



CITY OF NOVI
Long-Range Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
February 3, 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Mayor's Conference Room | Novi Civic Center | 45175 Ten Mile Road
(248) 347-0445

CALL TO ORDER: 7:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Pro Tem Casey, Council Members Gurumurthy, Staudt

STAFF LIAISON: Victor Cardenas, City Manager

ALSO PRESENT: Danielle Mahoney, Assistant City Manager
Katherine Oppermann, Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Gurumurthy; Seconded: Staudt; Approved 3:0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 25, 2024 Minutes

Motion: Gurumurthy; Seconded: Casey; Approved 3:0

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1. Review of Responses to the Consultant to Provide Facilitation Of Community Strategic Planning Process RFP

City Manager Cardenas opened by stating that, to his knowledge, we have never before received this volume of bids to a Request for Proposal (RFP) with nineteen proposals total. Of those we eliminated those that came in at too far over \$150,000 for budgetary reasons as well as some that were determined inadequate. Overall, he was impressed to see bids come in from all across the country, all the coasts. Following staff evaluation, the two top recommendations are Berry, Dunn, McNeil & Parker, LLC and SBrand Solutions. Berry Dunn has done a lot of work locally, including rec centers. Both had considerable experience and have worked with many other communities. Mr. Cardenas does not have personal experience working with either firm but has seen good things about both. We have not yet done formal backgrounds but, with the Committee's approval, we can bring in the top two for interviews.

Councilmember Staudt asked what factors had disqualified the other firms to which Mr. Cardenas replied that there had been various reasons, less impressive proposals, some didn't seem to have the necessary resources, etc.

Councilmember Staudt also stated that he was concerned about the level of "DEI" in one proposal, asking if that was something our community is leaning towards. He also thought that some of the communities they have worked in don't have much in

common with Novi. Overall, it was a red flag to him. He then asked Mayor Pro Tem if, based on their proposal, it is the direction she want to go in?

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said that, yes, their process is generally what she was hoping to see. She does have additional questions that she would like to bring up with them in conversation when we bring them in for interview. She understands Councilmember Staudt's concern as they try to stay neutral on issue but she did not see a focus on DEI in the process itself.

Councilmember Staudt stated that he needs to read more and requested that copies of plans/work the firms did for other communities, particularly those more centrist, be provided. He worries about the firm trying to push too much for their direction and not following their [the Committee/Council's] direction. He reiterated that he doesn't know what knocked off so many of the other applicants (aside from the with outlier prices), he hasn't read through each to compare. He agreed with Mayor Pro Tem Casey that he wants to interview the top two and also read some more of the final output plans from other communities.

The Committee then briefly changed topic to discuss the upcoming Council Workshops and the expected process.

Upon returning back to the topic of reviewing the RFP, Councilmember Gurumurthy noted that the approach was slightly different between the two vendors. She also stated that their role was helping with the approach and getting direction from Council/Committee/Novi residents so that it is tailored to our community. In her experience from the corporate world, they have specific measurement/criterion when evaluating bids. She asked if we have a similar process to that to which Mr. Cardenas replied that yes, we use a Quality Based Selective (QBS) Process with weighted criterion that staff uses for their recommendation process. Mr. Cardenas also showed the form that staff used in the current evaluation.

Councilmember Staudt asked Mr. Cardenas if he was aware of these vendors or has contacts that he can speak with regarding them. Mr. Cardenas replied yes on both and that he can reach out to his colleagues for their experiences/reviews and report back.

The Committee members determined that their next step would be to interview the two top firms. Additionally, their expectation for a final product is approximately Fall 2026, as that should provide enough time to have gotten through the community engagement and be at the stage of a draft plan review.

Councilmember Staudt asked if that worked given the potential of new elected officials after November. Mayor Pro Tem Casey said that she believes the process would be thorough enough and far enough along at that stage that it wouldn't waver.

Again, regarding the interviews, Mayor Pro Tem Casey said that she plans for 45 minutes to an hour for each firm as she has several questions.

Councilmember Staudt asked Mayor Pro Tem Casey if she has an example of what she wants. Mayor Pro Tem replied no, not exactly. Though an item she thinks of a lot is housing, the difficulty of purchasing, lack of single floor living, and the many multi-family developments approaching. This would be just one of the various scenarios they examine. Councilmember Staudt expects a push for full-time fire and other big issues. He agrees that housing is a good example. He stated that we're in a weird place as a community. Councilmember Gurumurthy thinks that we'll also be thinking more on the idea of smart infrastructure. Councilmember Staudt said that we've done a lot of things and that it's harder now to look out at the future.

The Committee decided to have their next meeting, focused on the interviews, from 3-5 p.m. on Wednesday, February 19th.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey wanted to point out that all of the proposals have talked about a steering committee. It needs to be determined if this committee, with resident additions, will become the steering committee or if the steering committee should be a separate entity. Councilmember Staudt thinks it should be separate. Councilmember Gurumurthy indicated that she would want a clear delineations of roles for both committees should we head in that direction. Mayor Pro Tem agreed that this will be something that the group needs to process and figure out.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS – none

ADJOURNMENT: 7:56 p.m.

Motion: Casey; Seconded: Gurumurthy; Approved 3:0

SCHEDULED MEETINGS – A Special “Novi 2050” City Council Workshop Meeting featuring Futurist Rebecca Ryan has been scheduled for Monday, March 3rd at 5:30 p.m., to take place in the Civic Center Council Chambers