City Spotlights:
AI in Permitting

Artificial intelligence is modernizing permitting processes for Florida cities. The technology is particularly helpful for building, zoning, and development reviews that are often slow, labor-intensive, and highly technical. Rather than replacing staff, these tools are being used to pre-screen applications, flag errors, and accelerate code compliance checks. The new tools are helping cities reduce backlogs while maintaining regulatory oversight.

Below are examples of how Florida jurisdictions are applying AI to permitting workflows.

Altamonte Springs: Tested an AI plan review tool for site development and landscape plans. The software is used to check submissions against zoning and design requirements. During the pilot, initial reviews that previously took days were completed in minutes.

Gainesville: Uses an AI-driven plan review platform developed in collaboration with the University of Florida to assess building permit submissions for code compliance. The system generates detailed review reports within one to two days. It has helped staff focus on higher-value review tasks and reduced plan resubmissions caused by overlooked errors.

Hernando County: Implemented an AI-powered permitting review tool, called SwiftGov by Swiftbuild.ai, to automatically analyze zoning and building permit applications for single-family homes and subdivisions. The system checks submissions against county codes, flags missing or noncompliant elements, and routes clean applications to staff for final approval. County officials report zoning reviews that once took weeks are now completed in days. The tool is reducing administrative burden and speeding development timelines.

Jacksonville: Piloting AI-assisted permit intake and review tools as part of broader efforts to shorten approval timelines. The technology is used to pre-screen permit applications, identify common errors, and streamline staff review. City leaders have framed AI as a way to improve consistency and predictability in permitting while preserving human decision-making authority.

Naples: Launched an AI-based plan review system called Blitz AI for residential and commercial building permits. The system analyzes digital construction plans against Florida Building Code and local ordinances. The tool identifies compliance issues

directly on submitted plans, allowing applicants to correct problems earlier in the process and enabling faster, more consistent reviews by staff.

City Tips

- **Start with pre-screening, not approvals.** Use AI to flag missing documents, basic code conflicts, or formatting issues before staff review. Do not use AI to replace final decision-making.

- **Pair AI with human oversight.** Treat AI outputs as decision support tools, with staff retaining responsibility for approvals and interpretations.

- **Be transparent with applicants.** Clearly explain how AI is used in the permitting process and what it does (and does not) decide.

- **Pilot before scaling.** Test AI tools on specific permit types (e.g., residential building permits) before expanding citywide.

- **Track real outcomes.** Measure reduced review times, fewer resubmittals, and staff hours saved to track outcomes. Do not only focus on the number of permits processed.