

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION 2026CLS001
FOR A CANNABIS LICENSING SYSTEM**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS AS OF 3/2/2026

Q1*. Please clarify the status of the current system, specifically identifying the incumbent vendor, whether the City operates the system alone, and the current platform/vendor for the "general-purpose permitting platform" mentioned in the RFI.

A1. Yes, DCR currently has a contract with Accela, Inc. for the City's cannabis licensing system. The current agreement is City Contract C-130126.

Q2*. What is the estimated budget range or funding authorization for this project, including the City's expected budget for initial system implementation, ongoing support (licensing, hosting, and maintenance), and the anticipated contract term structure (initial term and renewals)? Additionally, is any portion of this budget subject to an expiration date, and if so, when?

A2. No estimated contract value is available at this time. DCR intends to use the RFI opportunity to assist in any estimate to be used for the RFP stage. The current contract with Accela, Inc. (C-130126) has a not to exceed amount of \$9.35 million, which covers the period of 9/19/17 through 9/29/27.

Q3*. What are the primary operational limitations and top pain points (e.g., workflow rigidity, reporting, audit readiness, upgrades, usability, integrations, performance) of the current system that are prompting this market research effort?

A3. The current system was based on a building permit application system and is limited in cannabis licensing specific fields and functions. Challenges relate to system flexibility and administrative control, as certain workflow modifications, application data changes, and configuration updates may require technical development or vendor-supported code changes rather than adjustments by authorized Department staff. The RFI seeks solutions offering greater configurability and administrative control to manage workflows, application fields, user roles, access permissions, and security settings without extensive custom development, aiming for solutions more directly oriented toward commercial cannabis licensure for long-term sustainability, adaptability, and operational efficiency.

Q4. To what extent are current cannabis-specific workflows achieved through configuration versus custom code within the existing platform?

A4. The majority is done through custom code, but there are also areas that can be handled via configuration.

Q5*. Are there known performance, reporting, or integration constraints that the Department seeks to address in a future solution?

A5. Yes, and the Department will use the responses from this RFI as a measure of these constraints among existing systems.

**Note: Questions 1-31 marked with an asterisk were edited or rephrased to incorporate similar additional questions received.*

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Q6. Is full system replacement under consideration, or is continued modernization of the existing platform also being evaluated?

A6. At this time, DCR anticipates both full system replacement and continued modernization of the existing platform will be options considered in a future procurement process.

Q7*. What is the current data volume, including the number of active and historical license records, applications, and business entities, currently maintained in the system?

A7. 915 active records and 2244 historical records are currently maintained in the system.

Q8. Does the current system maintain a formal data dictionary for cannabis-specific fields?

A8. Yes, but it is very limited for cannabis specific fields. The current system is based on a general-purpose permitting platform, and therefore most fields have been repurposed for cannabis licensure.

Q9*. Are there known data integrity, normalization, or quality issues in the legacy system that may impact migration planning?

A9. No on normalization issues; Yes on data integrity due to old historical record types that have not been updated to current standards.

Q10*. Does the Department anticipate a full cutover or would it consider phased migration approaches? If a phased migration is considered, does DCR prefer phasing by License Activity Type (e.g., Retail first) or by Process Type (e.g., Renewals first), and what is the preferred sequencing (licensing first, then compliance/inspections, enforcement, analytics)?

A10. The Department is considering phased migration approaches over a full cutover.

Q11*. How many distinct license types, subcategories, permit, and license application types will be administered or supported in this solution?

A11. There are 16 Cannabis Business Activity Types and two (2) Subcategories (Adult Use and Medical).

Q12. Does the Department anticipate expansion or restructuring of license categories in the next three to five years?

A12. The Department may be asked to expand to include temporary or special event licenses. In that scenario, such licenses would likely be a subset of an existing license type. DCR does not expect significant restructuring of license categories over the next three to five years.

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Q13. What level of automation currently exists for renewals, amendments, and compliance tracking?

A13. Most review and approval processes are manual at this time. There are certain elements of processes that are automated once workflows are opened (e.g., submission of renewal and annual license applications), but review and approval processes and all elements of the compliance program are manual at this time.

Q14. Are enforcement activities and inspection records maintained within the same platform?

A14. Not at this time. DCR is currently working on launching the compliance module, but compliance inspection records are currently maintained outside the system.

Q15*. What financial systems manage cannabis licensing receivables, including any separate AR systems used by DCR, and what is the City's enterprise financial system (e.g., SAP, Oracle Financials, PeopleSoft)?

A15. The City's LATAX system, managed by the Office of Finance, serves as DCR's de facto accounts receivable system. LATAX integrates with and is reconciled against the City's financial management system (FMS4LA) which is run by CGI Advantage Financial Management Software.

Q16. Are AR functions centralized within the City's enterprise financial system, or partially managed within DCR?

A16. AR functions are currently managed primarily by the Office of Finance within their LATAX system. DCR generates invoices from Accela, but all payments are recorded in LATAX and LATAX serves as the de facto AR system. DCR is currently researching solutions to handle this function in-house, including via this RFI. Please see the response under Q15 for further details.

Q17. Is real-time integration with cashiering or financial reconciliation systems anticipated as a requirement?

A17. DCR would prefer to have real-time integration between its licensing system and accounts receivable system, and is exploring via this RFI the possibility of handling both functions in one system. It could be anticipated that real-time or near real-time integration with cashiering or financial reconciliation systems will become a requirement for a future RFP if the responses received during this RFI show this function can reasonably be included.

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Q18. Are there specific cybersecurity frameworks, City IT standards, or compliance mandates that a future solution must adhere to? Are there City-wide cloud strategy requirements that vendors should be aware of?

A18. Yes, these standards and requirements will come from the City's Information Technology Agency (ITA), and will be included in any future RFP.

Q19. Does the current system support granular role-based access controls (e.g., record-level or field-level security)?

A19. The current system enforces access control on many different objects and functions, including workflow status, application types, inspections, calendars, Function IDs (FIDs), and so forth. The system manages access permissions for modules, groups, and individual users. You can set access permissions differently for the module to which a group belongs, the group to which an individual user belongs, and the individual user.

Q20. Are there public transparency or reporting requirements that drive specific data architecture considerations?

A20. Yes. DCR is subject to the California Public Records Act (CPRA) and other public transparency requirements. Systems must support the ability to locate, retrieve, and export records in a timely manner, including associated metadata and audit history where applicable. The Department is interested in understanding how vendor solutions support data accessibility, reporting, and export capabilities in formats that facilitate public records responses, audits, and transparency obligations.

Q21*. What are the most significant reporting challenges and the most critical, painful reports (operational, compliance, financial, and audit) experienced today?

A21. Significant challenges exist in both financial reporting and application/record status reporting. Financial reporting is hampered by the disconnect between the licensing system and the externally-managed AR system, causing issues with payment status and reconciliation. Application/record status reporting issues occur due to workflows lacking efficient security/access control restrictions due to the granularity of settings and customizations. In both areas, the absence of some standard and custom fields in reporting interfaces limits the ability to filter and/or display important fields.

Q22. Is the Department seeking enhanced capabilities, dashboards, or public-facing reporting tools in a future platform?

A22. Yes.

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Q23. What level of internal staffing would likely be allocated to a future implementation effort?

A23. Two (2) IT staff could be devoted roughly half-time to the effort. In addition, approximately two (2) administrative staff and three (3) end-users could devote approximately 30% of their time to the implementation effort.

Q24*. Does the Department prefer highly configurable commercial off-the-shelf SaaS platforms over heavily customized solutions, and how does DCR prioritize configuration versus customization?

A24. In theory, DCR would prefer highly configurable commercial off-the-shelf systems. The intention of this RFI is to determine if this is feasible, and to learn what is available in the market before developing an RFP.

Q25. Does the Department anticipate issuing a formal RFP following this RFI?

A25. Yes, DCR anticipates issuing a formal RFP using the information gathered during this RFI process.

Q26. Will interoperability, long-term upgrade strategy, and system extensibility be emphasized in future evaluation criteria?

A26. Yes.

Q27. Is the City working with an advisory firm on this market assessment? If so, which firm?

A27. No, DCR is not working with any firm for this RFI.

Q28. Please confirm whether information submitted in response to this RFI (e.g., qualifications, references, pricing) will be used solely for planning purposes or if it will impact vendor eligibility or evaluation in any future RFP, and clarify the purpose of including eligibility-type requirements given that this RFI will not result in a contract award.

A28. As noted in the RFI, the intention of the RFI is for research and planning purposes only. Responding or not responding to this RFI will not impact a firm's ability to respond to a future RFP.

Q29. Is the City utilizing AI to evaluate vendor responses?

A29. The City may use AI to help summarize documents, but will primarily have contracting and end-user staff review and evaluate the information to inform development of a future RFP.

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Q30. For the response, is it acceptable to combine all the completed forms into a single PDF for ease of submission?

A30. [Specific instructions for submission are provided in RFI Section 3.1.3, Email Submission Requirement.](#)

Q31. When do you anticipate releasing the RFP?

A31. [DCR is working to release the RFP in Q3 of calendar year 2026.](#)

Q32. Does the upcoming compliance module require mobile capabilities, including native offline mobile capabilities for inspectors to conduct field visits, including inspection and licensing functions, and capture evidence in areas with limited cellular connectivity?

A32. [DCR may have a need for mobile inspection/licensing capability, which would include native offline mobile capabilities in areas with limited cellular connectivity.](#)

Q33. What is the desired scope of historical data migration (all 7+ years, or a subset)?

A33. [If migration is needed, all historical data is desired to be migrated.](#)

Q34. Will dual system operation be required during transition?

A34. [If a new system becomes the long term solution resulting from any subsequent RFP, DCR desires the new system to be implemented and the prior system to be retired at the same time.](#)

Q35. What is the anticipated contract type (fixed-price, T&M, hybrid)?

A35. [The anticipated contract type will be hybrid with implementation, license, maintenance, and/or subscription costs being fixed-price and any future enhancements being T&M.](#)

Q36. Can you describe the renewal process and any rates associated with?

A36. [Please see the link to the DCR 2026 Renewal page.](#)

Q37. For the “old historical record types” with known data integrity issues, is the City open to a Data Archival Strategy where legacy data is kept in a read-only cloud repository rather than being fully migrated into the new system's production schema?

A37. [Yes, the City is open to a Data Archival Strategy as described.](#)

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Q38. What post-go-live operating model is desired (City-run with vendor support, vendor-managed service, or hybrid tiering)?

A38. City-run with vendor support.

Q39. What support hours are required (business hours vs 24x7), and are there seasonal peak periods requiring enhanced coverage?

A39. Support during business hours is required for DCR staff, but applicants may need 24/7 support. Seasonal peak periods, including renewal season may require enhanced coverage.

Q40. Are respondents encouraged to propose multiple options (e.g., good/better/best, phased pricing)?

A40. Respondents may propose multiple options.

Q41. Can bidders assume that the portable tablets for City of Los Angeles staff and internet connectivity will be supplied by City of Los Angeles?

A41. Yes, any portable tablets needed for City staff along with internet connectivity will be supplied by the City.

Q42. What costs have City of Los Angeles incurred for the initial set up, ongoing maintenance, hosting, software licensing, support, and enhancements over the lifetime of the current systems to be replaced?

A42. The City of Los Angeles has incurred approximately \$7M in costs for the initial set up, ongoing maintenance, hosting, software licensing, support, and enhancements to-date over the lifetime of the current system (since 2017).

Q43. Which vendors attended the pre-proposal conference?

A43. The attendance list from the Pre-Response conference has been posted to RAMP.

Q44. Can the City confirm that all information desired is being requested in Exhibits 1-5?

A44. All information requested must be included in Exhibits 1-5. RFI Section 1 and Appendix A provide detailed instructions and information that Respondents should use in parallel with the Exhibits to confirm all information desired is being provided.

Q45. Can the City confirm that a pdf file with the cover letter, table of contents, and all five exhibits plus native copies of each exhibit comprises the full RFI submission?

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A45. Yes, in accordance with Section 3.1 a pdf file of the cover letter, table of contents, and all five exhibits plus native copies of each exhibit comprises the full RFI submission.

Q46. Has the City of Los Angeles received any presentations, software demonstrations, estimates, or quotes related to this opportunity from any vendors in the past 12 months, and if so, which ones?

A46. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q47. What is the Department's preference regarding the platform's deployment and hosting model (SaaS/cloud, on-prem, hybrid), including any requirements for continuous upgrades, cloud-first mandates, legacy data migration, data residency, or use of specific city infrastructure or cloud providers?

A47. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q48. Does DCR anticipate requiring a platform that allows for low-code configuration of evolving cannabis regulations without redevelopment cycles?

A48. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q49. Is a unified platform architecture (covering licensing, compliance, enforcement, and reporting) a requirement or merely a preference for the Department?

A49. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q50. Would the Department consider intelligent workflow automation that proactively identifies missing documentation, compliance gaps, or renewal risks?

A50. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q51. Is there interest in systems that provide automated recommendations to staff based on prior licensing decisions and enforcement history?

A51. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

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Q52. Would DCR value self-service applicant portals that use conversational or guided intake tools to reduce staff workload?

A52. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q53. What is the City's basis of accounting (cash, modified accrual, or full accrual) for maintaining its General Ledger?

A53. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q54. Does the City currently maintain an enterprise business intelligence or analytics platform that respondents should consider when proposing reporting capabilities?

A54. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q55. What is the current database structure and technology stack?

A55. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q56. Are system documentation, data dictionaries, and ERD diagrams available for review?

A56. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q57. What are the acceptable data validation tolerances, the required validation/sign-off approach (including sampling percentage, reconciliation rules, and parallel run), and the acceptable cutover downtime for the migration?

A57. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q58. Are there mandatory integration requirements with City systems, or can native AR functionality suffice?

A58. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

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Q59. What are the specific separation-of-duties requirements that must be enforced between licensing functions and cash-handling functions?

A59. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q60. Are there unique Los Angeles-specific regulatory requirements beyond standard cannabis licensing?

A60. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q61. What compliance/inspection workflows are in scope (field inspections, violation tracking, enforcement cases)?

A61. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q62. What weight will be given to cannabis-specific functionality vs. proven public-sector implementation experience?

A62. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q63. Does DCR currently use POS devices and/or require cash drawers/central cashiering, and if so, how many POS devices are currently deployed in addition to online payment portals?

A63. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q64. Are there rates for delinquencies?

A64. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q65. Will the City prioritize platforms that provide a native low-code environment, allowing DCR staff to manage workflows and fields without vendor code?

A65. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q66. Regarding the LATAX system used for accounts receivable, would the City prefer a

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solution that offers bi-directional API integration to provide staff with real-time payment status and automated reconciliation within the licensing record?

A66. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q67. Does the City require the platform to have built-in logic to track Social Equity Ownership Percentages and automatically apply specialized fee waivers or priority processing workflows based on those attributes?

A67. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q68. What is DCR's target go-live date (or window), and is it tied to any regulatory, fiscal-year, or program milestones?

A68. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q69. Which cannabis workflows are most critical to improve first (intake/review, issuance, renewals/modifications, compliance/inspections, enforcement violations, inter-agency coordination)?

A69. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q70. What is DCR's definition of success 6-12 months after go-live (KPIs such as cycle time, audit outcomes, digital adoption, reduction in manual steps)?

A70. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q71. What are the requirements for Public Records Act requests, including search, export, redaction expectations, and response timelines?

A71. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q72. What payment processor(s) does the City of Los Angeles currently use, and is the vendor expected to incorporate a payment processor or provide recommendations within the proposal?

A72. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to

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questions by March 5, 2026.

Q73. What approval controls are required for fee adjustments, waivers, write-offs, and corrections?

A73. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q74. What are the requirements for invoice generation, regeneration/revision, due dates, and audit trail for all changes?

A74. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q75. What fee scenarios must be supported (multiple fee schedules/effective dates, pro-rating, penalties/interest, refunds, partial payments, unapplied payments/overpayments)?

A75. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q76. What reconciliation processes are required (daily close, deposits, exports), and what is the required interface/reporting to City finance systems?

A76. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q77. Do business users need ad hoc reporting, and what governance, security, and skill-level assumptions should apply?

A77. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q78. Are there requirements for cost-recovery and fee-related analysis across time (multi-year trends, forecasting, workload analytics)?

A78. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q79. What level of internal staffing and commitment (e.g., product owners, SMEs, testers, trainers, security, finance) can DCR/City staff allocate and commit to a future implementation effort?

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A79. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q80. What change management and training outcomes are expected (e.g., train-the-trainer, role-based training, training environment, documentation, multilingual needs), and is the City open to a train-the-trainer methodology for preparing end users to use the new solution?

A80. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q81. What Accela modules are in use today? Can the City please run the "Accela Configuration Report" and provide the output?

A81. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q82. What data must be migrated vs archived (structured records, documents/attachments, inspection history, enforcement history), and what are retention requirements?

A82. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q83. What operational metrics and reporting are required (incident metrics, RCAs, uptime, performance, security patch compliance)?

A83. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q84. Which payment channels (online portal, in person cashiering, lockbox, etc.) and fee structures (tiered fees, equity discounts, penalties) are in scope for AR capabilities described in Appendix A Section 5?

A84. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q85. Are there specific data residency, retention, or public record requirements beyond those described in Section 4 that should be considered when describing data ownership, export, and audit capabilities?

A85. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

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Q86. Can the City of Los Angeles provide an inventory of all the reports that need to be replicated within the new system?

A86. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q87. Does the City of Los Angeles desire to have the option for staff to be trained in application administration to make changes after go-live, or is the City anticipating the vendor to perform future updates and changes?

A87. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q88. What are your total annual accounts receivable volume (transaction count and dollar amount)? Can the City also break out the total by payment type (card vs. e-check/ACH)?

A88. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.

Q89. For online payments, are processing fees absorbed by DCR or passed through to licensees? If fees are currently absorbed by DCR, would you be open to evaluating a pass-through model in the future?

A89. DCR is working on a response and will provide a final Q&A doc with all responses to questions by March 5, 2026.