

## WRRMA Strategic Planning

WRRMA Goals:

**Short term goals** – Increase the quantity of high-quality recycling through analyzing data, standardizing communications and media, and implementing a cohesive and comprehensive messaging campaign.

**Long term goals** – Analyze and pursue contracting recycling services as a group of member communities. Monitor and support regional full-service Drop-Off Station(s) to increase recycling access.

### Objectives:

Each objective below has a draft plan to implement the objective.

**a. Increase the quality of the recyclables within the constituent member communities and measure the results**

The Recycling Partnership (TRP) grant in its entirety is anticipated to make enormous strides towards achieving this objective by targeting contamination and recycling quality. Measuring the results will be completed by the pre- and post- program MRF audits, which also assigns a monetary value to program results. After the grant program runs its course, WRRMA communities will have data on contamination rates and which types of contamination might be best targeted by another focused messaging campaign or where improvements might still be able to be made.

**Subgoal a.1: Conduct a consistent and complete messaging campaign on what is recyclable in the geographic boundaries of the constituent communities**

Initiative/Actionable Item	Stage of Process	TRP Grant Relevance
Determine theme or main idea for campaign	Not started	Pre-cursor to grant messaging
Press release announcing WRRMA + Grant	Complete	Part of grant requirements
Common collectibles recycling flyer	Complete	Pre-cursor to grant messaging
Website	Complete	To put grant info/mailers/flyers/questions for residents to view
Inviting key service providers to scheduled meetings of WRRMA	In progress	Keep key stakeholders up to date on grant information, learn important contamination information from stakeholders
Social Media Campaign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create Facebook and Nextdoor accounts for WRRMA</li> <li>- Utilize member community</li> </ul>	Facebook account created; Nextdoor account not created	Needed to share grant messaging and reach out to residents

accounts/resources to share messages	Need member community social media manager info to connect	Needed to share grant messaging and reach out to residents
Add Recollect app for recycle searching	In progress- preliminary reach out and info from recollect	Required for grant Put on info-card mailer
Utilize Recycling Raccoon success	Not started – need to open communications with EGLE	Complements grant objectives and messaging
Township/city newsletter articles	AA Twp published one article; others will need to draft and get in touch with communications liaisons	Share news about grant – template for members will be created
Newspaper/MLive/other larger paper articles	Not started	Share news about grant following press release
Grant communications pieces: - Infocard mailer - Cart tags - Top issue mailer and signage	Not started – will work with Cassandra Ford at TRP	Required for grant
Identify next steps following grant, for targeting contamination longer term	Not started	Grant will provide baseline information and data to work off

### *Already Completed*

Groundwork for completing objective A has been started through the completion of the common collectibles flyer and the WRRMA/grant announcement press release. Some member communities have placed the flyer on their website. The flyer, like recycling guidelines, is changeable, and should guidelines or haulers/MRFs switch for any community, the flyer will need to be updated. A website for WRRMA on which to share information about the authority, recycling information to residents, and meeting information in accordance with the requirements of the OMA, is already completed and launched.

### *Next Steps*

The next step in the campaign is to determine the overarching theme or main message to focus on. The remainder of the communications pieces can be created afterward and distributed through grant materials, social media, and local newsletters/newspapers. Communication pieces included in the grant include a press release (already released), the informational mailers sent to homes prior to the program, cart tags (both “oops” tags and “good work” tags), as well as a top issue mailer and community signage. The Recollect app information needs to be populated with common collectibles and MRF/community level information.

Prior to the grant program, municipalities will need to have received pertinent information, key talking points, and frequently asked questions in order to answer resident questions if necessary. Some of this information, as well as information on downloading the Recollect app and copies of all the grant mailers and other communications, should be available on WRRMA’s website. WRRMA’s social media accounts

should be launched and have some already shared posts and be following member municipality and local business accounts.

Due to the success and widespread nature of EGLE’s Recycling Raccoon campaign, it would be appropriate to overlap messages from WRRMA with the Recycling Raccoons. EGLE has worked with certain municipalities to promote recycling initiatives and could support this project.

The RRS memo on WRRMA outreach planning recommends a large public launch packaged as a specific campaign to leverage outreach channels and partnerships. The TRP/EGLE grant communications launch coincides with this recommendation.

*Post-Grant*

Post-grant, we will need to share results of the program via another press release, more news articles, and more social media posts. A thorough analysis of program data should be conducted and utilized to determine the next steps for long-term contamination reduction in WRRMA communities. A partnership with an outside group or student project may be of assistance. WRRMA might consider an additional informational mailer to all participating houses to thank them for their work and contributions, as well as share results and the next steps to reducing contamination.

WRRMA will want to keep residents engaged by continuing to share information at regular intervals after the program ends, as well as increasing and expanding community partnerships and outreach initiatives.

**Subgoal a.2: Use current contract language and contract terms to determine what is currently recyclable in the member communities separately and as a whole**

All member communities should compile their contracts for review and for general records management purposes. The common collectibles flyer was based on what items the MRFs accept.

**Subgoal a.3: Consult with industry experts about what is recyclable in the current market**

Keep contacts/networking open with MRFs, EGLE, and other recycling & industry experts to keep abreast of any changes. Industry contacts and experts should continue to be solicited to present to WRRMA or answer questions on WRRMA’s behalf.

**Subgoal a.4: Consult with industry experts about what materials and what actions contaminate recyclables and develop effective messaging to decrease/eliminate contamination**

The Recycling Partnership’s campaign and messages inherent in the grant contains much of this information, but it is on WRRMA’s shoulders to spread the information via the steps above. Following the grant, the post-program MRF audits should be analyzed to determine future steps in contamination reduction.

**b. How to increase the amount of recycling in member communities and measure those increases as a group**

<b>Initiative/Actionable Item</b>	<b>Stage of Process</b>	<b>TRP Grant Relevance</b>
WRRMA Tonnage Metrics (trash & recycling)	In progress – have numbers from Dexter, Scio, and the City of Ypsilanti	Relevant baseline data, more useful for internal use and tracking

EGLE Municipal Measurement Program (eMMP)	In progress	Relevant baseline data
Grant baseline and post-program MRF sorts	Not started	Part of grant requirements
Campaign messaging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Transitional messaging (what things get turned into)</a></li> <li>- How recycling impacts the local economy</li> </ul>	Incomplete (need further information)	Could be additional campaigns post-grant or could be incorporated (lightly) into grant messaging and outreach. Board to determine.

Focusing on increasing the amount of recyclables in member communities should be done after the grant runs its course and completes objective A. Increasing the quality of recyclables should be done prior to increasing quantity, otherwise recycling contamination accumulates and any gains in value of recyclables will be offset by the increase in contamination and corresponding decrease in quality.

The EGLE Municipal Measurement Program and the grant pre- and post- program MRF audits will provide baseline data on recycling quantity for each community. This data will aide WRRMA in deciding where to go next with a campaign to increase recycling quality. One option includes sharing generally what recycled items are turned into to increase resident trust and feeling of participation in the process. Additionally, clarifying and tying recycling into the local economy may influence residents to recycle in greater quantities. There may be reason to combine these messages into the grant contamination-reduction campaign, but too many additional messages risks muddying the main message of the grant campaign. Small messages of related content would be preferable but is ultimately based on the Board’s decision. Otherwise, these messages could be the focus of a more robust campaign following the grant.

**Subgoal b.1: Use available data to determine or estimate the volume of recyclables managed in member communities separately and as a whole**

Select communities have shared their recycling and waste tonnage with Theo and WRRMA. WRRMA should create a robust and up-to-date spreadsheet to tracking tonnages for use in future contracts, discussions, and strategic planning purposes. This data over longer periods of time will show trends and longer-term changes in recycling and waste tonnages, allowing member communities to determine if these changes are in line with the goals of their communities, WRRMA, Washtenaw County, and the State of Michigan.

**Subgoal b.2: Develop a methodology to track the volume of recyclables for the group over time**

Research is needed to determine the best methodology to track recyclable volumes. Relying on the eMMP may mean that data is difficult to access, and therefore while important to complete for state-level data, WRRMA should keep an internal account of their own data. For use in planning and future contracts, if possible, tonnage data should be kept both on the individual community level as well as on the authority level. Member communities may in the future decide to evaluate contracting a software or other system to track this data if a spreadsheet does not serve their purposes.

**c. Market the recyclables to the service providers as a “block” of high volume/high quality recyclables going forward**

After reaching the goals of sustained quantity and sustained quality of recycling, the newly improved “block” of recyclables (combined member recyclables) can be marketed. This might involve an RFP process that frees up the municipal borders and allows for an effective and efficient collection contract for the block as a whole or as pieces. This end goal supports the interim objectives of messaging, quantity increase (an increase of waste diverted) and the pursuit of a high-quality recycling stream.