



# Genesee County Health Department

## Strategic Plan

**November 5, 2025**

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# Purpose & Scope of Strategic Plan

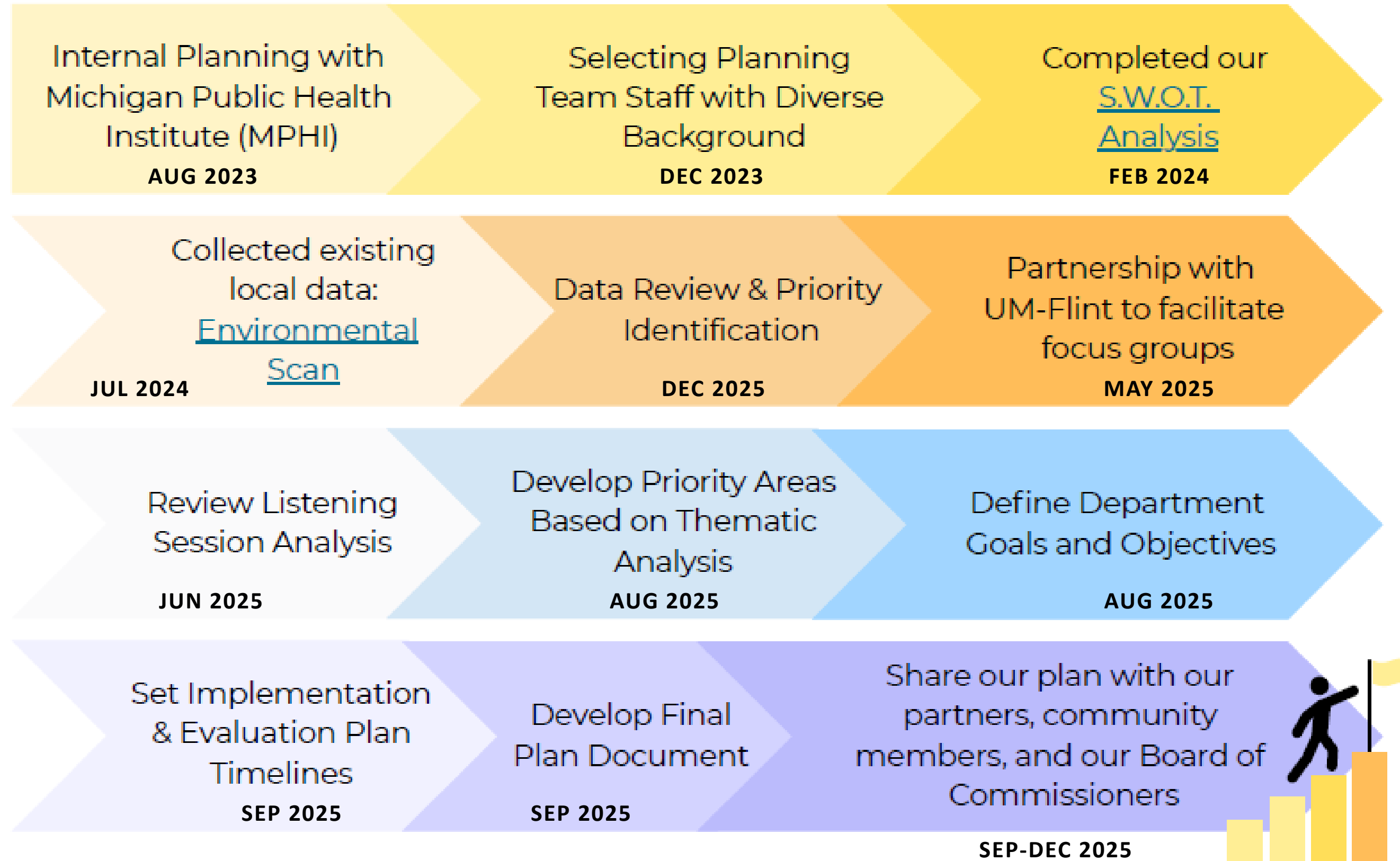
- Serve as a blueprint to strengthen services, community engagement, and collaboration across Genesee County.
- Reflect the shared vision and priorities of residents, partners, and public health professionals through an inclusive, data-driven process.
- Establish clear goals and actionable strategies to address pressing health needs and build organizational capacity.
- Promote transparency, accountability, and equity in guiding GCHD toward a healthier, more connected community.



## Genesee County Health Department

Strategic Plan  
2025 - 2030

# Timeline



# Key Activity: SWOT Analysis

- 86 staff members participated (72%)
- Survey open for 3 weeks
- Incentives Provided
  - Group: Catered lunch for program area with highest participation rate
  - Individual: 3 names drawn at random for gift card prize
- SurveyMonkey and paper submissions accepted
- Sent introductory email with “how to” video of what a SWOT analysis is and how we will use it.



## Key Areas for Change

- Staff retention and pay identified as top internal concerns
- Gaps in interdepartmental communication impact collaboration
- Outdated technology and equipment hinder efficiency

## Opportunities for Growth

- Strengthen internal/external communication to build trust
- Expand outreach to underserved communities
- Invest in tech upgrades and staff training
- Promote workplace wellness to boost morale and retention



# Key Activity: Environmental Scan

- **Summary assessment of available data**
  - Identifies key internal and external factors that can affect a program's success
- **Purpose**
  - Provides context and evidence for program design
  - Highlights opportunities and challenges
  - Ensures strategies align with local environment and stakeholder needs
- **Examples of documents assessed**
  - Community Health Needs Assessment
  - Genesee County Vital Statistics

| Data or Information Available | Date Perspective |           |             |                 |                     | Source Document/ Date |      | Substantiation |               | Relevance |     |      |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------|----------------|---------------|-----------|-----|------|
|                               | Community        | Financial | Health Dept | State, Nat'l L. | Learning and Growth | Source                | Date | Fact Based     | Opinion Based | Low       | Med | High |
|                               |                  |           |             |                 |                     |                       |      |                |               |           |     |      |
|                               |                  |           |             |                 |                     |                       |      |                |               |           |     |      |
|                               |                  |           |             |                 |                     |                       |      |                |               |           |     |      |

(Adapted from Moran, 2009)



# Key Activity: Listening Sessions



- Gather diverse input from community members and stakeholders to ensure an equitable, countywide planning process.
- Use a data-driven and inclusive recruitment approach to reflect the full range of experiences and perspectives across Genesee County.
- Identify priorities and gaps through structured, consistent questions informed by an environmental scan.
- Ensure ethical, transparent, and representative engagement to guide the development of GCHD's Strategic Plan.



# Genesee County Health Department

Strategic Plan  
2025 - 2030

# Introduction

The **Genesee County Health Department (GCHD)** Strategic Plan serves as a blueprint for enhancing our program’s services, engaging with the community, and building bridges within our community. Developed through a collaborative and inclusive process, this plan reflects the collective vision and priorities of residents, stakeholders, and public health professionals. This project utilized data-driven analysis, community engagement, and a commitment to equity, while recognizing the evolving challenges and opportunities facing Genesee County.

This strategic plan outlines a clear direction for the next several years, focusing on strengthening organizational capacity, enhancing service delivery, and addressing the most pressing health needs of our population. By integrating insights from staff, community members, and partners, the plan establishes shared goals and actionable strategies to guide our work. It is designed to be both ambitious and practical, ensuring that our efforts are responsive to local needs and aligned with broader public health standards.

Through this plan, we aim to foster transparency, accountability, and ongoing dialogue with all those invested in Genesee County’s future. The following sections detail the history of the department, the planning process, and the foundational elements that shape our vision, mission, and values. Together, these components provide a comprehensive overview of how GCHD is positioning itself to create a healthier, more equitable, and sustainable future for all residents.

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## **Letter From The Health Officer**

Dear Community Members and Partners,

We are proud to serve the residents of Genesee County and remain committed to protecting and promoting public health throughout our community. Our department has a rich history of service and collaboration. In 1970, the Flint City Health Department and the Genesee County Health Department merged to create a unified agency dedicated to meeting the evolving health needs of our region.

Since 2000, the Genesee County Health Department has successfully completed the Michigan Public Health Accreditation process. This rigorous process ensures that we meet high standards of public health practice and accountability. As part of accreditation, we outline our goals and objectives for the coming years, guiding our efforts and ensuring continuous improvement until the next accreditation cycle.

Our strategic planning process has been essential in achieving and maintaining accreditation. Through careful planning and community engagement, we identify priorities, set measurable objectives, and develop initiatives that address the most pressing health challenges facing Genesee County. This approach ensures that our department remains responsive, effective, and aligned with the needs and expectations of those we serve.

Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership. Together, we will continue to build a healthier, safer, and more vibrant Genesee County.

Sincerely,



Michelle Estell, RS., MSA

Health Officer

Genesee County Health Department



**Michelle Estell**

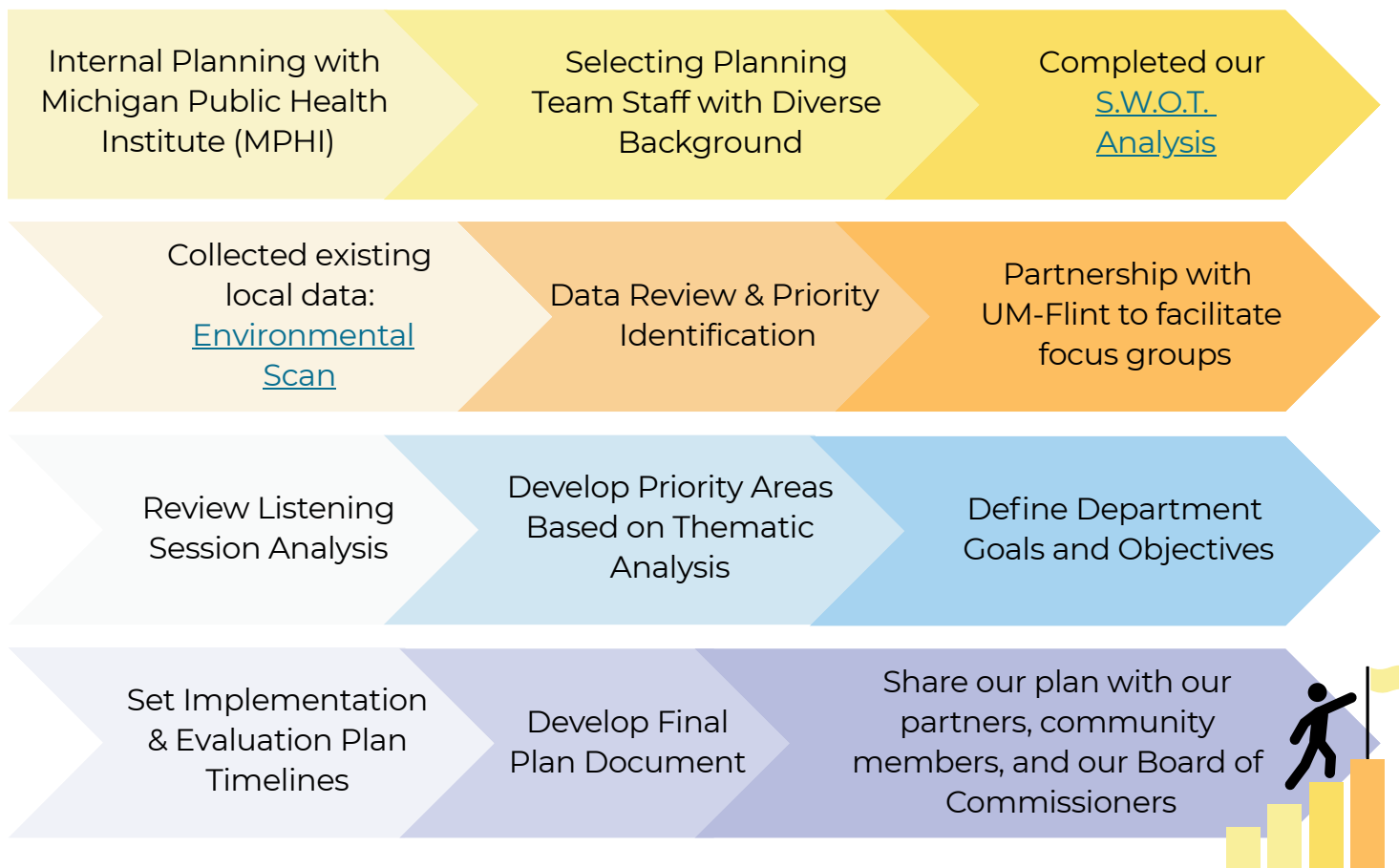
Health Officer

## Our Planning Process

The GCHD Strategic Plan represents a collaborative effort to chart a comprehensive and forward-thinking vision for the community's future. The process began with foundational support from the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) and its team, who helped establish the groundwork for the initiative. A S.W.O.T. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis was conducted to evaluate the internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the external opportunities and threats, facing GCHD. Led by a diverse internal team, this critical assessment provided a data-driven understanding of GCHD's current position and directly informed the design of listening sessions, along with the development of the department's mission, vision, values, and goals.

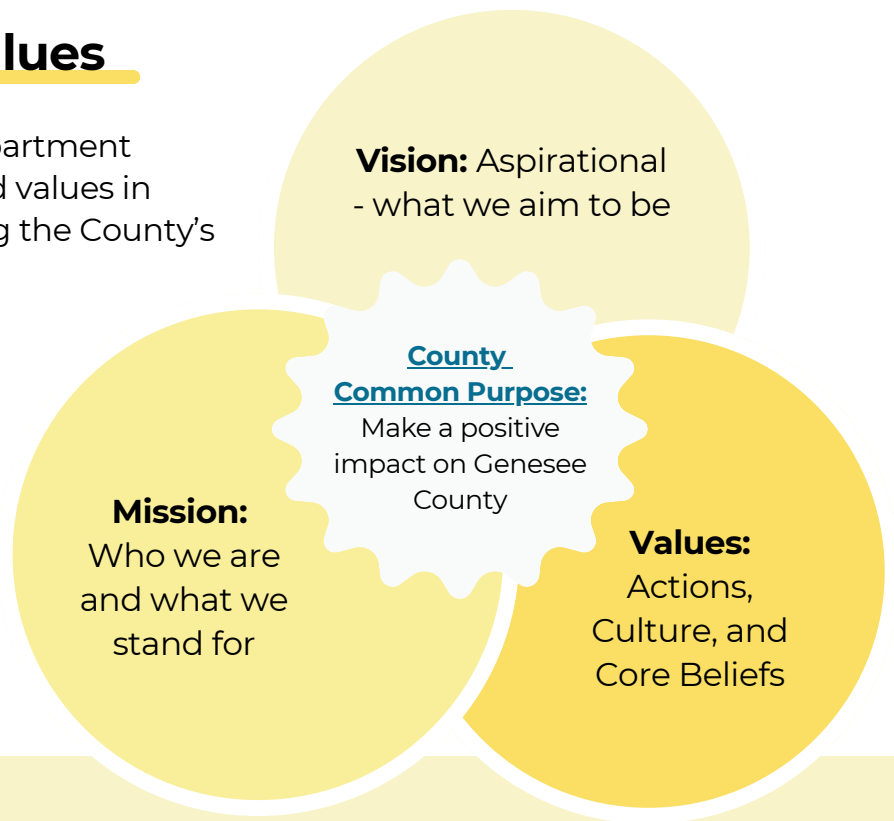


To ensure diverse input and community engagement, GCHD partnered with the UM-Flint to facilitate listening sessions. These sessions provided valuable feedback on community needs and experiences, ensuring that the strategic plan reflects the voices of residents and stakeholders. By integrating these insights with internal analysis and planning, the GCHD has crafted a roadmap designed to address challenges, leverage opportunities, and align its resources toward achieving long-term goals. This inclusive approach underscores GCHD's commitment to fostering a thriving, equitable, and sustainable future for all its residents.



# Mission, Vision, & Values

The Genesee County Health Department developed its mission, vision, and values in collaboration with our staff, using the County's core principles as a foundation. Our strategic planning committee used feedback to create actionable values that guide our efforts to improve the health of our community.



## Vision

Genesee County's trusted public health resource, supporting communities to thrive.

## Mission

To improve public health and equity in Genesee County through exceptional services, advocacy, and meaningful collaboration.

## Values

**Integrity & Excellence:** Operate with professionalism, accountability, and a dedication to the well-being of the community, fostering trust and confidence among all.

**Community Driven:** Our community-driven approach focuses on building mutual respect, fostering collaboration and partnerships, promoting inclusivity, and supporting all.

**Growth-oriented:** Commitment to continuous learning and development, through ongoing evaluation and quality improvement.

**Health Equity:** Creating fair and just opportunities for all to attain their highest level of health.

# S.W.O.T. Analysis Summary

As part of the GCHD Strategic Plan, a S.W.O.T. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis was conducted with input from 86 staff members across all program areas to identify actionable areas for improvement and growth. This process highlighted key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and external threats impacting the Health Department's operations.

## Key Areas for Change

Several internal challenges emerged that are both impactful and changeable:

- Staff turnover/retention and pay were identified as top concerns, highlighting the need for strategies to improve employee satisfaction and stability.
- Communication gaps between departments were frequently mentioned, emphasizing the importance of fostering clearer and more collaborative workflows.
- Technology and equipment updates were noted as areas requiring investment to enhance efficiency and service delivery.

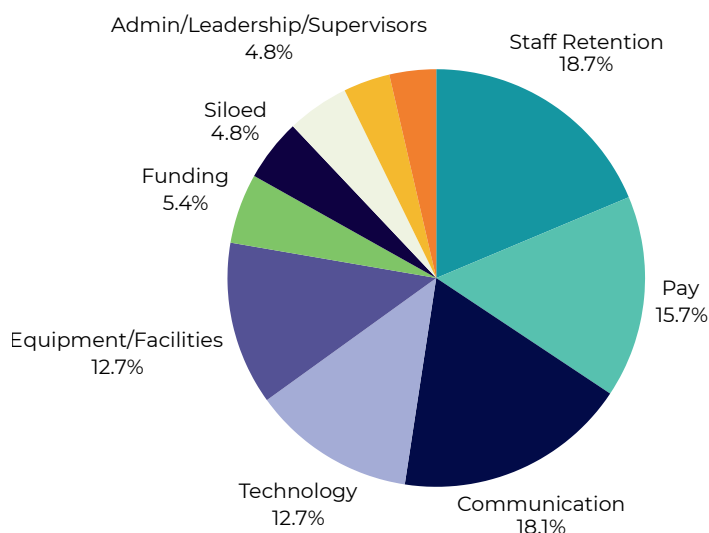
## Opportunities for Growth

- Improving communication internally and externally can strengthen collaboration and public trust.
- Expanding outreach efforts to better connect with underserved communities was identified as a priority.
- Updating technology and providing more training opportunities can empower staff and streamline operations.
- Prioritizing workplace wellness initiatives can address retention concerns while improving morale.

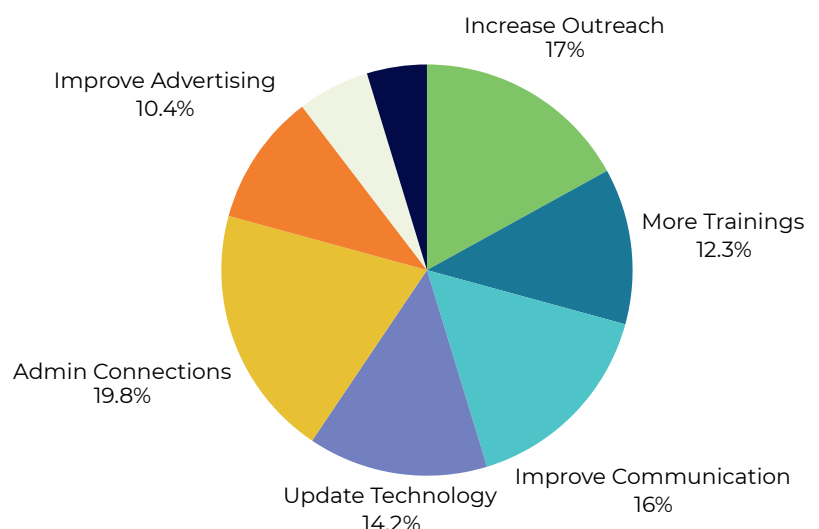
## Moving Forward

This analysis provided a roadmap for actionable improvements that will enhance the Health Department's ability to serve the community effectively. By addressing internal weaknesses and leveraging opportunities for growth, GCHD can build a stronger, more resilient organization that meets the evolving needs of its residents.

### Key Areas for Change



### Opportunities for Growth



# Listening Sessions & Data Collection



## Community and Stakeholder Engagement Process

To ensure a comprehensive and equitable strategic planning process, we sought input from both community members and key stakeholders who serve our county. Our goal was to achieve balanced representation from across the county, reflecting the diversity of experiences and perspectives within each district.

## Stratified and Inclusive Recruitment

We stratified the county by district groupings, using demographic and socioeconomic data to guide the identification of five representative groups of community members. Stakeholder groups were selected based on their area of expertise, including healthcare professionals, education, and faith-based organizations, and community organizations, as well as the potential impact of their work within the community. We employed a multi-stage sampling process for both community members and stakeholders to ensure fairness and inclusivity.



Once all interested individuals were identified, the lead investigator from the UM–Flint selected both primary and alternate participants. This selection was based on demographic information to ensure that each group accurately reflected the county. To protect participant privacy and maintain impartiality, all UM-Flint team received only de-identified data. Ethical approval was obtained from the University of Michigan Institutional Review Board (IRB #HUM00266812). All participants were provided with and signed an informed consent document.

## Data-Driven Question Development

The questions posed to participants were developed based on gaps identified during our initial [environmental scan](#). All community groups, organized by district, received the same set of questions to ensure consistency and comparability across the county. Stakeholder groups, however, were presented with questions tailored to the specific gaps identified in the environmental scan that related to their field of practice. The survey was distributed online and through paper copies to reduce digital access barriers.

This approach allowed us to gather meaningful insights from a broad cross-section of our community and stakeholders, which we worked into our action plan.



[Read the entire executive summary here!](#)

## Listening Session Outcomes & Key Themes

Understanding the major health challenges facing Genesee County helps guide actions to improve community well-being. Through listening sessions and surveys, residents and stakeholders identified the most pressing barriers and needs in health, service access, and quality of life. The key themes below highlight areas where individuals, families, and neighborhoods experience the greatest difficulties, as well as opportunities for positive change.

### Key Themes

- **Access to Healthcare:** Many residents struggle with finding available providers, paying for care, and getting to appointments, especially because of transportation and insurance issues.
- **Mental Health:** There's a shortage of mental health professionals, long wait times, and persistent stigma, making it hard for people of all ages to get needed support.
- **Maternal, Child, and Family Health:** Families report gaps in early care, limited support for mothers and children, and difficulty accessing reproductive and prenatal services.
- **Food Security and Nutrition:** Many neighborhoods lack stores with healthy foods, transportation is a barrier, and access to quality nutrition programs is limited, leading to poor diets.
- **Environmental Health and Emergency Preparedness:** Residents worry about water, air, and housing safety, and want better information and education about environmental risks and emergency planning.
- **Community Awareness and Engagement:** Information about health services isn't reaching residents, and people want more direct, visible outreach and trustworthy communication.

### Community Member Quotes

"It's not just medical—schools, therapists, everyone's in their own silo. If you don't know who to call, nothing happens."

"They looked at me like I was lying about my pain. Just because I don't look sick doesn't mean I'm making it up."

"I filled out the same paperwork three times because they couldn't find my file. That's when I gave up."

"I have insurance, but I still can't afford my prescriptions. If I pay for those, I can't buy groceries."

"I take care of my grandkids, and I don't drive. If no one's free to give me a ride, we just don't go."

"My doctor's office is only 20 minutes away, but if I miss the bus, that's two hours gone. And if you miss one appointment, they'll drop you as a patient."

# Recommendations Provided Based on Listening Session Analysis



The recommendations developed by our UM-Flint partners reflect the findings from community listening sessions and are designed to address needs across the broader community. While some recommendations extend beyond the direct scope and statutory functions of the local health department, we remain committed to advancing them where possible. Our role will focus on advocacy, supporting aligned efforts, and reviewing the full data set to identify ways we can assist community partners in implementing these recommendations.

- **Expand Access and Availability:** Increase the number of healthcare providers, offer more flexible scheduling, and make insurance acceptance more inclusive. Improve transportation services to allow easier travel to medical appointments.
- **Enhance Communication:** Use clear language, regular outreach at familiar public spaces, and trusted community liaisons to inform residents about available services. Create a centralized and easy-to-navigate resource guide to local health and social services.
- **Address Cost and Coverage Barriers:** Work toward more affordable and comprehensive insurance, with individualized support to help people understand and navigate coverage, especially for medications and preventive care.
- **Strengthen Mental Health Services:** Recruit more diverse mental health professionals, reduce stigma with community-based programs, and embed mental health care into schools, family centers, and neighborhood clinics.
- **Invest in Preventive and Early Intervention:** Implement more programs for early childhood, youth health education (including nutrition and reproductive health), and peer-led or home-based support, especially for young mothers and underserved families.
- **Promote Food Security:** Expand community food programs, improve food bank quality, increase nutrition education, and address transportation barriers to fresh foods. Schools should be involved in teaching cooking and healthy eating skills.
- **Strengthen Environmental Health Response:** Increase education and transparency around air, water, and housing safety. Encourage monthly community meetings and hands-on public education about environmental risks and emergency plans.

## Other Important Community Concerns

- 61.5% of survey participants cited transportation as a barrier to accessing medical care.
- Food deserts heavily affect certain neighborhoods, and many residents lack vehicles to reach distant grocery stores.
- Residents frequently reported long wait times for specialist appointments, often lasting several months.

## Priority Areas & Goals

The planning process was dynamic and interactive, with programs considering both their strengths and local challenges, so that each priority would uphold the department's commitment to continuous improvement.



This inclusive, collaborative approach resulted in a set of priorities that provide a strong, unified foundation for program-specific goals and measurable objectives. These priorities now drive departmental strategies and improvement efforts, guiding every team in the delivery of equitable and effective public health services for all Genesee County residents.

- 1 Received analysis & feedback from UM- Flint
- 2 Drafted Priorities based on thematic analysis, Genesee County Core Values, and Health Department Goals
- 3 Shared priority areas with program managers to gather feedback & assist with program-level planning
- 4 Organized departmental & program-specific goals into priority areas to ensure all priority areas are met
- 5 Shared the revised goals and objectives with program managers, provided tracking sheets to support monitoring, and reaffirmed the administrative team's commitment to ongoing support for continuous quality improvement initiatives.

The next two pages show the main priority areas that were developed by our team and associated goals. Programs developed S.M.A.R.T. ([Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timebound](#)) objectives to support at least two priority areas and three goals. This helps us stay focused, measure progress, and make sure our efforts truly benefit our residents and community.

# Priority Areas & Goals

## Priority Area 1: Improve Maternal and Child Health Outcomes

- Goal 1.1:** Substantially reduce maternal and infant mortality, with a focus on minimizing racial and socioeconomic disparities.
- Goal 1.2:** Reduce maternal and infant morbidity, with attention to addressing inequities in outcomes across populations.
- Goal 1.3:** Reduce barriers that affect maternal and child health, including financial, structural, and cultural barriers.

## Priority Area 2: Strengthen Maternal Mental Health and Address Substance Use

- Goal 2.1:** Integrate and expand access to culturally competent, trauma-informed mental health and substance use services for pregnant and postpartum individuals.
- Goal 2.2:** Increase provider training and organizational capacity to deliver culturally competent, trauma-informed care across maternal health settings.

## Priority Area 3: Advance Health Equity and Address Disparities

- Goal 3.1:** Identify, monitor, and reduce disparities in health outcomes and healthcare access across racial, ethnic, and geographic groups.
- Goal 3.2:** Identify partners to connect uninsured/underinsured clients with services and community resources.

## Priority Area 4: Strengthen Primary and Emergency Care Access Through Provider Education, Health Literacy, Navigation, and Trust-Building

- Goal 4.1:** Increase the effectiveness, accessibility, and equity of primary and emergency care.
- Goal 4.2:** Protect and improve the health of communities by minimizing the impact of public health emergencies.

## Priority Area 5: Modernize Data Collection, Surveillance, and Community Engagement

- Goal 5.1:** Build a robust, real-time data infrastructure to inform decisions and engage the community.

## Priority Area 6: Address Social and Environmental Determinants of Health

- Goal 6.1:** Mitigate the impact of environmental exposures and social determinants on health outcomes.

## Priority Area 7: Cultivating an Environment of Continuous Learning and Building a Future Workforce

- Goal 7.1:** Cultivate a collaborative, inclusive, and continuously learning organizational environment that empowers staff at all levels to deliver high-quality public health services, supports professional growth, and enhances team satisfaction and retention.
- Goal 7.2:** Strengthen academic partnerships to build a diverse and well-prepared pipeline of future public health professionals.

## Program Priority Area Summary

The finalized priorities, approved by the SPC, will serve as a foundation for setting program-specific S.M.A.R.T goals and objectives, guiding ongoing efforts to address the needs of the communities we serve.

Each program identified at least two priority areas for focus for continuous quality improvement. The chart below shows the selected priorities for each program.



| Program                                         | Priority Area 1 | Priority Area 2 | Priority Area 3 | Priority Area 4 | Priority Area 5 | Priority Area 6 | Priority Area 7 |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Administration                                  |                 |                 | ★               |                 | ★               |                 | ★               |
| Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS) | ★               | ★               | ★               |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Communicable Disease & Tuberculosis             |                 |                 | ★               |                 | ★               | ★               |                 |
| Emergency Preparedness                          |                 |                 |                 | ★               | ★               |                 |                 |
| Environmental Health                            |                 |                 |                 |                 | ★               | ★               | ★               |
| Health Coverage Enrollment Assistance           |                 |                 | ★               | ★               |                 |                 |                 |
| Hearing & Vision                                | ★               |                 | ★               | ★               |                 |                 |                 |
| Immunizations                                   | ★               |                 | ★               |                 | ★               |                 |                 |
| Family-Based Public Health Programs             | ★               | ★               | ★               |                 |                 | ★               |                 |
| Sexual Health & Family Planning                 |                 |                 | ★               |                 |                 | ★               |                 |
| Tobacco & Marijuana Education                   | ★               | ★               | ★               |                 |                 |                 |                 |

# Implementation Plan

To ensure the success of our Strategic Plan (2025–2030), the Genesee County Health Department will operationalize its goals through a structured implementation plan that applies evidence-based strategies and supports staff, leadership, and community partners in collaborative action.

## 1. Action Steps & Responsibilities

- For each strategic goal/program area:
  - Define specific, measurable action steps
  - Assign responsible staff/teams
  - Establish timelines (yearly, quarterly, etc.)
  - Identify required resources (budget, technology, training)

## 2. Resource Allocation

- Budget requirements reviewed annually; reallocation as recommended by management and Board of Commissioners.
- Workforce planning: support recruitment, retention, and professional development.

## 3. Communication & Collaboration

- Regular implementation progress reports (quarterly) shared with staff, commissioners, and the public.
- Ongoing partnerships with UM-Flint, healthcare organizations, and community groups.

## 4. Risk Management

- Identify risks/barriers (e.g., staff turnover, funding gaps) in advance and integrate mitigation actions into implementation steps.

## Example of Internal Tracking Process

| Program/Goal           | Action Step                                        | Timeline          | Responsible Party  | Resources Needed     |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Emergency Preparedness | Update emergency protocols & conduct annual drills | Year 1-5 (Annual) | EP Coordinator     | Training, Supplies   |
| Environmental Health   | Launch Fetch digital system; public access rollout | Year 1            | EH Director & Team | Software, IT Support |
| Healthy Start          | Expand parent education workshops                  | Semiannual        | HS Program Lead    | Outreach Budget      |

# Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

GCHD is committed to continuous improvement and accountability, recognizing that robust monitoring and evaluation are essential to achieving strategic plan goals.

## 1. Performance Indicators

- Define Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each strategic objective, selected based on public health impact, feasibility, and data availability.
- Examples:
  - Percent reduction in vaccine exemptions
  - Number of families enrolled in Healthy Start
  - Rate of accurate communicable disease reporting
  - Percent of inspections completed digitally

## 2. Data Collection & Review

- Data systems updated to support real-time tracking, analysis, and reporting.
- Quarterly review meetings for evaluating progress toward targets.
- Annual public health impact assessment and dashboard.

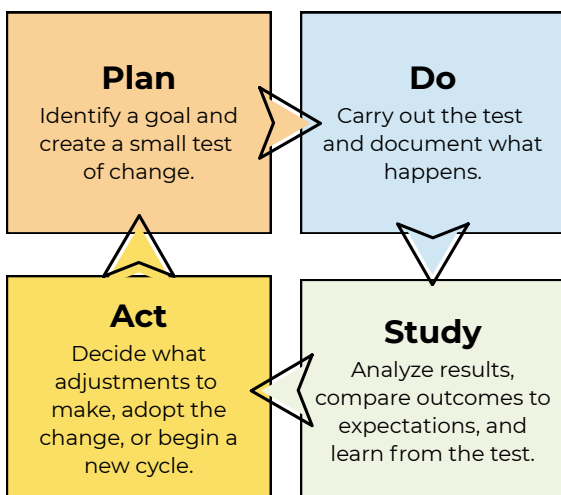
## 3. Accountability & Adaptation

- Assign evaluation responsibilities to division leads.
- Integrate stakeholder feedback and lessons learned through annual feedback opportunities and surveys.
- Adapt strategies as needed based on performance data and changing community needs.
- Publish an annual report summarizing outcomes, challenges, and next steps.

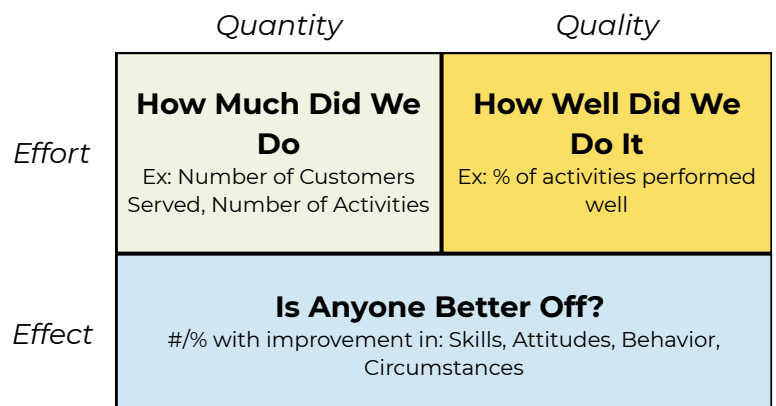
## 4. Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

- Embed the [Plan-Do-Study-Act \(PDSA\) framework](#) at the county level to drive change and assess progress on priority areas. Encourage programs to launch targeted interventions at the program level and consistently monitor outcomes using the [Results-Based Accountability framework](#).
- Foster a culture of learning and encourage staff to identify process improvements, participate in CQI training, and submit proposals for innovation.
- Document and celebrate successes to reinforce positive change.

### Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA)



### Results-Based Accountability



# Attachments

For access to all attachments, please visit the Genesee County Health Department website at [geneseecountymi.gov](http://geneseecountymi.gov), navigate to the “About Us” page, and select “Strategic Planning Committee.” The most complete and up-to-date version of this document, along with all listed attachments, is always available at this location. To view the full content, simply click the provided link or scan the QR code below for direct access.



QR Code to Strategic  
Plan Webpage

## Environmental Scan:

An environmental scan is a summary assessment that identifies relevant internal and external factors, such as policies, demographics, trends, resources, needs, and gaps, that may impact the success of a public health program or strategy. It helps inform planning and decision-making by providing context and evidence for program design, revealing opportunities and challenges, and supporting the alignment of interventions with the local environment and stakeholder needs.

## Definitions:

This section compiles explanations of key terms and concepts as they are used within the document. It provides readers with standardized definitions drawn from established public health sources, ensuring shared understanding and consistency in interpretation across all readers and stakeholders.

## Executive Summary:

The executive summary offers a clear and concise overview of the main points, key findings, and recommendations from the full analysis of the UM-Flint listening sessions. This summary highlights the essential results and themes identified, providing an at-a-glance understanding of the project’s purpose, major insights, and next steps.

## About Us:

This document provides an overview of all programs currently facilitated by the Genesee County Health Department (GCHD). Local Health Departments are mandated by public health law to maintain core health infrastructure and services. Each department serves a vital role within its community, acting as educators and implementation experts for public health programs such as WIC and the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. Beyond these responsibilities, we also support community health through a wide range of additional initiatives.

