

Nebraska

## State Plan For Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Deployment (Year Two)

08.27.2024 National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program



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# **Plan For Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Deployment (Year Two) State of Nebraska**

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August 27, 2024



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## Introduction

US Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved Nebraska's National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) plan in September 2022. This plan provides an update on activities the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) has been engaged from September 2022 through July 2023 in advancing implementation of the state's NEVI program including:

- Soliciting feedback from stakeholders, agency partners and Departments of Transportation in peer states.
- Working with inter-agency partners to navigate challenges posed by existing Nebraska state law.
- Evaluating updated NEVI guidance to ensure the state's deployment complies with all the requirements in 23 U.S.C., 23 CFR 680.
- Exploring contracting options to prepare for infrastructure deployment.
- Developing a draft Request For Proposals (RFP) to be used for soliciting applications for funding.

NDOT intends to invest federal NEVI formula program funds in its first phase to electrify the I-80 Alternative Fuels Corridor (AFC) with the goal of achieving fully built out status in 2025. NDOT led the creation of Request for Information (RFI) that informed the development of a draft Request for Proposals (RFP).

NDOT released the RFP in the Summer 2024 to solicit bids to close current electrification gaps in the AFC by deploying electric vehicles charging infrastructure or upgrading existing charging locations to fully comply with the NEVI requirements set forth in 23 CFR 680.

NDOT has developed a scoring methodology to use a competitive selection process to identify charging station partners with industry expertise who can meet all federal requirements.

NDOT will continue to closely evaluate the changing environment around electric vehicles infrastructure (EVSE) to ensure that the state NEVI program implementation is equitable and supports the needs of its residents.

## Updates from Prior 2023 Plan

The following sections of the plan have been updated. Each bullet heading serves as a link to their respective Plan sections:

- **State Agency Coordination (pg. 3):** Section updated to include a narrative description for recent updates to Nebraska Law allowing for charging customers for electricity by the kilowatt hour consumed. Additional meetings were held with neighboring states including Iowa, Kansas, Wyoming, and South Dakota to share relevant EV infrastructure information. A review of neighboring state NEVI Plans was also conducted, including Kansas, South Dakota, Iowa, Colorado, and Wyoming.
- **Plan Vision and Goals (pg. 11):** No change to this section.
- **Contracting (pg. 15):** Updates to various dates and additional information regarding scoring criteria have been added.
- **Civil Rights (pg. 17):** No change to this section.
- **Existing and Future Conditions Analysis (pg. 17):** Section updated to include additional NEVI compliant charging stations and the physical addresses of existing charging stations.
- **Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure Deployment (pg. 19):** Anticipated full build-out date updated.
- **Implementation (pg. 21):** Section updated to include more information on ensuring that current and planned charging stations are fully compliant with the requirements of the federal NEVI program. Development of supplemental RFP to upgrade existing stations if found to be non-compliant or construct additional stations noted.
- **Equity Considerations (pg. 22):** Section updated to include planned outreach activities and measures to evaluate the benefits of the program's implementation. Information regarding Justice40 DAC mapping for proposed stations has been added along with summary of in progress University of Nebraska-Lincoln benefit and measurement study.
- **Labor and Workforce Considerations (pg. 28):** Section updated to include a discussion on NDOT plans to ensure that the workforce installing electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) has appropriate licenses, certifications and trainings in compliance with 23 CFR 680.106 (j) and how these requirements are enforced through the state's NEVI contracting and procurement strategies. Focus on local workforce development and utilization added.
- **Program Evaluation (pg. 29):** No change to this section.

## State Agency Coordination

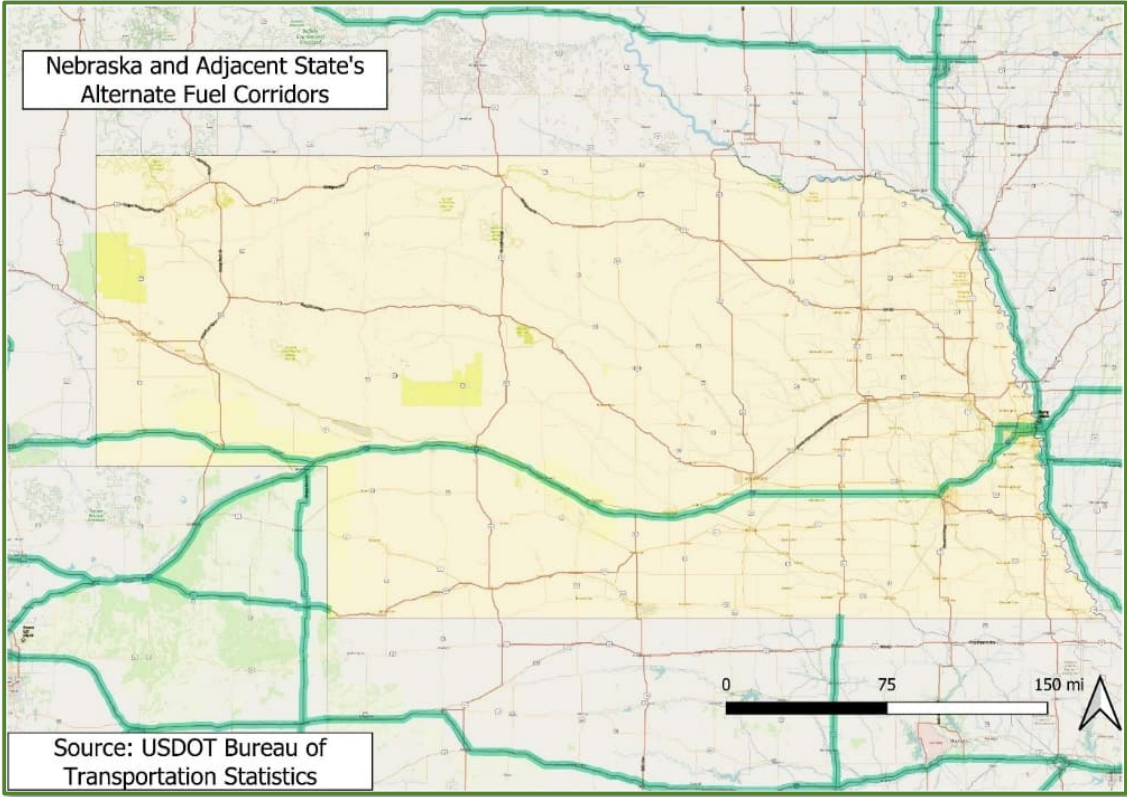
The Nebraska Department of Transportation's Strategic Planning Division is coordinating the deployment of the Nebraska Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan.

NDOT worked with the State Attorney General's office to identify ways to amend previously restrictive state laws that prohibited the deployment of NEVI compliant charging infrastructure. Previously, Nebraska state law only allowed public power companies to charge consumers by kilowatt hours for electricity, effectively restricting operators of electric vehicle charging stations to charging consumers by vehicle dwell time when connected to the charging station. This method was not considered to be accurate or equitable under NEVI compliant regulations as all batteries charge at different rates.

Following inter-agency meetings convened with NDOT, the Governor's Policy Research Office, Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy, the Nebraska Attorney General's office, and the Power Review Board, Legislative Bill 1317 was passed by the 108<sup>th</sup> Legislature which revised a number of existing statutes to allow commercial electric vehicle charging station operators to charge customers for electricity by the kilowatt hour consumed and signed in to law by the Governor on April 23, 2024.

NDOT conducted meetings with the peer states between August 2023 and August 2024 with Iowa, Kansas, Wyoming and South Dakota to share information, discuss best practices and identify upcoming challenges and opportunities to providing continuous EV charging infrastructure along their AFCs. Figure 1 illustrates the primary nature of the I-80 corridor as it connects with many of Nebraska's urban communities and a large focus of the population density.

Figure 1 - Nebraska is primarily served by the Alternate Fuel Corridor that runs along I-80 and continues East and West from Colorado to Iowa.



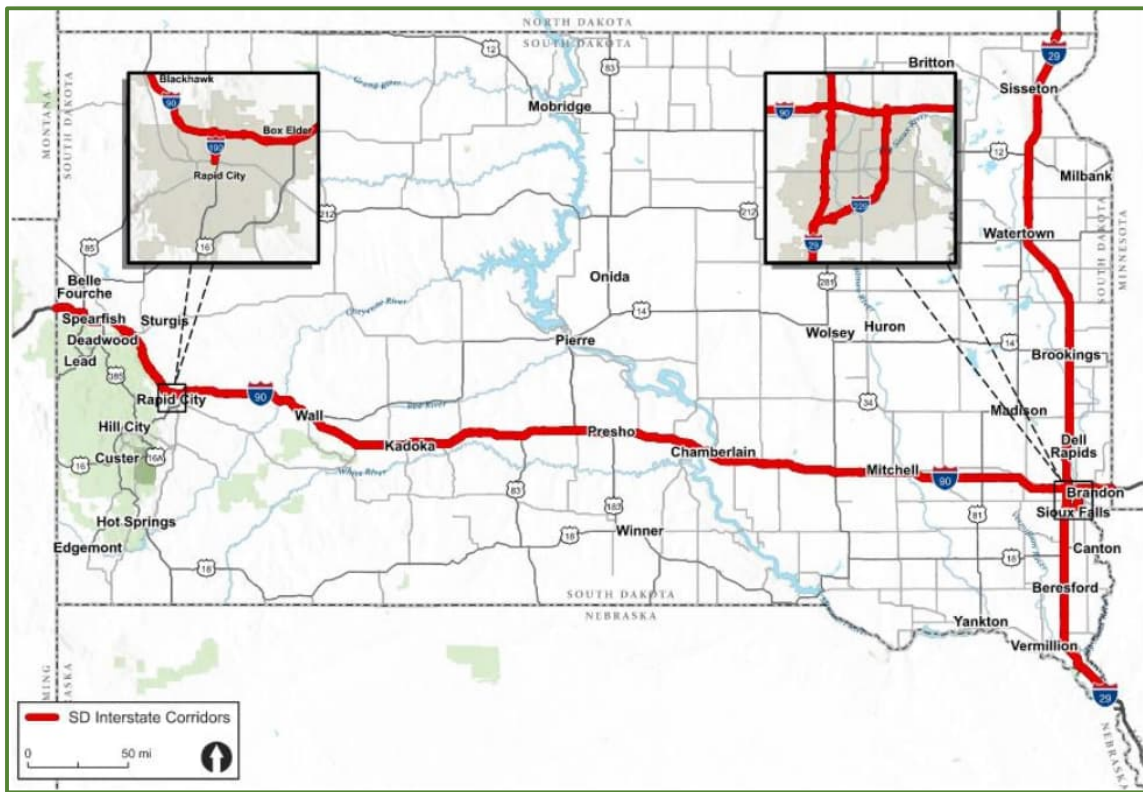




## South Dakota

Figure 3 depicts Interstate Corridors for South Dakota. I-29 is the only North/South Interstate corridor that approaches Nebraska. Despite this, I-29 passes through Iowa, on the eastern side of the Missouri River. South Dakota's initial plan from 2022 discussed the primary factors in locating NEVI charging infrastructure. One of the primary considerations was the financial viability of the charger and overall charging network. Other criteria for charging locations included the number of chargers, available amenities, employment of disadvantaged business enterprises and locations within a Justice40 or disadvantaged community. South Dakota indicates that installation of EV infrastructure will not start sooner than Fiscal Year 2024.

Figure 3 - South Dakota Alternative Fueling Corridors, South Dakota Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Deployment Plan, 2023



## Iowa

Iowa's AFCs connect to Nebraska near Council Bluffs and Omaha with the AFC along I-80 continuing from Iowa, west into Nebraska. Figure 4 depicts how the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) has planned to add further capacity in Council Bluffs as noted in its 2023 NEVI Plan Update to meet anticipated additional demand. The IDOT Plan notes the existence of a NEVI compliant charger along I-80 off Exit 49 in Council Bluffs. Their Plan also suggests it's still developing scoring criteria on projects, but they do have a weighted table evaluating site selection. Those factors include proximity to other chargers, ease of use for long-distance driving, adjacent amenities, proximity of different utility resources for energy, land use in terms of rural vs. urban, and a factor for Justice40 compliance.

Figure 4 - Iowa Alternative Fueling Corridors, Iowa Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Deployment Plan, 2023

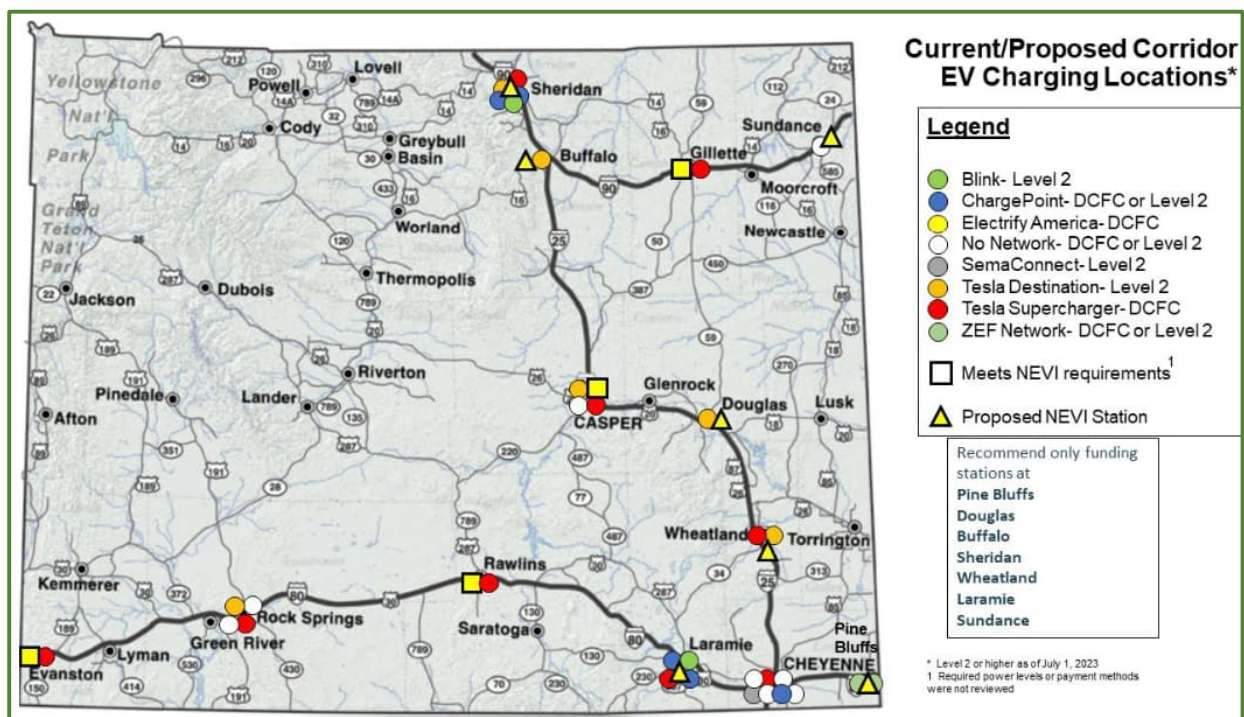




## Wyoming

I-80 is the only NEVI AFC connection between Wyoming and Nebraska. Figure 6 depicts how Pine Bluffs, WY is the closest charging hub to Nebraska. There is existing EV charging infrastructure installed there, and the Wyoming DOT has intentions to add further chargers despite having both Level 2 and DC Fast Charging in the form of both CHArge de Move (Chademo) and Combined Charging System (CCS) charging opportunities. Beyond the Pine Bluff location, the Wyoming DOT has larger concerns about the financial viability of charging stations across the larger network due to low traffic volumes and the rural nature of their state. Other concerns that were listed included grid capacity, geography, equity, and extraordinary cost. Many of the proposed locations of the sites in Wyoming are adding capacity to existing locations of charging infrastructure based on commercial interests already supporting charging there.

Figure 6 - Wyoming DOT mapping of existing and proposed NEVI Charging Improvements, Wyoming DOT, Wyoming DOT NEVI Deployment Plan, 2023



# Public Engagement

## Community Engagement Outcomes Report

Community outreach over the calendar year since adoption of the initial NEVI infrastructure deployment plan was directed more to potential grant applicants as their input prior to distribution of the initial RFP will improve the process, potentially increase competition and address questions prior to the application period. In the period, information for informing the public regarding the program was initiated with distribution to be timed with a better understanding of when the legislature will address electricity charging constraints for the program. Summarized below are key outreach efforts completed and planned:

- NDOT sent out a Request for Information (RFI) to gain feedback from community partners and other stakeholders on the goals of the planned NEVI infrastructure deployment. The RFI requested input from stakeholders on various aspects of the planned development. Stakeholders included representatives from communities, utilities and potential site operators. NDOT held a stakeholder meeting on February 13, 2023, to provide participants with an overview of the RFI process and receive feedback.

Several responses to the RFI were received that included feedback on whether NDOT should “bundle” future sites (i.e. having the same operator bid for all of the locations in which NEVI infrastructure will be deployed in a given year), the length of time the RFP should remain open and the provision of site amenities among others. The RFI and a summary of the feedback from potentially interested parties and the NDOT responses are reproduced in **Appendix A**.

- Responses from the RFI were used to guide the development of the recently issued Request for Proposals (RFP) that will be used to score and select electric vehicle charging site operators.
- Community outreach material, including information for potential RFP respondents was developed to the draft stage and was finalized over the Fall of 2023 and distributed.
- Engagement with federally recognized Tribes is planned in a future phase of the NEVI deployment. The Nebraska Department of Transportation held a Tribal Transportation Conference in March of 2023 where implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law was discussed.
- A public-facing outreach program has been initiated with information on the proposed initial implementation timeline as a product. The timeline will be incorporated into the NDOT NEVI webpage as material is approved for distribution.

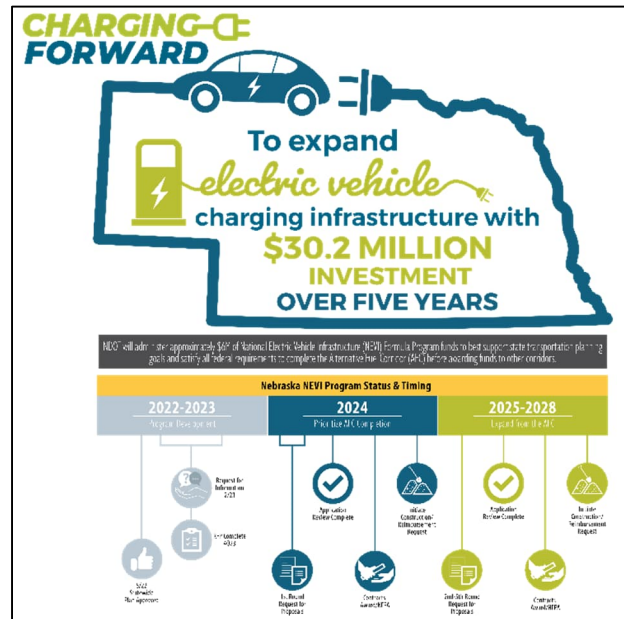


Figure 7 - NEVI Program Timeline

## Plan Vision and Goals

NDOT NEVI program goals incorporate system planning goals from the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)<sup>1</sup> to ensure that the NEVI program implementation goals were in line with other planning efforts at the state and regional levels. Following the release of the NEVI final rule (Federal Register, 2/28/2023), Nebraska program's goals and objectives were reviewed relative to the final rule content to confirm the Nebraska program established goals and objectives remained consistent with federal program guidelines.

A significant amendment put forth in the final rule was the ability for NEVI funds to be directed to community charging installations following the build-out of the state's AFC network. Central to a review of the original program goals and objectives was to ensure the program goals and objective support the intent of adding community charging to the national program. As the NDOT program goals and objectives are broad and encompassing, only minor language revisions were needed to support final rule modifications to the national program. Table 1 outlines the Nebraska NEVI program goals and objectives.

## Program Goals and Objectives Review and Analysis

### Asset Preservation

The cost of maintaining or replacing infrastructure on Nebraska's transportation system necessitates wise investment decisions at all levels of government in Nebraska to achieve the best return for each dollar spent on keeping transportation assets in a state of good repair. Relative to development of a charging network across the state, supporting both long distance travel charging and community charging, the NDOT will require successful applicants to submit an asset maintenance and operations plan. The plan, which is under development, will outline reporting requirements covering station utilization, charging levels by event, uptime/station availability, response times for maintenance, etc.

The Long-Range Transportation Plan (2040 Plan), acknowledges more widespread adoption of EVs will require an update to funding overall transportation network maintenance as gas taxes are the primary source. Thus, as the NEVI program matures and EV numbers increase, NDOT will be assessing alternatives and adjusting the funding program to ensure adequate asset maintenance/preservation/improvement funding levels.

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<sup>1</sup> Nebraska DOT Long Range Transportation Plan, 2040 Plan, <https://dot.nebraska.gov/projects/publications/lrtp/>

Table 1 - Nebraska DOT EV Charging Infrastructure Plan, Goals, and Objectives

Goal	Objectives
<p><b>Asset Preservation:</b> Keep Nebraska's multimodal transportation assets in a state of good repair</p>	Optimize road and bridge preservation investments on AFCs
	Invest in the preservation of EV charging infrastructure along AFCs
	Develop criteria for evaluating the condition of EV charging infrastructure
<p><b>Mobility choices for people and freight:</b> Provide efficient, affordable and equitable options across all modes for moving people and goods throughout Nebraska and beyond.</p>	Make AFCs in the state compliant with NEVI program maximum spacing of 50 miles or obtain exemptions when the guidelines is not feasible.
	Optimize locating publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure to support urban and rural mobility
	Provide support for freight and transit electrification across Nebraska
<p><b>Secure and Resilient Transportation:</b> Manage the risk and magnitude of major disruptions to Nebraska's transportation system</p>	Consider roadway network and in particular I-80 and alternate route plans when developing a program of device placement
	Minimize risk to EV charging assets from cyber attacks
	Ensure EV charging networks support all users
	Coordinate with public power districts to address electrical grid capacity for EV charging infrastructure to provide reliable charging for vehicles
<p><b>Safety:</b> Provide a transportation system in Nebraska that is safe for all users</p>	Minimize risk to EV charging users from inclement weather through providing storm shelter areas
	Create safe charging locations through lighting parking, access, etc.
<p><b>Support for economic and community vitality:</b> Support investments in Nebraska's transportation system that best support the vitality of Nebraska's economy and all of its communities</p>	Ensure installation, maintenance and operations of EV charging network is supported by industry professional throughout the life of the system



## Mobility Choice

The objectives of this goal include efforts to support electrifying the AFC corridor according to NEVI guidelines as well as a robust community charging program. This goal aligns with NEVI requirements of completing the build out of electrification along AFCs first with DCFC charging stations. A review of this goal and its objectives indicates a desire to prioritize EVSE deployment along major mobility routes that support inter-city and through state travel. These needs are likely best addressed by direct current fast charger (DCFC) charging that will allow EV owners to quickly and efficiently continue their travel and decrease range anxiety.

AFC electrification is likely best served by DCFC charging due to the nature of trips on the corridor. The goal also calls for optimizing the location of publicly charging infrastructure to support both urban and rural mobility, in addition to supporting transit and freight electrification. The objectives of this goal support the program taking a regional mindset to ensure that intercity passenger and freight travel are supported by EVSE.

## Security and Resilience

An objective of this goal is to address the need for system redundancy along major travel routes in the state, particularly I-80, in the event of natural or man-made disasters. Additionally, relative to EV charging station deployment, the goal seeks to ensure:

- All users are considered in EVSE deployment.
- Providing sufficient electrical grid capacity for increased EV demand.

The objectives of this goal also favor the creation of another tier of electrification corridors that can serve as critical travel routes statewide in the event of disruptions to the AFC.

Other key objectives of this goal, such as the desire to serve all users of the transportation system will require more analysis to determine whether DCFC or Level 2 Charging will be more likely to satisfy these requirements. For example, transit users may be best served by charging stations deployed in dense urban environments that can charge electric buses. For non-auto inter-city travel, heavy vehicle electric charging may be best paired with DCFC locations that already have sufficient electrical grid capacity and infrastructure installed.

This objective, including charging station locations, will also be informed by the Freight Plan to address commercial vehicle needs into the future.

## Safety

The objectives of this goal focus on protecting EV charging customers from inclement weather and other threats by providing adequate lighting and other amenities. While no direct connection is immediately apparent between this goal and the question at hand—it is important that charging station locations are comfortable, attractive, facilities that increase customer confidence in public EV charging. It is to be noted that providing oversight over the safety characteristics of fewer locations may reduce administrative burdens for the state.

## Support for Economic and Community Vitality

The objectives of this goal are focused on ensuring that the installation, maintenance and operation of Nebraska's NEVI funded EVSE is supported by local employment. Both DCFC and Level 2 charging installations are likely to provide clean energy jobs that directly enhance the state's economy. However, tradeoffs must be considered: DCFC installations are far more complex and will likely generate jobs that require high skills and provide higher salaries. However, many more Level 2 chargers can be installed for the same capital investment.

## Additional Considerations: Charging & Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grants Program

Another consideration in this analysis is the FHWA's Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grants Program. This competitive grant program was created under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to strategically deploy publicly accessible electric vehicle charging and alternative fueling infrastructure in the places people live and work, in addition to AFCs.

This program provides \$2.5 billion over five years in two categories: the first being charging focused communities and the second focused on electrifying corridors. Unlike NEVI that is a formula-based program, CFI provides a dedicated source of funds for community focused charging—allowing for the large-scale deployment of Level 2 charging infrastructure.

## Vision and Goals Recommendations

The current goals of the program focus on ensuring that the AFC network is built-out as the top priority. Other key considerations include supporting electric mobility throughout the state, providing a safe and resilient infrastructure network, and supporting economic and community vitality. Additional considerations include the existence of separate federal funds to invest in community charging, as well as an understanding of peer states' EVSE deployment goals.

Based on this review a framework was developed as follows to assist in determining the most efficient use of state resources:

1. In Year One, ensure that the Nebraska AFC is fully built out with DCFC charging infrastructure.
2. Support regional development by allowing EV users to safely and easily travel between Nebraska's major population and economic centers.
3. Support growth in Nebraska's EV market by ensuring consumers have reliable access to high quality public charging infrastructure.
4. Ensure statewide coverage: deploy chargers strategically to ensure geographic balance across the state.
5. Rollout a statewide public and stakeholder communication plan to effectively explain the program for adding electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the state to support the federal NEVI program.

This framework may be used to determine priority order and level of charging for future EVSE deployment. Applications for new EV installations may also be scored using this framework.

# Contracting

## Status of Contracting Process

Consistent with the process outlined in the 2023 EV infrastructure deployment plan, the NDOT will administer funding distribution as a grant program, with projects selected based on the application merit relative to the range of evaluation criteria and program goals set by NDOT. The NEVI program's goal of creating a convenient, reliable and Made-in-America EV charging network across the country will require potential site operators to have several qualifications that will require specialized skill sets. While cost will be a component of the selection process, many other program goals will also be scored to ensure that site operators are able to provide a robust installation that meets the needs of Nebraska's EV users. Through this approach, the NDOT believes the projects most favorable to meeting the program goals will be selected for funding.

NDOT's preferred approach of using best value selection of applicants required an exception to Title 23 USC through FHWA's Special Experimental Project No 14 (SEP-14), formerly known as "Innovative Contracting". The NDOT's request was approved on June 26, 2024 by Richard Fedora, FHWA Division Administrator. In accordance with the approval, NDOT's issued RFP outlines the NDOT's best value selection process for establishing and implementing a competitive solicitation process to request proposals from qualified entities (bidders) to design, build, operate and maintain electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) stations. Proposals will be evaluated, and applicants selected on a competitive basis, with several components, including cost.

In addition to these things, Nebraska State Law was changed to fulfill NEVI program rules. Specifically, the final NEVI rule requires that all compliant charging terminals must display the price for charging by the kWh by February 28, 2024. Furthermore, all electricity sold for retail consumption in the state is, by law, generated at a publicly owned facility. Recently passed legislation (LB 1317) brings State law into alignment with NEVI requirements concerning this issue, allow EV charging operators to sell electricity by the kilowatt hour.

With these things in place, the NDOT Leadership approved the content of the Request for Proposals (RFP) in mid-2024. The RFP was issued in August 2024 during the period the Year One plan update is being finalized and approved.

## Awarded Contracts

The RFP will be the method used by the NDOT to solicit applications from partners for NEVI funding. As stated previously, the RFP was issued in August of 2024. Based on this issuance, it is expected that the first contract could be awarded/signed by the end of 2024.

## Scoring Methodologies Utilized

Within the RFP, NDOT has included scoring methodology that aims to support technically sound competitive proposals, while addressing equity and supporting the NEVI program’s Justice40 goals. Applications for charging infrastructure received through the RFP process will be scored based on the rubric set forth in Table 2. Points for each section will be determined via internal NDOT scoring matrices based on the approach outlined in the RFP Evaluation Criteria. Justice40 scoring items are included under Part 4 – Candidate Site Requirements.

*Table 2 - 2025 Infrastructure Deployments - Build-out the Nebraska AFCs and Fill the I-80 Gaps*

Scoring Category	Available Points
A.1 — NEVI Program Minimum Requirements	Pass / Fail
A.2 — Corporate Overview	300
A.3 — Technical Approach	275
A.4 — Technical Requirements	105
A.5 — Candidate Site Requirements	450
A.6 — Cost Proposal Points	375
Total Points without Oral Interviews	1500
Oral Interviews (if required)	150
Total Points with Oral Interviews	1655

## Plan for Compliance with Federal Requirements

Applicants for NEVI funding are required to document how their project will meet the minimum standards and requirements as outlined in 23 U.S.C., 23 CFR 680 and all applicable requirements under 2 CFR 200 and as detailed in the approved NDOT Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan. The RFP (R231-24) issued on 08/06/2024 provides detailed instructions and submittal requirements for all potential applicants including NEVI Program reporting procedures.

## Civil Rights

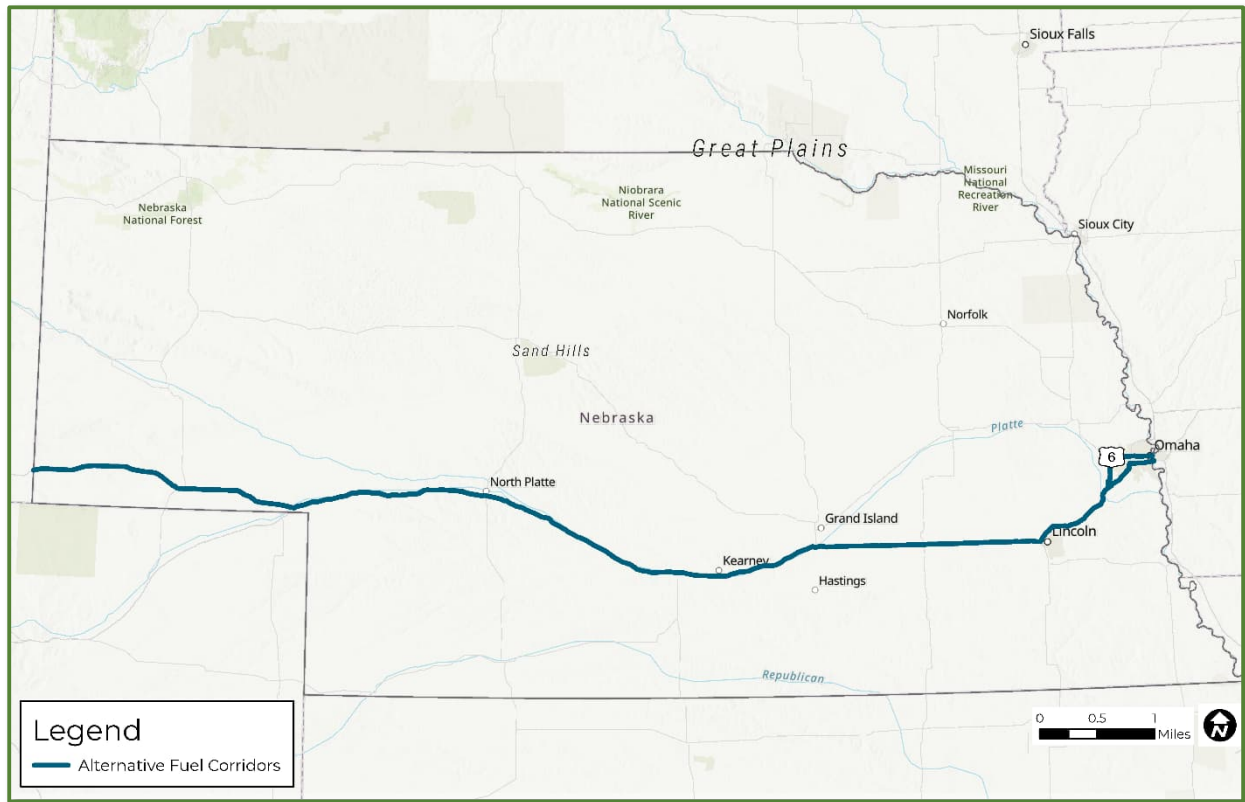
NDOT will ensure compliance with State and Federal civil rights laws pertaining to individuals with disabilities, e.g., the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) including applicable accessibility standards adopted by USDOT in its regulations at 49 CFR Parts 27 and 37 and by USDOJ in its regulations at 28 CFR Parts 35. To address gaps in existing ADA standards that do not specifically address EV charging stations, NDOT will require that charging stations are designed and constructed according to the US Access Board issued guidance *Design Recommendations for Accessible Electric Vehicle Charging Stations*. Charging stations will be designed and constructed in accordance with this guidance to demonstrate ADA compliance and optimize usability for persons with disabilities.

## Existing and Future Conditions Analysis

### Alternative Fuel Corridor (AFC) Designations

Since Round 4 of nominations, the NDOT has not requested additional corridors be added to the AFC designation. The current AFC network is displayed in Figure 8 with existing EV charging stations listed in Table 3 and proposed EV charging station listed in Table 4 on the following pages.

Figure 8 - Current Nebraska Alternative Fuel Corridors



## Existing Charging Stations

A desktop review using available online sources was used to update the list of electric vehicle charging stations located within one mile of the AFC which provide four or more CCS1 (Combined Charging System 1) 150kW ports. Table 3 highlights these current locations as of August 2024. These existing stations are assumed to be NEVI compliant with additional due diligence review in process to confirm. In the event any of these stations are determined by the NDOT to be non-compliant, and additional RFP will be issued to upgrade existing stations to meet NEVI Program requirements or solicit construction of new NEVI compliant charging locations.

Table 3 - Existing Private DCFC Locations Along I-80 AFC

Alternative Fuels Data Center Identifier	Route	Location	Owner/Number of Ports/ Connector Type	Utility Territories
TBD, pending certification	I-80	201 Pony Express Lane, Ogallala	Electrify America / 4 DCFC / CHAdeMO CCS	Ogallala (NPPD)
TBD, pending certification	I-80	1401 S Dewey Street, North Platte, 69143	Electrify America / 4 DCFC / CHAdeMO CCS	North Platte PPD
TBD, pending certification	I-80	200 Frontier Street, Lexington	Electrify America / 4 DCFC / CHAdeMO CCS	Lexington PPD or Dawson PPD if on south
TBD, pending certification	I-80	7838 S Hwy 281, Grand Island	Electrify America / 4 DCFC / CHAdeMO CCS	Southern PPD
TBD, pending certification	I-80	110 NW 20th Street, Lincoln	Electrify America / 4 DCFC / CHAdeMO CCS	LES

# Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure Deployment

## Planned Charging Stations

To buildout the AFC, charging stations are anticipated for the locations identified in Table 4.

## Stations Under Construction

As of August 2024, there are currently no stations under construction using NEVI funding.

## Planning Towards a Fully Built Out Determination

The I-80 is the only AFC with gaps under the 50 miles spacing rule of the NEVI program. Approximately 28 miles of US 6 is also designated as an AFC; however, the segment length is such that a charging station is not needed to identify the corridor as built-out. A total of 12 NEVI compliant charging stations will be required along I-80 for the corridor to be certified as fully built out. Figure 9 illustrates the seven additional station locations that will be necessary to achieve full buildout. Table 4 lists these locations, along with other details.

Figure 9 - Infrastructure Deployments to Achieve Build-out the Nebraska AFCs and Fill the I-80 Gaps



Table 4 - Infrastructure Deployments to Achieve Build-out the Nebraska AFCs and Fill the I-80 Gaps

ID	City/Town	Route	Location	Anticipated Number of Ports	Utility Territories	Anticipated Year Operational/ NEVI Sources	2022 Funding Amount
TBD, pending build out	Kimball	I-80	Exit 20 US 71	4	Kimball Power District or High West Energy	2025/ FY 2022	\$800,000
TBD, pending build out	Sidney	I-80	Exit 59 17J-US 385	4	Sidney Public Power District/ Wheatbelt Public Power District	2025/ FY 2022	\$800,000
TBD, pending build out	Big Springs	I-80	Exit 107 258	4	Big Springs (NPPD)	2025/ FY 2022	\$800,000
TBD, pending build out	Gothenburg	I-80	Exit 211 N-47	4	Gothenburg PPD	2025/ FY 2022	\$800,000
TBD, pending build out	Kearney	I-80	Exit 272 N-44	4	Kearney NPPD	2025/ FY 2022	\$800,000
TBD, pending build out	York	I-80	Exit 353 US 81	4	York (NPPD)	2025/ FY 2022	\$800,000
TBD, pending build out	Omaha	I-80	TBD	4	OPPD	2025/ FY 2022	\$800,000

As for the other 5 locations necessary for full buildout along I-80, a preliminary analysis found that these stations tentatively conform to NEVI spacing requirements and other criteria set forth in Title 23. A more recent desktop examination found an additional compliant charging location at the eastern end of the AFC in Council Bluffs, IA. In addition, feedback from participants received as part of the RFI indicated that in general, stakeholders were not supportive of NDOT bundling all locations required to fully build out the AFC. As a result, the forthcoming RFP will solicit applications for individual sites.

The NDOT program will focus on closing current gaps in the AFC with the expectation that AFC is certified fully built out by June 2028.

### Post AFC Build-out Charging Station Funding

Funding levels are adequate to support build-out of the AFC with approximately one year of the state's five-years appropriations. The NDOT priority since adoption of the inaugural plan has been addressing barriers/challenges to initiating implementation. Alternate concepts for statewide deployment have been explored and will be refined, with a post-AFC deployment plan to be developed in 2025-26.



## Implementation

NDOT plans in the first year of program implementation to focus on electrifying the I-80 AFC. The state will contract with one or more private entities for the installation, operation and maintenance of EV charging infrastructure through a fair and transparent Request for Proposal (RFP) process. As stated in this 2024 NDOT NEVI Plan, NDOT will provide up to 80 percent of the capital and installation costs of new charging infrastructure, with the remaining cost share coming from the program applicants. NDOT continues to evaluate options for distributing funding relative to the implementation phase with the following options currently being evaluated:

- Reimbursement following demonstration devices are functional, including the ability to collect payment and provide summary records.
- Substantial completion with the Applicant providing a surety bond for the full cost of the project.
- Reimbursement of up to 75 percent of the grant amount during construction with the remaining 25 percent paid following demonstration devices are functional, including the ability to collect payment and provide summary records.

There are currently five locations with charging stations that have four ports and at least 150 kW of power delivery per port along the corridor and are considered to be NEVI credible supporting the AFC. NDOT plans to further evaluate these charging locations to understand if upgrades may be necessary to ensure full compliance with regulations set forth in the code. In the event any of these stations are determined by the NDOT to be non-compliant, an additional RFP will be issued to upgrade existing stations to meet NEVI Program requirements or solicit construction of new NEVI compliant charging locations.

## Equity Considerations

Using the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool<sup>2</sup> developed by the Council on Environmental Quality, it was determined that one of the five existing EV Chargers is located in a Disadvantaged Community. Further it should be noted that 3 of the proposed locations are located in disadvantaged communities. This means that 25% of the EV charging stations along Nebraska’s I-80 AFC will be located in disadvantaged communities.

Table 5 - Existing EV Charging Station DAC Locations

Alternative Fuels Data Center Identifier	Route	Location	Owner/Number of Ports/ Connector Type	Utility Territories	Status	Located in Disadvantaged Community
TBD, pending build out	I-80	201 Pony Express Lane, Ogallala	Electrify America - 7 DCFC CHAdeMO CCS	Ogallala (NPPD)	Existing	NO
TBD, pending build out	I-80	1401 S Dewey Street, North Platte, 69143	Electrify America - 7 DCFC CHAdeMO CCS	North Platte PPD	Existing	NO
TBD, pending build out	I-80	200 Frontier Street, Lexington	Electrify America - 7 DCFC CHAdeMO CCS	Lexington PPD or Dawson PPD if on south	Existing	YES
TBD, pending build out	I-80	7838 S Hwy 281, Grand Island	Electrify America - 7 DCFC CHAdeMO CCS	Southern PPD	Existing	NO
TBD, pending build out	I-80	110 NW 20th Street, Lincoln	Electrify America - 7 DCFC CHAdeMO CCS	LES	Existing	NO
TBD, pending verification	I-80	Kimball	TBD	Kimball Power District or High West Energy	Proposed	YES
TBD, pending verification	I-80	Sidney	TBD	Sidney Public Power District/ Wheatbelt Public Power District	Proposed	NO
TBD, pending verification	I-80	Big Springs	TBD	Big Springs (NPPD)	Proposed	NO
TBD, pending verification	I-80	Gothenburg	TBD	Gothenburg PPD	Proposed	NO
TBD, pending verification	I-80	Kearney	TBD	Kearney NPPD	Proposed	YES
TBD, pending verification	I-80	York	TBD	York (NPPD)	Proposed	NO
TBD, pending verification	I-80	Omaha	TBD	OPPD	Proposed	YES

<sup>2</sup> <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>

## Identification and Outreach to Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) in the State

NDOT has previously identified Justice40 census tracts in Nebraska utilizing the aforementioned Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. In addition to using this map in its current selection process for I-80 locations, NDOT will work to provide outreach and collect relevant data about DACs Statewide to refine electrification priorities for station deployments after the AFC has been fully built out. Additional outreach to DACs will be conducted in FY 2025 and is described further in the next section. While DACs are a primary indicator anticipated for addressing equity, NDOT also considers the significant need of rural corridors and populations of the state as a priority. Strategically locating charging stations in rural areas will ensure geographic balance across the state and extend additional indirect benefits to DAC in the State.

## Process to Identify, Quantify, and Measure Benefits to DACs

### Purpose

This summary is provided to establish a context for NDOT to review NEVI project applications as they pertain to the flow of benefits intended to be achieved through the Justice40 initiative. The following assumptions have been incorporated into the NDOT process to identify, quantify and measure benefits to DACs:

- The NDOT has established definitions for key terms such as disadvantaged communities.
- NDOT has organized data to document benefits that can be quantified for the state population overall as well as the people located in areas defined as disadvantaged communities. This information will be used to help guide an in-progress study with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) discussed in the following bullet.
- NDOT has partnered with UNL to conduct a study to develop a tool for use by NDOT to quantify the benefits of EV charging stations for DACs, which is in development. The project work includes the following:
  - Developing metrics assessing EV charging station impacts on transportation accessibility, energy efficiency, economic growth, and environmental and health,
  - Developing a framework to measure benefits from these metrics, and;
  - Developing a scenario planning tool to assist in evaluating various deployment strategies.

Results of this study are pending and will help guide future Plan updates and decision making.

### Background of Executive Orders

The analysis of equity as it pertains to NEVI implementation has many elements to consider and resources from which to draw. Since Executive Order 13985 was issued: *On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*<sup>3</sup>, there have been numerous elements of additional guidance and tools that serve to further specify how equity analysis could be performed and how the Justice40 requirements could be best accommodated.

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021, EO 13985 was released, providing the first glimpse at the equity priorities

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<sup>3</sup> [On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government](#)

of the Biden administration, and loosely outlined how these elements would be applied. Several terms are defined, including 'underserved communities' and 'equity.' Along with people of racial minority, religious minorities, and LGBTQ+ peoples, persons living in a rural community are also considered members of the underserved communities toward whom equity efforts could be focused. The full definition of equity from the document is formatively stated as:

*"the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality."*

### **Developing Benefits, Measures, and Metrics**

The 2023 Nebraska NEVI Plan placed a strong reliance on the existing DAC mapping tool provided by the USDOT. With additional consideration of recommended investment goals and the USDOT NEVI Standards and Requirements final rule, a method of determining benefit to DACs that considers alternative sources, such as rural populations, may provide for a more nuanced approach and a resultingly more positive impact on the communities intended to be benefited.

NDOT continues to monitor the development of national best practices for identifying, quantifying, and measuring benefits to DACs. USDOT has identified potential categories of benefits to consider, but interim guidance on Justice40 has not defined how data will be utilized to measure direct and indirect benefits. The purpose of measuring benefits is to support a data-driven decision-making framework for project selection and for achieving the goal of ensuring that at least 40 percent or more of the overall benefits of charging infrastructure funded are received by DAC.

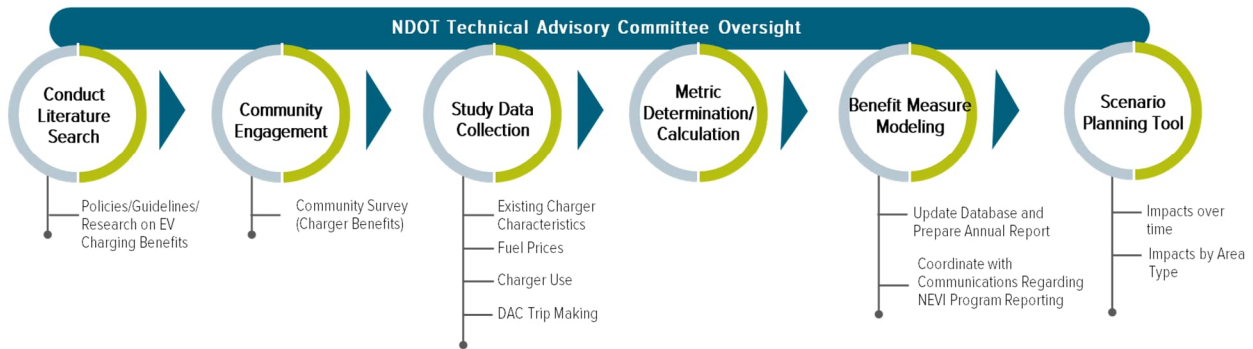
NDOT has recognized the need to address this lack of guidelines and moved to address it with additional research. In a collaborative effort between the University of Nebraska, Lincoln (UNL) and the NDOT, an academic research methodology has been proposed and approved to develop recommended measures of the benefits provided to identified disadvantaged census tracts in Nebraska. The research will result in development of answers for three research questions:

- How to incorporate different metrics to measure and track the overall benefits of charging station deployments given Nebraska conditions?
- How do the proposed models adapt to the evolving scenarios, in time and space, of EV charging station infrastructure development?
- What are the best metrics (indicators) to quantify the tangible benefits of EV charging station deployment to DACs?

Figure 10 displays the work plan steps for the NDOT sponsored study.

Figure 10 - University of Nebraska Lincoln, DAC Analysis Work Plan

UNL/Nebraska Transportation Center – Quantifying NEVI Benefits to DACs



The primary outcomes of the research would be to (1) Develop a set of metrics based on data to analyze the impact of an EV charging station on transportation accessibility, energy efficiency, economic growth, and environmental and health improvements, (2) develop a framework that provides an aggregate measure of benefits from these metrics, and (3) develop a scenario planning tool to allow NDOT to examine different deployment strategies. The outcomes will enable NDOT to document benefits measured toward a selection of possible categories listed below:

- Improve clean transportation access through the location of chargers.
- Decrease the transportation energy cost burden by enabling reliable access to affordable charging.
- Reduce environmental exposures to transportation emissions.
- Increase parity in clean energy technology access and adoption.
- Increase access to low-cost capital to increase equitable adoption of more costly, clean energy technologies like EVs and EV chargers.
- Increase the clean energy job pipeline, job training, and enterprise creation in disadvantaged communities.
- Increase energy resilience.
- Provide charging infrastructure for transit and shared-ride vehicles.
- Increase equitable access to the electric grid.
- Minimize gentrification-induced displacement result from new EV charging infrastructure.

## Recommendations

### Incorporate Rural Areas into DAC Definition

Taking the final rule into consideration, there are three primary areas of interest to be derived from the research that will provide noteworthy updates to the current Nebraska NEVI Plan relative to identifying disadvantaged communities.

1. Expand the definition of disadvantaged community within the NEVI plan; recognizing rural populations, rural corridors, and rural areas as important to the consideration of measuring benefits though it is not implicit to its definition. Incorporating geographic areas characterized as rural into the benefit to DACs is crucial to ensuring the Justice40 goal is met within the geographic context of Nebraska.
2. Incorporate 'rural' in the DAC definition by utilizing data, tools, and models provided by the USDOT and USDOE to determine the level of rurality of an area and the area's relative disadvantage. This approach would assist in the justification of charger placement that may be far from a DAC census tract listed on the DAC mapping tool provided by the USDOT. Initially, the DAC mapping tool only recognized census tracts with four of the seven potential categories of disadvantage. This process overlooks the benefit of serving the rural areas of Nebraska with an integrated network that can extend the utility and recreational trip lengths for EV owners along defined highway corridors. Currently, information available from the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool for Overburdened and Underserved Census Tracts is more refined than previously available DOT mapping of Justice40 Census Tracts. This creates a threshold for a range of disadvantages and displays any tract with at least one disadvantage that exceeds a threshold value.
3. Create a specific definition of rural for the NEVI plan that aligns with the Office of Surface Transportation program including Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA), and grant programs like Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE), Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A), Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight & Highway Projects program (INFRA), and Rural. This would provide a definitive basis on which to vet future project applications and show benefit to Justice40 communities, mapped and unmapped. Rural areas are those located outside of a U.S. Census-designated urban area with a population of 200,000 or more. A system of application analysis and site monitoring is recommended that allows for the most nuance so charger placement can benefit the most, most varied number of people possible.

### Reducing Greenhouse Gases

One of the most substantial benefits of providing a nationwide charging network for electric vehicles is the reduction in emission of greenhouse gases from mobile sources. Not only does reduction of airborne pollution have a beneficial effect on the environment it also decreases the rates of respiratory illness and contributes to overall healthy living. Calculation of this benefit may be measured by many factors, but the simplest will likely be the emission rates by vehicle class when converted from gasoline to electric powered vehicle types. Since larger vehicles produce more pollution per unit, a measurement of the type of vehicles and how many come through the State's AFCs would provide useful information regarding reduction of emissions. The emissions per vehicle class are provided by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics and the Alternative Fuel Data Center. Statewide and County vehicle registrations for gasoline powered vehicles by class may be observed to measure the decreasing rate of growth over time as more electric vehicles

are purchased. The difference in the rate of growth prior to the NEVI program to the future growth rate can be estimated for a difference in greenhouse gas emissions benefiting disadvantaged communities.

Across the state, elevated levels of greenhouse gas emissions are observed in urban areas of Omaha and Lincoln, where there are congested corridors/intersections in peak travel periods. Most of the congested mileage is located within the urban core of the metros, which is also the location of urban areas meeting the DAC definition. Thus, incorporating the potential for greenhouse gas reduction into the equity benefits assessment will elevate core areas of the largest metros into selection following buildout of the predominantly rural AFC.

## Workforce Development

As previously mentioned, whenever a new technology is introduced, a new workforce is necessitated. Development of any niche workforce or the progression of an existing workforce to support a new industry occurs over time based on market demands. Measuring the benefit of workforce development for supporting EV infrastructure may look at small businesses located within DACs or employed persons that live within a DAC as participation in these new projects. The number of businesses or employees benefiting from a unique or group of deployments can be reported directly within disadvantaged communities and the proportion of installations compared to statewide installations. This approach aligns with NDOT preference to seek local expertise and workforce development before looking outside the State. Installing and maintaining electric vehicle charging infrastructure is expected to be a catalyst for a more significant range of workforce development opportunities. Electric vehicle sales and service industry will be supported and measured through the Nebraska Department of Labor.

Table 6 outlines potential strategies for tracking benefits by type. Note, many of the strategies are still under development.

The State of Nebraska will verify that the workforce installing, maintaining, and operating chargers has appropriate licenses, certifications and trainings in compliance with [23 CFR 680.106\(j\)](#) and as required in the RFP. Specifically, any additional apprenticeship and/or training programs referenced would only be utilized in place of the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP) if and when such programs are approved by the Department of Labor per the [23 CFR 680.106\(j\)](#). The qualified workforce requirements will be enforced through the State of Nebraska's NEVI contracting and procurement strategies.

In compliance with [23 CFR 680.106\(j\)](#) to ensure that the installation and maintenance of chargers is performed safely by a qualified and increasingly diverse workforce of licensed technicians and other laborers, all electricians installing, operating, or maintaining EVSE must receive certification from the EVITP or a registered apprenticeship program for electricians that includes charger-specific training developed as part of a national guideline standard approved by the Department of Labor in consultation with the Department of Transportation, if and when such programs are approved.

## Labor and Workforce Considerations

To maximize the use of available funds for capital infrastructure NDOT is not planning to create a separate workforce development program as part of the NEVI deployment. The NDOT will require, as is included in the final rule, all charging infrastructure to be installed by an Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP) certified electrician. As of August 2024, there are 18 firms in the state with EVITP certified electricians on staff. Thus, it is anticipated there will be sufficient qualified personnel to provide timely installation of devices following selection of applicants. NDOT will work with the Nebraska Department of Labor on the benefits of leveraging the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) to assess specialized workforce needs and the NDOT's role in expanding the workforce.

During the application process, applicants will be required to certify that they will comply with all relevant state laws and local building codes.



## Program Evaluation

The NDOT Request for Proposals includes requirements for NEVI funded EVSE owners to operate networked EVSE on Open Charge Point Protocol Networks and provide charging station usage reports. Information reporting required through the overall USDOT NEVI Program supports the NDOT’s program goals and will apply to each NEVI compliant EVSE funded through the program.

Table 6 highlights draft program evaluation metrics by goal with NDOT NEVI evaluation criteria summarized in Table 7.

*Table 6 - Potential Workforce Development Benefit Measurement/Tracking Strategies*

Benefits Category (examples)	Strategy for Tracking Benefits (Metrics, Baseline, Goals, Data Collection & Analysis Approach, Community Validation)
Improve clean transportation access through the location of chargers	Themes: support demand, displace ICE vehicles, under equity and Justice 40—areas where there is demand are also areas that are adjacent to Justice 40 areas. Provide opportunity for EVs that can then reduce level of emissions (even if no congestion reduction)
Decrease the transportation energy cost burden by enabling reliable access to affordable charging	In Progress
Reduce environmental exposures to transportation emissions	In Progress
Increase parity in clean energy technology access and adoption	In Progress
Increase access to low-cost capital to increase equitable adoption of more costly, clean energy technologies like EVs and EV chargers	In Progress
Increase the clean energy job pipeline, job training, and enterprise creation in disadvantaged communities	In Progress
Increase energy resilience	In Progress
Provide charging infrastructure for transit and shared-ride vehicles	In Progress
Increase equitable access to the electric grid	In Progress
Minimize gentrification-induced displacement result from new EV charging infrastructure	In Progress

Table 7 - Draft NDOT NEVI Program Evaluation Criteria

Nebraska Program Goal	Focus Area	Metric
Asset Preservation: Keep Nebraska's multimodal transportation assets in a state of good repair	Reliability	Number of complaints per station.
		Percent up time for each charging port in the network (Minimum 97%)
Mobility choices for people and freight: Provide efficient, affordable and equitable options across all modes for moving people and goods throughout Nebraska and beyond.	Network Availability	Number of stations meeting NEVI Formula Program guidance minimum standards
		Average wait time for a charger
	Utilization	Build-out of the AFC Network Percent of time with a vehicle connected aggregated by time of day
Secure and Resilient Transportation: Manage the risk and magnitude of major disruptions to Nebraska's transportation system	Reliability	Percent up time for charger network (minimum 97%)
Safety: Provide a transportation system in Nebraska that is safe for all users	Access	Number of complaints received
		Number of stations meeting NEVI Formula Program guidance minimum standards
Support for economic and community vitality: choose investments in Nebraska's transportation system that best support the vitality of Nebraska's economy and all of its communities	Equity and Support for Underserved Communities	Share of chargers installed in or adjacent to disadvantaged communities
		Greenhouse gas reduction – Calculate based on electricity consumed and average miles per kWh.