

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVI
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2025, 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, Smith, Staudt, Thomas

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

CM 25-10-132 Moved by Casey, seconded by Smith; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

To approve the agenda as presented.

Roll call vote on CM 25-10-132 Yeas: Casey, Gurumurthy, Heintz, Smith, Staudt, Thomas, and Fischer
Nays: None

PRESENTATIONS:

Presentations for Planning Commission

1. Joseph Dominguez

Jospeh Dominguez said he was honored to be considered for the Planning Commission. He said he has a background in finance, is a business owner, and his career has been about balancing long term planning with practical solutions. He said he wants to bring that same approach to Novi's growth and development. He said he's listened to the concerns of the residents regarding traffic congestion, over development, environmental impacts, and a desire for more transparency. He said growth should be smart, not just about getting more. He said he will advocate for the redevelopment of aging commercial areas before expanding into their remaining natural spaces and ensuring projects align with the master plan for 2025. He said infrastructure must keep pace with development. He said that means requiring traffic studies and holding developers accountable for improvement when projects add strain to the roads, schools, and utilities. He said protecting Novi's environment must remain a top priority. He said he will push for strong storm water management, tree preservation, and green infrastructure so that growth does not come at the cost of wetlands, woodlands, or lakes. He said he would like to improve transparency and that residents should have clear plain language, summaries of proposed projects, more opportunities for input, and confidence that their voices shape Novi's future. He said he believes thoughtful planning is about balancing growth with preservation and opportunity with responsibility. He said it would be an honor to serve on the Planning Commission to help guide that balance for generations to come.

2. Hilliard Hampton

Hilliard Hampton said it would be an honor to serve on the Planning Commission if selected. He said he is a retired police officer, Wayne County Sheriff's Department, in the capacity of a command officer. He said he has his bachelor's degree from Wayne State University. He said he is a licensed builder in the State of Michigan. He said his greatest pleasure was to be the general contractor for Habitat for Humanity, western Wayne County. He said they built several homes and put homes in the hands of future homeowners. He said that was very rewarding. He said he was a former Mayor and has served in this capacity for many years. He said he moved to Novi 9 years ago with his wife Marcella, a retired third grade schoolteacher, and they have a lovely home. He said they enjoy this community, it is a bustling and vibrant community that has everything you want in a city to live. He said we have various agencies who help along the way, and Simco is one of those agencies that was very instrumental to him when he was Mayor. He said he reached out to them for various things and served on their Transportation Committee. He said he was recognized after many years of service for their Tubman Scholarship and was awarded that home. He said there is no learning curve. He said he doesn't want to suggest what's good for Novi without understanding what the goals are. He said he knows about zoning, how to read a site plan, and it would be his honor to delve back into public service. He said public service is where he enjoys being and he misses it. He said it would be his pleasure to serve as the next Planning Commissioner.

3. Sobha Reddi

Sobha Reddi said she's been a resident of Novi for the last 33 years. She said she was working in a profession that requires analytical skills and informatic knowledge. She said with those goals and objectives, she will be useful to the Planning Committee. She said with her experience she will support the initiatives that come forward. She said she is passionate about giving back to the community. She said she developed interest in serving the community because of her background, being born in India. She said her father is a great service man, a member of the Lions Club, and developed an eye hospital, and community school. She said her background is to support the community and take his guidance. She said she is on the Board of Trustees at SV Temple. She said she has helped a great deal for activities, coordination, interfaith programs, senior citizens events, and religious cultural events. She said she has also worked with many volunteers and community leaders in annual food drives and back-to-school programs. She said she has also helped with annual walk-ons to raise money that gets distributed among some of the state programs that helps where needed. She said if given the opportunity to serve on the Planning Commission it would be a great pride for her. She said if there are efforts to expand support, she will intend to support the other committees and be involved.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

CITY MANAGER REPORT: None

ATTORNEY REPORT: None

AUDIENCE COMMENTS: None

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS AND APPROVALS:

CM 25-10-133 Moved by Thomas, seconded by Casey; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

To approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

- A. Approve Minutes of:
 October 6, 2025 - Regular Meeting.
- B. Consideration of a request for Fireworks Display Permit by City of Novi Community Relations, to be operated by ACE Pyro, on Friday, November 21, 2025, for the community event, Light the Lights to be held at Twelve Mile Crossing at 44175 W 12 Mile Rd, Novi, MI 48377.
- C. Adoption of Resolution approving the City's 2025 Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP).
- D. Approval of contract with Shockey Consulting to facilitate the development of the Novi 2050 long-range strategic plan for \$156,000.
- E. Approve the cancellation of the November 3, 2025, City Council meeting.
- F. Enter Executive Session immediately following the regular meeting of October 21, 2025, in the Council Annex for the purpose of discussing union negotiations.
- G. Approval of claims and warrants – Warrant 1190.

Roll call vote on CM 25-10-133

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

MATTERS FOR COUNCIL ACTION:

1. Consideration of approval of a resolution to authorize Budget Amendment #2026-2.

City Manager Cardenas said this has a lot to do with the increase in vehicle maintenance costs, and vehicle costs for outfitting new police vehicles through forfeiture funds. He said since after the pandemic, they have not seen the forfeiture dollars that they have in the past. He said that since revenue is not coming in, they had to find other means to pay for some of these vehicles. He said that is why they are moving a lot of the assets around, maybe delaying some of the cars. He said they may be able to pay for new police interceptors. He said with that, and the Novi 2050 plan also.

Member Heintz said he appreciates the detail and reports and everything like that with all of the explanation for moving everything around. He said just to get a sense, would it be appropriate, with all of the fund's inputs and outputs to add everything together. He said he understands things being moved around and asked the appropriate kind of assessment of that. City Manager Cardenas said there is a net deficit, but that was pretty much for the planned expenditure for the 2050 plan. He said that's why you see the use of a fund balance, and that was for what Council planned previously. He said everything else is revenue neutral. He said that is, again, that they are just trying to move around those assets to be able to pay for the police vehicles from already budgeted items in the fiscal year. He said they are always trying to make the revenue neutral. Member Heintz said he's trying to make sure that they are mindful of how much money they are spending from different funds, sources and different ways to get the good holistic understanding.

CM 25-10-134 Moved by Smith, seconded by Thomas: MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

**Approval of resolution to authorize Budget Amendment
#2026-2.**

Roll call vote on CM 25-10-134

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

- 2. Consideration of Ordinance Amendment 25-196 to add a new section at Chapter 2, "Administration," Article V, "Boards and Commissions," Division 1, "Generally," to add a new section 2-161, "Commencement of Term of Office," in order to establish consistent starting and ending dates for Boards and Commissions where a different date is not set by other law or ordinance or resolution. FIRST READING**

City Manager Cardenas said this comes from the Ordinance Review Committee regarding meeting the Council goal of consolidating and streamlining the process of interviewing and appointing Boards and Commissions.

CM 25-10-135 Moved by Smith, seconded by Casey: MOTION CARRIED 7-0

Approval of Ordinance Amendment 25-196 to add a new section at Chapter 2, "Administration," Article V, "Boards and Commissions," Division 1, "Generally," to add a new section 2-161, "Commencement of Term of Office," in order to establish consistent starting and ending dates for Boards and Commissions where a different date is not set by other law or ordinance or resolution. FIRST READING

Roll call vote on CM 25-10-135

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

3. Consideration of a request from Ardiana's Restaurant for a new Class C quota license.

City Manager Cardenas said there are a few more licenses available. He said this business is located at the corner of 10 Mile and Meadowbrook on the northwest side.

Marissa Kalaj said she is the daughter of the applicant, Robert Kalaj. She said her brother, Victor, and her mother Ardiana are all apart of the family, but her father is the sole owner of the establishment. She said the family's role is to run and operate the business with the father. She said they have owned the restaurant for 13 years. She said the City of Novi is not just where they live, but where they grew up, built their lives, and created memories that define who they are. She said they have lived there for the past 30 years. She said the restaurant is named after her mother, who is an incredible chef. She said everything her mother makes is from her heart and soul. She said what they've built at the restraint is more than just a business, but a reflection of their family, culture, and deep gratitude for the community that has embraced them since the beginning. She said for the past 13 years, they worked tirelessly to make Ardiana's a place for people to feel welcomed, cared for, and connected as a home away from home. She said every meal is prepared with heart, and every member of her family plays an important role, and every dish is made with love. She said they have always believed in the potential of Novi and wants to bring new life and energy to it to create an uplift for the restaurant and community. She said their hope is to revitalize that area, attract new visitors and give people a reason to visit Novi and enjoy what makes it special. She said the biggest question they've gotten over the years is when they are going to serve alcohol. She said some get up and leave after being told they don't. She said serving alcohol is the one piece that is missing from the experience. She said this license will complete that vision and give their guests the opportunity to enjoy a glass of wine with dinner, or a cocktail with friends while continuing to operate with the same responsibility, integrity, and family values that have guided them from the beginning. She said those values are the heart of who they are, and that is why they made a conscious decision not to offer a bar. She said for them it is not about alcohol, it's about preserving the walm welcoming environment where families feel at home. She said all cultures and traditions are respected. She said all guests from grandparents to little ones can enjoy a meal comfortably together. She said they take this responsibility very seriously and are committed to proper training. She said the license isn't about serving the drinks, it is about growth, revitalization, and continuing to build community. She said on the behalf of her family, they would request that the City Council fully supports granting this request, it means the world to them, their customers, and the neighborhood they proudly serve.

Member Staudt said this is important to him, because he has known the family more than 30 years.

CM 25-10-136

Moved by Staudt, seconded by Casey: MOTION CARRIED 6-1

Approval of a request from Ardiana's Restaurant for a new Class C quota license for the existing restaurant located at 41602 W. 10 Mile

Road, Novi, MI 48375 and Agreement on the Prohibition on Profiteering by Class C Liquor License Holders. By allowing for the expansion of menu offerings, Ardiana's Restaurant will continue to complement the area and provide residents with a dining option which will foster or generate economic development or growth within the city, by bringing an expanded customer base to the Novi Ten Shopping center in the area of Ten Mile and Meadowbrook Road, in a manner consistent with the city's policies. The applicant appears to qualify for a license under the City's ordinance.

Member Smith said that improving existing businesses is exactly the kind of thing he likes to see. He said revitalizing that area over the last couple of years has been great. He said it is walkable from about four-square miles of Novi that is also heavily populated. He said this will be a great thing. He said people will walk there, have their dinner, have a glass of wine and walk home. He said he wishes them the best.

Member Thomas said she is on the outside of this vote again. She said she doesn't know that this fits the licensing policy as it is not giving a new or unique service. She said she thinks doing this is the same as saying they'll give a license to any restaurant in the city. She said she loves Ardiana's and eats there. She said after reading through the packet and looking at the proposed area, she is not opposed to them serving alcohol, it just doesn't seem like they are meeting the guidelines of the license.

Member Heintz asked the applicant if it was their first time applying for a liquor license or if this had been in the making for a while. Ms. Kalaj said it is her father's first time applying. She said the restaurant menu has changed drastically. She said it used to be more like a coney island when they were under contract with Honey Tree, and the liquor license wasn't necessary with that cuisine type. She said when her mom was able to make her own menu is when people started asking about alcohol, such as a list of wine to pair with pasta. She said a lot of comments and reviews were made about how they needed to get a liquor license, because not many places don't serve alcohol anymore and it began to affect their business. She said they have people coming for a unique breakfast, and they ask for a mimosa or bloody mary, but people leave when they find out alcohol isn't served. She said it affects business because they aren't attracting a lot of new people. But then people also aren't coming back. She said it is rare that they don't have some sort of a liquor license. Member Heintz asked what makes this restaurant unique and what sets them apart. Ms. Kalaj said they are very family oriented, and they don't want to lose that value. She said they don't want to be a bar. She said they want to be a place that people from all religions and backgrounds still feel comfortable where there isn't a big bar staring at them. She said family value is super important to them. She said they are not trying to be a big fancy place with liquor as their main source of income. She said they want their food to be the main source as well as heart and family.

Member Gurumurthy said it is important to have more family-owned businesses and local businesses in Novi, because there are a lot of chains. She said her family loves to go out and eat, especially Italian, and she would see this as a great addition to their place. She

said she supports how the business is family owned and how they are all involved and will support this.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said she will be very pleased to be supporting this license forward. She said the length of time the family has been in the community and at that location means something. She said there are economic development tools at the disposal of the City Council and in this instance, they are going to apply to a business that is trying to grow and expand and continue to reach people across the southeast area. She said she is in full support of this and looks forward to going to the restaurant soon.

Mayor Fischer said he remembers Councils from the 2000's that wouldn't give liquor licenses to pretty much anybody. He said for some reason they felt like they had to hang onto them. He said we had one left, but as he understood we are also getting two back. He said if they grant one today, they will still have two more. He said he finds it to be a debacle. He said some Councils would say that places are too small of a business. He said they would also say to a huge business spending \$4 million making a restaurant that they are too big and spend too much money, and to just go buy one. He said he thinks this is the perfect application of using the quota licenses. He said as a recent Council they have been very supportive of local business and family businesses that are invested in the community and have made it through things like COVID and supply chain issues. He said these applications are the ones that make him proud. He said the Council just approved one at Beck and Pontiac Trail that will hopefully generate some economic development in that area. He said he thinks this Council has done a great job diversifying who the licenses go to and supports the businesses that want to invest in Novi. He said that is exactly what Ardiana's is. He said he thinks the 10 Mile and Meadowbrook area has done a great job in investing in themselves and to not support one of the businesses that being part of that transformation with a liquor license would be a disservice. He said he will support the motion made.

Roll call vote on CM 25-10-136

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

Nays: Thomas

4. Consideration to award engineering services to OHM Advisors for the design of the Crescent/Lee BeGole Road Extension for \$431,250 and amend the budget.

City Manager Cardenas said this is one of the first major decisions with respect to the 2050 bond initiative. He said this is the road design for the Crescent Road extension that will connect Town Center all the way down Grand River. He said this is one of the byproducts of the \$11.5 million road they discussed for the project.

CM 25-10-137

Moved by Casey, seconded by Smith: MOTION CARRIED 7-0

Approval to award engineering services to OHM Advisors for the design of the Crescent/Lee BeGole Road Extension for \$431,250 and amend the budget.

Mayor Fischer said this is a full \$431,000 coming from proceeds of long-term debt in this year. He asked if this was truly expected to be expended by June. City Manager Cardenas said we believe so, yes. Mayor Fischer asked how that would work from a budget perspective. He said we haven't obtained the proceeds and asked if it will be borrowed from a different fund. City Manager Cardenas said they would most likely borrow it from another fund and then be reimbursed once they make their first debt issuance.

Roll call vote on CM 25-10-137

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

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS: None

AUDIENCE COMMENT: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Finance & Administration Committee - Mayor Fischer

Mayor Fischer said the committee met that evening to interview construction firms for the public safety project. He said they had two interviews that evening and a recommendation will be coming forward to Council at the next meeting. He said City Manager Cardenas shared in the last administration packet the full bid proposals for Council's deliberations, and if there were any questions to reach out to the City Manager directly.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL ISSUES: None

COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Fischer said this will be the last time this specific Council will be sat together. He said he would like to thank everyone who has sat with him on Council. He said Member Thomas has not chosen to run for reelection this year, and he would like to afford her the opportunity to make remarks.

Member Thomas said she appreciated the opportunity to serve the community. She said she wanted to thank her wonderful fellow Councilmembers, the fabulous staff, and all of the people who care enough to be involved. She said she especially wanted to thank the people who speak to the Council at the podium, it is not an easy thing to do if you do not speak to people on a regular basis. She said it is important for the Council to hear everything they are saying. She said thank you to the people who have ever come to the podium and would encourage them to keep coming up and make sure that the Council knows how they feel about the job they are doing. She said thank you to the residents who serve on the boards and commissions. She said it is not easy to come up

and go through the interview process for a volunteer job that can sometimes be thankless. She said they are there because they care about the community, the commitment, and that is what keeps Novi moving forward. She said thank you to the people who come out and care and put in their time and effort to keep Novi moving forward. She said serving on Council has been an eye-opening experience. She said she's learned how much thought, care, and teamwork goes into the decisions that shape the city, even when they don't all agree. She said listening to the opinions of others even when you don't agree, there is a mutual respect between one another that keeps the team moving forward. She said she thinks this Council worked well together, and she is greatly appreciative of that. She said four years ago, a lot of people came out and voted for her, and she has never taken that for granted. She said she hopes she represented them well, and they felt heard, and know that they matter. She said as she steps away, she is very hopeful for where Novi is headed. She said thank you to the Long Rang Strategic Planning Committee. She said she thinks there have been some great people standing up, dedicated residents and incredible staff. She said she knows what the community can do when everyone works together and believes that better days are ahead. She said thank you for the trust that was instilled into her and the privilege she has had to serve.

Mayor Fischer said it was this Council's pleasure to have served with Member Thomas as well. He said they wish her luck on her future endeavors. He said there are other people running in the election this year, both sitting at the dais as well as at home, and wishes everyone success in the upcoming election.

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 P.M.

Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

Justin Fischer, Mayor

Transcribed by Alyssa Craigie,
Administrative Assistant

Date approved: November 17, 2025