MINNESOTA IT SERVICES

Q2 2021

Quarterly Report

Information Technology for Minnesota Government

—— Note from the Commissioner ——

One of the biggest lessons that we've learned throughout the COVID-19 pandemic is that Minnesotans now expect – and deserve – a government that provides digital services that are easy to use, available, and secure. At Minnesota IT Services (MNIT), we saw the central role that IT played throughout the pandemic, and we understand and anticipate that people have high expectations for technology. We remain committed to delivering the technology services that support the work in every bill that's been signed by the Minnesota Legislature this year.

During the 2021 session, the Legislature passed a change item as part of the State Government omnibus budget, which implemented project delivery and digital services recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Council on Information Technology (BRC-IT). This funding will bring consistency to the way that state agencies take advantage of modernization opportunities.

The state government policy omnibus bill also helped clarify MNIT's duties and responsibilities by:

- Eliminating outdated and contradictory statutory language.
- Changing MNIT's legal name to align it with other executive branch agencies.
- Clarifying MNIT's primary focus to be the state's executive branch agencies.
- Amending membership of the Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) to align with expanded membership of the BRC-IT, and making this expanded Council the permanent advisory body for technology services in state government.

Reliable technology plays a key role in the success of the programs and services made available to all Minnesotans through the state budgeting process. In the past quarter, we've also focused on creating a future workplace that sets the state of Minnesota up for further innovation, new collaboration opportunities, and flexibility when it is needed. In the coming months, we'll be working with staff to lay the foundation for a gradual evolution toward a more flexible, hybrid workplace model while listening and communicating the path forward. We are excited to experiment and monitor the various approaches to hybrid work and share our learning across the executive branch as we create a more innovative digital government that works for all.

Contents

Planning

Tactical Plan

Minnesota IT Services wrapped up its 2020 Tactical Plan in June 2021 and began moving the agency's 2021-2022 Tactical Plan forward. Over 150 MNIT staff members participated in the 2020 Tactical Plan, of which 87% of tactics were completed or in progress by the end of the planning cycle.

Through this planning process, MNIT found that cross-functional tactic groups increased collaboration across the agency even beyond their tactics. Not only did MNIT staff meet others from across the agency to work on tactic teams, they even found common spaces to carry work and relationships forward outside of their tactic work.

Out of the 47 tactics, a few of the deliverables included:

- Protecting state email domain integrity
- Launching an enterprise payment card industry program (see this report's Security section for more)
- Developing an enterprise services dashboard for real time data around MNIT's performance
- Creating a data management maturity roadmap
- Launching Communities of Practice
- Developing a risk-based review process for projects
- Holding quarterly all-staff Town Halls

Notable achievements, awards, and events

Digital Accessibility Awareness Day

Governor Tim Walz proclaimed May 20 to be Digital Accessibility Awareness Day in Minnesota. Over the past year, businesses, governments, and Minnesotans have relied on technology and digital services as a connector and a path forward. Minnesota joined the world to celebrate digital accessibility in conjunction with Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD).

MNIT's Office of Accessibility is charged with overseeing the implementation of accessibility standards for all executive branch employees and employers. To celebrate Digital Accessibility Awareness Day, the Office of Accessibility hosted a free training event for state employees. Experts across state government shared best practices for organizing and running meetings that are inclusive for all.

Accessible COVID-19 response

The Office of Accessibility, MNIT, and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) created accessible applications, websites, and documents for the public. The MDH COVID-19 site was recently recognized by Johns Hopkins University's Disability Health Research Center as the top state COVID-19 information website with the least accessibility errors as tested by WAVE, a website accessibility evaluation tool. The Vaccine Connector was also top in the nation, ranked number seven.

Governor Safety Award

Minnesota IT Services was recognized for excellence in workplace safety and health during the 2021 Virtual Minnesota Safety and Health Conference, May 4-5. MNIT is one of 221 employers to be honored through the awards program, coordinated by the Minnesota Safety Council. MNIT received an Award of Honor, the top level for which winners are recognized. The 52 Award of Honor recipients have incidence rates at least 91% better than the industry average, and a score between 91 and 100 on the safety program evaluation scale.

— Emerging Technology: mobile apps —

Minnesota's Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) and the Department of Human Services (DHS) partnered with Minnesota IT Services to launch the Workforce One Connect mobile app in June 2020. The app provides greater access to financial benefits and services for Minnesotans who participate in employment and economic support programs.

The app connects Minnesotans to DEED's/DHS's case management system, Workforce One, which supports more than 20 programs across 3 state agencies. Minnesotans can use the app for resources like food, child care, housing, and more in their local communities. Workforce One Connect:
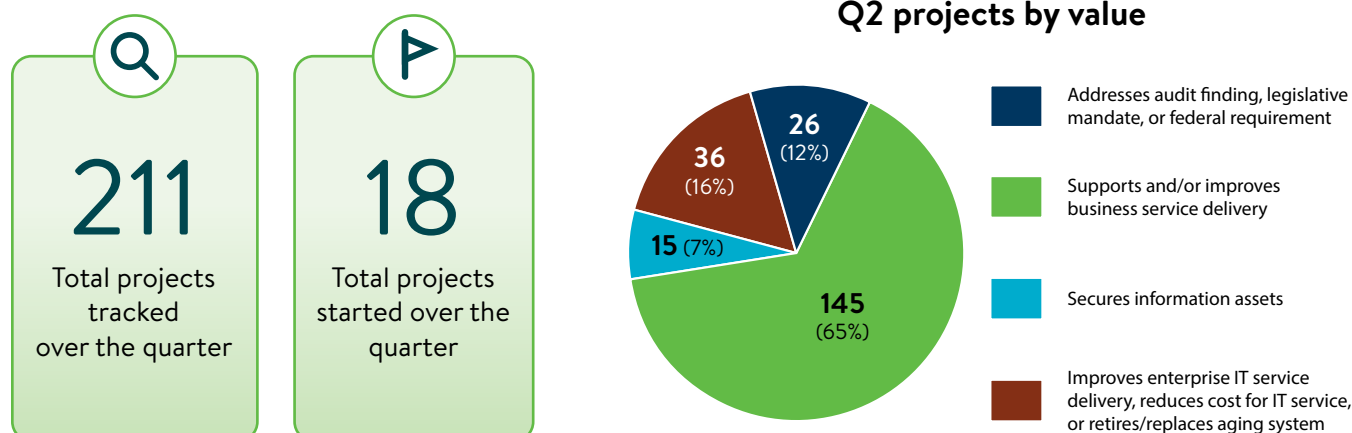
- Improves Minnesotans' experiences with communications and document delivery. Minnesotans use the app to communicate directly with DEED staff, reducing the risk of missing a message. They can also send a photo of a document, making it easier to apply for state services.
- Helps DEED, DHS, and community partner agency staff collaborate to identify the services and support that better fits Minnesotan's needs. Staff can see the full benefits and services that might be helpful for individuals seeking services.

Following an initial launch in June, the app is being rolled out in phases. As of July 10, 2021, 236 participants have signed on and more than 9 different employment and economic support programs have used Workforce One Connect to better connect with the people they serve. DEED and DHS will continue to add providers to the app in the coming months.

Agency updates

Project Management Office

Over the quarter, MNIT's Project Management Office (PMO) tracked the completion of 24 projects across Minnesota's executive branch agencies, boards, commissions, and councils. MNIT defines a project as "a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service or result. It has a start date, specific goals and conditions, defined responsibilities, a budget, a plan, and end date." These projects range from public-facing applications to internal-facing IT infrastructure endeavors.

211
Total projects tracked over the quarter

18
Total projects started over the quarter

Q2 projects by value

- **26** (12%) Addresses audit finding, legislative mandate, or federal requirement
- **145** (65%) Supports and/or improves business service delivery
- **15** (7%) Secures information assets
- **36** (16%) Improves enterprise IT service delivery, reduces cost for IT service, or retires/replaces aging system

Technology support for community vaccination sites

Minnesota IT Services, in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), set up the technology needed to run community vaccination sites across the state. Each community vaccination site allowed workers to securely connect to the internet, withstand severe weather, and ensured that Minnesotans could efficiently receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

The MNIT MDH team developed a process for providing the IT needs for vaccination sites across the state, modeled off their support of COVID-19 community testing sites, which began in Spring 2020. Some of Minnesota's community vaccination sites ran for long periods of time, like the State Fair site, while others were held in pop up locations, like at U.S. Bank Stadium and at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Minnesota's community vaccination strategy also included traveling vaccination clinics, which used Metro Transit buses to bring the vaccine to specific community events.

Before each vaccination site opened, MNIT sent or brought along portable bins, which included laptops, WiFi hot spots, cabling, walkie talkies, and any other technology or telecommunications equipment that helped to run the site. These bins allowed MNIT to quickly deliver technology tools to set up sites across the state of Minnesota. As of June 2021, MNIT teams set up over 300 vaccination sites (many of these sites were used multiple times) and 22 different MNIT employees staffed the sites.

MNIT also deployed new technology to ensure that vaccination sites could reach all of Minnesota's populations. A Language Line Translation service was installed on every computer and tablet to increase access and ensure equitable vaccine distribution.

Next Generation 911 hub site

In June 2021, the Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) Emergency Communication Network (ECN) launched the Minnesota Next Generation 911 (NG911) GIS Hub website, designed for ECN's GIS and public safety answering point (PSAP) partners. Minnesota is a nationwide early adopter in launching such a site for its NG911 GIS program.

The Hub is a faster, easier way for ECN to collaborate with partners and to share information about the NG911 project. For example, the site will enable local leaders to monitor how their county is progressing through each phase of the GIS project. It features several dashboards with interactive maps and charts that show GIS mapping progress for every Minnesota county.

Minnesota IT Services staff working with DPS and MNIT's Office of Geospatial Information (MnGeo) collaborated with ECN to bring the website to life. The next phase of the project will include a web-based statewide portal, which will contain the entire collection of ready-to use data. This will allow GIS and PSAP partners to upload data in real time, rather than having to wait several days for updated information.

Piloting self-service applications for Minnesota's benefits

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), MNIT, and Minnesota's counties teamed up with Code for America to develop a human-centered benefits application to serve the people of Minnesota. The application, MNbenefits, combines cash, food, and health care applications into a single, streamlined application to simplify processes and get help to the state's most at risk individuals and families. Almost 12,000 benefits applications have been submitted through MNbenefits.org by the end of May 2021. Before MNbenefits, it took about an hour to apply for benefits—now, the median time to completion is less than 12 minutes.
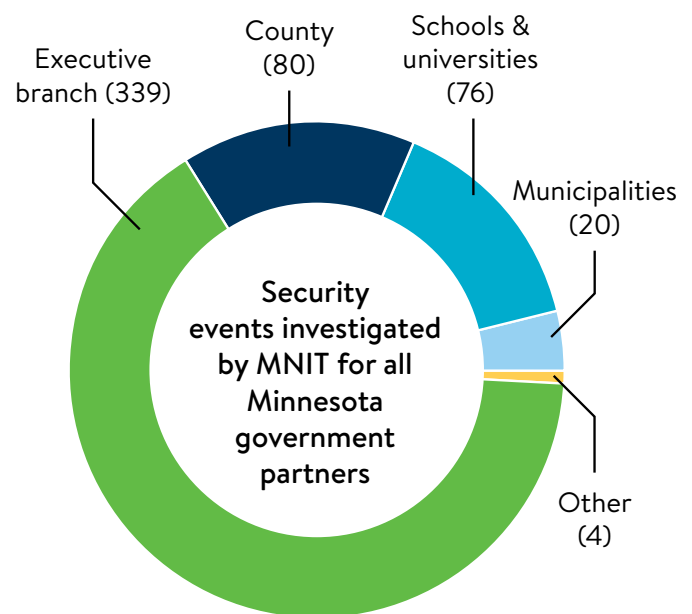
In its pilot phase, MNbenefits can be used to apply for SNAP (food assistance), cash assistance programs including Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) and General Assistance, Emergency Assistance, Group Residential Housing (housing support for seniors and persons with disabilities) and Child Care Assistance.

Security

To keep state government running, and to protect Minnesotans' private data, we must continually work to better secure Minnesota's IT systems. Cybersecurity is one of the most critical functions that Minnesota IT Services is tasked with, and it functions best when we are all working together, from the individual citizen, to our state agencies, and even to our legislators; that is how we can help protect the 35,000 users of our systems and 5.5 million Minnesotans who have private data secured by the state.

We serve Minnesotans by connecting all 87 counties, 300 cities, and 200 public higher education campuses across the state through MNET – Minnesotan's dedicated public sector network. This network provides broad visibility into cyber activity occurring across the state. From January to March, our Security Operations Center (SOC) detected or received reports of 519 cyber incidents.

Type of security incident	# reported
Malware	170
Unauthorized access attempt	73
Network attack/scan	65
Forensic investigation	101
Copyright violation	8
Social engineering	13
Denial of service	7
Lost/stolen devices	2
Unauthorized disclosure	1
Policy violation	16
Other	63

Security incidents detected by or reported to MNIT SOC.

Executive branch (339)
County (80)
Schools & universities (76)
Municipalities (20)
Other (4)

Security events investigated by MNIT for all Minnesota government partners
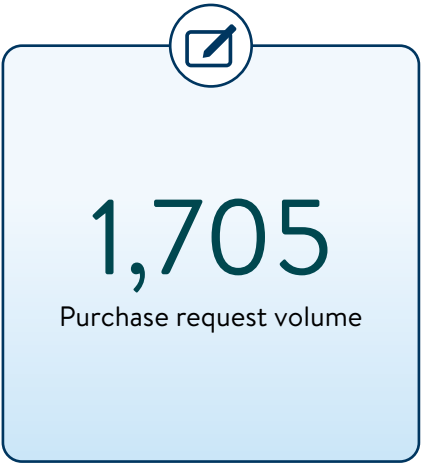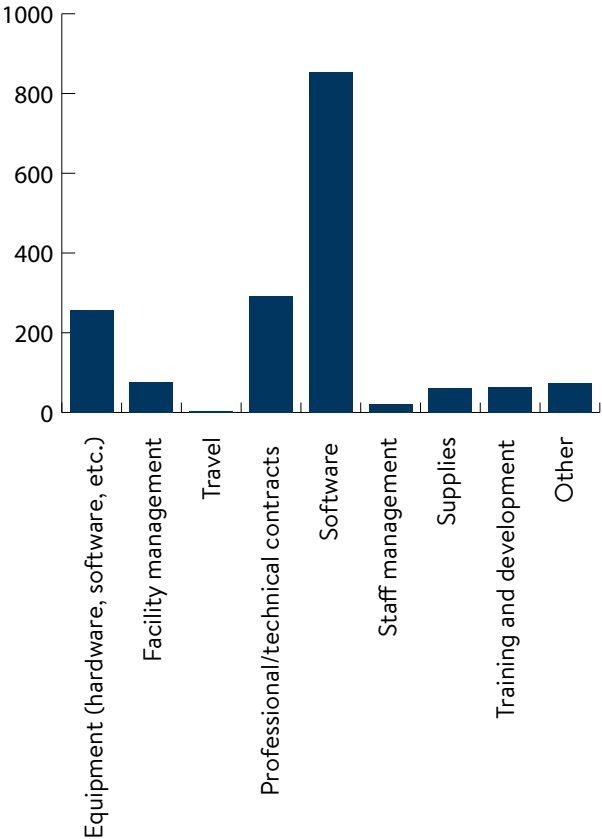
Securing state payment card data for Minnesotans

Minnesota IT Services developed and implemented a new payment card industry (PCI) program to better protect the applications that need to process credits cards and to secure Minnesotans' data. The programs and agencies that process credit card data in Minnesota's executive branch, also known as merchants, processed over $2.5 billion worth of credit card transactions in 2020 – to allow Minnesotans to renew their car tabs, register for campsites, apply for fishing and hunting licenses, pay taxes, and more. The PCI program assesses these merchants' PCI compliance with regulations, as well as industry best practices established by the state's PCI program. As of June 2021, all 104 merchants in Minnesota's executive branch are enrolled in the PCI program.
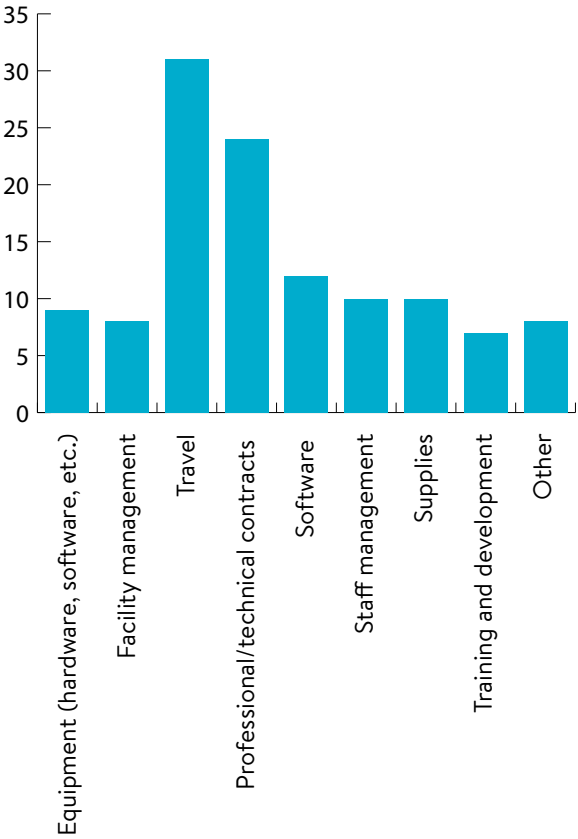
Procurement

The Procurement Division is responsible for processing all requests to purchase everything from IT hardware, software, and mobile devices, to contractors brought in to assist on projects. Procurement follows a standardized purchasing process that can include administrative review, accessibility testing, vendor negotiation, open bidding, and competitive RFP processes, among others.

1,705
Purchase request volume

13
Average purchase request processing time (days)

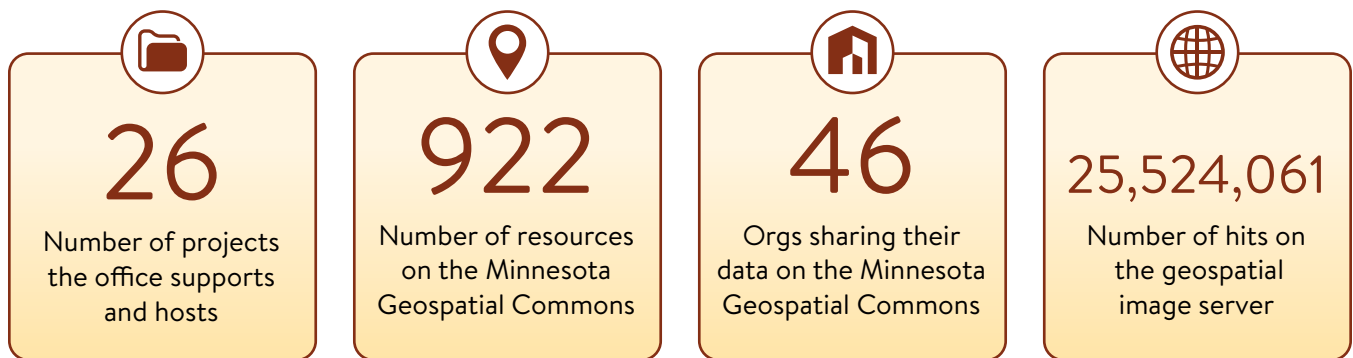### Number of purchase requests

Average processing time (days)
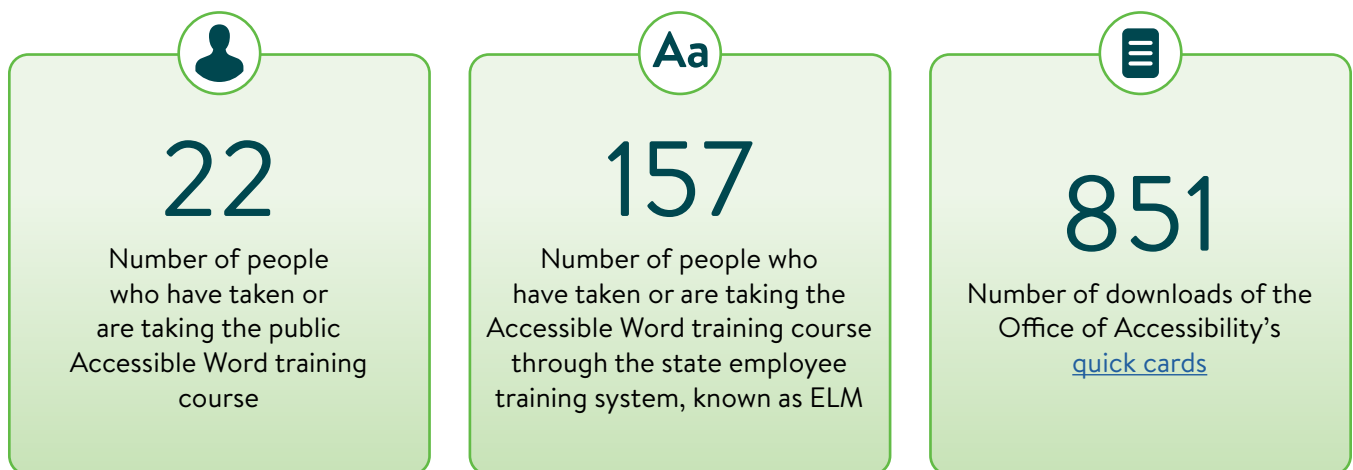
Geospatial Information Office

The Minnesota Geospatial Information Office coordinates geographic information systems (GIS) within the state, creating connections between state agencies and other stakeholders from government and non-government organizations. Using geography to inform decisions and influence outcomes, it shapes public safety, transportation planning, access to health services, the preservations of our natural resources, and much more. The Geospatial team manages the Minnesota Geospatial Commons, a collaborative public website where publishers can share, and users can access geospatial resources – data, maps, services and applications. The Minnesota Geospatial Commons is supported by operational team that includes staff from MnDOT, the Metropolitan Council and MNIT staff partnering with DNR, MDE, MDA and MPCA.

This quarter, MnGeo released its 2020 Annual Report, which details the accomplishments and priorities of the Geospatial Information Office.

26	922	46	25,524,061
Number of projects the office supports and hosts	Number of resources on the Minnesota Geospatial Commons	Orgs sharing their data on the Minnesota Geospatial Commons	Number of hits on the geospatial image server

Office of Accessibility

The Office of Accessibility is charged with overseeing the implementation of accessibility standards for all executive branch employees and state agencies.

22	157	851
Number of people who have taken or are taking the public Accessible Word training course	Number of people who have taken or are taking the Accessible Word training course through the state employee training system, known as ELM	Number of downloads of the Office of Accessibility's quick cards

Service desk

Our enterprise service desk provides 24/7 IT support and services for Minnesota state government: executive branch agencies, boards, councils, and commissions; non-executive branch customers, education, tribal governments, non-profits; and MNIT staff.

95,002
Total volume of all service desk tickets across the executive branch

47,804
Number of those tickets resolved the same day

50.3%
Percentage of service desk tickets resolved in one day

Statewide IT service updates

In May 2021, Minnesota IT Services finalized a multi-faceted enterprise agreement with Microsoft, which provided MNIT with the opportunity to advocate for new additional services, in addition to the continuity of the Microsoft services that executive branch agencies need to fulfill their missions with minimized price increases. This agreement includes new security, collaboration, and application development platform capabilities that will be available to state agencies to leverage over the life of the agreement.

Around the same time the previous Microsoft enterprise license agreement was expiring, MNIT issued a primary cloud service provider solicitation to begin implementing Minnesota's Intentional Cloud Approach. Our Intentional Cloud Approach embraces a multi-cloud environment while providing some guardrails around certain services. One element of the Intentional Cloud Approach includes a new standard for IT infrastructure and platform services: a primary provider for most of the state's cloud-based infrastructure and platform services, which includes IT networks, servers, and storage.

Microsoft responded to the solicitation and was evaluated as the top-ranked responder. As a result, negotiations for the primary cloud provider contract were wrapped into the enterprise license renewal to maximize value.

Meet MNIT

Kim Roberson

Kim Roberson is a Director of Business Application Management (BAM) for MNIT Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). Roberson is a 2018 recipient of MNIT's Manager of the Year Award and was recently accepted into the statewide leadership program, Senior Leadership Institute. She has over 25 years of IT experience, providing IT strategies, planning, and implementation for application portfolio management, data management, and business intelligence. Roberson has worked for the State of Minnesota since 2006 and was the IT project manager for the I-35W bridge collapse crisis response in 2007.

Roberson manages a group of six supervisors and more than 50 IT staff who work with MnDOT to provide strategic technology planning, application portfolio lifecycle management, and technical support for MnDOT's business applications. The MNIT team worked with their MnDOT partners to establish and mature an application portfolio management program for over 500 business applications.

About MNIT

Minnesota IT Services, led by the state's Chief Information Officer, is the Information Technology agency for Minnesota's executive branch, providing enterprise and local IT services to over 70 agencies, boards and commissions. MNIT employs more than 2,000 people across 90 physical locations. Together, we build, maintain, and secure the State's IT infrastructure, applications, projects and services. MNIT sets IT strategy, direction, policies and standards for enterprise IT leadership and planning. We also serve Minnesotans by connecting all 87 counties, 300 cities, and 200 public higher education campuses across the state on the MNET network. Through public-private partnerships, our team proactively protects the state's information systems and the private data of 5.6 million Minnesotans.

Learn more

For questions, comments, and feedback on MNIT's quarterly reports, please reach out to MNIT_Comm@state.mn.us

You can also find more stories about the agency across our social media accounts: