



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2023.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Botetourt County

Program Title: Launch of New BOCO Website

Program Category: Communications

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Tiffany Bradbury

Title: Director of Communications

Department: Communications

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Gary Larrowe

Title: County Administrator

Signature: Gary Larrowe



Botetourt County Website Rollout

Executive Summary:

Botetourt County is a rural county located in southwestern Virginia. The county is 548 square miles and is home to approximately 33,500 residents. Communicating effectively with a diverse population had become a challenge, so in June of 2021, Botetourt County established an Office of Communications. This new department consisted of a Director of Communications and a Marketing Communication Specialist. This team was tasked with reviewing communication strategies for our community and making recommendations and changes to the county's current communications efforts.

One of the first tasks of this newly established department was to audit the current county website and search for ways to improve it. The old website was a disjointed group of word press sites that were not cohesive or easy to navigate or update. It also did not use Botetourt County Brand Guidelines for our logo and was not accessible to users that may be visually impaired. The Director of Technology was already searching for new website vendors. The Communications Team took over this initiative and set the following goals for the new site.

1. The new website had to be easy for the community, businesses, and visitors to Botetourt County to navigate.
2. Ensure users of the site had a great experience.
3. The website must be accessible to ALL users.
4. The site must be visually appealing.



The Botetourt County Communications Team led the charge and quickly put together a marketing plan that included goals, a timeline, and a rollout plan. The first rule of order was to get feedback, not only from our external users but also from our internal staff. Surveys were developed and deployed, and feedback was analyzed to ensure that we were providing an optimal user experience. The next order was to identify page masters in each county department that would be responsible for the upkeep of their specific pages. Each of these staff members was trained in how to maintain the website. Our Communications Team also set up additional training opportunities and even had "open office" hours to answer questions or concerns about the site before it went live.

The implementation of the new website was delayed by a month due to some unforeseen issues with our vendor, but on February 15, 2022, the new and improved www.botetourtva.gov was launched. The Communications Office provided press releases to local news outlets and also produced a video that was shared on the county's social media channels.

The new site not only is visually appealing with vibrant photographs, and an easy-to-navigate calendar of events and county news on the front page, but we also went a step further and made pages for many of our more complex departments a little more robust. These pages are called "department headers" and they allow for more information to be housed on the site, therefore allowing users to quickly navigate and find what they are looking for. These pages were deployed for: Libraries, Parks and Recreation, Economic Development, Community Development, and Fire &



EMS. For the first time, residents could sign their children up for recreational sports online. They could more easily access agendas for boards and commissions. And they could keep up to date with county news, alerts, and happenings by signing up for notify me which would drop county news right into the user's email box or send a text to their mobile device.

(www.botetourtva.gov/notifyme)

Another opportunity was to revamp our recruitment efforts by making a landing page for job opportunities. This was not done on our previous site and the new website allows candidates a better customer experience when seeking out a career with the county. [Check it out here.](#)

We also wanted to honor our new residents, so a "new resident" page was made to provide a quick resource for our newest neighbors to help them answer questions that they may have about their new community (www.botetourtva.gov/newresident).

Since the launch on February 15, 2022, the county's website has seen over 318,700 users!

Our website is ever evolving, and our page masters diligently work to keep the information on the site up to date. We know that this tool is a lifeline for our community, and we are so proud of the end product and of those that worked so hard on the implementation process.

Persons and Organizations Involved:



Botetourt County Communications worked with our website vendor, Civic Plus, along with gathering information from our community to develop an organized, concise, and easy-to-navigate website. The Communications Team also worked closely with department page masters to ensure that they knew how to update their individual pages to make sure the county's website stays up to date with current information.

Expected Outcomes and Results:

Since the launch, our page continues to evolve to bring concise, timely and accurate information to our citizens, businesses and visitors.

Beneficiaries of the Program:

Botetourt County citizens, businesses, and visitors are reaping the benefits of having a more accessible website. The Communications Team audits the website to ensure usability and takes in feedback from community members as well as department page masters to ensure that the website stays fresh, accurate, and current. We know that our residents must have 24/7 access to county information and this new and improved website has allowed for this type of use.

Replication:

Replication of our website can be done by establishing a marketing plan and goals for your website. You then must find a reputable vendor that has experience dealing with governmental websites. It's imperative to continue offering training on website usage and the importance of

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accessibility to those in the county government offices that manage the site.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Botetourt County has done A LOT in the last two years when it comes to improving communications with our community. From relaunching all of our social media channels to designing and establishing a new website, plus beginning BOCO Storytellers and Getting to Know BOCO segments, the county Communications Team is dedicated to making information more accessible and transparent to our community. Our goal is to inform, build relationships and engage. To learn about Botetourt County, visit www.botetourtva.gov or follow us on social media:

[Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) & [NextDoor](#)

See below for website visuals.

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Old Botetourt County Website



New Botetourt County Website – www.botetourtva.gov

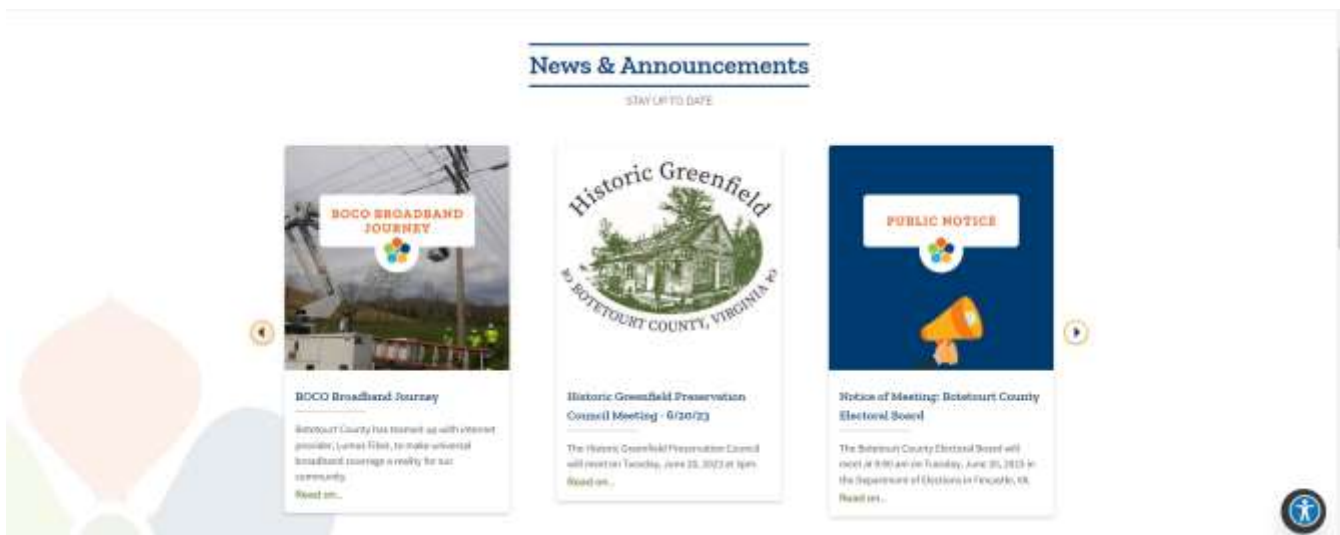
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News and Announcements are located on the home page and allow users to stay up to date with what's happening in the county.



Upcoming events are labeled clearly on our home page and allow the user to toggle between meetings and events.



Upcoming Events

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Meetings

JUNE 2023						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1

Events

- Wed Jun 21**
Canvass of Votes for June 20, 2023
Republican Party Primary
[Read On](#)
- Tue Jun 27**
Board of Supervisors Meeting
[Read On](#)
- Wed Jun 28**
CPWT Meeting
[Read On](#)
- Fri Jun 30**
Economic Development Authority Meeting
The Economic Development Authority of Botetourt Co...
[Read On](#)

[VIEW ALL EVENTS](#)

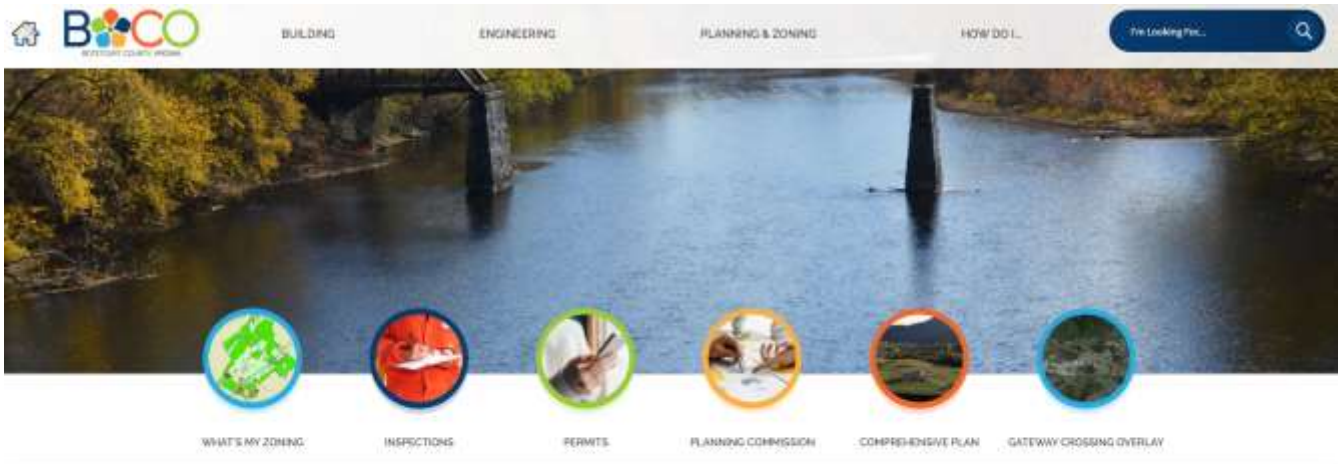
Our public facing departments, like Libraries, Parks and Recreation, Fire & EMS, Community Development and Economic Development have “department header” pages, allowing for a better user experience with fewer clicks to get to the information you are looking for.

The image shows a website header for Botetourt County Libraries. It includes a navigation menu with links for 'HOW DO I...', 'HOURS & LOCATIONS', 'SERVICES', 'PROGRAMS & CLASSES', and 'SUPPORT US'. There are also search boxes for 'Catalog Search' and 'Site Search'. Below the navigation is a large banner image of a planet with rings (Saturn) against a starry space background. Underneath the banner are five circular icons representing different library services: 'EBOOKS & AUDIOBOOKS', 'ACCOUNT & CATALOG', 'ONLINE RESOURCES', 'SUMMER LEARNING CHALLENGE', and 'RESERVE A MEETING ROOM'. At the bottom, there is a 'Library Events' section with a date range of '6/14/23 - 6/14/23' and a 'Library Events' button.

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Community Development News

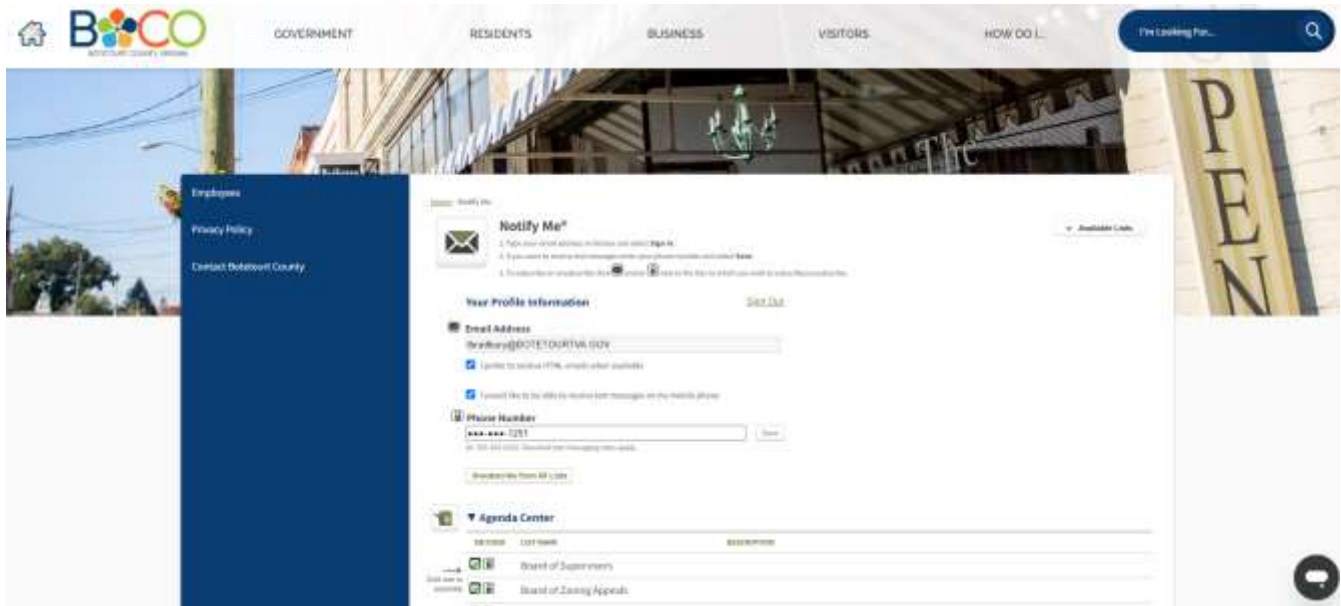
Users can sign up for "Notify Me" to stay up to date with county news, alerts and events.

www.botetourtva.gov/notifyme

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New residents can also access our "New Resident" page: www.botetourtva.gov/newresident

