

Urban Peer Group Committee
SEMCOG General Assembly - The Icon, Detroit
March 19, 2026
12:30 – 2 p.m.

MEETING NOTES

1. Welcome

- Mount Clemens Mayor Laura Kropp reflected on her time as a newly elected official, and the value of the resources she found through SEMCOG over the years since getting involved, including connections to data, best practice examples, and networking among peers.

2. Introductions & Icebreaker

- Attendance: Laura Kropp, Erik Rik (Mount Clemens); Isabel Alaway (Hamtramck); Anita Ashford (Port Huron); Milanna Jones (Pontiac); Michele Hodges (GPP); Erika Briggs (Ann Arbor); Zaineb Hussein, Maria Willet (Dearborn); Terry Campbell (Sen. Peters Office); Jess Westendorf (Farmington); 2x Washtenaw County; DTE; several others arrived after introductions.
- Participants discussed assigned icebreaker topics one-on-one, then shared what they learned about others with the group. Feedback included:
 - A hidden gem in Farmington is the Hawk— a former school redeveloped as a community center.
 - A trend/issue shaping Ann Arbor is the housing crisis, where limited supply and high costs present ongoing challenges.
 - If the City of Pontiac were a movie, it would be Les Misérables - representing a long history of hard times, but growth and opportunity coming from community-driven efforts.
 - DTE's most common concerns from their interactions with residents/ customers are rooted in affordability challenges.

3. Group Discussion:

- Participants shared feedback through a virtual poll, and then provided examples for the group based on their responses. Poll results are shown on the following images, with examples highlighted with each.
- Local Priorities, Success Stories, and Applied Resources:



- Data tools and analysis are widely used for planning, decision making, funding applications
- Learning and networking opportunities are of great value
- Addressing environment/ infrastructure and economic/ community vitality issues are top of mind for many.
- Challenges, Needs, and Future Opportunities:



- Participants are looking to SEMCOG to help address flooding vulnerability; Understanding how data centers fit in communities; Preparing for the 2030 census and wanting all citizens to be counted as part of the process.
- Priority topics for future discussions included:

- Urban flooding and resilience
- Urban placemaking
- Urban main streets/districts
- Some communities volunteered to host future meetings:
 - Mount Clemens
 - Pontiac
 - Farmington