

THE OPPORTUNITY

Attract new business and investment to Kent County while accelerating our progress toward a more sustainable community.

REIMAGINE TRASH

2020

REIMAGINETRASH.ORG

2030

The Kent County Dept. of Public Works has the opportunity to put West Michigan on the map as a national leader in recycling and waste reduction while helping protect our air, land and Great Lakes. Each year, Kent County DPW processes over **1 billion pounds of trash**, of which **more than 75% could be reused, recycled or repurposed**. The Kent County DPW

has set a bold goal to **divert 90% of trash from the landfill by 2030**, and the Sustainable Business Park is a key part of achieving this goal. This new approach to cutting back on trash dumped in the South Kent Landfill just makes sense: it will extend the life of the current landfill, protect the environment, and create new jobs and spark investment in our community.

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PARK

Building a Sustainable Business Park in Kent County will help our community cut down on trash buried in landfills and attract investment and jobs from companies that convert waste into usable products. The Park will take waste materials that would otherwise be dumped into a landfill and reuse or recycle those materials into products like compost for agriculture, fuel pellets, plastic pellets for new plastic products, biofuels and textiles. A variety of complementary businesses,

entrepreneurs and startups that need access to raw materials could tap into these reclaimed or converted materials, incorporating them into their production processes or transforming them into entirely new products. The Park has tremendous potential for preserving open space, establishing a center for innovation, and both producing and using renewable energy to power operations, which will help save money on electricity costs and further protect our air and Great Lakes.

OUR PLAN OF ACTION

We're bringing together national and local experts to engage in a plan for the 200-acre Sustainable Business Park to make West Michigan a national leader in circular economy thinking. The plan will look at the necessary improvements, costs, funding sources, and a proposed implementation schedule. As part of the plan, the DPW is actively working with the business community to attract potential tenants and complementary technologies.

A TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE WIN



It's a win for the **people** of West Michigan who can rest assured that their waste will continue to be managed responsibly but in a way that benefits future generations instead of burdening them.



It's a win for the **planet** when we look toward innovative ways to reintroduce discards back into the value stream as feedstock, plastic pellets, fuels, & more.



It's a win for our **economy** when we localize the processing of materials. The Sustainable Business Park will support local jobs and our West Michigan economy, all while capturing the \$52 million in 'easily recoverable' materials of value that are currently going into landfills in West Michigan.

PROJECT CONTACT

Kristen Wieland | 616.632.7923 | kristen.wieland@kentcountymi.gov | www.reimagnetrash.org/vision