

**City of Culver City, California  
Agenda Item Report**

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| Meeting Date: 10/10/2011                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  | Item Number: C-5                                                                       |  |
| <b>CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM – FOUR-FIFTHS VOTE REQUIREMENT: 1) Approval of a Professional Services Agreement with Accela (San Ramon, CA) to Upgrade the City's Permitting Software and to Implement Technology Improvements that will Enhance the Permitting Process; and 2) Approval of a Related Budget Amendment (Requires Four-Fifths Vote).</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  |                                                                                        |  |
| Contact Person/Dept.: Michele Williams<br>Craig Johnson                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |  | Phone Number: 310-253-5959<br>310-253-5802                                             |  |
| Fiscal Impact: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  | General Fund: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>      |  |
| Public Hearing: <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  | Action Item: <input type="checkbox"/> Attachments: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Commission Action Required: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |  | Date: _____                                                                            |  |
| Public Notification: Meetings and Agendas – City Council (10/05/11); Accela (10/05/11)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |                                                                                        |  |
| Department Approval:<br>John Richo (10/03/11)<br>Sol Blumenfeld (10/03/11)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  | City Attorney Approval:<br>Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (10/04/11)                       |  |
| Chief Financial Officer Approval:<br>Jeff Muir (by M. Noller) (10/05/11)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  | City Manager Approval:<br>John M. Nachbar (10/05/11)                                   |  |
| <p><b><u>RECOMMENDATION:</u></b></p> <p>Staff recommends that the City Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Approve a professional services agreement with Accela (San Ramon, CA) to upgrade the City's permitting software and implement technology improvements to enhance the permitting process; and,</li><li>2. Approve a budget amendment to provide funding for this project.</li></ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A BUDGET AMENDMENT REQUIRES A FOUR-FIFTHS VOTE</b></p> <p><b><u>BACKGROUND:</u></b></p> <p>The City's permitting software, Permits Plus was originally installed at the City in 1991. The software was provided by the vendor, Sierra (Visalia, CA). On November 24, 1997, the City Council authorized the upgrade of the software application to comply with a client/server infrastructure. The current software has continued to perform since this time with routine minor updates to ensure compatibility with the advancing technical environment.</p> |  |                                                                                        |  |

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In 2001, the vendor, Sierra, merged with another company and now operates under the name Accela. Over the years, Accela purchased two of its primary competitor's software (Kiva and Tidemark). Accela has labeled their three legacy applications (Permits Plus, Kiva, and Tidemark) as "Classic Products". While they continue to provide full support, they no longer sell these applications and technology advancements are primarily placed in their upgraded product, "Accela Automation". Accela has been actively encouraging its current customer base to migrate to the Accela Automation product.

**DISCUSSION:**

In September 2010, representatives from Building Safety, Code Enforcement, Engineering, Fire Prevention, and Planning Divisions, and the Information Technology Department met with the objective of determining if the City's permitting software should be replaced by another product or upgraded (remain with Accela's product). Staff identified alternative permitting solutions and reviewed product demonstrations from the following vendors:

- Accela
- Eden
- Munis
- New World Systems

It was determined that Accela's product most closely met the City's permitting needs and the Automation product provided a number of enhancements to facilitate improving the permitting process. It should be noted that Accela is considered the market leader for permitting software. They have 124 clients in California (Attachment 1) which include Santa Monica, West Hollywood, Torrance, and Manhattan Beach. Their client base totals about 500 state and local government agencies.

The following provides an overview of Accela Automation modules and permitting enhancements that will be realized as a result of implementing the upgrade:

*Automation – Land Management Software*

This product is the base permitting module. It is a web-based application which enables tracking the permitting process from start to finish. Enhanced features include workflow, E-mail notifications (internal to staff as well as external to customers), and streamlined permitting based on agency defined rules/ordinances.

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*Citizen Access – Online Permitting*

The City has implemented a limited version of online permitting where citizens can view the status of a permit and/or inspection. Additionally, payments can be received online once the permit has been initiated at City Hall. The Citizen Access module extends all features of permitting to the Internet as the base module is developed on a web-based platform. Once implemented, a subset or all of the City's permits can be issued online (as determined by the City) without the need to maintain a separate software module. Online permitting will be deployed for all divisions issuing permits (Building Safety, Engineering, Fire Prevention, and Planning).

*Mobile Office – Remote Inspections*

Implementing the mobile office product will enable remote inspections for the permitting divisions. The status of an inspection is entered in the field and imported directly into the permitting application. This functionality would greatly enhance productivity as inspectors would no longer have to write down the inspection results in the field and then manually enter all the inspection results for each day into the system upon returning to the office.

*Accela GIS*

It has long been envisioned that the City's permitting module would directly interface with the City's GIS. This module gives the ability to select a parcel and view all permitting activity at that location and surrounding areas. More importantly, from the permitting application, users can view all of the important GIS layers related to a particular location (zoning, general plan, flood zones, sewer infrastructure, etc). Permitting rules can also be configured in the application so that there are alerts when a permit is initiated in a designated area (i.e. adult use proposed in close proximity to a school).

*Digital Plan Submission*

Currently all construction permit applications requiring a plan check must be submitted using paper plans. The ability for contractors/citizens to digitally submit plans for review would greatly enhance the permitting process. Currently, applicants are required to submit multiple sets of plans and city staff route plans manually to all the required divisions. Digital plan submission would eliminate the routing of plans and would support the City's "Go-Green" initiative by no longer requiring paper plan submittals. Accela recently released a module "Project Manager" which is included with the Automation product at no additional cost. It facilitates digital plan submission, review, markup, and version control. Each workstation is required to have a version of the Adobe Professional software to use the features of this module.

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The City obtained a quote from Accela to upgrade to the Accela Automation software (Attachment 2). The total cost for software license fees and professional services is \$315,042.60 as detailed below:

| <b>Accela Software License Fees / Professional Services</b>                                                        | <b>Cost</b>         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Mobile Office (Remote Inspections)<br>One-time product license fee                                                 | \$30,494.00         |
| Accela GIS<br>One-time product license                                                                             | \$12,079.00         |
| Professional Services – Estimate 1,240 hours at \$175.00 per hour includes full implementation and data conversion | \$217,000.00        |
| Estimated Travel Costs – Actual travel costs are billed as incurred. (15 onsite trips)                             | \$19,140.00         |
| One year of annual maintenance/support for all Accela products                                                     | \$36,329.60         |
| <b>Total<br/>Accela Software License &amp; Professional Services</b>                                               | <b>\$315,042.60</b> |

**Infrastructure/Hardware Requirements for the Upgrade**

The following details hardware and infrastructure costs which will be incurred as a result of the software upgrade (Attachment 3).

| <b>Infrastructure and Hardware Components</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Cost</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <u>Server Operating System License</u><br>The upgrade requires the following five servers. Each server will need a Windows operating system (OS) software license (\$650.00 per server)<br>1. Application Server<br>2. Database Server<br>3. Web Server<br>4. GIS Server<br>5. Mobile Office Server | \$3,250.00  |

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| <b>Infrastructure and Hardware Components</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Cost</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <u>Microsoft SQL 2008 Server License</u><br>The database server will also require a license for the SQL database<br>(Price includes license and backup agents)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | \$2,900.00  |
| <u>Server Infrastructure Upgrades</u><br>The servers for the upgrade will be deployed within the City's virtual server environment. As a result, no physical servers will be purchased. However, the specifications require additional RAM, software licensing, and disk space within the virtual environment. This cost represents the total amount required for upgrading the RAM, virtual software license, and increasing the disk storage.                                                                                        | \$80,985.00 |
| <u>Mobile Computer for Remote Inspections</u><br>Implementing remote inspections requires having a mobile computer in the field. One of the ruggedized units that Accela has tested and recommends is the <i>Dell E6400 XFR</i> which can be purchased for \$4,000.00 per unit (including warranty). The City will require a total of 16 units for inspectors in the following divisions: (Building Safety, Code Enforcement, Engineering, Fire Prevention). The initial deployment will include four units assigned to each division. | \$64,000.00 |
| <u>Digital Plan Review</u><br>The Accela Automation product enables digital plan review. A version of Adobe Professional is required for each workstation using this functionality. Additionally, optimal onscreen viewing requires a large computer monitor. The recommended size is 24". It is estimated that 25 workstation's will require the ability to review plans digitally. (\$600.00 per workstation)                                                                                                                        | \$15,000.00 |

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| <b>Infrastructure and Hardware Components</b>                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Cost</b>         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <u>GIS Integration – ESRI Software</u><br>The GIS functionality provided in the Accela Automation product will require additional software licensing for the GIS products obtained from the vendor, ESRI. | \$14,000.00         |
| <b>Total<br/>Infrastructure and Hardware</b>                                                                                                                                                              | <b>\$180,135.00</b> |

***Digitize Historical Plans***

The Building Safety Division initiated an effort to digitize historical plans. To date over 79,000 plans have been digitized. In order to reduce costs, student workers were used to facilitate this effort. There is a need to expand this capability throughout the other permitting divisions (Engineering, Fire Prevention and Planning). Staff recommends extending historical plan digitizing to the other divisions by allocating 4,000 student worker hours (salary range is \$10.884 - \$12.025 per hour). This would result in an expenditure not to exceed \$45,756.00 (calculated using B salary step \$11.439).

Pursuant to Culver City Municipal Code Section 3.07.085, contracts for personal and professional services are not subject to the formal competitive bidding requirements provided competitive quotations are obtained, whenever practical, as determined by the City Manager.

**FISCAL ANALYSIS:**

In May 2005, the City Council implemented a 4% technology surcharge fee on permitting activity. Funds collected from this fee would be used to digitize historical plans and to implement technology improvements specific to the City's permitting process. On June 13, 2005, resolution 2005-R040 was adopted by City Council (Attachment 4).

These funds were collected specifically to implement technical improvements within the permitting process and per the resolution cannot be used for any other purpose. It is recommended that these funds be used to upgrade the City's permitting system and implement technology improvements that will enhance the permitting process.

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Authorization to contract with Accela for the software upgrade and to implement the permitting enhancements would result in total expenditure not to exceed \$540,934.00. There is currently an estimated appropriable fund balance of \$580,000.

Sufficient funding is available in the 412 fund balance, and this expenditure complies with the authorized usage of these funds. Staff recommends approving a budget amendment to transfer from the 412 fund balance to a new business unit 41224100 \$495,178 to support this project implementation. The costs associated with expanding the historical plan digitizing (\$45,756) would be transferred from the 412 fund balance to Building Safety's part-time salaries operating account 10151500.411200.

**Ongoing and Future Budget Year Impacts**

No direct costs will be charged to the general fund for the implementation of this project. Annual maintenance for the Accela software and support will decrease as a result of upgrading to Accela Automation. Currently the IT Department maintenance operating budget expenditures for Accela are \$56,722. Accela charges a premium maintenance fee for their "classic products". After project implementation, annual maintenance will decrease to \$36,330. The City will realize an annual ongoing savings of \$20,392.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Accela – California Client List
2. Accela Quote – Upgrade to Accela Automation
3. Hardware and Software Requirements
4. Resolution 2005-R040

**MOTION:**

That the City Council:

1. Approve a budget amendment to appropriate \$495,178 into 41224100 and \$45,756 into 10151500 (a budget amendment requires a four-fifths vote); and;
2. Approve a professional services agreement with Accela to upgrade the City's Permitting Software resulting in an expenditure not to exceed \$315,043; and,

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3. Approve the purchase of the required infrastructure and hardware required for project implementation resulting in an expenditure not to exceed \$180,135; and,
4. Approve continuing the historical plan digitizing effort by allocating 3,000 student worker hours for an expenditure not to exceed \$45,756;
5. Authorize the City Attorney to review/prepare the necessary documents; and
6. Authorize the City Manager to execute such documents on behalf of the City.