



MidMichigan Environmental Action Council (MidMEAC) Construction/Demolition (C&D) Recycling Market Development Project

MidMEAC is partnering with several organizations on a C&D Waste Diversion (Recycling) Project to expand the market for reclaimed materials from structures scheduled for demolition. The Project links material sources, workforce development, engagement with contractors and developers, warehousing, promotional activities and retail outlet components. Key partners include:



Ingham County Treasurer, Ingham County Land Bank, Ingham County Land Bank, under guidance of Ingham County Treasurer, has deconstructed several structures slated for demolition. These projects have ranged from near total deconstruction to partial – or “soft” – deconstruction, diverting waste percentages ranging from 85% (full) to 5-10% (partial.)



Michigan State University, Center for Community Economic Development and Department of Forestry are currently engaged in a Recycling Market Development program related to the reclamation of dimensional lumber for reuse in new timber products such as Cross-Laminated Timber (CLT) and Glue Laminated Timber (GLT.)



Midtown Training, deconstruction specialists developing programs for: Workforce Development; Certified Trainers who can train others in the process of deconstruction; Contractors, general and demolition; Owners and Entrepreneurs; Retail/Warehouse Workers; Developers' Architects and Engineers.

MidMEAC and partners are engaging with planners and elected officials to develop policies and ordinances that support deconstruction. Provisions include incentives/disincentives encouraging pre-demolition review for deconstruction viability and workforce preparation to maximize recovery of organic material, with a focus on old-growth timber.

Environmental Outcomes: Increased use of Recycled Materials, Greenhouse Gas Reduction, Great Lakes Protection

In 2015, 11.5 million tons of wood, much of it in the form of flooring, cabinetry, and architectural elements, were disposed of in landfills in the US; this was more than the total timber harvest on the national forest system that year. The Project will reduce greenhouse gases by 1) diverting organic waste (old-growth timber, mid-century lumber and other building materials) from landfills; 2) providing an alternative to cutting mature forests for new materials, while preserving the green spaces that are essential to clean water in our Great Lakes Basin watershed; and 3) establishing a mid-Michigan market will reduce heavy-duty vehicle-miles needed to transport reclaimed materials to established markets in Detroit and/or Chicago.

Economic Outcomes: Job Creation, Market Expansion

Deconstruction improves the standard of living in local communities by 1) providing high-quality, affordable building materials; 2) job-training programs for local workers, typically young adults seeking to gain skills to advance their careers; and 3) renewing housing stock (urban in-fill) in an environmentally responsible manner.

The training programs needed to create a functioning and successful market for salvaged materials will provide educational opportunities to persons who are unemployed or underemployed; skill sets include construction trades, warehouse management, and retailing. A “train-the-trainer” component will perpetuate future local deconstruction training. Workshops aimed at increasing support for deconstruction among contractors, developers and retail entrepreneurs are also planned.

Project Rationale

Ingham County Treasurer Eric Schertzing commissioned the study titled “Reclaimed Building Materials Market Analysis for the Greater Lansing Area” (Delta Institute, October 2015). The study analyzed supply, demand, and potential value of reclaimed building materials in the Tri County region. This Project is guided by the Delta Institute Analysis.

Achieving market potential for reclaimed materials relies on changing the perceptions of citizens, builders, demolition contractors, and policy-makers. We will provide promotional, educational, and advocacy actions to help communities recognize economic growth and employment opportunities associated with reclaiming assets from vacant structures.

MidMEAC is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization established to protect our natural resources. (TIN 38-3183986)

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Learn more at www.midmeac.org/climate-action/deconstruction/