

I'm Dan Ezekiel, here representing the Sierra Club's Huron Valley Group. Thanks for the opportunity to speak. My dad was on A2 City Council, and I understand something of the time and dedication it takes for you to do represent us.

Ann Arbor was long a leader in innovative, mission-driven diversion of waste from the landfill, working in partnership with community-based non-profits like Recycle Ann Arbor. We took our eye off the ball and have not kept up with the opportunities that exist in today's world.

There have been two huge problems created by the mismanagement of Ann Arbor's solid waste system over the past five years —downtown trash collection and the MRF. The SWRMP barely addresses these important issues, and yet it proposes big changes to the part of our system — residential collection — that runs very well, and is supported by over 90% of the community.

We now have an opportunity to take leadership again. Here are three ways:

1. The Huron Valley Group has already asked council (to paraphrase the Governor) to "fix the damn MRF", either through RAA's or a similar proposal, at no cost to the city.
2. We have asked council to join the county's regional waste authority, without any more delay. A high priority there would be to work with our neighbors on repairing or replacing our drop-off station before it, like the MRF, falls victim to neglect and disinvestment.
3. We ask the city council to step in assertively, including not accepting this report. We should thank APTIM and let them go on their way. Please specifically reject the plan to consolidate collections as proposed, instead direct staff to explore consolidating service by material stream.

APTIM is part of a large consulting firm primarily focused on the oil and gas industry. Like many corporate waste players, they see recyclables as trash, another cart or dumpster to get rid of, at the lowest cost. Recycling is the problem to be solved. This type of thinking that helped degrade the quality of the US recycling stream so much the Chinese told us to stop sending our so-called recyclables.

Ann Arborites see recyclables as a resource, and wasting resources and throwing them in landfills as the problem. This report seems to be straight off the rack, the same report APTIM would have given Ashtabula, with no accounting for local values or efforts.

APTIM was the high bidder on the RFP for this project. Why were they selected? I hope staff can answer.

There are a lot of people in the Ann Arbor community with expertise on recycling, composting, and solid waste, But they've been mostly ignored by City Hall over the past five years. Many served on APTIM's advisory committee and they're among the people who object to this plan.

The Huron Valley Group stands ready to help council finish the solid waste plan, a plan with timetables and numerical diversion targets, that should be based on our community's specific values and needs, a zero waste vision, and the city's climate goals.

Thanks again for listening.