



THE MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

The Association of Cities and Towns

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Justin Fiore, 410-295-9100, JustinF@mdmunicipal.org

Maryland Municipal League's Annual State of the Municipality Highlights Municipal Services Provided to Marylanders

(December 5, 2025) Annapolis, Md. – The [Maryland Municipal League](https://www.mdmunicipal.org/) (MML), which represents 161 local governments in Maryland, held its third annual State of the Municipality event in Annapolis on Thursday with 100 municipal officials, state legislators, and community partners in attendance. This year's event served as the release of the 2025 research report conducted by the University of Baltimore which highlights the variety and scale of services cities, towns and villages provide to Marylanders.

The report focuses on 15 critical services municipalities regularly provide in 6 major categories: housing, planning, and development; public works and infrastructure; economic and workforce development; public safety; environmental stewardship; and recreation and parks. Together, the services selected feature a core mix of mission critical functions and those that create a sense of place.



Dr. Ann Cotten presents UB Municipal Services Report at MML's State of the Municipality

Dr. Ann Cotten, Executive Director, Schaefer Center for Public Policy for the University of Baltimore shared key findings with the audience, which includes:

- **Broad, Essential Service Coverage:** Nearly all Maryland municipalities (91%) provide essential services related to housing, planning, and development. Furthermore, an average municipality provides nine of the 15 critical services examined in the study, underscoring their comprehensive role in daily life.
- **Driving Economic Activity and Community Engagement:** Municipalities play a critical role in local economic activity by issuing an average of 227 commercial and residential permits per year. They also promote a strong sense of community by hosting an average of 18 public events annually.
- **Commitment to Infrastructure and Environment:** Services related to public works and infrastructure are provided by a large majority of municipalities (87%). This includes essential

functions like trash removal (76%) and road maintenance (73%). Additionally, almost 66% of municipalities perform at least one service related to environmental stewardship.

- **Massive Financial Investment in Quality of Life:** Municipal governments commit significant financial resources to local services. Public safety is the highest average annual budget item at \$5.4 million, with water and wastewater operations also among the most expensive services at an average of \$3.2 million and \$4.3 million, respectively.
- **High-Volume Public Safety and Responsiveness:** Municipal public safety officers are highly active, responding to an average of over 12,000 requests for assistance per year. Just over half of all municipalities (56%) also provide their own policing services.

The report also revealed a strong, consistent relationship between a municipality's population size and the number of services it provides (Spearman's Rank Correlation of 0.71), meaning that as population increases, the number of services generally increases. The study explicitly notes that the trend is not consistent across the board, showing that municipalities of similar sizes may offer vastly different service portfolios.

“The State of the Municipality has become a staple in the MML calendar and offers an opportunity to have thoughtful discussion around policy issues and new data ahead of the General Assembly session,” said MML Managing Director Bill Jorch. “The choice to focus on municipal services for this year's study was done as a way to build more data and talking points to bolster our push to modernize the municipal revenue structure: MML's sole legislative priority for 2026.”



Pictured left to right: MML CEO Theresa Kuhns, Julia Glanz, Deputy Secretary of DHCD, Terry McGean, City Manager of Ocean City, Laura Runkle, President of Virginia/Maryland American Water, and Monique Ashton, Mayor of Rockville.

MML CEO Theresa Kuhns led a panel discussion on how municipal services are prioritized given limited budgets, what modernizing municipal revenues would do for local government finances, and how the private sector plays a role in provisioning services. Participants included Julia Glanz, Deputy Secretary of DHCD, Monique Ashton, Mayor of Rockville, Terry McGean, City Manager of Ocean City, and Laura Runkle, President of Virginia/Maryland American Water.

The National League of Cities (NLC) then unveiled a national presentation – City Fiscal Conditions 2025 – presented by Harshita Tanksali, Senior Research Specialist for the NLC. Dubbed “the nation’s most comprehensive annual analysis of the financial health of U.S. municipalities,” the report details how cities and towns are now navigating a more complex environment shaped by inflationary pressures, slowing revenue growth and the winding down of extraordinary federal aid. Additionally, it underscores the corresponding concern of city and town finance officers, only 45% of which feel optimistic about meeting fiscal needs in FY2026, down from 64 percent in 2024.

Concluding the event, Kuhns spoke to the collective strength of Maryland’s municipal governments: “Today has once again proven that our municipal family is strong, creative, and united in purpose. Whether we

are addressing infrastructure challenges, strengthening public safety, or expanding economic opportunity, and doing it on limited revenue sources, we are at our best when we support one another.”

#

About The Maryland Municipal League:

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) was founded in 1936 and serves as the collective voice of 161 municipal governments and the 2 million Marylanders it represents. A voluntary, non-profit, nonpartisan association controlled and maintained by city and town governments, MML works to strengthen and support municipal government through advocacy and the development of effective leadership. Through its membership in the National League of Cities MML offers legislative representation in Washington, urban research programs, and a national municipal government information exchange. MML is the only statewide organization in Maryland composed solely of municipal officials and devoted to the promotion of all branches of municipal administration.