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# Community News and Views

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## **Registration Now Open for the 4th Annual Innovate Michigan! Summit**

On **September 10, 2015**, MSU's EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation will host its fourth annual Innovate Michigan! Summit.

The goal of the summit is simple - to improve Michigan's economy. Join us and learn from experts from all over Michigan about the new and innovative ways to stimulate your community or regional economy.

Last year over 200 people attended Innovate Michigan!, our largest turnout to date. This year it

will be even bigger and more diverse.

**[REGISTER TODAY](#) for this year's Summit.**

For more information about this year's [Summit](#) and [Inventor Expo](#) visit [reicenter.org](http://reicenter.org).  
In the meantime, watch a summit promo video [here](#).

See you in September!

## REI Co-Learning Plans

**By: Molly Burford, Research Assistant, MSU REI, [burford2@msu.edu](mailto:burford2@msu.edu)**

Co-learning means collaborative learning. It means I learn, you learn, we learn. This is the purpose of the University Center Regional Economic Innovation (REI) Co-Learning Plans: to share news and information about different economic development ideas, tools, models, practices, and policies, as they apply to Michigan and the region.

Every year, REI asks professionals in various fields of economic development to explore the Co-Learning Pan topics selected by the REI Network. This year's topics are:

- [An Assessment of the Effects of Mountain Biking in Marquette and on Michigan's Ecotourism Economy \(by Scott Jordan\)](#)
- [P3 - Pathways from Prison to Prosperity: A Framework for Training Ex-Offenders to be Entrepreneurs in Legacy Cities \(by George Berghorn\)](#)
- [Policies and Practices to Support Triple Bottom Line Development \(by Terry Link &](#)

## Contemporary Issues Institute on Civility

**By: Emily Bank, Graduate Research Assistant, MSU CCED, [bankemil@msu.edu](mailto:bankemil@msu.edu)**



CCED Contemporary Issues Institute Highlight

On March 6, 2015, the MSU Center for Community and Economic Development hosted a Contemporary Issues Institute titled "Cultivating a Civil Society in an Era of Incivility." The event was held at the Michigan Capitol Building, which provided a unique space to discuss the civility and incivility that we experience throughout our lives.

[Presenters](#) at this year's institute included David Mathews, president of the Kettering Foundation; Cliff Lampe, professor at the University of Michigan School of Information; and Eric Freedman, Pulitzer Prize-winner and Knight Chair in environmental journalism in the MSU School of Journalism. These civility experts covered topics like democratic citizenship, behavior in online settings, and the [media's role in perpetuating civil or uncivil behavior](#).

A panel of distinguished individuals spoke during one of the event's concurrent sessions that focused on technology's impact on our civil behavior. Panelists included Lampe, Freedman, and Bill Ballenger, editor

[Bill Stough](#))

- [Publicly-Operated Telework Facilities: An Economic Development Opportunity for Michigan's Rural and Tourism-Oriented Communities \(by Eric Frederick\)](#)
- [Recycling Veterans \(by D. Laurence Rogers\)](#)
- [The Impact of Employer Commitment vs. Workforce Development Training Programs in Michigan \(by Marcus Jones\)](#)

To learn more about REI and this year's Co-Learning Plans visit us at [reicenter.org/events/innovate-michigan-summit-2015](http://reicenter.org/events/innovate-michigan-summit-2015), and keep your eye out for the completed plans and webinars later this summer.

of Inside Michigan Politics. These individuals discussed the causes of incivility and possible solutions to foster civility in the media. The session was recorded and provided several interesting insights, such as the "microphone effect," where everyone with access to a computer or cell phone has a voice in online conversations.

"Talk radio is very polarizing. You don't get the so-called objective commentators. You get extreme left and right. And even if they are not too extreme, they are so loud and aggressive that they create the impression of vast incivility and proliferation and polarization of views," said Ballenger. "Incivility has been going on a long time."

Freedman responded by stating what the traditional role of media has been in the past. "The traditional role of the media is gatekeepers-sorting out, trying for some balance and fairness-as well as some of the outrage and entertainment that is being bypassed by new media," he said. He also added, "Journalists love controversy and we love conflict. So, incivility is good. It gives us things to write about."

Lampe provided several solutions to calm the incivility storm: "Implement technical and social solutions to create more productive online forums" and "train younger people to have disagreements that do not just end in polarization," he advised, and added, "Internet is not the problem. It's just a communication channel... How we use those channels and how we allow them to run wild is definitely a problem."

Other scholars, thinkers, and doers discussed [place-making and its role in cultivating civility](#), the [theory behind civil and uncivil behavior](#), and [individual civil character](#).

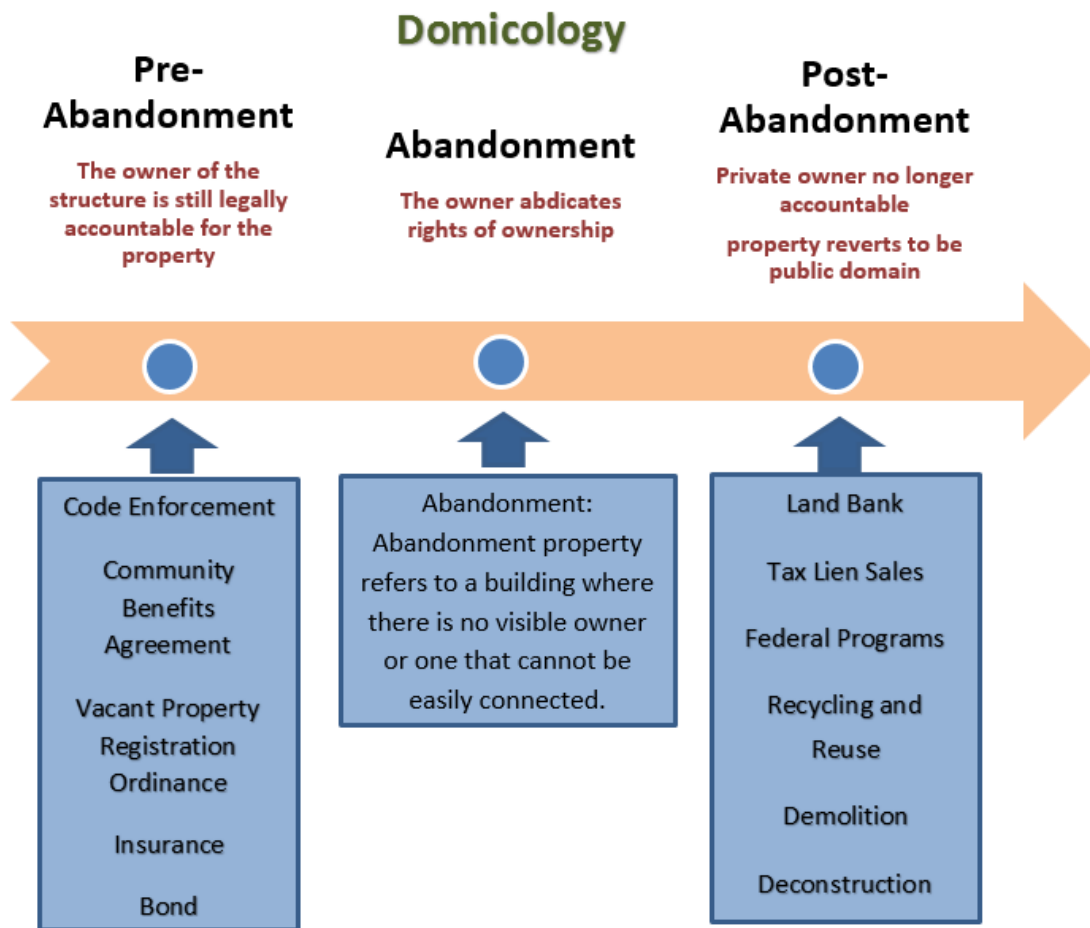
The MSU Center for Community and Economic Development has created a public virtual network for those interested in pursuing the topic of incivility. To join this virtual network, e-mail Chelsea Austin, CCED Research Assistant, at [austin54@msu.edu](mailto:austin54@msu.edu).

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## CCED Tackles the Scourge of Structural Abandonment in our Communities: Domicology

**By: Dr. Rex LaMore, Director; Dr. George Berghorn, Post-doc Research Assistant; Andrew Netter, Research Assistant; Mengqiu (Liria) Wu, Research Assistant; Lorraine Valembos, Research Assistant, MSU CCED**

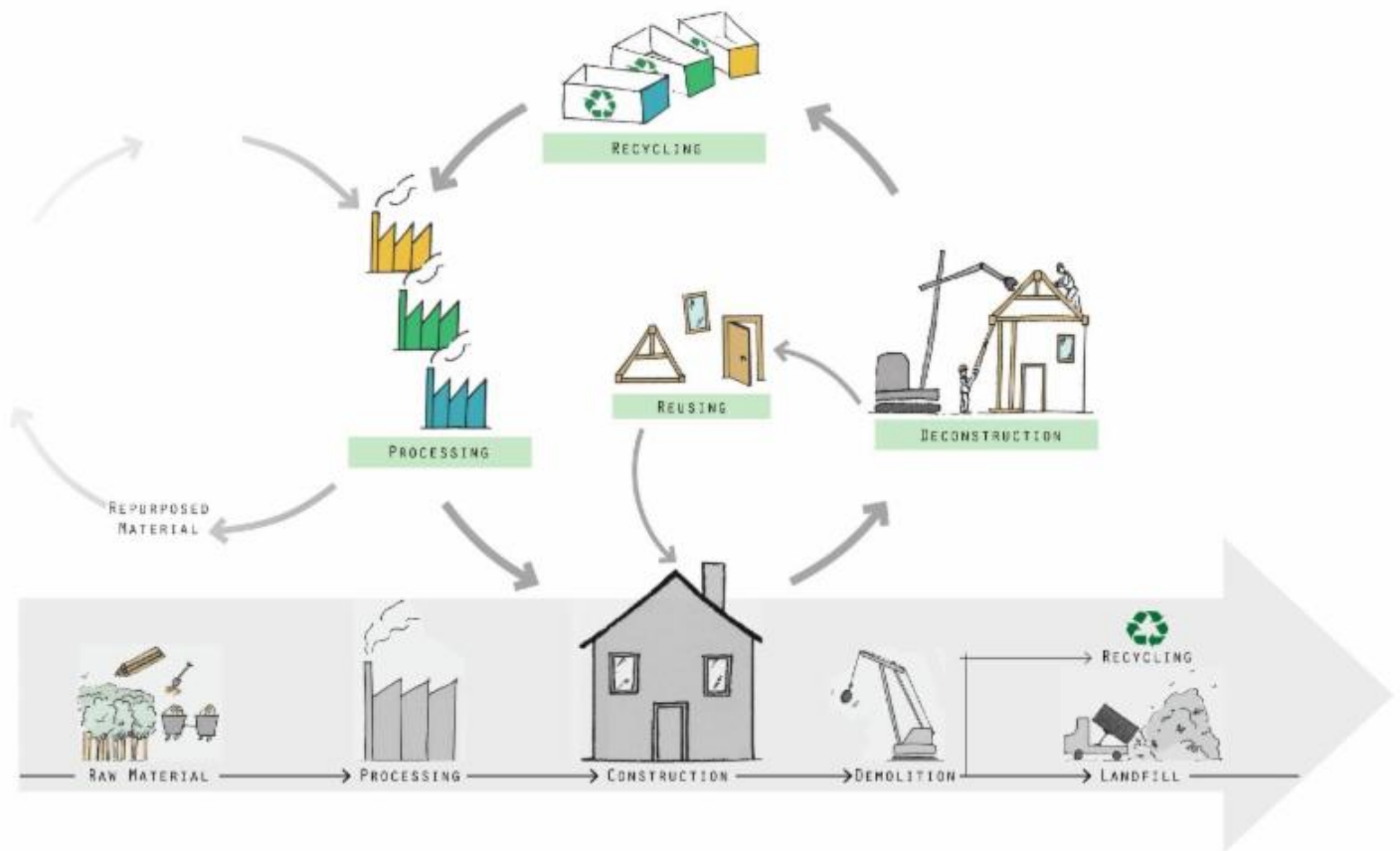
An interdisciplinary team of MSU students and scholars from planning, construction management, landscape architecture, and actuarial sciences is examining tools, models, policies, and practices that can sustainably address human structural abandonment. The team is examining the domicology-the continuum of structural abandonment from construction, building use, abandonment, and demolition or deconstruction, to material reuse-of abandoned sites in the Midwest (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Domicology: The study of policies and practices of human structural abandonment.**

Many Midwestern cities have suffered population and economic decline, resulting in widespread residential, commercial, and industrial property abandonment. This flood of abandonment and subsequent blight has left communities with large numbers of vacant properties and limited public resources to remove these abandoned structures. Large scale abandonment presents a clear public health and safety hazard requiring public funding for blight removal. Current policies governing abandoned private property and the removal of blighted structures shift much of the negative economic, social, and environmental costs of abandonment to the public (general taxpayers rather than property taxpayers). Innovative policies and practices that can change our built environment paradigm to achieve a more socially equitable, environmentally sustainable, and economically feasible system are the primary goals of this research team.

Team members are examining a variety of policies and practices, including development of innovative tools that can finance blight removal in a more sustainable and equitable way; building construction and deconstruction practices that maximize material salvage and reuse; and researching the potential economic and environmental impacts of a building life cycle economic sector (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2. Materials recycling process.**

Construction and demolition waste is one of the heaviest waste streams generated in the United States. According to the Pollution Prevention Resources Exchange, around 245,000 residential and 44,000 commercial structures are demolished each year. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimated 136 million tons of construction and demolition waste is generated each year and construction-related wastes constitute a quarter of landfill volume nationally.

The European Commission has adopted legislation that requires a minimum 70% (by weight) of construction and demolition waste to be either recycled or reused by 2020. To achieve this target, strict policies, market incentives, and education programs are being implemented.

The EU's commitment to structural material recycle/reuse is reflected in enterprises forming in these sectors. In 2010, the sector of waste and materials recovery (sector NACE Rev. 2 Division 38) comprised 41,000 enterprises in Europe. These enterprises are divided in three subsectors: 1) materials recovery subsector (18,700 enterprises), 2) waste collection subsector (16,500 enterprises), and 3) waste treatment and disposal subsector (5,800 enterprises). On the whole, 795,000 people were employed and the value-added reached \$56.1 billion in 2010.

The development of a recycle/reuse economy maximizing the material salvage and repurposing of structural materials has the potential to stimulate economy growth in the Midwest.

For more information on this initiative contact Dr. Rex L. LaMore at [lamore@msu.edu](mailto:lamore@msu.edu).

# Business at First Binational Meet the Buyer Expo in Port Huron, April 22, 2015

By: Tony Orlando, Research Assistant, MSU CCED & J.D. Snyder, Specialist, MSU CCED, [snyderj6@msu.edu](mailto:snyderj6@msu.edu)

The [MSU CCED Binational Regional Innovation and Collaboration Team](#) is excited to report on the success of the first "Binational Meet the Buyer Expo" that took place April 22, 2015, in Port Huron, Michigan. Over 125 companies discovered new business at the expo hosted by our colleagues at the St. Clair County Economic Development Alliance.

The expo provided real opportunities for businesses in the binational Blue Water Region, and many from outside the region, to showcase their products and services and to identify potential new trade partners. Eighteen companies and municipalities were set up at the expo to purchase products and services from 120 businesses, start-ups, and entrepreneurs. The expo program also highlighted eight "Quick-Pitch" (five-minute) presentations, each packed with information on new products, services, and ideas.

Major buyers included:

- St. Clair County
- City of Sarnia
- Eissmann Automotive
- Consumers Energy
- City of Lansing
- Michigan State University

The expo was the first binational activity resulting from the Binational Memorandum of Understanding on economic collaboration that was facilitated by the CCED team and signed last year at the Binational Blue Water Collaboration Conference (June 11, 2014) in Sarnia, Ontario. Organized over a six-month span, U.S. and Canadian planning organizations included:

- St. Clair County Economic Development Alliance
- Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership
- Sarnia-Lambton Chamber of Commerce
- Blue Water Area Chamber of Commerce
- I-69 International Trade Corridor/Next Michigan Corp.
- Southwest (Ontario) Economic Alliance
- MSU Center for Community and Economic Development

Both the U.S. Export Assistance Center and Export Development Canada provided on-site trade support, with staff available to answer questions and provide guidance to participants interested in exporting and international trade.

Overwhelmingly positive feedback was provided from an on-site survey, with the overall expo rating being either "excellent" or "very good." No lower ratings were received. New international business was clearly facilitated by the expo; 50% of respondents who had not previously engaged in international trade said they expect to do business with a new international trading partner as a result of the event.

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## Great Lakes Regional Training Initiative Update

By: Amy Carr, Research Assistant, MSU REI



With funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) University Centers in the Chicago Region initiated the [Great Lakes Regional Training Initiative](#) (GLRTI) in 2013 to assist regions in the six states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin by promoting technical and training assistance. GLRTI strives to make valuable university resources available to economic development professionals in all six states.

In 2014, Purdue University's EDA University Center developed and launched the Great Lakes Regional Training Initiative. The GLRTI website is a great one-stop shop, showcasing all the work of the EDA University Centers. All of the University Centers in the GLRTI collaborate and their partners across the six states have contributed to the three newsletters published to date ([September 2014](#), [January 2015](#), and [March 2015](#)).

Within the past three months, the GLRTI has hosted two webinars:

Purdue University's Center for Regional Development hosted the [Tipping Points and Indicators](#) webinar, a decision-making support system for watershed planning. This webinar focused on developing sustainable land use strategies, protecting natural resources, and enhancing local economies.

The second webinar, held in April, was organized and hosted by Michigan State University at the Center for Community and Economic Development's EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI). The title of the webinar was [Establishing an Entrepreneurial Friendly Region](#); presenters examined the elements of an entrepreneurial ecosystem and provided specific tools and policies pertaining to the Great Lakes Region. A closer look showed the role of scale and setting in determining infrastructure needs and services for entrepreneurs. Saurabh Lall, Research Director at the [Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs](#), led the discussion with his expertise on the impact that small and growing businesses have on poverty and economic development. He also described Aspen's newly developed diagnostic tool kit to measure entrepreneurial ecosystems around the world based on nine different frameworks out of several institutions ([George Mason University](#), [Babson College](#), and [World Bank](#)).

Following Lall, [Amanda Blondeau of Northern Initiatives, a previous REI Co-Learning Plan author](#), presented her organization's series of videos based on the Money Smart Model that she and her partners produced in Michigan's central Upper Peninsula. After Blondeau, another REI Co-Learning Plan author, [Angela Barbash of ReConsider in Ypsilanti, Michigan, described her team's co-learning plan from last year](#). This plan outlined the recently adopted MILE law and what the potential impact may be for Michigan. Barbash explained that there is an awareness issue for this law and a general misunderstanding of the due diligence work that is necessary to be successful. She announced that Indiana is also pursuing this type of legislation. Lastly, Michael Forsyth from the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation REVOLVE program presented his co-learning plan, where he takes readers through the process involved in starting a [Pop-Up Businesses program](#).

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## CCED Flint Launches REI Co-Implementation Plans

**By: Bob Brown, Associate Director, MSU CCED, [brownr23@msu.edu](mailto:brownr23@msu.edu)**

For the past four years, the CCED's Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI) has paired up with partners across the state to produce Co-Learning Plans to surface and

explore innovative economic development concepts. Now CCED Flint, with local partners, will be testing those concepts in actual co-implementation projects.

The Flint Aquaponic Network Co-Implementation Plan will bring together partners to co-create a grassroots entrepreneurial structure and process that will allow ex-offenders and other low-income individuals to learn how to grow and bundle a package of aquaponic products in a makerspace. The goal is to produce a living wage and then operate their businesses in afterhouses. (An afterhouse is a neighborhood house irreparably damaged by disuse, vandalism and fire. Rather than raze it and leaving fallow land, it is deconstructed with the basement foundation being used to build a semi subterranean passive geothermal greenhouse.)

Aquaponics is the integration of aquaculture (fish farming) and hydroponics (growing plants in water) in a water-circulating, soil-less system. The natural bacteria in the ecosystem converts waste from the fish to nutrients which are absorbed by the plants and removed from the water. This growing method, scalable from small backyard gardens to large commercial systems, requires minimal water usage and no chemical fertilizers while providing organic produce and fish from the system.



Flint Aquaponic Center

The co-learning plan from Benton, Dempsey, Mullins, and Shelly identifies the following general characteristics of makerspaces:

1. Legal status and governance
2. Membership fees and benefits
3. Location, space and equipment
4. Outreach activities
5. Safety aspects
6. Makerspace projects

Using these characteristics as our framework for initial brainstorming, we identified five potential elements of this co-implementation plan. We will use these elements to kick-start design dialogues with co-learning plan authors and a Flint Aquaponic Network core team to create the co-learning implementation plan and move it into action. The primary products of the REI support will include the development of an action plan, the writing of a multi-faceted grant proposal that can be shopped in total or in smaller pieces to a variety of funding sources, and the establishment of a core team that will continue to build the Flint Aquaponic Network.

The team will also undertake a Youth Entrepreneurship and Flint City Pop-Ups Co-Implementation Project. This effort will focus on young people and young businesses. The education and support program will target high school students and disconnected youth ages 16 to 24 who are interested in starting their own businesses. Flint City Pop-Up will engage the more advanced youth entrepreneurs, as well as start-ups in the community who will benefit from the intermediary step of having a temporary space in which to do business. The goal is to create a pipeline for entrepreneurial youth with multiple entry points and several successful outcomes. Positive results will include youth starting their own businesses, entering training programs to gain skills they will eventually need in their field, finding a route back into the educational system, or becoming more innovative employees at existing companies.



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