**Michigan Aggregates Association: A Historical Journey (1960-2025)**

This document chronicles the rich history of the Michigan Aggregates Association (MAA), from its founding in 1960 to its present-day status as the leading advocate for Michigan's aggregate industry. It traces the evolution of the organization through name changes, leadership transitions, legislative victories, and significant milestones that have shaped both the association and the aggregate industry in Michigan over more than six decades.

**Formation and Early Years (1960-1983)**

The Michigan Aggregates Association began its journey in 1960 as the Michigan Sand and Gravel Producers Association. Founded by a group of forward-thinking aggregate producers, the organization was established to protect and promote the interests, growth, and welfare of Michigan's aggregates industry. These founding members demonstrated remarkable foresight in recognizing the need for collective representation in an increasingly regulated business environment.

The association's first Board of Directors included industry leaders such as Lawrence Clark of American Aggregate, John Gillespie of Edw. C. Levy - Burroughs Materials, Paul Hubscher of Hubscher & Son, Inc., and several other prominent figures in Michigan's aggregate industry. Under the leadership of its first president, Lloyd "Dutch" Reid, the association began addressing the unique challenges facing aggregate producers in the state.

**Founding Principles**

From its inception, the association was committed to environmental stewardship, responsible production practices, and industry advocacy. These core principles have remained consistent throughout the organization's history, even as its scope expanded beyond sand and gravel to include crushed stone, industrial minerals, and recycled materials producers.

**Early Leadership**

The early leadership of the association established a tradition of industry service that continues to this day. The first Chairman of the Board was Lyle Walker of Walker Sand and Gravel (1960-1962), followed by R.S. Evans of American Aggregate Corp (1962-1964). These pioneers set the association on a path of growth and influence that would continue for decades.

During these formative years, the association began developing the committee structure and advocacy approach that would become hallmarks of its operations. By bringing together competitors as collaborators on industry-wide issues, the organization created a powerful unified voice for Michigan's aggregate producers during a time of significant regulatory change and industrial development across the state.

**Transitions and Evolution (1983-1996)**

The early 1980s marked a significant transition period for the association. From 1980 to 1983, the Michigan Sand and Gravel Producers Association underwent an informal reorganization as the Michigan Mineral Producers Association. This change reflected a strategic expansion of the organization's scope to include slag producers, dry producers, limestone operations, and industry vendors. This more inclusive approach recognized the interconnected nature of various mineral extraction operations across Michigan.

During this reorganization period, managing director L.D. Reid became ill, retired, and subsequently passed away. This transition created logistical challenges as records were relocated from Southfield to Lansing in late 1981. The loss of important historical documents and questions about the association's legal status prompted the retention of the law firm Dykema, Gossett, Spencer, Goodnow & Trigg to consult on the dissolution of the Michigan Sand and Gravel Producers Association and the formal establishment of its successor organization.

On November 17, 1983, the association officially changed its name to the Michigan Mineral Resources Association, formalizing the transition that had begun several years earlier. A. Douglas Graham served as President during this critical period (1981-1988), providing stability and guidance through these significant organizational changes.

**Leadership Continuity**

Despite the name changes and organizational restructuring, the association maintained remarkable leadership continuity. Many board members continued their service through these transitions, ensuring that institutional knowledge and industry relationships remained intact.

**Expanded Mission**

The association's mission expanded during this period to reflect its broader membership base, but its fundamental commitment to advocating for responsible mineral extraction and processing remained unchanged.

**Final Transition**

On October 25, 1995, the Board of Directors voted to change the name to Michigan Aggregates Association, with the change officially taking effect on August 28, 1996, establishing the identity that continues to this day.

This period of transition coincided with significant changes in Michigan's economy, environmental regulations, and public perception of extractive industries. The association's evolution during these years positioned it to better represent the diverse interests of its growing membership while maintaining its effectiveness as an industry advocate.

**Modern Era and Organizational Growth (1996-2015)**

The formal establishment of the Michigan Aggregates Association in 1996 marked the beginning of a new era for the organization. Under the leadership of its first official Board of Directors, which included Jeffery W. Wilson of Mid Michigan Materials, Inc. as Chairman and industry leaders like G. Max Brown of American Aggregates of Michigan, Inc. and Scott Carson of Lyon Sand & Gravel, the association entered a period of stability and growth.

Michael Newman assumed the role of Association President in 1995 and would lead the organization for the next two decades until 2015. His 20-year tenure provided consistent leadership through numerous industry challenges and opportunities. During this period, the association strengthened its committee structure, expanded its educational offerings, and increased its influence in legislative and regulatory affairs.

**2006**

Establishment of the Michigan Aggregates Association Foundation in December 2006, creating a vehicle for charitable, educational, and scientific activities that benefit the industry and public understanding of aggregates.

**2011**

Passage of PA 113 of 2011, a significant legislative victory that amended the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act to protect aggregate mining operations from restrictive local zoning unless "very serious consequences" would result from extraction.

**2014**

The Kyser v. Kasson Township court decision, where despite MAA involvement in both the Supreme Court case and related legislation, Judge Power ruled against mining operations. This case began in 2004 and represented a significant challenge for the industry.

During this period, the association instituted the Michael Newman Distinguished Service Award to recognize individuals who made exceptional contributions to the aggregate industry in Michigan. The first recipient was Paul Hubscher in 2000, establishing a tradition that continues to honor industry leaders annually.

The modern era also saw increasing emphasis on environmental stewardship, safety practices, and technological advancement within the industry. The association played a crucial role in helping members navigate increasingly complex regulatory requirements while maintaining productive operations. By the end of this period, the MAA had firmly established itself as the recognized voice of Michigan's aggregate industry, representing producers of sand, gravel, crushed stone, and other mineral products essential to Michigan's infrastructure and economy.

**Recent Leadership and Initiatives (2015-Present)**

In November 2015, a new chapter began for the Michigan Aggregates Association with the appointment of Douglas E. Needham, P.E., as Executive Director. Building on the strong foundation established during Michael Newman's tenure, Needham has led the association through a period of modernization, expanded services, and increased industry influence. His background as a professional engineer brought technical expertise that complemented the association's traditional advocacy strengths.

During this recent period, the association has been guided by a succession of dedicated Board Chairmen, each serving two-year terms: Rick Becker of Stoneco of Michigan (2017-2018), Dan Balkema of Aggregate Resources (2019-2020), Rick Kidd of Edw. C. Levy Co. (2021-2022), Mark Schlegel of Schlegel Sand & Gravel (2023-2024), and currently Sky Cheney of Cheney Limestone (2025-2026). These industry leaders have provided strategic direction while representing diverse segments of Michigan's aggregate industry.

**Strategic Modernization**

In 2016, the association updated its logo, reflecting a modern visual identity while honoring its heritage. The following year, 2017, saw the development of a comprehensive Strategic Plan with updated Mission and Vision Statements (later revised in 2022), providing a roadmap for the organization's future activities and priorities.

**Financial Strength**

The development of an MAA Investment Policy in 2018, with an initial deposit of $125,000, strengthened the association's financial foundation and created resources for expanded member services and advocacy efforts.

**Collaborative Partnerships**

The association has increasingly emphasized partnerships, including collaborating with the MDNR, Michigan Oil and Gas Association, and Michigan Manufacturers Association to develop and host a Governor's Summit on Extractive Industries in 2018, and beginning a partnership with the Michigan Chamber of Commerce and Tenurgy in 2019 to help members reduce utility costs.

**Legislative Victories**

Recent years have seen significant legislative achievements, including the passage of PA 20/21 of 2023 regarding sales tax on delivery, and PA 27/30 of 2023 clarifying industrial processing exemptions for aggregate production equipment.

Throughout this period, the association has demonstrated adaptability in responding to emerging industry challenges while maintaining its core mission of advocacy, education, and member service. The establishment of specialized workgroups, including the Operation Manager Workgroup (2019) and the Technology/Integrated Mine Workgroup (2022), reflects the association's commitment to addressing evolving industry needs and technological advances.

**Member Services and Educational Initiatives**

**Safety Programs**

The MAA Safety Committee has developed numerous resources to protect workers and promote best practices across the industry. In 2016, the committee launched the MAA Safety Bulletin program, providing members with various training aids to address specific safety concerns. This was followed in 2018 by the MAA Safety Innovation Program, which recognizes companies that establish or develop new approaches to workplace safety that go beyond standard practices.

In 2024, the association developed an industry template for an MSHA Safety Program specifically addressing the Mobile Equipment Rule, demonstrating its ongoing commitment to keeping members compliant with evolving regulations while prioritizing worker protection.

**Technical Resources**

The MAA has consistently worked to provide members with technical resources that improve operations and ensure regulatory compliance. In 2022, the MAA Specifications Committee developed an industry template Quality Management System (QMS) that satisfies the requirements of both the Michigan Department of Transportation and AASHTO R 18, streamlining compliance for member companies.

Building on this tradition, in 2024, the MAA Technology Committee developed "Steps to Success" guides, providing practical frameworks for implementing new technologies and operational improvements. These resources help members navigate complex technical challenges while maintaining focus on their core business activities.

**Professional Programming**

The association has demonstrated a commitment to professional development through initiatives like the "Women of MAA" forum created in 2023 and the MAA Emerging Leaders Program launched in 2024. These programs recognize the importance of different perspectives and leadership development for the industry's future success.

**Public Education**

Recognizing the importance of public understanding and support, the MAA has invested significantly in educational outreach. In 2019, the Public Relations Committee updated the school rock boxes and developed the MiRockRock program to educate students about geology and the aggregate industry. This effort was complemented by the hiring of Harbor Strategic (John Sellek) as the association's public relations consultant the same year, strengthening the organization's external communications capabilities.

The "Mining for the Future" project, initiated by the Public Relations Committee in 2021, highlights reclaimed aggregate operations, demonstrating the industry's commitment to environmental stewardship and responsible land management. These public education efforts have helped build public support for the industry while addressing misconceptions about aggregate operations.

**Mission, Vision, and Industry Advocacy**

**Industry Vision**

Promoting favorable public policies that foster growth and innovation

**Association Mission**

Advocating for the aggregate industry with best practices and education

**Foundational Values**

Safety, environmental stewardship, and industry sustainability

The Michigan Aggregates Association has maintained a consistent focus on its core mission while adapting to changing industry needs and public expectations. The current mission statement identifies the MAA as "the recognized advocate of the aggregate industry," promoting best practices for safe and efficient aggregate production, responsible environmental stewardship, and reasonable material specifications. Through community involvement, the association educates the public about the industry's contributions while creating a sustainable industry for future generations by providing materials used by Michigan citizens in their daily lives.

This mission is complemented by a forward-looking vision statement that emphasizes promoting favorable public policies to foster growth and innovation in the mining of materials used by diverse industries. The vision affirms the industry's commitment to rebuilding and maintaining Michigan's infrastructure and economic prosperity, providing desirable career opportunities, and restoring land to its natural beauty for beneficial use and conservation for future generations.

The association's advocacy efforts have resulted in significant legislative and regulatory victories that benefit both the industry and the broader public. By engaging proactively in the legislative process, the MAA ensures that elected officials remain aware and informed about issues affecting the industry and its thousands of employees. The organization's committee network interacts regularly with state regulatory agencies to provide industry perspective on developing regulations in areas including health and safety, land use, taxation, material specifications, land reclamation, and environmental protection.

**Legislative Engagement**

Since hiring Kelley Cawthorne (Dave Ladd) as the association's lobbying firm in 2003, the MAA has strengthened its presence in Lansing and its influence on legislation affecting the industry. This professional approach to government relations has resulted in numerous policy victories over the years.

**Regulatory Partnerships**

The initiation of the annual EGLE/MAA Environmental Committee meeting in 2017 exemplifies the association's commitment to constructive engagement with regulatory agencies. These collaborative approaches have helped develop more workable regulations while maintaining environmental protections.

**Public Perception**

The association's emphasis on public education and community relations reflects an understanding that industry success depends not only on favorable regulations but also on public support and understanding of the essential role aggregates play in Michigan's economy and infrastructure.

Through these multifaceted approaches to advocacy, the Michigan Aggregates Association has established itself as not merely a trade organization but as an essential partner in Michigan's economic development and infrastructure improvement. Its balanced approach to industry advocacy, emphasizing both business interests and public responsibility, has built credibility with lawmakers, regulators, and communities throughout the state.

**Recognition and Looking to the Future**

**Industry Recognition**

The Michael Newman Distinguished Service Award, named after the association's longtime president, has become a prestigious recognition of exceptional service to Michigan's aggregate industry. Since its inception, recipients have included industry leaders, regulatory officials, equipment suppliers, and association staff who have made significant contributions to advancing the industry's interests and capabilities.

**Environmental Leadership**

As the industry continues to evolve, environmental stewardship and land reclamation have become increasingly important focuses for the MAA. The association's advocacy for responsible land management practices and its showcase of successful reclamation projects demonstrate a commitment to sustainability that will be essential for the industry's future social license to operate.

**Technological Innovation**

Looking forward, the MAA is embracing technological advancement as a key to the industry's future success. The formation of specialized working groups focused on technology integration and operational efficiency positions members to adopt emerging technologies that can improve productivity, safety, and environmental performance.

As the Michigan Aggregates Association moves beyond its sixth decade of service to the industry, it stands on a strong foundation of accomplishment while facing new challenges and opportunities. The association received special recognition for its 50-year anniversary in 2010, with a Special Tribute from the Governor, Speaker of the House, and various Michigan Legislators acknowledging its contributions to the state's economy and infrastructure.

Recent initiatives such as the hiring of a part-time MAA Events Coordinator in 2025 reflect the organization's ongoing growth and its commitment to providing enhanced services to members. Similarly, the launch of the Emerging Leaders Program in 2024 demonstrates foresight in developing the next generation of industry leadership that will guide both the association and member companies in the years ahead.

The association's strength has always rested on the dedication and vision of its members, from the founding group of "conscientious and environmentally concerned aggregate producers" in 1960 to today's diverse membership that includes crushed stone, sand and gravel producers, industrial and recycled material producers, and equipment and service suppliers. Together, this community of industry professionals continues to ensure that Michigan has the essential mineral resources required for infrastructure, construction, manufacturing, and countless other applications that touch every citizen's daily life.

As Michigan's economy and infrastructure needs evolve, the Michigan Aggregates Association stands ready to advocate for policies that allow for responsible resource development while protecting environmental values and community interests. Its history of adaptation and steady focus on core principles position it well to continue serving as the recognized voice of Michigan's aggregate industry for generations to come.