

A photograph of a worker in safety gear (hard hat, sunglasses, harness) standing on a metal structure, possibly a tower or scaffolding. The background shows a landscape with trees and a body of water under a sunset sky. The image is partially obscured by a white diagonal shape in the bottom left corner.

CHAPTER 9.

Call to Action

As called for in Governor Snyder's 2016-5 Executive Order, this report outlines ambitious goals for Michigan's infrastructure for the next 30 to 50 years. With implementation of these recommendations, Michigan will lead the nation in creating an integrated and holistic infrastructure planning, management, investment and delivery system—one that residents have confidence in. This system will prioritize public health and safety, and solidify Michigan's status as a global leader as we move forward into the 21st century.

Michigan's ability to achieve the 21st Century Infrastructure Commission's vision depends on policymakers taking action today, and prioritizing infrastructure as the foundation of strong communities and increased quality of life. Sound and modern infrastructure is vital to the health and well-being of the people of Michigan and will help support our growing economy.

Today, infrastructure is siloed in our state. There are 619 separate road agencies, 79 transit agencies, 1,390 drinking water systems, 1,080 wastewater systems, 116 electric utilities, ten natural gas utilities, and 43 broadband providers. Coordinated infrastructure planning and management is a necessary foundation to a successful future system. Michigan must implement an integrated asset management database system, create a Council to oversee long-term coordination and strategy, invest in infrastructure systems in a sustainable way, and remain committed to embracing emerging technologies. Achieving these overarching goals, in addition to the sector-specific recommendations put forth in this report, will ensure reliable, safe, efficient, and cost-effective systems.

As a first step, we must identify a strategic way to better manage our infrastructure in order to make informed decisions. Chapter 3 calls for the State to implement an effective statewide asset management system—one that collects reliable data and information across all types of infrastructure. A statewide coordinated infrastructure system would make Michigan a national leader in infrastructure management.

To initiate this game-changing endeavor, the Commission urges the Office of the Governor to establish a regional infrastructure pilot in early 2017 to begin operationalizing a statewide asset management database. By 2018, the Michigan Legislature should establish the Michigan Infrastructure Council, an entity that can leverage the lessons learned in the regional pilot and help to coordinate and unify infrastructure efforts across the state in the decades to come. The database and Council will help the State, regions, local governments, and utilities make informed, strategic decisions, save taxpayer dollars, create opportunities for coordinated infrastructure projects and ensure a 21st century infrastructure system.

Our residents deserve reliable, safe, efficient, and cost-effective infrastructure—a 21st century infrastructure system that creates a foundation for the future. This report is the first step in an entirely new approach to planning, managing, and delivering infrastructure in the state of Michigan. By outlining the challenges and opportunities facing Michigan's infrastructure system and identifying key recommendations for action, the Commission aimed to give policymakers and the public the information and vision needed to begin implementation. We must agree to modernize and invest in our infrastructure systems, recognizing that investments today will create jobs and economic opportunity, attract and retain businesses, and save taxpayer dollars. The Commission looks forward to working together to build this vision as Michigan looks to the 21st century and beyond.