

***Proudly Serving Communities Throughout the United States!***



# January 2026 Newsletter

*A new year always brings fresh momentum, and 2026 is no exception. As communities look ahead, this is a time to reset priorities, strengthen strategies, and focus on building a resilient future. At Capital Strategic Solutions, we're excited to continue helping municipalities navigate challenges, seize opportunities, and move forward with clarity and confidence.*



## Leadership Between Chapters

### How Ken Calder Supported the Town of Ware's Department of Public Works Through a Critical Leadership Transition

When the Town of Ware faced a leadership transition in its Department of Public Works, Capital Strategic Solutions stepped in with experienced interim support from Senior Project Manager Ken Calder. As Interim Director, Ken ensured daily operations continued without disruption while also strengthening internal systems, including developing clear Standard Operating Procedures that will benefit the department long-term.

Throughout the transition, Ken worked closely with staff and Town leadership to maintain continuity, build trust, and support the search for a permanent Director. His leadership helped Ware maintain momentum while positioning the department for its next chapter—an example of how CSS supports communities during critical moments.



**Learn More About Ken in Ware:**



## Find Us - MMA Connect 351

**CSS to Attend MMA Connect 351**  
Boston's Seaport District  
**Booth #203: January 22, 2026 -**  
**January 24, 2026**



## Attendees From CSS



**Nichol Figueiredo**  
*Chief Executive Officer*



**Jennifer Thompson**  
*Chief Development Officer*



**Bill Keegan**  
*Senior Project Manager*



**Blythe Robinson**  
*Senior Project Manager*



**Bob Fennessy**  
*Senior Project Manager*



**Ed Burman**  
*Senior Project Manager*



**Heather Lemieux**  
*Senior Project Manager*



**Mary Ellen Kelley**  
*Senior Project Manager*



**Staci Figueiredo**  
*Administrative Assistant*



# Welcome Aboard

## Ed Burman

Capital Strategic Solutions is pleased to welcome Edward D. Burman as a Senior Project Manager, bringing more than 30 years of leadership experience across public safety,

policing, emergency management, and public health.

Most recently, Ed served as Chief of Police in Wayland, where he led departmental operations, budgeting, capital planning, and community engagement. He has also held senior leadership roles in Ashland and Framingham and played a key role as COVID-19 Task Force Lead in Ashland, coordinating regional vaccination efforts and emergency response initiatives. In addition to his law enforcement background, Ed is a Registered Nurse, giving him a unique, multidisciplinary perspective on complex municipal challenges.



Ed's deep operational experience and collaborative leadership style will be a tremendous asset to the communities we serve. We're excited to have him on the CSS team and look forward to the impact he'll make supporting our municipal clients.

[Learn More About Ed Burman:](#)



## CSS Talent Spotlight



### **Sarah Pawluczzonek:** **Bringing Clarity and Stability to** **Municipal Billing Systems**

CSS is proud to spotlight Senior Project Manager Sarah Pawluczzonek as part of our CSS Talent Spotlight series. With more than 20 years of experience in public works administration, Sarah is CSS's go-to expert in utility billing, MUNIS, and municipal financial systems. She has supported communities including Somerville, Wayland, Randolph, Weston, and Ludlow, helping stabilize and modernize billing operations, implement new workflows, support major transitions, and train staff. From troubleshooting complex billing issues to leading full MUNIS conversions and system



### **Liz Kalaijian:** **Clear, Confident, Community-** **Focused Communication**

CSS is proud to spotlight Project Manager Liz Kalaijian as part of our CSS Talent Spotlight series. Liz supports municipalities with strategic communications, public outreach, and engagement—helping public-sector teams communicate clearly, confidently, and consistently, especially around time-sensitive or high-visibility initiatives. With a background in television news, Liz brings a strong media lens to her work, strengthening media relations, shaping clear messaging, and helping communities connect more effectively with their residents. Through her work leading



cleanups, Sarah brings deep operational knowledge and hands-on expertise to every municipality she supports—helping teams navigate change with confidence and continuity.

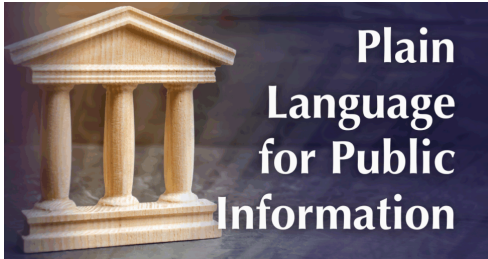
[Learn More About Sarah Pawluczzonek](#)

communications efforts for communities like Westford and Brookline, Liz helps municipalities build trust, increase transparency, and deliver messages that truly resonate.

[Learn More About Liz Kalaijian, PM, CSS](#)



## Smart Reads, Fresh Takes



### Plain Language for Public Information

#### Turning Municipal Language into Resident-Ready Information

The goal of simple municipal writing is not to remove detail. It is to translate technical information into plain language so residents can understand what is changing, why it is changing, and how it affects them.

[Read More](#)



#### How Municipalities Can Move Forward with Confidence in 2026

As municipalities enter 2026, the challenges facing cities and towns are familiar—but the expectations are higher than ever. Residents want transparency, reliability, and progress.

[Read More](#)



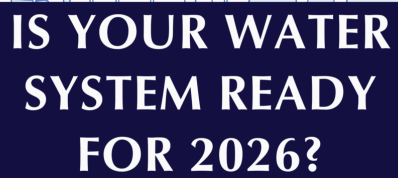
Designing for  
Accessibility,  
Usability, & Scale

**CAPITAL  
STRATEGIC  
SOLUTIONS**  
A Women-Owned Business Enterprise

#### New Year, New Branding

The start of a new year always brings a moment to pause and take stock. For many communities, that reflection isn't just about what's next on the calendar; it's about whether the tools they rely on to communicate are actually keeping pace with the work they're being asked to do.

[Read More](#)



## IS YOUR WATER SYSTEM READY FOR 2026?

### Emergency Planning for Community Water Systems

Storms, power outages, main breaks, cyber incidents, supply chain hiccups: none of these are hypothetical anymore. Add in extreme winter weather, drought conditions, water quality concerns, and growing public expectations, and the margin for error keeps getting smaller.

[Read More](#)



### Water Accessibility Starts with Informed Communities

Water is often taken for granted—until planned upgrades and advancements run into system capacity limits and projects are put on hold. Even in states where water may appear abundant, access to usable, permitted, and affordable water is not guaranteed.

[Read More](#)



### Supporting Municipal Recruitment When It Matters Most

Municipal governments across the country are facing an unprecedented workforce challenge. Demand for skilled, experienced professionals continues to grow, while competition for talent has never been higher.

[Read More](#)



## Career Corner

Discover open positions with our municipal partners and find your next opportunity to support strong, well-run local government.

### Town of Ware: Director of Public Works

**Salary Range: \$125,000-\$145,000**

Lead the Town of Ware's public works operations, including streets, water/sewer, and solid waste, with at least 10 years of experience required.

[Apply Now](#)

**City of Somerville:  
Director of Water & Sewer**

**City of Somerville: Director  
of Inspectional Services**

**Salary: Starting at \$130,000  
(commensurate with experience)**  
Guide Somerville's water and sewer enterprise, ensuring regulatory compliance and system reliability for a major Massachusetts city.

[Apply Now](#)

**Salary: Starting at \$130,000  
(commensurate with experience)**  
Manage the city's inspectional services team across building, zoning, plumbing/gas, electrical and code enforcement a strategic leadership role reporting to the Mayor.

[Apply Now](#)

## Town of Millbury: Finance Director

**Salary Range: \$120,000-\$126,000**  
The Town of Millbury is seeking a Finance Director to lead its Finance Department and serve as the municipality's Chief Financial Officer. This senior leadership role oversees Accounting, Treasury, Tax Collection, Assessing, and Information Systems.

[Apply Now](#)

## Town of Millbury: Director of Planning & Development

**Salary Range: \$92,000-\$97,000**  
Millbury is hiring a Director of Planning & Development to guide long-range planning, review development proposals, support town boards, and drive economic development initiatives.

[Apply Now](#)



# CSS Training Sessions

## On-Site Communications Training for Teams That Lead

Clear, confident communication matters more than ever. Capital Strategic Solutions offers customized, on-site communications training designed for municipal leaders, public safety teams, and staff. From media relations and crisis communications to interview skills and presentation best practices, our hands-on training helps entire teams stay aligned, prepared, and confident. By bringing training directly to your organization, CSS helps ensure shared expectations, consistent messaging, and stronger performance when it matters most.



[Learn More About On-Site Communications Trainings](#)

## Upcoming Virtual Trainings



**Register for Media Relations:**  
**Module 3: Leading Through Crisis — Mastering the Message** on Thursday, January 29, 2026 at 9:00 AM EST via Zoom | \$199 per person (purchase orders accepted)



# Grant Watch

*Insights, and Support to Drive Community Growth and Innovation.*

## Federal Grants

- [DOI Accepting Applications for National Fish Passage Program](#)
- [DOT Accepting Applications for Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant – Deadline Updated](#)
- [HHS Drug-Free Communities Support Program Deadline April 14, 2026](#)

## Connecticut Grants

- [Connecticut Agricultural Enhancement Grant Program \(FY 2026\) Deadline: February 2, 2026](#)
- [Connecticut State Department of Education Accepting Applications for Interdistrict Cooperative Grant Program – Deadline February 6, 2026](#)

## Florida Grants

- [2025 Urban & Community Forestry Natural Disaster and Recovery Supplement – Deadline March 10, 2026](#)

## Massachusetts Grants

- [FY 2026 Drinking Water Supply Protection \(DWSP\) Grant – Deadline April 13, 2026](#)
- [Green Communities Competitive Grant Program \(FY26–FY27\)](#)
- [MA DOER Regional School District Decarbonization Grant – Opportunity to Watch](#)

## Rhode Island Grants

- [Rhode Island Specialty Crop Block Grant Program \(SCBGP\) 2026 – Deadline February 28, 2026](#)

For help with your application, reach out to Capital Strategic Solutions. We specialize in grant management at every stage—from identifying opportunities and securing awards to ensuring compliance and managing budgets. Our public-sector expertise helps communities deliver sustainable, impactful projects. Partner with us to move forward with confidence.

## Contact Us

### About Capital Strategic Solutions (CSS)

CSS is a certified woman-owned, disadvantaged business enterprise of municipal experts delivering creative, cost-effective solutions that maximize success and

minimize risk. With deep local government expertise, we craft tailored strategies to meet each community's unique needs.



# CAPITAL STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS

A Women-Owned Business Enterprise

Our capabilities span public administration, municipal finance, human resources, policy development, emergency management, public safety, public works, water operations, interim municipal services, public relations, community engagement, project management, grant writing, and onsite support. We partner with clients to define clear goals, overcome challenges, and implement human-centered plans that drive performance and transform communities.

[Visit Our Website](#)



Capital Strategic Solutions LLC | 43 Broad Street, Suite B309A | Hudson, MA 01749 US

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