

Report of the

# STATE OF MINNESOTA BLUE RIBBON COUNCIL ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

*February 2021*



This report of the Blue Ribbon Council on Information Technology (BRC-IT) provides an update on progress made in regard to the BRC-IT's June 2020 recommendations, and proposes additional recommendations for improving the state of IT for Minnesotans.



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# Letter from the Chair

February 28, 2021

**Governor Tim Walz**  
**Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan**  
**Speaker of the House Melissa Hortman**  
**House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt**  
**Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka**  
**Senate Minority Leader Susan Kent**  
**MNIT Commissioner Tarek Tomes**

Cc:  
Members of the Blue Ribbon Council on  
Information Technology

The Governor's Blue Ribbon Council on Information Technology (BRC-IT) is pleased to issue its second report.

Governor Walz issued Executive Order 20-77 on June 30, 2020 continuing the Council and naming its members. The Council then met numerous times from November 2020 through February 2021 before issuing the report that follows.

During this period, we reviewed progress on the recommendations in the BRC-IT's first report<sup>1</sup> and focused on foundational elements needed for organizations to be successful at digital innovation and the evolving virtual work environment. We addressed three main topics: (1) Fostering a Culture of Innovation and Learning; (2) Digitization and Self Service; and (3) Creating Flexible Work Environments. The pages that follow provide information explored and considered by the Council members from the distinguished guest speakers, their own experiences, and the public.

As mentioned in the last report, the BRC-IT structure and overall support continued to allow it to be more influential and effective compared to its predecessor, the Technology Advisory Committee. The key to its effectiveness was the great blend of a variety of views, with six CIOs from Minnesota's leading companies, four legislators, numerous agency heads or deputies, two county members, and a MNIT union member. Each contributed their expertise and views enabling a richer, more well-rounded discussion. Everyone agreed to listen to each other and to seek common ground. Council members agreed to reach consensus on each item that would appear in the report rather than vote, unless absolutely necessary. Happily, there weren't any votes. Members listened and worked collaboratively with colleagues to reach agreement on recommendations. It was once again a bold gamble to achieve full consensus based on the BRC-IT's discussions, and it delivered. We are pleased legislation has been introduced to change the TAC membership to align with the BRC-IT's membership.

As you read the report, please keep in mind that most of the recommendations focus on actions that all agencies should take to become more innovative and effective in how they deliver services – rather than just technology items that MNIT can do alone. The key to adopting the recommendations will be the

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<sup>1</sup> The June 2020 Report of the BRC-IT is available at <https://www.lrl.mn.gov/docs/2020/other/200717.pdf>.

partnership between agencies and MNIT to effectively deliver value to the “citizen customer” as is the real goal of state government.

Between this report and the last one in June 2020, many great accomplishments can be highlighted. While all are important, there are two to call out, the launch of MNDRIVE and the quick pivot to state employees working virtually. The first was the successful launch in November 2020 of MNDRIVE, replacing MNLARS, the troubled license and vehicle registration system. This success highlights the decisive move by the Governor and the Legislature to use existing third-party software rather than building bespoke software. It also highlights the great benefit of bi-partisan cooperation and how the agency, in this case the Department of Public Safety, is the owner of the project, not MNIT.

The second and perhaps even larger success was how effectively the state government pivoted to working virtually to continue to provide government services. This effort, by each and every state employee was exemplary. People showed determination and courage as well as innovation and quick learning. This was not only a technology success; it also showed the state’s ability to develop and adopt policies and practices that support the changed work environment. As we are beginning to climb out of the pandemic, we call on the state to continue to be as resourceful and innovative as they were when the pandemic struck a year ago. You have shown you are able to do it!

As I close out this letter, I would like to thank our volunteer writers from Thomson Reuters, Amy Albus, Betsy Lulfs, and Darin Mjoen. They were a great asset to the Council and allowed the members to focus on the discussion and recommendations. I would also like to thank my now former employer, Thomson Reuters, for allowing the three of them and me the time and space to work on this important item to the state.

I would also like to thank the Governor, the legislative leaders, and the agency heads for their support of the BRC-IT. A special thanks to Commissioner Tomes, Deputy Commissioner Eichten, Michael Hainlin, Brandon Hirsch, Jeremy DePew, and the rest of the MNIT team.

We believe the BRC-IT has been successful in helping executive agencies with modernization and enabling technologies. The BRC-IT would happily expand its scope to include the other two branches of state government so they too would benefit.

Thank you to the members of the BRC-IT for their dedication and solid work leading to this report. Our fondest desire is for the recommendations in this report, and our previous report, to be implemented by the state agencies.

Should any of you have questions about the report, please let us know.



Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rick King". The signature is stylized and fluid.

**Rick King**  
Chair, Blue Ribbon Council on Information Technology

# Executive Summary

In June 2020, the BRC-IT published a report with 24 recommendations related to data management and privacy, cybersecurity, and technology modernization, with a focus throughout on encouraging greater collaboration between MNIT and the state agencies it serves. In this report, the BRC-IT reinforces the importance of those June 2020 recommendations. As you will see, a part of this report is an update on the progress of those recommendations. We are encouraged by the response to many of the recommendations, particularly considering the pandemic environment. We now turn the BRC-IT's attention toward creating a culture of innovation – not just at MNIT, but across state government.

After listening to the experiences of private and public sector organizations who have also been working on building a culture of innovation, the BRC-IT concludes that innovation arises out of an **environment devoted to learning**, including learning from experience and anecdotes, and learning from data. It comes from **executive support** for continuous upskilling and reskilling. It is activated through collaboration, embracing diverse perspectives and aligning them towards shared outcomes. It grows by igniting and encouraging curiosity, **celebrating success**, and understanding the role of **learning from early failures**. The capacity of the workforce, including the capacity to innovate, expands by leveraging inter-agency synergies and fostering public-private partnerships.

The COVID-19 pandemic overturned long-held assumptions about our ability to **efficiently and effectively work anywhere** while at the same time spotlighting the importance of innovation. But even before the pandemic began, the pace of change was increasing demand for **change resilience** and for creativity, to keep up with ever-changing expectations and needs of the population served. This report calls on MNIT and

agencies to continue, and in some cases expedite, the work underway in response to the June 2020 report, and calls on the Governor to support efforts to identify the best and fastest way to plant seeds of innovation throughout the enterprise by actively supporting the transition to a culture of learning and collaboration.

The BRC-IT acknowledges that in addition to requiring time and energy, many of the recommendations suggested here require **initial and ongoing financial support**. Government bodies have unique budgetary constraints that don't usually exist in the private sector, but agencies must be careful not to allow these budgetary constraints to get in the way of modernization. Agencies should look to examples in other state and local government entities and explore creative ways to foster innovation. This allows them to stay true to the objective of the funding provided while ensuring that provided services exceed the expectations of constituents. Where existing funding is insufficient to transform the culture, leaders should seek out the necessary appropriation.

The Council was able to collaborate virtually to arrive at the best outcomes as highlighted in this report. The diverse makeup of the Council contributed to rich discussions and meaningful findings. The combination of representatives from the private sector, state agencies, counties, and union, with bi-partisan, bi-cameral legislative members is an ideal mix.

What follows is the report of the BRC-IT, as requested by Executive Order 20-77.

# List of Recommendations

MNIT has been presenting to the BRC-IT updates related to the recommendations of the June 2020 report. The current state of activity for each of those recommendations is noted in Section 2 of this report, along with select highlights identified by the current BRC-IT members. New recommendations from the BRC-IT are listed below. They also appear in Sections 3, 4, and 5 with additional explanatory text.

1. To foster innovation across state agencies, MNIT should convene and sponsor an inter-agency working group of cross-functional leaders to identify pilot projects that build a culture of collaboration and learning across the enterprise and co-create an approach to support those projects.

2. To activate change across the enterprise, agency leaders should visibly support and encourage innovation and learning, by incorporating a culture transformation plan into their business modernization plans.<sup>2</sup>

3. MNIT should work with agency leaders to begin to formalize the culture and roles that drive a positive customer experience and a sound digital strategy, which includes identifying the best self-service opportunities in their respective agencies.

4. The State Office Reopening Work Group designing the future workplace should evaluate available research and best practices and provide guidance to agencies as they explore which roles can be done remotely, how to support a remote workforce, and how to design a hybrid workspace.

5. The BRC-IT supports the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Broadband and recommends rapid implementation of the stated plan.

6. The BRC-IT should invite to a future council meeting the IT service groups serving the Minnesota judicial and legislative branches to better understand opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing.

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2 Recommendation 19 of the June 2020 BRC-IT Report called on MNIT to collaborate with agencies on a modernization plan, for the agency generally and for technology specifically.

## Section 1

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# History of the Blue Ribbon Council on Information Technology

The Minnesota State Legislature created a Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) in 2011<sup>3</sup> to advise Minnesota's Chief Information Officer on technology strategy and management. Since then, the TAC has advised the State CIO on a variety of topics, but impact has been limited due primarily to limited meeting frequency and restricted membership.

On February 6, 2019, by Executive Order 19-02,<sup>4</sup> Governor Walz established the Blue Ribbon Council on Information Technology (BRC-IT) as an expansion of the TAC, adding private-sector and legislative members. The executive order stated that "Minnesotans expect reliable, secure, and accurate information technology services when they interact with the State" and noted that "the Blue Ribbon Council on Information Technology was created to ensure the people of Minnesota have access to high-quality, dependable services."

The close collaboration between the BRC-IT and MNIT leadership, as well as active engagement from all members has proven effective. The final report of this initial BRC-IT was published in June 2020, with 24 recommendations related to Modernization, Cybersecurity, Data Management & Privacy, and IT funding. With strong support from the newly appointed CIO, Tarek Tomes, review of and work on the recommendations started immediately.

One June 2020 recommendation of the BRC-IT noted the importance of continuing the work of the BRC-IT and called for amendment of the statutory language for the Technology Advisory Committee to reflect more closely the membership and mandate of the BRC-IT. Originally expiring in June 2020, Governor Walz extended the mandate by issuing Executive Order 20-77,<sup>5</sup> reconstituting the BRC-IT through February 2021 to ensure that work would continue at least until the legislature was able to consider the recommendation. A bill was introduced changing the name to the Technology Advisory Council and clarifying the mandate of the group. It remains under consideration in the legislature.

The extended BRC-IT, with four new members, met once in October and in November and twice in December, in January, and in February, more frequently than previously because of the shortened term of the council. It continues to be a great example of collaboration between the private and public sectors and between the executive and legislative branches of Minnesota government.

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3 The full text of the law can be found at <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/16E.036>.

4 The full text of Executive Order 19-02 is available at [https://mn.gov/governor/assets/2019\\_02\\_06\\_EO\\_19-02\\_tcm1055-371231.pdf](https://mn.gov/governor/assets/2019_02_06_EO_19-02_tcm1055-371231.pdf).

5 The full text of Executive Order 20-77 is available at [https://mn.gov/governor/assets/20-77%20Final\\_tcm1055-438770.pdf](https://mn.gov/governor/assets/20-77%20Final_tcm1055-438770.pdf).

## Section 2

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# Update on June 2020 Recommendations

In light of the extreme environmental factors created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the BRC-IT is impressed by the amount of work MNIT has accomplished in response to the June 2020 recommendations. One notable achievement, which serves as evidence of the agency's hard work was receipt of the highest score in the nation on the SITARA scorecard,<sup>6</sup> a benchmark which examines data points related to IT modernization and cybersecurity maturity.

Still, there is additional work to be done. The June 2020 recommendations remain important focus areas. The table on the following pages is the most recent progress report presented to the BRC-IT. It lists the numbered recommendation from the June 2020 report, as well as the 'next step' and designated 'owners' from MNIT and from other state agencies. In keeping with the original spirit of the recommendations, the BRC-IT suggests close collaboration between MNIT and agency leadership to ensure that the substance and timing of ongoing activities are feasible and appropriate for both groups.

The BRC-IT cannot overstate the continuing importance of the key themes from 2020:

- **Modernization** – The pace of change is only increasing, making it more important to establish modernization principles to be used as a guide, to further enhance and spread utilization of the modernization playbook, and ensure that a clear modernization vision and strategy is crafted and shared;
- **Cybersecurity** – The record number of malware attacks on Election Day 2020 and discovery of the wide-reaching impact of the SolarWinds hack<sup>7</sup> are further evidence that extreme diligence and commensurate funding are required to more ably safeguard Minnesotans;
- **Data Management & Privacy** – We are becoming more connected every day, generating massive amounts of data, making it imperative for the State of MN to develop a more intentional, coordinated strategy for the collection, storage, use, and protection of data.

BRC-IT members look forward to ongoing progress reports for all of the recommendations issued, and the council highlights the following as important ingredients for building a culture of innovation, the focus of this February 2021 report.

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<sup>6</sup> The SITARA scorecard for MN can be found at <https://internetassociation.org/sitara/#/m/MN>.

<sup>7</sup> As of February 2021, there is no known impact to the State of Minnesota Executive Branch from SolarWinds.

## Agile Implementation in the Modernization Playbook

Progress on the development and utilization of the Modernization Playbook promises to continue to improve outcomes for MNIT, for agencies, and for Minnesotans. With plans to incorporate human-centered design principles and increase **agility**, teams expect to deliver value sooner and more quickly learn what does or does not work. With a current ratio of approximately 80:20 in favor of waterfall over Agile delivery, the BRC-IT believes there is opportunity to expedite delivery of value and minimize waste, and it supports Commissioner Tomes in his desire to flip that ratio.

## Skilled Professional Program

There are several capabilities and competencies key to building a culture of learning, collaboration, and innovation. Some of these capabilities are well-developed in the private sector. The State of Minnesota may be able to benefit from external expertise, including for broader implementation of the Agile Development Framework and for Design Thinking as two examples. The BRC-IT looks forward to a report on the **feasibility of the recommended Skilled Professional Program**.

## Data Management Strategy

The BRC-IT believes that there are multiple individuals in different agencies who have a passion for data governance, and that identifying and convening these individuals as a **data management working group or a community of practice** would help to further progress on the June 2020 recommendations. They could explore the potential of the proposed Chief Privacy Officer role and also discuss ideas related to a data catalog, a metadata framework, data interoperability, and data retention. Further progress on data management strategy has

the potential to improve the experience of Minnesotans (e.g. reducing the amount of redundant data entry or submission) and to better protect, store, and utilize the data that is provided.

## CBTOs as Agency Partners

In the transition to a culture of innovation, collaboration, and learning, people must remain the focus over technology. To build innovative technology solutions that support the needs of people inside and outside the enterprise, Chief Business Technology Officers (CBTOs) must develop a true partnership with agency leaders and should be included in leadership conversations and strategic planning.

## Modernization Maturity Assessment

The MNIT Office of Transformation and Strategy Delivery, which was established to advance Council recommendations related to modernizing business process change and project delivery, is actively working to further develop, socialize, and drive adoption of the Modernization Playbook. To better understand where agencies currently are and where they need to go from a technology modernization perspective, they conducted a Modernization Maturity Assessment. They found pockets within the agencies doing things really well, as well as opportunities for improvement. The BRC-IT is pleased that they have a roadmap of improvements in keeping with their goals to evaluate and elevate **portfolio health** and develop a **modernization outlook**, and looks forward to further progress.

# Update on June 2020 Recommendations

## Section: BRC-IT

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### Recommendation 1: Technology Advisory Council

The Minnesota Legislature should amend the Minnesota statute authorizing the Technology Advisory Committee and rename the committee the Technology Advisory Council, with membership and mission replaced with that of the current BRC-IT.

| Status      | Next Steps  | Targeted Deliverable Date             | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|---|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| In Progress | MNIT technical changes bill – 2021 Legislative Session. | Legislation passed into law: May 2021 | MNIT/<br>Legislature |

## Section: Modernization Principles and a Modernization Review Board

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### Recommendation 2: Modernization Principles

MNIT should involve agency and technology leaders in the creation of business and technology modernization principles and establish a review process to ensure that the principles evolve as needed.

| Status      | Next Steps   | Targeted Deliverable Date                        | Owner (of next step)       |
|-------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| Not started | Once formed, Review Board develops Modernization Principles. | Modernization Principles drafted: September 2021 | Modernization Review Board |

### Recommendation 3: Modernization Review Board

MNIT should establish and host a Modernization Review Board (MRB) that includes key agency leaders to review the adoption of modernization review practices for large-scale or critical technology initiatives across the state.

| Status       | Next Steps   | Targeted Deliverable Date                              | Owner (of next step) |
|--------------|--|--|----------------------|
| Early Stages | Form Modernization Review Board (determine membership and objectives). | Modernization Review Board charter: End of Spring 2021 | MNIT                 |

## Section: Modernization Playbook

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### Recommendation 4: Simplifying Business Processes/Rules

Agencies should evaluate and simplify business processes and rules before building, replacing, or procuring new systems and make recommendations to the Legislature regarding modifications to laws and regulations.

| Status      | Next Steps  | Targeted Deliverable Date                    | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|---|--|----------------------|
| In Progress | Analysis of whether business process redesign training is applicable and incorporated into the initial phase of the Modernization Playbook. | Modernization Playbook training: Spring 2021 | MNIT                 |

### Recommendation 5: Vendor Engagement

MNIT and the Minnesota Department of Administration (ADM) should develop and implement a plan to ensure that agencies understand and use their authority and ability to engage more fully with vendors before a final vendor is selected.

| Status       | Next Steps  | Targeted Deliverable Date                       | Owner (of next step) |
|--------------|---|---|----------------------|
| Early Stages | Develop a guidance document for use by agencies when engaging with vendors. | Vendor engagement guide drafted: September 2021 | MNIT/ADM             |

### Recommendation 6: Procurement Resources

MNIT should build capacity within the procurement unit to develop procurement strategies and support acquisitions for IT modernization projects.

| Status      | Next Steps   | Targeted Deliverable Date  | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|--|--|----------------------|
| In Progress | Look at automation of manual processes to free-up current resources to take on higher-level tasks. | Draft and gather process flows, identifying opportunities: August 2021 | MNIT                 |

### Recommendation 7: Vendor Risk Assessment

MNIT and the Minnesota Department of Administration should jointly assess the current vendor risk through a structured process and security framework for contract management and risk prioritization.

| Status       | Next Steps   | Targeted Deliverable Date                      | Owner (of next step) |
|--------------|--|--|----------------------|
| Early Stages | Engage with ADM to identify existing policies and procedures for vendor risk assessment. Document current process flows and stakeholders involved. | Draft current state process flows: May 1, 2021 | MNIT/ADM             |

### Recommendation 8: IT Security Risk Assessment Process

MNIT should provide education for agencies on the IT security risk assessment process and partner with agencies to assess, manage, prioritize, and communicate any risks encountered during the process.

| Status      | Next Steps   | Targeted Deliverable Date                  | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|--|--|----------------------|
| In Progress | Solicit feedback from agency’s risk management function on IT Security Risk Assessment expectations. Collect through a survey or direct meetings with agency dedicated security staff. Goal: identify education opportunities to build targeted awareness. | Agencies feedback requested: April 1, 2021 | MNIT/Agencies        |

### Recommendation 9: Privacy Impact Assessment

Agencies should conduct a privacy impact assessment for all information technology projects as part of the project initiation process.

| Status       | Next Steps   | Targeted Deliverable Date                    | Owner (of next step) |
|--------------|--|--|----------------------|
| Early Stages | Analysis of at which stage the Privacy Impact Assessment is appropriately incorporated into the initial phase of the Modernization Playbook. | Modernization Playbook training: Spring 2021 | Agencies/MNIT        |

## Recommendation 10: Real-Time Project and Portfolio Management Reporting

MNIT should establish a plan for real-time access to project and portfolio management reporting that ensures effective communication with all stakeholders.

| Status      | Next Steps  | Targeted Deliverable Date                                | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|---|--|----------------------|
| In Progress | Modernization Playbook, evaluating pilot and making improvements. | Continuous improvement: next version release Spring 2021 | MNIT                 |

## Recommendation 11: Modernization Playbook Awareness Campaign

MNIT, working with state agency partners, should create education and training to introduce the Modernization Playbook to all MNIT staff and agency leaders and draft a plan to drive, govern, and measure adoption and acceptance of the Playbook.

| Status      | Next Steps  | Targeted Deliverable Date                | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|---|--|----------------------|
| In Progress | MNIT continues to develop the communications plan and training campaign for raising visibility of the Modernization Playbook. | Begin the training campaign: Spring 2021 | MNIT                 |

## Section: People Enabling a Modernization Vision

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## Recommendation 12: Agency Leadership Representation

State agencies should include the CBTOs in the agencies' various leadership teams and include them in the highest appropriate level of leadership meetings and strategy planning.

| Status      | Next Steps  | Targeted Deliverable Date   | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|---|---|----------------------|
| In Progress | MNIT engage with agency leaders on Enterprise status. | Bring discussion and status to agency leaders meetings: Spring 2021 | Agencies/MNIT        |

### Recommendation 13: Chief Privacy Officer

The executive branch should establish a chief privacy officer position to support state practices on data privacy and sharing.

| Status       | Next Steps                                     | Targeted Deliverable Date                        | Owner (of next step) |
|--------------|--|--|----------------------|
| Early Stages | Identifying resources to determine next steps. | State leaders discussing next steps: Spring 2021 | Executive Branch     |

### Recommendation 14: Legislature Cybersecurity Training

MNIT should establish an awareness campaign and a cybersecurity education and training program that can be made available to legislators and others in state government.

| Status       | Next Steps  | Targeted Deliverable Date   | Owner (of next step) |
|--------------|---|---|----------------------|
| Early Stages | Engage with BRC legislators, Senate Technology and Reform Policy Committee, and legislative IT offices to identify opportunity to share expertise and elevate training and awareness across state government. | Document current training: Spring 2021<br><br>Identify and plan additional trainings: August 2021 | MNIT/<br>Legislature |

### Recommendation 15: Skilled Professional Program

Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) should assess the feasibility of a Skilled Professional Program, identifying the appropriate authority for the program and whether statutory changes are required, and then present their findings to the BRC-IT.

| Status       | Next Steps                                | Targeted Deliverable Date                        | Owner (of next step) |
|--------------|---|--|----------------------|
| Early Stages | Identifying resources to lead the effort. | State leaders discussing next steps: Spring 2021 | MMB                  |

### Recommendation 16: Public/Private Partnership for Cybersecurity

MNIT should explore the feasibility and, if appropriate, outline a plan for creation of a public/private partnership for cybersecurity.

| Status      | Next Steps   | Targeted Deliverable Date                                  | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|--|--|----------------------|
| Not started | Identify and build partnerships to initiate planning workshops and research. | Partners identified and commitment confirmed: June 1, 2021 | MNIT                 |

## Recommendation 17: Legislative Coordinating Committees

The Legislature should create two new legislative coordinating committees – one for cybersecurity and one for technology.

| Status      | Next Steps   | Targeted Deliverable Date             | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| In Progress | Legislative Commission on Cybersecurity established bill – 2021 Legislative Session. | Legislation passed into law: May 2021 | Legislature          |

## Recommendation 18: Engagement of Other Governmental Units

MNIT and state agencies should include other governmental units, including the Minnesota County Information Technology Leadership Association (MNCITLA), and tribal governments as partners at project launch and include an assessment of their data needs and challenges in establishment of data privacy and management policy.

| Status      | Next Steps  | Targeted Deliverable Date                    | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|---|--|----------------------|
| In Progress | Incorporating a detailed stakeholder analysis as a key activity in the Modernization Playbook and updating the Business Case to include expanding stakeholder outreach. | Modernization Playbook training: Spring 2021 | MNIT                 |

## Section: Enterprise Strategy for Modernization

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### Recommendation 19: Long-term Business and Technology Modernization Planning

MNIT should collaborate with agencies on the development of a 10-year Outlook for Business Modernization and the related 5-year plan for technology modernization.

| Status       | Next Steps                                | Targeted Deliverable Date                                | Owner (of next step) |
|--------------|---|--|----------------------|
| Early Stages | Identifying resources to lead the effort. | State and agency leaders identify resources: Spring 2021 | MNIT/Agencies        |

## Recommendation 20: Data Management

MNIT should convene a working group of MNIT and agency staff to present a plan to catalog all data managed by the state, establish a metadata framework that enables data sharing and system interoperability, and identify guidelines for retaining and purging data.

| Status      | Next Steps  | Targeted Deliverable Date               | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|---|---|----------------------|
| In Progress | Cross agency review of roles and skills is underway, data strategy and framework is currently being transformed into a roadmap to be reviewed/piloted by selected agencies. | Review and pilot completed: Summer 2021 | MNIT                 |

## Section: Funding

### Recommendation 21: Modernization Maturity Assessment and Budget Considerations

Agency and MNIT leaders should review the Modernization Playbook and identify strengths, weaknesses, and capability gaps in the current staffing, processes and technology for each agency and submit to MMB, for consideration by the Governor through the state budget development process, the changes to current funding needed to address these gaps.

| Status      | Next Steps   | Targeted Deliverable Date  | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|--|--|----------------------|
| Completed   | Modernization Maturity Assessment and maturity roadmap completed. Initial implementation underway including multiple pilot projects. Assessment to be repeated biennially, second assessment to be completed in Summer 2022.   | Initial Modernization Maturity Assessment: Complete<br><br>Future Modernization Maturity Assessments: Biennially | MNIT                 |
| In Progress | Pilot projects and implementation will help agencies identify capability and resource gaps to inform where and how agency-led budget requests will advance IT and business process modernization.<br><br>Ongoing conversations with MMB leadership and budget team to define process for creating visible path for IT investments to advance through the state budget process. | Funding Requests: 2021 and 2022, ongoing   | MNIT/Agencies        |

## Recommendation 22: Cybersecurity as Critical Infrastructure

Cybersecurity protection should be declared critical infrastructure to allow for alternative funding capabilities, protection of operations, and expeditious responses to emergencies.

| Status      | Next Steps                               | Targeted Deliverable Date             | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Not started | Introduction and passage of legislation. | Legislation passed into law: May 2021 | Legislature          |

## Recommendation 23: Cyber Funding

The Legislature should ensure that the state has long-term, consistent, predictable, and appropriate funding for cybersecurity operations, based on a percentage of the total state IT budget.

| Status      | Next Steps                               | Targeted Deliverable Date             | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Not started | Introduction and passage of legislation. | Legislation passed into law: May 2021 | Legislature          |

## Recommendation 24: Disaster Recovery

MNIT should expand the disaster recovery roadmap to include all Priority 1 and Priority 2 applications and support additional funding to complete cloud-focused recovery capabilities for stability, data protection, and resiliency for critical systems and applications.

| Status      | Next Steps  | Targeted Deliverable Date                                    | Owner (of next step) |
|-------------|---|--|----------------------|
| In Progress | Wrapping up disaster recovery plans for Priority 1 applications, Priority 2 dashboard is drafted and scheduled for review by CBTOs and Executives, Template(s) and draft Exercise schedule is completed for 2021. Request for proposal (RFP) nearing award. | Planning and review: March 2021<br><br>RFP Award: March 2021 | MNIT                 |

## Section 3

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# Enabling Innovation with Collaboration and Learning

The COVID-19 pandemic expedited the need for faster and more collaborative innovation, and also seemed to expand the ability and capacity of MNIT staff to deliver services. MNIT has shared reports of several successful innovations,<sup>8</sup> some that got more attention because of the pandemic (e.g. the unemployment insurance system, as well as the MN COVID-19 Dashboard considered to be the best<sup>9</sup> in the country) and others the result of longer efforts (e.g. the launch of MNDRIVE).

The BRC-IT spent several meetings discussing the importance of cultivating innovation within MNIT and within all state agencies. Innovation is a desired outcome for all. It includes new ways to deliver services and experiences, preferably to match or exceed the expectations of Minnesotans, as well as new ways to solve specific problems.

MNIT shared some obstacles as well as drivers and enablers to innovation. The main **obstacles** include:

- a **compliance-focused** culture, and sometimes including constraint by statutes and regulations
- a **risk-averse** nature, partly due to fear of a public backlash and misinformation
- a **lack of resources** (bandwidth) to foster the experimentation required for impactful innovation

Some of the enablers included:

- greater **inter-agency collaboration**
- **redeployment and reassignment**, which helps staff question constraints
- **statutory and rulemaking flexibility** (e.g. that which arises in the case of emergency)
- **clear executive support** for creativity and learning

The BRC-IT hosted guest speakers who shared their experiences and research to support the importance of intentionally creating an environment for learning and innovation as well as suggestions to incorporate best practices. The pandemic showed that innovation happens naturally in crisis. It established a clarity of purpose, rallying cross-functional teams around a common problem. People were more willing to take risks while working toward the goal of safe and secure IT services. Outside of a crisis, it starts with **leaders identifying a compelling need** and crafting a story that motivates action.

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8 See Appendix B for innovation examples from several agencies responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

9 The Office of Governor Tim Walz & Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan published a press release on November 18, 2020, noting that a “New Study Rates Minnesota’s COVID-19 Dashboard Best in the Nation,” <https://mn.gov/governor/news/?id=1055-454265>

To foster innovation across state agencies, MNIT should convene and sponsor an inter-agency working group of cross-functional leaders to identify pilot projects that build a culture of collaboration and learning across the enterprise and co-create an approach to support those projects.

The working group should 1) consider the foundational elements of a collaborative learning culture, noted below, 2) facilitate retrospectives of successful and failed projects to determine key success factors, and 3) identify opportunities to pilot new services and experiences and explore creative ways to fund and run those pilots.

## Establishing Safety and Leadership Support

There are many different components to consider as part of this plan to cultivate innovation. It starts with identifying a shared goal and a compelling need, but success depends heavily on establishing a **foundation of “psychological safety.”**<sup>10</sup> This includes safety to challenge the status quo, questioning decisions and current ways of working in a productive way. It also includes safety to experiment and safety to fail, paired with the celebration of taking risks and capturing lessons learned.

These are key components of **business agility**, which can and should be championed not just in technology projects, but across all agency and

MNIT initiatives. Short, rapid iterations allow teams to quickly learn what is working, reducing risks associated with failure and improving the ability to pivot when required, to ensure ongoing value is delivered to key stakeholders. Still, very little experimentation is likely or successful unless it is encouraged or at least supported by leaders. For best results, this sort of culture transformation should be articulated in the business modernization plans recommended in the BRC’s June 2020 report, already underway at several agencies.

To activate change across the enterprise, agency leaders should visibly support and encourage innovation and learning, by incorporating a culture transformation plan into their business modernization plans.

For such a culture shift to succeed, agencies must **assess the current maturity** of innovation and learning, identify a target, and create a roadmap for execution. In executing the plan, executives must encourage and promote building a learning-culture environment and sponsorship must be shared from the executive level down. Leading with appreciative inquiry, along with design thinking<sup>11</sup> principles demonstrate an openness for divergent thinking and new ideas. Furthermore, it is important for executives to remain open to views that are different from their own and to provide the time, resources, and venues for reflecting and improving upon past performance.

10 Harvard Business School professor Amy Edmondson coined the phrase ‘Psychological safety,’ describing it as a belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes. More information can be found at [https://content.tcm mediasaffaires.com/LAF/lacom/psychological\\_safety.pdf](https://content.tcm mediasaffaires.com/LAF/lacom/psychological_safety.pdf) and from articles about how Google implemented the learning from the HBS white paper: <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/magazine/what-google-learned-from-its-quest-to-build-the-perfect-team.html> and <https://rework.withgoogle.com/guides/understanding-team-effectiveness/steps/introduction/>.

11 “The Total Economic Impact™ Of IBM’s Design Thinking Practice” can be found at <https://www.ibm.com/design/thinking/static/Enterprise-Design-Thinking-Report-8ab1e9e1622899654844a5fe1d760ed5.pdf>. Learn more about the Enterprise Design Thinking Framework at <https://www.ibm.com/design/thinking/page/framework>.

Empowering employees to seek out **opportunities for upskilling, reskilling, and innovating** “inside the box” and between job descriptions creates a culture of organizational citizenship that motivates employees to seek out self-directed learning opportunities, including through ‘freeskilling’<sup>12</sup> by finding freely available resources, as needs arise. This culture shift will be supported by setting benchmarks for improvement and tracking progress on learning culture goals with validated assessment tools.<sup>13</sup>

## Building Capabilities and Encouraging Learning

Equally important to establishing a clear strategy and building a secure foundation of safety and sound learning principles, senior leaders must ensure that they have the **right talent** to fully enable the innovation potential that exists. Leaders of all levels must be able to inspire action and must build within their teams the human-centered design capabilities required to jumpstart design thinking. Staff at all levels must be willing and empowered to proactively secure new skills or upskill their current skills to stay ahead of the changing environment. Constant change creates a need to *intentionally* build up change resilience, an ability to handle change more easily as it comes, in addition to ensuring appropriate change management practices are in place to shepherd transformation.

Innovation happens when tightly coupled with a strong learning culture. An organization with a strong learning culture is one that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future. Establishing a learning culture within an organization requires adopting new sets of

practices and systems along with a collective change in organizational expectations, management behaviors, and departmental culture.

Recent research supports the criticality of various learning principles to build a culture of innovation and learning within an organization, specifically: 1) **human-centered design principles**, which advocate for learning with customers to design and build the most appealing solutions to problems, and 2) **agile learning principles**, which call for creative, open mindsets within the organization and new approaches to skills development.

Emerging best practices to support organizational innovation suggest that learning should no longer happen exclusively in one-off courses and workshops. Instead, learning should be embedded within the culture of an organization and continuously applied during the work process. These new skill development approaches call for learning via iterative short bursts instead of longer lectures and workshops. Moreover, these “**microlearning**” bursts should be expected to occur during the flow of work while dynamically adjusting to changing needs.

Gartner notes that the most successful employees in the digital era will be the fastest learners. Learning must be embedded within the culture, work, and processes of the enterprise. Developing competencies of creativity, curiosity, complex problem solving, and collaboration are just a few ways to further develop an innovative mindset.

Though there are varying levels of experience across agencies, MNIT and state agencies have committed to developing many of these skills through the development of the playbook, seeking to become trusted partners.

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12 A more thorough description of freeskilling can be found at <https://blogs.gartner.com/graham-waller/2020/04/03/freeskilling-radical-rethink-close-talent-gap/>

13 The Dimensions of Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ): A Validation Study in a Korean Context can be found at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdfdirect/10.1002/hrdq.20007>.

Establishing Communities of Practice (COPs) is one way to quickly upskill and/or reskill staff, by offering a forum to share and establish best practices and by creating a solid network of support that could span across numerous different teams and agencies. COPs could be oriented around a function, like Business Analysis or Change Management - or a topic, like Business Agility or Human-Centered Design. As noted in Section 2, the BRC-IT believes that a COP with representatives from across the enterprise would be an excellent way to develop the data management strategy recommended in the June 2020 report. With clear sponsorship from leadership and passion from members, a COP benefits both the individuals and the organization. It can present excellent opportunities to learn and grow – and also encourages continuous improvement and innovation.

COPs at the state and at the county level are excellent forums for exchanging information with county partners. Washington County, for example, launched a data governance initiative to understand their data landscape. The complexity of their data sources and uses became apparent, even in early stages of the review. Learning from initiatives like theirs could help inform a similar initiative at the state level and could easily be shared with a COP of data practitioners.

## Centralizing Guidance and Celebrating Wins

Innovation should not just be a sporadic initiative. It must be embedded in the culture and spread to the edges of the enterprise. While it is the responsibility of all to engage in innovative initiatives, it is helpful to place responsibility for building the culture in a small, dedicated team, like a center of excellence. Creating an Innovation Team like that started by the [City of Minneapolis](#),<sup>14</sup> or a Department of Innovation and Technology, as exists within the [State of Illinois](#),<sup>15</sup> might help establish the culture and seed a startup mindset that propels greater innovation and more quickly yields value.

It is important to note, however, that innovation thrives under a **‘think globally; act locally’** model, where small cross-functional and self-organizing teams within agencies are empowered to explore ideas and test hypotheses. Access to centralized guidance and common technology and processes enables efficient and effective knowledge sharing and evaluation. The hub and spoke model of Launch Minnesota provides a great example of this.<sup>16</sup> A key part of building an innovative culture is sharing successes and experience. This reinforces the innovation mindset and also creates a sense of pride in the work. The retrospective is best done locally but shared globally (within COPs as one possible forum).

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14 Additional information about the City of Minneapolis Innovation Team can be found at <http://www2.minneapolismn.gov/coordinator/InnovationTeam/index.htm>.

15 Additional information about the State of Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology can be found at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/doi/Pages/default.aspx>.

16 Additional information about Launch Minnesota can be found at <https://mn.gov/launchmn/>.

## Section 4

# Expanding Opportunities for Self-Service

In the last ten years, we have seen a rapid shift from a preference or expectation of in-person service to a preference for online and mobile service. Greater mobile dependence has long been changing how and when Minnesotans interact with public and private sector establishments. COVID-19 expedited the transition with greater online interaction for grocery and restaurant orders and more effective mobile communication and options for banking and for curbside pick-up from retail establishments, for example. Like the private sector, the State of Minnesota was also quick to respond. A few notable innovations include: partnering with Google and Apple to release COVIDAware MN, an application that supported traditional contact tracing; rapidly shifting to online queuing for services; and developing online knowledge testing for new drivers.

Online services are often preferred by customers, who can engage at their convenience, from a location of their choice, often with more control over the process. In many cases, online services also speed up processing time for staff because data is submitted electronically rather than on paper and is therefore immediately available for processing or analysis. There are many opportunities for the State to rethink how services are delivered, to better meet Minnesotans where they are, to deliver what they need, when they need it. There are broad-ranging possibilities for self-service and mobile engagement<sup>17</sup> across the enterprise, including: paying taxes, obtaining

financial assistance, enjoying parks, obtaining building permits, licensing drivers, and registering vehicles.

**MNIT should work with agency leaders to begin to formalize the culture and roles that drive a positive customer experience and a sound digital strategy, which includes identifying the best self-service opportunities in their respective agencies.**

While a coordinated review is important to orchestrate now, it should also be noted that possibilities for self-service will naturally arise out of a culture that 1) focuses on the customer experience; 2) fully embraces an innovation mindset; and 3) ensures that teams are empowered to act. The transition to this culture does not happen overnight. It starts with assembly of a team to formulate the plan and establish the tenets that serve as guiding principles for the entire enterprise. Small wins grow, and incremental improvement generates progress in both capabilities and mindset.

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<sup>17</sup> See Appendix C for an example of self-service opportunities presented to the BRC-IT.

## Section 5

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# Establishing Flexible, Distributed Workforce Capabilities

The COVID-19 pandemic taught us what was possible with innovation. It also proved how quickly businesses were capable of shifting their operating models to exponentially increase the amount of flexible working. In just two weeks, executive branch agencies, in partnership with MNIT, were able to successfully shift over half of the workforce of 35,000 to a remote-work model, a truly amazing accomplishment that no one would have guessed possible pre-pandemic.

Relatively recent technology improvements - including a shift to cloud computing (enabling easier file sharing and access), collaboration tools, and cybersecurity improvements - made a flexible, distributed workforce structure possible. Assuming they had good internet access, employees were able to rapidly move their equipment home and continue working, mostly uninterrupted.

Prior to the pandemic, businesses raised concerns about this type of work-from-home arrangement, primarily due to perceptions of fairness and productivity. Forced into this experiment, each agency now has a better understanding about what works and what does not. As the pandemic eventually comes to a close, the State of Minnesota must be ready with a clear statement about a flexible work policy. There are advantages and disadvantages to both in-person and virtual work, many of which the BRC-IT has discussed.

The workplace of the future will likely be a hybrid model for most, with less flexibility allowed for certain roles due to the need for onsite or in-person interaction. Finding the right balance, where flexibility is possible, is important. The State can better understand the workforce by employing human-centered design to develop user personas that explain different technology needs, to craft journey maps that develop a better understanding of employee experiences and reviewing the different tools and channels available for engagement. The BRC-IT was particularly interested in the potential that some positions, traditionally only available in the metro areas, could be offered in Greater Minnesota, expanding opportunities and the diversity of the candidate pool.

KPMG shared with the BRC-IT six building block capabilities that form the foundation for Work Anywhere<sup>18</sup>:

1. People – engaged, connected, and productive
2. Ways of Working – day-to-day orchestration and effective performance management
3. Technology Capabilities – good infrastructure, collaboration tools, security and support
4. Workforce Strategy – operational resilience and access to emerging talent

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18 Work Anywhere is terminology used by KPMG to describe the flexible workplace. Additional resources are available from KPMG Advisory at <https://advisory.kpmg.us/articles/2020/work-anywhere-together-service.html>.

5. Workplace optimization – optimized physical and virtual work environments
6. Governance – updated policies friendly to virtual work and robust oversight

Each of those six capabilities requires a shift in thinking, about how best to engage and how best to measure performance. KPMG suggests creating a ‘recipe card’ that helps leaders and staff rethink regular ways of working,<sup>19</sup> with different tips to consider in different scenarios. Though working *anywhere* is not a likely option, having a flexible, distributed workforce should be, wherever possible.

**The State Office Reopening Work Group designing the future workplace should evaluate available research and best practices and provide guidance to agencies as they explore which roles can be done remotely, how to support a remote workforce, and how to design a hybrid workspace.**

To prepare for effective implementation of the work group recommendations, agencies should identify which technical, cultural, and leadership components are necessary for new protocols for flexible work arrangements to be successful, now and in the future. In developing the strategy and implementation plan, the BRC-IT encourages use of customer journey maps, which can help to surface the wide variety of employee needs and experiences. Town halls and design mapping exercises can draw out what is needed to best accomplish their jobs – during the pandemic, when we move to an epidemic, and then post-epidemic. Meaningful employee participation in these co-creation activities helps to cultivate that culture of empowered individuals, more ready and willing to collaborate, learn, and innovate.

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19 See Appendix D for an example of a recipe card that assists the transition to a new way of working.

## Section 6

# Other Important Considerations

### Broadband Access

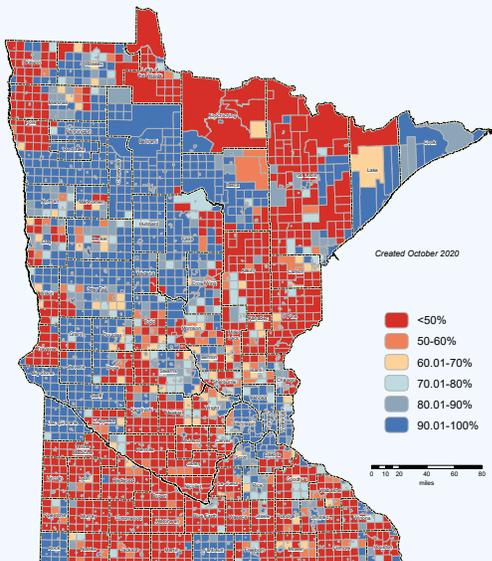
In light of MNIT's stated vision to create 'an innovative digital government that works for all' the BRC-IT wants to emphasize the importance of broadband access for all Minnesotans. The disparities in access have become more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic, when telemedicine visits and distance learning became the norm, rather than the exception. These new norms and advances in technology increased the need for higher download/upload speeds and are accelerating the goals set in 2014. Excellent work continues by the Broadband Task Force, chaired by Tewodros Bekele, the SVP & CTO of Land O' Lakes and a former BRC-IT member.

The BRC-IT supports the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Broadband and recommends rapid implementation of the stated plan.

### IT Services

In the spirit of efficiency and eliminating technical debt, the BRC-IT would like to invite conversation about the possibility of greater collaboration between the different groups providing Executive, Legislative, and Judicial IT services, with a particular focus on aligning phone services and single-sign on. MNIT and executive agencies have found the recommendations of the BRC-IT to be actionable and relevant and the BRC-IT encourages the other two branches to avail themselves of similar cross-sector, cross-functional expertise.

The BRC-IT should invite to a future council meeting the IT service groups serving the Minnesota judicial and legislative branches to better understand opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing.



### 2020 Broadband Availability in the State of Minnesota

- Percentage of households served by wireline
- Broadband service by city/township
- At least 25 Mbps download / 3 Mbps upload speeds
- Statewide Availability: 92.47%, Rural: 83.10%

Map: 2020 Broadband availability. Goal of 25 mbps download speed, 3 mbps upload speed (pre-COVID-19)

## Appendix A | BRC-IT Speaker List 2020-2021

| Month  | Type                 | Speaker  |
|--------|----------------------|--|
| Nov 20 | Presentation         | <p><b>Innovation at Intel and Medtronic</b></p> <p>Omar Ishrak, Chairman of the Board, Intel Corporation;<br/>Former Chairman and CEO of Medtronic</p>   |
| Dec 18 | Presentation / Panel | <p><b>Virtual Workplace</b></p> <p>Moderator: Theresa Wise</p> <p>Chris Panneck, Managing Director, KPMG</p> <p>Kristin Batson, Deputy Commissioner for Enterprise Human Capital, Minnesota Management &amp; Budget</p> <p>Vince Cabansag, Director of Technology, Clockwork</p> <p>Tom Butterfield, EVP &amp; CIO, TCF Bank</p>             |
| Jan 22 | Presentation / Panel | <p><b>Learning Culture</b></p> <p>Moderators: Rosann Cahill &amp; Ed Clark</p> <p>Graham Waller, VP Data Governance and Management, Gartner Research</p> <p>Bill Brendel, Associate Professor, Penn State University</p> <p>Cris Ross, CIO, Mayo</p> <p>Doug Powell, VP Design, IBM</p> <p>Justin Gilbert, Enterprise Design Leader, IBM</p> |

| Month  | Type                 | Speaker   |
|--------|----------------------|---|
| Jan 29 | Presentation / Panel | <p><b>Self-Service</b></p> <p>Moderator: Tom Butterfield</p> <p>Brian Tilzer, Chief Digital &amp; Technology Officer, Best Buy</p> <p>Brett Brunick, SVP &amp; IT Director, TCF Bank</p> <p><b>Data Governance &amp; Management</b></p> <p>Renee Heinbuch, IT Director, Washington County</p> <p>Rick Weyrauch, Baytown Township</p>  |
| Feb 5  | Presentation / Panel | <p><b>Broadband</b></p> <p>Moderator: Rick King &amp; Comm. Margaret Anderson Kelliher</p> <p>Teddy Bekele, SVP &amp; CTO, Land O'Lakes, Chair of Broadband Task Force</p> <p>Angie Dickison, Executive Director, Office of Broadband Development</p> <p>Diane Wells, Telecommunications Manager, Office of Broadband Development</p> |

## *Appendix B* | Innovation throughout the COVID-19 Response



The BRC-IT commends the innovative efforts that were initiated or expedited by the COVID-19 pandemic and wants to highlight some examples to celebrate the successes and to inspire solidification of the innovative mindset that emerged during the crisis. All agencies were forced to rethink service methods and practices. Some formed **inter-agency partnerships** to quickly adjust to changing needs. One example was the cooperation between the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development and the Department of Revenue to quickly disperse relief payments to businesses.

Not all innovation required new or enhanced technology. In some cases, innovation was made possible by **waiving existing legal requirements**. The rapidly increasing adoption of telehealth visits, for example, was made possible with Executive Order 20-12 and a waiver by the Department of Human Services, allowing a wider array of services to be provided remotely (and reimbursed), including services for mental health, substance use disorder, and medical care. Legislation temporarily (through June 2021) waived photo and vision screening requirements that would typically be required to renew a standard driver's license.

Though some service methods and processes may revert to pre-COVID ways, many changes made through these innovative efforts will continue. For example, in the summer of 2020, just months after the start of the pandemic, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) surveyed staff to capture and celebrate MnDOT employee's creativity and resilience, better understand impact to MnDOT customers and stakeholders, identify efficiencies and possible improvements, and share best practices. Staff shared over 90 COVID-19 innovations and 80% of them have been so successful that staff are permanently integrating them into regular business delivery. The BRC-IT believes MnDOT's experience of rapid innovation and the ongoing value it presents is shared across the enterprise.

The following list is a small sample of COVID-19-inspired innovation from agencies with representation on the BRC-IT.

### **Minnesota Department of Transportation: Asphalt Delivery E-Tickets**

Electronic tickets (E-Tickets) for reporting the delivery of hot mix asphalt to construction sites reduces physical contact and increases the accuracy of records and speed of payments.

### **Minnesota Department of Transportation: Virtual Public Engagement**

With limited ability to host in-person meetings, MnDOT's public engagement staff found new, creative ways to connect with Minnesotans, including a virtual self-guided tour of the 35W@94 Crosstown to Downtown project and a virtual open house for the Highway 67 Granite Falls to Echo project.

### **Minnesota Department of Transportation: Drone Live-Streaming of Project Sites**

Remote viewing of infrastructure with drone video reduces physical interaction at project sites, reduces the number of people required onsite. It also helps visualize roundabouts, collect more and different types of data, and support safety in roadside operations.

### **Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Driver & Vehicle Services: Online Testing, Permits, and Renewals**

In response to COVID-19 restrictions, DPS-DVS was able to offer several services online, including applications for a commercial driver's license and for seasonal farm licenses, knowledge testing for Class D licenses, applications for renewal or replacement of an unchanged standard driver's license and vehicle services form submission.

## **Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Driver & Vehicle Services: Virtual Lobbies and Online Scheduling**

For activities that required in-person service, DPS-DVS offered the ability to schedule appointments online, including for knowledge testing and vehicle inspection, and created a virtual lobby for regional exam stations. This eliminated the need for Minnesotans to wait in line, reduced the number of people inside buildings, and reduced the overall time spent at DVS exam stations.

## **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources: Online Notarization**

With many DNR staff members working from home due to mandatory stay-at-home orders, the agency partnered with MNIT to develop a process to notarize documents online. Prior to the pandemic, DNR notaries provided in-person notarization of real estate documents for the agency's land transactions. They developed a new process that meets statutory requirements and allows notaries and signers to meet online using Microsoft Teams, make an audio/video recording of the document signing and notarization, and commit the video and a notary journal to a document management system that enforces the statutorily defined 10-year retention schedule.

## **Minnesota Department of Human Services: Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer**

The Minnesota Department of Human Services, Minnesota Department of Education and Minnesota IT Services are collaborating to offer Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer, known as P-EBT, food benefits to hundreds of thousands of Minnesota school children. Over the past 12 months, they have worked closely together to create a new data portal for schools, share data across multiple state systems, pilot a texting project, and develop a P-EBT web-based application with assistance from Code for America.

## **Minnesota IT Services: COVID-19 Chatbot**

Minnesota's response to COVID-19 focused on keeping citizens informed by providing access to critical information needed by citizens and our partner agencies. One method for helping people get the information they need is through chat bots, an artificial intelligence (AI) software that can simulate a conversation (or a chat) with a user. MNIT implemented two different kind of chat bots during the COVID-19 response. When the MNIT service desk call volume peaked at over 1,100 calls per day, versus a typical day of approximately 200 calls, the agency adopted voice and chat bots to assist with resolving remote access issues exacerbated by the rapid increase in teleworking. MNIT also added a virtual assistant, or knowledge management chat bot, to allow Minnesotans to access resources on the state's COVID-19 website, including information about testing, new executive orders, health recommendations, and information for employees and businesses.

## Appendix C | Self-Service Opportunities

Agencies exploring self-services opportunities will be best served by the development of a uniform set of principles that each can use to set their own path. Industry experts indicate these principles should be outcome driven (focused on outcomes for customers not for the organization) using the overarching theme of ‘customer obsession.’ Examples include Door Dash as a breakthrough convenience, Peloton for anytime, anywhere expertise, and generally providing a personalized ‘Wow Experience’ for customers.

The following list of potential online self-service opportunities was informally compiled by surveying MNIT Chief Business Technology Officers, for initial discussion purposes in the Governor’s Blue Ribbon Council on Information Technology (BRC-IT).

- **Minnesota Department of Revenue (DOR):** Electronic amended returns
- **Minnesota Department of Revenue (DOR):** Virtual assistance to Taxpayers (Chat Bot)
- **Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS):** Additional Vehicle and Registration renewal transactions
- **Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA):** Preregistration for burial at a State Cemetery
- **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR):** Permits/Registrations/Payments
- **Minnesota Department of Health (MDH):** Electronic Notarization Health Facilities Regulation
- **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA):** Permitting (e.g. feedlots, stormwater, etc.) – ongoing MPCA strategy to move from paper to digital
- **Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB):** Apply for State Jobs mobile app
- **Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB):** Employee Open Enrollment mobile app (online currently)
- **Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB):** Employee Badging
- **Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT):** Automated Commercial Vehicle Inspection Scheduling
- **Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT):** Aero Registration (current project being scoped)

This list is not provided as an endorsement of any particular idea for self-service but instead as catalyst for further discussion about where self-service is possible and appropriate.

# Appendix D | Rethinking Ways of Working

Working remotely will look and feel differently than working together in person. Agencies should consider how work may need to change and could craft 'recipe cards' like the one below from KPMG, to help guide employees through the transition to the new ways of working.

## Rethinking your Ways of Working

**GO VIRTUAL**  
THE HOW-TO SERIES



**Meeting Archetypes**

# Status Meeting

### Recipe Card

**Best for...**

Understanding where everyone on the project stands and staying connected to keep things moving

**Virtual Considerations**

- **Do you need a meeting?** What parts of the status update can you move to a digital asynchronous format (email, team shared drive)?
- Shift the focus on the call to identifying and removing barriers and aligning on next steps with owners.

**Sample Agenda**

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Call to Order                                     | 2m     |
| Round Robin of Issues & Asks                      | 10-15m |
| Communicate Any Shifts in Priorities for the Team | 5m     |

### Meeting Archetypes

Team Building

Status Meeting

Information Sharing

Collaboration

Decision Making

Problem Solving

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Developed by Innovation Labs@ KPMG Ignition

Respectfully submitted on February 28, 2021 by:



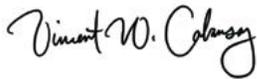
**Comm. Margaret Anderson Kelliher**  
Department of Transportation



**Rep. Kristin Bahner**  
MN House, District 34B



**Tom Butterfield**  
TCF Bank



**Vince Cabansag**  
Clockwork



**Rosann Cahill**  
Formerly Star Tribune



**Edmund Clark**  
University of St. Thomas



**Kasandra Church**  
Minnesota Association of Professional Employees



**Comm. Steve Grove**  
Department of Employment and Economic Development



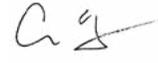
**Eric Hallstrom**  
Department of Natural Resources



**Renee Heinbuch**  
Washington County



**Dep. Comm. Lee Ho**  
Department of Revenue



**Dep. Comm. Chuck Johnson**  
Department of Human Services



**Chair Rick King**  
Thomson Reuters (retired)



**Sen. Mark Koran**  
MN Senate, District 32



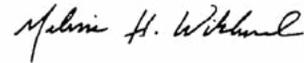
**Jason Lenz**  
Lyon County



**Tim Lynaugh**  
Department of Public Safety



**Rep. Jim Nash**  
MN House, District 47A



**Sen. Melissa Wiklund**  
MN Senate, District 50



**Theresa Wise**  
Formerly Delta/Northwest Airlines



# Letter from Commissioner Tomes

February 28, 2021

**Governor Tim Walz**  
**Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan**  
**Speaker of the House Melissa Hortman**  
**House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt**  
**Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka**  
**Senate Minority Leader Susan Kent**

Cc: Members of the Blue Ribbon Council on  
Information Technology

Minnesota IT Services (MNIT) thanks Chairman Rick King and the members of Governor Walz's Blue Ribbon Council for Information Technology (BRC-IT) for their continued collaboration as we work together with our state agency partners to continuously improve on the way that we deliver innovative technology services. The engaging discussions that the council members, private sector technology experts, public servants, and external guest speakers have in BRC-IT meetings continue to shape and inform opportunities for improved service delivery – helping to achieve MNIT's vision of an innovative digital government that works for all. We recognize the significant contributions of time shared by everyone involved, and we are grateful for their leadership and commitment.

The opportunity to carry out meaningful recommendations related to IT and business modernization are key drivers for improving the lives of all Minnesotans. Through the ongoing collaboration with the BRC-IT, MNIT has worked to advance the recommendations from the July 2020 report. While these recommendations are still in the early stages of implementation, they are already demonstrating value and driving change across the enterprise. The breadth and depth of the BRC-IT's recommendations are of tremendous value for the entire executive branch, and MNIT is hopeful that the BRC-IT's partnership will continue with legislation introduced that would make it the permanent advisory body for technology services in our state.

MNIT and our state agencies business partners welcome the support of the BRC-IT in identifying not only the recent progress, but also the future promise, of these recommendations. In order to fully-realize that continued progress, many recommendations require initial and ongoing investment. In their 2021 budget recommendations, Governor Walz and Lieutenant Governor Flanagan included one such investment request – Transforming IT Project Delivery to Maximize Business Value. This investment would accelerate the executive branch's ability to adopt industry best practices that support business modernization – a critical, foundational component to enhancing and supporting the ongoing implementation of the BRC-IT's recommendations. We look forward to working closely with our legislative partners on advancing this proposal.

The new recommendations in the BRC-IT's 2021 report seek to build on the BRC-IT's previous recommendations, while recognizing MNIT's experiences and successes during Minnesota's continued response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021 recommendations encourage further innovation stemming from the development of an active learning culture across all state agencies. MNIT's existing strategic goals serve as a meaningful compliment to these 2021 recommendations, and especially as MNIT focuses on cultivating a holistic, Connected Culture and promoting people-centered digital government services. MNIT is ready to lead and share our work in this space with all of our partners across state government.

The BRC-IT fundamentally seeks to aid in strengthening Minnesota's ability to deliver innovative digital services. Minnesota IT Services is eager to continue moving this work forward with our state agency business partners, our partners in the Minnesota Legislature, and our partners in private industry so that together, we can all deliver on the value of these recommendations for the enterprise and for all Minnesotans.



Sincerely,

**Tarek Tomes**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tarek Tomes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Commissioner, Minnesota IT Services and Minnesota State CIO







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