

CARS Project External Stakeholder Meeting

Date: January 14, 2026

Time: 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.



Welcome and Introductions

Margie Hieter, Project Sponsor

Harjit Basi, Project Director

John Heinlein, Assistant Project Director

Michael Laperche, CGI Deputy Project Manager

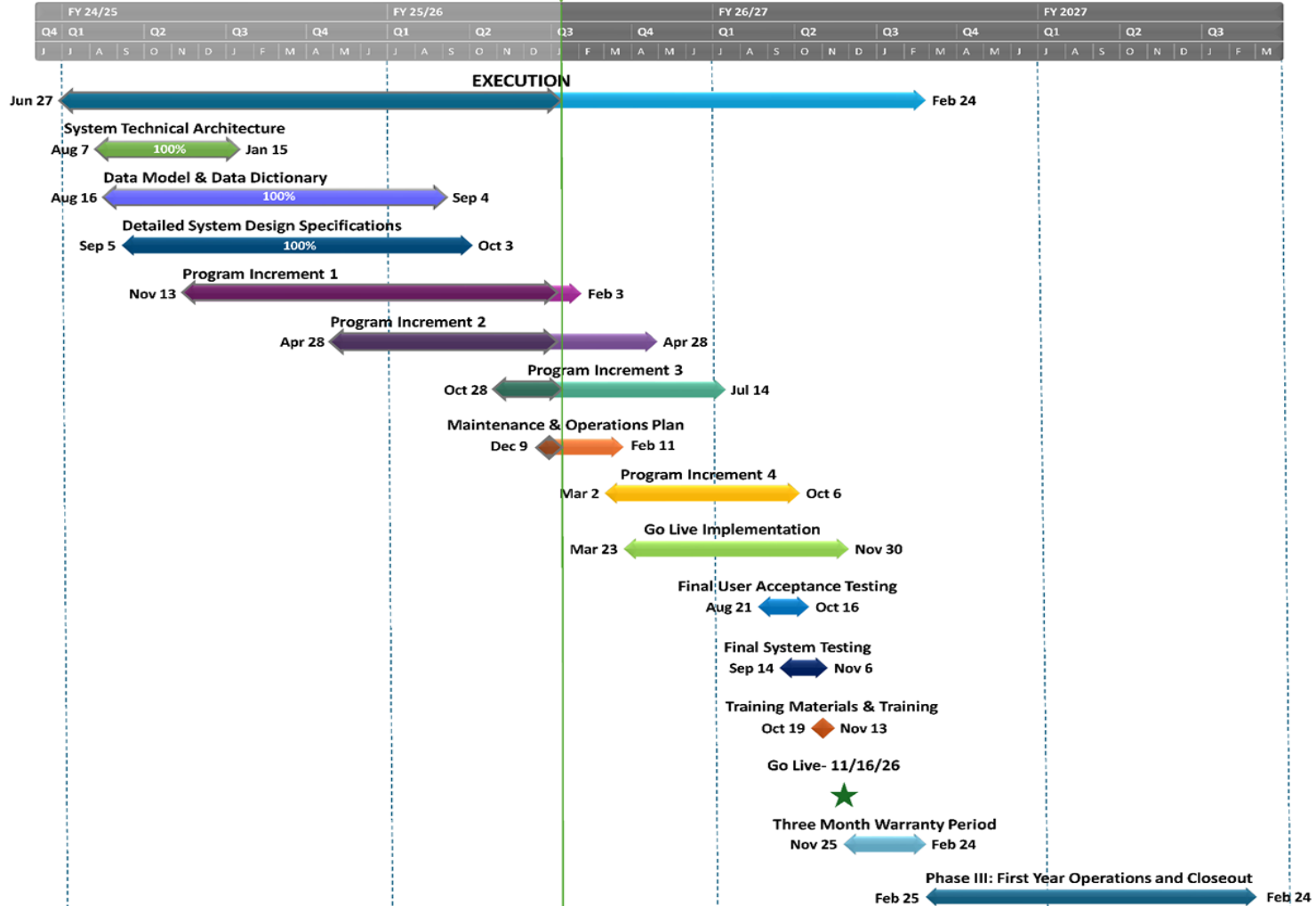
Jim Mason, CGI Business Analyst

Agenda

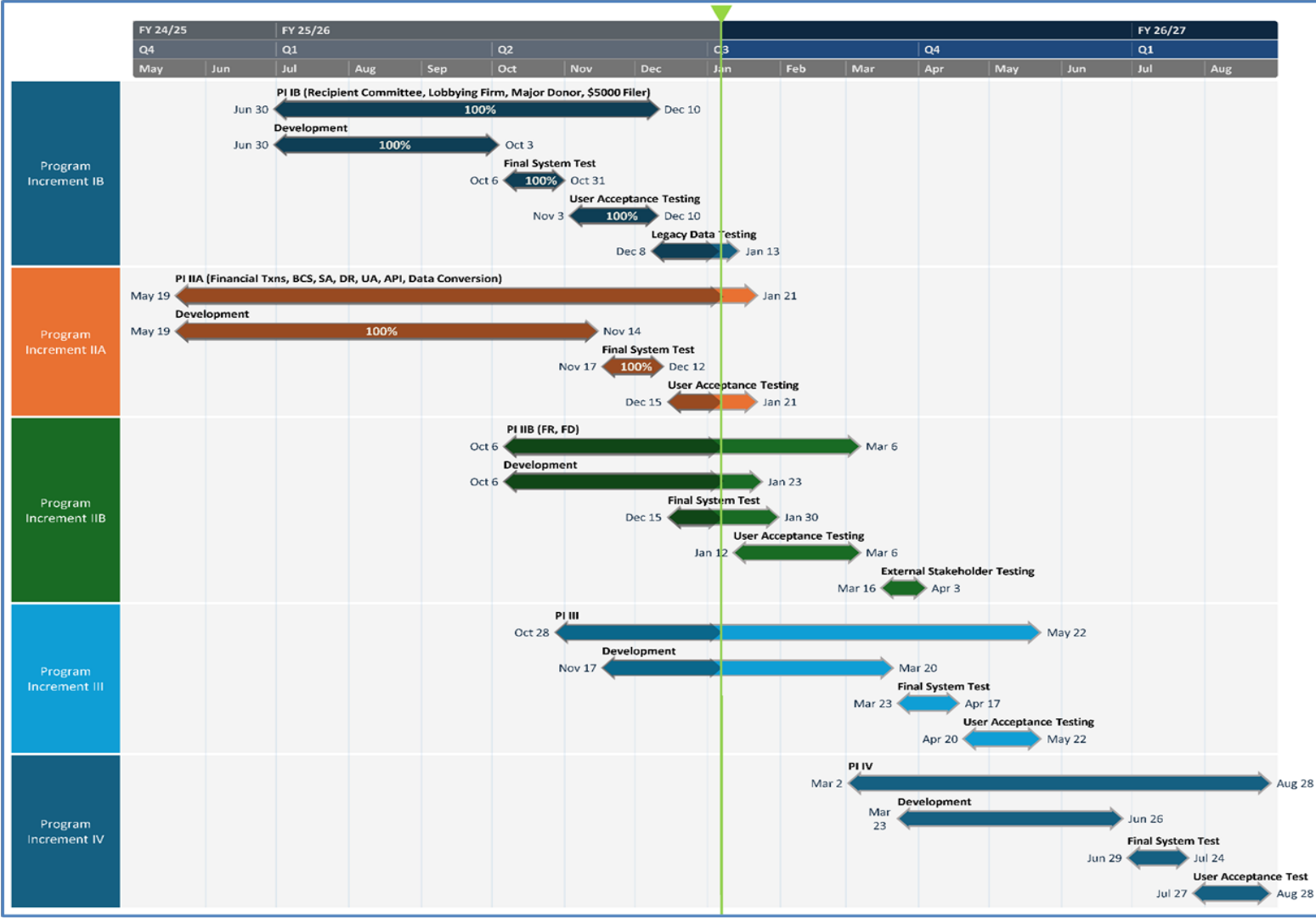
- Project Updates
 - Project Schedule
 - External Stakeholder User Testing Participation
 - Program Increments I & II Activity
 - Third Party Software Vendors
- Functionality Preview
- Q&A

Project Updates

Project Schedule



Project Schedule



EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER USER TESTING



- **External Stakeholder User Testing Preparation:**
 - Stakeholders choose the week they want to test—
3/23-3/27 or 3/30-4/3.
 - Stakeholders choose the functionality they want to test and provide the name and filer ID of the entities they will test.
 - Placed in small groups and assigned a mentor (your main contact for testing week).
 - Attend group training/functionality demonstration the week prior to your selected test week.

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER USER TESTING



- **External Stakeholder User Testing Week:**
 - Day one kickoff: Check in with your mentor to discuss your plan for the week and address any remaining questions.
 - End of day check ins: Message mentor to discuss progress and identify roadblocks.
 - Observation log: You will be provided with a spreadsheet in which you can document observations you want to share with the development team.
 - Post-testing survey: Share your experience!

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER USER TESTING



- **To sign up, email the following info to prdcars@sos.ca.gov no later than Wednesday 1/21/2026:**
 - Full name, email, and phone number
 - The week you want to test (subject to availability)
 - Functionality you want test
 - The name and filer ID of the entities you will test
- All documents will be available in the External Stakeholder Repository

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER USER TESTING



- **Expectations:**
 - Send information by Wednesday, 1/21/2026
 - Attend the mandatory training/functionality demonstration
 - Communicate daily with your mentor
 - Log observations in the External Stakeholder User Testing Log
 - Complete the post-testing survey

INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY ASSESSMENTS



- Security assessment for compliance and vulnerability assessment
- The Americans with Disabilities Act/Section 508 testing

PROGRAM INCREMENT I



Program Increment I – Design, Development, Testing: End to End Workstream

Campaign	Lobbying
Candidate – User Acceptance Testing (UAT)	Lobbyist Employer/Coalition – UAT
State Mailer Organization – UAT	Lobbyist – UAT
Recipient Committee – UAT	Lobbying Firm/\$5000 filer – UAT
Major Donor/Independent/Other Specific Campaign Types – UAT	

- UAT Functional Testing Complete – SOS Testing with Converted data target completion 1/13/26
- SOS and Prime Vendor working through Program Increment I final Acceptance Criteria

PROGRAM INCREMENT IA – COMPLETE



Campaign	Lobbying
Recipient Committee (Registration)	Lobbying Firm/\$5000 Filer (Registration)
Major Donor/Independent Expenditure (Registration/Disclosure)	

Activities: Design, Development, Unit Testing, System Testing, User Acceptance Testing

- Development and Unit Testing Complete:
 - ✓ Requirements: 724 of 3,322 total requirements included (22%)
- System Testing: 304 Functional Test Cases passed
- User Acceptance Testing: 100 Test Cases passed
- Training developed and delivered to User Acceptance Testing participants

PROGRAM INCREMENT IB – UAT



Campaign	Lobbying
Recipient Committee (Registration)	Lobbying Firm/\$5000 Filer (Registration)
Major Donor/Independent Expenditure (Registration/Disclosure)	

Functionality Includes:

- Filer Registrations (Initial, Amend), Filer Disclosures (Initial & Amend)
- Attestation, Withdraw, Termination, Linkages
- Third Party Software Vendor Interfaces

PROGRAM INCREMENT IB – UAT



Activities: Development, Unit Testing, System Testing, User Acceptance Testing

- Development and Unit Testing Complete:
 - ✓ Requirements: 764 of 3,322 total requirements included (23%)
- System Testing: 186 of 186 Functional test cases passed
- User Acceptance Testing: In Progress 92 out 92 Test Cases passed
- Training developed and delivered to User Acceptance Testing participants

KEY PROGRAM INCREMENT I

– FUNCTIONALITY DELIVERED



Campaign

- Register (Initial/Amend):
 - Candidate: Candidate Intention Statement
 - Slate Mailer Organization: Statement of Organization
 - Recipient Committee: Statement of Organization
- Establish: Major Donors, Independent Expenditure, and \$5000 Filers
- Attest, Request Linkages, Withdraw, Terminate, Dispose Linkages, Upload Activity Transactions
- Activity Reports (Initial/Amend):
 - Officeholder/Candidate Campaign Statements (includes short-form)
 - Slate Mailer Organization Campaign Statement
 - Independent Expenditure Committee and Major Donor Committee Campaign Statement
 - Communications Identifying Slate Mailer Candidates
 - Advocacy & Advertisements Statement of Online Activity
 - Paid Spokesperson Report

KEY PROGRAM INCREMENT I

– FUNCTIONALITY DELIVERED



Lobbying

- Register (Initial/Amend):
 - Lobbyist Employer/Lobbying Coalition Registration Statement
 - Lobbyist Report
 - Lobbyist Certification Statement
 - Lobbying Firm Registration
 - Lobbying Firm Activity Authorization
- Attest, Request Linkages, Withdraw, Terminate, Renew, Dispose Linkages, Upload Activity Transactions
- Activity Reports (Initial/Amend):
 - Payments made to Lobbying Coalitions
 - Payments Received by Lobbying Coalitions
 - Report of Lobbyist Employer/Lobbying Coalition
 - Other Payments to Influence Reporting by Lobbyist Employers and \$5,000 filers
 - 72h – Issue Lobbying Advertisement Report
 - 48h – End of Session Report
 - Enter a Lobbyist Report

PROGRAM INCREMENT IIA – DEVELOPMENT



Functionality	Functionality
Financial Transactions (Invoice, Payment Services, Waiver)	Common Services – Filer Portal and User Account Management
System Administration – PRD Staff	

- Development and Unit Testing Complete
 - ✓ Requirements: 191 out of 3,322 (6%)
- System Test Completed
 - 71 of 71 Functional Test Cases Passed
- User Acceptance Testing started target completion 1/21/26
 - 53 of 91 Test Cases have passed, 4 Failed
- Training developed and delivered to User Acceptance Testing participants

PROGRAM INCREMENT IIA – DEVELOPMENT



Program Increment II – Design, Development, Testing: End-to-End Workstreams

Financial Transaction

FT-01: Create an Invoice – [In UAT](#)

FT-02: Adjust an Invoice/Re-allocate a Payment – [In UAT](#)

FT-03: Cancel an Invoice – [In UAT](#)

FT-04: Cancel an Invoice for a Terminated Entity – [In UAT](#)

FT-05: Enter and Post an Online (Credit Card) Payment – [In UAT](#)

FT-06: Enter and Post a Manual Payment – [In UAT](#)

FT-07: Cancel a Receipt – [In UAT](#)

FT-09: Create a Waiver Request – [In UAT](#)

FT-10: Process a Waiver Decision – [In UAT](#)

PROGRAM INCREMENT IIA – DEVELOPMENT



Program Increment II – Design, Development, Testing: End-to-End Workstreams

System Administration/User Account Management/Common Components	System Administration/User Account Management/Common Components
UA-07.2: Reset a Password - – Ready for System Test	SA-01.2: Configure System – In UAT
UA-09: Delete a Registered User Account – Ready for System Test	SA-01.2A: PRD Portal Common Services/Navigation – In UAT
Filer Portal – Common Service/Navigation – In UAT	BCS7: Job Scheduler – In UAT
UA-02: Create a User Account – Ready for System Test	SA-01.2D: Manage Batch Processes – In UAT
UA-03: Update a User Account – PRD – Ready for System Test	SA-01.2C: PRD Disclosure – In UAT
UA-05: Recover a Username – Ready for System Test	

PROGRAM INCREMENT IIB – DEVELOPMENT



Functions	Functions
24-hour/10-day Independent Expenditure Report (496) – In System Test	Common Services – PRD Portal and Audit Logs – In Development/Blocking issue
24-hour/10-day Contribution Report (497) – In System Test	System Administration – Link Initiatives & Ballot Measures – In System Test
Late Payment Report (498) – Ready for UAT	Lobbying Firm Report (625) – In System Test
Recipient Committee Campaign Statement (460) – In Development	\$5000 Filer Report (645) - In Development
Portal: My Filer/Filer Summary/ Registrations/ Disclosures – In System Test / In Development	Void and Reinstate a Lobbyist – In System Test
Bulk data uploads – MD/IE - In System Test	

PROGRAM INCREMENT IIB – STATUS



Activities: Development, Unit Testing, System Testing, User Acceptance Testing

- Development and Unit Testing In Process:
 - ✓ Requirements: 752 of 3,322 total requirements included (23%)
- System Testing: 31 of 188 Functional test cases passed
- User Acceptance Testing: 1/12/26 - 3/6/26
- Converted Data has been loaded into the Development and Test Environments
- Training developed and sessions have started

PROGRAM INCREMENT III – DEVELOPMENT



Functions	Functions
Create a Refund Request (FT-11) – In System Test	Generate Financial Reports (FT-17)
Flag a Dishonored Check (FT-14) – In Development	Assess Annual and Registration Fees (FR-18) - Refinement
Prepare Daily Deposit (FT-08) - In Development	Assess Fines (FD-04) - In Design
Remove Dishonored Check Flag (FT-16)	PRD Portal Search (Registration/Disclosure)
Approve a Refund Request (FT-12)	PRD Portal Actions (Registrations/Disclosures)
Other Batch Jobs Not Related to Fees/Fines	

- Requirements: 571 out of 3,243 (18%)

PROGRAM INCREMENT III - STATUS



Activities: Development, Unit Testing, System Testing, User Acceptance Testing

- Development and Unit Testing In Process:
 - ✓ Requirements: 567 out of 3,322 total requirements included (17%)
- System Testing: target 3/23/26 - 4/17/26
- User Acceptance Testing: target 4/20/26 - 5/22/26

THIRD PARTY SOFTWARE VENDORS



- Continue to address design questions and review Application Programming Interface (API) specifications
- Reviewed
 - Schedule for testing and certification
 - Vendor identified to participate in the certification process
 - API Summary Totals

DRAFT SCHEDULE – PHASES FOR PREPARATION AND TESTING



CARS Project Team will work with the Third-Party Software Vendors who need to Certify through three Phases:

- Phase 1: Pre-certification setup in the Certification Environment (test at least one form)
- Phase 2: Integration Testing/UAT (CARS Project Test team works directly with Third-Party Software Vendors through formal test cases and processes)
- Phase 3: Certification (required for CARS go-live)

Each vendor must complete all three phases of the process to certify with CARS to be ready for CARS go-live in November 2026.

DRAFT SCHEDULE – PHASES FOR PREPARATION AND TESTING



Timeline:

Phase	Timeline
Phase 1: Pre-certification Set-up (12 of 13 completed Step 1)	10/6/25 - 12/19/25
Phase 2: Integration Testing/User Acceptance Testing (Vendors identify testing time slots)	2/23/26 - 7/24/26
Phase 3: Certification	8/10/26 - 10/16/26

- Each Vendor must complete all three phases of the process to certify with CARS for November 2026
- After CARS go-live, no new vendors will be added until February 28, 2027

CARS THIRD PARTY SOFTWARE VENDORS



- Aristotle Inc.
- Campaign Deputy
- Capitol WebWorks
- Quorum
- DDC
- DirectFile
- Filpac LLC
- ISPolitical
- NetFile
- NGP VAN
- Pasadena Consulting Group
- Granicus
- Scout Lunar

CARS THIRD PARTY SOFTWARE VENDORS – FORMS AVAILABLE FOR TESTING



Campaign Forms

- Form 400 - Slate Mailer Organization Statement of Organization
- Form 401 - Slate Mailer Organization Campaign Statement
- Form 402 - Slate Mailer Organization Statement of Termination
- Form 461 - Independent Expenditure Committee and Major Donor Committee Campaign Statement
- Form 470 - Officeholder/Candidate Campaign Statements
- Form 470s – Officeholder/Candidate Campaign Statements (Short Form)
- Form 498 – Late Payment Report
- Form 501 - Candidate Intention Statement
- Form 507 – Business Entity Advocacy & Advertisement Statement of Online Activity
- E-530 - Communications Identifying State Candidates
- 410 – Statement of Organization
- 511 – Paid Spokesman

Lobbying Forms

- Form 601 – Lobbying Firm Registration
- Form 602 – Lobbying Firm Activity Authorization
- Form 603 - Lobbyist Employer/Lobbying Coalition Registration Statement
- Form 604 - Lobbyist Certification Statement
- Form 606 - Notice of Termination
- Form 607 - Notice of Withdrawal
- Form 615 – Lobbyist Report
- Form 630 – Payments made to Lobbying Coalitions
- Form 635 - Report of Lobbyist Employer/Lobbying Coalition
- Form 635-C – Payments received Lobbying Coalitions
- Form 640 – Other Payments to Influence Reporting

PROGRAM INCREMENT I – FUNCTIONALITY PREVIEW



Functionality Preview

- Lobbying Firm Activity Report

Information & Feedback Channels

INFORMATION & FEEDBACK CHANNELS



- Third Party Software Vendor API Meeting held 1/13/2025
 - Next meeting Tuesday 1/27/2026 at 10:30 a.m.
- Next External Stakeholder Meeting on Wednesday, 2/11/2026 at 1:30 p.m.
- PRD Website for [Quarterly Updates](#)
- Post-meeting survey: [January 14, 2026](#)



Visit the CARS project website

<https://www.sos.ca.gov/campaign-lobbying/helpful-resources/cal-access-replacement-system-project-cars-updates>

CARS Project Email Address

Submit questions and comments to the CARS project team:

PRDCARS@sos.ca.gov

- View documents, news, and events
- Sign up to receive project updates



Sign up for
e-updates



Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.
California Secretary of State

CARS WEBSITE REMINDERS

CARS Project Homepage

[Home](#) > [Campaign & Lobbying](#) > [Helpful Resources](#) >
CAL-ACCESS Replacement System Project

Helpful Resources

[How To File Electronically](#)

[Electronic Filing Password Request](#)


[Elections Division](#)

[Federal Election Commission \(FEC\)](#)

[Fair Political Practices Commission \(FPPC\)](#)

[Political Reform Audit Program for the California Franchise Tax Board](#)

[CAL-ACCESS Replacement Project](#)



The California Automated Lobbyist and Campaign Contribution and Expenditure Search System (CAL-ACCESS) was developed to respond to the objectives of the Online Disclosure Act, added to the Political Reform Act by Ch. 866, Stats of 1997.

CAL-ACCESS is the public's window into California's campaign disclosure and lobbying financial activity, providing financial information supplied by state candidates, donors, lobbyists, lobbyist employers, and others. The CAL-ACCESS Replacement System (CARS) Project will implement a new data driven system replacing the existing form driven system.

To receive updates on the project as they become available follow the "sign up for e-updates" link at the bottom of this page, and, after entering your email address, select to subscribe to the CAL-ACCESS Replacement System Project Updates email list.

To reach us directly, send an email to prdcars@sos.ca.gov, call (916) 653-6224, or write to: Secretary of State, Political Reform Division, 1500 11th Street, Rm 495, Sacramento, CA 95814.


[News & Updates](#)

News & Updates for information prior to 2024 can be found on the [CARS Project Pre-2024 Archive page](#).

- October 9, 2024: Details for the monthly October Stakeholder meeting are in the [October 9, 2024 CARS Project External Stakeholder Meeting PowerPoint](#)

CARS Project Archive

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California Secretary of State
Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.

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The following news and references are for the previous solution (prior to 2024) and may no longer apply. Current updates can be found on the [CARS Project homepage](#).

Project References

- Draft version 1.07 of the CAL-ACCESS XML file specifications document (XSD/ZIP)
- Draft version 0.12 of the CAL Access Application Programming Interface (API) Requirements(PDF)
- CAL-ACCESS Replacement Project, System Integrator Vendor, Request for Offer
- SIBA (PDF)
- 15 - State Survey (PDF)
- 2013 Request for Information (RFI) and Responses (PDF)

CARS Software Vendor/Service Provider Meeting Presentations

- March 30, 2021, CARS Software Vendor-Service Provider Meeting
- January 21, 2021, CARS Software Vendor-Service Provider Meeting
- November 30, 2020, CARS Software Vendor-Service Provider Meeting
- September 16, 2020, CARS Software Vendor-Service Provider Meeting
- July 8, 2020, CARS Software Vendor-Service Provider Meeting

CARS Stakeholder Input Group (SIG) Meeting Presentations

- March 16, 2021, CARS Stakeholder Input Group (SIG) Meeting
- January 20, 2021, CARS Stakeholder Input Group (SIG) Meeting
- December 2, 2020, CARS Stakeholder Input Group (SIG) Meeting
- October 7, 2020, CARS Stakeholder Input Group (SIG) Meeting
- August 19, 2020, CARS Stakeholder Input Group (SIG) Meeting

CARS External Stakeholder Meetings

- July 5, 2023: Details for the July Stakeholder meeting are in the [July 5, 2023 CARS Project Update for External Stakeholders PowerPoint](#)
- June 7, 2023: Details for the June Stakeholder meeting are in the [June 7, 2023 CARS Project Update for External Stakeholders PowerPoint](#)
- May 3, 2023: Details for the May Stakeholder meeting are in the [May 3, 2023 CARS Project Update for External Stakeholders PowerPoint](#)
- April 5, 2023: Details for the April Stakeholder meeting are in the [April 5, 2023 CARS Project Update for External Stakeholders PowerPoint](#)

For questions about project communications: PRDCARS@sos.ca.gov



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California Secretary of State

Q & A

WRAP UP