



Date: 12/9/2014

To: Nebraska Information Technology Commission, Technical Panel
From: Michael J. Smith, Director/CEO

RE: Request for Waiver of NITC 7-104

The Nebraska State Historical Society respectfully requests a waiver to the requirements of *NITC 7-104: Web Domain Name Standard*. The Nebraska State Historical Society uses nebraskahistory.org as its official agency URL and has done so for more than 15 years.

The Nebraska State Historical Society sparks curiosity about the past and preserves historical resources to foster learning Nebraskans can use to build their futures. Established in 1878, the Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) is charged in statute to collect, preserve, study, and share Nebraska's history so the people can know and use their heritage. Designated in statute as an official state agency in 1994, the NSHS holds the state's historical resources in trust for the people. Artifacts, photographs, maps, manuscripts, archeological resources, historic buildings and places, government records and more are among items held in trust. Public demand for online access to many of these materials is robust and continues to grow. The nebraskahistory.org domain name was chosen for its brief and intuitive connection to the subject matter—Nebraska History—that most online users seek.

In response to increasing demand for historical resources in electronic format, the NSHS website has grown to many thousands of pages of content, approximately 10.2 Gigabytes with 22,410 files and 557 folders. Researchers may peruse collections catalogs for genealogy and family history records, photos, objects, buildings part of the Nebraska Historic Building Survey, historical markers and more. The nebraskahistory.org domain name has been proliferated in all our communications media since the turn of the 21st century.

A number of additional sites are linked to the nebraskahistory.org site, including Savingtreasures.org, which provides extensive information including how-to videos on care and preservation of objects of importance to Nebraskans, and Nebraskatudies.org, devoted to providing historical resources, lesson plans, standards-based content and more to teachers and students. (The former site is jointly owned with Nebraska Educational Telecommunications; the later with NET and the Nebraska State Department of Education.) *Family Tree* magazine recently listed the nebraskahistory.org site as one of the best state resources for genealogy.

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As the nebraskahistory.org content has grown, NSHS has listed it in all publications, educational and promotional materials, heritage tourism guidebooks and resources (Nebraska Tourism, AAA, Old West Trail, Lewis and Clark, and other regional promotional entities), state and local history organizations (Nebraska Museums Association, Mountain Plains Museums Association, American Association for State and Local History, American Alliance of Museums), state, federal, tribal and non-profit cultural resource management entities (Nebraska Land Trust, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, National Park Service, Midwest Archeological Center, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices) and genealogical and family history resources (Library of Congress, Nebraskaccess, Nebraska State Genealogical Society, Ancestry, Family Search and more.) Replacement of the nebraskahistory.org brand with a new URL would mean considerable cost not available in our budget or requested in the budget process for production of new print media pieces, changed signage, and significant staff time for change of electronic network links connected to this wide range of organizations and sites. Our newest program, the Nebraska Historic Tax Credit, is jointly administered by NSHS and the Nebraska Department of Revenue; a changed URL would require revamping of all those program materials, as another example.

NSHS identifies each website page on the site with the standard logo and "Official Nebraska Government Website" headers and is the process of adding government identifiers to social media products (Facebook, blog). NSHS observes procedural and statutory requirements for independent state agencies and clearly affiliates itself with state government in its electronic communications.

Retention of the nebraskahistory.org domain will allow continued public service and growth of access to Nebraska history resources without incurring the costs in personnel time, printing, signage, and electronic communications that the otherwise-required change to a new URL would entail.

Your consideration of this waiver request is appreciated. Please contact me or Deputy Director Lynne Ireland if we may provide further information.

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