



Beyond 2025 Steering Committee Meeting #4—September 21

Where do we want to be: Visioning Discussion

SC members were broken into small groups to discuss and reflect on reaffirming or modifying the 2014 CB Watershed Agreement Vision. Small groups reported back on six topics: Clean Water, Abundant Life, Conserved Lands, Access to Water, Vibrant Cultural Heritage, and Diversity of Engaged Stakeholders. Some general feedback included comments on public engagement strategies, the importance of considering how new technologies will impact peoples' interactions with the Bay and its resources, and including healthy people and a greater focus on how communities and the environment are linked. A breakdown of small group feedback by topic can be found at the end of this document.

Conceptual Overview of Steering Committee's Scope of Work and Discussion

SC Chairs [presented](#) the Conceptual Overview of all Beyond 2025 components and facilitated a discussion to finalize the path forward. Based on the Straw Poll vote, both the [product](#) and [process](#) were approved to move forward by SC members. The proposed [timeline](#) was scrapped because the document will constantly change throughout the process and still needs a lot of feedback.

- **Action:** Small group formats and expectations as well as how to approach public engagement will be fleshed out in the October meeting.

At-Large Advisory Membership Vote

SC members will vote on new At-Large advisory members by COB 9/22 (note: advisory members get to choose their own alternates). SC Chairs will notify new members on 9/25.

Presentation of Final Revised Evaluation Plan

ERG [presented](#) the final Revised Evaluation Plan, including updated evaluation questions based on feedback from the last meeting. Key adjustments were made to the evaluation questions before SC members voted on if ERG can move forward with developing the evaluation. An important note: the SC is responsible for drafting recommendations for the EC2024 based on the findings of the independent evaluation conducted by ERG.

- **Action:** ERG will move forward with the evaluation questions and plan.
- **Action:** Review the Paperwork Reduction Act requirements to determine the limiting factors of the evaluation.

Looking Ahead to October 26 Meeting [hybrid meeting]

- **Action:** Time needed for meeting will be adjusted once the agenda is set with an understanding that SC members have already planned for the original three-hour window.
- **Action:** SC members reserve as much of the day on 10/26 as possible.

Visioning Discussion: Summary by Topic

Clean water. Clean water is foundational to support aquatic life, drinking water, and recreational conditions. In looking at what's missing the group asked what's missing. Focused on connections, community, and climate. There needs to be a clearer connection between the vision statement and the concepts. The public needs to be shown the local and community benefits of the agreement and understand that public engagement in the process brings benefits. The concept of increasing resiliency and helping communities adapt to a changing climate.

Abundant life. Top three messages were starting at the headwaters, having healthy river corridors, and acknowledging connectivity from headwaters down to the transition zone to draw a clear connection between the watershed and the estuary. Discussed the economic side as being adaptable, sustainable, and well managed—making sure these terms are clearly defined. Acknowledged a need for wholistic land use that sustains development in the context of the living resource target site. Discussed the need for a better integration in the work, blurring the lines between the categories rather than continuing with siloed categories and the need to define restoration and success.

Conserved lands. Land conservation needs to be more of a priority—protection is better than restoration. Acknowledged the conflict between economic development and land conservation. Solutions to ease this conflict needs to come from the local level. A strategy needs to be developed on how to engage local communities in making these choices. People need to be educated on the existing resources and the value of the land and recreational activities.

Access to water. Focused on public access to waterways; currently, the plan to increase public access points is on track. New and existing access points need to be maintained. Access to greenspace needs to be improved and an evaluation of distance between greenspaces and waterways needs to be done. Need to determine how water access is connected to other goals like DEI, community building, tree canopy, and other areas of concern. Measurable metrics need to be determined so goals can be measurable and measured. The goal needs to be expanded to be more inclusive of everyone in the watershed.

Vibrant cultural heritage. Need to understand the intention of including the statement “vibrant cultural heritage.” How are the various uses, both water and cropland use, supported by the goal? Acknowledged that land use change is a challenging goal to sustain environmentally and economically. Need to prioritize sharing the cultural stories of people from all parts of the watershed—need to consider how to educate people on the variety of cultures across the watershed.

Diversity of engaged stakeholders. There is uncertainty around what the stakeholder advisory committee does. How can this understanding be built over time? Need to determine how stakeholders are engaged and how diversity is going to be defined in the future. The diversity in the watershed should be reflected in the diversity of the committee. Additionally, workforce diversity should be considered from academia to training programs. A plan needs to be made to engage grassroots stakeholders.