

12-29-2004

Mr. John Gale, Chairman of
Nebraska State Records Board
State Capitol, Suite 2300
Lincoln, NE. 68509

Dear Mr. Gale:

I am writing to you and the Board asking for you to consider the attached grant application On an Online Property Tax Payment System. Six counties are to serve as pilot counties and are mentioned in the application.

The software, hardware, implementation and updating will be done by Nebraska @ Online. Nebraska @ On Line has access to what has been done in most if not all of the counties in Iowa. They are the most experienced , to my knowledge, of the other companies providing on line payments in this state. The most active competitor has only four to six counties, and an other one has concentrated their efforts on the West Coast.

Other benefits to county government and to the consumer would be:

- A. This service would be free unlike another system in the state which charges counties around 100.00 to 150.00 per month.
- B. The data files would be updated nightly for no charge to the county unlike some competitors. Some treasurer's offices manually update records from a report
- C. Citizens would be able to pay their taxes any day of the week or any hour of the day.
- D. Funds would be electronically transferred to the county which means more efficiency. Staff would not need to handle paper checks.
- E. Future enhancements would allow lending institutions to make batch for the accounts they escrow. I think, in time, most, if not all Nebraska counties will be on this system. I have heard some rumbling concerning the 100.00 to 150.00 per month charge.

Mr. Gale, thanking you and the Board in advance for your time and consideration .

Respectfully yours,

Bob Dahms, Seward County Treasurer

Nebraska State
Records Board
State Capitol, Suite 2300
Lincoln, NE 68509

John Gale
Chairman
(402) 471-4070
<http://www.nol.org>



**APPLICATION FOR STATE RECORDS BOARD GRANT
TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION
(Local Government Grant Application)**

Cities and Counties desiring grants from the Nebraska State Records Board for projects to create or improve electronic access to government information or services should complete this application and follow any procedures outlined in this application and any accompanying materials.

I. Grant Summary

1. Name of entity applying for grant Buffalo, Clay, Dawson, Hamilton, Pierce, Seward Counties

2. Title of project Online Property Tax Payment System

3. Brief Description of Project

The application will allow citizens and businesses the ability to pay their property taxes online. Users will enter identifying information such as name, address or parcel number to obtain their tax information. They will then select payments to be made, enter credit card or electronic check information, and submit payment through a secure transaction system. The user will be provided a receipt or confirmation screen for their records.

3. Grant request amount \$25,000.00 (\$25,000 limit for collaborative grants, \$10,000 limit for single jurisdiction grants)

4. Will there be a fee for accessing records associated with this project? Yes

5. If yes, provide any statutory reference or authorization for the fee Section 13-609

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II. Grant Detail

1. Please describe the project in detail (you may attach this description)

See attachment.

2. Please describe whom the beneficiary or recipient of this service will be and projected activity for access or use of the proposed service

The recipient of the the service will be any citizen or business who owes a property tax liability. The application will allow them to pay for it online via a credit card or electronic check.

3. Timeline for implementation (specific completion date must be provided, grant funds lapse if not expended prior to completion date)

We expect the application to be live for use by September 1, 2005.

4. Subdivision contribution to project (labor, equipment etc.)

The six county treasurers will contribute their time and knowledge to help develop how the application will function. They will determine the business rules that must be followed.

5. Is other funding available for this project (explain)?

No. There are no other grants available. Counties in general do not have the funds to pay for development of an application such as this.

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6. Why is the grant money needed for the project, and, if applicable, how will the service be sustained once the grant money is expended?

The grant money will be used for the initial development of the application. A convenience fee will be charged to the user for continued support of the application. The user will also pay any credit card and ACH fees associated with the transaction.

7. Please describe how this project will enhance the delivery of government services or access to those services (you may attach a separate sheet if needed)

Allowing people the ability to make tax payments online will make it more convenient for them. They will be able to perform the transaction at any time and from any place.

8. Please describe how this project will improve the efficiency of government operations (attach additional pages if needed)

Since the transfer of money will be done electronically through the application, it will allow for a more streamlined use of staff time. County staff won't have to handle and process paper checks. Counties also don't currently accept credit cards and this will create another avenue for them to accept payments.

9. Please describe any collaborative effort among multiple jurisdictions or political subdivisions related to this project (if applicable, attach additional pages if needed)

Six counties will participate in the initial phase of the project. Other counties will be offered the opportunity to use the system after the first tax payment period. The six counties are: Buffalo, Clay, Dawson, Hamilton, Pierce and Seward.

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10. Please provide information on who will complete the project (in house personnel, outside contractor, combination of both, etc.)

Nebrask@ Online will do the software development while the six county treasurers will offer their expertise in developing the business rules that the application must follow.

11. Does the project involve the licensing, permitting or regulation of businesses, if yes then explain how the project or service will allow integration with the State of Nebraska's Business Portal and the one-stop online business registration system.

This project does not involve the licensing, permitting or regulation of business.

III. Technical Information

1. Describe the hardware, software, and communications needed for this project and explain why these choices were made.

Nebrask@ Online will host the application at the NIC data center as part of the board-approved central hosting environment. Nebrask@ Online will also provide the hardware and data communications. They will also develop the software application, which is expected to be an adaptation of similar systems currently operated by the NIC affiliates in Iowa, Kansas and other states.

2. Address any technical issues with the proposed technology including:

- **Conformity with generally accepted industry standards. Projects which interface with state systems (such as distance learning systems) should also address NITC technical standards and guidelines.**
- **Compatibility with existing institutional and/or statewide infrastructure.**
- **Reliability, security and scalability (future needs for growth or adaptation).**

The application will be developed using generally accepted industry standards. It will be developed to conform with the section 508 accessibility standards. The application will be developed with scalability in mind to allow for other counties to be added to the system in the future.

3. Describe how technical support will be provided.

Technical support for the application will be provided by Nebrask@ Online staff. The application will be written in a way so that if errors of a technical nature occur, the user will be directed to contact Nebrask@ Online. County treasurers will address any tax payment or policy questions that users may have.

4. Describe How the Project will comply with the State's Technology Access Clause
<http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/accessibility/tacfinal.htm>

The application will be written in a way that will allow users with disabilities to use the system. Nebraska@ Online has trained staff who are knowledgeable about section 508 accessibility standards and have considerable experience in developing accessible web sites and software applications.

IV. CONTACT INFORMATION, SIGNATURE

Contact person for any questions regarding this application _____

phone # _____ E-mail _____

Signed this _____ day of _____, _____

Signature

Title

Please Return to:

State Records Board
Suite 2300, State Capitol
P.O. Box 94608
Lincoln, NE 68509-4608

Online Property Tax Payment System Pilot Project

The Online Property Tax Payment System will allow citizens and businesses the ability to pay property taxes online. Initially, the system will only allow for payments for an individual county. Future enhancements may include payments of property taxes over multiple counties and batch payments by financial institutions. These functionalities will not be part of the pilot project.

Six Nebraska counties will participate in the Online Property Tax Payment System Pilot Project. These counties include: Buffalo, Clay, Dawson, Hamilton, Pierce and Seward. Nebrask@ Online will develop a system that can be used with any back-end system that a county uses. A \$25,000 State Records Board grant will be used to fund the pilot project. Once a functioning application has been developed and proof of concept has been established, the system would be made available to interested counties throughout the state.

The system will also have a reporting component available for county treasurers to use. The report will include information about the property, the owner and the amount of the payment. This will be developed in response to the needs of County Treasurers.

There will be no direct cost to the counties for this application. The user will have the ability to pay for the transaction with either a credit card or by electronic check. The system will incorporate a payment gateway that allow payment of taxes due plus convenience fees that will be paid by the user of the system. The user would pay any credit card/ACH fees and a fee yet to be determined that would be paid to Nebrask@ Online for development of future upgrades and maintenance of the system.

The system will be similar to the one developed in Iowa which can be viewed at http://www.iowatreasurers.org/county_locator.cfm?ID=1

County Contacts

Jean Sidwell
Buffalo County Treasurer
(308) 236-1250
treasurer@buffalogov.org

Jan Stratman
Clay County Treasurer
(402) 762-3505
clay.county@dmv.state.ne.us

Sharon Wood
Dawson County Treasurer
(308) 324-3241

Bobby Parks
Hamilton County Treasurer
(402) 694-2291
hamcto@hamilton.net

Richard Anderson
Pierce County Treasurer
(402) 329-6335

Bob Dahms
Seward County Treasurer
(402) 643-4574
stubby68434@yahoo.com

Nebrask@ Online Contacts

Dan Brown
Director of Integrated Services
(402) 471-0828
danb@nol.org

Megan Lyons
Marketing Associate/Web Designer
(402) 471-7838
megan@nol.org