

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

7/9/2025, 10:00 AM

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

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

Members Absent: Bukowski, Mason (ex-officio)

Washtenaw County Staff Present: Eggermont, Wright

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

Call to order: Chair Ohren called the meeting to order at 9:59am

Roll Call

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

Land Acknowledgement (read by Wright)

Approval of Agenda

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

Last Meeting Minutes Approval

A motion to approve the 6/11/2025 Meeting Minutes moved by Nicholson, seconded by Reeve. All in favor. Motion carries.

Review of Member Feedback (Input Form)

Heflin reviewed additional feedback from the most recent feedback from Committee members.

Where we are

Naud noted that the MMPC process is wrapping up the recycling section of the planning process, keeping in line with the work program timeline.

Education

Nancy Stone

(formerly) City of Ann Arbor, Ecology Center, Washtenaw County's advisory committees

Stone shared best practices for education and outreach with the Committee including:

- In-person engagement and feedback strategies to hear from the community
- Community based social marketing tips, a social marketing case study, and resources with the MRC and US EPA.
- Stone shared findings from a multi-family recycling study showing that smaller multi-family units with around 10 units had the highest recycling rates whereas buildings with over 50 units saw more challenges. A recycling champion is key.
- Stone gave examples of educational materials suggested for education.

Question and Answer:

- Hwang asked about other studies that give us more insight into multi-family?
- Ukena noted the City of St. Paul has done a multi-family recycling study looking at education and operational challenges and solutions. They have a great toolkit.
- Naud spoke to Ann Arbor's recycling education success – they had a full-time employee dedicated to recycling education.
- The committee discussed addressing the public's lack of trust in recycling.
- Stone noted that if you can get people to do energy conservation, they will then take steps to further their environmental impact. Stone suggested looking at other environmental programs and tapping into those participants.

Bryan Weinert

(formerly) City of Ann Arbor, Recycle Ann Arbor, Iris, and currently on the Board of Public Works

Eggermont shared comments received from a conversation with Bryan Weinert.

Weinert noted the challenge of recycling education being undervalued and often not having sustainable funding. Weinert shared opportunities for recycling education including tapping into local celebrities and organizations to share the message, emphasizing the "why" of recycling, and engaging with stakeholders to gain information.

The Committee discussed the opportunity to share positive recycling stories through news groups to support education as well as tapping into social media to bring together reuse and buy nothing groups across the County.

Angela Wright

Washtenaw County, Environmental Supervisor

- Wright addressed the challenges of trust in the recycling system and shared that WRRMA did a survey that found that over 90% agree that recycling has a positive impact while 60% agree their recyclables were turned into new items.
- Wright highlighted opportunities to build trust by using standardizing messaging, reporting back to the community on progress, offering tours, and other key learning opportunities.
- Wright noted that we know what the biggest benefits of recycling are, but this may not be what the community feels is the biggest benefit – it's important to integrate what the community sees as the most beneficial into your social marketing.
- The Recycling Partnership has done studies and has shown that empathetic messaging is more effective than logical messaging to change behavior.
- Ukena shared that there is a strong movement from brands to make their packaging recyclable. It's important to get clarity on what is greenwashing versus actually recyclable.
- Reeve suggested a virtual MRF tour be posted on municipality websites.

Waste Characterization Data Review

Heflin and Naud reviewed the characterization of waste generated in Washtenaw County that is landfilled. RRS highlighted waste landfilled from the county across four categories: Not Recyclable, Minimal Access for Recycling/ Specialty Recycling or Composting Programs, Recyclability Variable by Municipality, and Readily Recyclable.

Recycling Chapter Review

Naud reviewed the four draft recycling goals of the Materials Management Plan.

Goal 1: Reduce Reliance on Landfills

- The committee discussed benchmarking diversion rates, capture rates for recyclables, the impact of the economy on purchasing habits, and LEED certifications for construction.
- Drinan suggested removing the "other" category from the total landfill amount goal as it primarily contains waste soils.

Goal 2: Increase Diversion of Recyclable Material

- Increase recycling access across residential, multi-family, and commercial and institutional entities.
- Williams noted how to track participation: the haulers track each time they tip their trucks – you can divide that by the number of enrolled participants on the route.

Goal 3: Education to Improve Recovered Material Quality and Quantity

- Ukena suggested adding batteries to the goal of educating on drop-off programs. Ukena noted only having polyethylene listed here favors one material when there are other challenging materials that should be kept out of landfills.

Goal 4: Greater Access to Actionable Information

- License haulers working in the county and require data reporting so the county has real data to measure progress.
- Provide technical assistance to local governments to improve their programs.
- Use data to establish a reliable baseline of weights/volumes, access, and participation.

Next Steps and Future Meetings Schedule

- Next meeting August 13th at 10am.
- Washtenaw County will share the recycling chapter draft before the next meeting.

Public Comment

Jen Blaharski, Northville Township

- Suggested that the Committee ask a question regarding Arbor Hills releasing PFAS into Arbors Creek. There is a lack of information on getting this information. Why are they allowed to do this with little to no consequence?

Leah Michaels, Northville Township

- Concerned about PFAS in the creek. Underscored the advocacy aspect of the planning process and the need to build in consequences for corporations. Noted that it is in corporations' interest to obscure what can and cannot be recyclable.

Meeting adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting moved by Hwang, seconded by Kofflin. Meeting adjourned at 11:37a.m.

Approved by:

 (Chair)
 (Vice Chair)