

NOVI 2050

SHAPING TOMORROW, TOGETHER

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

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01. Executive Summary

This Environmental Scan provides a comprehensive assessment of conditions, trends, and strategic considerations shaping Novi’s future through 2050. It serves as the foundation for the Community Strategic Plan, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and constraints across ten critical topic areas.

Novi is a thriving, high-performing community that has grown faster and differently than previously projected. With a population exceeding 66,000 residents, exceptional diversity, strong schools, and a robust economic base, Novi has established itself as one of Oakland County’s most significant growth centers.

However, success brings complexity. The city is approximately 75% built out, meaning future growth will occur primarily through reinvestment and redevelopment rather than expansion. An aging population, rising housing costs, infrastructure maturity, and evolving workforce dynamics are converging in ways that require intentional planning and strategic investment.

The scan examines each topic through a consistent framework: Current Conditions, Strategic SWOC Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Constraints), Key Trend Drivers, and Looking Forward. This structure ensures decision-makers can understand where Novi stands today, what forces are shaping its future, and what strategic choices lie ahead.

Across all topics, several cross-cutting themes emerge:

- **Growth management** — Aligning development with infrastructure, services, and fiscal capacity
- **Demographic adaptation** — Serving an aging, diversifying population with evolving needs
- **Redevelopment readiness** — Transitioning from a growth mindset to reinvestment and optimization
- **Workforce and housing alignment** — Ensuring residents and workers can afford to live in Novi
- **Organizational capacity** — Supporting staff and systems to meet rising expectations
- **Fiscal sustainability** — Making decisions that strengthen long-term financial health

This Environmental Scan provides the evidence base for strategic conversations. It does not prescribe solutions but illuminates the conditions and tradeoffs that will shape Novi’s path to 2050.

02. Community Identity & Demographics

Current Conditions

Novi is growing faster—and differently—than previously projected. The City’s population reached 66,243 in 2020, representing a 20% increase since 2010, and has already surpassed SEMCOG’s 2025 population forecast. With more than 1,275 housing units currently underway, Novi is on pace to exceed even long-range population projections well ahead of schedule, reinforcing its role as one of Oakland County’s most significant growth centers.

Growth is accompanied by pronounced demographic maturation. Novi’s median age is 39.2, and the 45–64 age cohort is the largest segment (28.4%), with approximately 40% of residents over age 45. While Novi remains attractive to families—reflected in a strong 5–14 school-age cohort—the data shows a contraction in the 35–44 age group, signaling potential lifecycle gaps tied to housing cost, product type, or mobility preferences. These patterns underscore the importance of planning not just for growth, but for retention across life stages.

Diversity is one of Novi’s most defining characteristics. Between 2010 and 2020, the share of residents identifying as Asian alone nearly doubled—from 13.2% to 26.9%—while the White population share declined modestly. More than 26.8% of Novi residents are foreign-born, with approximately 72% originating from Asia, primarily Japan, India, and China. Nearly 30% of residents speak a language other than English at home, over half of whom speak Asian or Pacific Islander languages. This demographic reality has direct implications for civic engagement, service delivery, communications, and housing demand.

Household growth is equally strong. Novi added nearly 4,200 households between 2010 and 2020, an 18.9% increase, and the average household size increased slightly (2.46 to 2.49), bucking national trends toward smaller households. This suggests continued demand for family-oriented housing alongside emerging needs for downsizing and multigenerational living options.

Educational attainment remains a major asset: approximately 96% of residents hold at least a high school diploma, and nearly 60% have a bachelor’s degree or higher, placing Novi among the most educated communities in the region.

Strategic SWOC Analysis

Strengths

- Population growth outpacing projections and peer communities
- Strong household growth supporting economic vitality
- Highly educated population and strong school districts
- Exceptional racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity with global ties
- Stable household size indicating continued family demand
- Strong civic identity anchored in safety, schools, and quality of life

Weaknesses

- Demographic shifts are occurring faster than systems and policies are adapting

- Housing supply and product types do not fully align with aging and multigenerational needs
- Engagement and communications are not consistently structured for a multilingual, multicultural population
- Potential lifecycle leakage among mid-career households
- Limited formal coordination with schools despite overlapping demographic pressures

Opportunities

- Position diversity as a defining strength of Novi's civic identity and global competitiveness
- Redesign engagement, communications, and service delivery to reflect linguistic and cultural realities
- Align housing, mobility, and public spaces to better support aging in place and family retention
- Strengthen City–school collaboration to plan jointly for facilities, programming, and shared use
- Use arts, placemaking, and public spaces to build social cohesion across cultures and generations

Constraints

- Community hesitation around density or housing diversification may slow adaptation
- School enrollment growth may require significant capital investment
- Affordability pressures risk excluding younger families and workforce households
- Organizational capacity and funding flexibility limit the pace of response
- State and regional policy frameworks constrain local tools

Key Trend Drivers

- **Accelerated Growth:** Novi is growing faster than forecast, increasing urgency for long-range alignment
- **Aging Population:** A large 45–64 cohort signals rising senior service and housing demand
- **Global Diversity:** Foreign-born and multilingual populations are reshaping community needs
- **Household Stability:** Slightly increasing household size sustains demand for family-oriented amenities
- **Educational Strength:** High attainment supports economic competitiveness but raises expectations for services and quality of place

Looking Forward

Novi's demographic future is not defined by a single trend, but by the intersection of growth, aging, and global diversity. By 2050, the City's success will hinge on its ability to translate these realities into inclusive systems—housing, services, engagement, and public spaces—that evolve as quickly as the population itself.

Looking ahead, Novi must move beyond treating demographics as background context and instead use them as active drivers of planning and investment decisions. That includes aligning housing supply with lifecycle needs, modernizing engagement to reflect linguistic and cultural diversity, and strengthening partnerships—particularly with schools—to serve shared populations more effectively.

Success will look like a community where residents of all backgrounds see themselves reflected in civic life; where families, professionals, and older adults can remain in Novi as their needs change; and where diversity, education, and quality of life reinforce one another as core pillars of a confident, future-ready city.

03. Housing & Neighborhoods

Focus: Housing affordability, lifecycle housing, aging stock, development pressures, and demographic alignment

Current Conditions

Novi's housing market is strong but increasingly constrained. While the City continues to add housing units, housing demand is outpacing supply, driven by sustained population growth, regional housing shortages, strong local employment, and Novi's continued attractiveness to families and professionals. Between 2010 and 2020, Novi's population grew by approximately 20%, while housing units increased by roughly 13%, widening the gap between household growth and available housing options.

As of the 2020 Census, Novi had approximately 27,300–27,400 housing units. Since then, continued residential development has increased the total housing stock to more than 28,800 units by 2024–2025, reflecting new construction since adoption of the Master Plan baseline. Owner-occupied units comprise roughly 61%–64% of the housing stock, while renters account for approximately 32%–35%.

Housing costs have risen sharply. Novi's median home value more than doubled between 2014 and 2024, increasing from approximately \$235,600 to \$474,900, with average sale prices now exceeding \$450,000–\$500,000. Nearly 20% of owner households with a mortgage are cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of income on housing.

Rental market pressures have intensified as ownership becomes less attainable. Average rents increased from approximately \$1,053 to \$1,696 over the past decade, with typical rents now exceeding \$1,700. Approximately 40% of renter households are cost-burdened.

With approximately 75% of the City built out, Novi's housing future will be defined less by greenfield expansion and more by reinvestment, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse. Council and staff have expressed a clear preference for renovation and reuse—particularly in legacy neighborhoods and aging commercial corridors—over teardown-style redevelopment that alters neighborhood character or strains infrastructure.

Strategic SWOC Analysis

Strengths

- Strong housing demand supported by population growth, employment, and quality of life
- Diverse mix of housing tenures and typologies relative to peer communities
- High-value housing stock supports the City's tax base
- Stable neighborhoods with strong pride, HOAs, and maintenance
- Active planning framework supporting mixed-use and corridor redevelopment

Weaknesses

- Housing production has not kept pace with population and household growth

- Rising home prices and rents hinder affordability for moderate-income households and essential workers
- Limited supply of age-friendly, accessible, and downsized housing options
- Mismatch between newer housing products (e.g., townhomes) and older adult needs
- Aging rental and single-family stock requiring reinvestment

Opportunities

- Modernize zoning and development standards to enable missing-middle housing (duplexes, small multiplexes, cottage courts, ADUs)
- Advance adaptive reuse and reinvestment strategies in legacy neighborhoods and commercial corridors
- Align housing development with aging-in-place goals and proximity to services, parks, and mobility options
- Leverage public-private partnerships to expand attainable and workforce housing
- Integrate housing planning with economic development, mobility, sustainability, and fiscal strategy

Constraints

- State law limits inclusionary zoning and local affordability mandates
- Community resistance to density or changes in neighborhood character
- High construction, land, and financing costs limit feasibility
- Infrastructure limitations in older areas complicate infill
- Fiscal realities constrain the City's ability to subsidize housing at scale

Key Trend Drivers

- **Regional Housing Shortage:** Michigan is projected to face a significant long-term housing shortfall, sustaining upward price pressure
- **Aging Population:** A large 45–64 cohort signals rising demand for accessible, downsized, and service-supported housing
- **Lifecycle Mismatch:** Limited downsizing options reduce market fluidity and constrain younger household entry
- **Redevelopment Shift:** With limited greenfield land, future housing growth will occur primarily through redevelopment and adaptive reuse
- **Workforce & Talent Needs:** Housing choice and affordability increasingly influence employer competitiveness and retention
- **Fiscal Sustainability:** Housing form and location affect long-term service costs and tax base performance

Looking Forward

Housing will be one of the most consequential factors shaping Novi's success through 2050. The challenge ahead is not simply producing more units but producing the right mix of housing—at the right scale, in the right locations, and aligned with how residents' needs change over time.

Success by 2050 looks like a housing ecosystem that supports stability and choice—where older adults can remain in Novi as they downsize, younger households can enter the market, and neighborhoods evolve without losing their character. By coordinating housing decisions with mobility, economic development, infrastructure, and community services, Novi can continue to build neighborhoods that are resilient, inclusive, and prepared for the next generation.

04. Economic Development & Fiscal Health

Focus: Market competitiveness, workforce dynamics, redevelopment economics, and long-term fiscal resilience

Current Conditions

Novi is a regional economic hub with a diverse and resilient market position. Its location, transportation access, strong schools, and high-quality services have made the City one of the most competitive real estate and employment markets in southeast Michigan. The Novi Road/I-96 interchange—anchored by Twelve Oaks Mall—serves as a regional destination for retail, dining, entertainment, and employment, while the Suburban Collection Showplace functions as a nationally significant event and exposition center.

Residential market strength directly supports economic performance. Novi is firmly a seller's market, with a median home sale price of approximately \$505,000 at the end of 2024, significantly higher than Oakland County's median of \$370,000. Homes sell quickly—averaging 23 days on market—and often above list price.

Novi's commercial markets have proven resilient post-pandemic. Retail demand has rebounded strongly, with vacancy rates dropping to approximately 4.8%, nearly 96% of retail space leased, and more than 106,000 square feet of net absorption from 2023 to 2024. Restaurants, entertainment, household furnishings, and recreation-related retail continue to grow.

The office market is stabilizing but structurally changed. Vacancy rates remain elevated (approximately 10–11%), reflecting long-term shifts toward hybrid work. However, Novi experienced a 514% increase in net office absorption between 2023 and 2024, signaling renewed use of existing space rather than new construction.

Industrial and logistics sectors are among Novi's strongest performers. Nearly 97% of industrial space is leased, vacancy is low (approximately 3.4%), and net absorption exceeded 130,000 square feet from 2023 to 2024. Electric power transmission and distribution represents the single largest economic output sector in Novi at nearly \$946 million.

From a fiscal perspective, Novi benefits from a high taxable value and one of the lowest municipal millage rates among peer communities, supported by a history of clean audits and strong fund balances. However, Michigan's revenue structure—limited property tax growth, no local sales tax, and Headlee/Proposal A constraints—means that service costs are rising faster than revenues.

Strategic SWOC Analysis

Strengths

- Diverse and resilient economy spanning manufacturing, healthcare, logistics, R&D, retail, and professional services
- Strong regional market position and destination assets (Twelve Oaks, Suburban Collection Showplace)
- High household spending potential across nearly all categories

- Low municipal millage rate paired with high-quality services
- Strong industrial and logistics performance with low vacancy and high absorption

Weaknesses

- Office market oversupply relative to post-pandemic demand
- Workforce housing affordability constrains talent attraction and retention
- High reliance on property tax as primary revenue source
- Staffing capacity challenges within City departments
- Fragmented alignment between economic development, housing, and mobility strategies

Opportunities

- Redevelop underperforming commercial and office properties into mixed-use, employment-supportive districts
- Expand flexible office, co-working, and medical/R&D spaces aligned with growth sectors
- Strengthen corridor redevelopment strategies to increase taxable value per acre
- Align housing policy with workforce needs to support employers and municipal staffing
- Integrate fiscal impact analysis more directly into land use and zoning decisions

Constraints

- State restrictions on municipal revenue tools limit diversification
- Community sensitivity to density and redevelopment intensity
- High construction and financing costs affect redevelopment feasibility
- Regional competition for talent, investment, and development capital

Key Trend Drivers

- **Post-Pandemic Market Restructuring:** Demand is shifting toward flexible, smaller-scale, mixed-use spaces
- **Workforce Mobility & Housing Costs:** Housing affordability increasingly influences labor availability
- **Growth vs. Revenue Gap:** Service expectations and infrastructure costs are rising faster than revenue capacity
- **Redevelopment Economics:** Future growth depends on maximizing value and efficiency within built areas
- **Sector Realignment:** Growth in healthcare, professional services, logistics, and R&D continues, while traditional retail and large office formats evolve

Looking Forward

Economic success in Novi through 2050 will depend less on attracting growth at any cost and more on aligning growth with fiscal resilience, workforce needs, and land-use efficiency. The city's strong market position provides opportunity—but also raises expectations for infrastructure, services, and quality of place that must be sustainably funded.

Success by 2050 looks like a balanced, adaptable economy—one where redevelopment strengthens the tax base, businesses have access to talent, residents can afford to live near work, and City services remain high-performing without overextending fiscal capacity.

05. Public Services, Staffing & Governance

Focus: Organizational capacity, workforce sustainability, service delivery performance, governance alignment, and fiscal realism

Current Conditions

Novi's public services are widely recognized as high-performing and professional. Residents consistently rate City services highly, and many departments hold national accreditations or awards. The organization is known for strong customer service, transparency, and responsiveness, reinforcing Novi's reputation as a safe, well-managed community.

That said, interviews and leadership discussions point to potential capacity strain. While position vacancies are minimal, the City operates with lean staffing models that can limit flexibility, innovation, and surge capacity. As service demands increase, staff have little capacity to scale up their work, relying instead on cross-functional workarounds to maintain service levels.

The City's human resources model, systems, and policies are widely viewed as functional but outdated with manual processes and traditional job classifications. Recruitment and retention challenges are most evident in certified, technical, and competitive roles (engineering, building, IT, paramedics, skilled trades).

Governance dynamics are generally collaborative, but staff could benefit from clearer direction on long-term priorities. The Long Range Strategic Planning Committee emphasized the need to better align Council goals, budgeting, capital planning, and organizational capacity around a shared 2050 direction.

To address these challenges, leadership has reinvested in the High Performance Organization (HPO) model, an internal, values-based framework focused on building a high-performance culture grounded in continuous improvement, innovation, and staff empowerment.

Strategic SWOC Analysis

Strengths

- Strong culture of customer service, professionalism, and public trust
- Accredited and award-winning departments across public safety, recreation, and library services
- Staff pride and commitment to community outcomes
- Strong financial management and history of clean audits
- HPO initiative provides a foundation for cultural and organizational evolution

Weaknesses

- Lean staffing models limit resilience, innovation, and succession planning
- Outdated HR systems and workforce structures hinder recruitment, retention, and advancement

- Compensation challenges affect competitiveness in technical and certified roles
- Aging facilities constrain service expansion and efficiency
- Internal fatigue from maintaining high service levels with limited capacity

Opportunities

- Modernize workforce strategy through updated HR systems, workforce planning, and flexible staffing models
- Implement the Council-directed Five-Year Compensation & Benefits Cost Strategy to improve competitiveness
- Align facilities planning with long-range service demand and fiscal capacity
- Strengthen City–school collaboration around shared facilities, programming, and community services
- Use data, technology, and automation to improve efficiency and reduce staff burden

Constraints

- State limitations on revenue growth constrain staffing and compensation flexibility
- Community sensitivity to taxes and major capital investments
- Certification and labor market barriers limit candidate pools
- Political risk associated with organizational and structural change

Key Trend Drivers

- **Rising Service Expectations:** Residents expect high-quality, responsive, and increasingly digital services
- **Workforce Competition:** Municipal employers face growing competition for skilled and certified staff
- **Aging Population:** Increased demand for public safety, recreation, library, and older adult services
- **Facilities Lifecycle Costs:** Aging buildings drive higher maintenance and staffing needs
- **Organizational Modernization:** Legacy structures must evolve to support innovation and resilience

Public Services Breakdown

Human Resources & Governance: HR relies heavily on manual processes and outdated policies. Staff planning and use of the HPO framework is designed to address these issues, with a long-term focus on culture, empowerment, and innovation.

Public Safety – Police: Novi Police Department remains CALEA accredited. Total offenses dropped from 900 in 2014 to 506 in 2024. Body cameras and squad car video systems were deployed in 2024.

Public Safety – Fire Department: Rising EMS call volumes are pushing department capacity. Strategic goals include expanding 24/7 station coverage and enhancing EMS integration.

Public Library: The Novi Public Library is a national award-winner. Facility constraints limit programming growth, particularly for youth and older adults.

Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services: Recreation programs remain popular but suffer from space and staffing limits. Council has prioritized a potential community center.

Public Works: DPW is pursuing department-wide accreditation. Staffing gaps exist in skilled trades and certified roles.

Looking Forward

Novi's ability to sustain high-quality public services through 2050 will depend less on whether staff are dedicated—they clearly are—and more on whether the organization itself is structured, supported, and funded for the future. Rising service demands, workforce competition, and fiscal constraints are converging in ways that require intentional change, not incremental adjustment.

06. Infrastructure & Utilities

Focus: Capital investment, asset lifecycle management, service reliability, and long-term fiscal sustainability

Current Conditions

Novi’s infrastructure systems are well-established and generally high-performing, but they are increasingly defined by maturity rather than expansion. With approximately 75% of the City built out, infrastructure priorities have shifted from extending systems to maintaining, reinvesting in, and modernizing existing assets.

The City has a strong track record of asset management and capital planning, particularly for roads and utilities. Road conditions are monitored using PASER ratings, and capital projects are prioritized accordingly. As of the early 2020s, approximately half of Novi’s road network is rated “Fair” or “Poor,” driving continued demand for reinvestment. The FY 2024–25 budget allocates more than \$12 million for road improvements.

Water and wastewater systems are similarly managed through long-term planning. The Water & Sewer Fund supports phased upgrades, redundancy improvements, and system reliability investments, with nearly \$9 million budgeted in FY 2024–25.

Electric reliability has emerged as one of the most visible infrastructure concerns for residents and elected officials. Frequent and prolonged outages—particularly in southern Novi—have elevated power reliability into a politically sensitive issue.

Broadband infrastructure presents a mixed picture. Commercial areas and newer developments are generally well-served, but older neighborhoods experience gaps in speed, affordability, and provider choice. Council has identified development of a Broadband Master Plan as a priority.

Strategic SWOC Analysis

Strengths

- Strong culture of capital planning and asset management
- Long-standing commitment to infrastructure investment through the CIP
- Well-maintained road network relative to many peer communities
- Reliable water and wastewater systems with planned redundancy
- Transparent budgeting and financial discipline

Weaknesses

- Aging infrastructure across multiple systems increases maintenance and replacement costs
- Stormwater systems strained by changing climate conditions
- Uneven electric reliability with limited municipal control
- Broadband access gaps in older neighborhoods

- Staffing gaps in skilled trades and technical infrastructure roles

Opportunities

- Renewal of the **CIP millage** to sustain long-term capital investment
- Integration of climate-informed design standards into infrastructure projects
- Use of smart infrastructure, sensors, and data to improve efficiency
- Redevelopment-focused infrastructure upgrades that increase taxable value per acre
- Development of a Broadband Master Plan to close equity gaps

Constraints

- Reliance on external utility providers for electric infrastructure improvements
- Limited fiscal flexibility due to state revenue constraints
- Public sensitivity to taxes, rates, and long-term debt
- Long timelines and high costs for systemwide upgrades

Key Trend Drivers

- **Infrastructure Maturity:** As systems age, reinvestment costs increase faster than new capacity needs
- **Climate Stress:** Heavier rainfall and extreme weather accelerate wear on stormwater and road systems
- **Redevelopment Era:** Infrastructure must adapt to higher-intensity land uses without greenfield expansion
- **Reliability Expectations:** Residents increasingly expect uninterrupted power, water, and digital connectivity
- **Fiscal Pressure:** Capital needs are rising faster than available revenue growth

Looking Forward

Infrastructure will be one of the clearest tests of Novi's long-term readiness. The question ahead is not whether the City values infrastructure—it does—but whether investment levels, timing, and prioritization are aligned with a maturing community's needs and fiscal realities.

Success will look like infrastructure that residents rarely think about because it works—roads that are reliable, utilities that are resilient, systems that recover quickly from disruption, and investments that support economic competitiveness without undermining fiscal health.

07. Mobility & Transportation

Focus: Multimodal access, corridor performance, redevelopment readiness, resident experience, equity, and fiscal sustainability

Current Conditions

Novi's mobility system is shaped by decades of auto-oriented development and its role as a regional destination for employment, retail, healthcare, and events. The City is served by a well-defined hierarchy of principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and local streets, as established in the Thoroughfare Master Plan.

From a systemwide perspective, traffic growth in Novi has been modest on average (approximately 0.5% annually). However, localized congestion is significant and highly visible, particularly during peak periods on corridors such as Beck Road, Grand River Avenue, Pontiac Trail, and Twelve Mile Road. Volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratios on several of these corridors already meet or exceed 1.0 during PM peak hours.

With approximately 75% of the City built out, Novi's transportation challenges are no longer about large-scale expansion. Many corridors cannot be widened further due to right-of-way limitations, existing development, environmental constraints, and cost.

Auto dependence remains the dominant travel mode. Fixed-route public transit service was historically absent, but this changed in 2023 with the launch of SMART transit service in Novi for the first time. Three routes (305, 740, and 805) now operate along major corridors, connecting Novi residents and workers to regional destinations.

Active transportation infrastructure has expanded in recent years, but remains uneven and incomplete. The City adopted the Active Mobility Plan (2024) to address these gaps, prioritizing safety, access to destinations, and network completion.

Strategic SWOC Analysis

Strengths

- Clearly defined roadway hierarchy and corridor standards through the Thoroughfare Master Plan
- Generally well-maintained road network supported by asset management practices
- Declining crash trends and safety performance better than regional averages
- Adoption of the Active Mobility Plan to complement vehicular planning
- Launch of fixed-route transit service for the first time in City history

Weaknesses

- Transportation system remains heavily auto-oriented
- Localized congestion creates outsized resident frustration
- Many corridors prioritize vehicle movement over placemaking and multimodal comfort

- Incomplete sidewalk, pathway, and crossing infrastructure—especially along arterials
- Legacy subdivision patterns (cul-de-sacs, limited connectivity) funnel traffic onto arterials

Opportunities

- Use access management (driveway consolidation, shared access, median control) to improve safety and flow without widening roads
- Apply context-sensitive corridor retrofits during redevelopment
- Strengthen subdivision and redevelopment standards using connectivity index targets (≥ 1.4)
- Integrate transit planning with sidewalk completion, crossings, and mobility hubs
- Align mobility investments with housing, redevelopment, parks, and economic development goals

Constraints

- Right-of-way limitations in built-out corridors
- High costs and long timelines for major roadway reconstruction
- Dependence on MDOT and RCOC for improvements on regional routes
- Community hesitation toward changes perceived to reduce vehicle capacity
- Limited local control over transit service levels and frequency

Key Trend Drivers

- **Built-Out Corridor Reality:** Future improvements must occur within existing rights-of-way
- **Operational Optimization Over Expansion:** Signal timing, access management, and ITS will drive future gains
- **Redevelopment Intensity:** Mixed-use and higher-density projects require different mobility design approaches
- **Aging Population:** Demand for safer crossings, sidewalks, and non-driving options will increase
- **Transit Emergence:** Fixed-route service now exists but depends on supporting pedestrian infrastructure
- **Equity & Access:** Mobility increasingly shapes access to jobs, services, and community life

Looking Forward

Mobility is where residents most directly experience the tradeoffs of growth, redevelopment, and infrastructure investment. Looking toward 2050, Novi's opportunity is to integrate its mobility strategies: using the Thoroughfare Plan to protect system

function, the Active Mobility Plan to improve safety and access, and redevelopment policy to reshape corridors incrementally.

By operating efficiently, building deliberately, and investing strategically, Novi can manage congestion, support redevelopment, expand mobility choice, and improve equity without undermining fiscal sustainability.

08. Parks, Recreation, Arts & Cultural Assets

Focus: Quality of life, multigenerational services, cultural inclusion, facilities capacity, and long-term fiscal sustainability

Current Conditions

Parks, recreation, arts, and cultural assets are among Novi's most visible and valued community strengths. The City maintains an extensive park system, popular recreation programs, and a nationally recognized Public Library, all of which contribute directly to Novi's reputation as a safe, attractive, and family-friendly community.

At the same time, demand is outpacing capacity. Population growth, an aging demographic, and increasing cultural diversity are placing sustained pressure on facilities, staffing, and program space. Recreation programs routinely reach capacity, library usage continues to rise, and older adult programming has expanded beyond what existing facilities were originally designed to support.

Facility age and configuration are emerging as central challenges. Several recreation and library facilities were constructed decades ago and lack the flexibility, square footage, or modern infrastructure needed to support today's programming expectations.

Novi's arts and cultural ecosystem is more distributed than centralized. Cultural programming occurs through parks events, library programming, community festivals, schools, faith-based institutions, and private or nonprofit partners. While this creates diversity and reach, it also results in fragmentation, making it harder to coordinate programming.

Strategic SWOC Analysis

Strengths

- Extensive park system and well-maintained open spaces
- Highly regarded Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Department
- Nationally recognized Public Library with strong community engagement
- Broad range of programming serving youth, families, and older adults
- Parks and cultural events play a key role in community identity and cohesion

Weaknesses

- Facilities operating at or beyond capacity
- Aging buildings with limited flexibility for modern programming
- Staffing levels limit program expansion and responsiveness
- Fragmented arts and cultural programming across multiple venues and partners
- Limited indoor space for multigenerational and culturally inclusive programming

Opportunities

- Advance a multi-purpose community center concept integrating recreation, senior services, arts, and partnerships

- Align parks and facilities planning with demographic trends and aging-in-place needs
- Use redevelopment and corridor investments to expand park access and cultural spaces
- Strengthen coordination between parks, library, schools, and community organizations
- Expand culturally responsive programming that reflects Novi's diversity

Constraints

- High capital and operating costs associated with new or expanded facilities
- Fiscal limits require careful phasing and prioritization of investments
- Built-out context limits opportunities for new large park acquisitions
- Community sensitivity to taxes and long-term operating impacts

Key Trend Drivers

- **Aging Population:** Increased demand for senior programming, wellness, and accessible facilities
- **Population Growth & Diversity:** Rising demand for inclusive, culturally relevant programming and gathering spaces
- **Built-Out Community:** Greater emphasis on optimizing and reinvesting in existing facilities
- **Health & Wellness Focus:** Parks and recreation increasingly viewed as public health infrastructure
- **Walkability as Recreation:** Trails and parks serve as primary entry points for non-auto mobility

Looking Forward

Parks, recreation, arts, and cultural assets will play an increasingly central role in Novi's ability to sustain quality of life through 2050. In a mature, diverse, and aging community, these services are no longer optional amenities—they are core civic infrastructure that supports health, inclusion, and community cohesion.

Success by 2050 looks like a parks and cultural system that remains beloved and accessible—where residents of all ages and backgrounds can gather, recreate, and connect; where facilities are right-sized and sustainable; and where cultural expression reflects the community Novi has become.

09. Public Safety & Emergency Services

Focus: Strong public satisfaction, facilities investments, increasing demand for services, and multi-agency coordination

Current Conditions

Public safety is a cornerstone of Novi's quality of life and a defining strength of the community. The City operates an integrated Public Safety model with Police and Fire services aligned under a unified administrative structure, enabling coordination, efficiency, and consistent service delivery.

The City is making significant investments in public safety infrastructure through the construction of three new fire stations and a public safety headquarters.. These facilities will create new opportunities for improving services, ensuring staff safety, and increasing coordination between public safety departments.

Novi's Fire Department maintains a Class 2 ISO rating, placing it among the highest-performing departments in Michigan. Community confidence is high: the National Citizen Survey has consistently shown strong satisfaction with emergency services, with fire services receiving over 90% positive ratings in recent surveys.

Demand for emergency medical services continues to rise. An aging population, increasing residential density, and the concentration of senior living and care facilities have driven sustained growth in EMS calls. Between 2020 and 2021 alone, total calls for service increased by more than 12%, with EMS responses increasing by over 26%.

Strategic SWOC Analysis

Strengths

- Highly trusted public safety services with strong resident satisfaction and low crime perception
- ISO Class 2 Fire rating and a well-established culture of training and accreditation
- Integrated Police–Fire administrative model that supports coordination
- Strong mutual and automatic aid agreements that enhance regional resilience
- Staff pride in service and a clear sense of mission tied to community well-being

Weaknesses

- Facilities and infrastructure not fully aligned with long-term growth and service demand
- Recruitment and retention challenges driven by regional competition and compensation pressures
- Increasing call volumes—particularly EMS-related—placing strain on staffing models

- Perception among staff of reactive decision-making and limited clarity on long-term prioritization

Opportunities

- Planned investments in public safety facilities and technology to modernize service delivery and improve response times
- Expanded use of data, analytics, and risk modeling to anticipate service demand
- Community risk reduction strategies focused on aging populations and emerging technologies
- Strengthening partnerships with healthcare providers, neighboring jurisdictions, and community organizations
- Improved coordination through police and fire co-location

Constraints

- Continued growth increasing service demand without corresponding revenue growth flexibility
- Evolving risks tied to electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries, and alternative energy systems
- Rising expectations for transparency and response times amid fiscal constraints
- Balancing capital investment needs with community sensitivity to taxes

Key Trend Drivers

- **Demographic Change:** An aging population and growth in senior housing will continue to drive EMS demand
- **Development & Density:** Mixed-use redevelopment and increased residential density will alter risk profiles
- **Technology & Energy Systems:** Electric vehicles and battery storage introduce new fire and rescue challenges
- **Climate & Resiliency:** More frequent extreme weather events elevate the importance of preparedness
- **Workforce Dynamics:** Competition for certified public safety professionals will intensify

Looking Forward

Public safety and emergency services will remain central to Novi's identity as a safe, welcoming, and high-performing community. Looking ahead to 2050, the City's opportunity is not simply to maintain excellence, but to anticipate change and lead with intention.

A forward-looking public safety system in Novi will prioritize proactive risk reduction, data-informed decision-making, and strong regional partnerships. Continued

transparency and engagement will build public trust and shared ownership of what it means to invest properly in being a safe community—at all times, for all people.

10. Environmental Resilience & Sustainability

Focus: Climate readiness, stormwater and natural systems, redevelopment-era resilience, operational coordination, and long-term fiscal sustainability

Current Conditions

Novi has a long-standing foundation of environmental stewardship, with policies that protect wetlands, woodlands, and natural features, and development standards that require stormwater management and erosion control. However, the City's environmental systems are increasingly under stress as climate patterns shift and infrastructure ages.

Stormwater management is the most visible resilience challenge. Novi experienced multiple flood advisories in recent years, including a notable spike in 2021 that exceeded the total number recorded in the previous decade. Staff and residents report localized flooding in older neighborhoods and along key corridors.

Heat is an emerging concern. Large expanses of impervious surface—particularly along commercial corridors and parking-intensive development—contribute to localized heat islands.

Energy systems are in transition. Novi allows rooftop solar installations and is exploring electric vehicle charging and fleet electrification, but sustainability initiatives remain fragmented across departments.

Novi's parks, trails, wetlands, and woodlands function as critical green infrastructure, providing stormwater storage, cooling, and recreational access. Community support for environmental investments is strongest when these systems are framed around recreation, flood reduction, and neighborhood protection.

Strategic SWOC Analysis

Strengths

- Strong environmental protection policies for wetlands, woodlands, and natural features
- Extensive park system and natural areas functioning as green infrastructure
- Long history of stormwater management requirements for development
- Growing awareness among staff and leadership of climate and infrastructure interdependencies

Weaknesses

- Stormwater systems designed for outdated rainfall assumptions
- Sustainability initiatives spread across departments without a unifying framework
- Limited staff capacity for proactive resilience planning and implementation
- Inconsistent application of green infrastructure in redevelopment projects
- Limited metrics and performance tracking for resilience outcomes

Opportunities

- Integrate climate-informed design standards into capital projects and redevelopment
- Expand use of green infrastructure (bioswales, permeable pavement, tree canopy) along corridors
- Align stormwater upgrades with road reconstruction, park improvements, and redevelopment
- Leverage state and federal funding for resilience and infrastructure adaptation
- Use parks and trails as visible, multi-benefit resilience investments

Constraints

- Built-out conditions limit large-scale infrastructure expansion
- High costs and long timelines for stormwater retrofits
- Fiscal limits constrain rapid implementation
- Fragmented authority across agencies and utilities
- Community sensitivity to costs and disruption from infrastructure projects

Key Trend Drivers

- **Climate Variability:** Increased frequency of heavy rain and extreme heat events
- **Infrastructure Aging:** Legacy systems reaching capacity limits
- **Redevelopment Pressure:** Higher intensity land use increases runoff and heat impacts
- **Public Expectations:** Residents expect flooding mitigation and environmental reliability
- **Energy Transition:** Electrification and renewable energy introduce new infrastructure demands
- **Fiscal Sustainability:** Resilience investments must reduce long-term costs, not add volatility

Looking Forward

Environmental resilience will increasingly define Novi's ability to operate reliably, protect neighborhoods, and sustain quality of life through 2050. In a built-out community, resilience is less about expansion and more about how well existing systems are adapted to new realities.

Success by 2050 looks like a community where environmental systems quietly do their job—managing water effectively, moderating heat, supporting recreation, and reducing long-term costs. By operating efficiently, building strategically, and investing with intention, Novi can ensure environmental resilience strengthens—not strains—the community it is shaping for the future.

Sources

Adopted Plans & City Documents

- City of Novi Master Plan (2025)
- City of Novi Thoroughfare Master Plan
- City of Novi Active Mobility Plan (2024)
- City of Novi Fire Department Strategic Plan (2022–2027)
- City of Novi FY 2024–25 Budget
- City of Novi Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), FY 2024
- Economic Development Strategy (2022)
- 2026 Novi City Council Goals

Market, Demographic & Economic Data

- U.S. Census Bureau — Decennial Census (2010, 2020), American Community Survey
- Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) — 2050 Forecasts
- Data USA — Income, education, housing affordability, and workforce characteristics
- Regional and State Housing Projections

Transportation & Safety Data

- Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC)
- Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)
- SMART (Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation)

Staff, Committee & Stakeholder Input

- Department Director Interviews from previous consultant
- Long Range Strategic Planning Committee Recap Materials
- Environmental Scan Presentation Materials

Supplemental & Reference Materials

- National Citizen Survey Results
- ISO Public Protection Classification Program