



CROSSCURRENT
COMMUNICATIONS

2024 REPORT



SMPDC
SOUTHERN MAINE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

GOALS

CrossCurrent Communications provides communications consulting services to build visibility for Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission.

- Planning/executing strategic communications across all platforms
- Building engagement with communities and member towns
- Crafting compelling content for all platforms
- Developing relationships with like-minded organizations for cross promotion
- Posting on social media and growing following and engagement
- Securing media coverage
- Using the years of institutional success to increase awareness of all that SMPDC does and elevate SMPDC's stature within the economic development, planning, transportation, and sustainability communities
- Elevating individual SMPDC staff members and their expertise to be seen and sought after as "thought leaders"
- Providing guidance on any communications related issues/questions
- Providing crisis management as needed

DELIVERABLES

The overriding themes of the year's communications were leadership transition at the top and within the staff and celebrating the 60th anniversary, all while continuing to maintain a public presence for SMPDC in statewide television, radio, print and online publications, on social media as well, and strategizing/advising on all public relations. To date this year, we obtained over 37 articles, predominantly in state wide media, part of the 218 articles we have secured since beginning our contract in December 2019.

Anniversary - Strategized with team on how best to celebrate/communicate about the 60th.

Leadership Transition - Strategized with the team on best way to roll out new ED leadership and Paul's retirement

Annual Report - Worked with team to edit/design/publish the Annual Report, expanded to accommodate 60th anniversary celebration, recognition of organizational history and previous staff members, departure of long time Executive Director, and introducing new Executive Director and additional staff. Worked closely with Raegan Young who coordinated contributions from staff and board, and generated and edited content.

Annual Meeting - Helped in brainstorming topics, attended the event, took photos, shared and posted on social media

News Releases/media outreach - In 2024 we placed more than 30 articles predominantly in Maine media, the Portsmouth Herald, the New England Real Estate Journal, and two national publications - Energy News Network and Construction Equipment Guide. This was the result of numerous news releases we wrote on various topics and followed up individually with reporters and editors. The vast majority of our releases were picked up by media outlets. Topics included Energy Navigator, HUB program, Safe Streets, Traffic Study, Brownfields, LD2003, Southern Maine in Motion, coastal flooding, Broadband, Energy Resilience Plan, and the leadership transition.

DELIVERABLES

Social media - Consistently posted and monitored on all topics of interest, shared posts from partner organizations, grew followers and engagement

PR Pipeline - Tracked PR opportunities to get out ahead of each story and determined the best communications approach to build visibility: such as developing a news release, getting photography, determining customized pitch to media, creating a social media post, etc.

Tracking hot topics - Monitor news and all pertinent topics and discuss at each meeting to assess the status of a project, brainstorm next steps, see how SMPDC's experts fit with the "news of the day" etc.

Advising - We advise/recommend edits on such things as newsletter drafts and speaking engagements.

Media outlets - We stay up to date on the ever changing Maine media landscape so that we are targeting the right reporters and editors each time - adding or deleting reporters in our media database

Media training, social media training and PR 101 - CCC provided this for staff to ensure best possible interviews, how to get best photos in the field, actions to take if staff is approached by a reporter, etc.

Spotlight on SMPDC Reports - Discussed and implemented ways to publicize the myriad of reports that SMPDC provides on different topics.

Leadership/Expertise - Pursued opportunities for SMPDC staff to demonstrate leadership in regional planning and development, sustainability, transportation, housing, broadband expansion, etc.

Photography - Provided photos and advised on most effective images needed for each news release, social media post and Annual Report.

SOCIAL MEDIA



Instagram

Followers increased from 179 to 274 (2021) to 464 (2023) to 630 (2024).



Facebook

Followers increased from 264 to 358 (2021) to 443 (2023) to 570 (2024).



SELECT MEDIA COVERAGE

(does not include all media placement)

JANUARY 2024

Energy News Network/Energy Navigator

<https://energynews.us/2024/01/04/maine-towns-band-together-to-offer-energy-navigators-extra-funding-for-home-energy-upgrades/>

Maine Town & City/Energy Navigator - mention in December, to be corrected in January issue.

NEREJ/Foundry - Mention of SMPDC involvement

<https://nerej.com/reveler-development-begins-next-phase-of-construction-on-the-foundry>

FEBRUARY 2024

GoodMenProject/Energy Navigator

<https://goodmenproject.com/featured-content/maine-towns-band-together-to-offer-energy-navigators-extra-funding-for-home-energy-upgrades/>

Grist/Energy Navigator

<https://grist.org/energy/maine-towns-band-together-to-offer-energy-navigators-extra-funding-for-home-energy-upgrades/>

Press Herald/Hub Program

<https://www.pressherald.com/2024/02/06/small-businesses-benefit-from-new-economic-recovery-program>

WCSH-TV/Jason Nappi

<https://www.newscentermaine.com/article/news/special-reports/maines-changing-climate/road-resilience-climate-change-project-improvement/97-0e976091-1c96-4c32-9b9c-ad62b1839232>

MARCH 2024

Weekly Sentinel/Safe Streets

Construction Equipment Guide

<https://www.constructionequipmentguide.com/funding-approved-for-project-to-make-maine-roads-more-resilient-to-climate-change/64154>

Portsmouth Herald

<https://www.seacoastonline.com/story/news/local/2024/03/12/kennebunk-york-beaches-sustain-more-damage-after-coastal-floods/72943214007/>

Saco Bay News

<https://sacobaynews.com/sunday-storm-made-it-a-triple-whammy-on-the-maine-coast-p2756-1.htm>

Weekly Sentinel/Climate Action Planning Process (see clipping)

APRIL 2024

Press Herald/Paul's retirement

<https://www.pressherald.com/2024/04/01/longtime-southern-maine-planning-and-development-commission-executive-director-paul-schumacher-to-retire/>

Wiscasset Newspaper/partnership with SMPDC?

<https://www.wiscassetnewspaper.com/article/county-ema-seeking-grants-january-storm-damage/184766>

MaineBiz/Paul's retirement

<https://www.mainebiz.biz/article/longtime-regional-planner-in-southern-maine-will-step-down-this-summer>

Portsmouth Herald/York Traffic Study

<https://www.seacoastonline.com/story/news/local/2024/04/29/york-maine-route-1-traffic-study-curb-speeding-accidents-beach-roads/73454688007/>

MAY 2024

Maine Public Radio/Brownfields

<https://www.mainepublic.org/environment-and-outdoors/2024-05-29/portland-hosting-new-england-brownfields-summit-this-week>

JUNE 2024

Bangor Daily News/Brownfields Berwick

<https://www.bangordailynews.com/2024/06/24/mainefocus/mainefocus-environment/transformation-of-berwick-toxic-site-into-homes-stores-joam40zk0w/>

Portland Press Herald/Stephanie

<https://www.pressherald.com/2024/06/24/new-leader-takes-reins-at-smpdc/>

Portsmouth Herald/Kittery businesses

<https://www.seacoastonline.com/story/news/local/2024/06/28/kittery-foreside-businesses-urge-customer-support-during-construction/74218118007/>

JULY 2024

SacoBayNews/Stephanie + Paul

<https://sacobaynews.com/local-spotlight-stephanie-carver-and-paul-schumacher.htm>

Portland Press Herald/Biddeford program

<https://www.pressherald.com/2024/07/17/new-program-launched-in-biddeford-to-improve-access-to-high-speed-internet-service/>

Maine Monitor/LD2003

<https://themainemonitor.org/new-housing-law-compliance/>

Portsmouth Herald/New Maine Housing Law

<https://www.seacoastonline.com/story/news/local/2024/07/30/new-maine-housing-law-shakes-up-zoning-heres-how-towns-are-adapting/74583185007/>

SEPTEMBER 2024

Press Herald/article mentioning Karina/SMPDC

<https://www.pressherald.com/2024/09/10/kennebunk-kennebunkport-to-work-together-on-coastal-resilience/>

Press Herald/Community News/Southern Maine in Motion

OCTOBER 2024

Portland Press Herald/Community News 10/17 - JLUS4 "Study tackles emergency prep related to Portsmouth Shipyard"

Portland Press Herald/Kennebunk and Kennebunkport to assess coastal flood risk

<https://www.pressherald.com/2024/10/29/kennebunk-kennebunkport-to-assess-coastal-flood-risk/>

NOVEMBER 2024

Press Herald/Energy Resilience

<https://www.pressherald.com/2024/11/25/plan-to-help-businesses-withstand-power-outage-in-the-works/?copylink=true>

NewsCenterMaine/Climate Workshop

<https://www.newscentermaine.com/article/news/special-reports/maines-changing-climate/university-of-new-england-southern-maine-planning-and-development-commission-first-southern-maine-climate-action-workshop/97-0684df4b-bff6-4f16-92a8-56183f592f8a>

Portland Press Herald/Local climate action planning

<https://www.pressherald.com/2024/11/30/local-climate-action-planning-on-the-rise/>

Yahoo News

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/local-climate-action-planning-rise-090500872.html>

DECEMBER 2024

South Berwick Reporter/Climate

<https://southberwickreporter.org/2024/11/27/town-joins-state-effort-to-face-climate-change/>

Weekly Sentinel/Sanford Digital Device Program

Portsmouth Herald/Energy Resilience

<https://www.seacoastonline.com/story/news/local/2024/12/18/southern-maine-energy-resilience-plan-launched-to-combat-power-outages/77016184007/>

Yahoo/Energy Resilience

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/southern-maine-energy-resilience-plan-100527376.html>

SanfordSpringvale News/Digital Equity

<https://sanfordspringvalenews.com/portable-wireless-hotspots-available>

