

Join the Conversation: Regional Asset Management Summits

Spring 2019



Acknowledgements

Regional Hosts and Liaisons: Michigan Association of Regions (MAR), Nicole Baumer, Heather Bowden, Derek Bradshaw, Steven Duke, Kathy Egan, John Egelhaaf, Jane Fitzpatrick, Sue Fortune, Jeff Hagan, Erin Kuhn, Dotty LaJoye, Jacob Maurer, Christina McEmber, Alanna Mingay, Diane Rekowski, Ryan Soucy, Jerry Wuorenmaa

Council Members and Staff of the Michigan Infrastructure Council, Water Asset Management Council, and Transportation Asset Management Council

Summit Presenters: Mark Conradi, Joanna Johnson, Jon Kangas, Erin Kuhn, Jessica Moy, and John Weiss

Background: The Michigan Infrastructure Council (MIC), in partnership with regions across the state, designed a two-part summit series aimed at improving coordination and collaboration across a diverse set of stakeholders regarding water, transportation, utilities, and telecommunications infrastructure. The series consists of meetings in the spring and fall of 2019 and is funded by Integrated Asset Management grants provided through the Michigan Regional Prosperity Initiative.

Spring Summits

Logistics and Events:

The theme for the spring summits was “Beginning the Conversation” and thus featured introductory content pertaining to integrated asset management in Michigan and activities that prompted new conversations between participants. The format was a fast-paced mix of educational material, interactive problem-solving, and facilitated discussion.

Summit Agenda

10 Minutes – Introductions
30 Minutes – Presentation
10 Minutes – Break and Room Shuffle
30 Minutes – Small Group Activity
60 Minutes – Facilitated Discussion

MIC personnel worked closely with the Michigan Association of Regions (MAR) as the regional planning agencies to schedule sixteen summits across the state. The regions served as host and managed local invitations and logistics for each of the summits.

A standard presentation was given by MIC personnel to establish a common understanding of Michigan’s infrastructure challenges, the concept and value of best practice asset management, and the three Michigan councils created to address statewide infrastructure asset management: Michigan Infrastructure Council (MIC), Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC), and the Water Asset Management Council (WAMC).

At registration, each participant was asked which infrastructure type(s) they owned or managed and was given differently colored sticky dots, representing water (blue), transportation (green), utilities (red), and/or communications (yellow) to adhere to their nametag. Following the standard presentation, participants were asked to “shuffle” their seating location. They reorganized into small groups such that they were meeting new peers and the small groups represented diverse assets, based upon their colored sticky dots. Each table was then asked to discuss and record responses to the following questions:

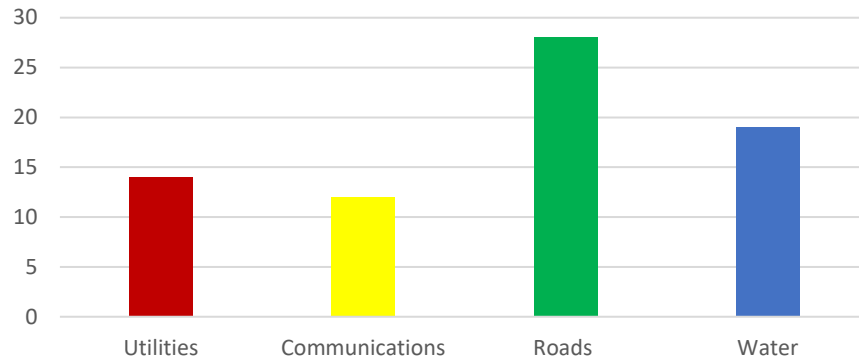
- How can Michigan improve the culture of infrastructure asset management?
What are we doing that fails?
What are we doing that works?
- Do you have suggestions for increasing cross-asset project coordination?
What are the barriers to project coordination today?
Where are opportunities for improvement?

At the conclusion of the small group activity, MIC personnel and regional staff facilitated a group discussion to share results and gather feedback.

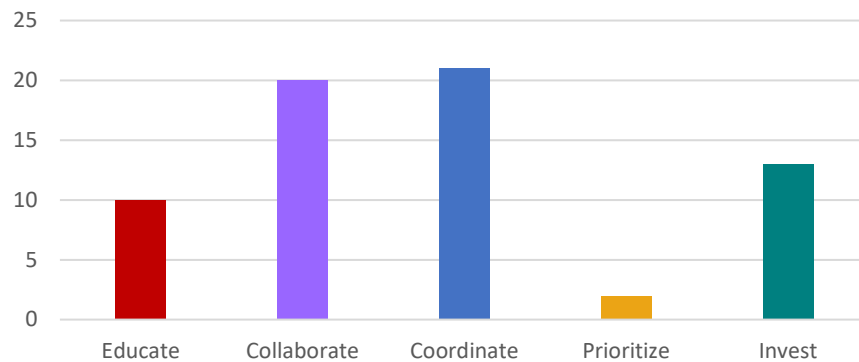
Kalamazoo – June 12, 2019

- We don't have state level support at the political level
- Lack of trust for government management
- Limited understanding of operations and functions of various entities such as commissions and boards
- Fear of sharing proprietary information
- How can we get Charter, Frontier, CTS etc. to share where their work will be in the community?
- Data is historically inconsistent
- Funding schedules do not line up
- There is no common repository for asset information
- Professional jargon can create challenges for the wider constituency – need common vernacular
- Make collaboration a requirement
- Fear of potential cost to participate
- Make asset management plans mandatory for MIC
- MEDC project map already posted online – make the best possible use of existing data
- Standardize data collection and management
- Government officials need to know that they are part of the project process and they are consulted to seek their input during planning
- Common template for developing asset management plans
- No funds for digitizing records
- Need better 5-year capital improvement plans
- Additional asset management training needed
- Need bigger communication database
- Transparency for all projects
- Infrastructure budget is a small percentage of what it used to be
- Cost to low income families is so high they cannot afford rate increases
- Lack of cross training and communication
- Some of our critical partners are not even here at today's summit
- Poor record keeping of existing utility data
- Lack of accountability of asset owners
- Who is the "Captain" of this within each organization or region?
- Offering low-interest loans does not help relieve the cost impact
- Use data to drive decisions
- We need who, what, when and where information on projects
- Very early coordination with stakeholders and MDOT needs to happen
- More communication prior to project initiation
- Incentivize cooperation
- Kalamazoo County is sharing the who, what, when, and where of projects – meeting every 6 months
- We need a forum for communication
- We need support at the management level
- Ownership is not adequately understood

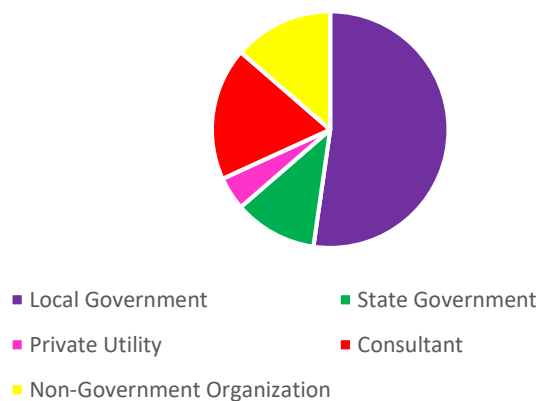
**Asset Distribution
As Self-Identified by Participants**



**Feedback Distribution
As Aligned with MIC Goals**

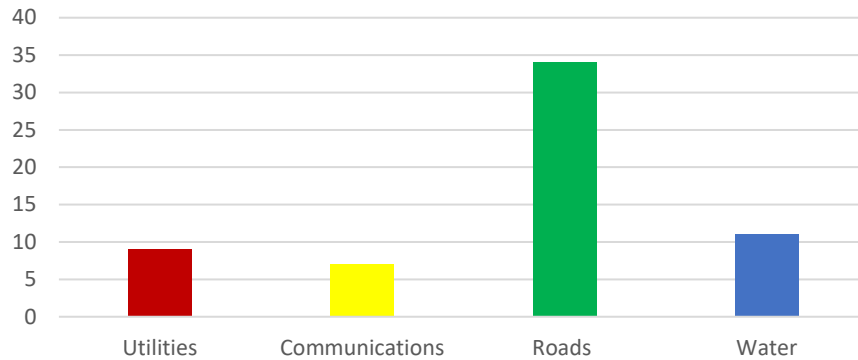


Distribution of Organizations

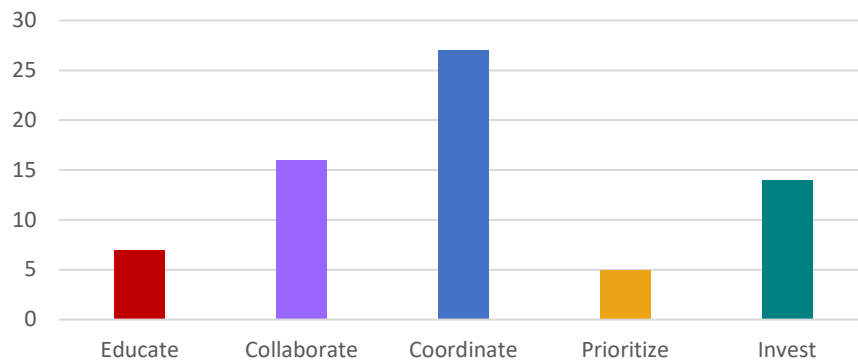


- Lack of awareness of who owns each asset and where the boundaries are
- Revolving loan fund timeframe makes coordination difficult
- Personality conflicts impact cooperation
- Stop relying on the state – need to take care of our own
- An attitude of “your project makes me do something I was not planning to do”
- Money must be spent on specific things and that prevents doing the right fix
- Lack of response time when incidents occur
- Do not want entire infrastructure known publicly
- Not able to stick with the plan because of natural disasters or laws changing
- Insufficient funds
- Lack of resources for information gathering
- Coordinating budgets is challenging
- Private vendors may not want to reveal their upcoming projects
- Fear – address worst first to keep people happy, but money does not go far enough
- Last mile ROI is a tough challenge for fiber
- Worst first is way too prevalent – “money pit”
- Not easy to convince elected officials to buy into asset management
- Need to educate boards and commissions
- Difficult to coordinate budgets and fiscal years
- Turf protection – politics can slow down the process
- MDOT is unpredictable
- Roadsoft is slow
- We need to communicate the true cost of maintaining assets
- Water and sewer are enterprise systems and users do not always understand what that means
- TAMC, IRT, all of Michigan.gov is hard to use
- TAMC annual reporting – a good idea, but software is hard to navigate
- Master plan updates could include asset management elements
- VanBuren County road millage allows for local match where other counties do not
- This summit itself is a positive first step
- Make people pay for what they are using
- Stop duplicating efforts
- Coordinate amongst agencies and assets to save money in the long run
- Combine fiber and electric to share poles and easements
- Incentivize coordination
- Fiber installation generally includes dark fiber that can be lit up in the future or leased to others
- Annual meeting to discuss upcoming projects
- Innovative tools to collect data – SAW, LIDAR...
- Townships are beginning to bond for broadband expansion
- Could use a universal database of who owns what asset
- Lack of coordination between jurisdictions and/or utilities
- No uniformity in the way things are done county to county
- MDOT funding is not flexible enough to accommodate utility work
- Miss Dig 811 – pre-planning opportunity and mapping – allows utilities to add future planned projects
- Need technology transfers between infrastructures
- Lack of templates
- There are no good records kept on assets

**Asset Distribution
As Self-Identified by Participants**



**Feedback Distribution
As Aligned with MIC Goals**



Distribution of Organizations

