

# Accela Spring 2021 Release

Designed to help agencies increase the speed of their digital transformations—to ensure high degrees of resiliency, security, and customer satisfaction, no matter what happens.

It has been a very trying year for us all. The COVID pandemic meant that in a very short timeframe, agency employees were forced to work at home, and shelter-in-place meant citizens could no longer visit agency offices to do business.

Agencies whose digital transformations were further along fared well with the changes. Those agencies who had made less progress, faced more significant challenges. In either case, agencies realized they needed to move more of their citizen-facing functions online, so no matter what happens, they can provide high levels of citizen services. The word we have heard all year long is *resiliency*, and how speeding up digital transformations can help ensure agencies can always do business with their citizens.

This release, and the product roadmap which includes future releases are a direct reflection of what we hear from our customers, and what we know will improve the security, ease of use, and productivity for agencies. For this Spring release, our focus has been the following:

- > To help agencies accelerate their digital transformations
- > Increase an agency's agility and ability to adapt quickly to change
- > Enhanced security and usability for citizens, enabling agencies to build higher degrees of trust within their communities
- > Increased operational efficiency for our agency customers

## Accela's Major Releases

Accela has two major releases per year, one in the Spring and the second in the Fall. The individual product components are versioned to align with the calendar year and if it is the first or second release. We also release *service packs* monthly and *hot fixes* when necessary.

Our Spring 2021 release will include new 21.1 versions of the products that make up our Civic Platform and new versions of several of our pre-configured Civic Applications. More specifically, this Spring release includes:

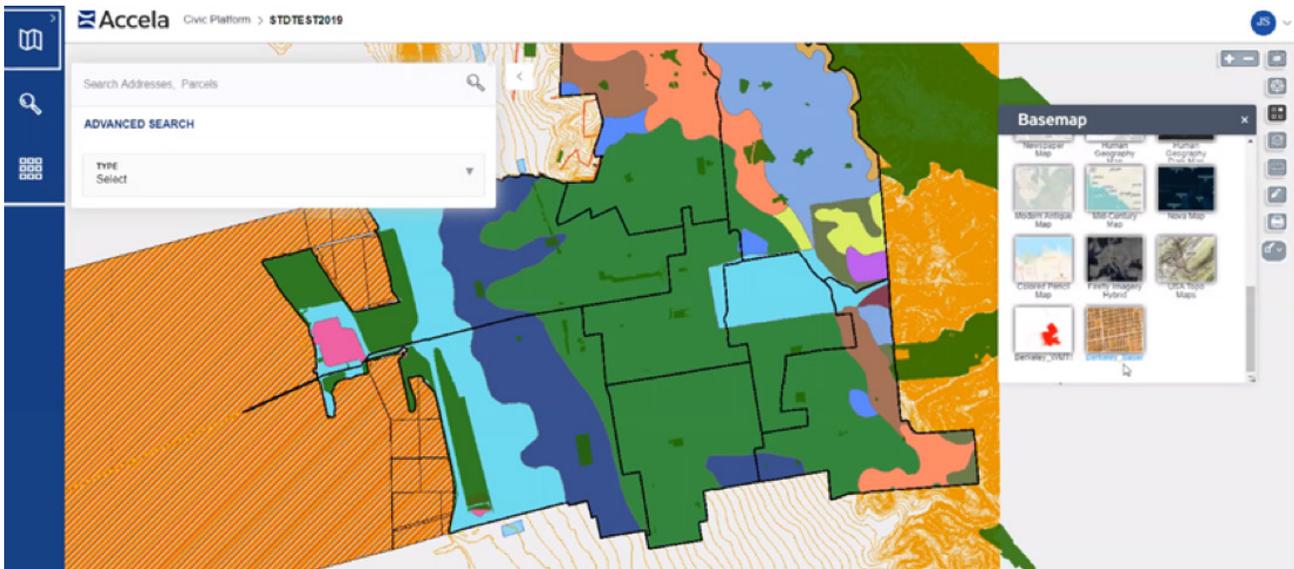
- > Updates to the Civic Platform for V21.1
- > New features for reporting and analytics
- > Improvements in Accela Mobile
- > Updates to Civic Applications, including:
  - > Environmental Health v3
  - > Occupational Licensing v2
  - > Service Request Management v2
  - > Fire Prevention v2

## Civic Platform V21.1

For the Spring release, we've added a new set of capabilities into the platform that will help efficiency, productivity, and usability.

They include the following:

- > **Protected Records** - This feature provides higher degrees of protection for sensitive information, such as personal information for law enforcement and their families, irrelevant histories, and other protected information. This makes it easier to ensure the safety, security of the information held in records, and to meet compliance laws in those states that have them.
- > **Stronger password rules** - Accela administrators will have new options to customize and enforce stronger passwords based on agency policies. It includes various capabilities including enforcement of lowercase characters, longer password length, and the restriction of password reuse for up to 25 password cycles.



**New Base Map Services with Civic Platform V21.1**

- > **Record type administration** – With V21.1, Accela has introduced “**quick filters**” which empowers administrators to quickly find and more easily make configuration changes to their systems. This includes creating new record types and modifying existing ones. The result is a better way to extend and expand usage of the system, creating maximum value for customers.
- > **Base Map Services** – With V21.1, we have added a new base map service within the GIS Administration system, which allows the uploading and selection of a variety of map styles and views, from ESRI and other map providers. With the new base map service, the system can support the use of custom base maps which may have a different projection than the ESRI default base maps. The screenshot above shows how different base maps can be imported and used to create more intuitive views for agency employees.
- > **Forte Payment Processing** – With the new release, we have expanded our capabilities with Forte, now providing support for **EMV chip readers**. *Accela is the only vendor in our space with built-in integration for an EMV chip reader.* This helps agencies stay current with the most contemporary technologies for processing payment transactions and ensures the highest degrees of security and safety.
- > Finally, with V21.1 we have successfully migrated all forms over to the new Angular technology for enhanced form design and performance.

## **Analytics and Reporting**

Accela offers a reporting option for our SaaS customers called **Accela Insights**, which is based on Microsoft’s PowerBI™. With V21.1, we have added new functionality such as the ability to render Accela Insights reports in PDF to make it easier for users to review and consume data and added a new time intelligence (calendar) table, allowing users to visualize more comprehensive trend analysis with the same, simple drag and drop functionality available in Accela Insights.

Also, with the Spring Release we have added support for **SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS) 2019** to ensure our customers can utilize current reporting technology from Microsoft with their implementations.

## Accela Mobile

For Accela Mobile, we've increased the usability for specific remote workers, and also introduced a new capability to allow them to communicate more easily in the field.

- > **Personalized job lists** – Accela Mobile now allows the creation of personalized job lists in V21.1. This creates a more personalized user experience across the various roles, functions, and preferences of inspectors, work crews, and code enforcement. Fields and options will display based on the record type accessed or referenced, providing a simpler and more concise user experience.
- > **Automated Alerts via SMS** – With this new release, we have added a feature which allows automated alerts via SMS or Standard Messaging Service. This service is the most widely used texting protocol for mobile devices. This feature ensures field workers can more efficiently communicate with third parties, with one-click texting with “on my way” messages, or custom messages using the texting app on their phone. Being able to message from within their Accela user interface, using the contact information in the solution, means less time, distraction, and fumbling trying to update or notify on-site contacts.

- > **Service Request Management v2** – With the V2 version of SRM we are adding the “Extended” version, which includes the rich process automation power of the Civic Platform. Now our system can not only engage citizens better on the front end but also provide deeper process automation and work management functionality as well.
- > **Fire Prevention v2** – Accela currently provides the “Essentials” version of our Fire Prevention Civic Application. With V21.1, we are introducing V2 and the “Extended” version, adding more functionality for solution customization, integrations across systems, and capabilities designed to support larger, more complex fire prevention programs.

## For More Information

To learn more, please visit the Accela Success Community to view the Spring Release (V21.1) Release Notes or contact your Accela Account Executive.

## Accela’s Civic Applications

Accela’s Civic Applications are the pre-configured solutions for a variety of agency needs built on the foundation of the Civic Platform. Because they are pre-built, they can shorten the time and cost for solution deployment, include the best practices of our 20+ years of focus in these areas, and can be configured to meet the unique needs of agencies, large or small.

For the Spring 2021 release we are updating the following Civic Applications:

- > **Environmental Health v3** – This update adds new record and report types, but also adds functionality to address the needs of our Decade customer base as they consider migration to the Civic Application for Environmental Health.
- > **Occupational Licensing v2** – For V21.1, we have added more pre-configured occupations, now totaling 48, which come out-of-the-box. These include more medical, real estate, cosmetology, and education job functions.