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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**Second Supplemental Report of the
County Real Estate Electronic
Government Advisory Committee**

The County Real Estate Electronic Government Advisory Committee (Committee) was created by House File 882, 2005 General Assembly, and directed to develop a plan to integrate the various websites housing county real estate data. The Committee filed its initial report on November 1, 2005 and its first supplemental report on February 15, 2006. House File 2794, 2006 General Assembly, extended the Committee's responsibilities and requires a supplemental report be submitted on or before November 1, 2006. The Committee met on March 10, 2006, May 5, 2006, August 18, 2006, October 5, 2006, and October 20, 2006. In accordance with HF 2794, 2006 General Assembly, the Committee herein submits its second supplemental report to the members of the General Assembly and to Governor Thomas J. Vilsack.

Grant Funding for Planning Phase

On March 8, 2006, the Committee received a \$25,000 grant from the IOWAccess Advisory Council to fund the planning phase of a joint web portal, along with the possibility of a subsequent additional grant for the development phase. The IOWAccess revolving fund is administered through the Iowa Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and was established for the purpose of assisting in planning and executing various governmental entities' e-government initiatives. The grant application was co-sponsored by the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC).

Subcommittee on the Joint Web Portal

From May through October 2006, the subcommittee on the joint web portal met with representatives of DAS-Information Technology Enterprise (ITE) to determine the functionality and design of the joint web portal. The subcommittee is composed of ten members as follows: one Assessor, one Recorder, one Treasurer, and one Auditor; one IT representative for each of the four county affiliates who is familiar with that affiliate's website initiative; and the two representatives from the Iowa Counties Information Technology affiliate. The subcommittee is weighted heavily with IT people because of the goal to design the technology necessary to link the various datasets and websites. The subcommittee is co-chaired by Polk County Treasurer Mary Maloney and Johnson County Recorder Kim Painter.

Subcommittee Conclusions

Subcommittee members met several times with DAS-ITE representatives Michael Tutty and Deb McDaniel and reached the following conclusions:

- 1) The joint web portal will link to each of the four affiliate websites and to participating county websites.

- 2) The joint web portal will not warehouse either data or a search engine, but will use the search engines to access the data housed on each affiliate's website.
- 3) Searches will run concurrently against the appropriate affiliate websites, dependent upon the type of search, and will return results depending on the nature and limits of the data.
- 4) Search types will include property site address, county parcel number, document reference number, property owner name, and an advanced search with multiple, detailed criteria.
- 5) Search results on a specific real estate parcel will simultaneously display on a "consolidated" screen that shows data accessed from multiple sources in a manner that is transparent to the user.
- 6) Help screens and frequently asked questions will be accessible and user-friendly.
- 7) Drill downs and links to affiliate and county websites will be available for access to additional detail.

Incremental Approach/Proof-of-Concept

DAS-ITE has recommended the joint web portal be developed through an incremental approach, as opposed to a finished-on-delivery approach. Delivering incremental functionality with predictable dates will assist in demonstrating progress and meeting expectations of legislators and the IOWAccess Advisory Council. Additional reasons for using an incremental approach include:

- Some of the new technology has not been used by most affiliates
- Existing data is disparately stored, used, and formatted
- The affiliates will become heavily interdependent in the joint web portal
- Each of the affiliates have had and will have significant changes (fundamental revisions to the Assessors' data plans, Treasurers move to multiple sites, the construction of an Auditors' website, and added functionality to Recorders' website)

An incremental approach will allow the Committee to create a proof-of-concept that can be demonstrated to legislators in order to acquire and incorporate their feedback.

Grant Funding for Development Phase

At its October 20th meeting, the Committee supported the second application for grant funding from the IOWAccess Advisory Council to develop the joint web portal. The application will be prepared by DAS-ITE and will include a Statement of Work (SOW), designs, estimates of time and cost, and a project plan. It will be completed in time to present it to the IOWAccess Advisory Council at its meeting in January 2007.

Costs included in the application for development funding will also include some out-of-pocket affiliate costs to convert data and build or modify their websites. The Recorders' and Assessors' affiliate representatives have said they would not be asking for grant funding to pay costs to convert data and link to the joint web portal. Treasurers' representatives have said the cost to convert data and link to the joint web portal would be about \$20,000, and they may or may not ask for partial grant

funding. Auditors' representatives have said they will likely ask for matching funds to pay start-up costs for counties to send data to a common database.

Hosting and Maintenance

DAS-ITE representatives have estimated annual costs for hosting and maintenance of the joint web portal will not exceed \$10,000.

Potential Link to Iowa Department of Management

Through discussion of possible methods for citizens to search for real estate data, the subcommittee identified the possibility of linking to source data at the Iowa Department of Management (DOM). Benefits of this would include the ability to search on an address in a city that straddles multiple counties without knowing in which county the address is located. It would also provide authoritative and standardized information on tax levy rates, tax districts, tax increment financing (TIF) districts, school districts, cities, townships, and special levy authority districts. An initial discussion with a DOM representative has been positive.

Affiliate Coordinator

DAS-ITE representatives recommended one individual be designated as the "affiliate coordinator" for the upcoming development phase to liaise with each of the four affiliate projects and with DAS-ITE. This position will have weekly reporting responsibilities and require good communication, coordination, and follow-up skills. At the October 20, 2006 meeting, Warren County Assessor Dave Ellis volunteered and was designated by the Committee as the affiliate coordinator.

Member Name	Representing
Sue Vande Kamp	Iowa County Recorders Association (Story County)
Kim Painter	Iowa County Recorders Association (Johnson County)
David Ellis	Iowa State Association of Assessors (Warren County)
LaRayne Riccadonna	Iowa State Association of Assessors (Polk County)
Mike Grandon	Iowa State County Treasurers Association (Cerro Gordo County)
Mary Maloney	Iowa State County Treasurers Association (Polk County)
Marsha Carter	Iowa State Association of County Auditors (Shelby County)
Ken Kline	Iowa State Association of County Auditors (Cerro Gordo County)
Bob Hartwig	Iowa Bankers Association
Martin Lee	Iowa Association of Realtors
David Dettmann	Iowa State Bar Association
Tim Reilly	Iowa Land Title Association
Justin Hupfer	Iowa Credit Union League
Charles Rieken	Iowa State Association of Counties (Cass County Supervisor)
Scott Williams	Iowa Counties Information Technology (Marshall County IT Director)
Matt Boeck	Iowa Counties Information Technology (Mahaska County GIS Coordinator)