SOUTHWEST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

FISCAL YEAR 2021 - 2023

To be a true leader and champion for enhancing regional opportunities, Southwest Regional Development Commission must strategically foster open, two-way communication within the organization and with its partners, stakeholders, and community. This comprehensive communications plan will serve as a tool to ensure SRDC is providing accurate, clear, and inclusive communication which is respectful, impactful, and timely to the region. This plan will also identify means to ensure SRDC is effectively listening and proactively responding to the region's needs. These elements will assist in the success of SRDC as a regional leader and regional champion.

The creation of this plan will provide strategic communication direction over the next thee years, and comes at a time of significant staff change and in the midst of a pandemic and recession, all of which will impact the organization's direction. The organization's and region's current situation emphasizes the need for clear, consistent, and inclusive communication.

This plan has been developed with the SRDC's mission, vision, cornerstones, and strategic plan in mind and incorporates findings from staff surveys, Commissioner surveys, a 2019 and 2020 communication audit (all included in the appendices of this plan), and follows nearly two years of purposeful listening and planning.

CPC
CERTIFIED PUBLIC COMMUNICATOR

This plan is the first of its kind for the SRDC and has been developed in coordination with the Certified Public Communicator (CPC) Program through the Bob Schieffer College of Communication at Texas Christian University. The CPC program is a partnership of TCU's Department of Strategic Communication, Extended Education, the Texas Association of Municipal Information Officers, the National Association of County Information Officers, and the Texas School Public Relations Association.

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INTRODUCTION
A Regional View

Southwest Regional Development Commission (SRDC) is a government agency that aims to connect units of government, businesses, and communities with the resources, planning, and services needed to promote and further opportunities in Southwest Minnesota.

We serve the nine-county region of Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood and Rock in the far southwest corner of the state. Since 1973, SRDC has worked with and on behalf of these counties, their cities, townships, school districts, and public interest groups. These partnerships and the leveraging of resources throughout the region have led to the advancement of programs in the areas of community, economic, energy, transportation, and land use development.

Our Commission leaders include elected officials representing nine counties, 80 cities, 163 townships, 32 school districts, the Lower Sioux Indian Community, and public interest groups, including Cultural Diversity, Higher Education, the Southwestern Center for Independent Living, Health and Human Services, and the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council.

About our Region

Southwest Minnesota is characterized by flat, windy prairie. The region relies heavily on the agricultural and manufacturing industries, but is also known for its renewable energy production, including wind, solar, ethanol, and bio-diesel. Bordered to the west by South Dakota, and to the south by Iowa, border issues frequently impact economic development in the region.

Demographic changes have also impacted the region, with long-term trends of outmigration, and an increasingly aging population. Although less diverse than the state, in-migration from international sources is also occurring, accounting for around 7% of the population.

Key priority areas for the region are: population/diversity, childcare, broadband, workforce scarcity, and agriculture. As the region's priorities and demographics continue to change, SRDC must be ready to meet the challenge of disseminating information about opportunities, quality of life, and what SRDC brings to the region to new and changing audiences in order to remain relevant and impactful.

OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Purpose | Mission | Vision | Goals

The following principles have been developed with SRDC's leadership and, along with our governance structure, provide the strategic framework for our organization. These principles are reviewed regularly and help define how we do business.

Our Statutory Purpose

To work with and on behalf of local units of government to develop plans or implement programs to address economic, social, physical, and governmental concerns.

Our Mission

To provide professional expertise and leadership to enhance regional opportunities.

Our Vision

To channel progressive collaboration between cities, counties, and townships so that shared knowledge and resources can be used to help the region prepare for a future where people and businesses thrive.

If we are successful, the region will see:

- A growing workforce and business base.
- Population stability.
- Better lives for those living in the region.
- Significant needs addressed that are challenging the region.

Our Strategic Goals

Infrastructure - Preserve, protect, maintain, and expand the region's core infrastructure.

Population - Respond to the needs of the region's changing population.

Awareness - Increase awareness of the region and the organization.

Relevance - Maintain an impactful organization to serve the region's needs.

Economy - Support and grow the region's economic base by supporting the needs of existing businesses, attracting new businesses, and developing entrepreneurs.

Workforce - Train workforce members and attract talent to meet the needs of local employers.

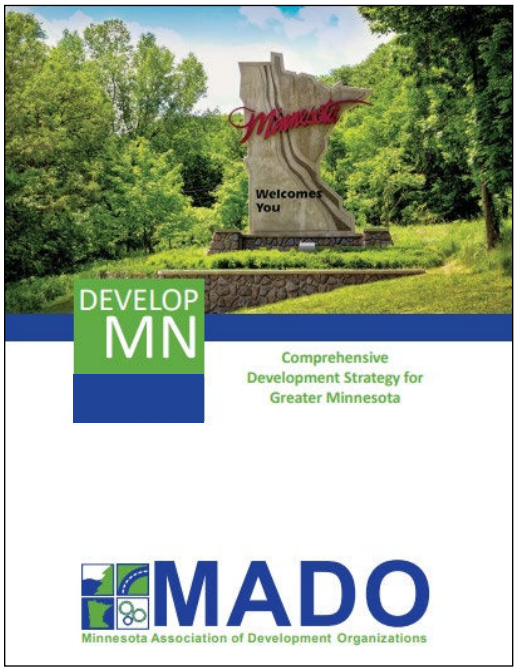
In addition to the strategic goals listed on the previous page, SRDC is also guided by various plans and policies, including:

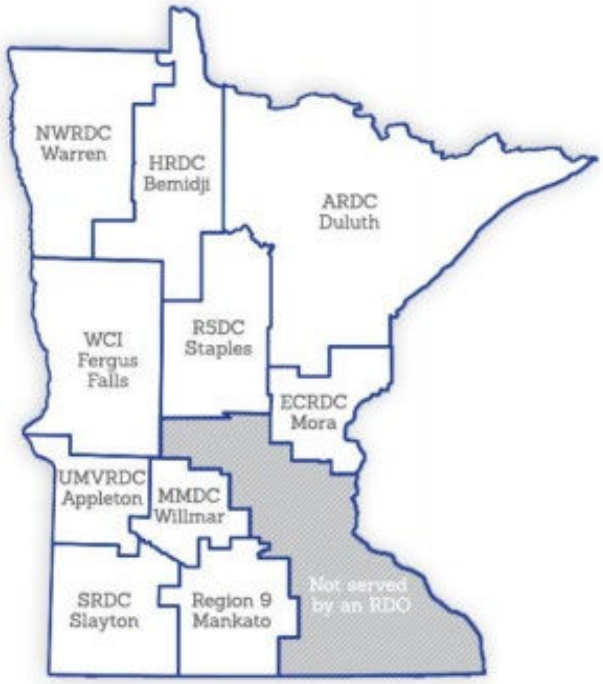
Minnesota Association of Development Organizations (MADO)'s DevelopMN Plan - MADO is comprised of ten regional development organizations working across the state to promote and create economic prosperity in Greater Minnesota. DevelopMN is a collaborative plan to align strategic development efforts and leverage resources at all levels for a greater overall development impact. The plan outlines four cornerstones of economic prosperity: Human Capital, Economic Competitiveness, Community Resources, and Foundational Assets.

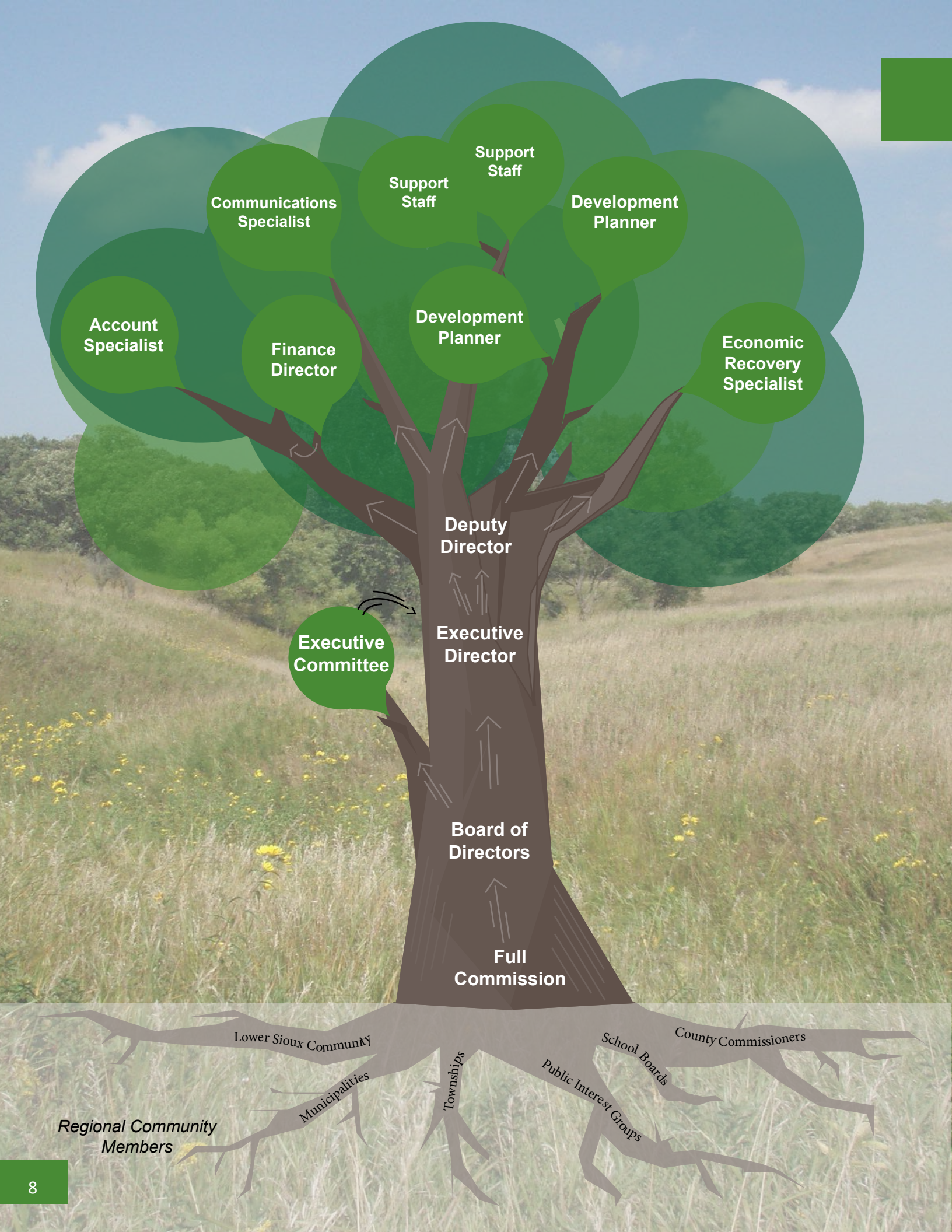
SRDC's Strategic Plan - Developed in coordination with the Board of Directors and planning staff, the most recent plan was completed in 2015. In 2019, the Board and staff reviewed and updated strategic priorities for the next 18 months.

SRDC's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) - The CEDS is a four-year regional plan that follows the DevelopMN cornerstones. The CEDS provides a process for individuals, organizations, local governments, higher education, and private industry to engage in a meaningful conversation about economic development in the region. Developed in collaboration with regional stakeholders, the CEDS helps to outline our regional collaboration efforts in order to best address economic development in the region.

Fiscal Year Work Program - Developed annually, this plan outlines the anticipated work areas for the SRDC's fiscal year.






Support Staff
Support Staff
Communications Specialist
Development Planner
Account Specialist
Finance Director
Development Planner
Economic Recovery Specialist
Deputy Director
Executive Committee
Executive Director
Board of Directors
Full Commission
Lower Sioux Community
Municipalities
Townships
Public Interest Groups
School Boards
County Commissioners
Regional Community Members

THE VOICES OF THE SRDC

Organizational Chart | SRDC's Voices | Evolution of Communication Efforts

Organizational Chart

The Roots of Our Organization: SRDC's structure functions like that of a tree - it is fed from its roots. Our roots are the stakeholders that make up our Commission and those with whom they represent. Each Commissioner is tasked to bring to the Commission issues of importance from their represented communities and is tasked to represent the SRDC to their represented communities. Our Commission consists of:

County - One County Commissioner from each of our nine counties represents their county.

Municipalities over 10,000 - One mayor or council member from each municipality over 10,000 in population represents their city.

Municipalities under 10,000 - One mayor or council member for each of the nine counties represents all cities under 10,000 within their county.

Townships - One township member from each of the nine counties represents all townships within their county.

School Boards - Two school board members from different school districts represent the school boards in the region.

Lower Sioux Community - One Tribal Government member represents the Lower Sioux Community.

Public Interest Groups - Each public interest group is represented by one designated member. Public interest groups currently include: Cultural Diversity, Health and Human Services, Southwest Center for Independent Living, Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, and Southwest Minnesota Higher Education.

Guiding of Our Organization: From our Commission, the Board of Directors are elected. Executive Committee members are also elected by the Commission and include Chairman, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer, and Immediate Past Chair. The full Commission, the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee govern the direction of the SRDC. The Executive Director reports directly to the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors and oversees staff. Second to the Executive Director is the Deputy Director.

Developers of Our Organization: Staff are tasked with the creation and management of programs as directed. Focus areas resemble the branches of the SRDC and include Economic Development, Land Use, Transportation, Community Development, Energy, Communications, Finance, and Administration. The programs developed from the SRDC reach out into the community and seed further development within the region.

SRDC programs and projects are expected to nourish the region's development, which through community and stakeholder feedback, cycles back into our organization's roots, creating a cycle of enrichment within the region and within the organization. While each member of the SRDC has its established focus area, collaboration and communication across the structure of the organization is essential for the SRDC to function effectively and to maintain a healthy and vibrant image within the region.

Who Speaks Publicly on Behalf of the SRDC?

Every staff and Commissioner plays a role in SRDC outreach and communication efforts. In total, there are up to 46 people who represent and could speak on behalf of the SRDC. For this reason, a communications plan is essential to guide the Commission's communication and ensure all representatives understand SRDC's mission, vision, values, and goals; maintain the "voice" of the SRDC; and maintain the message of the SRDC. With so many people who can speak on behalf of the SRDC, oversight of communication standards and practices will help create consistency, clarity, and trust in SRDC as a brand and as a regional leader.

1 Primary Spokespersons

Executive Director & Chairman
- Organization-level statements
- Regional-level statements
- Policies & By-laws
- Commission Meeting Facilitators

Communications Specialist
- SRDC Website & Social Media
- Press Releases & Media Content
- Written Statements as Directed

2 Secondary-level Communicators

SRDC Officers
- Backup Spokespersons for Chairman

Committee Chairs
- Committee Spokesperson

Deputy Director
- Backup Spokesperson
- Project & Program Communication

Finance Director
- Finance & Audit Communication

Planner Staff & Communications
- Project & Program Communication

3 Third-level Communicators

SRDC Commissioners
- General Commission Communication

Finance Staff
- Finance & Billing Communication
- General Commission Communication

Support Staff
- General Commission Communication

Evolution of SRDC Communication Efforts

SRDC currently has a hybrid communication system. Prior to the development of the Communications Specialist position in April 2018, communication was decentralized, with each staff responsible for running the communication of their own department and programs, with oversight by the Executive Director.

The development of the Communications Specialist role within the organization brought the introduction of SRDC social media channels, re-branding efforts, and an increased focus on regional outreach.

Typically the Communications Specialist is involved in drafting, reviewing, and/or designing external messaging following a request from department staff. Once drafted, the work is sent to the department staff for review and feedback. After approval, messaging is distributed either by the department staff, Communications Specialist, or support staff, depending on the audience. If a message is deemed significant due to subject matter or programing, approval from the Executive Director is needed prior to distribution.

At this time, various program communications, such as Rural Minnesota Energy Board (RMEB), Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs), Solid Waste Commission, or EDPros, typically have minimal-to-no consultation from

the Communications Specialist. For these programs, department staff create and disseminate their own messaging. These programs are staffed by SRDC but are their own entities and, as such, have their branding and style of voice that should be followed.

General Role of the Communications Specialist

Media Relations

- ✓ Message development
- ✓ Maintaining media contacts and media coordination
- ✓ Proactive story development
- ✓ SRDC education for local media
- ✓ Story tracking and analysis

Public Relations, Outreach, and Engagement

- ✓ Message development for SRDC Commissioners, partners, businesses, community members, etc.
- ✓ Facilitating engagement opportunities for community members, partners, and stakeholders
- ✓ Managing SRDC social media accounts
- ✓ Social media content development and design
- ✓ Web content development, design and oversight for SRDC and MADO sites
- ✓ Development and distribution of SRDC print publications (annual report, etc.)
- ✓ Development and distribution of SRDC e-newsletter
- ✓ Development assistance of Southwest CERTs e-newsletter
- ✓ Website and social media tracking and analysis

Commissioner Engagement and Commission Communication

- ✓ Development and distribution of new Commissioner materials and implementation of new Commissioner outreach
- ✓ Development, distribution, and record retention of Board/Full Commission materials, including agendas, meeting packets, minutes, notices, contracts, membership information, etc.
- ✓ Planning, organizing, and assisting with implementation of Board/Full Commission meetings and special events
- ✓ Record retention and distribution of project reviews
- ✓ Overseeing Commission correspondence
- ✓ Arranging legislative correspondence and visits

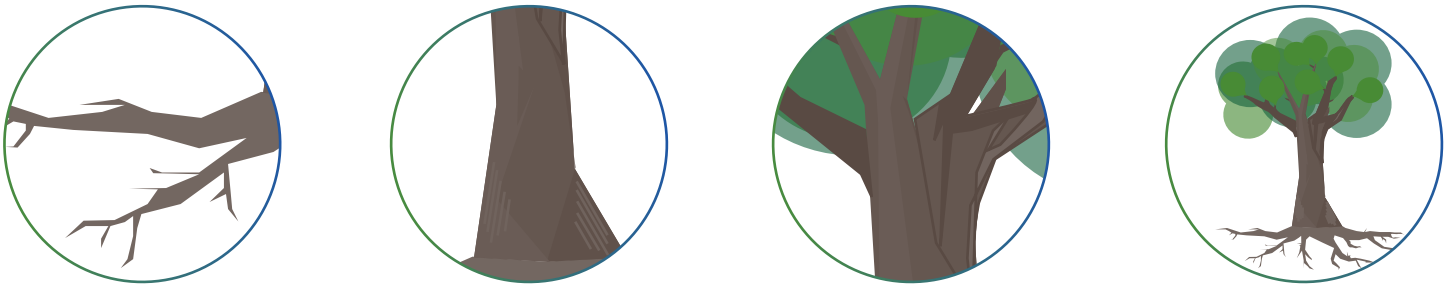
Marketing

- ✓ Development, execution, and analysis of strategic marketing plans and campaigns
- ✓ Advertising and placing ad buys (including job vacancies)
- ✓ Graphic design and brand management
- ✓ Document and material design and distribution
- ✓ Assistance with ADA Document Compliance
- ✓ Copy editing
- ✓ Photography and video services
- ✓ Development of marketing/outreach materials and assistance with distribution for contracted programs and projects (CERTs, PACE, RLF, SRTS, SHIP Active Living, etc.)
- ✓ Assistance with regional marketing efforts

Communication Training Services

- ✓ Contractual training or communication services with local units of government, businesses, organizations, etc.
- ✓ Development of marketing/outreach strategies for contracted programs and projects
- ✓ Educational presentations related to marketing, media relations, and public relations
- ✓ Internal communication training

Continuing the Evolution of SRDC Communication Efforts



The Communications Specialist role is still developing within SRDC. As its place in the organization continues to form, it is imperative that SRDC communications provide an opportunity to work collaboratively across all departments in an effort to provide branded and consistent messaging and to take advantage of potential synergies between department efforts. While SRDC has a hybrid communication system, efforts should be made to unify communications through the SRDC Communications Plan and through the Communications Specialist position.

Implementation of a Comprehensive Communications Plan

The implementation of a comprehensive communication plan is important at this stage in the growth of the communications role and in the continued evolution of SRDC communications as it will:

- ✓ Provide a roadmap for ensuring SRDC communicates consistently and purposefully.
- ✓ Provide strategies for increasing efficiency and worth of internal, external, and crisis communication.
- ✓ Emphasize the roles and responsibilities of the Communications Specialist in the organization.

Once approved, this plan should reflect the role that the Commission and Executive Director intend for the Communications Specialist to play in managing SRDC's communication practices, policies, strategies, and tools and in guiding the organization's communication efforts. This clarity will increase our efficiency as communicators throughout the organization as we work together to keep our stakeholders informed.

OUR REACH

Who We Want to Reach | How We Communicate & Listen

Who, in General, Does SRDC Want to Reach With Its Communication?

- Internal Ambassadors
  Staff & Commissioners
- Elected Officials
- Community Development Professionals
- Economic Development Professionals
- Transportation Professionals
- Solid Waste Professionals
- Local Units of Government
- Partner Organizations
- Civic Organizations
- Lenders
- Business Owners & Entrepreneurs
- Public Health Organizations
- School Boards
- Non-Profit Organizations

Extending our Reach through Partnerships

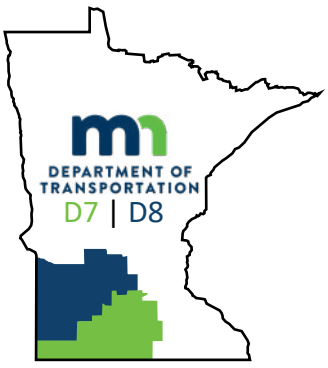
SRDC has a unique opportunity in developing stakeholders as its territory encompasses a nine-county area. However, SRDC assists in the following programs and partnerships which extend its reach to partners, stakeholders, and communities beyond our nine-county region:

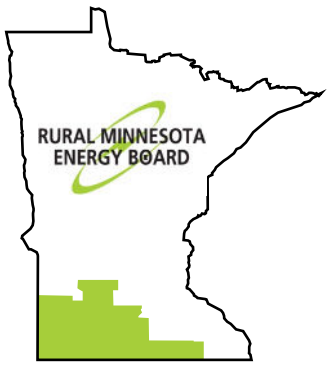
Minnesota Department of Transportation Districts 7 and 8, and Area Transportation Partners - Communication to stakeholders in SRDC counties plus Blue Earth, Brown, Chippewa, Faribault, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, LeSueur, Martin, McLeod, Meeker, Nicollet, Redwood, Renville, Sibley, Waseca, Watonwan, and Yellow Medicine counties (26 counties total).

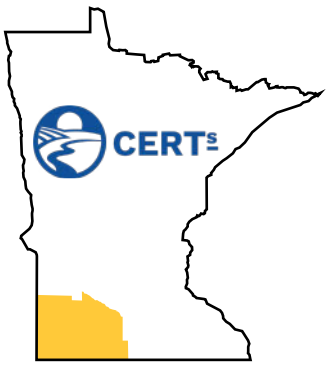
Rural Minnesota Energy Board & the PACE Program - Communication to stakeholders in all SRDC counties plus Renville, Nicollet, Brown, Blue Earth, Watonwan, Martin, Faribault, Freeborn and Mower counties (18 counties total).

Southwest Regional Solid Waste Commission - Communication to stakeholders in all SRDC counties plus Lac qui Parle, Renville, Yellow Medicine counties (12 counties total).

Southwest Clean Energy Resource Teams - Communication to stakeholders in all SRDC counties plus Brown, Watonwan, and Martin counties (12 counties total).







Communication Channels

How We Communicate

SRDC has a variety of outbound communication channels through which information reaches a wide variety of stakeholders. Below are the channels utilized, the type of stakeholder it reaches, the frequency of use, and ways to measure success of these channels.

Channel	Internal/External	Frequency	Who Communicates	Performance Indicators
Facebook	E	Daily	Communications Specialist	# of fans, likes, shares, comments
LinkedIn	E	Monthly	Communications Specialist	# of followers, likes, shares
Website	E, I	Monthly/ as needed	Communications Specialist	Website analytics, page views
Email	E, I	Ongoing	All Staff	Responses, follow-through
E-Newsletter	E, I	Quarterly	Communications Specialist	# of reads, subscribers
Call/text	E, I	Ongoing/ as needed	All Staff	Responses
Printed Materials: e.g. Brochures, Reports, Packets, Flyers, Mailings	E, I	Ongoing/ as needed	All Staff	# of materials distributed, feedback & responses
Media: Press Releases, Notices	E	Monthly/ as need	Communications Specialist	Media coverage, responses, sentiment
Radio: KDOM Spotlight	E	Monthly	Planning Staff, Executive Director, Communications Specialist, Chairman	Coverage, responses, feedback
Board/Commission/ Committee Meetings	E, I	Monthly	Planning Staff, Executive Director, Communications Specialist, Commissioners	Attendance, participation, feedback, meeting evaluation results
Events	E, I	Ongoing/ as needed	All Staff, Commissioners	Attendance, participation, feedback, survey results
Staff meetings/ activities	I	Weekly/ as needed	All Staff	Attendance, participation, feedback
Partners (CERTs, RMEB, PACE)	E	Ongoing	Planning Staff, Executive Director, Communications Specialist	Participation, continued partnerships, feedback

How We Listen

SRDC realizes the importance of quality communication, and this includes hearing what our staff, partners, stakeholders, and community members have to say. While digital strategies are increasingly important, there are many traditional means of communication and engagement that still have enormous relevance and effectiveness. Although inbound communication can come from any source within or outside of the region, below are primary sources that SRDC uses to stay up-to-date with, to listen to, and to engage. This is not an exhaustive list, but demonstrates the various connections.

Boards, Committees, and Commissions - SRDC staff and Commissioners serve on or assist a variety of boards, committees, and commissions throughout the region, beyond the region, and statewide. These positions provide opportunities for listening and engaging during meetings and events. Commissioners and staff serving in these roles can then provide recommendations to our organization that may lead to new projects or programs that address a need in the region.

Public Meetings, Program Meetings, and Staff Meetings - SRDC hosts public meetings, as well as for specific programs and projects. These meetings provide an opportunity for transparency and provide community members, partners, and stakeholders the opportunity to give feedback directly to the organization. SRDC staff participate in a variety of meetings throughout the region and statewide. Meetings, whether in-person or remote, offer opportunities for listening and engaging with participants. Staff then can provide recommendations that may lead to new projects to address a need in the region. Staff meetings and activities are held regularly and provide an opportunity for listening and engaging across the organization.

Special Events and Community Events - SRDC hosts and/or participates in special events throughout the region. Commissioners and staff can collect feedback from participants who may not otherwise have known about the organization during these events.

Social Media Channels - SRDC social media channels provide an opportunity for engagement. Social media channels are monitored for questions and comments that relate to our services, programs, and regional needs. SRDC additionally follows social media channels for partner organizations, local units of government, civic organizations, and regional newspapers, and monitors these channels for news, questions, and comments that relate to our organization's services and programs and/or our regional focus.

Emails and Calls - As the SRDC works on regional projects, much of our communication relies on the use of email and calls, providing an opportunity for staff to collect feedback from community members, partners, and stakeholders throughout the region.

Newspapers - SRDC actively monitors newspapers within the region for news that is regionally-significant or relates to our organization's services and programs. Articles of significance are shared across the organization and are used as an opportunity to address needs, find engagement opportunities, and gauge sentiment within the region.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) - The CEDS provides a process for individuals, organizations, local governments, higher education, and private industry to engage in a meaningful conversation about economic development in the region on a yearly basis.

Surveys - SRDC implements a variety of surveys to gauge sentiment and elicit feedback.

OUR CURRENT SITUATION
Challenges & Opportunities

Challenges

While SRDC is a regional entity, much of our work happens in the background; for example, connecting partners across jurisdictions to enable project development that serves the region. In the past, SRDC has been reserved with marketing its efforts and accomplishments. Attention has been given to promoting programs, partner work, and end products, but not to sharing SRDC's story as a partner, or promoting SRDC's role in regional work.

SRDC bases its work around the needs of the region. This work can span from Safe Routes to School planning to clean energy initiatives, from business lending to land use planning, from broadband initiatives to childcare and senior care initiatives. Because our work in the region is diverse and because our marketing has, in the past, been minimal, many stakeholders are unaware of the scope of our work. This, in turn, can affect our ability to form and maintain strong partnerships. If our stakeholders don't have a clear understanding of who we are or what we can do, how will they know how we can help them?

As our work must be agile to meet the region's needs, so too must our communication be agile as we work toward building awareness and partnerships with our stakeholders. The top currently-identified communication challenges include:

1. A lack of awareness of the SRDC, its programs, and projects among our stakeholders, constituents, community members, and the local media.
2. A lack of internal communication and collaboration across the organization due to the broad scope of our work, leading to a lack of internal knowledge of our work, an unclear vision of the broader goals of the SRDC, and lost opportunities to promote programs and services to our networks and stakeholders.
3. A lack of streamlined and consistently branded production of materials across the organization. Although material production has become more centralized since the introduction of the Communications Specialist position in 2018, further strategies and collaboration across the entire organization are needed to foster a clear and consistent brand identity.
4. Underutilization of SRDC staff and Commissioners as brand ambassadors.
5. Gaps in our ability to reach and communicate effectively with regional community members, particularly traditionally underrepresented groups.
6. Gaps in the diversity of community leadership and a lack of community engagement in local government.

Opportunities

These challenges present opportunities that are established as goals and strategies in this plan. To position the organization for maximum success, it is important to operate with a defined set of goals, objectives, strategies and tactics. It is essential that these goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics align with the SRDC's vision and strategic goals, and that we measure their level of success against these goals.

This plan was constructed with this process, and works to address the six challenges that emerged in the planning process. The following goals are comprehensive in scope and contain strategies that focus on target stakeholders.

OUR COMMUNICATION GOALS

Three-Year Plan

The following goals and their accompanying strategies reflect SRDC's communication priorities over the next three years. These goals will be reviewed and updated, at minimum, annually.

Goal 1: Increase awareness and knowledge of the SRDC

Challenges Addressed: 1. Awareness, 2. Internal Communication & Collaboration, 3. Consistent Branding & Decentralized Communication, 4. Staff & Commissioners as Ambassadors, 5. Gaps in Our Ability to Reach

Objective: Increase the resources available to Comissioners and staff to prime them to be SRDC's ambassadors and assist them with better communicating for & about SRDC.

- **Strategy: Provide Commissioners with communication tools and resources.**
  - Survey Commissioners on resources needed/wanted.
  - Implement a "Commissioner Resource Page" on the SRDC website.
  - Create SRDC reference videos housed on the resource page that can be used for Commissioner training.

  Measurement:
  - Survey completed by last quarter of FY2021 (June 2021).
  - Publish and begin promoting resource page by second quarter of FY2022 (December 2021).
  - Complete and publish three videos by last quarter of FY2022 (June 2022).
  - Track and survey page usefulness and recommend updates by second quarter of FY2023 (December 2022).

- **Strategy: Enhance New Commissioner onboarding process to better assist members with understanding the role of the SRDC and their role within the SRDC.**
  - Update and streamline New Commissioner packets for ease of use, exploring adaptations using new technology resources.
  - Update New Commissioner Orientation to emphasize SRDC's mission and vision, SRDC's role in the region, and the Commissioner's role in the SRDC.
  - Increase engagement opportunities with new Commissioners.
    - Contact new Commissioners prior to their first meeting to prepare them and answer questions.
    - Follow up with new Commissioners after their first two meetings to answer questions and receive feedback on their experience.
    - Conduct new Commissioner satisfaction surveys for all Commissioners within their first year with the SRDC.

  Measurement:
  - Implement increased engagement tactics by the fourth quarter of FY2021 (June 2021).
  - Increase in participation and engagement of new Commissioners.
  - Achieve 70% new Commissioner satisfaction in FY 2021 and increase by 5% in the subsequent years.

- **Strategy: Provide all staff with communication tools and resources.**
  - Implement an internal communications resources space to house the SRDC Communications Plan, style guide, social media policies, media kits, elevator pitches, promotional materials, templates and other communication resources.
  - Train all staff on the communication resources and assistance the Communications Specialist can provide.

  Measurement:

  - Implement the communications resource space by the first quarter of FY2022 (September 2021).
  - Provide staff training on the resources available by the first quarter of FY2022 and during onboarding for any new employees.
  - Track usage of materials and feedback from staff to use for continued updates and additions to the resource space.

Objective: Create communication standards for SRDC brand consistency, accessibility, and relevancy.

- **Strategy: Ensure SRDC brand consistency throughout all communication.**
  - Develop and implement the SRDC Communications Plan and distribute internally.
  - Transition the SRDC Brand Brief into a full SRDC Style Guide, including the implementation of a plain language guide to increase readability and usability of materials.
  - Create templates for frequently used documents (e.g. presentations, forms, letterhead, contracts).
  - Ensure staff use of email signatures and internal and external documents are consistent with SRDC's branding and style guide.
  - Implement a formal social media policy.

  Measurement:
  - Formally adopt the SRDC Communications Plan by the third quarter of FY2021 (March 2021) and review and readopt each fiscal year.
  - Implementation of the Style Guide and Social Media Policy by the fourth quarter of FY2021 (June 2021) and review and readopt as changes are needed each subsequent year.
  - Ensure consistent use of all staff email signatures by the fourth quarter of FY2021.
  - Achieve 80% success in adoption of templated documents and document consistency with the SRDC style guide by the fourth quarter of FY2022 and increase by 5% in the subsequent years.

Objective: Increase SRDC's visibility in the region.

- **Strategy: Actively connect SRDC to the region as an active participant and partner through creative storytelling and showcasing points of pride.**
  - Develop and publish feature stories on SRDC Commissioners, staff, partners, and work within the region.
  - Increase creation of SRDC photos, videos, and graphics that feature SRDC working in the region and or at places of regional significance.
  - Train staff on photo and video policies and best practices and identification of photo/video opportunities.

Measurement:

- Increase in quantity and quality of stories, with at least 6 feature stories in FY2022 and 12 in FY2023.
- Increase in quantity and quality of in-house photos and videos.

- **Strategy: Development outreach and engagement opportunities for SRDC.**
  - Establish an Outreach Committee and develop evaluation framework for types of public engagement opportunities SRDC should pursue.
  - Quarterly, explore public engagement opportunities throughout the region and recommend to the Board/Executive Director for approval.

Measurement:

- Form the committee and develop framework in FY2022.
- Recommend, approve, and participate in at least two public engagement events in the region in FY2023.
- Complete post-evaluation after each event, including tracing participant data, social media/ media coverage, and community feedback.

Objective: Design and implement a 50th anniversary campaign for SRDC in 2023.

- **Strategy: Use SRDC's 50th Anniversary as an opportunity to increase visibiitly & engagment.**
  - Establish a 50 year anniversary committee to lead the development of the anniversary event(s) and campaign plan.
  - Develop a campaign plan that makes use of multiple touchpoints.
  - Roll out 50th anniversary campaign in 2023.

Measurement:

- Form anniversary committee by March 2022 and develop campaign plan by December 2022.
- Implement campaign plan in 2023 and measure participant data, media/social media coverage, and regional feedback.
- Develop a mid-year and post-campaign report and distribute to the Commission.

Goal 2: Increase engagement and collaboration

Challenges Addressed: *1. Awareness, 2. Internal Communication & Collaboration, 3. Consistent Branding & Decentralized Communication, 4. Staff & Commissioners as Ambassadors, 5. Gaps in Our Ability to Reach, 6. Diversity in Leadership & Community Engagement in Local Government*

Objective: Increase readership with SRDC content.

- **Strategy: Create timely, open, and dynamic content across multiple communication channels that informs, educates, inspires, and engages.**
  - Distribute a quarterly e-newsletter for SRDC—The Southwest Connection.
  - Post at least 3 times per week on Facebook and weekly to LinkedIn.
  - Distribute at least one region-wide press release bi-monthly to area newspapers.

  Measurement:
  - Implement e-newsletter by first quarter of FY2021 (September 2021) and increase subscribers by 5% each subsequent year.
  - Increase social media following by 45% by the end of FY2021 (June 2021) and increase engagement and followers by 10% each subsequent year.

- **Strategy: Increase media and partner coverage of SRDC events and news.**
  - Research opportunities for regular media coverage similar to SRDC's monthly Kaleidoscope radio spot.
  - Identify potential communication partnerships to leverage cross-coverage opportunities on regional communication channels.

  Measurement:
  - Creation of media and communication partner list by the second quarter of FY2022 (Dec. 2022).
  - Track media and partner coverage in FY 2022. Increase coverage by 5% each subsequent year.

Objective: Develop and promote avenues for SRDC to listen to stakeholders' needs and measure satisfaction with SRDC performance.

- **Strategy: Increase our understanding of stakeholder needs throughout the region.**
  - Implement an annual stakeholder survey to gauge satisfaction with SRDC efforts, performance, and communication.
  - Develop a stakeholder outreach plan that capitalizes on staff/Commissioner strengths and travel itineraries.
  - Implement annual outreach visits & listening tours of stakeholders within the region.
    - Compile and maintain a list of stakeholders and recent communication efforts and house the stakeholder list in a central location for all staff to review and edit.
    - Semi-annually review the stakeholder list and outreach plan to identify priorities for outreach efforts within the region.
  - Encourage SRDC Commissioners to submit relevant news feedback and stories they receive from their jurisdictions.

Measurement:

- Implement stakeholder survey by the third quarter of FY2022 (March 2022). Increase survey response rate and stakeholder satisfaction by 5% each subsequent year.
- Implement use of outreach plan and stakeholder list by the first quarter of FY2022 (Sept. 2021). Complete outreach visits to 50% of stakeholder groups in the region in FY2022. Increase visit rates by 10% in FY2023.

- **Strategy: Explore new opportunities to reach stakeholders, taking advantage of available technology and diverse staff/Commissioner strengths.**
  - Create digital and print outreach and templated outreach materials (e.g. stakeholder visit kits, email introductions, program overviews, county brag sheets) that highlight SRDC's mission and goals, opportunities for collaboration, and assistance available.
  - Send personalized invitations to targeted stakeholders to attend SRDC events (e.g. New Commissioner Orientation, SRDC Annual Meeting, SRDC Bus Tour).

  Measurement:
  - Increase new stakeholder attendance at SRDC events by 10% in FY2022 and 5% in each subsequent year.

Objective: Increase the development and use of inclusive communication channels and tools used to reach stakeholders.

- **Strategy: Identify and target communication efforts toward traditionally under-represented and under-heard stakeholder groups.**
  - Seek opportunities to meet with and build relationships with targeted groups through events and activities in the region.
  - Implement listening tours throughout the region to understand community needs.

  Measurement:
  - Increase engagement with targeted groups by 10% in FY2022 & FY2023.

- **Strategy: Develop and publish communication that is accessible for all users.**
  - Develop and implement a formal ADA Communication Plan, including a plain language guide, to increase clarity, readability and usability of all SRDC communication.

  Measurement:
  - Implement the ADA Communication Plan and plain language guide by the first quarter of FY2022 (Sept. 2021).
  - Annually review digital and print communication materials for compliance with the ADA Communication Plan and plain language guide. Decrease noncompliance finds by 60% in FY2022 and 10% each subsequent year.

- **Strategy: Enhance and manage the SRDC website to ensure accessibility, usability, and relevancy.**
  - Develop a website redevelopment plan which outlines changes needed and a cost comparison of completing the redesign in-house or through a developer.
  - Conduct quarterly web audits to ensure relevancy and usability.

  Measurement:
  - Present plan and recommendations to the Board/Full Commission by the third quarter of FY2022 (March 2022).
  - Complete website redevelopment by the end of FY2023 (June 2023).

- **Strategy: Include all staff in the development and evaluation of SRDC communication strategies.**
  - Establish a process to review and update communication strategies yearly.
  - Develop a Communications Plan Matrix that is available for all staff to review and edit.
  - Establish an annual communications calender to better anticipate communication needs and timelines.
  - Provide opportunities each year for staff communication trainings.

  Measurement:
  - Implement the Communications Plan Matrix by the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2021 (March 2021) and update quarterly with current efforts.
  - Attain 100% of staff participation and input in the review and update of the communication plan each fiscal year.
  - Implement the communications calendar by the end of FY2021 (June 2021). Review and update the calendar monthly at a staff meeting.

Objective: Increase consistency & efficiciency with internal communication tools and practices.

- **Strategy: Make frequent-use and/or multi-user documents and project updates more readily accessible to all employees through Microsoft Teams.**
  - Transition appropriate documents from the Workfolder to Teams.
  - Provide best practices and training opportunities for staff to develop skills in using and collaborating on Teams.

  Measurement:
  - Provide training opportunities at least semi-annually through FY2023.
  - Increase storage of frequent-use, multi-user documents on Teams by 30% in FY2022 and 10% in FY2023.

- **Strategy: Increase use of staff/planner meetings to explore and further the organization's strategic directions and team development.**
  - Utilize Teams whenever possible for general internal communication and project updates in an effort to make best use of staff/planner meetings for planning purposes.
  - Set and send out agendas for staff/planner meetings prior to meeting.

Measurement:

- Utilization of agendas for 70% of staff/planner meetings by FY2022 and increase by 10% each subsequent year.

- **Strategy: Encourage opportunities for team building and engagement.**
  - Seek opportunities to showcase staff achievements.
  - Increase use of team building activities.
  - Ensure the continuation of a staff wellness and morale committee.

  Measurement:
  - Inclusion of at least one team building activity each quarter in FY2022.

Goal 3: Establish SRDC as a resource for communication and outreach support

Challenges Addressed: 1. Awareness, 3. Consistent Branding & Decentralized Communication, 5. Gaps in Our Ability to Reach, 6. Diversity in Leadership & Community Engagement in Local Government

Objective: Increase SRDC assistance with regional communication services.

- **Strategy: Promote ADA communication assistance as a regional communication priority.**
  - Develop and house the SRDC's formal ADA Communication Plan on the SRDC website for stakeholders to use as a resource.
  - Survey stakeholders on their current accessibility and inclusive communication efforts and needs.
  - Develop accessibility toolkits, including accessible templates, guides, and training tutorials for regional use.
  - Promote accessible and inclusive communication initiatives and assistance available through appropriate channels and outreach opportunities.

  Measurement:
  - Publish the ADA Communication Plan on the SRDC website by the first quarter of FY2022 (Sept. 2021).
  - Survey stakeholders by the second quarter of FY2022 (Dec. 2021).
  - Track website analytics and toolkit use in FY2023.

- **Strategy: Increase promotion of SRDC assistance availability.**
  - Develop communications assistance content for the SRDC website, including a digital portfolio of work.

  Measurement:
  - Publish communications content on the SRDC website by the third quarter of FY2022 (Mar. 2022) and track website analytics. Increase communication assistance requests by 5% each fiscal year.

- **Strategy: Develop a series of low-to-no-cost marketing training opportunities for regional small businesses and entrepreneurs.**
  - Partner with regional stakeholders to co-host, teach, and/or fund training opportunities.
  - Research and apply for grants to help fund training opportunities.
  - Survey regional business owners and entrepreneurs on marketing needs and training interests.

  Measurement:
  - Complete regional survey by the first quarter of FY2022 (Sept 2021).
  - Find successful partnerships and funding to secure a series of at least 4 training opportunities in FY2022. Host trainings and implement post-event surveys. Achieve an 80% satisfaction rate for all training opportunities.

Objective: Develop a crisis communication plan that can be used to help the SRDC and the region communicate effectively during a regionally significant crisis.*

- **Strategy: Establish SRDC's role in regional crisis communication.**
  - Research and reach out to regional stakeholders to understand their crisis needs and address questions on SRDC's role.
  - Work in collaboration with SRDC's Regional Economic Resiliency Planning efforts during FY2021-2022 to research and identify how SRDC can be of best assistance to the region during a crisis.
    - Conduct regional surveys on COVID-19 efforts.
    - Create and maintain an inventory of regional assets that could be used during a crisis.
    - Create case studies of regional crisis communication efforts.
  - Build response teams throughout the region to assist with messaging during all stages of crisis.

  Measurement:
  - Complete regional crisis communication plan by the fourth quarter of FY2022 (June 2022).
  - Build relationships with region crisis first responders, including regional public information officers, emergency management supervisors, and public health.

- **Strategy: Identify and train an internal crisis response team to assist with messaging during all stages of organizational crisis.**
  - Prepare template messages to be utilized during a crisis.
  - Train identified staff to assist with communication efforts during a crisis.
  - Ensure all staff are aware and familiar with the crisis communication plan and know how to implement it in the event of a crisis.

  Measurement:
  - Have two backup communicators trained by the second quarter of FY2022 (Dec. 2022).

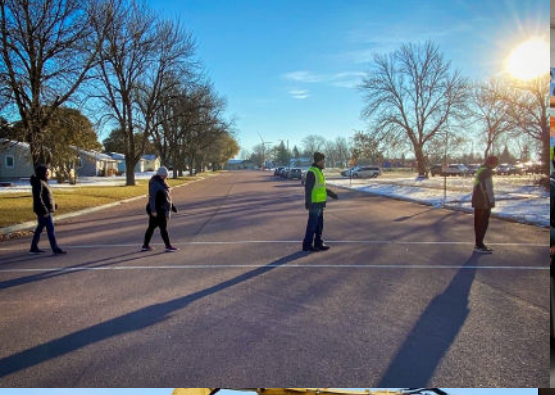
*OUR ROLE IN RESPONDING TO A REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT CRISIS

As a regional entity, external crisis situations within the region will initially receive direct response from local units of government (LUG). Most often, SRDC's primary role is with the crisis recovery phase.

Our initial role in a regional crisis must be to listen attentively—listen for developing crises and listen to the immediate response so that we can assist in cross-sector collaboration efforts. We can learn a great deal from our response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the region. Through assistance with cross-sector collaboration efforts, such as our organization of monthly regional CARES Act meetings which connected counties, cities, townships, school districts, and the private sector, we were able to assist in fostering regional communication that addressed concerns, questions, and shared ideas. Keeping channels of communication open across sectors and across boundaries will continue to be an important role SRDC must play in future crises.

Further research and planning is needed to identify how SRDC can best assist LUGs in the immediate response and crisis deescalation. We must work to answer:

- How can we leverage partnerships in the region to be of immediate assistance to our communities?
- What are the current gaps in crisis communication throughout the region? How can we help to fill these gaps?
- How can we quicken our response time to be of better assist the region?



IMPLEMENTATION

Vision of Success | Plan Adoption | Implementation Matrix

Vision of Success

By implementing this plan, SRDC will work toward an organizational culture that values open and inclusive two-way communication, both internally and externally. Creating this culture requires all staff and Commissioners to understand the role they play in the organization's communication, both individually and collectively. While the Communications Specialist will play an essential role in guiding the implementation of the goals outlined in this plan, to be truly successful in accomplishing all goals will require organization-wide commitment and effort.

While this plan is comprehensive in scope, we must also acknowledge the fact that there will always be ways in which we can continually improve our communication efforts. While this plan is a roadmap for the coming years, it is also intended to be a living document to be updated at least yearly to meet the ever-changing needs of our organization and our region.

The following Implementation Matrix will be used to track quarterly progress of the communications plan. Plans and procedures developed as a part of the communication plan's strategies will be added to the appendices of this plan as they are implemented.

Resolution to Adopt the
FY2021-FY2023 SRDC Comprehensive Communications Plan

WHEREAS, the Southwest Regional Development Commission has participated in a comprehensive communication planning process; and

WHEREAS, the planning process was has been developed in coordination with the Certified Public Communicator program through the Bob Schieffer College of Communication at Texas Christian University; and

WHEREAS, Southwest Regional Development Commission has completed the Comprehensive Communications Plan; and

WHEREAS, the plan includes organizational communication strategies, including goals and objectives and an implementation plan identifying specific action steps the Southwest Regional Development Commission can take to improve communication efforts; and

WHEREAS, the plan has been reviewed and vetted by the Certified Public Communicator Program and reviewed by Southwest Regional Development Commission leadership and staff.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southwest Regional Development Commission adopts the FY2021-FY2023 SRDC Comprehensive Communications Plan.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is a true and correct copy of the resolution presented to and adopted by the Southwest Regional Development Commission at a duly authorized meeting thereof held on the 11th day of March, 2021 by the minutes of said meeting.

Mike Kuhle

Mike Kuhle, SRDC Chairman

Jayme Trusty

Jayme Trusty, SRDC Executive Director

Date: 22 MAR 21

Implementation Matrix

Ongoing Tactics

Goal	Obj.	Tactic	Status
1	1c	Track usage of communication resource files and feedback from staff for updates/additions	
1	2b	Develop feature stories & increase creation of photos/videos	
2	1a	Post on average 3 times per week to Facebook and weekly to LinkedIn	
2	2b	Create digital & print outreach & template outreach materials	
2	3a	Seek opportunities to meet with & build relationships with targeted groups & implement listing tours	
2	3d	Review & update communications calendar monthly at a staff meeting	
2	4a	Provide Microsoft Teams training opportunities at least semi-annually	
2	4b	Utilize Teams whenever possible for general communication & project updates to make best use of staff/planner meetings for planning purposes	
2	4b	Set and send out agendas for staff/planner meetings	
2	4c	Increase use of team building activities & seek opportunities to showcase staff achievements	
3	3a	Build relationships with regional crisis first responders	

FY2021 Tactics

Goal	Obj.	Tactic	Qtr.	Status
2	1a	Implement quarterly e-newsletter	1	Started September 2020
1	1b	Update & Streamline New Commissioner Packets	2	Updated & streamlined for email delivery
1	2a	Develop & formally adopt SRDC Communications Plan	3	At March 2021 FC & send to CPC program
2	3d	Implement Communications Plan Matrix	3	At March 2021 FC w/ Comm. Plan
3	3a	Work in collaboration with the Regional resiliency planning efforts to research & identify SRDC's role in regional crisis communication	1-4	
1	1b	Updates to New Commissioner Orientation	3-4	
1	1a	Survey Commissioners on resources needed for resources page	4	
1	2a	Implementation of Style Guide	4	
1	2a	Implementation of Social Media Policy	4	At March 2021 FC w/Comm. Plan
1	2a	Ensure consistent use of email signatures	4	
1	1b	Implement New Commissioner engagement tactics	4	
1	1b	Conduct New Commissioner Satisfaction Survey—achieve 70% satisfaction	4	
1	3a	Track media coverage of SRDC stories	4	
2	1a	Increase social media following by 45%	4	
2	3d	Implement annual communications calendar	4	

FY2022 Tactics

Goal	Obj.	Tactic	Qtr.	Status
1	1c	Implement internal communications resource page	1	
1	1c	Provide staff training on communication resources available	1	+add to onboarding following
2	2a	Develop stakeholder outreach plan & stakeholder list	1	
2	3b	Develop & implement ADA communication plan & plain language guide	1	
3	1a	Publish ADA communication plan on SRDC website	1	
3	2b	Survey regional businesses on marketing needs & training interests	1	
1	1a	Publish & begin promoting Commissioner Resource Page	2	
1	1b	Update & Streamline New Commissioner Packets	2	
2	1b	Develop media & communication partner list & implement use	2	
3	1a	Survey stakeholders on accessible & inclusive communication efforts	2	
3	3b	Train two staff as backup communicators to assist with communication efforts in a crisis	2	
2	2a	Implement annual stakeholder satisfaction survey	3	
2	3c	Develop & present website redevelopment plan	3	
3	2a	Publish communication assistance content on website	3	
1	1a	Publish 3 reference videos on Commissioner Resource Page	1-4	
1	3b	Establish Communications & Outreach Committee & develop evaluation framework	1-4	
2	2a	Complete outreach visits of 50% of stakeholder groups	1-4	
3	2b	Find successful partnerships & funding to develop a regional marketing training series	1-4	
3	3a	Develop regional crisis communication plan	1-4	
3	2b	Develop & implement a series of at least 4 regional marketing training opportunities	2-4	
3	1a	Develop inclusive communication toolkits	2-4	
1	3c	Form Anniversary Committee & begin developing campaign	3-4	
1	1b	Conduct New Commissioner Satisfaction Survey—achieve 75% satisfaction	4	
1	2a	Review & Update Communication Plan & sub-plans	4	
1	2a	Achieve 80% success in adoption of template docs & doc consistency with style guide	4	
2	1a	Increase social media engagement & following by 10%	4	
2	1b	Increase media & partner coverage of SRDC stories by 5%	4	
2	2b	Increase new stakeholder attendance at SRDC events by 10%	4	
2	3a	Increase engagement with targeted groups by 10%	4	
2	3b	Review print & digital communication—decrease noncompliance with ADA plan & plain language guide by 60%	4	
2	3d	Attain 100% staff participation & input in Comm. Plan review & update	4	
2	4a	Increase storage of frequent use, multi-user docs on Teams by 30%	4	
2	4b	Utilization of agendas for 70% of staff/planner meetings	4	
3	2a	Increase communication assistance requests by 5%	4	

FY2023 Tactics

Goal	Obj.	Tactic	Qtr.	Status/Notes
1	3c	Develop 50th Anniversary Campaign & develop a mid-year report in Qtr 4	1-2	
1	1a	Track & Survey Commissioner Resource Page usefulness & recommend updates	2	
2	2a	Annual stakeholder satisfaction survey—increase response & satisfaction by 5%	3	
1	3b	Recommend, approve & participate in at least 2 public engagement events in region	1-4	
2	2a	Complete outreach visits of 60% of stakeholder groups	1-4	
1	3c	Implement 50th Anniversary Campaign	3-4	+ FY2024 Qtr 1-2
1	1b	Conduct New Commissioner Satisfaction Survey—achieve 80% satisfaction	4	
1	2a	Review & Update Communication Plan & sub-plans	4	
1	2a	Achieve 85% success in adoption of template docs & doc consistency with style guide	4	
1	3a	Increase media coverage of SRDC stories by 10%	4	
2	1a	Increase social media engagement & following by 10%	4	
2	1b	Increase media & partner coverage of SRDC stories by 5%	4	
2	2b	Increase new stakeholder attendance at SRDC events by 5%	4	
2	3a	Increase engagement with targeted groups by 10%	4	
2	3b	Review print & digital communication—decrease noncompliance with ADA plan & plain language guide by 10%	4	
2	3c	Complete website redevelopment	4	
2	3d	Attain 100% staff participation & input in Comm. Plan review & update	4	
2	4a	Increase storage of frequent use, multi-user docs on Teams by 10%	4	
2	4b	Utilization of agendas for 80% of staff/planner meetings	4	
3	2a	Increase communication assistance requests by 5%	4	

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SRDC BRAND BRIEF

Color Palette

SRDC Primary Green
RGB: 72, 139, 53
CMYK: 75, 24, 100, 8
Hex: 488b35

SRDC Primary Gray
RGB: 105, 116, 122
CMYK: 62, 46, 43, 11
Hex: 69747a

SRDC Primary Blue
RGB:27, 85, 166
CMYK: 94, 74, 1, 0
Hex: 1b55a6

SRDC Primary Black
RGB:0, 0, 0
CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 100
Hex: 000000

SRDC Primary White
RGB:255, 255, 255
CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 0
Hex: ffffff

SRDC Mid-Green
RGB: 34, 104, 47
CMYK: 85, 34, 100, 27
Hex: 22682f

SRDC Light Gray
RGB: 225, 229, 230
CMYK: 11, 6, 7, 0
Hex: e1e5e6

SRDC Light Blue
RGB: 120, 175, 223
CMYK: 51, 19, 0, 0
Hex: 78afdf

SRDC Light Green
RGB:107, 169, 50
CMYK: 64, 12, 100, 1
Hex: 6ba932

Brand Identity

The key elements of SRDC's brand identity are:

- Name
- Logo
- Primary Color Palette
- Tag-line: *Providing professional expertise & leadership to enhance regional opportunities.*
- E-mail signature
- Letterhead

To maintain this identity system, it is essential that these elements are used accurately and consistently.

Organization Name

The way the organization is mentioned is critical to audience identification and branding. The organization should be referred to as **Southwest Regional Development Commission** or the **SRDC**. When writing for a public audience, the first time the organization is referenced, the full organization name should be used, followed by SRDC in parentheses. Subsequent references should be written as SRDC.

Logo

The logo's use and presentation is just as critical to SRDC's brand as the design of the logo itself. The logo will be prominently displayed on all organization information and promotional material, including all print and digital publications. No other logo should be used in place of the official organization logo.

Full Color Preferred Logo

Color Logo

Grayscale

Placement & Display of the Logo

Placement of the logo is based on both its need for prominence and how the piece will be designed, mailed, presented or displayed. The logo is a brand and word-mark—it is not necessary that it be used as the central visual element of a publication.

The logo may be used in conjunction with photos or illustrations as a graphic element. When it is used in this capacity, a complete logo must be used on the same document following the standard guidelines.

Co-Branding

Co-Branding SRDC with Other Organizations

It's often necessary to brand with other partners. When this is needed, logos should be placed as follows:

- If SRDC is the primary funding or resource contributer: the SRDC logo should appear first, followed by other logos in succession of contribution level.
- If all organizations provide equal contribution to the effort: all logos should appear in alphabetical order and be of similar size.
- If SRDC is a secondary partner: the SRDC logo should appear behind larger contributers.

Co-branding SRDC with Signature Programs

Some programs, projects and services have signature graphic elements, logos, photos or design styles. The SRDC logo should appear on the same document when these elements are used.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

EFFECTIVE MARCH 2021

Southwest Regional Development Commission's Social Media & Electronic Media Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of the SRDC's social media/online presence is to present matters of public interest concerning SRDC's programs, activities, news and photos, and to provide content that serves to enhance regionally-significant work and promote regional opportunities.

The following guidelines address social media and electronic media, which should be broadly understood to include blogs, social networking sites, websites, online forums, electronic newsletters, video-sharing sites, email, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a simultaneous manner.

Anyone who participates in social media on behalf of the SRDC is expected to understand and follow these guidelines. Guidelines are subject to change as new technologies and social networking tools emerge.

Goals

SRDC acknowledges that social media has become a growing tool for communication. It is imperative for the employees of the SRDC to be aware of and support the following goals:

- Provide accurate and clear communication which is respectful and timely to the region.
- Emphasize topics relevant to the region's needs and strive to be proactive in meeting these needs.
- Emphasize topics that serve to enhance regionally-significant work, enhance the region's goals and needs, and promote regional opportunities and development.
- Demonstrate openness, transparency, professionalism, and ethical behavior in all communication efforts.

Responsibilities

It is important that the voice of the SRDC be consistent across all channels of communication. All social media activity representing the SRDC shall be published by the Communications Specialist, unless otherwise specified.

The Communications Specialist will be responsible for monitoring all social accounts.

Settings on the SRDC's social media accounts should be set to public, allowing all citizens to see the profile information.

Accounts

The introduction of new social media channels will be approved by the Executive Director prior to the creation of any new channel.

Account names will keep *Southwest Regional Development Commission* in long form to clearly identify the organization and brand. Posts may refer to the organization in short as SRDC.

Profile pictures for all SRDC accounts will always remain as the SRDC logo to maintain brand awareness. Cover photos (such as on Facebook or LinkedIn) will be updated regularly to reflect changing seasons, new initiatives/projects, upcoming events, or places within the region.

Approved Social Media Channels

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/SWRDCmn

- Used for citizen engagement, publicity, events, press releases, job openings, and crisis communication.

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/swrdc

- Used for events, publications, press releases and job openings.

Social Page Promotion

Employees will encourage SRDC partners, stakeholders, regional entities, and citizens to follow social media pages as much as possible to keep everyone informed of news and engaged with SRDC activities.

Post Content

Social media sites will be monitored at a minimum of once each work day and updated regularly. Employees wanting content posted to the SRDC's social media sites will submit content information to the Communications Specialist for review and posting. When submitting photos/videos, employees will assure that permissions have been secured (as needed), and will be responsible for informing the Communications Specialist of the photo content. Content to be posted should be timely. Employees will work with the Communications Specialist to set up social media campaigns in advance as needed.

The following guidelines apply to all employees when using official SRDC social media sites:

- All SRDC-related communication through social media outlets should remain professional in nature and should always be conducted in accordance with the SRDC's personnel policies, practices, and expectations.
- It is prohibited to post anything that is dishonest or misleading on one of the SRDC's social media outlets.
- SRDC should respect all people regardless of race, creed, age, religion, color, marital status, physical or mental disability, national origin, sexual orientation, political affiliation, etc.
- Plagiarizing is illegal. Proper respect to laws concerning copyright shall be followed. Excerpts of another's work must be attributed to the original writer.
- The use of profane language and obscene or offensive content is prohibited.
- Posts must respect SRDC's partners, loan recipients, etc. Discussing general details about a project is allowed; however, permission must be given when identifying specific details.
- SRDC reserves the right to take down any post that is deemed to be inappropriate, untrue, or disrespectful. If a post is in violation of any guidelines listed above, the post will be taken down. Prompt action is to be taken with regard to submissions that violate the guidelines above.

Employee Personal Social Media Channels

- Employees should never use their work email account in conjunction with a personal social media site.
- Participation in social media sites may result in a user's comments being permanently available and subject to being republished in other media. Users should be aware that libel, defamation, copyright, and data protection laws apply.
- The lines between public and private and personal and professional communications are blurred in online social networks. By virtue of identifying oneself as an SRDC employee within a social media site, the employee may be connected to his/her colleagues, stakeholders, or SRDC networks. If an employee identifies himself/herself as being employed by the SRDC on his/her social media sites, it is recommended that content associated with the employee be of a professional nature.

This policy should not in any way be interpreted to prohibit employee communications that are protected by law.

Social Media Engagement

Public likes, comments, and other engagements are encouraged on SRDC social media channels. SRDC social media pages can "like" comments or posts by citizens and organizations, and comment when necessary (i.e. answering questions).

The SRDC can like and follow organizations, and can engage with organizations posts when the posts and comments seek to promote the SRDC's Social Media Goals. The Communications Specialist will be responsible for monitoring social media content. The SRDC will not like or follow political candidates or pages which promote a political party, or violate the above SRDC's social media guidelines.

As SRDC social media pages are considered public forum, posts or comments are never to be deleted from the page. See Public Terms of Use and Comment/Content Violation sections for further information.

Crisis Communication

In the event of an emergency, the SRDC's Facebook page will be the primary social media channel used in order to get the necessary information out to the public quickly. Every effort shall be made to follow content guidelines.

SRDC Office closings related to weather or crisis will be posted to SRDC's Facebook page.

Public Terms of Use on Social Media Channels

The following Public Terms of Use should be made available on SRDC social media channels.

Southwest Regional Development Commission (SRDC)'s social media administrators are responsible for policing and enforcing the SRDC's Public Terms of Use.

SRDC reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of the Public Terms of Use or any applicable laws. Comments posted do not reflect the opinion of the SRDC. All postings should be relevant to the SRDC.

Posted information and comments must comply with the following regulations. Content or comments that do not comply with the following regulations may be removed by the administrator:

- Comments or material must be topically related to the post being commented upon.
- Comments must be civil and may not contain slanderous, libelous, malicious, offensive, threatening, profane, or insulting language or content.
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, nation origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, political affiliation, etc. will not be permitted.
- References to the personality of individuals, personal attacks, or potential libelous statements will not be permitted.
- Plagiarized material, private, or personal material published without consent will not be permitted.
- Advertising or promotional announcements will not be permitted.
- Comments cannot include personally identifiable information, such as address, phone number, social security number, or other sensitive information.
- Comments containing links to other websites or pages must be relevant to the topic.
- Comments or content of a sexual nature or links to sexual content will not be permitted.
- Comments or content made related to political campaigns or ballot measures will not be permitted.
- Comments or content conducting or encouraging illegal activity will not be permitted.

SRDC reserves the right to restrict or remove any content deemed in violation of the terms outlined. SRDC reserves the right to update these terms of use as needed.

Comment/Content Violation

If a comment/content does not adhere to the SRDC's social media policy, staff will contact the Communications Specialist so that the comment can be reviewed. The Communications Specialist will be responsible for monitoring comments.

If a comment/content is deemed to be in violation of the policy, the comment will be hidden from view and, when applicable, a private message sent to the commenter explaining the reason for the removal of the post. Comments/content should never be permanently deleted.

The Communications Specialist will keep a log of any comments/content that are removed and provide the applicable part of the log to the Executive Director upon request.

PHOTO, VIDEO, & MULTIMEDIA POLICY

EFFECTIVE MARCH 2021

Photo, Video, and Other Multimedia Policy

A photo is often the first thing people notice on a page. SRDC will aim to take and use photography, video, and other multimedia that tells SRDC's and/or the region's story; represents the breadth and culture of our organization, our region and our communities; and compels others to look more closely. All multimedia should reinforce our brand.

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines associated with photo, video, and other multimedia taken and used by SRDC.

Use of Media Taken by SRDC

Consent at SRDC Hosted Meetings and Events: SRDC will post a notice at the event/meeting entrance indicating the use of photography, video, and other multimedia. Signage language will include:

"Photography and/or video may be taken at today's event. By taking part in this event, you consent to interview(s), photography, and audio/video recording and its release, publication, or reproduction for news, promotional purposes, advertising, inclusion on websites, social media, or other print and online publicity by SRDC and its affiliates. If you do not wish to be photographed please inform an event organizer."

Non-Event Media Release: Written consent will be requested for images, video, or other multimedia that features clients or members of the public.

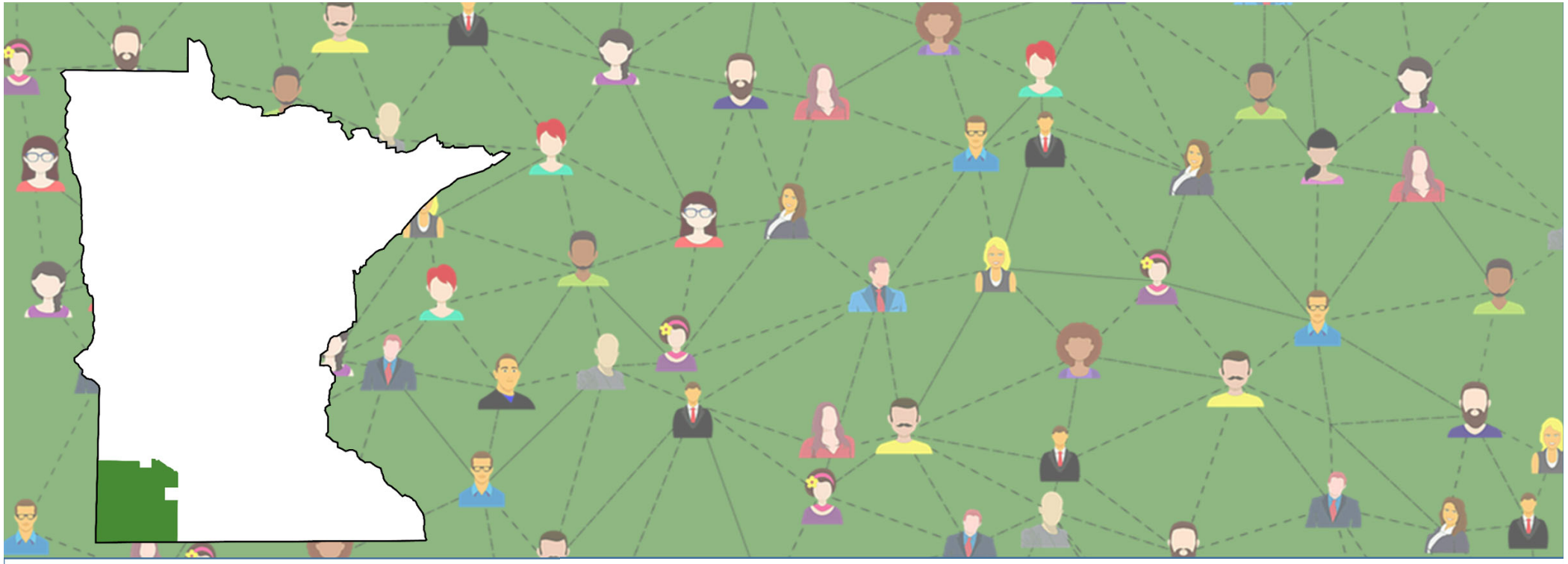
Use of Media from Other Sources

No photos, video, or other multimedia may be published or posted without express permission by the copyright holder. Written credit will be given to the copyright holder for all uses.

Representing SRDC in Photo, Video, or Other Multimedia

As a government entity, SRDC's branded image should showcase leadership, professionalism, and connection. As a representative of the region, SRDC's brand identity should also showcase regional pride. The following are guidelines to represent and reinforce our brand.

COVID-19 Guideline: As a regional leader and as an organization active in providing programs and services that assist the region in preventing, preparing for, and responding to the coronavirus pandemic, it is essential that images representing the organization convey that message and showcase a commitment to following state and health official guidelines. For this reason, when taking photos or video featuring more than one person, all persons representing the SRDC must be wearing masks and/or visibly more than 6 feet apart. This policy will remain in effect until physical distancing and mask requirements and/or recommendations have been lifted.



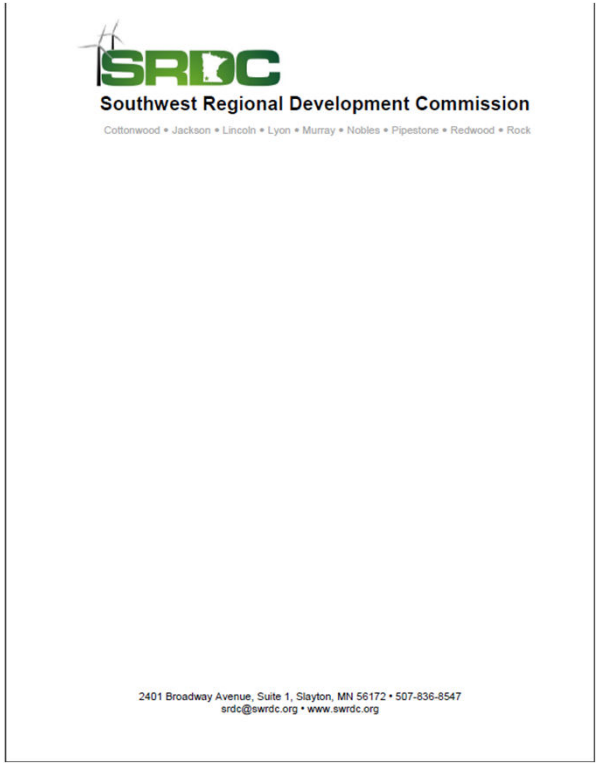
Southwest Regional Development Commission

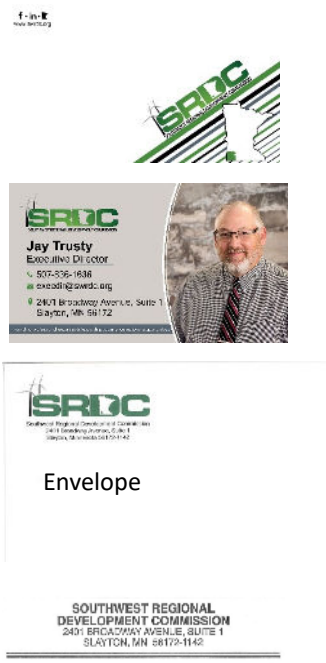
Communications Audit, October 2019

How does the SRDC communicate to its audiences?

Channel	Internal/External	Frequency	Who is the Communicator
Facebook	External	Daily	Communications Specialist
LinkedIn	External	Infrequently at this time	Communications Specialist
Website	External, Internal	Monthly	Communications Specialist
Email	External, Internal	Ongoing	All Staff
Printed Materials: Brochures, Reports, Packets, Flyers, Mailings	External, Internal	Ongoing and/or as needed	All Staff
Media: Press Releases, Notices	External	Monthly and/or as need	Communications Specialist
Radio: KDOM Spotlight	External	Monthly	Planning Staff, Executive Director, Communications Specialist, SRDC Chairman
Commission/Board/ Committee Meetings	External, Internal	Monthly	Staff, Commissioners
Events	External, Internal	Ongoing and/or as needed	Staff, Executive Director, Commissioners
Staff meetings/activities	Internal	Monthly and/or as needed	All Staff

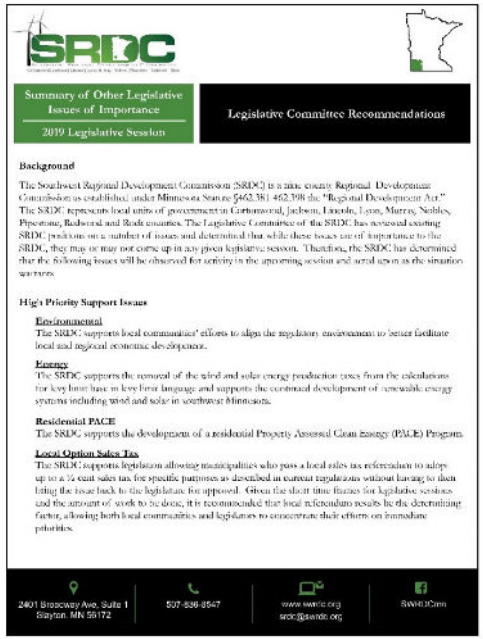
SRDC Documents

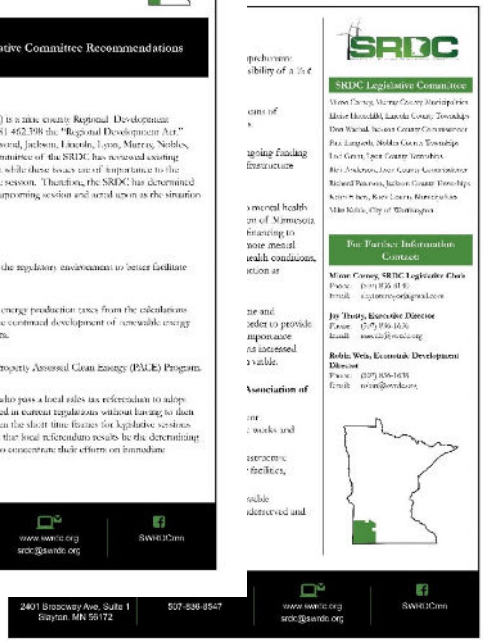




Envelope

Large return label





SRDC Documents

Annual Report
2019
JULY 2018-JUNE 2019

SRDC

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, October 10, 2019
3:30 p.m.

SRDC
SOUTHWEST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Annual Meeting

Guest Speaker:
KATHY DRAEGER
Statewide Director for the U of M Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships

Draeger will give a presentation on Deep Winter Greenhouses.

Registration:
To register, please clip and return the form below to the SRDC, or complete electronically and return via email to jessicaw@swrdc.org. All payments should be sent via mail by June 25th.

Questions:
Please contact Jessica at the SRDC office at 507-836-1644 or jessicaw@swrdc.org.

Thursday, July 11th
4:00 p.m.
Dinner following

Painted Prairie Vineyard
1575 250th Avenue
Currie, MN

Cost:
$18 per person payable to the SRDC

RSVP By:
June 25th pre-registration is necessary

Name(s): _____ **Phone:** _____
Representing: _____

☐ **I will be attending the SRDC Annual Meeting on July 11th at Painted Prairie Vineyard.** Enclose a check for $18.00 per person payable to Southwest Regional Development Commission (includes dinner). If submitting electronically, please mail payment to the address below.

☐ **I will be attending the SRDC Annual Meeting on July 11th at Painted Prairie Vineyard but will not be staying for dinner.**

IF ATTENDING, PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM & PAYMENT BY 6/25 TO:
Southwest Regional Development Commission
2401 Broadway Avenue, Suite 1, Slayton, MN 56172
or complete electronically and return to jessicaw@swrdc.org

SRDC Email Signatures

Jayme I. (Jay) Trusty
Executive Director
Southwest Regional Development Commission
507-836-1636
execdir@swrdc.org

Dianne Crowley, SRDC Finance Director

Robin Weis, Economic Development Director
Southwest Regional Development Commission
2401 Broadway Avenue
Slayton, MN 56172
507-836-1638
507-836-8866 (fax)
robin@swrdc.org
Website | Facebook | LinkedIn

Individualization- Woo- Maximizer- Strategic- Ideation

Annette Fiedler
SRDC Physical Development Director
RMEB Staff
SW CERT Coordinator
2401 Broadway Ave
Slayton, MN 56172
507.836.1631 FAX 507.836.8866
phydev@swrdc.org

www.swrdc.org www.rmeb.org www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org

Jason Walker, Development Planner
Southwest Regional Development Commission
2401 Broadway Avenue
Slayton, MN 56172
507-836-1642
507-836-8866 (fax)
jasonw@swrdc.org
Website | Facebook | LinkedIn

Achiever - Analytical – Strategic – Learner - Ideation

Jessica Welu
Communications Specialist
Southwest Regional Development Commission
2401 Broadway Ave. Suite 1, Slayton, MN 56172
P: 507.836.1644 | F: 507.836.8866
Website | Facebook | LinkedIn

Rose Oakland
Account Specialist - SW Regional Development Commission
2401 Broadway Avenue, Suite 1
Slayton, MN 56172
P: 507.836.1646 • F: 507.836.8866
roseo@swrdc.org

Kathy Schreiber
Southwest Regional Development Commission
Administrative Assistant II
2401 Broadway Avenue, Suite 1
Slayton, MN 56172
507-836-1640 Direct Number
507-836-8866 Fax
srdc@swrdc.org

Check us out on FaceBook: Southwest Regional Development Commission

Doreen Veenhuis, Admin. Asst.
SRDC
2401 Broadway Ave
Slayton, MN 56172
Work: 507-836-8547
Fax: 507-836-8866

SRDC Email Signatures

Strengths and Opportunities

- The average business employee sends/receives 125 emails per day (source: Radicati). That's an average of 1,250 marketing opportunities through the SRDC every single day.
- Email signatures are a chance to make it clear who we are, make it easy for people to reach us, and give people a place to find out more about the SRDC and what we're working on.
- Email signatures are a chance to help with the brand's identity—what makes us instantly recognizable.

SRDC Email Signatures

Weaknesses and Threats

Key elements of a brand's identity are the name, logo, colors, packaging, messaging, and reputation. Threats and weaknesses to the SRDC's identity within the current employee signatures includes:

Name: Amongst the nine email signatures, the organization is referred to as:

- Southwest Regional Development Commission (5x)
- SRDC (3x)
- SW Regional Development Commission (1x)

Logo: Amongst the nine email signatures, the logo is included in 5 signatures and logo size and location varied.

Colors: Amongst the signatures, the following text colors were used:

- Green text only (2x)
- Black text only (4x)
- Blue and red text (1x)
- Green and black text (1x)
- Blue and black text (1x)

Packaging/Messaging: Fonts, layout of information included, and information included also varied amongst signatures. Fonts were either Calibri or Arial, with font size varying from 10-14 pt., and variations in the use of bold and regular text were present. Website links present 4x, Social links/mentions present 4x. Inconsistencies in contact information (address, phone, fax, email) were present.

SRDC Email Signatures

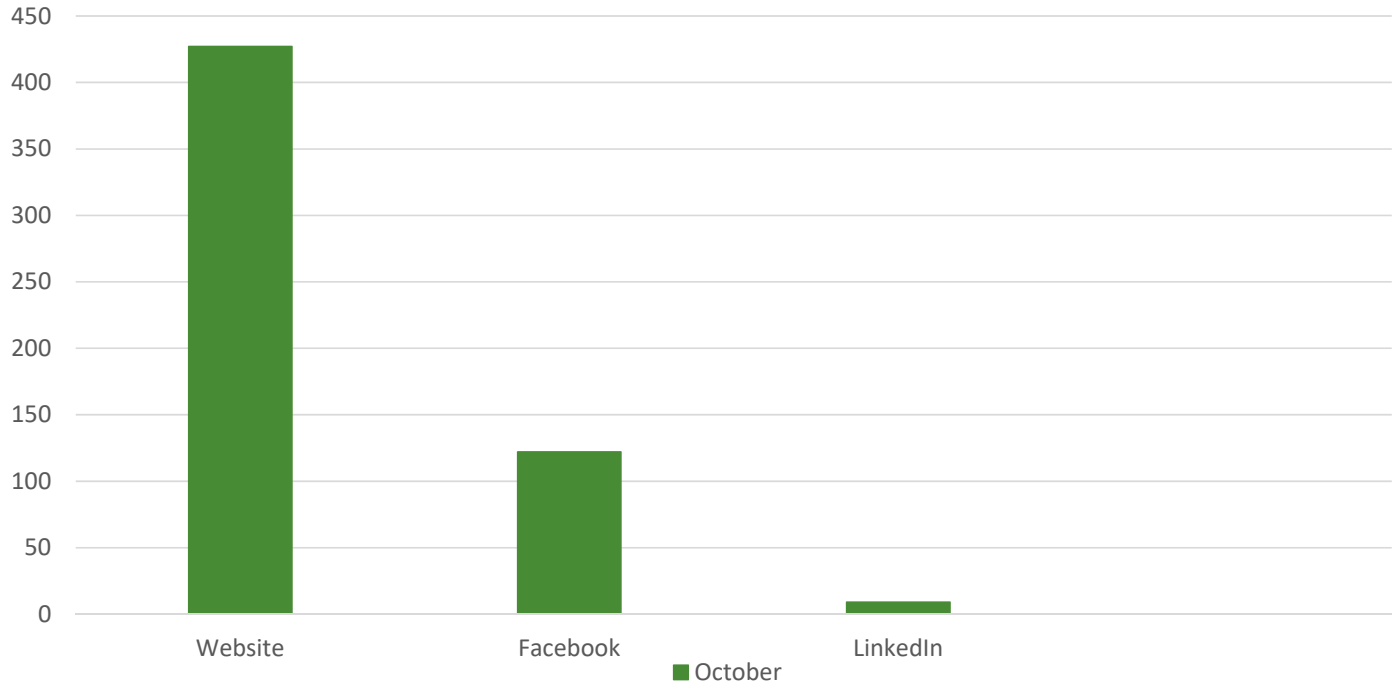
Recommendations

A consistent SRDC staff signature would assist with SRDC brand identification and communication of how to contact and find more information about the SRDC.

Recommendation: Creation of a consistent SRDC email signature that is adopted by all staff.

- Because some staff need additional information in their signature (such as additional affiliations), the signature could be adaptable for staff needs, but should maintain a consistent look, layout and the same content of the SRDC email signature.
- Any adaptations of the signature should be pre-approved to assure consistency of the branded signature.

Current Online Activity



SRDC Website

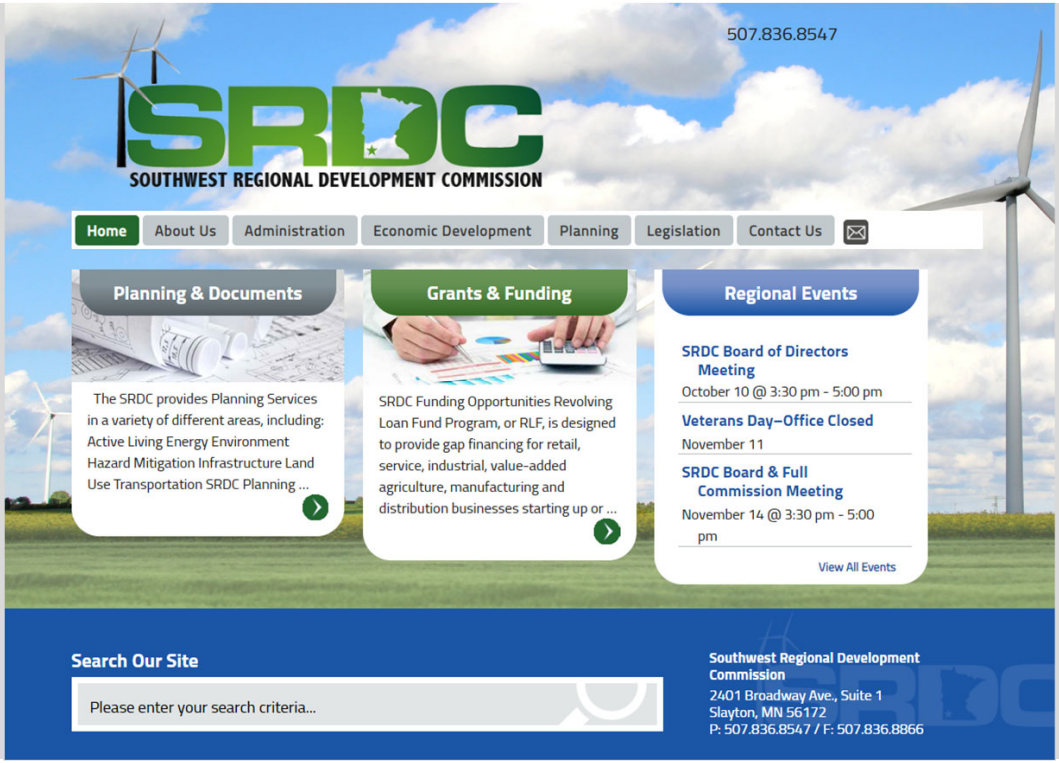
www.swrdc.org

Users

- 80% New
- 20% Returning

Top Pages

1. Homepage
2. Transportation
3. Staff
4. Grant Opportunities
5. Planning



Sessions

- 420 unique users in previous 30 days
- Bounce rate 61.67%

Top Referrals

1. MADO website
2. Facebook
3. Association of Minnesota Counties website
4. Greater Minnesota Partnership
5. MnDOT website

SRDC Website

Current Situation

The SRDC website is updated on a monthly basis. The framework was last updated 5+ years ago.

- **Goals of the website:** Provide information on who we are and what we do, provide contact information, act as the main branding identity for the SRDC, provide information our Commissioners need on a regular basis.
- **Is the website still on strategy:** Yes
- **What is the sentiment of citizen engagement:** Frequent visits of new users, but a high bounce rate and low use of returning users.
- **Is the POV relevant to current RDC issues:** Yes

SRDC Website

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
• A lot of content. • Regular updates are completed. • Information for our Commissioners is available.	• High bounce rate. • Low return-user rate. • Commissioners do not know where to find information. • Design is not as fresh, and is cumbersome to administer.
Opportunities	**Threats**
• High use by new users means we have the potential to foster communication and brand awareness and persuade return use.	• Users could look elsewhere if they can't quickly find what they're looking for. • ADA Compliance issues.

SRDC Website

Suggested Improvements

How can the website be more on strategy?

- Clearer navigation and centralization of commissioner information needs.
- Increased focus on keeping users on our site.
- Increased efforts in providing newsworthy updates, promoting regional opportunities, etc.

What needs to change in the coming year?

- Comprehensive discussions to discuss potential improvements.
- Launch of a Commissioner page.
- Increase news updates to provide further communication opportunities.

How can the website be improved to be more cohesive with other communication elements?

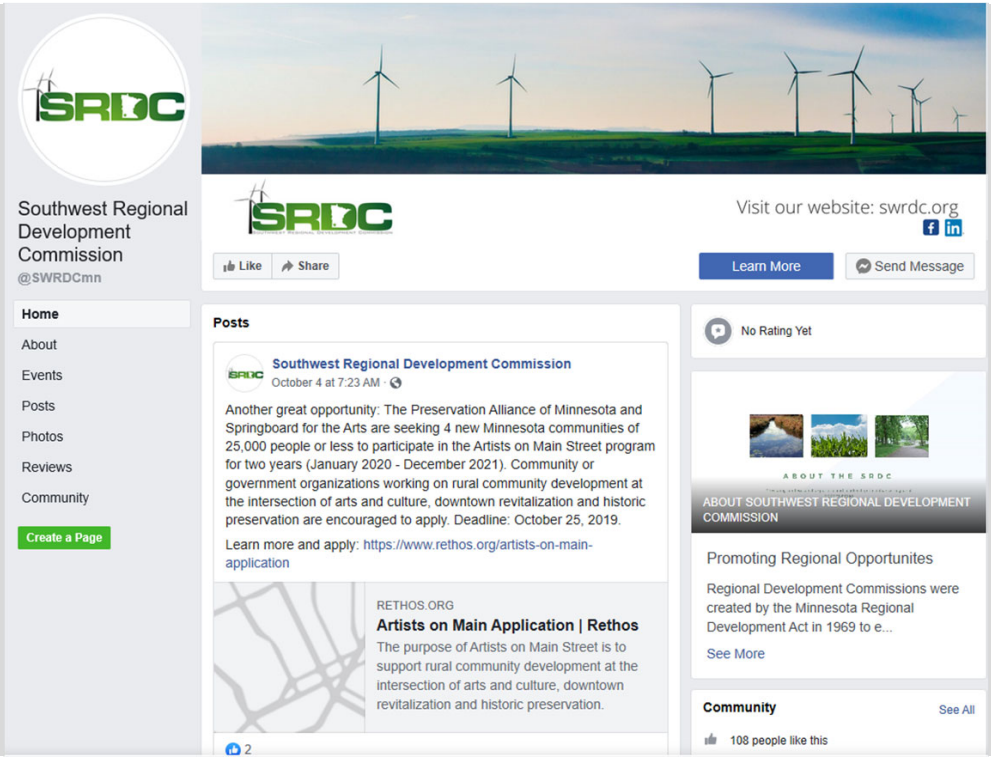
- Update look to tie into the SRDC's branding, tie-in with the SRDC's Facebook page.

SRDC Facebook

www.facebook.com/SWRDCmn

Subscribers as of Oct. 15, 2019

- 109 likes
- 122 follows



Updates

- Updated at least 2 to 3 times per week.
- Launched May 2018

SRDC Facebook

Top Posts

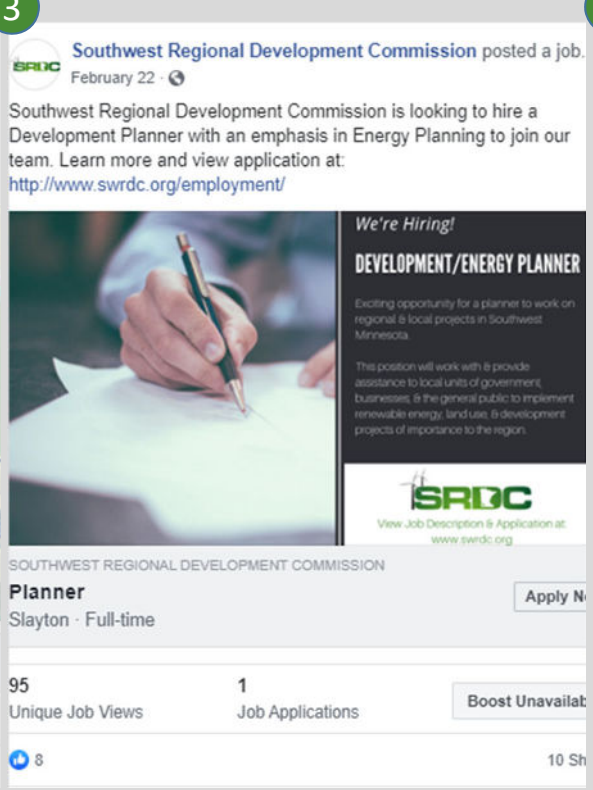
1

Reach: 1,043 | Engagement: 452

2

Reach: 1,782 | Engagement: 351

3



Reach: 872 | Engagement: 104

4

Reach: 226 | Engagement: 90

SRDC Facebook

Top Posts

5

Reach: 299 | Engagement: 87

6

Reach: 275 | Engagement: 80

7

Reach: 312 | Engagement: 77

8

Reach:235| Engagement: 70

SRDC Facebook

Top Posts

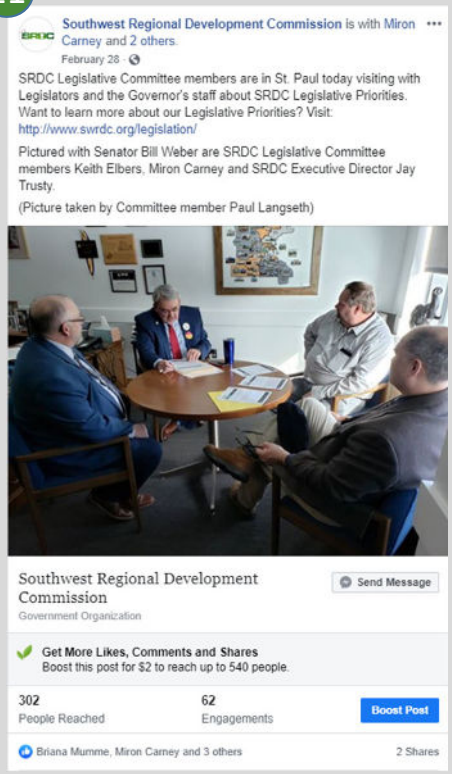
9

Reach: 901 | Engagement: 68

10

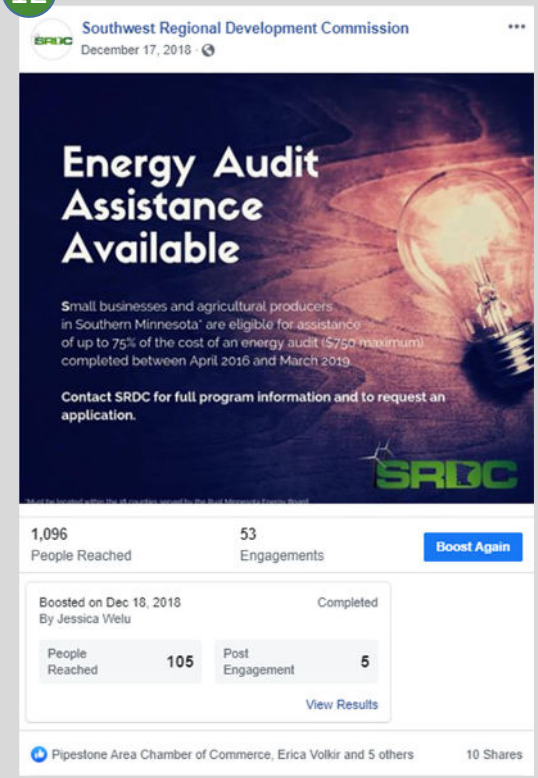
Reach: 202 | Engagement: 63

11



Reach: 302 | Engagement: 62

12



Reach: 1,096 | Engagement: 53

SRDC Facebook

Current Situation

The SRDC Facebook is typically updated 3+ times each week; launched in May 2018.

- **Goals of the site:** Provide information on who we are and what we do, provide regional opportunities and regional woohoos.
- **Is the site still on strategy:** Yes
- **What is the sentiment of citizen engagement:** We have not used paid "boosts;" all engagement has been organic. There has been steady increase in engagement, but the followers could be higher. Less than 20% of our Commissioners follow.
- **Is the POV relevant to current RDC issues:** Yes

SRDC Facebook

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
• A lot of content. • Regular updates are completed. • Information for our Commissioners is available.	• Following is small at this time. • A lot of our posts are shares from others. • Video content is important, but not currently using.
Opportunities	**Threats**
• SRDC staff are frequently at events/locations in the region that would lend themselves well to social media. • SRDC staff each have a wide network that could be invited to like/follow.	• Facebook algorithms make it difficult to increase reach organically as a page.

SRDC Facebook

Suggested Improvements

How can the site be more on strategy?

- Increased efforts in providing newsworthy updates, promoting regional opportunities, etc.

What needs to change in the coming year?

- Increase following with targeted pushes from SRDC staff.
- Increase photo/video content that is created by the SRDC.
- Form a sharing partnership with SRDC partner organizations, Commissioners and staff networks.

How can the site be improved to be more cohesive with other communication elements?

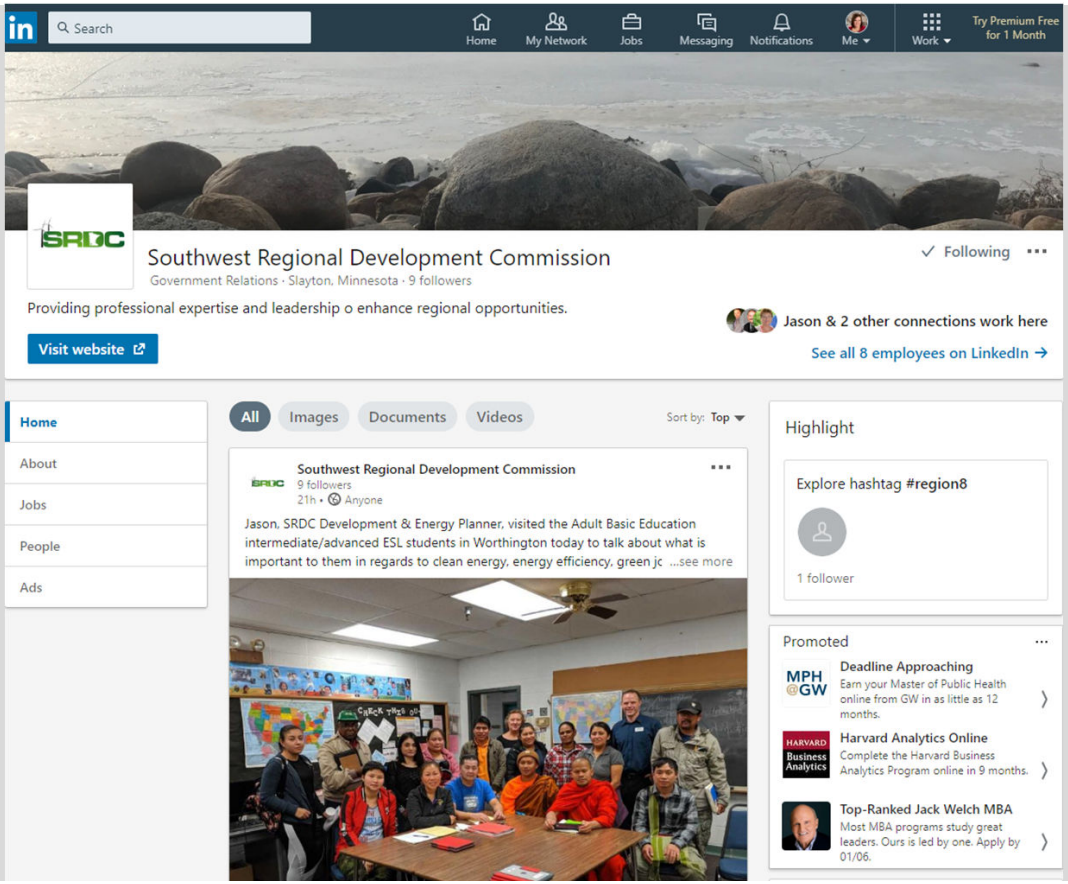
- Consider embedding Facebook updates into the news feed on the SRDC website.

SRDC LinkedIn

www.linkedin.com/company/swrdc

Subscribers as of Oct. 15, 2019

- 9 followers



Updates

- Updated monthly
- Launched May 2018

SRDC LinkedIn

Current Situation

The SRDC LinkedIn is typically updated monthly; launched in May 2018.

- **Goals of the site:** Provide information on who we are and what we do, share job opportunities.
- **Is the site still on strategy:** Possibly, but needs consideration. Posting has been less frequent due to low following and engagement.
- **What is the sentiment of citizen engagement:** Very low following. Posts typically receive 1-2 likes and average 52 impressions.
- **Is the POV relevant to current RDC issues:** Yes

SRDC LinkedIn

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
• For professional development, it is good to have the SRDC on LinkedIn.	• Following is low. • Little content and updating at this time.
Opportunities	**Threats**
• SRDC staff are frequently at events/locations in the region that would lend themselves well to social media. • SRDC staff each have a wide network that could be invited to like/follow.	• An increase in content and followings is needed to make the use of a company page worthwhile.

SRDC LinkedIn

Suggested Improvements

How can the site be more on strategy?

- Increased efforts in providing newsworthy updates.

What needs to change in the coming year?

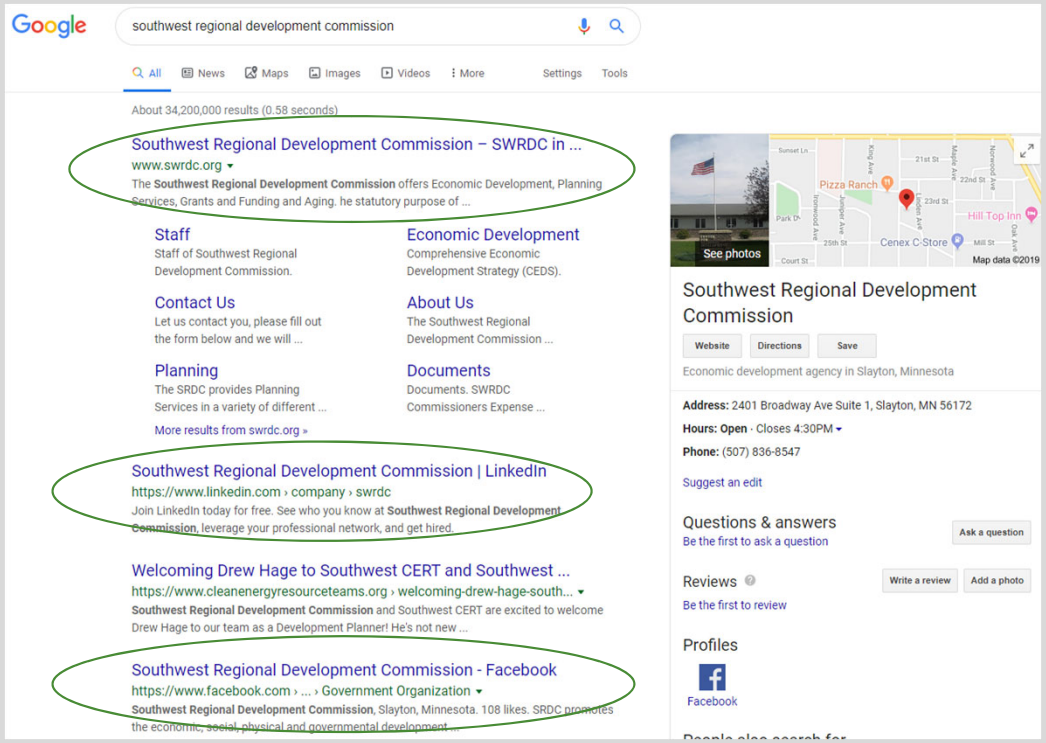
- Increase following with targeted pushes from SRDC staff.
- Increase content.
- Form a sharing partnership with SRDC partner organizations, Commissioners and staff networks.

How can the site be improved to be more cohesive with other communication elements?

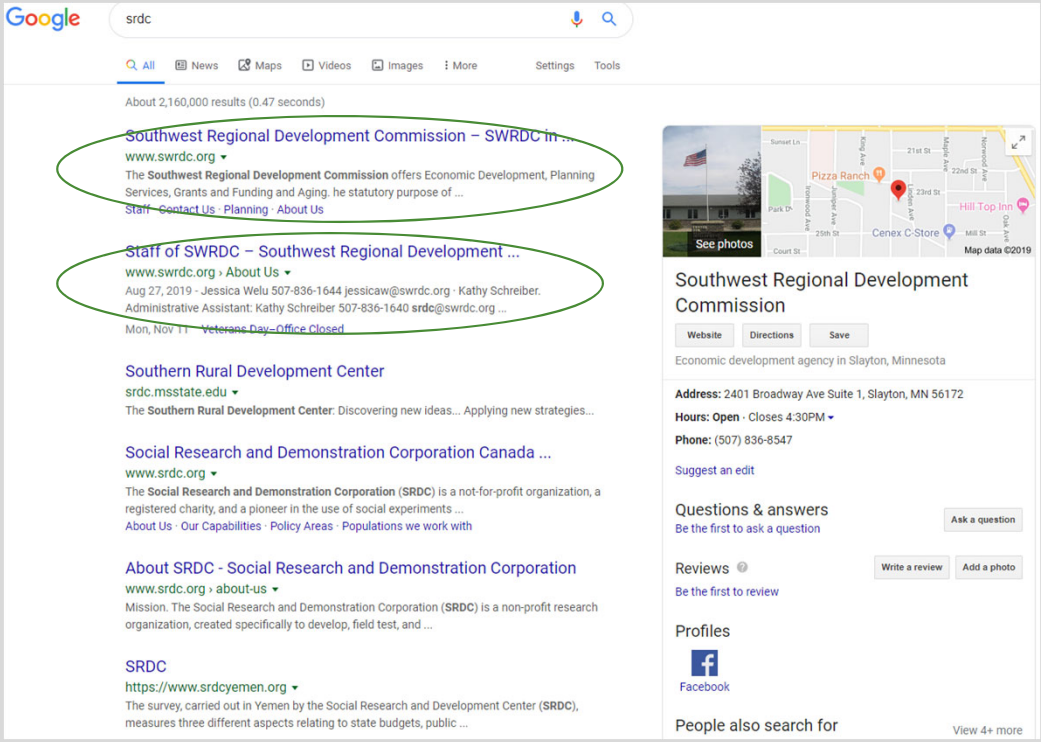
- Consistent content updates.

Google Search:

Southwest Regional Development Commission

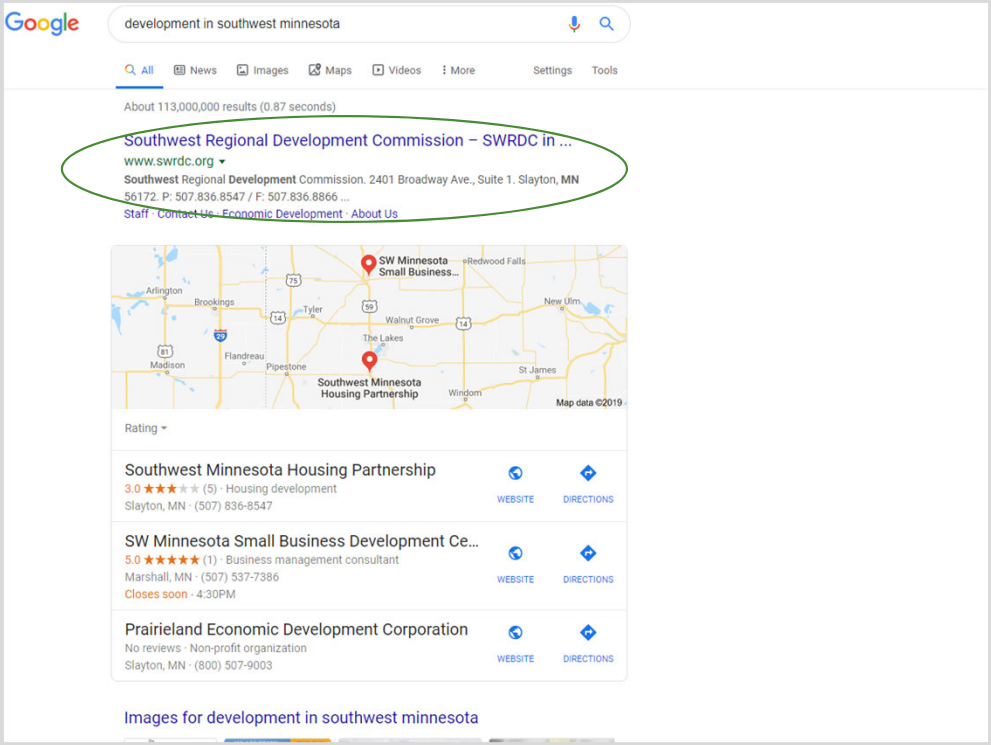


SRDC

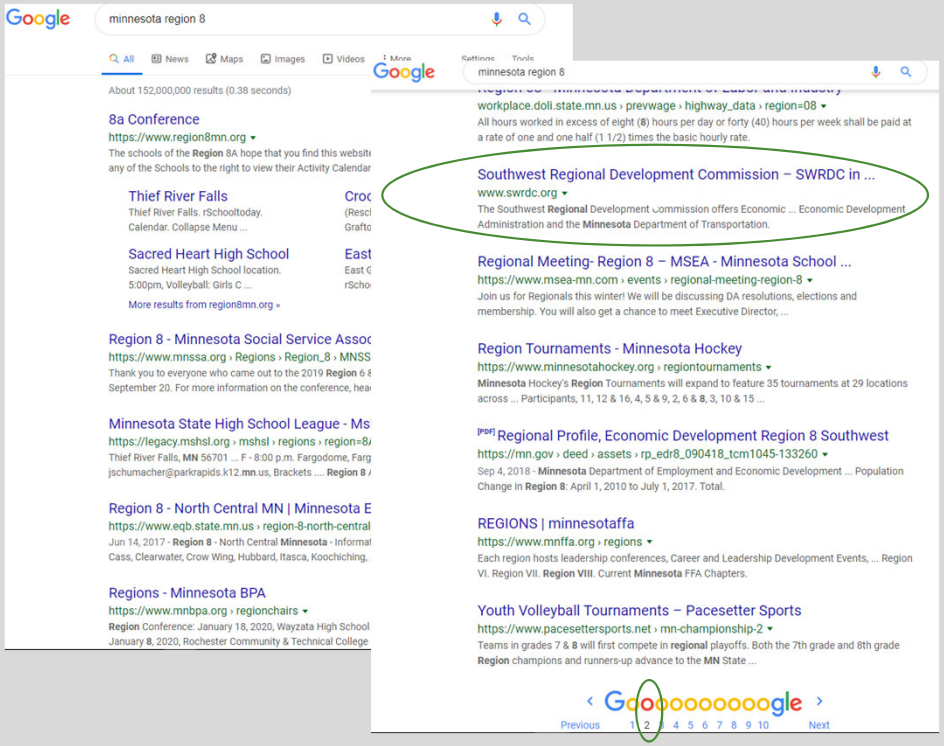


Google Search:

Development in Southwest Minnesota

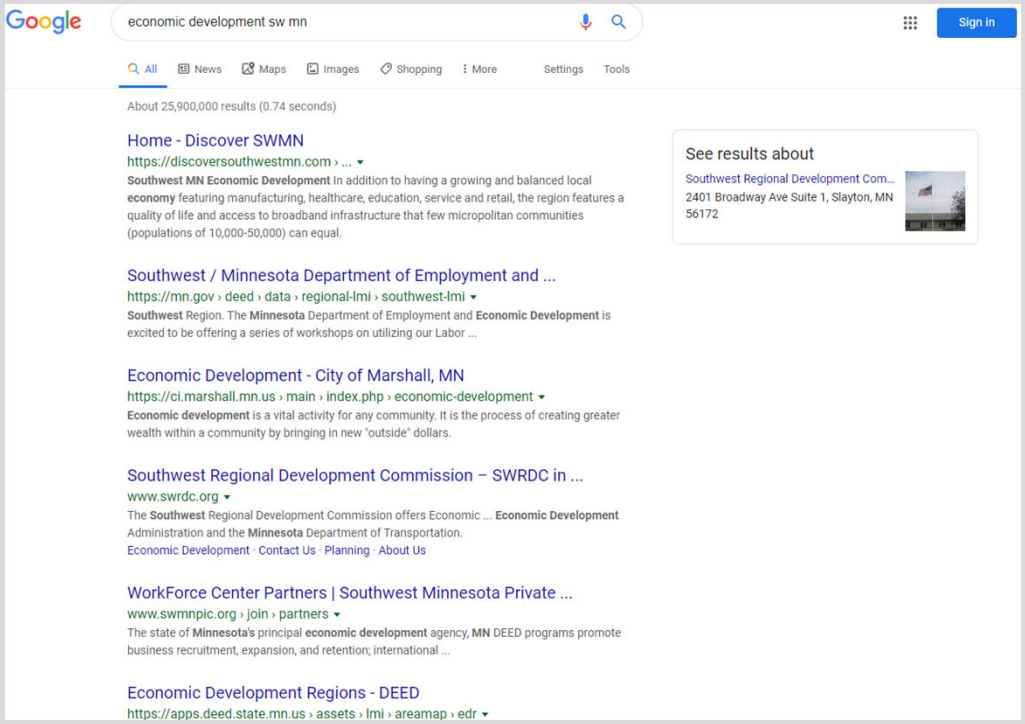


Minnesota Region 8—page 2 of results

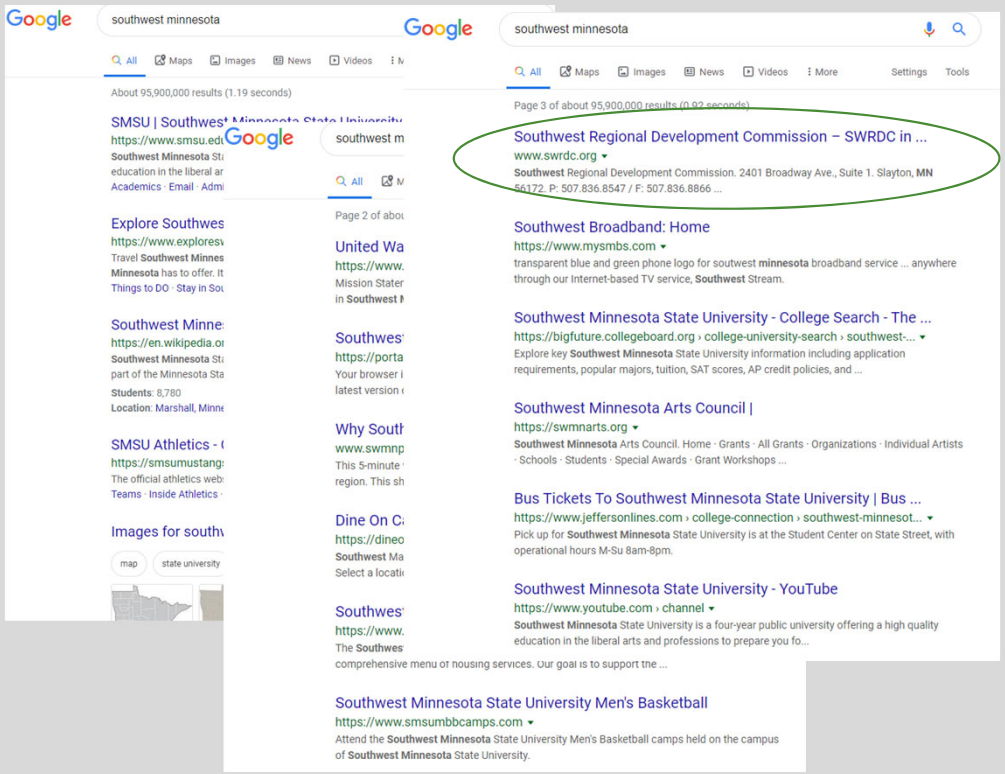


Google Search:

Economic Development SW MN

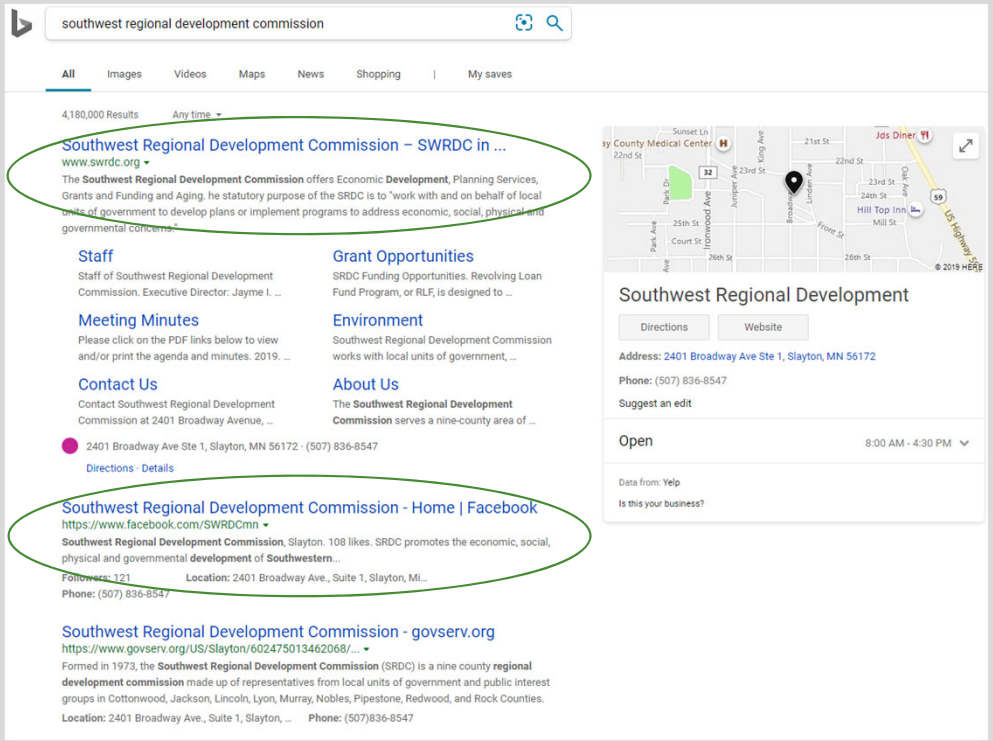


Southwest Minnesota—page 3 of results

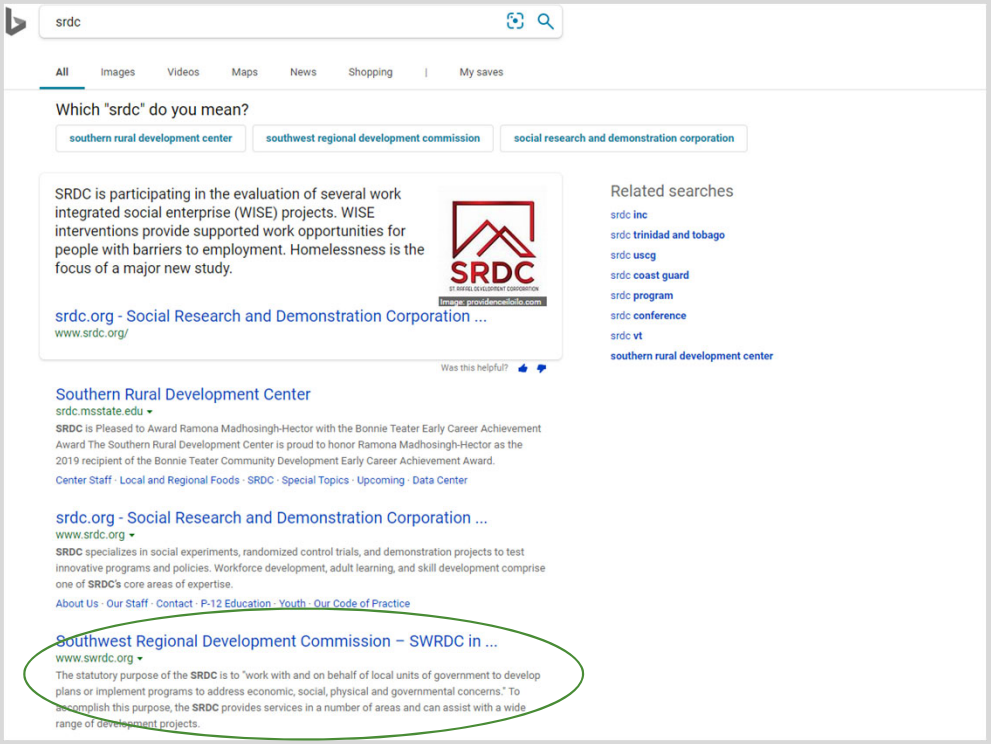


Bing Search:

Southwest Regional Development Commission

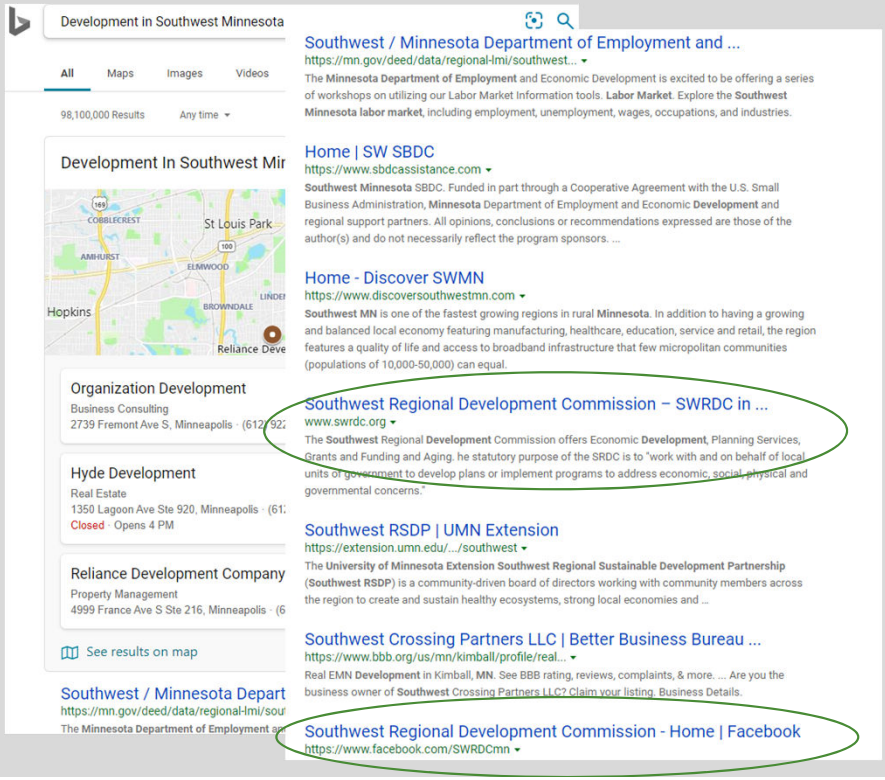


SRDC

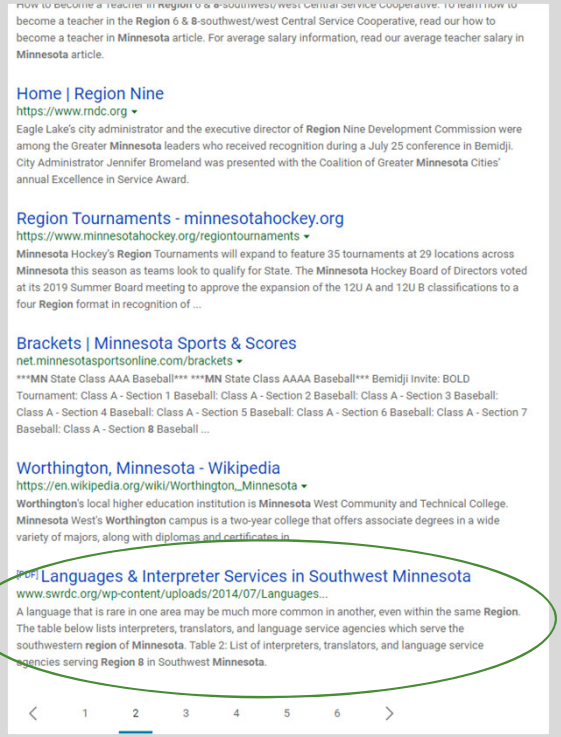


Bing Search:

Development in Southwest Minnesota



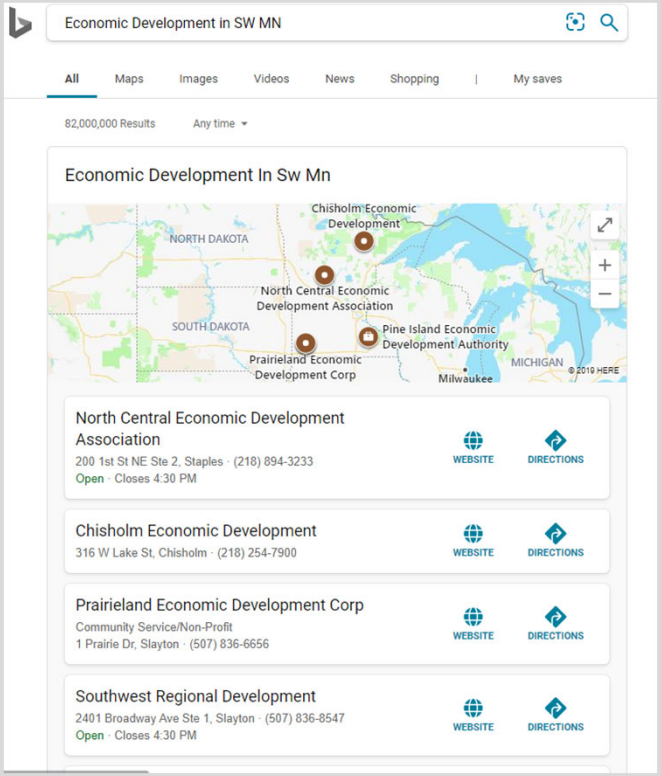
Minnesota Region 8—page 2 of results



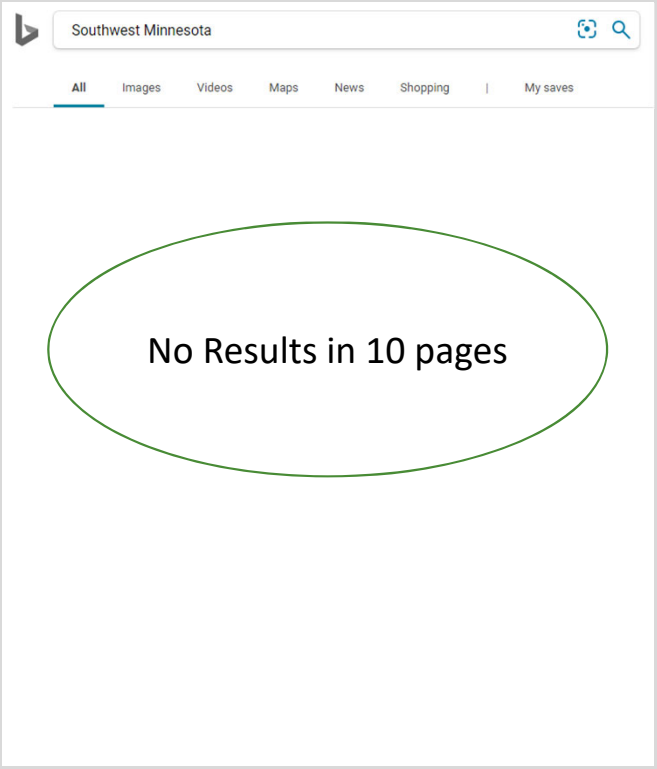
** Only result in 10 pages*

Bing Search:

Economic Development SW MN



Southwest Minnesota



SRDC Communication SWOT Analysis

What do you think?

Strengths	Weaknesses
• We communicate a lot. • Good sense of who our audience is. • Strong logo at the center of our brand.	• Inconsistencies in branding, especially email signatures and documents. • People don't know who we are. • Little engagement.
Opportunities	**Threats**
• SRDC is new to the social media world. • We do a lot, so there are a lot of potential stories. • What are our values? • Commissioners can be our greatest asset.	• Internal communication can be siloed. • We do a lot which makes it hard to succinctly explain what we do. • Transparency & timeliness of communication. • Small office & time constraints.

Communication Questions, Concerns, Opportunities, and Ideas

SRDC Internal Communications Survey

What attributes do you believe are most important to help the SRDC work most effectively?

- Known as a trusted source. The region is aware of SRDC, minimally from a 10,000 ft view. Increased social media presence.
- Information is shared in real-time and correct. Concise, yet effective.
- Clear direction, both from the Board and from clients.
- Time management, expert and reliable staff, team work.
- Need to communicate BEFORE things occur and with ALL staff.
- Communication amongst departments. Fun time periodically - people seems too serious.
- While we are a small team, we often do not know what the other members in the office are working on. Finding ways to share and collaborate in meaningful ways is important.
- Positive attitude, open minded, not only listen to others but hear them.
- Respect. Knowledge. Strategic thinking. Cooperation.

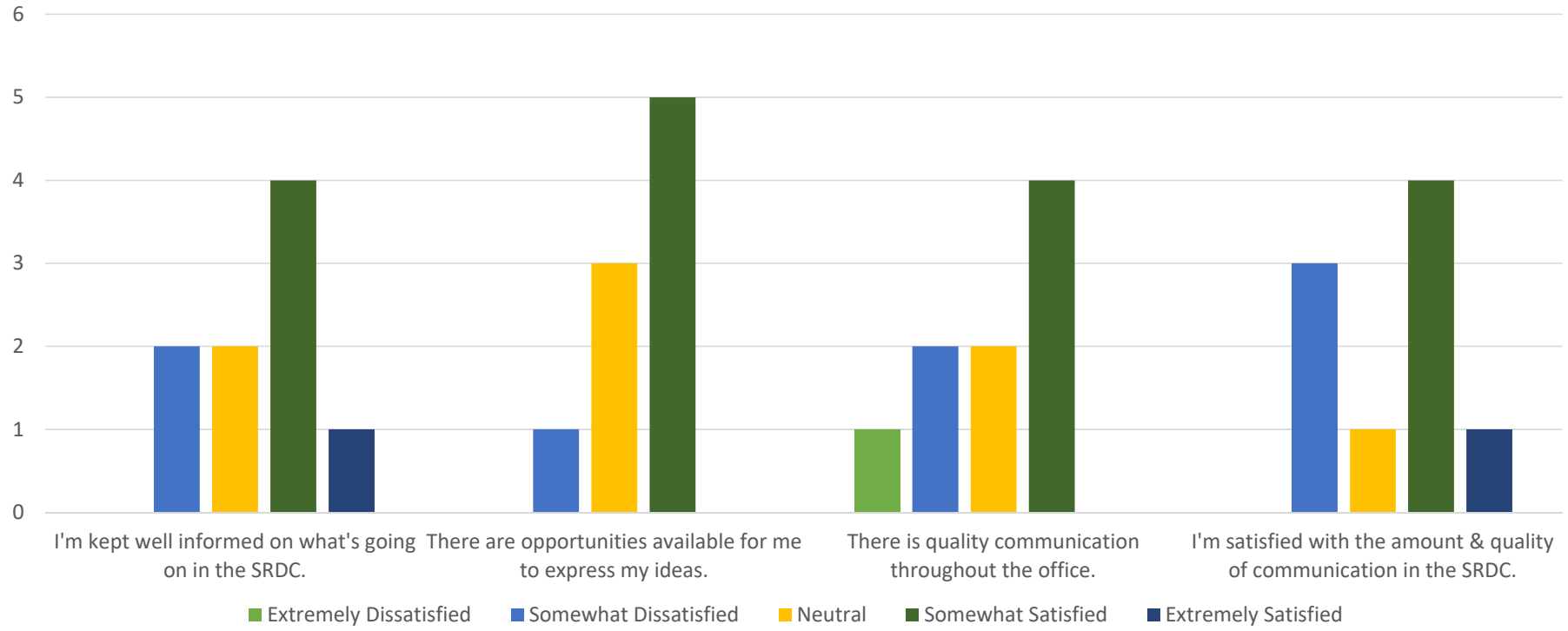
SRDC Internal Communications Survey

How do you envision communication in your role?

- Listening to other ideas. Providing input on pros and cons. Providing consistency but options or reasons or interpretations to help the end project.
- Helps with others to understand options.
- Each SRDC staff includes a short, consistent overview of the SRDC in everything that is done and makes connection to appropriate staff when necessary. Using consistent SRDC looking brochures, powerpoints, etc.
- Making sure everyone has the information they need to best do their jobs.
- Keeping people aware of certain situations.
- Sharing news and information that may impact my co-workers. Presenting information or findings to governments that contract services to us. Bridging the divide between local and state entities.
- Sharing information, data, resources.
- My role has a strong emphasis on external communications with various partners, communities, and funding sources. I need to facilitate, give presentations, listen to community/government needs, write reports, send emails and keep up to date on a number of different topic areas.

SRDC Communications Survey

Thinking about Internal Communication (staff-staff), how well do you feel we do with communication?



SRDC Communications Survey

What changes would you like to see for Internal (staff-staff) communication?

Board/Meeting Related Responses

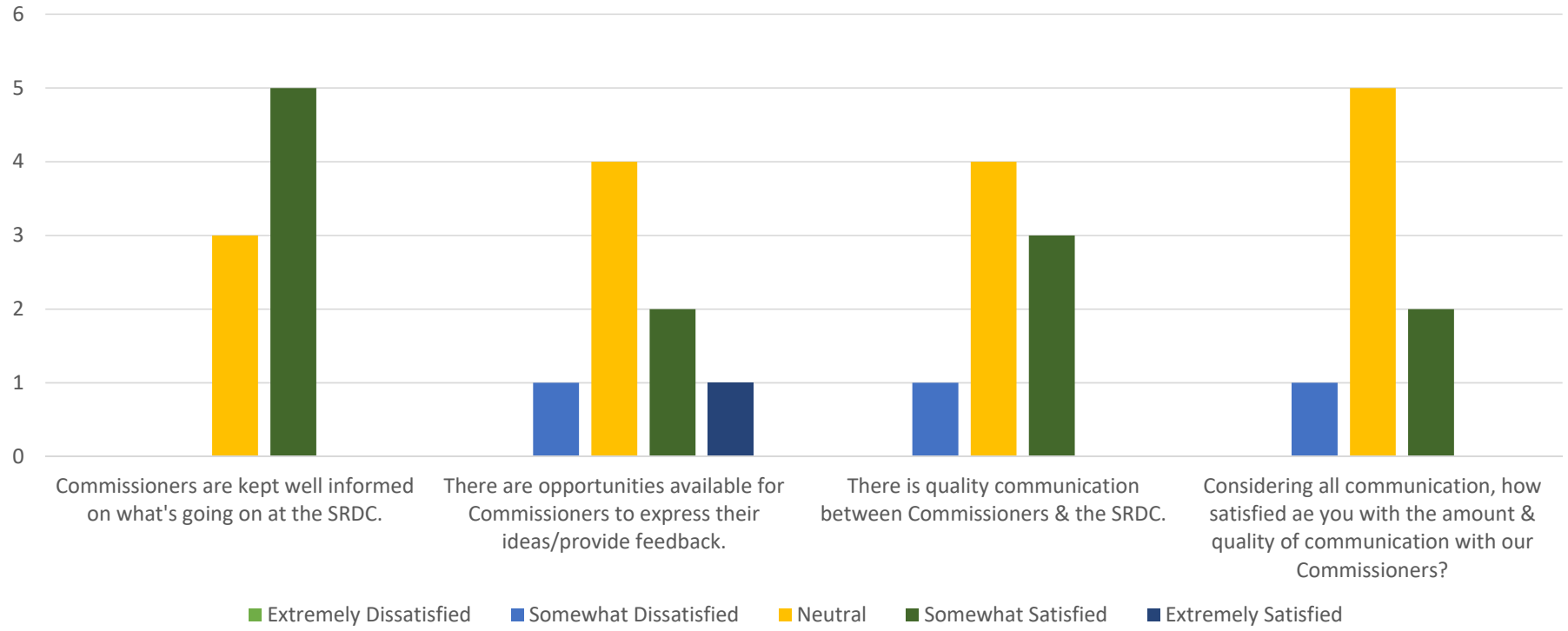
- Better use of the Board reporting process to more accurately reflect what work is actually being done that may not fit in a particular project/program pigeonhole.
- More of a staff meeting atmosphere during pre-board, like talking about what everyone is working on and has coming up.
- Written executive director report within full commission and board packets. Some meetings/events attended by one staff person may have materials shared, notes, etc. that would benefit other staff. Encourage scanning of relevant information when appropriate.

Information-Sharing Related Responses

- Limited people are told information and when that information is needed by others - they end up having to re-do work or how would they know. Don't just talk to a select group of employees.
- Maybe chat option for internal use. Inboxes can get filled up or cluttered. Things that are not directly related to related projects and are not required to be public knowledge (ex. "has anyone seen my special batman mug?") could go through that channel.
- More informal sharing and exploration of collaboration ideas--going beyond emails and board reports.
- There should be project updates at least among the planning staff.
- More interaction as a group and to open to change if need be.
- Knowledge of the purpose of what trying to pursue and how everyone fits into the organization, especially for new staff to know the value of non-planning staff and how we are to work together to help the 9-county area we serve. Better onboarding -have new staff attend orientation. Knowing more what is expected in a position so they can run with it. Respecting all staff no matter what position, length of service and working together more effectively.

SRDC Communications Survey

Thinking about Communication with our Commissioners, how well do you feel we communicate?



SRDC Communications Survey

What changes would you like to see for communication with our Commissioners?

Information Related Responses

- Sometimes seems like Full Commission is somewhat left out compared to the Board, but understandable as can't always work with a big group.
- Commissioners are often asked to report back what they learned at meetings they attend. Would be helpful for them to have a short recap after board and/or full commission meetings (CC staff so all get the same information).
- Commission meetings are report and info heavy. We could "flip" the meetings. We could emphasize that they are responsible for reading the reports ahead of time and then we could use our meeting time for questions, offering of various resources, and solving problems together while we have everyone gathered. Why waste their time telling them what they can easily read for 2 hours?

Technology Related Responses

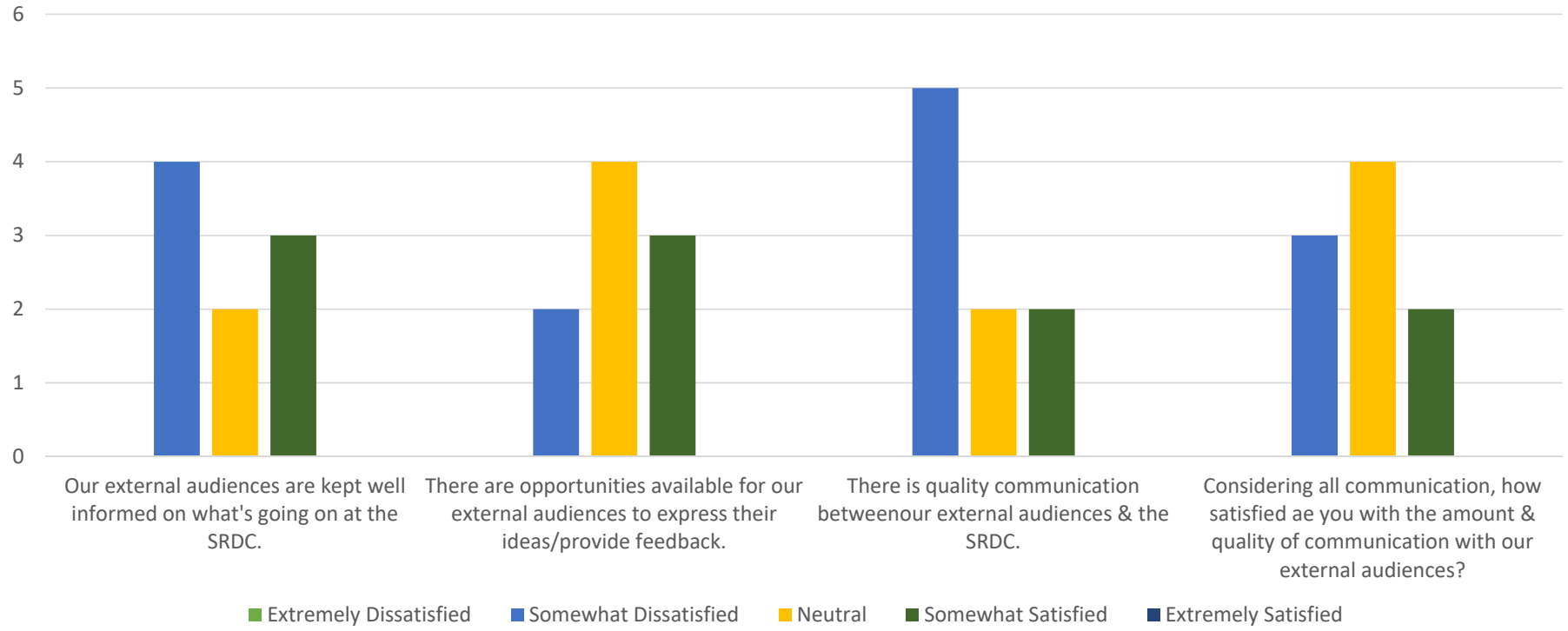
- More modern ideas - electronic options.
- I would like to see ALL of the Commissioners upgrade technologically so that Commission/Board Communication can be primarily electronic.

Other Responses

- I have not informed comment.
- Not quite sure on this one.

SRDC Communications Survey

Thinking about External Communication, how well do you feel we communicate?



SRDC Communications Survey

What changes would you like to see for communication with our Commissioners?

Awareness Related Responses

- Even our immediate location area citizens do not really know what we do and what our value to the community is, so how can the rest of the 9-county area.
- Confusion some times on who they talk to about certain elements.
- A more direct relationship between the work we do, how it is communicated, and how that leads to new work.
- Possibly more media or an awareness of what the SRDC does.
- More two-way communications. Newsletters, board reports, etc. are very one-side, information-heavy forms of communication. Let's engage in conversations, problem-solving, collaborations, and idea generation.

Marketing Related Responses

- Regularly scheduled newsletter sharing success stories, new programs, etc. Staff receive SRDC logo attire annually (people notice this). Give away item- i.e. SWIF consistently gives away 8 1/2 x 11 notepads, pens at loan closing, etc.- i.e. Region Nine has pins (might work good for board members and commissioners especially when they go on legislative visits, ATPs, etc.)
- More marketing of the RDC to our potential clients. More "patting ourselves on the back" stories to our external audience.

Other Responses

- Communicating to public audiences on behalf of any type of governmental unit is and will always be a challenge.
- I have no idea what the external communication is in the first place.

SRDC Communications Survey

Do you have other comments, suggestions, questions or thoughts to add as we work toward a Comprehensive Communications Plan? What opportunities do you see for better communication at the SRDC?

Branding Responses

- Consistent email signatures, CRD sign on Broadway is missing letters, SRDC sign on Broadway is not updated with logo, etc. Would open houses get people into our building so that people are more aware of who we are? Do other radio stations besides KDOM have free spots for SRDC?

Awareness Responses

- We are a unique organization. Commissioners need to see our value and not think that we are "just" another layer of government and operate the same as the counties or cities or townships.
- Perhaps we can start with exactly what is the current status of the communications - before we say what opportunities are.

“The Way We Do Business” Responses

- Move away towards the factory model of hour based contracting and focus on deliverables which then means we put a price on delivering a particular product or outcome and then we can work together as a staff/board combo to deliver on that product or outcome as efficiently and effectively as possible without worrying about the billable hours.
- If you want an opinion - go to the individual - not to someone who is "guessing" or something they heard in the halls/gossip.
- I think shared working platforms will be of great benefit to the agency, but I've not yet taken the time to familiarize myself with the available products

Communication Questions, Concerns, Opportunities, and Ideas

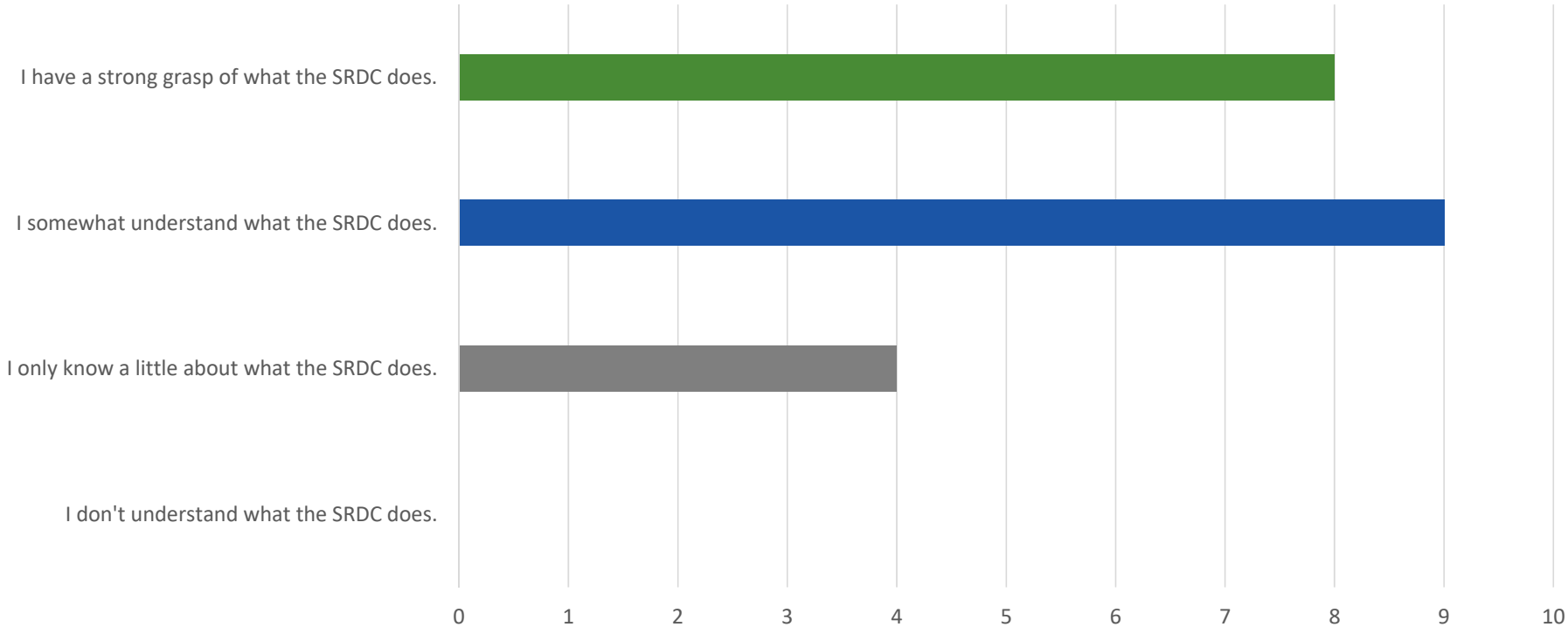
SRDC Commissioner Communications Survey

Survey completed November 14, 2019

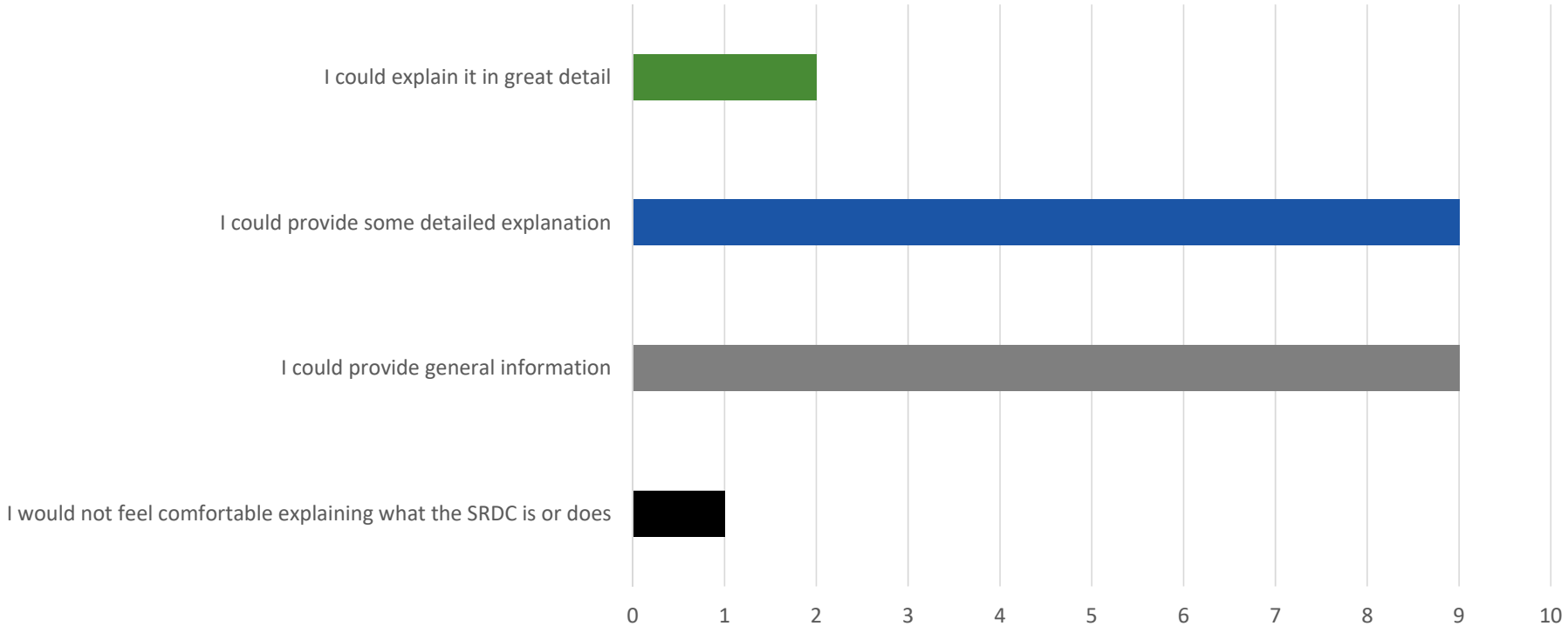
21/33 survey responses

Describe the SRDC in one word.

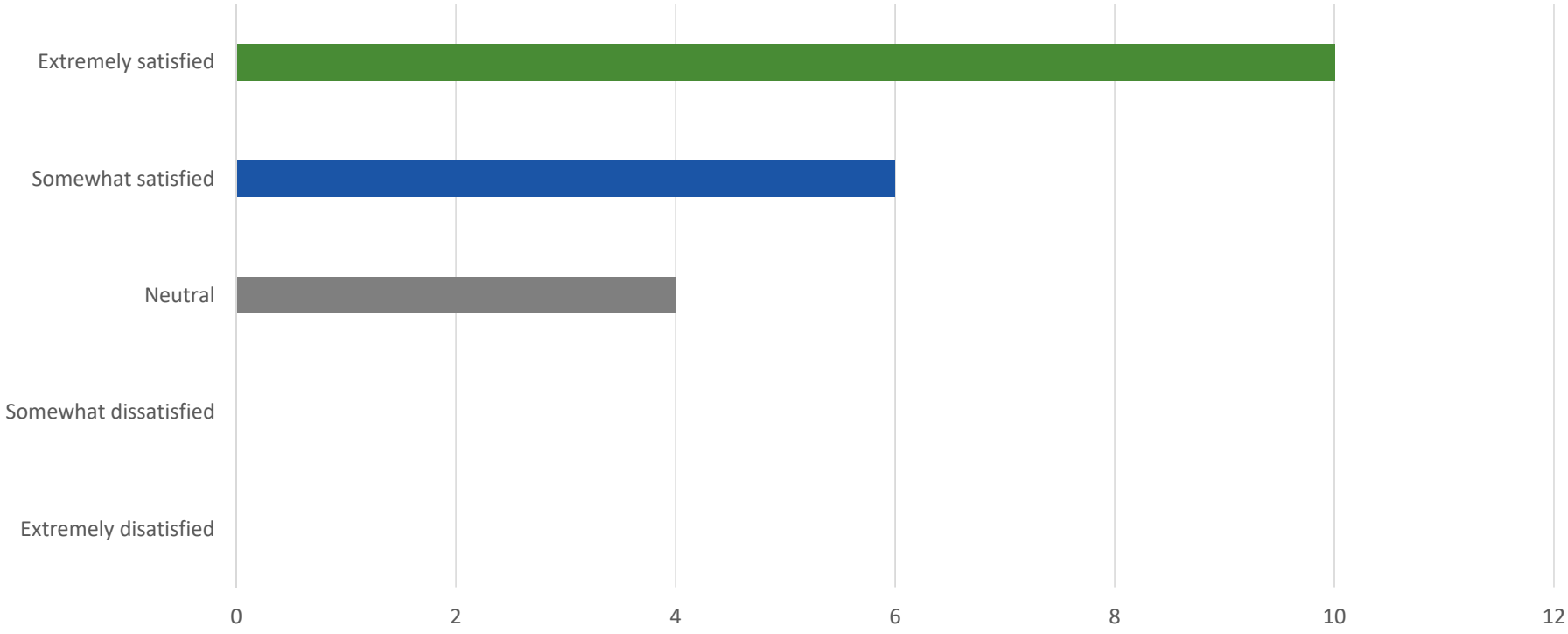
How well do you feel you understand what the SRDC does?



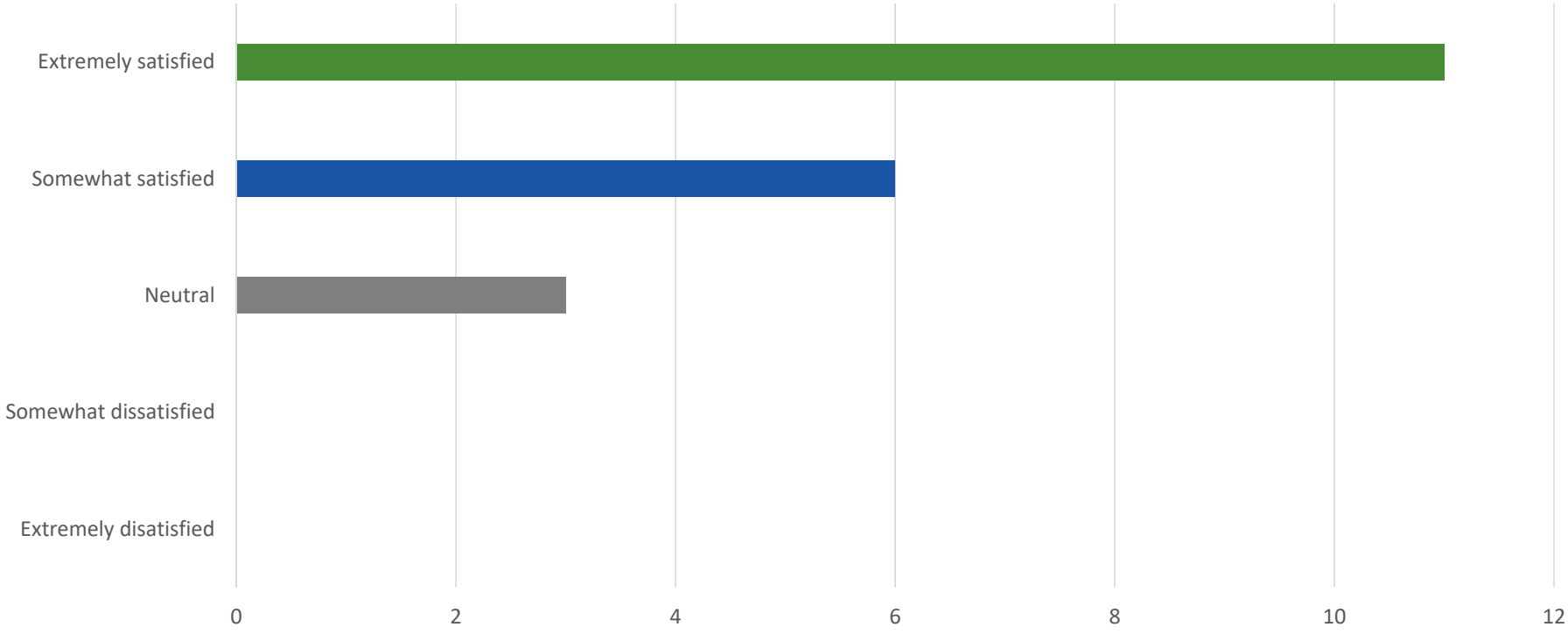
How well do you feel you can explain to somewhat what the SRDC is and what the SRDC does?



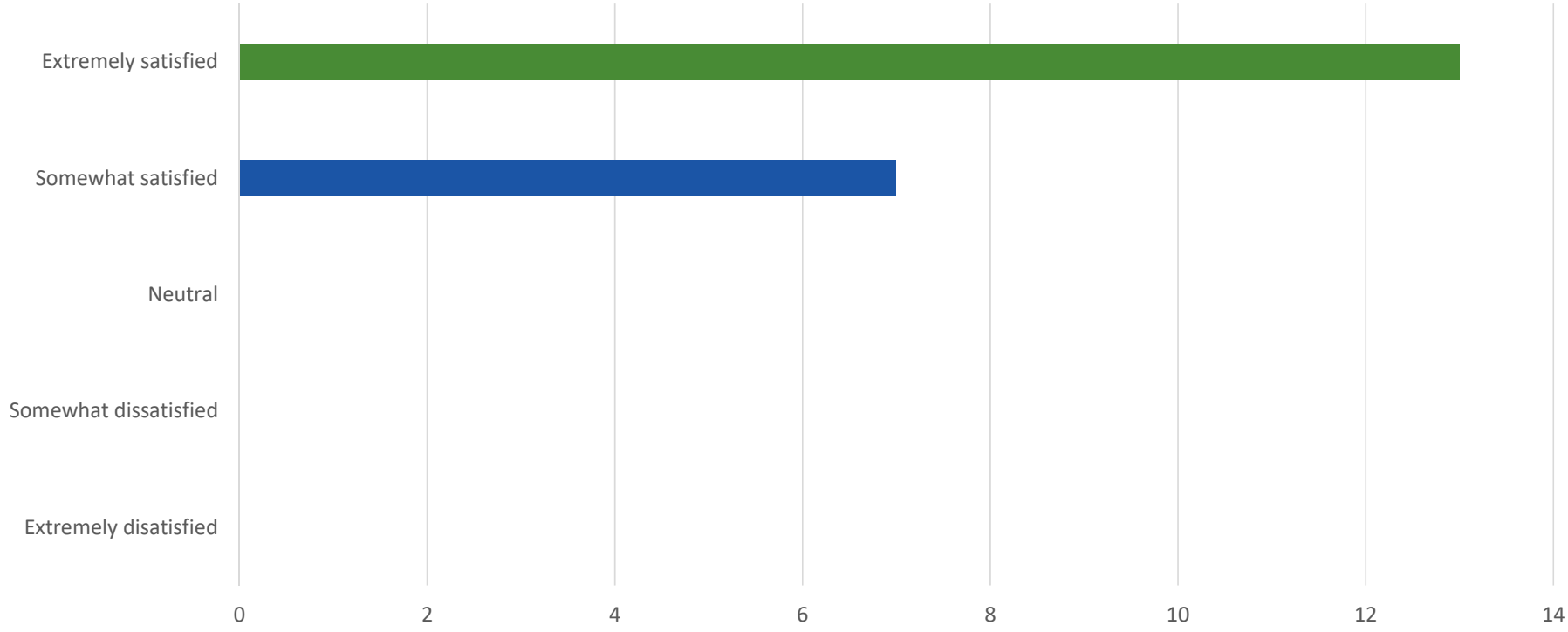
As an SRDC Commissioner, how well do you feel you are kept informed on what's going on at the SRDC?



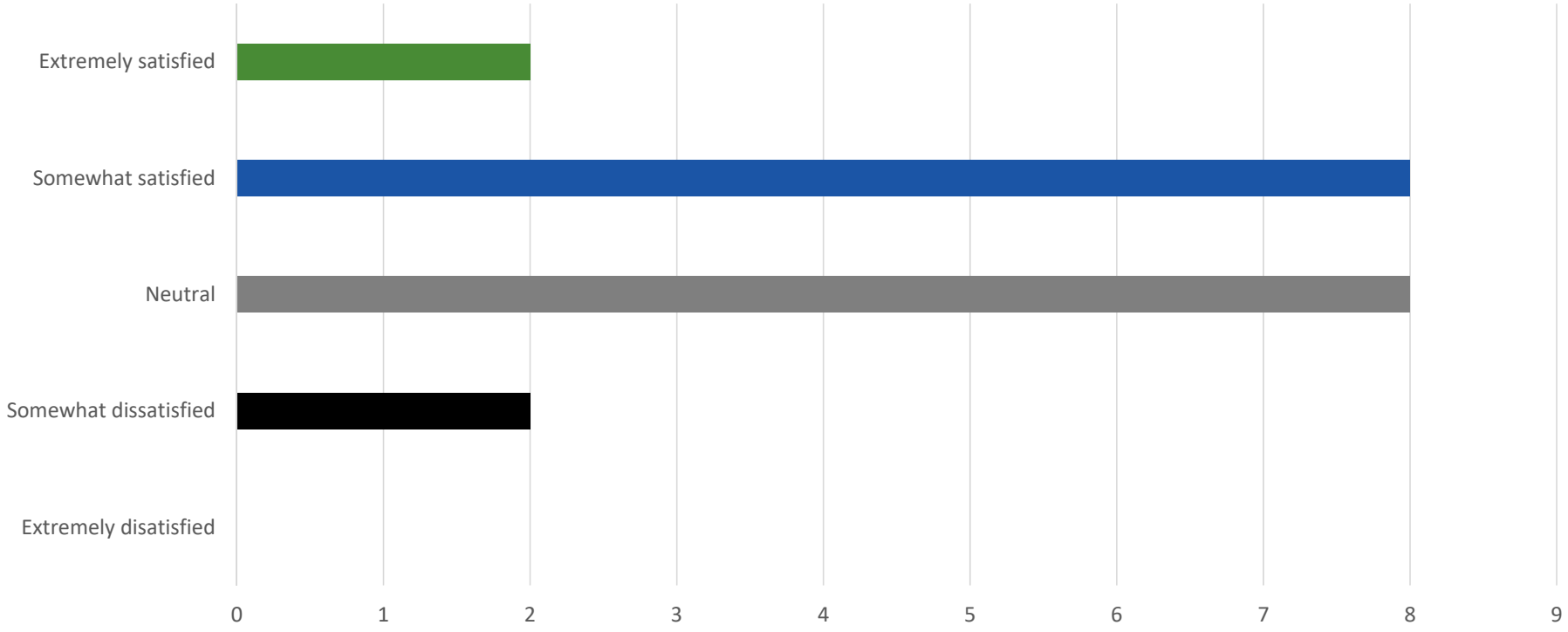
Do you feel there are enough opportunities available for you to express your ideas/feedback to the SRDC?



How satisfied are you with the quality of communication you receive from the SRDC?



How satisfied are you with the amount and quality of communication the SRDC has with the general public?

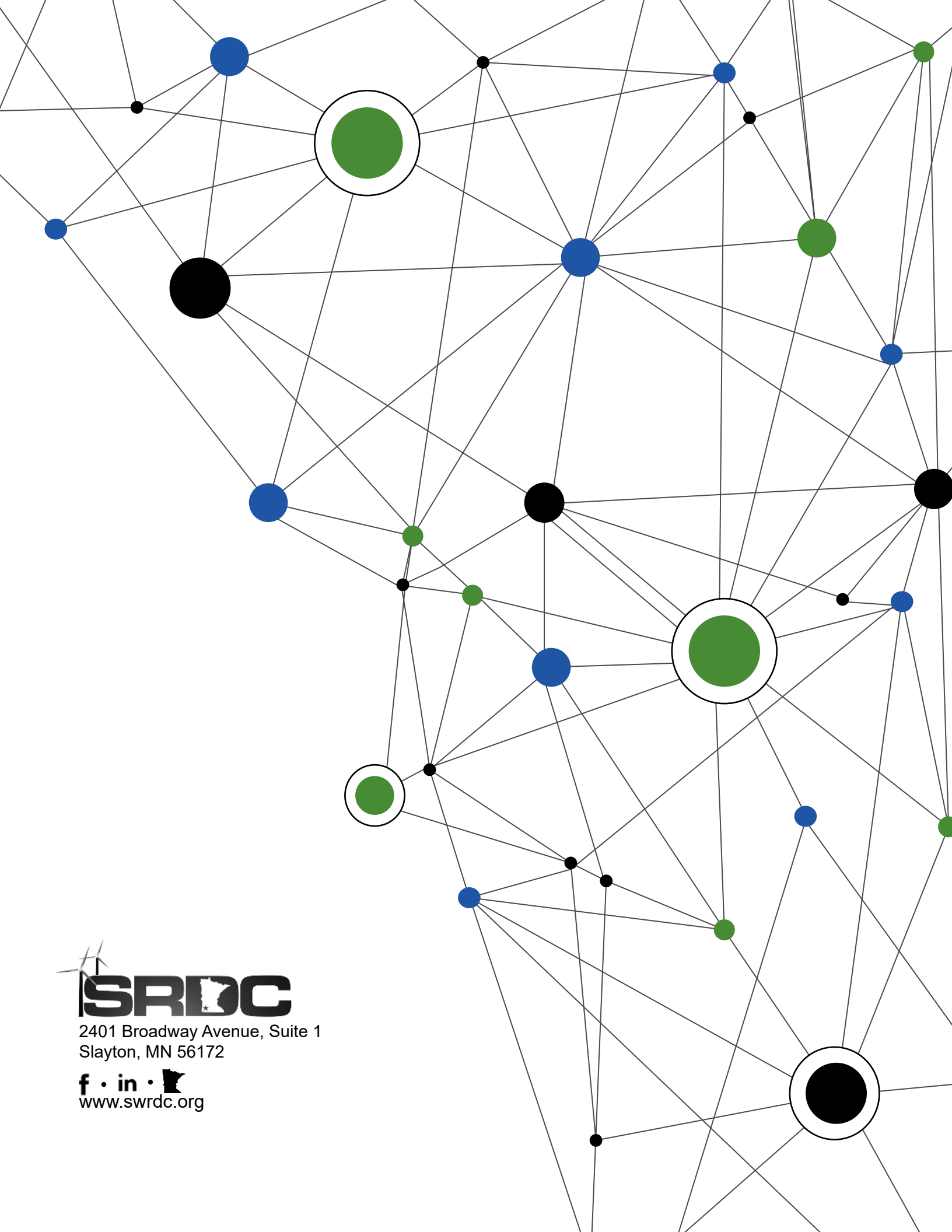


What is one thing the SRDC should do to increase its communication efforts?

- Go paperless
- Regional news briefs
- Public awareness
- Facebook
- Social media
- More marketing locally
- Facebook/radio
- Advertise
- Newspaper articles
- Public outreach events
- Regular viewer friendly reports
- Social media
- Local news information about SRDC
- I can say I think they do a good job with communication
- Having Jay attend meetings has been appreciated by many.
- The meeting packets are very helpful and full of information.
- I think the RDC does a good job of communicating to its base, which is the LGU's that are in the region. Those entities that are part of the commission have the responsibility to spread the word back to their organizations. Encouraging commissioners to invite staff to local meetings is a huge plus.

Do you have any questions or comments regarding SRDC communication?

- Keep up the great work!!
- The meeting packets are very helpful and full of information.
- No



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