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The city of Providence launches online permitting known as ProvSmart

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The city of Providence has moved its plan-review and permit-application processes online. The new system, "ProvSmart," is expected to improve efficiency and turnaround times for local developers, and fulfills a key component of mayor Angel Taveras' 20-point economic development action plan, Putting Providence Back to Work.

"The launch of online permitting makes it easier to do business in Providence," said Taveras. "For many years, developers have called for a faster, more efficient permitting process in Providence. We have listened, and establishing a web-based permitting process was one of the top five goals of my economic development action plan."

The ProvSmart website, <http://provsmart.smartapp.com/publicfacing/main>, allows online application submissions, electronic status updates and response-time estimates. The website enables the city to review permits while allowing developers to simultaneously track the progress of their permit applications in real time. The website is accessible by desktop computer, tablet computer and smart phone.

For developers with multiple projects, the external-facing website provides a customized dashboard that allows for the viewing and tracking of more than one project simultaneously.

"We are working to support the location and growth of businesses in Rhode Island's Capital City," said economic development director James Bennett. "This new technology expedites the entire permitting process and reduces regulatory burdens for businesses looking to start and grow in Providence."

The city has also installed a permitting kiosk at the Department of Inspections and Standards, located in the Joseph A. Doorley Municipal Building at 444 Westminster St., and plans to install at least one additional kiosk. City staff will be available to assist developers with the kiosks.

To streamline the permitting process internally, the city has created a new unit in the Department of Inspections and Standards (DIS) that focuses exclusively on small-permit application review to ease backlogs in the permit review process and to fast-track smaller permit applications.

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