



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number: 20-3685**

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**Agenda Item Number:** 10.

**Agenda Date:** 6/16/2020

**In Control:** Audit and Accountability Committee

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### **AUDIT COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

**June 16, 2020**

#### **Audit of Development Services Department**

#### **Accela Land Development, Permit, Inspection, and Compliance Management System**

Report Issued May 7, 2020

### **Audit Objective**

Determine if application controls for the Accela system are adequate and data is accurate and reliable.

### **Background**

The Development Services Department (DSD) is responsible for coordinating land and building development throughout the City. In partnership with other City departments, DSD helps homeowners, business owners, and those in the commercial industry plan and execute development projects.

For years, DSD has utilized disparate systems to deliver permit, inspection, land development and code enforcement services to their customers. These systems became outdated and were unable to easily adapt to DSD's changing business needs. In 2012, a business need to replace the outdated systems was identified and BuildSA formally initiated. BuildSA is the designated name of the project or software system that will either replace or integrate with many of the systems used today by DSD. The provider or vendor of the system is Accela.

Due to the complexity of DSD business and the amount of resources required to deploy a system like this, the project was divided into two phases that follow the development process:

- Phase 1 includes activities associated with horizontal development such as zoning, platting and construction inspections (Land Development). Phase 1 was implemented on October 1, 2018.
- Phase 2 is for activities associated with horizontal construction, such as plan review, permitting, inspections, building-related fire permits and includes code enforcement activities (Building Development & Code Enforcement). Phase 2 will be fully implemented by December 2020

### **Scope & Methodology**

The audit scope was phase 1 of the Accela implementation from October 1, 2018 through August 20, 2019. We reviewed general IT controls including user access, backup and recovery, change management, system documentation, and interface processing. We also reviewed financial data generated out of Accela including revenue collection and refund processing.

### **Conclusions**

The Accela system is working as intended by providing a more efficient and effective way for citizens to access City services and pay for those services in a secure manner. We determined that DSD has established policies and procedures to manage password requirements, data entry, change management, interface processing, and server security.

However, there are opportunities to strengthen the controls associated with user access, segregation of duties, and revenue account reconciliations.

We made recommendations to address the opportunities. Management agreed with the recommendations and developed positive corrective action plans.