Michigan’s move from open dumps to modern landfills forty years ago represented an important shift in environmental protection and remains the foundation of Michigan solid waste policy today. That policy, however, requires counties to assure adequate disposal capacity for waste, with little regard for the value of the materials being discarded.

Forty years later, we know more about the materials we pay to throw away. When diverted from disposal—collected, processed, and sold as commodities to manufacturers—those commodities have value and their repurposing reduces costs and the impacts of disposal.

In 2014, 8.4 million tons of waste was disposed, 1.4 million tons of material was recycled in Michigan, a 15% recycling rate. Michigan lags behind most Great Lakes states in recycling. We must create an environment where Michigan businesses, industries, and residents can accomplish their own sustainability goals and contribute to a financially and environmentally sustainable future, creating resilient communities across the state.

These separate stakeholder advisory groups have been recently joined together and make up the Solid Waste and Recycling Advisors. Their collective charge is to guide the state’s solid waste, sustainability, and recycling goals especially as it relates to the development of legislative language.

The deliberations of the appointed members of the Governor’s Recycling Council (GRC) and Department of Environmental Quality led Solid Waste and Sustainability Advisory Panel (SWSAP) have culminated in the development of two separate but complementary reports and sets of recommendations.
MATERIAL RECYCLED BY CATEGORY IN 2013

TRADITIONALLY COLLECTED MATERIALS 44%
ORGANICS 26%
CONTAINER DEPOSITS 11%
TAKE-BACK PROGRAM MATERIALS 19%
MEASURING RECYCLING IN THE STATE OF MICHIGAN, MAY 2013

POTENTIAL VALUE OF MI MSW MATERIAL DISCARDED

$104,843,445 METAL
$24,657,272 TEXTILES
$14,956,569 MI DEPOSIT
$128,778,438 PLASTIC
$95,040,343 PAPER

POTENTIAL VALUE OF MI MSW COMMODITIES DISCARDED

Mixed Paper $31,556,184
Newspaper $5,972,444
Corrugated $57,511,714
Plastic (#1,3,4,5,7) $18,803,449
Plastic Bags $14,481,222
Plastic Packaging $74,841,415
PET Beverage (#1) $20,652,352
MI Deposit $14,956,569
Ferrous $54,600,663
Aluminum $50,343,782
Textiles $24,657,272

MICHIGAN MSW MATERIAL BY EASE OF RECYCLING

41.2% STANDARD
15.4% NOT PRACTICAL
8.3% WITH EFFORT
35.2% WITH COMPOSTING
ECONOMIC IMPACT POTENTIAL AND CHARACTERIZATION OF MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE IN MICHIGAN 2016

EMPLOYMENT AND TOTAL FINANCIAL EFFECT OF INCREASED RECYCLING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Value of Reclaimed Materials</th>
<th>Jobs Multiplier</th>
<th>Jobs Created</th>
<th>Total Effect Multiplier</th>
<th>Total Economic Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$368,276,066</td>
<td>7.11</td>
<td>2,619</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>$398,732,497</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“The resources and services provided by our ecosystem are indispensable to economic activity. Consequently, economic activity that serves to extend the productive life of natural resources and minimize the waste byproducts of the economy’s productive activity must be a cardinal element of any lasting economic system. Recycling represents one of those unique opportunities in which both public and private investment can cooperatively promote robust and sustainable economic activity while concurrently supporting environmental protection.”

Mike Csapo, General Manager, RRRASOC

IN MICHIGAN, THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED 2,242 ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE RECYCLING AND REUSE INDUSTRY WITH RECEIPTS OF $11.6 BILLION, A PAYROLL OF ABOUT $2.06 BILLION, AND EMPLOYMENT OF 61,700.