

Interim Project Report – Fifty States Initiative – FGDC Category 3 Grant

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Agreement Number: 08HQAG0006
Project Title: Nebraska Spatial Data Strategic Planning – Laying the Foundation for Communication and Collaboration
Organization: Nebraska Department of Administrative Services, Office of the CIO, 501 S. 14th St., Lincoln, NE 68508, <http://www.cio.nebraska.gov/>
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Collaborating Organizations:

- **Nebraska GIS Steering Committee** (*name changed to Nebraska GIS Council*), Larry Zink, Office of the CIO, P.O. Box 95045, Lincoln, NE 68509, <http://nitc.nebraska.gov/gisc/> and numerous state and local agencies that participate in the GIS Council
- **Nebraska County Officials Association**, Larry Dix, 625 S 14th, Lincoln NE, 68508, <http://www.nacone.org/>
- **League of Nebraska Municipalities**, Lash Chaffin, 1335 L Street, Lincoln, NE 68508, <http://www.lonm.org/>.
- **Nebraska Association of Natural Resources Districts**, Dean Edson, 601 S. 12th St., Suite 201, Lincoln, NE 68508, <http://www.nrdnet.org/>
- **Metropolitan Area Planning Agency**, Paul Mullen, 2222 Cuming Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68102-4328, <http://www.mapacog.org/>
- **Nebraska GIS/LIS Association**, Eric Herbert, President, Sarpy County GIS, 1210 Golden Gate Dr - Ste 1130, Papillion, NE 68046, <http://www.gislis.org/>

Project Narrative

While staff support for numerous statewide GIS coordination activities remains very scarce (1 person), a considerable amount of work has been accomplished in the particular areas of focus outlined in Nebraska's CAP grant application. Highlights of those efforts are provided below. However, an RFP to hire a consultant to help us with the outreach and formal strategic planning process has not yet been released. Our RFP is currently in a review process and will hopefully be released prior to the end of April. As I noted in correspondence between myself and Milo Robinson and Brigitta Urban-Mathieux at the end of 2009, the Nebraska delay with this project has been a combination of too many projects and not enough resources and a very tight state budget situation that has included directions from the Nebraska Governor asking for serious spending restraint on travel, new initiatives, etc. I believe that we have now worked through these state budgetary restraint issues and ready to proceed with the RFP for strategic planning assistance. In the meantime, there has been considerable movement on many of the planning components that were outlined in our CAP application and some of those are outlined below.

Statewide Street Centerline/Address Database. For the first time, Nebraska now has a statewide street centerline-address database that includes all Nebraska roads and is based on current local government data. An initial statewide street centerline-address database has been compiled from data developed for the 93 Nebraska counties. The source data for this effort was 93 separate county datasets compiled by several different sources and with varying formats and standards. This effort has resulted in a normalized statewide dataset based on current local government data. The planning for the development of a statewide street centerline-address database was a significant component of our CAP proposal. A major enterprise-level planning process related to this database developed a consensus approach for this data

integration and an initial development plan. Agreements were reached between the key players to resolve outstanding data sharing issues. Two key agencies agreed to underwrite the estimated costs for initial data integration with the understanding that on-going funding for support and data upgrades will need to be arranged from other sources. Now that an initial statewide dataset has been developed, related planning efforts are now focused on how this dynamic dataset can be maintained.

Nebraska Geospatial Data Sharing and Web Services Network. Since the CAP grant application, a working prototype of a collaborative Nebraska GIS data sharing and web services network for Nebraska has been developed. Up until recently, Nebraska GIS users have operated in a very decentralized GIS environment with very little available in the way of statewide, enterprise-level operational services, upon which web-based data sharing and web-based services can be built. Based upon a collaborative project proposal, funding was secured from multiple sources for a two-year start-up project to develop a data sharing network focused on Nebraska-related geospatial data. A technical project manager has been hired to put into place the hardware, software and technical protocols necessary to establish the foundation for this data sharing network. A working prototype is now in place and efforts are currently underway to transition this prototype to a production service based at the Office of the CIO (<http://NebraskaMAP.gov>). An interagency governance structure for this service, known as the NebraskaMAP, has been established.

Update Nebraska GIS Steering Committee Structure. Restructuring the Nebraska GIS Steering Committee to include broader representation and closer coordination with the Office of the CIO was one of the objectives of the Nebraska CAP strategic planning application. Since the Nebraska CAP grant was awarded, the Nebraska GIS Steering Committee has undergone a significant restructuring. The GIS Steering Committee is a statutorily-defined body and so any significant changes in its structure require Legislative approval. As a result of recent legislation, the GIS Steering Committee was renamed as the GIS Council. It has been moved to be formally associated with the Office of the CIO and the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (the state's highest-level IT policy body). GIS Council membership has been expanded to include our state's emergency management agency, our public service commission (responsible for E911), formally defined representatives from our two major urban areas, a representative from our local state GIS professional association, and two additional at-large representatives. With this restructuring, we now have considerably more flexibility to involve local government representatives on our Council with two representatives for the county officials association, one municipalities representative, one natural resources district representative, and four at-large representatives. These structural changes will facilitate our effort to bring regional geographic representation to our GIS Council, as outline in our CAP proposal.

Statewide LiDAR Planning. An intergovernmental advisory committee has developed a working draft of business case for statewide LiDAR development over the next several years. Consistent with this LiDAR planning effort, there have been a couple of LiDAR acquisition efforts that have taken advantage of funding opportunities and the standards developed as a part of the business case. Last year (09) LiDAR data was acquired for approximately 1/5 of the geographic area of the state in an environmentally sensitive area of Nebraska. This year additional LiDAR acquisition is planned for the eastern Nebraska urban core as a part of collaborative aerial imagery project. In the meantime, the business case development effort continues to lay the groundwork for eventual statewide LiDAR acquisition.

Aerial Imagery Planning. Since the Nebraska CAP application was approved, planning for a 2010 collaborative state, local, and federal agency initiative to acquire high-resolution imagery (6-inch and 1-foot) for the urbanized areas of Nebraska has been completed and that imagery acquisition is currently underway. Also undertaken in this period, is a collaborative effort to "buy-up" the 2009 NAIP statewide imagery acquisition to also acquire the 4th band (near infrared). While these current imagery acquisition efforts are underway, there is a growing appreciation for the need for additional institutional coordination resources to support periodic collaborative imagery update acquisition. As more public entities express an interest in participating in these periodic endeavors it is clear that we lack the coordination resources to adequately support these efforts. Therefore an Imagery Working Group has been formed to make

recommendations for how Nebraska might better support future collaborative imagery acquisition efforts. This working group's recommendations will be included in the Strategic Plan.

Next Steps

Updating of Strategic Planning Objectives. Because of the delays in initiating the comprehensive Nebraska geospatial strategic planning effort, the Nebraska GIS Council felt it was important to revisit and update the planning objectives that were originally outlined in the Nebraska CAP application. The GIS Council, at its March 2010 meeting, reviewed and revised the strategic planning objectives to take into consideration the work that has occurred since the original application. This review of the planning objectives was undertaken to update the objectives in the RFP that will be used to solicit and hire a planning consultant. Two major planning objectives emerged as a result of this review: 1) the development of an overall strategic plan for Nebraska; and 2) the development of a business case to support the development of centralized, state government GIS service bureau and geospatial data sharing network/portal. As a result of this review and update the other objectives outlined in the original Nebraska CAP proposal will be maintained, but will take on a second tier focus. For example, the original Nebraska CAP proposal included a proposed development of a business case for a statewide street centerline-address database. Since the original CAP application, this statewide database has been developed. As part of the strategic planning process, we will still look at how this data will be maintained, but a full-blown business case no longer seems appropriate.

Completion of RFP for Strategic Planning Consultant Support. The key next step in our strategic planning process will be to complete the draft RFP and get it out on the street to solicit proposals for a contractor/consultant to assist with broader outreach and the strategic planning process. It is planned to have this RFP on the street no later than the end of April 2010. Following the hiring of a consultant/contractor we will then undertake the scheduling and hosting of regional strategic planning meetings and the use of the Data Inventory as a survey tool to solicit geospatial plans and needs from the broader geospatial user community.

The planned Business Case study for the geospatial data sharing network / GIS service bureau will build on the existing work of an advisory committee that has been working on developing a prototype data sharing network and has it in operation. While technical issues remain important, our major challenge now is building the institutional support necessary to sustain this network and its related services.

Revised Timeline

Obviously the RFP and the hiring of a strategic planning consultant aspect of our project are way behind schedule. This is a result of a desire on the part of the state's GIS community to move forward on other specific elements or components of our strategic planning process and therefore "pushing" those components to the head of the line in terms of priority. This, combined with administrative calls for serious state spending constraints, has resulted in a major delay this strategic planning effort. It is however, still our intent to move forward on the broader strategic planning process. As noted above, it is our current intention to have the RFP out for bids before the end of April 2010.

Proposed Revised Timeline

Apr 2010Release Strategic Planning RFP

*Dec 2010Finalize Strategic Plan

*Dec 2010Business Cases on Geospatial Data Sharing Network and GIS Service Bureau

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* I appreciate that the FGDC has already given us multiple extensions on this project and therefore we will endeavor to deliver our Strategic Plan and Business Case by Dec. 2010. However, I would suggest

that we could probably deliver a better product for all if we had the liberty of an April 2011 timeline for delivering the Final Strategic Plan and Business Case. If that is not feasible, particularly given our multiple delays up to this point, we will do our best with the Dec. 2010 deadline.

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