



CITY OF NOVI
Long-Range Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
August 28, 2025, 5:30 p.m.
Mayor's Conference Room | Novi Civic Center | 45175 Ten Mile Road
(248) 347-0445

CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 p.m.

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

STAFF LIAISON: Danielle Mahoney, Assistant City Manager

ALSO PRESENT: Katherine Oppermann, Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 28, 2025 Minutes

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

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1. Discussion with Shockey Consulting
Sheila Shockey, Shockey Consulting
Grant Mayfield, Shockey Consulting

Mayor Pro Tem Casey stated that the Committee is here today to talk with Sheila Shockey who worked on the Strategic Plans for Lenexa and Olathe, KN. They have requested that the presentation be limited to 15 minutes so that they have plenty of time for questions.

Assistant City Manager Mahoney welcomed the Shockey Consulting representatives and suggested that everyone present go through introductions before turning over the time to Shockey Consulting for their presentation. Following brief introductions Sheila Shockey went through the prepared slide deck for her firm. This included such items as their plan approach, the proposed project team for the City of Novi, roles of governing bodies in the process, planning pitfalls, a rough 9-month project task list and schedule, launch phase, discovery, vision, and crafting of the plan. She concluded the presentation by stating that this is what her firm does, a full custom fit for a City's needs, flexible since they've done this many times and in many different ways. Their work would support Novi continuing to be a High Performing Organization (HPO) in local government. She congratulated the Committee on making this plan for a clear, shared vision to see the City through 2050 and then asked for any questions the Committee might have.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey asked, regarding the timeline, how the community was engaged during launch and continued to be engaged through discovery

(specifically in regards to the peer cities of Lenexa and Olathe, KN). Ms. Shockey said that the Launch phase asks questions that can be answered without a lot of prep or background being given, it works to get a sense and get people excited/invested in the Strategic Vision. Discovery creates pillars that they will return to. She stressed that there should always be a continuous loop/beat of engagement and follow-up with any trends identified at the end of discovery. Mayor Pro Tem Casey then asked if, at the beginning of engagement, if it is done more in-person or more electronically/digitally and what medium it is done through (in-person conversations, focus groups, etc.). Ms. Shockey said that you want a mix of approaches, giving people multiple ways to engage. Online usually follows where you are in the process – are you just asking questions, sharing background information, asking more in-depth questions later. In-person approaches may vary throughout the process, approaching stakeholder interviews and focus groups at the beginning, preferably in person. They can also help formulate questions and provide mechanism to compile information into their database if the Committee prefers to run those interviews themselves. You may want to start a “roadshow” going to business leaders, to HOAs, etc. Mr. Mayfield stated that It can also depend on the depth of engagement you want. To drive excitement and interest they find that pop-ups at community events works well, but to get deeper insights on more complicated topics using a “pulse panel” of the same group that might be polled several times, or a steering committee. It is very customizable to the questions that you want answered and the point of the plan you are in. Ms. Shockey agreed, saying that they don’t necessarily recommend a committee being set up but instead that they like creating these “pulse panels” that they can tap into periodically for polls and focus group sessions. Mayor Pro Tem stated that as this Strategic Plan Process ultimately comes from Council Goals it is not, at this stage, staff or community driven, and they’ve struggled with knowing how to use an advisory body in the right way. She likes the suggested “pulse panel” to use them as a way of validating what they are hearing and what decisions are being made. Ms. Shockey stressed that establishing roles early on in the process is important, noting that the document is one the City Council adopts but that leads staff and ultimately the community. They’ve done engagement many different ways, some the City did almost all the engagement themselves and in others Shockey Consulting did all the engagement, it can be done many ways.

Mayor Pro Tem stated that, on a similar thread, she thinks a Project Charter and established Project roles are necessary so that everyone knows how they play. She thinks such a document would be critical to the project and asked for an example of similar duration, Council initiated, and pitfalls to avoid. Ms. Shockey said that you shouldn’t go out initially with ideas of what City Council wants to do. Go out, listen, attend the events, participate, and even facilitate the engagement. It is important to build strength in partnerships with the community, noting it can work against Councilmembers if they aren’t connected/engaged throughout the process.

Mayor Pro Tem then asked how Shockey Consulting would envision working with a staff project team. Ms. Shockey said that the usually always work alongside a staff team. Staff has the information and will be the ones implementing the plan. Novi is recognized as an HPO and they’ll have great ideas. They want staff engaged and excited about the Strategic Plan and process. Mr. Mayfield shared that they also have training and backgrounds that can be provided so that everyone is speaking

the same language as far as roles, and comparisons of the differences of said roles in the process.

Mayor Pro Tem then asked what the process, based on the data received and goals understood, to recommend the individual forms/initiatives/xyz processes. Ms. Shockey said that have templates used a lot which allows them to illustrate the different ways things can be implemented: ordinances, investing in capital, add/subtract to organization to work on a given initiative. They have templates to help understand what the role is on certain tasks, is it something the City is a service provider for or a facilitator to the community to help get it done. It includes roles, what can be done ourselves, if we can't do it ourselves then when partners are needed on strategies. Mayor Pro Tem Casey then asked what kind of questions would they ask of us, what do we need to provide, a clear understanding of what needs to be executed to get a Strategic Vision at the end. Ms. Shockey said that they have a big database of questions that can be answered and process steps they go through to access the data from the City as well as other sources so they can create the baseline and infographics that can then be used to determine how they can proceed with what questions Council wants answered through the process.

Councilmember Gorumurthy asked what the deliverables of each phase would be. Ms. Shockey said that the deliverable for the 1st phase "Launch" would be the project management memo, a data request, draft of the stakeholder development plan. These would be presented to both staff and City Council. Councilmember Gorumurthy asked what comes out of the community workshop? Ms. Shockey said that they have meeting notes that can then be turned into a press release and recommendations to the Committee. Mr. Mayfield said that each engagement event comes with an engagement report at the end that identifies raw data, key themes, etc. This helps build the framework and plan along the way. Ms. Shockey continued that the Discovery Phase deliverables would be a "snapshot" data document that shows where Novi currently is, they also use an trends identified as high priority/high impact to engage the public with through social media and meetings. Councilmember Gorumurthy clarified that goals are determined through trends to which Ms. Shockey said yes. Using the feedback/themes from the community they would report back to the governing body with the goal statements established through the process. They could then decide, for example, "five big ideas" to change the community which would then be shared back with the community as a loop of communication. Staff would then help develop the strategies and key actions/priorities needed to meet the milestones. Councilmember Gorumurthy also asked how existing documents would be incorporated. Ms. Shockey said that they collect those as part of the data request and categorize them, recognizing where there are already good plans/strategies that can be applied to the goals of the Strategic Plan. Mr. Mayfield stated that they can make recommendations as to how disparate ideas can come together during the implementation phase.

The Committee briefly discussed the example of Lenexa, Kansas, Councilmember Gorumurthy asked that, if they could go back, what Shockey Consulting would do differently with their processes in Kansas. Ms. Shockey said that that plan was very community driven and Council wasn't very involved, she would have wanted more

Council engagement. They could have listened and attended, gaining a deeper understanding of what citizens wanted. She noted that it still passed unanimously and that it went well but she thinks that there could have been more understanding. When you don't hear something firsthand you don't feel it in the same way. She noted that, similarly in Olathe, Council was involved initially but could have been more involved during engagement. She also spoke on some occasions when she had to coach Councilmembers on being more open during the initial stages.

Councilmember Gurumurthy said that she didn't entirely understand what was included in the baseline package from Shockey Consulting and what were add-ons. Ms. Shockey said that ultimately, they can mix and match. Councilmember Gurumurthy asked that the Committee be provided with a more detailed, clearly priced package so that they can discuss it in the future.

Councilmember Staudt briefly talked about his background and what sets him apart from some of the other Councilmembers as far as his perspective. He stated that he thinks of Council as a series of two-year segments in that every two years there is the potential of a new group of people. He thinks that the result of a lot of Strategic Plans he's seen don't apply to Novi and that they might be different than other cities Shockey Consulting has worked with. Given that council members are often elected because they bring something new to the table, and that a plan can be thrown out the moment the current council is gone, he wants to know how flexible these plans are so that they can sustain over 25 years and the ebb/flow of ideology. Mr. Shockey said that they've seen a lot of this, in 30 years she has worked with about 70 different municipalities and it's true that Council turns over and new ideas come in. They have to know what to do to accommodate new city members. She noted that that in Novi's recent Public Safety bond issues they probably involved various others throughout the community to ensure it would pass. It can be hard to get communities to pass a bond issue. It works well when you involve the community in the decision making. Those who get active and involved are often those you will then see to step up for public office themselves. If Novi's plan sustains depends on how well the community has been invested in the elements in the plan so that new champions will come up to effect that long-range vision. Vision statements need to be broad and staff needs to be bought into it as the community direction as they can sustain longer than Council. Councilmember Staudt said that he is interested in big broad ideas with some deliverable at the end, he wants 4 or 5 things that can be agreed on regardless of political position. He noted that anything too ideological will be the first to go. Any plan that is made and sits on a shelf to gather dust is a failed endeavor. Ms. Shockey said that a Strategic Plan is to decide what you want to do and what you don't want to do, she agreed that if you can get a consensus on 4-5 big things that will get you where you want to go you can establish performance measures. This allows you to measure your progress towards the goals that have been set.

Councilmember Staudt noted that Shockey Consulting has been brought in to potentially replace a prior consultant that we did not feel was giving adequate attention to Novi and their project, they don't want to be the stepchild. He further stated that he would like to see a timely process where we get people in, get the information, and proceed. He thinks that Council already probably knows 90% of

what they will hear back from the community, but he wants to know the 10% that they are missing and what angle they need to take to achieve success in that area.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey also spoke briefly on the difficulty with the previous consultant, that they were not understanding or customizing things to us. For next steps she would appreciate, balancing the level of detail, an initial base plan, revised pricing, and a bit more detail regarding community meetings and other events. She also asked how many other clients they would have at the same time. Ms. Shockey said that Novi would be the only Strategic Plan, they have other projects that other staff members are focused on (such as infrastructure projects, management consulting, comprehensive plans), and noted that she and Mr. Mayfield would be the main ones working with Novi.

Councilmember Staudt also asked what they think City Council should be thinking about as to what is important in a Public Safety Building, as Public Safety will continue to be one of the most important things into the future.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey thanked Ms. Shockey and Mr. Mayfield.

Councilmember Staudt asked what the total cost would be. Mayor Pro Tem Casey said that was still an evolving discussion but that the proposal was \$146,000. Councilmember Staudt stated that if they do what we want it doesn't really matter.

Ms. Shockey and Mr. Mayfield thanked the Councilmembers and exited the meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey appreciates them but said she needs a little bit more, especially regarding how they do their process, in order to make a decision. Councilmember Staudt said that he thinks that Ms. Shockey was far more engaging than anyone else they've talked to and that he thinks she "gets it". Assistant Manager Mahoney noted that in her discussions with Shockey Consulting she asked that they not be overly rigid and that with this meeting they should be able to revise it to what they want. She agreed that, from a staff perspective, she also very much appreciated her interactions with Ms. Shockey.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS: None

ADJOURNMENT: 7:04 p.m.

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