

2021-2026

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy  
(CEDS)



**NENEDD**

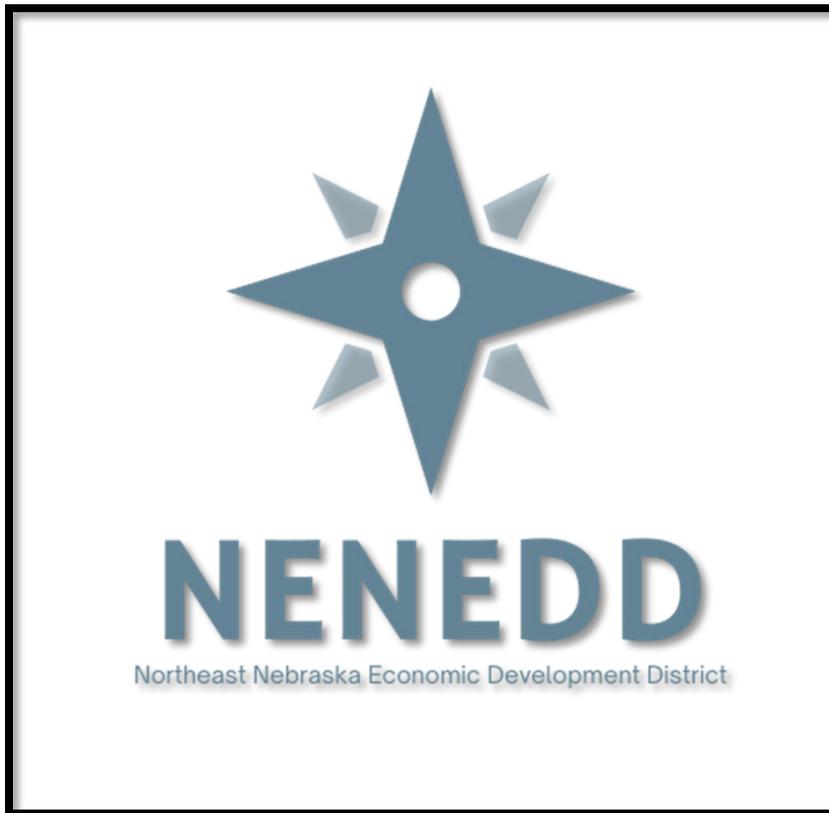
Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District

## Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Summary Background	
➤ Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District History	1
➤ Introduction of Region	2
✓ Economy	2
✓ Population	2
✓ Housing	2
✓ Labor Force Characteristics	3
➤ Natural Resources	4
✓ State/National Park, National Wildlife Refuges	4
✓ Designated or Proposed Wilderness Areas	5
✓ Wild or Scenic Rivers	5
✓ Endangered or Threatened Species	6
✓ Prime/Unique Agricultural Lands	6
✓ Superfund & Brownfield Sites	8
✓ Hazardous Chemicals	9
✓ Water Resources	9
✓ Wellhead Protection Areas	11
✓ Nonattainment Areas	11
✓ 100-year Floodplains	11
✓ Archeological, Historic, Prehistoric or Cultural Resource Sites	12
✓ Coastal Zone	12
✓ Environmental Justice	12
➤ Infrastructure	12
✓ Transportation	12
✓ Broadband	13
➤ Higher Education System	14
➤ Industry Clusters and Emerging & Weakening Industries	15
✓ Economic Clusters in the Region	15
 Chapter 2: Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT) Analysis	 17
 Chapter 3: Strategic Direction, Action/Implementation Plan & Evaluation Framework	 21
➤ Strategic Direction, Action/Implementation Plan	21
➤ Evaluation Framework	23
 Chapter 4: Economic Resilience	 28
Resiliency: 2019 Flooding & COVID-19	28
 Acknowledgements	 31
➤ Board Composition	33
➤ CEDS Strategy Committee & Staff List	33

## Chapter 1: Summary Background

### Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District History



In 1965, Congress enacted the Public Works and Economic Development Act for the purpose of restoring the economic health of areas burdened with high unemployment and low family income. Bolstering the living conditions of an economically distressed area must be achieved in large part by helping to nourish the conditions needed for industrial growth. New and growing industry means more jobs, larger payrolls, and better community services. To be eligible for assistance under the Public Works and Economic Development

Act, a potential project must be located within a redevelopment area or an Economic Development District.

Designed initially as an economic development facilitator, Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District (NENEDD) started operations in 1977 to serve Northeast Nebraska. NENEDD's first objective was to provide a series of meetings between communities in the area where common goals, objectives and problems could be discussed. The organization's founders believed the region's communities should work together because of their shared economic base.

The NENEDD Board of Directors sought to develop an action plan for economic growth in Northeast Nebraska. In November 1977, working with the assistance of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED), the District developed its first Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP – now known as the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs)). On the strength of the OEDP and other development activities, NENEDD attained recognition as an official Economic Development District by the United States Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) (per Title IV of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965). The recognized area originally consisted of 17 counties in Northeast Nebraska: Antelope, Boone, Burt, Cedar, Colfax, Cuming, Dixon, Dodge, Knox, Madison, Nance, Pierce, Platte, Stanton, Thurston, Washington and Wayne.

Because of Washington County's economic dependence on the Omaha Metro area, it was removed from the District's boundaries in 1996.

NENEDD is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors consisting of not less than nine (9) persons elected annually by the Council of Officials and may consist of elected or appointed officials from the Council of Officials membership. At least three (3) of the Board positions will be held by an elected official or a private sector representative as appointed by the Mayor from the three growth centers of Columbus, Fremont and Norfolk. The membership of the Council of Officials consists of one elective representative of each Active Member from cities and villages and two representatives - one elected, one non-elected - each of active member counties and the cities of Columbus, Fremont, and Norfolk. Elected officials comprise not more than sixty-five percent (65%) of the total membership of the Council of Officials.

## **Introduction of Region**

### **Economy**

Between 2016 and 2017 the unemployment rate in the Northeast Region decreased from 3.0 percent to 2.8 percent, or an employment rate of 97.2 percent. This compares to a decrease in the unemployment rate from 3.1 percent to 2.9 percent seen in the State of Nebraska. As of June 2021, the statewide unemployment rate was 2.7% compared to 2.4% in the Northeast Region.

The average earnings per job in the Northeast Region increased by \$4,083 between 2010 and 2017, or by 8.9 percent. This compares to an increase of \$2,036 in the State of Nebraska. Nebraska's average real per capita income was only \$1,975 less than the national average in 2019.

### **Population**

Between 2010 and 2017 the Northeast Region's population decreased by 1,134 persons, or by -0.5 percent, which compared to an increase of 5.1 percent for the State of Nebraska. By 2019, the statewide population estimate had risen another 5.9 percent, to 1,934,408 persons, while the northeast region saw an estimated decrease in population of less than one percent since 2000.

The total population of our region is 214,271 of which over 70,000 is concentrated in our three micropolitans Columbus (Platte County), Fremont (Dodge County), and Norfolk (Madison County). Of the 117 communities in the NENEDD region, 110 have a population less than 2,500.

### **Housing**

Between 2017 and 2018 the vacancy rate increased in the Northeast Region to a rate of 4.9 percent, which translates to an occupancy rate of 95.1 percent. In the State of Nebraska, the vacancy rates moved slightly higher this past year at 3.6 percent compared to 4.0 percent in 2019.

From 2016 to 2017 the number of single family units permitted in the Northeast Region increased to 345 units, or a change of 15.0 percent. Permitted single family units in the State of Nebraska increased to 5,436 units in 2017. In 2019 single family permits had fallen to 4,677. Building permits for 2020 in the Northeast Region totaled 1,034. Overall, permitted new construction in the State of Nebraska rose 2.1 percent from 2018 through 2019, increasing from 7,866 units in 2018 to 8,030 units in 2019.

Between 2010 and 2017 total housing units in the Northeast Region increased by 1,686 units, or by 1.8 percent. This compares to an increase of 40,775 in the State of Nebraska.

Sources: *Nebraska Investment Finance Authority – Northeast Region Dashboard* [www.nifa.org](http://www.nifa.org)

### **Labor Force Characteristics**

In the fall of 2017, the Nebraska Departments of Economic Development and Labor collaborated on two surveys designed to measure labor availability and employer needs in the Columbus, Fremont, and Norfolk areas of Nebraska.

The Bureau of Business Research at UNL also produced skills gap reports based on the results from the data received from individuals and employers in northeast Nebraska which summarize information about job skills in the Columbus, Fremont, and Norfolk areas and whether skills gaps are present.

Each full report listed provides detailed analysis and context about labor availability, hiring and training needs, and skills gaps. Below is a small sample of what can be obtained in the full reports found at: <https://networks.nebraska.gov/gsipub/index.asp?docid=802>

#### Labor Availability Reports

- Columbus - 30.9% of active job seekers believe that being overqualified is an obstacle to changing jobs or re-entering the workforce.
- Norfolk - 66.3% of potential job seekers reported being advanced in their ability to work independently.
- Fremont - 93.6% of potential job seekers were willing to attend employer-sponsored training in the next year.

#### Hiring and Training Needs Reports

- Columbus - 92.7% of businesses have hired or tried to hire in the last two years.
- Norfolk - 52.4% of responding businesses have at least one job opening.
- Fremont - Of the businesses that responded, there was an average of 2.8 current job openings.

#### Skills Gap Reports

The reports found that the skills gap in Northeast Nebraska was concentrated in blue collar occupations, particular for manufacturing production workers and truck drivers. There are also shortages of workers in a variety of service occupations such as retail sales, food preparation and office and administrative support.” said Dr. Eric Thompson of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Bureau of Business Research. “The reports found a need for more young workers to seek training in manufacturing and transportation occupations, and in selected skilled service occupations such as registered nurses and other health professionals.

## **Natural Resources**

### **Designated State or National Parks, or National Wildlife Refuges**

#### State Parks in the NENEDD Region:

##### *Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park*

Nearly 12 million years ago, volcanic ash engulfed this ancient watering hole, entombing innumerable animals. National Geographic has called it the Pompeii of prehistoric animals. Because of its scientific importance, the 360-acre historical park between Orchard and Royal was acquired in 1987 and is a joint project of the Game and Parks Commission and the University of Nebraska State Museum. See paleontologists dig the site and prepare fossils unearthed. Interpretive facilities include a visitor center and rhino barn.

*Niobrara State Park* is situated at the confluence of the Niobrara and Missouri Rivers on Nebraska’s northeastern border. The park offers visitors a wide array of outdoor experiences. This scenic, tranquil park offers cabins, both primitive and RV camping, picnicking, swimming, boat ramps, horseback trails, hiking, fishing and wildlife watching opportunities.

*Ponca State Park* is situated in the picturesque Missouri River bluffs in northeastern Nebraska. It is the eastern gateway to the 59-mile section of the Missouri National Recreational River, one of two picturesque, un-channelized stretches of the river bordering Nebraska. Comfortable lodging, unique events and sweeping views of the river have made Ponca state park a popular destination for all types of family gatherings, from family vacations to weddings.

#### National Park Service Sites:

There are 5 National Park Service Sites in Nebraska. Two of them are located in the NENEDD Region:

##### *Missouri National Recreational River*

This national recreational site is shared by Nebraska and South Dakota. It was initially designated as one of the national park service sites in Nebraska in 1978. However, the site was expanded in 1991 to include a 39-mile section of the river: from Fort Randall Dam to Niobrara. These two sections of the river that were added to the property are the only sections in the river that remain un-channelized or undammed.

The property is managed by the US National Park Service and covers 33,800 acres in area. There is also a cultural value to the property since this has been the site of human settlement in the past 10,000 years. In fact, archaeologists had been able to gather ruins of weapons and tools, former homes, ceremonial and other religious objects close to the river. Many archaeologists believe that the river and its surrounding property served as a pathway for the American Indians, steamboat captains, Lewis and Clark expedition, and many other settlers.

### *Niobrara National Scenic River*

This is another unit of the national park service sites in Nebraska that encompasses a river: the Niobrara River. This river stretches over 76 miles and along four counties in Nebraska: Cherry, Brown, Keya Paha and Rock counties. When it was designated as a national scenic river in 1991, the aim was to protect and preserve the outstandingly remarkable values of the river and its surrounding area. This includes the high-quality water resources in the river, wildlife and fish, the scenery, and the fossil resources within and near the river.

Furthermore, the Niobrara River has been developed to offer recreational facilities for tourists. With nearly 55,000 tourists who visit the river each year, there are plenty of recreational opportunities available. Canoeing in the river remains to be the most popular activity among tourists though; in fact, the river has been named as one of the top 10 rivers for canoeing in the country, according to Backpack magazine.

There are no National Wildlife Refuges located in the NENEDD Region.

### **Designated or Proposed Wilderness Areas Under the Wilderness Act**

There are no designated or proposed wilderness areas in the NENEDD Region.

### **Wild or scenic rivers**

Nebraska has approximately 79,056 miles of river, of which 197 miles are designated as wild & scenic – approximately 2/10ths of 1% of the state's river miles. Sections of the Missouri and the Niobrara Rivers run through the NENEDD region.

### *Missouri River*

This designation consists of two separate segments—from the Fort Randall Dam downstream to



the backwaters of Lewis and Clark Lake and from Gavins Point Dam downstream to Ponca State Park. These are among the last free-flowing segments of the once "Mighty Mo" and still exhibit the river's

dynamic character in its islands, bars, chutes and snags.

### *Niobrara River*

Perhaps the epitome of a prairie river, the Niobrara is known as a biological crossroads. Although passing primarily through private land, it also flows through the Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge and the largest single holding of The Nature Conservancy where bison have been reintroduced. The upper portion provides excellent canoeing.

### **Endangered or Threatened Species**

Nebraska has 27 threatened and endangered species, which can be viewed at, <http://outdoornebraska.gov/endangeredspecies/>. Click on a species to learn more about it. For a given county-species combination, the range of the given species covers some portion of the county (from all to very little). Included in the list are all federal and state listed species.

Species status:

FE = Federal Endangered, FT = Federal Threatened

SE = State Endangered, ST = State Threatened



### **Prime/Unique Agricultural Lands**

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) was passed by Congress as part of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 (Public law 97-98). The FPPA is intended to minimize the impact Federal programs have on the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. For the purpose of FPPA, farmland includes prime farmland, unique farmland, and land of statewide or local importance.

Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, oilseed, and other agricultural crops with minimum inputs of fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and labor, and without intolerable soil erosion, as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture. It may include lands currently used to produce livestock and/or timber. Unique farmland is land other than prime farmland that is used for production of specific high-value food and fiber crops, as determined by the Secretary. Examples of such crops include citrus, tree nuts, olives, cranberries, fruits, and vegetables. Farmland that is of statewide or local importance other than prime or unique farmland is used for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, or oilseed crops, as determined by the appropriate State or unit of local government agency or agencies, with the approval of the Secretary of Agriculture.

According to the information presented in the table below, the agriculture sector is a major industrial sector in northeast Nebraska. Farming and the value of farmland take on extra importance within the realm of northeast Nebraska's economy. The total cropland by number of farms decreased in every county. The total cropland by number of acres declined by 6% for the region as a total. In contrast, the total sales (dollars per farm) shows an over 100% increase for the region.

NENEDD Region Agriculture Census Highlights by County						
County	Total Cropland by Number of Farms		Total Cropland by Number of Acres		Total Sales (\$1,000) (Average \$ per Farm)	
	2017	% change since 2012	2017	% change since 2012	2017	% change since 2012
Antelope	704	-8	491,922	4	529,502	-1
Boone	524	-19	432,231	z	473,778	4
Burt	521	-7	298,103	-4	263,744	16
Cedar	784	-17	473,500	2	423,060	9
Colfax	516	-7	262,364	2	364,450	8
Cuming	804	-12	363,505	z	1,131,997	5
Dixon	567	-1	279,245	-7	271,575	61
Dodge	676	-12	337,346	2	270,502	-17
Knox	956	-11	600,822	-4	288,490	-8
Madison	659	-12	353,414	z	276,087	-9
Nance	375	6	220,091	6	155,302	6
Pierce	625	-8	343,711	4	255,468	-2
Platte	836	-11	383,635	-10	688,562	6
Stanton	571	-8	266,226	5	208,390	14
Thurston	309	-16	232,077	-6	207,256	5
Wayne	485	-6	281,283	z	223,811	10
<b>NENEDD Region</b>	<b>9,912</b>	<b>-149</b>	<b>5,619,475</b>	<b>-6</b>	<b>6,031,974</b>	<b>107</b>

Source: Census of Agriculture, 2017  
z-less than half of the unit shown

The table below illustrates in average reported land values per acres by type. Hayland saw the biggest increase in land value from 2013 to 2021 with an increase of \$605 per acre. Dryland Cropland (irrigation potential) saw the biggest decrease in value with an approximate \$850 per acre.

### Average Reported Land Values Per Acre by Type; 2021 and 2013

Northeast	Average Land Values	
	2013 (\$)	2021 (\$)
Dryland Cropland (no irrigation potential)	5,995	5765
Dryland Cropland (irrigation potential)	7,050	6,200
Grazing Land (tillable)	3575	3245
Grazing Land (nonbillable)	1850	2120
Hayland	2625	3230

Gravity Irrigated Cropland	7,850	7,225
Center Pivot Irrigated Cropland	8,715	8,145

Source: Nebraska Databook  
Preliminary February 1, 2021

**Superfund & Brownfield Sites**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports there are four Superfund National Priority list sites located in the NENEDD region (EPA Region 7):

Lindsay Manufacturing Company – Current Site Status

In 2008, EPA determined that additional cleanup activities were necessary. The PRP delineated the groundwater plume, installed groundwater monitoring wells, analyzed source areas and conducted on-site vapor intrusion sampling. The extent of the groundwater contamination is delineated. Vapor intrusion was investigated at buildings on site and at residences downgradient of the site and does not present an unacceptable risk to the occupants. Source identification under Building 1 is ongoing. In fall of 2017, the PRP performed additional sampling in the ditch to further delineate the contaminated zone.

10<sup>th</sup> Street Site – Columbus – Current Site Status



EPA has conducted several Five-Year Reviews of the site’s remedy. These reviews evaluate whether the remedies put in place protect public health and the environment, and function as intended by site decision documents. The most recent review concluded that response actions at the site are in accordance with the remedy selected by EPA and that the remedy

continues to be protective of human health and the environment. The next Five-Year Review will be in 2022.

Sherwood Medical Company – Norfolk – Current Site Status

The GET system was shut down in 2017 under a pilot study based on the reduced VOC removal rates. Since system startup in 1999, the GET system has removed 1,192 lbs. of VOC mass. The mass removal rates have decreased significantly to an estimated mass removal of 6.84 lbs. in 2015. Quarterly groundwater monitoring is being conducted to ensure the plume is stable. The fourth Five-Year Review was completed in September 2018. The review determined the groundwater remedy currently protects human health and the environment because contaminated



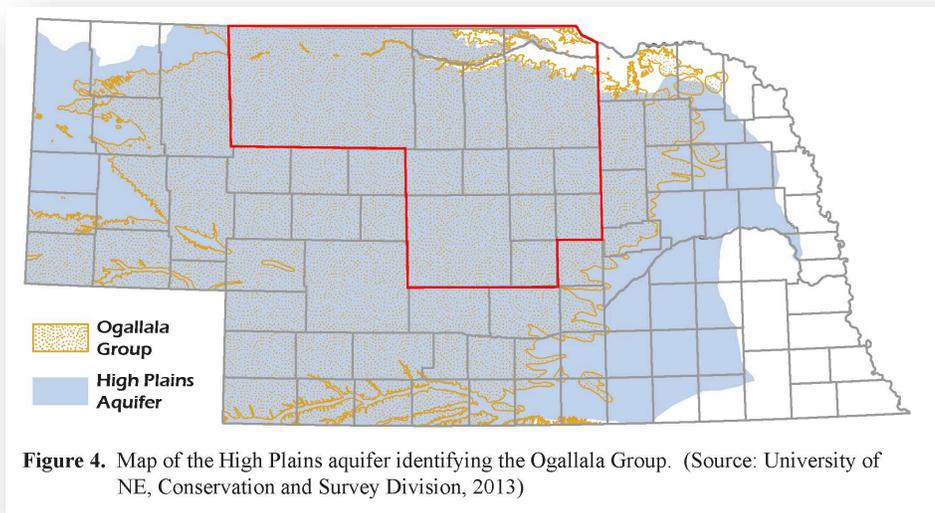
(NEPA) and its related laws. As such, each project will be evaluated as it relates to the fair treatment of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income

### **Water Resources (Sole Source Aquifers, Surface Water, Ground Water)**

The High Plains Aquifer is a conglomeration of many separate groundwater bearing formations such as the Brule, Arikaree, Ogallala, Broadwater, and many more recent unnamed deposits (including the Sand Hills). Many of the unnamed deposits are found mainly within the stream valleys (recent or ancient) and are a common source of groundwater. No single formation completely covers the entire state. However, when these numerous formations and deposits are combined, they form the High Plains Aquifer, covering almost 90% of Nebraska. There are parts of eastern Nebraska where the High Plains Aquifer is not present. These areas rely heavily on groundwater from buried ancient river channels, recent alluvial valleys (Missouri, Platte, and Nemaha Rivers) or surface water intakes from the Missouri River.

The 2001 Nebraska Legislature passed LB329 (Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-1304) which, in part, directed the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) to report on groundwater quality monitoring in Nebraska. Reports have been issued annually since December 2001. The text of the statute applicable to this report follows: “The Department of Environmental Quality shall prepare a report outlining the extent of ground water quality monitoring conducted by natural resources districts during the preceding calendar year. The department shall analyze the data collected for the purpose of determining whether or not ground water quality is degrading or improving and shall present the results to the Natural Resources Committee of the Legislature beginning December 1, 2001, and each year thereafter. The districts shall submit in a timely manner all ground water quality monitoring data collected to the department or its designee. The department shall use the data submitted by the districts in conjunction with all other readily available and compatible data for the purpose of the annual ground water quality trend analysis.” The section following the statute quoted above (§ 46-1305), requires the State’s Natural Resources Districts to submit an annual report to the legislature with information on their water quality programs, including financial data. That report has been prepared by the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts and is being issued concurrently with this groundwater quality report.

Groundwater can be defined as water that occurs in the open spaces below the surface of the earth. In Nebraska useable groundwater occurs in voids or pore spaces in various layers of geologic material such as sand, gravel, silt, sandstone, and limestone. These layers are referred to as aquifers where such geologic units yield sufficient water for human use. In parts of the state, groundwater may be encountered just a few feet below the surface, while in other areas; it may be a few hundred feet underground. This underground water “surface” is usually referred to as the water table, while water which soaks downward through overlying rocks and sediment to the water table is called recharge. The amount of water that can be obtained from a given aquifer may range from a few gallons per minute (which is just enough to supply a typical household) to many hundreds or even thousands of gallons per minute (which is the yield of large irrigation, industrial or public water supply wells).



### Wellhead Protection Areas

Nebraska’s Wellhead Protection (WHP) Program is a voluntary program which assists communities and other public water suppliers in preventing contamination of their water supplies. The Nebraska Legislature passed LB 1161 in 1998 ([Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-1501 – 46-1509](#))\*, authorizing the Wellhead Protection Area Act. This Act sets up a process for public water supply systems to use if they choose to implement a local Wellhead Protection plan. The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) is the lead agency for Wellhead Protection (WHP) Plan approval. The goal of Nebraska’s Wellhead Protection Program is to protect the land and groundwater surrounding public drinking water supply wells from contamination. Since approximately 85% of Nebraskans receive their drinking water from groundwater, preventing groundwater contamination is vital.

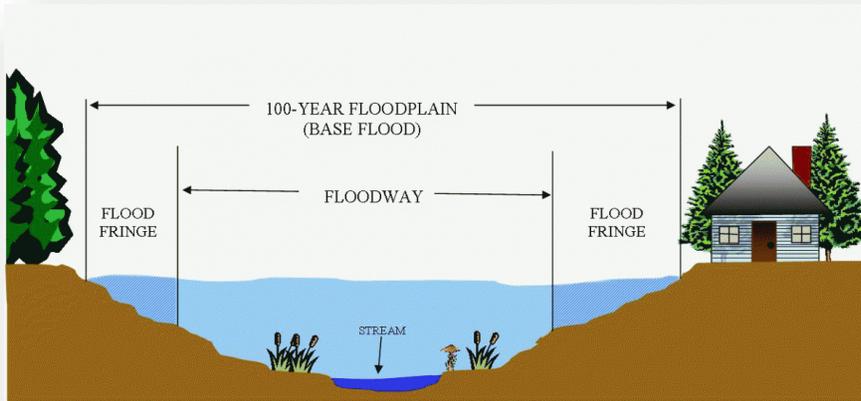
The Wellhead Protection planning process includes identifying the land surrounding the public water supply wells to be protected, identifying potential sources of groundwater contamination within this area, and managing the potential contaminant sources. Emergency, contingency, and long term plans are also developed for the community water supply, all the while educating and involving the public. A list of the current wellhead protection areas in NENEDD’s region can be found at [www.deq.ne.gov/NDEQProg.nsf/OnWeb/WHPA](http://www.deq.ne.gov/NDEQProg.nsf/OnWeb/WHPA)

### Nonattainment Areas

There are no nonattainment areas in the NENEDD Region.

### 100-year Floodplains

Flooding continues to be the main source of property and monetary losses from natural disasters. A significant amount of the NENEDD area is located in a 100-Year Floodplain, which has affected the ability of communities to grow. Currently, all but two of NENEDD’s 16 counties are mapped (Cedar and Dixon Counties are not mapped). For unmapped areas, FEMA Community Status Book can provide information on flood hazards: [www.fema.gov/fema/csb.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/fema/csb.shtm)



### **Archeological, Historic, Prehistoric or Cultural Resource Sites**

All projects that utilize state and/or federal funding are required to undertake an environmental review to ensure compliance of a project relative to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and its related laws. As such, the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) is contacted prior to the beginning of all projects. Known archeological, historic, prehistoric or cultural resource sites that could function as a major constraint to any proposed economic development projects would be identified at that time.

### **Coastal Zone**

Nebraska is not located within a designated coastal zone area and therefore does not have a federally approved Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Plan.

### **Environmental Justice**

All projects that utilize state and/or federal funding are required to undertake an environmental review to ensure compliance of a project relative to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and its related laws. As such, each project will be evaluated as it relates to the fair treatment of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income.

### **Infrastructure**

#### **Transportation**

The three interstate highways that are easily accessible from Northeast Nebraska are I-80, I-29, and I-90. US Highways 81 and 275 have been designated as four-lane expressways in Nebraska. Northeast Nebraska has commercial airline service in Omaha, Sioux City, Yankton, and Sioux Falls.

Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe are the rail service providers for Northeast Nebraska. In addition, Nebraska Central is a short line railroad that connects with these main line rail service providers. The majority of goods are supplied by the more than 70 truck lines serving the region.

The Nebraska Department of Roads Surface Transportation Program Book for Fiscal Years 2019-2024 is part of a continuing plan to preserve and to improve Nebraska's highway and bridges in

our state. Over \$157 million in federal, state and local funds are allocated for road and bridge improvements in the NENEDD Region for Fiscal Year 2019. The five year plan (2019-2024) consists of over \$420 million in infrastructure improvements in the NENEDD Region. These improvements will maintain the roadways that are so vital to the sustainability of the region.

## **Broadband**

The Rural Broadband Task Force was created to “review issues relating to availability, adoption, and affordability of broadband services in rural areas of Nebraska” by LB 994, which was passed by the Legislature and signed by Governor Ricketts on April 17, 2018. The bill was introduced by Senator Curt Friesen, Chair of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. The task force is chaired by Ed Toner, CIO for the State of Nebraska and Chair of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission. This report presents the findings and recommendations of the task force as required by LB 994.

### **Broadband Availability**

Eighty-nine percent of Nebraskans—but only 63% of rural Nebraskans—have fixed broadband of at least 25 Mbps down/3 Mbps up available, according to the latest data available from the FCC (June 2018).

### **Broadband Data and Mapping**

Current state and federal broadband mapping efforts likely overstate broadband coverage and need to be improved. Nebraska’s broadband map currently utilizes Form 477 data released by the FCC. Using Form 477, fixed broadband providers report the type of technology and maximum



advertised speeds in Mbps up and down by census block to the FCC. The use of census block reporting can overstate broadband availability in large census blocks. Mobile wireless providers provide polygons of their service area and the minimum speeds that are publicly available. The FCC is currently investigating at least one national mobile wireless provider for overstating coverage. The FCC’s Digital Opportunity Data Collection program, which was approved on August 1, 2019 and federal legislation being considered would largely address the shortcomings of the current fixed broadband data collection method.

Click here for the [Executive Summary](#) and [Full Report](#).

## Higher Education System

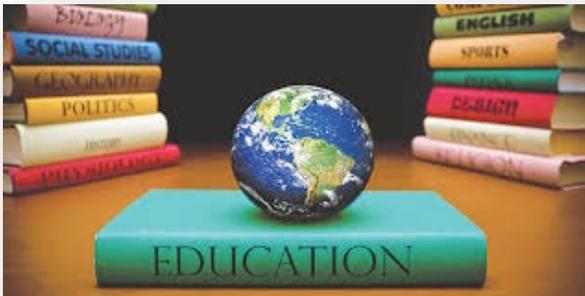
In Nebraska institutions of higher education are categorized into five types:

- University of Nebraska
- Nebraska State College System
- Nebraska Community Colleges
- Nebraska Independent Colleges & Universities
- For-Profit/Career Schools

In the NENEDD region, we are fortunate to have Northeast Community College with campuses located in Norfolk and West Point, as well as Wayne State College located in Wayne.

Northeast Community College is recognized as a premier educational leader and partner, with student completion and success being their highest priority. The Norfolk campus has a total enrollment of over 5,000 students. The student-faculty ration is 17-to-1. Students can earn associate degrees and certificates in 26 different fields. Popular programs include: Health Professions and Related Programs, Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities, and Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences.

Wayne State College is a four-year public college in the Nebraska State College System in Wayne, Nebraska. Wayne State is nationally ranked and has received recognition for affordability, academic excellence, and community service. They are a leading comprehensive college in Northeast Nebraska distinguished by providing quality academic programs in a



personalized setting. They're located on a 128-acre campus and boast a 20:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Wayne State College is best known for their friendly atmosphere, affordability, academic excellence, and successful graduates.

WSC began as a college primarily for teacher education but now offers more than 130 undergraduate programs and several graduate programs. Education

students are provided with valuable opportunities for hands-on teaching experience. Business, criminal justice and pre-professional programs are also popular at WSC. They have a solid reputation in educating future healthcare professionals as well, thanks to a high placement rate in the allied health fields at University of Nebraska Medical Center, as well as other regional schools.

## Industry Clusters and Emerging & Weakening Industries

### Economic Clusters in the Region



The Nebraska Department of Economic Development, in collaboration with the Nebraska Department of Labor, selected the Battelle Technology Partnership Practice (TPP) to conduct the *Growing Jobs, Industries, and Talent: A competitive Advantage Assessment and Strategy for Nebraska* – a strategic plan of action with concrete action steps. The assessment offers a detailed, fact-based analysis of Nebraska's industry

performance, technology drivers and talent base. Nebraska has a diverse set of twelve industry clusters that are driving the state's economy:

- Agricultural Machinery
- Agriculture & Food Processing
- Biosciences
- Business Management & Administrative Services
- Financial Services
- Health Services
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Precision Metals Manufacturing
- Renewable Energy
- Research, Development & Engineering Services
- Software & Computer Services
- Transportation, Warehousing & Distribution Logistics

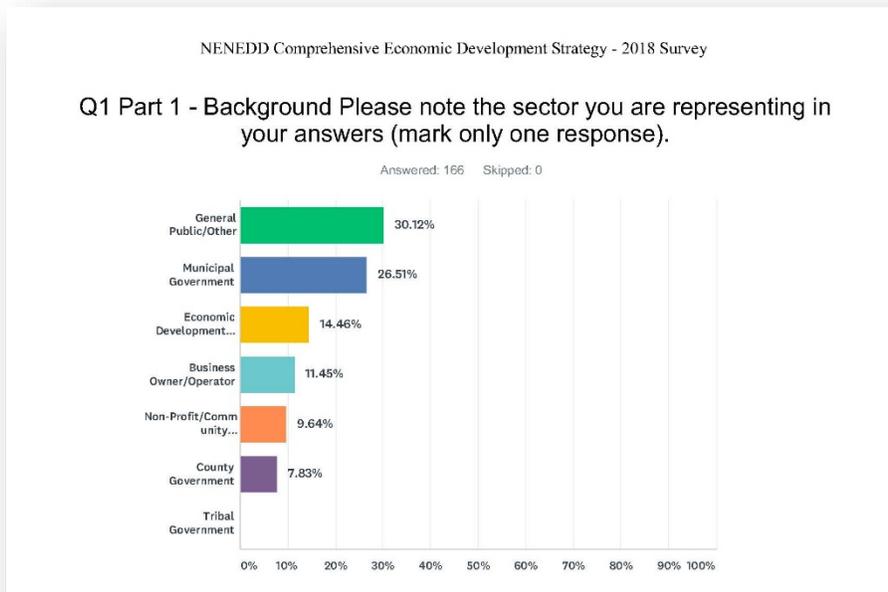
Through town hall meetings and online surveys in the NENEDD region, it was determined the region has the following growth sectors/clusters:

- Agriculture
- Health Care
- Manufacturing
- Technology
- Tourism/Recreation

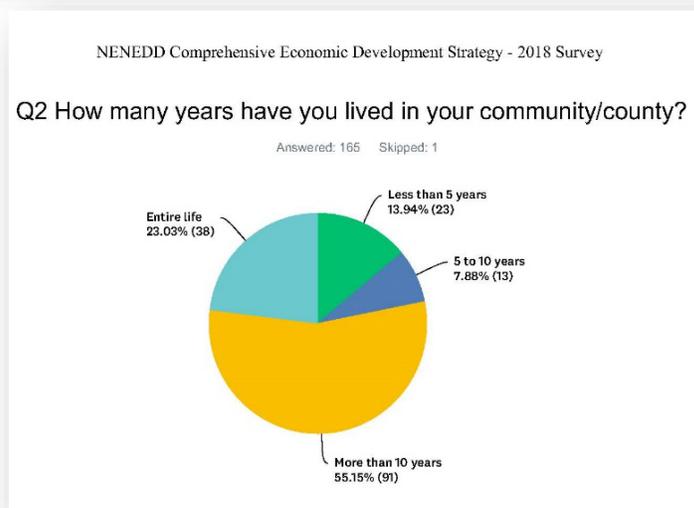
These growth sectors/clusters are consistent with the results of the Battelle Study and in line with the state's industry clusters. NENEDD will continue to assist and facilitate economic development and job creation/retention throughout central Nebraska by providing technical planning assistance in community development activities such as:

- Assisting in the coordination of entrepreneurial training programs for new and existing businesses, including minorities, to help foster the creation and retention of higher paying jobs.
- Assisting member jurisdictions in marketing and recruitment of new business/industry.
- Assisting member jurisdictions in implementing job creation projects and programs, especially as they may relate to applying for EDA assistance and carrying out the projects and programs funded with such assistance.
- Assisting its member jurisdictions in the development of short-term goals through needs assessments, attitude surveys, and strategic plans, their implementation and their evaluation
- Assisting its member jurisdictions in development of long-range plans, including comprehensive planning and zoning, housing needs assessments, blight studies and redevelopment plans
- Assisting members in identifying available federal, state, local and private resources to assist in the completion of community and economic development activities that will assist in rural revitalization efforts

## Chapter 2: Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT) Analysis



An in-depth analysis of NENEDD's regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats was conducted during late summer and early fall of 2018. The timeline for the research conducted was as follows:



### CEDS Milestones & Timeline

*July – September 2018* CEDS Kickoff/Community Survey through September 30<sup>th</sup>

*October 2018* Public town hall meetings begin to review survey results and gather additional feedback

*December 2018* Results from online survey and town hall meetings submitted to Steering Committee for review

*January – February 2019* Begin data analysis/CEDS Call for Projects/Draft SWOT/Action Plan & Criteria

*March – June 2019*-Address and include Flood Disaster/Recovery Items

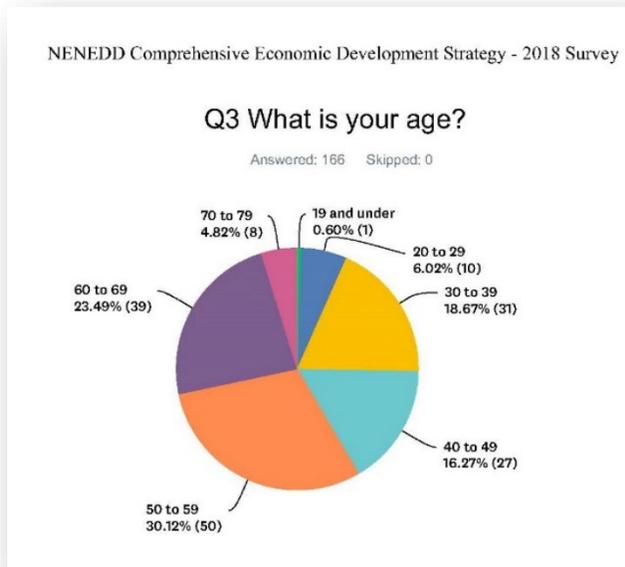
*August 2019*-Draft CEDES available for 30-day public comment period

*September 2019*- NENEDD Board of Directors adopts plan & CEDES is submitted to EDA

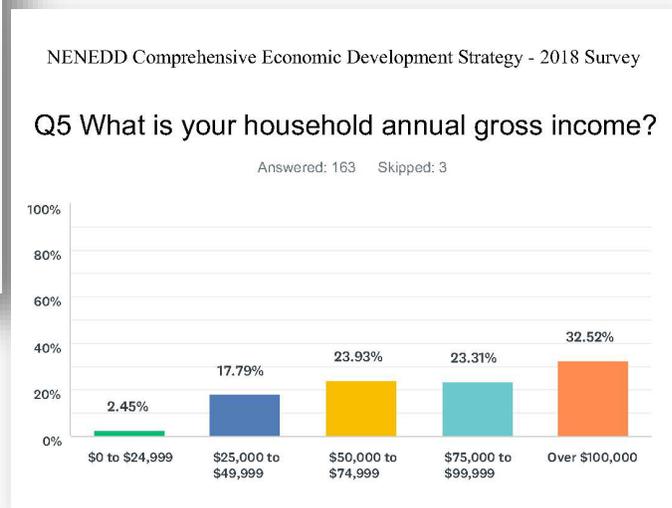
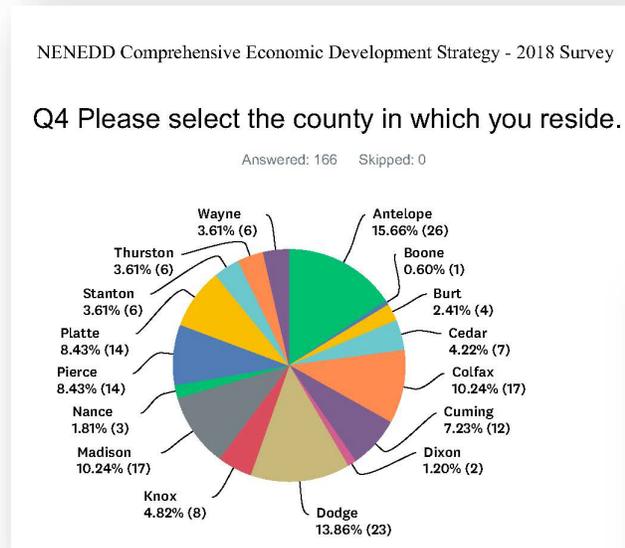
March – July 2021 Update to address/include Flood Disaster/Recovery Items and COVID-19 information as well as getting all of the Nebraska Economic Development District’s CEDS on the same timeline

August 2021-Draft CEDS draft available for 30-day public comment period

September 2021- NENEDD Board of Directors adopts plan & CEDS is submitted to EDA



The online survey tool “Survey Monkey” was utilized to gather initial input on the regional economy. A link to the survey was uploaded to the NENEDD website, embedded on our Facebook page, and distributed via email to all members and partners encouraging them to complete and promote the survey within their communities. In addition, press releases and news blasts were sent to surrounding media outlets promoting the survey. Two hundred thirty (230) responses were received from July to September 2018. Once the results were gathered, this information was disseminated throughout the region via seven town hall meetings, our Facebook page, the NENEDD website and email distribution to members and partners. Additional input was gathered from the CEDS Strategy Committee where the survey results were shared, discussed and prioritized.



## Top Strengths

Q8 What are the four most important resources or strengths your community/county has to attract or encourage community/economic development?

- 1) Quality of Life
- 2) Community & Economic Development (Land Availability/Local Incentives/Strong Government Leaders/Economic Development Organizations)
- 3) Education/Schools
- 4) Business/Industry

During the townhall meetings it was noted the biggest strength was quality of life. The citizens in rural Nebraska said the small town atmosphere, togetherness, cost of living are huge assets. There is available land for future development as well as a good business and industry base with exceptional educational opportunities.

## Top Weaknesses

Q9 What are the four biggest challenges your community/county faces in attracting or encouraging community/economic development?

- 1) Community & Economic Development (Lack of Federal & State Funding/Dilapidated Buildings/Shovel ready sites)
- 2) Housing
- 3) Workforce/People
- 4) Quality of Life

While the quality of life was a big asset it was also viewed as top weaknesses as it relates to workforce recruitment and getting new citizens to move to rural Nebraska. Even though there is plenty of land for development a top weakness is the lack of capital to make those sites shovel ready for development as well as a need for affordable housing to fit the workforce.

## Opportunities/Threats

Q7 Opportunities/Needs of Community/County Services When it comes to the availability and quality of infrastructure and services in your community/county, how would you rate the following?

	MEETS OUR NEEDS	IMPROVEMENTS ARE NECESSARY	SERIOUS PROBLEMS EXIST	NOT APPLICABLE	NO OPINION	TOTAL
Availability of single family homes	5.49% 9	42.68% 70	49.39% 81	0.61% 1	1.83% 3	164
Availability of apartment units	7.98% 13	40.49% 66	43.56% 71	4.29% 7	3.68% 6	163
Overall condition of housing stock	6.13% 10	51.53% 84	39.88% 65	0.61% 1	1.84% 3	163
Overall affordability of housing	18.18% 30	44.85% 74	30.30% 50	2.42% 4	4.24% 7	165
Retail and shopping services	23.64% 39	44.85% 74	27.88% 46	1.21% 2	2.42% 4	165

As our communities plan for growth the top opportunities that need to be addressed are availability of housing and retail and shopping. As the survey indicated these did not rate well as our communities look to grow.

Q10 Please list three specific community/economic development projects or opportunities that should be addressed over the next five years.

- 1) Infrastructure (Water/Sewer/Streets/Sidewalks)
- 2) Housing (Single and Multi Family)
- 3) Community Facilities (Community Centers/Library/Pools/Parks)
- 4) Business/Industry

As our communities plan for growth the need to update the current infrastructure, create housing opportunities, provide needed services, such as daycare, pools, parks are crucial to providing a place people want to work, live and enjoy.

Through the SWOT analysis the NENEDD goals and objectives were developed to assist in the retention and continuation of the positive attributes of the region and address the opportunities, weaknesses and threats. The next section discusses the goals/objectives and specific projects.

## Chapter 3: Strategic Direction, Action/Implementation Plan & Evaluation Framework

### Strategic Direction, Action/Implementation Plan

1. NENEDD will continue to adhere to EDA regulations and perform activities that will bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen NENEDD's regional economy.
  - a. Submit in hard and electronic copy via Grants Online (GOL) an Updated/Revised Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and CEDS Checklist following the CEDS Guidelines and include a resiliency section. Submit document to EDA by September 30, 2021. The CEDS will have a 30-day public comment period and be approved by the Board prior to submission to EDA.
  - b. Submit any revisions to the Updated/Revised CEDS to the EDA Denver Regional Office and Economic Development Representative (EDR) based on EDA's review of the initial document.
  - c. Continue implementing the goals and action plans in the current CEDS.
  - d. NENEDD will continue to promote planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation and infrastructure investments.
  - e. Provide expertise for and maintain rapport with four Tribes in the NENEDD region (Omaha Tribe, Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, Santee Sioux Nation, Winnebago Tribe).
  - f. Encourage the four Tribes in the NENEDD region to participate in the CEDS process.
  
2. Business & Industry - NENEDD will continue to encourage economic development and job creation/retention throughout Northeast Nebraska.



- a. Assist in the coordination of entrepreneurial training programs for existing and new businesses, including minorities to help foster the creation and retention of higher paying jobs.
- b. Continue to assist member jurisdictions in marketing and recruitment of new business/industry.
- c. Assist member jurisdictions in implementing job creation projects and programs, especially as they may relate to applying for EDA assistance and carrying out the projects and programs funded with such assistance.
- d. NENEDD will encourage the creation of additional business and industrial parks and will assist in identifying the resources needed for the construction of the needed infrastructure to adequately supply these parks.
- e. Encourage the four Tribes in the NENEDD region to participate in business revolving loan fund.

3. Community & Economic Development – NENEDD will continue to provide technical planning assistance in community development activities.



- a. Continue to participate in broadband regional forums and serve as part of the team to develop the broadband plan for Northeast Nebraska.
- b. Assist member jurisdictions in the development of short-term goals through needs assessments, attitude surveys, and strategic plans.
- c. Assist member jurisdictions in development of long-range plans, including comprehensive planning and zoning, housing needs assessments, blight studies and redevelopment plans.
- d. Assist members in identifying available federal, state, local and private resources to assistance in the completion of community and economic development activities that will assist in rural revitalization efforts.
- e. Provide reliable data regarding labor supply and market in the region as well as other demographic data to assist in job creation efforts.
- f. Encourage member communities to maintain rapport with the four Tribes in the NENEDD region regarding community and economic development.

4. Housing – NENEDD will assist members in identifying available federal, state, local and private resources to provide safe, affordable, quality housing in Northeast Nebraska.

- a. Assist member jurisdictions in identifying the housing needs in their community through housing studies and surveys.
- b. Assist member jurisdictions in pinpointing buildable lots for new construction activities.
- c. Continue to assist in the rehabilitation of existing housing when applicable.
- d. Encourage the four Tribes in the NENEDD region to participate in regional housing program.



# Evaluation Framework

Evaluation Framework									
CEDS Strategy	Goal	Objective	Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Lead Organization	Resources	Timeline	Jobs Created	Jobs Retained	Evaluation
Administration: EDA Regulations & Activities	1. Adhere to EDA regulations & perform activities to diversify & strengthen NENEDD's regional economy.	a. Submit CEDS Annual Reports in a timely manner	High	NENEDD	EDA/NENEDD	2021-2026	N/A	N/A	All required reports are submitted by the deadlines and NENEDD continues favorable Peer reviews from EDA
		b. Implement goals & action plans in current CEDS	High	NENEDD	EDA/NENEDD	2021-2026	50 (Average from past 3 years)	91 (Average from past 3 years)	Job creation/retention in the region and the generation of significant private and public sector investment
		c. Promote planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation & infrastructure investments	High	NENEDD	EDA/NENEDD	2021-2026	N/A	N/A	Continued quarterly committee meetings with momentum in accomplishing the goals and objectives in the scope of work & CEDS

CEDS Strategy	Goal	Objective	Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Lead Organization	Resources	Timeline	Jobs Created	Jobs Retained	Evaluation
<b>Business &amp; Industry</b>	2. Encourage economic development & job creation/retention throughout Northeast Nebraska	a. Assist in the coordination of entrepreneurial training programs for existing and new businesses, including minorities to help foster the creation and retention of higher paying jobs	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Federal, State and Local agencies as appropriate (EDA/USDA/HUD-CDBG/Nebraska Enterprise Fund/Regional Revolving Loan Funds & other funding sources as they are identified)	2021-2026	We estimate 150 jobs created annually over the next three years of this scope of work.	We estimate 200 jobs retained annually over the next three years of this scope of work.	Job creation/retention in the region and the generation of significant private and public sector investment
		b. Assist in marketing and recruitment of new business/industry	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Federal, State and Local agencies as appropriate (EDA/USDA/HUD-CDBG/Nebraska Enterprise Fund/Regional Revolving Loan Funds & other funding sources as they are identified)	2021-2026	We estimate 150 jobs created annually over the next three years of this scope of work.	We estimate 200 jobs retained annually over the next three years of this scope of work.	Job creation/retention in the region and the generation of significant private and public sector investment
		c. Assist in implementing job creation projects and programs, especially as they may relate to applying for EDA assistance and carrying out the projects and programs funded with such assistance	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Federal, State and Local agencies as appropriate (EDA/USDA/HUD-CDBG/Nebraska Enterprise Fund/Regional Revolving Loan Funds & other funding sources as they are identified)	2021-2026	We estimate 150 jobs created annually over the next three years of this scope of work.	We estimate 200 jobs retained annually over the next three years of this scope of work.	Job creation/retention in the region and the generation of significant private and public sector investment
		d. Encourage the creation of additional business and industrial parks and assist in identifying the resources needed for the construction of the needed infrastructure to adequately supply these parks	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Federal, State and Local agencies as appropriate (EDA/USDA/HUD-CDBG/Nebraska Enterprise Fund/Regional Revolving Loan Funds & other funding sources as they are identified)	2021-2026	We estimate 150 jobs created annually over the next three years of this scope of work.	We estimate 200 jobs retained annually over the next three years of this scope of work.	Job creation/retention in the region and the generation of significant private and public sector investment

CEDS Strategy	Goal	Objective	Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Lead Organization	Resources	Timeline	Jobs Created	Jobs Retained	Evaluation
Community & Economic Development	3. Continue to provide technical planning assistance in community development activities	a. Continue to participate in broadband regional forums and serve as part of the team to develop the broadband plan for Northeast Nebraska	Medium	Nebraska Broadband Initiative	Unknown	On-going	N/A	NA/	Reliable access to high-speed internet service across the state
		b. Assist in the development short-term goals through needs assessments, attitude surveys and strategic plans	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/EDA	2021-2026	Unknown	Unknown	Significant private & public sector investment for community and economic development projects. Potential job creation/retention in the region.
		c. Assist in development of long-range plans, including comprehensive planning and zoning, housing needs assessments, blight studies and redevelopment plans	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/EDA	2021-2026	Unknown	Unknown	Significant private & public sector investment for community and economic development projects. Potential job creation/retention in the region.
		d. Assist in identifying available federal, state, local and private resources to assist in the completion of community and economic development activities that will assist in rural revitalization efforts	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Federal, State and Local agencies as appropriate (EDA/USDA/HUD-CDBG/Nebraska Enterprise Fund/Regional Revolving Loan Funds & other funding sources as they are identified)	2021-2026	Unknown	Unknown	Significant private & public sector investment for community and economic development projects. Potential job creation/retention in the region.
		e. Provide reliable data regarding labor supply and market in the region as well as other demographic data to assist in job creation efforts	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Federal, State and Local agencies as appropriate (EDA/USDA/HUD-CDBG/Nebraska Enterprise Fund/Regional Revolving Loan Funds & other funding sources as they are identified)	2021-2026	We estimate 150 jobs created annually over the next three years of this scope of work.	We estimate 200 jobs retained annually over the next three years of this scope of work.	Job creation/retention in the region and the generation of significant private and public sector investment

<b>CEDS Strategy</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Priority (High/Medium/Low)</b>	<b>Lead Organization</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Jobs Created</b>	<b>Jobs Retained</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Housing</b>	4. Assist members in identifying available federal, state, local and private resources to provide safe, affordable, quality housing in Northeast Nebraska	a. Assist in identifying housing needs through housing studies and surveys	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Federal, State and Local agencies as appropriate (HUD-CDBG/State of Nebraska Trust Funds & Rural Workforce Housing Funds/Regional Housing Revolving Loan Funds & other funding Sources as they are identified)	2021-2026	N/A	N/A	Housing grant applications will be submitted and funded to address housing needs in individual communities and the region.
		b. Assist in identifying buildable lots for new construction activities	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Member Jurisdictions	2021-2026	N/A	N/A	An inventory listing of buildable lots will be kept on file.
		c. Assist in the rehabilitation of existing housing when applicable	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Federal, State and Local agencies as appropriate (HUD-CDBG/State of Nebraska Trust Funds & Rural Workforce Housing Funds/Regional Housing Revolving Loan Funds & other funding Sources as they are identified)	2021-2026	N/A	N/A	Housing rehabilitation programs will assist families in the region.

CEDES Strategy	Goal	Objective	Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Lead Organization	Resources	Timeline	Jobs Created	Jobs Retained	Evaluation
<b>Flooding &amp; Pandemic</b>	5. assist members in identifying available federal, state, local and private resources to help with the recovery efforts.	a. Continue to attend community meetings and monitor recovery.	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Member Jurisdictions	2021 - ongoing	N/A	N/A	Continued meetings with momentum in accomplishing the goals and objectives in the scope of work & CEDES
		b. Assist member jurisdictions in identifying funding to assist with recovery efforts.	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Member Jurisdictions	2021 - ongoing	N/A	N/A	Continued meetings with momentum in accomplishing the goals and objectives in the scope of work & CEDES
		c. Continue to work/partner with Federal and State Agencies.	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Federal, State and Local agencies as appropriate (FEMA, NEMA, EDA, USDA, HUD-CDBG/State of Nebraska agencies and other sources as they are identified)	2021 - ongoing	N/A	N/A	Continued meetings with momentum in accomplishing the goals and objectives in the scope of work & CEDES
		d. Participate in the Nebraska Joint Field Office (JFO) meetings.	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/Federal, State and Local agencies as appropriate (FEMA, NEMA, EDA, USDA, HUD-CDBG/State of Nebraska agencies and other sources as they are identified)	2021 - ongoing	N/A	N/A	Continued meetings with momentum in accomplishing the goals and objectives in the scope of work & CEDES
		e. Utilize NENEDD and NED, Inc. business loan programs to assist business	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/NED, Inc RLF programs	2021 - ongoing	N/A	N/A	Business programs will assist businesses in the region affected by the flooding.
		f. Utilize NED, Inc's housing programs to assist homeowner and renters.	High	NENEDD	NENEDD/NED, Inc RLF programs	2021 - ongoing	N/A	N/A	Housing programs will assist families in the region affected by the flooding.

## Chapter 4: Economic Resilience

### Resiliency: 2019 Flooding & COVID-19

#### Baseline Conditions and Impact Assessment Report



The State of Nebraska suffered record-breaking damage as a result of a severe winter storm (Winter Storm Ulmer), straight-line winds, and flooding in early 2019. The purpose of the Baseline Conditions and Impact Assessment Report (or “report”) is to summarize these impacts so that Nebraska’s leaders and communities can make informed decisions about long-term recovery.

The findings of this report provide context for the reader to understand the needs that may exist across the state as a result of gaps in available assistance. A clear understanding of these gaps will assist community leaders in identifying and leveraging resources, programs, and funding opportunities to address the outstanding needs of disaster survivors.

The categories of analysis in this report align with the working groups activated to support recovery coordination at the state level, known as Recovery Support Functions (RSFs):

- Public Infrastructure and Facilities
- Housing
- Economy and Agriculture
- Health and Social Services
- Community Planning and Capacity Building
- Natural and Cultural Resources

This report is one of two major documents that the Governor’s Task Force for Disaster Recovery and the associated RSFs are developing following the 2019 events to increase the state’s ability to withstand the impacts of future disasters. The second major document, the Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan, will build on the findings presented in this report to generate a series of recommendations for long-term recovery informed by stakeholders across the state.

The findings of this report will be used to responsibly prioritize and allocate finite resources in each of the categories assessed to meet the needs of disaster survivors as effectively as possible. The Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan will represent the formal record of this resource prioritization and allocation effort.

The intended audience for this report includes: State of Nebraska agencies, Federal Government partners, private sector donors, and impacted communities. Certain elements of this report are intended to help the state maintain eligibility and access to sources of federal funding to support

recovery efforts. Beyond informing the intended audience of the comprehensive scope of the disasters, this report serves to guide the development of Nebraska's Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan, the roadmap for long-term recovery informed by stakeholders across the state.

The complete report can be viewed [here](#).

### **Nebraska Emergency Management Agency Economic Ecosystem Analysis**

This report examines the effects of the 2019 disasters (severe winter storm, straight-line winds, and flooding) within the context of pre-disaster economic conditions across Nebraska's seven economic development districts:

- Central Nebraska Economic Development District
- Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District
- Panhandle Area Development District
- West Central Nebraska Economic Development District
- Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency
- Southeast Nebraska Development District and
- South Central Economic Development District

Three counties are not represented in the economic development districts above, although they are still included in the report: Dakota County, which is part of the Siouland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council; Butler County, and Lancaster County.

This analysis will supplement the state's Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan and its implementation. By analyzing the impacts of the 2019 disaster across key economic drivers: private sector activity, infrastructure, and housing and examining the pre-disaster economic outlook, strategies for recovery can be tailored to regional priorities. This report is intended to provide local and regional decision-makers with a tool to aid in the prioritization of recovery objectives and strategies based on pre-disaster priorities.

The document is organized into subsections that examine the state as a whole; each of the state's seven economic development districts; plus, the three individual counties mentioned above. Sections 0 through 2.9 present a summary of:

- The region's pre-disaster economic outlook and priorities based on the corresponding comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS). For counties that do not belong to an economic development district, research about pre-disaster priorities was conducted using other planning documents, described further in those sections.
- The severity of regional disaster impacts across the areas mentioned above: infrastructure, housing, and the economy. 2 These sectors were selected both because of their significance to the state's economy, and because county-level data was available to support analysis of the entire state.
- The regional economic ecosystem based on the pre-disaster priorities and severity of impacts.

- References to specific strategies in the *Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan* that speak to that region’s unique priorities, challenges, and long-term recovery considerations.

To view the full analysis click [here](#).

### **State of Nebraska Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan**

In the spring of 2019, Nebraska suffered widespread and devastating impacts from Winter Storm Ulmer and subsequent record-breaking flooding that continued through the summer. The economic impacts—estimated at approximately \$1.2 billion—spanned across sectors and caused direct, indirect, and induced damage (State of Nebraska Baseline Conditions and Impact Assessment Report). Following the disasters, Governor Ricketts directed the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to convene a group of representatives from agencies across the state, requesting “total cooperation in these long-term recovery efforts” to support building Nebraska back stronger than it has ever been before.

To guide the state through the process of recovery, NEMA convened the Governor’s Task Force for Disaster Recovery, activated six Recovery Support Functions, and established a Local Impacts Group to help organize recovery and resilience discussions and planning efforts across sectors and levels of governance. These groups collaboratively identified the overarching outcomes they hope to achieve through long-term recovery efforts.

The culmination of this planning effort is the heart of the *Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan*, which is summarized in the following pages (pages 3-16). The *Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan* is divided into seven sections: one for each of the six Recovery Support Functions activated following the 2019 disasters, and a seventh section specifically to address complex, cross-sectoral challenges. This document serves as a condensed version of the *Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan*, providing a high-level overview of the state’s long-term recovery goals, objectives, and strategies.

Each section of the plan is guided by a goal, with associated objectives, strategies, and tactics. The goals of each Recovery Support Function, and for each corresponding section of the document are as follows:

- **Cross-Cutting Issues (Community Planning and Capacity Building):** Identify issues, strategies, and potential solutions that require collaboration across multiple Recovery Support Functions, agencies, and stakeholders to effect recovery, resiliency, and capacity building.
- **Infrastructure Systems:** Support the efficient assessment, restoration, and revitalization of infrastructure systems (including but not limited to: roads, highways, dams, bridges, railways, tunnels, public drinking water systems, wastewater systems, sewer systems, electric generating facilities and transmission, fuel storage and associated pipelines, septic tanks, and levees).
- **Economic:** Return economic and business activities to a healthy state and develop new business and employment opportunities that contribute to a sustainable and economically viable community.

- **Agricultural:** Support the efficient restoration and revitalization of agricultural systems after a disaster by ensuring that the public sector has the necessary systems in place to support disaster recovery and that the agricultural community can access the information, funding, and resources necessary to recover.
- **Health and Social Services:** Restore services that protect health and safety and restore the mental, social, and physical health of the impacted population through the mitigation of disaster-created impacts.
- **Natural and Cultural Resources:** Protect natural, cultural, and historic places (e.g., parks, cemeteries, museums) through recovery projects to preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, and restore disaster-damaged resources.

As the state and federal government create programs to assist our member communities NENEDD will help with local strategic planning and grant applications to assist in the recovery efforts.

Click here to review the [Executive Summary](#) and the [Full Report](#).

### COVID-19 Impact on Nebraska Businesses Reports



The State of Nebraska, the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce, the University of Nebraska and several local project partners came together to develop and share the Nebraska Business Response Survey to understand the impact coronavirus (COVID-19) is having on the revenue and workforce of organizations across the state and find the best ways to support our business and nonprofit community during this crisis.

The first round of the survey launched Wednesday, April 15, 2020, at 2 P.M. and closed Friday, April 24, 2020, at 5 P.M. At the end of the first survey, respondents were asked if they would be willing to participate in future studies on this topic. On June 16 an email invited 2,251 business and non-profit operators to complete the round two survey. After three reminder emails, the survey closed on June 8, 2020. Nine hundred-five responses were received to the second round of the survey.

When reviewing the results of the survey be aware of the caveats. First, the survey results can only represent the views of those that responded during the time the survey was open. We recognize that the current global pandemic is rapidly evolving and thus viewpoints may evolve as well. Second, not all respondents answered all questions. Thus, the percentages and the number of respondents are given for most data points in the report and do vary across questions. Finally, in some places results may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

As the state and federal government create programs to assist our member communities NENEDD will help with local strategic planning and grant application to assist in the recovery efforts NENEDD has assisted with and EDA CARES ACT RLF and has assisted with several CDBG-CV grants to help with recovery efforts. Click here to review the [Full Report](#).



# NENEDD

Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District

## Acknowledgements

### Board Composition

#### Government Representatives

<u>Name</u>	<u>Government</u>	<u>Position</u>
Jerry Engdahl	Platte County	County Supervisor
Rich Jablonski	City of Columbus	City Councilman
Charlie Bahr	City of Columbus	City Councilman
Judy Mutzenberger	Cuming County	County Commissioner
Troy Uhlir	Madison County	County Commissioner
Gary Jackson	City of Norfolk	City Councilman
Sally Ganem	City of Fremont	City Councilwoman

#### Non-Government Representatives/Private Sector Representatives

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company</u>	<u>Position</u>
Brad Albers	Hilltop Restaurant	Private Business Owner
Blake Denton	Bank First	West Point Community
Shannon Stuchlik	Midwest Bank	Vice-President

#### Stakeholder Organization Representatives

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Position</u>
Tina Biteghe Bi Ndong	West Point Chamber of Commerce	Executive Director
Dan Kathol	Hartington Economic Development	Board Member
Loren Kucera	Nebraska Business Dev. Center	Center Director
Mike Frank	Northeast Community College	Retired
Megan Weaver	Wayne Community Housing	Executive Director
Jim McCarville	Northeast Community College	Acct Executive-Center for Enterprise

## **CEDS Strategy Committee**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Position</u>
Brad Albers	Hilltop Restaurant	Private Business Owner
Tina Biteghe Bi Ndong	West Point Chamber of Commerce	Executive Director
Jerry Engdahl	Platte County	County Supervisor
Blake Denton	Bank First	West Point Community
Rich Jablonski	City of Columbus	City Councilman
Charlie Bahr	City of Columbus	City Councilman
Dan Kathol	Hartington Economic Development	Board Member
Loren Kucera	Nebraska Business Dev. Center	Center Director
Mike Frank	Northeast Community College	Retired
Judy Mutzenberger	Cuming County	County Commissioner
Troy Uhlir	Madison County	County Commissioner
Gary Jackson	City of Norfolk	City Councilman
Sally Ganem	City of Fremont	City Councilman
Shannon Stuchlik	Midwest Bank	Vice-President
Megan Weaver	Wayne Community Housing	Executive Director
Jim McCarville	Northeast Community College	Acct Executive-Center for Enterprise

## **Staff**

Thomas L. Higginbotham, Jr., Executive Director  
Tina M. Engelbart, Deputy Director  
Kristen Rosner, Fiscal Officer  
Jeff Christensen, Business Loan Specialist  
Grace Petersen, Planning & Administrative Assistant  
Martin Griffith, Housing Specialist  
Mandy Gear, Housing Loan Specialist  
Jan Merrill, Community Planner  
Andrea Larson, Community Planner  
Kirk Brown, Community Planner  
Riah Deane, Community Planner