NENEDD

Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2027-2032

A regionally driven strategy for economic opportunity, resilient communities, and shared prosperity.

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Executive Summary

The Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District (NENEDD) serves a diverse 16-county region encompassing Antelope, Boone, Burt, Cedar, Colfax, Cuming, Dixon, Dodge, Knox, Madison, Nance, Pierce, Platte, Stanton, Thurston, and Wayne Counties. The region includes the Columbus, Fremont, and Norfolk micropolitan areas as well as more than one hundred smaller communities. Its economy is supported by agriculture and value-added production, manufacturing, healthcare, education, transportation, utilities, finance, construction, retail and service businesses, and a strong network of local governments and community organizations.

This 2027-2032 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a regionally owned roadmap for strengthening economic opportunity and resilience. It updates the 2021-2026 CEDS, incorporates NENEDD's previous annual progress reports, and is grounded in a 2026 regional survey and five public town hall meetings. The strategy follows U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) expectations for a summary background, SWOT analysis, strategic direction and action plan, evaluation framework, and integration of economic resilience.

What the region said

The 2026 survey received 188 responses from all 16 counties. Respondents represented municipal and county governments, Tribal government, economic development organizations, businesses, nonprofit and community organizations, and the general public. More than 84% had lived in their community for more than ten years or their entire lives. Five town hall meetings – in Creighton, Wayne, Schuyler, Fullerton, and Zoom – provided additional discussion of strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats.

Housing was the most consistent regional concern. Respondents also emphasized attracting and retaining young people and families, recruiting workers and employers, improving public infrastructure, expanding childcare, and strengthening local retail and service businesses. Town hall participants described strong schools, healthcare access, community pride, work ethic, collaboration, and recreation as competitive advantages, while noting workforce shortages, volunteer fatigue, demographic change, rising costs, and limited capacity in smaller communities.

Strategic priorities for 2027-2032

- Housing: Increase the supply, diversity, affordability, quality, and development readiness of housing.
- Workforce, childcare, and population attraction: Strengthen talent pipelines, childcare capacity, youth retention, and the ability of communities to welcome workers and families.
- Infrastructure and connectivity: Modernize streets, water, wastewater, stormwater, broadband, transportation, and development-ready sites.
- Business vitality and entrepreneurship: Support business retention, expansion, succession, entrepreneurship, access to capital, and economic diversification.
- Quality of life and community capacity: Invest in placemaking, recreation, downtowns, civic participation, planning, and local implementation capacity.
- Resilience through collaboration: Improve preparedness, continuity, regional partnerships, and the capacity to withstand and recover from shocks and long-term stresses.

Recent implementation results

NENEDD's 2025-2026 annual progress report demonstrates an active implementation platform. During that reporting year, NENEDD reported 115 jobs created and/or retained; approximately $10.2 million in private-sector investment and $4 million in public-sector investment; more than $3 million in grant and loan awards for NENEDD and member communities; and technical assistance to nearly 125 business clients. These results provide the baseline for the new evaluation framework.

> **REGIONAL VISION** By 2032, Northeast Nebraska will be a resilient, connected, and opportunity-rich region where communities have the housing, workforce, infrastructure, business environment, leadership, and quality-of-life assets needed to support employers, attract and retain families, sustain essential services, and adapt to changing conditions.

1. Summary Background

NENEDD history and purpose

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, 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), NENEDD developed its first Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP – now known as the 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.

NENEDD's purpose remains much the same as it was at its creation: to bring communities together around shared economic and community-development needs and to help move locally identified priorities toward implementation. Today, NENEDD provides community planning, grant development and administration, business financing and technical assistance, housing assistance, data support, and regional coordination. Its value is especially important in communities with limited staff or volunteer capacity. NENEDD contracts with Northeast Economic Development, Inc. (NED, Inc.) a Nonprofit Development Organization (NDO) governed by a separate board of directors to manage the organization and its programs.

The NENEDD Board and the NED, Inc. Board serve jointly as the CEDS Steering Committee. They are supported by NENEDD staff and informed by local and Tribal governments, economic development organizations, businesses, educational institutions, healthcare providers, utilities, nonprofit and community organizations, state and federal agencies, and residents.

Introduction to the region

Northeast Nebraska includes the Columbus, Fremont, and Norfolk micropolitan areas, county seats, small towns, rural townships, and Tribal communities. The district's larger employment and service centers are connected to more than one hundred smaller communities through commuting, healthcare, education, retail, agricultural processing, transportation, and public-service networks. The resulting economy is diverse, but regional growth is constrained when housing, childcare, workforce availability, infrastructure, or local implementation capacity does not keep pace.

Western / Central	Northern / Eastern	Micropolitan anchors
Antelope, Boone, Nance, Pierce, Platte, Stanton	Burt, Cedar, Colfax, Cuming, Dixon, Dodge, Knox, Madison, Thurston, Wayne	Columbus, Fremont, Norfolk

Economy

The State of Nebraska includes NENEDD’s territory in the designated Northeast Economic Development Region (EDR). Since 2023, there were 7,811 worksite establishments in the Northeast EDR, which was a 0.1% decrease from the previous year. Median earnings were $66,225, which was a 7.7% increase from the previous year. The top five growth industries in the Northeast EDR for industries employing more than 100 individuals at Nebraska worksites include:

- Arts, entertainment, and recreation
- Educational services
- Information
- Retail trade
- Wholesale trade

The projected industry sector growth based on expected employment levels between 2020-2030 in the Northeast EDR shows a significant increase in manufacturing, health care and social assistance, transportation and warehousing, educational services (including state and local government), and accommodation and food services.

Economic Development Region	Industry	2020 Projected Employment	2020-2030 Projected Change in Employment	Projected Percentage Changed Between 2020-2030
Northeast EDR	Manufacturing	26,725	1,722	6.89%
	Health care and social assistance	15,143	1,395	10.51%
	Transportation and warehousing	5,900	857	16.99%
	Educational services	12,395	759	6.52%
	Accommodation and food services	6,374	670	11.75%

Agriculture and value-added production, manufacturing, healthcare, education, construction, transportation and warehousing, utilities, finance, retail, and local services form the region's economic base. NENEDD's 2025-2026 annual progress report documented 115 jobs were created/retained, approximately $10.1 million in private investment, $4 million in public investment, more than $3 million in grant and loan awards, and technical assistance to nearly 125 business clients. Those results demonstrate a strong implementation platform, but the 2026 survey also found concern about household affordability, business conditions, local services, and community fiscal capacity.

Population, income, education, and labor-force characteristics

County	Population	Median age	Median HH income	Labor-force participation	Unemployment	HS graduate+
Antelope	6,305	42.4	$66,105	63.5%	1.7%	93.5%
Boone	5,356	42.6	$74,947	62.1%	1.2%	93.9%
Burt	6,740	44.3	$63,685	59.0%	1.1%	92.1%
Cedar	8,315	41.9	$73,578	68.2%	1.7%	96.4%
Colfax	10,641	35.5	$82,530	70.0%	1.3%	79.4%
Cuming	8,975	40.9	$71,104	68.5%	2.2%	91.5%
Dixon	5,545	43.3	$72,454	66.4%	2.4%	85.9%
Dodge	37,351	39.3	$74,329	66.2%	3.4%	88.4%
Knox	8,363	44.3	$64,636	61.8%	3.6%	92.6%
Madison	35,532	37.4	$63,128	67.3%	3.0%	91.1%
Nance	3,324	43.1	$65,179	65.5%	3.6%	92.6%
Pierce	7,325	39.6	$72,357	65.8%	2.1%	94.6%
Platte	34,716	37.7	$71,552	69.1%	2.0%	90.3%
Stanton	5,796	40.5	$80,687	66.2%	0.7%	94.1%
Thurston	6,627	29.2	$69,177	65.4%	10.0%	93.9%
Wayne	9,844	30.0	$66,215	67.3%	4.3%	95.4%
REGION	200,755	—	—	66.6%	2.8%	90.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020-2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, tables B01003, B01002, B19013, B23025, and B15003. Regional percentages are calculated from county-level ACS counts. The ACS unemployment estimate is a five-year period estimate and is not directly comparable to a monthly unemployment rate.

The ACS estimates place the 16-county population at 200,755. The regional labor-force participation rate was approximately 66.6%, while the estimated unemployment rate was 2.8%. Low unemployment is positive, but it also intensifies recruitment challenges for employers, healthcare providers, schools, childcare businesses, local governments, and essential services. Differences among counties, especially in age, educational attainment, and unemployment, also support targeted rather than one-size-fits-all responses. Approximately 6.7% of families in Northeast Nebraska have an income below the poverty level, which is below the statewide average of 7%.

The Nebraska Department of Labor's 2026 Building Nebraska's Future Workforce: A Statewide Landscape Assessment reports that Northeast Nebraska has a limited labor pool and faces challenges attracting and retaining workers. For January 2026, the Nebraska Department of Labor gave a preliminary unemployment rate of 3% for the state, a 0.1% increase from January 2025. The department's 2026 Nebraska Economic Analysis reports that the high manufacturing concentration in Northeast Nebraska signals the area as a powerhouse exporter that drives the state's primary production.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides detailed analysis and context about labor availability for NENEDD's three micropolitan areas.

Micropolitan Area	Unemployment Percentage Rate	Estimated Civilian Labor Force	Top Local Industries	Average Annual Salary
Columbus	3.6	39,300	Manufacturing and production	$50,255
Fremont	2.9	20,201	Agribusiness, food processing, manufacturing	$49,000
Norfolk	2	26,000	Manufacturing, health care, education	$51,848

Housing characteristics

Housing is the region's clearest cross-cutting constraint. Although the ACS counted 88,188 units, vacancy does not necessarily mean that homes are available, habitable, appropriately located, or affordable. More than 85% of survey respondents rated housing affordability and single-family availability as needing improvement or presenting serious problems; 84.41% said the same about housing-stock conditions. Rising construction and rehabilitation costs, limited contractors, appraisal gaps, infrastructure needs, financing conditions, and older homes that are not economically feasible to rehabilitate, all affect production.

County	Housing units	Vacancy rate	Owner-occupied	Median owner value
Antelope	3,149	16.3%	79.0%	$130,300
Boone	2,555	14.3%	81.9%	$173,700
Burt	3,333	12.1%	75.0%	$147,000
Cedar	3,899	11.7%	79.6%	$185,000
Colfax	3,997	7.3%	76.3%	$144,700
Cuming	4,153	8.3%	68.9%	$178,800
Dixon	2,515	13.0%	76.5%	$155,900
Dodge	16,725	9.3%	66.9%	$208,600
Knox	4,521	24.3%	78.4%	$127,700
Madison	15,510	6.8%	65.5%	$208,500
Nance	1,606	16.4%	72.9%	$132,000
Pierce	3,136	9.4%	78.2%	$196,000
Platte	14,325	4.7%	71.6%	$223,900
Stanton	2,483	6.9%	78.3%	$195,400
Thurston	2,290	13.1%	61.0%	$114,600
Wayne	3,991	6.0%	61.3%	$221,600
REGION	88,188	9.5%	70.8%	$176,250

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020-2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates, tables B25001, B25002, B25003, and B25077. Regional rates are calculated from county-level ACS counts.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Department of Agricultural Economics Center released the Nebraska Farm Real Estate Report in June 2026. The report shows that Northeast Nebraska had a 1-2% decline in overall land market values alongside cash market values in 2026. The Norfolk Daily News reported in April 2026 that the U.S. residential housing market experienced stagnation in many parts of the country since the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, with affordability being a major hurdle for prospective buyers. However, home sales across the U.S. began to rise in early 2023 into 2024, but fell 8.3% in January 2026, compared with the previous year. While Nebraska's median sale price for a home is much lower at $296,500 than the national average of $422,921, the one-year change in median sale price (2024-2025) has increased by 3.8+% in Nebraska as compared to a 1.6+% increase nationally. In Nebraska, the median number of days a home remains on the market for sale is 29.8, much lower than the national average of 48.7 days.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020–2024 American Community Survey, the 16-county NENEDD region contained an estimated 88,188 housing units, of which 8,336 were classified as vacant, resulting in an overall vacancy rate of approximately 9.45%. However, the overall rate includes seasonal and recreational properties, units that have been sold or rented but are not yet occupied, and properties classified as "other vacant." The region's calculated rental vacancy rate was approximately 6.01%, while the homeowner vacancy rate was only 0.52%. The low homeowner vacancy rate supports stakeholder concerns regarding the limited availability of homes for purchase, even in counties reporting comparatively high overall vacancy rates.

- 1,490 were available for rent
- 297 were available for sale
- 2,038 were for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use
- 3,093 were classified as "other vacant"
- The balance had been rented out or sold but were not yet occupied, or were used by migrant workers

Natural resources

Northeast Nebraska's natural resources are economic assets as well as planning considerations. Fertile soils support crop and livestock production; rivers and groundwater support agriculture, communities, and industry; and parks, wildlife habitat, and cultural resources support tourism and quality of life. Projects developed under this CEDS should use current site-specific data and complete all applicable federal, state, Tribal, and local reviews.

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 Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the University of Nebraska State Museum. Paleontologists can be seen throughout the year digging the site and preparing 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.

National Wildlife Refuges

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

Designated or Proposed Wilderness Are4as Under the Wilderness Act

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

Wild and 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 opportunities.

The Missouri National Recreational River is the principal federally protected river reach within the district. The Niobrara National Scenic River is adjacent to, rather than wholly within, the NENEDD service area. Project planning near river corridors should account for flood hazards, habitat, recreation, cultural resources, bank stability, water quality, and federal or state permitting.

Threatened and endangered species

Nebraska has 27 threatened and endangered species, which can be viewed at the Nebraska Game and Parks website. Navigate to the Threatened and Endangered Species page, and 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. 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 and 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 tables below, agriculture is a major industrial sector in Northeast Nebraska. Regionally, the total value of land per acre has decreased by 1%.

Agricultural resources and production

County	Farms	Land in farms (ac.)	Cropland (ac.)	Irrigated (ac.)	Products sold
Antelope	664	525,448	395,148	259,766	$772.8M
Boone	485	409,932	313,409	168,062	$674.8M
Burt	553	249,577	223,434	39,098	$300.4M
Cedar	850	451,579	376,702	157,994	$610.2M
Colfax	456	212,605	191,468	64,476	$431.4M
Cuming	832	362,361	316,217	55,579	$1,583.9M
Dixon	515	275,098	202,873	29,723	$340.9M
Dodge	694	337,094	312,885	117,489	$459.6M
Knox	950	482,157	283,896	83,835	$469.7M
Madison	681	304,018	268,060	113,590	$432.8M
Nance	298	134,404	90,151	41,813	$116.9M
Pierce	529	251,807	211,550	97,242	$301.4M
Platte	902	430,831	377,553	201,741	$1,042.2M
Stanton	532	193,736	165,944	32,153	$223.5M
Thurston	238	155,821	142,379	15,155	$190.2M
Wayne	446	262,185	236,676	77,036	$315.8M
REGION	9,625	5,038,653	4,108,345	1,554,752	$8,266.5M

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2022 Census of Agriculture County Profiles. Regional values are sums of the 16 county profiles.

Land class	Northeast District: value/acre, annual change	East District: value/acre, annual change
All land	$8,185 / -1%	$9,315 / -1%
Center-pivot irrigated	$11,735 / -2%	$12,430 / -4%
Gravity irrigated	$9,710 / -1%	$11,045 / -2%
Dryland, irrigation potential	$9,185 / -3%	$9,650 / -1%
Dryland, no irrigation potential	$7,670 / -1%	$8,320 / +2%
Grazing, tillable	$4,535 / +3%	$5,125 / +4%
Grazing, nontillable	$3,120 / +5%	$3,475 / +2%
Hayland	$4,145 / +2%	$4,630 / +3%

Source: University of Nebraska-Lincoln Center for Agricultural Profitability, 2026 Nebraska Farm Real Estate Market Survey. NENEDD counties fall within the survey's Northeast and East agricultural districts.

Superfund and Brownfields sites

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified four properties on the National Priorities List in the NENEDD region (EPA Region 7). Their continued inclusion is useful for planning, but cleanup stages, institutional controls, groundwater remedies, and reuse conditions can change. The current EPA site profile and land-use controls should therefore be checked whenever a project is proposed on or near one of these properties.

Site	Location	Planning consideration
Lindsay Manufacturing Company	Lindsay, Platte County	Confirm current remedy, monitoring, and land-use controls before nearby development.
10th Street Site	Columbus, Platte County	Remedy is compatible with continued use; verify controls and current EPA status.
Sherwood Medical Company	Norfolk, Madison County	Long-term remedy/monitoring and continued industrial use require site-specific review.
Iowa-Nebraska Light & Power Company	Norfolk, Madison County	Confirm current groundwater investigation/remedial status for nearby projects.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Superfund site profiles and Superfund Enterprise Management System.

The *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.

10th 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 2027.

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 groundwater is stable and institutional controls in the form of deed restrictions are in place. However, for the remedy to be protective in the long-term, the following actions need to be taken: conduct a focused site investigation and feasibility study to support a decision document modification.

Iowa-Nebraska Light & Power Company – Current Site Status

EPA and the respondents entered into an Administrative Settlement Agreement and Order on Consent to conduct the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study in May 2017. RI/FS work plans have been submitted and approved. The field work began Spring 2018 and consisted of installation and sampling of additional groundwater monitoring wells to determine the extent of the groundwater contaminant plume. The main objective of the RI/FS is to evaluate the nature and extent of the groundwater plume impacted by the former manufactured gas plant site and to gather data to support the development and evaluation of remedial alternatives.

There are 10 Brownfields Sites in the NENEDD Region. Brownfields are real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties protects the environment, reduces blight, and takes development pressures off greenspaces and working lands.

The Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES) is an online database for Brownfields Grantees to electronically submit data directly to the EPA.

Burt County Federal Brownfields Site Locations

- Old Medicine Chest Building, 108 South 13th Street, Tekamah
- Oakland Industrial Site, US 77 & County Road O, Oakland
- Tekamah Industrial Site, 656 South Highway 75, Tekamah

Colfax County Federal Brownfields Site Locations

- Schuyler Industrial Park, 981 Road E, Schuyler

Thurston County Federal Brownfields Site Locations

- Omaha Lodges, Ridgewood Street, Macy
- Lot 29, 421 Mathewson Street, Winnebago
- Heritage Hills Housing Property, Flood Road, Macy

Wayne County Federal Brownfields Site Locations

- City of Wayne Former REA Pole Yard, 200 Lincoln Street, Wayne
- Pick-Meyer Farms, 1200 West 7th Street, Wayne
- Zach Farms, 300 Douglas Street, Wayne

Source: www.epa.gov Region 7

Hazardous Chemicals

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

Water resources

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 NDEQ is the lead agency for WHP Plan approval. The goal of Nebraska's WHP 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 WHP 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.

Nonattainment Areas

There are no nonattainment areas in the NENEDD region.

Floodplains

Flooding continues to be the main source of property and monetary losses from natural disasters. A significant amount of the NENEDD service 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. Special flood-hazard areas occur along the Missouri, Platte, Elkhorn, Niobrara, and Loup systems and along smaller tributaries and drainage corridors. Flood insurance rate maps have different effective dates and are revised over time; the FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer and local floodplain administrator are the authoritative starting points for any site. The 2019 floods demonstrated that mapped floodplains do not capture every access, drainage, levee, utility, or cascading economic risk. Project development should consider future conditions, continuity of access, critical facilities, redundant utilities, and upstream/downstream effects in addition to minimum regulatory compliance.

Archeological, historic, prehistoric, and cultural resources

The district contains archaeological sites, historic buildings and districts, traditional cultural places, and landscapes important to Tribal Nations and local communities. Federally assisted projects may require review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and consultation with the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and affected Tribal Nations. 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. Early review can prevent avoidable delay and can identify opportunities for heritage tourism and adaptive reuse.

Coastal zone and equitable development considerations

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

Infrastructure

Transportation

The regional transportation system includes Interstate 80 at the southern edge, U.S. and state highways, county and township roads, municipal streets, freight rail, general-aviation airports, trucking routes, trails, sidewalks, and limited transit services. Agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare, education, and retail all depend on reliable movement of workers and goods. Survey respondents identified city streets, county and township roads, pedestrian facilities, and public transit as areas needing improvement. Priorities include pavement and bridge condition, freight access, safety, stormwater, airport and rail connections, last-mile links to industrial sites, and mobility for residents who cannot drive.

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 nearby commercial airline service in Omaha, Sioux City, Yankton, and Grand Island.

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.

Water, wastewater, stormwater, and energy systems

Aging water and wastewater systems, treatment requirements, capacity constraints, inflow and infiltration, stormwater drainage, and the cost of engineering and local match are recurring concerns. Utilities should be planned together with housing, industrial sites, downtown investment, and hazard mitigation so that growth does not outpace system capacity. Electric and natural-gas reliability, distributed generation, renewable energy, and backup power for critical facilities are also important to business continuity and emergency response.

Broadband and telecommunications

Broadband and mobile service affect business operations, education, healthcare, agriculture, public safety, and the ability to work remotely. Nebraska's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program is now moving from planning into implementation, while other carrier and Tribal projects continue on separate timelines. In May 2026, the Nebraska Broadband Office reported that seven companies completed subgrant executions through the BEAD program. There currently remain 1,735 BEAD eligible locations without commitments.

The 2024-2025 annual report also documents the cancellation of planned Digital Equity Capacity Grant activity after federal program changes. That experience supports a diversified approach in which regional goals are not dependent on a single grant source.

Higher education

Institution	Regional role and current context
Wayne State College	A public four-year institution in Wayne offering more than 130 programs. Its 2025-2026 profile reported 4,623 students, including learners from 80 Nebraska counties, 35 states, and 57 countries; 45% of degree-seeking undergraduates were first-generation students.
Northeast Community College	A public two-year institution in Norfolk serving Northeast Nebraska through academic transfer, agriculture, business, health sciences, human services and education, STEM, and skilled and technical programs. Its Norfolk campus and West Point presence are important regional assets.
Nebraska Indian Community College	A Tribal college established in 1973 with locations at Macy and Santee within the NENEDD region and at South Sioux City nearby. NICC combines postsecondary education and workforce preparation with culturally relevant teaching and community service.
Central Community College	A public two-year institution in Columbus serving Northeast Nebraska, offering 59 fields of study and 3,200 students enrolled. Major fields of study include business administration, vehicle maintenance and repair technologies, precision metal working, liberal arts and sciences, and criminal justice and corrections.
University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing – Northern Division	A UNMC satellite campus located at Northeast Community College, serving Northeast Nebraska. Degrees offered include a traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Doctor of Nursing Practice.

Source: Wayne State College 2025-2026 institutional profile and program information; Northeast Community College program and location information; Nebraska Indian Community College institutional information.

These institutions, along with K-12 schools, educational service units, apprenticeship programs, healthcare systems, employers, and workforce agencies, are essential partners in talent development. Regional priorities include work-based learning, credential alignment, incumbent-worker training, entrepreneurship, teacher and healthcare pipelines, skilled trades, childcare workforce development, and helping students see a future in Northeast Nebraska.

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 (NECC) with campuses located in Norfolk and West Point, as well as Wayne State College (WSC) located in Wayne, Central Community College (CCC) in Columbus, Nebraska Indian Community College (NICC) in three locations, and a satellite University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) College of Nursing in Norfolk.

NECC 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. 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.

UNMC has a Northern Division College of Nursing housed in the J. Paull and Elanor McIntosh College of Nursing Building at Northeast Community College. At the Northern Division, undergraduate and graduate programs are offered using a wide variety of learning technologies. Students learn from experienced faculty with specialization in nursing. Clinical experiences encompass a diverse range and involve rotations in rural acute and community settings.

WSC 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. WSC is best known for their friendly atmosphere, affordability, academic excellence, and successful graduates.

CCC is a public community college in Columbus. CCC offers a wide range of degree, diploma, certificate, and transfer opportunities. Students can choose from 14 career and technical programs or complete coursework in one of 25 transfer areas before continuing at a four-year college or university. The college has 59 fields of study. Major fields of study include Business Administration, Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Technologies, Precision Metal Working, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Criminal Justice and Corrections.

NICC is a public tribal land-grant community college with all three locations in the NENEDD region: Macy on the Omaha Tribe reservation, Santee on the Santee Sioux reservation, and the urban South Sioux City. NICC offers associate degrees in applied science, arts, and science, as well as certificates. The concentrations offered are carpentry, business, early childhood education, general liberal arts, human services, Native American studies general science studies, paraeducator/pre-teacher certification, alcohol and drug counselling, business administration, community counselling, entrepreneurship, and pre-nursing.

Industry clusters

Cluster	Regional role	Opportunities and exposures
Agriculture, food, and bioeconomy	Crop and livestock production, processing, inputs, equipment, storage, and related services form a foundational traded cluster.	Value-added production, water efficiency, bioproducts, and succession; exposed to commodity, disease, weather, input-cost, and trade volatility.
Advanced manufacturing	Food processing, machinery, metals, plastics, medical and other manufacturing support high-value production and exports.	Automation, supplier development, energy efficiency, and reshoring; constrained by labor, housing, childcare, and supply chains.
Healthcare and human services	Hospitals, clinics, long-term care, behavioral health, and social services are major employers and essential quality-of-life infrastructure.	Telehealth and regional service coordination; exposed to workforce shortages, reimbursement pressures, and rural facility sustainability.
Education and talent development	Colleges, schools, training providers, and apprenticeships create workforce pipelines and attract young people.	Work-based learning, retention, and credential alignment; exposed to demographic change and hard-to-fill occupations.
Transportation, logistics, and distribution	Highways, rail, trucking, warehousing, and agricultural logistics connect producers and manufacturers to markets.	Site development and multimodal efficiency; exposed to bridge, road, fuel, driver, and supply-chain disruptions.
Construction and housing	Contractors, suppliers, finance, real estate, and development services are essential to growth.	Housing production and infrastructure investment; constrained by workforce, financing, appraisal gaps, and material costs.
Business, finance, and professional services	Banks, insurance, accounting, technology, and professional firms support local ownership and investment.	Succession, remote work, cybersecurity, and entrepreneurship; exposed to market size and ownership transitions.
Tourism, recreation, and local services	Parks, rivers, heritage, downtowns, retail, dining, and events support quality of life and visitor spending.	Placemaking and outdoor recreation; exposed to seasonality, workforce availability, and small-market margins.

The NDED, 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

The cluster framework should guide business retention and expansion, workforce partnerships, site and infrastructure planning, and diversification. It is not intended to limit recruitment or entrepreneurship to these sectors.

2. Stakeholder Engagement and Key Findings

Planning process for the 2027-2032 CEDS

An in-depth analysis of NENEDD's regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats was conducted during the late spring and early summer of 2026. The timeline for the research conducted was as follows:

- January – March 2026: CEDS Kickoff/Community Survey distribution through March 4
- March – May 2026: Public town hall meetings, review of survey results, and gathering additional feedback
- June 2026 – Submission of town hall and survey results to CEDS steering committee
- June – July 2026 – Data analysis/CEDS Call for Projects/Draft SWOT/Action Plan & Criteria
- July – August 2026 – Draft CEDS available for 30-day public comment period
- September 2026 – NENEDD Board of Directors adopts plan, and 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 NENEDD's Facebook page, added to staff email signatures, 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. From March through May 2025, 188 responses were received. Once the results were gathered, this information was disseminated throughout the region via five town hall meetings, NENEDD's Facebook page, the NENEDD website, press releases 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.

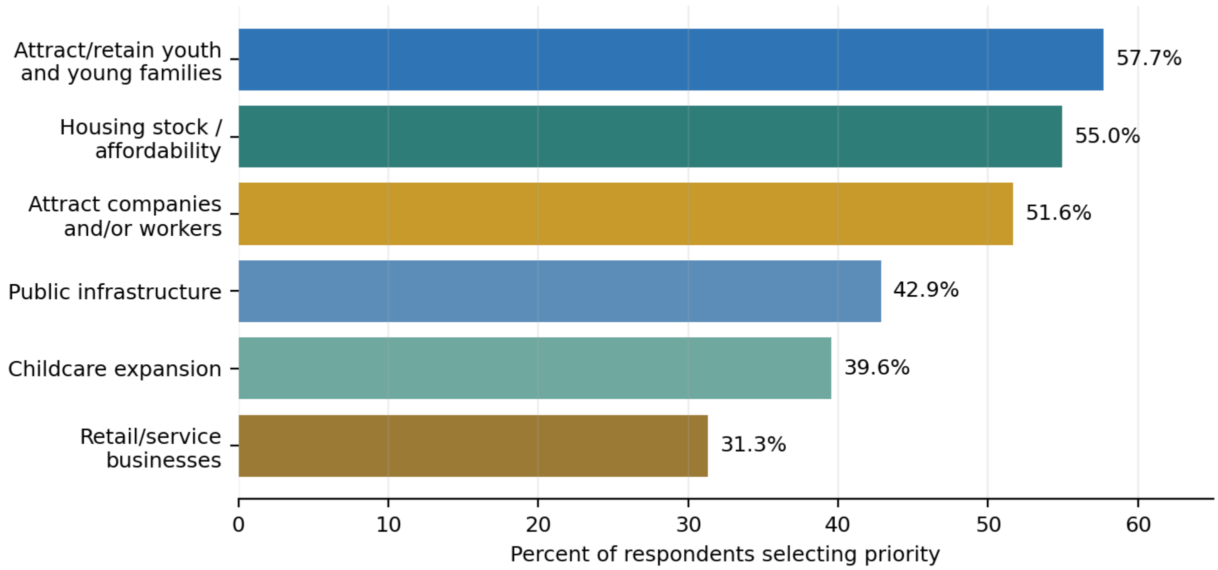
Activity	Participation / purpose	How findings were used
Regional survey	188 responses from all 16 counties and public, private, nonprofit, Tribal, and community sectors	Quantified service gaps, economic perceptions, assistance needs, priorities, and resilience readiness
Creighton, Wayne, Schuyler, and Fullerton town halls	20 total attendees	Provided local and regional SWOT discussion
Online town hall	19 registered participants	Expanded geographic access and regional discussion
Board update and Steering Committee guidance	NENEDD and NED, Inc. governance	Validated themes and shaped strategic priorities

Survey respondents

Respondent sector	Responses	Share
Municipal government	59	31.38%
General public / other	51	27.13%
Business owner / operator	29	15.43%
Economic development organization	27	14.36%
Nonprofit / community organization	12	6.38%
County government	8	4.26%
Tribal government	2	1.06%

Source: NENEDD Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy - 2026 Survey, Q1.

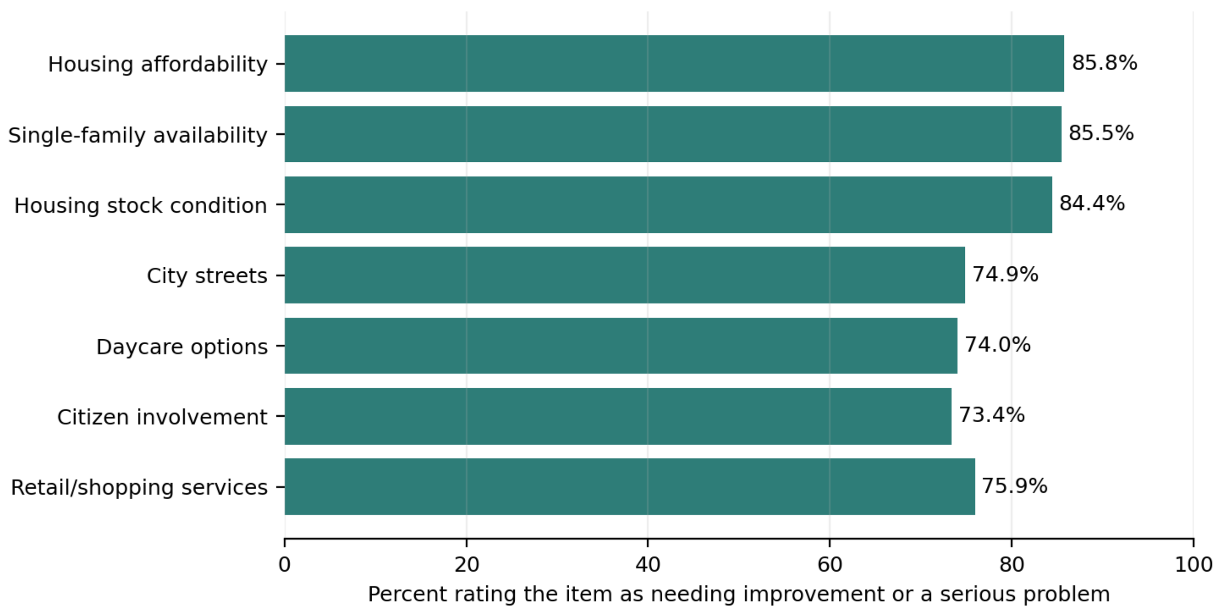
Top priorities



Source: NENEDD 2026 Survey, Q14. Respondents could select up to five priorities.

The six most frequently selected priorities form a connected system. Housing and childcare affect the ability to attract and retain workers and young families. Infrastructure affects housing, business sites, and public safety. Retail and service businesses affect local quality of life and economic leakage. The strategy therefore treats these priorities as mutually reinforcing rather than as isolated program areas.

Service and facility gaps



Source: NENEDD 2026 Survey, Q7. Percentages combine 'improvements needed' and 'serious problems.'

Economic resilience perceptions

Preparedness rating	Responses	Share
Very well prepared	17	9.50%
Somewhat prepared	86	48.04%
Neutral	39	21.79%
Somewhat unprepared	24	13.41%
Very unprepared	13	7.26%

A majority (57.54%) viewed their community as at least somewhat prepared to recover economically from a major disaster, but 20.67% viewed it as somewhat or very unprepared and 21.79% were neutral. This result supports practical resilience actions such as continuity planning, infrastructure redundancy, updated hazard and recovery plans, communication protocols, succession planning, and regional mutual assistance.

Town hall themes

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities / actions
Schools and educational institutions; healthcare; work ethic; community pride; recreation; collaborative leaders	Housing supply and condition; workforce shortages; childcare; infrastructure; volunteer fatigue; rising costs; limited capacity	Regional housing initiatives; entrepreneurship; attraction of young professionals and families; workforce partnerships; stronger use of educational assets; regional collaboration

3. Regional SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis combines the 2026 survey, town hall discussions, the 2025-2026 annual progress report, and conditions carried forward from the prior CEDS and related updates. It is intended to explain why the action plan focuses on a limited number of connected priorities.

Strengths

- Strong public schools, postsecondary institutions, training partners, and educational culture.
- Healthcare systems and access points that anchor employment and essential services.
- Established agricultural, manufacturing, finance, transportation, utility, retail, and service sectors.
- Strong work ethic, community pride, civic identity, and tradition of local leadership.
- Micropolitan employment and service centers connected to a broad rural network.
- Parks, recreation, trails, cultural assets, and a generally high quality of life.
- Experienced local economic development organizations, lenders, utilities, and regional partners.
- NENEDD's integrated planning, grant, housing, business-finance, and administration capacity.

Weaknesses

- Insufficient housing supply, limited affordability, aging stock, rehabilitation infeasibility, and shortage of build-ready sites.
- Persistent workforce shortages and difficulty attracting and retaining youth, young families, and specialized workers.
- Limited childcare availability and business-model challenges for childcare providers.
- Aging streets, water, wastewater, stormwater, and other public infrastructure.
- Broadband and cellular gaps in portions of the region.
- Limited contractor, developer, volunteer, and administrative capacity in smaller communities.
- Gaps in retail, services, dining, entertainment, and community appearance.
- Inconsistent relationships and participation across Tribal and non-Tribal partners.

Opportunities

- Use workforce housing, trust fund, tax increment financing, revolving fund, and public-private tools to expand housing.
- Coordinate employers, schools, colleges, workforce agencies, childcare providers, and communities around talent pipelines.
- Support infill, upper-story, adaptive-reuse, rehabilitation, and subdivision or site-readiness projects.
- Advance business succession, entrepreneurship, local ownership, value-added agriculture, and supply-chain opportunities.
- Modernize infrastructure through phased capital planning and combined funding packages.
- Market regional quality of life and career opportunities to alumni, remote workers, immigrants, and young families.
- Strengthen downtowns, recreation, cultural assets, tourism, and placemaking.
- Build shared regional services, data tools, procurement, training, and emergency or continuity partnerships.

Threats

- Population aging, natural decrease, out-migration, and shrinking volunteer or leadership pools.
- Construction costs, interest rates, appraisal gaps, and supply-chain volatility.
- Extreme weather, flooding, tornadoes, drought, wildfire, and infrastructure disruption.
- Agricultural price volatility, manufacturing concentration, business closures, and ownership transitions.
- Federal or state funding and policy changes that interrupt planned initiatives.
- Healthcare, childcare, school, retail, or other essential-service loss in smaller communities.
- Cybersecurity incidents, utility failures, and disruptions to communications or transportation.
- Increasing competition among regions for workers, investment, and public funding.

Strategic implications

The region's strongest assets - institutions, work ethic, partnerships, quality of life, and an established implementation network - can be used to address its primary constraints. Housing, childcare, workforce, infrastructure, and business vitality must be advanced together. Resilience should be embedded in project selection and implementation rather than treated only as emergency response.

4. Strategic Direction and Action Plan

Regional vision

VISION 2032 Northeast Nebraska will be a resilient, connected, and opportunity-rich region where communities have the housing, workforce, infrastructure, business environment, leadership, and quality-of-life assets needed to support employers, attract and retain families, sustain essential services, and adapt to changing conditions.

Guiding principles

- Regional value: Prioritize work where coordination, shared expertise, or pooled resources create value beyond a single community.
- Readiness and implementation: Help communities move from ideas to scoped, fundable, and administratively feasible projects.
- Inclusive participation: Seek practical engagement with Tribal partners, underrepresented residents, businesses, youth, and people affected by barriers to opportunity.
- Asset-based development: Build on existing institutions, industries, people, and places while addressing documented gaps.
- Resilience: Evaluate how actions reduce vulnerability, improve continuity, diversify the economy, or strengthen recovery capacity.
- Measurable progress: Track outputs and outcomes annually and revise activities when evidence shows a need.

Goal 1. Expand housing supply, quality, affordability, and readiness

Increase the variety and availability of safe, attainable housing needed for workforce recruitment, household stability, and community growth.

Strategy	Priority actions	Lead / partners	Timing	Measures
1.1 Assess and prepare	Support housing studies, market analyses, lot inventories, infrastructure assessments, blight studies, redevelopment plans, and local housing action plans.	NENEDD; local governments; housing authorities; developers; utilities; engineers; lenders	Years 1-5	Studies completed; build-ready sites identified; projects advanced
1.2 Produce and preserve units	Advance new construction, infill, rental, duplex, senior, upper-story, adaptive-reuse, and owner-occupied rehabilitation projects.	Local sponsors; developers; NENEDD; NIFA; NDED; USDA; HUD partners	Years 1-5	Units constructed, rehabilitated, preserved, or returned to service
1.3 Improve attainability	Support down-payment assistance, revolving funds, employer-assisted housing, gap financing, and locally appropriate affordability tools.	NED, Inc.; lenders; employers; foundations; local governments	Years 1-5	Households assisted; leveraged funds; financing tools capitalized
1.4 Strengthen development capacity	Develop contractor, developer, land-bank, code-enforcement, and project-management partnerships, especially for small communities.	NENEDD; local governments; developers; trades; colleges	Years 2-5	Partners engaged; reusable tools; stalled projects resolved

Goal 2. Strengthen workforce, childcare, and population attraction

Connect workforce development with the housing, childcare, education, and quality-of-life conditions people need to work and remain in the region.

Strategy	Priority actions	Lead / partners	Timing	Measures
2.1 Align talent pipelines	Convene employers, schools, colleges, workforce agencies, and training providers around priority occupations, internships, apprenticeships, and incumbent-worker training.	Employers; schools; colleges; workforce partners; chambers; NENEDD	Years 1-5	Partnerships, participants, credentials, placements
2.2 Expand childcare capacity	Support needs assessments, business planning, facility projects, workforce strategies, and financing for sustainable childcare expansion.	Providers; communities; employers; schools; DHHS; lenders; NENEDD	Years 1-5	Slots created or preserved; providers assisted; capital leveraged
2.3 Attract and retain people	Coordinate community marketing, alumni outreach, newcomer support, remote-worker opportunities, and welcome strategies tied to real jobs and available housing.	Local ED groups; chambers; employers; schools; NENEDD	Years 2-5	Campaigns; leads; relocations; retention indicators
2.4 Reduce barriers to work	Support transportation, language access, broadband adoption, housing navigation, and other locally identified workforce supports.	Local and Tribal partners; nonprofits; employers; workforce agencies	Years 1-5	Participants served; barriers addressed; service partnerships

Goal 3. Modernize infrastructure and connectivity

Improve the systems and sites necessary for housing, business growth, safety, mobility, and long-term resilience.

Strategy	Priority actions	Lead / partners	Timing	Measures
3.1 Build capital plans	Help communities inventory conditions, prioritize projects, phase costs, complete preliminary engineering, and maintain funding-ready capital improvement plans.	Local governments; utilities; engineers; NENEDD	Years 1-5	Plans and studies; projects entering design or construction
3.2 Improve core systems	Pursue streets, roads, water, wastewater, stormwater, accessibility, transit, and pedestrian projects that address documented needs.	Local, county, state, and federal partners	Years 1-5	Projects completed; dollars leveraged; users benefited
3.3 Expand digital connectivity	Coordinate broadband and cellular planning, adoption, digital-skills, and project-development efforts as funding and policy allow.	NBO; providers; libraries; schools; NROC; local governments	Years 1-5	Locations served; adoption efforts; planning milestones
3.4 Prepare development sites	Support land assembly, infrastructure, environmental review, due diligence, and financing for housing, commercial, and industrial sites.	Local ED groups; utilities; developers; NENEDD; state/federal partners	Years 2-5	Acres/sites prepared; businesses or housing projects enabled

Goal 4. Grow resilient businesses and entrepreneurship

Retain and expand existing firms, support locally owned businesses and entrepreneurs, facilitate succession, and diversify the regional economy.

Strategy	Priority actions	Lead / partners	Timing	Measures
4.1 Deliver financing and technical assistance	Provide or connect businesses to revolving loans, financial packaging, business planning, feasibility resources, and specialized training.	NED, Inc.; NENEDD; lenders; NBDC; NEF; CFRA; APEX	Years 1-5	Clients assisted; loans; capital leveraged; jobs created/retained
4.2 Support retention and expansion	Coordinate local outreach and address workforce, site, infrastructure, financing, and permitting barriers affecting existing employers.	Local ED groups; chambers; utilities; NENEDD	Years 1-5	Business visits; expansions; jobs and investment
4.3 Advance succession and entrepreneurship	Promote ownership transition planning, entrepreneurship education, mentorship, and connections between sellers and prospective local owners.	Lenders; attorneys; accountants; colleges; business organizations	Years 2-5	Transitions supported; startups; businesses retained
4.4 Diversify and add value	Explore value-added agriculture, technology, logistics, healthcare, tourism, remote work, and supply-chain opportunities suited to regional assets.	Industry partners; universities; utilities; local ED groups	Years 2-5	Opportunities assessed; projects launched; new markets

Goal 5. Invest in quality of life and community capacity

Strengthen the places, amenities, leadership, and planning systems that help residents and businesses thrive.

Strategy	Priority actions	Lead / partners	Timing	Measures
5.1 Plan with communities	Conduct attitude and income surveys, needs assessments, strategic plans, comprehensive plans, zoning updates, downtown plans, and redevelopment studies.	Local governments; residents; NENEDD; consultants	Years 1-5	Plans completed; participation; actions implemented
5.2 Improve places and amenities	Support downtown revitalization, parks, trails, libraries, community centers, arts and culture, recreation, and community appearance.	Local governments; nonprofits; businesses; foundations	Years 1-5	Projects completed; users; private/public investment
5.3 Build local capacity	Offer training, model documents, peer learning, project management, board development, and grant administration support.	NENEDD; NROC; agencies; professional associations	Years 1-5	Trainings; attendees; communities assisted; compliance outcomes
5.4 Deepen regional and Tribal relationships	Maintain regular, respectful outreach and develop specific opportunities for joint planning, business, housing, infrastructure, and resilience work.	Tribal governments and organizations; nearby communities; NENEDD	Years 1-5	Meetings; joint initiatives; referrals; participation

Goal 6. Increase economic resilience through collaboration and preparedness

Improve the region's ability to anticipate, withstand, recover from, and adapt to disasters, disruptions, and long-term economic stresses.

Strategy	Priority actions	Lead / partners	Timing	Measures
6.1 Assess vulnerabilities	Integrate hazard, infrastructure, industry, workforce, housing, supply-chain, fiscal, cybersecurity, and essential-service risks into planning and project selection.	NENEDD; emergency managers; utilities; businesses; public health	Years 1-3	Assessments; plans updated; vulnerabilities addressed
6.2 Strengthen continuity	Promote continuity-of-operations and business-continuity planning, data backups, communication protocols, succession plans, and alternate suppliers or sites.	Businesses; local governments; hospitals; schools; utilities	Years 1-5	Plans completed; exercises; technical assistance
6.3 Coordinate recovery capacity	Maintain partner lists, funding guidance, mutual assistance, damage documentation practices, and scalable recovery project pipelines.	Local/Tribal governments; emergency management; NENEDD; agencies	Years 1-5	Partnerships; exercises; recovery resources; time to mobilize
6.4 Diversify resources and economy	Avoid overreliance on a single funding stream, employer, industry, supplier, or facility through layered financing and economic diversification.	NENEDD; local ED groups; lenders; utilities; employers	Years 1-5	Funding sources; diversified projects; continuity outcomes

5. Economic Resilience

EDA defines economic resilience as the ability of a region to anticipate, withstand, and recover from shocks, disruptions, and stresses. Northeast Nebraska's experience with the 2019 floods, the COVID-19 pandemic, supply-chain disruption, workforce shortages, and changes in federal program funding demonstrates that resilience is both an emergency-management responsibility and an everyday economic-development practice.

6 Regions, One Nebraska

In May 2024, the Nebraska Governor's Office, NDED, and Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry announced the 6 Regions, One Nebraska initiative. The program convenes leaders within each of the state's six community college districts to identify shared economic challenges and design collaborative regional projects. The Nebraska Legislature initially allocated $3 million of American Rescue Plan Act funds to NDED for the initiative. Eligible project areas included resident recruitment, youth engagement, entrepreneurship, technology, infrastructure, and a priority project selected by each region. The State's investment also supported regional leadership structures, including a full-time Regional Navigator responsible for helping move regional ideas toward implementation. (https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/governors-office-ded-and-nebraska-chamber-kick-off-6-regions-one-nebraska-in-the-northeast-community-college-region/)

The Northeast Region encompasses the NECC service area, including NENEDD's 16 counties and Garfield, Holt, Keya Paha, and Wheeler Counties. Through regional meetings, workgroups, asset mapping, and analysis prepared by the University of Nebraska Omaha Center for Public Affairs Research, participating leaders have examined housing, workforce, childcare, education, population, and other conditions affecting the region's long-term economic vitality. The data resources are intended to evolve as regional needs change and provide local leaders with a common foundation for decision-making. (https://www.unomaha.edu/college-of-public-affairs-and-community-service/center-for-public-affairs-research/programs/6-regions-one-nebraska.php)

Housing was identified as a leading Northeast Region priority. In December 2024, NDED awarded $200,000 to the Central Nebraska Economic Development District on behalf of the Northeast Region to consolidate housing studies and information about available programs into a bilingual regional website for developers and community officials. The project is also intended to highlight innovative construction methods and best practices for reducing code and zoning barriers, supporting the development of workforce housing and affordable homes for young families. This work complements NENEDD's housing goal by improving access to information, encouraging consistent regional approaches, and helping communities move from documented housing needs to implementable projects. (https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/gov-pillen-announces-awards-for-6-regions-one-nebraska-priority-projects/)

The Northeast Region has also partnered with NECC and Nebraska Extension to establish the Northeast Elected Leaders Academy. The academy provides elected officials and emerging candidates with practical instruction in leadership, ethics, communication, community development, citizen engagement, public finance, government processes, conflict management, and technology. Its curriculum includes crisis communication and a scenario-based exercise designed to strengthen teamwork, map community systems, and improve coordination during a disruption. These activities build the leadership continuity and institutional knowledge communities need to maintain essential operations, respond effectively to emergencies, and carry long-term projects through changes in local leadership. (https://northeast.edu/continuing-ed-workforce/nela)

NENEDD staff participates in 6 Regions, One Nebraska through regional workshops and trainings and service on the Northeast Region marketing committee. This participation helps align NENEDD's housing, workforce, childcare, business, infrastructure, quality-of-life, and resilience priorities with broader regional and state efforts. It also provides an established network that can be used to share information, coordinate partners, identify funding, and respond collectively to economic disruptions or emerging opportunities.

Regional vulnerabilities

Risk category	Examples	Economic consequences
Natural hazards	Floods, tornadoes, drought, wildfire, winter storms, extreme heat	Business interruption, infrastructure damage, displacement, agricultural losses
Workforce and demographics	Aging population, out-migration, childcare gaps, skills shortages	Reduced production, service closures, slower business growth
Housing	Shortage, aging stock, unaffordability, contractor constraints	Recruitment barriers, displacement, reduced household stability
Infrastructure and technology	Utility failure, road closure, broadband outage, cybersecurity incident	Interrupted commerce and services; higher recovery costs
Industry and market	Agricultural volatility, major-employer contraction, supply-chain disruption, interest-rate changes	Job and income loss; reduced investment
Institutional and funding	Policy shifts, grant rescission, staff turnover, volunteer fatigue	Delayed projects and reduced implementation capacity

Two-pronged resilience approach

1. Steady-state planning: diversify the economy and funding base; modernize infrastructure; strengthen housing, workforce, childcare, and business continuity; and integrate risk reduction into normal project development.
2. Responsive capacity: maintain communication networks, continuity plans, partner roles, recovery funding knowledge, and pre-identified projects so the region can act quickly following a disruption.

Lessons from recent disruptions

Experience	What it revealed	CEDS implication
2019 flooding	Damage extended beyond structures to roads, bridges, utilities, access, housing, farms, businesses, and public finances.	Plan for cascading and long-duration effects; protect access and essential services; maintain recovery-ready project records.
COVID-19 pandemic	Business models, supply chains, healthcare, schools, childcare, and local services were disrupted at the same time.	Support continuity planning, digital capability, flexible financing, workforce supports, and rapid communication.
Workforce and housing stress	Chronic shortages can limit production and essential services even without a declared disaster.	Treat housing, childcare, talent pipelines, and welcoming capacity as core resilience infrastructure.
Drought, storms, and extreme temperatures	Agriculture, water supply, energy demand, transportation, and vulnerable residents face repeated climate and weather stresses.	Coordinate hazard mitigation, water planning, backup power, conservation, and business continuity.
Funding and policy changes	The cancellation or redesign of a single program can stop otherwise viable work.	Build layered funding strategies, maintain alternate scopes, and avoid relying on one program or deadline.

Resilience framework

Phase	Regional actions
Prepare	Maintain partner contacts, risk and continuity plans, pre-disaster project concepts, data backups, funding knowledge, and regular exercises.
Withstand	Protect essential facilities and infrastructure; create redundant power, communications, suppliers, transportation routes, and workforce capacity.
Recover	Coordinate damage and economic-impact documentation, business outreach, housing and workforce support, financing, grant development, and public information.
Adapt	Conduct after-action reviews; update plans, capital priorities, land-use decisions, program design, and performance measures based on lessons learned.

Sector continuity priorities

System	Priority actions
Businesses and supply chains	Encourage continuity plans, alternate suppliers and sites, cyber hygiene, records backup, succession planning, emergency financing readiness, and employer-to-employer mutual assistance.
Agriculture and water	Coordinate drought and flood planning, animal and crop disease response, water conservation, market and transportation continuity, energy reliability, and producer communication.
Housing and neighborhoods	Pre-identify temporary and permanent housing options, preserve habitable units, plan for displacement, and avoid rebuilding vulnerabilities into future development.
Workforce, childcare, and healthcare	Map critical occupations, backup staffing and childcare, transportation barriers, behavioral-health capacity, and ways to reconnect displaced workers and employers.
Infrastructure and public services	Prioritize critical assets, redundant communications and power, mutual aid, emergency procurement, cybersecurity, access routes, and capital improvements that reduce recurring loss.
Local institutions and funding	Cross-train staff, document procedures, preserve records, maintain grant-ready information, and use multiple financing tools and implementation partners.

Roles and activation

Local and Tribal governments and emergency managers retain their established public-safety and incident-command responsibilities. NENEDD's economic-development role is complementary: convening economic partners, documenting business and community impacts, helping prepare recovery projects and applications, connecting businesses and communities with financing and technical assistance, and tracking long-term recovery. During steady-state periods, NENEDD should maintain contacts and templates. Following a major disruption, the Executive Director or designee should determine whether to activate a regional economic-recovery coordination function in partnership with affected jurisdictions.

Condition	Suggested NENEDD response
Localized disruption	Contact the affected community and economic-development partner; identify business, housing, infrastructure, and financing needs; provide targeted technical assistance.
Multi-county event	Convene regional partners; establish a shared impact picture and communication rhythm; coordinate project, funding, and business-assistance information.
Major employer or sector shock	Coordinate rapid-response workforce partners, business retention outreach, supplier impacts, site reuse, financing, and diversification strategies.
Long-term stress or policy change	Reassess CEDS actions and funding assumptions; adjust project scopes; develop alternative resources; document the change in the annual CEDS update.

Resilience screen for priority projects

- Does the project reduce a documented vulnerability or protect an essential service?
- Does it create redundancy, flexibility, or alternate capacity?
- Does it support people or businesses most likely to face barriers during disruption?
- Does it diversify the economy, funding sources, suppliers, sites, or workforce pipelines?
- Can it be implemented and maintained with realistic local capacity?
- Does it improve regional coordination, data, communications, or recovery speed?

Suggested resilience measures

- Number of communities, businesses, and partner organizations completing or updating continuity plans.
- Number of major projects screened for hazard, infrastructure, cybersecurity, supply-chain, housing, workforce, and funding vulnerabilities.
- Number of exercises, trainings, or after-action reviews and the share of identified improvements completed.
- Critical facilities or systems receiving backup power, redundant communications, flood protection, or other risk-reduction improvements.
- Time required after an event to establish regional partner coordination, contact affected businesses, and assemble initial economic-impact information.
- Amount of recovery and mitigation funding secured and the number of pre-disaster project concepts advanced to implementation.

6. Evaluation Framework

NENEDD will review implementation annually with the CEDS Steering Committee and report progress to EDA. Measures should be interpreted as a balanced scorecard: no single indicator captures regional prosperity, and annual results may vary with project cycles and external conditions.

Core annual measures

Category	Measure	2024-2025 reference point	Direction
Business	Jobs created / retained through NENEDD-supported activity	115 created and/or retained	Maintain or increase over five-year cycle
Investment	Private- and public-sector investment associated with implementation	$10.16M private; $4M public	Increase cumulative leveraged investment
Funding	Grants and loans awarded to NENEDD and member communities	More than $3M	Increase cumulative awards and successful projects
Business assistance	Businesses receiving financing or technical assistance	Nearly 125 clients	Maintain broad access and track outcomes
Housing	Units constructed, rehabilitated, preserved, or returned to service; households assisted	4 homebuyers / $120,000 DHA; 6 OOR completions	Increase feasible production and preservation
Planning	Surveys, plans, studies, and project-development processes completed	Multiple income surveys, attitude surveys, and strategic plans	Complete priority plans and document implementation
Infrastructure	Projects advanced to funding, design, construction, or completion	Multiple CDBG, recreation, housing, and civic projects	Increase ready and completed projects
Capacity / inclusion	Trainings, partners, participating communities, and Tribal engagement	Baseline to be established in Year 1	Expand meaningful participation and capacity
Resilience	Continuity plans, risk assessments, exercises, and resilience-screened projects	Baseline to be established in Year 1	Increase preparedness and risk reduction

Source: NENEDD Annual CEDS/Progress Report, July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026.

Evaluation cycle

Timing	Activity	Responsibility
Quarterly	Track project, financing, housing, planning, and assistance outputs in internal program records.	NENEDD program staff
Annually	Compile CEDS performance measures, economic-condition updates, accomplishments, barriers, and proposed adjustments.	Deputy Director / Executive Director / staff
Annually	Review progress and priorities; identify projects for the next work program.	CEDS Steering Committee
As needed	Update actions in response to major disaster, employer shock, policy change, or new regional opportunity.	NENEDD and affected partners
Year 5	Conduct broad stakeholder engagement and prepare the next full five-year update.	NENEDD and Steering Committee

Project prioritization criteria

- Addresses a documented CEDS priority or resilience vulnerability.
- Demonstrates local commitment, readiness, and realistic long-term operation or maintenance.
- Leverages private, local, state, federal, philanthropic, or other resources.
- Benefits multiple communities, strengthens a regional system, or can be replicated.
- Supports job quality, workforce participation, housing access, essential services, or broad community benefit.

- Advances an under-resourced community or population while maintaining transparent, lawful eligibility criteria.
- Has measurable outcomes and a credible implementation partner.

7. Implementation Progress and Organizational Capacity

2025-2026 accomplishments incorporated into this CEDS

Program area	Selected accomplishments
Business and industry	Nearly 125 clients received technical assistance; NENEDD supported financing, referrals, revolving funds, recruitment, retention, expansion, and ownership-transition activity.
Community planning	Income surveys, attitude surveys, and strategic planning were conducted for numerous communities across the region.
Project development	Communities received assistance with public works, water/wastewater, tourism, recreation, housing, civic facilities, workforce housing, land development, and recovery programs.
Housing	Four low- to moderate-income households received a total of $120,000 in direct homebuyer assistance through regional HOME revolving funds.
Broadband / digital access	NENEDD participated in statewide broadband coordination and contracted to support digital-equity capacity work before federal program funding was rescinded.
Regional investment	NENEDD reported more than $4.9 million in grant and loan awards and over $28.5 million in associated private and public investment.

NENEDD's implementation roles

- Regional convener and facilitator
- Community planning and needs-assessment provider
- Grant and loan application developer
- Grant, loan, and revolving-fund administrator
- Business finance and technical-assistance provider
- Housing program partner
- Data and funding-resource navigator
- Partner liaison among local, Tribal, state, federal, nonprofit, educational, utility, and private-sector organizations

NENEDD's role will vary by project. In some communities, NENEDD will complement strong local development capacity with specialized technical assistance. In others, it may provide more direct support to define the project, organize partners, identify funding, prepare applications, and establish administrative readiness.

8. Adoption, Annual Updates, and Public Participation

Public review and adoption

The public-comment draft will be made available for at least the period required by EDA and applicable NENEDD procedures. NENEDD will document the notice, comment period, comments received, and any resulting revisions. Following review, the NENEDD Board will consider adoption and the final CEDS will be submitted to EDA.

Milestone	Date / status
Draft presented to CEDS Steering Committee	[Insert date]
Public-comment period opened	[Insert date]
Public-comment period closed	[Insert date]
Comments and revisions summarized	[Insert date / appendix reference]
NENEDD Board adoption	[Insert date and resolution number]
Submitted to EDA	[Insert date]
EDA acceptance	[Insert date when received]

Annual maintenance

Each annual update should summarize changed economic conditions, progress against measures, major projects and investments, barriers encountered, changes to priorities or implementation partners, and resilience-related events. Adjustments should preserve the strategy's regional direction while allowing activities to respond to emerging needs.

Appendix A. Survey Snapshot

Respondent background

The survey received 188 responses. All 16 counties were represented. More than 84% of respondents had lived in their community for more than ten years or their entire lives. The largest age groups were 40-49 (26.88%), 60-69 (23.66%), and 50-59 (21.51%). The response pool provides extensive local experience but underrepresents residents under age 40; future engagement should include targeted outreach to young adults, students, newcomers, and families with young children.

Highest-ranked priorities

Priority	Responses	Share
Attracting / retaining youth and young families	105	57.69%
Increased housing stock / affordable housing	100	54.95%
Attracting new companies and/or workers	94	51.65%
Improving public infrastructure	78	42.86%
Childcare expansion	72	39.56%
Developing retail / service businesses	57	31.32%
Growing existing local companies	43	23.63%
Quality-of-life enhancements	42	23.08%
Helping entrepreneurs start new companies	35	19.23%

Requested NENEDD assistance

Among 144 respondents to the service-assistance question, the most frequently selected needs were assistance preparing grant or loan applications for community and economic development projects (20.83%) and identifying federal, state, local, and private resources (18.75%). Other responses included grant and revolving-fund administration, planning and survey services, business financing, housing rehabilitation, down-payment assistance, and new-construction financing.

Interpretation limitations

- The survey is a voluntary stakeholder sample and should not be interpreted as a statistically representative poll of all regional residents.
- Government, economic development, and higher-income respondents were strongly represented.
- Some questions received fewer responses or were open-ended; town halls and program data were used to add context.
- Percentages may not total 100 because of rounding, skipped questions, or multiple-response formats.

Appendix B. Source Notes and Data Refresh Items

Primary sources used

- NENEDD 2021-2026 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.
- NENEDD Annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and Progress Report, July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026.
- NENEDD CEDS Update: Regional Survey and Town Hall Findings, June 2026.
- NENEDD Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy - 2026 Survey, Final Survey Results.
- U.S. Economic Development Administration, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy content guidance.
- U.S. Census Bureau, 2020-2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
- USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2022 Census of Agriculture County Profiles.
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln Center for Agricultural Profitability, 2026 Nebraska Farm Real Estate Market Survey.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Superfund site profiles and Green Book.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency National Flood Hazard Layer and local flood insurance rate maps.
- Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy and Nebraska Natural Resources District resources.
- Nebraska Broadband Office program information.
- Wayne State College, Northeast Community College, Central Community College, UNMC Northern Division, and Nebraska Indian Community College institutional information.
- Nebraska Department of Economic Development, 6 Regions, One Nebraska web pages.
- Norfolk Daily News, articles on 6 Regions, One Nebraska

Acknowledgements

Board Composition

Government Representatives

Name	Government	Position
Doug Huttmann	Stanton County	County Commissioner
Jeff Jensen	City of Norfolk	City Councilman
Salley Ganem	City of Fremont	City Councilwoman
Rich Jablonski	City of Columbus	City Councilman
Tod W. Voss, MD	Village of McLean	Village Board Member
Troy Uhlir	Madison County	County Commissioner
Charlie Bahr	City of Columbus	City Councilman

Non-Government Representatives/Private Sector Representatives

Name	Company	Position
Blake Denton	MetLife	Representative
Jason Ash	Weiland Doors	Co-owner
Kurt Dostal	Citizens State Bank	Sr. Loan Officer

Stakeholder Organization Representatives

Name	Organization	Position
Meghann Buresh	Apex Accelerator	PTAC Consultant
Benjamin Benton	NBDC	Director
Mason Zimmerer	Northeast Community College	Development Officer
Anthony Warrior	Nebraska Indian Community College	Indianpreneurship Director
Loren Kucera	NBDC	Semi-retired

CEDS Strategy Committee

Name	Organization	Position
Doug Huttmann	Stanton County	County Commissioner
Jeff Jensen	City of Norfolk	City Councilman
Salley Ganem	City of Fremont	City Councilwoman
Rich Jablonski	City of Columbus	City Councilman
Tod W. Voss, MD	Village of McLean	Village Board Member
Troy Uhlir	Madison County	County Commissioner
Charlie Bahr	City of Columbus	City Councilman
Blake Denton	MetLife	Representative
Jason Ash	Weiland Doors	Co-owner
Kurt Dostal	Citizens State Bank	Sr. Loan Officer
Meghann Buresh	Apex Accelerator	PTAC Consultant
Benjamin Benton	NBDC	Director
Mason Zimmerer	Northeast Community College	Development Officer
Anthony Warrior	Nebraska Indian Community College	Indianpreneurship Director
Loren Kucera	NBDC	Semi-retired

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