



TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: VICTOR CARDENAS, CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT: PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY
DATE: NOVEMBER 20, 2024

M

Mayor and Council –

Please see a summary of previously raised questions about the status of the Public Safety Facility Needs Assessment process. Included is:
Summary
History of what has been done to date
Draft update from PMR
A current working draft of the agreement, including scope.

- Victor

In response to the City of Novi's evolving public safety needs, this memo consolidates our initial evaluations and decisions for developing new public safety facilities. The proposed plans for the police station, fire stations, and associated infrastructure reflect a commitment to efficiency, centrality, and adaptability. Data from the Redstone Architects report, the Public Safety Needs Committee, which incorporated Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police Erick Zinser's insight along with community stakeholders, and comparative cost analyses support our recommendations to construct new facilities rather than repurpose existing structures.

1. Data Evaluation About Re-Use of Existing Buildings

- **Summary:** The viability of repurposing existing buildings was carefully evaluated, with findings clearly indicating limitations in configuration and functionality. According to the 2022 Redstone study, the current 38,000 square-foot facility, despite potential renovations, lacks the structural capacity and spatial layout necessary to meet the department's operational demands. This constraint underscores the need for purpose build facilities that align with both immediate and projected needs.
- **Supporting Data:** The Redstone study highlights the limitations of current buildings in terms of configuration, which inhibits effective adaptation for public safety needs.
- **Cost Comparison:** Refurbishing older structures could lead to higher long-term costs while still falling short of current functional standards. Redstone's cost projection estimated that a new combined Public Safety Building and Fire Station #1 could be built for approximately \$650 per square foot, aligning with budgetary and spatial needs.
- **Additional Factors:** Chief Zinser's recommendations suggest the location's proximity to residential areas as a challenge, underscoring the need for a centrally located, dedicated facility.

2. Location Benefits for New Police Station

- **Centralized Location:** A central location benefits operational efficiency, ensuring equitable access across Novi's neighborhoods. This placement, endorsed by the Public Safety Committee, enhances response times and optimizes patrol routes citywide.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Redstone's and city staff's Run Time Analysis (RTA) reinforces this benefit, predicting that over 93% of existing calls can be reached within five minutes of this site - a crucial factor in our emergency response standards.
- **Community Integration:** The new location will maintain a police presence at civic events, particularly those at the Civic Center.
- **Enhanced Civic Center Campus:** This move supports the development of a cohesive second campus for city operations, including police, fire, and DPW facilities. Considerations include the potential addition of a public pocket park. The fuel island, fleet maintenance facilities, and personnel will all be centralized.
- **Disaster Preparedness:** By moving this facility to another part of the City, it provides a secondary location that could serve as an emergency base of operations if a natural disaster strikes both the Civic Center and Police Station at their current location

3. Considerations for a new location for Fire Station #1

- **Alternative Locations:** We explored other potential locations for Fire Station #1 and concluded that the existing general location optimally supports our emergency response requirements.
- **Mapping and Logistics:** A map illustrating potential locations reveals few viable properties; many are either prohibitively expensive or unsuitable for logistical reasons. With assistance from Plante Moran Realpoint, if another viable centralized property becomes available, it will be considered/evaluated and presented to City Council.
- **Road Infrastructure:** The planned road necessary for this location has been included in economic development plans and traffic flow enhancements to Grand River, similar to the long-term planning for the current ring road.
- **Historical Goals:** Plans for Station #1 align with long-standing City Council goals dating back years, underscoring the importance of maintaining this location within the broader infrastructure strategy.

4. General Considerations for Flexibility in Site and Configuration

- **Evaluation of New Options:** Our approach prioritizes flexibility, allowing for adjustments in building design, parking configurations, and other site features to

reflect community feedback and ongoing assessments. The proposed site allows for needed expansion, providing scalable solutions that accommodate Novi's growth projections. Should a more affordable and suitable site become available, we are open to evaluating it for potential use as a Public Safety Headquarters and Fire Station #1.

- **Configurable Design:** The data and cost analyses provided by Redstone Architects, combined with the Public Safety Committee's strategic input, confirm the advantages of constructing purpose-built facilities. These new sites will meet current demands while allowing for growth and adaptability. Continued dialogue with community stakeholders and thorough evaluations of any merging site opportunities will further enhance these plans. This foundation will support Novi's public safety needs for years to come, ensuring prompt, effective, and accessible services.

Redstone Architects Background

Redstone Architects, Inc., established in 1937, is a highly respected firm specializing in law enforcement, justice, and public safety architecture. With over 85 years of experience, their expertise lies in developing innovative, functional, and cost-effective facilities tailored to the specific needs of police, fire, and public safety departments. They have earned a strong reputation for delivering high-quality designs that enhance operational efficiency and align with modern public safety standards. Their expertise is evident in Novi's feasibility study, where they conducted data-driven analyses, including space needs assessment and the Run-Time Analysis, which confirmed that a purpose-built facility would address current space deficiencies, optimize emergency response times, and accommodate future growth. Redstone's recommendations prioritize operational efficiency, sustainability, and flexibility, ensuring long-term value for Novi.

Some of the highlights of their report are as follows:

1. **Space and Operational Deficiencies:** The current public safety building is approximately 38,000 square feet but is not meeting the spatial and functional requirements identified in both internal and external studies. Limitations in layout prevent effective operational adaptations, which impacts the efficiency and response capabilities of both police and fire departments.
2. **Cost Inefficiency of Renovations:** The option to renovate and expand the current building was evaluated but deemed impractical. Initial estimates suggested renovation with an addition would cost around \$7 million but still fail to meet long-term needs. By comparison, a purpose-built facility offers a more cost-effective, durable solution that aligns with operational demands.

3. **Run Time Analysis (RTA) Findings:** The RTA conducted by Beckett and Raeder along with city staff shows that a centrally located facility would achieve rapid response times, with about 93% of calls being reachable within five minutes. This efficiency aligns with best practices in emergency response and public safety standards, making a centralized new building strategically essential. The City of Novi operates on a tiered emergency response system. The fire and police department, depending upon the nature of the call, initially respond, followed by the contracted ambulance service provider.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) response standard for emergency medical calls is 90% within nine minutes (8:59 or less) within urban/suburban areas with populations of 1000 residents per square mile. The Novi Fire Department has always used six minutes as our benchmark, which is below the MDHHS standard. The current response average by the Novi Fire Department for 2024 is five minutes and eleven seconds for approximately 5,189 priority calls.

4. **Projected Facility Requirements for Growth:** Redstone's space needs assessment highlighted the future growth needs of the police and fire departments. For instance, the new combined campus is planned to encompass over 53,776 square feet for police and administrative operations, with additional space for Fire Station #1 and maintenance facilities. These projections account for both current needs and future scalability.
5. **Inadequate Site Capacity at Current Locations:** Redstone's study assessed potential sites for Fire Stations #2 and #3 and found the existing locations too small to house the needed facilities. They recommend relocating to larger sites that could accommodate three-bay fire stations with necessary amenities like sleep rooms for personnel and designated parking for emergency vehicles.
6. **Centralized Campus Benefits:** The report supports creating a cohesive campus by relocating the police and fire departments alongside other city operations. This setup would facilitate shared resources, streamlined maintenance, and improved community access. It also positions public safety as a prominent and accessible city service located near the "four corners" of the city (Novi Road and Grand River Ave), which is beneficial for community engagement and transparency. The proposed site line of the new location would be in the heart of the city with views of 12 Mile Crossing at Fountain Walk, 12 Oaks Mall, I-96, Novi Road, and Grand River Avenue.
7. **Long-Term Cost Savings:** Although the projected cost per square foot for the new Public Safety Building is higher than renovations, the purpose-built facility will reduce future maintenance costs, extend the lifespan of city assets, and accommodate modern public safety technology. Redstone's cost projections—

factoring in construction costs and soft costs—demonstrate that a new facility is a prudent long-term investment.

8. **Support for Community and Economic Development:** The report indicates that the new location and facility design align with broader economic development plans, including traffic flow improvements and infrastructure updates. A modernized facility not only supports efficient public safety services but also enhances property values and city appeal, thus benefiting Novi's economic growth.
9. **Flexibility for Future Adaptation:** The Redstone study emphasizes a modular design approach, allowing the new building to adapt to emerging public safety needs or increased staffing in the future. This forward-thinking design is a cost-efficient way to ensure the facility remains functional over the next few decades as Novi's population and service demands grow.
10. **Compliance with Industry Standards:** Redstone Architects, specializing in law enforcement and public safety architecture, based their recommendations on best practices and standards within the field. The proposed facility's layout, equipment specifications, and site selection all adhere to industry norms, reinforcing the project's credibility and necessity.

The need for new public safety facilities is clear and supported by expert analysis. The Redstone Architects report identified critical deficiencies in our current infrastructure, including inadequate space and outdated layouts, and confirmed that renovating would cost more while providing less functionality than a new purpose-built facility. Council approved Plante Moran Realpoint, a leader in municipal project management, brings extensive experience with similar projects, including work in Royal Oak, Livonia, and Novi schools. Notably, the Novi School District faced a comparable situation and allocated tens of millions of dollars for a comprehensive remodel of its high school campus to accommodate future growth, a forward-thinking approach we should replicate for our public safety needs. This investment will modernize public safety operations, enhance efficiency, and support the city's long-term growth.