

Genesee County: Material Recovery Facility Feasibility Study. 2016

Executive Summary

Our team, senior undergraduates of the Urban and Regional Planning program at MSU have composed a feasibility study of implementing a material recovery facility (MRF) in Genesee County, Michigan. A MRF is a recycling plant utilized to separate and prepare recyclable materials for end use distribution. This project was created by the establishment of a client partnership between the GCMPC and the School of Planning, Design & Construction at MSU. This team has elaborated the current social and economic conditions within Genesee County and laid out several recommendations that we believe are obtainable by the county. The client has required that the materials involved in this study will be common household recyclables diverted from residential waste only. This is a direct priority by the current Michigan Governor, Rick Snyder's, 2014 statewide recycling goal. An investigation was conducted to determine what parameters could be required to implement and successfully operate a MRF under current conditions within the county.

Our methodology has revolved around compiling data that includes general recycling knowledge and statistics, literature reviews, socioeconomic data, facility site criteria, and case studies. The group made two site visits to operational MRF's in Michigan. Our field experiences have allowed us to observe the day to day operations of a functioning MRF while interviewing their personnel to acquire the facilities independent data. This data then allows the team to compare and contrast the MRF's which then segue to create transferable data.

The report concludes with several recommendations made by our team that explain what will be the best option for Genesee County regarding a MRF implementation. The recommendations are broken down into, site location characteristics, facility criteria and costs, education strategy, and cost recovery, and education strategies that have been proven to heighten recycling rates. With the close of the 2016 spring semester, this team will have made a recommendation for the Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission. Based on our findings and recommendations, we believe establishing a MRF is in fact, a feasible opportunity for Genesee County.