



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your 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: Gloucester

Program Title: Current Conversations Podcast

Program Category: Communications

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Quinton Sheppard

Title: Director

Department: Community Engagement & Public Information

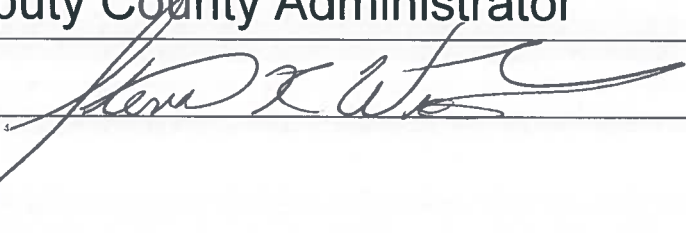
Telephone: 804-693-5730 Website: www.gloucesterva.gov

Email: qsheppard@gloucesterva.info

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Steven Wright

Title: Deputy County Administrator

Signature: 

Gloucester County's Current Conversations Podcast

Executive Summary

Gloucester County launched its “Current Conversations” podcast in early 2020 to reach a wide demographic and expand on topics that are of importance to its residents and visitors. Since its inception, the podcast has grown leaps and bounds, reaching well over 2,000 members of the public, who were able to learn more about certain topics and events of interest to them.

The monthly podcast has tried to showcase all the County departments, giving everyone the opportunity within the organization to have their time to have a back-and-forth casual conversation with the podcast host. The podcast has not only focused on local government departments but has also connected with other community partners to bring awareness and provide information on hot button issues that impact Gloucester County as a whole.

Popular topics that the podcast has covered include development in Gloucester, the housing market in the county, marketing various departments, and more.

The Current Conversations podcast has been a budget-friendly medium that we have successfully utilized to reach a wide audience than typically reached by traditional media. The podcast site is now known by the public as a go-to location for residents and visitors to learn more about Gloucester County and what it has to offer.

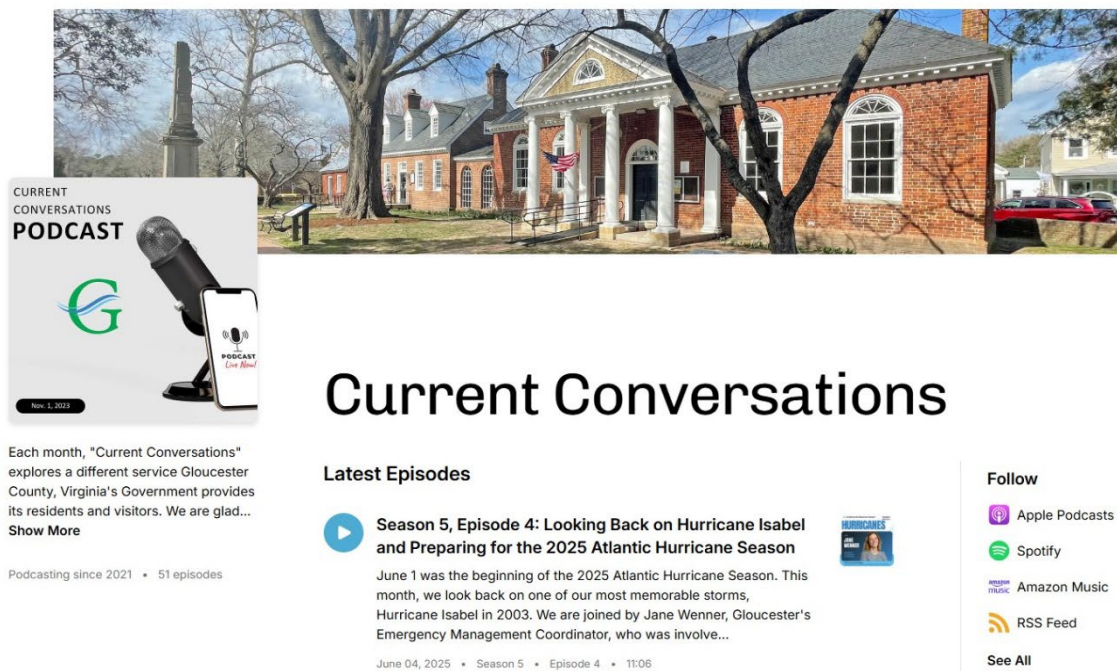
To learn more about the podcast and to listen to podcast episodes, visit

<https://currentconversations.buzzsprout.com/>.

Gloucester County's Current Conversations Podcast

The Problem Addressed

Since 2019, Gloucester County's Community Engagement & Public Information Department has made a priority to reach different demographics of its residents. One of the means it has worked to achieve this is by launching a podcast series called, "Current Conversations." The podcast, which was established in 2020, delves deeper into the issues facing local government and the Gloucester community.



Current Conversations

Latest Episodes

Season 5, Episode 4: Looking Back on Hurricane Isabel and Preparing for the 2025 Atlantic Hurricane Season

June 1 was the beginning of the 2025 Atlantic Hurricane Season. This month, we look back on one of our most memorable storms, Hurricane Isabel in 2003. We are joined by Jane Wenner, Gloucester's Emergency Management Coordinator, who was involve...

June 04, 2025 • Season 5 • Episode 4 • 11:06

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The monthly podcast has tried to showcase all the County departments, giving everyone the opportunity within the organization to have their time to have a back-and-forth casual conversation with the podcast host. The podcast has not only focused on local government departments but has also connected with other community partners to bring awareness and provide information on hot button issues that impact Gloucester County as a whole.

Local Cooperation Toward a Solution

We are fortunate to have invaluable relationships with our local media partners. However, we understand that not so much time and space can be dedicated to Gloucester County initiatives. With the Current Conversations podcast platform, we can take the amount of time we need to fully explain the issues that are facing the public without time or space constraints. Our local media outlets have often been kind enough to share our podcast related to a topic that they may be covering.

One of our most popular episodes delved into a controversial housing development that was set to be built on an already-crowded major corridor in the County. Many people in the community had been asking on social media what was happening on that property and our local media never fully explained it. We saw this as an opportunity to leverage our podcast to share in-depth the plans for the site and what the public could expect. Soon after the podcast was published, it started receiving multiple shares on social media sites when people posed the question, “What’s going on across from Lowe’s?”



Season 4, Episode 1, Part 2: What's Being Developed Across From Lowe's?



Sticking with the theme of real estate this month, we've received many questions about why so much land is being cleared along Route 17 Southbound, just past the intersection of Burleigh Road, across from the Lowe's Home Improvement store. In P...

March 06, 2024 • Season 1 • Episode 1 • 13:45



Season 4, Episode 1, Part 1: Gloucester's Current Housing Market



This month, we have a two-part podcast. For Part 1, we branch off a bit from County government, and speak with Kandy Fist, President of the Chesapeake Bay and Rivers Association of Realtors (CBRAR), about Gloucester's current housing market. Ka...

March 06, 2024 • Season 4 • Episode 1 • 20:02



Season 3, Episode 11: Addressing Current Challenges in Education



This month, we are joined by our School Superintendent, Dr. Anthony Vladu, who just completed his first six months on the job! He updates us on how his entry plan is going and discusses some of the current challenges the school system is facing...

February 07, 2024 • Season 3 • Episode 11 • 14:14

Another extremely successful time we leveraged the podcast was during a budget season when a certain County department was coming under some public scrutiny because a few residents did not understand what that department did on a regular basis. We were able to use the podcast to fully explain the depth and breadth of this department's daily activities and why it proved to be crucial to our local government organization. This podcast reached about 100 people, many of whom we imagine, shared similar questions.

A third successful podcast was one where we partnered with a local real estate leader. At the time this podcast was recorded, our housing market was facing a crisis. We had very few housing units available either for sale or rent. The homes that were available were extremely inflated to the point many in our local economy could not afford to purchase. As a local government, this was concerning, as the crisis could easily trickle down to negatively impact our revenues and operations.

The local real estate leader was able to explain the reasoning behind the lack of housing inventory and share her experiences with markets quickly turning themselves around. This did indeed happen after a while, and we are confident that this podcast helped many of our residents and prospective homeowners make decisions about whether to enter the market at the time.

With the purchase of several \$25 “Snowball” microphones to enhance our sound quality and a \$12/month commitment to Buzzsprout to share our podcast across multiple platforms, we have reached nearly 2,000 people that took the opportunity to learn more about their local government and current issues impacting their community. We have utilized staff in our Community Engagement & Public Information department, so no dollars were used on staffing the podcast.

We didn’t stop there. Since we already had the recorded content, we started uploading the podcasts to other mediums, such as YouTube, where it has gained hundreds of additional views/listens.

To help market our podcast, we immediately linked it to our overall branding efforts and have created attractive, easy-to-follow graphics to encourage listeners to tune in:



How this Model Could Assist Other Counties

In summary, we feel the Current Conversations podcast has been a budget-friendly medium that we have successfully utilized to reach a wide audience than typically reached by traditional media. The podcast site is now known by the public as a go-to location for residents and visitors to learn more about Gloucester County and what it has to offer.

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