

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

Date: October 31, 2008
Agreement Number: 08HQAG0006
Project Title: Nebraska Spatial Data Strategic Planning – Laying the Foundation for Communication and Collaboration
Organization: Nebraska Department of Administrative Services, Office of the CIO, 501 S. 14th St., Lincoln, NE 68508, <http://www.cio.nebraska.gov/>

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Collaborating Organizations:

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

Project Narrative

For a one-person GIS coordination office for the entire state, quite a bit of planning has been happening since the CAP grant was awarded. However, unfortunately the RFP to hire a consultant to help us with the outreach and formal strategic planning process is still in a draft stage. While that aspect of the strategic planning process has been delayed, a number of other planning components are definitely moving forward.

Statewide Street Centerline/Address Database. The planning for the development of a statewide street centerline-address database was a significant component of our CAP proposal. A major enterprise-level planning process related to this database has been underway over the last six months resulting in an interagency consensus on approach and an initial development plan. An advisory committee has involved all of the key state, local and federal players that have a primary focus on this data theme. Agreements have been reached between the key players to resolve outstanding data sharing issues. Absent an obvious statewide data integrator for this data theme, an agreement has been reached for the Office of the CIO to assume this role. A Technical Working Group has developed draft standards and a draft RFP for initial database integration and tools development is in an advance stage. Two key agencies have agreed to underwrite the estimated costs for initial data integration with the understanding that on-going funding for support and data upgrades will need to be arranged from other sources.

Nebraska Geospatial Data Sharing and Web Services Network. Currently Nebraska GIS users operate in a decentralized GIS environment with very little available in the way of statewide, enterprise-level operational services, upon which web-based data sharing and web-based services can be built. Initial

startup funding has been secured to contract for a technical lead staff to put into place the hardware, software and technical protocols necessary to establish the foundation for this data sharing network. Over the last several months, efforts have been underway to recruit and hire someone with the technical and project management skills to lead this enterprise project. Given the very competitive environment for these types of skills in a rural area like Nebraska it has proven to be very difficult to hire someone for the two-year project funding we have currently secured. We have gone through three rounds of advertisement and recruitment and we will hopefully soon be hiring our most current candidate. During this frustrating process, the advisory committee for this statewide, enterprise-level project has stayed engaged and together.

Update Nebraska GIS Steering Committee Structure. During the six months since the Nebraska CAP grant was awarded, the Nebraska GIS Steering Committee has undergone a significant restructuring. This was also one of the objectives outlined in the Nebraska CAP proposal. The GIS Steering Committee is a statutorily-defined body and so any significant changes in its structure require Legislative approval. As a result of the legislation passed this summer, the GIS Steering Committee was renamed as the GIS Council. It has been moved to be formally associated with the Office of the CIO and the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (the state's highest-level IT policy body). The statutes were also changed in a manner that will no longer require legislative actions to add new representation to the GIS Council. GIS Council membership has been expanded to include our state's emergency management agency, our public service commission (responsible for E911), formally defined representatives from our two major urban areas, a representative from our local state GIS professional association, and two additional at-large representatives. With this restructuring, we now have considerably more flexibility to involve local government representatives on our Council with two representative for the county officials association, one municipalities representative, one natural resources district representative, and four at-large representatives. It is hoped that these structural changes will facilitate our effort to bring regional geographic representation to our GIS Council, as outline in our CAP proposal.

Statewide LiDAR Planning. An intergovernmental advisory committee has been convened to research and develop a strategic plan and business case for statewide LiDAR development over the next several years. Because of funding availability for a special project, approximately 1/5 of the geographic area of the state is due to have LiDAR developed over the next year.

Aerial Imagery Planning. Initial discussion and intergovernmental planning has commenced for the collaborative acquisition of new high-resolution imagery (6-inch and 1-foot) for Nebraska's urban areas in 2010. This effort will build on a successful collaborative effort in 2007 that covered over 8,500 sq. mi. of "urbanized" area and involved numerous local, state and federal government entities. This collaborative effort was based originally in the Omaha-area and has been rapidly expanding to include other areas and other public entities. As the project scope has expanded, the need for additional coordination resources has also grown. This growing need for coordination and support services will be documented in the statewide strategic plan.

Next Steps

Completion of RFP for Strategic Planning Consultant Support. The key next step in our strategic planning process will be to complete the draft RFP and get it out on the street to solicit proposals for a contractor/consultant to assist with broader outreach and the strategic planning process. With just a one-person coordination shop, one has to prioritize and run with project initiatives and opportunities while they are "hot". This has meant that the RFP drafting and solicitation of a strategic planning contractor has not reached the top of the pile, with so many other initiatives underway. Many people and entities are involved in the current initiative specific planning endeavors that have been referred to above. However, the RFP and contractor support are a key component of the planning processes effort to facilitating outreach to and involvement of additional players statewide. It is the current plan to have this RFP will be available no later than the end of 2008.

Following the hiring of a consultant/contractor we will then undertake the scheduling and hosting of regional strategic planning meetings and the use of the Data Inventory as a survey tool to solicit geospatial plans and needs from the broader geospatial user community.

The planned Business Case studies for both the street centerline-address database and the geospatial data sharing network will build on the existing work of the two advisory committees that have working in these areas over the last six months.

Revised Timeline

Obviously the RFP and the hiring of a strategic planning consultant aspect of our project are behind schedule. This is a result of desire on the part of the state's GIS community to move forward on other specific elements or components of our strategic planning process and therefore "pushing" those components to the head of the line in terms of priority. It is however, still our intent to move forward on the broader strategic planning process and in particular the outreach component. As noted above, it is our current intention to have the RFP out for bids before the end of 2008. That would put us approximately nine (9) months behind our original timeline project for the RFP facilitated component of this strategic planning process. Therefore, while it would certainly be our hope to complete the strategic plan before then, we would appreciate the possibility of having a one-year timeline extension, with a Final Project Report due in July 2010. It will be important for us to know if this one-year extension is possible before we release an RFP.

Proposed Revised Timeline

Jan 2010Finalize Strategic Plan
Mar 2010.....Draft Business Cases (2)
May 2010Final adoption of two Business Cases
Jul 2010.....Final Project Report due

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