

*Northwest
Regional
Development
Commission*

(www.nwrdc.org)

2011 Evaluation and Assessment

*NWRDC
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*Working on behalf of Local Units of Government in Kittson, Marshall, Norman,
Pennington, Polk, Red Lake and Roseau Counties*

Northwest Regional Development Commission 2011 Evaluation Report

I. Background of the Evaluation

The Regional Development Act of 1969 requires that a self evaluation of each Regional Development Commission be completed every five years. The section of the Act which deals with the evaluation reads as follows:

"In 2001 and every five years thereafter the commission shall review its activities and issue a report assessing its performance in fulfilling the purposes of the regional development act. **The report shall address whether the existence of the commission is in the public welfare and interest.**"

The Regional Development Act states the purpose of Regional Development Commissions is 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 of each region of the state.**"

The Northwest Regional Development Commission (NWRDC) has undertaken this evaluation to determine if the Commission is meeting the expectations of the public and if improvements can be made for the future.

II. Methodology

The following steps were completed during the evaluation process:

- A review of past evaluations was completed.
- The NWRDC Board of Directors instructed staff to complete a survey of local units of government and those receiving services from the Commission.
- Staff drafted a survey instrument, solicited input on understandability and completed modifications based on input. A copy of the survey and associated documents begin on page 5.
- The survey was mailed to county commissioners, county auditors/administrators, mayors, city clerks, township association chairs, NWRDC advisory committee members, and a sample of persons receiving services from each of the programs.

A total of 820 surveys were mailed. 506 email survey invitations were sent through SurveyMonkey.com, with 281 respondents (56%). 314 surveys were sent by mail with 56 respondents (18%). Each mailing included a stamped return envelope. Overall respondent rate was 41.1%.

- Survey results were tabulated and presented to the NWRDC Board and Commission.
- A final report was drafted and accepted by the NWRDC Board on January 3, 2012.

III. Survey Results

The survey results are tabulated on page 5. The total number of persons responding to each question is found directly adjacent to the box for each response option. The following is a summary of the results:

Response Rate

- The overall response rate of 41.1% is high enough to assume the results are representative of those surveyed.
- The response rate from local units of government was high enough to reflect a strong representative sample. 157 surveys were returned from the 289 units of government (7 counties, 54 cities, 228 townships). Each type of local government also appears well-represented in the survey returns.
- The response rate from NWRDC members and Committee members was high enough to indicate a representative sample. 113 surveys were returned from board members. Each committee was also well-represented.
- All the programs and service types are well enough represented in the responses to assume the survey can be applied to all components of the NWRDC.

Quality of Services

- The ranking of 8.52 on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest ranking, reflects a very positive assessment by those responding to the survey.
- There were only 9 rankings below 5 with the exception of one ranking of 1. The comments related to those rankings were mainly about the need for more information or assistance.
- Cross tabulations of quality of service according to categories of elected officials, committee members, program areas, and types of services showed very little variation.

Fulfillment of Purpose

- 86.8% of those responding agreed with the statement that the NWRDC is working on behalf of local units of government to address concerns of the region.

- Only 2% of those responding felt the NWRDC is not working on behalf of local units of government. A small percentage (11.2%) were not sure. Comments related to these responses were almost all about a lack of information.

Information

- 86% of those responding felt the NWRDC is providing adequate information about it's programs and services.
- 4.3% (13) felt information was not adequate and 9.7% were not sure. This was associated with low quality and fulfillment ratings.

Priorities and Comments

- There were a variety of suggestions and comments on the operation of the NWRDC and future priorities. The responses are summarized beginning on page 11 of 26 in the SurveyMonkey results. The great majority of the comments were positive or constructive in nature with a small number of negative comments and concerns.
- There were no major trends in the comments that appeared to reflect a need for the NWRDC to make large scale shifts in direction. There were a number of helpful suggestions and reaffirmations of the work directions set by the NWRDC and program Committees. A number of comments appeared to be directed toward the importance of maintaining efforts to support growth and development.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusion

Based on the results of the evaluation process, the Commission can state that:

1. **The existence of the commission is in the public welfare and interest.** This statement is made in consideration of the costs and benefits of the services provided by the NWRDC.
2. The NWRDC is fulfilling its purpose of working on behalf of local units of government to address economic, social, physical, and governmental concerns of each region of the state.
3. Local units of government and others receiving services feel the programs and services of the NWRDC are high quality in nature.
4. No major shifts in direction or corrective measures are needed to respond to public concerns.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to address concerns expressed during the evaluation process and to insure the continuation of quality services to the area:

1. The NWRDC should monitor changing economic, social, and natural resource conditions to maintain a clear understanding of development issues facing Northwest Minnesota.
2. Staff, Commission, and Committee members should make an extra effort to provide information about the Commission when the opportunity is presented. Providing understandable information to the public and units of government should be an ongoing priority, especially to township representatives.
3. Individual programs should review the results of the evaluation to incorporate information about the public's perceptions on priorities and direction.
4. Appreciation should be expressed to commission members, committee members, local units of government, staff, and our many partners for their efforts in providing service to the public.

NWRDC 2011 Evaluation



1. Elected or appointed official:

	Response Percent	Response Count
Federal	1.0%	3
State	2.2%	7
County	21.5%	67
City	14.7%	46
Township	13.8%	43
N/A	48.1%	150
answered question		312
skipped question		23

2. Commission or Committee Member:

	Response Percent	Response Count
NWRDC	12.7%	40
Arts Council	8.3%	26
Enterprise Fund	2.5%	8
Aging	8.3%	26
Transportation	2.9%	9
Homeland Security	1.3%	4
N/A	68.8%	216
answered question		314
skipped question		21

3. Which program(s) did you receive services from or participate in within the past five years?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Aging/Senior LinkAge Line®		18.2%	59
Arts		34.2%	111
Economic Development		23.1%	75
Loan Fund		13.5%	44
JobZ		7.1%	23
Housing		6.5%	21
Transportation		8.9%	29
Homeland Security		5.8%	19
N/A		23.4%	76
answered question			325
skipped question			10





4. Services - If you received a direct service from the NWRDC in the past five years, what type of service did you receive?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Grant	40.6%	103
Loan	11.4%	29
Info/Referral	18.5%	47
Professional Service	20.5%	52
Newsletters or Other Publications	33.5%	85
Technical Assistance	13.4%	34
Staffing/Meeting Facilitation	15.4%	39
Other	8.3%	21
For "Other" please specify:		24
answered question		254
skipped question		81





5. Quality of Services - How would you rank the overall quality of the services of the NWRDC Agency (Please check one number, with 10 being the highest ranking):

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Ratio Average
NWRDC	0.0%	0.7%	0.7%	1.9%	3.3%	3.0%	10.8%	20.1%	24.9%	34.6%	8
	(0)	(2)	(2)	(5)	(9)	(8)	(29)	(54)	(67)	(93)	
											answered question
											skipped question












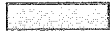


6. Fulfillment of Purpose - Do you feel the Northwest Regional Development Commission is working with and on behalf of local units of government to address economic, social, physical and governmental concerns of the region?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Definitely		74.8%	225
Sometimes		12.0%	36
Rarely		2.0%	6
Not Sure		11.3%	34
	If you would like, please explain:		21
	answered question		301
	skipped question		34





7. Information - Does the NWRDC provide adequate information about programs and services?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Definitely		58.7%	175
Sometimes		27.2%	81
Rarely		4.4%	13
Not Sure		9.7%	29
	If you would like, please explain:		24
	answered question		298
	skipped question		37

8. Priorities - What are the development issues or programs you feel the NWRDC should pursue in the next five years? Please check up to five areas.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Senior/Aging Support Services		45.5%	135
Transportation (Transit, Mapping)		23.2%	69
Economic Development		63.3%	188
Affordable Housing Issues		43.4%	129
Business Retention/Expansion (Loans, Technical Assistance)		44.4%	132
Disaster Recovery		8.1%	24
Broadband (access, availability, marketing)		21.5%	64
Arts Programs/Promotion		38.4%	114
Community Development		55.6%	165
Workforce Development		32.7%	97
Renewable Energy (Wind, Solar, Geothermal, Biomass)		37.0%	110
Comprehensive Planning		16.5%	49
Energy Efficiency		24.9%	74
Other		2.7%	8
	Other (please specify)		15
	answered question		297
	skipped question		38

9. Have you used the NWRDC websites www.nwrdc.org or www.visitnwminnesota.com in the last six months?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, and the information was useful		39.9%	121
Yes, and the information was only partly useful		5.6%	17
Yes, but the information was not useful		1.7%	5
No		52.8%	160
Comment on what you found or did not find on-line on the NWRDC and its program areas:			12
		answered question	303
		skipped question	32

10. The NWRDC maintains fresh vision and mission statements with specific policies and strategies to achieve them.

	1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Vision/Mission	3.0% (9)	5.6% (17)	9.6% (29)	28.1% (85)	22.5% (68)	31.1% (94)	3.89	302
						answered question		302
						skipped question		33

11. The NWRDC's regional focus is on results and outcomes, rather than control and gaining credit.

	1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Outcome Focused	3.6% (11)	6.0% (18)	8.9% (27)	21.5% (65)	42.1% (127)	17.9% (54)	4.13	302
							answered question	302
							skipped question	33

12. The NWRDC is an active participant and associate of business, industry and educational associations and alliances within our region.

	1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Associations	3.0% (9)	5.4% (16)	9.4% (28)	24.5% (73)	37.6% (112)	20.1% (60)	4.11	298
							answered question	298
							skipped question	37

13. The NWRDC is a key resource for moving our region forward in the 21st century.

	1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
21st Century	5.0% (15)	4.3% (13)	12.5% (38)	28.7% (87)	35.6% (108)	13.9% (42)	4.00	303
							answered question	303
							skipped question	32

14. The NWRDC board members are engaged in setting the agenda and priorities for the organization.

	1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Board Engagement	4.0% (12)	3.6% (11)	7.3% (22)	20.5% (62)	16.2% (49)	48.3% (146)	3.80	302
								answered question 302
								skipped question 33

15. The NWRDC is best described as:

	Never	Rarely	Somewhat	Often	Always	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Board driven	0.0% (0)	4.1% (12)	13.7% (40)	17.1% (50)	9.2% (27)	56.0% (164)	3.71	293
Customer motivated	0.3% (1)	3.8% (11)	12.3% (36)	23.3% (68)	23.3% (68)	37.0% (108)	4.04	292
Staff lead	0.3% (1)	3.1% (9)	7.2% (21)	26.3% (77)	18.4% (54)	44.7% (131)	4.07	293
Program focused	0.3% (1)	1.7% (5)	8.1% (24)	32.2% (95)	26.1% (77)	31.5% (93)	4.20	295
Grant influenced	0.7% (2)	2.7% (8)	11.3% (33)	28.9% (84)	14.8% (43)	41.6% (121)	3.93	291
							Comments	2
								answered question 301
								skipped question 34

16. Comments - Please provide any additional comments about the NWRDC as an agency and/or the programs and services of the NWRDC, including both things working well, and those needing attention:

	Response Count
	58
answered question	58
skipped question	277

Page 1, Q4. Services - If you received a direct service from the NWRDC in the past five years, what type of service did you receive?

1	Zoning	Dec 21, 2011 9:53 AM
2	none	Dec 21, 2011 9:18 AM
3	I have been approved for grant, but haven't actually gotten yet	Dec 20, 2011 7:38 PM
4	Arts information	Dec 20, 2011 2:58 PM
5	We received little real assistance in ant way and we did not request any.	Dec 20, 2011 11:22 AM
6	We worked together on a grant application to HUD that would have covered these areas.	Dec 16, 2011 8:27 AM
7	Encouragement and practical advice regarding our complex public art grant project at several stages along the way to completion and dedication	Dec 15, 2011 2:56 PM
8	None	Dec 15, 2011 1:15 PM
9	Participated on the loan committee	Dec 15, 2011 12:45 PM
10	Opportunity to sit on Trails steering committee.	Dec 15, 2011 12:11 PM
11	I serve on the Land of the the Dancing Sky - West Central Agency on Aging Council. I am a medical social worker representing Perham Health.	Dec 15, 2011 11:05 AM
12	Financing	Dec 15, 2011 10:21 AM
13	Arts grants and newsletters Professional Service in assisting the MN Historic Northwest consortium organize.	Dec 12, 2011 2:21 PM
14	Loan partner in business projects throughout nwmn	Dec 12, 2011 7:49 AM
15	I am not aware that we received any direct services from NWRDC.	Dec 12, 2011 7:33 AM
16	NWRDC was a co-recipient of funding we provided to study housing needs in the greater Thief River Falls area	Dec 12, 2011 7:31 AM
17	I was asked to come to two economic development meetings as a professional resource.	Dec 12, 2011 7:15 AM
18	Used NWRDC jointly with other agencies such as the Mn. Foundation and SBA on a loan package. Worked very well.	Dec 12, 2011 6:39 AM
19	Contract for aging service.	Dec 12, 2011 5:26 AM
20	None	Dec 10, 2011 4:24 AM
21	Not applicable	Dec 9, 2011 6:07 PM
22	My Daughter received a \$500 art schloarship for singing. I have received a couple of support letters for my work at the Nature Conservancy.	Dec 9, 2011 3:35 PM
23	I serve on an arts board which receives grants for arts projects.	Dec 9, 2011 3:03 PM

Page 1, Q4. Services - If you received a direct service from the NWRDC in the past five years, what type of service did you receive?

24 Gap loan funding for a bank customer

Dec 9, 2011 2:12 PM

Page 2, Q6. Fulfillment of Purpose - Do you feel the Northwest Regional Development Commission is working with and on behalf of local units of government to address economic, social, physical and governmental concerns of the region?

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| 1 | I don't hear enough about services for the elderly. | Dec 21, 2011 9:58 AM |
| 2 | We have not had any projects that we needed to use your services | Dec 20, 2011 7:54 PM |
| 3 | My response refers to the Arts as that is the only part of the agency I have had contact with during the past 5 years | Dec 20, 2011 3:03 PM |
| 4 | It is an increasingly complicated region to understand and benefit with a wide range of programs and limited resources. | Dec 20, 2011 3:02 PM |
| 5 | As a banker we are always looking to develop our local communities. With tools like NWRDC it enables us to close a deal we may not have otherwise been able to. | Dec 20, 2011 12:27 PM |
| 6 | The expertise provide by NWRDC and their willingness to explore options for the future that would benefit the region were exemplary. | Dec 16, 2011 8:29 AM |
| 7 | It seems in the area of aging services the state has taken on so many initiatives that end up being a duplication of services for monitoring activities rather than providing funds for actual service delivery. | Dec 15, 2011 11:08 AM |
| 8 | The staff members that I work with go above and beyond to meet the needs of the counties, our region, and my agency on a regular basis. | Dec 15, 2011 10:24 AM |
| 9 | Since we are so far away from anything related to the arts, it is great to get opportunities for the kids to take lessons or go to camps to help them develop as musicians/artists. If not for these programs, my kids would not be doing anything extra in the arts. | Dec 15, 2011 10:02 AM |
| 10 | One thing that bothers me is that some people are really good at living off programs like these, and never try to better themselves. We have neighbors who stay drunk in spite of so many efforts and programs given them, and we keep paying their bills with our taxes. Not good! What is done to track those people so they do NOT keep getting "free money" without changing their lifestyles? | Dec 14, 2011 2:34 PM |
| 11 | They realize that because of our distance it is very difficult for us to attend various artistic functions. Therefore, they help us to bring those artists right to our home towns. This benefits our students and our communities. | Dec 14, 2011 2:25 PM |
| 12 | As I have seen the areas we have received assistance, we are definitely an area that has benefited. The MNHNW consortium is strong due to input in grant writing and organizational skills as we were assisted by Mara Wittman. | Dec 12, 2011 2:31 PM |
| 13 | I get the impression they do good work, but I am not familiar with everything they do. | Dec 12, 2011 9:28 AM |
| 14 | In a time of transition, it's hard to compare old vs new leadership. Feel things moving in a better direction now. | Dec 12, 2011 9:20 AM |
| 15 | Do not have enough experience working with NWRDC to answer this question | Dec 12, 2011 7:33 AM |

Page 2, Q6. Fulfillment of Purpose - Do you feel the Northwest Regional Development Commission is working with and on behalf of local units of government to address economic, social, physical and governmental concerns of the region?

- | | | |
|----|---|----------------------|
| 16 | Speaking only as this question relates to the Senior Linkage Line Services (the only part of the NRDC I associate with) it seems fairly obvious that the Commission is responding to government mandates....not working to address issues specific to the region. | Dec 12, 2011 5:49 AM |
| 17 | Cam and the folks at NWRD are well informed and always willing to help bring economic activity to the area. | Dec 10, 2011 6:13 AM |
| 18 | Housing is a huge regional problem that some more time could be spent on. | Dec 9, 2011 7:56 PM |
| 19 | The leadership has and is not aggressive enough and present enough communities. | Dec 9, 2011 7:24 PM |
| 20 | The NWRDC may be involved with local governments on various issues, but I believe anything positive that happens in our region would still happen without the NWRDC's involvement. I see the actual impact of the NWRDC to be very minimal. | Dec 9, 2011 3:04 PM |
| 21 | We've just started the loan application process, so there is not enough information to go by. | Dec 9, 2011 2:34 PM |

Page 2, Q7. Information - Does the NWRDC provide adequate information about programs and services?

- 1 I don't hear enough about services for the elderly. Dec 21, 2011 9:58 AM
- 2 There was confusion on wheather or not I was old enough to apply for the grant Dec 20, 2011 7:41 PM
- 3 I am made aware of deadlines for services/opportunities only JUST BEFORE a deadline, which is extremely frustrating when filling out forms or writing a grant can take a considerable amount of time and thought. Dec 20, 2011 10:50 AM
- 4 Not sure the information always gets out there as needed, but usually it's pretty good. Dec 19, 2011 7:24 PM
- 5 And, they are always open and willing to help with any questions Dec 19, 2011 7:00 AM
- 6 Infor is always available, but sometimes we locals who may be working as volunteers in a capacity new to us may forget about this valuable resource. Dec 15, 2011 3:03 PM
- 7 Specific to Land of the Dancing Sky AAA Dec 15, 2011 11:38 AM
- 8 The e-mails are very much appreciated. Dec 15, 2011 10:02 AM
- 9 Until I became a member I was not aware of all the responsibilities and projects that the NWRDC is involed with. I have spoken to many individuals about the arts monies and loan s available. Dec 14, 2011 4:00 PM
- 10 I always get a newsletter that explains all the various grants and updates as to who received funds and how the funds were used. Dec 14, 2011 2:25 PM
- 11 I am not able to answer as I am involved in a grant to provide services to the elderly and not in the other services provided by the agency by te NWRDC. Dec 14, 2011 6:35 AM
- 12 I cannot clearly in my mind tie programs to NWRDC. I am likely familiar with the programs but not aware they are part of NWRDC. Dec 12, 2011 9:28 AM
- 13 One of the best regional websites I've seen Dec 12, 2011 7:51 AM
- 14 The website is minimal Dec 12, 2011 7:33 AM
- 15 Maybe more information regarding loan funds for business in our area and other services. Dec 12, 2011 6:46 AM
- 16 Often Dec 10, 2011 7:46 AM
- 17 Like we talked at the last meeting, more information is always better. Dec 10, 2011 7:45 AM
- 18 Transportation help from Troy has been great. I have worked with Troy and Shannon the most and found very knowledgeable. Dec 9, 2011 7:56 PM
- 19 I wish they would give more advance notice for artists to apply for grants. Dec 9, 2011 4:49 PM
- 20 The NW Regional Arts Council does, but I don't believe the NWRDC as a whole does. I think the Arts Council should be separated from the NWRDC. Dec 9, 2011 3:04 PM
- 21 I was only exposed to the art grant portion and that was through school Dec 9, 2011 2:39 PM

Page 2, Q7. Information - Does the NWRDC provide adequate information about programs and services?

- | | | |
|----|---|---------------------|
| 22 | This has been good so far. | Dec 9, 2011 2:34 PM |
| 23 | Certainly I have been provided with excellent information but not so sure the public understands what great services NWRD offers. | Dec 9, 2011 2:30 PM |
| 24 | We receive to understand any assistance available as we as help to go forward. | Dec 9, 2011 2:14 PM |

Page 2, Q8. Priorities - What are the development issues or programs you feel the NWRDC should pursue in the next five years? Please check up to five areas.

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| 1 | Be pro-active in telling or getting the truth from untruthful agencies like USACOE | Dec 21, 2011 11:36 AM |
| 2 | None | Dec 21, 2011 9:34 AM |
| 3 | Roads | Dec 21, 2011 9:32 AM |
| 4 | There are really no handicapped services for transport after about 4:30 PM. sometimes the handicapped/wheelchair bound people have things to go to at night, and there really isn't anything available for that. | Dec 21, 2011 9:00 AM |
| 5 | Actually, if you note all the boxes: comprehensive regional planning with an intensivce and extensive critical overview. | Dec 20, 2011 3:02 PM |
| 6 | Program to ensure students are fully qualified to graduate from k-12 and encourage post-secondary education | Dec 20, 2011 10:03 AM |
| 7 | Senior Comunity development | Dec 15, 2011 11:38 AM |
| 8 | Particularly broadband to people who live in the country | Dec 15, 2011 11:30 AM |
| 9 | It would be exciting to have the funds to start a senior choir within an assisted living facility here in Thief River Falls, MN | Dec 14, 2011 2:25 PM |
| 10 | All of them are continuously needed. So far so good. | Dec 10, 2011 7:45 AM |
| 11 | Improved Public Transportation | Dec 9, 2011 6:09 PM |
| 12 | Can not be everything to everyone. Do not take on more than the commission can handle. | Dec 9, 2011 3:42 PM |
| 13 | Wethouse for habitual alcoholics/overnight housing for single men and women | Dec 9, 2011 2:30 PM |
| 14 | Economic Development is #1 need in the rural area | Dec 9, 2011 2:13 PM |
| 15 | Tranportaton but more than map/bus | Dec 9, 2011 1:38 PM |

Page 2, Q9. Have you used the NWRDC websites www.nwrdc.org or www.visitnwminnesota.com in the last six months?

- | | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|
| 1 | I was only looking for contact information | Dec 21, 2011 9:52 AM |
| 2 | I think the website could be enhanced | Dec 20, 2011 3:03 PM |
| 3 | It isn't the most user friendly or frequently updated sites. | Dec 20, 2011 10:50 AM |
| 4 | Not always current. | Dec 19, 2011 7:24 PM |
| 5 | I was looking for art grant possibilities. | Dec 16, 2011 11:57 AM |
| 6 | Most often arts grant info, but too busy to really dig into this source regularly | Dec 15, 2011 3:03 PM |
| 7 | The information in some of the areas needs to be updated. | Dec 15, 2011 1:29 PM |
| 8 | Grant materials that are posted in the arts area are not kept up to date. | Dec 12, 2011 9:28 AM |
| 9 | I just haven't thought of looking there. | Dec 9, 2011 7:56 PM |
| 10 | Grant information and support | Dec 9, 2011 7:23 PM |
| 11 | It is not always kept up to date. | Dec 9, 2011 3:42 PM |
| 12 | Your websites are incredibly outdated, in terms of how they look and function, and the content on them (for example, one of the first things you see on the NWRDC site is its FY10 newsletter, which people are supposed to view for the "latest information"). I think some useful information is there, but the way it's presented isn't consistent with current website standards. There's also no social media component. | Dec 9, 2011 3:04 PM |

Page 3, Q15. The NWRDC is best described as:

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| 1 | The best strategic planning is always subject to available funding. | Dec 20, 2011 3:09 PM |
| 2 | My only involvement is as noted prior, therefore do NOT feel I have adequate involvement to answer the prior questions. | Dec 15, 2011 11:09 AM |

Page 3, Q16. Comments - Please provide any additional comments about the NWRDC as an agency and/or the programs and services of the NWRDC, including both things working well, and those needing attention:

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| 1 | If sending an email with link to survey why send paper copy? Waste of money. Might be time to get some fresh ideas with some younger blood. | Dec 27, 2011 8:25 AM |
| 2 | Thanks for everything | Dec 27, 2011 8:19 AM |
| 3 | I've been working with Cam Fanfulik at the Warren, MN - Marshall County Office. He is thorough and knows his stuff. He is an absolute joy and pleasure to be working with. Give this great employee a few days off with pay! He is much appreciated, very articulate and helpful. And... he never tires of an "old" woman pestering him. He is a real gem. | Dec 22, 2011 7:26 PM |
| 4 | Don't Know | Dec 21, 2011 11:53 AM |
| 5 | Our community does not utilize the commission as much as it should, and when contacted the response was not timely. | Dec 21, 2011 11:47 AM |
| 6 | Waste of Money | Dec 21, 2011 11:40 AM |
| 7 | The Red River Bridge at Shelly must have been poorly planned. It should have been much higher and wider. | Dec 21, 2011 11:38 AM |
| 8 | My experience was very possitive, good communication and ease of getting help. | Dec 21, 2011 11:31 AM |
| 9 | It is unfair of us to fill out this survey as no one on our board can remember ever having anything to do with you. You may be doing a wonderful job or be absolutely worthless. We don't know. | Dec 21, 2011 9:43 AM |
| 10 | I received 3 surveys, one at each of our offices. I would like to know more about NWRDC. We have a good relationship with AAA | Dec 21, 2011 9:26 AM |
| 11 | I am on the board of West Central Agency on Aging | Dec 21, 2011 8:40 AM |
| 12 | I have not had the opportunity to work with NWRDC but hop to in the very near future | Dec 21, 2011 7:59 AM |
| 13 | As other regions discover as well, it is difficult to break out of the political distinction between "TC" and "Outstate". How do you leverage fair-priced housing or educationally based job development in the hinterland when they need a new stadium in TC? :-) | Dec 20, 2011 3:09 PM |
| 14 | Have always had great experience with technical assistance on grant applications and other projects I have need help with. Have directed individuals to NWRDC for loan funding and are always will to help when possible. | Dec 20, 2011 12:56 PM |
| 15 | The artist in residence we hosted was great with the kids and provided a wealth of information while he was here. However, he offered to follow up our public performance video footage and make it available to us. It has been nine months now, and he still has our video footage and won't reply to email and phone. I could no longer recommend this artist to other schools. This isn't the fault of the agency, but this should be noted so that this doesn't happen to other schools if they choose this artist. | Dec 20, 2011 11:58 AM |

Page 3, Q16. Comments - Please provide any additional comments about the NWRDC as an agency and/or the programs and services of the NWRDC, including both things working well, and those needing attention:

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| 16 | Enjoyed Greatly Working with NWRDC | Dec 20, 2011 10:06 AM |
| 17 | Great help by the aging program Helpful for planning trails and bike paths.
Financial help for businesses | Dec 19, 2011 5:18 PM |
| 18 | The NWRDC would be well served to add a Human Resources Department headed by an individual with considerable experience and a degree in this field. | Dec 19, 2011 8:09 AM |
| 19 | Living and working in a rural community, the NWRDC has been a vital resource for us. I am specifically focused on the arts council, but I hear others who have been appreciative of their other services too. | Dec 19, 2011 7:03 AM |
| 20 | The NWRDC is an effective, grounded organization that represents the Region well and leverages its connections and relationships to better opportunities across the Region. My only concern from the outside looking in is that there is need for additional staff capacity. Naturally, without funding for these positions, that's always difficult. The Staff of the NWRDC are top notch; just wish there were more of them. | Dec 19, 2011 6:38 AM |
| 21 | need much better communication; follow up isn't always great | Dec 16, 2011 11:29 AM |
| 22 | Our experience was very positive and working together on a project in the future would be welcome. Perhaps we can find success on the next grant round if the program still exists in the next federal budget. | Dec 16, 2011 8:32 AM |
| 23 | This program has been a godsend for our music program!!! | Dec 16, 2011 6:55 AM |
| 24 | Arts Director, M.Wittman, is extremely encouraging and quick to respond to questions and requests for assistance on arts grant projects Roseau County reps, Charles Erickson on Arts Board and Gerry Schiltz & ALiza Olson are good to pass along info about upcoming opportunities and have even helped develop 2 of our recent grant projects here in Roseau County. We are very grateful that Mara alerted us to the Laura Jane Musser Fund to help us cover expenses for improving/promoting our public art project in a timely way. | Dec 15, 2011 3:17 PM |
| 25 | Where does Land of the Dancing Sky fit in? do? | Dec 15, 2011 3:06 PM |
| 26 | The services of the NWRDC are of value to communities and Northwest Minnesota as a whole. The staff does an excellent job, and are great to work with. I do think some staff are stretched thin. Consideration should be given to collaborating more in the region to accomplish regional goals, or hiring more staff. A better job needs to be done in marketing the Commission's services and displaying its vision/mission statements, particularly on the website. I think there a lot of people who are not aware of the services NWRDC provides. | Dec 15, 2011 1:56 PM |
| 27 | Great folks to work with (I am an economic educator and know I can always call Cam or Troy (as well as formerly Leon) to get a good pulse on what I am looking at or for decent referrals!) | Dec 15, 2011 12:27 PM |
| 28 | Our association has been with the Land of the Dancing Sky AAA. We are not familiar with the 'parent' organization. | Dec 15, 2011 11:40 AM |
| 29 | I have had very little involvement with the NWRDC. My contact has mainly been | Dec 15, 2011 11:31 AM |

Page 3, Q16. Comments - Please provide any additional comments about the NWRDC as an agency and/or the programs and services of the NWRDC, including both things working well, and those needing attention:

- with the NWRAC.
- 30 I have been very happy working with the NWRDC on loan's which I received. I look forward on future assistance. Dec 15, 2011 11:18 AM
 - 31 The Loan Committee has been a valuable resource to our communities in times of disaster and times of expansion. It very important for the NWRDC to continue to support the development of small businesses and good paying jobs in our region. I feel that the NWRDC has contributed directly to our region's more stable economy and small business job growth, even during tough economic times. The NWRDC also needs to continue to work with communities regarding affordable housing for employees moving into our region. Dec 15, 2011 10:34 AM
 - 32 In my position, I represent a State Agency and 14 Counties in NW MN; Our relationship with NWRDC goes back about 10 years. In the more recent years we've contracted a number of services from NWRDC. Each of the services have been provided in a manner that has exceeded our expectations. All of the staff assigned to our programs have been not only professional but customer oriented. I honestly don't know how we could do our jobs without the service provided by the NWRDC. Dec 15, 2011 10:34 AM
 - 33 Keep including grants for the Arts! We really need this up in our rural area. Even with the grants, I sometimes have a hard time getting kids to even apply. Without the grants, none of my kids would do anything in the arts for the betterment of themselves or society in general. Dec 15, 2011 10:04 AM
 - 34 I am probably most interested in and aware of the economic development loans to start up businesses. I feel that this is an area that must continue and grow in these economic times because many banks are getting extremely wary of loans without a track record . Start up businesses need a chance for our communities to prosper. Dec 14, 2011 4:07 PM
 - 35 The NWRDC has helped my choral program for many years. Because of this organization I have been able to bring in visiting artists to my classroom that would not be possible without this resource. They are always eager to hear about the different ideas that I have for diversity and cultural awareness programs and have always been supportive. Dec 14, 2011 2:28 PM
 - 36 I have found when I have a question the people of the NWRDC are knowledgeable and eager to assist. I have appreciated their presence and assistance. Dec 14, 2011 9:02 AM
 - 37 It has been a long time since we have received our loan through NWRDC so it is a bit hard to answer questions on the survey, although they have always been helpful to answer questions regarding our loan. Dec 13, 2011 12:03 PM
 - 38 I feel the NWRDC is moving in a positive direction and has great leadership from staff and the Board. Dec 13, 2011 11:15 AM
 - 39 I found the group to be well led with a clear focus on economic development in the region. The grasp of the fundamental micro economics of the Red River Valley was impressive and instructive to me in helping them understand what Dec 12, 2011 7:18 AM

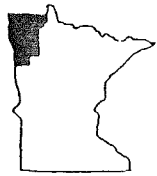
Page 3, Q16. Comments - Please provide any additional comments about the NWRDC as an agency and/or the programs and services of the NWRDC, including both things working well, and those needing attention:

- opportunities might exist.
- 40 The NWRDC STAFF, is always will to give a helping hand and to try to find a way to make things work that is not only for the best of each city but the best for the region! Dec 12, 2011 6:51 AM
- 41 There are so many opportunities the NWRDC could explore in terms of partnering with local school districts to enhance learning opportunities for area youth. Making connections between young people through schools and area businesses is key in my opinion for helping spur economic development, building the labor pool and maintaining population base. Currently no such programs or activities occur to my knowledge. Dec 11, 2011 6:21 AM
- 42 I believe the agency needs leadership. Dec 10, 2011 12:57 PM
- 43 We are very grateful for the help we have received through grants. These grants have allowed our very small arts organization to move forward. Dec 10, 2011 8:39 AM
- 44 Not sure how to answer some of the above questions. Dec 10, 2011 7:48 AM
- 45 Our Theatre has benefited from grants for our productions and has given our community opportunities for the children and adults to preform and build confidence, poise and character as individuals. These fine arts are important to our area therefore through fund raising and grants from NWRDC we are able to fulfill these productions each year. Dec 10, 2011 7:08 AM
- 46 I don't remember receiving services from the NWRDC. Dec 10, 2011 4:32 AM
- 47 As I am acquainted only with the Arts Board, I don't know much about the larger organization. Dec 9, 2011 8:33 PM
- 48 Take care of infastructure Support the senior programs Dec 9, 2011 7:59 PM
- 49 I like the staff a lot. They are very friendly and capable. Where I think the issue is they need a leader who is a visionary and and activator. Dec 9, 2011 7:28 PM
- 50 I have a concern with the combining of the administration position and the Economic Development/Loan officer position. Puts too many tasks on one individual, and does not allow enough time to efficently manage staff. Dec 9, 2011 3:42 PM
- 51 There are too many commission members. It's impossible for a group of 31 to operate effectively. I don't think the board has a vision. Joe Bouvette has been chairman for too long. Overall, I think the NWRDC is stagnant and has little impact. Other RDC's in the state are more effective, streamlined, focused, and influential than ours. The NWRDC should be the organization that sets the tone for growth of the region, but it isn't. The perception of the NWRDC is that it's outdated and somewhat irrelevant. There are few young adults involved with the organization. The NW Regional Arts Council does good work and should be an entirely separate entity. Both the NWRDC and the Arts Council should be located in Thief River Falls, the true center of our region and the area both organizations serve. I have a strong interest in and appreciation of NW MN, and I hope someday the NWRDC improves and becomes the organization it could be. Dec 9, 2011 3:18 PM

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- 52 We are especially blessed to have the dedicated people of this organization serving all of us. Customer service certainly motivates this organization. Dec 9, 2011 2:39 PM
- 53 I have been very happy with Cam and his close relationship with our business. He has helped us and been a source in information the entire time. However, I can not say that I am versed with what else / whom else the NWRDC are working with in the area or who/whom the board members even are at the moment. Dec 9, 2011 2:38 PM
- 54 Since we are in the middle of the loan application process for community development, I do not have enough experience to adequately comment. Dec 9, 2011 2:37 PM
- 55 I believe the current staff are the drivers in making things happen within our region. They provide vital resources to local governmental units as well as being a source of information for local small businesses. Staff willingly help with questions and if they can't provide the service needed most often have the knowledge to refer to an agency or person that can assist. They are fulfilling their mission and are vital to the continued progress of NW Minnesota. Thanks to all! Dec 9, 2011 2:21 PM
- 56 I am extremely appreciative, as are all those I work with, on the quality of direction and assistance we receive in the area of arts and legacy funds. Dec 9, 2011 2:17 PM
- 57 The NWRCD has definitely invigorated our area by making possible many endeavors that would not otherwise have happened. I have worked with the NWRCD within two separate groups and experienced nothing but positive results. Dec 9, 2011 1:57 PM
- 58 i have appreciated all quick and usefull information I have received. Dec 9, 2011 1:55 PM

NWRRegional Development Commission



Memorandum

To: NWRDC Stakeholders
From: Cam Fanfulik, Executive Director
Date: December 9, 2011
Subject: NWRDC Evaluation Survey

The Northwest Regional Development Commission (NWRDC) is conducting a performance evaluation as required by the Regional Development Act. The primary purpose of this evaluation is to determine if we are fulfilling the purpose of the Act and whether the existence of the Commission and its programs is in the public welfare and interest.

The Regional Development Act states that the purpose of Regional Development Commissions is 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 of each region of the State."

The program areas being evaluated include the Area Agency on Aging, Arts Council, Economic and Community Development, JOBZ Tax-Free Zones, Transportation Planning, Homeland Security, Housing Partnership, and Enterprise Business Loan Fund. The enclosed brochure provides additional information about each program and the NWRDC; or you can also access the information at www.nwrdc.org. If you would like, please provide us your email address on the survey form for future mailings.

Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey. Your comments will help us greatly in this task. Thank you!

PLEASE RETURN BY: DECEMBER 20, 2011

making the most of our resources