



## ***See what's possible Campaign***

### **THE RESEARCH**

The Genesee County Board of Commissioners and the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors challenged the Chamber with changing the perception of the City of Flint and the communities of Genesee County among its citizens, future visitors, business relocation site sectors, perhaps even the media.

**The first step was to establish a baseline of research that measured perception.**

**Spring of 2011** - Commissioned a Michigan-based research firm, RDA Group, to do a regional perception survey for the city of Flint and Genesee County

- Conducted an email survey among business executives from companies located:
  - In Genesee County
  - Outside the county but still within Michigan
  - Outside of Michigan
    - 14,735 email surveys sent; “highlights” reports offered as an incentive
    - Survey fielded from March 29 - April 30
    - 424 surveys completed (246 returns was the anticipated target response)
    - 242 from Genesee County; 130 from Michigan; 52 National

**Spring of 2011** – Commissioned the Upjohn Institute, out of Kalamazoo, to prepare an economic dashboard report on Flint/Genesee County

- Compared Flint to five similar cities across the U.S.
  - Allentown PA; Lynchburg VA; Merced CA; Shreveport LA; York PA
    - Comparison factors: unemployment , quality of life, educational attainment, city core, business growth by category, job creation

**Spring of 2012** – Contracted Mark Lantz of the Mark Lantz Project, former Chief Strategist at McCain Erickson Advertising Agency in Birmingham MI, and co-creator of the Pure Michigan brand/campaign. As a recognized expert in destination branding, Mark helped orchestrate the local research effort.

**Spring of 2012** – Conducted local research among citizens and businesses, including students, the faith-based community, elected officials, city and county employees, higher education and healthcare representatives, small and large businesses owners, non-profits, etc. The purpose of the research was to gain a grounded and diverse perspective from around the region on each individual’s perception of Flint & Genesee

- Conducted six group listening sessions, nine extensive one-on-one interviews, five focus groups, multiple committee meetings, countless one-on-one conversations, resulting in 190-plus participants from organizations like:

Alpha Phi Alpha Flint Pan Hellenic, Hampton Inn, Baker College, Flint Cultural Center, Handmade Flint, Career Alliance, Flint Institute of Arts, Holiday Inn, City of Fenton, Flint Mayor's Office, Hurley Medical Center, Clio Area Chamber, Genesee County Commissioners, Lewis & Knopf, Coffee Beanery Genesee, County Fair, Lunch Studio, Crim Foundation, Genesee County Parks, Mass Transit Authority, Diplomat Pharmacy, Governor's Office of Urban, McLaren Regional Medical Center Disability Works, Metropolitan Initiatives, Mott Community College, Faith Tabernacle, Grand Blanc Chamber and several other communities' Chambers, Residence Inn, Financial Plus, Great Start Collaboration, Sloan Museum, Flint Crepe Company, Greater Flint Arts Council, Flint Institute of Arts, THA Architects, Flint Food Bank, Greater Flint Health Coalition, University of Michigan-Flint, Baker College of Flint, and many others.

Mark Lantz and the creative team then distilled the resulting focus group input into a brand manifesto, outlining the necessary steps for launching a compelling destination marketing campaign designed to enlighten and amaze the public. The campaign launched in April of 2013 with a multi-media strategy which included broadcast, out-of-home, digital, print and social media, backed by a far-reaching public relations and communications campaign.

**In 2013** the campaign will run concurrently in Genesee County and out-of-area to both inform local citizens and draw prospective tourism and business interests from afar.

**In 2014** the media spend and public relations efforts will principally be focused on creating awareness of the rich assets of our region among those from the western part of the state and from Southern Ontario and northern Ohio/Indiana/Illinois.