

**JANUARY 26, 2023  
COMMITTEE MEETING  
DRAFT MINUTES**

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# MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES

CITY OF NOVI

**January 26, 2023 6:00 PM**

Novi Police Training Center  
45125 Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375  
(248) 347-0475

## 1. Roll Call

<b>Members Present:</b>	<i>Planning Commission:</i> John Avdoulos (Chair), Ramesh Verma <i>Council:</i> Mayor Pro-Tem Dave Staudt <i>Staff:</i> Lindsay Bell, Victor Cardenas, Ben Croy, James Hill, Barb McBeth, Rick Meader
<b>Members Absent:</b>	David Dismondy, Mike McCready
<b>Support/As Needed:</b>	Charles Boulard, Tom Schultz
<b>Consultants:</b>	John locoangeli (Planner), Rowan Brady (Planner), Colleen Hill-Stramsak (Engineer)

## 2. Approval of Agenda

The January 26, 2023 agenda was unanimously approved.

## 3. Approval of the December 14, 2022 Committee Meeting Minutes

The December 14, 2022 minutes were unanimously approved.

## 4. Discussion Items

- A. Feedback from Initial Concepts for Master Plan (Presented at the December 14<sup>th</sup> meeting):

John locoangeli noted that a copy of the PowerPoint presentation and a copy of the framework plan from the December 14<sup>th</sup> meeting are provided in the packets for reference. Mr. locoangeli also prepared an Executive Summary for today's meeting. The Executive Summary outlines the progression of plans from 1993, 2000 and 2016, the current status, a market analysis and recommendations.

As the Novi community grew, it was being built out in a fairly significant clip. Of the total city acreage, presently the City is approximately 91% built out, which amounts to 18,181 acres. Redevelopment acreage of 972 acres, or 5%, and new development acreage of 874 acres, or 4%, has been identified.

The referenced presentation went into more detail, but in summary the Residential market remains strong, although rising mortgage interest rates will taper the pace of sales. There is a movement towards higher density single family residential, with

3-5 units per acre, to accommodate 1,700-2,100 square foot homes that will allow home purchasers the ability to “age in place.”

Back in 2000, the Master Plan identified the retail sector square footage as exceeding four times the amount needed to serve the City population, which makes Novi a regional retail destination. There are concerns about retail being overbuilt and specifically about Twelve Oaks Mall with recent closures of big retail brands.

Office occupancy was significantly impacted by Covid-19, and the continuation of the work from home option will impact the size and functionality of future office space. There is a trend toward R&D and technology tenants, with hybrid office spaces with multi-tenants sharing common facilities.

Some of the recommendations included in the framework plan were the possibility of reducing zoning down from the current 28 zoning districts. The future land use framework proposes five categories that would consolidate some of those districts: TC – Town Center, CMX – Commercial Mixed Use, GMX – General Mixed Use, OST – Office Service and Technology, and Public/Quasi Public. The documentation provided includes the description of each district, the purpose, regulated non-residential and residential uses and distinguishing characteristics of each district.

The purpose of revisiting this tonight is this is the cornerstone of the plan. The Committee was asked at the December meeting to review and consider the information. Mr. locoangeli is looking for direction from the Committee as to whether to move forward with the concept and fine tune it.

The districts primarily affected are found along Grand River and along Twelve Mile, the central core of the community. The districts proposed to be realigned are currently designated OST - Office, Service, Technology, TC – Town Center, and TC-1 – Town Center -1, RC – Regional Center and I-1 Light Industrial. These districts currently match well with the amount of redevelopment and new development sites identified on the revised potential opportunities map.

B. Opportunities Map – updated with additional redevelopment sites

At the December meeting, there was suggestion to look in more detail at other potential development or subject to redevelopment sites over 10 acres. Rowan Brady displayed a map with sites identified.

City Planner McBeth noted she observed that the recommendation from the previous Master Plan to take the City West area and make it a denser mixed-use district is aligned with the current proposal. This would create a lot of different characteristics in terms of greater heights, greater density and adding residential to an otherwise Office, Service, Technology and Light Industrial area. The City West proposal is currently being put together to be brought forward to the Implementation Committee, then Planning Commission and City Council.

Interim City Manager Victor Cardenas requested further information regarding the rationale of allowing residential at the Meadowbrook and Twelve Mile area. Mr. locoangeli relayed the regulated uses in the proposed Land Use districts are set up such that the market, developer and City can determine the appropriate mix of use with a Planned Unit Development (PUD) requirement. The PUD would be

used in conjunction with new zoning district classifications. This is different than what the City normally operates under, however in the development community, Planned Unit Developments are a good tool because they become a negotiated development agreed upon by the developer and the City. As Covid accelerated many real estate trends, in today's world flexibility is needed in terms of how property is developed.

Chair Avdoulos agreed that flexibility is needed to pivot. For example, recognizing that office occupancy was impacted by Covid, the office environment is still changing, and office workers are now being asked to come back into the office to work. The office environment is being reimagined with flex workstations, repurposed break out areas, and meeting spaces. Chair Avdoulos added he likes the direction presented.

City Planner McBeth added that the proposal almost follows the lines of the PRO Ordinance so our Planning Commission and City Council have grown accustomed to the idea of flexibility built into rezoning. If a PUD is being considered there is flexibility as it goes from Planning Commission to City Council.

Mr. locoangeli relayed typically in the intake stage of the PUD Ordinance there is specified criteria based on overall city objectives that the developer must meet a certain number of those criteria to enter the process with the Planning Commission. It is incumbent upon the developer to bring a unique and innovative idea that is within the framework of the PUD Ordinance.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dave Staudt inquired to City Attorney Tom Schultz as to the difference between a PUD and a PRO. City Attorney Schultz relayed a PRO is a form of a PUD. Around the year 2000, the City revoked the PUD in response to Sandstone falling apart, only to find out a few years later that there is a need for a PUD type option, so a Planned Rezoning Ordinance (PRO) was created. The PRO as a type of PUD is less effective since a rezoning is required. The PUD being discussed is similar to that in Farmington Hills, where a PUD is placed over the existing zoning and design a plan to certain standards, but you don't have to find a district to rezone it to that fits the Master Plan. The City PRO is a little less attractive to developers and harder to use. The bigger change proposed is condensing the 20 non-residential districts into 4, which will need further definition.

Mayor Pro-Tem Staudt relayed many who have been around for a while are not familiar with this and may not be inclined to make massive changes to what has been successful for a long time. City Attorney Schultz relayed time has passed since Sandstone and the time is right to talk about the PUD again as a Council.

Mayor Pro-Tem Staudt added he is not sold on not having city parks as part of a larger entity, as everything he's read leads him to believe it is better leave it in its own category, as City Park. Mr. locoangeli clarified that based on discussion at a team meeting, City-owned park property on the Land Use plan will be identified separately as its own category.

City Attorney Schultz asked for clarification as to whether the recommendation being presented referred to limiting future Land Use categories or paring down Zoning districts. Mr. locoangeli relayed he would like to do both as the 22 Land Use categories and 28 Zoning districts could both be reduced. For example, the Land

Use map could have single family Residential called out in yellow, then the Zoning Map could be more specific with 4-5 Residential zoning classifications based on lot size.

Charles Boulard inquired as which districts were identified as similar that make sense under one under one umbrella, and if there were any that are no longer relevant.

Mr. locoangeli noted that the TC and TC-1 districts come to mind. Based on the regional and national market analysis that was done, and conversations with developers, there is a trend in Town Center type districts to evolve into mixed-use type districts. As is, the area of Twelve Oaks Mall would not accommodate the trend toward reimagining of retail malls with hotels, public parks and residential because the current RC Regional Center zoning does not allow a wider range of uses.

Mr. Boulard inquired if districts are combined, would there be conflicts at the edges. Mr. locoangeli relayed that connectivity between land uses is important and will also be a factor in the non-motorized plan.

Chair Avdoulos suggested that sketching out procedurally what the steps may be for a property to compare the differences between a PRO and a PUD could be helpful.

Mr. locoangeli relayed if the group was in consensus to proceed, the next steps would be to put together a matrix to show how the existing districts would migrate into the new proposed districts. Hearing no objections, they will proceed.

#### C. Specific study areas

Mr. locoangeli relayed that there would be 4 specific study areas to look at either as a steering committee or through public Open Houses that introduce these concepts to the community based on the framework just discussed. For example, taking the Fountain Walk/Twelve Oaks area, the Open House format would provide a description for the purpose of the district and the regulated uses then we would request community feedback on what type of uses they see as appropriate to fit into that space.

Based on the results on the community survey showing suburban, corridor and downtown examples, a high percentage of people picked the downtown framework showing mixed-uses as a preferred development type.

The proposed format for the Open House is to combine the Master Plan for Land Use with the Active Mobility Plan, as it makes sense since there is a great interface between the two.

#### D. Format and dates for Focus Group meetings

City Planner McBeth proposed holding two community Open Houses on different days and times of the week to accommodate various schedules. Mr. Brady relayed that even with an in person Open House, providing opportunities for those unable to attend to participate after with a survey or other follow up is effective.

Mr. locoangeli relayed a short informational video would be effective, put out ahead of time to help drive attendance at the Open House. Mr. Cardenas relayed that the City's in-house studio team is equipped to produce the video.

## **5. Next Steps**

### A. Focus Group meetings

The group reviewed a calendar of events and determined Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM and Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> from 4:00-6:00 PM for the community Open House dates.

### B. Transportation modeling

Mr. locoangeli conferred with Colleen Hill-Stramsak on timing for transportation modeling. Ms. Hill-Stramsak relayed early May timing.

### C. Coordination with findings of Non-Motorized Master Plan

## **Audience Participation and Correspondence**

Mr. locoangeli called attention to an email in the packet from Mr. Shapiro, Ivanhoe Companies, relative to the general mixed-use district. Mr. Shapiro expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to weigh in on the potential changes to the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Shapiro introduced himself and stated he has been developing in Novi over 35 years. Ivanhoe Companies develops all over Michigan and two other states either on their own or in conjunction with other national developers. Ivanhoe continually has an interest in Novi and for years has been looking at the City West property and the Trinity property. Ivanhoe has worked with five different regimes at the Trinity hospital over twenty years to acquire the property and have reached an agreement to partner with them to develop it.

Mr. Shapiro expressed appreciation to the staff and Beckett Raeder for the proposed direction. The proposed PUD gives flexibility and Mr. Shapiro is pleased with the areas selected for general mixed-use. Currently with the 28 districts and variances needed it is confusing and difficult. Streamlining the process will encourage creativity, yet at the same time allow for better controls.

Mark Szerlag, partner with Thomas Duke company, introduced himself and stated he has been involved in the Novi community for over 35 years. Mr. Szerlag has been working with property owners at the southwest corner of Thirteen Mile and M-5 and has assembled 17 acres currently being marketed for sale. This fits into the 10 acre + study areas mentioned earlier and Mr. Szerlag would appreciate it being considered in future study sessions and would be happy to contribute any information he can.

Mr. Szerlag is also working with Mark Kassab on the Orchard Grove Community Church property at Fourteen Mile and M-5. This involves thirty acres that runs along M-5 just south of Fourteen Mile. The property is under contract with Mark Kassab and Shapiro Development. They will be coming forward shortly to the Planning Commission for consideration of a multi-family development.

## **6. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 PM.