

**CITY OF NOVI CITY COUNCIL
JUNE 8, 2026**

SUBJECT: Authorization to Allow Planning Commission to Take Initial Steps Towards Opening Up the City's Master Plan for Land Use in Connection with a Potential Conveyance of Property by the City to the Novi Community School District

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT: City Manager's Office

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- The Novi Community School District is proposing significant improvements to its high school campus and has requested ownership of a City-owned stormwater basin that would be expanded to accommodate additional runoff generated by the project.
- Any transfer of the basin would require easements to ensure the City can continue managing stormwater from its governmental campus and preserve future capacity for potential City campus expansion.
- Before a conveyance can occur, the City may need to amend its Master Plan to remove the basin area from its park designation, a public process that could be completed by early fall 2026 if initiated this summer.
- An agreement and presentation will come before City Council for consideration at their June 22, 2026 meeting.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Novi Community School District (NCSD) plans to make some significant improvements to its high school campus adjacent to the City Hall/Ella Mae Power Park area of the City's governmental campus. **A copy of School Superintendent Ben Menka's recent presentation to the School Board is attached for some general information.**

As part of its plans, NCSD has identified a stormwater basin that is located on the City property as an area where it can discharge additional stormwater that will result from the improvements to the high school property. The basin currently accepts drainage not only from the City's government campus, but also apparently from a portion of the high school campus and the Novi Public Library property as well.

NCSD has approached the City with **a request for the City to convey the basin to NCSD.** As part of its high school campus improvements, NCSD would enlarge and expand the basin in order to add more capacity to accommodate NCSD's planned

improvements. Because the basin will continue to be used to handle stormwater from the City's government campus, as part of any conveyance to it, NCSD would be required to execute an appropriate easement document to allow not only for that continued use by the City for its current government campus purposes, but also allow the City in the future to design and build its proposed improvements to the basin property in a manner that would allow additional stormwater volume in the event the City decides to improve or expand the City's government campus with new or additional improvements.

The City and NCSD are still evaluating the documentation of such a conveyance, both in terms of a purchase agreement and deed, and as to the terms and conditions of an appropriate stormwater easement. NCSD is preparing a presentation to the City Council that will likely be **scheduled for the Council's June 22, 2026, meeting**.

In the meantime, in the event the City Council decides to move forward with a conveyance/easement process, an additional step in that process needs to get under way as quickly as possible. The basin area in question is currently part of the Ella Mae Power Park parcel. Under the Home Rule City Act (HRCA), MCL 117.5(e), a city may not sell property that is required under a master plan as park property without the vote of the people. A conveyance even for nominal consideration would likely be considered under that provision as a sale, and the designation in the City's current Master Plan of the entirety of Ella Mae Power Park, including the basin area as part of the park property, means that it would likely be considered property that is "required" under the Master Plan as park property.

A potential solution to having the matter put to a vote of the people is to **remove the property from any designation as park property in the City's Master Plan**. The City has undertaken a similar removal process with respect to other property conveyances (most recently the multi-parcel "land swap" with NCSD back in 2023). That process would begin at the Planning Commission stage with a public hearing with regard to a new map that does not include the basin property as part of the actual park. There would then be a City Council meeting to discuss distribution of the proposed map amendment, followed by notices sent to other governmental agencies, and then another public hearing to be held at the Planning Commission at least 42 days after the Council approves distribution of the amended map.

NCSD would like to begin construction of its campus improvements as soon as possible. Under the above framework, if the Council authorized the Planning Commission to go ahead and "open up" the Master Plan by scheduling an initial Planning Commission public hearing for July 8, 2026, the process could be completed by early to mid-September.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorize the Planning Commission to take initial steps towards opening up the City's Master Plan for Land Use in connection with a potential conveyance of property by the City to the Novi Community School District.



April 23, 2026
NHS Activity Center -
2025 NCSD Bond Program

Partnership | NCSD and City of Novi at NHS and Civic Center Site

NCSD has an approved bond issue to build an activity center and is proposing a partnership with the City of Novi (CON) to build the best activity center possible – not just for the district and students, but for the community as a whole.

To do this, the CON and NCSD will need to partner on site issues for the benefit of the Novi community and come to an agreement on the following items:

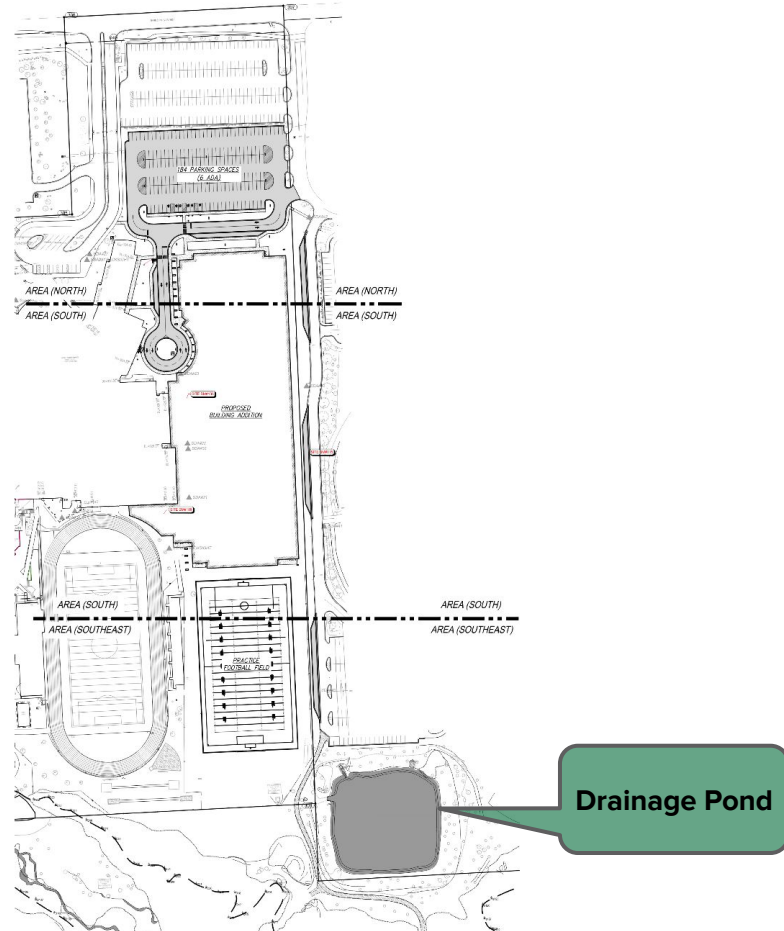
- **Water retention pond ownership/easement, expansion, beautification, and maintenance**
- **Novi Way Road easement to provide access, utility, and maintenance**
- **Novi Activity Center operation and partnership**

Water Retention Pond | Shifting Ownership and Responsibility

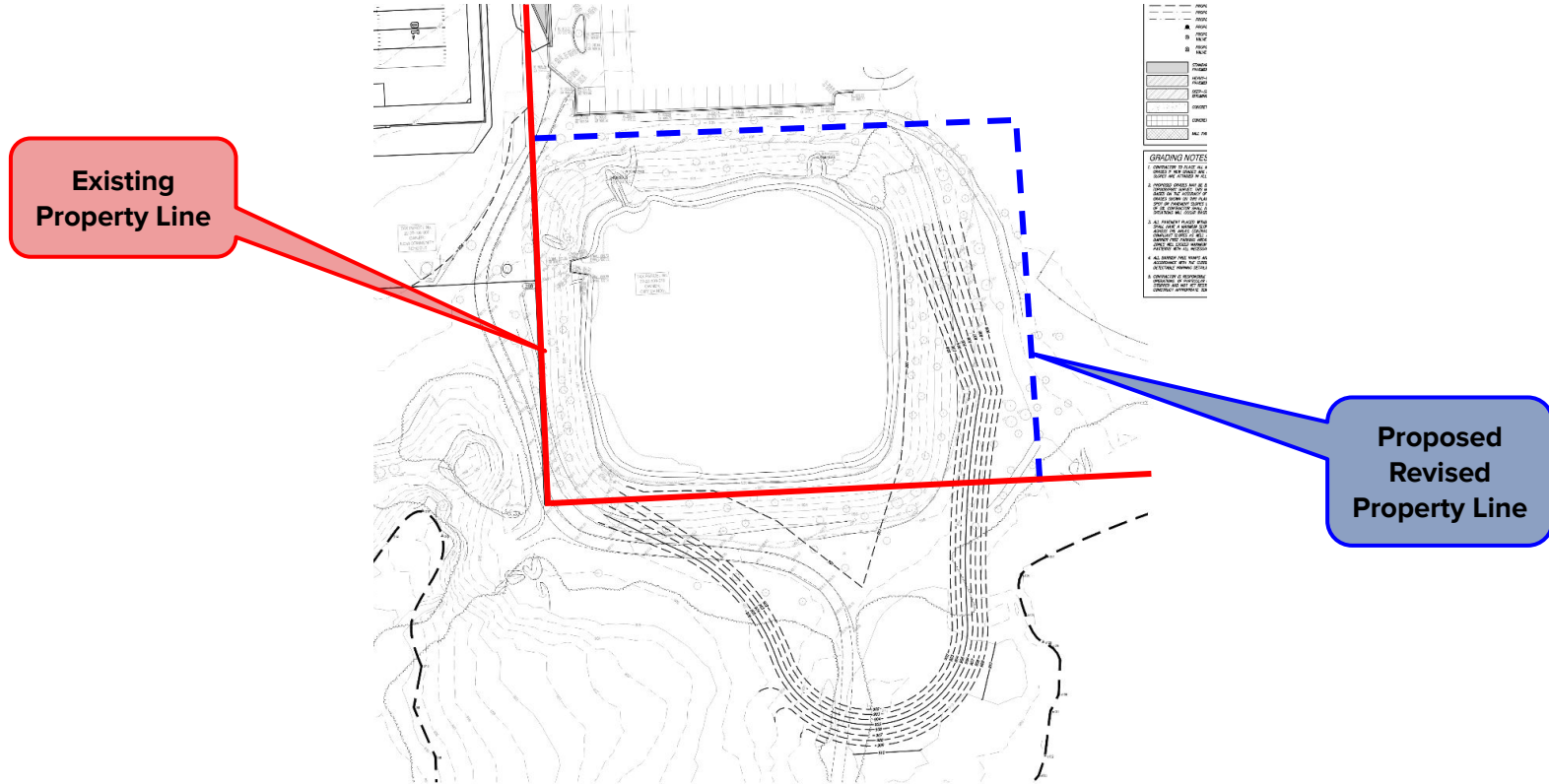
In lieu of building an additional drainage pond, through partnership, we can save taxpayer investment by the CON transferring ownership of an existing small retention pond at the south of the Civic Center property to NCSD. Details include:

- Retention pond ownership would transfer to NCSD.
- CON would gain an easement to utilize the existing pond at both current levels and future levels of need.
- NCSD would expand, beautify, and maintain the existing pond.

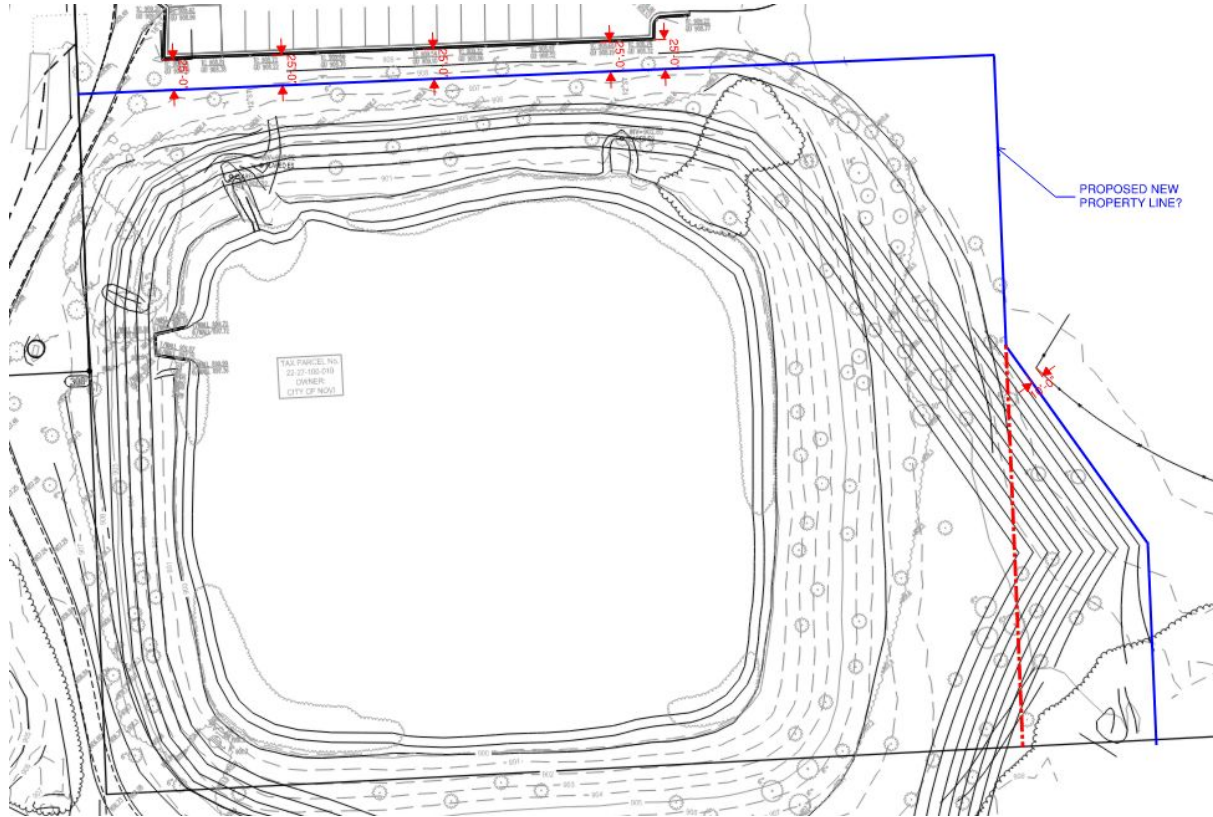
OVERALL PLAN | South Drainage Pond



SOUTH DRAINAGE POND | Proposed Expanded Footprint



SOUTH DRAINAGE POND | New Property Line

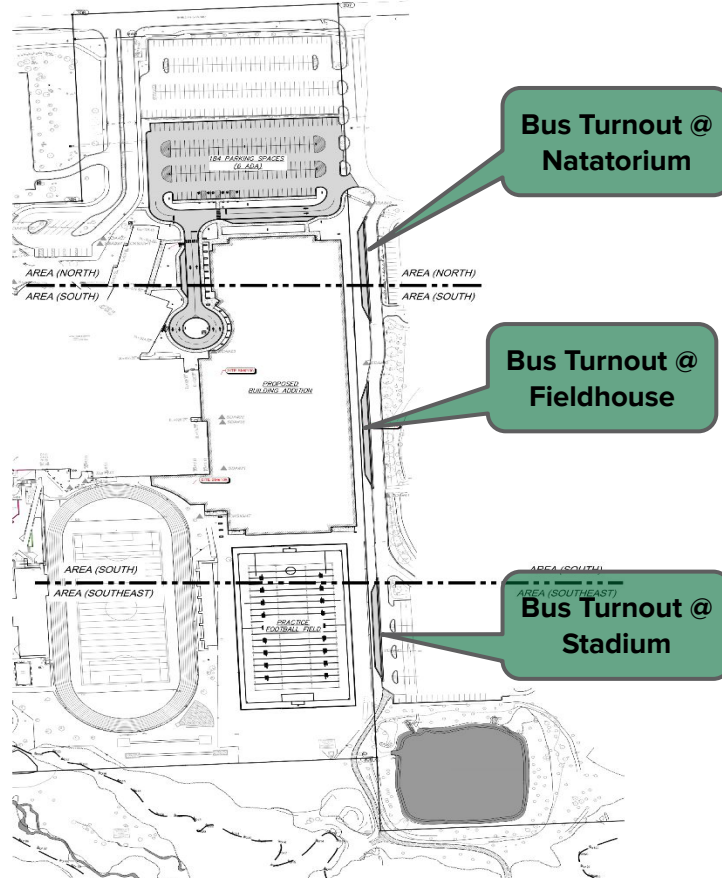


Novi Way | NCSD Gaining Access and Utility Easement

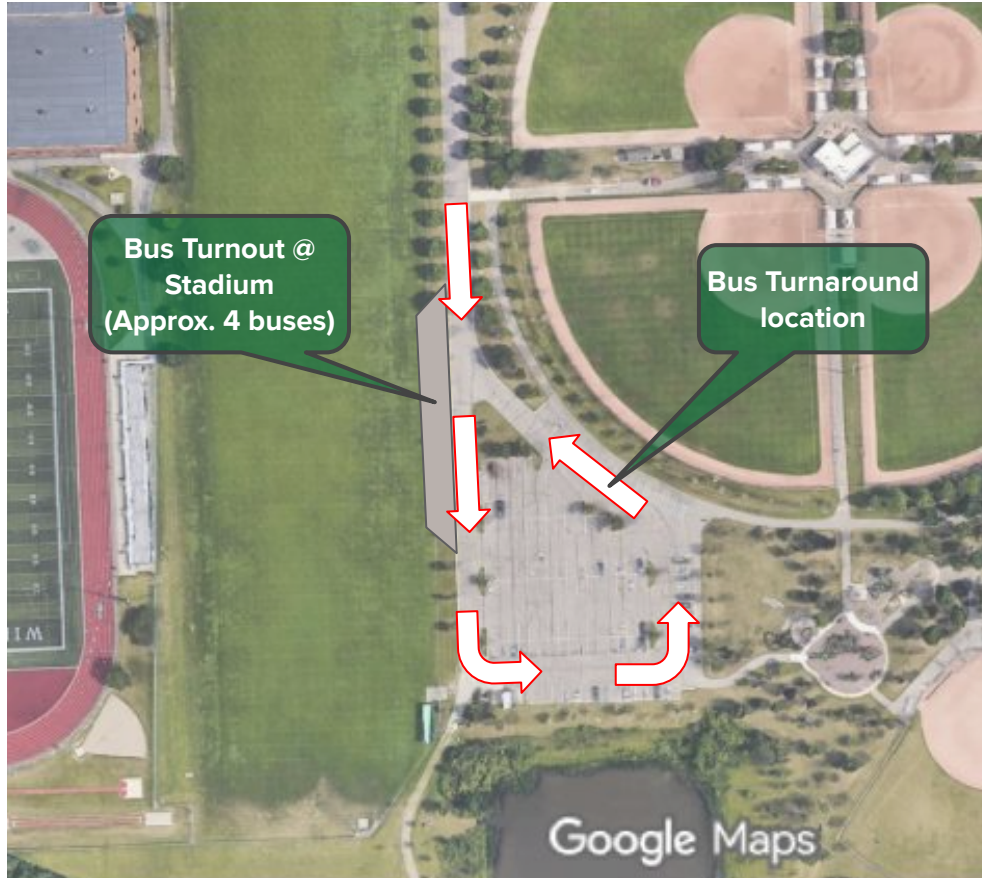
Novi Way will be a critical way residents access the new Novi Activity Center. NCSD would gain an access and utility easement and would also completely update and reconstruct the road. Details include:

- **CON would retain ownership of Novi Way, and NCSD would gain an easement for access and utilities.**
- **NCSD would be installing infrastructure for the Novi Activity Center and rebuilding a new road in the same location within reasonable tolerances to the specifications needed.**
- **NCSD would maintain Novi Way and keep it a valuable community asset.**
- **No existing trees on the east side of road would be cut down during this project.**

NOVI WAY | Proposed Bus Turnout Locations



NOVI WAY | Proposed Bus Turnaround



Novi Activity Center | Providing for our Kids and our Community

The new Novi Activity Center was a promise to our students and also to our community. This innovative, state of the art activity center will provide our students with facilities to explore their passions and interests while providing recreation opportunities not currently available for residents.

The CON and NCSD are working collaboratively to determine how programming can be run and administered together. Details include:

- **New pool and therapy pool for extensive athletics and parks and recreation activities.**
- **New courts, indoor turf, and track surfaces for community recreation.**

NOVI ACTIVITY CENTER | Conceptual Renderings



Next Steps | Development of Instruments

- Currently, attorneys for the CON and NCSD are working on agreements that will collaboratively protect the interests of each group and also make this community vision a reality.
- Each governing body would take the necessary steps to move forward by the end of June.
- Construction could begin in Fall of 2026.