**Dear Resident of Lancaster City,**

The Department of Environmental Protection (EPA) has mandated that your residential community take action to decrease the amount of stormwater runoff in your community. Each year, property owners in the City of Lancaster are responsible for approximately 750 million gallons of polluted water flowing into the Conestoga River which eventually flows into the Chesapeake Bay.

Over the past 100 years, streets, parking lots, sidewalks, and roofs have been a steadily increasing part of our communities as we continue to develop more and more of the landscape. As a result, rain that used to soak into the ground now rushes over these nonporous surfaces and into storm drains, which sends the water directly into rivers and streams. This is a huge problem because stormwater carries a massive amount of pollution, including sediment, car oil, lawn fertilizers, pesticides, pet feces (containing viruses and bacteria), and cigarette butts. This in return has severe negative impacts on streams and rivers.

The City of Lancaster must take action now to decrease the amount of stormwater runoff. The City of Lancaster is over 300-years-old! It operates on a combined sewer system that collects and transports both sewage from the communities and rainwater. This becomes a problem when there is a rainstorm or other wet weather event. The wastewater treatment plant becomes overwhelmed and the untreated combined sewage flows into the Conestoga River. These events are referred to as combined sewer overflows (CSOs).

“Save It! Lancaster” is a committee that recently formed due to the EPA mandates on managing stormwater runoff. Their goal is to decrease the amount of stormwater runoff by funding more “green infrastructure” projects and Low-Impact Development (LID) technology. **They are willing to fund any projects that meet the following requirements:**

* Use Green Infrastructure(GI) to decrease stormwater runoff
* Use Green Infrastructure to increase biodiversity
* Create a model to show how your plan will decrease the amount of runoff in your community
* Provide data and evidence to support your project
* Present your plan to the board using technology
* Explain the advantages of using GI

Stormwater runoff pollution is a problem that has no boundaries and neither does the solution! **Each team will be working to develop a plan to decrease the runoff on their current residential properties and increase biodiversity.** You must be prepared to present your project to the board on **December 19th**. They will determine if they are going to fund your project after you present.

Sincerely,

*Melanie Smith*

Save It! Lancaster Committee Member

[Melanie\_smith@saveitlancaster.org](mailto:Melanie_smith@saveitlancaster.org)