



# Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

## 4A

Agenda Item #

**Requested Meeting Date:** May 10, 2022

**Title of Item:** Award Bid for Communications Project

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY	<b>Action Requested:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <small><i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i></small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing*
<b>Submitted by:</b> Mark Jeffers		<b>Department:</b> Administration
<b>Presenter (Name and Title):</b> Mark Jeffers, Economic Development Coordinator		<b>Estimated Time Needed:</b> 10 minutes
<b>Summary of Issue:</b> <p>Economic Development staff, with collaboration and approval by the Aitkin County Economic Development Committee (ACEDC) requested proposals for the purpose of selecting a qualified firm to serve as communications consultant for the Economic Development Tourism and Recreation marketing plan. The purpose of the Economic Development Tourism and Recreation marketing plan is to develop a County marketing strategy to attract workforce, businesses and highlight the quality of life resources of the County.</p> <p>The scope of this project is to produce an Economic Development Tourism and Recreation Marketing Plan that will establish and execute the County and partner organizations' vision and promote the County's resources of recreation, tourism and quality of life. Four proposals were submitted. Companies submitting bids were Strateligent, Small Small Business, the Golden Shovel Agency and Global Investment Attraction Group.</p> <p>Golden Shovel: \$39,950          Strateligent: \$40,000          Small Small Business: \$38,500          Global Investment Group: \$35,000</p> <p>The ACEDC reviewed and interviewed candidates and recommend awarding Strateligent the bid for communications consulting.</p>		
<b>Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:</b>		
<b>Recommended Action/Motion:</b> Approve resolution to award Strateligent as the communications consultant for the Economic Development Tourism and Recreation marketing plan.		
<b>Financial Impact:</b> Is there a cost associated with this request? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$ Is this budgeted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <i>Please Explain:</i> ARPA funding has been approved for this project.		

Legally binding agreements must have County Attorney approval prior to submission.



## AITKIN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

Aitkin County Government Center  
307 – 2nd Street NW, Rm. 316  
Aitkin, MN 56431

Mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us  
Phone: 218-927-7305  
Cell: 218-513-6188

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR COMMUNICATION SERVICES RELATED TO AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOURISM AND RECREATION MARKETING PLAN

#### Statement of Purpose

Aitkin County is requesting proposals for the purpose of selecting a qualified firm to serve as communications consultant for the Economic Development Tourism and Recreation Marketing Plan.

The purpose of the Economic Development Tourism and Recreation Marketing Plan is to develop a County marketing strategy to attract workforce, businesses and highlight the quality of life resources of the County.

#### Background Information

Aitkin County (pop. 15,886) is strategically located between the northern Minnesota urban centers of Brainerd, Grand Rapids and Duluth. Its largest industries are tourism, forest products and agriculture. Aitkin County has excellent public schools, well-developed transportation systems, and world class health care facilities.

Long famous for its recreational assets, it boasts an abundance of ATV, snowmobile and river trails, including the Axtell Technical Riding Area and ATV Park. Aitkin County is proud of its water destination lakes and rivers, including Mille Lacs Lake, one of Minnesota's most popular and prolific fishing destinations. The Mississippi River runs through the entire County, in fact, Aitkin County has more miles of the Mississippi than any other County in MN (103 miles).

<https://www.co.aitkin.mn.us/departments/economic-dev/economic-develop.html#gsc.tab=0>

#### Scope of Services and General Duties

The scope of this project is to produce an Economic Development Tourism and Recreation Marketing Plan that will establish and execute the County and partner organizations' vision and promote the County's resources of recreation, tourism and quality of life.

Elements of the Economic Development Tourism and Recreation Marketing Plan will include, but need not be limited to:

- County wide story promotion campaign
- Aitkin County story development
- Community communication plan for execution
- Branding creation and execution of our current tourism and recreation resources



- Branding creation and execution for workforce and business attraction
- Social media elements
- Communication timeline for execution

## **Proposal Form and Content**

The proposal must, at a minimum, include the following:

### Scope of Work Defined

The firms should present their understanding of the requirements of the project and present a task-by-task description of the work to be accomplished. Do not simply restate the scope of services.

### Timeline

The firms are required to include a timeline for the project which will contain the approximate dates that portions of the project will commence and conclude.

### Resumes

Identify person(s) with key responsibilities who will be assigned to work on the project, describe their role and duties for the project. Include the firm's current or past connections to Aitkin County.

### Experience

Discuss demonstrated experience of the firm and the project team with projects of similar scope and magnitude as this project. Experience must be related to projects completed within the past five years.

### Time and Budget Constraints

Demonstrate the ability of the firm to manage the project in a timely and cost effective manner. Although a specific deadline for the process has not been established it is the objective of Aitkin County to complete the update as soon as it may be practical to do so.

### References

List of references relating to the projects completed for local governments over the last five years, with comparable characteristics to the project proposed by Aitkin County.

### Fees

The proposal shall contain an overall anticipated cost for the project, understanding the preliminary budget is expected not to exceed \$40,000.



## General Information

The firms shall submit proposals electronically to [mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us](mailto:mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us) and four (4) hard copies to:

Mark Jeffers  
Economic Development  
Aitkin County Government Center  
307 – 2nd Street NW, Rm. 316  
Aitkin, MN 56431

## Closing Submission Date

Proposals must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday, January 28, 2022

## Inquiries

Inquiries concerning this RFP should be directed to Mark Jeffers, Economic Development Coordinator Aitkin County, [mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us](mailto:mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us)

## Conditions of Proposal

All cost incurred in the preparation of a proposal responding to this RFP will be the responsibility of the submitter and will not be reimbursed by Aitkin County.

## Right to reject

Aitkin County reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP.

## Notification of Award

The decision of selecting successful consulting firm(s) to participate in interviews will be made within two-three weeks from the closing date of the receipt of proposals.

## Schedule of Events

Aitkin County has developed the schedule of events below for selection process—the schedule is subject to change.

Request for Proposal release:

Deadline for Receipt of Proposals:

Proposal Review:

Interview(s) with Economic Development Committee

		strateligent		Small Small Business	
Criteria	Points	Points	Comments	Points	Comments
Organization experience, individual resume of experience	10	10	Solid resume	9	solid resume, good experience and local connection- Brielle Bredsten
References: related to our project	5	5	local references and examples	5	Good response and examples of like organizations
Scope of work defined: Process for identifying AC story and development process of the story	25	25	true understanding of our scope and need	25	Great assessment of need
Scope of work defined: Branding ideas and process	20	20	developed in community meetings	15	Detailed response but still some questions
Scope of work defined: Social Communication ideas and elements	10	9	website is a major push for them, subtracting one point	7	Detailed response but still some questions
Timeline: 12 month completion expectation	10	9	this may go longer than what is listed, many variables	9	1/2 of the expectation, is this too quick??
Time and Budget Constraints: ability of the firm to manage the project in a timely and cost effective manner	10	10		10	Great detail
Fees: \$40,000 expectation	10	8	\$40,000 including video and websites, additional available	10	\$38,500, 300 hours/\$125 hr, \$1000 added in for travel and administration
Total	100	96	Great presentation, very comfortable with this company	90	Brielle Bredsten is part of this organization and would be directly involved

		Golden Shovel		Global Investment	
Criteria	Points	Points	Comments	Points	Comments
Organization experience, individual resume of experience	10	10	good resume, much experience	7	limited staff, limited examples of work
References: related to our project	5	5	good references	2	website only, no examples of consulting plans or references
Scope of work defined: Process for identifying AC story and development process of the story	25	20	work defined is in great detail, too much emphasis on website	10	one meeting live?
Scope of work defined: Branding ideas and process	20	15	detailed response but still some questions	10	limited examples
Scope of work defined: Social Communication ideas and elements	10	10	good communication	7	offered but not explained
Timeline: 12 month completion expectation	10	10	solid timeline	10	meets timeline, limited investment and commitment
Time and Budget Constraints: ability of the firm to manage the project in a timely and cost effective manner	10	10	great detail	10	ok
Fees: \$40,000 expectation	10	9	\$39,950, tailoring the pricing to the expectation	10	\$35,000
Total	100	89	Solid design, maybe a little too	66	LinkedIn contact, San Diego with no local connection- hard to get to know us

A person wearing a red and black snow suit and helmet is riding a red snowmobile through a snowy forest. The snowmobile has "POLARIS" and "LINC" branding. The forest consists of tall, thin evergreen trees under a clear blue sky. The snow is bright white and appears to be a well-trodden path.

Strategic growth through intelligent design.



Aitkin County Economic Development through Ecotourism/Quality of Life  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
DATED: 01/27/22

LOCATION:  
McGregor

Photo by Aaron Houtala, Stratelligent

## The “purpose” of the Economic Development Tourism and Recreation Marketing Plan is to develop a County marketing strategy to attract workforce and businesses while highlighting the quality of life resources of the County.

### Introducing a creative team that knows Aitkin County and the goodness it beholds.

Since 2015, strateligent has been steeped in Aitkin County storytelling. With our introduction to Mille Lacs Tourism during the walleye crisis, and following with McGregor Area Chamber of Commerce and Riverwood Healthcare Center. Living and working nearly on the Aitkin County line, we’ve had the ability to see much, learn much, and have resources already within our servers to begin telling the story of Aitkin County.

The largest challenge the above “purpose” faces is that of county-wide alignment. We’re happy to bring to the table great working relationships with two Aitkin County Chambers of Commerce, Riverwood Health Care Center, and our elected officials. We believe these relationships will help serve Aitkin County well in bridging vision, unity of mind, and voice.

This is not easy work. This is difficult work. It’s far more complicated than just taking a pretty photo or a nice video. It’s about people, aligning people and creating a spark to begin a movement that becomes a county-wide culture in time.

The good news is we’ve accomplished this “purpose” prior. Both in Cuyuna and in Washington State. Cuyuna, being our closest portfolio piece, showcases the relationship-building strategy, storytelling angle, and relentless vision of how to ensure the quality of local life, is known, understood, and deeply desired by the potential future residents, business owners, and their workforce.

We as Strateligent would love to assist Aitkin County on behalf of this “purpose.” Our goal is for Aitkin County to be the strongest it possibly can be. When this happens, our clients of Mille Lacs Area Tourism Council, McGregor Area Chamber of Commerce, and Riverwood Healthcare Center will also flourish.

Thank you for considering our proposal. We look forward to chatting more.

Best Regards,

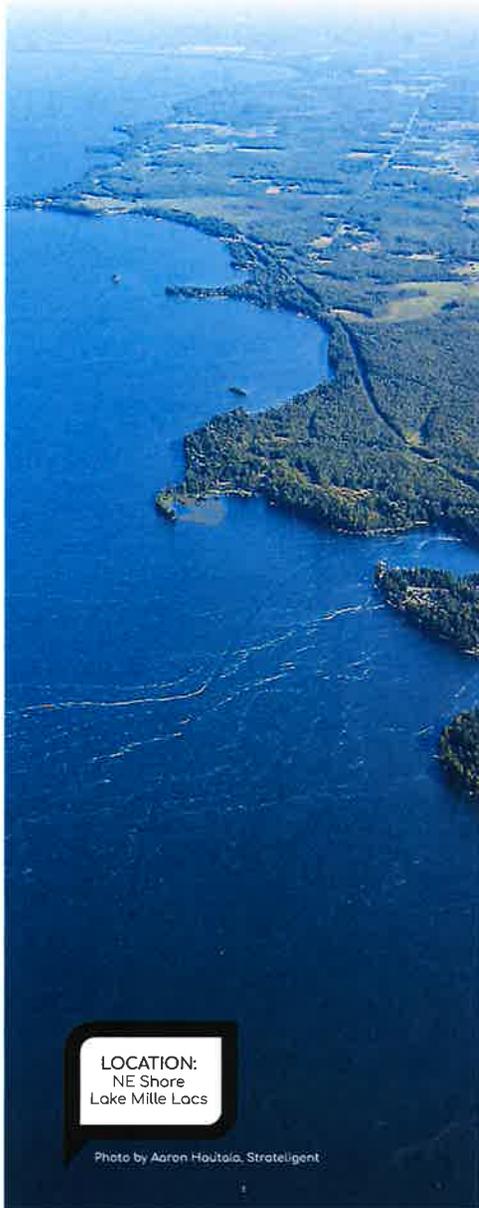


Aaron W. Hautala  
Creative Director, Owner

LOCATION:  
Daisy Street  
(Switzerland Trail)

Photo by Aaron Hautala, Strateligent





LOCATION:  
NE Shore  
Lake Mille Lacs

Photo by Aaron Houtala, Stratigent

## Scope of Work Defined

<p><b>Aitkin County Economic Development through Ecotourism/Quality of Life Communication Plan:</b>                  This is the necessary work to unify the County as a whole upon a single plan of action in terms of economic development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Input sessions with Aitkin County economic development stakeholders                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Cities, townships</li> <li>b) Chambers</li> <li>c) Recreation user-groups (ATV, Snowmobile, Fishing, Cycling, Birding, etc)</li> <li>d) Aitkin Growth, major employers</li> <li>e) IRRR</li> <li>f) Elected officials (county/state/federal)</li> <li>g) Local residents with influencing potential</li> </ul> </li> <li>2) Creation of the Aitkin County Economic Development through Ecotourism/Quality of Life:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Positioning statement</li> <li>b) Elevator speech</li> <li>c) Tagline</li> <li>d) Communication plan</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>40 hours    \$10,000.00</p>	<p>\$40,000.00</p>
<p><b>Aitkin County Economic Development Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) See page 4 for sample microsite page content</li> <li>2) Organic SEO (Search Engine Optimization) to have the ability to be found via Google searches for jobs/economic opportunity in Minnesota</li> </ul>	<p>120 hours    \$15,000.00</p>	
<p><b>Aitkin County Economic Development :30 Video - Motorized Trails (ATV/UTV-Summer &amp; Snowmobile-Winter)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To be used on Aitkin County economic development website, to also provide to regional stakeholders to use in their tourism, workforce recruitment strategies</li> <li>2) Price contingent on our existing Aitkin County clients allowing us to use our existing footage on this new project</li> </ul>	<p>40 hours    \$5,000.00</p>	<p>\$40,000.00</p>
<p><b>Aitkin County Economic Development :30 Video - The Water (Lake Mille Lacs, Big Sandy, Cedar Lake)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To be used on Aitkin County economic development website, to also provide to regional stakeholders for use in tourism and workforce recruitment strategies</li> <li>2) Price contingent on our existing Aitkin County clients allowing us to use our existing footage on this new project</li> </ul>	<p>40 hours    \$5,000.00</p>	
<p><b>Aitkin County Economic Development :30 Video - Our World River, Our Wildlife Reserve, Our State Park</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To be used on Aitkin County economic development website, to also provide to regional stakeholders for use in tourism and workforce recruitment strategies</li> </ul>	<p>40 hours    \$5,000.00</p>	
<p><b>Aitkin County Economic Development Statewide Public Relations Campaign</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Releasing the news of the County to local, county, and statewide news media agencies to promote their outlets telling our story</li> </ul>	<p>20 hours    \$2,500.00</p>	<p>If an additional budget is available, or one video (above) could be deleted.</p>
<p><b>Aitkin County Economic Development Minneapolis/St. Paul Social Media Campaign</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Targeted entrepreneurs in the Minneapolis/St. Paul marketplace who will naturally align with the brand culture of Aitkin County</li> </ul>	<p>20 hours    \$2,500.00</p>	



## Sample Website Sitemap

### Aitkin County Economic Development Website Page Content, Site Strategy

Home (SEO Optimized)	Business Development	Business News	Lake Life	Recreation	Life	Contact
	<p>Starting a business in Aitkin County (SEO Optimized)</p> <p>List of Major Employers</p> <p>Transportation / Location</p> <p>Opportunity Zone Info</p> <p>AC Opportunity Zones</p> <p>Financing in Aitkin County</p> <p>Grants (IRRR, other)</p> <p>Lean Startup Innovation Certificate Program</p>	<p>Ongoing blog of Aitkin County business news, recognition, awards</p>	<p>Overview (SEO Optimized)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link to Mille Lacs Tourism</li> <li>• Link to Aitkin Area Chamber</li> <li>• Link to McGregor Area Chamber</li> <li>• Link to Hill City Chamber</li> </ul>	<p>Motorized Trails (ATV + Snowmobile) (SEO Optimized)</p> <p>Human Powered Trails (Walking, Bicycle, Paddle, Hiking, Snowshoeing) (SEO Optimized)</p> <p>Wildlife Preserve (Birding) (SEO Optimized)</p> <p>Savanna Portage State Park (SEO Optimized)</p> <p>Hunting (Public Land) SEO Optimized</p>	<p>Broadband</p> <p>K-12 Schools (Aitkin, McGregor, Hill City) (SEO Optimized) Links to schools</p> <p>Healthcare (Riverwood) (SEO Optimized) Link to Riverwood</p> <p>Law Enforcement (City, County, State) Links</p> <p>Cities (Links to Aitkin, McGregor, Hill City, McGrath, and Tamarack)</p> <p>Townships (Link to 40 different townships)</p>	
1 page	8 pages	1 page	1 page	5 pages	6 pages	1 page
<p>23 total website pages</p> <p>10 total website pages optimized for SEO (Search Engine Optimization) Google</p>						

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LOCATION:  
Hill City

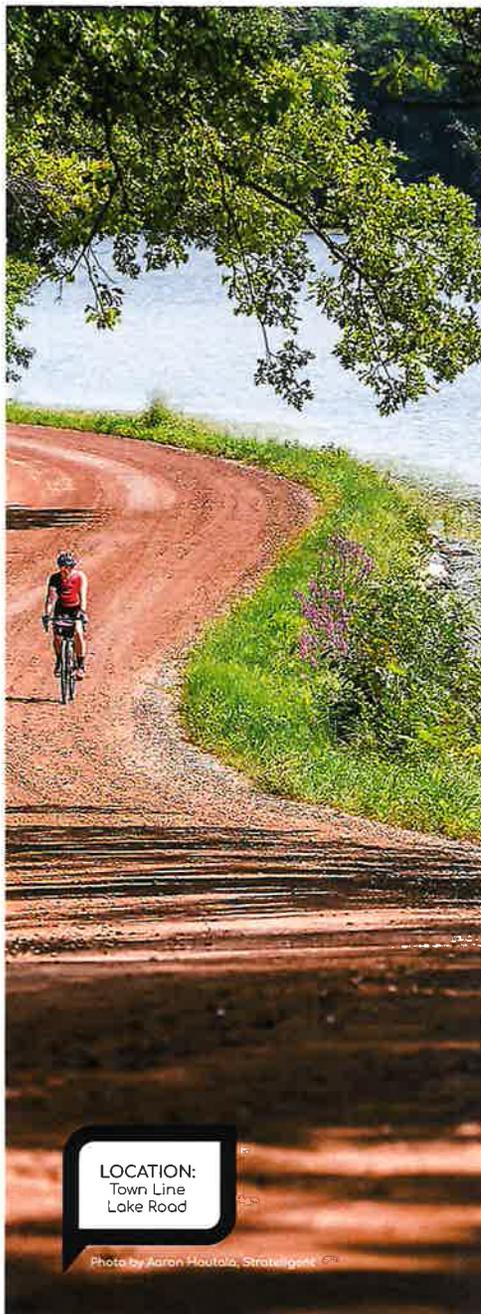
Photo by Aaron Hautala, Strateligent

## Timeline

- 1) Aitkin County Economic Development through Ecotourism/Quality of Life Communication Plan
  - 30 working days from the first date of the proposal being accepted by Aitkin County, and initial 50% down payment being received (\$20,000)
- 2) Aitkin County Economic Development Website
  - 60 working days after the Communication Plan has been developed, 90 working days after the proposal has been approved
- 3) Aitkin County Economic Development :30 Video - Motorized Trails (ATV/UTV-Summer & Snowmobile-Winter)
  - 30 working days after the Communication Plan has been developed, 60 working days after the proposal has been approved
- 4) Aitkin County Economic Development :30 Video - The Water (Lake Mille Lacs, Big Sandy, Cedar Lake, Hill Lake; example only)
  - 45 working days after the Communication Plan has been developed, 75 working days after the proposal has been approved
- 5) Aitkin County Economic Development :30 Video - Our World River, Our Wildlife Reserve, Our State Park
  - 60 working days after the Communication Plan has been developed, 90 working days after the proposal has been approved
  - Remaining 50% balance, \$20,000 invoiced to Aitkin County
- 6) Additional / Optional Added Cost: Aitkin County Economic Development Statewide Public Relations Campaign
  - To be deployed upon the live launch of the website, 90 working days after the proposal has been approved
- 7) Additional / Optional Added Cost: Aitkin County Economic Development Minneapolis/St. Paul Social Media Campaign
  - To be deployed upon the live launch of the website, 90 working days after the proposal has been approved

Aaron W Hautala - Creative Director, Owner  
22777 Agate Shores Road, Deerwood, MN 56444  
218-454-3210 ext 800  
strateligent.com  
aaron@strateligent.com





LOCATION:  
Town Line  
Lake Road

Photo by Aaron Hautala, Strateligent

## Resumes

### Our communication services full-time employees



#### Aaron Hautala, Creative Director

More than 25 years of experience in the advertising and public relations industry. Leads the work with the client, understanding goals, challenges, opportunities, and the steps forward to accomplish the goal. Internationally recognized speaker on communication and brand building, with comprehensive background in the government, healthcare, education, technology, and community development sectors.



#### Heidi Lake, Project Manager

More than 18 years of communication experience. Oversees the entire operation, from creating and managing project schedules, to keeping communication moving forward between staff, clients, partners, and producers. Experienced in strategizing digital marketing plans, analyzing campaign data, public relations, and media management.



#### Jodi Schwen, Copywriter/ Social Media Specialist

More than 30 years writing and editing experience, with an M.A. degree in communication. Skilled in social media management against multiple networks, complete with analytics and metrics of conversion success.



#### Steph Swanson, Copywriter/Digital Advertising Specialist

More than five years of writing experience, specializing in making complex subjects more understandable. Skilled in executing digital advertising against platforms of search, display, geofence, retargeting, eMail, and paid social media, complete with analytics and metrics of conversion success.



#### Emalee Hedberg, Website Design and Development

Eight years in the advertising industry. Skilled in print design, layout and production, website design and development, hand-drawn typography, and photo capture/editing.



#### Cory Johnson, Website Design and Development, Video and Drone Pilot

Seven years in the advertising industry. Skilled in print graphic design, video capture/editing, website design and development, and graphic animation editing.

#### Aitkin County Working Relationship

To date, our firm has established a working relationship with Aitkin County in regard to Aitkin County Public Health and Aitkin County Child and Teen Checkups. Additionally, through our work experience with the Mille Lacs and McGregor markets, we have collaborated with the Aitkin County Land Department in an effort to understand the size and scope of Aitkin County's public lands.



Client Reference:

Jodi Crowell  
Executive Director  
(320) 676-9972  
Jodi@millelacs.com

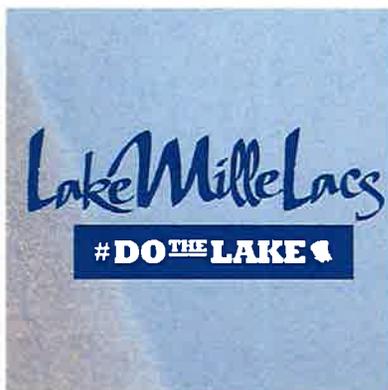
Senator Carrie Ruud  
651-296-4913  
Sen.Carrie.Ruud@senate.mn

Representative Dale Lueck  
218-232-5582  
Rep.Dale.Lueck@house.mn

## Economic Development Experience - Minnesota

### Mille Lacs Area Tourism Council, Lake Mille Lacs Scenic Byway

- A renowned fishing destination started experiencing an economic downturn when changes in walleye fishing regulations reduced the number of visiting anglers.
- We were tasked to develop new positioning and showcase new tourism opportunities to complement the already strong fishing base.
- We met with community members, business owners, elected officials, Mille Lacs Area Tourism, Mille Lacs Corporate Commission, Explore Minnesota, and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Once everyone was aligned on the goals and strategy in achieving those goals, we created a communication plan to reposition the area—focusing on tourism draws that had been overlooked—trophy bass fishing, rich Native American culture and history, and exciting outdoor recreation, such as kiteboarding, ATViing, snowmobiling, and two state parks.
- The #DoTheLake campaign used digital ads, video, social media, photography, radio, billboards, targeted email marketing, year-around blogs, state-of-the-art drone video footage, and search-engine optimized web copy to draw awareness to these hidden tourism gems.
- Today, Lake Mille Lacs is a nationally recognized, top destination for smallmouth bass fishing, kiteboarding, and as a Minnesota ATV hotspot.
- This campaign won the Explore Minnesota Tourism Award.



Logo and tagline development



Website development



Recreation retailing



Recreation videos



Client Reference:

Kari Horbacz  
Executive Director  
218-768-3692  
chamber@mcgregormn.com

## Economic Development Experience - Minnesota

### McGregor Area Chamber of Commerce

- McGregor, as a destination, needed an identity, positioning, and a plan to strategically use their marketing budget. We delivered all three. Based on conversations with local business owners and residents, we built the McGregor Area brand. A logo, a tagline, a new website, outdoor advertising, targeted digital display, and tourism photography and videos that made it all happen.
- When the pandemic hit, lockdowns followed—as did the concept of social distancing. Being an outdoor recreation destination, people could still safely enjoy McGregor—we just had to tell them. Our team met with the Executive Director and in 30 minutes we completely reworked their communication plan. This pivot refocused messaging to position McGregor as the social distance vacation destination, and the campaign included creating custom decals and a fun t-shirt.



Logo development



Website development



Recreation retailing



Recreation videos



Client Reference:

Lisa Kruse  
PR and Marketing Supervisor  
218-927-5557  
lkruse@rwhealth.org

## Economic Development Experience - Minnesota

### Riverwood Healthcare Center

- What does consistency across all communication, strengthening positioning, and deploying strategic, digital and traditional campaigns do for a rural hospital? It sets record patient volumes in Surgery and Family Medicine. After just three years. And on top of it all, during a pandemic.
- Using our annual communication plans and purposeful messaging across patient testimonial videos, digital display ads, and traditional outdoor media has helped patients see Riverwood as a center for surgical excellence—a true healthcare destination—in rural Minnesota.



Website development



Social Media Development



Health topic videos



References:

Senator Carrie Ruud  
651-296-4913  
Sen.Carrie.Ruud@senate.mn

Representative Dale Lueck  
218-232-5582  
Rep.Dale.Lueck@house.mn

Crow Wing County Commissioner Doug Houge  
218-330-0734  
Doug.Houge@crowwing.us

Tim Houle  
Administrator - Crow Wing County  
(218) 824-1067  
CoAdmin@crowwing.us

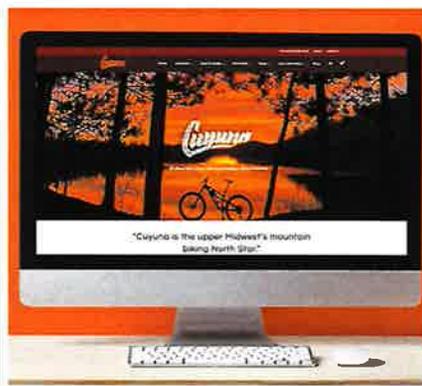
## Economic Development Experience - Minnesota

### Cuyuna Adventure Town USA®

- Over \$6,000,000 successfully advocated for in State and local fundraising for infrastructure and trail development
- 20+ new businesses within 10 years
- Increased the Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area cycling attendance by over 1,000% in 10 years
- Made possible the City of Crosby to be recognized by Outside Magazine as a Top Place to Live in the United States
- Made possible for the Cuyuna region to be recognized as a Top 25 Places to Visit in the World Right Now by Outside Magazine
- Assisted Graphic Packaging International in Crosby in recruiting 70 additional employees in 2020 to keep up to their international manufacturing orders
- Assisted in gaining a five-page special section on Cuyuna in the Star Tribune



Logo and tagline development



Website development



Map/Route creation for smart phone use



Recreation videos and merch



Client Reference:

Tim Houle  
Administrator - Crow Wing County  
(218) 824-1067  
CoAdmin@crowwing.us

## Economic Development Experience - Minnesota

### Crow Wing County

- Crow Wing County refreshed their brand to better serve their residents—a new logo, engaging signage at each of their County managed properties, and practical, yet captivating, informational materials. Communication with purpose. Usable. Functional. Successful.
- Our work with Land Services helped more people learn about water management and discover Crow Wing County's outdoor access and recreational opportunities. For the sheriff's office, we developed a recruitment microsite to deliver the right message to potential job candidates—complete with live-action, documentary-style videos shot on-location.



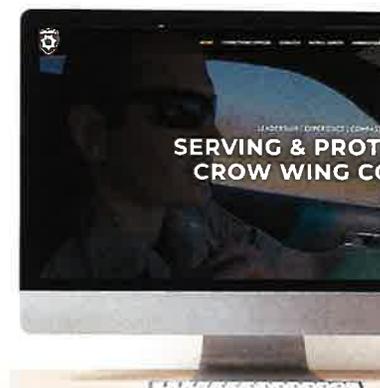
Natural Resources Collateral



Recreation Wayfinding, Entry Points



Recreation Communication



Recruitment Website



## Time and Budget Constraints

### Timelines

The sample timelines provided on page 5 are based upon our contracted client projects as of 01/27/2022. Production schedules are subject to change.

### Fiscal Sustainability

In the first year of this work, the majority of the budget is appropriated to the building the Aitkin County economic development brand (communication plan, website, videos). Additional public relations and digital advertising will be necessary in years 2, 3, 4, etc., to allow Aitkin County to achieve the goals desired. Considering past work, we estimate a total of 3 to 5 years of consistent social, digital, and public relations communication for the effects of this plan to be substantially felt within Aitkin County.

### Budget

Project website and video projects are based upon our current Aitkin County clients (Mille Lacs Tourism, McGregor Area Chamber of Commerce, Riverwood Health Care Center) allowing us to use already created photography and video within the tools of this video project. Additional video content will also need to be captured.

### Scheduling / Project Management

Stratelligent provides more than advertising and marketing collateral—we give clients a strategic plan to communicate with purpose, improve their communities, and get results. As a full-stack digital marketing agency, we're able to execute any mix of digital marketing and traditional campaigns—copywriting, graphic design, ecommerce, SEM, SEO, SMM, email, web design, video production, drone video/photography, as well as traditional print, radio, outdoor, and live events.

When a new project is requested, the process often begins with a kickoff meeting between the client (Aitkin County) and the Stratelligent creative director. Once the direction and concept of the project are decided, the creative director discusses the details with the Stratelligent project manager and the project(s) are entered into Basecamp, our online project management system. From there, the project is scheduled for our creative team to begin. Clients and partners are invited to the Basecamp project to monitor timelines, communication, and files, including proofs. Throughout the project, our project manager guides the projects from the helm of Basecamp, ensuring the assigned team members are able to accomplish the tasks as assigned.

### Analytics

Website data is reviewed regularly throughout the campaign, with monthly reporting, analysis, and recommendations sent to the client. We review specific campaign performance data to see how people are engaging with our site content, as well as website data in Google Analytics to determine the actions people are taking once arriving on the landing page.

When launched, digital campaign success is determined based on campaign objectives. For example, digital display campaigns are evaluated based on impressions (awareness-building). Search campaigns are evaluated based on actionable conversions (such as clicks on "Start a Business in Aitkin County") as these ads are being served to customers who are already actively seeking out a particular product or service. We also analyze click-through rate (CTR) to determine if our ads are resonating with and reaching the right audiences. We also have the ability to track public relations efforts through the website analytics.

LOCATION:  
Aitkin Lake

Photo by Aaron Houtala, Stratelligent



**Award Bid for Communications Project**

**WHEREAS**, Aitkin County requested proposals for the purpose of selecting a qualified firm to serve as communications consultant for the Economic Development Tourism and Recreation marketing plan.  
**AND**

**WHEREAS**, four proposals were submitted. Companies submitting bids were Strateligent, Small Small Business, the Golden Shovel Agency and Global Investment Attraction Group. **AND**

**WHEREAS**, The Aitkin County Economic Development Committee (ACEDC) reviewed and interviewed candidates and recommend awarding Strateligent the bid for communications consulting.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Aitkin County awards Strateligent to be the communications consultant for the Economic Development Tourism and Recreation marketing plan at a cost no higher than \$45,000.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the County certifies authorization to Mark Jeffers, Economic Development Coordinator, to facilitate this project.

Commissioner XXXXX moved for adoption of the resolution and it was declared adopted upon the following vote

FIVE MEMBERS PRESENT

All Members Voting

STATE OF MINNESOTA}  
COUNTY OF AITKIN}

I, Jessica Seibert, County Administrator, Aitkin County, Minnesota do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing with the original resolution filed in the Administration Office of Aitkin County in Aitkin, Minnesota as stated in the minutes of the proceedings of said Board on the 10th day of May, 2022 and that the same is a true and correct copy of the whole thereof.

Witness my hand and seal this 10th day of May, 2022

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Jessica Seibert  
County Administrator