

OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Date: August 11, 2021

CAO File No. 0220-05869-0000

Council File No. 19-1278

Council District: All

To: The Mayor
The Council

From: Matthew W. Szabo, City Administrative Officer



Reference: Department of Building and Safety memorandum dated July 7, 2021; Received by the City Administrative Officer on July 7, 2021; Additional information received through August 6, 2021

Subject: **REQUEST TO REAPPROPRIATE FUNDS WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TRUST FUND FOR NEW TASK ORDERS IN SUPPORT OF THE BUILDLA PROJECT**

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:

1. Approve the reallocation of previously appropriated funds in the amount of \$1.2 million within the Development Services Trust Fund No. 58V/08 for the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) to fund task orders in support of the BuildLA Project;
2. Authorize the Controller to:
 - a. Establish a new appropriation account within the Development Services Trust Fund, Fund No. 58V/08, Account Number TBD, entitled BuildLA IT Project – LADBS; and,
 - b. Transfer \$1.2 million within the Development Services Trust Fund, Fund No. 58V/08, from Account No. 08RBLA, Build LA - B&S to the new appropriation Account Number TBD, entitled BuildLA IT Project – LADBS; and,
3. Authorize the General Manager of the LADBS, or designee, to make any technical corrections as necessary to the instructions included in this report to implement the intent of those transactions, subject to the approval of the City Administrative Officer.

SUMMARY

In the attached memorandum dated July 7, 2021 (Report), the Department of Building and Safety (DBS) requests authority to reappropriate funds within the Development Services Trust Fund

(DSTF) to fund new task orders in support of the new vision for the BuildLA Project. BuildLA is a centralized portal and an electronic planning and permitting solution that supports the improved delivery of development services in the City through an automated, centralized, and simplified workflow.

In April of 2015, the Mayor and Council approved appropriations in the amount of \$10.2 million from the DSTF (formerly the Construction Services Trust Fund) for the original vision of BuildLA, Project Year 1 and authorized the DBS to negotiate contract with Accela Inc., the highest ranked proposer selected from a Request for Proposals process for the BuildLA project (C.F. 15-0316). A total of \$3.24 million of the original appropriation was spent by December 2016 with a breakdown as follows: \$638,750 was paid to Gartner Consulting (Contract No. C-126026) for BuildLA program management support and quality assurance services and \$2,598,527 was paid to Oracle, Inc. for Oracle licenses included in the BuildLA project budget. The remaining \$6.96 million of the original appropriation remains unspent following the dissolution of contract negotiations with Accela, Inc. in 2016. On May 15, 2020, the DBS provided a status update to the Council on BuildLA and described the new vision for the project, which consists of the following six projects: 1) Virtual Development Services Center; 2) Electronic Plan Review (ePlanLA); 3) Universal Cashiering System; 4) Universal Project ID Number; 5) Universal Customer Account; and, 6) Development Services Systems Replacement.

The requested reappropriation of funds will support seven new task orders for Project 2 - ePlanLA, a web-based application that allows customers to submit plan check applications for building, electrical, and mechanical permits through the internet, and Project 6 – Development Services Systems Replacement. The DBS is proposing the following four tasks orders to enhance the ePlanLA application: 1) Implement Write-Once-Read-Many Technology for Plan Documents; 2) Develop Bluebeam APIs to Interface with ePlanLA; 3) Implementation of Online Modifications Enhancement; and, 4) Future Modifications and Irreversible Time-stamp for Plan Check Activity Module (PCAM). The DBS is proposing the following three task orders for the Development Services Systems Replacement project: 1) Data Warehouse and Executive Dashboard; 2) Data Cleansing/Conversion; and, 3) Implement Address Validation Features. Additional information regarding the seven task orders can be found in the attached DBS Report. The DBS indicates that it intends to work with the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering (BOE), to complete the proposed task orders through the BOE's existing contract with Psomas (Contract No. C-134269), a consultant secured by the BOE to provide staff augmentation for project management and programming services for BuildLA. The DBS also confirmed that it will request funding for the other BuildLA projects under a separate cover. This Office concurs with the recommendations of the Department.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

There is no impact to the General Fund. The funding for the proposed task orders in support of the BuildLA project will be fully funded by the Development Services Trust Fund.

FINANCIAL POLICIES STATEMENT

The recommendations in this report comply with the City's Financial Policies in that the proposed work will be funded by special funds, which are supported by dedicated funding sources, and spending is to be limited to the mandates of the funding source.

MWS:MOF:02220016d

Attachment

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: July 7, 2021

To: Matt Szabo, City Administrative Officer

FROM: *A. Alchutan* for
 Osama Younan, General Manager
 Department of Building and Safety

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO REAPPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR NEW TASK ORDERS IN SUPPORT OF THE BUILDLA PROJECT (C.F. 19-1278)

The Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) is submitting for your consideration a request to reappropriate funds within the Development Services Trust Fund (DSTF) for new task orders in support of the new vision for the BuildLA Project (C.F. 19-1278).

Summary

BuildLA is a cooperative undertaking by City departments that provides development services through a unified system, including a common architecture and infrastructure, common business applications, and common support tools. Appropriations in the amount of \$10.2 million from the DSTF (formerly Construction Services Trust Fund) was approved by Council (C.F. 15-0316) for the original vision of BuildLA, Project Year 1. Over \$6.9 million of this original appropriation remains unspent following dissolution of contract negotiations with Accela, Inc. in 2016. LADBS provided a status update for the BuildLA Project on May 15, 2020, describing the new vision of the program which consists of six (6) projects that will move the City towards a unified system for development services. Each of these projects will use a phased implementation approach where a minimum viable product for a feature(s) will be incrementally added and enhanced. The six projects include:

- Project 1 – Virtual Development Services Centers
- Project 2 – Electronic Plan Review (ePlanLA)
- Project 3 – Universal Cashiering System
- Project 4 – Universal Project ID Number
- Project 5 – Universal Customer Account
- Project 6 – Development Services Systems Replacement

LADBS requests reappropriation of \$1.2 million in unspent DSTF funds to pay for new task orders in line with the phased implementation approach for several of the above projects. LADBS intends to work with the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering (BOE), to complete these task orders through a consultant already secured by BOE.

Objectives

Following is a list of the proposed new task orders in support of the BuildLA Project.

BuildLA Project 2 – Electronic Plan Review (ePlanLA):

- **Task Order #1 – Implement Write-Once-Read-Many (WORM) Technology for Plan Documents:** A security feature for storing permit and permit-related documents on technology that cannot be altered. Implementing this feature will eliminate the need for customers to print plans and/or documentation to bring to a Development Services Center

in order to complete the plan check application process. Currently, customers are required to bring in their final plans to be stamped or perforated in order to prevent alterations to the approved plans.

- **Task Order #2 – Develop Bluebeam APIs to Interface with ePlanLA:** Bluebeam APIs will be used in conjunction with ePlanLA to improve the permitting process. These APIs will be particularly useful for the joint stamping process, whereby a permit is stamped by multiple departments. Bluebeam APIs will be used to automate the creation of Bluebeam Studio Sessions, which will enhance the coordination of plan checkers from multiple departments in marking up plans and issuing corrections. The APIs will create the session, upload the appropriate plan documents, and notify the different departmental users that the plans need to be reviewed and stamped. As each plan is reviewed and stamped, an API will interface with ePlanLA to provide the latest status. Once a plan is completely stamped, an API will notify the customer, save the plan in a designated location with WORM technology, and close out the Bluebeam Studio Session.
- **Task Order #3 – Implementation of Online Modifications Enhancement:** This task will assist customers requesting modifications to already submitted applications. The enhancement will update the current paper process and bring it online, allowing the customer to submit and pay for the modification from a web application. Currently and without this enhancement, modifications for already submitted online applications must be handled offline with paper forms and phone calls.
- **Task Order #4 – Future Modifications and Irreversible Time-stamp for PCAM:** This task will enable online processing of modifications for future online permit applications (similar to the task described in Task Order #3, but for future applications). Additionally, an irreversible time stamp for date validations will be implemented to ensure accurate time recording of the work of LADBS engineers.

BuildLA Project 6 – Development Services Systems Replacement:

- **Task Order #5 – Data Warehouse & Executive Dashboard:** As part of the replacement of current Development Services Systems (PCIS, CEIS, etc.), this task will enable the display of up-to-date building-related data on public and private web pages. The data will be available for both public consumption as well as internally for the City of Los Angeles. Access to real time data that can easily be sorted and categorized will enable more efficient management of resources and faster identification of problems.
- **Task Order #6 – Data Cleansing / Conversion:** This task will help prepare proprietary data for conversion as part of on-going efforts to replace current Development Services Systems (PCIS, CEIS, etc.). This effort will help prepare for the modernization of the systems tracking permits and other data. As new systems are brought online, the legacy data will need to be in a readable format so that the new systems can interact with the data.
- **Task Order #7 – Implement Address Validation Features:** This task will help improve and coordinate the address validation systems that the City currently uses among all Development Services Departments. Addresses are currently not synchronized across different City systems, and when customers add new addresses they must be added through BOE's system. Since the current systems are used by multiple departments for permits and other applications, issues arise when addresses do not exist in the master BOE list or when new addresses are added and are not reflected in other systems. This lack of synchronicity can make address validation difficult, and can prevent customers from submitting otherwise valid permit applications.

Recommendations:

1. That the Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee of the City Council APPROVE, pursuant to Section 5.321(l) of the Los Angeles Administrative Code, the reallocation of previously appropriated \$1.2 million within the Development Services Trust Fund No. 58V/08 (DSTF) for the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) to fund task orders in support of the BuildLA Project;
2. That the City Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:
 - a. Request the Controller to establish a new account in the Development Services Trust Fund No. 58V/08, entitled Account No. TBD, BuildLA IT Project – LADBS;
 - b. Request the Controller to transfer \$1.2 million from DSTF 58V/08, Account 08RBLA to the new account Account No. TBD, BuildLA IT Project – LADBS.

Please direct any questions regarding this request to Ana Mae Yutan, Assistant General Manager and Bureau Chief of Resource Management Bureau, at (213) 482-6782.

cc: William Chun, Office of the Mayor
Richard H. Llewellyn, Jr., Office of the Mayor
Sharon M. Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst
Holly L. Wolcott, City Clerk
Gary Lee Moore, PE, Bureau of Engineering
Ted Allen, PE, Bureau of Engineering

OY:AMY:VES:GW:ZD:PE