

PC 07-14-2026

#2

Study session on Permit
Streamlining and Simplification
for Small Home
Upgrades City Work Program
item

Presentations

CITY OF CUPERTINO

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION

FY 25 – FY 27 City Work Program Goal:

Permit Streamlining and Simplification for Small Home
Upgrades

July 14, 2026



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FY 25 – FY 27 City Work Program Quality of Life Goal: **Permit Streamlining and Simplification for Small Home Upgrades**

Develop a suite of improvements to (1) improve access to, and (2) speed the processing of permits for small home upgrades to;

- Enhance compliance and improve overall efficiency.
- Improve turnaround times.
- Set Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for staff and outsourced reviewers.
- Set customer service Key Performance Indicators (KPI's).
- Create templates to reduce back and forth.
- Improve internal staff expertise to reduce consulting expenses.

What Are Small Home Upgrades?

Types of permits/projects that are considered small home upgrades in Cupertino are:

- Small additions (<250 sq ft)
- Kitchen and bathroom in-place replacements or new or relocated appliances and fixtures
- Equipment upgrades including;
 - EV charging
 - Heat pump installation
 - Furnace or water heater replacement
 - HVAC
 - Whole house or partial re-pipe

Timeline of Activity

- **March 2025:** The City Council approved FY 2025-2027 City Work Program priority items.
- **FY 2025:** CDD Staff began work on this CWP item.
- **February 2026:** An outreach survey was distributed to 12 local CBO's, in which we received a 50% response rate.
- **Today staff is ready to report on findings, progress, receive feedback, and discuss next steps.**

Benchmarking Methodology

Survey responses received from six of twelve outreached Chief Building Officials in cities throughout Santa Clara County focused on the following categories;

- Permitting Programs Used and Metric Reporting
- Turnaround Times - Expected vs. Actual
- Permit and Staffing Volumes
- Review Process and Business Support Features
- Response Times - Applicant and Staff
- Service Level Agreements (SLA) & Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
- Efficiency Factors

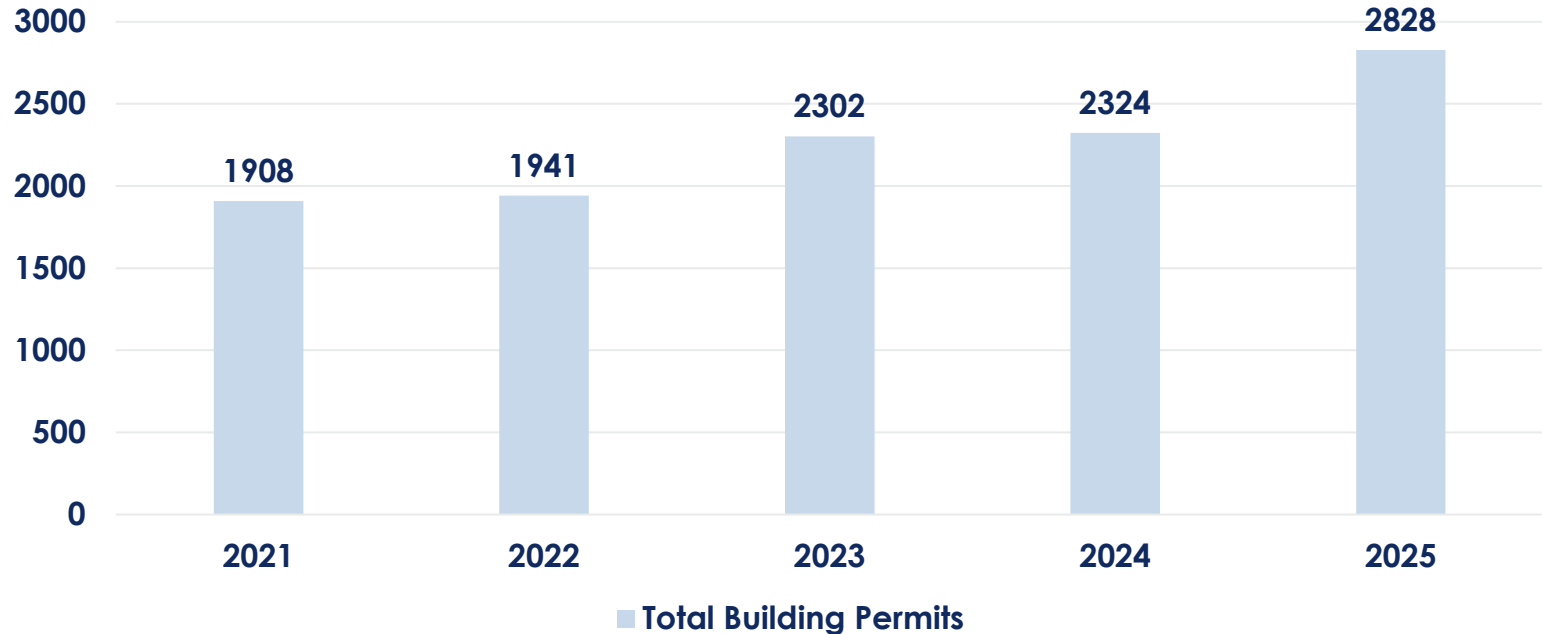
Survey Findings Overview

- All peer jurisdictions provide detailed checklists and handouts for small home remodel permits.
- Only one peer city publicly reports key performance indicators (KPIs).
- Permitting system platforms vary across cities, though three jurisdictions use Accela (Cupertino's permit programming platform).
- The most common causes of repeat submittals are incomplete applications and the applicant's unfamiliarity with code requirements.
- All cities experienced a decline in small home remodel permits between FY23 and FY24.
- Cupertino experienced an increase in permit submissions during the same period.

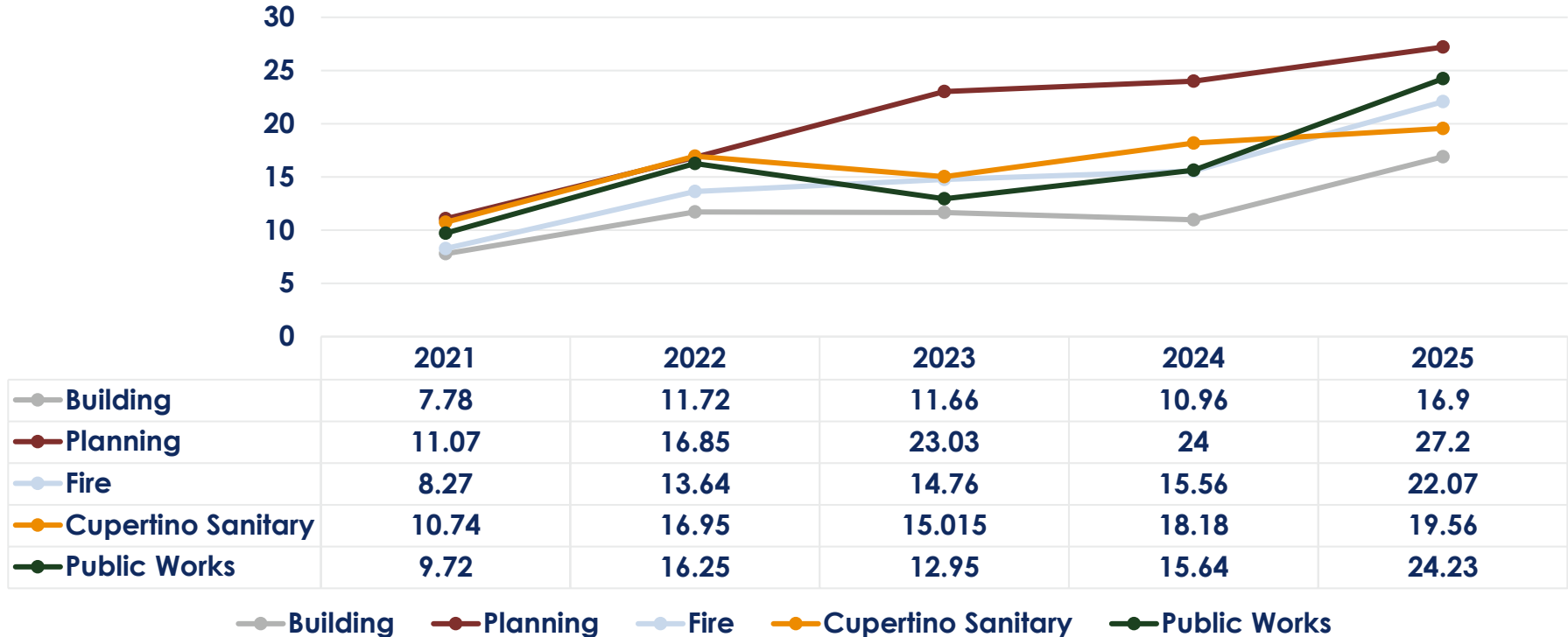
Benchmarking Data with Peer Cities: Volume, Staffing, & Review Times

City	Total Small Home Remodel Permits (FY24-25)	Total Full Time Employee Reviewers	Consultant Support for the Building Division	Actual Avg First Round Review (Days)
Cupertino	2144	2	Yes	19
City 2	60	2	No	21
City 3	3115	7	Yes	40
City 4	419	9	Yes	21
City 5	152	5	Yes	30
City 6	179	5	No	20
City 7	737	11	No	20

Cupertino's Total Residential Building Permits from 2021 - 2025



Cupertino's Average Building Permit Turnaround Time (Days) by Division



Current Available Service Features

- Over-the-counter same-day plan review
- Options to schedule a pre-submittal meeting to help reduce review cycles for building permit applications
- Detailed checklists and handouts
- Permitting system guides for navigating permitting programs
- Email notification and permit status features
- Walk-in counter services
- Electronic plan review and submittal
- A responsive and reachable staff
- Use of Zendesk, a customer service accountability platform

Current Streamlining Efforts Underway

- Exploring AI-supported prescreening and plan review (in coordination with IT) to identify issues earlier
- Expand staff training and use of Microsoft Copilot to improve efficiency and consistency
- Develop clear, standardized checklists for all small residential remodel permits
- Continue to offer instant online permits for common residential projects (e.g., solar, reroof, EV chargers, water heaters)
- Expanding instant permits to additional minor projects (e.g., kitchen/bath remodels, HVAC, heat pumps)
- Upgrading the online permit portal to improve usability and support all permit types in collaboration with IT
- Implementing the e-check payment options for permit fees

Discussion, Questions, & Next Steps



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#3

Review of the Draft Active
Transportation Plan and Provide
a
Recommendation to the City
Council.

Presentations

City Of Cupertino

Active Transportation Plan

Planning Commission Meeting
July 14, 2026



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Latest Commission Comments

The Draft Project List was presented to the Bicycle Pedestrian Commission and Planning Commission following Phase 2.

- Planning Commission – February 10, 2026
- Bicycle Pedestrian Commission – February 18, 2026

Areas of Consensus

- Safety should be prioritized for the Vision Zero HIN.
- School scoring is overweighted and should be reduced.

Recommended Adjustment

- Subtract 10 points from Schools and apply 10 to Vision Zero HIN.

Council Direction

The Planning Commission and Bicycle Pedestrian Commission recommendations were presented to City Council on April 7, 2026.

- After reviewing all Phase 2 materials, Council conducted a straw poll, instructing staff only to rescore projects using the proposed scoring adjustment.
- Chapter 7 of the Draft ATP reflects the Council's direction.
- The rankings in Chapter 7 serve only as guidance for future project selection. Project selection will be determined through future Council CIP approval, in consideration of available funding, staffing, resource availability, priorities, among other factors.

What's in the Plan?

The work completed in Phases 1 and 2 makes up the Draft Active Transportation Plan.

- The Draft Active Transportation Plan incorporates all materials previously reviewed by the City Council, the Bicycle Pedestrian Commission, and the Planning Commission.
- Its content reflects the direction provided by the City Council to staff throughout the project.



Phase 1

Mar – Jun 2025

Policy review
Technical analysis
Initial outreach

Phase 2

Aug – Nov 2025

Draft network recs
Additional outreach
Commission/Council review

Phase 3

2026

Draft Plan development
Public review

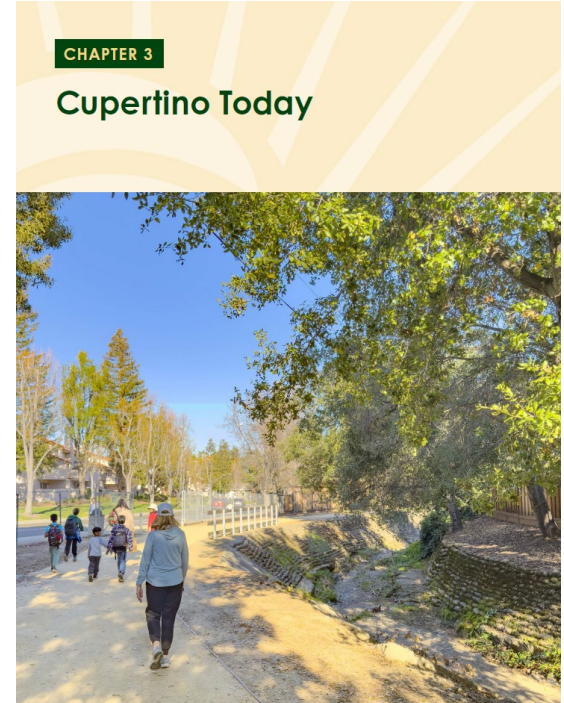
Draft Plan Comments

What we Heard from the Community

- Minor clarifications or document presentation edits
- Suggestions already considered as part of Phases 1 and 2
- Items outside the ATP scope

Draft Plan Revision

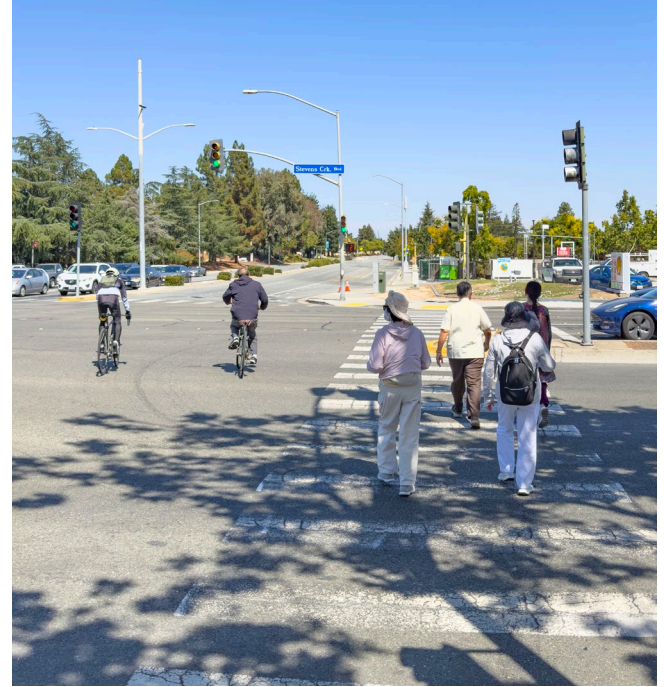
- Staff added minor language in Chapter 1 to further emphasize youth e-bike safety, supplementing what's included in Chapter 6



What Comes Next

Upcoming Meetings

- Bicycle Pedestrian Commission
 - July 15, 2026
- City Council
 - September 14, 2026





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