

MICHIGAN Product Stewardship Initiative



February 13, 2012

ELEMENTS OF A BEST-IN-CLASS RECYCLING PROGRAM

The Michigan Recycling Coalition (MRC) urges the State of Michigan to adopt a comprehensive approach to recycling. This includes making the investment necessary for Michigan to accomplish adopted State goals and providing the leadership necessary to realize the economic and environmental benefits of achieving those goals. In the report *"2011 State of Recycling in Michigan: A Way Forward"*, the MRC documents the significant return on investment offered by addressing the funding needs associated with the components of a comprehensive, and successful statewide recycling program.

Components of a successful recycling program were identified through a review of best practices found globally, nationally, and in other Great Lakes states, cross-referenced with programmatic needs identified by stakeholders in Michigan's Solid Waste Policy. The elements outlined below are essential if Michigan is to fully realize the economic and environmental benefits offered by a more sustainable, commodities approach to waste resource utilization and recycling.

THE SIX ELEMENTS

Measurement and Data Collection

Characterizing and measuring waste and waste utilization in Michigan to benchmark progress and materials will provide accurate inventories of entities involved in materials collection, processing, and utilization, as well as an understanding of the commodities involved. These data will allow program managers to evaluate program efficacy, identify areas of need, and enhance utilization efforts. Data reporting must be a requirement of material utilization entities in Michigan.

Estimated Annual Cost: \$321,000

Education and Technical Assistance

The development of a strategic message and delivery of consistent statewide information and education regarding recycling, proper waste disposal, and litter prevention has never been applied to the recovery effort in Michigan, yet is critical to driving material recovery efforts from residential and commercial generators.

Estimated Annual Cost: \$542,000

Community Services and Infrastructure

The most significant obstacle to reaching waste utilization goals is the lack of community-based infrastructure and services. Funds will be used by local units of governments and nongovernmental entities to develop, enhance, and operate benchmark recycling and waste diversion programs; which include



PO Box 10070
Lansing, MI 48901

517-974-3672

www.michiganrecycles.org

Mike Csapo, *Policy Committee Chair*
Bill Gurn, *MRC Board Chair*
Kerrin O'Brien, *Executive Director*
kerrinmrc@gmail.com

minimum service levels, data reporting, and education requirements. As is currently the case with locally generated recycling funds, the funds may be used directly by local units of government to run benchmark recycling programs or may be used to pay private service providers to ensure that benchmark recycling programs are implemented. Such funds can be used to encourage best practices, while replacing revenue lost due to cuts in revenue sharing and the dramatic decline in property tax revenue.

Funds managed through this program can be delivered to eligible local units of government on a per capita basis in a manner similar to the current Economic Vitality Incentive Program. Upon the deployment of local recycling and waste utilization programs that meet benchmark standards, local units of government would receive revenue sharing funds through this component.

Estimated Annual Cost: \$69,500,000

Market and Economic Development

Research, development, and demonstration of recycling markets and new technologies and methodologies in the industry is key to the ongoing success of the industry. Providing technical and economic development assistance, business development loans and matching grants to increase the use of recycled material in manufacturing, and waste assessment services to governmental and nongovernmental entities will move the industry forward.

Estimated Annual Cost: \$1,400,000

County Planning

County Solid Waste Planning is an important, State-mandated tool that gives local governments the framework to properly and legally plan for and manage solid waste. Yet, counties neither have the resources nor the leadership support to update plans. Funding will provide resources for both the State and Michigan's 83 counties to facilitate and administer the county solid waste management planning process, as required by current State law.

Estimated Annual Cost: \$3,438,000

State Solid Waste Policy Administration

The State of Michigan must assume its leadership role if the State Solid Waste Policy is to be successfully implemented. A basic administration role includes, developing the necessary tools, leadership and data management processes, and providing assistance to stakeholders.

Estimated Annual Cost: \$150,000

