



**Chesapeake Bay Program**  
*Science. Restoration. Partnership.*

March 20, 2026

# Local Government Leadership Workgroup Report

*Maura Christian, VA DEQ, Chair*  
*Caitlin Bolton, MWCOCG, Vice Chair*

## New Leadership



Maura Christian - VA DEQ



Caitlin Bolton - MWCOCG

## New Name

Local **Government**  
Leadership Workgroup

## New Outcome Language

### Revised Outcome Language:

Increase knowledge and support the capacity of local government leaders in decision-making, such as land-use planning, to implement local actions that advance the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement.

### 2014 Outcome Language:

Continually increase the knowledge and capacity of local officials on issues related to water resources and in the implementation of economic and policy incentives that will support local conservation actions.

## New Targets

1. Engage directly (e.g., roundtable discussions) with at least 400 local government leaders annually.
2. Engage indirectly (e.g., newsletters) with at least 4,000 local government leaders annually.

## New Goal Team

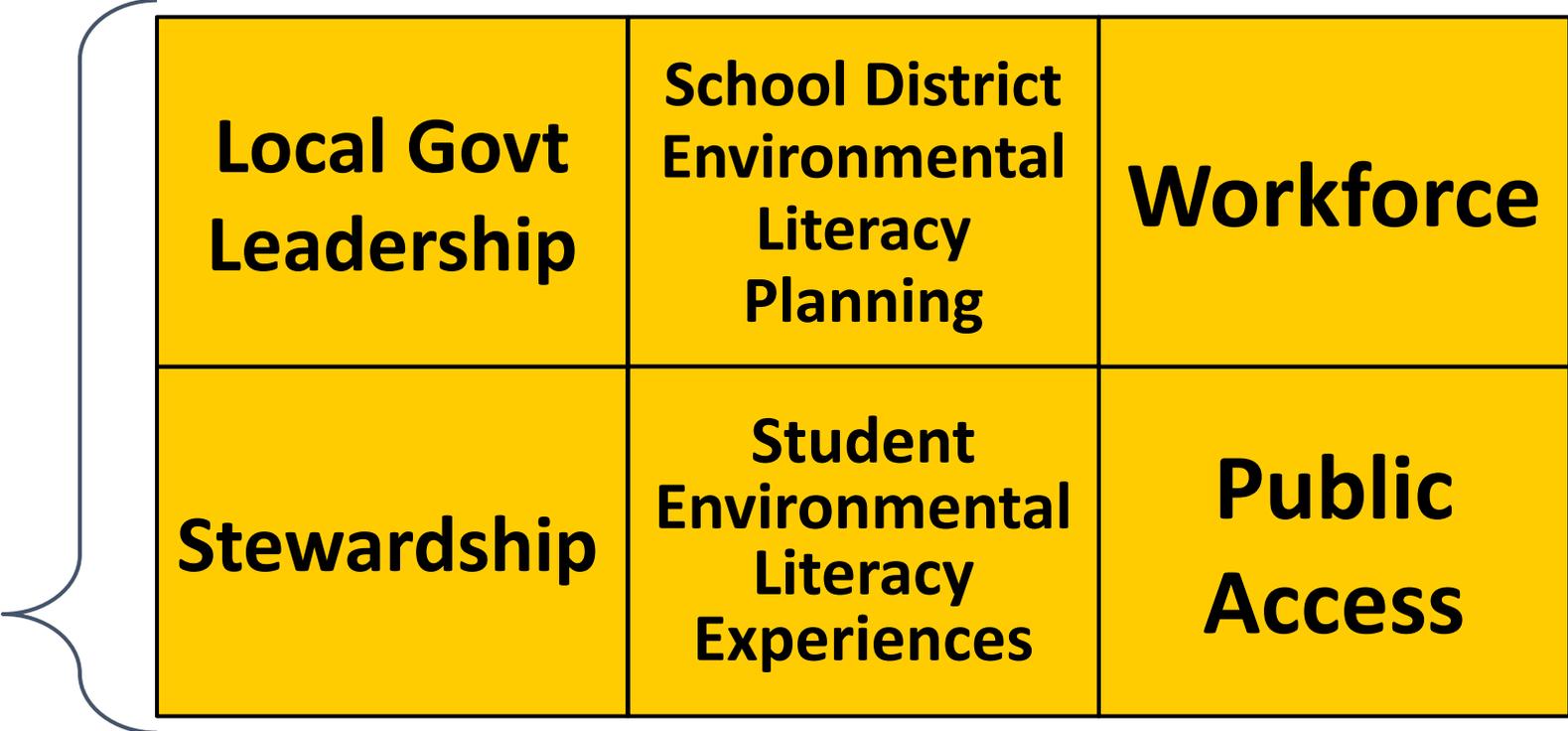
### **Engaged Communities (ECom)**

*Engage and grow a community of local stewards and leaders through education, recreation and professional opportunities to ensure the long-term success of restoration and conservation efforts.*

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# Setting the Stage for 2026

## New Goal Structure



### Wrapping up 2025 Projects

- TA Inventory & Gap Analysis
  - *Thank you Amy, Phil, and Laura!*
  
- Network Science TA with the Healthy Landscapes Goal Team
  - *Thank you Elizabeth!*

# Setting the Stage for 2026

## Direct Engagement

### WANDERING DELMARVA'S WATERWAYS

**Land Use on the Shore:  
Protecting Waterways and Meeting Local Priorities**

Join us for an immersive two-day bus tour to investigate land use challenges, strategies, and solutions across Delmarva! Explore practical strategies, creative funding models, and real-world success stories that demonstrate how effective land use planning and decision-making can strengthen both the environment and the economy.

**TOUR DETAILS**

- Thursday, April 16 - Friday April 17, 2026
- Projects and sites across Delmarva
- Tour is **FREE OF CHARGE** through generous support from the Campbell Foundation
- Overnight lodging provided at the Tidewater Inn

**REGISTER TODAY!**

Photo courtesy of the Chesapeake Bay Program

ALLIANCE for the Chesapeake Bay | Local Government Advisory Committee | MARYLAND COUNTIES | VCoV | VML

April 16-17, 2026

*Land Use on the Shore: Protecting Waterways and Meeting Local Priorities*

Rooted in the Past. Serving the Present. Creating the Potential.

CELEBRATING OUR **90<sup>TH</sup>** ANNIVERSARY

**MML**  
Maryland Municipal League

SUMMER CONFERENCE JUNE 14-17, 2026

Registration Open

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, Ocean City, MD

June 14, 2026

*Maryland Resilience: Reflecting on the Past to Envision the Future*

### Municipal Leadership Summit

PSATC | Pennsylvania Municipal League | University Center for Cities & Communities

October 7, 2026

*Theme TBD - Alignment with Sustainability Conference Track*

## Indirect Engagement

- Protect Local Waterways
- Social Media & Newsletter Blurbs
- Trusted Source Blogs & Articles

**ENVIRONMENT**

Co-written by Rick Mittle, Local Government Projects Coordinator, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and Kayli Ottomanielli, Local Government Projects Associate, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay



A rain garden seen in Pennsylvania, demonstrating efforts to address combined sewage and stormwater pollution problems. Photo by Will Parsons/Chesapeake Bay Program

### Stormwater Infrastructure That Prepares, Protects, and Pays Off

Across Pennsylvania, borough leaders are working at the crossroads of aging infrastructure, stronger storms, and evolving regulatory requirements that shape how communities manage stormwater. With updated Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permits rolling out and many counties revisiting or implementing Act 167 Stormwater Management Plans, boroughs face both historic challenges and opportunities. Looking ahead, boroughs should prepare for the impacts of growth and changing weather, protect people and property from future storms, and find strategic funding for clean water, public safety, and community development goals.

Today, stormwater projects are no longer just pipes and culverts buried underground. Boroughs across the Commonwealth are adopting creative, visible, and sustainable solutions that do more than move water. These modern approaches enhance public and private spaces, provide recreation and education opportunities, improve public health, and strengthen local economies. In short, the value of stormwater infrastructure extends far beyond compliance; it touches every aspect of community life.

**Preparing: Staying Ahead of Impacts**

Preparing for changing weather patterns requires a mix of traditional upgrades and a wider application of green stormwater infrastructure (GSI). Practices like permeable pavement, rain gardens, and conservation landscaping help capture rainfall, slow runoff, and promote infiltration, thus reducing pressure on storm drains and downstream systems.

Communities across the Chesapeake Bay watershed, many in Pennsylvania, are discovering how GSI can convert chronic flood areas into community assets such as outdoor classrooms, community gathering spaces, or demonstration sites. Preparation does not end with installation, as maintenance is essential to community health. Whether that means clearing clogged inlets, removing accumulated sediment from basins, or maintaining healthy plantings in rain gardens, boroughs that stay ahead of maintenance see fewer flooded intersections and lower long-term repair costs. With widespread GSI installation and maintenance, boroughs can prepare to succeed.

**Protecting: People, Property, and Waterways**

Stormwater systems are among the most important public safety investments a borough can make. Well-designed infrastructure prevents flooding, protects homes and businesses, and improves water quality. Effective stormwater management also plays a central role in meeting MS4 obligations. Reducing sediment, nutrients, and pollutants entering local streams helps boroughs maintain compliance while protecting the health of local waterways. Updated MS4 permits call for measurable progress, incentivizing boroughs to invest in projects that will deliver benefits for years to come. With planning and foresight, today's investments can create long-lasting protection.

Intermunicipal collaboration on stormwater management can amplify protection. Act 167, Pennsylvania's Storm Water Management Act, can be used as a tool for boroughs to establish a consistent, watershed-based framework for stormwater management across municipal boundaries. When boroughs align projects with their county plans, they gain improved regional coordination, streamlined permitting pathways, and better access to state and federal funding sources. For example, coordinated upgrades to shared drainage corridors or impaired streams allow multiple municipalities to reduce flooding and pollution more effectively than a single borough could alone.



The start of a spate of public parks and linear stormwater management areas in a historic brownfield site in Carlisle Borough, Cumberland County. Photo by Sage Levy/Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay Chesapeake Bay

**Paying Off: Now and in the Future**

When local governments invest in stormwater infrastructure, they save money and diminish risk down the road. Local governments have noted that flood reductions often lessen emergency responses and road repair costs. As communities transform vacant lots and incorporate stormwater features into their streetscapes, we see systems that function and center improvements for community members.

Although investments for preparation and protection pay off in the long run, they still require upfront funding. Boroughs across the Commonwealth have successfully secured critical funds by using Countywide Action Plan (CAP) Coordinators. By working with CAP Coordinators,

“Carlisle has a long and rich history, and we are committed to building on that foundation by meeting modern standards in ways that will benefit our community today and far into the future. The linear stormwater park and neighboring redevelopment exemplifies the kind of creative, place-based solutions that urban communities like Carlisle must pursue to grow sustainably.”

**MAURITA “MO” ABELN, DIRECTOR OF WATER RESOURCES, BOROUGH OF CARLISLE**

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*Stormwater Infrastructure That Prepares, Protects, and Pays Off - PA State Association of Boroughs*  
[The Borough News - March 2026 \(Pg. 52-54\)](#)

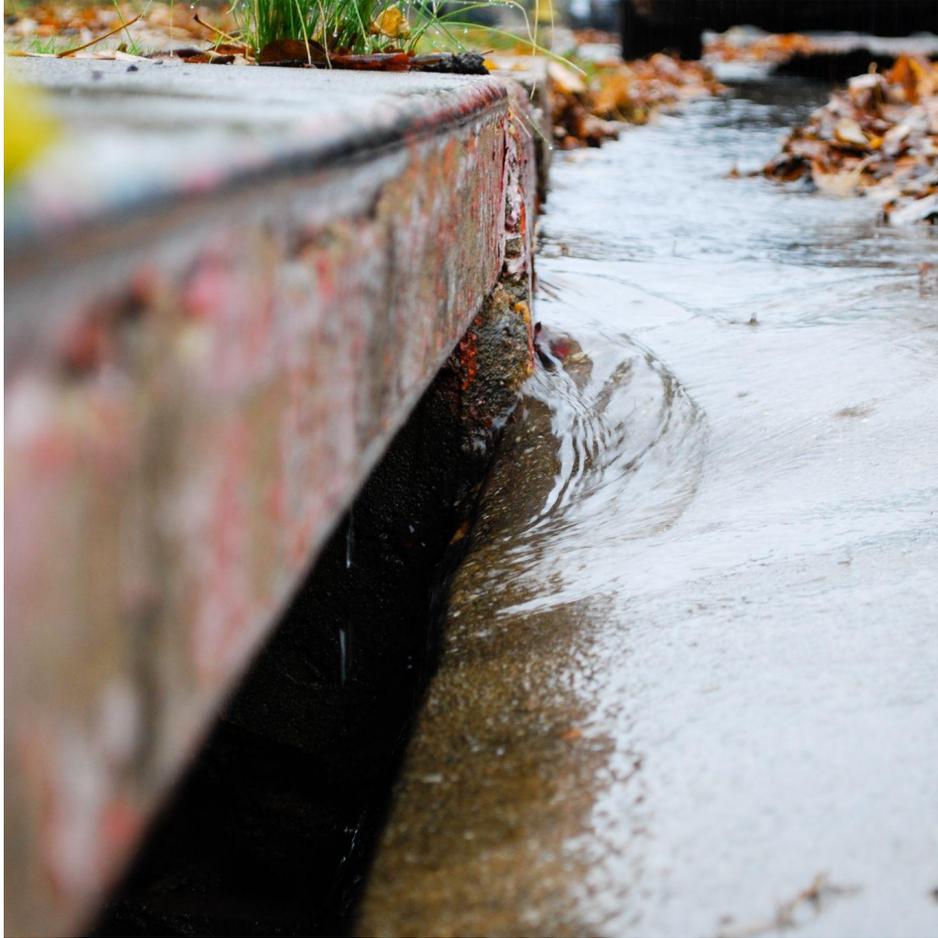


Photo: Chesapeake Bay Program

## Innovative Approaches To...

- Managing Stormwater - David Wood
- Mitigating Flooding - Scott Smith
- Reducing Pollution - Dr. Peter May

# Upcoming Meetings

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- Quarterly Meetings
  - May 21 - *Strengthening Local Solutions: Communicating Successes and Tailored Technical Assistance*
  - August 25 - *Growing Green: Local Land Use Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities*
  - November 19 - *Supporting Small Communities: Septic and Rural Wastewater Management System*



# Thanks!

Maura Christian, VA DEQ, LGLW Chair  
Caitlin Bolton, MWCOG, LGLW Vice-Chair  
Rick Mittler, ACB, LGLW Coordinator  
Erin Sonnenburg, CRC, LGLW Staffer