MINNESOTA IT SERVICES

Q2 **2023**

# Quarterly Report

Information Technology for Minnesota Government

Note from the Commissioner

This year the Minnesota Legislature made investments that recognize technology as a major catalyst for moving Minnesota forward. Technology can transform the services we all use – from annual tasks like paying your taxes or applying for a fishing license to benefits that help feed your family or find a job.

MNIT recently developed its Strategic Plan that aligns these goals and investments. Built upon Governor Tim Walz and Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan's One Minnesota Plan and MNIT's 2020 strategies, the updated plan puts a renewed and urgent emphasis on building MNIT's capacity to serve Minnesotans.

The plan is a living document that will be adjusted as we implement and learn more. Through the plan's initiatives, MNIT will develop new and innovative products, expand our robust platform of services, drive fiscal accountability, and enhance our abilities to connect Minnesotans to the services that will improve their lives. The three themes of the plan – customer experience, cybersecurity and operational excellence, and Connected Culture – will continue to evolve our processes and technology while prioritizing privacy and data security to move with agility to meet the ever-evolving needs of our state.

MNIT will work tirelessly to use the investments from the legislature and the priorities in our plan to make government services more efficient, user-friendly, and less burdensome. By streamlining processes and reducing complexities, we will return a precious commodity to Minnesotans – their time.
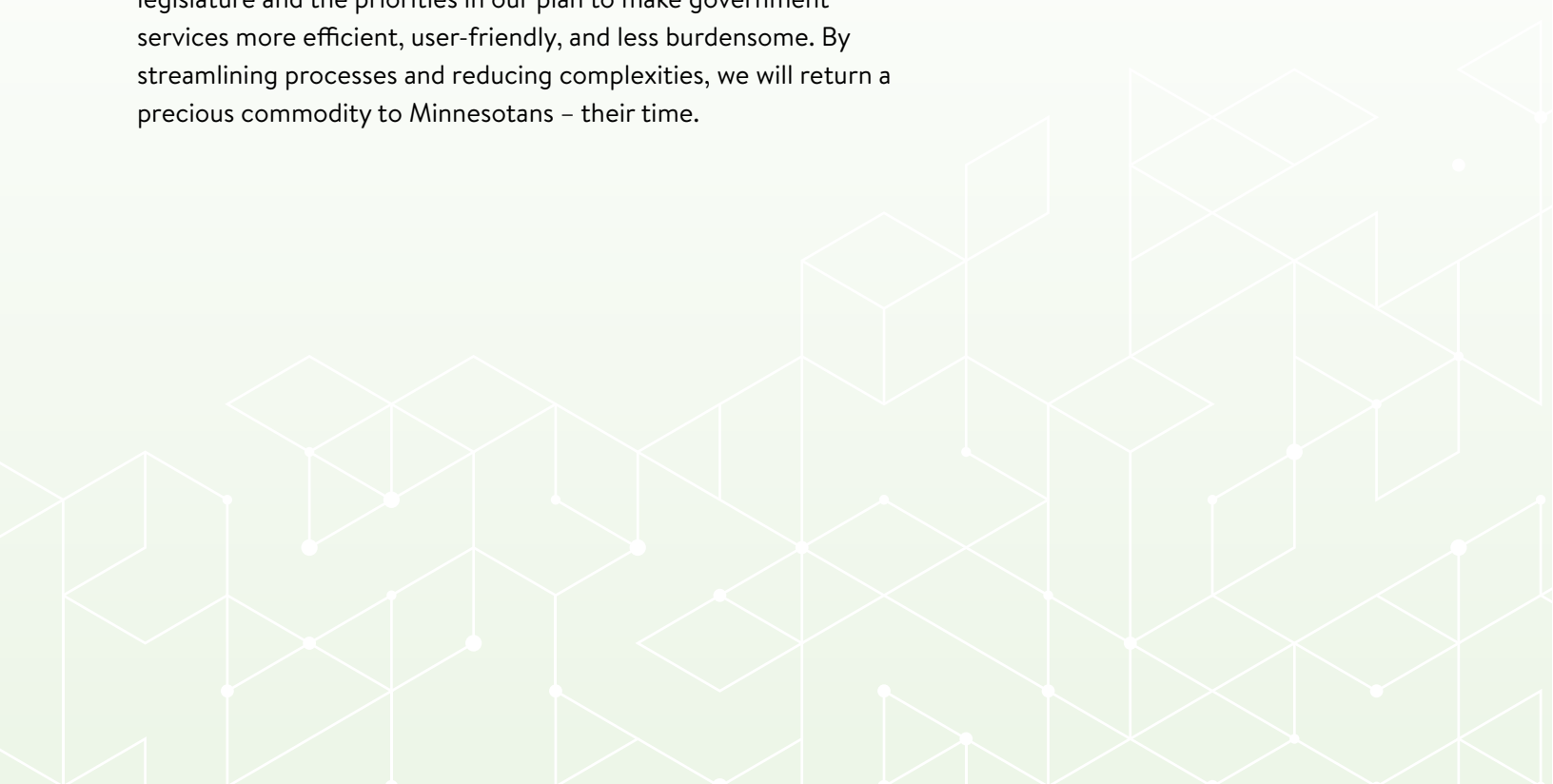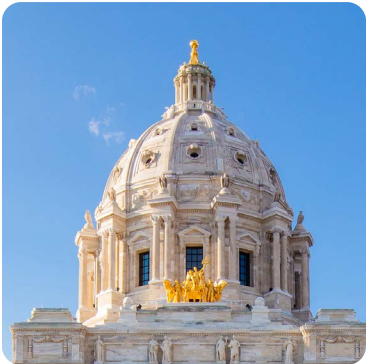
Contents

Legislative update

The 2023 legislative session concluded in May with Governor Tim Walz signing several bills that strengthen the ability of Minnesota IT Services (MNIT) and our state agency business partners to better serve the evolving needs and expectations of Minnesotans.

The legislature provided historic investments across the executive branch to modernize the way we deliver digital services and help families, businesses, and communities, access services in ways that are more efficient, secure, and user-friendly. These multi-year investments take an enterprise-wide, strategic approach to modernizing both the infrastructure and the applications that power our government.

— Achievements, awards, and events —
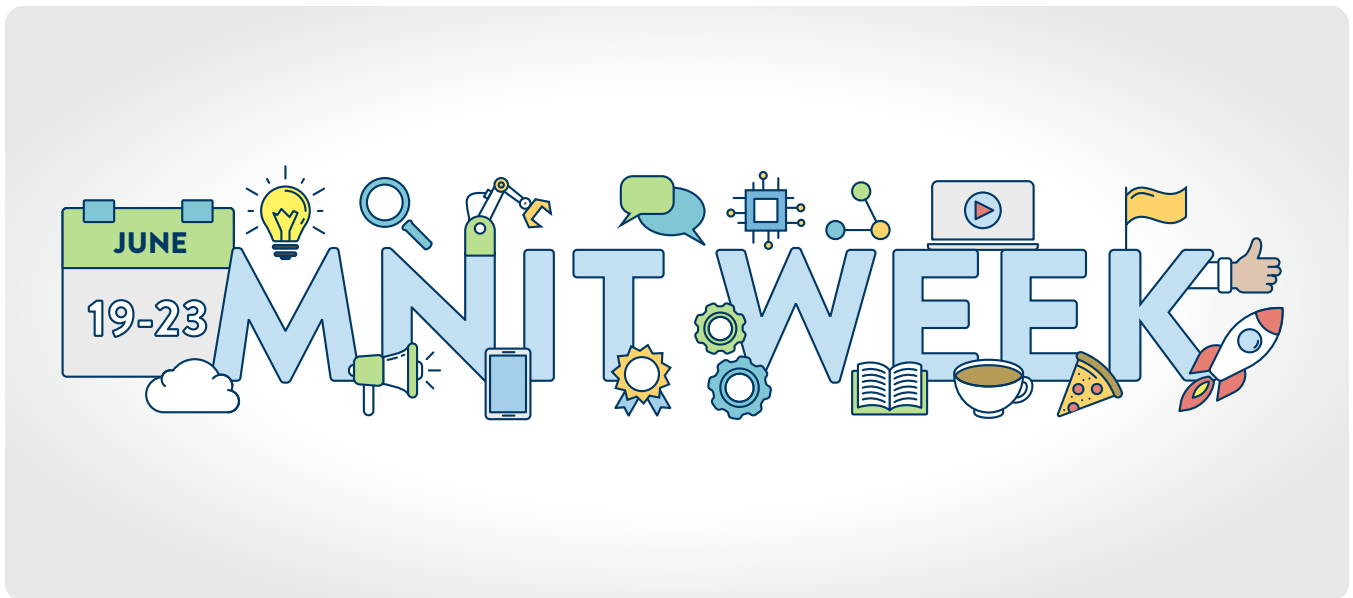
MNIT Week

In June, MNIT held its annual MNIT Week. This is a time for professional development opportunities, and for staff to connect with one another, as well as agency leadership. Highlights from the week included a virtual town hall, a length of service ceremony, and the agency's annual awards ceremony.

Annual Awards

On Friday, June 23, MNIT held its Annual Awards ceremony to recognize service excellence and the honorees' dedication to furthering MNIT's mission, vision, values, and priorities. Learn more about this year's finalists and honorees.

New Leadership

MNIT welcomed two new leaders: John Israel and Qiana Hicks. John Israel was named as Assistant Commissioner and Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) for the State of Minnesota. He served as Interim CISO since October 2022 and has over 25 years of IT experience leading, building, and growing cybersecurity and IT functions in municipal, county, and state entities integrating highly technical functions into strategic organizational operations.

Qiana Hicks is the Chief Business Technology Officer (CBTO) for MNIT partnering with the Department of Education. Starting her IT career 23 years ago, she has established an extensive track record in software engineering, quality assurance, infrastructure, production operations, data warehousing, and analytics.

Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD)

To celebrate [Global Accessibility Awareness Day](), MNIT's Office of Accessibility hosted two virtual events for State of Minnesota employees. The goal was to get everyone talking, thinking, and learning about digital accessibility and inclusion. The presentations showcased the value of accessibility and how to include accessibility in meetings. [Find recordings of each session](#).
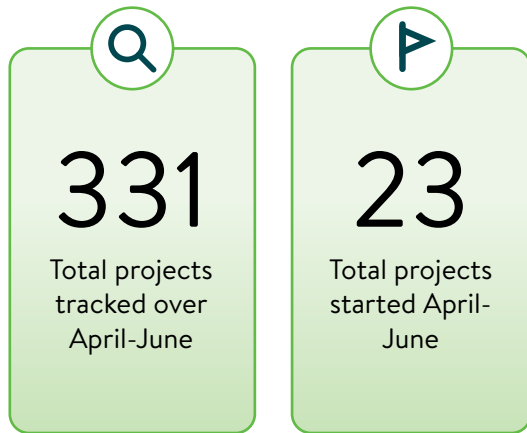
Emerging technology

DVS Language Access Project

In March 2023, as part of the language access project, Minnesota launched a new virtual assistant to help customers access driver and vehicle services. Developed through a partnership between MNIT and the Department of Public Safety's-Driver and Vehicle Services (DPS-DVS), the technology helps Minnesotans access online support services and documentation in a language that is easier for them to read, write, and speak Specifically, it provides translation into Hmong, Cushite-Beja-Somali, and Spanish. Over 300,000 Minnesota residents who rely on a language other than English can now more easily receive services from DPS-DVS.
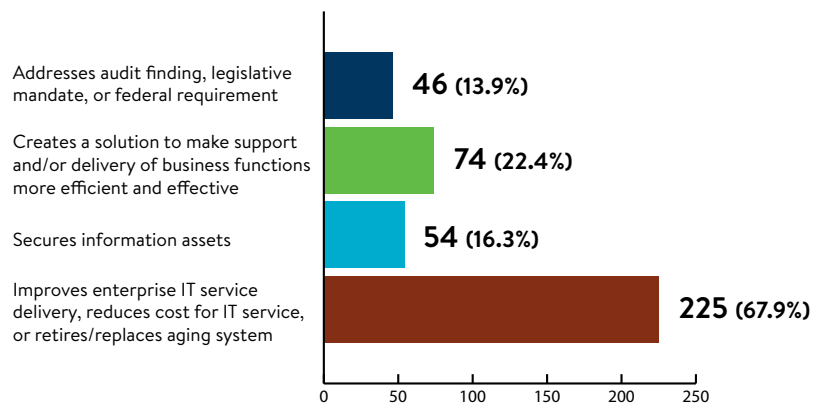
Agency updates

Office of Transformation and Strategy Delivery

The Office of Transformation and Strategy Delivery tracked 48 completed projects across Minnesota's executive branch agencies, boards, councils and commissions.

331
Total projects tracked over April-June

23
Total projects started April-June

Q2 projects by value

| Category	Value
Addresses audit finding, legislative mandate, or federal requirement	46 (13.9%)
Creates a solution to make support and/or delivery of business functions more efficient and effective	74 (22.4%)
Secures information assets	54 (16.3%)
Improves enterprise IT service delivery, reduces cost for IT service, or retires/replaces aging system	225 (67.9%)

PROJECT AND PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Minnesota Department of Education Prepares for Free Lunch Program

In March, the Legislature passed the MN Free Schools Meals bill providing one free breakfast and one lunch, regardless of income, to every student at schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program. MNIT worked with the Minnesota Department of Education to update the School Nutrition Program application, which resides in CLiCS (Cyber-Linked Interactive Child Nutrition System), by the beginning of May to opt schools into the state-funded program. The CLiCS application made it a seamless process for participating schools to be included in the new program as part of their annual renewal process. Additionally, the project also included updating CLiCS to include the new Minnesota Free School Meals rates for the 2023-2024 school year.
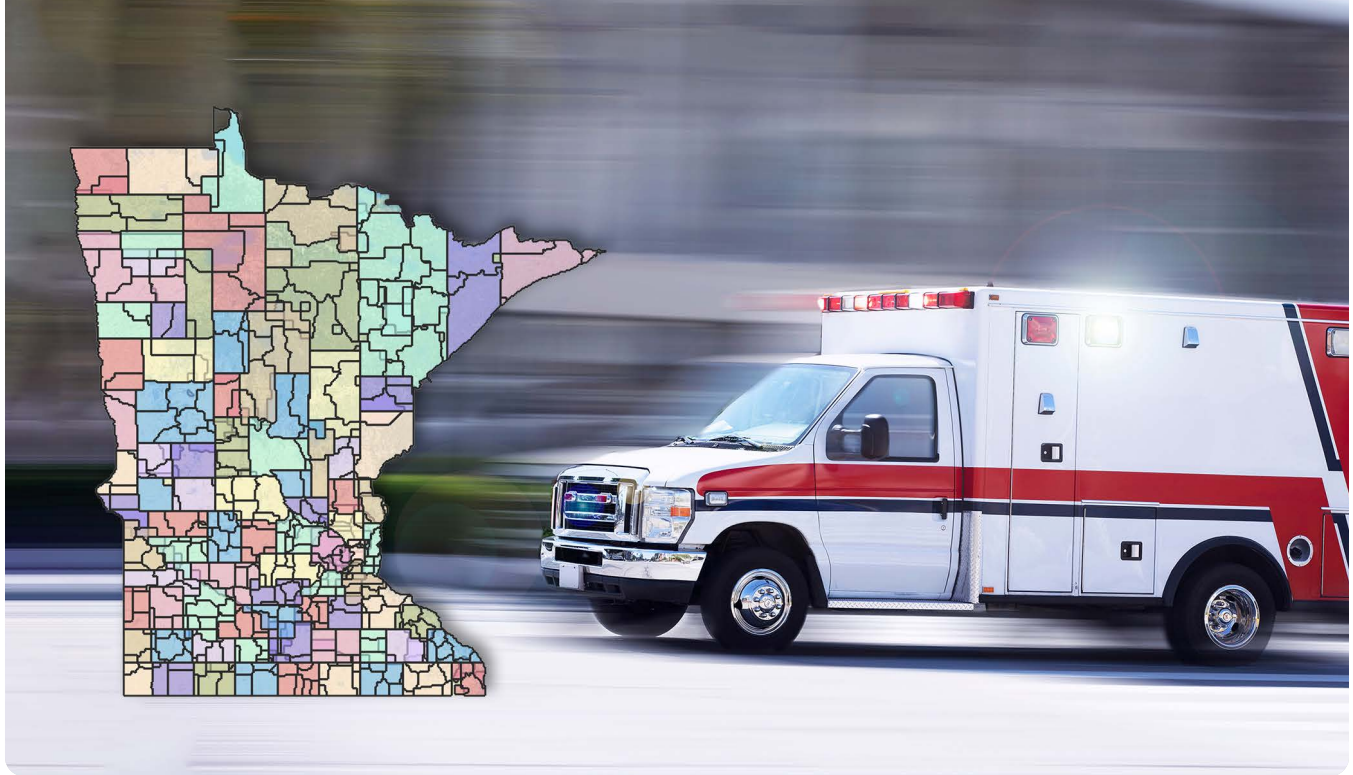
EMSRB Primary Service Territory Creation

MNIT's Geospatial Information Office partnered with the Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board (EMSRB) to convert text-based PDFs into geographic boundaries to display ambulance service primary service areas. The project makes it easier to navigate and understand ambulance service coverage as a whole and for each geographic area. By developing an interactive map that provides a visual representation of the primary service areas, accompanying descriptors can provide specifics about each area's coverage. Previously, the primary service areas were only defined by text-based descriptors. A link to the map can be found on EMSRB's website and the map is searchable in ArcGIS Online.


Update Allows for Employees to Display Preferred Names in Microsoft 365

MNIT partnered with Management and Budget to update the state's HR system to begin the process to automate how employees' preferred first names display in Microsoft 365 tools like Outlook, Teams, and SharePoint. Employees' legal name will continue to be their primary identity in the system, but the process will allow them to use what they prefer to be called in day-to-day settings. New and re-hired employees can enter their preferred first name directly during the onboarding process; HR staff enter existing employees' preferred first name in the HR system.

Incident   MPCA InformaCast   Notifications
                  Mass Notification System
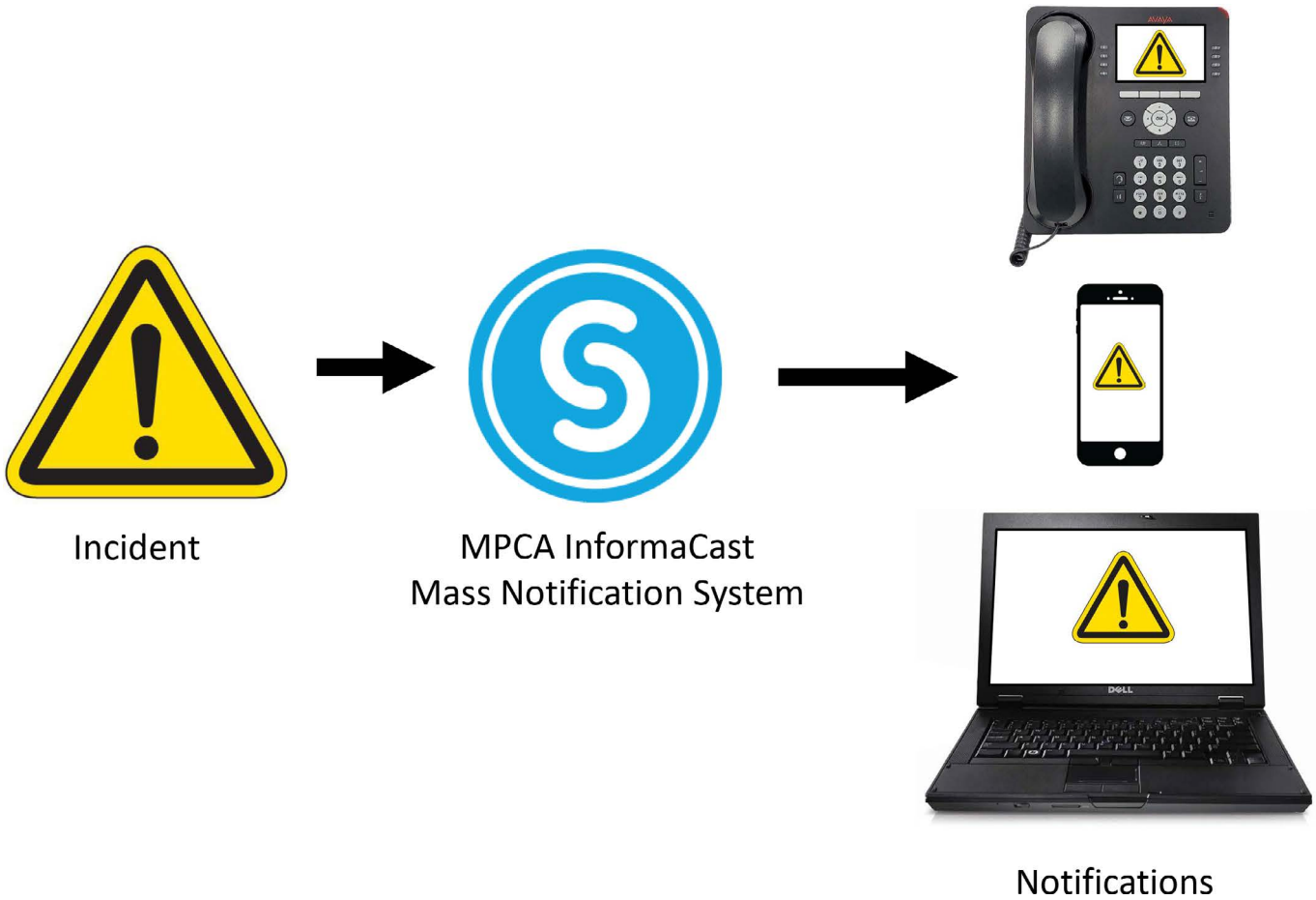
Minnesota Pollution Control Updates Mass Notification System for Staff

MNIT partnered with the Minnesota Pollution Agency to update its mass notification system to send both emergency and non-emergency notifications to staff in a timely and efficient manner. Notifications include information on things such as tornado warnings, gas leaks, and other events requiring action. The previous system only allowed notifications to hard phones (like desk phones), text messages, and email. With many employees now working remotely, the system has expanded capabilities to send messages out to additional sources including soft phones, desktop notifications, and more.
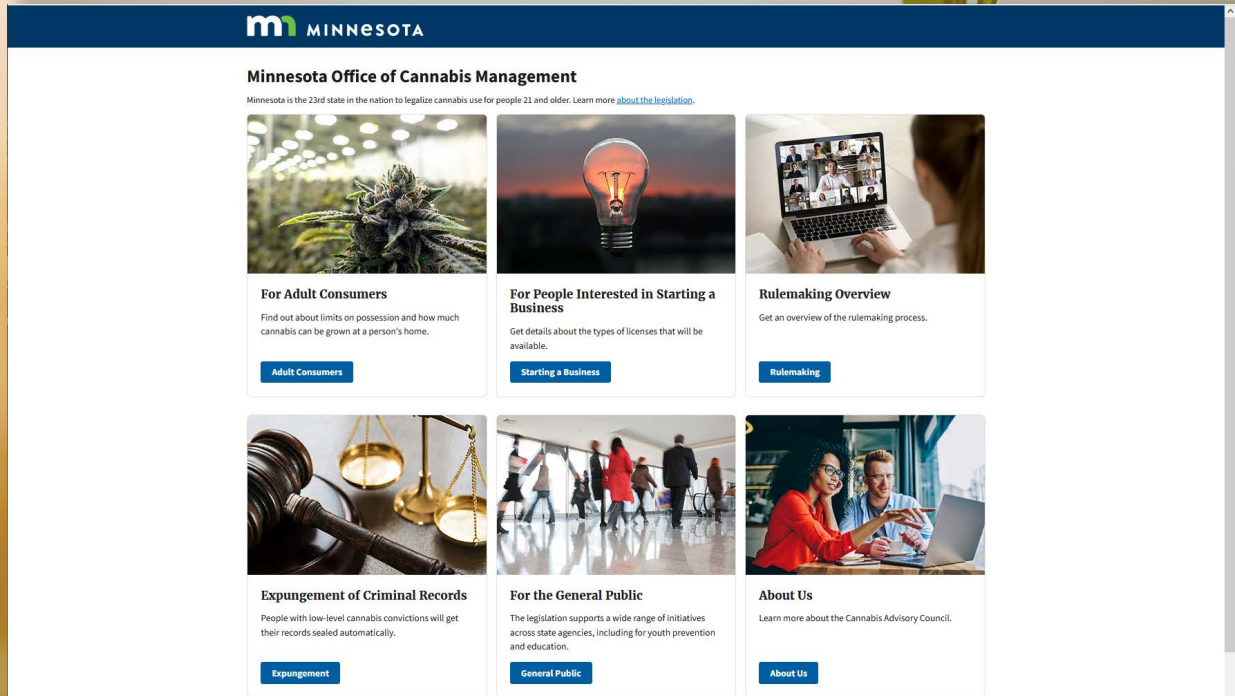
Office of Cannabis Management Website Launch

On May 30, 2023, Governor Tim Walz signed a bill legalizing cannabis use by adults 21 and older. By nightfall of that day, MNIT in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) launched the Office of Cannabis Management website.
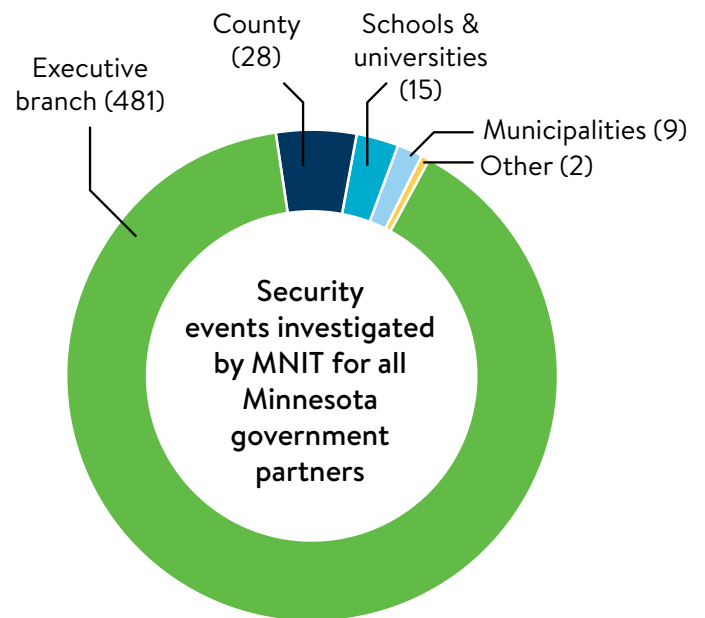
The Office of Cannabis Management regulates cannabis (including for the adult-use market, the Medical Cannabis Program, and lower-potency hemp edibles) and will issue licenses and develop regulations outlining how and when businesses can participate in the industry. Recognizing there would be considerable public interest, the three agencies took a proactive approach and leveraged technology to provide Minnesotans quick access to information. The website provides a one-stop resource that's easy to navigate for visitors.

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 5.7 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 535 cyber incidents.

Type of security incident	# reported
False positive	111
Forensic investigation	92
Policy violation	86
Compromised password	71
Malware	37
Social engineering	34
Copyright violation	12
Unauthorized access attempt	8
Multi-factor authentication compromise	6
Network attack/scan	6
Unauthorized disclosure	4
Denial of service	1
Inappropriate use	1
Lost/stolen devices	1
Other	65

County (28) Schools & universities (15)

Executive branch (481)

Municipalities (9)
Other (2)

Security events investigated by MNIT for all Minnesota government partners

New Cyber Risk Framework

MNIT made available a cyber risk quantification (CRQ) framework that will help agencies use data to evaluate cybersecurity risks and their potential financial impacts. This framework helps the state prioritize security investments based on the severity and likelihood of each threat, supports compliance, and creates a common language about security risks across agencies.
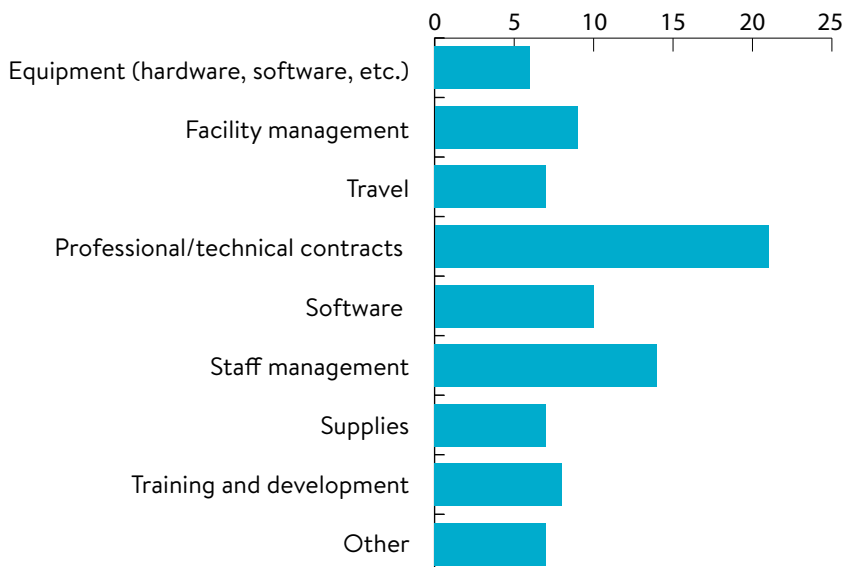
Procurement

The Procurement Division processes requests to purchase everything from IT hardware, software, and mobile devices to contractors brought in to assist on projects and initiatives.
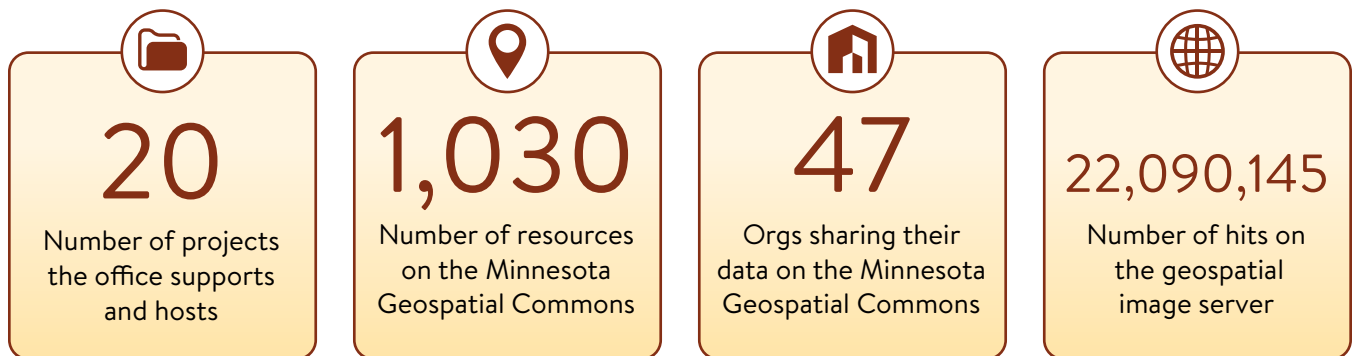
Number of purchase requests
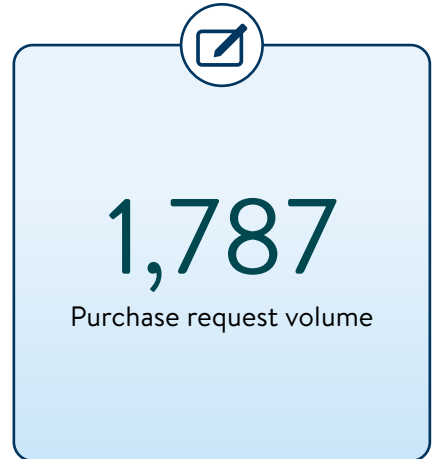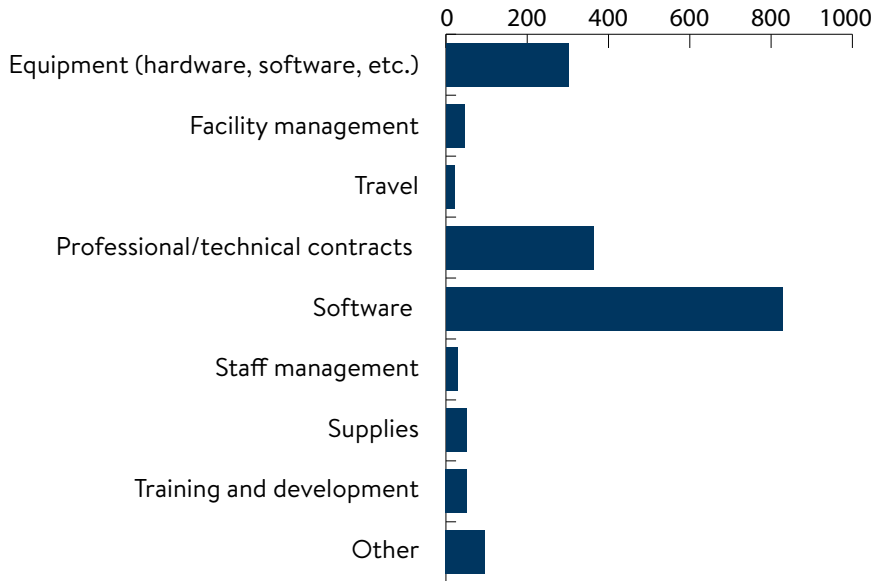
Average processing time (days)

1,787
Purchase request volume

12
Average purchase request 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 nongovernment organizations. Using geography to inform decisions and influence outcomes, 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 an operational team that includes staff from MnDOT, the Metropolitan Council, and MNIT staff partnering with DNR, MDE, MDA, and MPCA.

20	1,030	47	22,090,145
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

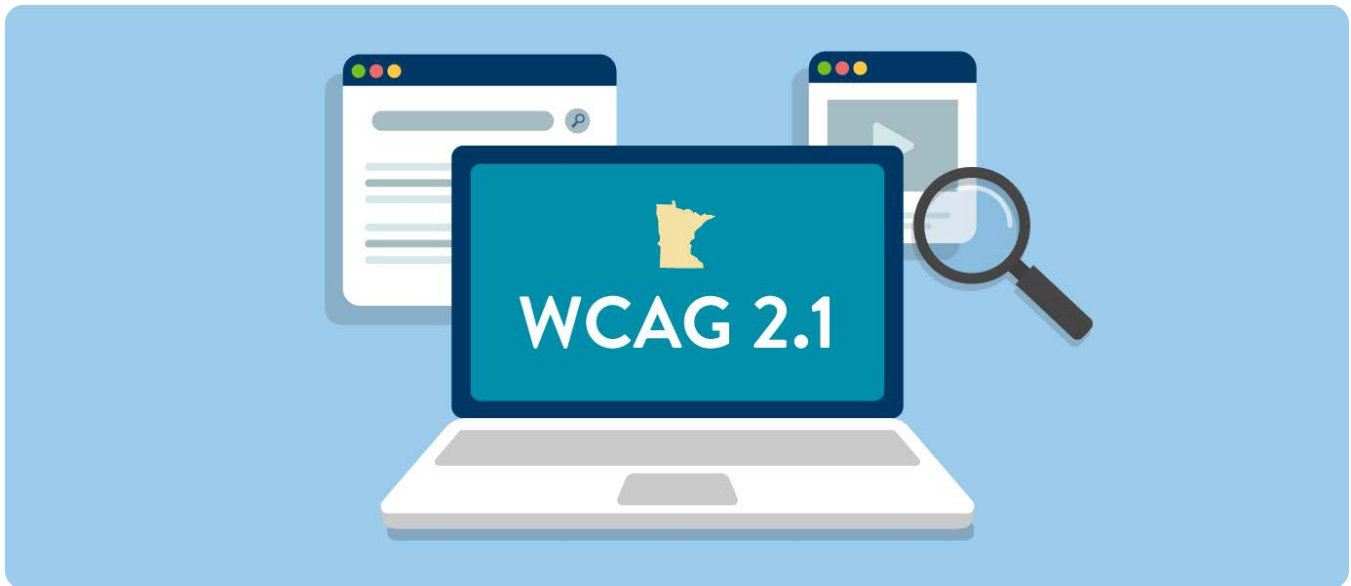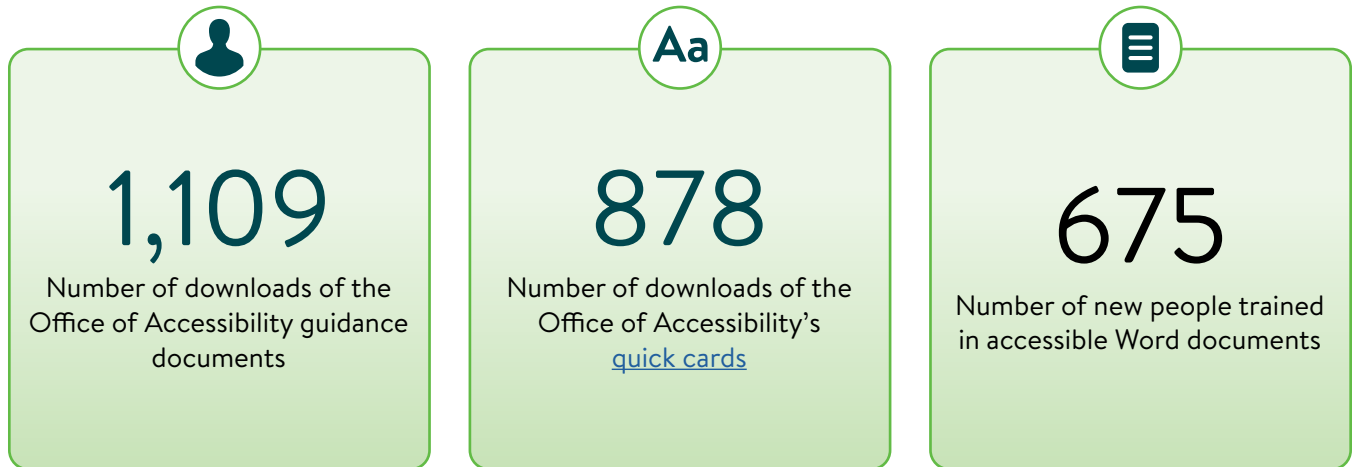## Minnesota Geospatial Commons passes 1,000 resources!

The Minnesota Geospatial Commons has now surpassed 1,000 resources! The Commons launched in 2015 with nearly 200 resources from 9 publishers. Its steady growth is due to the ongoing commitment of organizations to provide free and open geospatial data to the Minnesota geospatial community and beyond. In 2022, users downloaded over 135,000 resources.

Recently published resources:

- Broadband Map (Department of Employment and Economic Development)
- Ambulance Primary Service Areas (Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board)
- Travel Behavior Inventory 2021 (Metropolitan Council)
- Forest Health Survey 2023 (Department of Natural Resources)
- Dakota County Aerial Photography Fall 2022 (Dakota County)

Office of Accessibility

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

1,109
Number of downloads of the Office of Accessibility guidance documents

878
Number of downloads of the Office of Accessibility's quick cards

675
Number of new people trained in accessible Word documents
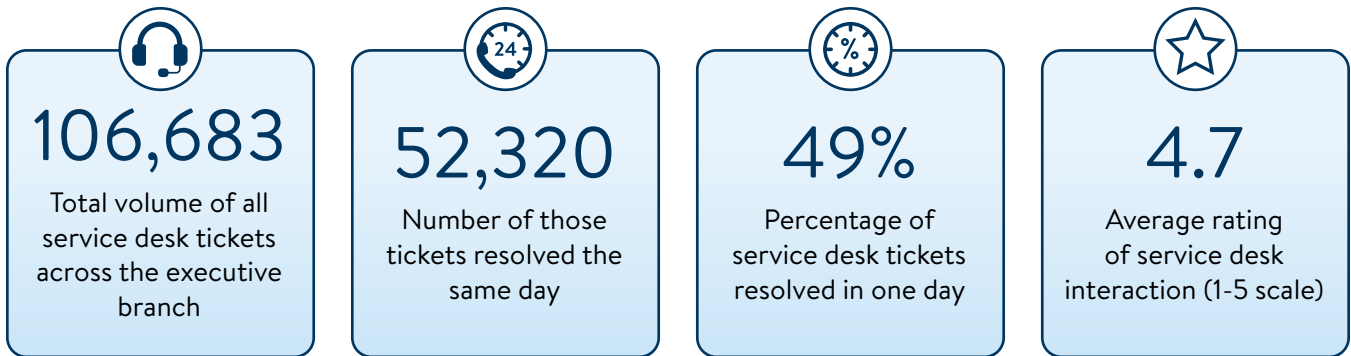

State of Minnesota Plans to Adopt WCAG 2.1

The State of Minnesota will update its digital accessibility standards to reflect new guidelines – Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1. After researching the impact on both state employees and potential value for end users, MNIT's Office of Accessibility formed a cross-agency steering committee to lead the adoption efforts. With an expected effective date of March 1, 2024, the steering committee will prepare state agencies and their employees with the resources and direction they need to plan, design, and create or buy accessible information and technology that supports WCAG 2.1.

Enterprise 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, nonprofits; and MNIT staff.

106,683	**52,320**	**49%**	**4.7**
Total volume of all service desk tickets across the executive branch	Number of those tickets resolved the same day	Percentage of service desk tickets resolved in one day	Average rating of service desk interaction (1-5 scale)

IT optimization updates

CloudRAMP

CloudRAMP (Cloud Readiness and Modernization Project) is MNIT's enterprise project to identify and modernize applications to begin moving into the Azure cloud. Updates from the most recent quarter:

In May, $33.5M in funding was approved by the Minnesota legislature to accelerate the executive branch's move to the cloud. MNIT will leverage these investments over four years to accelerate its ongoing cloud adoption initiative.

Also in this quarter, MNIT's Azure Government Cloud became available. One agency has initiated a test case for its use.

Mobile device management

MNIT rolled out 2 Mobile Device Management (MDM) service options available starting July 1, 2023. All state-owned devices must use MDM Limited at a minimum, but some agencies are upgrading to MDM Full Service. Learn more about the benefits of Full Service MDM.

Self-service desktop deployment

MNIT now has a self-service option for computer replacements. This gives state employees flexibility in scheduling, reduces staff time, and gives you the level of support people want via in-person or virtual appointments, curbside pickup, and shipping – whatever type of replacement works best for them.

Nancy Skuta and Elizabeth Guidarelli

Nancy Skuta was named the 2023 Employee of the Year honoree during MNIT's Annual Award Ceremony for her tireless work in vulnerability management. Nancy recognizes the need to continuously improve the state's security posture in the face of ever-changing cyber threats. As a senior information security analyst, she often goes above and beyond her duties to detect threats and find solutions to fix them. Her ability to build relationships across enterprise security teams and help them respond rapidly to new and evolving threats makes her an asset to MNIT. She is recognized as an expert in her field and presents on vulnerability management nationally and locally.

Elizabeth Guidarelli was named the 2023 Manager of the Year honoree during MNIT's Annual Award Ceremony in for her ability to deliver continuous business value. Her balanced combination of technical and business strengths helps turn ideas into reality and build great partnerships across MnDOT and MNIT. Her success is visible in many projects and platforms, be it to create the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) tool app; partnering as co-owner of a very large multi-year accounting modernization program; promoting the IT Trainee program as a pathway into State service; or embracing emerging technologies such as Microsoft Power Platform.

Elizabeth, who has 25 years of experience partnering with the MnDOT, serves as the application and data development IS manager and leads a team of more than 45 people.

Nancy Skuta

Elizabeth Guidarelli

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 5.7 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: