

Report Title [Publication Date]	R# [for F#]	Recommendation	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Recommendation Response (Implementation)	Recommendation Response Text
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R4 [for F4]	By November 30, 2023, the Mayor, in consultation with the Office of the City Administrator, should convene a working group of all departments and agencies involved in assisting small businesses whose commercial projects are eligible for 30-day permit processing under Proposition H (as defined in this report), which will be tasked with promptly developing and implementing mechanisms and procedures to (a) accurately determine eligibility under Proposition H for 30-day permit processing; and (b) accurately and regularly track and publicly report the City's compliance with the 30-day timeline.	Office of the City Administrator [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	The Planning Department, in its role as implementor, established a cross-departmental working group in 2021. Through this working group, the 30-day permit review process for qualifying businesses has been operationalized in each department without the ongoing need for frequent meetings. Regular monitoring of the program helps the Planning Department determine if some issues or projects necessitate convening the working group. Additionally, the Permit Center has restructured its governance model to include a steering committee focused on business topics and will include the participation of stakeholders involved in regulating and stimulating business activity in San Francisco. The new business-focused steering committee will be convened by September 1, 2023, to identify the strategic work for the Permit Center for FY23-FY25.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R7 [for F7]	By March 1, 2024, the Mayor and Board of Supervisors should take the legislative and budgetary steps necessary for the City to implement a cross-departmental technology integration strategy for the deployment of a federated computer system that will increase data visibility across all departments involved in business registration, planning, and permitting, for improved collaboration and to enable compilation of disparate system data into transparent and usable output for small business customers.	Office of the City Administrator [August 20, 2023]	Requires further analysis	The City does not support a one-size-fits-all technology solution, recognizing the diversity of requirements across departments and stakeholders. The City remains cognizant of the potential drawbacks of a single system, which include increased implementation costs, prolonged timelines, and heightened risks. Instead, we are looking towards a more agile and adaptive strategy that leverages industry-leading practices. We agree that systems could be better integrated, and data can be aggregated to provide the department greater visibility in the end-to-end customer journey. When possible, data is being integrated, APIs are being created, and data structured to allow visibility across diverse technology is being developed.

2022-23 CIVIL GRAND JURY FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND RESPONSES TO FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F1	First Year Free has been generally well-received by small businesses and City agencies, but due to its limited scope when first adopted and its status as a temporary pilot program, its financial benefits to small businesses have been more modest than initially expected.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	The First Year Free (FYF) program has resulted in helping over 3,000 small businesses open their doors in San Francisco. While it began as a temporary program, it is essential pilots are tested and refined in order to best serve the communities intended to be served. Further, in the latest City budget, the City extended the program for an additional fiscal year through June 30, 2024.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F4	There is no mechanism (outside the Online Portal) that accurately tracks eligibility for, or compliance with, the 30-day permit processing provision of Proposition H (as defined in this report), so it is not possible to credibly assess whether Proposition H is achieving its intended goals.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Agree	There is no single mechanism for tracking eligibility for or compliance with Proposition H's 30-day timeline. However, three strong data sources provide sufficient information to determine the program's efficacy and identify ways to evolve the work. 1. Prop H Portal, which tracks projects that self-identify for the expedited process. 2. DBI data from their permit tracking system for over-the-counter projects, which shows that the median number of days to issuance for Over the Counter (OTC) projects is less than three days. Most businesses that seek limited-scope tenant improvements employ the OTC process because it assures they will receive permits well under the 30-day threshold. 3. TTX unified license data provides aggregated operational permit information for DPH, Fire, Police, Entertainment Commission, and Public Works.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F5	The statutory protection for the provisions of Proposition H (as defined in this report) regarding 30-day permit processing and the elimination of neighborhood notification will expire in December 2023, but reliable data to assess the effectiveness of these provisions is not expected to be available by that time.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Agree	Certain limits on amendments to Proposition H expire at the end of 2023. However, there is sufficient data available to assess the effectiveness of the program subject to those provisions.

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F8	Substantial outreach efforts by the City departments responsible for promoting First Year Free and Proposition H have not yet fully informed small businesses and merchants' associations, because those efforts have not been sufficiently comprehensive and coordinated.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	<p>Businesses that are eligible for the First Year Free program are informed of this program at the outset, upon business registration. This is the most comprehensive way to inform businesses about the program. Issues with the First Year Free program arise, however, when the DBI Permit Tracking System does not indicate a permit falls under the First Year Free program via a manual process, thereby causing a cascading effect throughout the rest of the permitting journey. Regardless of this challenge, the Office of Small Business' Small Business Permit Specialists and Business Case Managers share information about the First Year Free program and Proposition H with each business owner that seeks assistance through our office. Additionally, the Office of Small Business conducts regular proactive outreach through merchant walks and meetings with merchants' associations to inform them of the First Year Free Program, Proposition H, and other small business resources.</p> <p>Note that the Office of Small Business' goal is to assist businesses with getting their permits issued as quickly as possible. In many cases, this means advising businesses to get their permits processed over-the-counter, versus through the Proposition H online portal.</p>
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F9	Despite recent reforms, there remains a prevalent perception that San Francisco is inhospitable to small businesses, and City agencies have not deployed the resources required to effectively counter that perception.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	<p>Proposition H, the Small Business Recovery Act, and the First Year Free program are all examples of reforms that small business owners have benefitted greatly from, but those who have not experienced the City's permitting processes prior to these programs do not have a way of comparing processes of the past. While these programs have been beneficial for small business owners, the City must still pursue additional reforms to both counter the perception and make City processes more efficient. These reforms include, but are not limited to, advancing digital permit applications and ultimately allowing a project applicant to easily track the progress of their permit online, as well as legislation introduced by Mayor Breed in June 2023 to make over 100 changes in the Planning Code to ease the small business permitting process.</p>

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R1 [for F1]	By November 30, 2023, the Mayor and Board of Supervisors should take the legislative and budgetary steps necessary to make First Year Free a permanent program.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Requires further analysis	The success of the First Year Free program continues to be analyzed, and as it has been, so too has it been extended with additional budgetary support. Additional analysis is needed to ensure that permanence is the best route for this program and for the total funding spent on it, as well as the fees included. This analysis will continue through June 30, 2024 when the program is set to expire. Leading up to then, the City will include this recommendation during its annual budget process.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R3 [for F3]	By January 1, 2024, the Mayor should direct that the Office of Treasurer and Tax Collector, the Planning Department, the Department of Building Inspection, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Public Works, the Entertainment Commission, the Fire Department, the Police Department, and any other City departments that impose fees covered by the First Year Free program, should implement procedures to ensure that fees are properly waived for all businesses enrolled in First Year Free, that any billing errors are promptly identified, and that any fees that are improperly charged are promptly refunded to the affected business without requiring any action by the affected business.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	Departments have already implemented this recommendation. In those cases where fees are mistakenly assessed, they are refunded without requiring actions by the affected business. In addition, groups like the Office of Small Business and the Permit Center assist in proactively identifying First Year Free refund candidates.

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R6 [for F6]	By November 30, 2023, the Mayor should establish an inter-departmental working group, chaired by the Office of Small Business, with membership from City departments involved in small business registration, planning, and permitting, which shall hold regular cross-departmental meetings to collaborate on implementation and troubleshooting of programs to assist small businesses, including but not limited to First Year Free and Proposition H.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	The Permit Center is in the process of establishing a new governance structure, under which business permitting issues would be addressed through specific working groups. The Office of Small Business will play a key role in identifying the key issues to be addressed by such working groups. The new governance structure will be implemented by September 1, 2023 with a goal of identifying the strategic work that the Permit Center will take on for FY23-24. Additionally, The City has established working groups for inter-departmental collaboration including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OEWD hosted Recovery Business Permitting (monthly) 2. Permit Center Monthly Huddles (monthly) 3. Permit Center Business Steering Committee (cadence to be determined) 4. Permit Center Construction / Land Use Steering Committee (monthly) 5. Permit Center Customer Service Steering Committee (monthly) 6. Permit Center Strategic Steering Committee (met monthly and is migrating to the Permit Center Strategic Council) 7. Prop H Stakeholder Meeting (ad hoc)

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R8.1 [for F8]	By December 31, 2023, OSB, in consultation with OEWD and other departments responsible for small business assistance programs, with the participation of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and neighborhood merchants' associations, should schedule a public Small Business Summit, to be held on at least an annual basis, to promote small business assistance programs and to address obstacles faced by small businesses, and produce a public Summit report listing action items.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable	The Office of Small Business understands, based on experience and feedback received, that small business owners prefer direct outreach, given challenges they have with attending meetings. The Office of Small Business regularly and proactively conducts merchant walks to share small business resources and gather feedback on obstacles faced by small businesses. Office of Small Business staff also regularly participate in meetings and events with merchant associations, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations to promote the City's small business assistance programs. The feedback gathered inform the work and priorities of the Office of Small Business. Additionally, the Small Business Commission, in collaboration with San Francisco State University, has conducted several in-depth surveys to better understand the needs of small businesses. These survey results, along with surveys conducted by community-based organizations that collaborate with the City, provide useful data points to guide the work of the Office of Small Business. The qualitative and quantitative data gathered from these surveys provide the City with the same type of information as would be generated from a Summit report.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R8.2 [for F8]	By December 31, 2023, OSB should prepare a user-friendly guide for small businesses in paper and electronic format describing First Year Free and streamlined permit processing under Proposition H, including instructions regarding how to access these benefits and how to use the Online Portal. OSB should distribute this guide online, at the Permit Center and to San Francisco merchants' associations.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	The Office of Small Business has already created information available online regarding the First Year Program and Proposition H online. Additionally, businesses are first alerted upon business registration through the Treasurer and Tax Collector's Office. The Office of Small Business shares information about these programs regularly with businesses and merchants associations through in-person visits, meetings, and the office newsletter. These resources are usually shared electronically and are available in the City's threshold languages, and they can easily be printed

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R8.3 [for F8]	By February 1, 2024, OSB should develop and regularly update a public dashboard or scorecard that demonstrates the impact of San Francisco's small business assistance programs.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable	Currently, the Office of Small Business makes publicly available its annual report, which provides information about the impact of San Francisco's small business assistance programs. Additional data beyond what is shared in the annual report, and which is available, can be found through the City's DataSF portal. If a public dashboard or scorecard on the permitting process is requested, this would require significant investment in technology/systems changes of each of the <u>permitting agencies</u> .
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R8.4 [for F8]	By November 30, 2023, OEWD should commit to report at Small Business Commission meetings at least once a year regarding developments, practices, trends, initiatives, investments and potential or proposed policies or legislation affecting San Francisco's small businesses.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	OEWD leadership already does report at Small Business Commission meetings on a regular basis to provide these types of updates and help answer questions.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R9 [for F9]	By January 31, 2024, the Mayor and Board of Supervisors, in consultation with OSB, should approve funding sufficient to develop and launch a sophisticated marketing campaign to promote San Francisco as a welcoming and supportive environment for new small businesses to open, and to encourage support for existing small businesses, with reference as appropriate to programs such as First Year Free and Proposition H.	Office of the Mayor [August 20, 2023]	Requires further analysis	With limited resources, City funding should prioritize programs that significantly benefit small business owners, rather than marketing alone. For example, an investment in funding to extend indefinitely the City's First Year Free program would serve both purposes of helping small business entrepreneurs while marketing to the small business community that San Francisco is a welcoming and supportive environment for new or expanding small businesses. Another example would be to invest funding in technology/systems improvements, which would create efficiencies in the permitting process while offering small businesses a supportive environment throughout their permitting journey. Currently, the Office of Small Business has used existing resources to market and promote San Francisco as a welcoming and supportive environment for small businesses, having launched the ShopDineSF campaign online and through social media (sf.gov/ShopDineSF) and collaborated with SFGovTV on promotional videos featuring local small businesses that have felt supported by the City. These efforts are ongoing.

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F2	The lack of a current published list of fees subject to waiver under the FYF program makes it difficult for eligible businesses to decide whether to participate in the program and hinders the City's ability to implement and promote its benefits.	Office of Small Business [August 20, 2023]	Agree	The Treasurer and Tax Collector's Office is currently in the process of developing a list of fees subject to waiver under the FYF program.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F3	Businesses enrolled in First Year Free have been charged fees that should have been waived, which imposes burdens on the City personnel who must manually correct such errors and on the small businesses whose waivers have been delayed.	Office of Small Business [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	Refunds are the exception and not the norm for this program; however, there is room for improvement. Contributing to the confusion are the following: 1. Eligibility criteria have changed each year of the program. 2. Construction permitting services have a high volume of third-party applicants who are not always familiar with the business registration and FYF qualifications of their clients. 3. Multiple entry points for permits and licenses occur at different times along the customer journey. TTX, Office of Small Business (OSB), and the Permit Center continue to outreach to departments to finesse the administration and coach on improving the service. On the rare occasions when a business is not identified, processes exist to identify these businesses proactively and quickly for refunds.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F4	There is no mechanism (outside the Online Portal) that accurately tracks eligibility for, or compliance with, the 30-day permit processing provision of Proposition H (as defined in this report), so it is not possible to credibly assess whether Proposition H is achieving its intended goals.	Office of Small Business [August 20, 2023]	Agree	There is no single mechanism for tracking eligibility for or compliance with Proposition H's 30-day timeline. However, three strong data sources provide sufficient information to determine the program's efficacy and identify ways to evolve the work. 1. Prop H Portal, which tracks projects that self-identify for the expedited process. 2. DBI data from their permit tracking system for over-the-counter projects, which shows that the median number of days to issuance for Over the Counter (OTC) projects is less than three days. Most businesses that seek limited-scope tenant improvements employ the OTC process because it assures they will receive permits well under the 30-day threshold. 3. TTX unified license data provides aggregated operational permit information for DPH, Fire, Police, Entertainment Commission, and Public Works.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F5	The statutory protection for the provisions of Proposition H (as defined in this report) regarding 30-day permit processing and the elimination of neighborhood notification will expire in December 2023, but reliable data to assess the effectiveness of these provisions is not expected to be available by that time.	Office of Small Business [August 20, 2023]	Agree	Certain limits on amendments to Proposition H expire at the end of 2023. However, there is sufficient data available to assess the effectiveness of the program subject to those provisions.

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F6	The lack of regular cross-departmental meetings focused on small business issues between the Office of Small Business and City departments involved in business registration, planning and permitting hinders the development and implementation of coordinated approaches and solutions.	Office of Small Business [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	<p>Since the Office of Small Business expanded its team and physically located half of the office within the Permit Center in early 2022, the Office of Small Business has convened multi-agency meetings focused on specific issues to explore and implement permitting process improvement changes, resolve recurring challenges for small businesses, and discuss solutions to new issues impacting small businesses. While multi-agency discussions are helpful, the challenge rests mainly with differences in technology systems to implement needed changes, resources (funding and staff) to pursue meaningful systems changes, and each department's approach to problem solving.</p> <p>While there are always opportunities for more collaborative communications, there are several meetings that do exist that provide significant opportunities for coordination and streamlining, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OEWD hosted Recovery Business Permitting (monthly) 2. Permit Center Monthly Huddles (monthly) 3. Permit Center Business Steering Committee (cadence to be determined) 4. Permit Center Construction / Land Use Steering Committee (monthly) 5. Permit Center Customer Service Steering Committee (monthly) 6. Permit Center Strategic Steering Committee (met monthly and is migrating to the Permit Center Strategic Council) 7. Prop H Stakeholder Meeting (ad hoc)
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F7	The computer systems of City departments involved in business registration, planning and permitting are not adequately integrated, and there is a growing need for these departments to conduct their operations on a federated computer system that will improve efficiency and cross-departmental collaboration.	Office of Small Business [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	<p>The City does not support a one-size-fits-all technology solution, recognizing the diversity of requirements across departments and stakeholders. The City remains cognizant of the potential drawbacks of a single system, which include increased implementation costs, prolonged timelines, and heightened risks. Instead, we are looking towards a more agile and adaptive strategy that leverages industry-leading practices.</p> <p>We agree that systems could be better integrated, and data can be aggregated to provide the department greater visibility in the end-to-end customer journey. When possible, data is being integrated, APIs are being created, and data structured to allow visibility across diverse technology is being developed.</p>
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F8	Substantial outreach efforts by the City departments responsible for promoting First Year Free and Proposition H have not yet fully informed small businesses and merchants' associations, because those efforts have not been sufficiently comprehensive and coordinated.	Office of Small Business [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	<p>Businesses that are eligible for the First Year Free program are informed of this program at the outset, upon business registration. This is the most comprehensive way to inform businesses about the program. Issues with the First Year Free program arise, however, when the DBI Permit Tracking System does not indicate a permit falls under the First Year Free program via a manual process, thereby causing a cascading effect throughout the rest of the permitting journey. Regardless of this challenge, the Office of Small Business' Small Business Permit Specialists and Business Case Managers share information about the First Year Free program and Proposition H with each business owner that seeks assistance through our office. Additionally, the Office of Small Business conducts regular proactive outreach through merchant walks and meetings with merchants associations to inform them of the First Year Free Program, Proposition H, and other small business resources.</p> <p>Note that the Office of Small Business' goal is to assist businesses with getting their permits issued as quickly as possible. In many cases, this means advising businesses to get their permits processed over-the-counter, versus through the Proposition H online portal.</p>

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R9 [for F9]	By January 31, 2024, the Mayor and Board of Supervisors, in consultation with OSB, should approve funding sufficient to develop and launch a sophisticated marketing campaign to promote San Francisco as a welcoming and supportive environment for new small businesses to open, and to encourage support for existing small businesses, with reference as appropriate to programs such as First Year Free and Proposition H.	Office of Small Business [August 20, 2023]	Requires further analysis	With limited resources, City funding should prioritize programs that significantly benefit small business owners, rather than marketing alone. For example, an investment in funding to extend indefinitely the City's First Year Free program would serve both purposes of helping small business entrepreneurs while marketing to the small business community that San Francisco is a welcoming and supportive environment for new or expanding small businesses. Another example would be to invest funding in technology/systems improvements, which would create efficiencies in the permitting process while offering small businesses a supportive environment throughout their permitting journey. Currently, the Office of Small Business has used existing resources to market and promote San Francisco as a welcoming and supportive environment for small businesses, having launched the ShopDineSF campaign online and through social media (sf.gov/ShopDineSF) and collaborated with SFGovTV on promotional videos featuring local small businesses that have felt supported by the City. These efforts are ongoing.

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F8	Substantial outreach efforts by the City departments responsible for promoting First Year Free and Proposition H have not yet fully informed small businesses and merchants' associations, because those efforts have not been sufficiently comprehensive and coordinated.	Office of Economic and Workforce Development [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	<p>Businesses that are eligible for the First Year Free program are informed of this program at the outset, upon business registration. This is the most comprehensive way to inform businesses about the program. Issues with the First Year Free program arise, however, when the DBI Permit Tracking System does not indicate a permit falls under the First Year Free program via a manual process, thereby causing a cascading effect throughout the rest of the permitting journey. Regardless of this challenge, the Office of Small Business' Small Business Permit Specialists and Business Case Managers share information about the First Year Free program and Proposition H with each business owner that seeks assistance through our office. Additionally, the Office of Small Business conducts regular proactive outreach through merchant walks and meetings with merchants associations to inform them of the First Year Free Program, Proposition H, and other small business resources.</p> <p>Note that the Office of Small Business' goal is to assist businesses with getting their permits issued as quickly as possible. In many cases, this means advising businesses to get their permits processed over-the-counter, versus through the Proposition H online portal.</p>
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F9	Despite recent reforms, there remains a prevalent perception that San Francisco is inhospitable to small businesses, and City agencies have not deployed the resources required to effectively counter that perception.	Office of Economic and Workforce Development [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	<p>Proposition H, the Small Business Recovery Act, and the First Year Free program are all examples of reforms that small business owners have benefitted greatly from, but those who have not experienced the City's permitting processes prior to these programs do not have a way of comparing processes of the past. While these programs have been beneficial for small business owners, the City must still pursue additional reforms to both counter the perception and make City processes more efficient. These reforms include, but are not limited to, advancing digital permit applications and ultimately allowing a project applicant to easily track the progress of their permit online, as well as legislation introduced by Mayor Breed in June 2023 to make over 100 changes in the Planning Code to ease the small business permitting process.</p>

Report Title [Publication Date]	R# [for F#]	Recommendation	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Recommendation Response (Implementation)	Recommendation Response Text
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R8.1 [for F8]	By December 31, 2023, OSB, in consultation with OEWD and other departments responsible for small business assistance programs, with the participation of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and neighborhood merchants' associations, should schedule a public Small Business Summit, to be held on at least an annual basis, to promote small business assistance programs and to address obstacles faced by small businesses, and produce a public Summit report listing action items.	Office of Economic and Workforce Development [August 20, 2023]	Has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future	The Office of Small Business understands, based on experience and feedback received, that small business owners prefer direct outreach, given challenges they have with attending meetings. The Office of Small Business regularly and proactively conducts merchant walks to share small business resources and gather feedback on obstacles faced by small businesses. Office of Small Business staff also regularly participate in meetings and events with merchant associations, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations to promote the City's small business assistance programs. The feedback gathered inform the work and priorities of the Office of Small Business. Additionally, the Small Business Commission, in collaboration with San Francisco State University, has conducted several in-depth surveys to better understand the needs of small businesses. These survey results, along with surveys conducted by community-based organizations that collaborate with the City, provide useful data points to guide the work of the Office of Small Business. The qualitative and quantitative data gathered from these surveys provide the City with the same type of information as would be generated from a Summit report.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R8.4 [for F8]	By November 30, 2023, OEWD should commit to report at Small Business Commission meetings at least once a year regarding developments, practices, trends, initiatives, investments and potential or proposed policies or legislation affecting San Francisco's small businesses.	Office of Economic and Workforce Development [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	OEWD leadership already does report at Small Business Commission meetings on a regular basis to provide these types of updates and help answer questions.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R9 [for F9]	By January 31, 2024, the Mayor and Board of Supervisors, in consultation with OSB, should approve funding sufficient to develop and launch a sophisticated marketing campaign to promote San Francisco as a welcoming and supportive environment for new small businesses to open, and to encourage support for existing small businesses, with reference as appropriate to programs such as First Year Free and Proposition H.	Office of Economic and Workforce Development [August 20, 2023]	Requires further analysis	With limited resources, City funding should prioritize programs that significantly benefit small business owners, rather than marketing alone. For example, an investment in funding to extend indefinitely the City's First Year Free program would serve both purposes of helping small business entrepreneurs while marketing to the small business community that San Francisco is a welcoming and supportive environment for new or expanding small businesses. Another example would be to invest funding in technology/systems improvements, which would create efficiencies in the permitting process while offering small businesses a supportive environment throughout their permitting journey. Currently, the Office of Small Business has used existing resources to market and promote San Francisco as a welcoming and supportive environment for small businesses, having launched the ShopDineSF campaign online and through social media (sf.gov/ShopDineSF) and collaborated with SFGovTV on promotional videos featuring local small businesses that have felt supported by the City. These efforts are ongoing.

Report Title [Publication Date]	F#	Finding	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Finding Response (Agree/ Disagree)	Finding Response Text
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F4	There is no mechanism (outside the Online Portal) that accurately tracks eligibility for, or compliance with, the 30-day permit processing provision of Proposition H (as defined in this report), so it is not possible to credibly assess whether Proposition H is achieving its intended goals.	Planning Department [August 20, 2023]	Agree	There is no single mechanism for tracking eligibility for or compliance with Proposition H's 30-day timeline. However, three strong data sources provide sufficient information to determine the program's efficacy and identify ways to evolve the work. 1. Prop H Portal, which tracks projects that self-identify for the expedited process. 2. DBI data from their permit tracking system for over-the-counter projects, which shows that the median number of days to issuance for Over the Counter (OTC) projects is less than three days. Most businesses that seek limited-scope tenant improvements employ the OTC process because it assures they will receive permits well under the 30-day threshold. 3. TTX unified license data provides aggregated operational permit information for DPH, Fire, Police, Entertainment Commission, and Public Works.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F5	The statutory protection for the provisions of Proposition H (as defined in this report) regarding 30-day permit processing and the elimination of neighborhood notification will expire in December 2023, but reliable data to assess the effectiveness of these provisions is not expected to be available by that time.	Planning Department [August 20, 2023]	Agree	Certain limits on amendments to Proposition H expire at the end of 2023. However, there is sufficient data available to assess the effectiveness of the program subject to those provisions.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F6	The lack of regular cross-departmental meetings focused on small business issues between the Office of Small Business and City departments involved in business registration, planning and permitting hinders the development and implementation of coordinated approaches and solutions.	Planning Department [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	Since the Office of Small Business expanded its team and physically located half of the office within the Permit Center in early 2022, the Office of Small Business has convened multi-agency meetings focused on specific issues to explore and implement permitting process improvement changes, resolve recurring challenges for small businesses, and discuss solutions to new issues impacting small businesses. While multi-agency discussions are helpful, the challenge rests mainly with differences in technology systems to implement needed changes, resources (funding and staff) to pursue meaningful systems changes, and each department's approach to problem solving. While there are always opportunities for more collaborative communications, there are several meetings that do exist that provide significant opportunities for coordination and streamlining, including: 1. OEWD hosted Recovery Business Permitting (monthly) 2. Permit Center Monthly Huddles (monthly) 3. Permit Center Business Steering Committee (cadence to be determined) 4. Permit Center Construction / Land Use Steering Committee (monthly) 5. Permit Center Customer Service Steering Committee (monthly) 6. Permit Center Strategic Steering Committee (met monthly and is migrating to the Permit Center Strategic Council) 7. Prop H Stakeholder Meeting (ad hoc)
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F7	The computer systems of City departments involved in business registration, planning and permitting are not adequately integrated, and there is a growing need for these departments to conduct their operations on a federated computer system that will improve efficiency and cross-departmental collaboration.	Planning Department [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	The City does not support a one-size-fits-all technology solution, recognizing the diversity of requirements across departments and stakeholders. The City remains cognizant of the potential drawbacks of a single system, which include increased implementation costs, prolonged timelines, and heightened risks. Instead, we are looking towards a more agile and adaptive strategy that leverages industry-leading practices. We agree that systems could be better integrated, and data can be aggregated to provide the department greater visibility in the end-to-end customer journey. When possible, data is being integrated, APIs are being created, and data structured to allow visibility across diverse technology is being developed.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F8	Substantial outreach efforts by the City departments responsible for promoting First Year Free and Proposition H have not yet fully informed small businesses and merchants' associations, because those efforts have not been sufficiently comprehensive and coordinated.	Planning Department [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	Businesses that are eligible for the First Year Free program are informed of this program at the outset, upon business registration. This is the most comprehensive way to inform businesses about the program. Issues with the First Year Free program arise, however, when the DBI Permit Tracking System does not indicate a permit falls under the First Year Free program via a manual process, thereby causing a cascading effect throughout the rest of the permitting journey. Regardless of this challenge, the Office of Small Business' Small Business Permit Specialists and Business Case Managers share information about the First Year Free program and Proposition H with each business owner that seeks assistance through our office. Additionally, the Office of Small Business conducts regular proactive outreach through merchant walks and meetings with merchants associations to inform them of the First Year Free Program, Proposition H, and other small business resources. Note that the Office of Small Business' goal is to assist businesses with getting their permits issued as quickly as possible. In many cases, this means advising businesses to get their permits processed over-the-counter, versus through the Proposition H online portal.

2022-23 CIVIL GRAND JURY FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND RESPONSES TO FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Report Title [Publication Date]	R# [for F#]	Recommendation	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Recommendation Response (Implementation)	Recommendation Response Text
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R3 [for F3]	By January 1, 2024, the Mayor should direct that the Office of Treasurer and Tax Collector, the Planning Department, the Department of Building Inspection, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Public Works, the Entertainment Commission, the Fire Department, the Police Department, and any other City departments that impose fees covered by the First Year Free program, should implement procedures to ensure that fees are properly waived for all businesses enrolled in First Year Free, that any billing errors are promptly identified, and that any fees that are improperly charged are promptly refunded to the affected business without requiring any action by the affected business.	Planning Department [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	Departments have already implemented this recommendation. In those cases where fees are mistakenly assessed, they are refunded without requiring actions by the affected business. In addition, groups like the Office of Small Business and the Permit Center assist in proactively identifying First Year Free refund candidates.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R4 [for F4]	By November 30, 2023, the Mayor, in consultation with the Office of the City Administrator, should convene a working group of all departments and agencies involved in assisting small businesses whose commercial projects are eligible for 30-day permit processing under Proposition H (as defined in this report), which will be tasked with promptly developing and implementing mechanisms and procedures to (a) accurately determine eligibility under Proposition H for 30-day permit processing; and (b) accurately and regularly track and publicly report the City's compliance with the 30-day timeline.	Planning Department [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	The Planning Department, in its role as implementor, established a cross-departmental working group in 2021. Through this working group, the 30-day permit review process for qualifying businesses has been operationalized in each department without the ongoing need for frequent meetings. Regular monitoring of the program helps the Planning Department determine if some issues or projects necessitate convening the working group. Additionally, the Permit Center has restructured its governance model to include a steering committee focused on business topics and will include the participation of stakeholders involved in regulating and stimulating business activity in San Francisco. The new business-focused steering committee will be convened by September 1, 2023, to identify the strategic work for the Permit Center for FY23-FY25.

Report Title [Publication Date]	R# [for F#]	Recommendation	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Recommendation Response (Implementation)	Recommendation Response Text
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R6 [for F6]	By November 30, 2023, the Mayor should establish an inter-departmental working group, chaired by the Office of Small Business, with membership from City departments involved in small business registration, planning, and permitting, which shall hold regular cross-departmental meetings to collaborate on implementation and troubleshooting of programs to assist small businesses, including but not limited to First Year Free and Proposition H.	Planning Department [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	<p>The Permit Center is in the process of establishing a new governance structure, under which business permitting issues would be addressed through specific working groups. The Office of Small Business will play a key role in identifying the key issues to be addressed by such working groups. The new governance structure will be implemented by September 1, 2023 with a goal of identifying the strategic work that the Permit Center will take on for FY23-24.</p> <p>Additionally, The City has established working groups for inter-departmental collaboration including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OEWD hosted Recovery Business Permitting (monthly) 2. Permit Center Monthly Huddles (monthly) 3. Permit Center Business Steering Committee (cadence to be determined) 4. Permit Center Construction / Land Use Steering Committee (monthly) 5. Permit Center Customer Service Steering Committee (monthly) 6. Permit Center Strategic Steering Committee (met monthly and is migrating to the Permit Center Strategic Council) 7. Prop H Stakeholder Meeting (ad hoc)

2022-23 CIVIL GRAND JURY FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND RESPONSES TO FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Report Title [Publication Date]	F#	Finding	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Finding Response (Agree/ Disagree)	Finding Response Text
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F3	Businesses enrolled in First Year Free have been charged fees that should have been waived, which imposes burdens on the City personnel who must manually correct such errors and on the small businesses whose waivers have been delayed.	Department of Building Inspection [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	Refunds are the exception and not the norm for this program; however there is room for improvement. Contributing to the confusion are the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eligibility criteria have changed each year of the program. 2. Construction permitting services have a high volume of third-party applicants who are not always familiar with the business registration and FYF qualifications of their clients. 3. Multiple entry points for permits and licenses occur at different times along the customer journey. TTX, Office of Small Business (OSB), and the Permit Center continue to outreach to departments to finesse the administration and coach on improving the service. On the rare occasions when a business is not identified, processes exist to identify these businesses proactively and quickly for refunds.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F4	There is no mechanism (outside the Online Portal) that accurately tracks eligibility for, or compliance with, the 30-day permit processing provision of Proposition H (as defined in this report), so it is not possible to credibly assess whether Proposition H is achieving its intended goals.	Department of Building Inspection [August 20, 2023]	Agree	There is no single mechanism for tracking eligibility for or compliance with Proposition H's 30-day timeline. However, three strong data sources provide sufficient information to determine the program's efficacy and identify ways to evolve the work. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prop H Portal, which tracks projects that self-identify for the expedited process. 2. DBI data from their permit tracking system for over-the-counter projects, which shows that the median number of days to issuance for Over the Counter (OTC) projects is less than three days. Most businesses that seek limited-scope tenant improvements employ the OTC process because it assures they will receive permits well under the 30-day threshold. 3. TTX unified license data provides aggregated operational permit information for DPH, Fire, Police, Entertainment Commission, and Public Works.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F5	The statutory protection for the provisions of Proposition H (as defined in this report) regarding 30-day permit processing and the elimination of neighborhood notification will expire in December 2023, but reliable data to assess the effectiveness of these provisions is not expected to be available by that time	Department of Building Inspection [August 20, 2023]	Agree	Certain limits on amendments to Proposition H expire at the end of 2023. However, there is sufficient data available to assess the effectiveness of the program subject to those provisions.

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F6	The lack of regular cross-departmental meetings focused on small business issues between the Office of Small Business and City departments involved in business registration, planning and permitting hinders the development and implementation of coordinated approaches and solutions.	Department of Building Inspection [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	<p>Since the Office of Small Business expanded its team and physically located half of the office within the Permit Center in early 2022, the Office of Small Business has convened multi-agency meetings focused on specific issues to explore and implement permitting process improvement changes, resolve recurring challenges for small businesses, and discuss solutions to new issues impacting small businesses. While multi-agency discussions are helpful, the challenge rests mainly with differences in technology systems to implement needed changes, resources (funding and staff) to pursue meaningful systems changes, and each department's approach to problem solving.</p> <p>While there are always opportunities for more collaborative communications, there are several meetings that do exist that provide significant opportunities for coordination and streamlining, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OEWD hosted Recovery Business Permitting (monthly) 2. Permit Center Monthly Huddles (monthly) 3. Permit Center Business Steering Committee (cadence to be determined) 4. Permit Center Construction / Land Use Steering Committee (monthly) 5. Permit Center Customer Service Steering Committee (monthly) 6. Permit Center Strategic Steering Committee (met monthly and is migrating to the Permit Center Strategic Council) 7. Prop H Stakeholder Meeting (ad hoc)
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	F7	<p>The success of the First Year Free program continues to be analyzed, and as it has been, so too has it been extended with additional budgetary support. Additional analysis is needed to ensure that permanence is the best route for this program and for the total funding spent on it, as well as the fees included.</p> <p>This analysis will continue through June 30, 2024 when the program is set to expire. Leading up to then, the City will include this recommendation during its annual budget process.</p>	Department of Building Inspection [August 20, 2023]	Disagree partially	<p>The City does not support a one-size-fits-all technology solution, recognizing the diversity of requirements across departments and stakeholders. The City remains cognizant of the potential drawbacks of a single system, which include increased implementation costs, prolonged timelines, and heightened risks. Instead, we are looking towards a more agile and adaptive strategy that leverages industry-leading practices.</p> <p>We agree that systems could be better integrated, and data can be aggregated to provide the department greater visibility in the end-to-end customer journey. When possible, data is being integrated, APIs are being created, and data structured to allow visibility across diverse technology is being developed.</p>

Report Title [Publication Date]	R# [for F#]	Recommendation	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Recommendation Response (Implementation)	Recommendation Response Text
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R3 [for F3]	By January 1, 2024, the Mayor should direct that the Office of Treasurer and Tax Collector, the Planning Department, the Department of Building Inspection, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Public Works, the Entertainment Commission, the Fire Department, the Police Department, and any other City departments that impose fees covered by the First Year Free program, should implement procedures to ensure that fees are properly waived for all businesses enrolled in First Year Free, that any billing errors are promptly identified, and that any fees that are improperly charged are promptly refunded to the affected business without requiring any action by the affected business.	Department of Building Inspection [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	Departments have already implemented this recommendation. In those cases where fees are mistakenly assessed, they are refunded without requiring actions by the affected business. In addition, groups like the Office of Small Business and the Permit Center assist in proactively identifying First Year Free refund candidates.
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R4 [for F4]	By November 30, 2023, the Mayor, in consultation with the Office of the City Administrator, should convene a working group of all departments and agencies involved in assisting small businesses whose commercial projects are eligible for 30-day permit processing under Proposition H (as defined in this report), which will be tasked with promptly developing and implementing mechanisms and procedures to (a) accurately determine eligibility under Proposition H for 30-day permit processing; and (b) accurately and regularly track and publicly report the City's compliance with the 30-day timeline.	Department of Building Inspection [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	The Planning Department, in its role as implementor, established a cross-departmental working group in 2021. Through this working group, the 30-day permit review process for qualifying businesses has been operationalized in each department without the ongoing need for frequent meetings. Regular monitoring of the program helps the Planning Department determine if some issues or projects necessitate convening the working group. Additionally, the Permit Center has restructured its governance model to include a steering committee focused on business topics and will include the participation of stakeholders involved in regulating and stimulating business activity in San Francisco. The new business-focused steering committee will be convened by September 1, 2023, to identify the strategic work for the Permit Center for FY23-FY25.

Report Title [Publication Date]	R# [for F#]	Recommendation	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Recommendation Response (Implementation)	Recommendation Response Text
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R6 [for F6]	By November 30, 2023, the Mayor should establish an inter-departmental working group, chaired by the Office of Small Business, with membership from City departments involved in small business registration, planning, and permitting, which shall hold regular cross-departmental meetings to collaborate on implementation and troubleshooting of programs to assist small businesses, including but not limited to First Year Free and Proposition H.	Department of Building Inspection [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	<p>The Permit Center is in the process of establishing a new governance structure, under which business permitting issues would be addressed through specific working groups. The Office of Small Business will play a key role in identifying the key issues to be addressed by such working groups. The new governance structure will be implemented by September 1, 2023 with a goal of identifying the strategic work that the Permit Center will take on for FY23-24.</p> <p>Additionally, The City has established working groups for inter-departmental collaboration including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OEWD hosted Recovery Business Permitting (monthly) 2. Permit Center Monthly Huddles (monthly) 3. Permit Center Business Steering Committee (cadence to be determined) 4. Permit Center Construction / Land Use Steering Committee (monthly) 5. Permit Center Customer Service Steering Committee (monthly) 6. Permit Center Strategic Steering Committee (met monthly and is migrating to the Permit Center Strategic Council) 7. Prop H Stakeholder Meeting (ad hoc)

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R3 [for F3]	By January 1, 2024, the Mayor should direct that the Office of Treasurer and Tax Collector, the Planning Department, the Department of Building Inspection, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Public Works, the Entertainment Commission, the Fire Department, the Police Department, and any other City departments that impose fees covered by the First Year Free program, should implement procedures to ensure that fees are properly waived for all businesses enrolled in First Year Free, that any billing errors are promptly identified, and that any fees that are improperly charged are promptly refunded to the affected business without requiring any action by the affected business.	Department of Public Health [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	Departments have already implemented this recommendation. In those cases where fees are mistakenly assessed, they are refunded without requiring actions by the affected business. In addition, groups like the Office of Small Business and the Permit Center assist in proactively identifying First Year Free refund candidates.

Report Title [Publication Date]	R# [for F#]	Recommendation	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Recommendation Response (Implementation)	Recommendation Response Text
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R3 [for F3]	By January 1, 2024, the Mayor should direct that the Office of Treasurer and Tax Collector, the Planning Department, the Department of Building Inspection, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Public Works, the Entertainment Commission, the Fire Department, the Police Department, and any other City departments that impose fees covered by the First Year Free program, should implement procedures to ensure that fees are properly waived for all businesses enrolled in First Year Free, that any billing errors are promptly identified, and that any fees that are improperly charged are promptly refunded to the affected business without requiring any action by the affected business.	Department of Public Works [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	Departments have already implemented this recommendation. In those cases where fees are mistakenly assessed, they are refunded without requiring actions by the affected business. In addition, groups like the Office of Small Business and the Permit Center assist in proactively identifying First Year Free refund candidates.

Report Title [Publication Date]	R# [for F#]	Recommendation	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Recommendation Response (Implementation)	Recommendation Response Text
Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R3 [for F3]	By January 1, 2024, the Mayor should direct that the Office of Treasurer and Tax Collector, the Planning Department, the Department of Building Inspection, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Public Works, the Entertainment Commission, the Fire Department, the Police Department, and any other City departments that impose fees covered by the First Year Free program, should implement procedures to ensure that fees are properly waived for all businesses enrolled in First Year Free, that any billing errors are promptly identified, and that any fees that are improperly charged are promptly refunded to the affected business without requiring any action by the affected business.	San Francisco Fire Department [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	Departments have already implemented this recommendation. In those cases where fees are mistakenly assessed, they are refunded without requiring actions by the affected business. In addition, groups like the Office of Small Business and the Permit Center assist in proactively identifying First Year Free refund candidates.

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Taking Care of Business: San Francisco's Plan to Save its Small Businesses [June 21, 2023]	R3 [for F3]	By January 1, 2024, the Mayor should direct that the Office of Treasurer and Tax Collector, the Planning Department, the Department of Building Inspection, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Public Works, the Entertainment Commission, the Fire Department, the Police Department, and any other City departments that impose fees covered by the First Year Free program, should implement procedures to ensure that fees are properly waived for all businesses enrolled in First Year Free, that any billing errors are promptly identified, and that any fees that are improperly charged are promptly refunded to the affected business without requiring any action by the affected business.	San Francisco Police Department [August 20, 2023]	Has been implemented	Departments have already implemented this recommendation. In those cases where fees are mistakenly assessed, they are refunded without requiring actions by the affected business. In addition, groups like the Office of Small Business and the Permit Center assist in proactively identifying First Year Free refund candidates.