

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS ANNOUNCES FULL ROLL-OUT OF "E-PLAN"
PROGRAM TO INCREASE EFFICIENCIES IN BUILDING PERMIT PROCESS**

E-Plan Review System Decreases "Time-In-Line" for Homeowners and Business Owners

CHICAGO – Today, the Chicago Department of Buildings announced the full roll-out of its electronic plan review system, "E-Plan," which increases efficiencies and reduces time-in-line for homeowners and business owners so they can more quickly obtain required permits and get to the business of building or remodeling homes and opening or expanding businesses.

"Increasing efficiencies and modernizing our processes is essential to helping our residents and business community continue to enhance their quality of life and economic growth," said Department of Buildings Commissioner Michael Merchant. "While my department continues to maintain Chicago's rigorous building standards, we are committed to making the process as quick and efficient as it can be."

E-Plan allows a homeowner or business owner's design professional to submit plans online electronically, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to the Department of Buildings for review and approval, eliminating the need for paper plans to be manually printed and delivered. E-Plan also allows:

- Simultaneous review of the plans by all professional and trade disciplines;
- Improved clarity in direction from City departments on changes or corrections to plans that need to be made before approval can be given, right on the electronic plans in clear type-face;
- Re-submission of corrected plans online electronically, 24/7, from the convenience of any computer;
- Real-time return approved stamped plans once necessary reviewing fees have been submitted.

The new system was initially rolled-out in January 2012 for larger development projects. After proving successful on those project and incorporating suggests for further enhancement from the design professional community, E-Plan is now available to be rolled-out to all project in the City that require plans from a licensed architect or engineer.

"We are excited that the Department is taking this step to modernize and enhance its processes," said Zurich Esposito, Executive Vice President of the Chicago chapter of the American Institute of Architects. "We've been imminently impressed with the Department's willingness to communicate with design professionals and incorporate their suggestions. AIA represents about 3,000 architecture and design professionals, small and large, and we're not

only satisfied with the Department's commitment to innovate in this area, we look forward to many years of effective communication that will help move the industry forward.”

This is just one effort the Department of Buildings has undertaken to streamline and modernize its processes to work towards Mayor’s Emanuel goal of making City government more effective and efficient. In addition to E-Plan, more than 5,000 projects a year now use the new Certified Plan Corrections process, which allows design professionals to certify their own plan corrections per Department specifications, eliminating the need to schedule an in-person meeting with multiple reviewers. In May, the City announced reforms to business inspection processes that will reduce the number of inspection visits, modernize scheduling of inspections and ensure that individual inspectors are more consistent with their approach, increasing efficiency for the Department and businesses.

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