

MEMORANDUM



TO: SHERYL WALSH-MOLLOY, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
FROM: DAMON PARNELL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
SUBJECT: MAYOR'S YOUTH FORUM
DATE: JUNE 11, 2026

Seventeen local high school students attended the Mayor's Youth Forum on April 30, 2026, at the Novi Public Library. Mayor Fischer opened the meeting with a summary and highlights of his State of the City Address, including the Police & Fire Buildings Bond, property tax allocation, and the Novi 2050 Strategic Vision. Students then participated in a discussion on infrastructure, mobility, housing, and community development.

Key Discussion Themes

Urban Planning and Community Connectivity

Students expressed concerns about Novi's car-dependent design, noting that separated residential and commercial areas make it difficult for non-driving residents to access jobs, shopping, and social opportunities. Participants also described Novi as feeling fragmented, with neighborhoods often identifying more closely with surrounding communities than with the city as a whole.

Student Recommendations

- Encourage neighborhood-scale retail and services closer to residential areas.
- Repurpose vacant or underutilized properties for parks, mixed-use development, or community gathering spaces.

Transportation and Mobility

Students were largely unaware of the People's Express (PEX) transit service and cited limited awareness and advance reservation requirements as barriers to use. Participants also discussed sidewalk and trail gaps that affect walkability.

Student Recommendations

- Improve promotion of existing transit services to younger residents.
- Explore a fixed-route local shuttle connecting major destinations such as Twelve Oaks Mall, West Market Square, and Fountain Walk.

Housing Affordability

Students discussed rising housing costs and concerns that young adults may be unable to live in Novi after graduation. They supported additional housing options that balance affordability with responsible growth.

Student Recommendations

- Encourage mixed-use and multifamily developments.
- Incentivize projects that include workforce housing and more efficient land use, such as structured parking.

Commercial Development

Students questioned the concentration of similar retail and restaurant uses throughout the city. Staff explained the role of private property ownership and zoning regulations in shaping commercial development.

Communications and Engagement

Participants indicated that traditional print communications are not effective for their demographic.

Student Recommendations

- Expand outreach through social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok.
- Partner with local schools to share city updates through existing digital communication channels.

Next Steps

Students expressed strong interest in meeting again during the summer rather than waiting until fall. The next Mayor's Youth Forum was scheduled for Friday, August 7 at 11am.