

Dec. 16, 2011



focus

Designed for all staff and departments who use Accela

Project News!

This week, as Brenda Berens kept the Accela Center activities moving forward, Rocky Copeland was busy meeting with the core Subject Matter Experts and other key project staff. This week we determined a final count and matrix of all named users for the Accela modules. We determined the source for addressing within Accela Automation. The GIS address point file will be the key source of address information; only legal addresses will be allowed for permitting processes. We have some address issues that remain to be resolved, for example, permits that are used for temporary purposes (power poles), references for working in the proximity of the Interstate, and others.

During the Executive Management Team meeting we had an opportunity to provide a project update to directors. To kick start the reporting phase of the project, we discussed metric reporting ideas with Mike Lang. The analysis on the contractor license renewal project has taken a couple of steps forward. We reviewed in detail all contractor application specific information. On the peripheral side of the project we have continued discussion with Jon Carlson regarding to a single-complaint tracking system. This was an exploration of leveraging Accela Automation with safer neighborhoods. Finally, the “project parking lot” was revisited. The parking lot is a concept where a collection of additional projects are identified from consideration outside of the current scope of this project. Here is a sample of what we currently parked in the parking lot: Single Complaint System, Asset Management, CIP program incorporation into Accela, Accela Analytics, and many others. In the parking lot – we see a “lot” of opportunity. Whew, it’s been a great week!

Change in Location for Overview Product Demo on 1/17/12:

Hey everyone, remember that you have an invitation to attend one of the product overview sessions on January 17th. These sessions have been moved to another room at the Health Department. The sessions will now be held in the Health Department training facility located in the lower level. These sessions will occupy Rooms 212 and 213. The times have remained the same. Choose one session, 9 – 11:00 AM or 1 – 3:00 PM. Please take advantage of this opportunity for a firsthand look at the Accela product and feel free to ask questions about the product or the project.



Suggested Enhancements Requested to Accela Automation

The Accela consulting team has been awesome to work with. They have been sharing their knowledge of the best practices that they have accumulated from their projects from across the country. As the project has progressed we have uncovered some functional ideas that we believe will lead to the best possible end result for the City as well as strengthen the Accela Automation product. These ideas are in the best interests of both

parties. To further our partnership with Accela the following software enhancements have been submitted to Accela.

AOTC – Accela On-line Training and Checklist Module: We are in the early stages of discussing the context of potential changes to the Accela Implementation Methodology (AIM) and functionality within the product. The end result is that checklists are automatically generated for permit types. The checklists are displayed along with the specific details of the record type. We learned that Ventura, California is creating a similar result. Our proposal is different. We are requesting that this functionality becomes a part of the configurable product whereas Ventura’s solution is not a part of the base product. It is tailored for them. Our proposal opens the functionality to the entire Accela install base. Regarding training, the specific request is to create an educational template for cities to create content to drop into the application template which is specific to their city. The template would accommodate a variety of media types.

Integrated Scanning – Accela Automation allows scanning, image capture and creating record relationships. However, this process is a manual effort and is not integrated in the Accela Automation software. The proposal requests scanning functionality while working with the records within Accela. We prefer a scanning which allows you to scan and attach records at the same time you are working with a record type. The attachment of documents would be automatic and behind-the-scenes.

Land Management/Citizen Access contact updates – Our vision for the public facing of the product is in line with the industry. More often than not, businesses create user profiles with current customer contact information. Within the Accela software suite, there are certain limitations; for example, updates only being allowed at the time of an event such as a renewal process. What we have proposed is that Accela open up contractor/business contact information for update at anytime.



Asheville, N.C. Initiates Accela Project – Sound Familiar?

Development Services is the umbrella name for the development assistance and regulation provided by five Asheville, North Carolina departments: Building Safety, Planning and Development, Transportation and Engineering, Water Resources, and Fire and Rescue. Accela Automation will be employed to streamline Building Safety’s land use activities such as permitting, plan reviews, inspection, code enforcement activity, and more. The DSC also intends to provide its customers with a one-stop shop for e-government services such as 24/7 permit applications and tracking. The new system is targeted for availability in the fall of 2012.

The largest city in North Carolina’s Blue Ridge Mountains region, fast-growing Asheville, serves as a regional hub for business, health services, shopping, culture, and tourism. Its resident population of more than 80,000 swells to almost 120,000 on an average day. To better serve the public and enhance the community’s quality of life, the city has focused on technology innovation and best business practices as cornerstones of its strategy. To that end, Asheville sought a system for the DSC that would improve the quality and accessibility of information for business planning, minimize paper-based processes and forms, reduce redundant internal systems, data entry, processing and storage, and provide user-friendly functionality to office and field-based workers, and the public. Accela Automation also will allow other DSC groups that work with Building Safety to share and access appropriate information for their activities.

Overwhelming Success Framework

Our OSF team continues to meet. The framework is taking shape. Designing this framework will require a little more time than initially planned; however, we are making progress. The team is anxious to complete the design and share it with the management group. The construction of the framework will be supported by an Action Plan. If any readers would like more information about the framework, the process of its design and construction, or you simply have a question, please contact any of the team members (Jim Walkenhorst, Michaela Dugan, Richard Burton, Glenna Graupmann or Jeff McReynolds).



Matrix of Named Users

Named User Matrix			
Department	Land Management	Mobile Office	GIS
Building & Safety	53	40	20
Health	50	5	5
Law	6	0	0
LES	6	0	0
Planning	21	0	21
Public Works & Utilities	25	3	4
Other	2	0	2

This is the count of final named users by department for which we will have to license and pay maintenance.

Accela Analysis Center

Brenda has been rolling along in the analysis center reviewing the results documents with the Health and Public Works and Utilities departments. All departments are continuing their review of the analysis results and providing sign off documents for each permit type. Outside of the analysis center activities, Darren Koontz and Shauna Minor have begun the configuration or build process for many of the permit types. We will get a chance to see some of these on-line after the first of the year.



JIM WALKENHORST
PROJECT MANAGER

FRED A. HOKE
PROJECT SPONSOR

Please print a copy of this
newsletter for staff who do
not have e-mail.