



CITY OF NOVI  
Long-Range Strategic Planning Committee Meeting  
**July 28, 2025, 5:30 p.m.**  
Mayor's Conference Room | Novi Civic Center | 45175 Ten Mile Road  
(248) 347-0445

**CALL TO ORDER:** 5:35 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor Pro Tem Casey, Council Members Gurumurthy, Staudt

**STAFF LIAISON:** Victor Cardenas, City Manager

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA** - As amended by Mayor Pro Tem, adding an "Advisory Group" item  
Motion: Staudt; Seconded: Gurumurthy; Approved: 3:0

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – July 16, 2025 Minutes  
Motion: Staudt; Seconded: Gurumurthy; Approved: 3:0

**PURPOSE OF THE MEETING**

1. Long-Range Strategic Plan Consultant Professional Services Contract

Mayor Pro Tem Casey started by stating that, as the Councilmembers have seen, there was a memo and motion sheet put forward by staff for removing the City from the BerryDunn contract. It is intended that BerryDunn will be informed about this decision at the upcoming Bi-weekly meeting with the staff project team on Tuesday. It is not her intent to have the motion come from this body but to let it go forward as a staff recommendation.

As for next steps, she doesn't intend to re-bid the project. They are looking instead to reach out to other consultants such as Sheila Shockey and SBrand.

The Committee wants someone who will be personable, and that we will like working with. We have some time at this point to have discussions with other firms and make sure we feel good about who we move forward with. It was also suggested that it be included in the new contract who the primary contact will be with whatever firm is selected.

2. Advisory Group

The next matter, as brought by Mayor Pro Tem, is with the new luxury of time to form a better vision of what the Committee wants an Advisory Group to look like. It remains the preference that the elected Councilmembers be the decision makers but to have input from an Advisory Group.

For the group size, a larger group might mean more diversity and engagement. In looking at other public bodies for Strategic Plans many had very large advisory

groups of 20, 30, or even 40 members. The Committee should decide on both what they want the Advisory body to do and what the size of that body should be.

The Committee then took some time to look over an example from Greenville, SC that had been recommended by residents at Fox Run. Mayor Pro Tem noted that she like that they set their values as Resourceful, Enterprising, Inclusive, and Courageous. She also appreciated that they had a whole conversation about the necessary and expected difficulty of the decisions. She noted it they also utilized trends like Novi had already worked on in their futurist session. Some other valuable turns of phrase in the Greenville plan included "do no harm to our assets without committed mitigation" and "Fidentlity to our value...". Overall, the Greenville example gave a presentation that had the level, scenario planning, and conversational style that Mayor Pro Tem was envisioning. City Manager Cardenas agreed that Greenville's presentation was very well done.

Mayor Pro Tem then asked the other Councilmembers what electeds should keep as their responsibility and what should be the purview of the advisory body? Councilmember Gurumurthy stressed that determining roles first would be important. She also briefly discussed the process that the Library had used for their Strategic Committee. Mayor Pro Tem added that she understood that the Library used their resident group to validate, rate and prioritize insights that had already been developed by the staff and Board. Councilmember Staudt suggested that he thinks the advisory body should not be named as a Board/Committee since it is not intended to be a long-standing group but only for the duration of the plan formation. Mayor Pro Tem agreed with the point. When we build our timeline we may want to build it in such a way to have specific points that the advisory group are called for check-ins and feedback. Mr. Cardenas asked what they envision the decision-making power of the advisory body to be and Mayor Pro Tem stated none, they would be purely advisory. Mr. Cardenas continued, asking what would happen in the theoretical scenario that we bring in the advisory group and they don't approve of the current direction. Mayor Pro Tem says we would then take that feedback, go back to the plan, access if they agree with that "no" and make decisions from there. Councilmember Staudt asked if Mayor Pro Tem envisions a facilitator/consultant to be present for the advisory check-ins and Mayor Pro Tem said yes. He then asked how many meetings we would anticipate with the group and Mayor Pro Tem suggested three or four. Councilmember Staudt thinks that that many meetings may be a big commitment but Mayor Pro Tem Casey thinks it is entirely achievable given her experience with the focus groups that were used for the Older Adult Needs Committee.

The Committee then spoke briefly on the topic of focus groups and on assuring that we use both them and other avenues (surveys, other engagement) to ensure we get the conversations and feedback we want and need for the process. Councilmember Staudt said that he would love to have two or three managed focus groups in the beginning, to make sure they avoid going too far down a path and then finding they were biased in what they thought the community wanted. Though he noted that, given his and Mayor Pro Tem's tenues as Councilmembers, he doesn't expect that they would be too surprised by what they learn in focus groups. Mayor

Pro Tem agreed that they need to be thoughtful in how they put together the focus groups and that they should be included near the beginning of the timeline.

The Committee briefly discussed some matters that they think may come up, particularly housing affordability, the desire for more affordable houses but the opposition to housing density, the senior population, population growth vs. the possibility of stagnation or decline, etc.

Mayor Pro Tem posed the question if the Committee thinks that a advisory body is needed or if they would be comfortable with just focus groups/surveys in the preparation of the plan. Councilmember Gurumurthy thinks having the advisory body in place to assist in guiding and providing additional perspective would be helpful. We should have an idea with the key stakeholders to move forward and reconvene them together when needed. Mayor Pro Tem Casey noted that some groups that should be engaged would be those that live in the mobile home communities, disabled residents to speak to ADA issues/universal design, various ethnic groups, etc.

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#### Next Steps

1. Have Assistant City Manager Mahoney talk to Sheila Shockey and assess her firm as an option. If positively assessed, the firm should be brought before the Committee
2. Think about focus groups
3. Reconvene with a more concrete plan for moving forward
4. Determine advisory assembly members

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:** 6:32p.m.

Motion: Gurumurthy; Seconded: Staudt; Approved: 3:0