

Adopted GRC Policy Statement - Introduction

The GRC has adopted the following policy statements in its role advising the Governor and DEQ Director - having concluded that these are essential to Michigan's development of metric driven cost effective recycling strategies for our state that achieve the Governor's stated goal of 30% recycling and that will realize the economic, job creation and environmental benefits that strong recycling brings to our state.

Proposed Modifications to Adopted Policy Statement on Access

Convenient recycling access is essential to achieving the 30% recycling goal. Recycling access will vary by type for different sectors (e.g. urban, rural, in-home, multi-family, away-from-home). As a first step towards achieving the goal of convenient recycling access, the GRC advises the Governor and DEQ Director that legislative action, this session, is needed that requires, by state statute, solid waste haulers to provide residential recycling collection services if they provide residential trash collection services within higher density residential areas in Michigan as specified by the US Census as shown in Exhibit A, – as qualified below.

The GRC advises the Governor and DEQ Director that the following additional considerations should be addressed in recycling access legislation and in its execution:

- As a first step, convenient recycling access can be provided within the boundaries of higher density areas in Michigan (shown as urbanized areas and urban clusters as specified by the US Census – see Exhibit A) via the existing system of trash haulers – areas to be identified as “Designated Curbside Recycling Areas”.
- A statute that requires every hauler in Michigan servicing those urbanized areas to provide convenient recycling collection services as part of their “normal” services.
- The access requirement will need to take into account the structure of Michigan Home Rule Authority – utilizing language such as “a person who chooses to provide hauling services must offer the following in conjunction with them – if that person meets these threshold.”
- That statute should establish a framework defining minimum requirements for the services provided, including:
 - Each customer being charged for recycling including provision of a recycling cart or container, allowing the hauler to spread the cost to all;
 - That charge, while bundled into the total bill for that customer, would as a best practice not be broken out as a separate line item, but would be allowed to be shown as a separate line item should the hauler so choose;
 - Recognize that details of these requirements will need to be worked out, with hauler input, addressing issues related to customer participation and customer non-payment.
 - A standard suite of materials to be collected would be specified with the statute referencing “common household paper and packaging including but not limited to...” and would include a requirement that the recyclables collected were delivered to a registered recycling establishment;

- Minimum standards for recycling service would be defined, but with enough flexibility in the language to enable recycling service features (e.g. weekly or every other week, carts or bins, dual or single stream, approach to incentives/education, etc.) to be matched to local conditions;
- An enforcement mechanism would be included that is sufficient to prevent abuse, especially in border counties where haulers from adjacent states may assume they can operate outside of the rules;
- Tracking of curbside recycling access coverage data would be incorporated into the state's recycling measurement system;
- A clause that would make it illegal to take (steal) recyclables from the curb – often known as “anti-scavenging” language.
- The statute should define mechanisms for implementation including:
 - Provisions for the Director to establish more detailed minimum requirements as well as process mechanisms - initially via a DEQ Guidance Document to be released within 6 months of statute passage - with consideration for adoption of rules at a later date if necessary to correct issues that have developed during execution.
 - Provisions for input from key stakeholders, including haulers of all sizes as well as the communities to be serviced, in the design process for implementation guidelines and/or rules and regulations – so that there is input into the model to be implemented.
 - Provision for training and technical assistance to be provided via a designated service provider – and mechanisms for hauler participation in that training.
 - A timeline for implementation to accommodate reasonable steps required for haulers to responsibly meet the obligations – e.g. no later than 18 months after statute adoption.
 - Provisions that recognize the importance of broad based endorsement of citizen participation in the program – through coordinated announcements of its availability on both hauler and municipally controlled information channels (e.g. web, newsletters, cable, etc.) along with annual repeat.
 - Provisions that enable communities that contract with haulers and/or provide their own trash and/or recycling service with municipal crews in the designated curbside recycling areas to separately achieve the access objectives- with clear statute language for these areas that release haulers servicing that area from that obligation.
 - Provisions that enable Townships and Cities that partially incorporate urbanized census blocks within their boundaries (as shown in Exhibit B) to extend the hauler requirements to areas outside those boundaries through local action, including what incentives could be provided to the haulers to make that possible.
- The statute would require the Director, by a date certain, to provide a plan for expanding recycling access, either by drop-off recycling or curbside recycling, to areas outside of the designated curbside recycling area.

Exhibit A

Michigan Census Urban Boundaries Map:
Urbanized areas and urban clusters by census block classification
combined to be considered urban based on US Census

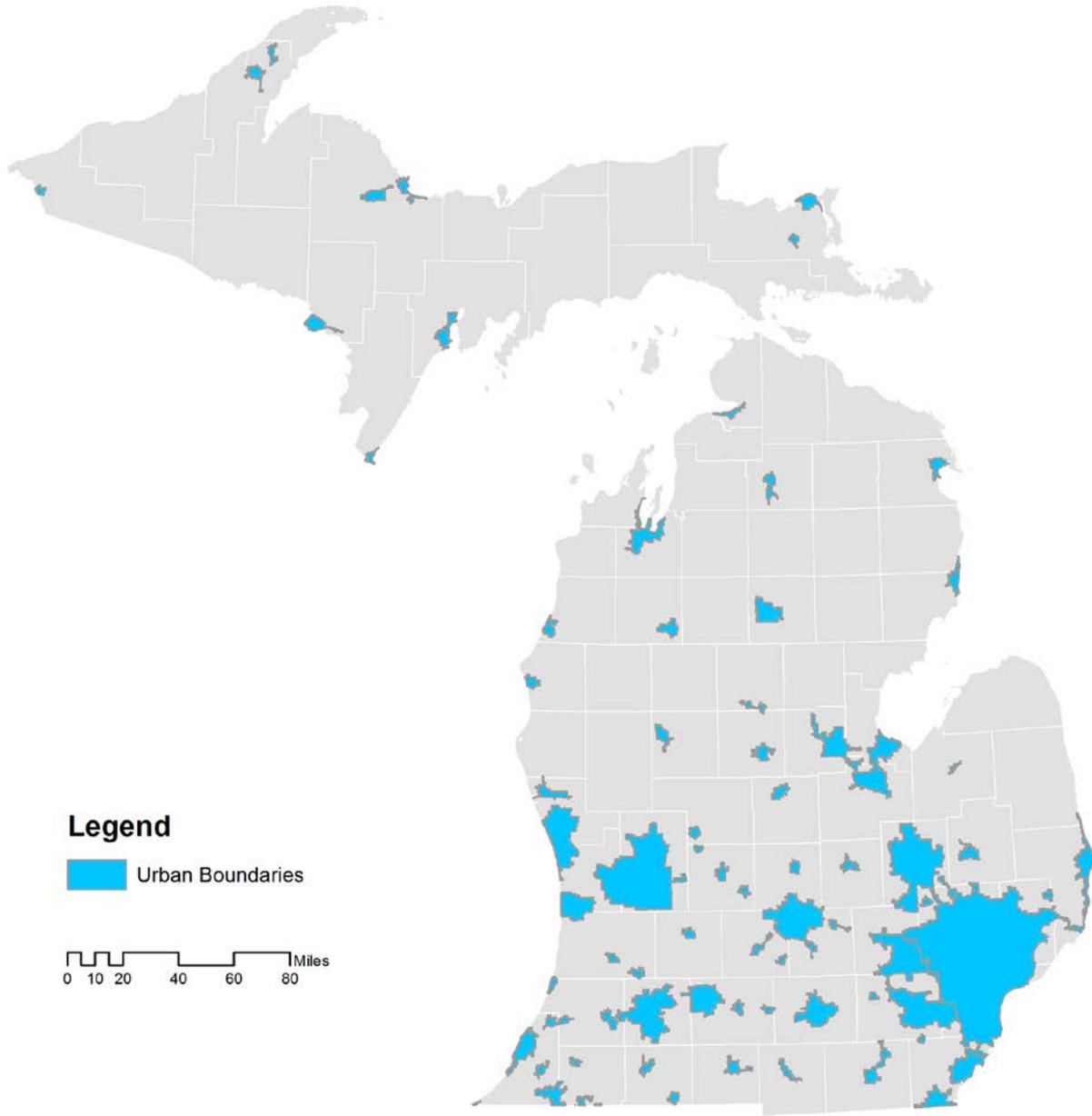


Exhibit B

Michigan Township and Cities Urbanized Area Map:
All units of government that incorporates urbanized census blocks
within their boundaries based on US Census

