

# Genesee County Association of Chiefs of Police

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Dear County Commissioners,

October 30, 2023

During the October meeting of the Genesee County Association of Chiefs of Police, the members discussed the proposed closing of the out-county court buildings and voted unanimously to oppose the closing of these buildings. The members of the association believe that this is a terrible idea. Our challenge to you is to find the funding necessary to keep these buildings open and fully functional even if it means asking the voters to pay a county-wide millage. These buildings and the business conducted in each are vital to the efficiency of the judicial system here in Genesee County.

Are you aware that the out-county court buildings handle the vast majority of the case load here in Genesee County? According to the district court administrator, the out-county court buildings conduct over 80% of the case load in the county. The remaining case load is mostly felony cases handled by the circuit court downtown. If you have ever been to the court buildings downtown, then you know just how busy they already are and imagine adding 80% more of a case load to what is already going on.

The current environment at the McCree is stressed on days when exams are scheduled. The duty judge has multiple exams scheduled each day. Officers, victims, witnesses, and sometime suspects, and their families begin to arrive at McCree. Very shortly thereafter there are no side rooms outside of each courtroom available for privacy for victims, prosecutors, and officers to discuss cases. The people most affected by this overcrowding are our victims and witnesses. We have a huge concern with this because the victims get victimized yet again when they are forced to sit in the hallway with the perpetrator or the perpetrator's family as they are about to testify against them.

The situation above does not consider pretrials for misdemeanors, traffic court, landlord tenant disputes and civil proceedings which are typically handled by the out-county court locations. Instead of being serviced by a local court, a citizen will now have to travel to the City of Flint. Municipalities on the outer edges of the county like Linden, Argentine, Montrose, will see an impact with officers being out of their jurisdictions for significant periods of time to be in downtown Flint if the out-county courts are forced to close. The 6 courts service multiple departments each, and each department has paperwork, warrants, sometimes tickets as well as other correspondence that must be delivered to their servicing court on a regular basis. Not to mention the local aspect of problem solving for police departments and the citizens that each court serves. Citizens who are trying to take care of "fix-it-tickets" (tickets for defective equipment) alone will be significantly burdened by having to drive from their municipality to downtown Flint, to have their ticket waived. We realize that these issues may seem part of the daily job, however; it will impact the budgets at years end for some of the smaller municipalities. The other glaring fact is that the closings will force citizens in each local municipality to conduct their local business in a courtroom that is not local for them. Forcing citizens from Flushing, Grand Blanc, Montrose, Argentine, Linden, etc. to go to the City of Flint for small claims or any other matter is not an equitable solution.

Parking downtown is already a logistical nightmare for officers, victims, witnesses, and offenders who subpoenaed to appear downtown for court. If you close the six out-county court buildings, there will be an 80% increase in people needing to find a place to park. Then factor in any construction projects, such as the paver project that is ongoing, traffic and parking downtown is going to be a frustrating issue for anyone needing to conduct business at the courthouses. Our primary concern is when our victims,

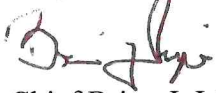
## MEMBER AGENCIES

Argentine Twp PD, Bishop Airport Authority, Clio PD, Davison PD, Flint Area Narcotics Group (F.A.N.G.), Fenton PD, Flint PD, Flint Twp. PD, Flushing PD, Flushing Twp. PD, Genesee Auto-Theft Investigation Network (G.A.I.N.), Genesee County 911, Genesee Twp. PD, Genesee County Prosecutor's Office, Genesee County Sheriff's Office, Grand Blanc PD, Grand Blanc Twp. PD, Kettering University Campus Safety, Law Enforcement Officers Regional Training Commission (L.E.O.R.T.C.), Linden PD, Metro Police Authority, Michigan State Police, Montrose Twp. PD, Mott Community College PD, Mt. Morris PD, Mt. Morris Twp. PD, Otisville PD, Richfield Twp PD, U of M Flint PD, U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF), U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), U.S. Marshall Service, and U.S. Secret Service.

witnesses, elderly, and high-risk victims must appear downtown and can't find a place anywhere close by to park.

It is for these reasons and more that the members of the Genesee County Association of Chiefs of Police are asking the Genesee County Board of Commissioners to reconsider their plan on closing the six out-county courthouse buildings. These buildings and their operations are too important to the judicial processes here in Genesee County. Please exhaust all avenues in attempting to keep these buildings open.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read "B. Lipe".

Chief Brian J. Lipe

President

Genesee County Association of Chiefs of Police

P.O. Box 320031

Flint, MI 48532

[blipe@cityofgrandblancmi.gov](mailto:blipe@cityofgrandblancmi.gov)