

State of Nebraska

# Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan

Executive Summary

JULY 2020 | VERSION 1

## Executive Summary

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

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

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

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

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

- **Health and Social Services:** Restore services that protect health and safety and restore the mental, social, and physical health of the impacted population through the mitigation of disaster-created impacts.
- **Natural and Cultural Resources:** Protect natural, cultural, and historic places (e.g., parks, cemeteries, museums) through recovery projects to preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, and restore disaster-damaged resources.

Strategies were prioritized based on a weighting system, informed by members of the Governor's Task Force for Disaster Recovery, to help focus available capacity. These strategies also include details such as lead entities, potential project partners, funding sources, measures of success, and additional resources to provide clear and detailed direction to support strategy implementation.

As Nebraskans approached the one-year anniversary of the start of the 2019 events and this long-term recovery and resilience planning effort continued, attention began to shift. The Coronavirus Disease 2019, or COVID-19, pandemic spread across the world—with sweeping ramifications—and the associated response took shape.

The *Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan* was conceived from its outset to provide a basic roadmap for long-term recovery from the disasters of 2019 that could also be applied to future disaster events. Thus, to the extent possible within the original planning timeline, cross-sector impacts, emerging recovery needs, and future considerations associated with COVID-19 were incorporated.

The publication of the *Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan* represents a transition from intermediate to long-term recovery. Although the recovery planning process is finished and many recovery activities have been completed, more work remains to help the State of Nebraska recover from the disasters of 2019 and 2020. The plan is intended to help guide long-term recovery to increase the state's capacity to withstand and rebound from whatever the future holds.

# Cross-Cutting Issues



The following section presents the goal, objectives, strategies, and tactics associated with cross-cutting issues related to recovery and resilience-building. Cross-cutting issues are those that impact multiple sectors or Recovery Support Functions. The activities described in this section will be overseen and implemented by all members and partners associated with the Nebraska Recovery Support Functions.

Goal:

**Identify issues, strategies, and potential solutions that require collaboration across multiple Recovery Support Functions, agencies, and stakeholders to effect recovery, resiliency, and capacity building.**

## Overview

 *High Priority Items*

### Objective 1:

Create statewide resources to promote awareness of long-term recovery activities, community needs, available assistance, and funding programs.

 **STRATEGY 1.1**

Develop a statewide communications plan and information clearinghouse to standardize engagement of communities, businesses, and individuals after disasters about disaster recovery.

 **STRATEGY 1.2**

Identify or develop materials describing long-term recovery basics; disaster preparedness and response; mitigation principles and best practices; and disaster recovery funding sources so that guidance can be readily distributed to impacted communities before, during, or after a disaster.

### Objective 2:

Work with federal partners to create efficiencies and streamline response and recovery operations to get individual assistance, public assistance, hazard mitigation, and all available funds to impacted persons and communities as rapidly as possible.

 **STRATEGY 2.1**

Build state capacity to efficiently apply for and manage major federal funding programs.

 **STRATEGY 2.2**

Identify sources to meet gaps in funding related to open and standing disasters (e.g., DR-4420, DR-4521), including local cost share.

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### Objective 3:

Obtain and disseminate accurate and timely mapping of disaster impacts to help assess priorities for disaster response, recovery, and mitigation.

❗ **STRATEGY 3.1**

Establish a statewide High-Water Mark and LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) Collection System to monitor the extent and severity of flood events.

❗ **STRATEGY 3.2**

Maintain and pursue opportunities to improve best available flood maps, data, and tools.

❗ **STRATEGY 3.3**

Take inventory of all drones that could be activated during an emergency.

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### Objective 4:

Ensure that considerations for people with access and functional needs are addressed throughout disaster response, recovery, and preparedness.

❗ **STRATEGY 4.1**

Monitor and address access and functional needs considerations as they arise or are identified, while increasing capacity at the state and local level to do so in the future without technical assistance.

❗ **STRATEGY 4.2**

Make statewide communications about disaster response and recovery readily available, accessible, and understandable to all residents.

❗ **STRATEGY 4.3**

Identify and address opportunities to increase the resilience of access and functional needs populations.

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### Objective 5:

Continue providing support for mold remediation.

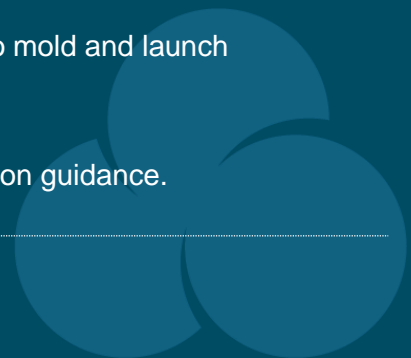
❗ **STRATEGY 5.1**

Continue to monitor emerging public health trends related to mold and launch appropriate treatment plans in response.

❗ **STRATEGY 5.2**

Establish unified statewide mold identification and remediation guidance.

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**Objective 6:**

Revise and update local, regional, and state long-term recovery planning documents and related decision-support tools to reflect changing understanding of risk and vulnerability.

**❗ STRATEGY 6.1**

Develop a pre-disaster long-term recovery framework for use throughout the state and provide technical assistance to local community emergency management agencies working to update their plans.

**❗ STRATEGY 6.2**

Use best available flood data from impacted areas to guide conversations with local communities to inform recovery, mitigation, and future development—including relocation and/or elevation of critical infrastructure and housing supply.

**❗ STRATEGY 6.3**

Work with communities and local emergency management agencies to update and adapt local emergency operations plans to account for revised guidance and inefficiencies created by/exposed by 2019 flooding.

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**Objective 7:**

Establish mechanisms to monitor emerging and delayed impacts and associated recovery needs over time.

**❗ STRATEGY 7.1**

Use the Periodic Needs Assessment to assess impacts to Nebraskan communities and identify any missed areas of need.

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**Objective 8:**

Minimize impediments to response and recovery during future disasters without compromising the safety of Nebraskans.

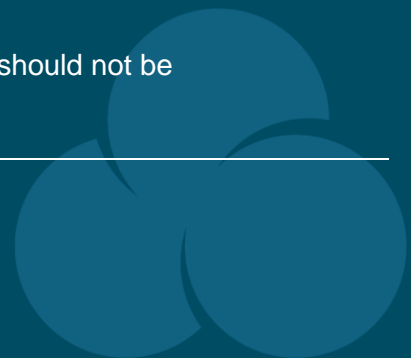
**❗ STRATEGY 8.1**

Evaluate the need to amend regulatory hurdles that hinder response, recovery, or resilience-building.

**❗ STRATEGY 8.2**

Build capacity to navigate regulatory hurdles that cannot or should not be amended through policy changes.

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## Infrastructure Systems

The following section presents the goal, objectives, strategies, and tactics associated with infrastructure systems recovery and resilience-building. The activities described in this section will be overseen and implemented by members and partners associated with the Nebraska Infrastructure Systems Recovery Support Function.

Goal:

**Support the efficient assessment, restoration, and revitalization of infrastructure systems (including, but not limited to, roads, highways, dams, bridges, railways, tunnels, public drinking water systems, wastewater systems, sewer systems, electric generating facilities and transmission, fuel storage and associated pipelines, septic tanks, and levees).**

### Overview

 *High Priority Items*

#### Objective 1:

Support and work alongside federal, state, and local partners to rebuild and repair disaster-affected infrastructure in ways that reduce future vulnerability.

 **STRATEGY 1.1**

Leverage available funding programs to support mitigation measures that reduce future risk to infrastructure statewide while increasing local capacity to do the same in the future.

 **STRATEGY 1.2**

Evaluate and address drinking water and wastewater needs, impacts, and issues.

 **STRATEGY 1.3**

Continue to address restoration of flood control works.

**STRATEGY 1.4**

Identify remaining roads in need of repair, prioritize amongst those needing repair, and seek opportunities to address challenges (e.g., funding gaps, lack of contractors).



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**Objective 2:**

Prepare for future flooding or other damaging disasters.

**1 STRATEGY 2.1**

Promote infrastructure resilience at the local level by providing education and technical assistance to build awareness of best practices.

**STRATEGY 2.2**

Assess critical infrastructure vulnerability to identify priorities for mitigation or relocation that will make vulnerable infrastructure less susceptible to damage during future disasters.

**STRATEGY 2.3**

Develop policies and procedures to increase the efficiency of response and recovery and effectively prioritize resources.

**STRATEGY 2.4**

Work with stakeholders and the state to manage, track, and identify gaps in supplies and materials for infrastructure repair projects before, during, and after disasters.

**STRATEGY 2.5**

Evaluate state capacity to manage debris removal.

**STRATEGY 2.6**

Develop and implement joint, interagency damage assessment teams.

**STRATEGY 2.7**

Evaluate opportunities to implement electrical upgrades (e.g., self-sufficient microgrids).

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# Housing



The following section presents the goal, objectives, strategies, and tactics associated with housing recovery and resilience-building. The activities described in this section will be overseen and implemented by members and partners associated with the Nebraska Housing Recovery Support Function.

Goal:

**Design and implement interim, temporary, and permanent housing recovery solutions that effectively support the needs of the whole community. Return housing to a stable, resilient state and develop new opportunities for housing and neighborhood growth.**

## Overview

 High Priority Items

### Objective 1:

Restore damaged housing to ensure Nebraskans have livable (safe, secure, and sanitary) housing.

 STRATEGY 1.1

Develop and implement a program to provide free or subsidized rehabilitation inspections for damaged residential properties.

 STRATEGY 1.2

Identify and remedy urgent housing repair, recovery, and rehabilitation needs through coordinated use of disaster recovery resources.

 STRATEGY 1.3

Establish a program to support new developments of prefabricated manufactured houses that are eligible for traditional 30-year mortgage financing without any underwriting discount.



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**Objective 2:**

Support local housing-related mitigation, community-development, and resilience initiatives statewide.

**❗ STRATEGY 2.1**

Purchase, demolish, and replace homes destroyed by flooding with innovative and affordable housing types outside of known high-risk areas.

**❗ STRATEGY 2.2**

Create public campaigns that educate homeowners, landlords, and renters on National Flood Insurance Program requirements, emphasizing the importance of maintaining flood insurance coverage.

**❗ STRATEGY 2.3**

Develop post-disaster housing recovery guidance for the state and local governments.

**STRATEGY 2.4**

Identify and promote innovative individual and community-level mitigation measures to protect housing.

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**Objective 3:**

Assist impacted households in obtaining temporary and/or permanent livable housing, including both displaced households and households who remain in their damaged homes.

**❗ STRATEGY 3.1**

Provide housing solutions that enable individuals and families to secure housing within their home communities.

**STRATEGY 3.2**

Identify affordable housing solutions for individuals experiencing homelessness (or at risk of homelessness).

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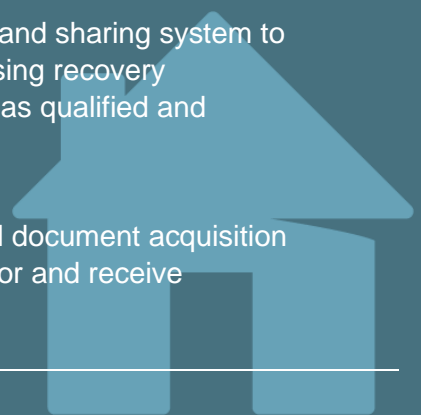
**Objective 4:**

Develop a cross-agency, secure data and document acquisition and sharing system to target, focus, and accelerate delivery and documentation of housing recovery resources, labor, and financing to clients and projects discerned as qualified and ready to proceed.

**STRATEGY 4.1**

Explore the feasibility of developing a coordinated data and document acquisition and sharing system to help households more easily apply for and receive disaster housing assistance.

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## Economic

The following section presents the goal, objectives, strategies, and tactics associated with economic recovery and resilience-building. The activities described in this section will be overseen and implemented by members and partners associated with the Nebraska Economic Recovery Support Function.

Goal:

**Return economic and business activities to a healthy state and develop new business and employment opportunities that contribute to a sustainable and economically viable community.**

### Overview

 *High Priority Items*

#### Objective 1:

Improve private-sector hazard preparedness and support economic resilience-building.

 **STRATEGY 1.1**

Conduct outreach to business owners to help increase awareness of hazard vulnerability and risk-reduction activities.

 **STRATEGY 1.2**

Expand statewide flood, cyber, and business interruption insurance outreach and education programs for businesses.

 **STRATEGY 1.3**

Establish centralized location hosting risk-reduction resources for business entities.

 **STRATEGY 1.4**

Target key businesses driving economic vitality (e.g., major businesses, essential businesses) or providing vital goods and services in individual communities across the state to encourage preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery planning.

 **STRATEGY 1.5**

Implement programs to increase small businesses' resilience to future disasters.

**STRATEGY 1.6**

Encourage entrepreneurship and startups intended to address known community needs or leverage identified regional or local growth opportunities.



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**Objective 2:**

Promote workforce development, particularly in building trades, to support economic development and recovery.

**❗ STRATEGY 2.1**

Provide career training for those in disrupted industries and in support of the recovery of impacted communities.

**STRATEGY 2.2**

Develop incentive program (e.g., Kansas Rural Opportunity Zones) subsidizing student loan payments, housing costs, or other costs of living to encourage the return and retention of college- and trade-educated individuals to rural communities.

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**Objective 3:**

Help address revenue losses and economic recovery in impacted rural communities.

**❗ STRATEGY 3.1**

Leverage state and federal loans and grants and other sources to help local governments bridge revenue gaps.

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# Agricultural



The following section presents the goal, objectives, strategies, and tactics associated with agricultural recovery and resilience-building. The activities described in this section will be overseen and implemented by members and partners associated with the Agricultural Recovery Support Function.

Goal:

**Support the efficient restoration and revitalization of agricultural systems after a disaster by ensuring that the public sector has the necessary systems in place to support disaster recovery and that the agricultural community can access the information, funding, and resources necessary to recover.**

## Overview

*High Priority Items*

### Objective 1:

Build capacity of agricultural information sharing network to encourage preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities.

**STRATEGY 1.1**

Develop tools to collect and organize information and resources that will help farmers, ranchers, and agricultural goods processors respond and recover from disasters.

**STRATEGY 1.2**

Develop a master list of stakeholders that can support information collection about agricultural and livestock production and impacts (e.g., state senators, University of Nebraska Extension county offices, commodity associations, drone users).

**STRATEGY 1.3**

Promote the uptake of crop, livestock, and equipment, wind, hail, and other types of insurance relevant to agricultural producers.





## Health and Social Services

The following section presents the goal, objectives, strategies, and tactics associated with health and social services recovery and resilience-building. The activities described in this section will be overseen and implemented by members and partners associated with the Nebraska Health and Social Services Recovery Support Function.

Goal:

**Restore services that protect health and safety and restore the mental, social, and physical health of the impacted population through the mitigation of disaster-created impacts.**

### Overview

 *High Priority Items*

#### Objective 1:

Provide Nebraskans with needed social services support.

 **STRATEGY 1.1**

Support long-term recovery groups to strengthen disaster case management and match identified needs to available funding programs and other support mechanisms.

 **STRATEGY 1.2**

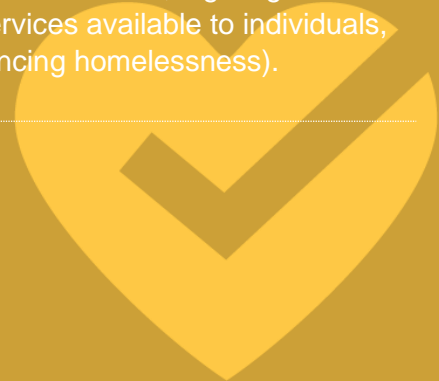
Using existing resource lists, create a disaster survivor resource database that is accessible to all Nebraska long-term recovery groups, Nebraska disaster case managers, and Nebraskans.

 **STRATEGY 1.3**

Encourage local jurisdictions to work with local stakeholders (e.g., businesses, non-profits, faith-based organizations) to incorporate activities related to individual and community-level well-being and resilience and local recovery efforts into local programs and events.

**STRATEGY 1.4**

Promote available services and deconflict information about insurance, legal rights and responsibilities, grant programs, and other funding and services available to individuals, including vulnerable populations (e.g., individuals experiencing homelessness).



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**Objective 2:**

Increase utilization of treatment programs and services for behavioral health issues to promote individual resilience.

**❗ STRATEGY 2.1**

Promote suicide awareness and prevention to reduce stigma surrounding behavioral health issues through outreach campaigns in schools and impacted areas, particularly rural and frontier areas.

**❗ STRATEGY 2.2**

Monitor behavioral health impacts and needs as they evolve over time.

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**Objective 3:**

Increase capacity of behavioral health treatment programs to meet the demand for services with evidence-based, trauma-informed care to increase institutional resilience.

**STRATEGY 3.1**

Increase behavioral health treatment availability statewide, including pastoral care and telehealth.

**STRATEGY 3.2**

Increase treatment capacity for providing evidence-based, trauma-informed care.

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## Natural and Cultural Resources



The following section presents the goal, objectives, strategies, and tactics associated with natural and cultural resources recovery and resilience-building. The activities described in this section will be overseen and implemented by members and partners associated with the Nebraska Natural and Cultural Resources Recovery Support Function.

Goal:

**Protect natural, cultural, and historic places (e.g., parks, cemeteries, museums) through recovery projects to preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, and restore disaster-damaged resources.**

### Overview

 *High Priority Items*

#### Objective 1:

Increase availability and use of open space in floodplains and wetlands to reduce long-term flood risk while maximizing other beneficial uses.

 **STRATEGY 1.1**

Identify project areas where potential floodplain, stream, or wetland restoration is feasible.

 **STRATEGY 1.2**

Increase community-based understanding of the potential benefits of floodplain, stream, or wetland restoration projects.

#### Objective 2:

Facilitate the restoration and preservation of Nebraska's natural assets.

 **STRATEGY 2.1**

Use available grant funding and rebuilding opportunities to improve and expand Nebraska's parks and open spaces to reduce future vulnerability to disasters.





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**Objective 3:**

Encourage the rehabilitation and mitigation of damaged historic buildings and resources.

**❗ STRATEGY 3.1**

Rehabilitate state-owned and community-owned resources and historical markers and implement measures to mitigate future risk.

**STRATEGY 3.2**

Develop and implement a program to help preserve and rehabilitate privately-owned historic resources.

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**Objective 4:**

Integrate arts and culture throughout recovery to support whole community recovery efforts.

**STRATEGY 4.1**

Leverage public-private partnerships to incorporate artistic, cultural, landscaping, and other community-identified value-adding components to infrastructure projects.

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