

# CARS Project External Stakeholder Meeting

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**Date:** January 14, 2026

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



# Welcome and Introductions

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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

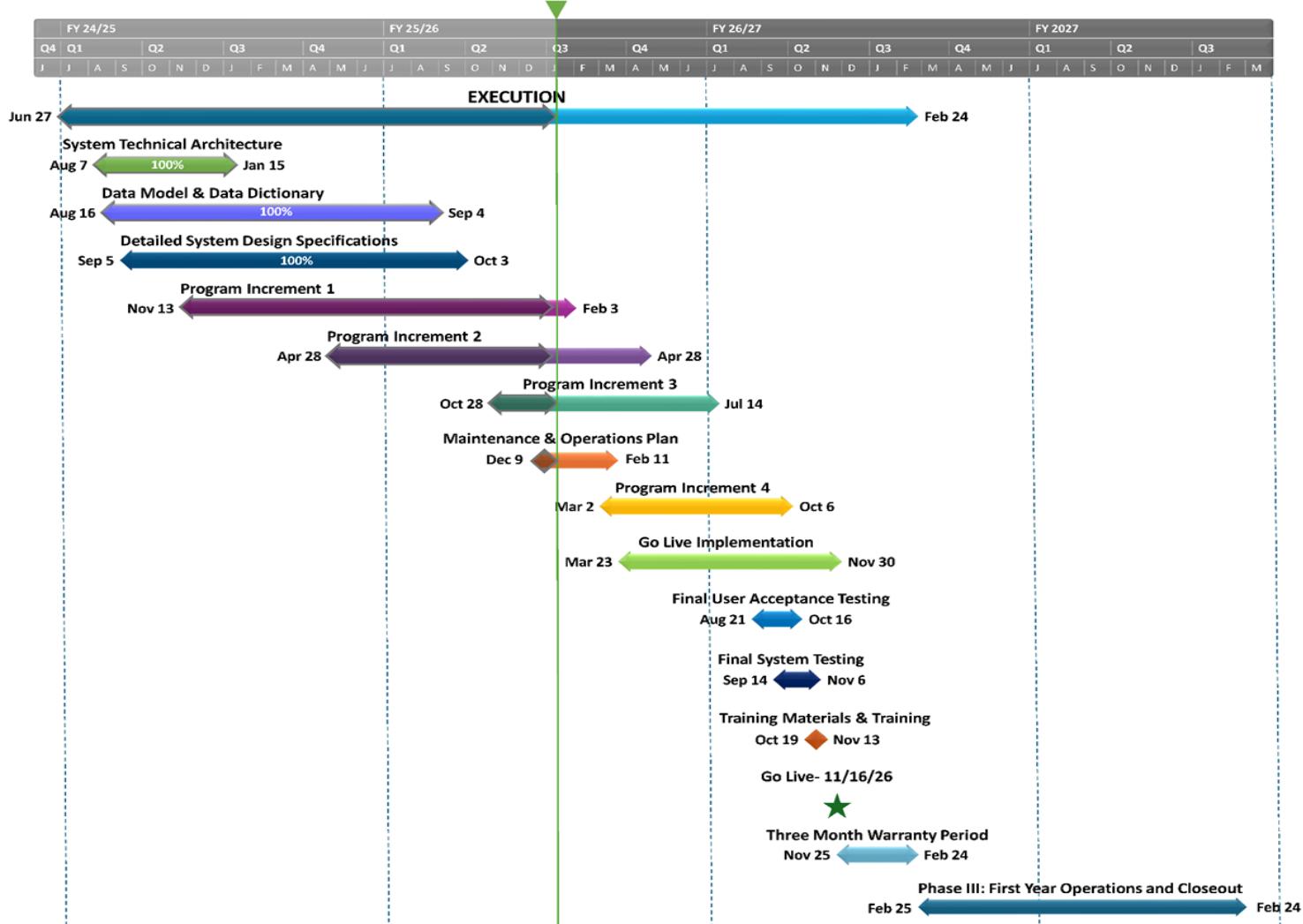
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- Project Updates
  - Project Schedule
  - External Stakeholder User Testing Participation
  - Program Increments I & II Activity
  - Third Party Software Vendors
- Functionality Preview
- Q&A

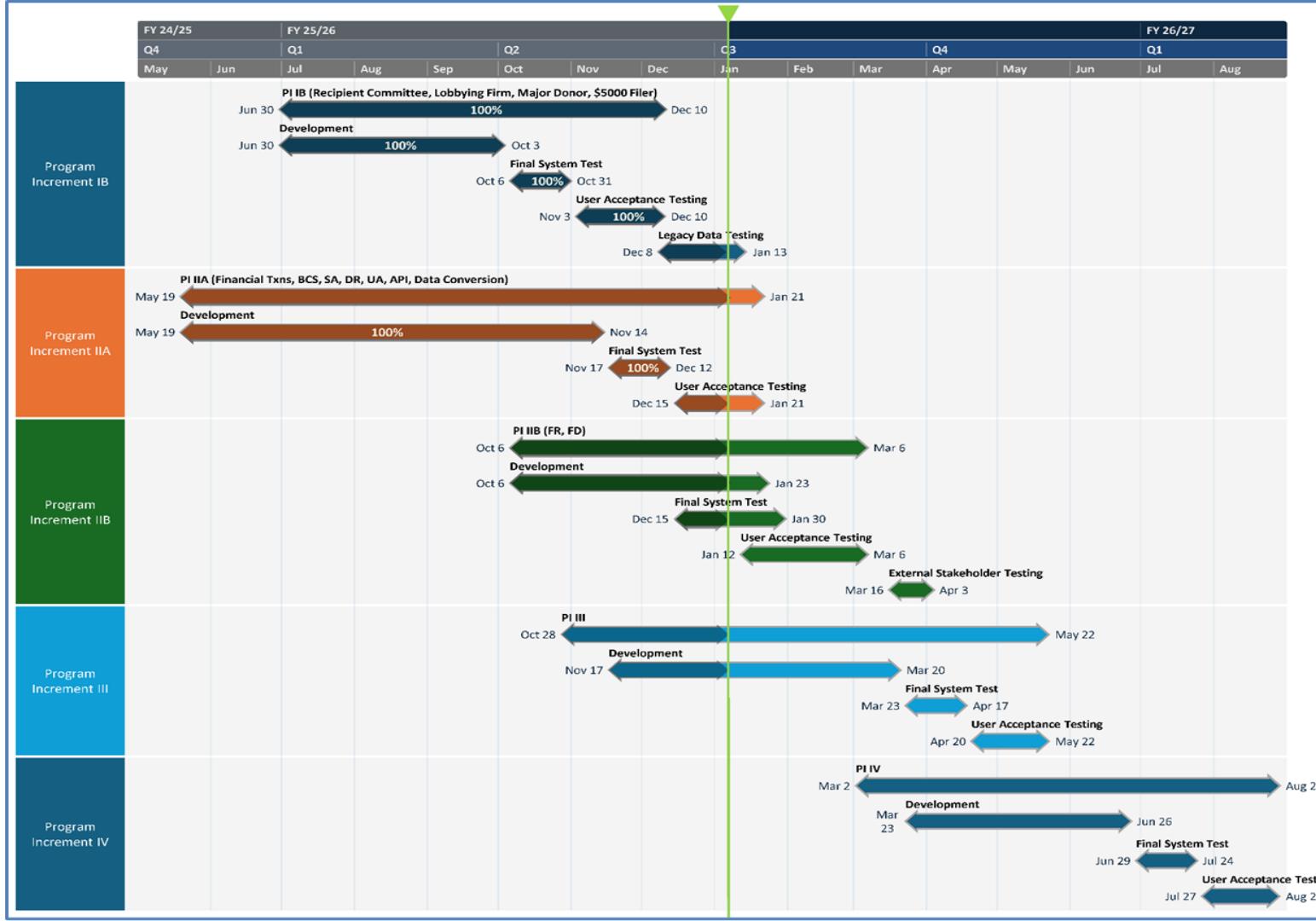
# Project Updates



# 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](mailto: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 – <a href="#">In UAT</a>
UA-09: Delete a Registered User Account – Ready for System Test	SA-01.2A: PRD Portal Common Services/Navigation – <a href="#">In UAT</a>
Filer Portal – Common Service/Navigation – <a href="#">In UAT</a>	BCS7: Job Scheduler – <a href="#">In UAT</a>
UA-02: Create a User Account – Ready for System Test	SA-01.2D: Manage Batch Processes – <a href="#">In UAT</a>
UA-03: Update a User Account – PRD – Ready for System Test	SA-01.2C: PRD Disclosure – <a href="#">In UAT</a>
UA-05: Recover a Username – Ready for System Test	

# PROGRAM INCREMENT IIB – DEVELOPMENT



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

# 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) – <a href="#">In System Test</a>	Generate Financial Reports (FT-17)
Flag a Dishonored Check (FT-14) – <a href="#">In Development</a>	Assess Annual and Registration Fees (FR-18) - <a href="#">Refinement</a>
Prepare Daily Deposit (FT-08) - <a href="#">In Development</a>	Assess Fines (FD-04) - <a href="#">In Design</a>
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>

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

**CARS Project Email Address**  
Submit questions and comments to the  
CARS project team:

[PRDCARS@sos.ca.gov](mailto:PRDCARS@sos.ca.gov)



**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](mailto: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](#)



For questions about project communications: [PRDCARS@sos.ca.gov](mailto:PRDCARS@sos.ca.gov)

## CARS Project Archive

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

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What can we help you with?

Home > Campaign Finance and Lobbying Activities > CAL-ACCESS Replacement System Project > CARS Project Archive

#### Campaign & Lobbying

- About Political Reform
- History
- Public Services
- Campaign Finance Analysis
- Lobbying Finance Analysis
- Electronic Filing Information
- Campaign Disclosure and Requirements
- Lobbying Disclosure Requirements
- Other Resources
- Contact Us

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)
- 12th CARS Survey (PDF)
- 2013 Request for Information (RFI) and Responses (PDF)

#### CARS Software Vendor/Service Provider Meeting Presentations

- March 20, 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 10, 2020, CARS Software Vendor/Service Provider Meeting
- July 3, 2020, CARS Software Vendor/Service Provider Meeting

#### CARS Stakeholder Input Group (SIG) Meeting Presentations

- March 18, 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 13, 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](#)





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

# Q & A

# WRAP UP

