Harnessing the Power of the Cloud
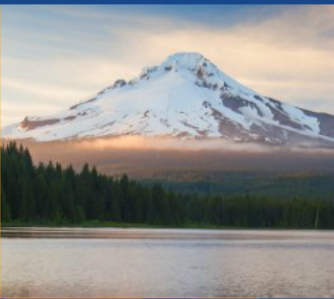
Government Agencies

Improve Efficiencies

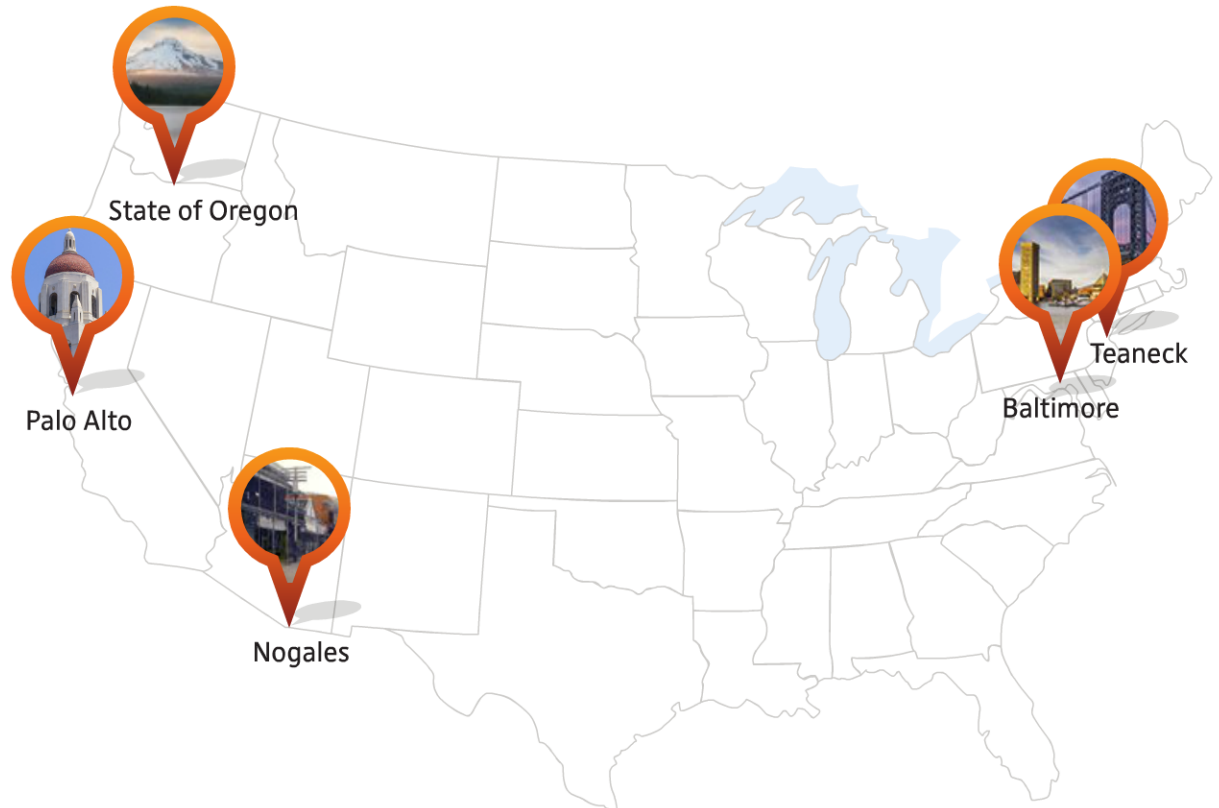**While Reducing Costs**

Accela

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Today, government agencies are moving away from the "own-it-and-run-it-yourself" model to cloud computing. With this change, agencies of all sizes have gained significant advantages while making it much easier for citizens to connect and engage.

Moving to the cloud lets agencies focus their resources on improving the delivery of services instead of managing IT infrastructure. It also helps protect shrinking budgets by eliminating the costs associated with implementing and maintaining an on-premise system, and provides a systematic, standardized approach to security that is often difficult for agencies to achieve on their own.

Agency staff can keep track of and manage data in one, easily accessible location. Public employees can conduct their work on mobile devices directly from the field, entering results in real time. Citizens can interact with their government on their terms, 24/7. And, the cloud can extend an agency's reach by making it easier for third-party developers to incorporate government data into applications that benefit both agencies and citizens.

By harnessing the power of cloud computing, Accela makes it easy for citizens to engage with government to build great communities. And we make it easy for government to efficiently and cost-effectively serve citizens.

Keep reading to discover how cloud-based solutions have improved productivity and citizen engagement from the State of Oregon to Teaneck, New Jersey.

Nogales, Arizona

Creates One-Stop Shop

"
As a small city with limited budget resources but with a very active inter-national port of entry and trade with Mexico, we selected the Civic Platform in the Civic Cloud because it eliminated the need for purchasing new computer hard-ware, software or servers in our IT Department."

Hector Tapia,
Assistant Public
Works Director

"With the economic times we face … it's been a boon to get a really good technological system."

– **Hector Tapia**, Assistant Public Works Director

The Challenge

With the goal of revitalizing its downtown community, Nogales needed to update its outdated, inefficient processes to better manage building plan reviews, permitting and inspections. Its digital system was only available to staff at the front counter, so citizens looking for status updates had to call during business hours or wait in line to find their information.

The Solution

Accela Land Management collects and manages the entire City's planning and permitting data in one easily accessible location. This online portal allows citizens to submit project plans and apply for building permits.

The solution also provides remote access to inspectors in the field, so they can enter data, upload photos and update project files from their mobile devices. "Now we can show that information to the building inspector or to the plan reviewer through Accela," shared Hector Tapia, Assistant Public Works Director.

The Result

The agency was able to purchase just the licenses necessary for improving its workflow. The migration to the cloud costs the city only $10,000 annually. Now, the agency is a one-stop shop for everyone in the document plan review, permitting and inspection process.

"The system makes it easy for county employees and con-tractors to check the status of a pending application. They can find the information they're looking for based on just a tidbit of data."

Lori Furlong,
Administrative Manager,
Deschutes County
Community Development
Department

Center for Digital Government Teleconference:
A Developer's Dream: How Oregon State Government
Was Able to Accelerate Economic Growth
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de Electronic Building Permits System

– POPULATION –
3.9 MILLION

"With the economic times we face … it's been a boon to get a really good technological system."

– **Celina Patterson**, ePermitting Manager, Building Codes Division, State of Oregon

The Challenge
In Oregon, a single set of building codes applies throughout the state. However, some rural counties were using a paper process for permits, while other communities had some type of software system or database. Contractors who work in several areas had to use a different process to obtain permits in each. It was time-consuming and inefficient.

The Solution
TThe Oregon Building Codes Division (BCD) chose Accela to help create a voluntary, state-wide ePermitting system. The division offered Accela to local departments as a single, shared-services permitting platform. Local jurisdictions don't have to participate, but any county or city that wants to can use it free of charge.

Deschutes County chose the cloud-based solution to replace its system for the first time since 1988. "It doesn't

matter whether [a contractor is] doing a project in the jurisdiction where they live or on the other side of the state," said Lori Furlong, Administrative Manager with the Deschutes County Community Development Department. "They can submit an application to any agency without going into an office."

The Result
Every quarter, 6,000 work authorizations or permits are now processed across the state via Accela Citizen Access, an online citizen portal. With ePermitting in place, it's not only the contractors who reap the benefits of easy online applications. All of the inspectors' workloads can be organized in the field, eliminating paperwork.

"People have saved time and money," shared Celina Patterson, ePermitting Manager with the State of Oregon's Building Codes Division. "We've provided a wonderful set of solutions to the jurisdictions that have joined us."

"In the cloud, we have the ability to partner with leaders and civic innovators in a way we couldn't before. Giving them access to the data they need is simple and now we've been able to partner to create new civic applications."

Peter Pirnejad,
Development Services
Director

– POPULATION –
61,200

"I'd rather spend our resources on our innovation and not on the hardware. We spend too much time trying to update our servers when we should be focused on the technology. A cloud-based environment lets us do that."

– Peter Pirnejad, Development Services Director

The Challenge

With a community eager to grow, the Palo Alto Development Services Department realized that its review process had languished. Construction activity must gain approval from five different intercity departments for both the plan check and construction stages of a project. Wait times topped two hours and frustrated citizens wanted a more efficient way of doing things.

"We did surveys and found that people were looking to engage with Development Services and local government agencies online. In fact, 50 percent wanted to engage via an online portal. So, we were looking for a way to respond to that," stated Pirnejad.

The Solution

Palo Alto partnered with Accela and is now leveraging the Accela Land Management solution. Citizens are now able to access the data and permits they need, schedule inspections and pay online from home.

All City inspectors are equipped with iPads and are able to view and manipulate cases from the field, shortening the time from application to completion. Additionally, Pirnejad and his team have partnered with civic developers like BuildingEye and Civic Insight to launch apps to streamline display and development review.

The Result

The Palo Alto Development Services Department was able to accelerate the planning and review process, improve customer service and enhance citizen engagement through the development of mobile apps.

> "The amount of savings we've realized in such a short time really shows how this solution provides immediate, measurable benefits. It also points to the added value everyone gains when more and more entities participate in the ecosystem."

Margaret B. Martin, PE,
Division Chief III
Department of General
Services

"Accela offers true dynamic infrastructure coordination with easy web access; it's an intuitive design, so the learning curve was very short; our data is secure; and best of all, it's affordable."

– **Margaret B. Martin**, PE, Division Chief III, Baltimore's Department of General Services

The Challenge

The City of Baltimore faced the challenge of managing the thousands of infrastructure projects, street incidents and events that take place each year. "We had too many meetings and not enough pertinent information," shared Margaret B. Martin, PE, Division Chief III in Baltimore's Department of General Services. "It was all static data with no way to visualize what was really happening in a specific location. When a colleague introduced me to Accela, I immediately knew this was the solution we needed."

The Solution

Accela Right of Way Management has enabled the City of Baltimore to better coordinate conflicts between infrastructure projects. With the cloud-based solution, staff can proactively review projects during their monthly utility coordination meetings, allowing for collaborative opportunities. Baltimore is able to accommodate shifting project priorities and schedules for enhanced infrastructure planning and coordination. As a result, the City and its ecosystem partners have avoided hundreds of costly conflicts.

The Result

The City has improved stakeholder engagement, gained earlier awareness of project impacts, coordinated traffic management plans, enhanced data quality and improved pavement life. The solution helps the City keep citizens informed with access to detour maps online. Over the first year of using Accela Right of Way Management, Baltimore reported a cost savings of between $350,000 and $500,000 in paving costs with a projected annual savings of $900,000. "I see Accela as a real game changer in how municipal infrastructure construction can be managed more efficiently and effectively," noted Martin.

Teaneck, New Jersey

Streamlines the

Agenda Creation and Distribution Process for Council Meetings

"Not only has the technology provided by Accela resulted in sufficient cost savings, but it has assisted me with implementing a process… that is organized, time-managed, transparent and aesthetically pleasing."

Jaime Evelina, RMC, Township Clerk

The Challenge

Teaneck Township possessed an archaic agenda creation process that took a full week to organize, creating a great deal of unnecessary work. Upon her appointment in 2011, Teaneck Township Clerk Jaime L. Evelina knew she had to do something to change the way "things were always done."

Evelina wanted to find an innovative solution that would provide immediate access into key government decisions for residents while promoting organization, time management and cost savings. After viewing a demo of Accela Legislative Management and presenting it to the Township Council, the agency moved forward with implementation.

The Solution

As new users quickly came up to speed, the Township Clerk and her fellow Department Heads loved the convenience of accessing materials 24/7 from the office or home. With a few simple clicks, Evelina can easily update an agenda, and even convert an agenda outline into a minutes outline. Additionally, the solution can manage minutes and transcripts with multiple people speaking simultaneously.

The solution lets staff broadcast meetings live for the public through the agency's web portal, providing immediate access to agendas, legislation and proceedings. The time-stamping feature lets citizens jump directly to the agenda item they want to see, giving them 24/7 access.

The Result

Accela Legislative Management has significantly reduced costs for Teaneck, New Jersey, saving the Township money on overtime and the purchase of recordable DVDs, ink and 10,000 sheets of resolution paper every year. The cloud-based solution provides unlimited storage and hosting, lowering agency costs. In addition, citizens can now easily search for and find meeting content and agenda items online.

For more information on the power of cloud-based solutions:

Start building better communities today.

Learn how your agency can transform planning, permitting, inspections and code enforcement

CONTACT US

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ABOUT ACCELA

At Accela, we believe that engagement makes all the difference. We're ushering in a new era where democracy thrives when government works directly with the people, coming to citizens on their terms through mobile devices, social media and networks, and open data. By streamlining critical agency functions like land and asset management, licensing, and public health and safety, engaging citizens with web and mobile applications and enabling them to participate virtually in civic meetings, the Accela Civic Platform bridges the gap between agencies and citizens. We help build better communities by powering thousands of services and millions of transactions daily for agencies of all sizes.

Accela is headquartered in San Ramon, California, with offices in San Francisco, New York, Melbourne and Dubai.

For more information, visit www.accela.com.