



BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

THEO EGGERMONT
Public Works Director

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Board of Public Works
705 N. Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

September 11, 2026

Western Washtenaw Recycling Authority
8025 Werkner Road
Chelsea, MI 48118

Subject: Feedback Regarding Special Assessment District and Regional Recycling Operations

Dear WWRA Board,

On behalf of the Board of Public Works, we would like to express our sincere appreciation for the vital role the Western Washtenaw Recycling Authority (WWRA) plays in our community. WWRA offers a cost-effective recycling solution for many municipalities in Washtenaw County, in certain areas it is the only option for recycling available. As part of our renewal of the Special Assessment District, the Board of Public Works conducted two public hearings this past summer. There were approximately 20 members of the public who provided comments. The assessment covers over 9,000 households. However, attendees voiced specific concerns we feel are important to bring to your attention:

Public Usage from Outside the District: Residents within the Special Assessment District expressed frustration regarding out-of-district individuals using a service they don't contribute to financially. A grant funded survey a few years ago provided data that confirms out of district usage is a high percentage of users. Because the program is largely funded by the assessments, we agree that the WWRA board should work to address this issue. Some potential solutions discussed as a part of the special assessment process include:

- It is possible that many out of district residents don't know that they aren't supposed to use drop-offs. If that is true, a minimally appropriate step would be to add signage providing notice about who pays for and who is permitted to use the drop-offs.
 - Providing the same notice and seeking donations (\$35/year) through a QR code for out-of-district residents who are willing to "do the right thing."

- Add costly additional measures to restrict usage such as occasional staffing or fencing.

Reduction of locations: Residents vocalized in letters and during public comment that the removal of the fairgrounds/Old Manchester site resulted in them not supporting the assessment. While everyone in Chelsea has access to curbside collection, residents from neighboring townships found the site to be the most convenient, with more residents from Lima Township voicing this concern.

Glass Recycling Restrictions: Community members requested glass be accepted and requested that WWRA re-evaluate the exclusion of glass at certain drop-off sites. If the issue is noise, pursue alternate locations or noise mitigation methods such as rubber lined bins, baffling, or signage noting “No Glass Deposits after XX PM”.

Additionally, the Board strongly recommends collecting and reporting performance metrics and other relevant data to the member municipalities and the general public on WWRA’s website. WWRA should create an annual report that includes the number of tons of material collected (front end) and/or sent for recycling to processors (back-end), what recyclable materials are turned into, and the number of drop-off bins collected per township. Bringing attention to the amount of money spent on illegal dumping also may help residents understand that it costs the community when people unlawfully leave trash and hazardous materials at the WWRA drop offs. In a similar way we strongly recommend conducting a regular survey that gauges resident usage within the district, resident behaviors and knowledge, and support for the assessment.

County staff are well suited to provide support for education, outreach, surveys, and developing an annual report template. We are happy to offer our support to initiate or review these materials. Thank you for your time, your dedication to environmental stewardship, and your continued partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Theo Eggermont", is written over a horizontal line.

Theo Eggermont, Director of Public Works on behalf of the Board of Public Works
CC: Board of Public Works