



March 22, 2023

RE: City of Novi and Novi Community Schools Land Exchange

Novi Property Owner:

On April 19, at a public hearing, the Planning Commission will consider an amendment to the Future Land Use Map to be consistent with the intended property swap between the City of Novi and the Novi Community Schools for possible approval. You will be getting a formal notice from the City's Community Development Department, required by the state statute governing the adoption and amendment of the City's land use Master Plan, of the date of the hearing, and your right to attend and comment on the proposed changes.

The purpose of this letter is to add some additional information about the purpose of the proposed changes, given the questions that were raised at the initial Planning Commission meeting in February. The following is taken from correspondence was sent to members of the Dunbarton Pines Homeowner Association regarding the land exchange after that meeting:

For years, the City and Schools have been using large chunks of each others' property for particular uses (athletic fields, parkland, etc.) under either formal lease agreements or by informal consent. Both the City and Schools are now looking at ways to make better use of these public areas, and along with that comes an obligation to explore whether it makes more sense to exchange the properties so that the public "user" of the property is also the public "owner" of it, and to get rid of lessee/lessor relationship. Doing that turns out to require not only an exchange of deeds/title from one entity to the other but a change to the City's master plan maps to reflect the change in the nature of the underlying ownership and use (from City to Schools and vice versa).

Part of the process of changing the master plan maps for those parcels that would go from City to the Schools is to recognize that they would no longer be City parkland. That means literally changing their designation on the maps from "public park" to "educational facility" – still a public use, just not City-owned. But along with that, under the language of the City's existing master plan, the City needed to add an underlying "density" number to the land no longer designated "public park." That doesn't mean it will not be an educational facility or that it will ever actually be developed; it's just a designation like any other non-park property in the master plan. That density designation is no different than the underlying zoning designation of the property—right now, today—of R-4 single-family residential. That current zoning doesn't mean it's going to be developed for residential—every property in the City, even City-owned properties that are not at all going to be developed for any other use, have an underlying zoning designation. The master plan density designation is no different.

Because the City would be transferring the Ella Mae Power Park property to the Schools, we have no reason to believe that it will have any use other than for school purposes—which is what the Schools have

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Mayor and Council –

Please see the following letter that will be sent simultaneously with the public notice to residents around the Civic Center campus.

- Victor

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committed to. But after hearing the concerns shared at a recent Planning Commission meeting about some future transfer to a private owner, the City and the Schools have discussed inserting language into the property exchange agreement that might lessen that concern by allowing for a right of "re-purchase" should the body acquiring property now decide in the future that they don't need it anymore. So, in the unlikely event that the Schools decided they didn't want the Ella Mae Power Park property, the City would have the right to get it back.

In the weeks since that correspondence was sent, to the Dunbarton Pines HOA/residents, the Schools have confirmed they are comfortable with the added language regarding right of "re-purchase" by the other entity should either party decide in the future they don't need the property any longer. This makes it extremely unlikely that the Ella Mae Power Park property would ever be owned by anyone other than the Schools or the City.

I hope this helps clarify some of the questions/concerns. You can contact the Community Development office or me with any questions.

Victor Cardenas
Interim City Manager