

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVI  
MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2026, 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, Martinez, Smith, Staudt

**ALSO PRESENT:** Victor Cardenas, City Manager  
Danielle Mahoney, Assistant City Manager  
Tom Schultz, City Attorney

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**CM 26-01-003      Moved by Martinez, seconded by Casey; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0**

**To approve the agenda as presented.**

**Roll call vote on CM 26-01-003      Yeas: Casey, Gurumurthy, Heintz, Martinez,  
Smith, Staudt, Fischer  
Nays: None**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS: None**

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**24/25 Council Goals Final Update**

Assistant City Manager Mahoney presented a final update on the latest goal cycle. For context, she said every two years, Council gets together for goal-setting sessions. She presented the goals that were approved in 2024. At that time, City Council divided their strategic priorities into three categories: operate, build and invest. In each of those categories, they had short- and long-term goals. To re-cap, for Q4, she presented 23 Council goals. All the goals under Invest were underway. Two of them were completed. She mentioned some key highlights on Boards and Commissions updates, some development going on at the Town Center area and ongoing accreditation efforts. There has not been much movement since that update. They have completed a few more goals, and some things have moved from "planning" to "in progress." Similar to last time, about 75% of the goals are either in progress or completed. Assistant City Manager Mahoney said they have made some updates to the Board and Commission structure. Staff made recommendations to the Rules Committee that were aligned and presented to Council. These changes streamline the application process to cut down on different timeframes for when they receive applications and when they make appointments. They've developed some internal standard operating procedures to align staff liaisons around standard processes for how they manage the committees, including some loose AI guidelines that have been shared previously. This isn't one of the goals that will be stopping; they will continue to make updates to this process—specifically around onboarding. There has been a lot of conversation around new Council Member

onboarding. They also want to look at how they onboard people serving on committees, boards and commissions. She also highlighted an item that sunsets the Older Adult Advisory Board and streamlines that into some other efforts to make things more efficient. She said she previously spoke about some progress that was happening in the Novi Town Center area, building off a goal to create a vibrancy strategy in that "four corners" area. They got some feedback to expand their scope. Staff shifted their focus to the Main Street area. She said they've had some promising meetings with property owners in the Main Street area talking about creating a Special Assessment District, both for lighting improvements that are needed and for streetscape improvements. Those owners will be getting back to the City Manager's office by the end of January to say if they would like to do that. Lastly, Assistant City Manager Mahoney said accreditation and reaccreditation are ongoing. The Parks and Recreation team has submitted its self-assessment for CAPRA reaccreditation and the National Peer Review team is going to do a virtual site visit in May. If reaccreditation is recommended by the review team to the CAPRA Commission, they will likely be granted formal reaccreditation at the NRPA conference in Philadelphia in September. She said by nature, a lot of the goals Council set lend themselves to being more long-term. They continue to explore opportunities with the school district which rolls into one of the new proposed goals. Senior mobility and transit are an ongoing issue for staff. She mentioned accreditation and reaccreditation and then the CIP Millage Renewal. Council will get something in their packet next week to talk about the process and some considerations the staff has put together to get that planning underway.

Assistant City Manager Mahoney said Council has set some new goals. As part of that transition, they're going to officially close out the reporting cycle on the 2024 goals, saving the ones they are continuing to work on. They are going to align their departmental work plans and resources with the newly adopted goals. She plans to update Council quarterly. For the first quarterly update, Mayor Fischer requested a slide to show anticipated dates that they'll see all the quarterly updates so they can make sure they keep to that schedule and follow-through with the updates.

#### **CITY MANAGER REPORT:**

City Manager Cardenas said the Clerk's office received an email from Mr. Syed who lives on Argyle. Mr. Syed wanted to recognize Novi's Department of Public Works and Matt Wiktorowski, in particular, for their hard work in keeping the roads accessible during these very frigid times. City Manager Cardenas said the team has done a fantastic job cleaning the roads and keeping them safe for the city residents and visitors.

#### **ATTORNEY REPORT: None**

#### **AUDIENCE COMMENTS:**

Ann Nelke, 48646 Windfall Road, said she is not opposed to development. She moved into a ranch condo at the Village of Stonebrook four years ago because she wanted to stay in Novi and her rheumatoid arthritis has made living in a two-story home less feasible.

She objected to this proposal in its current state for the following reasons: Woodland Destruction. The plan proposes to remove 484 mature trees deemed in good condition. She said this will have a negative impact on carbon mitigation from gas emissions, temperature control, soil preservation, soil purification and flood prevention. Wetland Impact. Per the City's goal of environmental sustainability, removal or mitigation of wetlands and vernal pools poses an increased flood risk, a threat to water purity and causes irreplaceable damage to the environment. Negative impact on neighboring residents. Placing evergreen trees (which are not 30' tall) as well as planting replacement trees (which are at best 4' in diameter and will take 50-75 years to reach the maturity to be beneficial as the ones destroyed) is not any type of benefit to adjoining residents and does not provide the buffer developers claim. Light Pollution. 71 townhouses with required outside road lighting will again cause a disturbance to the quality of life for the adjoining residents. Increased Traffic Burden. Approximately 142 vehicles per day pulling out onto Ten Mile will slow down current traffic volume which is already heavy and will cause a greater risk for accidents. The claim is a moderate increase, and this does not appear to be the case. Ms. Nelke said, per the City's goals, any change in zoning should be a benefit and not a detriment to adjoining residents as well as all residents of Novi. She truly hopes that developers will take the time to listen to the actual needs of many residents, 40% of whom are over the age of 45 and wish to downsize to a smaller footprint, ranch, home or condo to remain in their community. Sadly, this does not appear to be the case. She said it is imperative for our elected officials, who are the residents' voices, to maintain and preserve the integrity of Novi by thought-filled reasons to changes in zoning as well as abiding by set ordinances.

Martha Ryznar, 44875 Yorkshire Drive, said she is against the rezoning of the Novi 10 project because she believes the developer is overbuilding on a sensitive site. She asked the Council as they consider a tentative approval, to put Novi neighborhoods and the environment first. She said the developer bought the land knowing it had wetlands and protected trees. That was a choice they made. If the City changes the rules in order to make the project work, she said it feels like the City is bailing the developer out for a risky investment and that breaks the master plan. She does not think it's the City's job to fix a developer's mistake, especially when it hurts the environment. She suggested that rather than accommodating the developer who is pivoting from failed commercial plans, the developer could sell the property. Ms. Ryznar asked why Novi should lose nearly 500 trees and risk flooding homes to make this project work. She said a large part of this land is a 100-year-old floodplain and she asked who would want to live on a floodplain. Novi's water table is already high. She asked if the new homeowners will be told that the homes built in this zone will require mandatory flood insurance which is very expensive. She said this is a huge red flag for any new resident. Moreover, she said, when you cover wetlands with concrete, the displaced water must go somewhere. She asked what that would mean for the current Ridgeview residents. She said she read the package and there hasn't been a study specifically investigating how the removal of wetlands (which act as a natural sponge) will affect the water table and basements of the Ridgeview families. Before Council approves this, she asked if they need an independent study so neighboring residents won't be paying the price with flooded homes. She said she does not see the public benefit; she sees a public risk. She said this is not a liability gap where

without this study, water could be in living rooms. Ms. Ryznar said there is a traffic study that shows this project adds 3,000 car trips per day. She said the 10 Mile and Novi Road intersection is already a bottleneck. The resident taxpayers will end up paying the bill for five lanes when the developer is long gone. She asked City Council to consider using state grants to buy the land for a permanent park. She said years from now, no one will thank Council for adding more traffic, but they will thank them for saving 500 trees, the wildlife and for keeping Novi beautiful for the residents' families. She asked City Council to vote no.

Greg Wayne, 42776 Cardinal Way, said he is on the board of Ridgeview Villas and he came to represent the 93 Ridgeview Villas homeowners. He said he had submitted a letter to Ms. Bell and Ms. Macbeth from the Planning Office. He asked that that letter be distributed to Council and Mayor Fischer. He said they have been working with Toll Brothers and Mr. Weiss, under Council's direction, to come to an agreement on the Novi 10 project. He said initially, they did not come to an agreement. He said the "writing is on the wall" and something is going to happen there whether it is a light industrial versus commercial and residential project. They came up with three items that are important to Ridgeview Villas and he came hoping that they could get Council agreement on them. One is the initial intention of connecting the two communities. The homeowners did not want to see that happen. They've spoken before about the liability risk of bringing the public into a private residential area such as Ridgeview Villas. So, they worked with the developer to come up with alternative plans to either use 10 Mile Road and Novi Road as a walkway or to use the property west of Ridgeview Villas (which is currently owned by Mr. Weiss) to put a path there that connects up to Nick Lidstrom Drive. The homeowners prefer to use 10 Mile Road and Novi Road because they are already in place and can be made into a nice public walkway to get people around to the areas that they want to go. If not, the homeowners fully support keeping the connector path out of Ridgeview and putting it to the west side of the property. The second item Mr. Wayne said the homeowners would like agreement about is a barrier between the two developments, meaning the evergreen trees. Currently, there is a nice barrier between Ridgeview Villas and the Novi Athletic Club that was done very well by Toll Brothers. They put large evergreens in and it works great. The homeowners don't see or hear them. They would like the same type of plantings to be put in place as early as possible in the construction process to mitigate dust and noise as they build the new units. Mr. Wayne spoke about a third item which he said seems to be an oversight on everyone's part. He said there were cut throughs put in the berms from the River Oaks apartments onto Nick Lidstrom Drive. He said the cut-throughs are not part of this project, and they shouldn't have been on the plans. The homeowners would like them removed. Mr. Wayne's final point was to say he had spoken with Mr. Schultz and Ms. Bell about the PRO that was written for Ridgeview Villas back in 2015. He said the PRO gave a public easement and the opportunity to connect the two developments. The discussion has been that they would need to amend that original PRO. He said he is not a lawyer, but he doesn't believe they need to go through the time, effort and money to amend it. He believes that if they state on the new Novi 10 PRO that they will never connect the two developments, that will satisfy everyone and they don't need to amend the original PRO. Mr. Wayne said those are the three items the homeowners are most concerned about.

He was hoping to come before Council with Mr. Weiss and tell them that they had worked together and made an agreement that included these three items. He thanked Council for listening.

**CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS AND APPROVALS:**

**CM 26-01-004          Moved by Casey, seconded by Martinez; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0**

**To approve the Consent Agenda as presented.**

- A. Approve Minutes of:  
January 10, 2026 - Regular Meeting
- B. Approval of request to transfer ownership of an existing Class C & SDM license from Wasabi K & H Inc. to Novi Ichiban Restaurant LLC (dba Ichiban Japanese Steakhouse), located at 42050 Grand River Ave, Novi, MI 48375.
- C. Approval to award a contract continuation for interim finance and accounting services to The WoodHill Group.
- D. Approval of Recommendation from Council Rules Committee to amend Council Organization and Order of Business.
- E. Consideration of approval to award engineering design services to OHM Advisors for the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of 11 Mile Road and Taft Road, in the amount of \$98,000.
- F. Approval of the final payment to Highway Maintenance and Construction Company, Inc. for the 2024/2025 Capital Preventative Maintenance in the amount of \$37,990, plus interest earned on retainage.
- G. Adoption of a resolution amending a contract with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) for the reconstruction and widening of Beck Road between 11 Mile Road and Grand River Avenue.
- H. Acceptance of a warranty deed from the property owner of the subject parcel (parcel 50-22-16-300-055) for the reconstruction and widening of Beck Road between 11 Mile Road and Grand River Avenue, in the amount of \$16,907.00.
- I. Approval of the final payment to Brenca Contractors, Inc. for the DPW Salt Dome Replacement project, in the amount of \$61,843.00, plus interest earned on retainage.
- J. Approval of resolution establishing smoking and vaping ban within specified areas and in city parks.
- K. Approval of claims and warrants – Warrant 1195

**Roll call vote on CM 26-01-004**

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

**MATTERS FOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

- 1. Consideration of tentative approval to rezone approximately 34 acres of land east of Novi Road, south of Ten Mile Road from Light Industrial and Office Service to Community Business and Low-Density Multiple Family with a Planned Rezoning Overlay.**

City Manager Cardenas said this is the third instance that City Council has seen this item, the last time was in December of 2024 when the matter was postponed. He said, as a reminder, the request is to re-zone the parcel via the PRO process to develop a 71-unit, multi-family townhome development in the R-1 portion and approximately 35,900 square feet of commercial space in the B-2 portion. The PRO public considerations are preservation of almost 16 acres of wetland woodland, a public access trail connection and marshland overlook and a donation of a trailhead area to the City of Novi. The applicant has also provided a letter summarizing their meetings with the Ridgeview Villas HOA in which they stated they have come to an agreement on several points, including not connecting the pathway Ridgeview stub intended for the purpose and providing enhanced screening. The Ridgeview HOA confirms this agreement. He said staff and the petitioner were there to answer any questions.

Lonny Zimmerman from Siegal/Tuomaala Associates Architects and Planners, Inc. said he was there in December 2024 to give the last presentation. He said they are in agreement with what they heard about the three items from the Ridgeview Villas HOA. He said Mr. Weiss and Toll Brothers accept that exactly. He believes they put that in a letter to Ms. Bell at the Planning Office. He said in December of 2024, Council asked them to meet with the Ridgeview Villas HOA. He said starting in November, they had a Zoom meeting with Toll Brothers and the HOA. After that, there were several telephone meetings with Mr. Weiss and they came to this agreement that Siegal/Tuomaala is totally in favor of. Mr. Zimmerman said Council wanted to see options for the path. He said they have three viable options. One was the one they agreed to abandon. It was the initial one which was the connection that was planned in the original PRO agreement. They are willing to abandon that option and go with the two other alternatives. One would be connecting via the existing sidewalk system. The other would be creating a path through the adjacent Novi 10 property—not part of the PRO to the west where a pathway which would be much shorter than the sidewalk route and would be through some more natural lands would be connecting totally bypassing Ridgeview but still connect. It would connect down roughly from the retail area and down Nick Lidstrom Drive and then over to get down as far south as the dog park, through the sports club area and through the ice arena. He said before that, even along the natural path so you can overlook the 16

acres of natural area that is going to be put into a conservation easement by Mr. Weiss. It will never be built on.

Mr. Zimmerman said Council also asked them to address traffic site drainage and the screening concerns. He said one thing that was mentioned is the screening from I-2 across 10 Mile Road. He said they have 75' of townhouse setback with heavy landscape evergreens in it. 10 Mile Road is that point 120' right-of-way. The I-2, the existing building, Tremar Industries, is set back about 115' now. Even if they were gone, and a new I-2 were there, they require 100' setback. He said there is quite a distance between there and hitting even the south side of 10 Mile Road where their landscaping would start. He said the evergreens would be planted at that point. It would be a 12-month kind of screening. It wouldn't be deciduous trees; it would be evergreens. He said Mr. Meter from the Landscape Architect's Office and Ms. Macbeth had a meeting with him several months ago where they talked about the screening material. They originally wanted a type of Arbor Vitae which would be deer-resistant, but Mr. Meter recommended against it because having one type of planting would not be advisable. For now, they've said it will be evergreen and they will work out the details later.

Mr. Zimmerman said as far as traffic in general, they are quite a bit less than the scenario if this were to be built on as zoned right now. He said if they were to build it up as zoned, it would be 616 parking spaces required. If they build it as they propose with the B-2 and the RM-1, there are 336 spaces which makes them over 45% less in terms of parking. Peak traffic generated is 35% less in the morning and 1% less in the afternoon than if it were built up under the current zoning. Regarding site drainage, Mr. Zimmerman said it currently goes about 13 acres toward the south, which is toward Ridgefield. With their new plan, they're directing it to the east which is toward the Middle Rouge which is in the wetlands area to the east. There is a 75% reduction in drainage going southbound, so away from Ridgeview and to the east. He said there is about a 200% increase to the east into the wetlands area with the drainage. Mr. Zimmerman said visual separation was another item that was talked about. They've got 150-170' between the closest building of Ridgeview and the new development. There is a line of evergreens south of the new townhouses that will run east and west along that development area.

Mr. Zimmerman said this project has been around for a long time. He thinks it's been at least 25 years and one of the Council members said it's been more than 25 years. It's been around a long time and it's gone through a lot of iterations. There have been several starts and stops in 2004 and 2009. They began this new iteration in July 2021. They are optimistic that they have a great solution. He said it solves residential, neighborhood, commercial. It's a walkable community. They want to make it a successful, walkable project where someone can go from the retail area to the dog park, walking through natural areas. They believe it's compatible with the 2025 Master Plan because it provides townhomes--the second most-requested type of housing in the City according to the Master Plan.

Mr. Zimmerman addressed how their project enhances Novi's community identity. He said they feel like high-quality residential, high-quality neighborhood commercial

because they have limited the uses in neighborhood commercial, they've excluded certain things they feel would not be compatible. They feel like they have helped the community identity through environmental stewardship, 15.87 acres of conservation easement, the connectivity of the path, the overlooks of the conservation area, and the two pocket parks. Mr. Zimmerman spoke about infrastructure. He said they've got a new path system for bicycles, pedestrians, and runners from the north area all the way down to the dog park. Regarding economic development, Mr. Zimmerman said this project is a balance between the economy, the environment and the community. He said they feel like this PRO does all of this and they hope that Council agrees that they have done enough to move it forward.

Member Gurumurthy said she was very happy to see that there had been a discussion and alignment between the HOA and the development team. She asked City Attorney Schultz about the connector that was part of the Ridgeview PRO agreement as a public benefit. She asked if they chose Option 3, would they be leveraging any public benefit from the Ridgeview PRO agreement. She asked how that situation would work, meaning would Ridgeview have to come up with an alternate public benefit. City Attorney Schultz said they had talked about the possibility of amending the Ridgeview agreement in December 2024. At that time, they were talking about a concept where Ridgeview was articulating their position that the pathway through their parcel was not a public pathway. There was some talk about whether it would be continued. Now, today, the pathway is still there. The pathway in Ridgeview will stay a public pathway, it just won't be connected. In his view, after talking with Planning staff, that isn't much different than City Council in an early development approving a stub road to the neighbor and then not connecting to the neighbor. He said it's there, it's still potentially a benefit, it's just not being used. The alternative proposed here is not nothing, it's a different route. He believes City Council can look at that say they're fine with Option 3 if that's the option they choose. Nothing needs to be done to the PRO for Ridgeview because nothing is changing. They're not re-designating it private or anything like that. This is how they ended up with the Community Development Department saying if Council wants to go with Option 3, then they can let Ridgeview stay where it is. If Council chooses to stay with the original option, they still have that authority as well. Member Gurumurthy asked if the current pathway that goes through Ridgeview is still a public benefit. City Attorney Schultz clarified and said yes, the pathway is still there, right up to the end of their property. Member Gurumurthy said she has two other points. The first is about the traffic. She said she drives through 10 Mile every day. She said, from looking through the information, the improvements that were proposed in terms of the westbound, eastbound and the center lane, she wanted to understand a little bit more. She said there were comments from RCOC in terms of the center lane that's not going to, in other words, they were not for it in terms of between the residential and the railroad tracks. She asked them to explain the final list of improvements that will happen on that road.

Mr. Zimmerman said he believes the RCOC asked that the center lane be extended all the way to the residential. He said they will follow what RCOC requires. There's no question about that. He said they will be adding the east, adding the west and the center where they require it and as they show on the drawings.

Member Gurumurthy asked if the developers had a drawing they could present. She asked them to confirm if the eastbound would taper into the commercial and then taper into the residential. Mr. Zimmerman said that was his understanding, yes. Member Gurumurthy asked what would happen with the westbound lane. She asked if that lane would continue from the railroad track through Novi Road or if it would start after the residential or the commercial. Mr. Jason Iacoangeli, Toll Brothers, said he understands that the westbound lane will be widened from the traffic signal to the railroad crossing. He said the widening will take place on both the eastbound and westbound lanes, starting at the driveway all the way to the tapers. The tapers will go past the commercial or the residential driveway and will extend on the north side of 10 Mile. Mayor Fischer asked Mr. Iacoangeli to put the drawing on the overhead. He showed the widening of the eastbound and westbound lanes and the designated lefthand turn lane. He said there are deceleration tapers on both sides of the residential and commercial. Member Gurumurthy said the pink color on the drawing represents the eastbound. Mr. Iacoangeli confirmed that. She said the eastbound goes through the residential which is clear. She said the developers are saying the westbound starts after Walgreen's, a little bit after the dental practice. Mr. Iacoangeli said that is right and there will be some widening of that lane as it approaches the railroad intersection even past the entrance to the residential development. He said they're requiring some additional width in that right-of-way. Member Gurumurthy asked if there would be a separate lane between Novi Road and the railroad track, an additional lane westbound. She asked if this drawing confirms there will be an extra lane. Mr. Iacoangeli said there is extra width being added to the northern lane which will be the westbound lane. The additional width is being added on the north side of the street and then it'll widen out on both sides as you approach the entrance to the residential driveway. The widening will continue between the entrance to the residential development and the commercial development on both sides of the street. There will be a benefit to those neighbors that are on the north side of 10 Mile. Member Gurumurthy said with the widening, the eastbound is pretty clear. The westbound lane is less clear. She asked if it's widening, is it still one lane or is it two. Mr. Iacoangeli said he doesn't believe they are requiring an extra lane, he believes they're just requiring that the lane be widened. Member Gurumurthy said that is not clear. Mr. Zimmerman said their engineers are working with the Road Commission and they are the ones who will be coordinating this as they get to more complete drawings. The drawings that were submitted and reviewed by the Road Commission were preliminary drawings and that is what they commented on. Mr. Zimmerman said the specifics will be really determined by what the Road Commission requires. Mr. Iacoangeli said preliminarily, mostly what they've looked at is the curb cuts for access. Member Gurumurthy said she was hoping it was a separate lane because that would help with traffic. At the end, toward Novi Road, it was a separate lane. It comes out as a separate lane. She said it would be good to clarify that. Then, she said she thinks the RCOC has said that the whole center lane to the residential was not feasible because of the head-on thing. She wanted to clarify that, too. She said if you think about the traffic there, the railroad track, if you don't have something to turn out, there will be a lot of traffic there. It is the only entry out of the residential area. She asked the developers to clarify that issue with the center lane, where it's going to be and where it is not. She said hopefully, it will be there at the

residential as well. Mr. Zimmerman said his recollection is that they wanted to go at least as far as the residential.

Member Gurumurthy mentioned timing. She said there are comments and discussions that are happening, but the timing needs to be very clear in terms of when the road gets done versus when the actual residential or commercial happens. The timing is critical. The traffic there is extremely busy in the early morning and at the end of the day. Mr. Zimmerman said they anticipate that the roadwork will be completed before occupancy of the residential and commercial. Member Gurumurthy said that the developers will plan around the timing. Mr. Zimmerman said he can't talk about the start dates, but they can relate more to the finish dates. He said they know they need to get the road in place before the buildings are operating.

Member Gurumurthy said they heard about flooding earlier in the meeting. She said there is a stormwater management plan that shows how the developer has managed how the water will be going into the Middle Rouge instead of the creek. She asked them to explain how the flooding plain is going to be mitigated in terms of the building. Mr. Zimmerman said it will be re-routed through the stormwater management plan that has been designed. He said it will happen through the grading of the site and through the management via the detention ponds that are there. He said that's the simple answer. Member Gurumurthy said they heard about the flooding insurance for the residents who might live there. If people choose to live there, will they need to buy separate insurance? Mr. Iacoangeli said there is a floodway that runs through that area, but there is no development occurring in it. None of the condominiums in Ridgeview or this new neighborhood will be built within the floodway. He said no insurance, no flood insurance through FEMA would be required for homeowners. He said, based on all the maps they have and the data they have, floodways and flood plains are highly regulated by the federal government. He said this development is far outside the floodway. He said that's just the area that's immediately adjacent to that tributary of the river. He said he can't speak to when it floods because he doesn't know how periodic that is, but none of the new units that would be built would be within the floodway or would be required to get federal insurance for flooding.

Member Gurumurthy asked the developer if Option 3 will be designed to be fine and less risky. Mr. Iacoangeli said yes, they would have to get things permitted. He explained that anytime you go through a regulated wetland, water body or a stream crossing, permits are required probably from the State of Michigan through EGLE and locally, depending on the size of the impact. He said there is the potential to have to get necessary permits for those crossings within that area based on the sensitivity of it. Mr. Zimmerman said they've involved Niswander Associates to help with the wetlands work for this project. He said they would be involved in the next phase as well, if they need to get permits through EGLE.

Member Gurumurthy asked about the 484 protected trees. She asked what this percentage is compared to the 0.1 percentage of wetland compared to the 15% of the near 16 acres. She encouraged the developer to work with the landscape lead to plant

more trees on site as much as possible. She believes the plan says 215, but she encouraged them to plant as many as possible. They will be taking out quite a lot of trees. She said they will be preserving 15.87 acres which is good and the impact is only 0.1 acre which is also good. Overall, she said she is concerned about the traffic, the timing, the lane clarification and the flooding.

Member Smith thanked the developers for working with their neighbors to the south. He believes that's important. He believes what is proposed works better than what is currently zoned for with Office Light Industrial. He said there is less impact on the environment from hard surfaces. This development has less impact that it potentially could have with less parking and things like that. He said that's good especially because it's near some critical wetlands on the Rouge. He said he would like to see Option 1 stay. He said it's not a hill he's willing to die on as long as the connector is there. He said maybe in the future, people will agree with him and decide to connect it. He likes anything that makes walking distances shorter and cuts down on friction to get out and walk to places. He said Option 2 is already there. He doesn't see it as a public benefit. He said he would support Option 3 because it's a nice, natural pathway through there. He said there was an Option 4, but it's a non-starter from the EGLE standpoint. It would also require a 0.25-mile of boardwalk which is expensive to maintain. He would not support that.

Member Smith said the pickleball courts were dropped and he is happy about that. He likes the idea of pocket parks, but pickleball and nearby homes don't go well together, so he's glad that option is gone. He said as they move forward with planning, they should make sure that all the comments in the planning and landscaping documents are at least talked about and get better answers for the questions that still need them.

Member Staudt said they've been discussing this project for a long time. At one point, it was going to be a Kroger development. He's very happy it didn't happen because he believes this is a superior development for this project. He said when he sees 15.87 acres of permanent conservation easement, it makes him smile. He said he's confident that the Ridgeview Villas residents are happy that nothing will ever be built in their backyard.

**CM 26-01-005      Moved by Staudt, seconded by Fischer: MOTION CARRIED: 7-0**

**Tentative indication that Council may approve the request of Novi Ten Associates, JZ23-09 with Zoning Map Amendment 18.740 to rezone from I-1 and OS-1 to RM-1 and B-2, subject to a Planned Rezoning Overlay (PRO) Agreement, and corresponding PRO Concept Plan, and direction to the City Attorney to prepare the PRO Agreement, including:**

**A. All deviations from the ordinance requirements shall be identified and included in PRO Agreement, including:**

**1. Building Orientation (Sec. 3.8.2.D): Deviation for proposed residential buildings to not be configured 45 degrees to the**

*property lines since most of the buildings are not on any main road and they front to a substantial irregular shaped 20-acre wetland nature area of a minimum 200 feet wide separation across from Toll's existing multifamily Ridgeview project.*

**2. Side and Rear Setbacks (Sec 3.1.7.D and Sec 3.6.2.B):** *Deviation to reduce the side setback from 75 feet to 25 feet along the north property line for two residential buildings abutting the proposed commercial area (B-2), since screening is proposed between the residential and commercial uses.*

**3. Distance between Buildings (Sec 3.8.2.H):** *Deviation to reduce the building separation distance from the calculated formula (resulting in 31-32.72 feet required) to a distance of 30 feet between all buildings. This deviation of less than 3 feet is considered minor and enables the layout of this project to fit within the available space while minimizing wetland and woodland impacts.*

**4. Parking along Major Drives (Sec. 5.10):** *Deviation to allow for 8 perpendicular parking spaces on a major drive, since the spaces provide for visitor parking.*

**5. Major Drive Radius (Sec. 5.10):** *Deviation from the ordinance requirement for a minimum centerline radius of 100 feet, to allow the 85-foot radius shown at the western curve. The reduced radius does not impede the fire truck access route, and may serve to slow traffic speeds, creating a safer roadway.*

**6. Landscape Berms (Section 5.5.3.A.ii):** *A Zoning Ordinance deviation is requested to not provide a 10 to 15-foot-high landscape berm on a proposed RM-1 district adjacent to an I-1 district. The berm would be unnecessary in this case as the adjacent I-1 area is east of the existing natural features and the railroad tracks and would likely result in greater wetland and woodland impacts, as well as fill in the floodplain.*

**7. Right-of-Way Landscaping (Section 5.5.3.B.ii):** *A deviation for the lack the required street trees and berm along 10 Mile Road due to underground utilities. The required trees are to be provided elsewhere. This deviation is supported due to the utility conflicts.*

**8. Adjacent to Public Rights-of-Way – Berm/Wall (Zoning Sec. 5.5.3.B.ii, iii):** *The required 3-foot-tall berm is not proposed, however an alternative brick screening wall 3-feet in height is proposed.*

**9. Building Foundation Landscaping (Zoning Sec 5.5.3.D):** None of the commercial buildings meet the requirements for building foundation landscaping along the front side and allow the planter landscaping to count toward foundation requirements. However, Buildings A, C and D are only slightly deficient, so the waiver is supported. The applicant states Building B landscaping will be increased to lessen the deviation or eliminate it.

**10. Section 9 Waiver (Section 5.15):** Proposed elevations for residential buildings have an underage of minimum required brick on all rear and some front facades (26-27% proposed, 30% minimum required) and an overage of Asphalt shingles (56% front side, 50% maximum allowed). As the deviations are minor and do not adversely affect the aesthetic quality of the facades, the waiver is supported.

**11. Opposite-Side Driveway Spacing Waiver (Code of Ordinances, 11.216.d.1.d & e.):** The Design and Construction Standards indicate a minimum of 150 feet is required between a new driveway and an existing “downstream” driveway. The proposed driveways are 105 feet and 118 feet. *The applicant indicates they have RCOC approval of the proposed driveway locations, however the City would also need to approve a waiver from its standards.*

**12. Color Spectrum Management (Sec. 5.7.3.F):** A recent amendment to the Zoning Ordinance has a requirement that light fixtures shall not have a Correlated Color Temperature (CCT) greater than 3000 Kelvin (K). The photometric sheets show light fixtures measuring 4000K, *since the level still represents a warm tone that is pleasing to the eye rather than a cool or unnaturally bright light.*

**B. The following conditions shall be requirements of the PRO Agreement:**

**1. As shown in the PRO Plan, the eastern portion of the parcel adjacent to the railroad tracks and the south 50-foot-wide strip along the wetland of the proposed PRO (~15.87 acres of the 27.07 RM-1 rezoning) being protected with a conservation easement to preserve existing marshland and wildlife. This natural area wraps around the PRO and includes on the west end a proposed new 0.4-acre park/playground located between the proposed residential and retail sites. The proposed trail system, with its overlooks near the Novi Athletic Club is to be a usable and**

**accessible community resource. This is a benefit to both residents and the environment to have additional natural resources preserved in perpetuity.**

**2. To help achieve walkability and connectivity of the entire area, a trail system is being added which consists of new crushed limestone paths, overlooks, and existing sidewalks. This walkway system provides connectivity between the proposed residential area with the marshland nature areas, the proposed pocket park, the Novi Athletic Club, Ice Arena, and Dog Park, and with the new proposed local retail along Ten Mile Road. The commercial area consists of the new retail and restaurant areas, and the existing Walgreen's and dental office. New walkways and bike paths wind through the natural area, overlook the preserved 15.87 acre wildlife area and connect this PRO development to other amenities. This is a benefit as future residents as well as the general public will have access to the area for walking that connects various community amenities. The nature path will follow the Option 3 route as described and illustrated in the packet.**

**3. Two pocket parks are proposed: One added at the trail head on 10 Mile Road at the north end of the new conservation area. The second is on the west end of the townhouses to include playground equipment. This is a benefit as future residents as well as the general public will have access to the pocket parks and trails. The applicant states the approximately 3-acre trailhead area will be dedicated to the City, along with 3 benches, four picnic tables, and a small parking area.**

**4. A landscaped plaza along the storefronts, 20 feet in depth, with benches, and planters with a variety of trees and flowers. This goes beyond what the ordinance requires and is considered an enhancement of the project area that could be used by any customers of the retail area and provides an attractive streetscape.**

**5. Proposed use restrictions to exclude certain automotive and other business uses in the proposed B-2 commercial zoning (Sec. 3.1.12.B & C) are to be part of the PRO. Not permitted uses are:**  
**a. Vehicle Oriented Uses: gas/fueling station,**  
**b. Other excluded uses: Check cashing, Pawn shop, Hotel/motel (Marijuana sales already not permitted in the City of Novi will also be excluded by the PRO documents in case the city's law is changed to allow it in the future.)**

This is an enhancement of the property as the City can be assured that the future tenants of the commercial buildings will not include certain uses that would be less compatible with the residential uses, and is more restrictive than the ordinance requires.

*6. EV Charging Stations will be located at each of the commercial buildings (8 indicated in total). Outlets for 240-volt EV chargers will be provided in each townhouse garage.*

This is an amenity that goes beyond what the ordinance requires.

*7. The amount of open space provided for the RM-1 townhouses exceeds ordinance requirements. This is a benefit as future residents as well as the general public will have access to the pathways and trailhead area.*

*8. Commercial Building Setbacks exceed ordinance requirements:*

- a. Front: 40 feet required....101 feet provided*
- b. Rear: 30 feet required....74 feet provided*
- c. Side: 30 feet required.....88 feet provided*

*9. Residential Building Heights will be limited to 29 feet, which is more restrictive than the 35 feet permitted. This is a benefit as the buildings will be less obtrusive than the 35-feet otherwise permitted.*

*10. Commercial Building height will be limited to 23 feet, which is more restrictive than the 30 feet permitted. This is a benefit as the buildings will be lower profile than the 30-feet otherwise permitted.*

*11. Maximum Residential Lot Coverage of 25% is permitted, 14% is proposed. This is a benefit as more permeable surface will be preserved, which allows stormwater to permeate, and more green space is available.*

*12. The development standards of the RM-1 District require a minimum rear yard setback of 75 feet. The applicant proposes a greater setback of 100 feet minimum along the south side. This benefits the neighborhood to the south as buildings are further away than the ordinance requires, with less of the existing trees to be cleared.*

*13. In the RM-1 District, a development of 3-bedroom units can have up to 5.4 dwelling units per acre. This development*

**proposes 4.5 dwelling units per acre. This is 17% more limiting than otherwise permitted in the district.**

**14. As noted in the façade review, the commercial buildings significantly exceed the 30% minimum requirement for brick on nearly all elevations. This represents an enhancement of the project area beyond what the ordinance requires.**

**15. The applicant will plant landscaping to the south of Buildings 7-11 to achieve 80-90% opacity along the southern property boundary, which is more than what is typically required between multiple family uses. The species will include a mixture of Green Giant Arborvitae and other native spruces to achieve aesthetic, screening and biodiversity goals, which will be reviewed by the City's Landscape Architect at the time of site plan submittal.**

**16. The applicant states they will off-set their impacts on 10 Mile Road by constructing the following improvements:**

- a. Widen eastbound 10 Mile Road to two through lanes, ending with a right-turn deceleration lane at the site's easternmost residential driveway.**
- b. Widen westbound 10 Mile Road to two through lanes west from the 3<sup>rd</sup> site driveway to help provide additional capacity for outbound site traffic.**
- c. Extend the center left-turn lane along 10 Mile Road from where it currently ends at Catherine Industrial Road to service all commercial driveways.**

**As noted in the Engineering Review letter, these improvements may require the acquisition of Right of Way on the north side of 10 Mile Road, and the approval of those property owners, as well as the approval of the design by the RCOC.**

**17. The applicant shall make necessary adjustments to the PRO Plan consistent with this tentative approval prior to final approval of the PRO Agreement, including removal of the direct pathway connection to Ridgeview Villas, delineation of the trailhead park to be dedicated to the City, and removal of the berm cut-through to River Oaks.**

- C. This motion is made because the proposed B-2 and RM-1 zoning districts are a reasonable alternative to the OS-1 and I-1 Districts, and fulfills the intent of the Master Plan for Land Use for multiple-family use, and because of the resulting benefits include:**

- 1. The preservation of a large area of woodland, wetland, and floodplain, which benefits the overall environment and community members,**
- 2. The development supports various goals of the 2025 Master Plan for Land Use, including:**
  - a. Ensure the availability of a wide range of attractive housing choices protected from noise, traffic, and other impacts of non-residential development. Encourage the development of neighborhood open space and neighborhood commercial goods and services to minimize motorized travel.**
  - b. Explore opportunities to increase housing density in mixed use development areas to create “walkable density” developments.**
  - c. New development of land should continue to be of high-quality design and materials.**
  - d. Encourage the use of high-quality right-of-way plantings, site landscaping, and building materials to enhance the appearance of the community.**
  - e. Maintain public and private stewardship of the natural environment using low-impact development techniques.**
  - f. Utilize planned developments to encourage the preservation of natural features, such as woodland, wetlands, and wildlife habitats.**
  - g. Implement the Active Mobility Plan’s recommendations to create continuous walking and biking networks to reach key destinations.**
  - h. Apply the Active Mobility Plan’s recommendations to public and private development projects to continue to enhance safety and connectivity of the non-motorized network.**
  - i. The City should strive to maintain the balance between the economy, the environment, and the community to ensure sustainable development that meets the needs of today while ensuring that the needs of future generations can be met.**
- 3. The possible detriments to the City from the commercial and multiple family development as proposed are mitigated through the preservation of woodland and wetland areas, pedestrian pathways, enhanced landscape screening, and the proposed improvements to Ten Mile Road. The conditions proposed would result in an overall enhancement of the area that may not be achieved in the absence of the PRO Agreement.**

Member Staudt addressed Mr. Weiss, telling him that he is pleased to see this project is being built instead of Kroger. He doesn't think Ridgeview would have liked having a Kroger in their backyard and he believes it may have put some other businesses along 10 Mile Road out of business. He believes this is a good compromise.

Member Heintz said he appreciates the developer working with the neighbors and the development of their plan to create a walkable community. Hopefully, this would be a benefit to people in that community to be able to walk to businesses instead of driving. He said if Option 3 is accepted to move forward (and he thinks it is one of the better options with the natural path), he asked what that would mean for the proposed pocket parks. He asked if Option 3 would connect the pocket parks or how it would work. Mr. Zimmerman showed a slide and said Option 3 (the red dashed line) connects with the west pocket park directly. From there, it goes down and hits Nick Lidstrom Drive. The west park then ties into the U-shaped trail that goes south of the new units. Nick Lidstrom Drive ties into the whole walkway system that goes all the way down to the dog park. That becomes the connector from the east on 10 Mile Road down to the dog park. Member Heintz said Option 3 would include the U-shaped path behind that. Mr. Zimmerman said yes, that doesn't change. Mr. Zimmerman said the whole idea of Option 3 as opposed to Option 2 is that it does connect through a trail system. Member Heintz says he loves this idea where he can leave his house and go for a run or explore different areas and he would love for others to be able to do the same.

Member Heintz asked about the parking differences between how the land is currently zoned and what this project is proposing. He said they mentioned 600 parking spaces. He asked if that is with only the 34 acres developed or if it would include all 49 acres. Mr. Zimmerman said that is strictly the 34 acres. They worked it out as part of what they initially needed to do with the current zoning. They submitted that a long time ago with the packages. They figured out that on the I-1 site, they could build a 290,000 square-foot, 40' tall building and still get sufficient industrial parking to meet the ordinance. That's what generated the 600-car parking. Member Heintz said he appreciates them doing that on the 34 acres. He also appreciates that they worked with Ridgeview Villas on this project.

Member Martinez said he agreed that it's important that the developers have worked with the HOA at Ridgeview Villas. He and several others on the Council believe in being good neighbors. He said the area where the nature path in Option 3 will go looks low in terms of topography. He asked if the developer has any indication that the path that circles the new part of the property would be subject to runoff or flooding in any way. Mr. Zimmerman said no, it's upland area. Member Martinez said he wants to be conscientious that when they have PROs come before them, the conditions established in one don't become meaningless. It does have a heavy emphasis when they consider public benefits and whether a potential development outweighs the detriments that come with it. He appreciated what the Ridgeview HOA said. This is not the only project he has seen where there is a disconnect between what was discussed originally and then what happens once the residents move in. He wants to be thoughtful about that moving forward, that they're not putting provisions in for no reason. He said when they take an action at the table, it has some purpose behind it. He agreed with Member Smith that Option 1 seems very consistent with what had already been discussed by past councils. He said Option 3 would be the next best choice. He said what they're presented with is a better alternative than what could be there. If the previously-proposed Kroger project were being presented, it would be a much different conversation. He said he came into

the meeting not leaning one side or the other, but he agrees with Member Smith's analysis and the comments of some of the other Council members.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey asked the developer to describe and explain the storm water management to Council. She said they mentioned in their comments that they would be solving the flooding and the water management by the storm water management, but they have not said what the plan is and how it works. Mr. Zimmerman said he had to be honest and tell Council that their engineer was down the flu. He put up a drawing that was part of the package that was submitted. Mr. Weiss stood to answer the question. He said this question is asked like the developer is reinventing the wheel. The reality is that the City has standard procedures in place. There is the Agricultural Rate which means when the property is just growing weeds, a certain amount of water runs off. When this project is done, after all the sidewalks, the parking lots and the roofs collect water, the water has to go through a process where it doesn't go anywhere at any greater rate than it would have if nothing had been built. That's the standard process that's built into the City site plan approval process. Mr. Weiss said they are not inventing this process, and the engineers aren't inventing it. This is what goes into place on every project. This prevents the water that comes from the sky from going into the next-door neighbor's kitchen as they alleged. Instead, it goes into water detention basins. He said Lonny summarized this when he said they're going to be getting 30% less water going toward them. Mr. Weiss said another thing that hasn't been mentioned is that in between this project and their project, they will comply 100% with the stormwater detention basins that are already built into the system. He said it happens during the site plan process for every project and it guarantees that the Agricultural Rate is complied with.

Mr. Weiss said from the railroad tracks on the east, all the way to the west end, there is the "Grand Canyon." He said it is 100' wide, 40' deep and 1200' long. This canyon lies between this project and Ridgeview. If all the drains got plugged, the water would go down into the "Grand Canyon" and the "Grand Canyon" goes to the Rouge River. It doesn't climb up 20' from the bottom of the "Grand Canyon" into anyone's kitchen. There are multiple levels of engineering and regulations that the previous engineers designed and put into place. He said they are complying with all of that. It will be submitted into the site plan and will be guaranteed by the existing processes rather than being something the developer had to invent.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said generally, when they get a development proposal in front of them, they get a certain amount of information. That last time Council saw this developer was in December 2024. The information they had at the meeting was a piece of what they expected to see rather than the full amount. That is why she was asking for clarity on the stormwater management plan. Mayor Pro Tem Casey asked Ms. Bell if there was additional information that could be provided. She said she respected that the engineer was not there to answer the questions, but when you make a statement like, "It's going to follow the stormwater management plan," it's fair game for Council to ask questions. She also said she did not appreciate the lecture Mr. Weiss just gave her as a response to her question. She asked Ms. Bell to come up and provide additional information.

Mr. Weiss said he'd like to add one more thing. He said what is shown on the drawing in conformance with standard, normal things are storm sewers with pipes that go to the water detention basins. The size of those pipes and the size of the detention basin will hold the water when it rains. There is an engineered, smaller pipe that lets the water come out and go into the Rouge River at the same Agricultural Rate as if the water were falling on the ground as if nothing were built. For the specifics, he didn't mean to be insulting, he just meant to say that Council doesn't need to rely on the developer because they have existing systems in place. He said what is shown on the drawings are the water detention basins. That is what is normally done and what are included here.

Ms. Bell stood and said she is not an engineer, but she was given some helpful graphics. The area in yellow that would normally go to the south is shown as surface drainage through the existing trees and fields that are there today. The area in green goes more toward the Middle Rouge. As they're showing in the proposed PRO, the site develops a much larger area falling into areas that are part of the stormwater management system. That water gets conveyed to the basin that is located over here. It is designed in a manner that will release the water at a controlled rate into the Middle Rouge this way. The yellow area is a much smaller area that will continue to drain to the south because that is the sloped area that naturally goes that way. Mayor Pro Tem Casey thanked Ms. Bell and said the information Ms. Bell provided was helpful. The image didn't translate what Ms. Bell explained.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey asked Mr. Zimmerman about the screening between the development. She likes that they are planning to do 150-170'. She asked if there are existing trees they will be supplementing in those spaces. She asked if there are existing trees that don't require any kind of additional supplementation. She asked what the plan is for the actual trees in that space. Mr. Zimmerman said they are going to leave the existing trees as much as possible. They are also going to provide screening. They reviewed this via a meeting with Ms. Macbeth, Mr. Meter, and their landscape architect, Mr. Jim Allen, a couple of months ago. They have committed to evergreen screening going in at probably 10-12' high evergreens. He believes the opacity requirement is around 80% and they'll comply with that. He said they've committed to the HOA and the City, so that will happen.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said she knows the developers will meet all the requirements. She appreciates that they'll be putting in taller evergreens rather than the shorter, more viable ones. She appreciates that they'll amplify the existing trees. In terms of the timing, she asked when they will be putting in the screening. A different recent development planned to put the screening between the development and the residential behind it before they started construction on the site. She asked Mr. Zimmerman what their timing is for them to do any further work in that space. Are they going to do that before they start developing or in the middle? She asked if they have a sense for when that work will get done. Mr. Zimmerman said they haven't talked about it. He said it would make sense that it would happen toward the beginning of the development process, but he's not the person who would schedule that. He said the plan would not be to wait until everything is all done and then put the screening in. Mayor Pro Tem Casey asked if they'll

have that submitted to Council by the time they see it for final approval. He said they can provide that. She said she would like that to be an expectation for the next time they see this.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey asked about the timing of the road work. She said they understand more about what the changes will be on 10 Mile Road due to Member Gurumurthy's detailed questions. They also understand that 10 Mile Road is owned by RCOC and because of that, the developer will be, in some measure, at RCOC's whim for when they're going to get the work done. She asked if RCOC will be paying for the work or if the developer will be covering the cost of the extensions to the roadwork. Mr. Zimmerman checked with Mr. Weiss and said that the developer will be paying for the roadwork. She said having some clarity about the timing as best as they can with working with RCOC would be helpful for Council to have by the final submittal. Mr. Zimmerman said as they move toward site plan approval, their engineers will be discussing this project with RCOC more intensively. Mayor Pro Tem Casey said she is very interested in the timing aspect for the roadwork.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said when she looks at the connector options, she appreciates the work the developer has done. Council asked them to come back with options and they did. She believes Option 3 is the next best. For the people who moved into Ridgeview, there was an obvious visual cue that there was going to be a connection. The sidewalk and where it starts to curve were done before the buildings were finalized and people started moving in. That should not have been a surprise to the residents of Ridgeview. She believes doing Option 1 is the preferred option, but she will not push for it because the developer has graciously conceded that to the HOA. She will support Option 3, but she thinks not doing Option 1 is going to turn out to be a mistake and that Council will want to do that in the future.

Mayor Fischer said there has been a lot of robust conversation on this topic. He agrees with most of the sentiments that have been expressed. He said sometimes people think that if Council fights about different options or if they use certain delay tactics, nothing will happen on the property. That isn't true. There could be a Kroger, or a 290,000 square-foot industrial building, 40' high with 600 parking spaces there. Either of those would decimate all wetlands and woodlands in the area. He said Council has a very tough process and decision to make sure they're balancing all the different needs. He thinks this proposal does just that, given where it is in the city and what it connects to, meaning near some industrial and abutting some residential. Overall, he is comfortable with the proposal as it is.

Mayor Fischer talked about Options 1, 2 and 3. He said it was almost insulting that Option 2 was put out there. Option 1 is his preferred option. He hates to walk away from a promise that they made to 66,000 residents when they approved the Ridgeview proposal. Having said that, he was one of the sternest voices the last time this proposal came before Council saying that everyone needed to get in the room, have a discussion and come out with a compromise. So, while he prefers Option 1, he supports the agreement the developer and the HOA came to for Option 3.

Member Staudt asked Mr. Weiss if he volunteered to put the pathway that is part of Option 3 on a piece of property that he currently owns. Mr. Weiss said yes. Member Staudt asked what his intention is with that property. Member Staudt said he saw it was for sale and now, Mr. Weiss is putting a pathway on the back portion of it. He asked Mr. Weiss what he is thinking about with that property, considering that, to him, it's an extremely sensitive environmental piece of wetlands for the most part. Mr. Weiss said that property has limits, but a lot of it is high and dry. Buildings can be put on there without compromising the wetlands, the wetland rules and the wetland buffers. In the future, it will get developed in conformance with the Master Plan and the zoning. A little bit less of it might be available to whatever extent this walkway takes up. He said the walkway won't have any material effect on it because within a very small distance from that walkway is a big drop off down to the river. He doesn't see that that walkway has a big impact on what's left. He said what's left there, in the center, is a small lake and that will stay there. All the sensitivities that are built into the regulations to make sure it stays there and stays protected will remain in place. The high and dry areas, north of it, will probably get some buildings built there in conformance with the zoning and the Master Plan. Member Staudt said he hopes Mr. Weiss will keep an open mind in the future in case someone comes looking to preserve that property long-term. Mr. Weiss said he expects that that will happen no matter what because all the EGLE regulations and the City of Novi's regulations that protect wetlands are already in place, pretty much guaranteeing that. Mr. Weiss joked that no one will try to turn it into a Kroger or a parking lot. Member Staudt said maybe someone will turn it into a park.

**Roll call vote on CM 26-01-005**

**Yeas: Heintz, Martinez, Smith, Staudt, Fischer,  
Casey, Gurumurthy**

**Nays: None**

- 2. Consideration of approval to award engineering design services to AECOM for 11 Mile Road, Wixom Road to Beck Road, rehabilitation and reconstruction, and for the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of 11 Mile Road and Beck Road, in the amount of \$108,976.**

**CM 26-01-006**

**Moved by Smith, seconded by Staudt: MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

**Approval to award engineering design services to AECOM for 11 Mile Road, Wixom Road to Beck Road, rehabilitation and reconstruction, and for the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of 11 Mile Road and Beck Road, in the amount of \$108, 976.**

**Roll call vote on CM 26-01-006**

**Yeas: Martinez, Smith, Staudt, Fischer, Casey,  
Gurumurthy, Heintz**

**Nays: None**

**3. Consideration of approval to award engineering design services to AECOM for a Meadowbrook Road, 9 to 10 Mile Road, project, in the amount of \$128,267.**

**CM 26-01-007            Moved by Martinez, seconded by Gurumurthy: MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

**Approval to award engineering design services to AECOM for a Meadowbrook Road, 9 to 10 Mile Road, project, in the amount of \$128,267**

**Roll call vote on CM 26-01-007**

**Yeas: Smith, Staudt, Fischer, Casey,  
Gurumurthy, Heintz, Martinez**

**Nays: None**

**4. Approval and confirmation of goal language from January 10, 2026 Council Goal Setting Session**

City Manager Cardenas said what is presented is the staff's best efforts to encapsulate what was developed earlier this month at Council's goal-setting session. This is an opportunity for Council to make changes. Staff will be starting on these goals post-haste.

Member Martinez thanked the staff, City Manager Cardenas and his team for getting the goals digested and turned into actionable items. He thinks he came in very aspirational to the goal-setting meeting and he appreciates how the staff turned that discussion into something concrete, verifiable, and trackable. In other words, it checks all the boxes they had at the goal session, and he appreciates all the work that went into doing that.

Member Gurumurthy said in the update to their current goals, there was a goal related to downtown Novi—the strategy, vision and vibrancy. She believes there has already been a lot of work done and, in fact, something is coming up at the end of January. She said there is a goal Council voted on for economic development. Because the goal and the activities are ongoing, she asked if there is a way Council could look at this goal in terms of that economic development perspective and then continue the work that's been happening.

City Manager Cardenas said this is something that is on-going in terms of looking at Main Street as well as other ideas at Town Center. He said it is up to Council if they'd like to amend the goal to add something in there with respect to the four corners of Grand River and Novi Road. Mayor Fischer said the time for changing and combining the goals has passed; however, he would like the staff and City Manager Cardenas to hear the sentiment behind the robust economic development goal. He does not feel like the work that has been done on that goal over the past two years has been up to the standards of what he and Member Gurumurthy intended. A couple of tactical things have been done, but the planning out of a strategy on making that entire area more vibrant has

fallen short. He believes this emphasis fits nicely as something staff can work on under the umbrella of the economic development goal. He also believes Council has been clear about this being a goal of utmost importance by how many votes it received. Member Gurumurthy agreed that this is her sentiment as well.

Member Staudt said he is a bit nervous about committing in the goals to fund a public art fund for taxpayer dollars for roughly \$70,000 a year—not knowing whether this fits into the budget or not. He recognizes that this is a goal, not a mandate or a requirement, but there are some challenges the City will be facing from a budget perspective in the next several years. \$70,000 per year in the big picture of Novi's budget is a relatively small amount of money, but it is taxpayer dollars. He said he wasn't 100% sure that when they combined these two into a single goal that they were committing to spending \$70,000 per year on funding public arts. He said he is keeping an open mind to it, but in his mind, if Council is going to do this, it should be a budget line item rather than a goal.

Mayor Fischer said he agrees with Member Staudt in that it is a goal at this point. What he says about goals is that Council sets the vision out there, they do not set the roadmap of how to get there. That's City Manager Cardenas's job. He also agrees that Council has received some signals about the revenue plateauing and costs are escalating with personnel and operating expenses. He said that doesn't mean that they have to get to the full funding of this goal in this budget year. They don't have to do the full \$77,000 this year. They could start small. There are different options. He said it's a good point to bring up the budget impact of this goal as well as others so Council can be cognizant of the issues there. Eventually, they will need to pass the budget with at least five votes.

Mayor Fischer thanked Ms. Mahoney for pulling the goals together. When he was in the goal-setting session, he caught himself wondering what they were talking about. He appreciated how she was able to put together a concise, professional effort that represents Council's thinking.

**CM 26-01-008                      Moved by Casey, seconded by Smith: MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

**Approval and confirmation of goal language from January 10, 2026  
Council Goal Setting Session.**

**Roll call vote on CM 26-01-008**

**Yeas: Staudt, Fischer, Casey, Gurumurthy,  
Heintz, Martinez, Smith**

**Nays: None**

**5. Consideration of a Resolution Regarding the Sunsetting of the Older Adult Services Advisory Board.**

Mayor Pro Tem Casey thanked the current and past members of the Older Adults Advisory Board for the work they have done since 2013. When they had the Older Adults Needs Committee, one of the goals they had was the formation of a Council-appointed Older Adults Advisory Commission or Board. They are still moving toward that goal. Since working on the Novi 2050 project, she thinks it's right to briefly pause and listen to the residents when they go through the work of doing the plan before they try to build a charter for a new commission. She would like the residents to tell them what they would like the commission to focus on. This is a goal, meaning it is not attached to funding. She believes they could get this new commission up and running by the end of the year. This has come up because they have seen some challenges with availability of their current commission members. Understanding that and with the 2050 plan in the works, it makes sense for them to take the time now and sunset this board and lead it to its conclusion.

**CM 26-01-009                      Moved by Casey, seconded by Smith: MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

**Approval of the resolution regarding the formal sunseting of the  
Older Adult Services Advisory Board.**

**Roll call vote on CM 26-01-009**

**Yeas: Fischer, Casey, Gurumurthy, Heintz,  
Martinez, Smith, Staudt**

**Nays: None**

**CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS: None**

**AUDIENCE COMMENT:**

John Sands, 22800 Napier Road, said they've been in Novi for 80 years. He said he never heard that they were going to be cutting trees in the tree line. When they put the new road in, Oakland County cut down every single tree he had on the east side of his property, at the road. He said in the fence line, there were at least four willow trees that were all about 3-4' in diameter. He brought a picture of David Barr's book so he could show Council the trees. He said he understands that you might want to put a sidewalk around the pond and that's great, but he wanted to show the two trees that are already gone. He said all of this happened on Wednesday. He said the trees were there and they enjoyed them for 35 years. There are two left that are on his property. As far as he knows, no one did a survey. Mr. Sands asked Council to do whatever they can do about the willow trees.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**1. Rules Committee – Mayor Fischer**

Mayor Fischer said they met and Council had approved the item on the Consent Agenda.

## **2. Ordinance Review Committee – Mayor Fischer**

Mayor Fischer said they reviewed an ordinance related to recycling fees and trash fees. He said recycling fees have continued to increase in cost to the City. The committee would like to make sure there is flexibility to get reimbursement there.

## **3. Finance and Administration Committee – Mayor Fischer**

Mayor Fischer said they had a couple of different topics. One was Plante Moran where they reviewed some governance documents of what will come to Council for approvals. He believes that information will be coming in the next admin packet. They also continued their discussions on the Novi Ice Arena, an item that was referred to this committee in the middle of 2025. Finally, Ms. Walsh had shared with them information on Council chamber refurbishments. They took the opportunity to hear more about her memo. He encouraged the other Council members to take a look at her memo, too.

## **4. Long-range Strategic Planning Committee – Mayor Pro Tem Casey**

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said they met earlier before Council and had a conversation with their partner, Shockey. They talked, worked through and finalized some more of the project plan and timing. There are going to be a couple of virtual workshops coming up in early February. One of them is going to be with staff to start educating Shockey on what they do and know about the City. The second is going to be with the Long Way Strategic Planning Committee. She said Shockey will be here in April on a date yet to be determined. They are going to schedule a couple of additional workshops at that time and they'll have more details as that event gets closer.

## **5. Environmental Sustainability Committee – Councilmember Smith**

Member Smith said they had a good discussion with representatives from My Green Michigan. They do food waste composting for some of Novi's neighboring cities. The committee received a proposal from My Green Michigan to do something in Novi. They'll be discussing the proposal at their upcoming meeting on February 9, 2026. There may be a request to Council after that.

## **6. Public Utilities and Technology Committee – Councilmember Gurumurthy**

Member Gurumurthy said their committee is focusing on four main areas: GLWA, DTE, Priority Waste and broadband. GLWA remains their top priority. The committee is working toward receiving regular status updates now with clear milestones and the task. This will help them better communicate with Novi's residents. The GLWA posted an update on January 21, 2026. She asked Council to take a look at that on their website. DTE is another focus. They are seeking more detailed information on the December power outages, including root causes and the age of the lines. Priority Waste is another thing where they are reviewing the data on delayed pick-ups. Most of the data comes from residents' reported calls. They are encouraging residents to report issues. They can call Priority

Waste and the City. This will help them build a complete and accurate picture. Broadband is their fourth pillar where they are working to understand the current fiber landscape in Novi through word of mouth. They have some plans to make a map more solid so they can understand where the gaps are.

## **7. Mobility Committee – Councilmember Staudt**

Council Member Staudt said they talked about sidewalks on the east side of Taft Road and pathways and trailways as they pertain to PRO's. They talked about getting the Mobility Committee involved in talking about how those are public benefits. They have a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, some planning commissioners and three Council members on the committee. They could all provide some input regarding the actual public benefit of the trailways and pathways as they pertain to PRO's.

## **MAYOR AND COUNCIL ISSUES:**

### **1. Data Centers - Councilmember Martinez**

Council Member Martinez said he thought long and hard before he brought this topic up. He said it's reasonable that as they discuss and debate things at the Council table, they're not just being the proverbial cat, chasing the laser pointer, or in other words, not chasing a fad or having a knee-jerk reaction to something. His thoughts on this topic have evolved. Originally, he was of the mindset that the kinds of developments they've seen in neighboring communities that have generated a lot of interest and pushback, really wasn't viable here. He said that is mostly due to a lack of available space for this kind of land use. His initial thought was that Novi doesn't have that available space for those kinds of large data centers that they've seen in other areas. However, as he started delving into this and looking at projects that have come up in other cities, he came across a plan from the City of Lansing where a data center was being placed on roughly a half-acre. It still takes a lot of power consumption and still has a large impact on the surrounding areas. This really changed his calculus on this issue and led him to believe there was at least some discussion and maybe clarification that needed to happen.

Member Martinez said that several weeks ago they got some information from staff that indicated to him that this might be a blind spot in Novi's ordinance. He decided to bring it up for discussion at the meeting, hoping they could have a discussion so they can provide certainty to potential applicants, certainty to planning and to the Council and, of course, to the public. He made a motion to direct the City Attorney in conjunction with staff to prepare proposed amendments to the Novi Zoning Ordinance for Council review, to clarify and distinguish existing land use category of data processing and computer centers from modern, high-powered data center facilities, including those designed to support artificial intelligence platforms, and to recommend appropriate definitions, district location standards and an evaluation of whether such facilities could be subject to special land use review and related requirements so that potential impacts on public health, safety and welfare are fully addressed.

Mayor Fischer said he had read a memo prepared by staff a few weeks ago and he understood that this has already been contemplated. City Manager Cardenas said yes, the City Attorney is already working on it, convening a work group with a group of attorneys to take a look at this. The City's planning staff is also looking into it this week in terms of having some preliminary information regarding the specificities they are looking for. City Attorney Schultz said that was accurate. They have read the staff memo and had conversations with folks at the City. They are sort of underway with exactly what Member Martinez put down in his thoughts. He said that's sort of what's going on in his office. After he spoke with Community Development, he believes they are doing the same thing. He said he doesn't know if there is a need for a formal motion at this point. Mayor Fischer said he feels very comfortable that staff is on top of this topic, given the information that has already been provided. He doesn't believe a formal motion is needed. He turned it over to Council because there was a motion made

Member Martinez asked City Attorney Schultz if part of the review taking place is going to consider whether they could have these types of facilities as a special land use, which would then have to come before Council for their consideration and vote. City Attorney Schultz said yes, he believes that is accurate.

Member Smith had some comments on data centers. He said they've received a lot of attention recently due to the need for new centers to support AI. They've really been around since the start of the internet, supporting web-hosting cloud services, streaming music and video. Pretty much anything you do on the internet goes through a data center at some point. He said they'll be around regardless of what happens to the current boom and AI. The other thing that has really drawn attention is the scale. If you define a data center as a computer or a group of computers providing data services over the internet, that could be my system at home that has a VPN so he can access his computer from anywhere, it could be your employer's server room that has a couple racks of computers, or it could be Saline using 1.4 gigawatts of energy with bigger ones on the way. He thinks this is a good time to be reviewing that because to zone it, they have to know what it is. He doesn't know if they know what it is yet. He is very confident Novi's planning and legal staff can come up with a good definition that will work for the Novi residents and businesses and that won't get them into any legal trouble.

Member Smith said other concerns about data centers are the environmental impacts due to the additional electric capacity required and groundwater use, given how they're cooled. He said that's kind of beyond the scope of what Novi can address. That's up to EGLE and Public Services Commission to make those kinds of decisions. There are concerns, but he believes there are also upsides. The data center Member Martinez referred to is using its excess heat to supply heat to the downtown heat loop in Lansing which heats up the Capitol complex and a GM plant. He thinks that is a very creative use of something that was just getting dumped into the atmosphere. Any data center requires improvements to the local power grid and internet access in the area. Perhaps they would be able to leverage improving the power grid and/or internet in the City. He supports treating it as a special land use. The ground is changing so fast. He would like to

have City Council be able to take a look at anything that comes up because any rule they write this year could be obsolete next year, based on technology coming through.

Member Heintz asked City Attorney Schultz what the difference is if they don't vote on this compared to if this were a vote. He asked if they were to make a motion and vote, would it change priorities or a level of action or anything that the attorney's office would be doing. City Attorney Schultz said they are going to do the same thing. Either way, yes. Member Heintz asked if there were a downside to them voting that night. City Attorney Schultz said there is no downside or upside. He said they are literally doing what Member Martinez put in this motion. He said it is Council's call. Member Heintz asked Member Martinez if this is something he was still interested in. Member Martinez said he is satisfied with what City Attorney Schultz said. He said part of making the motion he thought was part of just the mechanisms for how they would do that. He said he'll chalk it up to being a rookie at the table. Based on the information the City Attorney provided, he was comfortable withdrawing that motion in hopes that they can get some concrete information or plans within a reasonable amount of time. He withdrew his motion.

**COMMUNICATIONS: None**

**ADJOURNMENT** – There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 P.M.

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Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

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Justin Fischer, Mayor

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Transcribed by Diana Charles  
Customer Service Representative

Date approved: February 9, 2026