Iowa County Treasurers E-Government Alliance (ICTEA)

Request for Proposals (RFP) for Hosting, Support, and Redesign

1. Introduction

The Iowa County Treasurers E-Government Alliance (ICTEA), a public entity organized under Iowa Code 28E, is soliciting proposals from qualified vendors to:

1. **Phase 1:** Provide hosting and technical support services for the existing *iowatreasurers.org* website and all associated applications, services, and integrations.
2. **Phase 2:** Redesign, modernize, and enhance the look, function, architecture, accessibility, and security posture of the ICTEA website and supporting systems.

Vendors must clearly delineate solutions and pricing for Phase 1 and Phase 2 within a **single proposal**.

All communications, questions, and submissions must be sent to: **icteaboard@govtechservices.com**.

2. Background

ICTEA operates a statewide online portal providing property tax payments, motor vehicle registration renewals, escrow and portfolio batch payment functions, and a suite of administrative tools used by counties, business partners, and the public. The system includes:

- Public-facing website
- Password-protected extranet
- Escrow, portfolio, and tax sale subsequent systems
- Ledger, reconciliation, and county reporting tools
- Integrations with the Iowa DOT, county software vendors, and payment processors
- County file exchange via secure FTP
- In-office payment support

ICTEA has experienced significant growth in usage and needs a vendor capable of providing reliable technical support, transparent operations, and a forward-looking modernization strategy.

3. RFP Structure

This RFP is divided into two distinct phases:

- **Phase 1: Hosting and Support of the Existing System**
- **Phase 2: Website Redesign, Rewrite, and Modernization**

Vendors may not submit partial proposals; a single proposal covering both phases is required.

PHASE 1 — Hosting and Technical Support of the Existing System

4. Scope of Work – Phase 1

The selected vendor will:

4.1 Hosting Requirements

- Host existing ICTEA website and related components.
- Maintain full operational stability, security, and performance.
- Provide 99.5% uptime (excluding scheduled maintenance).
- Maintain and renew SSL certificates and domain names as needed.
- Manage site DNS records.
- Perform daily backups and maintain disaster recovery capability.
- Vendor will provide visibility into hosting resources and configurations upon request.

4.2 Technical Support Requirements

- Provide technical support Monday–Friday, 7AM–7PM CST.
- Respond quickly and with appropriate transparency to issues raised by ICTEA, counties, partners, or the public.
- Provide clear incident ownership and triage processes.
- Maintain DOT, county, tax sale, and payment processor integrations.

- Ensure continued PCI DSS compliance.
- Maintain security patching, monitoring, and log review.
- Perform basic content updates or additions.

4.3 Reporting & Governance

Provide monthly reports including:

- Site traffic and related statistics
- Incident/outage review when applicable
- Hours expended, summarized by category of work
- Identified risks and suggested strategies for mitigation

Participate in monthly governance meetings with ICTEA and project manager.

4.4 Transition Requirements

- Collaborate with outgoing or prior vendors to ensure smooth transition.
- Inventory all current integrations, codebases, and system components.
- Confirm ownership and control of components and infrastructure
- Prepare and follow a transition timeline
- Ensure ongoing and consistent communication is maintained throughout the transition process.

5. Phase 1 Pricing Model

Vendors must follow the required commercial structure:

5.1 Hosting Costs

- Cloud hosting costs will be billed to ICTEA as transparent pass-through expenses.
- Vendor may charge a cloud hosting management fee calculated as a % of the pass-through expenses.
- Vendor will deploy and utilize cloud resources in a cost-effective manner following industry standards and best practices.
- In addition to the recurring hosting fees, one-time costs of transitioning the site to a new vendor are allowed and should be clearly outlined in the response.

5.2   Technical Support Costs

- Technical support services will be billed as a fixed monthly flat fee.
- The flat fee will cover all support and maintenance activities as noted in the support requirements.

- Site enhancements fall outside the standard support scope and may incur additional charges, as mutually agreed upon by both parties.
- One-time costs of transitioning the site to a new vendor are allowed and should be clearly outlined in the response.

No alternative pricing structures will be accepted for Phase 1.

PHASE 2 — Website Redesign and Modernization

6. Scope of Work – Phase 2

The selected vendor will deliver a redesigned, modern, secure, compliant, and accessible ICTEA website and supporting systems.

6.1 Design and UX

- Provide a dramatically improved, user-centered, modern interface.
- Ensure **WCAG 2.1 AA** accessibility compliance.
- Redesign public website, extranet, dashboards, and mobile interfaces.

6.2 Technical Architecture

- Modernize or rewrite components as necessary to ensure code is up-to-date, secure, and supported.
- Create scalable, maintainable architecture capable of accommodating new counties and partners with minimal friction.
- Preserve and enhance all current functional capabilities unless otherwise mutually agreed.

6.3 Security & Compliance

The redesign must include:

- Full **PCI DSS** compliance for all payment-related components.
- A third-party **penetration test** and remediation plan. (Security testing vendor and services must be approved in advance by ICTEA.)
- Modern development practices.

6.4 Integrations & Data Flows

- Maintain or improve integrations with:
  - • Iowa DOT
  - • County vendor systems
  - • Tax sale platforms
  - • Payment processors
- Maintain robust file exchange processes and reconciliation workflows.

6.5 Deliverables

- High-fidelity UX/UI prototypes
- Technical architecture documentation
- Implementation plan and migration plan
- Testing and QA documentation
- Accessibility audit results
- Security review & penetration test report
- Final deployment to production
- All graphics, source code, reports, and documentation will become property of ICTEA

7. Phase 2 Pricing Model

Phase 2 must be bid as a **fixed project cost** that includes all components:

- UX/UI redesign
- Development and implementation
- Accessibility compliance and testing
- PCI DSS compliance and testing
- Penetration testing
- Migration and go-live support
- Documentation and training

No hourly, retainer, or open-ended pricing will be accepted for Phase 2.

8. ICTEA Governance & Vendor Collaboration

- ICTEA may utilize the Iowa State Association of Counties as a project management resource for this project.
- Vendor must communicate clearly, avoiding unnecessary technical jargon.
- Project planning and progress meetings may include the vendor, project manager, and ICTEA Board.

- Vendor must be proactive in reporting issues or providing recommendations to help the project run smoothly.

9. Vendor Qualifications

Proposals must demonstrate:

- Successful hosting of high-volume, mission-critical online payment or e-commerce systems.
- Experience with public cloud hosting environments.
- Strong understanding of PCI DSS, WCAG, and modern application security.
- Capability to redesign complex public-facing systems.
- Ability to communicate clearly with both technical and non-technical stakeholders.

10. Proposal Format and Requirements

Vendors must submit **one proposal** submission that clearly delineates:

- **Phase 1**: Hosting & Technical Support
- **Phase 2**: Redesign & Modernization

Phase 1 should stand on its own. Phase 2 may have the dependency of phase 1 being completed.

Proposals must also include:

- Separate pricing for each phase
- Staffing plans and resumes
- Client references
- Security and compliance capabilities
- Detailed project plans and timelines

11. Submission Timeline

- RFP published: March 24, 2026
- **Vendor questions due:** May 1, 2026
- ICTEA will issue written responses to all questions by May 7, 2026.
- **Final proposals due:** May 13, 2026
- Submit proposals and questions to: **icteaboard@govtechservices.com**

12. Evaluation Criteria

ICTEA will evaluate proposals based on:

- Vendor experience and qualifications
- Technical strength of hosting and support plan
- Quality and completeness of redesign proposal
- Cost transparency and alignment to required pricing structure
- Security, compliance, and accessibility approach
- Project governance and communication plan
- Ability to meet required timelines

13. ICTEA Rights

ICTEA reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals
- Request clarifications from any vendor
- Negotiate components of the proposal
- Complete phase 1 without any obligation to proceed to phase 2
- Award based on overall best value to ICTEA
- Cancel or modify the RFP at any time

End of RFP

APPENDICIES:
- **Appendix A – Technical Specifications (Existing System)**
- **Appendix B – Application System Architecture Diagram**
- **Appendix C – Logical Architecture Diagram**
- **Appendix D – Payment Flow Diagram**
- **Appendix E – Historical Transaction Statistics**
- **Appendix F – Glossary**

Appendix A – Technical Specifications (Existing System)

This appendix describes the current ICTEA online payment system and related components. It is provided to help vendors understand the existing environment for **Phase 1 (hosting & support)** and to inform planning for **Phase 2 (redesign/modernization)**.

A.1 Purpose & Scope

The ICTEA online payment system is a web-based application used to:

- Accept online **property tax** payments for 90 Iowa counties.
- Accept **motor vehicle registration renewal** payments.
- Support **escrow** and **portfolio** property tax payments.
- Support **tax sale subsequent tax payments**.
- Act as an informal portal to Iowa County Treasurers' services in all 99 counties.
- Support **in-office** credit/debit card payments via PIN pads.

The system is used by citizens, county staff, and external partners and must be available 24/7 aside from scheduled maintenance.

A.2 Overall System Description

A.2.1 Product Perspective

The ICTEA application is:

- A **web application** with no local installation required (except for in-office payment devices).
- Integrated with banking/payment services to process Visa, Mastercard (credit/debit), Discover, and e-check payments.
- Integrated with county tax systems and the Iowa DOT using scheduled file transfers (FTP).

A.2.2 Key Features

- **Online Property Tax Payments**
  - Citizens can search parcels and pay property tax using cards or e-check.
  - Supports partial and recurring payments.
- **Online Vehicle Registration Renewal**
  - Citizens can renew registrations online if there are no vehicle or customer stops.
  - Uses DOT files (renewal, stop files) exchanged via FTP.
- **Escrow Property Tax Subscription Service**
  - Vendor provides daily updated parcel/tax files for escrow companies via FTP.
  - Escrow customers return files with selected parcels for bulk payment.
  - System generates audit reports and allows escrow users to review summaries and mark payments "ready to finalize."
- **Portfolio Property Tax Subscription Service**
  - Customers build and manage a portfolio of parcels across counties.
  - Supports annual reload of new tax information for portfolio parcels.
  - Supports ACH debit and ACH credit.
  - Exports data to spreadsheets and provides ledger/audit reports.
- **Tax Sale Subsequent Tax Payments**
  - Provides access to parcels where the subscriber holds tax sale certificates.

- o   Supports subsequent tax payments paid by ACH debit.
  - o   Supports ledger/audit reporting and exports.
- **In-Office Payments (IOP)**
  - o   Supports credit/debit card payments via PIN pad devices in county offices.
  - o   Records payments and issues receipts.

A.3 User Classes & Roles
The application supports multiple role-based access levels, including but not limited to:
- **Citizen (Public User)** – Pay taxes, renew registrations, download forms, view FAQs.
- **General User** – View member content pages.
- **County Admin** – Edit County -specific content pages.
- **Site Admin** – Edit site-wide content (FAQs, shared pages).
- **Auditor** – View reports and approve escrow/portfolio payments.
- **Super Admin** – Manage users and site content globally.
- **MemberNP** – Member limited from Ledger access.
- **Portfolio User** – Manage multiple parcels and make grouped payments.
- **Escrow User** – Review escrow payment summaries and mark payments as ready to finalize.
- **Tax Sale Subsequent Taxpayer** – Manage and pay subsequent taxes for tax sale certificates.

A.4 Interfaces & Integrations
A.4.1 County Interfaces (FTP-based)
- Vendor maintains an FTP site for approximately 90 counties.
- Each county uploads daily tax files.
- System imports tax files into the online payment system.
- System generates daily payment files for each county with all payments made online and places them on the FTP site for county pickup.
- System accommodates existing county software platforms (Solutions, Tyler, DevNet, and custom software).

A.4.2 Iowa DOT Interfaces
- DOT provides:
  - o   Vehicle registration renewal files twice monthly.
  - o   Vehicle stop and customer stop files daily.
- Vendor retrieves these files from the DOT FTP site and imports them.
- System sends nightly vehicle registration payment files back to DOT via FTP.

A.4.3 Payment Services
- Payment processing is performed via a payment gateway that interacts with a banking services provider.
- The system is responsible for preparing transaction data and disbursement instructions.

A.5 Security & Compliance
- All payment transactions are conducted over HTTPS with SSL/TLS encryption.
- Vendor is responsible for completing applicable **PCI compliance** assessments.
- Confidential information in databases is encrypted.

- The application, logs, and database reside on a segmented network with limited administrator access.

A.6 Content & Payment Management
- **Content Management** – Admin users can create and edit page content using a content management interface.
- **Payment Management** – Admin users can configure settings for disabling or enabling payments by date, time, and type.
- **Scheduling** – Public users can schedule one-time, weekly, monthly, and semi-annual payments.

A.7 Logging, Auditing & Reporting
- System logs key activities such as user login, password changes, content updates, payments, and administrative actions.
- Reporting capabilities include:
    - Payment search and detail reports
    - Summary reports
    - Custom reports for audit and operational needs

A.8 Performance & Availability
- The system is designed to operate 24 hours per day, with scheduled downtime as needed.
- Performance is especially critical during peak periods:
    - The week ending **September 30**
    - The week ending **March 31**
- Typical response times targeted are 2–5 seconds between user actions, recognizing Internet and load constraints.

A.9 Support & Help Desk
- Help desk support is currently specified as **7AM–7PM Monday–Friday**.
- Emails and voicemails received after hours are addressed the next business day.

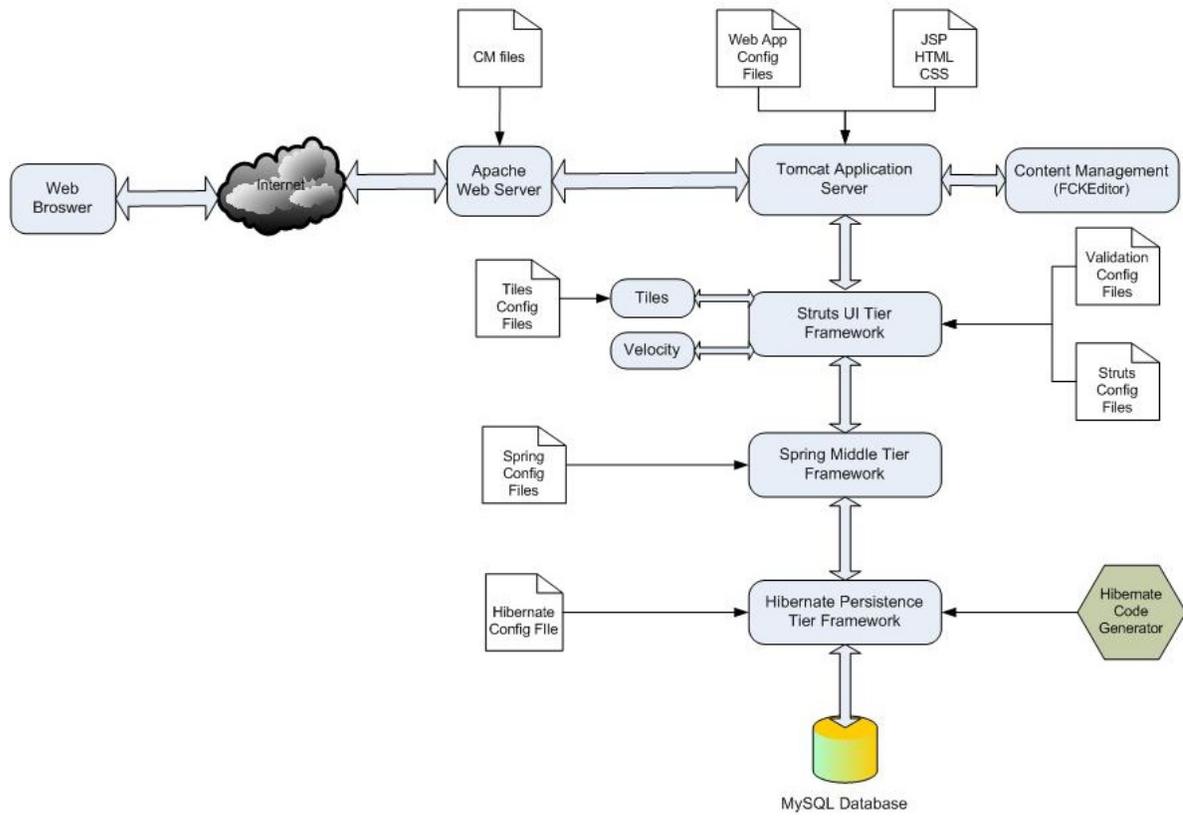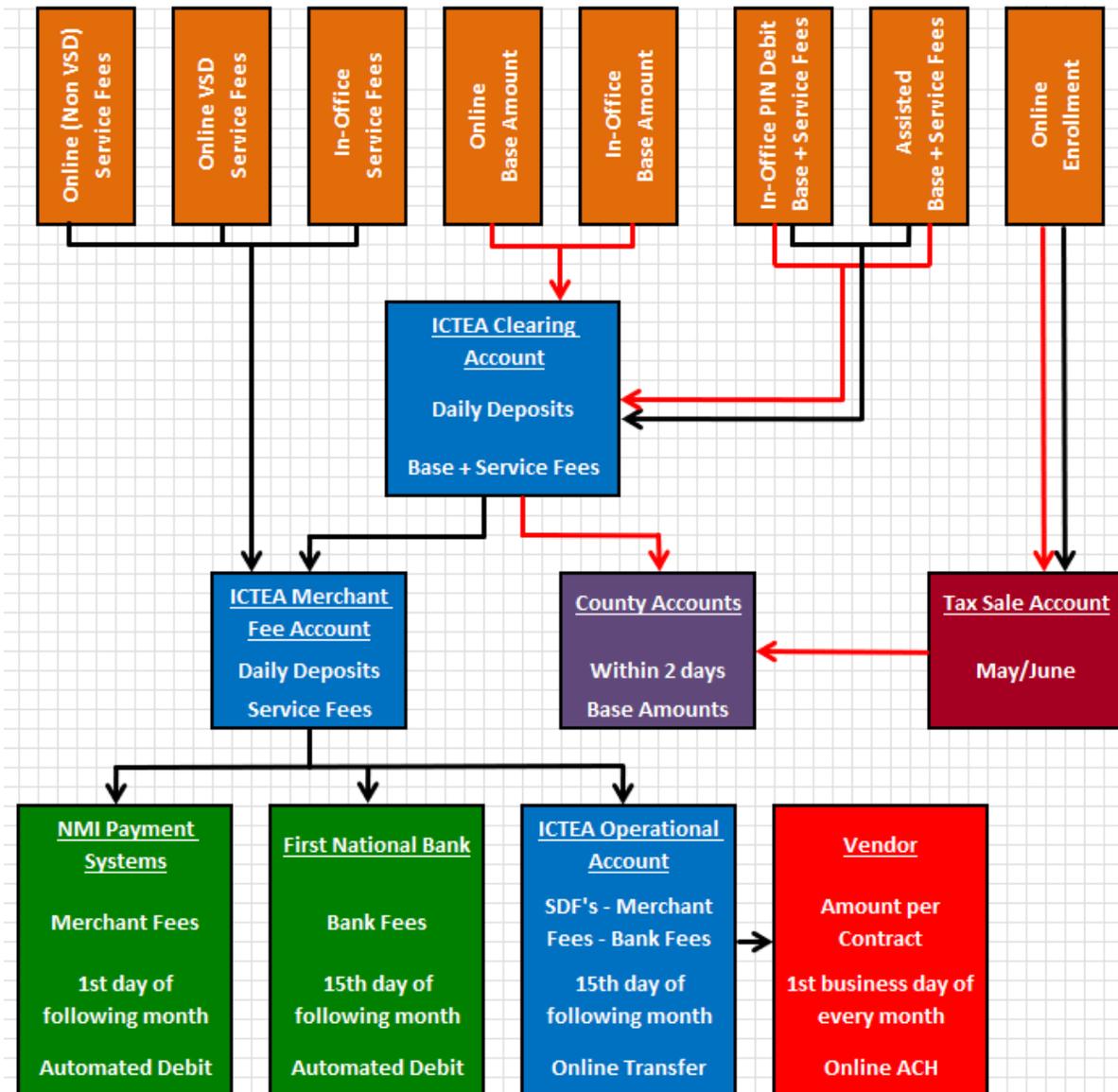# Appendix B – Application System Architecture Diagram
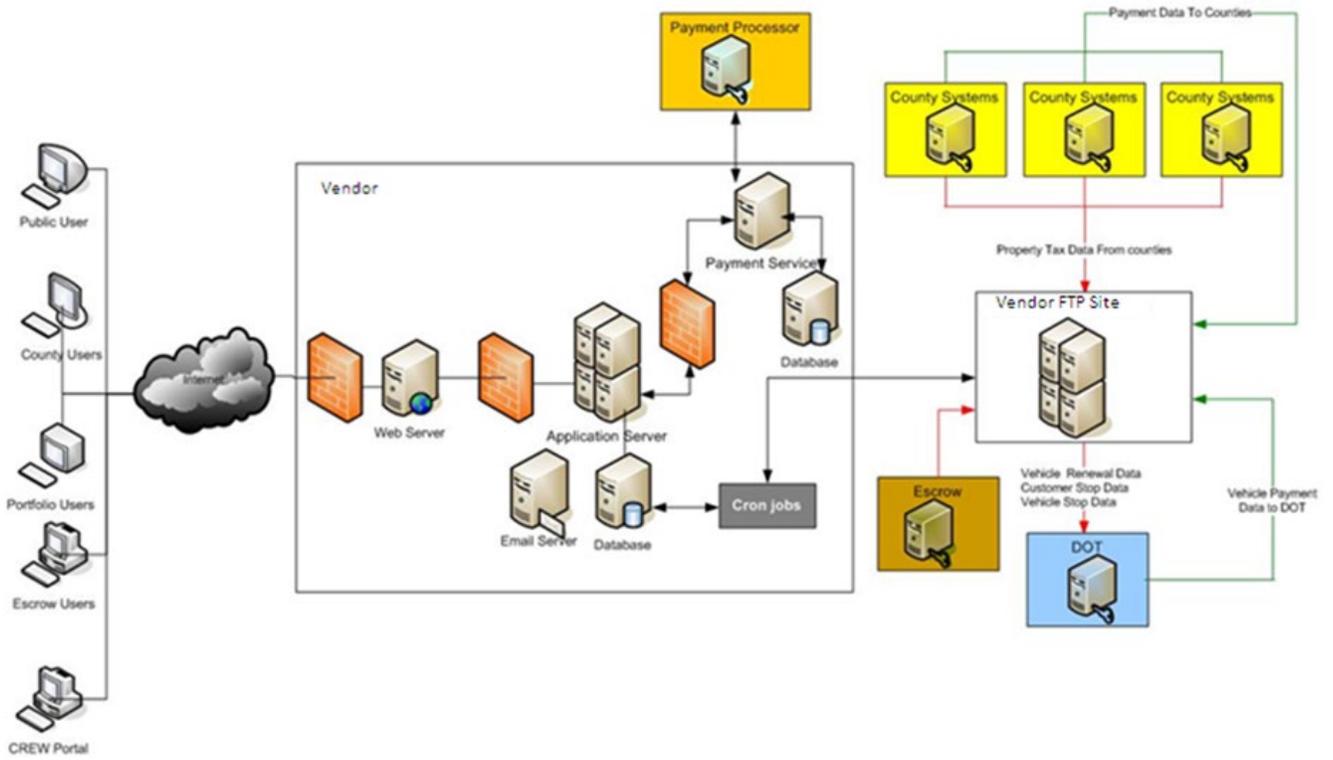
Appendix C – Logical Architecture Diagram

Appendix D – Payment Flow Diagram

Appendix E – Historical Transaction Statistics

ICTEA Online Property Tax Payment History

Month		Items	Returned	Credit Card	ECheck	Escrow	Portfolio
Dec	7,795	15,335	0	625,580.17	8,494,142.74	0	535,958.00
Jan	7,009	10,83	666	389,397.70	4,837,439.37	0	0
Feb	15,088	30,893	3,550	1,197,278.54	32,690,841.42	0	196,926.50
March	79,101	486,948	17,095	7,958,885.15	298,311,756.69	311,807,126.15	23,906,262.71
April	16,025	27,569	1,337	1,664,919.35	17,767,406.98	0	951,013.00
May	14,587	27,751	1,269	2,064,049.97	15,056,023.88	0	73.00
June	6,745	10,057	6,877	819,767.80	3,431,099.51	0	236.00
July	5,291	7,998	0	241,560.18	1,743,224.11	0	0
Aug	38,883	83,813	52,93	4,547,076.06	96,121,855.90	0	418,718.80
Sep	91,916	551,093	125,801	10,801,647.84	349,078,706.98	327,316,747.88	25,976,500.07
Oct	16,423	31,317	606	2,005,394.78	19,259,506.73	0	0
Nov	13,523	32,387	11,458	1,382,582.85	17,616,799.61	0	62.00
Dec	8,439	16,134	0	566,05.06	9,750,659.82	0	15.50
Jan	7,928	12,080	138	517,516.98	547,7710.94	0	0
Feb	16,799	34,731	16,482	1,373,166.31	35,177,221.94	0	1,483,480.00
March	85,675	515,286	51,407	9,473,888.34	339,977,694.86	328,746,840.11	16,681,028.59
April	16,676	29,758	2,961	2,194,025.62	20,180,977.80	0	0
May	15,213	30,013	1,208	2,213,643.77	17,329,629.84	0	0
June	7,402	10,983	665	930,245.94	3,079,965.09	0	799.00
July	5,724	8,682	54	267,058.77	1.976.069.47	0	0
Aug	40,467	92,137	58,227	4,778,375.92	107,882,043.44	0	186,356.90
Sep	99,152	574,279	74,580	12,744,599.80	389,923,092.66	348,413,877.82	29,414,935.62
Oct	20,460	41,627	6,986	3,170,256.63	32,236,407.31	0	0
Nov	14,806	35,598	11,093	1,585,378.70	18,750,446.12	0	557,262.00
Dec	8,880	18,451	55,811	839,121.70	9,549,631.81	0	541,875.00
Jan	8,180	12,249	0	515,126.24	5,200,98.56	0	0
Feb	18,893	42,202	1,296	1,673,204.62	49,300,097.66	0	0
March	90,591	528,827	25,336	10,179,664.44	365,006,898.91	365,693,298.35	16,600,598.00
April	21,085	40,362	3,777	3,067,132.21	31,507,215.05	0	0
May	16,581	30,410	815	2,179,694.68	19,256,659.59	0	0
June	7,683	11,284	13,827	972,385.57	3,868,695.13	0	0
July	6,515	9,783	0	301,681.35	2,135,787.32	0	0
Aug	42,378	89,554	55,610	5,078,280.03	115,126,132.16	0	0
Sep	113,382	627,412	368,585	15,718,400.16	519,916,378.82	378,237,888.97	19,043,552.21
Oct	18,779	35,283	26,156	2,544,515.51	24,964,175.92	0	0
Nov	13,592	31,263	13,584	1,712,229.92	18,093,401.95	0	0
Totals	1,302,275	5,408,768	2,643,401	148,475,546.09	3,778,122,629.63	2,640,969,064.62	184,021,487.85

ICTEA Online Vehicle Payment History

Month	Transactions	Items	Returns	Credit Card	ECheck
Dec 2021	29,683	53,844	655	2,258,104.00	6,628,229.25
Jan 2022	35,432	61,010	693	2,703,355.50	7,141,366.00
Feb 2022	34,175	57,000	1,999	2,485,194.00	6,679,688.50
March 2022	39,887	67,045	112	2,689,545.75	7,989,082.00
April 2022	35,196	58,864	616	2,494,401.50	6,939,210.00
May 2022	35,870	59,606	515	2,599,737.00	6,967,323.25
June 2022	35,221	58,617	1,264	2,618,334.00	6,956,744.50
July 2022	35,325	58,491	1,241	2,716,511.50	6,941,280.50
Aug 2022	37,230	61,670	1,328	2,863,158.00	7,463,591.50
Sep 2022	35,830	59,856	771	2,807,301.00	7,220,142.50
Oct 2022	33,499	55,302	2,060	2,778,248.00	6,721,616.00
Nov 2022	33,025	58,802	1,119	2,960,945.00	7,093,062.00
Dec 2022	30,305	55,822	2,654	2,465,366.00	6,706,740.00
Jan 2023	37,228	64,036	1,437	3,005,108.50	7,348,570.00
Feb 2023	35,982	60,740	404	2,820,350.00	7,052,342.00
March 2023	41,243	70,152	837	3,140,995.00	8,076,548.00
April 2023	36,156	60,476	277	2,739,539.50	6,976,907.50
May 2023	37,689	63,324	1,078	2,981,320.00	7,292,182.50
June 2023	37,130	61,946	372	2,960,354.50	7,265,196.00
July 2023	36,919	61,677	2,310	2,927,712.50	7,341,693.00
Aug 2023	37,986	63,112	2,238	3,148,384.00	7,502,841.00
Sep 2023	36,342	61,107	3,287	2,914,686.00	7,460,133.00
Oct 2023	35,982	59,529	1,456	3,067,255.00	7,291,837.00
Nov 2023	34,967	63,639	439	2,964,358.00	7,660,521.00
Dec 2023	32,284	59,466	770	2,663,080.00	7,137,140.00
Jan 2024	37,913	65,821	493	3,061,992.00	7,607,098.00
Feb 2024	38,655	65,455	1,475	3,090,515.25	7,444,404.50
March 2024	41,809	71,533	830	3,205,587.25	8,310,482.00
April 2024	38,755	65,070	510	2,980,724.85	7,562,205.50
May 2024	38,374	64,853	1,158	2,949,616.25	7,556,339.75
June 2024	38,152	64,572	581	3,053,093.75	7,547,654,50
July 2024	40,303	67,217	1,347	3,411,220.25	7,925,874.70
Aug 2024	39,933	66,573	2,308	3,353,554.00	7,890,960.50
Sep 2024	40,229	67,987	810	3,399,943.00	8,279,997.50
Oct 2024	37,183	62,428	651	3,251,833.00	7,603,271.50
Nov 2024	30,137	54,819	1,612	2,514,987.75	6,747,938.50
Totals	1,718,071	2,917,692	52,890	133,885,837.85	345,200,859.70

ICTEA In-Office Payment History

Month	Transactions	Returns	Credit Card	ECheck
Aug 2023	32,342	0	8,612,869.14	420,640.20
Sep 2023	31,574	0	10,352,306.62	247,098.75
Oct 2023	28,484	0	7,677,666,67	180,769.01
Nov 2023	25,179	0	6,587,542.21	214,187.20
Dec 2023	23,524	0	6,134,151.64	140,174.65
Jan 2024	22,918	0	5,924,638.58	42,141.05
Feb 2024	29,698	0	7,548,155.25	66,250.35
March 2024	33,791	0	10,193,012.98	152,717.75
April 2024	32,466	0	8,607,695.13	230,253.43
May 2024	33,138	0	8,485,217.61	83,110.05
June 2024	28,984	0	7,269,204.12	82,590.10
July 2024	32,230	0	7,788,924.53	50,524.27
Aug 2024	35,112	0	9,467,520.55	244,425.40
Sep 2024	34,394	0	11,847,273.96	340,378.29
Oct 2024	32,321	0	8,530,945.23	480,176.71
Nov 2024	22,452	258	5,977,903.34	41,190.86
Totals	1,283,784	258	337,070,244.21	6,009,373.67

Appendix F – Glossary

This appendix defines key terms used throughout the RFP and system documentation, including but not limited to:

- **ICTEA** – Iowa County Treasurers E-Government Alliance.
- **ISCTA** – Iowa State County Treasurers Association.
- **Internet Clearing Account (ICA)** – Account used to receive and disburse all funds collected through the web portal.
- **Operational Account** – Account used for operational expenses funded by interest from the ICA.
- **Merchant Fee Account** – Account used for service fee deposits, merchant fees, bank fees, and ICTEA revenue.
- **Tax Sale Account** – Account used for online tax sale payments, bidder registration fees, and related vendor fees.
- **Escrow Payment** – Bulk property tax payments from escrow companies based on county parcel data.
- **Portfolio Payment** – Bulk property tax payments for multi-parcel portfolios managed by a subscriber.
- **Tax Sale Subsequent Payment** – Payment of subsequent taxes on parcels where the payer holds tax sale certificates.