



AGENDA
Communications Committee
Remote Meeting Only

Wednesday, September 11, 2024 – 12:00pm

TO VIEW THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING & OFFER PUBLIC COMMENT:

<https://scarboroughmaine.zoom.us/j/87196415422>

TO VIEW THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING ONLY:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3gWjS1LLqM>

Item 1. Call to Order.

Item 2. Roll Call.

Item 3. Approval of Minutes: July 10, 2024.

Item 4. Town Council Communications Planning

Item 5. Town Staff Communications Updates

Item 6. Council Corner Live Takeaways

Item 7. Communications Framework Discussion.

Item 8. Public Comment.

Item 9. Future Agenda Items.

Item 10. Adjourn.



Communications Plan Framework

Project/Topic	Timeline

Mission/Purpose:

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Measureable Goals:

Target Audiences:

--	--

Key Messages:

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Content Timeline

SCARBOROUGH
MAINE



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE

scarboroughmaine.org

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BACKGROUND

The Town of Scarborough is a community of 23,000 residents, spanning 42 square miles of coast, forest, marsh, agriculture, and developed environments. Effective communication is essential to keep our growing community informed of the Town of Scarborough's efforts to enhance the quality of where we live, work, explore, and recreate. We strive to provide awareness around general town topics, issues, projects, Council initiatives, and more.

The key priorities for Town of Scarborough communications are accessibility, transparency, timeliness, and public engagement. Information should be made available to residents in a digestible format that encourages interest and involvement in local decision making.

Communications efforts support Town departments and the Scarborough Town Council. Many of the annual messages are guided by the Town Council's goals for the year ahead. They are also informed by results of recent community surveys. The Town takes a proactive approach to build a communications plan that addresses current newsworthy happenings balanced with ongoing issues of interest to residents. These broader topics include:

- Fiscal responsibility
- Conservation
- Growth and development
- Capital projects/investments
- Traffic and transportation

Effective communication relies on involvement from administrative leaders, department directors and employees, and the Town Council. Collaboration ensures that residents are made aware of Town information in a timely manner.

PRIORITIES AND GOALS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS EFFORTS

- Be proactive and lead the narrative on town issues
- Capitalize on opportunities to highlight Town accomplishments

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESSIBILITY

- Inform on what's happening and make further details and materials available
- Strengthen public confidence to build trust in Town government
- Share content across communication channels to enhance reach



ENGAGED TOWN COUNCIL

- Provide outlets for councilor messaging
- Collaborate with council communications committee for aligned messaging and priorities

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Support visibility to public engagement opportunities to encourage attendance
- Highlight board and committee updates to showcase them as opportunities for residents to become more involved in town interests
- Use Scarborough events as opportunity for outreach and connection

BRAND IDENTITY AND VISIBILITY

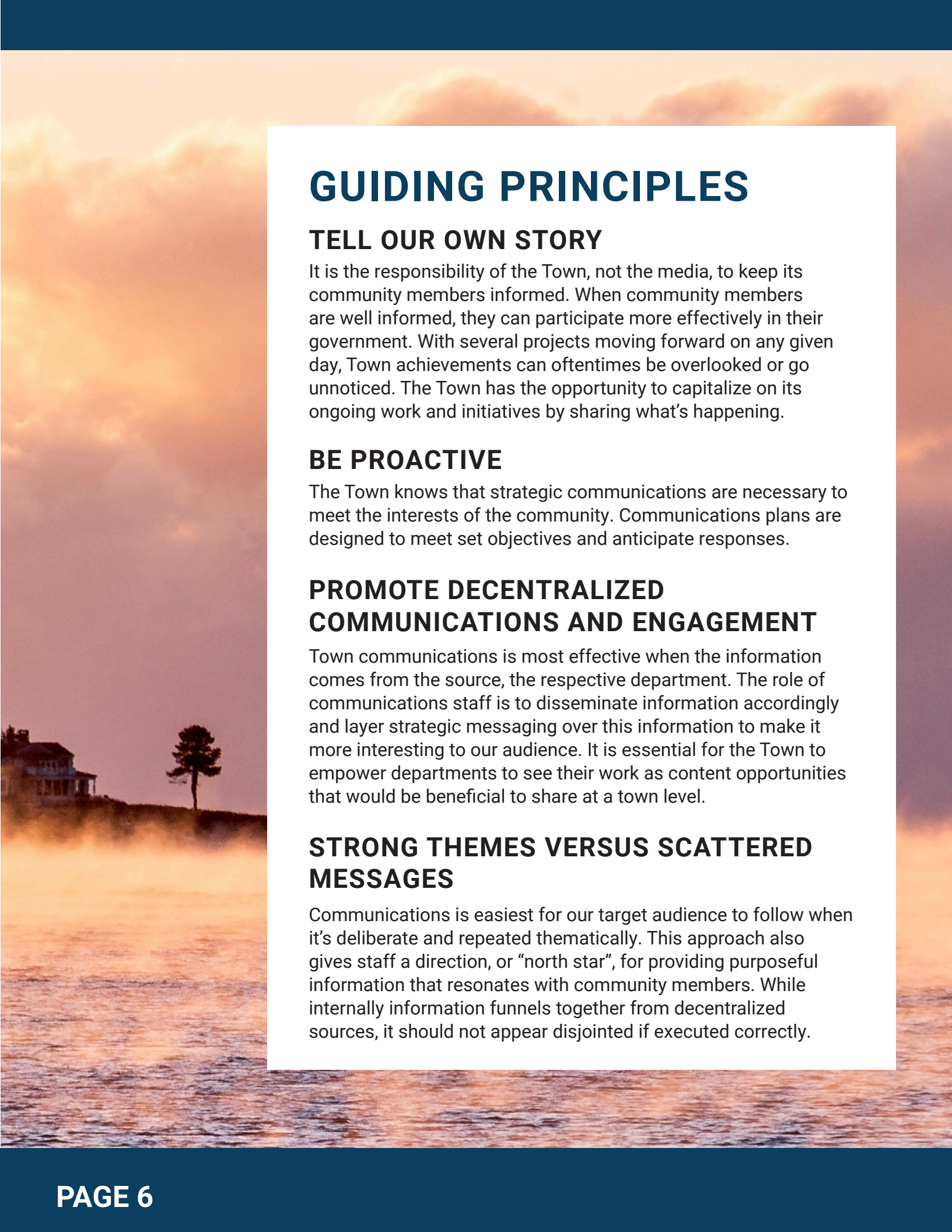
- Display and maintain a visible community presence
- Use logo and branding consistently and appropriately in all communications and engagement efforts
- Manage and share Town style guide to ensure proper use



AREAS OF FOCUS

The Town of Scarborough communications personnel are responsible for providing comprehensive outreach and information to the community and its residents. Information is conveyed in a timely, accurate, relevant, and consistent manner.

- Strategic Communications
- Community Engagement
- Public Relations
- Marketing and Branding



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

TELL OUR OWN STORY

It is the responsibility of the Town, not the media, to keep its community members informed. When community members are well informed, they can participate more effectively in their government. With several projects moving forward on any given day, Town achievements can oftentimes be overlooked or go unnoticed. The Town has the opportunity to capitalize on its ongoing work and initiatives by sharing what's happening.

BE PROACTIVE

The Town knows that strategic communications are necessary to meet the interests of the community. Communications plans are designed to meet set objectives and anticipate responses.

PROMOTE DECENTRALIZED COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Town communications is most effective when the information comes from the source, the respective department. The role of communications staff is to disseminate information accordingly and layer strategic messaging over this information to make it more interesting to our audience. It is essential for the Town to empower departments to see their work as content opportunities that would be beneficial to share at a town level.

STRONG THEMES VERSUS SCATTERED MESSAGES

Communications is easiest for our target audience to follow when it's deliberate and repeated thematically. This approach also gives staff a direction, or "north star", for providing purposeful information that resonates with community members. While internally information funnels together from decentralized sources, it should not appear disjointed if executed correctly.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CORE PRINCIPLES

Bringing the community together on an issue is critical for transparency and inclusive decision making. The following principles guide the process.

CAREFUL PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Through adequate and inclusive planning, ensure that the design, organization, and convening of the process serve both a clearly defined purpose and the needs of the participants.

INCLUSION AND DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY

Equitably incorporate diverse people, voices, ideas, and information to lay the groundwork for quality outcomes and democratic legitimacy.

COLLABORATION AND SHARED PURPOSE

Support and encourage participants, government and community institutions, and others to work together to advance the common good.

OPENNESS AND LEARNING

Help all involved listen to each other, explore new ideas unconstrained by predetermined outcomes, learn and apply information in ways that generate new options, and rigorously evaluate the process.

TRANSPARENCY AND TRUST

Be clear and open about the process, and provide a public record of the organizers, sponsors, outcomes, and range of views and ideas expressed. 6 Impact and Action
Ensure each participatory effort has real potential to make a difference, and that participants are aware of that potential.

SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATORY CULTURE

Promote a culture of participation with programs and institutions that support ongoing quality public engagement

Source: National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation - Resource Guide

TARGET AUDIENCES

Knowing the audience is key to an effective communications and engagement plan.

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

- Town Council
- Town Manager
- Employees

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

- Scarborough residents (New, Longtime)
- Community members
- Neighborhood groups
- Nonprofit organizations
- Prospective residents
- Visitors
- Realtors
- Seniors
- Businesses
- Youth
- News media

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Scarborough Schools
- Scarborough Public Library
- Scarborough Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO)
- Project GRACE
- Rotary Club of Scarborough
- Scarborough Lions Club

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

Many of the following tools may be implemented for a communications plan, depending on the project objectives and target audience. The emphasis we put on each may vary. We also expect these tools to evolve over time, so part of this process includes monitoring for performance, reach, and engagement so we can adapt as needed.

PRINT

- Direct mail
- Flyers
- Postcards
- Tax Bill Inserts

DIGITAL

- Email Newsletter (Bi-Weekly)
- Town Website: Town Calendar, QR codes
- Social Media: Facebook, Instagram
YouTube, X*, Nextdoor*, LinkedIn*

**Not actively using*

MEDIA

Print and online

- Scarborough Leader
 - Press releases
 - “In the Know” column
 - “Council Corner” column

OTHER

- Electronic messaging (Town sign)
- CodeRED alerts
- Advertisements*

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Town-hosted community events (tabling)
- Committee open houses/public forums
- Community/neighborhood meetings
- Town Council meetings
- Town Council workshops
- Council Corner Live events
- Elections
- Job fairs (recruitment)
- Door-to-door



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The following tools measure the performance outcomes of our communications efforts.

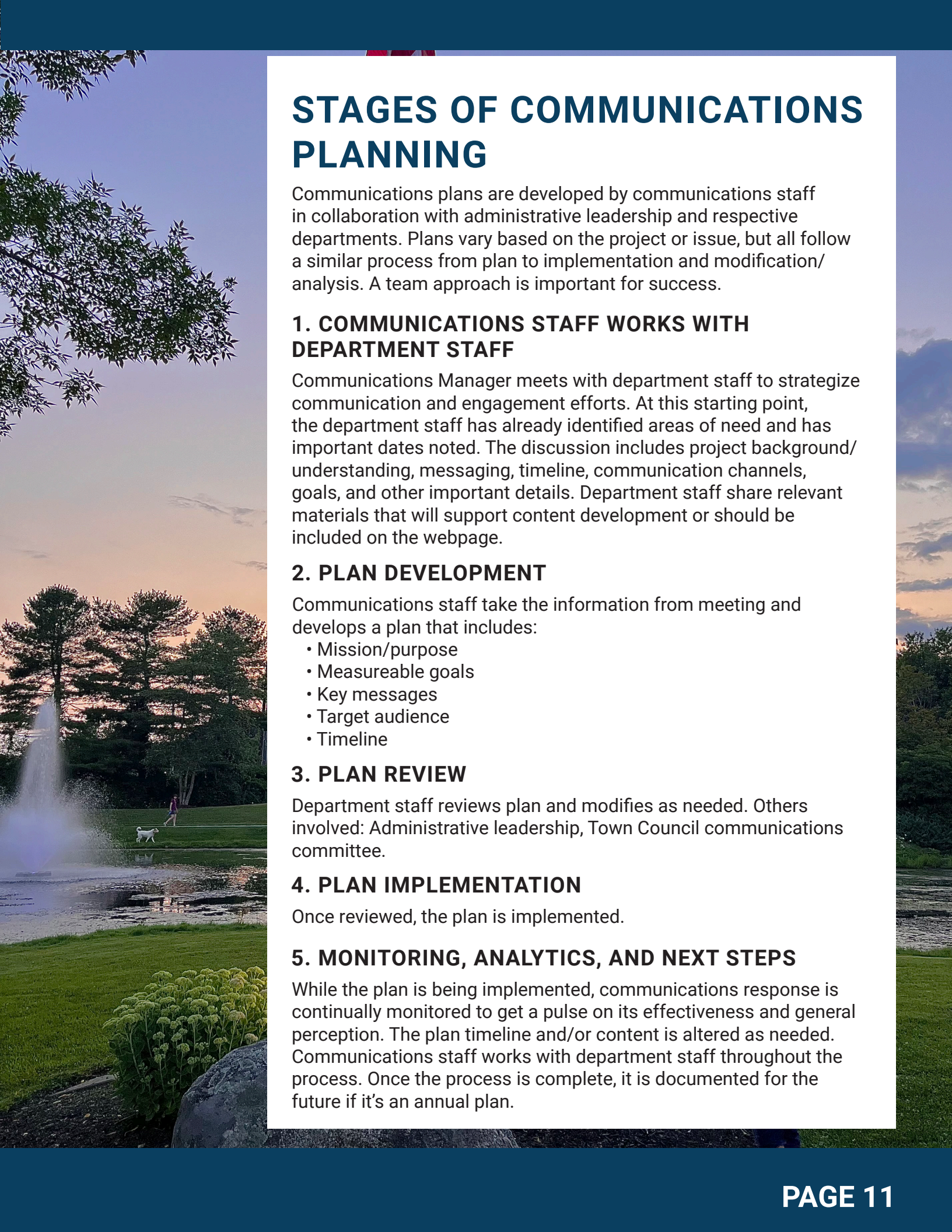
- Website page views
- Newsletter subscribers
- Newsletter engagement (open rate, click rate, links clicked)
- Social media followers (Facebook, Instagram)
- Social media engagement (likes, views, shares, direct messages, reach, comments)
- YouTube video views (public meetings, other)
- Number of surveys completed
- Election participation
- Event/meeting attendance

**How is our target audience responding?
Evaluation helps us know what's working and what's not.**

OTHER

- Social media comments
- Community survey results
- Media coverage
- Town Council emails (What are people reacting to? What is the sentiment?)
- Social media commentary on local pages/groups





STAGES OF COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

Communications plans are developed by communications staff in collaboration with administrative leadership and respective departments. Plans vary based on the project or issue, but all follow a similar process from plan to implementation and modification/analysis. A team approach is important for success.

1. COMMUNICATIONS STAFF WORKS WITH DEPARTMENT STAFF

Communications Manager meets with department staff to strategize communication and engagement efforts. At this starting point, the department staff has already identified areas of need and has important dates noted. The discussion includes project background/understanding, messaging, timeline, communication channels, goals, and other important details. Department staff share relevant materials that will support content development or should be included on the webpage.

2. PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Communications staff take the information from meeting and develops a plan that includes:

- Mission/purpose
- Measureable goals
- Key messages
- Target audience
- Timeline

3. PLAN REVIEW

Department staff reviews plan and modifies as needed. Others involved: Administrative leadership, Town Council communications committee.

4. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Once reviewed, the plan is implemented.

5. MONITORING, ANALYTICS, AND NEXT STEPS

While the plan is being implemented, communications response is continually monitored to get a pulse on its effectiveness and general perception. The plan timeline and/or content is altered as needed. Communications staff works with department staff throughout the process. Once the process is complete, it is documented for the future if it's an annual plan.

FRAMEWORK

Each project across departments that involves some level of public engagement should undergo the exercise of developing a communications framework. This is the first step in a campaign roll-out for the project.

The following framework was developed as a template for communications staff to work with departments to align on key messages, timeline, etc. for their project. A single template used across departments ensures a consistent approach and organization to Town of Scarborough communications.



SCARBOROUGH
MAINE



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FRONT

BACK