



# CENTER FOR LOCAL, STATE, AND URBAN POLICY

## Conducting a Local Recycling Survey in Your Michigan Community

Prepared for the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy

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Community surveys can be powerful tools to help learn about your residents' preferences, prioritize competing projects, and find out what's going right and what needs improvement. But they also can be challenging to develop and administer, particularly for smaller communities.

This document provides a basic overview of a few key considerations but is just a starting point for Michigan local jurisdictions interested in surveying their residents regarding recycling services.

Large jurisdictions may be best served by hiring out their survey research efforts to consultants who can provide multi-modal data collection, sophisticated sampling and weighting, and data analysis, while smaller communities may be able to implement relatively simple surveys on their websites or as inserts to newsletters that are less scientifically rigorous (or costly) but may still yield valuable insights.

Below you can find survey questions that can be used, as well as a framework and guidance in how to successfully develop and conduct surveys on recycling issues that can provide insights on how residents feel about your community's current and future recycling options.

### Customizing this template for your local government's needs:

Different communities have different recycling services available to residents, while some have none at all. Your local government may provide recycling services directly, there may be private providers in the community, or there may be few or no recycling services available.

This document provides questions that can be used for surveying residents, but before proceeding with choosing which questions to include, a community should first consider a few preliminary issues.

## 1) First, think about exactly what your government needs to know.

**Why** (are you surveying your residents)? What are the specific issues your government is considering or dealing with, and what resident input will help your Board or Council make decisions about services and budgeting? What resident input will help your service providers know where to target improvements or expand service options? Once you determine what answers you need, that will help you pick the questions you should ask of your residents.

## 2) Choose a methodology that works best for your community.

**What** (is your budget)? Your resources will help drive the approach you use to gather the survey data. A telephone or mail survey is significantly more expensive to conduct and requires more time and resources, but can often be more representative of all your residents than an online or social media survey. Low- or no-cost online survey software (such as Google forms, SurveyMonkey, Qualtrics, etc.) can save on printing, mailing, and data entry costs, and residents can answer on computer, tablet, or phone. However, this approach would only be available to residents with online skills and internet access, and may raise important issues of equity in terms of who has a voice in the government's work.

**Who** (will be taking your survey)? Opt-in web surveys let anyone participate without having to recruit a random sample of invitees, but the highly-engaged and the internet-connected may differ from your typical resident. If you're not sure you will get consistent representation from the entire community, you could try targeted recruitment (specifically seeking out particular kinds of residents) or "weighting" the responses you do get (giving more emphasis to certain characteristics, such as a respondent's age or the neighborhood or district where they live).

**How** (will you contact them)? Issues of budget and target audience will help you decide whether to send out your survey using the USPS, an online survey via email, low-cost social media outreach (like Facebook or NextDoor), inserts that could be placed in current curbside recycling bins or on door handles, or a mix of various methods. You could also partner with local community organizations, such as senior centers or PTAs, to get the word out about your survey. If you plan to conduct a simple online survey, there is free software that will allow you to create a "QR code" that will allow residents to easily pull up the survey on their phone.

**When** (do you want to gather information)? If you are planning a new recycling effort, do you want to gather information before it is finalized, to help shape what it looks like? Or do you want to wait until after a new service is launched and find out how satisfied residents are with it? You may want to avoid certain times of year (such as school breaks, the start of hunting season, or the busy summer tourist season) so your residents aren't too busy to participate.

### 3) Develop a questionnaire that's focused on the areas of your community that matter most.

- Review the example questions in the modules below.
- Choose the most important and actionable questions to include. Avoid changing the wording to these example questions; by using the same questions as other Michigan communities, you can compare answers to your survey directly with those from other, similar jurisdictions.
- Think about how you will use the findings from each question.
- Ideally try to keep the length of the survey under 10 minutes. Have someone take an initial version of the questionnaire and time them. This kind of “pre-test” will also help you find errors or fix misunderstandings that might be in your questionnaire.
- Make sure to include a demographics section at the end of the survey so you have a sense of how representative the responses are of your community and so you can break down the responses by factors such as the respondents' age, gender, income level, and so on.

### 4) Promote the survey while it is “in the field.”

- Don't simply send out one email and hope for the best. Send follow-up emails or post regular reminders on social media to prompt residents to respond. Alternatively, with a mail survey, you could send out reminder postcards or place a second round of flyers in residents' recycling bins.

### 5) Have a plan for using the data once the survey is complete.

**Examine results in different parts of the community** and for different kinds of residents. Average survey results are not the same everywhere or for everyone. For example, older residents and younger residents may be more or less willing to drive to recycling centers.

**Benchmark** against other Michigan communities. By selecting from the following template of questions, you will be able to compare your residents' opinions to those in other governments across the state.

**Report back** to stakeholders (your Board, your staff, your residents). Conduct action-oriented meetings to identify next steps that the data and your knowledge of the community suggest. In workshops, you can engage not only staff and elected officials but community nonprofits, businesses, and residents to identify a small number of survey-inspired outcomes to achieve within a set period of time.

## Summary of topics

We've broken down the questions you may want to ask by general topics grouped together in modules. [We recommend asking all of the questions in Basic Module A and in the demographics module.](#) Then review the supplementary modules to pick and choose relevant questions for your community.

### **Basic module A –**

**This is a foundational set of recycling questions for everyone to use**

**Page 6**

- ⇒ knowledge of recycling services currently available
- ⇒ recycling service use
- ⇒ recycling service participation
- ⇒ recycling service satisfaction
- ⇒ suggestions for improvement
- ⇒ support for access to recycling

### **Basic Module B –**

**Some demographic questions for you to include**

**Page 9**

- ⇒ type of housing
- ⇒ primary residence or secondary/seasonal residence
- ⇒ number in your household
- ⇒ respondent gender
- ⇒ respondent age
- ⇒ respondent education level
- ⇒ respondent race/ethnicity

### **Supplemental Module C –**

**This looks at residents' recycling opinions, motivations, and challenges**

**Page 11**

- ⇒ barriers to recycling
- ⇒ reasons residents do recycle
- ⇒ reasons residents don't recycle
- ⇒ how far residents would be willing to drive for drop-off recycling
- ⇒ factors that would encourage residents to recycle more

### **Supplemental Module D –**

**This looks at recycling knowledge and sources of information**

**Page 15**

- ⇒ do residents have the knowledge and information they need about local recycling programs
- ⇒ if unsure something is recyclable, do residents put it in the trash or the recycle bin
- ⇒ where do residents get information about recycling
- ⇒ how do residents want to receive information about recycling
- ⇒ what types of information do residents want to receive about recycling

**Supplemental Module E -**

**These ask about policy preferences (e.g., funding mechanisms, preferred providers)    Page 17**

- ⇒ questions on how to pay for recycling
- ⇒ who should have primary responsibility for providing recycling
- ⇒ does the community spend the right amount on recycling
- ⇒ tradeoffs between higher taxes or fees or fewer (or no) recycling services

**Supplemental Module F -**

**These gauge residents' desire for interest in upgraded or new services    Page 19**

- ⇒ would a new service encourage residents to recycle more
- ⇒ how much would they be willing to pay for a new service
- ⇒ how do they want new or improved services provided

**Supplemental Module G -**

**These are some additional satisfaction questions    Page 22**

- ⇒ how satisfied are residents with current services and how could they be improved

**Supplemental Module H -**

**Finally, some basic questions on sustainability, benefits of recycling    Page 23**

**Example hardcopy questionnaire    Page 24**

## Basic module A (for everyone)

**Description:** a short and simple recycling survey that can be used by itself, or in conjunction with supplemental modules.

**Who this is for:** We recommend that all jurisdictions use this module as the starting point for a recycling survey regardless of what — if any — recycling services are available in the jurisdiction, and who provides them (e.g., your government, a private contractor, the county government, etc.)

**Special considerations:** Note that some questions are not applicable to residents who do not have access to any recycling services, these are denoted with “SKIP IF NO ACCESS TO RECYCLING,” and that instruction should be provided on the questionnaire.

**The base module will help you answer the questions:**

1. What recycling options are your residents aware of, and what services do they use?
2. How frequently do your residents recycle?
3. Are your residents satisfied with the current amount of recycling availability?
4. Are there additional recycling services your residents want to have access to?
5. Are your residents supportive of having local access to recycling?

### Survey Questions for residents

- A1. **FOR SURVEYS BY COUNTIES:** As far as you know, which of the following recycling services are currently available to you in [your county name]? (*check all that apply*)

Curbside recycling collection

Access to a drop-off recycling site (either free or for a fee)

Household hazardous waste collection opportunities (e.g., household chemicals, paint, batteries, medicine)

Household electronic equipment collection opportunities (e.g., computers, televisions, phones, tablets)

Collection of residential yard waste

Collection of residential food waste

Other (*please describe*) \_\_\_\_\_

None of the above

Don't know

**Quick tip:** when you have “check all that apply” lists, consider including an “other” option (along with a space to add text). This will allow residents to tell you things you may not have thought of or help you to understand how their understanding of the topic differs from yours.

**A2. FOR SURVEYS BY CITIES/VILLAGES/TOWNSHIPS:** As far as you know, what types of objects or materials can be recycled in [your community name]? (*check all that apply*)

No recycling available in my community  
Paper  
Metal cans  
Plastic containers  
Cardboard  
Household electronic equipment  
Household hazardous waste  
Residential yard waste  
Residential food waste  
Other (*please describe*) \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't know

**Quick tip:** always include a “don't know” option in your questions. You don't want respondents to guess. Also, finding out what residents don't know can be very important data!

**A3. FOR SURVEYS BY ALL JURISDICTION TYPES:** Which of the following recycling services have you used in the past 12 months? (*check all that apply*)

Curbside recycling collection  
A drop-off recycling site (either free or for a fee)  
Household hazardous waste recycling (e.g., household chemicals, paint, batteries, medicine)  
Household electronic equipment recycling (e.g., computers, televisions, phones, tablets)  
Collection of residential yard waste  
Collection of residential food waste  
Other (*please specify*) \_\_\_\_\_  
None of the above  
Don't know

**Quick tip:** if you are using online survey software (like Google forms or Qualtrics), you can add instructions in the programming to “skip” respondents out of particular questions that are not relevant to them. So, for example, if a respondent answered “No recycling available in my community” in Question #2, you could have the survey skip them directly from Question #2 to Question #5.)

**A4. SKIP THIS QUESTION IF NO ACCESS TO RECYCLING:** Not counting deposit-return bottles or cans, how would you describe your participation in the recycling programs available in your community? Would you say you recycle all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, rarely or never?

- All of the time
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Rarely
- Never
- Don't know

**A5. Overall, how satisfied would you say you are with your current access—or lack thereof—to recycling?**

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Don't know

**Quick tip:** it can be good to include a neutral middle category, like “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” in your scale, so that respondents can indicate they don't really care one way or the other.

**A6. How could recycling in [your community name] be improved?**

*(allow respondents to compose an answer in a text box)*

**A7. Whether or not there are currently recycling services or programs available in {your community name}, how much do you support access to recycling in [your community name]?**

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Little support
- Do not support at all
- Don't know

## Base Module B - Demographics & Residence Information

**Description:** This module collects information on respondent demographics including housing type and location of their residence, which can help you understand the variety of responses you receive on the survey.

**Who this is for:** Every jurisdiction should ask demographics questions 1-2. Additional questions can be included if desired.

**Special considerations:** It is important that you collect information on demographics, so you know who is answering the survey. However, it's best practice to put them at the very end of the questionnaire, because they are the least interesting questions for the respondent to answer.

**This module will help you answer the questions:**

1. How closely do the people who answered your survey match up with the whole population of your community?
2. Are all respondents actual residents, or do they live outside the jurisdiction's boundaries?
3. Are there differences in the views of different groups within your community?

### Survey Questions for residents

**B1. FOR SURVEYS BY COUNTIES ONLY:** What city, village, or township do you live in?

\_\_\_\_\_

**B2. FOR SURVEYS BY CITIES/VILLAGES/TOWNSHIPS:** Are you a resident of [your community name] or do you live outside the [city's/village's/township's] boundaries?

I am a resident of [your community name]

My primary residence is elsewhere (*please specify*) \_\_\_\_\_

**B3. FOR ALL JURISDICTIONS:** What type of housing is your residence in [your community name]?

A single-family home

A townhome or duplex

An apartment building or condominium

A manufactured/mobile home

Other (*please specify*) \_\_\_\_\_

Don't know

**B4. Is your residence in [your community name] your primary residence or a secondary/seasonal residence?**

Primary residence

Seasonal residence

**B5. How many people, including yourself, live in your household?**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6 or more
- Prefer not to answer

**B6. Respondent gender**

- Male
- Female
- Self-describe \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to answer

**B7. What is your age?**

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-75
- 75 or older
- Prefer not to answer

**B8. What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

- 12th grade or less/no diploma
- High school graduate or GED
- Some college/Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's/Professional/Doctorate degree
- Prefer not to answer

**B9. Please check one or more categories below to indicate what race(s) you consider yourself to be. (check all that apply)**

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- Asian
- Multiracial
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

**Quick tip:** Only ask the questions you are planning to use in your analysis or reporting. Avoid taking up more time from your residents than you must.

## Supplemental Module C - Residents' recycling opinions, motivations, and challenges

**Description:** This module contains more detailed questions about why your residents do or do not recycle. This can help you answer questions about how to help your residents recycle more. It is appropriate for places where recycling participation is lower than desired or to help prioritize improvements to services. It could also help develop a "recycling campaign" to encourage people to recycle.

**Who this is for:** This module is most appropriate for places where there are some recycling services available. For jurisdictions where residents do not have access to any recycling, these questions may not work well.

**Special considerations:** Different questions are appropriate for individuals who recycle vs. those who do not.

**This module will help you answer the questions:**

1. What barriers or challenges do residents face when trying to recycle?
2. What motivates your residents to recycle (if they do)?
3. For residents who do not recycle - why not?
4. How can you encourage residents to recycle more?

### Survey Questions for residents

- C1. To what extent, if at all, have the following been barriers that have challenged or discouraged you from recycling ordinary items like cans, plastic containers, paper, or cardboard?** (include these response categories: A significant barrier | Somewhat of a barrier | Not much of a barrier | Not a barrier at all | Don't know)

Recycling is not available where I rent or live.  
Recycling is available, but not in a convenient way.  
Recycling drop-off is available, but it is too expensive.  
I'm not sure what is recyclable and what isn't.  
I don't have the time.  
It's just easier to throw things in the trash.  
Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

**Quick tip:** The question above is structured as a grid. The response categories extend across the top of five columns and are the same for the item in each row.

C2. [SKIP THIS QUESTION IF answered “never recycle” in earlier question on participation (A4 above)] Would you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
I recycle because ...

(include these response categories: Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know)

It keeps material out of our landfill.  
It helps protect our lakes, rivers, and groundwater.  
It reuses valuable resources.  
It keeps our community and neighborhoods clean.  
It's good for our local economy.  
I see my neighbors doing it and want to do my part, too.  
I want to be a socially responsible person.  
It saves me money.  
Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

We suggest using the above items in Question C2, but here are some suggestions for items to add and/or alternative phrasing:

*It's good for our planet and keeps plastics and other materials out of the oceans.*  
*It reduces materials in the landfill.*  
*It is good for the environment.*  
*Recycling reduces pollution.*  
*Recycling preserves landfill space.*  
*Recycling supports local jobs and local businesses that re-purpose materials.*  
*Recycling creates jobs.*  
*I want other people to think of me as a responsible person.*  
*I feel it is expected of me.*  
*Recycling is the right thing to do.*

**C3. [SKIP THIS QUESTION IF answered they do recycle in earlier question on participation (A4 above)] Would you agree or disagree with the following statements? I do not recycle because...**

*(include these response categories: Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know)*

It does not benefit me personally.  
It does not benefit the community.  
It uses more energy than just making something new from scratch.  
I don't know what recycling options exist in my community.  
It is difficult to know what items can be recycled.  
I do not have enough recyclables.  
The recycling location is not convenient.  
I don't have transportation to take recycling to a drop-off location.  
It is too expensive.

*We suggest using the above items in Question C3, but here are some suggestions for items to add and/or alternative phrasing:*

*Recycling is just a money maker for government and private waste haulers.  
Recycling doesn't make any difference, so why do it?  
It takes too much time.  
It's too difficult to find room for temporary storage of recyclable items.  
I don't know where to take recycling.  
I do not have curbside recycling.  
I think recycling should be free and I don't have that option in my community.  
I don't believe the things I put in recycling goes to a processing facility and that it just ends up in a landfill anyway.*

**C4. How many minutes would you drive to use a drop-off recycling site?**

Up to 5 minutes  
6-10 minutes  
11-15 minutes  
16-20 minutes  
More than 20 minutes  
I don't drive / don't have access to transportation  
I would not drive any distance to a drop-off site  
Don't know

**C5. Regardless of how much - if at all - you currently recycle, what would encourage you to recycle more?**

*(allow respondents to compose an answer in a text box)*

**Quick tip:** When you include open-ended questions like the one above, think about whether you want to offer respondents a question at the end of the survey where they can indicate they are willing to be recontacted by phone or email to follow up on their comments, in case you want more information.

## Supplemental Module D - Recycling knowledge and sources of information

**Description:** This module is designed to give you information about how knowledgeable your residents are about recycling, and how to provide them with additional information.

**Who should use this:** This is most appropriate for jurisdictions where some recycling services/programs exist, as the questions may not be relevant for people who have no access to recycling at all. It may be useful for jurisdictions considering outreach to residents about recycling.

**Special considerations:** You may want to choose only a subset of these questions, depending on your goals for the survey, current levels of outreach, and any plans for future outreach. Questions 1-2 focus on your residents' knowledge about correct recycling behaviors, while questions 3-6 focus on how to communicate with your residents about recycling. Question 6 would only make sense if your jurisdiction already conducts at least some outreach.

**This module will help you answer the questions:**

1. Do your residents have enough information to participate in recycling programs?
2. What do your residents do when they don't know if something is recyclable?
3. What are the best ways to communicate with your residents about recycling?

### Survey Questions for residents

**D1. Do you feel you have the knowledge and information you need about local recycling programs to recycle effectively?**

Very much  
Somewhat  
Not at all  
Don't know

**D2. Most of the time, if you are unsure if something is recyclable, do you put it in the trash or the recycle bin?**

Trash  
Recycle bin  
Don't know

**D3. In the last 12 months, who has provided you with useful information about recycling?**  
(check all that apply)

Neighborhood or Homeowners' association  
My landlord  
Word-of-mouth from neighbors or other community members  
[Your community name]'s government  
The county government  
Other governments, including state, county, and local  
Private waste disposal companies  
Non-profit organizations  
Newspapers  
Social media  
Don't know

**D4. What would be the best way(s) for you to receive information about recycling services from [your community name] government or from your recycling service provider?**  
(check all that apply)

Email  
Letter or flier via postal mail  
Website  
Social media  
Texting on mobile phone  
An app for my mobile device (e.g., Waste Wizard, Recollect, Recycle Coach)  
A note left in or stuck on my home recycling container  
Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_  
I prefer not to receive any information about recycling  
Don't know

**D5. [SKIP if answered "prefer to not receive any information about recycling"] What types of information would you like to receive about recycling?**

Information about new recycling services  
Changes in service provision  
Changes in rules for what is recyclable  
Occasional reminders about what can and can't be recycled  
Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't know

**D6. Do you recall hearing from [your community name] about recycling in the past 12 months?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know

## Supplemental Module E - Policy preferences (e.g., funding mechanisms, preferred providers)

**Description:** This module contains questions about residents' preferences around recycling policies, focusing on costs, responsibility for payment, and responsibility for service provision.

**Who this is for:** Jurisdictions that are considering adding new services, changing service providers, and policy changes especially around funding.

**Special considerations:** You may want to only choose a subset of these questions, depending on your goals for the survey and specific policy changes under consideration. Some of these questions may be more hypothetical or abstract, but they can still provide useful insights about your residents' views. Questions 1-2 focus on who should pay for recycling, question 3 focuses on who should provide recycling, and questions 4-5 focus on how much should be spent on funding.

**This module will help you answer the questions:**

1. How would my residents like recycling programs in the community to be funded?
2. Who do my residents think should be responsible for providing recycling services?
3. How willing are my residents to pay taxes and/or service fees for recycling programs?

### Survey Questions for residents

- E1. In terms of who pays for recycling, would you support or oppose the following options in [your community name]?**

*(include these response categories: Strongly support | Somewhat support | Neither support nor oppose | Somewhat oppose | Strongly oppose | Don't know)*

Recycling is a community public service, so all residents should pay for recycling through taxes.

Recycling should be funded by trash disposal fees.

Recycling should be funded by the companies that produce and/or package the products.

Recycling should be funded through service fees directly collected by the recycling service provider.

- E2. If you had options for how to pay for recycling, which one of the following would you choose? (if you're using on-line software, this will be a "radio button" with only one answer allowed)**

Recycling is a community public service, so all residents should pay for recycling through taxes.

Recycling should be funded by trash disposal fees.

Recycling should be funded by the companies that produce and/or package the products.

Recycling should be funded through service fees directly collected by the recycling service provider.

Don't know

**E3. Who, if anyone, should have primary responsibility for providing recycling services in [your community name]?**

Recycling should be provided by [your community name]'s government itself.

[Your community name] should contract with a private contractor or hauler.

[Your community name] should provide recycling jointly with other local governments or regional arrangements.

Recycling should be provided by our County government. *(if a city, village, or township)*

Residents should contract directly with private contractors or haulers if they want recycling.

Don't know

**E4. Regardless of who provides recycling services in your community, do you feel [your community name] currently spends too much, about the right amount, or too little on recycling programs and efforts?**

It spends too much.

It spends about the right amount.

It spends too little.

Don't know

**E5. In terms of trade-offs between costs and benefits of your recycling services, would you be more likely to choose higher taxes or fees for more (or improved) services, or would you choose lower taxes or fees and have fewer (or no) recycling services?**

Would choose higher taxes or fees for more services.

Would choose lower taxes or fees for fewer services.

Don't know

## Supplemental Module F - Residents' desire for upgrades to current services and interest in specific (new) programs or services

**Description:** This module is designed to give information about residents' interest in specific types of recycling that are not currently available. For example, this could include upgrades to current services, such as replacing recycling bins with carts or switching to single-stream recycling, or adding new recycling services that are not currently available such as curbside recycling or a drop-off center, or adding the ability to recycle new materials, such as electronics or food waste.

**Who this is for:** Jurisdictions considering adding a new recycling program or service (including contracting with a private provider or collaborating with other local governments) or upgrading a specific type of service.

**Special considerations:** This module will need more customization than others so that the language appropriately reflects the type(s) of services you are considering introducing or changing. For F1, you should remove any services that you know your residents all have access to. Additionally, you may wish to consider removing items that you are not considering introducing. For subsequent questions, the module indicates where specifics about a type of program should be added, but you may wish to further modify the questions. Additionally, some questions, such as F3, may not be applicable for the type of change you are considering. This module offers "alternative phrasing" for some questions to further help customize this to your needs.

**This module will help you answer the questions:**

1. What services are residents interested in having access to?
2. Will residents participate in a new service if it is available?
3. Will residents be willing to pay for a new service?
4. How important is it to residents that this service be offered?

### Survey Questions for residents

**F1. Are there any recycling services that are not currently available to you that you would like to have access to? (*check all that apply*)**

Curbside recycling collection  
Food waste collection  
Access to a drop-off recycling facility  
Access to food waste drop-off facility  
Programs for hard to recycle or bulky items such as mattresses, appliances, textiles, foam, bikes, etc.  
Household hazardous waste collection opportunities  
Household electronic equipment collection opportunities (i.e., e-waste)  
Paper shredding opportunities  
Upgrading curbside collection from bins to carts  
Collection of yard waste material for composting  
Other (*please specify*) \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't know

**F2. What is the likelihood you would recycle more if [insert service of interest, e.g., electronics recycling / curbside recycling / recycling carts / food waste recycling] were available to you?**

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely
- Don't know

**Alternative F2. [Your community name] currently does not have a [insert service of interest, e.g., food waste recycling or food composting] program but wants to gauge residents' interests in participating in one. This program would [describe program of interest, e.g., divert food scraps (besides meats and heavy oils) from landfills to a processing facility that will convert the organic materials into compost]. How likely would you be to use a [insert service of interest, e.g., food waste recycling or food composting] program if it were available to you?**

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely
- Don't know

**Quick tip:** As shown in the alternate question wording above, sometimes it makes sense to add a short descriptive definition for your survey respondents. That way, you can be more confident they understand and are assessing what you want them to assess.

**F3. [IF SELECTED "very" or "somewhat" likely in Question F2] What type(s) of [insert service of interest, e.g., food waste recycling or food composting] program would you participate in? (check all that apply)**

- Curbside bag pick-up
- Curbside cart pick-up
- Taking my recycling to a drop-off center
- Don't know

**F4. How much would you be willing to pay to participate in a [insert service of interest, e.g., electronics recycling] per year?**

- \$10 or less
- \$11-\$25
- \$26-\$50
- \$51-\$75
- \$76 or more
- I would not be willing to pay
- Don't know

**Alternative F4. [Your community name] may add new services for recycling [insert service of interest, e.g., electronics, single-stream recycling]. Regardless of whether you would use this new service, would you be willing to pay a nominal fee to help offset costs of offering [insert service of interest, e.g., electronics recycling, single-stream recycling] in the community?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**F5. [Your community name] may add new services for recycling [insert service of interest, e.g., electronics, single-stream recycling]. If residents were asked to pay to help offset costs of offering [insert service of interest, e.g., electronics recycling, single-stream recycling] in the community, would you prefer individuals be charged a fee per visit or to pay an annual fee to participate?**

- Fee per visit
- Annual fee
- Don't know

**F6. How high of a priority is it to you that [your community name] adopt a [insert service of interest, e.g., food waste program]?**

- A top priority
- A high priority
- Not a high priority
- Not a priority at all
- Don't know

## Supplemental Module G - Additional satisfaction questions

**Description:** This module collects detailed information on satisfaction with specific types of recycling services provided in the community.

**Who this is for:** The module is most appropriate for jurisdictions where multiple types of recycling services or programs are available.

**Special considerations:** The question includes a list of many types of services. You should remove services that are not available, or that you are not interested in learning about satisfaction. If additional types of services or programs are available in the community, they could be added to the list.

**This module will help you answer the question:**

1. How satisfied are my community members with the specific types of services and programs that are already provided in the community?

### Survey Questions for residents

**G1. Thinking once more about the services or programs that are available to you, how satisfied are you with the current provision of these programs within your community?**

*(include these response categories: Very satisfied | Somewhat satisfied | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | Somewhat dissatisfied | Very dissatisfied | Not applicable | Don't know)*

Curbside recycling collection for residents  
On-site recycling collection for local businesses  
Access to a drop-off recycling facility  
Household hazardous waste collection opportunities  
Household electronic equipment collection opportunities (i.e., e-waste)  
Collection of yard waste material for composting

**G2. [IF SELECTED “somewhat” or “very” dissatisfied above in G1] If you’re dissatisfied with one or more of your current recycling services, please let us know how you would like to see them improved?**

*(allow respondents to compose an answer in a text box)*

## Supplemental Module H - Basic questions on sustainability, benefits of recycling

**Description:** Some communities may wish to ask additional questions about other policies & practices related to sustainability or to understand attitudes about the general benefits of recycling. This module provides a few high level questions that could be added on to the recycling survey, but should not be considered a comprehensive survey on these topics.

**Who this is for:** Local governments that want to better understand their residents' views on sustainability and recycling, to get more information about support for these types of programs.

**This module will help you answer the questions:**

1. Do my residents think environmental / sustainability issues are something the government should be addressing?
2. What are my residents' views on the potential environmental / sustainability benefits of recycling?

### H1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

*(include these response categories: Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know)*

Recycling is good for Michigan's economy.

Recycling programs help decrease litter and pollution in our local community's environment.

Recycling programs help protect clean water in Michigan.

Recycling efforts boost our local economic development and job growth.

Recycling is not worth the effort given the small impact it actually has.

Most materials collected in recycling programs end up in landfills.

### H2. Thinking more generally about local government programs and services, do you agree or disagree that promoting environmental sustainability and the concept of "being green" should be important goals for your local government?

Strongly agree

Somewhat agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Somewhat disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

## Example of a hardcopy questionnaire aka “EGLE Township Recycling Survey”

Q1. Are you a resident of EGLE Township or do you live outside the township’s boundaries?

- ☐ I am a resident of EGLE Township
- ☐ My primary residence is elsewhere (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q2. (SKIP if you are not a resident) What type of housing is your residence in EGLE Township?

- ☐ A single-family home
- ☐ A townhome or duplex
- ☐ An apartment building or condominium
- ☐ A manufactured/mobile home
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Don't know

Q3. (SKIP if you are not a resident) Is your residence in EGLE Township your primary residence or a secondary/seasonal residence?

- ☐ Primary residence
- ☐ Seasonal / secondary residence

Q5. As far as you know, what types of objects or materials can be recycled in EGLE Township? (check all that apply)

- ☐ No recycling available in my community (skip to Q5) ☐
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Metal cans
- ☐ Plastic containers
- ☐ Cardboard
- ☐ Household electronic equipment
- ☐ Household hazardous waste
- ☐ Residential yard waste
- ☐ Residential food waste
- ☐ Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☒ Don't know

Q6. (SKIP if answered no recycling in Q5) Which of the following recycling services have you used in the past 12 months? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Curbside recycling collection
- ☐ Access to a drop-off recycling facility (either free or for a fee)
- ☐ Household hazardous waste collection opportunities (e.g., household chemicals, paint, batteries, medicine)
- ☐ Household electronic equipment collection opportunities (e.g., computers, televisions, phones, tablets)
- ☐ Collection of residential yard waste
- ☐ Collection of residential food waste
- ☐ Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ None of the above

**Q7. (SKIP if answered no recycling in Q5) Not counting deposit-return bottles or cans, how would you describe your participation in the recycling programs available in your community? Would you say you recycle all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, rarely or never?**

- ☐ All of the time
- ☐ Most of the time
- ☐ Some of the time
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

☐ Don't know

**Q8. Overall, how satisfied would you say you are with your current access—or lack thereof—to recycling?**

- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied
- ☐ Very dissatisfied

☐ Don't know

**Q9. How could recycling in EGLE Township be improved?**

**Q10. Whether or not there are currently recycling services or programs available in your community, how much do you support access to recycling in EGLE Township?**

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☐ Somewhat support
- ☐ Little support
- ☐ Do not support at all

☐ Don't know

**Q11.** To what extent, if at all, have the following been barriers that have challenged or discouraged you from recycling ordinary items like cans, plastic containers, paper, or cardboard?

	A significant barrier	Somewhat of a barrier	Not much of a barrier	Not a barrier at all	Don't know
Recycling is not available where I rent or live.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recycling is available, but not in a convenient way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recycling drop-off is available, but it is too expensive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm not sure what is recyclable and what isn't.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't have the time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It's just easier to throw things in the trash.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q12.** (SKIP if answered "never recycle" in Q7) Would you agree or disagree with the following statements? I recycle because ...

	Strongly agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
It keeps material out of our landfill.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It helps protect our lakes, rivers, and groundwater.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It reuses valuable resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It keeps our community and neighborhoods clean.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It's good for our local economy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I see my neighbors doing it and want to do my part, too.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It saves me money.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q13.** (SKIP if answered "never recycle" in Q7) **Would you agree or disagree with the following statements? I do not recycle because...**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
It does not benefit me personally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It does not benefit the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It uses more energy than making something new from scratch.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't know what recycling options exist in my community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is difficult to know what items can be recycled.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The recycling location is not convenient.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't have transportation to take recycling to a drop-off location.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recycling is too expensive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q14.** Regardless of how much - if at all - you currently recycle, what would encourage you to recycle more?

Q15. Do you feel you have the knowledge and information you need about local recycling programs to recycle effectively?

- ☐ Very much
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ Don't know

Q16. Most of the time, if you are unsure if something is recyclable, do you put it in the trash or the recycle bin?

- ☐ Trash
- ☐ Recycle bin
- ☐ Don't know

Q17. In the last 12 months, who has provided you with useful information about recycling? *(check all that apply)*

- ☐ Neighborhood or Homeowners' association
- ☐ My landlord
- ☐ Word-of-mouth from neighbors or other community members
- ☐ EGLE Township's government
- ☐ The county government
- ☐ Other governments, including state, county, and local
- ☐ Private waste disposal companies
- ☐ Newspapers
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Non-profit organizations
- ☐ Don't know

Q18. Do you recall hearing from EGLE Township about recycling in the past 12 months?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Q19. In terms of who pays for recycling, would you support or oppose the following options in EGLE Township?

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know
Recycling is a community public service, so all residents should pay for recycling through taxes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recycling should be funded by trash disposal fees.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recycling should be funded by the companies that produce and/or package the products.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recycling should be funded through service fees directly collected by the recycling service provider.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q20. If you had options for how to pay for recycling, which one of the following would you choose?

- ☐ Recycling is a community public service, so all residents should pay for recycling through taxes.
- ☐ Recycling should be funded by trash disposal fees.
- ☐ Recycling should be funded by the companies that produce and/or package the products.
- ☐ Recycling should be funded through service fees directly collected by the recycling service provider.
- ☐ Don't know

Q21. Regardless of who provides recycling services in your community, do you feel EGLE Township currently spends too much, about the right amount, or too little on recycling programs and efforts?

- ☐ It spends too much
- ☐ It spends about the right amount
- ☐ It spends too little
- ☐ Don't know

Q22. In terms of trade-offs between costs and benefits of your recycling services, would you be more likely to choose higher taxes or fees for more (or improved) services, or would you choose lower taxes or fees and have fewer (or no) recycling services?

- ☐ Would choose higher taxes or fees for more services
- ☐ Would choose lower taxes or fees for fewer services
- ☐ Don't know

Finally, we have a few demographic questions.

Q23. How many people, including yourself, live in your household?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6 or more
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q24. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Self-describe \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q25. What is your age?

- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ 65-75
- ☐ 75 or older
- ☐ Prefer not to answer