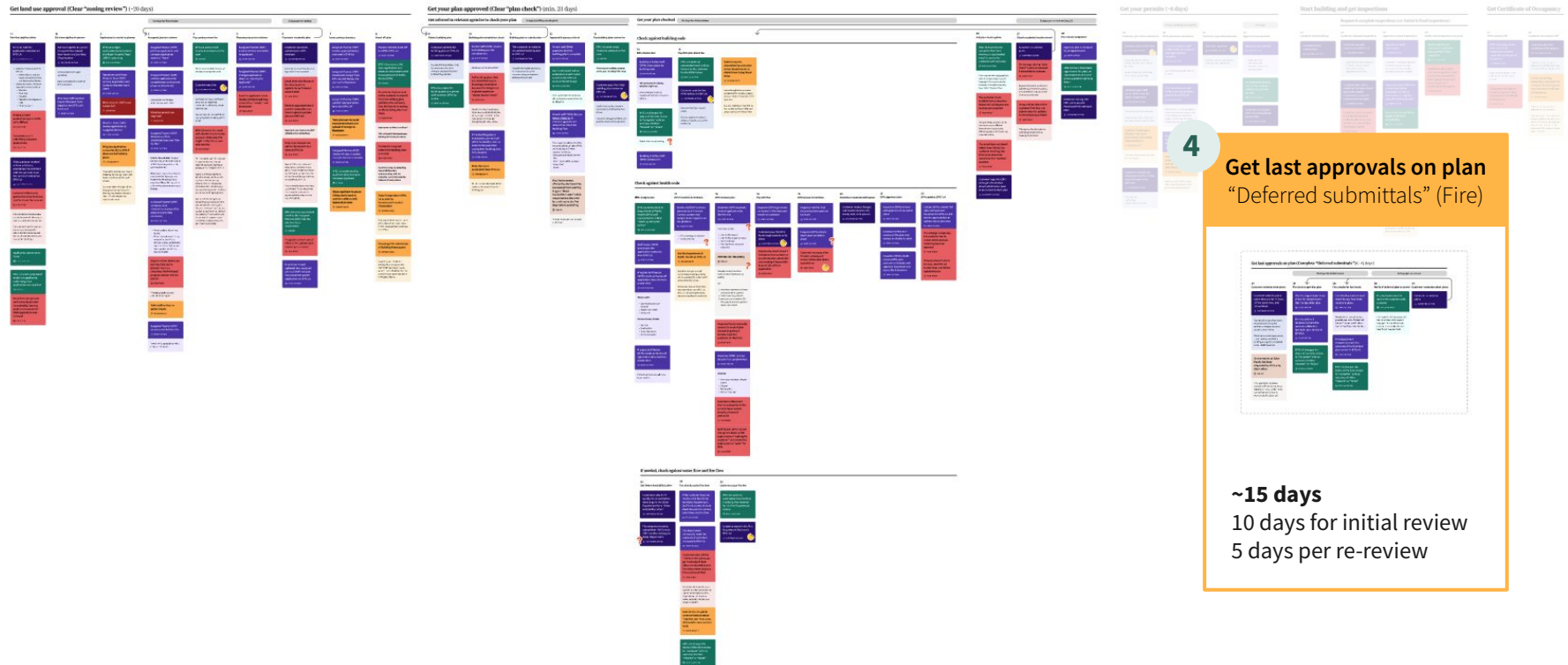
3

**Get permits**  
(Dept. of Public Works)

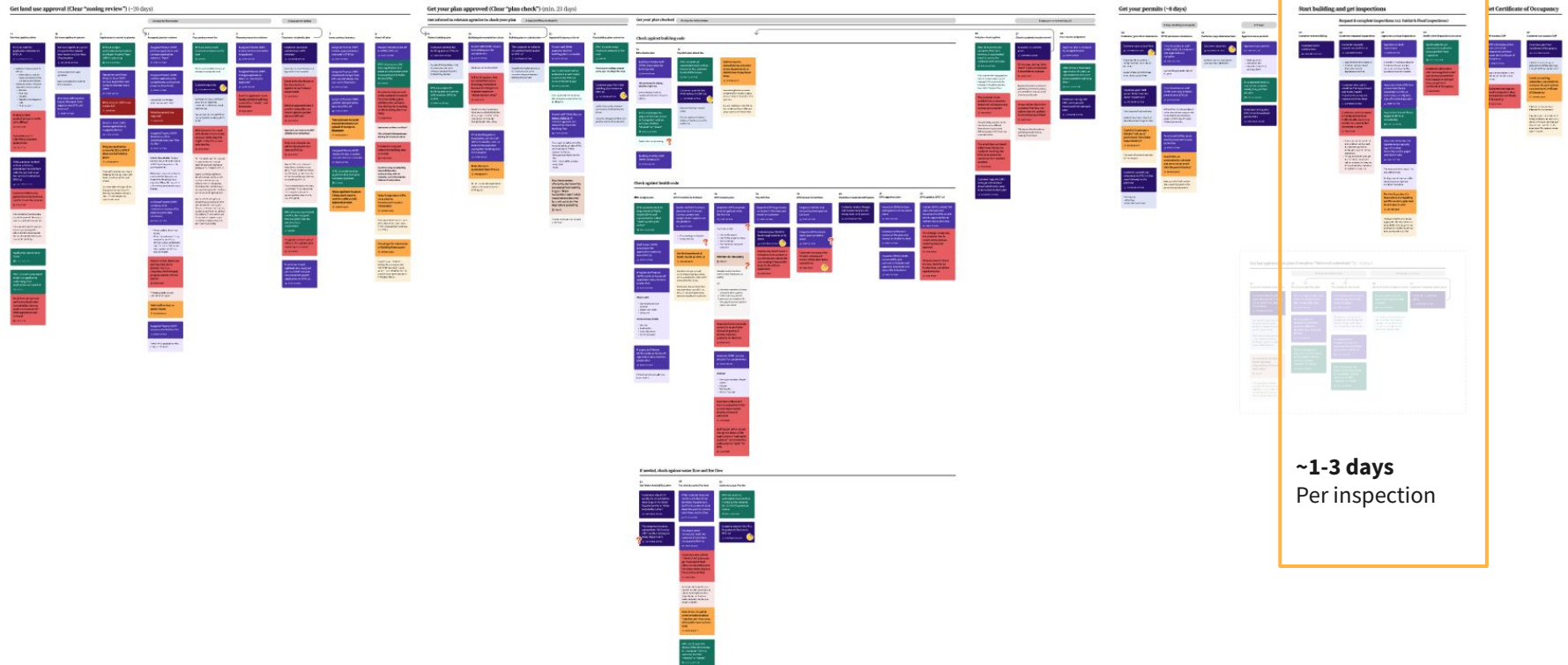




## Phases in the rebuild permitting process



# Phases in the rebuild permitting process

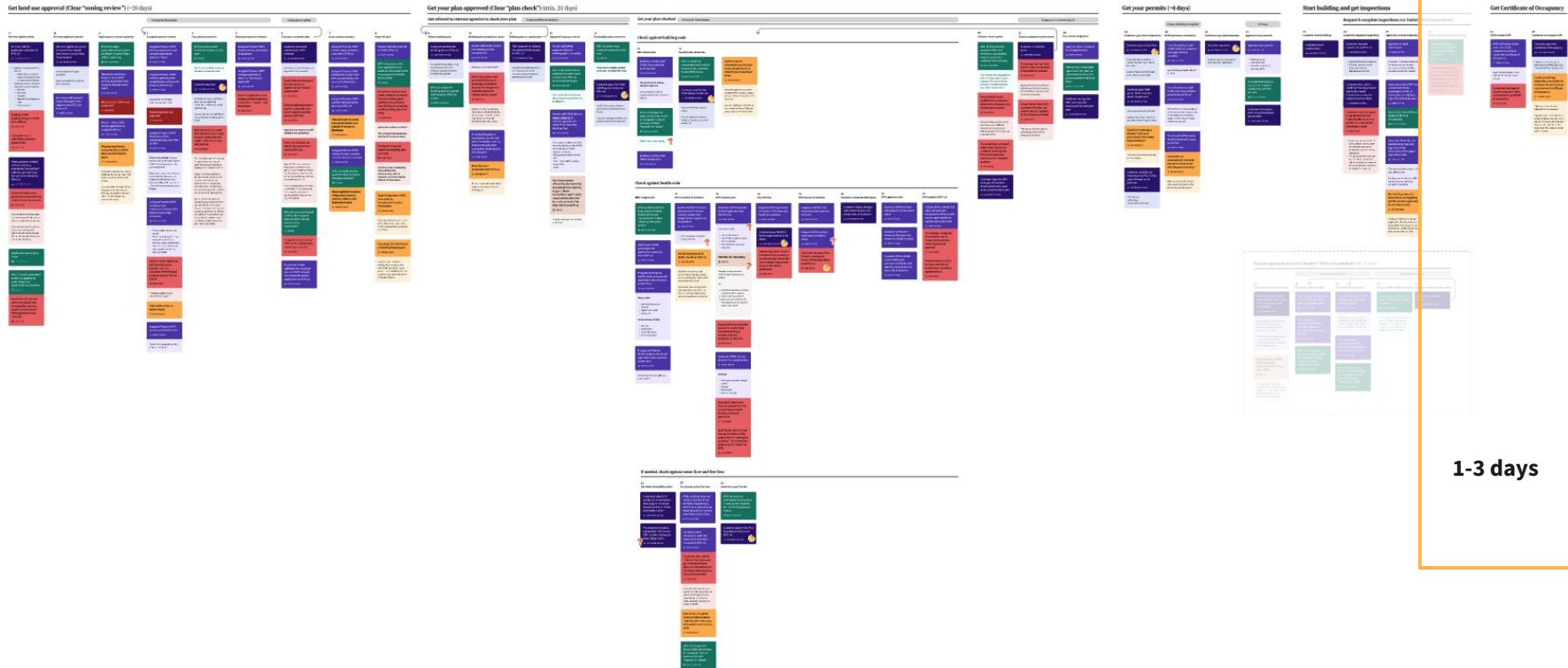


# Phases in the rebuild permitting process

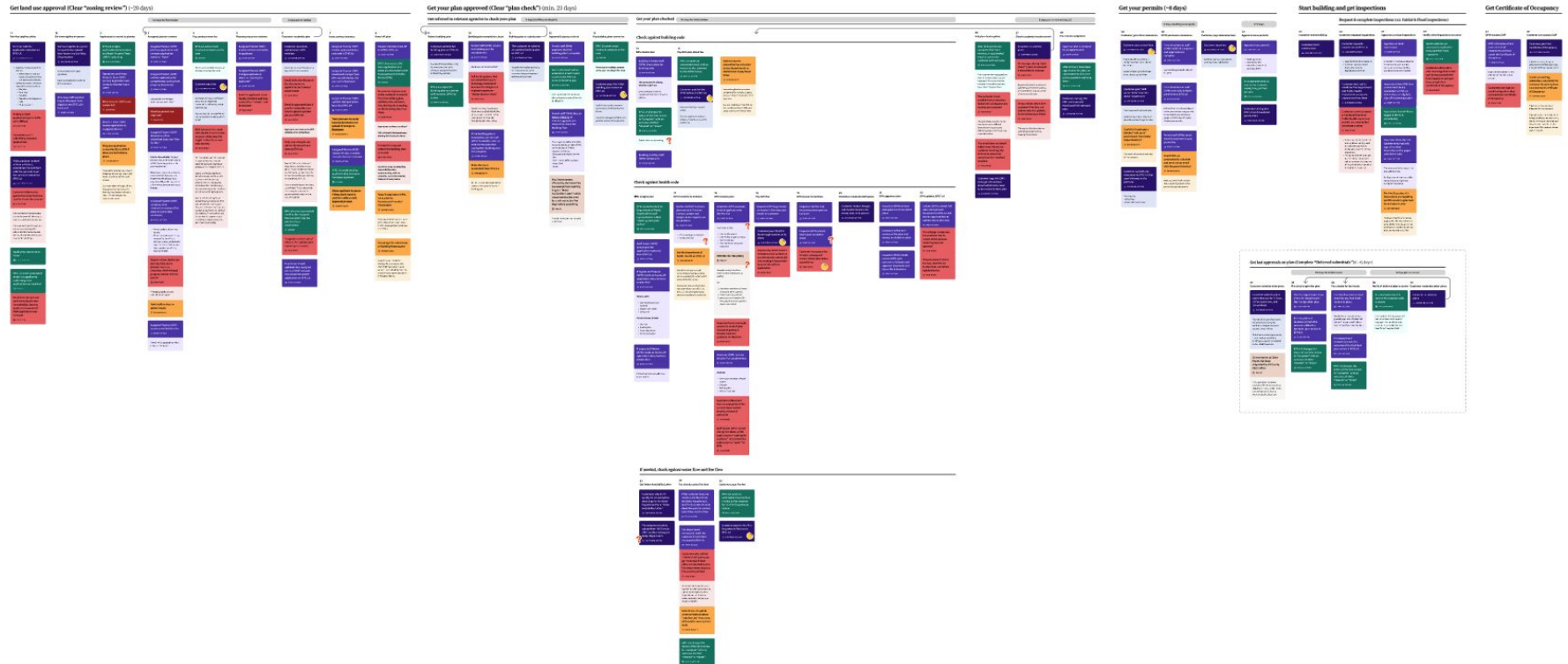
6

Get  
“Certificate of  
Occupancy”

1-3 days



**In total: ~65 business days of processing**  
From Application to Certificate of Occupancy



# Key Takeaways & Recommendations

Our top 10 recommendations to address these three goals

Customer experience

Meet 30 day processing goal

Operational alignment

## Our top 10 recommendations at a glance:

### Customer experience

**1**

Make the **homeowner a required contact on EPIC-LA**

**2**

Consolidate **fees**, and make them predictable

**3**

Revisit all **customer-facing communications**

### Meeting the 30-day processing goal

**4**

Improve the **EPIC-LA workflow** with frontline staff

**5**

Send customer **communications** sooner for needed plan revisions

**6**

Enable, but not require, **simultaneous review**

### Operational alignment

**7**

Align on a cross-departmental definition for **“Like-for-Like”**

**8**

Get the **Dept. of Public Health** on EPIC-LA

**9**

Continue to focus on integrating the system with **data dashboard**

**10**

Keep up momentum in managing your **service journey**

# Customer Experience

**1**

Make the homeowner a required contact on EPIC-LA

**2**

Consolidate fees, and make them predictable

**3**

Revisit all customer-facing communications

## Make the homeowner a required contact on EPIC-LA

During the workshop, participants raised core risks to both the customer experience and timeliness of the overall process:

- In the current configuration of EPIC-LA, communications only go to the email that was used to create the account, meaning that **customers are often in the dark when their plans need revisions or when they need to pay a fee**
- Contractors may not respond promptly and may be deflecting responsibility when communicating with the customer, leading customers to **incorrectly blame delays on County review**

During the session it was raised that **EPIC-LA can be easily re-configured** to both 1) ask for homeowner contact information as part of the application process, and 2) require homeowner contact information to be listed.

### The Opportunity

Imagine if...

- **The homeowner were equally aware of their status as their contractor**, and can pressure their contractors accordingly.
- **The homeowner knows when they need to pay fees**, when something is **outstanding** from them (ie: the full building plan, or corrections), and when they've reached **major progress milestones** (ie: they can begin construction).



## Consolidate fees, and make them predictable

Currently customers have to pay fees **at least 6 separate times** before getting their permits, sometimes on different platforms.

Fees can be **extremely costly**, some over \$100,000. Many customers may need to submit the fee invoices to their insurance in order to have the cash to pay the fees, which adds an extra step and time to the overall process.

**Fees are treated as gateways** to next steps and that's not well understood upfront by the customer. As a result, the process is delayed and customers can get frustrated. For example:

- A full building plan check cannot be completed until the customer has paid multiple departments separately for their review.
- A customer can't access their completed permits until they have paid another fee.

### Key Considerations

- **A user-friendly fee payment experience needs to account for collections limits.**  
EPIC-LA has a \$50k collection limit and credit cards have an estimated \$100k limit.
- **It's possible to estimate and collect fees before a step in the process is completed.**  
For example, the City of Inglewood consolidates fee payments for permitting upfront and later refunds any excess.

## Revisit all customer-facing communications throughout the journey

This includes touchpoints like automated emails, status views on EPIC-LA, corrections lists, and the LA County Recovers website. Improved communications should focus on:

- **Orientation in the journey.** How successfully touchpoints help the customer understand the status of where they are in the process, what's next, and without creating any misunderstandings.
- **Tone and plain language.** Optimize wording to improve accessibility and comprehension. For example, revisit words like “deny”/“fail”/“rejected” and “approved.”
- **Timing.** Ensure actions needed are communicated just in time at an appropriate cadence.
- **Visual consistency.** Use consistent branding and language to engender trust and reduce cognitive load.
- **Clarity of sender.** Ensure the email sender is clear. Prevent the feeling of “Who is this?” and opportunities for scammers.

### Pain Points

- **Planning’s “approval” for land use/zoning has been misunderstood** as completing the process for permitting.
- **Emails to applicants are not always tonally sensitive** and may come off as “robotic” and boilerplate.
- **There’s no communication for customers to submit their full building plan**, resulting in frustration with a delay as the County waits for the customer.

# Meet 30 day processing goal

4

Improve the **EPIC-LA** workflow  
with frontline staff

5

Send customer **communications**  
sooner for needed plan revisions

6

Enable, but not require,  
**simultaneous review**

## Improve the EPIC-LA workflow with frontline staff

Much valuable effort has been made to design a new EPIC-LA workflow for this expedited rebuild permitting process, and that's worth celebrating!

And, as many stakeholders mentioned during the session, a **major risk to the overall success of the new workflow is the 1) hand-offs between staff & departments and 2) the buy-in from staff adopting this new process.**

We recommend you meaningfully engage staff to improve their workflow by:

1. Shadowing staff in order to provide **UX recommendations to the worker-facing views of EPIC-LA**
2. **Bringing together cross-departmental staff in a similar service blueprinting process** to identify pain points and opportunities for efficiencies from their perspective

### Key Considerations

- **Not all departments and staff have familiarity of EPIC-LA to start**, and even for those with EPIC-LA experience, they will need to re-learn new processes.
- **Staff actions (or a lack of staff action) can be directly tied to client misunderstanding about the status of their case.**  
Step-in-action checks are not required, so if a staff member misses a checkbox, the progress tracker will not update.

## Send customer communications sooner for needed plan revisions

One critical finding during the breakout groups is that in the current model, **customers only receive an automated email letting them know they need revisions once the slowest department completes its first plan check.**

Public Health is the exception because they are not yet on EPIC-LA, so their staff individually reach out to customers before all plan checks are completed to request revisions.

The intent in waiting to contact customers about needed revisions is **well-intentioned**: because departments have a 10 day requirement to complete their initial reviews, the goal was to consolidate communications.

However, given that **customers regularly have to re-submit revisions and every day counts**, there is a clear opportunity to give clients a heads up to begin preparing and submitting item corrections several days sooner.

### Key Considerations

- **We don't want to overwhelm clients with emails either**, so consider batching emails with needed item corrections per day or per every couple of days.
- **The UX of submitting specific item corrections need to be clear and easy for customers** so that the staff across different departments picking up the revisions can easily address the single issue that is corrected.

## Enable, but don't require, simultaneous review

During the session, participants estimated the potential timeline for each phase. That exercise revealed that **the current process as-is is very unlikely to meet the 30 day processing goal for permitting.**

If we take into account the **typical number of needed re-reviews** and assume the best case scenarios where revisions are submitted within 1 day of corrections issued and customers pay their fees on the same day as requested, this process would take **51 business days** or 2.5 months:

- **Zoning review** would take **~20 days**
- **Plan check** would take **~23 days**
- And an additional **~8 days** are needed to issue permits

To **increase the likelihood of meeting a 30 day turnaround, we suggest LA enables simultaneous review** where zoning + plan check occurs during the same time. The Department of Public Works and Planning shared that a proposal for this has been created already and is in active discussion.

### Key Considerations

- **Communicate the risks to customers and allow them to make a choice to opt-in.** The risk is that customers may have to re-do their zoning review if one part of their plan requires significant re-design.
- **Some customers may only want to complete the zoning review** (ie: because they plan to sell the land, not rebuild). Give customers the option to state their intention for the plan submission.

# Operational Alignment

7

Align on a cross-departmental definition for “Like-for-Like”

8

Get the Dept. of Public Health on EPIC-LA

9

Continue to focus on integrating the system with data dashboard

10

Keep up momentum in managing your service journey

## Align on a cross-departmental definition for “Like-for-Like”

The term “**Like-for-Like**” is **understandable for customers** who want to rebuild and return to their former lives as quickly as possible.

However, some session participants noted that the phrase “Like-for-Like” **may mislead customers and set incorrect expectations** about requirements when different departments define the term differently. For example:

- The Department of Health does not consider plans to fall within the definition of “Like-for-Like” if it contains an **extra bedroom**, even if the plan meets the Planning Department’s zoning definition.
- Customers may submit plans identical to that of their original home but not take into account **updated fire code**, leading to customer frustration when they are asked for revisions

### Pain Points

- **Customers may have to substantially re-design plans and restart the process** at zoning review under the impression that they have met “Like-for-Like” requirements, due to different Departments’ definitions.
- **Fire Sprinklers and Fuel Mods** are concrete examples of design choices that may be missed in a “Like-for-Like” submission.



## Get the Dept. of Public Health on EPIC-LA

The Department of Public Health currently stitches together **two platforms for processing plans: EPIC-LA and Envision.**

Public Health staff are not currently able to do all their processing work within EPIC-LA, so staff must **spend time manually moving between two systems:** downloading and printing forms from EPIC-LA, entering data into Envision, and later downloading and re-uploading from Envision to put the checked plan back into EPIC-LA.

Public Health staff also **reach out to customers directly** to request revisions, rather than relying on automated EPIC-LA emails. This has the benefit of contacting clients sooner (see Recommendation #5) but the downside of contributing to potential confusion about coordination on communications (see Recommendation #3).

### Pain Points

- **The current process delays plan check** due to the additional time required for DPH staff to manually download, send, and re-upload documentation.
- **Application status of DPH's review is opaque** to customers and other department staff.
- **Fees for DPH must be paid using a different system** creating inconsistency and potential for confusion.

## Continue to focus on integrating the system with data dashboard

**It's very exciting that there is a publicly-available dashboard** to share the status on permit applications. We applaud the County's emphasis on using data to track opportunities for improvement!

However, currently staff must **manually coordinate weekly** to sync counts of different application types and their status to update the data dashboard.

The County has been **making progress** towards reducing manual actions required to maintain an updated view of application data. A unified workflow across departments will allow for a more automated and granular view of the application pipeline—enabling the County to more quickly identify bottlenecks and develop solutions.

### Key Considerations

- **Keep up the good work! You're moving towards automated tracking** based on actions taken in EPIC-LA's workflow, which will remove the weekly manual effort of entering data and creating reports.
- **With automation, the dashboard and reports could update in real-time** without active human intervention.

## Keep up momentum in managing your service journey

### The dreams you all expressed are achievable.

We felt the genuine passion you all had, across departments, to take a service design approach and thoughtfully consider the experience for both the customers and staff. The goal of working as a “single line of business” has been a long-held dream for many, and this moment is a window of opportunity to make it happen.

We encourage you to actively manage your service journey. This is just the start. From a tactical perspective, we recommend that you:

- **Utilize the service blueprint as a guiding resource:** As a framework, it continues to keep you focused on the experience for people. Update it as you make changes, continue to reference it as you develop improvements, and name 1-2 owners who will be its steward.
- **Engage staff and even survivors** going through the permitting process: you’ll find some of your ripest opportunities there.

### In your words:

VERY HELPFUL TO BE  
TOGETHER TO TALK IT  
THROUGH. NEED TO  
CONTINUE TO WORK  
TOGETHER LIKE THIS!

INTERESTING PROCESS  
THAT ALLOWS 4  
DEPARTMENTS TO  
BRAINSTORM AND  
FUNCTION AS ONE