

Flint Neighborhoods United Meeting

January 4, 2025

Gloria Coles Flint Public Library

9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Flint Neighborhoods United (FNU) is a coalition of neighborhood groups and residents who come together on the first Saturday of each month to share information and leverage their resources to create positive change in the Greater Flint community.

Announcements/Community Conversation

- Communities First, Inc.
 - African American Film Series at the Flint Institute of Arts
 - Film: MLK and the FBI
 - Showing: Thursday, Jan. 9
 - Dinner at 5:30 pm, movie at 6:45 pm, discussion to follow - all free
- Flint Residents for Stronger Neighborhoods (FRSN)
 - Group that advocates for good urbanism, walkability, investments in public transit, etc.
 - Next meeting: Jan. 27 at 6 pm at St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- Parent 2 Parent Flint Support Group
 - Support group for parents with disabled children
 - Next meeting: Jan. 23 from 4:30 - 6 pm at Eisenhower Elementary
 - If interested in more information/attending contact Forleasadon Harper: parent2parentflint@gmail.com or call 973-687-8838
- Flint Our Community Our Voice (FOCOV)
 - Printing on Monday, Jan 6 and will be on shelves shortly thereafter
- Gloria Coles Flint Public Library
 - 40th Annual MLK Event - Saturday, Jan. 18, 2025
 - Matt Franklin will be keynote, Essence Wilson will be emcee
 - Following this event Selma will be showing at the New McRee Theater at 2 pm
 - Unfortunately unable to offer tax help this year, as the UM-Flint partnership that normally supports that effort was unable to move forward due to the class not happening this semester
 - Looking at providing other resources, including through United Way, more info to come
 - Offering 6 week yoga sessions
 - Saturdays starting January 25
 - Happening in Mott Room
 - Library is looking to hire a development staff person! This position and others are to be posted on the library's website.
- [Michigan Saves](#)
 - Officially launching community networking initiative, flyers available with more information
 - Starting to offer grants this spring, more information to come
- Crim Fitness Foundation

- Working with the Boys and Girls Club on a youth leadership development workshop
- Resume building and cover letter workshop, potentially with MichiganWorks!, to come in the future
- West Flint Community Watch
 - Helped with the first food drive by Grace Lutheran Church and hope to continue partnering with them on future such drives
- City of Flint
 - Peer mediation pilot program kicking off Jan. 13: 10 students from each of 4 starter schools will be learning violence intervention techniques to take back to their peers
- St. John Vianney
 - Looking for support on their Mission Garden
- League of Women Voters
 - High school voter registration starting in February
- Edible Flint
 - May 17 will be distribution day
- North Flint Food Co-Op
 - Looking to open in second quarter of 2025
- 100k Ideas
 - Business supporter, located in the Dryden Building downtown
 - Upcoming event: Mystery Box Auction fundraiser (you don't know what's in the box, just who supplied it!)
- Flint City Council
 - Operation Fire Safety coming up on January 20; City of Flint will install free smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors
 - Looking for volunteers for this effort
 - Can contact Councilwoman Lewis or Councilwoman Mushatt
 - Flyer also being sent to email list
 - Homeowner Property Exemption program has begun
 - March 7, July 11, Dec 5 are review periods
 - More information: <https://www.cityofflint.com/online-service/hope/>

Eliminating Medical Debt

Pastor Monica Villareal, Greater Flint Task Force on Social and Racial Equity

- Medical debt is incurred because crises happen. It's the leading cause of bankruptcy.
- Undue Medical Debt program is a model that erases medical debt for large groups of patients by matching donated dollars with qualifying debt. It partners with health care providers and debt buyers to purchase medical debt.
 - To be eligible to for relief under this program, must be earning 4x or below the federal poverty line have medical debt that is 5% or more of annual income
- We're the last municipality in Michigan still awaiting a vote on this initiative
- Medical providers do need to opt in to working with Undue Medical Debt program
 - This will require further outreach through community

- Debt needs to be roughly a year old and deemed uncollectable at present, but Pastor Villareal sees sustainability model through voting on the initiative now, getting initial uncollectable debt paid, and building on this partnership to continue on after initial funding structure
 - Individuals don't need to sign up; Undue will buy a portfolio and send you a letter noting the relief
- Powerpoint will be included in email to FNU members

MTA Update

Joseph Kapper - SRF Consulting Group, Inc.

- Have been conducting primary route study for about a year. Started by looking at existing conditions and service performance. It's been over a decade since last comprehensive look at MTA routes in this way. Also gathered information from community input meetings, MTA board and staff, etc.
- Key Takeaways:
 - MTA riders tend to have lower incomes and do not own vehicles
 - Most transit trips are not for work, but commuting is most common purpose
 - Expanding service north and east of Flint can better serve People of Color who live in Flint
 - Downtown-oriented bus service leads to many people needing to transfer as most report wanting to go to destinations outside of downtown
 - Most transit travel occurs between 9 am and 3 pm but a significant number of trips occur into the late evening (when retail/restaurant employee shifts end)
- Some Survey Feedback:
 - Requests for a wider service span (hours)
 - More frequent service every day of week
 - Service expansion to further edges of Flint
 - More frequent stops, bus shelter improvements
- Goals of service design:
 - Serve transit-using communities
 - Improve coverage, reliability, transfers
 - Reduce travel times
 - Increase ridership
- Guiding principles of redesign:
 - Simplifying routes
 - Improve route directness
 - Provide service in both directions on a route
- Presented Scenarios:
 - Intended outcomes of Scenario 1:
 - Network-wide 30 minute frequency for most of the weekdays
 - Modify existing routes to improve directness and user-friendliness
 - Focus allocation of resources in areas of highest need and demonstrated transit demand
 - Maintaining no-transfer from residential areas to conveniences

- Intended outcomes of Scenario 2:
 - Address known route-specific reliability and coverage challenges that require additional investment
 - Fill gaps in existing service area
 - Establishing more robust crosstown service with transfer points outside of downtown
- Intended outcomes of Scenario 3:
 - Improve span of service
 - Establish high-frequency network
 - Address remaining reliability issues
- Visit project website for more information on the three scenarios' specifics outlined and to complete feedback survey:
 - <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/9df0b67bfd5c4564825017f18c0b9e81>
- Upcoming Town Halls:
 - Jan. 15: Community Enrichment Center (322 E. Hamilton) from 5:30 pm - 7 pm
 - Jan. 16: The Grand on University (422 W. University Ave) from 6 pm - 7:30 pm

City of Flint

- Ambulance service is up and running, two are activated and one is spare
 - Kwame Hogan, with the city's Fire Dept., spoke on how the program is going thus far; responded to 1,400 calls in the first 3 months
- Recently increased firefighter pay
- Feedback from community members:
 - Illegal gunfire during new years was extraordinary, what's being done about that?
 - Increase in hit and runs and violent car crashes, what's being done about this?
- Mayor Neeley noted the gun buyback/destruction program; city will provide active shooter training upon request
- Buick City site development is going well and more investments are to come; teased potential \$62 billion

Genesee Conservation District

Blake Harity, Community Forester

- Urban forest is all the trees within a city's boundaries; it's not "traditional" forest, but is a highly managed/maintained forest
- City of Flint works with GCD to manage street tree population throughout city, conduct tree inspections and communicate with residence about care to be performed; use specialized software for tracking trees; GCD and private contractors manage the care
- Tree canopy provides needed cooling to paved city areas; work to plant in areas of high heat
 - Trees can also increase property value 3.5-15%
 - Absorbs sound and reduces flooding
- In 2014, 62% of trees were maple trees; planting oak, sycamore, and other trees to improve tree diversity and create resiliency against disease
- Flint is a Tree City USA!

- Using a \$5m grant over the next 5 years to develop workforce, plant 7.5k trees; and train, trim, remove over 2,700 trees.
- GCD provides technical assistance on private and public trees; youth education
- To reach out to Blake: blake.harrity@macd.org
- More information on GCD trees: geneseecd.org/trees

Next Meeting: Saturday, February 1, 2025