Technical Panel
of the
Nebraska Information Technology Commission
Tuesday, May 14, 2002 - 9:00 a.m.
Clifford Hardin Center, 33rd and Holdrege, North Platte Room
Lincoln, Nebraska

AGENDA

1. Roll Call and Meeting Notice

2. Public Comment

3. Approval of Minutes* - April 16, 2002

4. Project Reviews

   STATE RECORDS BOARD GRANT APPLICATIONS* (Sample motion)
   - Interactive License Renewal Initiative
   - Online Rules and Regulations Search
   - Citizen's Portal
   - Education Portal
   - Online Payment Portal

5. Statewide Technology Plan - 2002 Update

   Revised Section 3 of the Statewide Technology Plan*
   Priorities and Action Items*

6. Technical Panel Membership

   Alternate for State CIO*

7. Regular Informational Items and Work Group Updates (as needed)

   - Wireless Project
   - Network Architecture Work Group (NETCOM)
   - Security Architecture Work Group
   - Accessibility Architecture Work Group
   - Nebraska Network Work Group

8. Other Business

9. Next Meeting Date

   June 11, 2002, 9:00 a.m.

10. Adjourn

* Denotes Action Items

NITC and Technical Panel Websites: http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/
Meeting notice posted to the NITC Website: 17 APR 2002
Meeting notice posted to the Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar: 17 APR 2002
Agenda posted to the NITC Website: 8 MAY 2002

TECHNICAL PANEL
Tuesday, April 16, 2002, 9:00 a.m.
Clifford Harding Center for Continuing Education-North Platte Room
33rd & Holdrege
Lincoln, Nebraska
PROPOSED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mike Beach, Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission
Steve Henderson, alternate for Brenda Decker, Department of Administrative Services
Steve Schafer, Chief Information Officer, State of Nebraska
Walter Weir, Chief Information Officer, University of Nebraska
MEMBERS ABSENT: Christy Horn, University of Nebraska, Compliance Officer

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND NOTICE OF MEETING

The Chair, Walter Weir, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. There were three members present at the time roll call. A quorum existed to conduct official business. The meeting notice was posted to the NITC and Public Meeting Calendar Websites on March 13, 2002. The meeting agenda was posted to the NITC Website on April 10, 2002.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 12, 2002 MINUTES

Mr. Schafer moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Beach seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Schafer-Yes, Weir-Yes, and Beach-Yes. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

NIS (NEBRASKA INFORMATION SYSTEM) UPDATE
Tom Conroy, Project Director

Mr. Henderson arrived at 9:10 a.m.

The project is behind schedule. IBM has brought in two more people with project management experience. A total project management assessment is currently underway. Resources and time frames are being re-evaluated. The results will go to the Steering Committee tomorrow. The proposed timeline changes are as follows:

11/4/02 - Finance, Projects, Grants, Fixed Assets and Budget Management
10/14/02 – Human Resources
1/3/03 – Human Resources/Payroll
2/3/03 - Purchasing and Inventory
FY 2005-05 - Biennial Budget Preparation

The analysis and design of the interfaces are becoming more difficult. A state project manager, Skip Neilson, has been assigned to assist Mr. Conroy. A Change Order will need to be negotiated with the consultant.

Mr. Conroy entertained questions and comments regarding the following:

- Discussion of penalties for IBM's delay in project
- Decision making processes
- Interfaces
- Technical Panel assistance to the NIS project was offered
- Ongoing support after go-live date

COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY FUND GRANT REVIEWS
Anne Byers, Community Information Technology Manager

Mr. Beach moved to approve the technical reviews of the Community Technology Fund grant applications. Mr. Henderson seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Weir-Yes, Schafer-Yes, Henderson-Yes, and Beach-Yes.The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Weir requested that thank you letters be sent to the reviewers. Staff will follow-up.

INCIDENT REPORTING
Steve Schafer, Chief Information Officer

The Incident Reporting Procedure had previously been recommended by the panel for the NITC's approval. Mr. Schafer withdrew the document in order to incorporate information and forms utilized by the federal government.

Mr. Henderson moved to approve the revised Incident Reporting Procedures for the 30-day comment period. Mr. Beach seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Henderson-Yes, Beach-Yes, Weir-Yes and Schafer-Yes. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Weir commended Mr. Schafer for his work and efforts.

STATEWIDE TECHNOLOGY PLAN – SECTION 3

Mr. Schafer reviewed proposed changes to Section 3-Technical Infrastructure. Members made the following comments/suggestions:

- Utilize graphics, pictures, charts, etc.

- Include a statewide data dictionary

- Explore the possibility of a statewide data warehouse

- Development of a business plan is needed.

- Focus on vision in first part of paragraph.

Section 3 will be discussed further at the May meeting.

The State Government Council is developing standards for state government that will be presented to the Technical Panel at a later date.

MEMBERSHIP

Assistive Technology Alternate. Mr. Schafer withdrew his nomination. At last month's meeting, Ms. Horn nominated Lance Perez as the Assistive Technology alternate.

Alternative for CIO. No nomination was made.

K-12 Representative and Alternate. The Education Council tasked the Educational Service Unit's Network Operations Committee to make the recommendations for Technical Panel members. They are Kurt Langer, Network Specialist for ESU 18 and Ron Cone, Systems Engineer for ESU 10, as his alternate.

Mr. Schafer moved to approve the recommendations of Lance Perez, Assistive Technology Alternate, Kurt Langer, as the K-12 member and Ron Cone, as the K-12 alternate. Mr. Henderson seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Schafer-Yes, Weir-Yes, Beach-Yes and Henderson-Yes. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

UPDATES

Wireless, Brenda Decker. Ms. Decker was not available to report. Mr. Becker stated that the wireless bill, LB1211, is on Final Reading and that several amendments have been adopted.

NETCOM, Brenda Decker. Ms. Decker was not available to report. Mr. Schafer stated that the responses for the pilot project were due on April 15th. Mr. Weir stated that Kearney is also very interested in being a pilot location.

Security, Steve Schafer. The committee has worked on incident reporting procedures. There is interest in discussing

contingency procedures.

Accessibility, Christy Horn. Ms. Horn was not available to report. Mr. Weir commented that Kearney has an extensive program for deaf children. A facility has been built for the program. They are very anxious to get high-speed network services.

Nebraska Network Group, Steve Schafer. The work group has had several meetings. An interim report for the NITC is being drafted. Mr. Weir commented that there is concern by some of the members about timing with the biennial budget and e-rate deadlines.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Beach moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Henderson seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion was carried by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Meeting minutes were taken by Lori Lopez Urdiales and reviewed by Rick Becker of the Office of the CIO/NITC.

NSRB Grant Application Template

Agencies desiring grants from the NSRB for projects to improve access to state government information should complete this application and follow any procedures outlined in this application and any accompanying materials.

1. Name of agency applying for grant

Chief Information Officer

2. Title or brief description of the project

Interactive License Renewal Initiative

3. Grant request amount

$25,000

4. Will there be a fee for accessing records associated with this project?

There may be transaction-based payments to Nebrask@ Online in conjunction with individual services, which will be submitted through the normal NSRB review process.

5. If yes, provide any statutory reference or authorization for the fee

Unless there is a change in state law authorizing convenience fees (i.e. passed on to the user), any transaction-based payments will be paid by the agency as an operational expense.

6. Please describe the project in detail

The State E-Government Strategic Plan calls for aggressive efforts to bring entire processes online for the benefit of citizens, businesses and government agencies. One of the largest areas of opportunity involves a wide variety of professional and business licenses, filings and registrations. There are dozens of these types of transaction-based processes that exist in state government, the vast majority of which continue to be manual, paper-based processes.

The State Government Council of the NITC supported a study that concluded there is relatively little information that is common among licenses and filings. However, it does appear possible to approach development of various license, filing and registration applications in a standard, enterprise-wide manner.

For example, the Department of Health & Human Services has a strong interest in providing online renewal for their 40+ professional licenses. They utilize a license management software that is currently being upgraded, and have indicated that

Nebrask@ Online is their preferred partner for development of the front-end and payment processing capabilities.

It is anticipated that once an interface is built between NOL and the license management software for one renewal application, it may be possible to re-use a considerable amount of the code libraries and other technical aspects of the application for other renewals. However, that cannot be determined until the first application is built.

Should this pilot be successful, consideration may be given to seeking an enterprise-wide license for the management software to allow greater acceleration in bringing license renewal applications online. The purpose of this grant is to provide a pool of resources to bring a minimum of five health professional license renewals online, testing the capability of building and adapting an interface into the HSS license management system that can be in part re-used for additional health licenses. Ongoing fees for maintaining and enhancing the applications will be negotiated with HHS subject to the normal NSRB review process.

The CIO would like to reserve the right to use a portion of these funds for online license or filing applications with other agencies, subject to approval by the board or its authorized representative.

7. Please describe whom the beneficiary or recipient of this service will be and projected activity for access or use of the proposed service

Professional licensees, and potentially others who file or register with the state, will benefit from the convenience of online license renewal. The agency will achieve efficiencies by automation what are currently manual processes.

8. Estimated timeline for completion

Installation of the upgraded license management software is scheduled to be complete in August. Work on initial renewal applications will begin upon approval of the grant, and applications will be brought online in conjunction with statutory renewal periods. Should license or filing applications with other agencies be pursued, they will be developed and brought online in conjunction with license or filing periods.

9. Agency contribution to the project (labor, equipment, etc.)

The CIO will provide leadership in project planning and oversight during implementation. The CIO will also work with the State Government Council of the NITC, the NSRB, and appropriate agencies as needed during the course of the project.

10. A. Has this project every been submitted as a budget request (explain)?

No. A previous grant was approved by the NITC for possible use on license renewal, but the grant expired due to delays caused by licensing issues for the management software.

The source of funds (the Government Technology Collaboration Fund) will potentially be reduced or eliminated by legislative action.

10. B. Does the project require additional statutory authority (explain)?

Unless convenience fees (paid by the user) are considered for ongoing support of the licensing or filing applications, no change in statute is required.

10. C. Why is the grant money needed for the project, and if applicable, how will the service be sustained once the grant money is expended?

The grant funds will provide short-term return for efforts by Nebrask@ Online to establish a standard, enterprise-wide approach to licensing and filing applications. Over the long-term, transaction-based revenue from these services will provide ongoing support maintenance and enhancements of these services, as well as for growth and expansion of the NOL network. Given the relatively small volume of each individual service, it is likely to take several years and several services to generate a revenue stream of any significance. The grant funds will also provide a way for agencies to achieve a lower per-transaction rate than might otherwise be recommended.

11. Please describe how this project will enhance the delivery of state agency services or access to those services.

Providing online capability for license renewal, filing and registration will improve convenience for citizen and business users, as well as enhanced efficiency for government agencies. Renewals, filings and registrations can be conducted quickly at the user's convenience in a secure environment that incorporates online payment.

12. Please describe how this project will 1) improve the efficiency of agency operations; 2) facilitate collaboration among state agencies; 3) facilitate collaboration between state agencies and other public institutions; 4) support public/private partnerships in the delivery of public services (you may respond to any or all of these criteria in your answer)

Agency operational efficiency will improve through replacement of manual, paper processes with automated service delivery. Assessing the possible use of a standard license management software could provide numerous opportunities for collaboration among agencies. The involvement of Nebrask@ Online continues the ongoing, successful public/private partnership to enhance the delivery of public services.

13. Contact person information

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Addendum to NSRB Grant for the Interactive License Renewal Initiative

Deliverables
- 5 interactive health professional license renewal applications (or other license renewal applications as agreed to by the Chief Information Officer and the NSRB or its designated representative), including online payment capability. Health professional licenses to be included in the initiative will be selected by the Health & Human Services Credentialing Division.
- A licensing portal (web site) for access to all license renewal applications

Grant Request
- Payment to Nebrask@ Online of $5,000 upon delivery and activation of each license renewal application.
- The licensing portal is included at no additional cost.

Time Frame
- Development work on the license renewal applications will begin upon approval of the grant and selection of the licenses to be included. Deployment of the applications will coincide with the renewal periods for each license. The goal is to complete the five renewal applications no later than January 1, 2003.

Technical Considerations
- The licensing portal will be developed using standard web development tools such as HTML and Fireworks graphic software.
- Integration with back-end systems (such as License 2000) will initially require custom development of modules in standard programming languages such as Perl, C and PHP. The intent is that once an integration module has been developed, most components can be re-deployed in additional applications.

APPLICATION FOR STATE RECORDS BOARD GRANT TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION

Agencies desiring grants from the Nebraska State Records Board for projects to improve access to state government information should complete this application and follow any procedures outlined in this application and any accompanying materials.

Online Rules & Regulations Posting/Search/Tracking

1. Name of agency applying for grant

Secretary of State

2. Title or brief description of the project

Online Rules & Regulations Posting/Search/Tracking

3. Grant request amount

$25,000

4. Will there be a fee for accessing records associated with this project?

No

5. If yes, provide any statutory reference or authorization for the fee

N/A

6. Please describe the project in detail

When public policy is enacted into law, there is often a requirement or authorization for the implementing administrative agency to promulgate rules and regulations. These rules & regs most commonly provide additional details necessary for effectively implementing the policy. The rule-making process typically involves publication of a draft for comment by interested or affected citizens or businesses. The rules must then be approved by the Attorney General and Governor before taking effect.

Final rules and regulations are filed with the Secretary of State on paper. While some agencies post their rules & regulations on the agency web site, there is no single site through which all rules & regulations are available and searchable. The purpose of this grant request is to provide online access and search capability for this substantial collection of public information.

The project will involve several steps:

- *Converting rules & regs that currently exist only on paper into a searchable web format. These are in many cases documents that were created prior to the availability of personal computers and word processing applications. Presently, there are 2,170 pages of regulations that exist in paper-only format. Converting rules & regs that exist in their original electronic format (most likely a word-processing format) into a searchable web format;*
- *Working with agencies that currently post their rules & regs online to ensure they can be searched and retrieved through the project search engine. Several agencies have posted rules & regulations on the web in PDF format, and there are more than 200 pages of these regulations for which the Secretary of State does not have associated electronic text file These will need to be converted to an html format to enable online searching;*
- *Developing procedures and capability for ongoing conversion and posting of rules & regs as they take effect in the future;*
- *Enhancement of the Secretary of State's website to incorporate the new service, including search capability;*

The project will be undertaken in a manner that will provide a foundation for future enhancements, which could include the ability to post, review & comment on draft rules & regs and track their progress through the approval process. Depending on the resource requirements for the first phase of this project, it may be possible to initiate these enhancements within this grant request.

7. Please describe whom the beneficiary or recipient of this service will be and projected activity for access or use of the proposed service

Beneficiaries include businesses and citizens interested in reviewing rules & regs that may apply to them. The project may also prove beneficial for legal or policy research purposes. Among other expressions of interest in this capability, several participants in recent focus groups held in conjunction with the Governor's business portal project expressed a strong interest in having this service available.

8. Estimated timeline for completion

The grant request will support work by Nebrask@ Online on the system and conversion through October, 2002. System work will be complete by that time, although a more thorough analysis of conversion requirements must be undertaken to assess what progress can be expected on that portion of the project during this time frame.

9. Agency contribution to the project (labor, equipment, etc.)

The Secretary of State's office will provide staff assistance in identifying rules & regs requiring conversion, working with agencies and Nebrask@ Online during the conversion process, and assisting with testing the system for accuracy and completeness. Labor to complete the conversion and develop the system will be carried out by Nebrask@ Online using grant funds. Should resources be available within this grant, NOL and the Secretary of State will work with appropriate agencies (including the Governor's Office and Attorney General) to evaluate and possibly initiate enhancements in the area of tracking progress and commenting on draft rules & regulations.

10. A. Has this project every been submitted as a budget request (explain)?

No.

10. B. Does the project require additional statutory authority (explain)?

No, the Secretary of State of state currently has statutory authority to act as custodian of agency rules & regulations.

10. C. Why is the grant money needed for the project, and if applicable, how will the service be sustained once the grant money is expended?

The project falls well within the mission of the State Records Board to improve access to public information. The investment of grant funds will establish a system of online access to a widely-desired collection of public information. Once the system is in place and existing rules & regs are converted, ongoing maintenance will become a routine part of the rule-making process and responsibilities of Nebrask@ Online.

11. Please describe how this project will enhance the delivery of state agency services or access to those services.

Agency rules & regulations affect, in one way or another, virtually every citizen and business in Nebraska. While all rules & regs are public information, the ability to obtain and review the information is cumbersome in many instances. Access to this important library of public information will be substantially enhanced by providing the information online, and more importantly, the ability to search the information easily and conveniently.

12. Please describe how this project will 1) improve the efficiency of agency operations; 2) facilitate collaboration among state agencies; 3) facilitate collaboration between

state agencies and other public institutions; 4) support public/private partnerships in the delivery of public services   (you may respond to any or all of these criteria in your answer)

Availability of rules & regs online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week should cut down on telephone or mail requests for copies, improving agency operational efficiency. The system's search capability will allow retrieval of rules & regs from different agencies that deal with the same subject, creating opportunities for collaboration and eliminate of overlap or conflict among various rules & regs. The project enhances the state's ongoing public/private partnership with Nebrask@ Online.

13. Contact person information

Greg Lemon
Deputy Secretary of State
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Signed This 1st day of April, 2002

                                           _____

                                           Greg Lemon
                                           Chief Deputy Secretary of State

Addendum to NSRB Grant for Online Rules & Regulations Search

Deliverables
- Conversion of rules & regulations available only on paper or scanned PDF files to html format.
- Search engine capable of online searches of agency rules & regulations, including an easily-accessible search screen.
- If desired, design and possible implementation of a tracking system for draft rules & regulations

Grant Request
- Payment of up to $10,000 to a subcontractor designated by the Secretary of State to support conversion of paper/scanned PDF documents to html format.
- Payment to Nebrask@ Online of $5,000 for delivery of the search engine and entry screen.
- $10,000 reserved to apply to the tracking system for draft rules & regulations should a decision be made to pursue that initiative.

Time Frame
- Conversion of paper/scanned PDF documents to html format is expected to be completed by November 1, 2002.
- The search engine and entry screen will be completed and ready to launch upon completion of the conversion process.
- Work on the tracking system for draft rules & regs is pending a decision to proceed.

Technical Considerations
- Conversion of paper/scanned PDF documents into the standard HTML format will require manual data entry and conversion.
- Search capability will be developed as a custom tool for this application built in one of several standard programming languages such as Perl or C.
- Technical aspects of the tracking system, should it be pursued, will be developed in one or more standard languages such as HTML, Perl or C.

NSRB Grant Application Template

Agencies desiring grants from the NSRB for projects to improve access to state government information should complete this application and follow any procedures outlined in this application and any accompanying materials.

1. Name of agency applying for grant

Chief Information Officer

2. Title or brief description of the project

Citizen's Portal

3. Grant request amount

$25,000

4. Will there be a fee for accessing records associated with this project?

Specific services may have an associated statutory fee. Any fee approvals that are necessary would go through the normal NSRB review process. There is nothing directly associated with the Citizen's Portal that will have a fee.

5. If yes, provide any statutory reference or authorization for the fee

N/A

6. Please describe the project in detail

Web portals have become a very effective way of integrating access to public information and services across agencies and levels of government. The Official State Portal at www.state.ne.us provides a single entry point for convenient access to information and services for state, local and federal government agencies, as well as appropriate information provided by statewide associations. Nebrask@ Online for Business takes the portal concept to a specific audience, providing information as well as access to forms and services of particular interest to Nebraska's business community.

There are other subsets of the user base for government information and services that would be well-served by the one-stop concept embodied by web portals. Once such audience is the individual citizen. Each of us, from time to time, has occasion to deal with government agencies. Providing a web portal specifically tailored to the needs of the citizen will contribute to efficient interaction with government, and continue to improve Nebraska's standing as a leading state in digital democracy.

The project will build on the tools and lessons learned in development of the business portal. Application can be made of the forms inventory tool set, as well as the portfolio wizard for personalized service. Lessons learned from populating the forms inventory and maintenance of the information contained therein can also be applied.

While the tools can be adapted for use with the citizen portal, adjustments will be required that involve programming resources. More substantially, a considerable amount of effort will be required to manage data input to create the inventory of forms used by citizens. Resources will also be devoted toward gathering citizen input during the development process to achieve optimal utility from the portal.

Resources from this grant will be directed toward adapting the tool sets developed for the business portal to the needs of the citizen portal; working with agencies to populate the citizen forms inventory with the appropriate data; gathering citizen input regarding the most useful services and features to be included; and marketing the availability of the portal and associated services upon launch.

While unforeseen circumstances may dictate otherwise, it is anticipated that the leverage achieved from work done on the business portal will allow the citizen portal to be developed and launched within the resources of this grant. Development work, gathering input and marketing will be conducted by Nebrask@ Online with direction from the CIO, the State Records Board, and the State Government Council of the NITC.

Key deliverables include the citizen portal website; the citizen forms inventory, including data edit/input tools and data entry; customized search capability and portfolio wizard; results of gathering citizen input; and marketing/outreach efforts.

7. Please describe whom the beneficiary or recipient of this service will be and projected activity for access or use of the proposed service

The primary beneficiaries will be Nebraska citizens in terms of increase convenience in obtaining information and transacting business with their government. Citizens outside the state can also benefit in this manner. Agencies will benefit through improved customer service and enhance operational efficiency. Activity is difficult to project, but but experience with the official state portal would indicate that a well-constructed product will attract considerable use.

8. Estimated timeline for completion

Project planning, website development and customization of tools will begin following approval of the grant in May/June 2000. Data entry into the forms inventory will be conducted during July, August and September. A prototype should be ready for testing by October 1, with the site prepared for launch by December 1.

9. Agency contribution to the project (labor, equipment, etc.)

The Office of the CIO will take a lead role in project planning, oversight and monitoring of progress for the project. As required, the CIO will assist in securing agency cooperation in areas such as data entry into the forms inventory.

10. A. Has this project every been submitted as a budget request (explain)?

No. This is an initiative that fits well within the statutory mission of the NSRB and its grant funds, which are appropriated to the board for purposes such as this.

10. B. Does the project require additional statutory authority (explain)?

No.

10. C. Why is the grant money needed for the project, and if applicable, how will the service be sustained once the grant money is expended?

The project falls well within the mission of the State Records Board to improve access to public information and services. The investment of grant funds will support staff resources at Nebrask@ Online to conduct the development and organizational work to bring the citizen's portal online. Once operational, the portal will be maintained within the normal operating resources of NOL.

11. Please describe how this project will enhance the delivery of state agency services or access to those services.

One-stop access to a wide range of service for Nebraska citizens will improve the ease and convenience of access to government information and services. Knowledge of which agency is responsible for a particular service will not be required, so the user will be able to easily retrieve information or find services of interest.

12. Please describe how this project will 1) improve the efficiency of agency operations; 2) facilitate collaboration among state agencies; 3) facilitate collaboration between state agencies and other public institutions; 4) support public/private partnerships in the delivery of public services (you may respond to any or all of these criteria in your answer)

Agency operations will gain efficiencies through a reduction in direct requests for information or services and elimination or reduction of manual data entry. The portal will provide access to information and services across agencies, potentially identifying areas of duplication or opportunities for collaboration. The involvement of Nebrask@ Online continues the ongoing, successful public/private partnership in enhanced public access to government information and services.

13. Contact person information

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Addendum to NSRB Grant for Citizen's Portal

Deliverables
- A ready-for-launch citizen portal site, including portal home page, portfolio personalization if appropriate, and links to content of interest to individual citizens. The site will be reviewed prior to acceptance and launch by such groups as the CIO and NSRB may designate.
- If deemed desirable, development and implementation of a public relations campaign to promote the citizen portal once it is launched.
- If deemed desirable, a searchable inventory of government forms, or other value-added services, useful to citizens for various interaction with government agencies.

Grant Request
- Payment to Nebrask@ Online of $5,000 upon delivery of the complete citizen portal site, prepared for launch.
- Payment to Nebrask@ Online for actual costs incurred for the public relations campaign, should it be deemed desirable, up to $5,000.
- $15,000 reserved for development and implementation of a forms inventory, or other value-added services, should a decision be made to proceed with those initiatives.

Time Frame
- A prototype of the site, based on research of similar sites in other states and other market research, should be ready for review by August 1. Depending on changes required by suggestions from reviewers, the site could be ready for launch by September 1. Should a decision be made to incorporate a forms inventory, the expected launch date would be moved back to December 1.

Technical Considerations
- The citizen portal will be designed and constructed with standard web development tools, including HTML and Fireworks graphic design software.
- Portfolio capability, if included, will be adapted from the portfolio wizard module included as part of the business portal. This module was developed in the Perl programming language and is readily adaptable to other uses.
- Should a forms inventory and search capability be added, work from the business portal will be adapted for this purpose. These features incorporate a MySQL database and custom search and data entry modules built in Perl and readily adaptable to other uses.

NSRB Grant Application Template

Agencies desiring grants from the NSRB for projects to improve access to state government information should complete this application and follow any procedures outlined in this application and any accompanying materials.

1. Name of agency applying for grant

Chief Information Officer

2. Title or brief description of the project

Education Portal

3. Grant request amount

$25,000

4. Will there be a fee for accessing records associated with this project?

Specific services may have an associated statutory fee. Any fee approvals that are necessary would go through the normal NSRB review process. There is nothing directly associated with the Education Portal that will have a fee.

5. If yes, provide any statutory reference or authorization for the fee

N/A

6. Please describe the project in detail

Web portals have become a very effective way of integrating access to public information and services across agencies and levels of government. The Official State Portal at www.state.ne.us provides a single entry point for convenient access to information and services for state, local and federal government agencies, as well as appropriate information provided by statewide associations. Nebrask@ Online for Business takes the portal concept to a specific audience, providing information as well as access to forms and services of particular interest to Nebraska's business community.

There are other subsets of the user base for government information and services that would be well-served by the one-stop concept embodied by web portals. Educators and citizens interested in education-related information and services comprise one such group. For example, information can be organized around various events in the course of lifelong learning, from acquiring a child's birth certificate prior to entering kindergarten through planning for higher education. In the near term, organizing information and services around topical areas instead of by institution will provide more

convenient, user-friendly access to a wealth of information. Longer-term, online services such as ordering transcripts and paying tuition online should become possible.

The project will build on the tools and lessons learned in development of the business portal. Application can be made of the forms inventory tool set, as well as the portfolio wizard for personalized service. Lessons learned from populating the forms inventory and maintenance of the information contained therein can also be applied.

While the tools can be adapted for use with the education portal, adjustments will be required that involve programming resources. More substantially, a considerable amount of effort will be required to manage data input to create the inventory of forms used by educators and individuals interested in education-related matters. Resources will also be devoted toward gathering input through the NITC Education Council during the development process to achieve optimal utility from the portal.

Resources from this grant will be directed toward adapting the tool sets developed for the business portal to the needs of the education portal; working with agencies and educational institutions to populate the education forms inventory with the appropriate data; gathering input from potential users regarding the most useful services and features to be included; and marketing the availability of the portal and associated services upon launch.

While unforeseen circumstances may dictate otherwise, it is anticipated that the leverage achieved from work done on the business portal will allow the education portal to be developed and launched within the resources of this grant. Development work, gathering input and marketing will be conducted by Nebrask@ Online with direction from the CIO, the State Records Board, and the Education Council of the NITC.

Key deliverables include the education portal website; the education forms inventory, including data edit/input tools and data entry; customized search capability and portfolio wizard; results of gathering input from potential users; and marketing/outreach efforts.

7. Please describe whom the beneficiary or recipient of this service will be and projected activity for access or use of the proposed service

The education portal should benefit both educators and citizens with an interest in various education-related matters. Activity is difficult to project, but experience with the official state portal would indicate that a well-constructed product will attract considerable use.

8. Estimated timeline for completion

Project planning, website development and customization of tools will begin following approval of the grant in May/June 2000. Data entry into the forms inventory will be conducted during August and September and October. A prototype should be ready for testing by November 15, with the site prepared for launch by January 1, 2003.

9. Agency contribution to the project (labor, equipment, etc.)

The Office of the CIO will take a lead role in project planning, oversight and monitoring of progress for the project. As required, the CIO will assist in securing agency cooperation in areas such as data entry into the forms inventory.

10. A. Has this project every been submitted as a budget request (explain)?

No. This is an initiative that fits well within the statutory mission of the NSRB and its grant funds, which are appropriated to the board for purposes such as this.

10. B. Does the project require additional statutory authority (explain)?

No.

10. C. Why is the grant money needed for the project, and if applicable, how will the service be sustained once the grant money is expended?

The project falls well within the mission of the State Records Board to improve access to public information and services. The investment of grant funds will support staff resources at Nebrask@ Online to conduct the development and organizational work to bring the education portal online. Once operational, the portal will be maintained within the normal operating resources of NOL.

11. Please describe how this project will enhance the delivery of state agency services or access to those services.

One-stop access to a wide range of service for Nebraska educators and citizens interested in education-related matters will improve the ease and convenience of access to information and services. In addition to providing a one-stop shop for the benefit of those in the education community, citizens should benefit from convenient access to a wide range of education-related information and services.

12. Please describe how this project will 1) improve the efficiency of agency operations; 2) facilitate collaboration among state agencies; 3) facilitate collaboration between state agencies and other public institutions; 4) support public/private partnerships in the delivery of public services (you may respond to any or all of these criteria in your answer)

Agency operations will gain efficiencies through a reduction in direct requests for information or services and elimination or reduction of manual data entry. The portal will provide access to information and services across education institutions and service delivery organizations, potentially identifying areas of duplication or opportunities for collaboration. The involvement of Nebrask@ Online continues the ongoing, successful

public/private partnership in enhanced public access to government information and services.

    13. Contact person information

Steve Schafer, Chief Information Officer
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slschafe@notes.state.ne.us

Addendum to NSRB Grant for Education Portal

Deliverables
- A ready-for-launch education portal site, including portal home page, portfolio personalization if appropriate, and links to content of interest to citizens and educators. The site will be reviewed prior to acceptance and launch by such groups as the CIO and NSRB may designate.
- If deemed desirable, development and implementation of a public relations campaign to promote the education portal once it is launched.
- If deemed desirable, a searchable inventory of government forms, or other potential value-added services, useful to citizens for various interaction with government agencies.

Grant Request
- Payment to Nebrask@ Online of $5,000 upon delivery of the complete education portal site, prepared for launch.
- Payment to Nebrask@ Online for actual costs incurred for the public relations campaign, should it be deemed desirable, up to $5,000.
- $15,000 reserved for development and implementation of a forms inventory, or other potential value-added services, should a decision be made to proceed with thoseinitiatives.

Time Frame
- A prototype of the site, based on research of similar sites in other states and other market research, should be ready for review by September 1. Depending on changes required by suggestions from reviewers, the site could be ready for launch by October 15. Should a decision be made to incorporate a forms inventory, the expected launch date would be moved back to January 1, 2003.

Technical Considerations
- The education portal will be designed and constructed with standard web development tools, including HTML and Fireworks graphic design software.
- Portfolio capability, if included, will be adapted from the portfolio wizard module included as part of the business portal. This module was developed in the Perl programming language and is readily adaptable to other uses.
- Should a forms inventory and search capability be added, work from the business portal will be adapted for this purpose. These features incorporate a MySQL database and custom search module built in Perl and readily adaptable to other uses.

NSRB Grant Application Template

Agencies desiring grants from the NSRB for projects to improve access to state government information should complete this application and follow any procedures outlined in this application and any accompanying materials.

1. Name of agency applying for grant

Chief Information Officer

2. Title or brief description of the project

Online Payment Portal

3. Grant request amount

$25,000

4. Will there be a fee for accessing records associated with this project?

Online payments made by credit card or electronic check have associated fees charged by banks and online transaction processors. Pending a change in state law authorizing convenience fees, these fees are absorbed by participating agencies. The NSRB may be asked to consider a per-transaction fee for ongoing maintenance of the payment portal at a future date, but that is not part of this grant proposal.

5. If yes, provide any statutory reference or authorization for the fee

Credit cards are currently used by agencies for both online and over-the-counter payments, and any related fees are paid as an operating expense by the agencies. Passing these charges along to users in the form of convenience fees would require a change in state law.

6. Please describe the project in detail

Government services with an associated fee or payment are increasingly moving online. These include license & permits, tax payments, and sales of items such as state employee directories. Current payment options are somewhat limited and generally do not include the capability for aggregating payments to multiple agencies, and in some cases require manual processes to complete movement of money to the appropriate account.

The payment portal initiative will provide a way to move toward integration of online payment across agencies, and complete automation of both payment and general ledger processes. The portal initially will provide a uniform credit card and electronic check payment module that can be integrated with both existing and planned online services such as license renewals and tax payments.

The payment portal will then be enhanced with a "super shopping cart" capability that will allow users to aggregate payments for multiple transactions into a single payment. For example, payment for a license renewal with one agency can be added to the "shopping cart" along with payment for a tax filing and other services, with a single transaction covering payment for several services. In this way, the user is not required to go through each service and enter payment information individually for each transaction.

A third possible feature of the payment portal design is automation of the general ledger form used by agencies to validate transaction amounts and move money into the appropriate agency accounts. Initially, it is anticipated that the system will provide capability for electronic transmission of the general ledger data to the State Treasurer, DAS Accounting Division, and other appropriate agencies. Once the Nebraska Information System (NIS) is brought online, it should be possible to integrate general ledger information from the payment portal and NIS.

Nebrask@ Online envisions leveraging work done by NIC on a general payment portal and super shopping cart. Work on the general payment portal is nearing completion, with the super shopping cart expected to be available by late 3rd quarter. The purpose of this grant is to provide support for customizing this application for use in Nebraska, and work on automation of general ledger capabilities.

Key deliverables include standard payment modules for credit card, electronic check and potentially debit card; the super shopping cart application that will allow payments for multiple services to be aggregated into a single payment; and automation of general ledger capabilities.

7. Please describe whom the beneficiary or recipient of this service will be and projected activity for access or use of the proposed service

Beneficiaries of the project will be citizens and businesses who use interactive e-government services that require payment of a fee or tax. The project will improve convenience for these users. It will also provide benefits for agencies through process automation including general ledger.

Currently, payment of fees or other costs associated with each online service is generally handled in one of three ways:

- *Monthly billing for services offered through Nebrask@ Online's premium service, under which NOL collects fees or payments and remits them to the state;*
- *Online credit card payment for an individual transaction;*
- *Traditional check payment or ACH electronic funds transfer separate from the online application.*

The monthly billing option, through which users pay via credit card, ACH or paper check, lends itself well to integrating payment for multiple services across agencies.

Users with authorized accounts can access services from several agencies, including the Dept. of Motor Vehicles, Revenue, Natural Resources and Secretary of State. Statutory fees for these services are combined into one monthly bill. Money is collected by NOL and moved electronically to the appropriate agency accounts. Currently, NOL has about 5,000 user accounts and collects on average more than $200,000 per month on behalf of various state agencies.

Although this system works well for frequent users of services requiring payment, it does not lend itself to periodic transactions such as annual license renewals or tax payments. Online services such as renewals of real estate, engineer or architect licenses each include a credit card payment module. Once the renewal information is completed, the user inputs credit card information that is then verified and the credit card is billed.

For each service, the agency must establish a merchant account with the processing bank. This process has in some cases taken several weeks or months to complete. Credit card authorization and debits are automated processes. However, completing the transaction by moving money into the appropriate account still requires a manual general ledger process between the agency and the State Treasurer.

Other services such as tax filing with the Department of Revenue involve traditional check payment or ACH electronic funds transfer as a process separate from the online filing application. Given the large dollar amount of some tax payments, credit cards are not perceived as an attractive option given that fees are calculated as a percentage of the payment amount. As a result, the "business" side of the transaction is separate from the payment, not necessarily a convenience for the user.

Electronic checks are coming into use across the country as an alternative to credit card payment. These systems operate in a similar fashion to online credit card payments, with two notable exceptions. First, bank account and routing information is provided instead of a credit card number. Second, fees associated with electronic checks are generally a flat amount rather than a percentage of the payment, providing an attractive alternative to credit cards for large payments. Interest has been expressed in electronic check capability by several agencies, and it would provide an additional payment option for existing services that currently provide only credit card payment.

Activity associated with online credit card transactions has been generally low in the early stages, ranging from less than 2% of total payments for a given service to nearly 20% in the first year. As more services become available and users become aware of them, and as additional payment options are provided, activity should increase considerably.

8. Estimated timeline for completion

Work will begin on the standard payment module upon approval of this grant, and should be completed by the end of August. Customizing work on the super shopping cart will

begin once the module is completed by NIC and should be customized for use in Nebraska by January 1, 2003.

9. Agency contribution to the project (labor, equipment, etc.)

The CIO will provide direction in project planning and oversight during implementation. The CIO will work to ensure appropriate involvement of agencies such as the State Treasurer, DAS Accounting Division and NIS project leadership.

10. A. Has this project every been submitted as a budget request (explain)?

No. Online payment processing has been included as a feature of specific interactive applications, but no effort has been made to approach online payment in a comprehensive manner.

10. B. Does the project require additional statutory authority (explain)?

If processing fees for credit cards, electronic checks or other transaction-based activity are paid from an agency's operating budget, no additional statutory authority is required. A statutory change is necessary if a convenience fee (paid by the user) is to be added for these fees.

10. C. Why is the grant money needed for the project, and if applicable, how will the service be sustained once the grant money is expended?

Grant dollars will support customizing the NIC payment engine and super shopping cart for use in Nebraska. Consideration may be given to some type of transaction-based fee for ongoing maintenance of the payment portal once it is operational. Should this be deemed necessary, the issue will be brought before the NSRB at a later date for consideration.

11. Please describe how this project will enhance the delivery of state agency services or access to those services.

As more government services move online, providing a standard approach to payment of any fees associated with these services will improve functionality for the user and efficiency for the agency. The ability to aggregate payment for multiple services across agencies will be an added convenience for the user. .

12. Please describe how this project will 1) improve the efficiency of agency operations; 2) facilitate collaboration among state agencies; 3) facilitate collaboration between state agencies and other public institutions; 4) support public/private partnerships in the delivery of public services (you may respond to any or all of these criteria in your answer)

Moving from paper check payment to various types of electronic payment will speed the movement of money and eliminate or reduce manual processes for the agency. Automating general ledger documents and other business processes will provide additional efficiency. Allowing multiple payments across agencies, and possibly across levels of government, will improve collaboration. The involvement of Nebrask@ Online continues the ongoing, successful public/private partnership in the delivery of public services.

13. Contact person information

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Addendum to NSRB Grant for Online Payment Portal

Deliverables
- Online payment module for credit card or electronic check payments, designed for easy integration with any online application (such as license renewal). The module will be designed to interface with the existing state credit card and electronic check processors.
- Automated general ledger transmission tool.
- Enhanced shopping cart feature to allow aggregation of multiple amounts into a single payment.

Grant Request
- Payment of $12,500 to Nebrask@ Online upon delivery of the integrated online payment module and successful integration with at least one online application.
- Payment of $2,500 to Nebrask@ Online upon delivery of the automated general ledger transmission tool.
- Payment of $10,000 to Nebrask@ Online upon delivery of the enhanced shopping cart feature.

Time Frame
- Additional requirements-gathering is necessary to determine the scope of integrating the online payment module with existing state processors. The tentative target date for delivery of this module is September 1. Depending on requirements, this date may need to be moved back a few weeks.
- The automated general ledger transmission tool should be delivered at the same time as the online payment module.
- The enhanced shopping cart module should be delivered by January 1, 2003.

Technical Considerations
- The payment engine and enhanced shopping cart applications are proprietary products of NIC, Inc. but are designed for easy integration with a wide variety of applications and programming languages. The grant funds will support NIC corporate technical staff efforts to customize the NIC modules to meet Nebraska-specific requirements. Once complete, the modules can be readily integrated with applications developed by Nebrask@ Online, state technicians, or other third-party contractors.

Section 3
Technical Infrastructure

Overview

State statute directs the NITC to undertake several steps to coordinate and improve the state's technical infrastructure. According to Sections 86-1501 through 86-1514, the NITC must accomplish the following tasks:

- Develop a statewide vision and strategic plan to guide investments in information technology;
- Improve the planning, budgeting, and management of state government's information resources;
- Support the development of a unified statewide telecommunications infrastructure that is scalable, reliable, and efficient; and
- Organize technology planning in new ways to aggregate demand, reduce costs, and create support networks.

The NITC uses four approaches to coordinate and develop the state's technical infrastructure. Through the work of the Technical Panel, the NITC is defining a **technical architecture.** The technical architecture guides decisions about hardware, software, and networks in order to achieve interoperability, data sharing, flexible systems, and control costs. Where necessary, the NITC adopts **standards and guidelines** pertaining to specific aspects of the technical architecture. The process for developing standards and guidelines emphasizes communication and broad participation. Pursuant to state statute, the NITC conducts **technical reviews** of selected projects. Finally, the NITC undertakes **special projects** to achieve its goals.

This section of the Statewide Technology Plan lays the foundation for all NITC-sponsored activity pertaining to the state's technical infrastructure. Detailed information about the state's technical architecture and standards and guidelines is available on the NITC web site at: http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/index.html.

The NITC web site (http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/) also has more information about special projects that are underway.

Technical Architecture

Purpose and Goals

An "enterprise architecture framework" refers to a conceptual structure for guiding decisions on the exchange of information and utilization of shared information technology resources. The framework includes, but is not limited to networks, computer platforms, applications, and enterprise-specific data. The business case for developing this architecture rests on six goals for information systems:

- **Provide access to data in a useful format when and where it is needed;**

- **Insure accurate and consistent data;**

- **Share data across the organization;**

- **Improve ability to adapt to changing business needs;**

- **Provide security; and**

- **Contain costs.**

Objectives

The objectives of this undertaking are to:

- Establish guidelines and standards for the use of information technology in the State of Nebraska, when standards are needed to support statewide activities, including but not limited to accessibility, communications networks, e-government, and security.;

- Assist communities of interest in developing standards that are necessary to integrate data and applications across jurisdictions;

- Develop guidelines that enhance information technology investment and purchasing activities; and

General Principles

The Technical Panel and NITC shall observe the following principles when recommending and adopting standards and guidelines for a state enterprise architecture framework. The architecture should:

- Facilitate the strategic objectives of the Statewide Technology Plan;

- Support the use of information technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness of all sectors;

- Increase access to information and services for citizens, business, and government, and all sectors, while protecting privacy and security considerations;

- Enable affected entities to leverage existing technology infrastructure investment;

- Use advances in technology that are scalable, reliable and cost-effective;

- Enable affected entities to use information technology as a catalyst to re-engineer current practices and design better ways of conducting the business of each sector;

- Provide for identification of process and resource owners (responsible individuals); and

- Provide for identification or creation of clear lines of authority and responsibility for all processes and technical decisions.

Affected agencies should be allowed reasonable access to the process of developing standards and guidelines. Affected agencies should have a reasonable time to implement applicable standards and guidelines.

The NITC, in concert with affected entities, will weigh the benefits of a standard or guideline against the cost of implementation.

Development

The Technical Panel of the NITC will undertake a periodic review of the current architecture. The review will identify problems as well as strengths. In cooperation with the Councils of the NITC, the Technical Panel will identify the important business drivers that will determine the adequacy of the architecture in the future. The Technical Panel may sponsor studies of specific components and issues pertaining to the architecture. Based on this

information, the Technical Panel will develop a state enterprise architecture framework which:

- Categorizes the architecture into useful components;
- Defines the scope of each component;
- Establishes principles to guide the development of each component of the architecture.

The Technical Panel shall recommend technical standards and guidelines to assist implementation of the architecture. The Technical Panel shall recommend policies and strategies to support the transition from the current to the target architecture.

The architecture framework should reflect the unique requirements of different sectors of the state. Preparing the framework should reflect a collaborative effort. A state enterprise architecture framework should not impede the rapid deployment of appropriate technology or establish cumbersome regulations or bureaucracy.

Given the complexity, scope, and changing nature of technology at the statewide level, developing the state enterprise architecture framework must follow an incremental approach that focuses on functional groups with shared interests. The framework should address the goals of access, accuracy, adaptability, cost containment, data sharing and security.

Defining the Scope of the Enterprise

Since information sharing is a fundamental purpose of enterprise architecture, the term "enterprise" should include all areas that need to share **substantial** amounts of information. (Steven Spewak, 1995) A scope that is too narrow will miss important details and fall short of achieving the goals of the enterprise architecture. A scope that is too broad will take too much time to develop and will become unmanageable.

To be successful, enterprise architecture must incorporate policy, control, implementation, and management functions. (NASCIO Enterprise Architecture Toolkit, v.1.0, 2001)

Defining the enterprise architecture is a significant challenge for the NITC, because the potential scope includes state agencies, local government, K-12 education, higher education, and even

other entities. This is far too broad to be successful, except for limited areas. In addition, the NITC can only set policy. Control, implementation, and management are other essential components of a complete governance model for enterprise architecture. These are outside the authority of the NITC.

Solving this dilemma requires a hybrid approach to enterprise architecture. The solution includes the following elements:

1. NITC guidelines should encourage enterprise architectures for organizational units, such as state government, local government entities, and higher educational institutions. The guidelines should recommend a common approach and templates, such as those under development by NASCIO. The enterprise architecture of each organizational unit should explicitly address data sharing requirements and interoperability with statewide systems.
2. The NITC should encourage communities of interest to develop standards and guidelines that will promote data sharing and insure interoperability. Examples of communities of interest include the Nebraska Geographic Information Systems Steering Committee, the Nebraska Criminal Justice Information Systems Advisory Committee, and distance education networks. The NITC Technical Panel should help organize, review and coordinate these efforts.
3. The NITC Technical Panel will develop elements of the enterprise architecture, including standards and guidelines, on topics that transcend organizational units or individual communities of interest. Security policies and procedures are an example. Accessibility requirements are another example.
4. The NITC Technical Panel will recommend procedures for evaluating major investments in the technical infrastructure. The procedures should address the business case, life cycle cost analysis, alternatives, compatibility with other elements of the technical architecture, and risk assessment.
5. The NITC should provide a clearinghouse to document the technical architecture, including standards and guidelines.

Technical Infrastructure

Process for preparing, reviewing, and updating standards and guidelines

Authority

"The Commission shall: … adopt minimum technical standards, guidelines, and architectures upon recommendation by the technical panel …" Neb. Rev. Stat. Section 86-1506(6)

"… The technical panel may recommend technical standards and guidelines to be considered for adoption by the Commission." Neb Rev. Stat. Section 86-1511(2)

Definitions

Standard: A degree or level of requirement that all jurisdictions should use, which would be enforceable by duly authorized entities. With any standard, there will be circumstances that merit exceptions.

Guideline: A statement of general policy or procedure by which to determine a course of action, subject to reasonable situations. Adherence is voluntary.

Overview

Adhering to a sound set of standards for information technology can reduce costs and improve service delivery. Statute requires the Technical Panel to recommend standards and guidelines to the NITC for adoption. Enforcement of NITC standards and guidelines depends entirely upon cooperation of other entities with such authority.

These procedures permit both the NITC Technical Panel and users to propose standards and guidelines. By statute, the Technical Panel may recommend technical standards and guidelines to the NITC. In addition, any state agency, political subdivision, educational institution, or other information systems user in Nebraska may propose standards or guidelines for information technology. The technical panel will review the proposal and then invite comments from other information technology coordinating bodies, other government agencies, and the public.

Principles

The Technical Panel and NITC shall observe the following principles when recommending and adopting standards and guidelines:

- Data are shared, consistent with security and confidentiality requirements.

- The infrastructure uses advances in technology that are scalable, reliable and cost-effective.

- Design and development of the statewide infrastructure are collaborative.

- The telecommunications infrastructure is based upon open-systems concepts to assure universal access and interoperability.

- Affected entities should have a reasonable time to implement a standard or guideline.

- The NITC should weigh the benefits of a standard or guideline against the cost of implementation.

Format

The format of a standard or guideline shall include the sections listed below. Eventually, a form will be available for this purpose to facilitate the process of proposing and reviewing standards and guidelines.

1. Title and number
2. Date of first adoption
3. Date of last revision
4. Date of scheduled review
5. Status (draft, pending, active, inactive, standard or guideline)
6. Applicability (who it pertains to)
7. Category
8. Description of impact
9. Related Standards
10. Rationale and justification
11. Primary NITC principle addressed

Technical Infrastructure

Process

The Technical Panel will solicit initial standards and guidelines from NITC Councils, other coordinating entities, and state and local agencies. The invitation will include a timeframe for receiving notices and making recommendations to the NITC. After the initial round of standards and guidelines, a sponsor may propose a standard or guideline to the Technical Panel for consideration. Proposals should be e-mailed. Sponsors should describe the standard, its applicability, impact, related standards, and provide other justification.

The Technical Panel will review the proposed standard or guideline and determine whether to proceed with further consideration. The Technical Panel may request further information from the sponsor or make changes to the proposal. The Technical Panel will announce and post the proposed guidance on the World Wide Web for review by affected entities for at least 30 days.   Comments should be submitted by e-mail to info@cio.state.ne.us. The Technical Panel may appoint special review committees to examine the proposal and make recommendations.

The Technical Panel will review the proposal and any comments received. The review will include an evaluation of the proposal's alignment with the NITC Statewide Technology Plan.

The Technical Panel may make further changes or recommend the proposal to the NITC for adoption. If changes are substantive, in nature, the Technical Panel shall provide another 30-day opportunity for comment.

The NITC may adopt, change, or reject any proposed standard or guideline.

Technical Review Process

Section 86-1511 (2) requires the Technical Panel to "… review any technology project or request for additional funding recommended to the Nebraska Information Technology Commission…." Sections 86-1512 and 86-1513 require the Technical Panel to review requests for funds from the Community Technology Fund and the Government Technology Collaboration Fund. Section 9-812 requires the Technical Panel to review funding requests for educational technology assistance grants (lottery funds).   In addition, the Technical Panel will conduct special reviews on request by project sponsors, the Governor, the Legislature, or other entities exercising oversight responsibilities.

The review process will evaluate and rank the adequacy of each component of the project plan. The Technical Panel will identify issues pertaining to implementation, technical impact, and risk assessment. The Technical Panel will look for duplication, opportunities for collaboration and compatibility with other systems.

It is neither practical nor necessary for the Technical Panel to review all information technology projects that an agency or other jurisdiction undertakes. One purpose of the review process is to assist the budget process in reviewing and ranking appropriation requests. Statue requires the Technical Panel to review requests for "new or additional funding." ~~Given the undefined meaning of this term, the NITC and Technical Panel will rely on the State Budget Division and Legislative Fiscal Office for assistance in determining what information technology projects represent "additional funding."~~ The NITC has issued instructions to guide agencies on what constitutes "new or additional funding." The guidance document is available on the NITC web site at: http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/forms/.

Another purpose of the review process is to promote consistency with the Statewide Technology Plan. Other than reviews mandated by statute, the NITC and Technical Panel must rely on agencies and other jurisdictions to identify and submit for review any projects that would have either a significant positive or negative impact on the Statewide Technology Plan.

The review process can also provide technical assistance and advice to project sponsors. Agencies and other jurisdictions may submit any project to the Technical Panel for review.

Special Projects

The NITC has sponsored two planning efforts that target the need for a "unified statewide telecommunications infrastructure that is scalable, reliable and efficient." In 1998, the NITC recommended a study that would document the current and future telecommunications demand of public entities. The "Telecommunications Infrastructure Needs Assessment" (TINA) got underway in August 1999. It included interviews with almost 250 individuals, an inventory that was sent to over 400 entities, and 3 focus groups with 125 participants. The TINA study identified several objectives, including:

- Providing an information infrastructure to support governmental educational and economic development initiatives throughout the state;
- Leveraging the State's purchasing power to create economic development incentives; and
- Reducing telecommunications costs of state government;

The TINA study resulted in an RFP in August 2001, which sought a qualified entity to assume the position of "prime contractor" for implementation of a statewide telecommunications network. On October 19, 2001, the State rejected all proposals because they failed to meet key objectives. In February 2002, the NITC passed a resolution, which endorsed conducting a pilot project as a proof of concept.   Further information about the TINA study and related activities is available at:
http://www.doc.state.ne.us/netcom/index.html.

Another special project is the Nebraska Network Feasibility Study. At its February 2002 meeting, the NITC formed a workgroup to evaluate the feasibility of developing a digital network and related support functions that would serve education, communities, and state government. The workgroup will present a final report and recommendations to the NITC by September 2002. Further information is available at:
http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/nitc/network/.

Technical Panel
of the
Nebraska Information Technology Commission

Technical Panel Action Items
(Revised: 6 MAY 2002)

> **PRIORITY TP-1:** Support the development of a robust statewide telecommunications
> infrastructure that is scalable, reliable and efficient.

TP 1.1
TITLE: **Provide Technical Support to the NETCOM Project and the Nebraska Network Work Group**
DESCRIPTION: The panel will provide technical support for the implementation of the NETCOM Project; and, support for the Nebraska Network feasibility study, and any subsequent implementation resulting from the study.
LEAD: Brenda Decker, Network Architecture Work Group
TIMEFRAME: NETCOM - Ongoing
Nebraska Network - Provide network design specifications required for the
Nebraska Network feasibility study - 3rd Quarter 2002

TP 1.2
TITLE: **Nebraska Telecommunications Infrastructure Security Review**
DESCRIPTION: Working with the state Homeland Security team, examine security issues regarding the state's telecommunications infrastructure.
LEAD:
TIMEFRAME:

TP 1.3
TITLE: **Identify and Monitor Levels of Service**
DESCRIPTION: The panel will identify the levels of telecommunication services that different sectors (including business, health care, and education) require. In cooperation with the Public Service Commission and service providers, the panel will investigate ways to document the availability of different telecommunication services by geographic area.
LEAD:
TIMEFRAME:

> **PRIORITY TP-2:** Develop a technical architecture, including recommended standards and
> guidelines, to provide for interoperability and greater efficiency in IT systems.

TP 2.1
TITLE: **Recommend Technical Standards, Guidelines, and Best Practices**
DESCRIPTION: The panel, with input from the NITC councils and other coordinating entities, will recommend the adoption of technical standards, guidelines, and best practices.
LEAD:
TIMEFRAME: (Dates to be added as areas for development are identified.)

PRIORITY TP-3: Review technology projects or requests for funding recommended to the NITC, including budget requests, NITC grant requests, and Information Technology Infrastructure Fund projects.

TP 3.1
TITLE: **Project Reviews - Statutory**
DESCRIPTION: Provide a technical review of project proposals as required by statute. Categories of projects that must be reviewed by the panel are: budget requests; GTCF grant fund applications; CTF grant fund applications; and ITIF funded projects. Certain long-term projects, such as NIS and NETCOM, are also reviewed periodically during the project implementation.
LEAD: Rick Becker
TIMEFRAME: Budget requests: September - November 2002
GTCF and CTF grants: As received
ITIF funded projects: Prior to authorization of use of funds
Long-term projects: Ongoing

TP 3.2
TITLE: **Project Reviews - Other**
DESCRIPTION: The panel will review projects not listed in 3.1 above at the request of the NITC, the project sponsor, or other responsible party.
LEAD: Rick Becker
TIMEFRAME: State Records Board grants: Quarterly
Voluntary reviews: As requested