



CITY OF GRAND HAVEN

Press Release

American Public Works Association (APWA) Project of the Year Ceremony

Grand Haven, MI [June 1, 2026] – Harbor Island coal yard closure and restoration project was formally recognized at the American Public Works Association (APWA) Michigan Chapter Awards Ceremony held on May 21, 2026, where it received the *State Project of the Year Award*.

The recognition builds on the project's *district-level Project of the Year* win in late 2025 and highlights the City's leadership in sustainable infrastructure and environmental restoration. During the ceremony, project leaders and partners were honored for their innovative, low-impact approach, which minimized environmental disturbance and saved up to \$1 million in costs.



"It was incredibly rewarding to stand alongside our partners at Thursday's ceremony and see this project recognized at the state level," said Derek Gadjos, Grand Haven Project Management Director. "This honor represents years of thoughtful planning and reinforces our commitment to delivering solutions that protect our island while serving our community."

Collaboration and community engagement were central to the coal yard cleanup. The City partnered closely with the engineering consulting firm HDR which also provided support while maintaining transparency with residents on project updates. Daily on-site safety meetings ensured proactive hazard management, resulting in zero safety incidents. The team leveraged available historical information to develop and submit an executable work plan, which enabled the cleanup to proceed on schedule and within budget.

To learn more about this effort and the larger remediation efforts happening on the Harbor Island project, visit www.renewharborisland.org.