

Q4 2019

Quarterly Report

— Note from the Commissioner —

I am incredibly proud of the work that MNIT completed in 2019, and of the progress that we have made toward future success. One of the big priorities you'll often hear leaders in government technology discuss is IT modernization – and to be honest, that's no different here in Minnesota. At the state, more than 1,600 applications are reaching the end of life. That's a remarkable opportunity and challenge.

More than simply concerning ourselves with aging software and hardware, however, as technologists, MNIT staff have a role in working with our business partners to re-envision and reimagine how we help Minnesotans interface with the services we provide.

We will strive to unlock our creativity and engage with stakeholders in new and exciting ways. I've seen firsthand how powerful this can be during my tenure as the Chief Information Officer and Chief Innovation Officer for the city of Saint Paul. The state of Minnesota has 350 active projects at any given time, and human-centered design must be an ever-present lens through which we view our work. Taking advantage of these opportunities means we can provide the strongest, most intuitive IT support for our partners across state government.

The projects highlighted this quarter have all been developed by asking end users questions about how we can provide better services as a state. Technology is transforming people's lives and playing a large part in solving complex challenges. We are all a part of that – and we all have a responsibility to make sure that the solutions we bring forth keep people at the center of our work.



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Planning

Tactical Plan

This quarter, Minnesota IT Services finalized its 2020 Tactical Plan for release in January 2020. The plan focuses on advancing tangible tactics to improve our business processes, collaboration, and relationships across the agency. The Tactical Plan covers the timeframe from January 2020 through January 2021. While the goal is to accomplish each tactic by January 2021, this plan considers the fact that the worlds of government and technology are constantly changing, and that tactics may evolve over time. Tactics will have “tactic owners” who are responsible for developing Tactic Action Plans that will move their tactic forward within the scoped timeframe. Tactic Action Plans will outline the scope, stakeholders, timeline, deliverables, and metrics. The Tactical Plan will be refreshed throughout the year as tactics are accomplished and the agency moves forward on long-term strategies.



Employees ranking and categorizing goals and ideas in a planning session.

Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan is MNIT’s vehicle to establish and work collectively toward long-term strategic objectives. To accomplish the agency’s mission and vision, the Strategic Plan creates a roadmap for focus and action, making space to define and measure strategic priorities and outcomes. As part of Governor Walz’s One Minnesota Plan, MNIT will release its Strategic Plan in Spring 2020, in tandem with other executive branch agencies. The Strategic Plan will be updated and presented biennially for the Governor and the Minnesota legislature, in compliance with Minnesota Statutes 16E. It provides the vision for MNIT’s business strategy, leveraging the strengths and perspectives of stakeholders across the agency and the executive branch to build upon current momentum and ensure our continued progress.

Notable achievements, awards, and events



Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Governor Walz declared October to be Cybersecurity Awareness Month, timed with a national campaign to promote cybersecurity efforts across the public and private sector. Throughout the month, MNIT engaged stakeholders across the state to make sure that we are doing all that we can to protect data. MNIT staff held tabling events at state agencies, provided information to employees about reporting and phishing emails, and coordinated a student cybersecurity event at the Boys & Girls Club.



MNIT cybersecurity expert awarded

Security Operations Manager, John Israel, was presented with the Visionary Security Operations Leader Award at the Cyber Security Summit. On October 29, 2019, Israel received the award which recognizes those who have shown exemplary leadership to develop and foster strategies that protect critical systems and data. In his role, John Israel supervises the Security Operations Center and coordinates responses to cyber incidents that occur across state systems.



Recognition in the GIS community

Alison Slaats, program manager at MNIT's Geospatial Information Office, received the Polaris Leadership Award, which recognizes GIS professionals who demonstrate a beacon of energy and creativity that inspires and guides other GIS professionals. Honored at the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium and Workshop, Alison received the award for being a collaborative leader and technical problem solver.

Emerging technology: user experience

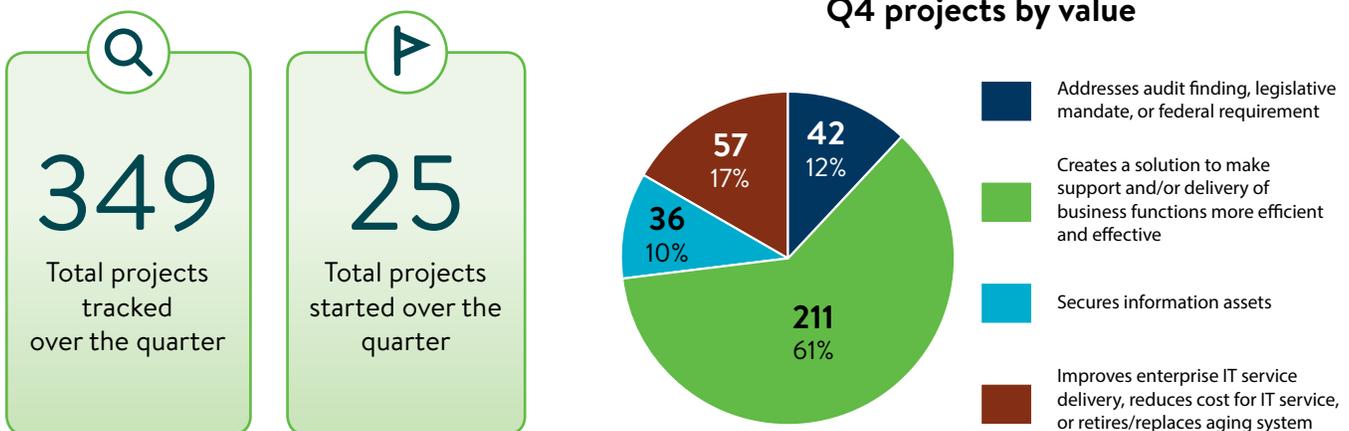
Innovation around user experience (UX) allows MNIT to improve the adoption and performance of the applications, technologies, and services that we provide. This requires our teams to learn and apply UX and human-centered design methods – to gather user insights throughout the entire service development process and iterate on what they learn. As new guidance, processes, and frameworks evolve to improve our application development process, MNIT and our partner agencies are finding new ways to actively engage their user communities, streamline product adoption, and create positive digital experiences with government services.

At the Department of Human Services (DHS), MNIT is developing a research process that includes the creation of personas to better understand DHS program beneficiaries and the services they use to move toward a self-service approach. Within the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI), persona development and a UX approach helped stakeholders reimagine a workers' compensation technology solution. As more agencies launch self-service applications and products for Minnesotans, UX research, design, and strategy becomes an essential IT function. By involving the stakeholders that use state systems at every step of the development process, and by prioritizing human-centered, accessible design, we can create better solutions that directly connect our agency partners to Minnesotans.

Agency updates

Project Management Office

Over the quarter, MNIT's Project Management Office has tracked the completion of 33 projects. 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.



NOTABLE PROJECTS

Upgraded accounting and procurement system for the state

MNIT co-sponsored an upgrade project with Minnesota Management and Budget and the Department of Administration that ultimately affected nearly 110,000 end users, including all state employees and private sector vendors. The collaborative project upgraded and modernized two enterprise systems – SWIFT and Portal. SWIFT is the state’s accounting and procurement system, used by more than 5,000 state employees and nearly 240,000 active vendors to process around 46,000 payments per week. Portal connects SWIFT and other essential systems, like Employee Self Service, which is used by all state employees for payroll and benefits. MNIT’s team provided project management and developed an infrastructure that improved stability, security, performance, and user experience. The development process incorporated accessibility and usability for all users, and it created standards that will improve software development for the state’s IT projects.



Licensing process improvements for electrical permits

MNIT’s work enables our business partners to have more efficient processes. A new online permitting and inspection system from the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry reduces the time required to process large batches of electrical permits from weeks to seconds. The new system was launched in October 2019 by DLI’s Construction Codes and Licensing Division, in partnership with Minnesota IT Services. Electrical permits are the highest volume permits for DLI, with roughly 120,000 applications a year by homeowners, electrical contractors, and public utilities. High-volume applicants can now submit permit applications in batches that can be processed in seconds, saving weeks of staff time.

Centralized workforce website

Minnesota's Department of Employment and Economic Development and Minnesota IT Services worked with a variety of private, public, and nonprofit partners to develop CareerForceMN.com, Minnesota's career development and talent-matching resource. CareerForceMN.com utilizes API-driven integration to provide resources to employers and career seekers wherever they're at in the workforce process – delivering the right information to the right user at the right time. Career seekers can search for a job, complete skills and interest assessments, explore career options, and learn about additional career services. Employers can find regional labor market information, see contact information for staff and partners who can help them, and access online resources to help them find, attract, and retain talent. CareerForce publicly launched in September 2019 and has more than 1,750 staff and partner accounts, 8,780 career seeker accounts, and 500 employer accounts created to-date.



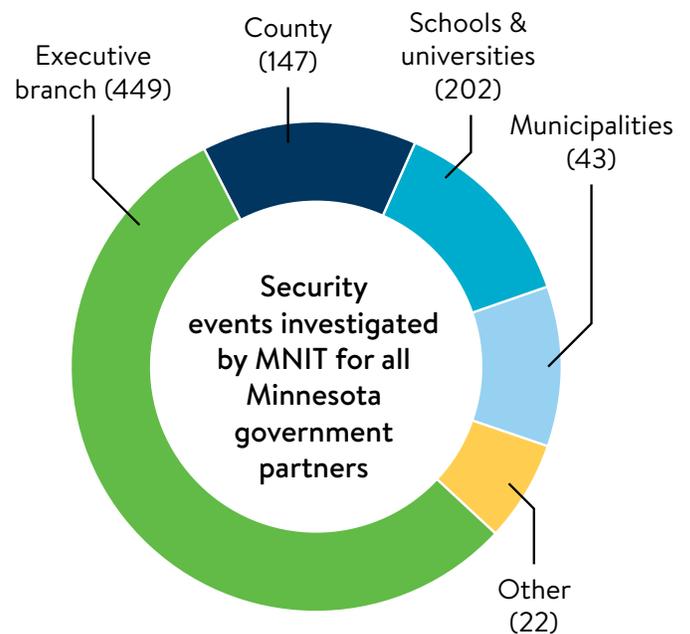
Expanding cash assistance

For the first time in 33 years, Minnesota increased its cash assistance for families in need. Effective February 1, 2020, the maximum cash grant standards increased by \$100 for the 69,000 individuals served by the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), the Diversionary Work Participation (DWP), and the Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA). In June 2019, MNIT began working with our partners at the Department of Human Services, where all three programs are offered, to implement these changes. MFIP, DWP, and RCA program eligibility is determined by MAXIS, a computer system used by county and tribal workers to calculate appropriate benefit levels and to issue those benefits to participating households. The fact that all three programs reside within a mature, highly-automated system aided in the fast implementation of the statute changes, to be ready for a February 2020 install. MFIP is the largest beneficiary of the cash assistance, as over 31,000 Minnesotans apply for benefits every year.

Security

To keep state government running, and 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. 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 October to December, our Security Operations Center (SOC) detected or received reports of 863 cyber incidents.

Type of security incident	Number reported
Malware	307
Unauthorized access attempt	298
Network attack/scan	109
Forensic investigation	75
Copyright violation	22
Social engineering	8
Denial of service	4
Lost/stolen devices	3
Unauthorized disclosure	3
Policy violation	2
Other	32



Security incidents detected by or reported to MNIT SOC.

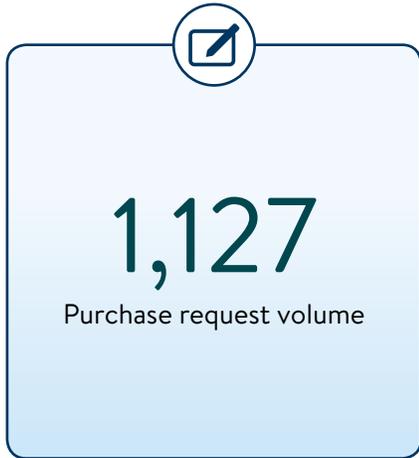


Statewide Security Monitoring Initiative

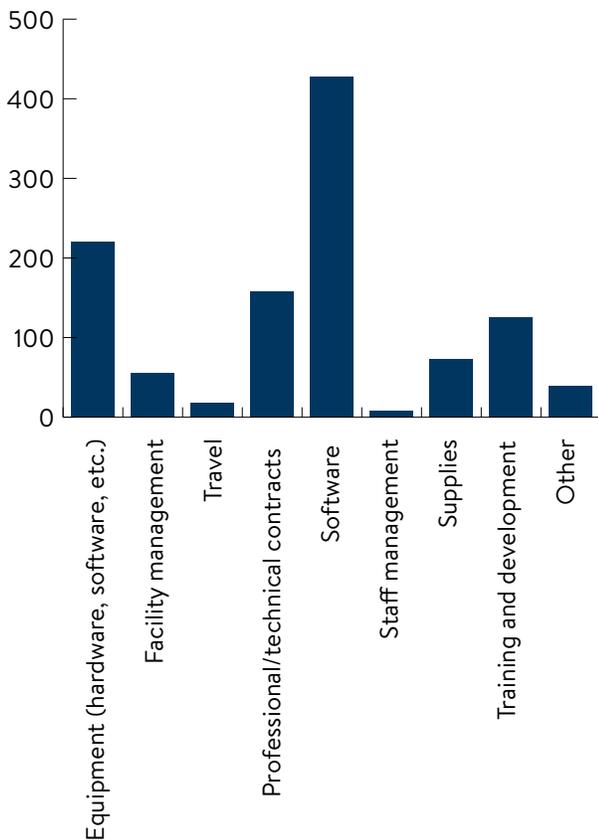
As part of our work to secure and monitor cyber activities across the state, MNIT continues to expand those covered by the Statewide Security Monitoring Initiative (SSMI). SSMI is focused on improving situational awareness of and response to cybersecurity incidents that target or impact Minnesota government. In 2019, the SSMI project expanded to 12 more counties, now covering 60 counties. SSMI provides security event detection, incident validation, and incident response support for suspicious, malicious, and other monitored network events.

Procurement

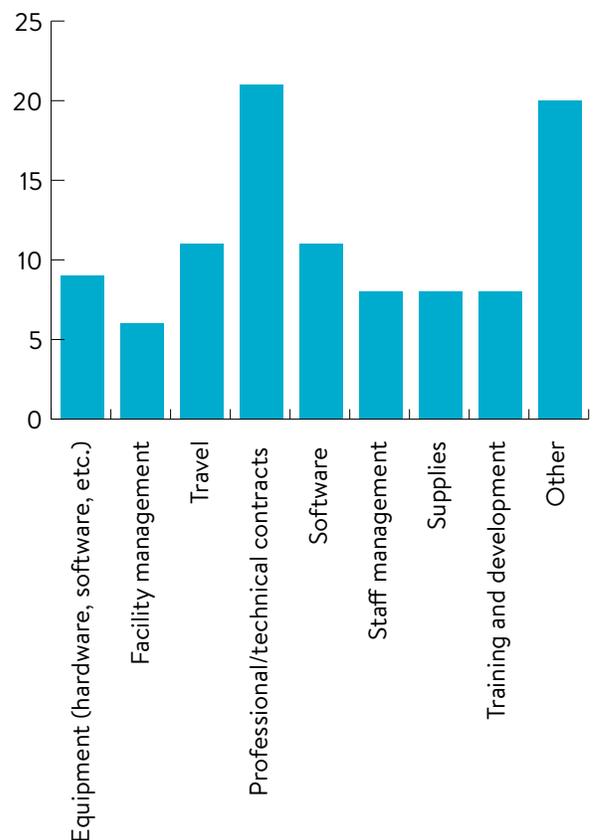
The Procurement Division is responsible for processing all requests to purchase everything from IT hardware, software, and mobile devices, to contractors brought in to assist on projects. Procurement follows a standardized purchasing process that can include administrative review, accessibility testing,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



Number of purchase requests

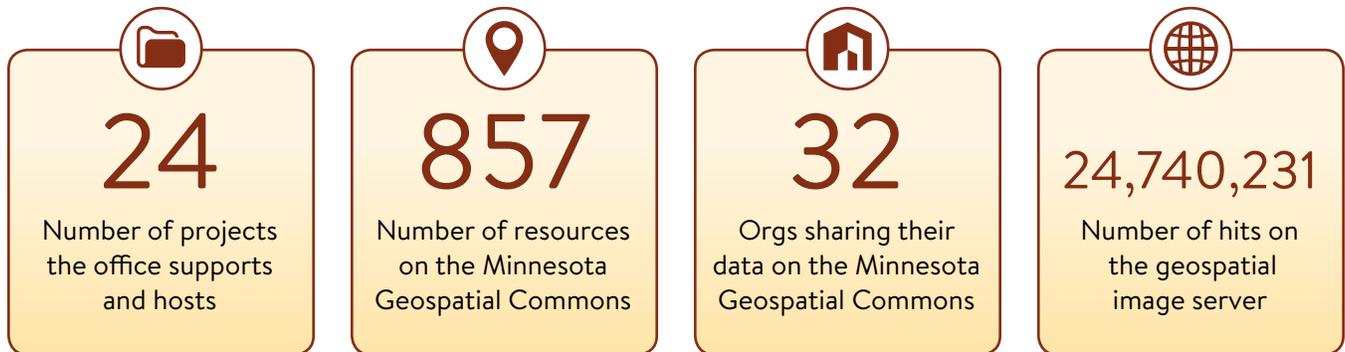


Average processing time (days)



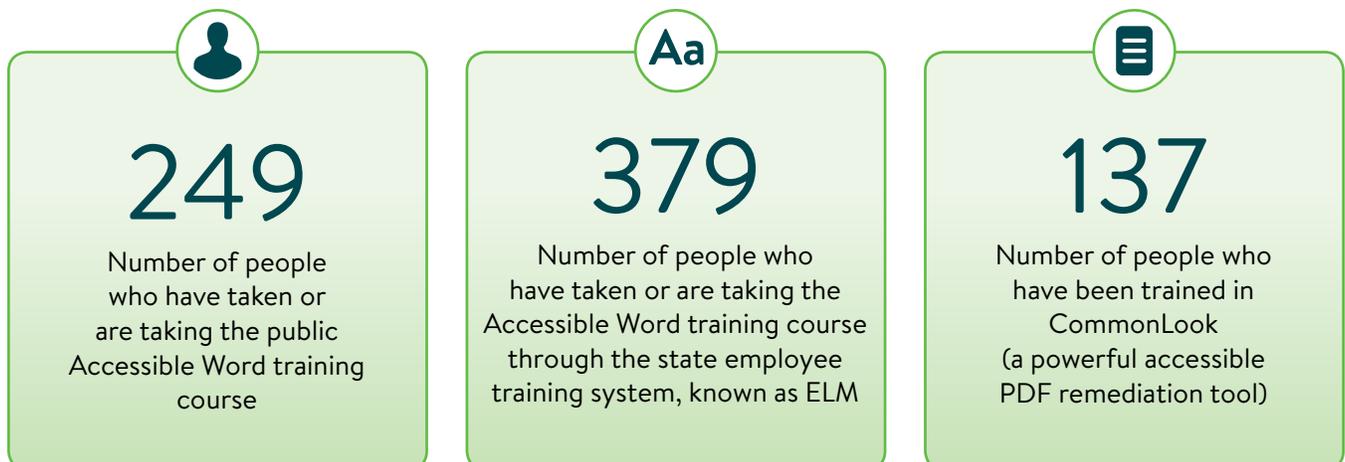
Geospatial Information Office

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 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.



Office of Accessibility

The Office of Accessibility is charged with overseeing the implementation of accessibility standards for all executive branch employees and state agencies. Nine state employees in Minnesota were finalists for awards recognizing their advocacy, skills, and work in digital accessibility this November and December.



Service desk

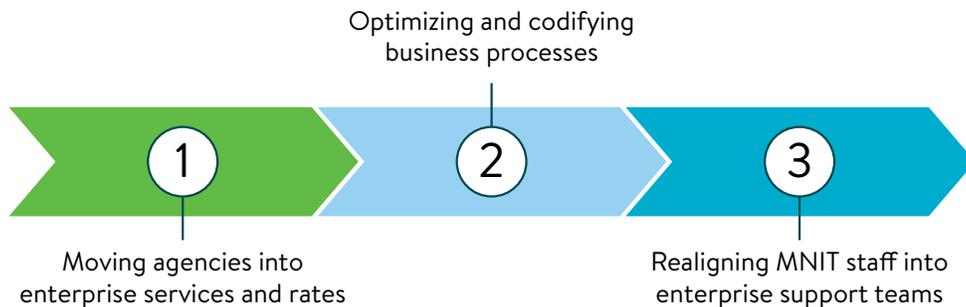
Our enterprise service desk provides 24/7 IT support and services for Minnesota state government: executive branch agencies, boards, councils, and commissions; non-executive branch customers, education, tribal governments, non-profits; and MNIT staff.



IT optimization updates

In 2019, new leadership joined MNIT with a fresh perspective on what services are being delivered, how they are being delivered, and even where they are delivered. The effort to improve the services provided by the Enterprise Services team will require tweaking and even re-engineering service delivery processes. One example of that re-examination is in the workstation management service, where we have engaged with an outside consulting company to assess our current processes, help us identify process gaps, and make service maturity recommendations.

As we move into 2020, new metrics will be introduced to measure the performance of services such as desktop management, hosting, and project management. These new measurements will inform Enterprise Services and our business partners of how successfully the services we provide are being delivered. Captured data will be leveraged in new dashboards that present data transparently for both internal and external consumption. This data transparency will allow Enterprise Services to set goals with our business partners to drive accountability and build trust.



Meet MNIT



Major Applications for DHS

The Major Application Support Team that partners with the Minnesota Department of Human Services and MNsure recently received the “Team of the Year” award at our annual awards ceremony. This award recognizes an operational team across the agency that provides excellent customer service for both our executive branch partners and Minnesotans using the technology. This year’s winner provides support for over 360 applications for DHS and MNsure, allowing Minnesotans to do everything from sign up for the health insurance exchange to receive treatment. The Major

Application Support Team uses its varied experience to provide efficient and critical support for the tens of thousands of DHS staff and its partners, the 12,000+ patients and clients at direct care and treatment facilities who access DHS systems, and the 123,000+ Minnesotans that enrolled in MNsure.

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 5.5 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:

