

Commission Quarterly

Materials Management Planning

Based on amendments to Part 115, Solid Waste Management, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, each county in the state is required to prepare a Materials Management Plan (MMP). Once approved, the MMP will replace the existing county solid waste plans. The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is implementing the law as well as providing guidance, resources, and funding to counties as they embark on the development of MMPs.

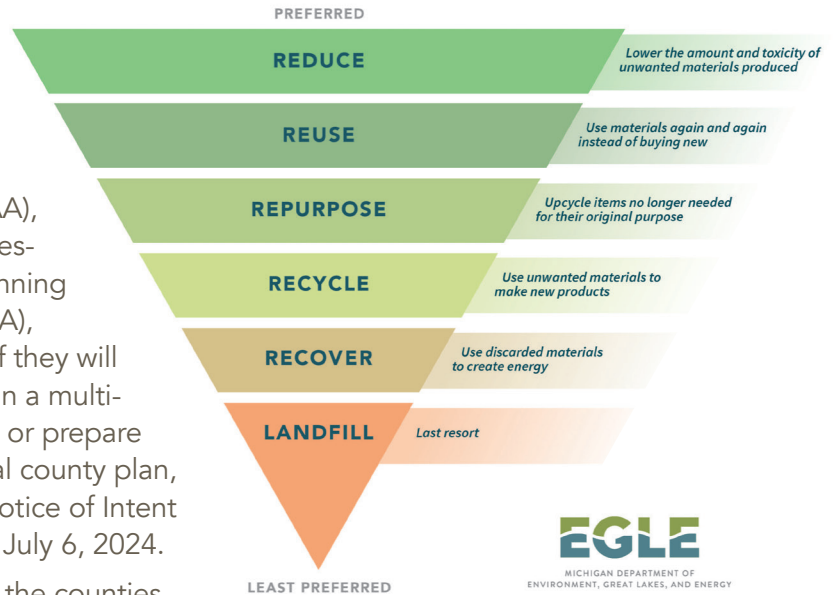
MMPs are to focus on comprehensive materials management, including recycling, composting, disposal, and other diversion activities. These plans will establish goals with measurable objectives to divert recyclables and organics from disposal while also increasing recycling access and education. Counties will have 36 months (three years) to complete the planning process.

EGLE initiated the planning process beginning January 8, 2023, through a formal initiation letter to each county and regional planning agency in the state. Now that the process has begun, a series of activities are required to be completed by the counties within 180 days from the date noted above including agreeing to serve as the County

Approval Agency (CAA), identify a Designated Planning Agency (DPA), determine if they will participate in a multi-county plan or prepare an individual county plan, and file a Notice of Intent to EGLE by July 6, 2024.

This spring, the counties of Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana have all agreed to serve as the County Approval Agency (CAA) and named WMSRDC as their Designated Planning Agency (DPA). The five counties have met several times and are in the process of executing an interlocal agreement to prepare a five-county MMP. WMSRDC will work with the counties to gather the required documentation to submit the Notices of Intent by the deadline.

Over the next six months, WMSRDC will work with the counties to establish the Materials Management Planning Committee (MMPC), establish bylaws, and prepare a work plan that will be approved by the MMPC, all five CAAs, and EGLE. Development of the MMP will commence upon approval of the work plan.



Preparation of the MMPs is a new and unique planning process being undertaken in the state. The shift away from Solid Waste Planning to a comprehensive Materials Management Planning process is a practice that has not been done in Michigan. WMSRDC is excited to be partnering with the five counties in our region in navigating this new process together.

Table of Contents

.....

Economic Development	2
Special Projects	2
Environmental	3
Local Government Services	4
Transportation	5, 6 & 7
GIS Mapping	7

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Economic Development: ERC Fellow

Annika Gacnik, the Economic Recovery Corps fellow hosted by WMSRDC to advance the agricultural and food process sector in West Michigan through the summer of 2026, has been busy at work bringing valuable resources to our region. Below is a message from Annika...

"I am incredibly honored to be hosted by the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission as an inaugural fellow with the Economic Recovery Corps. Working alongside the dedicated, passionate team at WMSRDC and at their partner organizations has already been

an incredibly rewarding experience, and I look forward to the positive impacts we will make together over the next two years.

As many of you know, Michigan is the second most agriculturally diverse state in the nation. This fellowship aims to build upon West Michigan's agricultural strengths to create a model for resilient and thriving regional food systems everywhere. By embodying a triple bottom-line approach, this initiative will foster economic growth while also supporting West Michigan's vibrant communities and gorgeous natural environment.



Annika attending an ERC orientation in Portland, WA.

I am proud to be part of this transformative journey and look forward to the continued progress we will make together."

Special Projects Kinder "gardeners"

As a part of outreach efforts for the Marquette Micro Forest, project partners engaged Pennsylvania Elementary School to educate students on white pines. On March 27th, representatives from Muskegon Rotary Club, the City of Muskegon, and WMSRDC worked with kindergarteners to pot bare root white pines to take care of and grow in their on-site hoop house. John Noling from Muskegon Rotary also gave the students a presentation on white pines, gathering the students in a circle to display the circumference of the largest known white pine.

On a rainy May 3rd, students, teachers, parents, and project partners gathered again, this time on site at the micro forest, to plant more white pines and some other trees. John Noling and David Bailey, a certified arborist with the City of Muskegon, gave a demonstration on proper tree planting techniques. The group planted a total of 50 trees before gathering for a picture around the micro forest sign – which proved to be a bigger challenge than planting!

Pennsylvania Elementary School, located in the Reeths-Puffer school district, is a unique kindergarten program of about 40 students that focuses on environmental consciousness and engagement. The school is a Nature Explore Outdoor certified classroom as well as certified Michigan Green School.



David Bailey from the City of Muskegon works with a student in planting a white pine



Pennsylvania Elementary School kindergartners gather around the micro forest sign.

Environmental: Stony Creek Update

Construction contractors are making quick work of the massive improvements at Stony Creek! Within five weeks, JE Kloote Contracting, supervised by Oceana County Road Commission and Scott Civil Engineering, has torn down two old foot bridges, removed the three inadequate culverts, and installed a beautiful, open span timber bridge along Marshville Dam Road. Minimal earth work is needed before the installation of guardrails and road pavement. The project team anticipates the road will be open to the public by July 4!

With the road work coming to an end, the stream and habitat

work is ramping up. Catskill Remedial and Kanouse Outdoor Restoration are implementing the designs by GEI Consultants to remove the old dam and install 500 feet of instream habitat.

These environmental activities are funded under the Stony Creek Fish Passage and Habitat Restoration project, as one of multiple projects under a WMSRDC/NOAA Regional Partnership, designed to restore fish and wildlife habitat in eastern Lake Michigan drowned river mouth systems and coastal wetlands.

Regional Partnership designed to restore fish and wildlife habitat in eastern Lake Michigan drowned river mouth

systems and coastal wetlands. Once complete, the Stony Creek project will open 6.5 miles of stream and 18

acres of adjacent wetlands for fish and wildlife, giving Lake Michigan anglers the opportunity to catch steelhead and salmon naturally produced in Stony Creek.

Thanks to additional funding secured by Conservation Resource Alliance, Stony Creek will have an additional 2,000 feet of instream habitat upstream of the WMSRDC project footprint and inclusion of recreational access to the stream. Additional project partners not already mentioned include Grand Valley State University Annis Water Resources Institute, to complete pre and post monitoring, as well as Oceana County Parks and private landowners, who have not only allowed the project and utilization of resources on their land but have also been instrumental in communicating the progress and success of the project to the community.



Kanouse Outdoor Restoration laying mats along the stream to access the site for restoration; picture credit John Wyns.



The timber bridge downstream of the dam, taken from where the foot bridge used to cross.

Subcontractor Kanouse Outdoor Restoration and design engineering firm GEI implementing habitat restoration down stream of Pierce Road on Swinton Creek.

Local Government Services: Blue Lake Township Planning Assistance

WMSRDC has agreed to work with Blue Lake Township in Muskegon County to update the township’s comprehensive development plan (also known as a master plan) and recreation plan. These plans were previously completed in 2019 and 2017, respectively, and are due for five-year updates.

The recreation plan is expected to be complete and submitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) by February 1, 2025, to enable the township to apply for recreation grants from the state of Michigan. The comprehensive development plan will be finished in the early summer of 2025.



Blue Lake Township welcome sign.

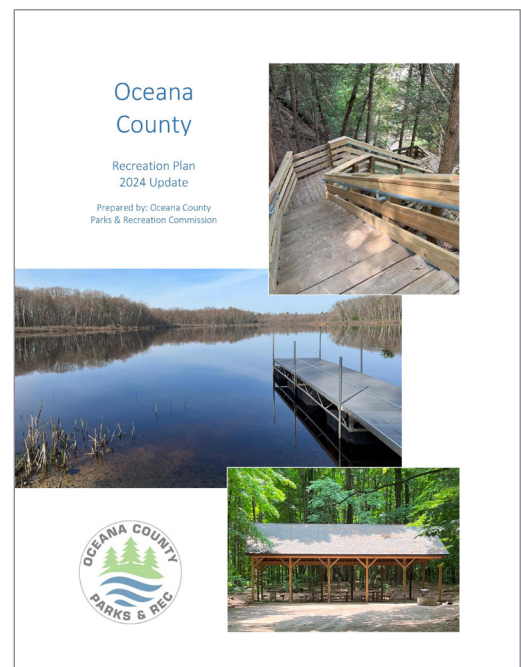
The mission of the WMSRDC Local Government Services program is to support local communities by providing technical assistance to communities that do not have planning

expertise in-house, or the resources necessary to hire a private consultant. Each year, WMSRDC agrees to assist a small number of communities with creating or updating local plans.

Local Government Services: Oceana County Recreation Plan

In early June the Oceana County Parks and Recreation Commission approved the Oceana County Recreation Plan five-year update. WMSRDC assisted with updating this plan concurrently alongside the county’s master plan, which was formally adopted by the Oceana County Board of Commissioners in March 2024. The recreation plan will be considered for adoption by the Board of Commissioners at the end of June.

The final step of the recreation planning process is to submit the adopted plan to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Once accepted at the state level, Oceana County will be eligible to apply for recreation grants through the Natural Resources Trust Fund and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Eligibility lasts five years, after which the plan must be updated once again.



Oceana County Recreation Plan cover page. The plan was approved by the Oceana County Parks and Recreation Commission in June 2024.

Transportation: FY25 Unified Work Program and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The WestPlan MPO Committees last met in May where they reviewed and approved the 16th Amendment to the FY2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). At this meeting there was also an amendment to the FY2024 Unified Work Program to update the MPO Non-Motorized Plan project. Plan kick off is anticipated later this year with completion in 2025. The City of Muskegon and the Muskegon County Bicycling Coalition have both agreed to contribute to the local match for the project.

MPO Committees also approved the FY2025 WestPlan Unified Work Program at the May 2024 meeting. The plan was developed with assistance from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), who is currently reviewing the document along with staff from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The UWP outlines the budget and activities for the MPO's next fiscal year. Budget estimates for the UWP are provided by MDOT



Left: US-35 bike route in Grand Haven

and are allocated to several different program areas within the MPO.

The UWP is a federally required document, which is reviewed and approved by the MPO Policy Committee on an annual basis. Some of the responsibilities outlined in the UWP include the development and maintenance of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Long-Range Plan. These documents are the short- and long-range planning documents that are required to receive federal transportation funding. Other tasks outlined in the UWP

Below: White Lake Chamber of Commerce along the bike trail in Whitehall



include Transit, Asset Management, Air Quality, Non-Motorized, and Performance Based Planning. All these plans and tasks will be completed by MPO staff with assistance from the MPO Policy and Technical Committees. Public involvement is also a component of the UWP and all the tasks that are completed by the MPO.

Details of WestPlan MPO TIP amendments and other MPO related information can be found by visiting the website at www.wmsrdc.org.

Transportation: Air Quality Conformity

As of April 15, 2024, the new Motor Vehicle Emission Budget (MVEB) for the Muskegon Partial County 2015 Ozone Nonattainment Area, approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), went into effect. Going forward, an emissions analysis will be made for the partial county nonattainment area while only a qualitative report will be made for the remaining 1997 ozone

maintenance areas in the county. It is required under the Clean Air Act Amendments that conformity determinations for air quality be made when updating plans or creating projects. This year, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) cycles have begun and the MPO has updated their WestPlan 2050

MTP and WestPlan 2023-2026 TIP accordingly. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), with the consultation of the EPA, have found that the conformity determinations for the MTP and TIP are consistent with Federal Air Quality Conformity Regulations (23 CFR Part 450 and 40 CFR Part 93).

Transportation: Air Quality

Since 1995, the The West Michigan Clean Air Coalition (WMCAC) has been a partnership of businesses, academic institutions, government agencies, industry, and non-profit organizations in Kent, Ottawa, Muskegon, and Kalamazoo counties working to achieve cleaner air in the region through educational and promotional voluntary emission reduction activities. WMSRDC is proud to be a continuing financial support and an active member of the WMCAC.

With the summer season rolling in, the temperatures are getting warmer with the sun out longer, leading to the ground ozone levels increasing, and the WMSRDC staff is out and about! WMCAC is taking on this year's 2024 Clean Air Action (CAA) season with a rejuvenated enthusiasm.

On May 9, WMCAC hosted the annual kickoff luncheon in the Grand Rapids area. Presentations occurred successfully while food and conversations were enjoyed. With the excellent turn-out, attendees, presenters, and hosts alike had a positive experience. Prior to this, on May 4, WMSRDC staff attended the 3rd annual STEAM Along the Lakeshore at Hackley Park in Muskegon. There were about 650 children in attendance, so staff had the opportunity to educate and discuss with a larger group of parents and kids on the CAA Program and what air quality means to/for them. Other events like STEAM will be sought out, and even though WMSRDC staff will not be in attendance of the Spring Lake Heritage Festival, educational and promotional materials were provided for the car show on June 14.

An educational display began moving from host to host, starting with Ferrysburg City Hall on April 16, and then the Ottawa County Road Commission on April 22. This has led to multiple other locations in the months of May and June, as well as upcoming hosts in August. The entire month of July is available for hosting the CAA display; so, if any businesses, local units, libraries, or any other organization would be interested in hosting, please email lblake@wmsrdc.org for more information!

WMCAC members are looking forward to what the rest of the season brings! Look out for our social media posts to follow both WMSRDC and GVMC's Clean Air Action displays along on their host routes. Remember: Do your share for cleaner air!



Fallon Chabala and Lauryn Blake working the Air Quality booth at STEAM



Air Quality display at Muskegon County offices

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19TH IS A
Clean Air Action
Day

**FOR ALLEGAN, BERRIEN, KENT,
MUSKEGON, OTTAWA, AND VAN
BUREN**

What makes it a Clean Air Action Day?
EGLE meteorologists expect ground-level ozone to reach or exceed levels where people who are sensitive to it might start to experience negative health impacts.

LEARN MORE AT WWW.WMCAC.ORG

An example of the Clean Air Action Day notices posted on WMCAC and WMSRDCs social media pages

Transportation: City of Muskegon Heights Funding

U.S. Representative Hillary Scholten recently announced \$500,000 in federal funding for the City of Muskegon Heights. Representative Scholten held a press conference awarding the funding in Rowan Park in Muskegon Heights on June 10. The federal funding is an important first step in a plan for bike lanes, landscaping, lighting, and plantings along Broadway Avenue in downtown Muskegon Heights. The hope is that this planning grant will unlock additional funding for implementation. WMSRDC staff members participate, monthly, with a group of other professionals from the City of Muskegon Heights, Greater Muskegon Economic Development, Muskegon County, the Community Foundation for Muskegon County, and others, to identify potential funding opportunities.



Rep. Scholten announces funding award for City of Muskegon Heights and standing behind her is Mayor Bonnie McGlothin

GIS Mapping: Cemetery Mapping and GIS Program Update

WMSRDC’s GIS staff is hard at work mapping three cemeteries for Shelby Township in Oceana County. Groundwork in the cemetery is to conclude in June with final maps and an online map viewer posted to the WMSRDC website soon. Groundwork on Leavitt Township’s three cemeteries will commence soon. WMSRDC is also working with Muskegon County Veterans Affairs office to update and maintain the Veteran’s Memorial Park walkway and tree memorial markers. If you have any questions about cemetery or asset mapping, please contact WMSRDC’s GIS staff at 231-722-7878, ext. 150.

WMSRDC has begun switching over from ArcGIS Desktop to ArcPro. This transition will make map creation, editing, and online mapping more streamlined and user friendly. Staff also attended the annual IMAGIN (Improving



Sign at New Era Cemetery located in Shelby Township

Michigan’s Access to Geographic Information Networks) Conference held in Thompsonville, Michigan in June. The IMAGIN Conference is an excellent opportunity for networking with other mapping professionals, learning about current projects happening around the state, and hands on skill building.



Oceana Center Cemetery sign also located in Shelby



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