

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

ACCELA CIVIC PLATFORM'S ROLE IN HOUSING AFFORDABILITY



01 INTRODUCTION



Across the country, many cities struggle with a pernicious issue that undermines the vitality of their community: housing affordability. Many of the qualities that make for a welcoming community are directly, or indirectly, related to the availability of housing.

Population growth, job growth, and racial and ethnic diversity can all be threatened by the skyrocketing price of housing. City, county, and local officials are right to focus on this issue as it has the potential to stall growth, force out long-time residents, and generally erode the elements that make for vibrant and thriving neighborhoods.

It is true that there are many causes of housing unaffordability. At present, the cost of housing continues to rise because of constraints in housing supply. Simply put, people are not moving enough, and new housing cannot be built fast enough to keep up with demand.

CAUSES OF HOUSING AFFORDABILITY 02



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Certainly, macroeconomic factors like the strength of the economy, inflation, and interest rate policy play a critical role in prices and housing availability in general. Additionally, it is not likely that local leaders will have an opportunity to affect or influence any of these variables directly. There is one lever that local leaders can pull to help bring more housing supply to the market—they can reduce any unnecessary friction in the private development and permitting process.

03 ACCELA CIVIC PLATFORM

Building codes and standards are a necessary component to ensure safe, effective, and consistent development. However, the application of those codes through the permitting process is often laden with uncertainty, obfuscation, inconsistency, and delays – all of which add time and costs to the development process.



This is where local leaders can invest in an updated permitting platform to address those process deficiencies head on; thereby reducing the overall cost of development and delivering more housing units to the market.



As an industry-leading permitting solution, the Accela Civic Platform provides access to services for public sector institutions across the globe. The platform eases the administrative burden of the private development permitting process. Internal staff recognize the benefits of outsourcing time-consuming data entry to the permit applicant through an online application

portal. Additionally, data validation techniques catch and handle errors, which leads to greater consistency throughout review and permit issuance.

Administrators and supervisors can assign tasks, monitor due dates, and run reports; all of which translates into a more accountable and timely process. Additionally, the robust public portal provides applicants with a window into the process, increasing public transparency and accountability with an added benefit of reducing status check phone calls.

CONCLUSION 04



The platform alone is not enough to recognize all the benefits offered by the software. Aligning code and process requirements with the platform is essential for agencies to fully realize the efficiencies the solution affords. With over a decade of regulatory experience coupled with a decade of Accela experience, 3SG Plus is uniquely situated to translate those requirements into a configuration that drives the productivity gains needed to help stem the tide of rising housing costs.

The problem of housing affordability cannot be solved with a single magic bullet. The challenge is far too complex with too many variables and dependencies for a simple solution. However, that complexity should not be a crutch for inaction. Local leaders do have options. They can choose to make investments in technology that helps reduce the cost of development. With a challenge as large and impactful as housing, any initiative that moves the needle, however small, is worthy of pursuit.

ABOUT 3SG PLUS

WHO WE ARE

3SG Plus is a technology reseller and IT services provider headquartered in Columbus, Ohio. Our services include enterprise content management, digital transformation, and cybersecurity. We are an authorized Accela reseller, integrator, and professional services provider.

We provide customized Accela deployments, and we integrate Accela software with other agency platforms to enhance functionality and effectiveness. We also provide onboarding assistance and post-implementation support.

Our team brings over 10 years of experience configuring Accela platform and regulatory compliance. Our expertise and comprehensive support services enhance operational effectiveness, boost transparency, and maximize the value and impact of their Accela software.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: MICHAEL BOWEN, DIRECTOR OF ACCELA PRACTICE

Michael Bowen, Director of Accela Practice at 3SG Plus, has over a decade of expertise gained from extensive use of Accela software while serving at the City of Columbus Department of Building and Zoning Services.

Michael adeptly applies his wealth of hands-on experience to serve our Accela customers, aligning our enhancements with the operational requirements of government agencies, drawing from his firsthand knowledge of the challenges and solutions encountered in adoption and onboarding processes.



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