

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVI
MONDAY, AUGUST 11, 2025, AT 7:00 P.M.**

Mayor Fischer called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Mayor Fischer, Mayor Pro Tem Casey, Council Members Gurumurthy, Heintz, Smith, Staudt (*absent/excused*), Thomas

ALSO PRESENT: Victor Cardenas, City Manager
Tom Schultz, City Attorney

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

CM 25-08-103 Moved by Thomas, seconded by Casey; MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

To approve the agenda as presented.

Roll call vote on CM 25-08-103	Yeas: Casey, Gurumurthy, Heintz, Smith, Thomas, and Fischer Nays: None Absent: Staudt
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PRESENTATIONS: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

CITY MANAGER REPORT:

1. Fourth Quarter (Q4) Council Goals Update

Assistant City Manager Danielle Mahoney said that they have made a lot of progress. She said the OBV Study was completed, and they were able to receive a report out from Morgan Stanley about how they have been implementing suggestions. She said development continues at Town Center, which they will hear a bit more about in this update. She said with ongoing accreditation efforts, there was an exciting update from the Police Department to share as well. She said for the fourth quarter they are cruising along. She said that at the end of the third quarter, nearly two thirds of the goals were either in progress or completed. She said as the fourth quarter is ending, they are at about 75% of goals in progress or completed. She said last week they met with the Ordinance Review Committee to propose some structural updates to the current boards and commissions. She said what staff is proposing is just to streamline the cycles that we currently have for appointment periods, application periods, and terms. She said they are trying to make that process a little bit more efficient for everyone involved. She said they presented a very high-level recommendation last week. She said staff is going to pull together some of that information and get it into an admin packet to send out to the full council with those recommendations. She said more importantly they wanted to inform council of the current state, there are a lot of moving parts with boards and commissions, committees, term limits, dates, things like that. She said they're just going to give a full picture of where things are, and what they do today and then make a

recommendation at a high level for what they are proposing. She said that will come back to Council another date for action. She said the Town Center is one of the goals she was thinking of through a vibrancy strategy. She said the Sakura development is underway. The Special Assessment District (SAD) process for infrastructure and facilities is in review. She said the Corridor Improvement Authority has been charged with the entire corridor on Grand River to make it livelier. She said City Manager Cardenas has been speaking with officials at Walmart to use their parking lot to try and activate that area as a gathering space. She said they had initial conversations. She said the conversation has been positive and they are thinking of doing a rendering for potential painting, such as a mural, and then renderings for some seating areas and gathering spaces, whether that be a pop-up concert series, food trucks, etc. She said they are still thinking about what that could look like, but there have been very early discussions. She said under the investment tab, there is exciting news for the Roads and PASER score. She said one of Council's Goals is that all of the percentages of roads rated poor or fair fall below 50%. She said the percentage has gone down to 49%, so that goal has been met. She said that they would want to see that percentage continue to decrease. She said that over the weekend the Police Department was awarded their second accreditation with CALEA through the Michigan Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission. She said she would like to congratulate them on continued pursuit of excellence through these accreditation efforts. She said there are still some goals in progress that they will continue to work on both short and long term and continue to make progress. She said that the Council will reconvene in January to do this all over again and reestablish new goals for the fiscal year. She said that meeting will coincide with the budget planning process to help staff be informed on priorities to make sure they are in line with the Council goals as they continue to work on the budget. She said a hope is to also have alignment with the Novi 2050 efforts. She said she thinks the ultimate goal of the Council goals is hopefully the 2050 plan that can act as the North Star as they go through the process in the coming years.

Member Gurumurthy said congratulations to the Police Department for the accreditations. She said thank you for bringing a status update because it is good to see progress. She said she has a couple of comments regarding building a community around downtown. She said she knows they are focused on the town center, which is great, and she loves the update with Walmart, but wants to request that they keep Main Street in the same space, so it is all included. She said the way the goal was written was coming up with a strategy plan. She said she doesn't think they want to spend a lot of effort, but at the same time they want to look at the whole area holistically and come up with some ways at a high level to then work towards execution. She said some of the goals say fiscal year 2026 which is appropriate because those will extend to the next year. She said some of the other goals would not be Q4, so there is potential to update for the target completion of those goals.

Mayor Fischer said that the Town Center goal came up about two years ago. He said that goal was more about the four corners of Grand River and Novi. He said he doesn't think we are really hitting the mark on that one as far as the area they are trying to enhance, and the strategic plan. He said it looks like they are doing things to accomplish

a goal but not meeting that grander strategic plan for the whole area. He said we are missing the marks on this one. He said if they're to pick an area to be connecting with, it would actually be Main Street. He said the city is having issues with ordinance enforcement in that area, whereas the Town Center has been developing and redeveloping and investing in itself. He said the fact that we would try to increase the usage in that area when we have an underutilized area just south of Grand River is surprising. He said he would take a look at that goal and maybe bring it back to Council in a month or two and hit some of the same points that Councilmember Gurumurthy has brought up.

ATTORNEY REPORT: None

AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

Daniel Redstone, President of Redstone Architects, said he is excited that the bond issue has passed. He said their company conducted a renovation study in 2020 of the public safety building, which led to a strategic planning study in 2023. He said their report in collaboration with public safety and the department and committees were presented to Council in January of 2024. He said the study they did became the base for the bond issue and included a new public safety building with a fire station attached of about 73,000 square feet, and two new fire stations. He said Plante Moran recommended one design professional for all three projects. He said they also indicated that they would solicit proposals from qualified firms, and only four firms were invited. He asked how those firms were chosen, and why. He said he is looking at the websites of the firms invited and none of them specialize in public safety projects. He asked if any of the invited firms have sufficient staff experience with public safety facilities. He said he is asking the city to consider engaging with two design professionals for the bond issue to work concurrently with one construction manager, one architect for the public safety building, and another architect for stations two and three of the renovations. He said he would like to stress that there are numerous firms in the Detroit area that are qualified to design fire stations. He said, for example, Chesterfield Township recently received 14 proposals for a new 10,000 square foot fire station. He said he considers many of them to be very qualified to build fire stations, but only one of those firms is on the City's list. He said in addition, Lake Township is an example of multiple design professionals working with one construction manager at risk. He said they are currently running three projects, a public safety building, a town hall, and the 9-acre site for the buildings to be on. He said he requests for the Council to consider involving local architects and requests Plant Moran to solicit proposals from local architects for the designs of the public safety and fire stations.

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS AND APPROVALS:

CM 25-08-104 Moved by Thomas, seconded by Smith; MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

To approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

- A. Approve Minutes of:
July 28, 2025 - Regular Meeting
- B. Acceptance of a water main easement from the property owner of 21525 Beck Road (parcel 50-22-32-400-020) for construction of the Southwest Water Main Loop, in the amount of \$9,323.16.
- C. Approval of a Warranty Deed to dedicate 43 feet half-width right-of-way along the east side of Dixon Road for the Fountain View Professional Center located on the north side of Twelve Mile east of Dixon Road (parcel 50-22-10-400-074).
- D. Acceptance of a Warranty Deed to dedicate 60 feet of half-width right-of-way along the north side of Grand River Avenue, and of a sidewalk easement for the Supply Line International Medical Center project (parcel 50-22-23-226-001).
- E. Approval of a Storm Drainage Facility Maintenance Easement Agreement for the Supply Line International Medical Center project located on the north side of Grand River Avenue east of Town Center Drive (parcel 50-22-23-226-001).
- F. Approval of a Storm Drainage Facility Maintenance Easement Agreement for CVS Distribution Center located on Gen Mar, west of Novi Road (parcel 50-22-22-276-009).
- G. Approval of a Storm Drainage Facility Maintenance Easement Agreement for Goddard School located on the north side of Grand River Avenue east of Wixom Road (parcel 50-22-17-126-016).
- H. Approval of a Storm Drainage Facility Maintenance Easement Agreement for the Regency Drive Unit One project located west of Haggerty Road, north of Regency Drive (parcel 50-22-24-276-014).
- I. Approval of a Storm Drainage Facility Maintenance Easement Agreement for O'Reilly Auto Parts located on the south side of Grand River Avenue east of Novi Road (parcel 50-22-23-102-030).
- J. Approval of Traffic Controls Order 25-02 through 25-03 for the implementation of No Parking Zones around the islands at the two intersections of Stonehenge Blvd. and N. Rockledge Blvd.
- K. Approval of Traffic Controls Order 25-04 through 25-12 for various regulatory signs for Montebello Court within Montebello subdivision.
- L. Approval of Traffic Control Order 25-13 for the implementation of a No Left Turn restriction onto Taft Road from the northern school driveway on school days only during the periods of 7:00 AM – 9:00 AM and 2:20 PM – 4:20 PM.

- M. Resolution Approving Assignment of Commercial Rehabilitation Exemption Certificate (Sakura Novi, located at 42750 Grand River Avenue).
- N. Approval of a Resolution to terminate the existing water main easement for the Porsche of Novi project (parcel 50-22-24-476-036).
- O. Approval of the Ordinance Review Committee's recommendation to refer Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment 18.306 to the Planning Commission for public hearing and recommendation back to the City Council to modify the B-3, General Business District to reclassify auto washes from Principal Permitted Uses to Special Land Uses in the B-3 District, and to add use standards to be met by new Auto Wash establishments.
- P. Enter Executive Session immediately following the regular meeting of August 11, 2025, in the Council Annex to discuss union negotiations.
- Q. Approval of claims and warrants – Warrant 1185.

Roll call vote on CM 25-08-104

**Yeas: Gurumurthy, Heintz, Smith, Thomas,
Fischer, Casey
Nays: None
Absent: Staudt**

MATTERS FOR COUNCIL ACTION:

- 1. Consideration of two Resolutions authorizing the conversion of Existing County Drain Facilities in Novi to a new Drain district; the Rouge Valley Sanitary Inter-County Drain**

City Manager Cardenas said the City's sanitary sewage flows through a system partly owned by Oakland County and ultimately treated by Wayne County with the city paying Oakland County for the service. He said this arrangement operates under Act 342, giving Oakland County's Water Resource Commissioner administrative control over decisions and improvements. He said the Water Resource Commission (WRC) asked Novi to switch the legal framework to Chapter 20 and 21 drains under Michigan Drain Code. He said Chapter 20 covers North Novi and Oakland County and Chapter 21 covers a portion of Wayne County and the City of Northville. He said while the day-to-day operation would remain the same, the change would shift the oversight to a public drainage board made up of elected officials requiring open meetings and formal approvals for improvement. He said City Staff support this change as Novi already uses the governance model for regional stormwater management and have prepared petitions and resolutions to start the process. He said he believes officials in the WRC and Public Works are available to answer any questions.

Member Smith asked if the elected officials will be a new body, if they will be electing a board directly, or if the members are appointed. City Manager Cardenas said he believes elected officials can be there but believes appointed officials have also served

in that conjunction with the Water Resource Commissioner to be able to go through the official business of the commission. A manager with the Oakland County Water Resource Commissioners Office said the 1956 drain code is what these would fall under, and it's a three-person board. She said it's made up of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, the Chair of the Oakland County Finance Committee, and the countywide elected drain commissioner; so, you don't choose the three elected officials because they are appointed, according to the drain code set by the state. Member Smith asked if they would still have the same input as they currently do as far as what happens in the city. She said technically right now, under code 342 and Jim Nash as the agent, they don't have a lot of say. She said they work with the city, because Jim Nash is a wonderful person, but he doesn't have to as it is purely his decision. She said this gives them more say as an elected body to come forward and actually speak up and have a place where they can be heard which they did not have previously.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said that moving to Chapter 20 and 21 gives the council more of an ability to have say in related matters. She asked how that works, if it is an elected board, that they have no authority over, and none of the three members have any connection to Novi. She asked how the council as an elected body has more ability to influence. The Manager said right now, Jim Nash is a countywide elected official and the agent of the Huron Rouge. She said when he sets the rates, it is his decision, and he just signs off on it. She said there is not a public meeting where concerns can be raised. She said under the Chapter 20 drain code, all rates are set through a public meeting. She said there is a window that it is open, depending on what the item is, but usually about 30-60 days where there is a public hearing and responses are taken from the public; that window does not currently exist. She said when you do large capital projects that are bonded under Chapters 20 and 21, they have to petition from two of the communities. So, it would be City of Northville and Novi would both have to petition to do anything because Novi is the only member of Chapter 20. She said they could not build any bonded projects without the City of Novi petitioning to make it happen. She said the Council would have a lot more say than they do under the current method. Whereas now the WRC just does a project and bills the city afterwards. Mayor pro Tem Casey asked what kind of influence they would have on the rate setting. The Manager said the Water Resource Commissioner recommends the rates. She said what normally happens is they meet with communities and take those discussions to Jim Nash. She said because of the very good relationships they have with the communities; she isn't anticipating that that changes, except for the rates going to the board. She said they meet with communities now as kindness. She said in the future it would sort of be best practice to meet and get your buy-in for rates. She said it protects the communities that they are rolling into this practice for the future. She said depending on the elected officials over the next 20-30 years the practice could change, but this agreement would be locked into stone for the new method.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey asked what the requirement is for the board to notify the City Council directly when there is an open window for feedback and discussion. Lauren Burton is an attorney for Clark Hill, the legal team helping the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner's office into the transition from Act 342 systems to Chapters 20

and 21 drain code. She said if she had the drain code she could provide an exact timeframe. However, in general these petitions would initiate a process under both Chapters 20 and 21 respectively, that involve numerous public notices, public hearings, and appeal opportunities for the public corporations impacted. She said the City of Novi under Chapter 20 and the City of Northville and City of Novi under Chapter 21 would have appeal opportunities and there are different deadlines for each of those things. She said they would be happy to write out step by step on what happens after a petition is filed and how the process works. She said there is a series of steps and meetings. She said filing a petition under Chapter 21 Drain is a bit more convoluted, because it involves the County of Wayne and the folks there as well. She said each Chapter will have a different timeline in terms of when different hearings are held and notices are sent. She said they would be happy to prepare a timeline for the Council to be well aware moving forward. Mayor Pro Tem Casey asked if the City would receive a direct notification or if they would be reliant on articles posted in the paper. Attorney Burton said that there are direct notices to public corporations. Mayor Pro Tem Casey said she doesn't know when the City has been in a partnership where it crosses the boundaries between Novi and Northville. She said she wants to know what would happen going forward. She said for instance if there is a big project in Novi that is 95% benefit to Novi, and 5% to Northville, but Northville says, 'no thanks.' She asked how that situation would work under the new offering. Attorney Burton said each petition project currently does not involve any capital improvements to the system. She said when a project is planned in the future, they will need petitions, similar to what is being proposed today to move forward. She said in the case of Chapter 21 Drain system with Wayne County, there would be a board set up with a representative from the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development who acts as the chair of that board. She said then it is the Wayne County Drain Commissioner, the Oakland County Water Resources Commission, and the respective chairs of those boards of commissioners and the finance or fiscal committees. She said in the case of Chapter 21, there is sort of a tiebreaker, having the MDA representative there. She said also for the apportionment example, if that particular project was benefitting to one community more than the other, that board would have to designate those apportionments or the percentage of costs to those communities. She said there are appeal periods for that. She said not only would that board have to agree to set something, but then each community will get an opportunity to appeal it as well. She said there are a lot of checks and balances moving forward. She said for those individual projects, the apportionments don't stay the same forever, it depends on the specifics of each project.

Mayor Fischer said this has been billed as a very good thing for Novi and asked if there are any cons that the Council should be considering whilst making the decision. Attorney Burton said they couldn't think of any. She said she believes the Council was provided with a bullet point list of benefits for the city to pursue the action. She said ultimately the benefit is to the county from switching ownership and liability from the county to a drainage district or a separate legal entity under the drain code. The manager from the Water Resources Commission said the City of Novi has been paying cash, and majority of the communities they talk with the bonding is a big thing. She said if you bond under 3-42 the method they generally use requires full faith and credit of the communities. She

said normally when they introduce the drain code and so that there is no full faith and credit, other communities get excited about it. Attorney Burton said on a negative side, the only con she has perceived is going from working with Jim Nash to working with a board. She said it would only be a negative, because Jim Nash is a very easy person to work with. She said with that caveat that Jim Nash obviously will not be the elected Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner forever. She said that the petition process also slows down some big capital projects. She said a downfall is that you may need more than a year in advance before you can just put a shovel in the ground or put engineers on the projects. The Manager with the WRC said they do have a five-year plan, so it is not something they are concerned about, but it is something they have noticed. She said they transitioned the Southeast Oakland Sewage Disposal system to GWK. She said they also transitioned the Evergreen Farmington system to Evergreen Farmington Drain. She said it does take longer with petitions due to the hearing processes and payment processes rather than just proposing something to Jim Nash. Mayor Fischer asked if the major benefit to them is the shifting of liabilities from the county to the drainage system. The WRC manager said there have been a lot of lawsuits regarding rates, and that the county has been very good at protecting itself. She said there have been other counties and communities in Michigan where their general fund has been put at risk, and that there being directed to slowly move away from the management of the rates and keep it to the legal entity. Mayor Fischer asked City Manager Cardenas if staff were in full support of the item and if they anticipate any issues with projects, rates setting, or anything alike. He asked if he felt fully confident in the recommendation. City Manager Cardenas said that is correct.

Member Smith asked if there is a project going on and if something goes badly wrong, the entity is sued. He said if the project is all in Novi and Oakland County, right now the entity is the Oakland County Water Commission. He said in the new scenario, same project, same thing goes wrong, would the liability fall on Novi. The Manager for the WRC responded that no, the county is self-insured, and it falls under the county when they pull out to a drain. She said the WRC purchases insurance the same as you would car insurance, and that would cover the drain. So, it wouldn't be Novi on the hook. She said Novi would be on the hook for insurances fees, like you would for anything else you own. She said it's equivalent to what Novi is paying into the county and sometimes even lower. She said you are protecting the county and also getting better insurance, because the county is not as friendly with their payment sometimes. She said this option is like a back door that protects them from liability.

CM 25-08-105

Moved by Thomas, seconded by Smith: MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

Approval of two Resolutions authorizing the filing of Petitions necessary to convert existing County Drain facilities in Novi, now known as the Huron Rouge Sewage Disposal System, into a Chapter 20 Drain to be identified as the Huron Rouge Sanitary Drain and a Chapter 21 Drain to be identified as the Rouge Valley Sanitary Inter-County Drain

Roll call vote on CM 25-08-105

**Yeas: Heintz, Smith, Thomas, Fischer, Casey,
Gurumurthy**

Nays: None

Absent: Staudt

- 2. Consideration of a cost participation agreement with the Road Commission of Oakland County (RCOC) for the rehabilitation construction costs for Novi Road from Eight Mile Road to Nine Mile Road, in the amount of \$ 111,667.**

City Manager Cardenas said this is for the rehabilitation efforts for Novi between 8 and 9 Mile. He said this will be done in two phases of construction. He said the first will begin this fall and the second will be wrapping everything up in the summer of 2023. He said this will all be done utilizing tri-party funding.

CM 25-08-106

Moved by Casey, seconded by Thomas: MOTION CARRIED 6-0

Approval of a cost participation agreement with the Road Commission of Oakland County (RCOC) for the construction associated with the rehabilitation of Novi Road from Eight Mile Road to Nine Mile Road, with the estimated City share in the amount of \$111,667.

Roll call vote on CM 25-08-106

**Yeas: Smith, Thomas, Fischer, Casey,
Gurumurthy, Heintz**

Nays: None

Absent: Staudt

- 3. Consideration to approve the purchase of a shooting lane upgrade system for the Novi Firearms Training Center (FTC) from Action Target in the amount of \$154,950.**

City Manager Cardenas said this is currently budgeted for this year's budget in the Firearms Training Center Fund. He said this is a completely self-sustaining fund with revenue paying for the operations and improvements from the rentals of the training center. He said most importantly, this is coming under budget.

CM 25-08-107

Moved by Smith, seconded by Gurumurthy: MOTION CARRIED 6-0

Approval to purchase a shooting lane upgrade system for the Novi Firearms Training Center (FTC) from Action Target, sole source provider, and through a General Services Administration (GSA) contract in the amount of \$154,950.

Roll call vote on CM 25-08-107

**Yeas: Thomas, Fischer, Casey, Gurumurthy,
Heintz, Smith**

Nays: None

Absent: Staudt

4. Consideration of approval of the FIRST READING of Amendment to the City of Novi Code of Ordinances, Section 33-501, relating to parking on narrow streets.

City Manager Cardenas said this recommendation comes from the Ordinance Review Committee specifically addressing street parking and ensuring there is enough space for emergency vehicles to pass in the narrow streets and around the city. He said this is also preventing blocking driveways; not allowing cars to park directly behind driveways that are on narrow streets which are 24 feet and similar.

Member Smith said he gives commendation to the Ordinance Review Committee, as this was a challenging question on how to deal with parking on the streets. He said it seems like a very good solution.

CM 25-08-108 Moved by Smith, seconded by Thomas: MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

Approval of Ordinance to amend the City of Novi Code of Ordinances, Chapter 33, "Traffic and Motor Vehicles", Article II, "Uniform Traffic Code," Division 2, "Additional Regulations," Subdivision 5, "Stopping, Standing, Parking," Section 33-501, "Parking in a Manner that Obstructs Traffic; Violation as Civil Infraction," in order to add standards relating to parking on narrow streets. FIRST READING

Roll call vote on CM 25-08-108

**Yeas: Fischer, Casey, Gurumurthy, Heintz,
Smith, Thomas**

Nays: None

Absent: Staudt

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS: None

AUDIENCE COMMENT: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Ordinance Review Committee – Mayor Fischer

Mayor Fischer said the Ordinance Review Committee met recently and spoke at quite a great length about the parking ordinance that was just discussed. He said they also discussed pickleball courts and setting a potential set back for those. He said they discussed boards and commissions, which Assistant City Manager Mahoney also commented on. He said in the future they will be talking about garbage and fees associated with those collections.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL ISSUES: None

COMMUNICATIONS: None

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:34 P.M.

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Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

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Justin Fischer, Mayor

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Transcribed by Alyssa Craigie,
Administrative Assistant

Date approved: August 25, 2025