Introduction to the MN County IT Leadership Association

The Minnesota County Information Technology Leadership Association (MNCITLA) is a voluntary membership association consisting of over 60 counties from around the state. MNCITLA's purpose is to support Minnesota county information technology leaders through collaborative communication between counties, state agencies, the legislature, and public sector organizations. MNCITLA prides itself on successfully integrating counties of all sizes into an active organization. Our goals include providing education and advocacy that reinforce how foundational information technology is to every county function. As a membership, we believe that IT must be valued as an integral part of public service and governance, as opposed to merely technical support. In 2019, MNCITLA formally affiliated with the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) to establish an advocacy presence at the State Capitol and to collaborate more effectively across county professional associations.

MNCITLA's 2022 Legislative Priorities

Broadband

Expanding access to broadband, both state-wide and nationally, is necessary to address shortfalls in workforce, telehealth, and educational accessibility that have been highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic response. Expanding broadband accessibility will allow local governments to provide more effective, efficient services to our communities in the future.

- MNCITLA supports the goal of statewide deployment of advanced, innovative, and scalable broadband networks and symmetrical high-speed capacity by 2026.
- MNCITLA supports continued funding for the Border-to-Border Broadband Development Fund to meet this goal, and any efforts that aim at enhancing citizen access to broadband across Minnesota.

GIS Data Requirements for Next Generation 911

Next Generation 911 (NG911) technology is necessary for the safety of our communities so that individuals can be located with a high degree of accuracy when calling from a mobile device, or texting 911. This technology will be implemented by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety in response to the NG911 Advancement Act of 2012. MNCITLA recognizes the enhanced partnership between County Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping and 911 services, due to counties being tasked with building the emergency management maps that are foundational to NG911 technology.

- MNCITLA supports dedicated, short-term funding for the current County Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping efforts until NG911 is implemented state-wide, as well as ongoing, dedicated sources of funding for NG911 specific GIS maintenance and future requirements.

Digital Resources

Digital resources have become integral in how citizens understand and interface with their county governments. As these technologies continue expanding, MNCITLA understands this increase in interaction and transparency requires a simultaneous focus on digital accessibility and inclusion.

- MNCITLA supports funding streams and other resources focused on implementing best practices in digital accessibility.

County IT Complexity

The challenges County IT faces are distinct and complex because of the County role in administering state and federal services to Minnesota's residents. Successfully navigating these challenges requires the ability to bridge specialized public sector knowledge with technical implementation, which can present a barrier in understanding for those outside of public sector IT.

- MNCITLA is dedicated to providing information for elected officials and state agencies in an approachable way to cultivate an understanding of the complex issues facing County IT and find solutions that best serve the citizens of Minnesota.

Data Management

Counties create and are entrusted with a significant amount of sensitive data. As the volume of data generated, collected and stored by counties grows, so do the challenges of securing, maintaining and sharing data.

- MNCITLA supports clarification and simplification of existing data practices statutes.
- MNCITLA supports funding allocations for County Governments to offset the growing costs associated with securing, maintaining, and sharing government data.

Technology RFP Process

The Request for Proposal (RFP) process in Minnesota provides competition and essential transparency when making substantial expenditures of taxpayer dollars. As County Governments utilize more complex technology the limitations of Minnesota's RFP process in technology contracting have become evident, particularly when County business needs change.

- MNCITLA supports modifications to the RFP process that allow for more innovation and adaptability in technology contracting.

Cybersecurity

Minnesota's citizens rely on their counties to provide election services, vital records management, public health and humans services, public safety, road and bridge maintenance, property records, environmental resources, waste disposal, and other essential services. County governments rely

completely on secure, interoperable technology systems to deliver these services. These systems link federal, tribal, state, county, and other local governments together, presenting challenges and opportunities. The need for interconnected technology systems between units of government means that a security risk at one city, county, state agency, or contracted vendor becomes a threat vector for all.

- MNCITLA supports implementation of robust, scalable, and cost-effective cybersecurity solutions.
- MNCITLA supports allocation of resources to help government organizations at all levels meet the myriad of federal, state, and local cybersecurity standards required to ensure secure operating environments.
- MNCITLA supports enhanced collaboration and standardization between counties and other government entities to prioritize and fund necessary cybersecurity efforts.

For additional information, please contact MNCITLA Executive Director, Nathan Zacharias at nzacharias@mncounties.org or 715-222-2824