

## Nebraska Resiliency & Recovery in Action

*By Chris Schroeder, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency*

The Governor's Task Force for Disaster Recovery, which was stood up in 2019 in response to the flooding, has been meeting regularly ever since to ensure all needs, issues, and problems stemming from that event – and others that have happened since then – are identified and being addressed accordingly, in such areas as housing, infrastructure, natural resources, agriculture, health, economics, and functional needs. We have been able to bring together State Agencies, Federal partners, local communities, nonprofit organizations, elected officials, and other stakeholders to work toward the full recovery of our friends and neighbors. And, in recent months, the conversations have expanded intentionally to allow for the continued development of objectives and strategies centered around preparedness, resilience, and, ideally, solving problems before they become problems. This list of objectives continues to grow, as do the action items needed to implement them locally across Nebraska, with many items centered around expanding training opportunities, communication channels, and partnerships – and includes such things as: maintaining a database of local drone operators who can be leveraged during a disaster to provide real-time, overhead images of impacted areas; increasing translation and interpretation services in conjunction with case management efforts; and developing joint, inter-Agency, multi-level preliminary damage assessment teams, to both increase coordination and mitigate duplication of effort. These meetings are open to any individuals, representatives, or organizations who may be interested in joining the conversation.

In addition to the Governor's Task Force, the state is engaged in a number of other activities and efforts impacting Nebraska's resilience to future disasters including the following:

- The Nebraska Department of Natural Resources is partnering with NEMA, local communities, officials, natural resource districts, and other partners to write a new, updated State Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan – largely informed by the 2019 flooding and with an intentional emphasis on future conditions and nature-based solutions – the initial version of which is set to be finalized and published in the summer of 2022. This will also serve as expansion and amplification of the State's All-Hazards Mitigation Plan, which itself was just updated in January of this year, and which is available electronically here: [hazmitplan2021.pdf \(nebraska.gov\)](https://hazmitplan2021.pdf(nebraska.gov)).
- The Nebraska Business Development Center, SBA, and University of Nebraska are working together, and with a legion of other partners, to launch SourceLink Nebraska on November 16<sup>th</sup>. It is a database for business owners, entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders designed to not only aggregate information on nonprofit, education, and government resources, but also deepen and strengthen the state's economic development, community development, and private sector resilience. More information on the platform, it's launch, and all those involved is available on the website: [SourceLink Nebraska](https://SourceLinkNebraska.com).
- The University of Nebraska, our Food Banks, local pantries, nonprofits, VOAD partners, and other organizations are collaborating to amplify a new GIS mapping tool called Market Maker, which is designed to connect individuals, families, local pantries, farmers markets, producers, growers, distribution sites, food banks, SNAP vendors, and other partners. Additional conversations are ongoing around how to expand this platform's impact before and during the coming winter season, and how best to align this database with emergency managers and

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first responders before, during, and after disasters: [Nebraska Market Maker | Nebraska Regional Food Systems Initiative \(unl.edu\)](#).

- NEMA is continuing to overhaul our Agency's website, social media output, and partner outreach – and feedback from our partners, local communities, VOAD organizations, elected officials, and other stakeholders has been integral in making this everything we want it to be, and then some. The website itself is still getting streamlined and made more efficient, but the intent is to develop an entry-point, for anyone and everyone, on information, assistance, resources, and guidance, on disasters of all kinds, before, during, and after such events: [Nebraska Emergency Management Agency](#).

More information on the Governor's Task Force for Disaster Recovery or to review Nebraska's Long-Term Recovery & Resiliency Plan can be found at: [Long-Term Recovery | Nebraska Emergency Management Agency](#). You can also reach out to Chris Schroeder, NEMA Community Outreach Unit Supervisor & Voluntary Agency Liaison, at [chris.schroeder@nebraska.gov](mailto:chris.schroeder@nebraska.gov).