

PARKS POST

January-March 2025

Mayor and Council –

Please see a new format on how to present updates from PRCS. In lieu of separate “picture pages” now you’ll see quarterly updates.

- Victor

TEAM



Site Supervisors Recognized for Assistance

Two young adult site supervisors were commended for their quick thinking and assistance in calming a young child and mother at the Civic Center. They took it upon themselves to provide crayons, etc. and interact with a distraught child until the situation was resolved. “They (the site supervisors) were so kind and their tone so calming...I was truly impressed.”

A recognition system was implemented last year to encourage site supervisors to take initiative, go above and beyond, etc. The Novi Parks staff nominates the deserving site supervisors to receive a custom badge charm to wear proudly at work.

TRUST



AARP Tax Aide

For more than 40 years, Novi has hosted the AARP Tax Aide program to assist community members to file their taxes. The majority of those using the free service are retired, and relatively low income, however no one is excluded. The program is held each Wednesday February through mid-April. A total of 52 volunteers were trained in Novi and they work at six different locations, five days a week.

In 2025, 460 appointments were scheduled and the Novi site filled by February 7, a month earlier than previous years.

COMMITMENT



Nature.Nurture.Novi.

Nature. Nurture. Novi.(N3) offers residents the opportunity to explore nature and learn best practices for environmental consciousness. **In 2024**, the department worked with local experts and entities to offer free or low-cost programs for **1,640 participants**. These included hikes, birding, identifying plants, gardening, bee education, invasive species removal days, Arbor Day, etc. In 2025, several N3 Jr. programs for children are scheduled and we anticipate increased participation across all N3 programs.

INNOVATION

Young Actors have a Place to Grow

The partnership with In the Mitten Productions has flourished, with youth productions having **casts more than 70 actors** and **ticket sales upwards of 900** seats. The actors range from elementary to high school and are extremely talented, making key roles competitive. To grow the program and encourage the youngest actors, a new, smaller production was created for actors in K-3. The Claw, **the 2025 spring production featured 20 actors and sold 320 tickets**. We plan to offer both the older and younger child actors separate shows, twice per year.



Older Adults are Out & About

The City of Novi's Older Adult Travel Program has **increased by 54% between 2022 and 2024**, growing from 350 to 538 travelers. In partnership with five travel companies, and using the City's 14-passenger bus, the program offers a wide variety of both domestic and international day and extended trips. Spring and fall travel fairs help increase the visibility of our travel program and allow participants to meet face-to-face with the travel companies. While open to those 50 and older, the majority of our travelers are in their late 70s to early 90s. **In just the first quarter of 2025 (January-March), 268 participants have already participated in our travel fairs and registered for trips**, forecasting another record-breaking year.

TEAM



Novi Parks Team at 2025 mParks Conference

Several Novi Parks team members shared their expertise:

Kit Kieser & Madison Lachance - ChatGPT for Dummies:

A Hands-On Playground for Parks & Rec Professionals

Steve Fellhauer - Youth Sports is More than a Game &
Navigating Conflicts in Sports

Jeff Muck - Leadership & Executive Presence &
So You Want to be a Director

The department received a **Park Design Award for Jessica's Splashpad** & **Jeff Muck received the Fellowship Award**.

Commitment

Oakland County Veterans Fair

The Novi Civic Center was a 2025 host site for a Oakland County Veterans Resource Fair in February. The fairs are open to all veterans, active duty, guard and reserves and their families. **More than 500 community members registered for the event.**

Attendees received nonperishable food boxes (cars were lined up outside the Civic Center), and had the opportunity to meet with dozens of representatives from services offered by the state and county.



Villa Barr Art Park Enhancements

The Villa Barr Art Park webpage - cityofnovi.org/villabarr- was refreshed and restructured, making it easier for park visitors and potential artists-in-residence to locate information. Staff and the Friends of Villa Barr agreed to advertise for three local resident artists per year, in addition to the three artists who are chosen to stay in the house for 6-8 weeks. The local residents will use the Villa Barr studios but not stay on property. Residencies are funded by the Novi Parks Foundation. Lastly the two studios have been cleaned, reorganized, and partially repainted, making the space even more inviting for potential applicants.

INNOVATION

Building on a Good Foundation

The Novi Parks Soccer Club has nearly 1,000 players, ranging from Tiny Tikes to high school age select travel teams. The club provides league play in spring and fall with some teams choosing to take part in tournaments and winter indoor leagues. Summer camps and programs are offered to keep the players engaged and in shape throughout the off-season. New this year are three levels of skill & development training, a soccer instruction camp and a creative skills camp.



COMMITMENT

Parks & Recreation Master Park Plan Approval

In January, the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) approved the five-year Community Recreation Plan. A plan is required of municipalities to be eligible to apply and be awarded State and Federal grant monies. Development of the plan utilized components of the 2020-24 Strategic Community Recreation and Master Park Plan, and DNR Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans.



TRUST

Rotary Park Footbridge Replacement

The pedestrian bridge connecting the Rotary Park trails to the Chase Farms subdivision is in need of replacement. In April, PRCS Director Jeff Muck and Park & Municipal Property Superintendent Steve St. James met with representatives from the HOA and the adjoining property owners regarding using the easement as part of the construction plan. The project was well received by the residents. PRCS and Engineering are awaiting a response from EGLE to complete the next steps in development of costs and design.

