

Nebraska Information Technology Commission

Progress Report
to the
Honorable Dave Heineman,
Governor

and

2008 Legislature,
Senator Pat Engel,
Executive Board Chair

November 14, 2008

State of Nebraska
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Executive Summary

The Legislature established the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (NITC) in 1998 to provide advice, strategic direction, and accountability on information technology investments in the state. Section 86-518 directs the NITC to submit a progress report to the Governor and Legislature by November 15 of each even-numbered year. This report is submitted in response to that requirement. Over the past two years, the NITC has realized many significant achievements in each of the seven criteria set forth in Section 86-524(2).

- The NITC's vision is being realized and short-term and long-term strategies have been articulated and employed. However, because technology constantly presents new challenges and opportunities, the NITC's vision will continually evolve. The NITC has developed a vision statement, goals, and strategic initiatives to articulate its vision and to highlight technology projects which have strategic importance to the State of Nebraska. In particular, significant progress has been made on priority areas designated as strategic initiatives by the NITC. Current strategic initiatives include:
 - Network Nebraska
 - Community IT Planning and Development
 - eHealth
 - Public Safety Communications System
 - Digital Education
 - State Government Efficiency
 - E-Government
 - Security and Business Resumption
- The statewide technology plan prepared annually by the NITC has been an effective vehicle for identifying key projects, building stakeholder support, coordinating efforts, and communicating with policy makers.
- Recommendations made by the commission to the Governor and Legislature have assisted policy and funding decisions. The review process and prioritization of new IT projects provides policy makers with information about the objectives, justification, technical impact, costs, and risks of proposed systems.
- In order to encourage interoperability and standardization, the NITC has adopted 43 standards and guidelines. Within the past two years, 19 new or revised standards and guidelines have been adopted, including:
 - Information Security Policy
 - Data Security Standard
 - Minimum Server Configuration Standard
 - Password Standard

- Remote Access Standard
 - Remote Administration of Internal Devices Standard
 - Incident Response and Reporting Procedure for State Government
 - Definitions
 - Waiver Policy
 - Agency Information Technology Plan
 - Project Review Process
 - IT Procurement Review Policy
 - Website Emergency Information Page
 - E-mail Policy for State Government Agencies
 - DNS Forwarding Standard
 - SMTP Routing Standard
 - Project Status Reporting
 - Enterprise Projects
 - Blocking E-mail Attachments
- The NITC website and monthly newsletter serve as an information technology clearinghouse. In addition, the eHealth Council produces a newsletter to inform stakeholders of new research and developments.
 - The NITC encourages and facilitates input and involvement of all interested parties by engaging in collaborative processes, involving five advisory councils, the Technical Panel, and numerous workgroups and subcommittees. Additionally information is publicly distributed and public input is encouraged.
 - The NITC is addressing long-term infrastructure innovation, improvement, and coordination through Network Nebraska and related initiatives. Network Nebraska has aggregated statewide telecommunications to a common infrastructure, lowering the unit cost of Internet service to participating entities through aggregated purchasing power. In 2006, the Nebraska Legislature passed LB 1208, tasking the Chief Information Officer with providing access to all educational entities through Network Nebraska. Currently 183 education entities in the northeast and central parts of the state are served by Network Nebraska. By the summer of 2009, 240 education entities across the state will be connected. Network Nebraska is not a state-owned network. Facilities are leased from private telecommunications providers in the state. In this way, the state hopes to stimulate private investment in Nebraska's telecommunications infrastructure.

The Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network is also providing greater access to services across the state. The Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network currently connects 67 rural hospitals, eight regional medical centers which serve as hub sites, seven Omaha metropolitan hospitals, 17 public health departments, and six bioterrorism labs in Nebraska.

Introduction

The Legislature established the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (NITC) in 1998 to provide advice, strategic direction, and accountability on information technology investments in the state. The NITC is a nine-member commission, chaired by Lieutenant Governor Sheehy. Commissioners are appointed by the Governor and represent elementary and secondary education, postsecondary education, communities, the Governor, and the general public.

The NITC conducts most of its work through six advisory groups: the Community Council, Education Council, eHealth Council, Geographical Information System Council (previously the Geographical Information System Steering Committee), State Government Council, and Technical Panel. Each council establishes ad hoc work groups to prepare recommendations on specific topics.

The Office of the Chief Information Officer provides support for the NITC, its Councils, the Technical Panel, and ad hoc groups. The Governor appointed Brenda Decker as Chief Information Officer in February of 2005. On March 7, 2006 the 99th Legislature of the State of Nebraska passed LB 921, changing the duties of the Office of the Chief Information Officer. As a result of LB 921, the Division of Communications and the Information Management Services Division became part of the Office of the CIO. This change in legislation has helped the State of Nebraska more closely align IT policy and IT operations.

LB 823, passed during the 2008 legislative session, strengthens the Commission's authority to address planning, management, and accountability. The new legislation also more closely aligns the work of two existing advisory groups, the Geographical Information System Steering Committee and the Nebraska Intergovernmental Data Communications Advisory Council (NIDCAC) with the NITC.

Section 86-518 directs the NITC to submit a progress report to the Governor and Legislature by November 15 of each even-numbered year. This report is offered in fulfillment of that requirement.

Section 86-524(2) sets out the following review criteria:

1. The vision has been realized and short-term and long-term strategies have been articulated and employed;
2. The statewide technology plan and other activities of the commission have improved coordination and assisted policymakers;
3. An information technology clearinghouse has been established, maintained, and utilized of Nebraska's information technology infrastructure and of activities taking place in the state involving information technology, and the information flow between and among individuals and organizations has been facilitated as a result of the information technology clearinghouse;

4. Policies, standards, guidelines, and architectures have been developed and observed;
5. Recommendations made by the commission to the Governor and Legislature have assisted policy and funding decisions;
6. Input and involvement of all interested parties has been encouraged and facilitated; and
7. Long-term infrastructure innovation, improvement, and coordination has been planned for, facilitated, and achieved with minimal barriers and impediments.

Over the past two years, the NITC has realized many significant achievements in each of the seven criteria established by the Legislature. This report details those achievements. In particular, significant progress has been made on priority areas designated as strategic initiatives by the NITC. Current strategic initiatives include:

- Network Nebraska
- Community IT Planning and Development
- eHealth
- Public Safety Communications System
- Digital Education
- State Government Efficiency
- E-Government
- Security and Business Resumption

Realization of Vision and Employment of Strategies

The vision has been realized and short-term and long-term strategies have been articulated and employed.

The NITC has developed a vision statement, goals, and strategic initiatives to articulate its vision and to highlight technology projects which have strategic importance to the State of Nebraska. The NITC continues to make progress toward the realization of its vision. However, because technology constantly presents new challenges and opportunities, the NITC's vision will continually evolve.

Vision. The NITC vision statement is to "promote the use of information technology in education, health care, economic development, and all levels of government services to improve the quality of life of all Nebraskans."

Goals. The NITC has established four goals:

1. Support the development of a robust statewide telecommunications infrastructure that is scalable, reliable, and efficient;

2. Support the use of information technology to enhance community and economic development;
3. Promote the use of information technology to improve the efficiency and delivery of governmental and educational services, including homeland security;
4. Promote effective planning, management and accountability regarding the state's investments in information technology.

Strategic Initiatives. In 2004 the NITC began identifying priority areas as strategic initiatives. Each strategic initiative includes a strategic plan. The development of the strategic plans has been a collaborative effort involving many individuals and entities. These efforts have been successful in gaining cooperation of many stakeholders. The strategic initiatives form the core of the NITC's annual Statewide Technology Plan (www.nitc.ne.gov/stp).

The current list of strategic initiatives includes:

- Network Nebraska
- Community IT Planning and Development
- eHealth
- Public Safety Communications System
- Digital Education
- State Government Efficiency
- E-Government
- Security and Business Resumption

The past two years have brought significant progress in each of the strategic initiatives. A summary of each strategic initiative follows.

Network Nebraska

In order to develop a broadband, scalable telecommunications infrastructure that optimizes quality of service to public entities, the State of Nebraska and the University of Nebraska began aggregating their backbone network services into a single core network backbone in 2003. In 2006, the Nebraska Legislature passed LB 1208 which named the statewide network as *Network Nebraska*, and tasked the Chief Information Officer (assisted by the University of Nebraska) with "providing access to all education entities as soon as feasible, but no later than July 1, 2012." Due to advances in WAN Ethernet technology, Network Nebraska is now able to reach almost every education entity through three core aggregation points: Grand Island--College Park, Lincoln--Nebraska Hall, and Omaha--Peter Kiewit Institute.

The development of the distance education network has increased the number of customers served by Network Nebraska. Data and Internet customers currently include the three state colleges, three of the six community colleges, and more than 160 school

districts under ten different educational service units. The number of educational entities is expected to grow to 240 when the third phase of implementation is completed in the summer of 2009. A fourth and final phase of connectivity is now projected for the summer of 2010 to connect to the education entities that are remaining.

Benefits of Network Nebraska include flexible bandwidth utilization, IP addressing, lower network costs, greater efficiency, interoperability of systems providing video courses and conferencing, increased collaboration among educational entities, new educational opportunities, and better use of public investments. Network Nebraska has succeeded in lowering the unit cost of Internet service to participating entities through aggregated purchasing power. Initial cost savings were estimated at 67%. More recently, the Office of the CIO used the Technology Refreshment clause of the statewide Internet contract for Network Nebraska to negotiate a 47% lower Internet rate to begin July 1, 2009 out of Omaha's Peter Kiewit Institute. This will benefit all current and new Network Nebraska schools, ESUs and colleges that purchase their Internet service from the statewide master contract. Network Nebraska has also stimulated investments in telecommunications infrastructure. In October 2006, the original University of Nebraska/state agency circuit from Scottsbluff to Grand Island to Lincoln, which served as a pilot project for Network Nebraska, was upgraded providing Scottsbluff with the same capabilities as Omaha and Lincoln. The benefits of this upgrade included the ability to incrementally increase bandwidth and cost savings of up to 30%.

Network Nebraska has also provided support and assistance to the Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network. The Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network connects nearly all of Nebraska's hospitals and public health departments in one of the country's most extensive telehealth networks.

Network Nebraska has been made possible through a cooperative effort of the Collaborative Aggregation Partnership (CAP). CAP was established by Governor Dave Heineman (who was at the time Lieutenant Governor and NITC Chair) and former University of Nebraska President L. Dennis Smith. CAP is composed of several operational entities: Office of the CIO, University of Nebraska, and Nebraska Educational Telecommunications with policy assistance from the Nebraska Department of Education, Public Service Commission, and the NITC.

Network Nebraska is not a state-owned network. Facilities and circuits are leased from private telecommunications providers in the state, allowing the State of Nebraska to act as an anchor tenant.

Community IT Planning and Development

The NITC Community Council has been addressing technology-related development in Nebraska's communities since its formation in 1998. As technologies and the needs of communities have changed, programming and areas of emphasis have shifted. Partnerships have been forged to address specific projects.

Current efforts are focusing on helping communities develop content-rich websites in order to better promote the community and to recruit people to the area. The Developing Websites for Community Growth project is providing hands-on assistance to 11 communities, accessibility testing of websites, and marketing assistance. The project is strictly focused on content development, website enhancements, and marketing. At the end of the process, each community will have fully developed website content and will be able to pass that on to a web developer.

Communities participating include:

- Burwell
- Butler County
- Elwood
- Gering
- Grand Island
- Laurel
- Pender
- Scribner
- South Sioux City
- St. Paul
- Valentine

A detailed manual will be available for all Nebraska communities in December. The manual will guide communities through the process and will include a website content development checklist, best practices, project planning, marketing resources, and hints for utilizing Web 2.0 enhancements.

Project partners include the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, DED, Nebraska Public Power District, AIM Institute, Twin Cities Development - Scottsbluff/Gering, and the NITC Community Council. The Developing Websites for Community Growth project has been funded through a grant from the Nebraska Information Technology Commission's Community Technology Fund.

Through the Podcasting Across Nebraska program (2006-2007), the City of South Sioux City and South Sioux City Public Schools, the Highway 14 Association, the North Platte/Lincoln County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Panhandle Public Health District and Panhandle Podcasting Partners received hardware and software as well as training on how to create and produce podcasts. Nearly 30 individuals from the four communities and 30 resource providers participated in podcasting training. Twenty-five podcasts were created during the year-long program. Podcasting is having a positive effect on participating organizations' promotional and information dissemination efforts. Participating in the program has also made participants more aware of and more interested in other interactive communication technologies. Project partners include the NITC Community Council, University of Nebraska, Network Nebraska, Department of Economic Development, Division of Tourism, Network Nebraska, Technologies Across Nebraska, and Nebraska Lied Main Street program.

eHealth

eHealth technologies include telehealth, electronic health records, e-prescribing, computerized physician order entry, and health information exchange. The widespread adoption of electronic health records and other eHealth technologies is expected to reduce medical errors, improve quality of care, and reduce health care costs for payers. Nebraska is already a leader in telehealth. The Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network connects nearly all of Nebraska's hospitals and public health departments in one of the country's most extensive telehealth networks. The adoption of many other eHealth technologies, however, remains low in the state.

On Feb. 22, 2007, the NITC approved the creation of an eHealth Council to address issues related to the adoption of interoperable healthcare information technology by the healthcare delivery system in Nebraska. Members represent healthcare providers, eHealth initiatives, public health, consumers, payers and employers, and the State of Nebraska.

The eHealth Council has assessed the current status of health IT adoption in the state and has learned about health IT initiatives in the state. Current initiatives include the Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network, Western Nebraska Health Information Exchange, Nebraska Health Information Initiative (NeHII), Southeast Nebraska Behavioral Health Information Network (SNBHIN), and Southeast Nebraska Health Information Exchange (SENHIE). The eHealth Council facilitates conversations among these initiatives to address common issues.

The eHealth Council has identified the security and privacy of health information, e-prescribing, and personal health records as areas on which to focus. Work groups have been created to study these areas and make recommendations.

The Nebraska Health Information Security and Privacy Committee (HISPC) was created in 2006 by Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy in response to national initiative. In 2007, with the creation of the eHealth Council, the Nebraska HISPC became a work group of the eHealth Council. In 2007, the Nebraska HISPC published a number of recommendations which are available at <http://www.nitc.ne.gov/eHc/clearing/HISPC.html>. In 2008, the Nebraska HISPC has focused on examining Nebraska's laws to identify potential barriers to the exchange of health information and on developing educational materials and a website to provide information for providers and consumers. Nebraska is also participating in a collaborative multistate project to examine audit and authentication requirements for health information exchange as part of the national HISPC effort funded by the Office of the National Coordinator and led by RTI International.

The E-Prescribing and PHR Work Groups met for the first time in October 2008. The groups are expected to make initial recommendations by the spring of 2009.

The NITC has further supported the adoption of health IT by awarding \$277,439 for six projects through the NITC's Community Technology Fund in 2008:

- The Panhandle Public Health District was awarded \$100,000 to support the implementation of a regional health information exchange within an established network of rural health care providers across Western Nebraska.
- Region V Services was awarded \$40,000 to support efforts to create timely access to behavioral health patient information between and among behavioral health providers in the Region V Service area.
- The State of Nebraska, Office of the CIO on behalf of the Nebraska Health Information Security and Privacy Committee was awarded \$8,037 to develop educational resources which will help consumers better understand health information exchange and related security and privacy concerns.
- The State of Nebraska, Office of the CIO on behalf of the Nebraska Health Information Security and Privacy Committee was awarded \$8,600 to develop a health information privacy and security website.
- The University of Nebraska at Omaha on behalf of the Nebraska Health Information Initiative (NeHII) was awarded \$100,000 to partially fund a proof of concept pilot project and demonstrate the validity of exchanging medical information including clinical messaging, e-prescribing and physician referral.
- The Board of Regents, University of Nebraska on behalf of the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center was awarded \$20,800.00 to obtain perspectives of Nebraskans about electronic sharing of health information

Public Safety Communications System

This initiative upgrades the communications systems of state law enforcement agencies and the Nebraska Public Power District. The system will enable interoperability with local, state and federal agencies. The system is part of the statewide interoperable communications initiative of state and local partnerships to improve public safety communications across Nebraska. When completed in 2010, the system will position Nebraska as a successful example of cooperation and leadership in developing partnerships that improves public safety communications across all of Nebraska.

Governor Heineman and the Nebraska Legislature supported funding for the communications system in 2007. The OCIO facilitated a discovery process to create specifications for the system and develop an RFP. The system contract was awarded in October 2008 after a successful competitive bid process. The communications system will enable the State Patrol, Game and Parks Commission, State Fire Marshal's Office and Nebraska Public Power District to consolidate onto a single technology platform that modernizes their communications resources.

The Office of the CIO is coordinating a partnership with the Nebraska Public Power District to jointly develop the communications system infrastructure. NPPD is an equal partner in the state's efforts to plan, fund and implement the new statewide communications system. The State-NPPD partnership is a recognition that much can be accomplished through common need and sharing resources for Nebraska taxpayers and public safety first responders.

The OCIO is also coordinating with the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the Governor's Homeland Security Policy Group to implement the statewide interoperable communications plan using federal Homeland Security grants. The plan includes integration projects that will tie state and local communication resources together during emergencies. The plan standardizes the communications infrastructure to improve compatibilities across different legacy systems and provides the means to share critical information when needed.

Benefits of the system include:

- Shared statewide communications infrastructure
- Interoperability for the State Patrol and other agencies
- Ability for existing local communications systems to interconnect
- Technology platform is scalable, expandable and upgradeable
- Sharing opportunities for other local, state and federal agencies

Digital Education

The primary objective of the Digital Education Initiative is to promote the effective and efficient integration of technology into the instructional, learning, and administrative processes and to utilize technology to deliver enhanced digital educational opportunities to students at all levels throughout Nebraska on an equitable and affordable basis.

The initiative is dependent upon adequate Internet connectivity and transport bandwidth for learners, instructors, administrators, and for educational attendance sites. A minimum acceptable level of classroom technology will have to be established for the initiative to be successful.

The primary components of the Digital Education Initiative include:

- A statewide telecommunications network with ample bandwidth capable of transporting voice, video, and data between and among all education entities (See Network Nebraska.);
- Distance insensitive Internet pricing for all Nebraska education entities;

- Development of a statewide eLearning environment so that every teacher and every learner has access to a web-based, digital curriculum;
- Development of a statewide digital resource library so that any teacher or learner will be able to retrieve digital media for use in instructional and student projects;
- Synchronous videoconferencing interconnections between all schools and colleges;
- The means to coordinate and facilitate essential education opportunities for all students through a statewide student information system; and
- Regional Pre-K-20 education cooperatives that vertically articulate educational programs and opportunities.

Establishing a Digital Education environment is critical to Nebraska's future. Internet has gone from a "nice to have" educational application of the 1990's to the "must have" mission critical application of the 2000's. So much of what teachers, students, and administrators do today is tied to Internet-based information and communication. Nebraska's ranking of 2.8 students per high speed, Internet-connected computer in the classroom seems to compare favorably with the U.S. average of 3.7 students per high speed, Internet-connected computer. (Technology Counts 2007 Report) However, it still makes it challenging for students to complete their digital assignments when they are expected to share two or three students to a computer, or to wait their turn to be able to use a computer. Educators and administrators are urged to work to achieve the goal of attaining 1:1 computer availability.

The benefits of the Digital Education Initiative would include:

- Greater technical capacity for schools and colleges to meet the increasing demands of a more diverse customer base;
- More equitable and affordable Internet access for Nebraska schools and colleges;
- A comprehensive Web-based approach to curriculum mapping and organization and automation of student assessment data gathering and depiction;
- The availability of rich, digital media to the desktop that is indexed to Nebraska standards, catalogued, and searchable by the educator or student;
- A more systematic approach to synchronous video distance learning that enables Nebraska schools and colleges to exchange more courses, staff development and training, and ad hoc learning opportunities.

Network Nebraska is going through a significant upgrade process that began in July 2007. By moving to a high bandwidth, flexible IP network, participating education entities will be able to:

- Have ample bandwidth for local and regional transport to accommodate present and future education technology applications;

- Take advantage of nationwide Internet2 routing and resources;
- Purchase some of the lowest Internet access pricing in the country;
- Participate in a statewide, standards-based IP videoconferencing system between all schools and colleges;
- Post their course offerings and unfilled curriculum needs to a statewide clearinghouse and scheduling system for all synchronous and asynchronous distance learning;
- Position themselves to develop new and exciting regional and statewide applications of digital content to serve all students and teachers.

State Government Efficiency

The State of Nebraska is improving efficiency in state government through the development of standards and guidelines and the implementation of shared services.

Standards and Guidelines

In order to encourage interoperability and standardization, over 43 standards and guidelines have been adopted. Within the past two years, 19 new or revised standards and guidelines have been adopted, including:

- Information Security Policy
- Data Security Standard
- Minimum Server Configuration Standard
- Password Standard
- Remote Access Standard
- Remote Administration of Internal Devices Standard
- Incident Response and Reporting Procedure for State Government
- Definitions
- Waiver Policy
- Agency Information Technology Plan
- Project Review Process
- IT Procurement Review Policy
- Website Emergency Information Page
- E-mail Policy for State Government Agencies
- DNS Forwarding Standard
- SMTP Routing Standard
- Project Status Reporting
- Enterprise Projects
- Blocking E-mail Attachments

Shared Services

Early in 2005 the State of Nebraska launched a shared services initiative to consolidate the purchase and operations of certain technology services. The initiative has been very successful in reducing costs and increasing efficiency. The NITC's State Government Council has played an important role in identifying the potential services which could be offered as a shared service. Current efforts are focusing on the following shared services:

- Enterprise Maintenance / Purchase Agreements
- Geographic Information System (GIS)
- E-mail
- Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery
- Directory Services
- Active Directory
- Document Management

Enterprise maintenance and purchase agreements. Enterprise maintenance and purchase agreements were among the first shared services, resulting in significant cost savings. The coordinated purchasing of IBM licenses and maintenance agreements saved over \$500,000 in FY2006, \$610,000 in FY 2007, and \$458,000 in FY2008. Savings in FY 2009 are projected to be \$214,037 due to a reduction in the volume of new products being purchased. The four-year savings total \$1,782,037.

GIS. The GIS Shared Services initiative has also yielded cost savings for new aerial imagery acquisitions for many Nebraska-based GIS users. The NITC GIS Council (formerly the GIS Steering Committee) coordinated efforts with several state and local agencies to acquire updated 2006-based, statewide, 1-meter, full color, leaf-on aerial imagery. This statewide imagery was ultimately acquired for the bargain price of \$8,500, well below the original full acquisition cost of over \$1,000,000. A second collaborative planning effort to acquire updated high-resolution imagery for much of Nebraska's more densely populated areas was completed early in 2008. The collaborative project contracted with a vendor for the acquisition of high resolution (6-inch or 1-foot) imagery for an eight-county contiguous area around the Omaha-Council Bluffs-Lincoln metro area, and for three counties and four cities in non-contiguous areas in the eastern half of Nebraska. Partners included numerous cities, counties, NRDs, utilities, state agencies and the USGS. The final project price of \$1,300,000 provided substantial cost savings for the partners.

E-mail. Significant progress has been on consolidating e-mail systems. Currently over 10,500 state employees have been migrated to the new enterprise Exchange e-mail system. Nearly 90% of employee mailboxes have been migrated. On average, 140,000 e-mails are delivered to @nebraska.gov accounts per day. Over the last year, the system has been up 99.897% of the time, with 10 scheduled downtimes and 12 unscheduled downtimes. The consolidation of e-mail systems is expected to lead to increased efficiency and decreased maintenance costs.

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery. The State of Nebraska continues to address business continuity and disaster recovery by employing a multi-faceted approach to business continuity and disaster recovery planning, emphasizing the development of partnerships as well as the identification and prioritization of critical business functions. Additional information is included in under the Security and Business Resumption section of this report.

Directory Services. Discussions on directory services are underway.

Active Directory and Document Management. New shared services work groups were created in the fall of 2008 to address Active Directory and document management.

E-Government

Nebraska has been recognized as a leader in e-government. Nebraska ranked in the top 20 in the 2006 and 2008 Digital States Surveys conducted by the Center for Digital Government. The State's Web portal, Nebraska.gov, was recognized by the Center for Digital Government as one of the top state Web portals in 2007 and 2008. Nebraska.gov, was redesigned in June 2008 and offers over 300 services. The new portal offers an enhanced, more accessible design featuring larger and brighter images. The site has been designed to be accessed by both full-sized computers and mobile devices. The site has also been translated into twelve languages.

Individual agencies are also using e-government to improve customer service and to increase efficiency. For example, the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles unveiled a new Web site in the summer of 2007, featuring services allowing citizens to purchase specialty license plates, estimate taxes on new vehicles, and reinstate suspended licenses. The Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles' suspended license reinstatement application won a 2008 Digital Achievement Award from the Center for Digital Government. The Department of Health and Human Services offers a new subscription service providing instant notification on 175 topics. The Department of Environmental Quality has developed an online system for reporting hazardous chemicals stored in facilities. The online form is used by more than 75% of businesses submitting reports.

The Secretary of State's Rules and Regulations Tracking System has given the three State offices involved in the adoption process the ability to all view the same information, concurrently, in the same place as well as making information more accessible to the public. The Nebraska State Agency Proposed Rules and Regulations Tracking and Email Notification System earned a Digital Government Achievement Award from the Center for Digital Government in 2007.

An annual e-government conference is held every November to showcase successful e-government projects and to keep both managers and IT staff informed on developments in e-government and technology. The conference is presented in partnership with *Government Technology Magazine*.

Security and Business Resumption

The State of Nebraska continues to make progress in addressing security and business resumption. In the past two years, the NITC Security Work Group worked with the State Government Council and Technical Panel to develop seven new or revised policies and standards. The policies and standards include:

- Information Security Policy (new)
- Data Security Standard – Agency Level Risk Assessment (new)
- Password Standard (update)
- Remote Access Standard (update)
- Incident Response and Reporting Procedures (update)
- Computer Users Guide (update)
- IT Administrator’s Guide for Security State Resources (update)

Several security initiatives have been implemented or are underway. A new certification and accreditation process being implemented across the State of Nebraska will test every Web-based application for vulnerabilities on an annual basis. An enterprise threat assessment program provides for a monthly assessment of all servers and network devices as well as a remediation program to correct any vulnerabilities found. A new secure e-mail program allows the State of Nebraska to securely communicate with hospitals, insurance companies, courts, and federal agencies. A secure file transfer program eliminates all non-encrypted file transfers into and out of the State of Nebraska, especially those files that contain personal or sensitive information. The annual cyber security conference held in the spring has grown to include both state employees and the private sector. The 2008 conference featured Greg Garcia, Assistant Secretary of Cyber Security and Telecommunications with the Department of Homeland Security.

Disaster recovery and business continuity have also been addressed. The State of Nebraska has mitigated risks to public safety and the state’s economy by employing a multi-faceted approach to business continuity and disaster recovery planning, emphasizing the development of partnerships as well as the identification and prioritization of critical business functions. The iterative process, coordinated by the Office of the CIO, began in 2001 and is continuing. Components of the State of Nebraska’ Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Planning include:

- A partnership between the State of Nebraska and University of Nebraska to mutually provide assistance with business continuity and disaster recovery planning and initiatives, including the development of joint facility outside of Lincoln to provide emergency computing capacity by the first quarter of 2009;
- Identification and prioritization of critical public safety, public health, and institutional care business functions by agency directors;

- Creation of a Continuity of Operations /Disaster Recovery Shared Services Group to discuss the issues related to business continuity and disaster recovery to leverage their experiences and efforts; and
- Continuity of operations and disaster recovery exercises, including working with NEMA in the TERREX exercises.

Operational improvements include greater organizational capacity to respond to emergency situations due to increased collaboration and involvement in continuity of operations and disaster recovery planning. The collaboration between the State of Nebraska and the University of Nebraska has also resulted in modest cost savings to Nebraska tax payers and state agencies.

Improved Coordination and Assistance to Policymakers

The statewide technology plan and other activities of the commission have improved coordination and assisted policymakers.

The statewide technology plan annually prepared by the NITC has been an effective vehicle for identifying key projects, building stakeholder support, coordinating efforts, and communicating with policy makers.

The current plan was prepared in the first quarter of 2008. The plan focuses on eight strategic initiatives:

- Network Nebraska
- Community IT Planning and Development
- eHealth
- Public Safety Communications System
- Digital Education
- State Government Efficiency
- E-Government
- Security and Business Resumption

These initiatives were identified by the NITC and its advisory groups. These groups include representatives of a wide array of entities, including health care providers, education, local government, the private sector, and state agencies. This process has proven to be effective in building stakeholder support. These initiatives are collaborative projects involving many entities both inside and outside of state government. The statewide technology plan provides a method of communicating the importance of these initiatives, progress made, and plans for further implementation. The plan is sent to members of the Legislature and the Governor. The primary role of the NITC in these initiatives has been facilitation and coordination. The success of

these initiatives testifies to the NITC's effectiveness at facilitation, coordination, and communication with policymakers.

The NITC and Office of the CIO staff have testified at hearings and given briefings to legislative committees several times over the past two years, including:

- Joint briefing for members of the Appropriations Committee and Transportation and Telecommunications Committee, November 9, 2007
- Legislative Performance Audit Hearing, November 20, 2007
- LB 823 hearing for members of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee, Jan 22, 2008
- Briefing for several members of the Legislature (including Senators Harms, Dubas, Loudon and Erdman) on IT issues in the State on February 11, 2008.

The Chief Information Officer and the staff or advisory groups of the NITC are occasionally called upon to provide analysis or review of technology initiatives, explanation of state-specific information technology data, and other requests as needed by the Governor and Legislature.

Policy and Funding Recommendations

Recommendations made by the commission to the Governor and Legislature have assisted policy and funding decisions.

Section 86-516 (8) directs the NITC to "make recommendations on technology investments to the Governor and the Legislature, including a prioritized list of projects, reviewed by the technical panel," as part of the biennial budget process. Prior to budget submissions, agencies submit IT plans which are reviewed by the Office of the CIO and the NITC Technical Panel. This information provides a context in which to better review IT projects submitted by agencies. Technical reviews of information technology projects are conducted by a team of reviewers. With input from the NITC State Government and Education Councils, the Technical Panel further reviews the project proposals. Using information from the review process, the NITC makes funding recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature by November 15 of each even-numbered year. The review process and prioritization of new IT projects provides policy makers with information about the objectives, justification, technical impact, costs, and risks of proposed systems. The agency comprehensive information technology plans and the project proposal forms for budget requests of new IT spending provide policy makers with far more information in a consistent format than before. The Technical Panel also conducts voluntary review of IT projects and projects awarded funding through the NITC Community Technology Fund and Government Technology Fund.

Policies, Standards, Guidelines, and Architectures

Policies, standards, guidelines, and architectures have been developed and observed.

In order to encourage interoperability and standardization, over 43 standards and guidelines have been adopted. The development of standards and guidelines has helped the State of Nebraska achieve greater interoperability and efficiency. The process encourages public input from all involved constituents. Most standards are developed by a work group consisting of stakeholders from state government agencies and other interested entities. The Technical Panel recommends approval of standards and guidelines to the NITC. All standards are approved at open NITC meetings after a 30 day comment period.

Within the past two years, 19 new or revised standards and guidelines have been adopted, including:

- Information Security Policy
- Data Security Standard
- Minimum Server Configuration Standard
- Password Standard
- Remote Access Standard
- Remote Administration of Internal Devices Standard
- Incident Response and Reporting Procedure for State Government
- Definitions
- Waiver Policy
- Agency Information Technology Plan
- Project Review Process
- IT Procurement Review Policy
- Website Emergency Information Page
- E-mail Policy for State Government Agencies
- DNS Forwarding Standard
- SMTP Routing Standard
- Project Status Reporting
- Enterprise Projects
- Blocking E-mail Attachments

Information Technology Clearinghouse

An information technology clearinghouse has been established, maintained, and utilized of Nebraska's information technology infrastructure and of activities taking place in the state involving information technology, and the information flow between and among individuals and organizations has been facilitated as a result of the information technology clearinghouse.

The NITC's website and newsletter (www.nitc.ne.gov) serve as an information technology clearinghouse. It provides access to an extensive amount of information including resources for communities, health care providers, educational entities, and state government.

The NITC website is the official repository for agenda, minutes, and documents for the NITC, its councils and their workgroups. The section on "Standards and Guidelines" provides access to all technical standards and guidelines adopted by the NITC or under development.

The NITC has published a monthly electronic newsletter, *NITC.news*, since June, 2000. *NITC.news* provides current information on information technology issues and developments. The current readership is approximately 1,000. It includes public officials, community leaders, educational personnel, and interested persons. Past copies of *NITC.news* are available on the NITC website. The eHealth Council also publishes an electronic newsletter which is available from the NITC website

Additionally, NITC staff members handle requests for information on technology projects and development and facilitate the exchange of information

Input and Involvement of Interested Parties

Input and involvement of all interested parties has been encouraged and facilitated.

The NITC engages in collaborative processes, involving five advisory councils, the Technical Panel, and numerous workgroups and subcommittees. Additionally information is publicly distributed and public input is encouraged through the NITC's website, through e-mail distribution, and through publication of the NITC's monthly news letter, *NITC.news*. NITC staff also present information on NITC initiatives at conferences, workshops, and meetings across the state. The list of NITC Commissioners, council members, and Technical Panel members is included in this document.

Active work groups and subcommittees over the past two years include:

- State Government Council – Document Management Shared Service Work Group
- State Government Council – Active Directory Shared Service Work Group
- Technical Panel – Accessibility of Information Technology Work Group
- Technical Panel – Learning Management System Standards Work Group
- Technical Panel – Security Architecture Work Group
- Technical Panel – Statewide Synchronous Video Network Work Group
- State Government Council – Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery Work Group
- Community Council – Developing Websites for Community Growth Steering Committee
- eHealth Council – Health Information Security and Privacy Committee (HISPC)
- eHealth Council – HISPC Legal Work Group
- eHealth Council – HISPC Education Work Group
- eHealth Council – E-Prescribing Work Group
- eHealth Council – PHR Work Group
- GIS Council – Street Centerline-Address Database Work Group
- GIS Council – LiDAR Work Group
- GIS Council – Geospatial Data Sharing and Web Services Work Group
- GIS Council – Strategic Planning Work Group
- Education Council--Marketing Task Group
- Education Council--Services Task Group
- Education Council--E-rate/Funding Task Group
- Education Council--Network Nebraska Governance Task Group

Infrastructure Innovation, Improvement and Coordination

Long-term infrastructure innovation, improvement, and coordination has been planned for, facilitated, and achieved with minimal barriers and impediments.

The NITC is addressing long-term infrastructure innovation, improvement, and coordination through Network Nebraska and related initiatives.

Network Nebraska has aggregated statewide telecommunications to a common infrastructure, generated considerable cost savings to public entities, and decreased the unit cost of Internet service by leveraging the consolidated demand of all participating entities. Since September 2003, Network Nebraska has grown to serve the data and

Internet service needs of all state agencies with outstate circuits, the University of Nebraska's four campuses, three of the state's community colleges, all three state colleges, and more than 160 school districts under ten different educational service units. The number of customers is expected to continue growing due to the favorable Internet rates and the high quality of service offered by Network Nebraska. The number of educational entities is expected to grow to 240 when the third phase of implementation of the distance education network is completed in the summer of 2009. A fourth and final phase is now projected for the summer of 2010 to connect to the education entities that are remaining.

Network Nebraska has been made possible through a cooperative effort of the CIO-Division of Communications, University of Nebraska, and Nebraska Educational Telecommunications, with policy assistance from the Nebraska Department of Education, and the Public Service Commission. This partnership is known as the Collaborative Aggregation Partnership (CAP).

The first phase of the multipurpose backbone became operational in September 2003 serving Omaha, Lincoln, and Grand Island with the second phase following in February 2004 extending service to Norfolk, Kearney, North Platte, and the Panhandle. In October 2006, the original circuit from Scottsbluff to Grand Island to Lincoln which served as a pilot for Network Nebraska was upgraded, providing Scottsbluff with the same capabilities as Omaha and Lincoln. The benefits of this upgrade include the ability to incrementally increase bandwidth and cost savings of up to 30%. More recently, the Office of the CIO used the Technology Refreshment clause of the statewide Internet contract for Network Nebraska to negotiate a 47% lower Internet rate to begin July 1, 2009 out of Omaha's Peter Kiewit Institute. This will benefit all current and new Network Nebraska schools, ESUs and colleges that purchase their Internet service from the statewide master contract. Network Nebraska has also stimulated investments in telecommunications infrastructure. In October 2006, the original University of Nebraska/state agency circuit from Scottsbluff to Grand Island to Lincoln, which served as a pilot project for Network Nebraska, was upgraded providing Scottsbluff with the same capabilities as Omaha and Lincoln. The benefits of this upgrade included the ability to incrementally increase bandwidth and cost savings of up to 30%.

Network Nebraska is not a state-owned network. Facilities are leased from private telecommunications providers in the state. In this way, the state hopes to stimulate private investment into Nebraska's telecommunications infrastructure.

Additionally, the NITC has facilitated the coordination and development of a statewide telehealth network. The Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network currently connects 67 rural hospitals, eight regional medical centers which serve as hub sites, seven Omaha metropolitan hospitals, 17 public health departments, and six bioterrorism labs in Nebraska. Members of CAP have provided technical assistance in the development of the Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network. The telehealth network will also be able to obtain telecommunications services at the same rate negotiated by the Chief Information Officer for Network Nebraska.

Awards and Recognition

- Nebraska ranked 14 in the Center for Digital Government's Digital States Survey in 2006 and 18 in 2008.
- The State of Nebraska's Web portal, Nebraska.gov, ranked in the top 10 in 2007 and 2008 Center for Digital Government's Best of the Web awards.
- The Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles Driver's License Reinstatement application won a 2008 Digital Government Achievement Award.
- The Nebraska State Agency Proposed Rules and Regulation Tracking and E-mail Notification System received an Honorable Mention in the 2007 Digital Government Achievement Awards.
- Nebraska's statewide distance education network was featured in the USDLA's *Distance Learning* magazine.
- N-WINS, Nebraska's public safety communications system, was featured in the Winter 2008 issue of *Interoperability Technology Today*.
- CIO Brenda Decker was honored for Outstanding Community Service in Technology by the AIM Institute at their Annual Technology Celebration Banquet on April 15, 2008.
- Brenda Decker was selected as one of the [Premier 100 IT Leaders for 2008](#) by *Computerworld*.
- The Mobile Disaster Recovery Communications System received an Honorable Mention at the Annual GCN (Government Computer News magazine) awards for our Mobile Disaster Recovery Communications System.

Fun Facts

- 4 past and present Chairs (Kim Robak, Dave Maurstad, Dave Heineman, and Rick Sheehy) have presided over the NITC.
- 6 advisory groups (Community Council, Education Council, eHealth Council, GIS Council, State Government Council, and Technical Panel) have assisted the NITC.
- 8 Statewide Technology Plans have been developed by the NITC.
- 10 years ago, the NITC became a statutory body.
- 43 standards and guidelines have been adopted by the NITC.
- 48 Commission meetings have been held.
- 113 advisory group members provide input to the NITC.
- 21 work groups have been active during the past two years.
- 183 education entities in the northeast and central parts of the state are currently served by Network Nebraska.
- 240 education entities across the state will be connected by the summer of 2009.
- Over 300 services are offered through the State of Nebraska's Web portal, Nebraska.gov
- 10,500 state employees have been migrated to the new enterprise Exchange e-mail system.
- \$1,782,037 in savings over four years from the enterprise maintenance and purchase agreements shared service.

Advisory Group Members

| Community Council | Education Council | eHealth Council |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Norene Fitzgerald, Co-Chair, York County Development Corporation</p> <p>Ted Smith, Co-Chair, Norfolk Public Library</p> <p>Chris Anderson, City of Central City</p> <p>Rod Armstrong, AIM Institute</p> <p>Mitch Arnold, Move Back to Nebraska</p> <p>Jason Barelman, Wayne State College</p> <p>Scott W. Bovick, City of Nebraska City</p> <p>Dr. Don Costello, University of Nebraska-Lincoln</p> <p>Linda Fettig, Nebraska Rural Development Commission</p> <p>Dean Folkers, Nebraska Department of Education</p> <p>Darla Heggem, Twin Cities Development, Scottsbluff-Gering</p> <p>John Jordison, Great Plains Communications</p> <p>Lynn Manhart, Central City Public Library</p> <p>Joan Modrell, Nebraska Department of Labor</p> <p>Tim O'Brien, Nebraska Department of Economic Development</p> <p>Angie Ramaekers, Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Dan Shundoff, Intellicom, Kearney</p> <p>Jerry Vap, Public Service Commission</p> | <p>Dr. Michael Chipps, Co-Chair, Mid-Plains Community College</p> <p>Dr. Terry Haack, Co-Chair, Bennington Public Schools</p> <p>Arnold Bateman, University of Nebraska-Lincoln</p> <p>Stan Carpenter, Nebraska State College System</p> <p>Clark Chandler, Nebraska Wesleyan University</p> <p>Ron Cone, ESU 10</p> <p>Dr. Eileen Ely, Western Nebraska Community College</p> <p>Stephen Hamersky, Daniel J. Gross Catholic High School</p> <p>Yvette Holly, University of Nebraska Medical Center</p> <p>Jeff Johnson, Centennial Public Schools</p> <p>Chuck Lenosky, Creighton University</p> <p>Dennis Linster, Wayne State College</p> <p>Craig Pease, Ashland-Greenwood Public Schools</p> <p>Linda Richards, Ralston Public Schools</p> <p>Art Tanderup, Tekamah-Herman Community Schools</p> <p>Dr. Bob Uhing, ESU 1</p> <p>Brenda Decker, Office of the CIO</p> <p>Dr. Marshall Hill, Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education</p> <p>Mike Kozak, Nebraska Department of Education</p> <p>Michael Winkle, Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission</p> | <p>Kimberly Galt, Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions</p> <p>Daniel Griess, Box Butte General Hospital, Alliance</p> <p>Dr. Keith Mueller, UNMC College of Public Health</p> <p>Dennis Berens, Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Rural Health</p> <p>Vivianne Chaumont, Department of Health And Human Services, Division of Medicaid and Long Term Care</p> <p>Susan Courtney, Blue Cross Blue Shield</p> <p>Joni Cover, Nebraska Pharmacists Association</p> <p>Senator Annette Dubas, Nebraska Legislature</p> <p>Congressman Jeff Fortenberry, represented by Marie Woodhead</p> <p>Donna Hammack, Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network and St. Elizabeth Foundation</p> <p>Steve Henderson, Office of the CIO</p> <p>Alice Henneman, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County</p> <p>Ron Hoffman, Jr., Mutual of Omaha</p> <p>C.J. Johnson, Southeast Nebraska Behavioral Health Information Network and Region V Systems</p> <p>Jim Krieger, Gallup</p> <p>Harold Krueger, Western Nebraska Health Information Exchange and Chadron Community Hospital</p> <p>Jeff Kuhr, Three Rivers Public Health Department, Fremont</p> <p>Ken Lawonn, NeHII and Alegent Health</p> <p>David Lawton, Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Assurance</p> <p>Kay Oestmann, Southeast District Health Department</p> <p>John Roberts, Nebraska Rural Health Association</p> <p>Nancy Shank, Public Policy Center</p> <p>September Stone, Nebraska Health Care Association</p> <p>Dr. Delane Wycoff, Pathology Services, PC</p> <p>Henry Zach, HDC 4Point Dynamics</p> |

| GIS Council | State Government Council | Technical Panel |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Steven L. Henderson, Chair, Office of the CIO</p> <p>Lash Chaffin, Vice Chair, League of Nebraska Municipalities</p> <p>Mark Brugger, Nebraska Public Power District</p> <p>Steve Cobb, State Surveyor</p> <p>John Erickson, Governor's Policy Research Office</p> <p>Les Howard, Conservation and Survey Division - UNL</p> <p>James Langtry, US Geological Survey</p> <p>Josh Lear, Department of Natural Resources</p> <p>John Miyoshi, Lower Platte North Natural Resources District</p> <p>Jack Dohrman, Clerk of the Legislature</p> <p>Sudhir Ponnappan, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission</p> <p>Thomas Rauner, Department of Health and Human Services</p> <p>Mike Schonlau, Omaha/Douglas County</p> <p>Larry Seifert, Howard County Commissioner</p> <p>Ruth Sorensen, Department of Revenue</p> <p>Bill Wehling, Department of Roads</p> <p>Paul Yamamoto, Department of Environmental Quality</p> <p>Jeff McReynolds, Lincoln-area (pending)</p> <p>Mike Hybl, Public Service Commission (pending)</p> <p>Chad Boshart, Military Department/Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (pending)</p> | <p>Brenda Decker, Chair, Office of the CIO</p> <p>Bob Beecham, Department of Education</p> <p>Michael E. Behm, Crime Commission</p> <p>Dennis Burling, Department of Environmental Quality</p> <p>Mike Calvert, Legislative Fiscal Office</p> <p>Carlos Castillo, Department of Administrative Services</p> <p>Tom Conroy, Office of the CIO, Enterprise Computing Services</p> <p>Douglas Ewald, Department of Revenue</p> <p>Pat Flanagan, Private Sector</p> <p>John Gale, Secretary of State of Nebraska</p> <p>Rex Gittins, Department of Natural Resources</p> <p>Dorest Harvey, Private Sector</p> <p>Lauren Hill, Governor's Policy Research Office</p> <p>Catherine Lang, Department of Labor</p> <p>Jeanette Lee, Department of Banking and Finance (alternate)</p> <p>Glenn Morton, Workers' Compensation Court</p> <p>Beverly Neth, Department of Motor Vehicles</p> <p>Gerry Oligmueller, DAS—Budget Division</p> <p>Jim Ohmberger, Department of Health and Human Services</p> <p>Terry Pell, Nebraska State Patrol (alternate)</p> <p>Jayne Scofield, Office of the CIO, Network Services</p> <p>Robin Spindler, Department of Correctional Services</p> <p>Rod Wagner, Library Commission</p> <p>Janice Walker, Supreme Court</p> <p>Bill Wehling, Department of Roads</p> | <p>Walter Weir, Chair, University of Nebraska Computer Services Network</p> <p>Michael Winkle, Nebraska Educational Telecommunications</p> <p>Brenda Decker, Office of the CIO</p> <p>Christy Horn, University of Nebraska Central Administration</p> <p>Kirk Langer, Lincoln Public Schools</p> |

Appendix

Policy Objectives and Review Criteria

Section 86-518 directs the NITC to submit a progress report to the Governor and Legislature by November 15 of each even-numbered year. This report is offered in fulfillment of that requirement.

Section 86-524 further directs the Appropriations Committee and Transportation and Telecommunications Committee to conduct a joint review of the activities of the NITC by the end of the calendar year of every even-numbered year. Section 86-524 also provides three objectives and a list of criteria for evaluating progress. This report is intended to provide information to assist the Legislature in conducting its review.

Policy Objectives

Section 86-524 states: "It shall be the policy of the state to:

1. Use information technology in education, communities, including health care and economic development, and every level of government service to improve economic opportunities and quality of life for all Nebraskans regardless of location or income;
2. Stimulate the demand to encourage and enable long-term infrastructure innovation and improvement; and
3. Organize technology planning in new ways to aggregate demand, reduce costs, and create support networks; encourage collaboration between communities of interest; and encourage competition among technology and service providers."

Review Criteria

Section 86-524 states: "In the review, the committees shall determine the extent to which:

1. The vision has been realized and short-term and long-term strategies have been articulated and employed;
2. The statewide technology plan and other activities of the commission have improved coordination and assisted policymakers;
3. An information technology clearinghouse has been established, maintained, and utilized of Nebraska's information technology infrastructure and of activities taking place in the state involving information technology, and the information flow between and among individuals and organizations has been facilitated as a result of the information technology clearinghouse;

4. Policies, standards, guidelines, and architectures have been developed and observed;
5. Recommendations made by the commission to the Governor and Legislature have assisted policy and funding decisions;
6. Input and involvement of all interested parties has been encouraged and facilitated; and
7. Long-term infrastructure innovation, improvement, and coordination has been planned for, facilitated, and achieved with minimal barriers and impediments.”