



City Council and Planning Commission

CITY OF NOVI
Capital Improvement Program Meeting
Wednesday, February 12, 2025 | 5:30 P.M.
Novi Special Conference Room – Civic Center 2nd Floor
45175 10 Mile Road
(248) 347-0445

CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Fischer, Council Members Casey, Staudt
Planning Commissioners Becker and Lynch

STAFF/OTHERS: Victor Cardenas, City Manager
Danielle Mahoney, Assistant City Manager
Jeff Herczeg, Director of Public Works
Carl Johnson, Chief Financial Officer and Director of Finance
Barbara McBeth, City Planner
Jeff Muck, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Eric Zinser, Chief of Police and Director of Public Safety

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Casey; Seconded: Lynch; 5:0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 14, 2024

Motion: Casey; Seconded: Becker; 5:0

AUDIENCE COMMENTS - None

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1. Discussion of proposed Capital Improvement Program projects for [FY2025-2026](#).

City Manager Cardenas opened the meeting by stating that we had appreciated the past feedback from Mayor, Council and the Commissioners, in response the Finance department made the key sheet for the group. The items that have been moved up are from natural progression. He further stated that, as always, the City of Novi staff team is here to answer any questions they may have specific to their given departments.

Commissioner Lynch asked about the progress on the Beck Road project. Mr. Herczeg shared that they are funded for a preservation overlay as a more effective measure for the next 7-8 years. Mr. Cardenas stated that, in addition, we are more confident with the funding as the environmental reviews that were previously endangering the time frame are back on track.

Commissioner Lynch then asked what the biggest/top-dollar project is for the 25/26 fiscal year? Mr. Johnson stated that, outside of roads/water/sewer the answer is nothing. They have half a million budgeted in the general fund, everything else is in the restricted funds. Parks and Recreation has a \$300,00 project but beyond that there is nothing. Commissioner Lynch noted that he is glad they don't have to worry about lift stations, we can ensure safe water and affirmed that roads are always a great investment.

Mayor Fischer asked if there are any areas percolating, especially in the north end of the city regarding sewers. Mr. Herczeg said that Buckminster has been a problem with a lot of breaks. The Department of Public Works (DPW) is currently scoping a project there. As we find any other deficiencies we can find dollars to address them.

Commissioner Lynch also wanted to commend whoever had the idea to use funds towards the Entryway Grant. He thinks it is a great way for a small amount of funds to go a long way. We want more young people to move into the City, keeping us and our schools strong. With many of the more affordable homes for young families being in the older, east side parts of the City this is a great way to keep them looking fresh and inviting.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey requested that they talk briefly about the Fire Truck. Pulling it out of the general fund and covering it with the CIP is great. They know it needs to be brought for 2028, not by 2028 and that they take 4 years to build. She is concerned that the funding of it is still so far out. She wants to know if we have the money to buy it now if needed. Mr. Johnson said yes, but it would clear out the remainder of the fund. Chief Zinser said that two fire apparatuses are on order now, one expected to be delivered in December 2025 and the other March 2027.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey then asked about the changes to Rotary Park. When she looked at the small print regarding the bridge that it said support is coming and wanted more information on that. Mr. Muck said that we are still getting the engineering done and that and need some more information, and as such it is a rough estimate. Mayor Pro Tem Casey also confirmed that the support is not from the Rotary Club, she knows that Mr. Muck had previously approached them. Mr. Muck confirmed that they will be funded one bench as of the current conversation, though he thinks the conversation is still ongoing. She then asked about the ADA improvements to City Park Facilities, Mr. Herczeg confirmed that the scope for the improvements was completed and is now in the hands of Integrated Solutions.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey then asked about what the larger vision was for the full vision of the project on Lakeshore Park/Shawood Lake, noting the million dollars and canoe launch/trail. Mr. Muck confirmed that the million dollars there is currently a placeholder, given the recent acquisition of the island and the thought process of connecting the island to the existing park via boardwalk as well as adding a canoe launch. There are not plans for other improvements to Lakeshore Park. Mayor Fischer noted that the purchase agreement for the island was only just approved and that conversations regarding improvements/boardwalk have not yet been through City Council and therefore he suggests taking it out. Mayor Pro Tem Casey agreed.

Mayor Fischer returned the conversation to the fire engines/apparatuses. HE wants to know why we are replacing so many (3 engines) in such a short amount of time and what, if anything, can be done to prolong their lifespan. Chief Zinser stated that they are constantly servicing the existing engines, to keep them in working order. They work round the clock in harsh working environments. Mayor Fischer asked, backing up to 2018, how many have we purchased and how many are in service. Chief Zinser replied that we have bought four, received one, and have two on order, the 2028 purchase would be the fourth one. We have four engines, the ladder truck, and two out-of-service trucks used for training or back up for when others are in service. Councilmember Staudt confirmed that we have therefore replaced all but one truck in the last six years, Chief Zinser affirmed this. Councilmember Staudt says that in the past the engines came out of the general fund balance, since they initiated the CIP it has come out of that. Mayor Fischer noted that, without the CIP, these purchases would have had to come out of the General Fund and would be 4 -5 million dollars lower in the General Fund. Councilmember Staudt notes his concerns that, if we don't have the CIP in future years, it will be much more difficult to purchase trucks at the current prices. Mayor asked what the expected life of a fire truck is, Chief Zinser replied that it is about 10 years. Councilmember Staudt asked what the current oldest truck in use is? It was confirmed to be a 2015 engine; it is used in-and-out of service and for training. Commissioner Lynch encouraged foresight on the next cycle of fire engine replacements that will be needed in the next ten years. This could affect the decision making of Council. Mayor agreed and said that based on the information he has it looks like we need to be planning on a replacement every two to three years. He asked again about the possibility of extending their life, Chief Zinser said that we do a very good job of general maintenance and outside of that there is little else they can do. They are stored inside. Councilmember Staudt noted the option of not sending the trucks out on every call so as to reduce wear. He knows people like to see them, but they are not always necessary on all the calls they attend to. Commissioner Lynch and Becker agreed that this should be considered as an option, though all agreed they would defer to the expertise of the Chief. The option of having an in-house fire track repair with a purpose mechanic, garage, lift, etc. was also briefly discussed given the prospective new Public Safety buildings. Mayor Fischer once more affirmed that the cost of the trucks has gone up astronomically, double what they were prior, and that we need to either plan to buy one every two to three years or find a way to improve their lifespan. He thinks we need the feet to come out in more even increments. With the cost and density of how often we do them, a plan to spread out replacements, if possible, would be good. There is a need you have to do it but whatever you do, do it great. Commissioner Lynch noted that he was recently very impressed seeing our firefighters in action.

Mayor asked Mr. Herczeg if he had any concerns regarding funding in the upcoming year. Mr. Herczeg said that they are generally in good shape, his only concern would be the potential of increased costs of materials.

Mayor Fischer then returned once more to the question of the island and improvements noted in the CIP. Mr. Muck said that said that the PRCS team started envisioning what the acquisition of the island would mean and look like when the conversations had first started. The money for the project is placed far out in 2031, the team is not aggressively pursuing any such project at this stage but should they want to do such a project in the future and apply for grant monies to fund any portion of it

that would need to appear in the CIP. Such a grant process would usually be two years. It is a placeholder project for the time being. It is Mayor Fischer's opinion that even the placeholder is premature since there has not been any formal plan discussed at the Council or Parks Commission level,

Motion made that the Shawood Lake Island Boardwalk/Canoe launch item be removed from the CIP.

Moved: Mayor Fischer

Seconded: Mayor Pro Tem Casey

Approved 5:0

Mayor Fischer further stated that we've done so much acquisition lately, the discussions still need to be had for ITC, Bosco, the island, etc. He isn't letting the vacant land "burn a hole in his pocket", he is okay with letting it sit so they can properly look at the inventory, finish the projects they already have, and have those discussions to come to a united vision. Commissioner Lynch agreed that anything we do should be done top-notch, to attract residents, whatever we do, do it great. Mayor Pro Tem Casey appreciated hearing Mr. Muck's stance, and that it makes a lot of sense from a grant standpoint to have a plan and that they will have that conversation about solutions in the future. They can come to vision, then add to the CIP, we don't want to get ahead of ourselves. Mayor Fischer expects that a lot of future Parks visions could come from a renewal of the CIP. We want to make sure we get the prioritization right.

Mayor Fischer asked if there is anything else that needed to be addressed, Mr. Cardenas said no, this is somewhat of a "boring" year since we are coming to the end of the CIP funding period, and the funds are maxxed out. As we move forward, we can provide Council with more options.

Motion made to move the CIP to the Planning Commission, following the usual Public Hearing.

Moved: Mayor Pro Tem Casey

Seconded: Commissioner Becker

Approved 5:0

ADJOURNMENT: 6:21 p.m.

Motion: Casey; Seconded: Fischer; 5:0