



JISC to Develop Housing Metrics Tool for NIFA

Nebraska is blessed with ample resources, including our clean air, an abundance of land and water, the potential to produce food, and a hard-working, productive, and educated populace. While we once had the foresight to put in place certain public policies to foster stewardship of our resources, today's pressing issues, such as climate change and population migration, have meant that we need to be more assiduous in our approaches to both conserving and developing our resources to ensure a sustainable future for coming generations.

Technology, globalization, and public policies have created enormous shifts in our agrarian economy over the past 60 years, such that the towns, villages and rural lands that are necessary to support vitality in our cities have been experiencing serious challenges due to degradation, aging and/or loss of population, businesses, housing, schools, infrastructure, and leadership. *Urban and rural populations and enterprises are interdependent, interconnected, and we take for granted one or the other at the peril of both.* This credo is at the core of JISC's mission.

Housing, an engine of economic and socio-cultural growth and sustainability, is a critical issue for both rural and urban communities globally. It is true for Nebraska, too. Small cities, towns, and villages throughout Nebraska are experiencing a need for increased workforce and affordable housing, as well as market-rate housing in order to maintain or grow their populations in a healthy way. Workforce and affordable housing are urgently needed in the state's largest cities.

To that end, the Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities (JISC) is embarking on a project for the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) to develop a tool to measure current housing conditions, the need/demand for housing, and the capacity to develop additional housing in a given community, neighborhood, or area.

Called the PERMF Tool (for Program Evaluation, Review and Management Framework), will conduct a survey of existing national, state, and local data sources for relevant indicators. The year-long project will develop a minimum of 24 metrics that indicate capacity, activity, resilience, growth, strength, and tenure or length of affordability.

A standards of outcomes scale will be established in order to enable comparative evaluations among and between communities, regions and states. Thirty-one Nebraska communities that comprise NIFA's Nebraska Profile will be included in the data collection.

At the end of the study, in June 2020, the Joslyn Institute will continue to work with NIFA to develop a digital interface for deployment of the PERMF tool, so that it may be of use to all communities.

The entire project will shed light on current economic, housing, and other conditions in these communities and areas. The vantages of builders/developers, community leadership, and inhabitants will all be part of the data collection, assessment, and development of the PERMF tool.

FFAR Invites JISC Proposal for Regional Food System

The Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research (FFAR) has invited the Joslyn Institute to submit a formal proposal for "The Need for Coordinated and Replicable Development of Urban and Peri-Urban Food Systems."

The proposal is part of the FFAR's 2019 *Seeding Solutions: Addressing Challenges in Food and Agriculture* grant program. Over the past five years, JISC has completed a feasibility study, conducted extensive surveys, and executed a great deal of research and planning for establishing a regional food system in Southeast Nebraska.

This FFAR Seeding Solutions proposal takes JISC's efforts to the

next level. The proposed program will address farmers' need for reliable markets and consumers' need for reliable fresh food and produce year-round; urban and rural interdependencies; food distribution; on-demand transportation vis à vis produce and people; web-based technologies in service of food systems; commercial kitchens availability; recommendations for public policy regarding land use and support for local foods; and much more. JISC will engage with a panoply of partners in this endeavor.

The proposal will be submitted to FFAR in early August, and a final announcement will be made in early winter.



Photo by Yuval Yehudar on Unsplash

Thanks to **Green Omaha Coalition** for the following calendar of upcoming events. If you've an interest in sustainability, consider joining the GOC and/or making a donation to this worthy organization.

Citizens' Climate Lobby Omaha Chapter Meeting

WHEN: 6:15-8:15 pm, Wednesday, July 17

WHERE: Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center at UNO (6400 University Dr. S)

It is becoming clear to many of us that we need to act now to bring about the massive change necessary to really have an impact on climate. Join Citizens' Climate Lobby's June chapter meeting to learn about the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act currently in Congress and meet others interested in enacting significant change! The evening will include a video presentation with Drew Jones, Co-Founder and Co-Director of Climate Interactive, a think tank that provides modeling for climate policies and tools, giving policy-makers a realistic view of what's needed to contain global warming below 2 degrees Celsius. More information about Citizens' Climate Lobby and Carbon Fee and Dividend Policy at: citizensclimatelobby.org



Mode Shift Omaha's Transportation Coffee Chat

WHEN: 8-9 am, Friday, July 19

WHERE: Hardy Coffee Co. at The Highlander (2112 N 30th St.)

Join Mode Shift Omaha to talk with Julie Harris of Bike Walk Nebraska. Come and hear how they are carrying out their mission to cultivate safe and accessible active transportation in Nebraska through partnerships, education and advocacy. These Coffee Chats are informal monthly events featuring guests with various connections to transportation in the Omaha area.

For more information, visit: modeshiftomaha.org

USGBC Nebraska Flatwater presents UNMC Solar Tour

WHEN: 11:45 am-1 pm, Tuesday, July 23

WHERE: UNMC Maurer Center for Public Health, Rm 3020 (519 S 40th Plaza)

Omaha's hot summer is in full swing, what better time to talk about the power of solar energy. UNMC's 500 kW of solar power started producing early this year and is meant to have direct impact on peak summer energy consumption. Register online: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/unmc-solar-tour-the-development-and-benefits-of-distributed-solar-tickets-64534768229>

WATCH THIS SPACE for upcoming information on a new JISC initiative encouraging and enabling green practices in the film and television industry with our new partner Karen Steward!