

**Washtenaw County Materials Management Planning Committee (MMPC)
Meeting Minutes**

3/12/2025, 10:00 AM

**Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center
4135 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor, 48108**

Members Present: Seegert, Bukowski, Kerkez, Ukena, Ohren, Williams, Maciejewski, Reeve, Nicholson, Mason (ex-officio), Drinan (ex-officio)

Members Absent: Mazanec, Cornell

Washtenaw County Staff Present: Eggermont, Wright

Resource Recycling Staff Present: Heflin, Naud, Oulton (virtual), Wouters (virtual)

Call to order: Chair Ohren called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Roll Call

- a. David Seegert – present
- b. Jennifer Cornell – absent
- c. Paul Mazanec – absent
- d. Todd Bukowski (Vice Chair) - present
- e. Bryan Ukena – absent – present at 10:06 a.m.
- f. Lindsey Kerkez – present
- g. Joseph Ohren (Chair) - present
- h. Jason Maciejewski – present
- i. Bruce Reeve - present
- j. James Nicholson – present
- k. Marc Williams – present
- l. Sarah Mason (ex-officio) – present
- m. David Drinan (ex-officio) – present

Land Acknowledgement (read by Wright)

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda moved by Williams, seconded by Nicholson. All in favor.
Motion carries.

Last Meeting Minutes Approval

A motion to approve the 2/12/2025 Meeting Minutes moved by Seegert, seconded by Nicholson. All in favor. Motion carries.

Seegert noted Jill Hollister was with Freedom Township, not Northville Township.

Ukena suggested a correction on page three in the section “Goal- Divert Recyclables from Landfills” that the conversation regarding advocacy include the word “yes”. The committee discussed examples of how advocacy has been done at the County level and

that this committee can recommend it, though any action will be up to the County Board of Commissioners.

All in favor of approving the minutes with the two amendments discussed.

What we're doing now vs. What we can do

Naud reviewed goals from the last solid waste management plan that Washtenaw County did in 2017. Naud noted that some of the last plan's goals are difficult to measure.

Feedback from MMPC Input Form

Naud requested feedback from the last meeting on the goals, targets, and actions. Heflin summarized some of the feedback that MMPC members submitted to the input form:

- A shared understanding and definition among all Committee members is needed (e.g., capture rate versus diversion rate).
- Understanding of likely capture rates for each recyclable commodity.
- Current composition of landfill materials (what's currently going in).
- Understanding of current methods for collection of materials and what flows where.
- Sharing economy versus refill and reuse economy – these should be separated.
- Suggestion to expand goal regarding proper siting to be more encompassing of changes to existing facilities and ensuring existing facilities are meeting proper standards.

Committee members provided additional feedback on items they'd like considered including measuring the capture rates of recyclables to guide the diversion rate goal, advocacy, and sustainable funding sources including but not limited to EPR. The committee also discussed additional data to collect including residential recycling at retail locations, such as bottle returns and plastic bags, and food donations made by retailers to food banks. Nicholson noted retailers are sending organic waste to feed animals, they may or may not be willing to share this data. Eggermont noted that can and bottle deposit data is only available on a statewide basis, but some data may be voluntarily provided.

Principles and Visioning Workshopping

Naud reviewed the current plan's guiding principles and additional principles including the circular economy. Ohren offered that the second principle, "more diversion and recovery, less disposal", could be pulled apart to make clearer that reducing consumption is separate and a higher priority. The committee discussed advocacy to reduce the amount of waste coming in from outside the state and what role this committee could play. Maciejewski shared that the committee could recommend advocating for waste import reduction in the plan and the Board of Commissioners will decide if the County will and where it fits in their advocacy priorities. Alternatives include collaborating with the Michigan Association of Counties and/or SEMCOG. Kerkez added that reducing imported waste, especially hazardous materials, is a priority of SEMCOG.

Additional considerations were discussed including pairing education with infrastructure upgrades, greenhouse gases, and the impact on the environment and human health more broadly.

Ukena added that there are multiple models used to calculate impact. There are some models that also include human health impacts and deaths, etc. Ukena advocated that we use those models that account for the whole supply chain and incorporate chemical toxicity and embodied carbon.

Naud reviewed EGLE's Sustainable Materials Management Hierarchy and how it relates to our principles. Naud also reviewed the EPA's new Wasted Food Scale. Both scales emphasize reduction of material created and used in the first place, then recovery, with disposal last. Naud shared the current plan's vision and encouraged the committee to continue thinking about this language and providing feedback on recommended changes.

Overview of County Programs

Eggermont reviewed the programs that Washtenaw County's Materials Management Division operates. This includes the Household Hazardous Waste Program, County Cleanup Days for residents to recycle electronics, tires, scrap metal, appliances, and dispose of bulky waste, the Waste Knot business recognition program, the School Recycling Program, Waste Reduction Sponsorships, Zero Waste Event support, Medication Disposal Network, and other miscellaneous programs.

Ukena asked for clarification about the difference between WRRMA and WWRA and if the two organizations are looking to combine. Eggermont responded that each authority is organized using different legislative authority - WRRMA has a membership fee and does not have any infrastructure while WWRA is funded through a special assessment and has infrastructure and contracted services.

Defining Recycling, Developing Goals, and Measuring Progress

Naud reviewed the proposed definition of recycling including different categories of residential, commercial and institutional, industrial, and drop-off. Naud shared information that we currently have on the residential and commercial collection systems in each municipality in the County. Naud pointed out the data needed to measure success and presented a list of questions prompting the committee to think about who ought to be responsible for collecting this data and getting it to the County (the County vs. municipalities vs. haulers).

Proposed County Recycling Goals

Naud reviewed proposed County recycling goals. Naud revisited the vision and reminded MMPC members to suggest improved language.

May Meeting Reschedule

Maciejewski motioned to reschedule the May meeting from the ^{14th}~~21st~~ to the ^{21st}~~14th~~ due to a conflict with the annual Michigan Recycling Coalition (MRC) conference. Nicholson seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carries.

Future Meetings Schedule

Next meeting is April 9.

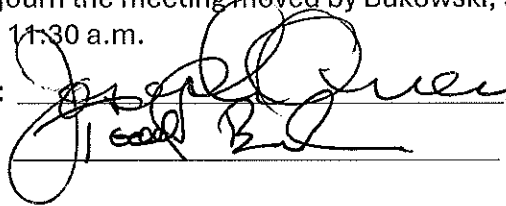
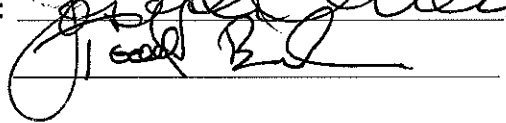
Public Comment

Jill Hollister, Freedom Township, requested the MMPC consider the growing concerns about land application of digestate from digestors. She noted that PFAS chemicals are often found in digestate that is then applied to the land and these crops are eaten by animals. It is also showing up in corn that is fed to cows that produce cheese, beef etc.

Meeting adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting moved by Bukowski, seconded by Nicholson. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Approved by:

 (Chair)
 (Vice Chair)