# CARS Project
# External Stakeholder Meeting

**Date**:  March 11, 2026
**Time**: 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

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

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# Welcome and Introductions

Margie Hieter, Project Sponsor

Harjit Basi, Project Director

John Heinlein, Assistant Project Director
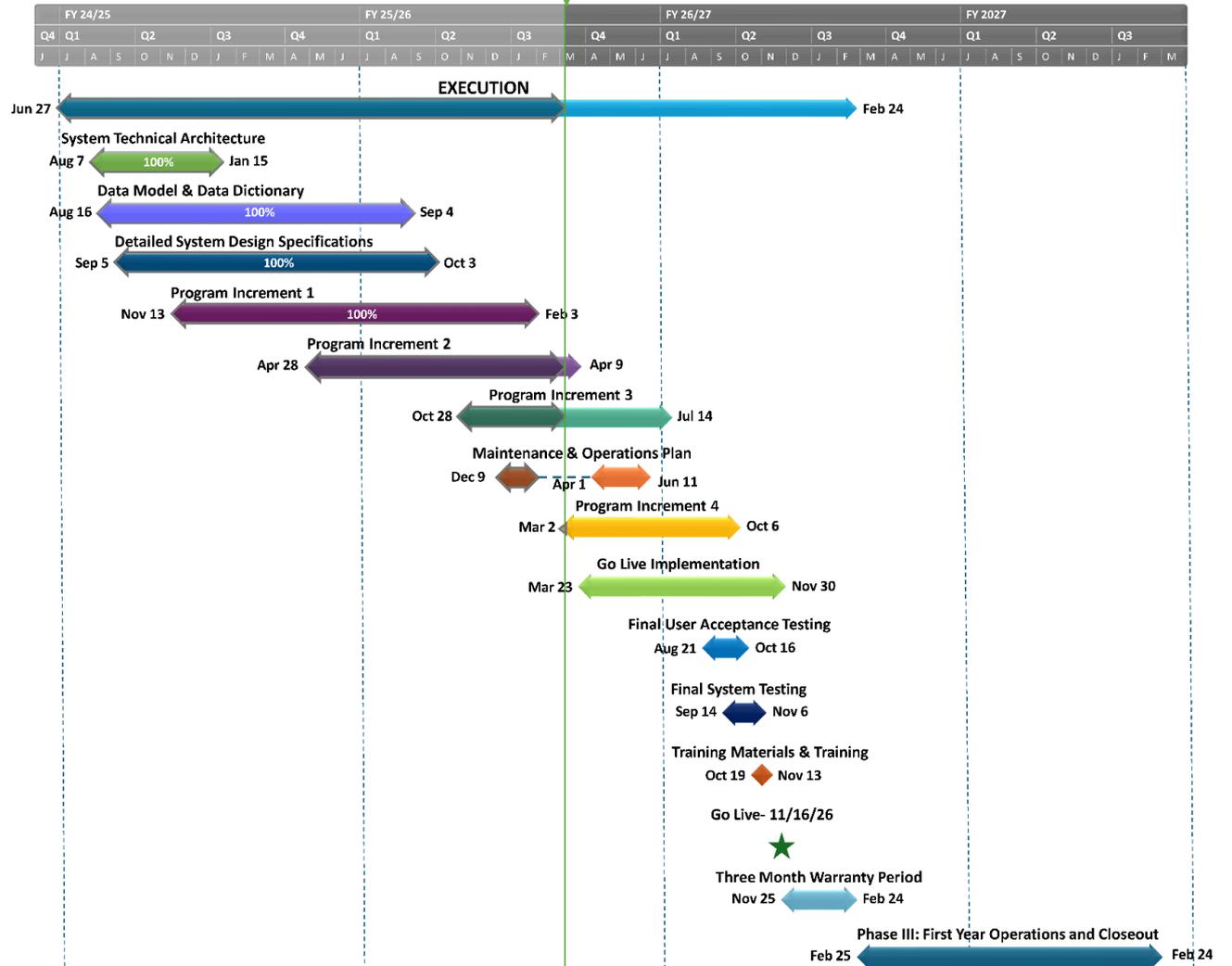
Denise Tower, CGI Project Manager

Jim Mason, CGI Business Analyst

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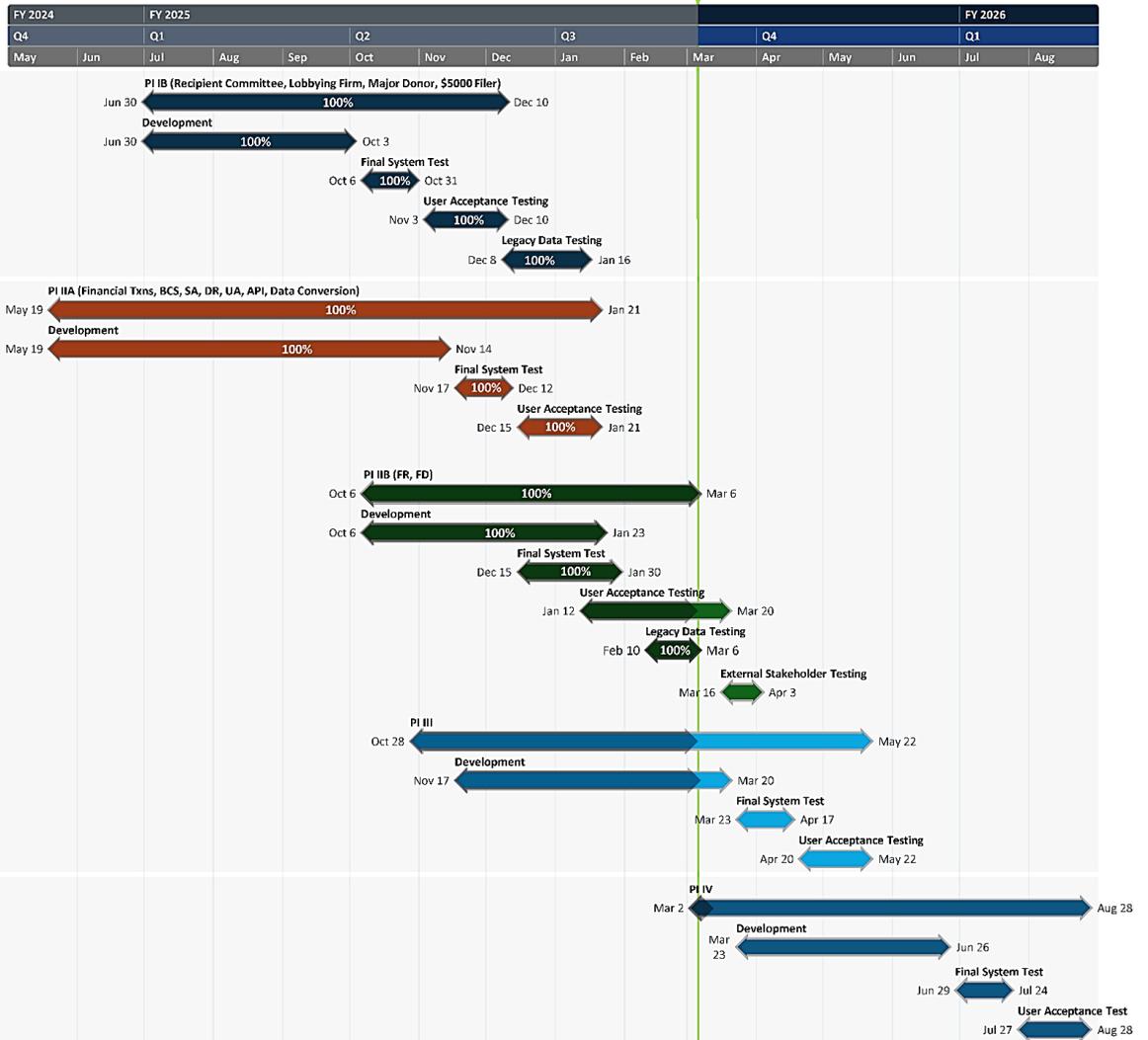California Secretary of State

# Agenda

- Project Updates
  - Project Schedule
  - External Stakeholder User Testing Participation
  - Program Increment II, III, and IV Activity
  - Third-Party Software Vendors
- Functionality Preview
- Q&A

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# Project Updates

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# Project Schedule



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| | FY 24/25 | | | | FY 25/26 | | | | FY 26/27 | | | | FY 2027 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 |

**EXECUTION** — Jun 27 → Feb 24

**System Technical Architecture** — Aug 7 — 100% — Jan 15

**Data Model & Data Dictionary** — Aug 16 — 100% — Sep 4

**Detailed System Design Specifications** — Sep 5 — 100% — Oct 3

**Program Increment 1** — Nov 13 — 100% — Feb 3

**Program Increment 2** — Apr 28 — Apr 9

**Program Increment 3** — Oct 28 — Jul 14

**Maintenance & Operations Plan** — Dec 9 — Apr 1 — Jun 11

**Program Increment 4** — Mar 2 — Oct 6

**Go Live Implementation** — Mar 23 — Nov 30

**Final User Acceptance Testing** — Aug 21 — Oct 16

**Final System Testing** — Sep 14 — Nov 6

**Training Materials & Training** — Oct 19 — Nov 13

**Go Live- 11/16/26**

**Three Month Warranty Period** — Nov 25 — Feb 24

**Phase III: First Year Operations and Closeout** — Feb 25 — Feb 24

# Project Schedule



Project Schedule Gantt chart — Cal-Access Replacement System (CARS), California Secretary of State

| | FY 2024 | FY 2025 | | | FY 2026 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 |
| | May Jun | Jul Aug Sep | Oct Nov Dec | Jan Feb Mar | Apr May Jun | Jul Aug |

**Program Increment IB**
- PI IB (Recipient Committee, Lobbying Firm, Major Donor, $5000 Filer): Jun 30 — 100% — Dec 10
- Development: Jun 30 — 100% — Oct 3
- Final System Test: Oct 6 — 100% — Oct 31
- User Acceptance Testing: Nov 3 — 100% — Dec 10
- Legacy Data Testing: Dec 8 — 100% — Jan 16

**Program Increment IIA**
- PI IIA (Financial Txns, BCS, SA, DR, UA, API, Data Conversion): May 19 — 100% — Jan 21
- Development: May 19 — 100% — Nov 14
- Final System Test: Nov 17 — 100% — Dec 12
- User Acceptance Testing: Dec 15 — 100% — Jan 21

**Program Increment IIB**
- PI IIB (FR, FD): Oct 6 — 100% — Mar 6
- Development: Oct 6 — 100% — Jan 23
- Final System Test: Dec 15 — 100% — Jan 30
- User Acceptance Testing: Jan 12 — Mar 20
- Legacy Data Testing: Feb 10 — 100% — Mar 6
- External Stakeholder Testing: Mar 16 — Apr 3

**Program Increment III**
- PI III: Oct 28 — May 22
- Development: Nov 17 — Mar 20
- Final System Test: Mar 23 — Apr 17
- User Acceptance Testing: Apr 20 — May 22

**Program Increment IV**
- PI IV: Mar 2 — Aug 28
- Development: Mar 23 — Jun 26
- Final System Test: Jun 29 — Jul 24
- User Acceptance Test: Jul 27 — Aug 28

# INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY ASSESSMENTS

- Security assessment for compliance and vulnerability

- The Americans with Disabilities Act/Section 508 testing

# EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER USER TESTING

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- **By the end of this week,** we will send an email with your assigned testing week and additional details. We will also send a meeting invitation to the mandatory training (held 3/19/2026 for week 1 or 3/26/2026 for week 2).

**Week 1**
- **Mentor introduction:** 3/9/2026
- **Login test:** 3/18/2026
- **Mandatory training:** 3/19/2026
- **Day one orientation:** 3/23/2026
- **End of day check-ins:** 3/23/2026-3/27/2026
- **Post-testing survey:** 3/27/2026

**Week 2**
- **Mentor introduction:** 3/9/2026
- **Login test:** 3/25/2026
- **Mandatory training:** 3/26/2026
- **Day one orientation:** 3/30/2026
- **End of day check-ins:** 3/30/2026-4/3/2026
- **Post-testing survey:** 4/3/2026

# EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER USER TESTING



- **Next steps:**
  - Read the follow-up email and accept the Mandatory Training meeting invitation.
  - Mentors will reach out by 3/9/2026 to introduce themselves and schedule a day one orientation on the first day of testing.
  - Login information will be sent the morning before your assigned training (either 3/18 or 3/25).
  - Block off time in your calendars to complete the login test, end of day check ins, and the post-testing survey
  - If you do not currently have access to the CARS External Stakeholder Repository, please email prdcars@sos.ca.gov.

# EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER USER TESTING

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- **Functionality available for External Stakeholder User Testing**
  - As a reminder, all external stakeholders are testing <u>filer</u> functionality. The public portal is not yet available to test.

| Entity/Report | Related functionality |
|---|---|
| Candidate | Register, Amend, Withdraw, Disclosure |
| SMO | Register, Amend, Terminate, Disclosure |
| Recipient Committee | Register, Amend, Terminate, Disclosure |
| E-530 | Register, Amend, Disclosure |
| Major Donor/ Independent Expenditure | Establish, Disclosure |
| Business Entity | Register, Amend, Disclosure |
| $5,000 Filer | Establish, Amend, Disclosure |
| Lobbyist Employer/Lobbying Coalition | Register, Amend, Renew, Withdraw, Terminate, Disclosure |
| Lobbying Firm | Register, Amend, Renew, Withdraw, Terminate, Disclosure |
| Lobbyist | Register, Amend, Renew, Withdraw, Terminate, Disclosure |

# PROJECT SUMMARY

| Program Increment | Key Areas | Status |
|---|---|---|
| Program Increment I | Filer: Candidate, SMO, Recipient Committee, Major Donor, Lobbyist Employer, Lobbyist, Lobbying Firm, $5000 Filer (Registrations/Disclosures) | Accepted |
| Program Increment II | Filer: Remaining Disclosures, Filer Portal Financials: Invoice, Payment, Waivers | User Acceptance Testing(UAT), Acceptance target April |
| Program Increment III | Filer: Assess Fees, Fines, Penalties PRD Portal, Correspondence, System Admin Financials: Refund, Reports, Dishonored Check | Development – End of March |
| Program Increment IV | Public Portal, Datawarehouse, Reporting | Development begins March 23 |

# PROGRAM INCREMENT I – ACCEPTED

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

| Campaign | Lobbying |
|---|---|
| Candidate | Lobbyist Employer/Coalition |
| State Mailer Organization | Lobbyist |
| Recipient Committee | Lobbying Firm/$5000 filer |
| Major Donor/Independent/Other Specific Campaign Types | |

- SOS and Prime Vendor Completed Program Increment I final acceptance

# PROGRAM INCREMENT I – ACCEPTED

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

- Development and Unit Testing Complete:
    - ✓ Requirements: 1461 of 3,486 (total includes Change Requests) total requirements included (42%)
- System Testing: 490 Functional Test Cases passed
- User Acceptance Testing: 192 Test Cases passed
- Training developed and delivered to User Acceptance Testing participants

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## 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 ACCEPTED

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## 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 II – USER ACCEPTANCE TESTING



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

- Development and Unit Testing complete
  - ✓ Requirements: 925 out of 3,486 (27%)
- System Test completed
  - 256 of 256 functional test cases passed
- User Acceptance Testing and Data Conversion Testing in process
  - 121 of 138 test cases have passed, 5 failed, remaining to be executed
- Training developed and delivered to User Acceptance Testing participants

# PROGRAM INCREMENT IIA – USER ACCEPTANCE TESTING

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

| Financial Transaction |
| --- |
| FT-01: Create an Invoice |
| FT-02: Adjust an Invoice/Re-allocate a Payment |
| FT-03: Cancel an Invoice |
| FT-04: Cancel an Invoice for a Terminated Entity |
| FT-05: Enter and Post an Online (Credit Card) Payment |
| FT-06: Enter and Post a Manual Payment |
| FT-07: Cancel a Receipt |
| FT-09: Create a Waiver Request |
| FT-10: Process a Waiver Decision |

# PROGRAM INCREMENT IIA – USER ACCEPTANCE TESTING

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

| System Administration/User Account Management/Common Components |
| --- |
| Filer Portal – Common Service/Navigation |
| SA-01.2: Configure System |
| SA-01.2A: PRD Portal Common Services/Navigation |
| BCS7: Job Scheduler |
| SA-01.2D: Manage Batch Processes |
| SA-01.2C: PRD Disclosure |

# PROGRAM INCREMENT IIB – USER ACCEPTANCE TESTING

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

# PROGRAM INCREMENT III – STATUS

| Functionality | Functionality |
|---|---|
| Correspondence | PRD Portal, User Account Management |
| Fees, Fines and Penalties | Financials (Reports, Refund, Dishonored Check) |

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

- Development and Unit Testing in process:
  - ✓ Requirements: 511 out of 3,486 total requirements included (15%)
- Data Conversion Activities – In Process
- System Testing: target 3/23/26 - 4/17/26
- User Acceptance Testing: target 4/20/26 - 5/22/26

# PROGRAM INCREMENT III – DEVELOPMENT

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

# THIRD-PARTY SOFTWARE VENDORS

➤ Continue to address design questions and review Application Programming Interface (API) specifications

➤ Reviewed

    • Schedule for testing and certification

    • Vendors identified to participate in the certification process

# 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
- MicroPac
- NetFile
- NGP VAN
- Pasadena Consulting Group
- Granicus
- Scout Lunar
- microPAC

# PHASE 2 THIRD PARTY SOFTWARE VENDOR TEST SCHEDULE

| VENDOR / FORMS | | April | May | June | July |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NGP VAN | 9 | | 5/18 – 5/29 | | |
| Filpac LLC | 1 | 4/20 – 5/1 | | | |
| DDC | 3 | | 5/4 – 5/15 | | |
| Granicus | 8 | | 5/18 – 5/29 | | |
| Pasadena Consulting Group | 13 | | 5/18 – 6/5 | | |
| Aristotle | 4 | | | 6/1 – 6/12 | |
| ISPolitical | 23 | | | 6/1 – 6/26 | |
| NetFile | 23 | | | 6/1 – 6/12 | 7/7 – 7/21 |
| Campaign Deputy | 6 | | | 6/15 – 6/26 | |
| Quorum | 5 | | | 6/15 – 6/26 | |
| Capitol WebWorks | 12 | | | | 7/6 – 7/17 |
| DirectFile | 7 | | | | |
| Scout Lunar | 2 | | | | 7/6 – 7/17 |
| microPAC | 7 | | | | |

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# CARS THIRD-PARTY SOFTWARE VENDORS – FORMS AVAILABLE FOR TESTING

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## Campaign Forms

- Form 400/402 - Slate Mailer Organization Statement of Organization
- Form 401 - Slate Mailer Organization Campaign Statement
- Form 460/450/425 – Recipient Committee Campaign Statement
- Form 461 - Independent Expenditure Committee and Major Donor Committee Campaign Statement
- Form 496 – 24 hr/10 day Independent Expenditure Report
- Form 498 – Late Payment Report
- Form 501/470/470S - 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 601/605/606/607 – Lobbying Firm Registration
- Form 602 – Lobbying Firm Activity Authorization
- Form 603/606/607 - Lobbyist Employer/Lobbying Coalition Registration Statement
- Form 604/606/607 - Lobbyist Certification Statement
- Form 615/690 – Lobbyist Report
- Form 625/690 – Report of Lobbying Firm
- Form 630 – Payments made to Lobbying Coalitions
- Form 635/630/635-c/640/690 - Report of Lobbyist Employer/Lobbying Coalition
- Form 645/640/690 – Report of $5000 Filer

# PROGRAM INCREMENT I – FUNCTIONALITY PREVIEW

Functionality Preview, Jim Mason

- My Filer

# Information & Feedback Channels

# INFORMATION & FEEDBACK CHANNELS

- Third-Party Software Vendor API Meeting held 3/10/2025

  - Next meeting Tuesday 3/24/2026 at 10:30 a.m.

- Next External Stakeholder Meeting on Wednesday, 4/8/2026 at 1:30 p.m.

- PRD Website for Quarterly Updates

- Post-meeting survey: March 11, 2026

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

PRDCARS@sos.ca.gov

# 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


Sign up for e-updates

# CARS WEBSITE REMINDERS

CARS Project Homepage

CARS Project Archive



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

# Q & A
# WRAP UP