

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



ITEM: 2.7
(ID # 12335)

MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, May 05, 2020

FROM : AUDITOR CONTROLLER:

SUBJECT: AUDITOR-CONTROLLER: Public Land Management System Review Report,
District: All. [\$0]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and file the Public Land Management System Review Report

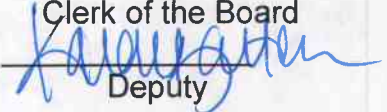
ACTION:Consent


Paul A. Angulo, County Auditor-Controller 4/9/2020

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Perez, seconded by Supervisor Spiegel and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended.

Ayes: Jeffries, Spiegel, Washington, Perez and Hewitt
Nays: None
Absent: None
Date: May 5, 2020
xc: Auditor

Kecia R. Harper
Clerk of the Board
By: 
Deputy

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

BACKGROUND:

Summary

In October 2019, complaints came to our attention surrounding the **Public Land Use System (PLUS)** managed under the Transportation and Land Management Agency. These complaints generally related to one of the following categories: 1) Inefficiencies of the system, 2) Transparency relating to customer fees; and, 3) Overall system functionality. This report addresses those complaints.

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost
COST	\$ 0.0	\$ 0.0	\$ 0.0	\$ 0.0
NET COUNTY COST	\$ 0.0	\$ 0.0	\$ 0.0	\$ 0.0
SOURCE OF FUNDS: N/A			Budget Adjustment:	No
			For Fiscal Year:	n/a

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND:

Summary (continued)

Impact on Residents and Businesses

Provide information on significant trends occurring in county government.

ATTACHMENT A.

Public Land Management System Review Report



REVIEW

Public Land Use System (PLUS) Transportation and Land Management Agency

PAUL ANGULO, CPA, M.A.
County Auditor Controller

April 16, 2020

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Executive Summary

In October 2019, concerns came to our attention surrounding the **Public Land Use System** (PLUS) managed under the Transportation and Land Management Agency. These concerns generally related to one of the following categories: 1) Inefficiencies of the system, 2) Transparency relating to customer fees; and, 3) Overall system functionality. We were asked to conduct an assessment of these concerns.

This report provides the Board of Supervisors, and TLMA management, a summary of the results based on the review conducted by our office. Our review does not constitute a formal audit and, therefore, we do not render an audit opinion of the system. However, the review does allow for recommendations based on observations, meetings, and the information obtained directly from TLMA staff. The results in this report are strictly based on the information they provided.

On June 25, 2014, through Board of Supervisors Agenda Number 3-59, the Transportation and Land Management Agency (TLMA) was granted the approval to purchase a new land management system for the total price of \$5.7M. It was deemed critical by TLMA to purchase a new information technology platform as an important component of its county initiative to leverage technology to provide improved, effective, and fiscally prudent services. The previous land management system was 17 years old and was no longer supported by the original vendor. The cost to support the legacy system was expected to increase and the risk of system failure was of great concern.

Full implementation of PLUS was originally estimated to take 18-months. The system went live in production mode on December 11, 2017. An expected benefit with PLUS was the ability to provide customer centric features and functions by making an online portal available to the public. This feature, PLUS Online, went live on February 2019.

Scope and Methodology

We conducted our review through interviews and observations. Our scope focused on those concerns addressed with our office and did not include end-to-end testing of the system. We focused on the following:

- Customer account balances – updates and notification of transaction charges against deposit-based fees (DBFs)
- Ability of staff to make customer account changes
- Inefficiencies relating to data entry of new project applications in PLUS
- PLUS integration with other county systems (PeopleSoft, Map My County, and Envision)

- Invoice transparency (itemization of specific charges)

The information for this review was obtained directly from TLMA staff through meetings, observations, and documentation provided.

Terminology

- **Contractors:** A person or a company hired to provide services to TLMA needed for the assessment and approval of a project.
- **Customers:** Public members who pay for county services provided through TLMA
- **Departments:** In this review we use the term sub-department to identify those departments under the TLMA umbrella. These sub-departments are Planning, Code Enforcement, Building and Safety, and Transportation
- **DBF:** Deposit Based Fees are initial deposits used to initiate a project which may be supplemented with additional fees to recover actual cost for services provided by the county.
- **GIS:** Geographical Information System is a framework for gathering, managing, and analyzing geographical data
- **LMS:** Land Management System previously used by TLMA that has now been replaced by PLUS
- **Map My County:** Riverside County's mapping and spatial data portal used as a reporting tool to aid users in obtaining assessor maps, recorded maps, and google maps
- **PeopleSoft Financials:** County of Riverside financial system used to record all financial data for the county
- **PLUS Online:** Online version of PLUS, providing customers with limited information regarding the services provided by TLMA
- **RCIT:** Riverside County Information Technology Department
- **Subject matter experts (SMEs):** County staff considered experts in their fields due their experience. For the purpose of this report, these are planners, inspectors, engineers, surveyors and code enforcement officers
- **Sub-department:** Planning, Code Enforcement, Building and Safety, Transportation
- **Transparency:** details and itemization of transactions.

Public Land Use System Review

Complaint #1: "Applicant's accounts do not automatically alert staff members when staff charges exceed the funds deposited. This allows large charges to continue to accumulate before payment is made and/or the applicant can be contacted."

Observation: True

Based on our review, we find this complaint to be valid as the system is not presently coded to update or alert staff "automatically."

Current process: Each TLMA sub-department runs reports in PeopleSoft to determine the DBF work that exceed the initial deposit balances. Negative balance projects are placed on hold. The intent of the hold is to prevent additional work from being done until additional deposits are secured in order to proceed with projects.

Strengths: Customers can get itemized statements of their DBFs (but only upon request).

Weakness: Calculation of the invoices for additional deposit fees are computed manually and without a specific methodology, therefore, it is subject to error. These additional fees are computed by accounting tech staff, without the consultation of the SMEs.

- Customer inquiries of balances are directed to accounting tech staff and not to the SMEs who have a better understanding of the project.
- TLMA provides notification to customers of negative balances and additional assessed fees through an invoice.

Recommendations to Complaint #1

- 1) Code the system for notifications to be sent "automatically" to TLMA staff and customers.
- 2) Include an itemized statement against the DBFs when sending invoices to customers. Presently, customers must ask for detailed statements.
- 3) Additional assessment of DBF related fees should be done in consultation with SMEs, not by accounting tech staff.

Complaint #2: "Case Planners cannot make simple account adjustments like changing an application's phone number or mailing address."

Observation: True

Current Process: Presently staff who have the proper security rights can make the customer account changes as needed. The system has an audit trail to identify who made

Public Land Use System Review

changes in the customer accounts. Changes to customer accounts are not allowed unless specifically requested by the customer and the proper authorization forms have been submitted to document the request.

Strengths: Limiting who can make changes to customer accounts is an appropriate system internal control to limit the exposure of private information to only those designated by the customer.

Weaknesses:

- A policy and procedure manual has not been compiled. Each sub-department has been tasked with creating their own manual. Without a central point (i.e., ownership) the effort to complete the manual for all sub-departments will not be consistent, Also, each sub-department may be working in different directions thereby not leveraging the system.
- The lack of a policy and procedure manual hurts business continuity when staff who possess institutional knowledge leaves employment with the department.

Recommendations to Complaint #2

- 1) Centralize the task of creating a policy and procedure manual to ensure consistency and completion.
- 2) Once the policy and procedure manual is finalized, ensure that it is appropriately updated as policy and procedures change.
- 3) Review the security roles of all staff who have access to PLUS and ensure the roles are compatible with their respective responsibilities.

Complaint #3: "Logging in a case requires more than 80 steps. Applicants have complained about the time it takes to submit even a simple land use application or secure an over the counter building permit. PLUS has not made this processes quicker."

Observation: True, if by "logging in" refers to the data needed and entered to start and complete an application. Entering application information for new projects requires lots of information that goes into multiple fields. This, in turn, populates the fields used by the sub-departments making the rest of the application approval process streamlined.

Current Process: While TLMA sub-departments have had their own management systems in the past, PLUS brings these systems together under one **department ERP System**. PLUS Online provides the ability for customers to submit their project request online. While it takes more time to initially enter a project application into the system, it

feeds that data to the various modules needed by each sub-department under TLMA.

PLUS has the ability to link to the GIS system and pre-populate fields based on an address, parcel number, or other identification data. The initial delays in the process was the learning curve which required staff to learn and adapt to the new system's functionality.

Strengths: One system for all sub-departments under TLMA.

Weakness: Incomplete applications delays the application process overall. This leads to frustrations for the customer.

Recommendations to Complaint #3

- 1) Complete the policy and procedure manual in a centralized manner.
- 2) Provide system training to all staff.
- 3) Compile an applicant instruction checklist detailing what is required for the application to be considered complete.

Complaint #4: "The system is not linked to Environmental Health's Envision system so septic system certificates, clearances and denials are not known to the other Departments."

Observation: True

Current Process: Environmental Health was not part of the initial scope in the procurement process nor was it part of the scope in the final contract approved by the Board. They were, however, authorized to use the system for specific permitting processes.

- NOTE: Environmental Health opted not to implement the system for all their processes because PLUS would not help them with their compliance requirements to other Governmental Agencies. PLUS does have the capability through another module that would need to be created by RCIT or third-party. Environmental Health says they can integrate the information from Envision into PLUS, but the option they were provided would create a redundant process for the department, making it inefficient. Per RCIT, the creation of the module would require Environmental Health to re-enter information from Envision into PLUS.
- Environmental Health is considering the purchase of a new system.

Recommendations to Complaint #4

- 1) Environmental Health should work with RCIT to determine if PLUS has the ability to receive information directly from Envision instead of having to enter data manually. This would make the process more efficient.
- 2) Ensure additional customization is cost feasible for both TLMA and Environmental Health Department.
- 3) Fix and work within the system to save taxpayer money.

Complaint 5: "PLUS and other County systems like PeopleSoft and Map My County are not compatible."

Observation: True with PeopleSoft. Not true with Map My County.

Current Process: DBF account balance information is available in PLUS which comes from PeopleSoft. However, details on the transactions that impact the DBF are only available upon request from the customer. For security reasons PeopleSoft does not integrate with PLUS nor does it have a public portal for this application (by design).

Map My County feeds information into PLUS and PLUS to Map My County, bi-directional.

Recommendations to Complaint #5

No recommendation provided as we do not see a problem with this specific process.

Complaint #6: "PLUS does not provide real time balances. In-House contract planners' billing usually lags even further behind since this system does not allow for timely charging by non-county employees. It also does not provide a full detailed description of those charges for the Applicant. This lack of real time accounting prohibits Planners from staying on top of their application account balances."

Observation: The complaint is valid but this is not because of PLUS. The problem is how the process is designed to capture the cost, and delays of data input. PLUS cannot compute data that has not been entered into the system.

Current Process: DBF balances are impacted by different types of transactions (e.g., county staff billable hours and contractor billing) when recorded in PeopleSoft Financials. The recording of these transactions occur at different intervals and, therefore, impact DBF

Public Land Use System Review

balances as transactions are processed. PLUS is updated with the most recent DBF balances once the transactions are entered and processed in PeopleSoft Financials.

Delays created by untimely recording of county staff billable hours, or delayed issuance of billings by the contractors is the root cause associated with the complaint. These problems are further exacerbated when customers receive invoices from TLMA without details of the transactions impacting their DBF balances (details are available but only upon requests), creating what is referred to as "lack of transparency."

Note: TLMA is currently addressing the problem by monitoring the timeliness of transaction processing, and communicating with contractors for timely billing.

Strengths:

- Details of the transactions charged against the DBF balance are available (but only upon request).
- Account balances (DBFs) update daily.

Weaknesses:

- Contractors' billing creates a delay with DBF balances because their billing processes are outside TLMA's control. While TLMA continues the use of contractors' services for project assessments and approvals, the delays these have on the DBF balances will persist.
- Untimely entry of county staff work hours in the time management system impacts DBF balances.

Recommendations to Complaint #6

- 1) Ensure work hours on respective DBF projects are accurate and entered timely in PeopleSoft Financials to ensure real time balances to DBFs.
- 2) Ensure adequate review of time recorded by county staff.
- 3) TLMA needs to explore making financial transaction details available in PLUS for TLMA staff.

Claim #7: "The Building Industry Association, Land Use and Engineering Consultants as well as small Mom & Pop Applicants have all complained about the lack of transparency of the billing system. And the shock of receiving huge statements months after they thought they had settled their accounts."

Observation: True, but it is not because of PLUS or lack of transparency per se. That is, itemized statements are available to the customer upon request.

Current Process: PLUS provides DBF balance information for TLMA staff and customers when requested. Invoices sent to customers have information on how to get details of transactions. Also, DBF forms have instructions on how to contact TLMA for financial details.

Strengths:

- System security prevents the applicant customer from looking at the details directly from PeopleSoft.

Weakness:

- Calculation of balances is a manual process which opens itself to errors.
- Additional fees are assessed manually by accounting tech staff, without the consultation of the SMEs.
- TLMA does not include itemized details on the invoices, unless requested.

Recommendations to Complaint #7

- 1) Additional assessment of fees should be done in consultation and approval of SMEs, not accounting tech staff.
- 2) Calls from customers should be directed to the SMEs for the customers to get correct answers to their questions.
- 3) An itemized statement of transactions should be included with all invoices.

Complaint #8: "As many as 10 TLMA staff members are assigned to manage the PLUS system, many coming from such diverse previous assignments as: Code Enforcement, Parks or Biology."

Observation: Five staff with whom we met appear to understand its capabilities and efficiencies through demonstration.

Current Process: A PLUS user group meets periodically to address different topics relating to PLUS. These topics address system updates or changes, solutions to problems with the system, and business process changes.

Recommendations to Complaint #8

No recommendation provided as system is functional.

Complaint #9: Is the system salvageable or is there a need to find another system?

Observation: Until there has been a bonifide attempt to work out the bugs, set policy, and work out comprehensive procedures in the form of a policy and procedures manual this question cannot be answered definitively.

Recommendations to Complaint #9 and Overall Conclusion

- 1) Complete policy and procedures manual.
- 2) Work to maximize system capabilities and efficiencies.
- 3) Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), not the accounting tech staff, should address problems with the invoices for all TLMA DBFs.
- 4) Centralize the coordination of the policy and procedure manual as opposed to leaving it up to respective TLMA sub-departments for completion.
- 5) Policies and procedures should be updated immediately after a change has been agreed and approved.
- 6) Review TLMA related ordinances and determine if there is a need to change or update them.

TLMA Management Response to Executive Summary:

On June 25, 2014 TLMA recommended entering into a licensing, professional services, and maintenance/support Agreement for a replacement Land Management System (LMS) with Tyler Technologies, Inc. This system has been named the Public Land Use System (PLUS) and it serves as the development processing platform for Planning and Building & Safety Development Applications and Permits (as well as being used by County Fire, Code Enforcement, and for several Transportation Department permitting functions).

This PLUS system replaced a 17-year old DOS-Based Land Management System (LMS) that was not Windows compatible, had no on-line functionality, was no longer supported by the vendor, and had reached end-of-life operating issues.

The Notice to Proceed to Tyler Technologies was issued in October 2014. Tyler completed filling out their project staffing team (staff were completing other assignments) in December 2015, and work started in earnest in January 2015. Staff from TLMA and RCIT worked with Tyler Technologies on system implementation and the first formal phase of PLUS was launched on December 11, 2017. The on-line version was launched on February 2019. We originally estimated that the system would take 18-months to complete. It took 23 months from the actual start of the project to go-live for internal staff use in December 2017, and an additional 14 months for the on-line initial launch. As with any new technology roll-out, staff had to balance the desire to get it ready for use as soon as possible, with the desired functionality of the system to be as complete and work as well as possible prior to rolling it out.

The total cost to date of developing and implementing PLUS has been approx. \$3.9 Million. The estimated 10-year contract with Tyler (including development, maintenance, and support of the system) was \$5.70 Million.

Since January 2018, a total of 74,200 permits have been issued through PLUS. This includes Building permits, Fire permits, Business (Stormwater) Registrations, and others. About 3,500 Planning entitlement applications have been processed through PLUS. One of the benefits on PLUS, as these Planning applications move into the building permit issuance stage, will be far less conditions of approval to clear and greater use of Advisory Notices to inform applicants of standard County requirements.

We note that, since the Governor's Order's issued on March 19th and the subsequent County closure of our building to public access, PLUS on-line has been the only resource available to our customers to process development permits. To date, over 800 building permits have been applied for on-line since the closure of County buildings to the public, and we have close to 3,000 registered development users that are able to access PLUS On-line to meet their permitting needs.

TLMA Management Response to Complaint #1

Response to ACO's Observations of Complaint No. 1 - Partially Concur.

The accounting of our Deposit Based Fee (DBF) systems, like other County time-based fiscal accounting, is done by PeopleSoft. PeopleSoft Invoices are not configurable to provide the sort of detailed information needed by our applicants. PeopleSoft also has limitations on the "automatic" update features such as sending notices to staff when deposits are exceeded. However, Planning management staff does have a process in place for checking projects and their deposit balance against standard process milestones (such as Development Advisory Committee -DAC - where staff provides comments to applicants after their applications have been reviewed, or prior to scheduling for Planning Commission).

Given the limitations with PeopleSoft invoices, Planning staff has traditionally provided more detailed statements. Understanding that we wanted to provide our applicants with greater detail than what was available, in 2017 TLMA staff prepared a more detailed Statement which indicates which staff members are charging the case, their time charged, and what activity is being done. This increases accountability and transparency. This Statement was developed by TLMA staff to extract financial data from PeopleSoft and use it to populate fields that provide the applicant with additional detail.

Planning staff sends out an itemized Statement for Land Use cases, which are more complex and include environmental reviews and public hearings and take longer to process. Building and Safety, which has simpler permits of shorter duration, make the detailed Statements available upon request. Transportation has recently modified their practices to now send the more detailed statement.

Planning assessments for over a decade have been done by a Planner, who is intimately familiar with the development process and processing costs, and she consults with the individual case planner on every project to determine status and estimated costs to complete. This has to be essentially a "manual" process because every Planning case has unique circumstances such as specific site-related environmental concerns and documentation, different level of public interest, controversies, etc. and at times, opposition. Building and Safety management provides a guide to the accounting staff of typical costs associated with each stage in the building process.

TLMA management supports the concept of having PeopleSoft continue to integrate with PLUS to provide further "automatic" updates to staff on case deposit status, and would welcome the opportunity to work with both RCIT and the Auditor's Office to accomplish this.

TLMA Management Response to Complaint #2

Response to ACO's Observations of Complaint No. 2 - Partially Concur.

The Statement that "Case Planners cannot make simple account adjustments like changing an application's phone number or mailing address" was correct at the time of the commencement of the audit. However, this practice was changed in December 2019 to allow staff Planners greater flexibility to make case changes, since Planning staff has become more familiar with using the system and following standard corrections for entering case information to achieve a baseline level of consistency.

Regarding the statement that a policy and procedure manual has not been compiled, we note that each Department involved in the Land Use process plays a specialized role at different timeframes in the process. For example, Planning oversees the work of getting projects entitled (CEQA, General Plan and Zoning consistency, Public Hearings, Conditions of Approval from different Departments, etc.); Building & Safety issues individual construction permits for buildings, etc. in accordance with State Building Codes; Transportation is responsible for infrastructure in the public road right-of-way including Plan Check with County Standards, etc.

Although staff does agree that having a series of policy and procedures manuals may be of value, our focus continues to be on making operational improvements and fine-tuning the system. We have also been focusing on the "outward-facing" aspects of PLUS for our applicants through the development of instructional videos, detailed application instructions, and FAQ's. TLMA management does intend to focus on staff policy and procedure manual, which will need to be developed by SME's in each Department given the level of technical detail, at the appropriate time.

TLMA Management Response to Complaint #3

Response to ACO's Observations of Complaint No. 3 - Do Not Concur.

Although the statement that logging in a case requires more than 80 steps is not quite accurate, we do require that sufficient applicant information be required up-front in order to not delay the case at a later stage due to incomplete information. The amount of information required is commensurate with the type of case.

The initial information required has not measurably changed with PLUS vs. the prior system. However, PLUS does allow the project information once entered, to "Drop-down" into future applications needed for later phases of the development process.

The Planning Department has a standard checklist on the website, that's been in place for

several years, which indicates which information is required to submit a complete application.

TLMA and Department of Environmental Health (DEH) Management Response to Complaint #4

Response to ACO's Observations to Complaint No. 4: Partially Concur

DEH staff have access to PLUS in order to review Planning cases and approve projects/permits for health-related conditions. Since the inception of PLUS, DEH has directly reviewed and/or commented on 1,106 Planning cases and 3,457 permits. DEH staff regularly attend PLUS user group meetings to stay informed of changes or issues. Although DEH currently utilizes one integrated application (Envision) for all operational facets, all building permit information for both PLUS and Envision is available to the public and other County Departments within the Map My County application (refer to Complaint #5).

DEH will continue working with RCIT and TLMA to determine the most cost-effective data transfer solution without the burden of a dual entry system in order to benefit all stakeholders.

TLMA Management Response to Complaint #5

Response to ACO's Observations to Complaint No. 5 - Partially Concur.

We agree that Map My County is more directly integrated into PLUS than PeopleSoft, due to the system security limitations with PeopleSoft as the County's overall Fiscal Control System.

The invoices, which are generated directly by the PeopleSoft Financial, are not directly configurable to provide the desired level of account detail. Therefore, TLMA staff developed and implemented a detailed Statement in 2017 which provides greater detail than any prior historical Statements.

TLMA Management Response to Complaint #6

Response to ACO's Observations of Complaint No. 6 - Partially Concur.

We agree that there is a lag in the time-entry for contract planners into the system, which is due to contract planners not being able to directly access PeopleSoft because of the way that the system security has been set up. To compensate for this, TLMA management has required that contract planners enter their time in more frequent intervals so that it can be

captured by the PeopleSoft system as quickly as possible. TLMA management would like to see this direct-entry functionality made available to contractors in the upcoming PeopleSoft upgrade.

We generally disagree with the assertion of untimely entry of county staff work hours, with some exceptions. TLMA and other County Departments involved in the land use review process (Fire, Flood Control, and Environmental Health) enter their time spent on cases within the same pay-period.

There are two other County Departments (County Counsel for project legal compliance and the Clerk of the Board's office for public notice advertisements) that direct bill to Planning rather than entering time into the PeopleSoft system to recover costs. We have worked with both offices to receive their direct bills more promptly than in the past, and this process was recently instituted.

TLMA Management Response to Complaint #7

Response to ACO's Observations of Complaint No. 7 - Partially Concur.

We disagree with Recommendations 1) and 2) above. As we have explained in our Response to Complaint No. 1, the assessment of fees is done by and in consultation with the Subject Matter Experts for Planning and Transportation, and a cost estimation guide is provided to accounting staff for Building and Safety. Any applicant that has questions on their individual cases can direct them to the Project Planner (for Planning cases) or to the Department management in that functional area (Building and Safety, Transportation. Etc.)

Itemized Statements of transactions are provided along with all Planning invoices, and upon request for Building and Safety invoices given the simpler nature of those cases. Transportation is now providing statements with their billings as well.

TLMA Management Response to Complaint #8

Response to ACO's Observations of Complaint No. 8 - Partially concur.

System management and improvement, including upcoming updates that the vendor is rolling out this year to improve system functionality, is overseen by a staff of three TLMA staff members, which also are responsible for overseeing other non-PLUS functions such as mitigation fee implementation and records management. This essentially equates to about 2.5 FTE's, which TLMA anticipates will be reduced further over time as we continue to fine tune the system and resolve issues.

TLMA Management Response to Complaint #9

Response to Complaint No. 9 - Do Not Concur.

TLMA management strongly recommends against embarking on a process to find yet again another Land Management System. This was a generational change from a system that served the County well for close to two decades, but that was no longer supported by the vendor, had major limitations with configurability, and was at the end of its useful life. Indeed, as we were nearing the roll-out of PLUS in December 2017, the legacy LMS system had a major failure that require about two weeks of staff re-entry of case activity.

As with any major technology roll-out, one of the most challenging aspects is getting staff trained and familiar with the system. The more complex the system, the greater the learning curve. In this case, PLUS replaced not only the antiquated LMS but also the Code Enforcement case management system and Fire Department permitting system. While there are long-term benefits to using this one common platform so that County Departments can see what others involved in the permitting process are seeing and have a more complete picture of a land use case, that also led to greater complexity in the development and initial implementation.

It should be noted that rolling out PLUS involved not only the TLMA Departments involved in processing development applications and permits (Planning, Building and Safety, and Transportation) and Code Enforcement that has to check properties for compliance with County codes, but it also entailed involving the other Departments involved in the development process (Flood Control, Environmental Health, Waste Resources, Parks). In all, over 250 users had to be trained as part of the system roll-out.

TLMA management recognizes that, as with any new system, there are some things in hindsight that we would have liked to have improved on. We also recognize that there are still needed improvements to the system that will further enhance its staff usability and development customer experience. We strongly recommend that the effort be put into that as we continue on the course to make this system better, rather than embarking on a new system.

We also note that the Tyler system is also utilized by the County of Los Angeles, City of Temecula, City of Lake Elsinore and dozens of other jurisdictions throughout the Country. We are active participants in user-group initiatives to learn and teach each other and provide further feedback to Tyler to make further enhancements.

We do agree with Recommendations 1), 2) and 5) above, and do work continuously to make system improvements and enhance training. We do not fully agree with Recommendations 3) and 4) for the reasons stated herein in our response.

Regarding Recommendation No. 6, TLMA does actively work to review and update our ordinances. Some of the ordinance changes currently in the works include

- Zoning Ordinance (Ord. 348) Changes - wholesale modernization and major ordinance revision; revisions to the section on Temporary Events; proposing new section for Hemp regulations; revisions to the Housing sections;
- Revisions to Ordinance 460 (Land Development) - prior changes instituted to simplify map extensions and other processing changes, more revisions are in the works.
- Ord. 671 - Deposit Based Fee Ordinance - under review and changes being proposed to transfer more cases to flat-fee and away from deposit based fees.
- Ord. 457 - Building Ordinance - changes approved in the past year to align it with changes to the State Building Codes, other changes are being contemplated.