

PRESS RELEASE

Moving Flint Forward Initiative Launched to Help Local Businesses

March 24, 2016

FLINT, Mich. – March 24, 2016 – The Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce, working with FlintNOW and the Community Foundation of Greater Flint, has launched the Moving Flint Forward initiative to address the immediate and long-term business development needs arising out of, or magnified by, the Flint water emergency.

“This initiative is part of a long-term commitment by the Chamber to help our community emerge from this crisis stronger and healthier than before,” said Tim Herman, CEO of the Flint & Genesee Chamber.

The centerpiece of Moving Flint Forward is the Genesee Chamber Foundation’s new charitable fund created to provide financial support for small businesses, minority-owned businesses, North Flint redevelopment and activities that encourage tourism. The Moving Flint Forward Fund, established at the Community Foundation, will help bridge the gaps that exist between the various government sources of funds as well as address the business recovery needs that are outside the realm of health and human services.

“The Flint water crisis has led to a real call for action on several fronts,” said Herman. “As part of the recovery effort focused on the city’s health and economic issues related to the water emergency, the unmet needs of the business community, and the neighborhoods that lack access to products and services, have become even more apparent.”

Herman said that FlintNOW, a private-sector initiative by Tom Gores, Chairman and CEO of Platinum Equity and Owner of the Detroit Pistons, will serve as a strategic partner to the Chamber’s Moving Flint Forward Initiative. Gores, who grew up in Flint, earlier this year announced a \$10 million pledge to support a broad range of short and long-term relief efforts in Flint and created the FlintNOW Foundation as a cornerstone of his campaign.

Mark Barnhill, a Partner at Platinum Equity and member of the FlintNOW Board of Directors, praised the Chamber for its efforts to support the local business community. He said that FlintNOW would assist the Chamber with program development and, in addition to the Chamber’s own outreach, would help connect Moving Flint Forward with other private-sector interests throughout the state and around the country.

“It’s these types of collaborative efforts to bring people together toward a common cause that are going to make the biggest difference over the long run,” said Barnhill. “At the same time, local knowledge and understanding of what’s happening on a grassroots level is paramount. The Chamber has the expertise necessary to ensure that programs are designed effectively and that capital is deployed to the people who need it most.”

“A dedicated charitable fund provides a way for the public to support this activity with their tax-deductible contributions,” said Kathi Horton, President of the Community Foundation of Greater Flint.

The Community Foundation will grant monies from the Moving Flint Forward Fund to the Genesee Chamber Foundation, a support organization of the Flint & Genesee Chamber, for disbursement to eligible recipients, who meet the charitable giving criteria.

Grants will fund programs that are in alignment with the Chamber's Moving Flint Forward initiative, which aims to improve the overall quality of life in Flint by:

- Fostering economic growth and diversification
- Increasing access to quality products and services
- Helping existing businesses and entrepreneurs create jobs
- Stabilizing neighborhoods
- Attracting visitors

To give online, please visit Community Foundation of Greater Flint at www.fundsforflint.org.

To give by check, make payable to the Community Foundation of Greater Flint and write "Moving Flint Forward Fund" on the memo line. Please mail to: Community Foundation of Greater Flint, 500 S. Saginaw St. Suite 200, Flint, MI 48502.

ABOUT THE FLINT & GENESEE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Serving the community for over 100 years, the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce is a premier business membership organization unlike most chambers of commerce. In addition to traditional member services, our responsibility includes serving as the lead economic development agency for Flint & Genesee, marketing tourism, youth and business training, and a Shared Services Center.

Collaboration is one of our core strengths. To affect real and lasting change, inclusiveness and collaboration are keys to success. We form partnerships with private businesses, education and governmental agencies at the local, state and federal levels, as well as grant-making foundations to fuel economic growth and bring positive change to the region. For more information, visit www.flintandgenesee.org. Check us out on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

ABOUT THE GENESEE CHAMBER FOUNDATION

The mission of the Genesee Chamber Foundation is to receive and administer funds donated to the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce to implement programs for educational, scientific and charitable purposes that contribute to the public welfare of the citizens of Genesee County.

Foundation funds will be used to support efforts to diffuse knowledge and understanding of matters that are of public concern including the American economic system, consumer education, career education, vocational training, housing, cultural development and human resources.

MEDIA CONTACTS

Elaine Redd

Flint & Genesee Chamber

810-600-1418

Bob Campbell

Flint & Genesee Chamber

810-600-1421

Dan Whelan

Platinum Equity/FlintNOW

310-282-9202

DONATE TODAY

FlintNOW.org