

MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL LEAGUE
CONVENTION 2026

TRAVER
CL
WITH

FESTIVAL
KANE
WELLS

COMING SOON

NOW PLAYING





Reimagining Michigan's Harbors from a Local Perspective

Moderator:

Dale Dalman, Mayor Pro-Tem, Rockford, MI

Panelists:

Emily Finnell, Great Lakes Senior Advisor and Strategist, Office of the Great Lakes, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy

Ken Johnson, Mayor, City of Muskegon

Marcus Muhammad, Mayor, City of Benton Harbor

Travis Wheeler, Chief Policy Officer and U.S. Managing Director, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative



Re-imagining Michigan's Harbors

A Local Perspective with Ken Johnson, Mayor of Muskegon



muskegon-mi.gov

Economic cycles and environmental degradation



Muskegon 1889



Muskegon 1940s



A lake diminished and watershed weakened



Beneficial Use Impairments (BUIs)

- Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat
- Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations
- Degradation of Benthos
- Eutrophication and Undesirable Algae
- Restrictions on Drinking Water Consumption
- Restrictions on Fish and Wildlife Consumption
- Degradation of Aesthetics
- Restrictions on Dredging Activities
- Beach Closings

Community-driven collaborative cleanup

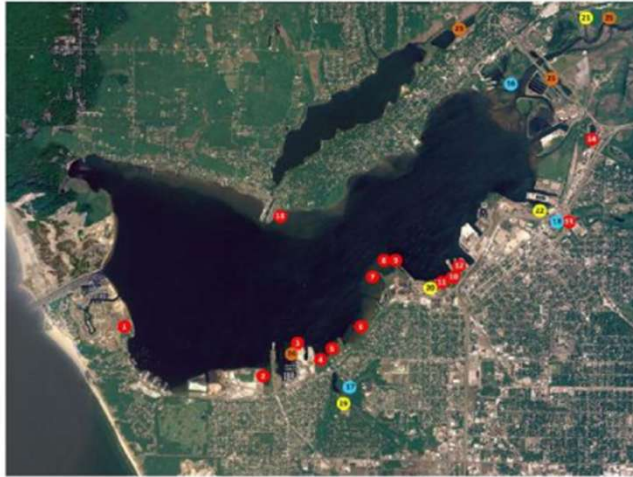


Muskegon Lake Area of Concern Remediation & Restoration Project Locations

22 HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS
4 CONTAMINATED SEDIMENT CLEANUPS

Restoration under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

- 1 Edgewater shoreline and wetland restoration
- 2 Grand Trunk shoreline, wetland, and open water habitat restoration
- 3 G&V shoreline and open water habitat restoration
- 4 Ruddiman Creek mouth open water habitat restoration
- 5 Amoco Peninsula shoreline and wetland restoration
- 6 Lakeshore Trail shoreline and wetland restoration
- 7 Centerpoint Bay & Kinsay Peninsula shoreline and wetland restoration
- 8 Michigan Steel and Hartshorn Peninsula shoreline and wetland restoration
- 9 East Hartshorn Peninsula shoreline, wetland and open water habitat restoration
- 10 Heritage Landing Circle shoreline, wetland and open water habitat restoration
- 11 Heritage Landing Rotary Park shoreline, wetland and open water habitat restoration
- 12 Heritage Landing Scrap Bay shoreline, wetland and open water habitat restoration
- 13 Ryerson Creek streambank, wetland, and fish passage restoration
- 14 South Branch at Richards Park shoreline and wetland restoration
- 15 Pointe Marine shoreline and wetland restoration



Thank you to all our partners who are helping to restore Muskegon Lake!



Restoration under NOAA's Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Program

- 16 Muskegon Lake Nature Preserve wetland enhancement
- 17 Ruddiman Creek upstream shoreline, wetland restoration and invasive species management
- 18 Ryerson Creek wetland, riparian and fish passage restoration

Restoration under the Great Lakes Legacy Act

- 19 Ruddiman Creek contaminated sediment removal
- 20 Division Street outfall contaminated sediment removal
- 21 Zephyr contaminated sediment removal (upcoming)
- 22 Ryerson Creek contaminated sediment removal (upcoming)

Upcoming restoration under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

- 23 Bear Creek wetland and fish passage restoration and water quality improvements
- 24 Mill debris removal
- 25 Veterans Park Muskegon Lake wetland, shoreline, and fish passage restoration
- 26 Muskegon River wetland restoration



Lakefront scrapyard turned park & festival grounds



Transformation leads to greater tourism



Re-orienting our city to the water



Housing, hospitality, and recreation



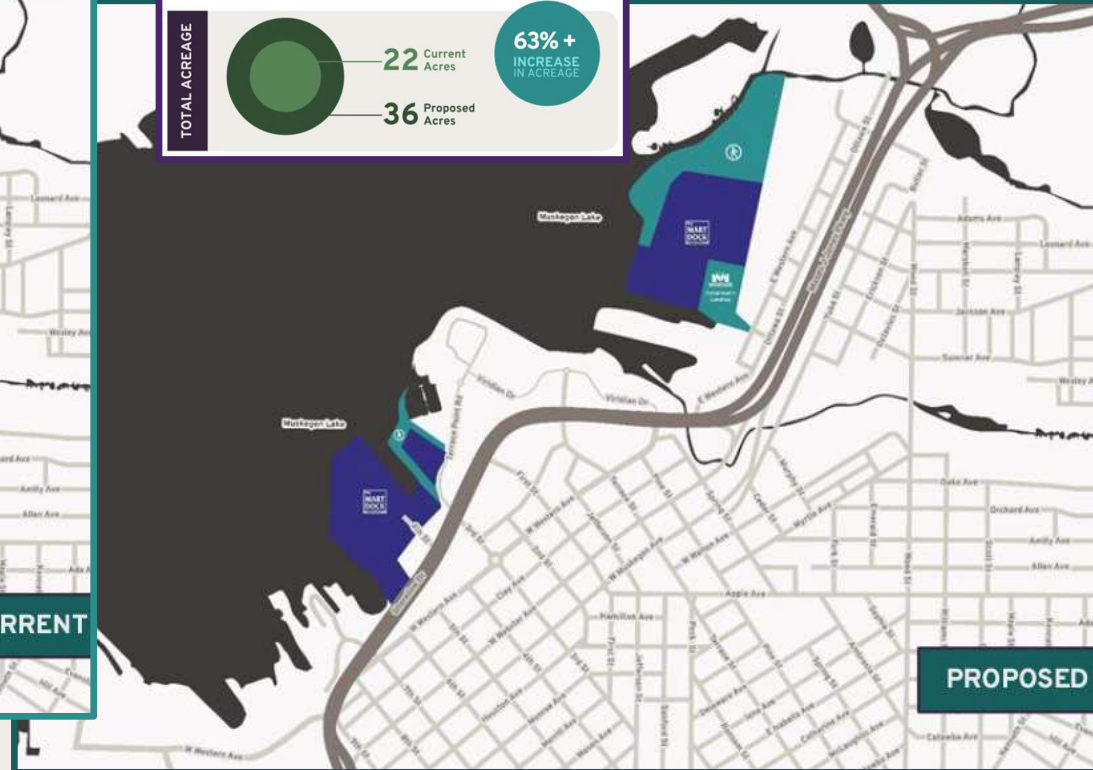
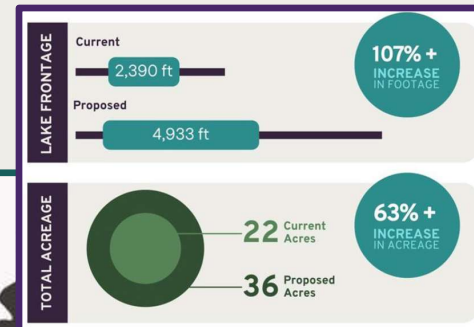
Vacant - on the way - to vibrant: a former papermill site



Connecting Community to Water, Ports, and Parks



Re-arranging the shoreline for sustainability – social, economic and environmental



“

Muskegon is at an exciting moment in time. We've spent decades repairing the environmental legacy of the economies that built our city. Now our responsibility is to ensure both equitable public access to and economic benefit from our natural resources while sustaining a healthy Muskegon Lake and watershed.



Muskegon Lake - a welcoming waterfront and hopeful harbor



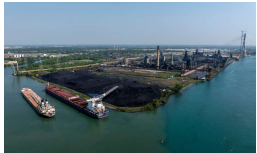
Michigan Maritime Strategy

MML Conference
October 9, 2026

Emily Finnell
Great Lakes Senior Advisor and
Strategist
Office of the Great Lakes, MI EGLE



There is a significant opportunity to harness Michigan's maritime assets for regional & national prosperity



Strategic deepwater access and underutilized waterfront property



A world-class manufacturing and engineering workforce



A vibrant maritime innovation ecosystem



An extensive and adaptable supply chain network



Centrally located with substantial multimodal connections

Leverage Investments in Michigan's Maritime Ecosystem

- \$10.3 million MDOT Maritime and Port Facility Office & Grant Program
- \$25 million Investments in Michigan ports
- \$3 million MI Clean Ports Program
- \$500,000 Fresh Coast Challenge
- \$1.5 million Maritime Innovation Grants
- \$50 million Michigan Maritime Manufacturing Initiative (M3)
 - \$15.4 million Navy funded training Center at Macomb Community College
- \$11.6 Workforce Development Grants



*Elk Rapids Marina – Electric boats
& charging infrastructure*



M3 Initiative



M/V Hudsongracht at the Port of Monroe

Michigan Maritime Strategy



- 10 year forward looking statewide strategy, 5-year implementation plan
- 6 Goals, 55 Recommendations
- Supports MI maritime sector's efforts to help the state achieve clean energy targets by 2040
- Framework to leverage Michigan's maritime assets, align state policy, strategies, and plans
- Roadmap for collective action, collaboration and investment in sustainable maritime innovation and environmental stewardship in commercial and recreational sectors
- Foster collaboration with industry, business, and academia; support R&D; and drive coordinated action

Strategic Objectives



Support economic development through modernization of maritime infrastructure, intermodal transportation connectivity, leveraging manufacturing capability, and supporting supply chain resilience



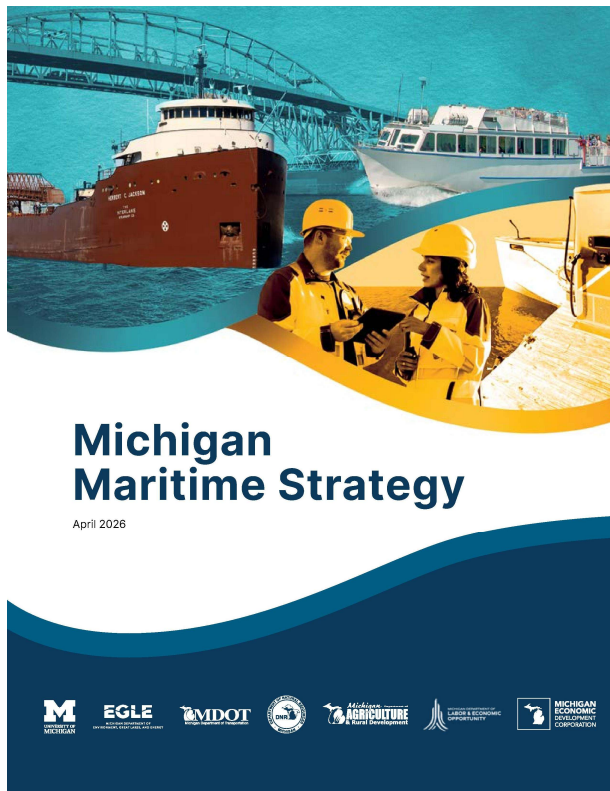
Accelerate the clean energy transition in maritime uses



Invest in maritime research, innovation, education & workforce development



Enhance sustainability, resilience & revitalization of ports, harbors & waterfronts



Contact:

Emily Finnell

Great Lakes Senior Advisor and Strategist

Office of the Great Lakes

MI EGLE

finnelle@michigan.gov

For more information on the Michigan Maritime Strategy visit www.michigan.gov/ogl

EGLE

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY

MDOT
Michigan Department of Transportation

**MICHIGAN OFFICE OF DEFENSE
AND AEROSPACE INNOVATION**

**Michigan Department of
AGRICULTURE
& Rural Development**



**MICHIGAN OFFICE OF
FUTURE MOBILITY
& ELECTRIFICATION**

**MICHIGAN
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION**

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF
LABOR & ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY**

