



CITY OF NOVI CITY COUNCIL NOVEMBER 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Consideration of tentative approval of The Grove PRO to rezone from Office Service Technology to Low Density Multiple Family with a Planned Rezoning Overlay. The applicant is proposing to develop a 232-unit multiple-family townhome development.

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT: Community Development, Planning

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Rezoning 62 acres of vacant land at 12 Mile and Meadowbrook Roads to RM-1.
- The applicant is proposing to develop a 232-unit townhome development.
- Council's initial consideration of the PRO was on December 16, 2024; the plans have since been modified to reduce the number of units by over 200 and the number of deviations requested and enhance the benefits to the community at large.
- The project design represents a high-quality community with a focus on connectivity, preservation of a significant amount of wetland and woodland areas and exceeding open space requirements.
- All of the units will be for-sale homes, and a majority can accommodate a primary bedroom on the main floor to promote aging-in-place.
- Planning Commission recommended approval of the PRO Plan on October 8, 2025.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The petitioner is requesting a Zoning Map Amendment for approximately 62 acres of property on the south side of Twelve Mile Road, east of Meadowbrook Road (Section 13). The applicant is proposing to rezone property from Office Service Technology (OST) to Low Density Multiple Family (RM-1) using the City's Planned Rezoning Overlay (PRO) option.

The recently adopted Master Plan identifies this property and those around it in purple as General Mixed Use. The area to the east is Public/Quasi-Public, and north of 12 Mile is Public Park, Community Commercial, and Single Family.

The subject parcel and all parcels surrounding it are zoned Office Service Technology (OST), which reflects the historic development pattern of this area. To the west of the property are office buildings and vacant parcels, and one residential home. The parcel to the south is Meadowbrook Corporate Park office buildings and preserved common area. To the east is a large MDOT-owned parcel with the Ingersol Regional Detention Basin and Ingersol Creek. North of Twelve Mile are the Beacon Hill Trailhead park, the future Beacon Hill retail area, and the future Armenian Church and Cultural Center.

The formal PRO Concept Plan proposes a 232-unit multiple-family townhome development, which was reduced from 438 on their original plan. The applicant has also revised the request to rezone the property to RM-1 Low Density Multiple Family. All of the units are now for-sale townhome units, with over 50% of those having a primary bedroom on the ground level to accommodate aging-in-place. The development consists of four "villages" of homes: The Meadows (67 attached units in 14 buildings), The Vistas (68 attached units in 15 buildings), The Woods (36 attached units in 8 buildings) and The Pointe (61 attached units in 12 buildings). There is also a central park area with amenities, including a pickleball court and a playground park, with an option to locate a clubhouse in that area if determined to be desired in the future. A couple of different designs are provided for the clubhouse depending on size of building selected.

The development is accessed by two entrances off Meadowbrook Road, and one from 12 Mile Road. The stormwater plan shows an interconnected system with 6 detention ponds of various sizes, along with the existing wetland system.

As described in the Wetland Review, each of the delineated wetlands on the site meet the criteria of providing wildlife habitat as well as flood and storm control. Wetland review notes that the proposed development appears to result in a total permanent wetland impact area of 1.44 acres out of the total 9.64 acres present on site (about 15% impact). The full requirement for mitigation is proposed to be provided on-site, as well as the mitigation required for the future development of the "Trinity Parcel."

For woodlands the plan appears to remove about 73% of the regulated trees on the woodland survey. Approximately 250 credits are proposed to be planted on-site, with the remaining credits to be paid into the Tree Fund.

The façade materials have been revised and now the proposed buildings are in full compliance with the standards. In addition, the level of detail and overall character of the designs qualify as an enhancement of the area beyond what could be required by the ordinance, which is in line with the intent of the PRO Ordinance.

The recently adopted Master Plan designates this area as General Mixed Use (GMX). This new category is meant to provide a high degree of flexibility in development, with a site-specific master plan to guide development. "Properties within this designated land use category can also utilize the PUD (Planned Unit Development Option) as a development tool to provide a variety of uses within an approved master plan development." Since the City has not adopted a Planned Unit Development ordinance at this time, the Planned Rezoning Overlay represents the closest option available to achieve the intended vision (the PRO is a form of Planned Unit Development, though more limited than the new Master Plan contemplates).

Some of the possible detriments of the proposal we identified include questions of compatibility and buffering from the adjacent uses that will remain OST. Being adjacent to a residential development will require additional setbacks and possible use restrictions, which can be an added burden to adjacent non-residential landowners, but that would primarily be an issue to the south and the Trinity Parcel, which are not separated by a thoroughfare. The applicant has proposed a berm and dense landscaping along both borders, which will provide screening buffers. The area to the east of the property will remain undeveloped, as it is an MDOT stormwater and wetland mitigation site.

The undisturbed woodland and wetland areas on the site and surrounding properties would allow the proposed use to remain relatively secluded from the commercial properties, as well as provide natural spaces contiguous with adjacent preserved areas, which is beneficial for natural habitat. The remaining undeveloped properties in the area that could develop under the OST zoning district are not likely to cause significantly greater conflicts with residential use on this site, since they are located on the other side of Meadowbrook Road.

Residential development is likely to result in *smaller* wetland and woodland impacts compared to an OST development due to the typical size of buildings and parking needs. OST permitted uses include offices, research & development, data processing, and hotels, which all have a larger footprint and greater surface parking demands than the RM-1 use proposed. The Traffic study notes that the number of residential units would result in fewer vehicle trips compared to an OST development, including during peak hours.

Staff supports the requested rezoning with the stated benefits, conditions, and deviations listed. There are conditions proposed that are more strict or limiting than the RM-1 standards and are found to have an overall benefit to the public. The list of identified benefits of rezoning appears to outweigh the anticipated detriments of introducing residential use to this section of Meadowbrook Road. The number of deviations has been reduced from 16 to 7 as listed in the suggested motion, with each being supported by staff.

The PRO Conditions offered by the applicant that are proposed to establish an overall benefit to the public include:

- A one-acre park area, accessible to residents and the general public, with pedestrian and bike rest stop area, at the northeast corner of the site along 12 Mile Road.
- A one-mile loop Grove nature area trail, accessible to residents and the public, that extends from the newly created park area along the east property line of the Property, providing scenic views of the adjacent 30-acre natural wetland area as well as natural features of the Property.
- In order to address the impact of additional use of Beacon Hill Park by the new residents and planned access and interconnectivity for Novi residents and Grove Nature Trail, Developer agrees to provide the City with \$25,000 to be used by the City at its discretion, for Beacon Hill Park improvements, art, services and/or maintenance.
- Constructing over 700 feet of 10-foot-wide pathway gap on the south side of 12 Mile Road to create a connection from the existing bike path, located along the east side of Meadowbrook Road, and the new sidewalk being constructed with The Grove.
- Relocating the SMART bus stop to the east and enhancing the area with landscaping and seating along 12 Mile Road, which is supported by SMART. Additional bike parking has also been added for a total of 8 spaces.
- Approximately 1/3 of the property will be open space with most of the units abutting or overlooking open space and nature areas which significantly exceeds *the Ordinance requirement for usable open*.

- Consistent with Novi's mobility plans, construct an 8-foot wide shared-use public pathway within The Grove to provide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between Meadowbrook Road and 12 Mile Road.
- Proposed conservation easements protecting approximately 10 acres of woodland and woodland replacement areas and 15.5 acres of wetland and wetland mitigation areas, *which represents over 47% of the property and could not be required under typical development conditions.*
- Decrease in density from what would be permissible in the RM-1 zoning district (4.2 units per acre proposed, up to 7.3 units per acre permitted).
- Dedicate right-of-way (60-foot width) along the entire Meadowbrook Road frontage, a total land area of about 2.5 acres.
- As well as additional overall benefits as listed in the suggested motion.

The full list of proposed conditions to be included in the PRO Agreement is included in the suggested motion.

PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on the formal PRO Plan on October 8, 2025 and recommended approval to the City Council. Comments made at that time are reflected in the meeting minutes included in this packet.

CITY COUNCIL ACTION

If the City Council is inclined to approve the rezoning request with PRO at this time, the City Council's motion would be to direct the City Attorney to prepare a PRO Agreement with specified PRO Conditions. Once completed, the PRO Agreement will return to Council for final approval.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Note 3-part motion A-C.

Tentative indication that Council **may approve** the request of Ivanhoe Companies for The Grove JZ24-31 with Zoning Map Amendment 18.745, to rezone from Office Service Technology (OST) to Low Density Multiple Family (RM-1), subject to a Planned Rezoning Overlay (PRO) Agreement, and corresponding PRO Concept Plan, and direction to the City Attorney to prepare the PRO Agreement including items A through C:

- A. All deviations from the ordinance requirements shall be identified and included in PRO Agreement, including:
 1. A Zoning Ordinance deviation from Section 3.1.7.D to reduce the building setbacks from 75 feet to 50 feet along the north, east, and south property lines, as *sufficient screening appears to be proposed.*
 2. A Zoning Ordinance deviation from Sec. 3.8.2.D to revise the required orientation of the buildings from a minimum of 45 degrees in certain locations. This allows for a more uniform site layout with all of the units backing up to open space/wooded areas.

3. A Zoning Ordinance deviation from Sec 3.8.2.H to reduce the building separation distance from the calculated formula as shown on the Building Separation Table on Sheet SP-3.6 of the PRO Plan. *This deviation enables the layout of this project to fit within the available space while minimizing wetland and woodland impacts.*
 4. A Zoning Ordinance deviation from Section 5.10 allows for perpendicular parking on the major drives. This deviation is requested due to the impracticality of providing a minor road (defined as less than 600 feet in length) given the site constraints (woodlands, wetlands, and property configuration). *Perpendicular parking for guests is proposed on four Major Drives (Simi Drive, Beckham Drive, Elle Parkway, and Ari Crest) in several locations, where driveways are also proposed. The parking spaces will not cause any more disruption on the roadway than cars that will be backing out of the driveways.*
 5. A Zoning Ordinance deviation from Section 5.10 to allow on-street parking on curves with less than a 230-foot centerline radius. *The deviation is supported as the parking spaces will not cause any more disruption on the roadway than cars that will be backing out of the driveways.*
 6. A landscape deviation from Section 5.5.3.A.ii to not provide a 4-foot, 6-inch to 6-foot-high landscape berm on a proposed RM-1 district adjacent to an OST district on the east and south side. *This deviation is supported because of topography and the provision of dense landscaping along both property lines.*
 7. A landscape deviation from Section 5.5.3.B.ii for the required greenbelt berm and plantings along 12 Mile and Meadowbrook Road due to the existing natural areas to be preserved, and a heavily landscaped detention basin.
- B. The following conditions shall be requirements of the PRO Agreement:
1. Preservation of approximately 10 acres of City regulated woodlands and woodland replacements in a conservation easement.
 2. Preservation of approximately 15.5 acres of City regulated wetlands and wetland mitigation areas in a conservation easement.
 3. Removal of invasive species within the existing wetlands on site.
 4. Density shall not exceed 4.2 dwelling units per acre (More limiting than the dwelling units per acre allowed in the RM-1 District).
 5. Providing the community amenities shown in the PRO Plan.
 6. As an option, a clubhouse could be placed where the pickleball court and playscape are currently shown. The design of the clubhouse would need to meet Façade ordinance requirements at the time of site plan approval.
 7. Dedication of 1,650 linear feet of Right of Way on Meadowbrook Road.
 8. Building height will be limited to 30 feet, which is more limiting than the 35 feet permitted in the RM-1 District.
 9. The traffic improvements as shown on the PRO Plan.

10. If pickleball court(s) are proposed at the time of Preliminary Site Plan submittal, a noise impact statement shall be submitted showing that the activity, with any noise mitigation measures required, will comply with the City's Performance Standards.

11. Sustainable design features will include:

- a. Pre-wired garages for one 240-volt EV charger.
- b. All appliances used within the development must be EnergyStar-rated or applicable equivalent standards.
- c. All applicable plumbing fixtures shall be WaterSense labeled or applicable equivalent standard.
- d. Building material on the exterior façade of a majority of the exterior elevations are energy-efficient, durable, and low maintenance, including brick and composite siding.
- e. Use of energy-efficient glass/glazing.
- f. Use of energy-efficient insulation materials.
- g. Offer a tankless water heater option.
- h. Install smart scheduling technology for sprinklers.
- i. Multi-modal non-motorized pathway network and infrastructure as shown on the PRO plan that reduces emissions and promotes pedestrian connectivity with bike/pedestrian friendly streets, and bicycle parking in units throughout the site.
- j. Benches will be made with recycled materials will be used throughout the open space areas.

C. This motion is made because, depending on finalization of an appropriate PRO Agreement, the proposed use of the PRO and RM-1 zoning district can be a reasonable alternative to the General Mixed Use with a Planned Unit Development recommended in the Future Land Use Map, and fulfills the intent of the Master Plan for Land Use, and because of the resulting benefits including:

1. A one-acre park area, accessible to residents and the general public, with pedestrian and bike rest stop area, at the northeast corner of the site along 12 Mile Road. The applicant states a public access easement will be placed over the park area.
2. A one-mile loop Grove nature area trail, accessible to residents and the general public, that extends from the newly created park area described above, along the east property line of the Property, providing scenic views of the adjacent 30-acre natural wetland area as well as natural features of the Property. The applicant states a public access easement will be placed over the trail area.
3. In order to address the impact of additional use of Beacon Hill Park by the new residents and planned access and interconnectivity for Novi residents and Grove Nature Trail, Developer agrees to provide the City with \$25,000 to be used by the City at its discretion, for Beacon Hill Park improvements, art, services and/or maintenance. *Enhancements of the public trailhead would benefit the overall community.*

4. Consistent with Novi's mobility plans, over 700 feet of 10-foot-wide pathway/sidewalk, off-site on the south side of 12 Mile Road to create a connection from the existing bike path, located along the east side of Meadowbrook Road, and the new sidewalk being constructed with The Grove. *The provision of this missing sidewalk segment enhances connectivity of the project area and benefits the public.*
5. Relocating the SMART bus stop to the east and enhancing the area with landscaping and seating along 12 Mile Road, which is supported by SMART. Additional bike parking has also been added for a total of 8 spaces. Maintenance and public access agreements would likely be required. *This would be considered a benefit to the public.*
6. Approximately 1/3 of the property will be open space with most of the units abutting or overlooking open space and nature areas (1.65 acres usable open space required, 5.97 acres proposed). *Exceeding the Ordinance requirement for usable open space qualifies as an enhancement that could not otherwise be required.*
7. Consistent with Novi's mobility plans, construct an 8-foot wide shared-use pathway within The Grove to provide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between Meadowbrook Road and 12 Mile Road. *The applicant states a public access easement will be placed over the pathway, so the pathway would be considered a benefit to the public at large.*
8. Proposed conservation easements protecting approximately 10 acres of woodland and woodland replacement areas and 15.5 acres of wetland and wetland mitigation areas. *The provision of conservation easements to protect the natural features, which represents over 47% of the property, is considered an enhancement that will benefit the public at large.*
9. Decrease in density from what would be permissible in the RM-1 zoning district (4.2 units per acre proposed, up to 7.3 units per acre permitted), *which is a site-specific limitation that is more strict than would otherwise apply to the zoning district and is considered an enhancement of the project.*
10. Dedicate right-of-way (60-foot width) along the entire Meadowbrook Road frontage, an approximate length of 2,166 feet. The total land area to be dedicated is approximately 2.5 acres, *which is a benefit in the interest of the public.*
11. The Façade review notes that the design of the buildings meet or exceed the requirements of the Façade Ordinance, and the high level of character and attention to detail represents an enhancement of the project that would be unlikely in the absence of a PRO.
12. The benefits to the City from the proposed multiple family development as proposed outweigh the detriments.