

Strategy for Question Structure & Deployment by Project Phase

Aligning Questions, Roles, and Decisions

The Novi 2050 engagement approach is intentionally designed so that different questions are asked at different phases, and different participants are asked different types of questions, based on their role, perspective, and ability to inform long-range decisions.

This approach ensures the plan is:

- Grounded in evidence and trends
- Informed by lived experience
- Shaped by strategic leadership
- Focused on clear outcomes and implementation

All questions build on the Environmental Scan, which identified:

- A built-out city shifting from growth to reinvestment
- Rapid demographic change and population aging
- Housing affordability and lifecycle mismatch
- Infrastructure maturity and mobility constraints
- Economic restructuring and fiscal pressure
- Rising service expectations and workforce strain
- Environmental resilience as a core civic issue

Guiding Principles for Question Design

Across all phases, questions are structured to:

1. **Build on the Environmental Scan and Trends**

Questions do not start from a blank slate. They respond to what is already known from:

- Existing plan review
- Demographic and market data
- Trend analysis
- Prior Council, staff, and Committee discussions

2. **Match the Question to the Role**

- Community members: lived experience and priorities
- Sounding Board members: interpretation and tradeoffs
- Boards, Commissions, and Council: direction-setting and long-term implications

3. Evolve Over Time



4. Avoid Asking People to Answer What They Can't Know

Technical feasibility, budgeting, and operations are tested with staff—not the general public.

PHASE 1: VISION

What kind of city are we planning for?

Purpose of This Phase

Establish a shared picture of Novi's future that is:

- Aspirational but grounded
- Informed by trends, not nostalgia
- Broad enough to guide long-term decisions

Question Strategy

Questions are open-ended and future-focused, asking people to describe:

- How Novi should *look, feel, and function* in 2050
- What excites or worries them about the future

Who Is Asked What

General Public	Sounding Board	Boards / Council
"When you think about Novi's future, what excites you most?"	"Based on the trends presented, what kind of future feels realistic and desirable?"	"If Novi's 2050 plan is successful, what is fundamentally different?"
"What concerns you most if things stay the same?"	"Where do you see tension between growth, change, and community expectations?"	"Which future conditions require leadership now to avoid long-term risk?"
<i>Why: Captures values, hopes, and fears tied to daily life.</i>	<i>Why: Helps interpret vision in light of data and trends.</i>	<i>Why: Grounds vision in governance and accountability.</i>

PHASE 2: BIG IDEAS / GAME CHANGERS

What bold moves might be required?

Purpose of This Phase

Reveal transformative ideas that:

- Respond to trends and constraints
- Push beyond incremental change
- Can later be tested for feasibility and alignment

Question Strategy

Questions invite creative but intentional thinking, without requiring solutions.

Who Is Asked What

General Public	Sounding Board	Boards / Council
“Imagine you’ve traveled to 2050. What ONE big idea or change helped get us there?” <i>Why: Encourages imagination rooted in lived experience.</i>	“What big shifts should Novi explore—even if challenging?” “What assumptions might need to change?” <i>Why: Identifies disruptive ideas worth testing.</i>	“What bold or transformative ideas should be explored given demographic, economic, and infrastructure trends?” <i>Why: Surfaces ideas with policy and political implications.</i>

PHASE 3: GOALS

What must the City accomplish over time?

Purpose of This Phase

Translate vision and big ideas into clear, durable goal areas.

Question Strategy

Questions shift from “what could be” to “what must be addressed,” informed by:

- Strengths and challenges
- Environmental Scan findings
- Trend prioritization

Who Is Asked What

General Public	Sounding Board	Boards / Council
Strengths and challenges (select up to 3) “Which challenge feels most urgent in the next 5–10 years?” <i>Why: Identifies priorities from a community lens.</i>	“Where is the mismatch greatest between current conditions and future needs?” “What issues require focus to avoid future constraints?” <i>Why: Helps synthesize priorities and tensions.</i>	“Which challenges require long-term policy attention?” “Where should the City focus to protect fiscal and service sustainability?” <i>Why: Frames goals that guide future decisions.</i>

PHASE 4: MISSION & VALUES

How does Novi choose to act as it pursues its goals?

Purpose of This Phase

Clarify the principles that guide:

- Decision-making
- Tradeoffs
- Partnerships
- Community trust

Question Strategy

Questions emphasize how decisions are made, not just what decisions are made.

Who Is Asked What

General Public	Sounding Board	Boards / Council
“Do you feel welcomed and included in Novi?” “What would help you feel more connected?” <i>Why: Grounds values in lived experience.</i>	“What does inclusive, trust-based engagement look like in practice?” “How should the City plan with communities, not just for them?” <i>Why: Interprets values into practice.</i>	“What does a world-class, future-ready local government look like?” “How do we decide what not to do?” <i>Why: Aligns values with governance.</i>

PHASE 5: STRATEGIES

How do we move from goals to action?

Purpose of This Phase

Explore options and pathways, not project lists.

Question Strategy

Questions focus on:

- Tradeoffs
- Sequencing
- Alignment across systems

Who Is Asked What

General Public	Sounding Board	Boards / Council
Scenario reactions Preferences and concerns about different approaches <i>Why: Tests resonance and risk tolerance.</i>	“What strategies feel promising?” “Where do tradeoffs feel most acute?” <i>Why: Stress-tests options.</i>	“Which strategies best align with long-term competitiveness and livability?” “What risks are acceptable—or not?” <i>Why: Shapes direction before implementation.</i>

PHASE 6: PRIORITIES

What comes first—and why?

Purpose of This Phase

Clarify focus without committing to specific projects.

Question Strategy

Questions narrow attention to:

- Timing

- Impact
- Alignment with vision and goals

Who Is Asked What

General Public	Sounding Board	Boards / Council
“Which investments would most improve daily life?”	“Which strategies require near-term momentum?”	“Where should limited resources be focused first to support long-term outcomes?”

Why This Approach Works

This structure ensures:

- Community members are never asked to solve technical problems
- Leaders are never isolated from lived experience
- Trends inform—but do not dominate—decision-making
- Each phase builds logically on the last

Most importantly, it allows the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee to do its core job:

Integrate evidence, experience, and leadership judgment into a coherent long-term strategy.

Master Question Bank

Organized by Environmental Scan Topic Areas

Note: Not all questions are used at once and this list is not exhaustive. As we know more, we will tailor questions to the process.

1. COMMUNITY IDENTITY, QUALITY OF LIFE & CIVIC PRIDE

(Environmental Scan: strong quality of life, rising expectations, service excellence)

Which aspects of Novi contribute most to quality of life today?

(Select up to 3)

- ☐ Safe neighborhoods and public safety
- ☐ Schools and education
- ☐ Parks, trails, and recreation
- ☐ Sense of community
- ☐ Access to nature and open space
- ☐ Retail, dining, and entertainment
- ☐ City services
- ☐ Location and regional access
- ☐ Housing and neighborhoods
- ☐ Cultural amenities and events

How has daily life in Novi changed over the past 5–10 years?

- ☐ Much better
- ☐ Somewhat better
- ☐ About the same
- ☐ Somewhat harder
- ☐ Much harder

What excites you most about Novi's future?

[Open response]

What concerns you most if things stay the same?

[Open response]

POP-UP PROMPT (Vision)

- “In 2050, I picture Novi as...”
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2. HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOODS & LAND USE

(Environmental Scan: housing mismatch, aging population, redevelopment pressure, land constraints)

How well do current housing options meet the needs of people at different life stages?

- ☐ Very well
- ☐ Somewhat well
- ☐ Neither well nor poorly
- ☐ Somewhat poorly
- ☐ Very poorly

Which housing types should receive more emphasis in the future?

(Select up to 2)

- ☐ Starter homes
- ☐ Townhomes or condos
- ☐ Apartments
- ☐ Senior-friendly housing
- ☐ Multi-generational housing
- ☐ Workforce or attainable housing

Which housing-related issues should receive the greatest long-term focus?

(Rank top 3)

- ☐ Affordability
- ☐ Housing diversity
- ☐ Neighborhood compatibility
- ☐ Redevelopment of aging areas
- ☐ Efficient use of limited land

What assumptions or fears most limit productive housing conversations today?

[Open response]

POP-UP PROMPT (Vision / Place)

- “In 2050, I picture a Novi neighborhood that...”
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3. MOBILITY, TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY

(Environmental Scan: congestion, auto-dependence, aging infrastructure, access gaps)

How easy is it to reach daily needs in Novi without a car?

- ☐ Very easy
- ☐ Somewhat easy
- ☐ Neither easy nor difficult
- ☐ Somewhat difficult
- ☐ Very difficult

Which mobility improvements would most improve access and safety?

(Select up to 2)

- ☐ Road condition and capacity
- ☐ Sidewalks and trails
- ☐ Safer crossings
- ☐ Transit or shared mobility
- ☐ Better connections between destinations
- ☐ Traffic management and technology

Which transportation investments should receive the highest long-term focus?

(Rank top 3)

- ☐ Roads and infrastructure condition
- ☐ Walking and biking networks
- ☐ Transit options
- ☐ Technology-based solutions
- ☐ Regional transportation coordination

What trips feel harder than they should?

[Open response]

POP-UP PROMPT (Access)

“In 2050, I picture getting around Novi as...

4. INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES & CAPITAL INVESTMENT

(Environmental Scan: mature systems, reinvestment needs, fiscal alignment)

Which investments would most improve daily life in Novi?

(Select up to 3)

- ☐ Roads and utilities
- ☐ Stormwater infrastructure
- ☐ Community or recreation center
- ☐ Parks and trails
- ☐ Public safety facilities
- ☐ Cultural or civic facilities

Which infrastructure systems are most at risk if reinvestment is delayed?

(Select up to 2)

- ☐ Roads and bridges
- ☐ Utilities and stormwater
- ☐ Public facilities

- ☐ Technology systems
- ☐ Emergency services facilities

POP-UP PROMPT (Investment)

“By 2050, I picture the investment that made the biggest difference as...”

5. ECONOMIC VITALITY, REDEVELOPMENT & WORKFORCE

(Environmental Scan: retail change, economic diversification, talent competition)

Which economic priorities should guide Novi’s future?

(Select up to 3)

- ☐ Economic diversification
- ☐ Talent attraction and retention
- ☐ Redevelopment of aging retail/office areas
- ☐ Support for innovation and entrepreneurship
- ☐ Fiscal sustainability
- ☐ Alignment with housing and mobility

Which types of places would strengthen Novi’s long-term vitality?

(Select up to 2)

- ☐ Walkable mixed-use districts
- ☐ Neighborhood-serving retail
- ☐ Employment centers
- ☐ Cultural or entertainment destinations
- ☐ Community gathering spaces

What jobs or opportunities do people currently leave Novi to find?

[Open response]

POP-UP PROMPT (Identity / Economy)

“By 2050, I picture Novi being known for...”

6. ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE

(Environmental Scan: stormwater, climate risk, health impacts, green infrastructure)

How important is environmental sustainability to Novi’s long-term success?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Moderately important
- ☐ Slightly important
- ☐ Not important

Which environmental actions should receive greater focus?

(Select up to 2)

- ☐ Stormwater management
- ☐ Tree canopy and green space
- ☐ Energy efficiency
- ☐ Climate resilience
- ☐ Protection of natural areas

How should sustainability be positioned in long-range decision-making?

- ☐ Core economic and community strategy
- ☐ Important supporting priority
- ☐ Long-term consideration
- ☐ Compliance-focused only

POP-UP PROMPT (Stewardship)

- “In 2050, Novi protects its environment by...”
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7. PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

(Environmental Scan: aging population, rising EMS demand, service complexity)

Which services are most likely to see increased demand over the next 20 years?

(Select up to 3)

- ☐ Emergency medical services
- ☐ Fire and emergency response
- ☐ Police services
- ☐ Senior services
- ☐ Mental health and wellness
- ☐ Community facilities and programs

Which factors are most likely to strain service delivery in the future?

(Select up to 3)

- ☐ Population aging
- ☐ Workforce availability
- ☐ Facility capacity
- ☐ Rising service expectations
- ☐ Fiscal constraints

POP-UP PROMPT (Well-Being)

“By 2050, I picture Novi supporting well-being by...”

8. PARKS, CULTURE & COMMUNITY SPACES

(Environmental Scan: connection, amenities, multi-generational needs)

What role should parks, arts, and culture play in Novi's future?

- ☐ Central to community identity
- ☐ Important but secondary
- ☐ Supportive amenities
- ☐ Limited role

Which experiences or spaces are most needed?

(Select up to 2)

- ☐ Multi-generational gathering spaces
- ☐ Cultural or arts venues
- ☐ Recreation facilities
- ☐ Public plazas or civic spaces
- ☐ Trails and natural areas

POP-UP PROMPT (Place-Making)

"In 2050, I picture people gathering in Novi at..."

9. BELONGING, EQUITY & DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

(Environmental Scan: growing diversity, aging residents, inclusion needs)

How well does Novi meet the needs of a diverse and changing population?

- ☐ Very well
- ☐ Somewhat well
- ☐ Neither well nor poorly
- ☐ Somewhat poorly
- ☐ Very poorly

Which areas need the most improvement to ensure inclusion and access?

(Select up to 2)

- ☐ Communication and outreach
- ☐ Housing options
- ☐ Access to services
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Civic participation

POP-UP PROMPT (Belonging)

"In 2050, I picture everyone belonging in Novi because..."

10. GOVERNANCE, TRUST & COLLABORATION

(Environmental Scan: complexity, coordination, trust expectations)

How informed do you feel about decisions that affect Novi's future?

- ☐ Very informed
- ☐ Somewhat informed
- ☐ Neither informed nor uninformed
- ☐ Somewhat uninformed
- ☐ Very uninformed

Which governance approaches will be most important in the future?

(Select up to 3)

- ☐ Cross-department coordination
- ☐ Regional partnerships
- ☐ Community engagement and trust-building
- ☐ Data-driven decision-making
- ☐ Flexible and adaptive policies

How should the City decide what *not* to pursue as challenges grow more complex?

[Open response]

POP-UP PROMPT (Process)

"In 2050, I picture Novi making decisions by..."

11. VISION, BIG IDEAS & GAME CHANGERS

(Cross-cutting; used throughout the process)

What does a successful Novi in 2050 look like, feel like, and function like?

[Open response]

What is one bold or transformative idea Novi should explore to reach that future?

[Open response]

POP-UP PROMPTS (Big Ideas / Game Changers)

- "The big picture for Novi 2050..."
- "The change that shaped Novi by 2050..."
- "The decision Novi made that mattered most..."