



## **2022 Summary of Activities:**

In 2022, WRRMA continued to move forward with its short-term goal of increasing the quantity of high-quality recycling through analyzing data, standardizing communications, and implementing a cohesive and comprehensive messaging campaign. WRRMA also began pursuing the long-term goal of contracting solid waste services as a group of member communities.

The WRRMA board accepted a grant from the State of Michigan and The Recycling Partnership with a value of \$137,905. The first phase of the grant, called Recycling Quality Improvement, aimed to reduce contamination in single family curbside recycling for Ann Arbor City residents. The other WRRMA members completed this grant in 2021. Recycling material samples taken before and after the Ann Arbor campaign indicate the program reduced recycling contamination by over 20%, down to a 12.75% contamination rate. Notably, the program's effort in Ann Arbor to educate residents through a single-issue mailer about scrap metal, which is no longer accepted curbside, resulted in an 80% decrease in scrap metal as compared to the pre-campaign audit. The grant also includes a second phase, called App to Action, that WRRMA is using to increase recycling participation and collect information about barriers to participation. As a follow up to all the grants, an audit is being scheduled to determine how long education and outreach impact recycling contamination. A summary of the grant actions and impacts will be available on the WRRMA website by early 2023.

The WRRMA Board continues to engage with service providers to learn more about services and infrastructure. The new Material Recovery Facility (MRF) in Ann Arbor came online in early 2022, and all but GFL customer's recycling material is primarily sent to the Ann Arbor MRF. Under contract, GFL customers' materials are sent to the GFL MRF. In May, several members of the Board toured the Ann Arbor MRF to see the how recycling is sorted and processed. Additionally, WRRMA hosted Recycle Ann Arbor to learn more about the Drop-Off Station located near Ellsworth and Platt Roads. At the same meeting, the board participated in an input session that is helping to guide a proposed replacement Drop-Off Station.

One of the fundamental reasons that WRRMA formed is to work regionally and collaboratively to take advantage of economies of scale to reduce costs and/or improve services, while providing a clear and consistent message to residents. WRRMA has been investigating providing an option to collaboratively contract for solid waste services for interested municipalities with contracts ending in 2024 or 2025. The Board has been reviewing a draft request for proposal and is discussing the appropriate next steps. If the RFP is put out and favorable bids are received, the municipality would contract with WRRMA and WRRMA would collaboratively contract with a service provider. Per WRRMA's Articles of Incorporation, consideration and approval from the respective municipal legislative body would be required prior to any contractual arrangement.