Five members of the Japan Local Government Center spent four days in Novi recently to learn about the various City departments, interact with staff and elected officials, and explore Novi and Detroit as part of the CLAIR Fellowship Exchange Programme.

CLAIR New York (Council of Local Authorities for International Relations) is one of seven overseas offices of CLAIR in Tokyo and where these local government officials work while in America. The group that came to Novi included CLAIR’s executive director and representatives from the Yamanashi Prefecture, Matsue City, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department.

CLAIR members traveled to Providence Park Hospital with Novi Mayor Bob Gatt (4th from left) and met with Providence Park President Joe Hurshe (5th from left).

(Left) Nothing says Detroit like a Coney Dog from Lafayette Coney Island. Of course our guests got them fully loaded with chili, onions and mustard.
(Below left) An intense game of ping-pong broke out inside the Shinola store between Novi City Council Member Brian Burke and Ryoji Sakurai.
(Below Right) Novi Assistant Chief of Police Erick Zinser talks with the representatives inside the Novi Police Department garage.
Novi also sends someone to Japan each year to experience first-hand Japanese prefecture and local government administration, while soaking in the culture by staying with a local family.

Strangers when the week begins, friendships form fast as both sides are eager to ask questions and learn from each other. The exchange program has proven to be extremely beneficial to Novi, helping the City better serve its Japanese businesses and residents.