

CITY OF MERCED

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

PARKING CITATION  
PROCESSING AND PAYMENT SERVICES



Finance Department  
678 W. 18<sup>th</sup> St.  
Merced, CA 95340

## **Introduction**

The City is looking for a vendor to provide integrated parking citation management services for the processing and collection of parking citations. Services should be provided through a web-based application that is accessible by the City of Merced. It is the intent of this proposal to allow the City to select the most qualified and dependable vendor to provide this service at a reasonable, fair, and competitive price.

The City of Merced is requesting proposals from qualified organizations to perform agreed upon procedures with regards to parking citation processing for the period beginning July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027, with the option for two one-year extensions upon mutual agreement. There is no expressed or implied obligation for the City of Merced to reimburse responding organizations for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals in response to this request.

City staff will evaluate proposals submitted. During the evaluation process, the City reserves the right to request additional information or clarifications from Vendors, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions. At the discretion of the City, Vendors submitting proposals may be requested to make oral presentations as part of the evaluation process.

The City reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and to use any ideas in a proposal regardless of whether that proposal is selected. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the organization of the conditions contained in this request for proposal, unless clearly and specifically noted otherwise in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between the City of Merced and the selected organization.

The City reserves the right to terminate the engagement immediately upon written notice. In such an event the City will pay the reasonable cost of services rendered up to the date of termination.

## **Background**

Currently, the City of Merced has two full time parking enforcement officers, with a third to be added soon. On an average, there are 6,000 parking citations issued per year. Of the total citations issued each year, approximately 10% are manually written citations with the remaining being printed on TCS portable printers.

Currently, citations are written by the City's parking enforcement officers using web-based software that is compatible with City issued mobile devices and the TCS portable printers. The tickets are uploaded directly to our current vendor.

City's Finance Department is responsible for processing and monitoring the parking citation tickets. On a monthly basis, finance staff runs reports to compare the issued tickets with payment receipts. Monthly reports are run and compared to what was sent by parking-

The City is interested in partnering with a company that offers a web-based solution that is accessible by both the City and residents. The company will have to be able to handle the ticket from issuance to collection.

## **Term of Engagement**

The contract will be for a period of five (5) years at the quoted rate commencing with the awarding of the contract. The contract may be renewed by mutual agreement of both the City and vendor on an annual basis following the five-year award period.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

### **Parking Citation Processing**

- Automated transfer and upload of Citations issued with Auto Cite handheld ticket writer computer.
- Software compatibility with Casio IT 9000.
- Edit capability to correct dates, duplicate citations, violations codes and fine amounts.
- Process for promptly notifying City regarding citations unable to be entered for any reason (no violation code, unreadable license, errors in file, etc.).

### **Data Entry from Handwritten Citations**

- Ability to batch, record and verify receipt of all manual citations within two (2) business days after being received from the City.
- Edit capability to correct dates, duplicate citations, violations codes, and fine amounts.
- System for filing and storing handwritten citations in easily retrievable format for a minimum of five (5) years.

### **Registered Owner Name Retrieval**

- Must have ability to retrieve data on-line from California DMV and access registered owner information.
- Validate DMV car make upon return of registered owner information to ensure proper make of vehicle issued citation.

### **Out-of-State Registered Owner Retrieval from State DMV**

- Maintain regularly scheduled communications with DMV offices in all 50 states.
- Mailing of collection letters.
- Vendor's ability to access DMV's nationwide for registered owner information.

### **DMV Registration Holds/Releases**

- Vendor should have on-line access with California DMV for registered owner information, holds and releases.
- Process DMV holds or releases.
- Capability to release registration holds upon City's request.
- Report monthly holds placed and payments made at DMV.
- Immediate update of database with monthly payment information from DMV.

### **Payment Processing**

- Enter and process payments received within one (1) business day, including opening all mail received, verifying payment amounts, updating computer system, and making daily bank deposits.
- Daily reconciliation of all payments entered with bank deposits.
- Daily reporting of bank deposits with citation payment detail to the City.
- Vendor must track rebilling on partial payments, checks returned for insufficient funds, vehicle change of ownership, and leased vehicle information.
- Prefer Vendor to offer on-line payments through Visa, MasterCard and Discover credit cards only.

### **Correspondence Processing**

- All correspondence shall be processed within two (2) business days from date of receipt.

### **Reporting**

- Regular monthly reports shall be provided for operating, production, and audit functions.
- The proposal should include a sample of all reports available.
- Duplicate or replacement reports shall be provided to City at no cost.

### **Toll-Free Telephone Service**

- A toll-free telephone number shall be provided for inquiries.
- Vendor's Customer service representatives shall be available to provide instructions and information on general parking policies and procedures, and administrative adjudication procedures of the City.

### **Automated Voice Response System**

- A customized recorded voice response system in English and Spanish shall be available to provide information about how and where to pay and contest citations, registration violation information, as well as provide City address information.
- The automated telephone system must provide detailed real time citation information on citation issue date, delinquent date, amounts owed, and open citations by license plate number.

### **Courtesy Notices, Customer Notices and Letters**

- The Vendor shall provide the necessary postage, correspondence, and stock forms to meet all applicable requirements of state and local laws regarding citation processing and adjudication. City will provide handwritten and automated citation forms.
- Vendor will provide samples of mailing and return envelopes with proposal.
- Courtesy notices will be sent according to the state and local laws for citation processing.
- Delinquent notices will be generated after courtesy notices have been liened. Delinquent notices will be mailed at least once a week by first class mail to registered owners.
- Returned check notices will be mailed by first class mail to individuals immediately upon notification from the City that a check has been returned for

non-payment. The notices shall state the amount of original penalty, delinquent amount, and the appropriate returned check fee.

- Partial payment notices shall be sent to those who do not pay the full penalty amount by first class mail. The notice shall indicate the amount that was paid and the remainder that is due.
- Vendor must use U.S. Postal Service "Zip Plus 4" database on all mailings.
- Vendor must interface with the California Franchise Tax Board for final delinquent collections and must show that it has done so for a minimum of two years for other California clients.

### **On-Line Inquiry Access**

- City will be able to access the software through a secure internet connection.
- The on-line inquiry system must provide real time access to all citation information including registered owner information, payment information, and administrative adjudication correspondence history.
- Vendor to provide internet access and reporting on client database.

### **Support**

- On-going support shall be provided for the City to access and interface with the parking citation database.
- Vendor shall provide federal, state, and local legislation information relating to changes that may affect parking citation processing and collections.
- Vendor shall provide a user's manual that includes step-by-step instructions for accessing computer database information and a list, with descriptions, of any and all codes used in screens accessed by the City.

### **Administrative Review & Hearing Tracking System.**

- Currently the City conducts its own administrative reviews, but Vendors must include information regarding their processes for conducting administrative reviews in case the City wants to add them as a contract item.
- Vendor shall provide process for automated notification of administrative review requests.
- Vendor shall provide tracking and correspondence for all administrative review and hearing requests.
- Vendor shall maintain a database of all administrative review and hearing requests received showing current status of each request. System must be integrated with parking citation issuance and processing system(s).
- Administrative review requests must be entered into the system(s) within two (2) business days from date of receipt (repetitive?).
- Vendor shall forward all inquiries regarding citations in the administrative review process to the City for determination.
- The City of Merced Hearing Officer shall schedule the administrative hearings upon request and forward a copy of the schedule to the Vendor. The Hearing Officer will then forward the results of the administrative hearing to the City's Finance Office and Vendor.
- Vendor will mail letters regarding the results of administrative reviews and administrative hearings.
- When a refund is appropriate, the City will issue refund and notify Vendor.
- All source documents shall be filed and stored for easy retrieval, if necessary.

## **AB 503 and AB 2544 – Indigent Payment Plans**

- Vendor should be able to comply with City’s internal “Indigent Payment Plan” and “Low-Income Determination” policy. Policy can be located on City website: <https://www.cityofmerced.org/departments/finance/parking-citation-information>
- Acceptance and scanning of indigent payment plan requests (approval/denial by City and/or by Vendor)
- Indigent payment plan letters
- Tracking of payment plans that are setup.

## **Payment to County**

- Collect, track and send monthly payment to the County of Merced for the portion of monies collected that belong to the County and the State.

# **RFP RESPONSE SPECIFICATIONS**

## **Submittal Information**

Please provide comprehensive information for the areas defined below:

A letter of Introduction describing the company, identifying those able to sign on behalf of the company, a contact person, the headquarters of the company, tax identification number and whether there is any pending litigation.

Vendor background and experience in providing the required services. Vendor must have provided these services continuously for a minimum of five years in the state of California.

Provide a “Scope of Services” complete with descriptive information. Also, provide a list of additional services that Vendor may offer.

Describe the quality assurance and technical resources of the system and disaster preparedness and backup system.

Provide rate of collections.

Provide three current customers with the services utilized, length of service, contact person, title, and telephone number.

For the Vendor’s response, complete the Cost Proposal for the City of Merced, found on the last page of this document. If Vendor cannot meet a service, then the term “No Proposal” should be entered on the Fee Schedule for that specific requirement. In the case of a “No Proposal” remark, the vendor may offer an alternative equivalent service.

Please state on the Cost Proposal if the amount proposed is per item, flat rate or a percentage. Vendor may also include a separate list of services and fees that may be of interest to the City.

A vendor may submit written questions in order to clarify any matters relating to the RFP. Questions should be directed to Michelle Zamudio in written form by **e-mail only** to zamudiom@cityofmerced.org.

### **Submittal Address**

Interested vendors should mail one (1) original set and two (2) copies of their RFP response addressed to and labeled as follows to:

Parking Citation Processing RFP  
City of Merced Finance Department  
678 W 18<sup>th</sup> St Merced, CA 95340

### **Submittal deadlines**

Questions are due May 1, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. and answers will be posted by end of day next day on the City's website.

Responses must be received at the specified location above no later than 5 p.m. on May 8, 2024.

It is the responsibility of Vendors to ensure that the proposal arrives on time at the right place. Any proposals received after the above time will be disqualified.

All submitted proposals and information included therein or attached thereto shall become public record upon delivery to the City's Finance Office.

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, wave any informalities and minor irregularities, or to select the proposal that best meets the needs of the City, even though it may not be the lowest.

Proposals should be valid for a period of 120 days. No changes will be allowed following the due date and time.

### **Evaluation of proposals**

Proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation committee made up of at least three stakeholders within the Finance Department and Parking Enforcement Division based on the following criteria:

1. Completeness of proposal.
2. Ability to perform required scope of work within the required timeframe.
3. Experience of company.
4. Company references.
5. Reasonableness of the fee requested to perform the services.
6. Ability to finalize and fully execute required contract.

**Post-award Contract Requirements**

The selected vendor will maintain in full force and effect throughout the term of the contract, at its own cost and expense, the required insurance coverage as specified in the standard City Professional Services Agreement (attached). The City's insurance requirements are mandatory and cannot be altered or waived. Please see attached copy of the standard City Professional Services Agreement for the insurance requirements.

Awarded Vendor is expected to sign the City's standard Professional Services Agreement as the form of contract.

Awarded Vendor is expected to obtain and maintain a City Business License through the life of the contract.

CONTINUES IN THE NEXT PAGE



## ***COST PROPOSAL FOR THE CITY OF MERCED***

Monthly Cost	_____
Fee for processing & collecting each manually written citation	_____
Fee for processing & collecting each electronically written citation	_____
Fee for <u>collecting</u> each out-of-state citation	_____
DMV Holds	_____
Reports	_____
Conversion Fee	_____
Review, Hearing and Court Appearances	_____
Additional Correspondence	_____
Refunds handled by Company	_____
Fee for Delinquent Collection Notices – (Old Citations, those that have gone through the normal collection cycle including the first delinquent notice required by California & DMV hold that remain uncollected.	_____
Indigent Payment Plans (AB 503) Service/Fees Price for City to handle appeals and if Vendor handles appeals.	_____
Postage	_____
Payment Processing	_____
FTB Tax Lien Participation Agency qualification & sign -up, matching social security number to debts, noticing, customer service, collections, file adjustment on Vendor database and FTB database & monthly management reports.	_____