



Locating a Landfill in Michigan

Fixing a historic problem in how we site and expand landfills

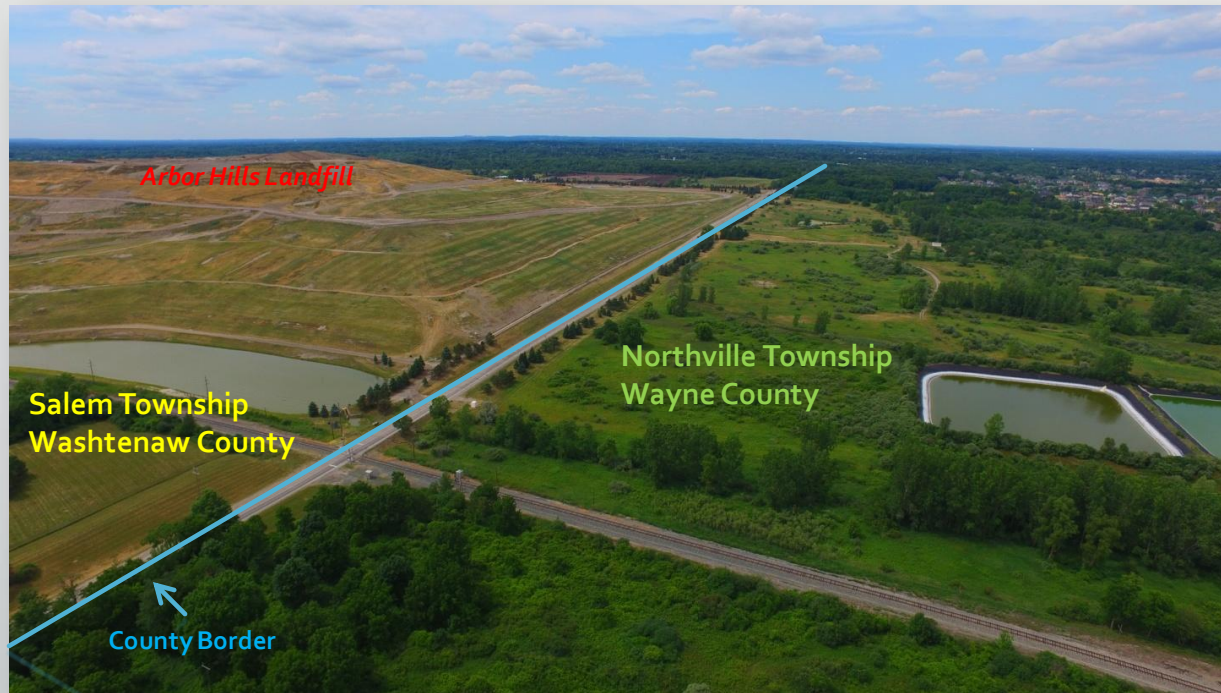
Background

- Michigan's Part 115 of the Natural Resources Environmental Protection Act (NREPA) has landfills completely controlled and sited by the county in which the landfill is located.
- Adjacent counties and local units of government have no say about a landfill beyond their respective borders.
- A handful of landfills (six) are impacting surrounding counties and communities by being directly on a county border.

Why This Creates Problems

- When landfills cause problems beyond traditional political boundaries (odors, view, truck traffic, etc.), neighboring communities have no remedies.
- Communities cannot enforce their nuisance or zoning ordinances beyond their borders.
- Landfill operators are often supported by host communities through financial benefits without consideration for neighboring communities.

Northville Township – An Example

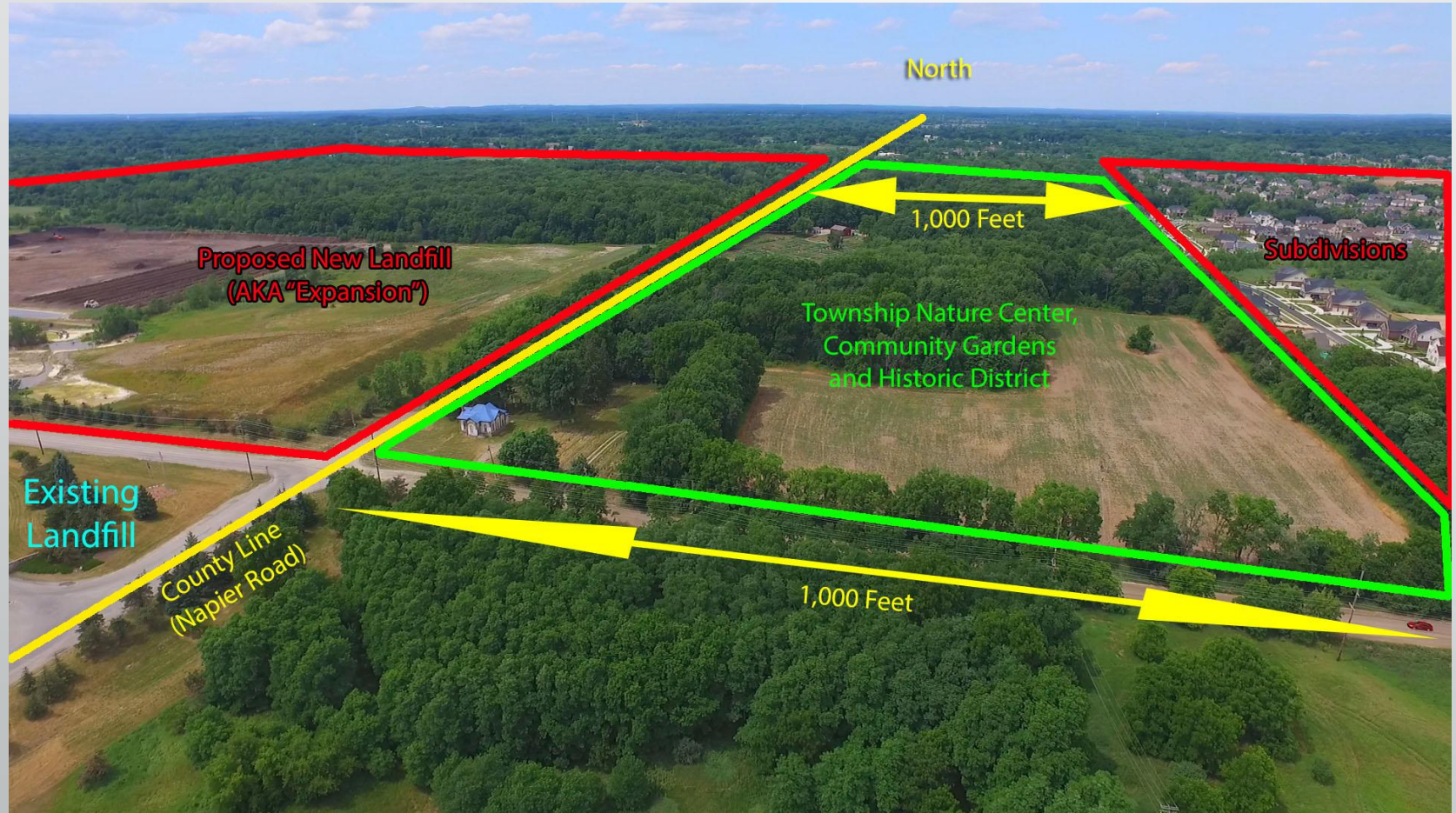


- Northville Township sits on the border of Wayne and Washtenaw Counties.
- The Arbor Hills Landfill in Washtenaw County is across a two-lane road, county border and has caused long-term nuisance issues for Northville Township residents in Wayne County.

Issues Caused by the Arbor Hills Landfill

- Attempted to expand despite having received over 50 violations from the EPA and EGLE. *Source:* [Northville Township landfill cited 51 times for violating state and federal environmental regulations](#)
- Heavy garbage truck traffic on the same road as, neighborhoods, a High School, and Elementary School.
- Over 3,200 documented odor complaints from nearby residents in 2019 alone. These odors have traveled up to two miles. *Source:* https://www.michigan.gov/documents/egle/egle-aqd-year_in_review_2019_686094_7.pdf

Arbor Hills Photos



Arbor Hills Photos



*The building in the foreground is an elementary school

No Authority

- Wayne County's Northville Township, has no standing to manage the landfill through ordinance or regulation.
- Washtenaw County's Salem Township, hosting the landfill, gets millions in host fees and has fewer nuisance issues due to prevailing winds and a lower population.
- Should the landfill expand, which has been attempted recently, Northville Township residents and government will have zero ability to alter or stop the plans.

There Is A Way To Protect Bordering Communities!

- Adding language to the bill package which would allow a community across a county line and contiguous with a landfill to be an additional host community.
- Existing landfills will be allowed to continue their current operations without new consent requirements under this proposed amendment.
- **Only a handful of landfills (six) would be impacted by this change and only if they expand.**

Suggested Language

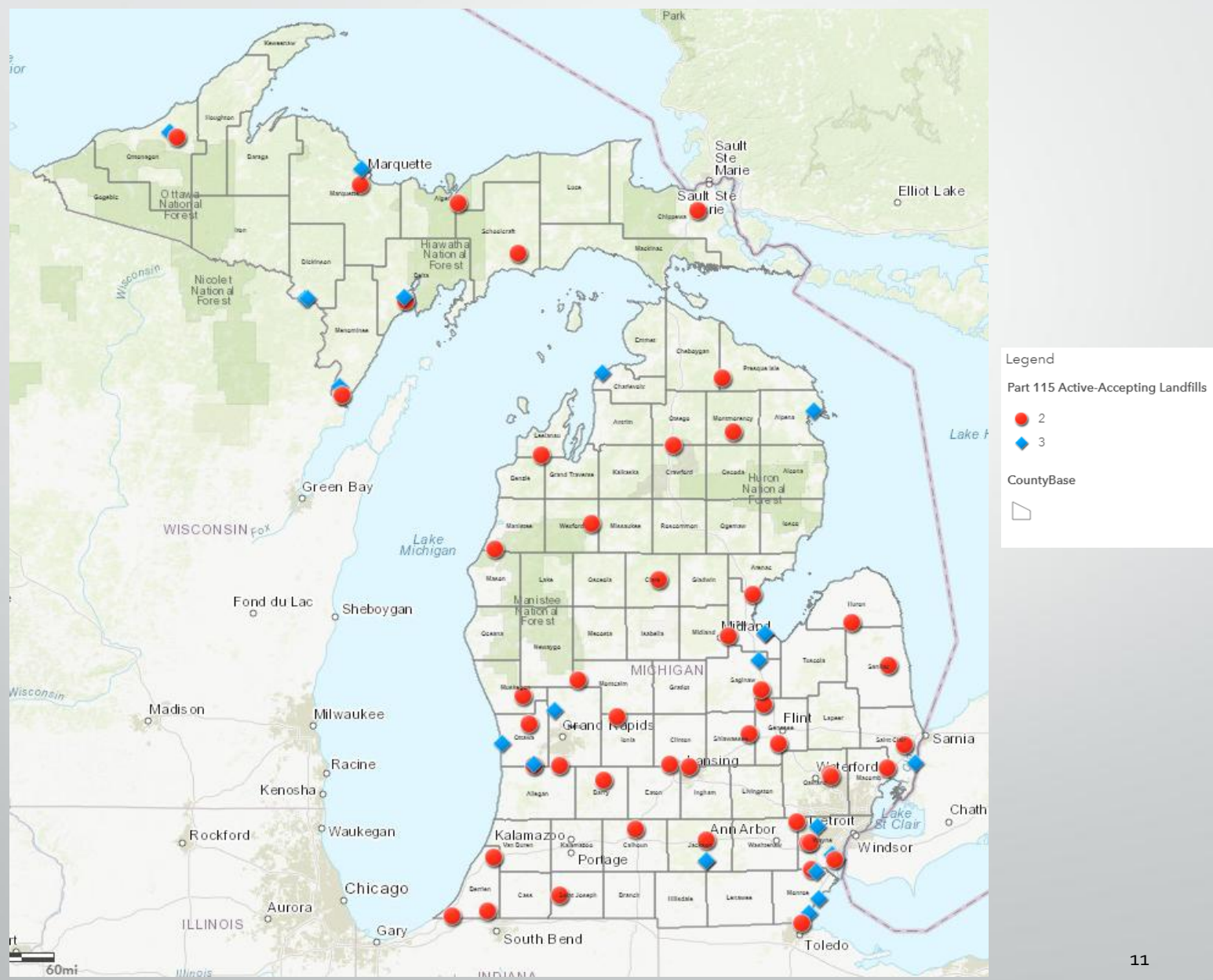
The bill package lacks a definition for host community, we suggest including:

"Host Community" is:

A. A municipality in which a landfill is located

B. A municipality located on a county border which is contiguous or immediately across a right of way from an existing landfill or landfill property proposed for expansion

Communities across Michigan are impacted by landfill placement!



Questions?

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Additional Arbor Hills Background

- Originally permitted in 1970 as Arbor Hills, the location was previously a gravel pit that was turned into a landfill. There was an expansion granted to go from 150 to 400 feet tall without the consent of neighboring communities in the late 2000's.
- Ownership changed around 2015, which is when odor and gas complaints started. This is also when most violations started to occur.
- The EPA has mandated hydrogen sulfide gas monitoring at a nearby elementary school.
- Most recently, the landfill operators have asked to dump treated leachate into the Johnson Creek, one of the last coldwater trout streams in the region.

Additional Sources

- [Arbor Hills Landfill Receives Over 1,125 Odor Complaints during November](#)
- [EGLE's Dedicated Arbor Hills Enforcement Website](#)
- [Air Quality Monitoring Placed At A Local School](#)
- [EGLE FAQ Sheet on Arbor Hills](#)



NEIGHBORS COMPLAINING ABOUT ARBOR HILLS LANDFILL