

finding funding for the future



VAPDC August Workshop Speakers

Lauren Pugh
Planning Director
Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC)



Lauren Pugh serves as the Planning Director at the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC), where she oversees a wide range of planning and community development initiatives across the region. Since joining the CRC four years ago, she has led efforts in broadband expansion, affordable housing, emergency management, and community resilience, working closely with local governments to secure grant funding, and implement projects that enhance quality of life. Lauren holds a bachelor's degree from James Madison University and is passionate about helping communities build long-term capacity through collaborative planning and innovative funding solutions.

Lauren Stuhldreher
Economic Development Representative for Virginia
Economic Development Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce



Lauren Stuhldreher serves as the Economic Development Representative for the Commonwealth of Virginia at the United States Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. She works collaboratively with local and regional stakeholders on economic development investments that have included workforce development initiatives, industry and feasibility studies, construction of multi-use buildings, and infrastructure improvements throughout Virginia, totaling over \$130 million dollars since 2019. Prior to joining the U.S. Economic Development Administration in October 2019, Lauren worked as a Program Coordinator at Northwestern University and most recently as the Incentives Coordinator at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership. She earned her bachelor's degree from Virginia Tech and is a recipient of the U. S. Department of Commerce Bronze Award for Superior Federal Service.

Masengo Kapanga

State Specialist

Water and Environmental Programs



Masengo Kapanga has been the state specialist for Water and Environmental Programs since 2023. She has 15 years of experience working in mortgage operations, construction lending, affordable housing, and community development. She is an alum of Xavier University in Cincinnati, OH with a BA in Economics

Erica Duncan

Manager, Wastewater Technical Assistance

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality



Erica Duncan is the Manager of Wastewater Technical Assistance at DEQ. She has been with the Department since 2023. Prior to that she was the Assistant Division Director of Henrico County's Water Reclamation Facility, overseeing all aspects of the operations, maintenance and engineering of a 75MGD wastewater facility. Erica holds her Class 1 Wastewater License and her BS in Biology from the University of Mary Washington. She is the Vice-Chair and Board Member for DPOR's Water and Wastewater Works Operators and Onsite Sewage System Professionals Board, an active member of Virginia Water Environment Association, and the proud recipient of the 2022 William Hatfield Award for Outstanding Performance and Professionalism in the Operation of a Wastewater Facility. She spends her free time with her husband and son, and enjoying the outdoors, including the beautiful Virginia waterways.

Erika Tanner

Local Government Liaison

Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority



Erika Tanner is a Local Government Liaison with the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority supporting the 31 cities and counties in the Central Virginia region. In this role, she works with localities to support engagement and access to OAA funding opportunities. Prior to joining the OAA in October 2025, Erika served as a Community Planner with the Southside Planning District Commission.

Billy Gammel

DHCD, GO Virginia Interim Program Manager



Billy Gammel, DHCD, GO Virginia Interim Program Manager Prior to joining DHCD staff Billy served as a Senior Planner for the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC). At the RRPDC his efforts were concentrated in community development, community revitalization, economic development, and data analysis. He has been with DHCD the last 9 years where he helps administer the GO Virginia program; an economic development grant program that focuses on incentivizing regional collaboration as it relates to talent development, entrepreneurship & innovation, site development & infrastructure, and cluster scale-up opportunities. Within the GO Virginia program he has historically focused his work on the communities of Southside Virginia, Greater Fredericksburg area, Northern Neck, and Middle Peninsula. Billy resides in Henrico County with his wife, Shannon, and 4-year old son Reed. They are expecting a daughter at the end of August.

Chris McNamara

Senior Strategic Housing Officer

Virginia Housing



Chris has been with Virginia Housing for about 5 years serving as a Senior Strategic Housing Officer for Economic Development. His focus is on bridging the gap between traditional economic development efforts and the housing delivery network. Prior to joining VH, Chris worked for the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and has experience in real estate sales, property management and sales. He has a BS in Marketing from Virginia Tech and Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Commonwealth University. Chris was born in Massachusetts but has called Virginia home since he was 15 and enjoys exploring VA's history, running, spending time with his nieces and nephews, and being by the water

Hannah Rowlette

Clean Water Finance Project Manager, Piedmont Region

Department of Environmental Quality



Hannah Rowlette is the Clean Water Finance Project Manager for the Piedmont Region at DEQ. She joined DEQ in 2026. Prior to that she was a Program Analyst with the Environmental Protection Agency, working in the Superfund program as a part of the Remedial Acquisition Framework national management team. Hannah has a BA in Global Affairs and minors in Conflict Analysis and GIS from George Mason University. She was the recipient of the EPA OSRTI Alan Youkeles Analyst of the Year and OLEM Analyst of the Year in 2023 for outstanding analytical skills in support of the Superfund Program. In her free time, she enjoys hiking with her dog and kayaking.

Karen M. Weber, P.G.
Brownfields Coordinator

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)



Karen M. Weber, P.G., is the statewide Brownfields Coordinator with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), where she oversees sites enrolled in the Virginia Voluntary Remediation Program and manages Brownfields redevelopment initiatives across the Commonwealth. In this role, she evaluates site characterization and risk assessment activities, manages grants and grant funded projects, guides communities through environmental assessment and reuse planning, and collaborates with state and federal partners to advance economic redevelopment. She serves on the review committee for the Virginia

Brownfields Restoration and Economic Redevelopment Assistance Fund, that has been providing grants to support Brownfield redevelopment across Virginia since 2012.

Prior to joining the Virginia DEQ, Karen worked in environmental consulting for 19 years, establishing deep technical expertise in site characterization, risk evaluation, and remediation strategy. A licensed Professional Geologist in Virginia, Karen is also an adjunct faculty member in Geosciences at Virginia Tech, where she contributes through guest lectures, career advising, and regulatory-sector outreach. She holds a B.S. in Geoscience and M.A. in Higher Education, grounding her technical expertise in a strong understanding of learning, motivation, and mentoring.

Karen is an active member of regional and national professional networks such as the Central Appalachian Brownfields Innovative Network (CABIN) and currently serves as the EPA Region III representative for the Association of States and Territorial Solid Waste Management Organization (ASTSWMO) Brownfields Focus Group.

Stephen Versen
Deputy Director

Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission



In August 2023, Stephen Versen began serving as Deputy Director of the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission. In this role he serves as the organization's Chief Operations Officer, leading the development and implementation of the Commission's strategic initiatives, managing Commission staff and taking the lead on economic development projects. Previously, Stephen spent nearly 15 years with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services administering the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) fund, an incentive grant program for attracting new and expanding agriculture- and forestry-based business to Virginia.

Stephen's other work experiences include the City of Staunton's Department of Economic Development and the Department of Housing and Community Development's Virginia Main Street program, where he assisted communities with their downtown revitalization efforts. He most recently worked at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership as a Business Manager in Regional Talent Solutions and Business Outreach team. Stephen graduated from James Madison University with a Bachelors of Business Administration (Economics & History Majors) and received his Masters of Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Commonwealth University. He lives in Richmond with his wife and three children.

Tony Leone
Senior Program Manager
Virginia Resources Authority



Tony Leone is a Senior Program Manager at the Virginia Resources Authority. He currently oversees the Virginia Community Flood Preparedness Fund and Resilient Virginia Revolving Fund and assists with the management of the \$2.5 billion Virginia Pooled Financing Program. He has almost 20 years of experience in local and state government, where he has worked in various roles covering budget, finance, strategic planning, and project management. Tony has an MBA with a concentration in Finance from Virginia Commonwealth University and a BA in English from Virginia Military Institute. When away from the office, Tony enjoys traveling and spending time at the beach with his wife and daughter, doing various outdoor activities, and reading a good book.

Tory McGowan
Real Estate Office Program Manager
Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development



Tory is Program Manager for the Real Estate Office of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development and has been part of DHCD for nearly eleven years. He currently manages the Enterprise Zone, Industrial Revitalization Fund, and Port Host Communities Revitalization Fund programs. He has also worked with the GO Virginia and Virginia Main Street programs in his time at DHCD. Tory has 20 years of community and economic development experience at both the state and local levels in Virginia and Missouri.

Matt Frame
Sustainability Coordinator
Office of Drinking Water

Matt Frame has worked as a sustainability coordinator for the VA Office of Drinking Water serving the Southern region of the state for the past year, he works with providing technical assistance and connecting waterworks to resources they need. Prior he worked as a non-community sustainability coordinator covering the whole state of Virginia.