

A panoramic view of the Seattle skyline featuring the Space Needle, various skyscrapers, and Mount Rainier in the background under a clear blue sky. The foreground shows green trees.

2021 SDCI Departmental Priorities

Photo by John Skelton



Seattle Department of
Construction & Inspections

Land Use and Neighborhoods Committee
Nathan Torgelson, SDCI Director | March 10, 2021

SDCI PURPOSE AND VALUES

Our Purpose

Helping people build a safe, livable, and inclusive Seattle.

Our Values

- Equity
- Respect
- Quality
- Integrity
- Service

SDCI 2021 PRIORITIES

1. Develop outreach plan to prepare tenants for expiration of eviction moratorium and continue to focus tenant services grants on assisting tenants facing eviction.
2. Carryforward best practices adopted during COVID, such as components of a virtual Applicant Services Center and in-person services at non-downtown locations, and develop process for resuming all standard services, including in-home inspections.
3. Streamline permit processes and make demonstrable reductions in permitting times.
4. Create a cross-departmental Permit System governance model with Seattle IT to improve customer experience and functionality of permitting systems.
5. Continue working with OIR and other partners to modify the State SEPA rules that apply to homeless facilities.

SHIFTING RESOURCES TO ADDRESS COVID

- Redirected workforce to virtual
- Paused and then resumed most in-person inspections. RRIO inspections on hold
- Provided comprehensive assistance to tenants and landlords
- Worked with Mayor's Office, OEM, and SDOT to prioritize COVID response efforts (hospital worker parking, permitting for COVID related facilities)
- Maintained high level of customer service (online Q&A, paid coaching, electronic plan review and permit issuance)



TENANT OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Develop outreach plan to prepare tenants for expiration of eviction moratorium and continue to focus tenant services grants on assisting tenants facing eviction

- \$1.3M in tenant services grants awarded at beginning of 2021 with an emphasis on COVID response and recovery.
- Additional staff for POTA group & outreach material
- Training and technical assistance to grantees and community partners on moratoria, recovery period, and resources
- Collaboration with SOCR, OIRA, and DON



MAINTAIN INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Carry forward best practices adopted during COVID and develop process for resuming all standard services, including in-home inspections.

- Continue building on the success of virtual public meetings, including design review
- Two virtual SDCI home fairs drew over 500 people
- Keep using and improving virtual inspection and plan review tools
- Work with the SPL about the possibility of having staff at a north and south Seattle location on selected days to assist the public.



PERMITTING CHANGES

Streamline permit processes and make demonstrable reductions in permitting times, including:

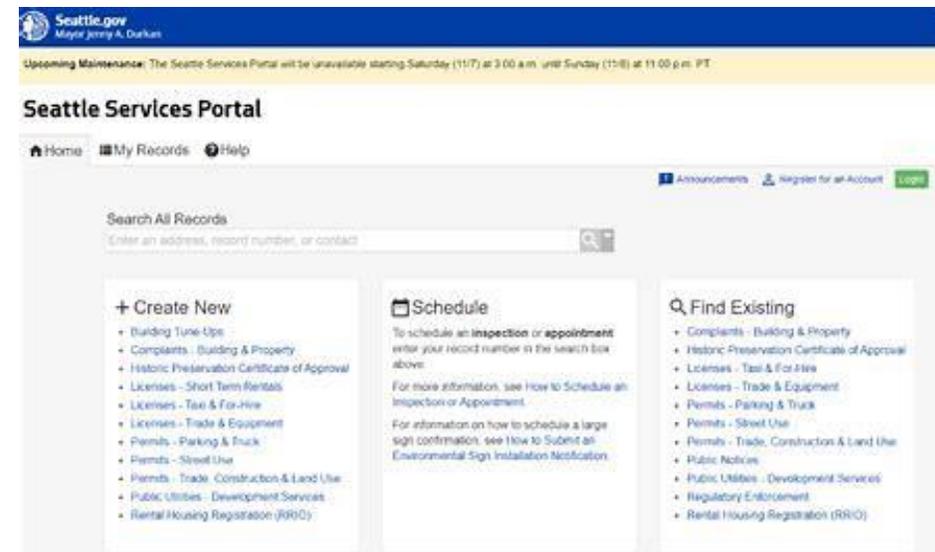
- Implement AMIHAC recommendations to better coordinate permitting across City departments and reduce review times for affordable housing projects
- Partner with OED to prepare for more changes to small business spaces and reduce permitting time
- Identify efficiencies in reviews of "pre-approved" plans for ADUs/DADUs
 - ADUniverse resource:
<https://aduniverse-seattlecitygis.hub.arcgis.com/>



CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL PERMITTING

Create a cross-departmental Permit System governance model with Seattle IT to improve customer experience and functionality of permitting systems.

- User experience improvements to the Seattle Services Portal, including new navigation from the home page and a custom My Records page.
- Accela enhancement in progress to allow for seamless customer experience and allow public to submit comments via the Seattle Services Portal
- A new complaints map will be added to [Shaping Seattle](#) web application
- SDOT and DON migration to Accela



MODIFICATION OF STATE SEPA RULES

Continue working with OIR and other partners to modify the State SEPA rules that apply to homeless facilities

- Legislation authored by SDCI and sponsored by State Senator Nguyen (D-34th LD) would allow communities who have declared a state of emergency to more easily site homeless facilities by bypassing the SEPA requirement, provided the shelter meets certain criteria.



QUESTIONS?

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