



## Memorandum

**Memorandum No: 23-113**

**Date:** September 22, 2023

**To:** Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Commissioners

**From:** Greg Chavarria, City Manager   
Greg Chavarria (Sep 27, 2023 16:41 EDT)

**Re:** **Online Permitting Services – Going Paperless**

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On February 8, 2021, the Development Services Department (DSD) introduced digital plan review through LauderBuild Plan Room (LPR). Digital plan review allows applicants to upload building permit applications and documents from their home or wherever convenient for a transparent user-friendly digital plan review process. In 2021, utilization of LPR for digital permit submissions started at 18% and increased to 41% by the end of the year. In the first year of its implementation, DSD's Acceleration Team provided training to the public and professional communities to help with use of the online platform. The team used user feedback to refine the user experience and improve internal and external users' confidence in the new system. In 2022, digital permit submissions increased to 62% by the end of the year and have steadily risen to a current rate of 67%. Not only does LPR benefit the applicant by being transparent and by creating efficiency in the plan review process, LPR also is sustainable by reducing the amount of paper used and thereby lowering the space used and the cost of storing paper records and plans. The training, public outreach and communication, and LPR workflow refinement has built confidence in the usefulness of the LPR system among City staff and the building and development community.

Beginning January 1, 2024, DSD will transition to an entirely paperless building permitting process. New building permit applications and documents will only be accepted digitally via LPR. Permits and other documents that were not submitted via LPR prior to January 1, 2024, cannot be converted to digital submissions and will be completed in the format originally submitted. This digital transformation will improve the ease of the permitting process, increase the transparency of the process for applicants, and increase the City's ability to complete concurrent plan reviews which can reduce the timeframe from application to issuance. Understanding that owner-builders, small businesses, and those without access to technology may have barriers to creating electronic plans, DSD staff will be prepared to provide scanning assistance to those individuals.

DSD will be updating its website and call center to notify neighbors of the change. Help guides, tutorials, and staff assistance will be provided to neighbors who need help registering for a LauderBuild account or navigating the LPR. To ensure this transition

occurs as smoothly as possible, DSD will communicate this change to the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations, Greater Fort Lauderdale Realtors Association, Broward Real Estate Investor's Association, Builders Association of South Florida, Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, Fort Lauderdale DDA, Broward Board of Rules and Appeals, Broward County Minority Builders Coalition, Construction Association of South Florida, and Associated Builders and Contractors - Florida East Coast. DSD will also collaborate with Strategic Communications to ensure the community is aware of the change and share resources to assist with the transition to a fully digital permitting experience.

If you have any inquires on online permitting services, please contact Christopher Cooper, Director of Development Services Department, at (954)828-5980 or [Ccooper@fortlauderdale.gov](mailto:Ccooper@fortlauderdale.gov).

c: Anthony Fajardo, Assistant City Manager  
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