

Washtenaw County Materials Management Planning Committee (MMPC)
Meeting Minutes

5/21/2025, 10:00 AM

Washtenaw County Western Service Center
705 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, 48103

Members Present: Seegert, Mazanec, Kerkez, Ukena, Maciejewski, Nicholson, Williams, Hwang, Mason (ex-officio), Drinan (ex-officio), ~~Reeve~~

Members Absent: Bukowski, Ohren, ~~Reeve~~

Washtenaw County Staff Present: Eggermont

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

Call to order: Eggermont called the meeting to order at 10:04a.m.

Roll Call

- a. David Seegert – present
- b. Paul Mazanec – present
- c. Todd Bukowski (Vice Chair) - absent
- d. Bryan Ukena – arrived at 10:17am – present
- e. Lindsey Kerkez – present
- f. Joseph Ohren (Chair) - absent
- g. Jason Maciejewski – present
- h. Bruce Reeve - absent, **present at 10:10 a.m.**
- i. James Nicholson – present
- j. Marc Williams – present
- k. Roland Hwang – present – arrived at 10:20
- l. Sarah Mason (ex-officio) – present
- m. David Drinan (ex-officio) – present

Land Acknowledgement (read by Eggermont)

Election of Temporary Chair

Motion made by Seegert to nominate Nicholson as Chair for today's meeting. Seconded by Mazanec. All in favor. Motion carries. Nicholson will serve as Chair as Ohren and Bukowski are absent.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda moved by Maciejewski, seconded by Ukena. All in favor. Motion carries.

Last Meeting Minutes Approval

A motion to approve the 4/9/2025 Meeting Minutes moved by Ukena, seconded by Mazanec. All in favor. Motion carries.

Review of Member Feedback (Input Form)

Mazanec elaborated on his input to make zero waste an ideal. The Committee discussed how this needs to be further defined in the vision statement.

MRC Conference Key Takeaways

The Committee and staff discussed key takeaways from the MRC Conference. Eggermont noted that we may want to think about the toxicity of plastics in our plan. Eggermont reviewed the keynote speaker's parallel of a MMP to a master plan and most of the authority of solid waste is held by the municipalities. Other members shared that communities sharing contracted services, bottle redemption, extended producer responsibility, and organics were highlights from the conference.

Data Update

Heflin shared a high-level update on the progress of data collection and gaps still existing. The County has access to residential recycling data and program data. Gaps include commercial and institutional recycling data and end markets for recycled materials.

Recycle Ann Arbor Input – Residential Curbside and Dropoff

Ukena gave an overview of Recycle Ann Arbor including their processing capacity, programs, and the acceptance of construction and demolition debris.

Challenges and barriers you face?

Ukena noted the biggest barrier is trust from the public. A second barrier is balancing the cost, convenience, and environmental benefit. Ukena noted that a key to success is being transparent and accountable with contracts. Recycling hauling often gets lumped in with other materials management services. Unbundling these services has a lot of benefits, like the ability to incentivize recycling. Ukena noted the economic development that can be created from recycling and that contracting directly with the processors allows for accountability. Ukena added that incentives can also be incorporated into RFPs such as volume-based pricing.

Ukena noted that drop offs handle things that MRFs cannot and provide real value. He noted that access needs to be equitable. He summarized that RFPs are the biggest area for impacting progress in recycling.

Eggermont noted that the drop off has required public subsidy for a number of years. The County has an interest in having a comprehensive DOS.

Multifamily Recycling

Best Practices

Naud reviewed best practices for multifamily recycling. Noted that Kalamazoo has done recent work educating multifamily residents with tote bags and educational mailers. The work is very costly per unit.

Challenges and barriers you face?

Eggermont relayed a conversation with the City of Ypsilanti DPW noting that it has a lot of multifamily housing. The biggest challenges are being unable to track contamination to the individual user, more turnover compared to single family housing and therefore requires more education, and recycling bins being accessible to the public, which introduces contamination. Mason added that the City of Ann Arbor requires multifamily units to provide recycling and it is funded by the City's solid waste millage. The City has done education to tenants and property managers, though the transient population presents a challenge. Ukena added many multifamily units are being planned for Ann Arbor and access for residents with physical barriers needs to be considered.

What enables/allows you to be successful?

Ukena noted that having dedicated staff to multifamily is crucial, as well as placement of carts for access from residents and haulers. Naud asked about building codes and new designs that have considered recycling versus older buildings. The Committee noted that the County has not had a planning department in decades. Mason noted that their success comes from education and outreach and the policy requirement.

What opportunities do you see and what role does the County have in enabling these opportunities?

The committee discussed opportunities including consistent education and messaging across the county, finding champions in multifamily units, and planning for recycling infrastructure when new buildings are being designed. It was noted that best practices, toolkits, and collaborative service contracts across municipalities could address multifamily recycling. Naud reminded that the County can levy money from households to support materials management.

Naud asked that the City of Ann Arbor share their waste audit information from their sort with Recycle Ann Arbor. Ukena noted that it is really good to sort based on communities so you can tailor your education to those communities based on their recycling behaviors.

The Committee discussed capture rates – are we measuring by tons? Or by capture rate? It will take much longer to capture a ton of plastic film, for example.

Mason noted you can increase recycling or reduce total waste generated. She noted that focusing on reduction first is an important distinction.

Next Steps

- The planning team will compile goals and share initial draft goals with the Committee.
- Eggermont will work on scheduling tours (MRF, compost, landfill, transfer station)
- Eggermont will be surveying elected officials: what their awareness of this process is, willingness to pay, etc.

Public Comment

Jill Hollister from Freedom Township spoke about the potential anerobic digester, noting PFAS and microplastics.

Leah Michaels from Northville Township noted her concern about PFAS and her hope that the Committee will consider how waste is managed that does not go to landfill.

Valisa Bristle, the Clerk for Freedom Township spoke noting their rural nature and she appreciated the information today.

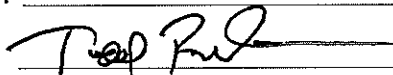
Future Meetings Schedule

Next meeting June 11th at 10am. Topic: Commercial and institutional recycling

Meeting adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting moved by Ukena, seconded by Seegert. Meeting adjourned at 11:33a.m.

Approved by: _____ (Chair)

 _____ (Vice Chair)