



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR LOCAL VENDOR PRIORITY PROGRAM

Date of Issue: January 12, 2026

Proposals Due: February 16, 2026

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I. INTRODUCTION

The City of San Rafael's Community and Economic Development (CED) Department is issuing this informal Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify qualified organizations to engage San Rafael-based mobile vendors, provide assistance with navigating compliance requirements, and manage a food park destination on private or public property from spring to fall 2026. The Local Vendor Priority Program aims to achieve a "win-win-win" scenario by improving local entrepreneurs' ability to succeed, reducing accessibility conflicts by directing foot traffic away from sidewalks, and ensuring compliance with food safety requirements through bilingual technical assistance. The Local Vendor Priority Program advances [the City of San Rafael's Fiscal Years 2025-2028 Strategic Plan](#) Goal: E.6.1 Revise the Street Food Vending Ordinance and develop an implementation, enforcement, and communications plan. Ultimately, the City will implement the Local Vendor Priority Program on a one-year pilot basis after which it will evaluate whether to continue or modify the program going forward.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Recent State Legislation to Encourage Mobile Vending

Before 2019, local jurisdictions had sole authority to regulate or ban sidewalk vending. However, in 2019, the State Legislature limited local control over sidewalk vending by passing Senate Bill (SB) 946, which promotes entrepreneurship and supports immigrant and low-income communities. SB 946 decriminalized sidewalk vending, prohibited local governments from banning it, and limited local ordinances regulating sidewalk vending to those that address objective health, safety, or welfare concerns. Under SB 946, violations of a local authority's sidewalk vending ordinance may only be punished by a series of administrative fines that increase in scale as the number of violations increases, or by revocation of a sidewalk vending permit (See Government Code Section 51039.) Furthermore, SB 946 established that violations of a local ordinance, including vending without a permit, may only be penalized with administrative fines and cannot be punished as infractions or misdemeanors. Despite these restrictions, SB 946 does provide for the following expressly permitted regulations:

- Cities may prohibit stationary vendors from residential zones outright;
- Cities may prohibit sidewalk vendors from locating near certified farmers' markets;
- Cities may prohibit all sidewalk vending in a park (including beaches or open space areas) if a city has an exclusive concessionaire agreement for that site;
- Limitations on hours of operation that are not unduly restrictive;
- Requirements to maintain sanitary conditions and ensure compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act;
- Requiring the sidewalk vendor to obtain from the local authority a permit for sidewalk vending or a valid business license; and

- Requiring compliance with other generally applicable laws (e.g., fire safety and health code requirements).

SB 946 also provides that cities can enact additional regulations, provided they serve the objective of health, safety, and welfare. The City of San Rafael's [Mobile Vendor Ordinance](#) incorporates the above-listed regulations and provides additional regulations tailored to the City's objective health, safety, and welfare concerns.

In 2022, the California Legislature passed [SB 972](#). SB 972 simplified the requirements for street vendors by introducing street vending, including a new type of retail food facility called "compact mobile food operation" (CMFO) into the food code, and limiting the equipment requirements originally established for food trucks. SB 972 defines a CMFO as a mobile food facility that operates from an individual or from a pushcart, stand, display, pedal-driven cart, wagon, showcase, rack, or other nonmotorized conveyance. Like SB 946, SB 972 limits CMFO violations of the California Retail Food Code to administrative fines.

In terms of local implementation, the Environmental Health Services Division within the County of Marin's Community Development Agency oversees the permitting of mobile vendors and enforces related laws. The Environmental Health Services Division derives its authority from California Health and Safety Code Sections [101275](#) and [101280](#), which authorize Environmental Health staff to undertake inspections, enforcement, permitting, investigations, and emergency actions in accordance with state and local regulations.

B. San Rafael: Unpermitted Mobile Vending

Much like other jurisdictions across California, San Rafael has seen a rise in mobile food vending following the passage of SB 946, resulting in mixed outcomes. The principal benefit is expanded access to diverse and affordable food options. This benefit is particularly critical in the Canal neighborhood, as it has the second-highest proportion of people living below the federal poverty level among all census tracts in Marin County.¹ Additional benefits of mobile vending include increased neighborhood vitality through more eyes on the street and entrepreneurial opportunities for local food vendors.

Increased mobile vending has also led to a variety of negative impacts. Food consumed from food vendors not permitted by Marin County's Environmental Health Services Division has led to food-borne illnesses. Likewise, vendors operating without a permitted commissary have improperly disposed of waste, including grease, in the public right-of-way, thereby attracting vermin and contaminating waterways. Additionally, vending on narrow sidewalks can limit or

¹ See Marin County Priority Communities Data Explorer:
<https://marincounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/lookup/index.html?appid=7fbb628711ac4d74a4f1ed4d6fa391a4>

prevent people in wheelchairs from using the sidewalk, and excessive noise and odors/fumes from late-night vending have disturbed residential neighbors. City staff have observed people walking into traffic or into double-parked vehicles, creating traffic hazards.

To address the negative impacts of unpermitted food vending, the City's Code Enforcement Division partnered with Marin County's Environmental Health Services Division on numerous mobile vending educational and enforcement operations. These operations include educating vendors on health permitting requirements, issuing administrative citations, and seizing and disposing of unsanitary food.

While these efforts have reduced the overall amount of unpermitted vending in the City, these operations redirect limited Code Enforcement staff resources from other City priorities, and unpermitted vending continues.

C. Adoption of Mobile Vending Program

In November 2025 the San Rafael City Council adopted a mobile vending ordinance, codified as San Rafael Municipal Code 10.50, which established a mobile vending permit program in San Rafael. In addition to the ordinance, the City Council approved a three-prong approach of (i) strengthening the City's enforcement tools, (ii) providing multiple paths to legalization, and (iii) supporting local entrepreneurship. The program includes establishing a permitting process for mobile vendors with time, place, and manner restrictions, partnering with Marin County's Environmental Health Services Division on new enforcement strategies, and funding a community-based organization to provide bilingual technical assistance to San Rafael-based vendors to help them navigate mobile vending compliance requirements. This RFP is a critical step towards implementing the third prong of supporting local entrepreneurship.

III. Budget

The City of San Rafael's CED Department has identified \$50,000 that can be utilized for the Local Vendor Priority Program in calendar year 2026. The City encourages organizations to leverage any additional funds and services to maximize the impact of City funds.

IV. Contract Award Process

A. Anticipated RFP Schedule

Selection Timeline	Dates and Time
Announcement	January 12, 2026
RFP Responses Due	February 16, 2026, by 5:00 pm
Evaluation	February 17-24, 2026
Consultant Team Interviews (if needed)	February 25-March 6, 2026
Contract Execution	March 2026

B. RFP Addenda & Questions

All requests for clarification of this RFP must be made in writing. Please email any questions regarding the RFP to Greg Minor at ced.bids@cityofsanrafael.org by February 2, 2026. All addenda, questions, and answers will be posted on the RFP webpage by February 9, 2026.

V. SCOPE OF WORK

The City is seeking one or more consultants with demonstrated expertise and experience in the following areas described below. Respondents may choose to submit proposals to provide services in one or all areas.

1. Engage San Rafael Vendors and Assist with Compliance Requirements

Engage at least twelve San Rafael residents that operate as mobile vendors in San Rafael and:

- Educate the vendors on the City's new mobile vending permit program.
- Identify and address any challenges vendors have with complying with County Health and City permitting requirements.
- Collaborate with regulating authorities to address vendor needs.

2. Manage Marketplace

Serve as the organizer for a recurring marketplace for San Rafael vendors to sell food and merchandise throughout the spring, summer, and fall of 2026. The organizer will be responsible for the following:

- Organizing vendors to participate in the market
- Securing the market location; if the location is public property, coordinating with the applicable public agency
- Ensuring compliance with City and Marin County Environmental Health Services requirements
- Addressing any concerns raised by neighbors of the market
- Marketing and community engagement as needed

3. **Data Collection for Program Evaluation**

- Gather data on vendors participating in the Local Vending Priority Program, including but not limited to: number of vendors, permits obtained, and economic impact of participation.

VI. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Submittals provided in response to this RFP should include the following elements:

1. **Approach.** Present your concept of how your organization will implement the proposed Scope of Services.
2. **Budget and Schedule.** Please indicate the personnel and hourly rates for each member of the team and any subconsultants assigned to the project.
3. **Project List.** Please include a list of similar or related projects completed by your organization, along with relevant background information, including the project timeframe and the client's contact information.

VII. SUBMITTAL DETAILS AND DUE DATE

Responses shall be submitted as one document via electronic mail in a printable PDF format with the subject line: *(Name of Organization) Response to RFP: Local Vendor Priority Program.*

All proposals shall be submitted at your earliest convenience, but no later than February 16, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. to:

Greg Minor, Assistant Director

Community and Economic Development Department

ced.bids@cityofsanrafael.org

VIII. SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals to provide the services described above will be evaluated based on the following factors:

- Quality and completeness of the proposal: 5%
- Experience completing projects of similar scope and complexity: 20%
- Experience of the proposed project team members: 15%
- Ability to provide services in Spanish 15%
- Approach to project and demonstrated understanding of the work to be performed: 20%
- Availability to perform the work required: 10%
- Familiarity with issues and agencies in San Rafael and Marin County 10%
- References: 5%

The City will identify the top-ranking applicants in each requested service category. One or more of these firms may be invited to a panel interview. The evaluation would consider both the interview and the proposal.

The most highly evaluated consultant team(s) will then be recommended for a Professional Services Agreement.

IX. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. Professional Services Agreement

The consultant selected shall use the City of San Rafael's standard Professional Services Agreement. **Submitting a Proposal is acceptance of the Professional Services Agreement as-is.** Contractually required insurance coverage and endorsement information are shown in the body of the document.

2. Reservations

The issuance of this RFP constitutes only an invitation to present responses. This RFP does not commit the City to award a contract, to defray any costs incurred in the preparation of a Proposal pursuant to this RFP, or to procure or contract for work. The City reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to determine whether or not any aspect of the response satisfactorily meets the criteria established in the RFP.

3. RFP as a Public Record

All Proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of the City and thus become public records and, as such, may be subject to public review.

4. Right to Cancel

The City reserves the right to cancel or change, for any or no reason, in part or in its entirety, this RFP, including but not limited to: selection schedule, submittal date, and submittal requirements.

5. Business License

Prior to the selected consultant engaging in any operation or activity as a result of an award of a purchase contract, it must obtain a business license from the City of San Rafael. The business license must be kept in full force and effect during the term of the contract.

6. Additional Information

The City reserves the right to request additional information and/or clarification from any or all respondents to this RFP, the right to confer with any respondent submitting a response, and the right to reject any or all responses with or without cause. The City reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive any irregularities or informality. The City may conduct interviews with any respondent it deems necessary.

7. Reasonable Inquiry

The City may conduct any reasonable inquiry to determine the responsibility of the proposer. The submission of a proposal constitutes permission by the proposer for the City to verify all information contained therein. If the City deems it necessary, additional information may be requested from any proposer. Failure to comply with any such request may disqualify a proposer from consideration.

8. Public Information

Consultants who wish to release information regarding the consultant selection process, contract award, or data provided by the City at any public hearing/meeting must receive prior written approval from the City before disclosing such information to the public.

X. STANDARD AGREEMENT AND INSURANCE COVERAGE

The selected firm shall enter into a Professional Services Agreement with the City. The City's Standard Agreement is included as Attachment "A." The consultant shall provide proof of the insurance coverage limits specified in this Agreement and shall maintain these coverage levels for the duration of the project. If a proposer desires to modify any provisions of the Agreement, including insurance requirements, these changes shall be identified as part of the proposal submission. If no changes are proposed, full acceptance of the Agreement shall be assumed by the City.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Standard Professional Services Agreement, Including Insurance Requirements