



CITY OF NOVI  
Finance and Administration Committee Meeting  
**February 19, 2026, 4:30 p.m.**  
Police Training Center | 45125 Ten Mile Road  
(248) 347-0445

**CALL TO ORDER:** 4:34 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor Fischer, Mayor Pro Tem Casey, Councilmember Staudt

**STAFF LIAISON:** Victor Cardenas, City Manager

**ALSO PRESENT:** Danielle Mahoney, Assistant City Manager  
Charles Boulard, Community Development Director  
Barb McBeth, City Planner  
Jeff Muck, PRCS Director  
Jeff Herczeg, Director of Public Works  
Megan Mikus, Deputy Director of Public Works  
Erick Zinser, Chief of Police/Director of Public Safety  
John Martin, Fire Chief  
Katherine Oppermann, Recording Secretary  
Tom Schultz, City Attorney  
Greg VanKirk, Plante Moran Realpoint  
Todd Fenton, Plante Moran Realpoint  
Brian Weber, Plante Moran Realpoint  
Megan O'Neill, Plante Moran Realpoint

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – January 20, 2026

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

**PURPOSE OF THE MEETING**

**1. Discussion with Novi Community School District**

With Ben Mainka, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Danielle Ruskin, Board of Education  
Willy Mena, Secretary, Board of Education  
Betsy Beaudoin, Trustee, Board of Education

Mayor Fischer started by briefly recapping the bond initiatives from both the City and School and noted that he considers this a continuation of previous discussion between the two entities. He wants to have success clearly defined by both the City and School. Superintendent Mainka echoed Mayor Fischer's comments on the importance of partnership between the School District and City, he wants to continue that support and share in the success with the new facilities the school is

building. He expressed the importance of the City's support and collaboration for the School's ideas for the space. Success looks like alignment and support on the proposed concepts. He then shared the current conceptual plan for the High School campus/Fieldhouse/parking/shared road/etc.

Mr. Mainka stated that the first ask is to figure out the maintenance, cleanup, and expansion of the existing retention pond. They are proposing an option for an exchange of property/change of property lines where the Novi Community School District takes on the full ownership and maintenance of the pond. They would then have the space and ability to absorb the cost of further expansion should they or the City do further property work that would require expansion. Mr. VanKirk noted that the City and Highschool are already sharing the pond, which is a precedent preceding anyone here today. Councilmember Staudt stated that if the school takes on the payment for future pond expansion, such as if the City tore down the existing Police Department building to build a Community Center then he is good with the plan. Mayor Pro Tem Casey also stated that she has no concerns at this time and is interested to hear more.

Board of Education Trustee Beaudoin asked that if the City expands the property if the Highschool would also still have room to expand. Mr. Mainka said yes, they would reshape the pond to accommodate either They are already considering making the pond larger that is currently needed so as to accommodate potential future growth/expansion. Mayor Fischer stated that he can't imagine a new building here (the current Police Department) would have a building envelope much bigger than what is currently present but that he expects expanded parking would necessarily increase run-off (necessitating pond capacity). He further stated that he thinks the property exchange would be a "slam dunk", he is in support of the school's project as well as them taking over maintenance of the pond and further beautifying it for the community. This land swap would be a win-win. Mr. Mainka agreed that it is a great opportunity for both parties and makes the most fiscal sense for the School District. Mr. VanKirk stressed that the best thing they can have is speed as costs always escalate, he hopes they can start something this fall.

Councilmember Staudt asked if the City Attorney saw any issues with deeding the property to the schools and Mr. Schutz replied no, though noted the necessity of properly drafting an agreement which takes time. Ms. Beaudoin suggested that they could start with a simpler Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) ahead of the more formal paperwork. Mayor Fischer asked is a clause can be included that, in the event the project doesn't move forward, the property would revert to the City. Mr. Schultz and Ms. Beaudoin both said yes. Mr. Mainka also agreed that an MOU would be a good start. Following some brief discussion on the merits of various document types (MOU, Letter of Intent, Deed, etc.), Mayor Fischer stated that he doesn't care how it gets done, that the biggest consideration to him is the benefit of the City still being able to have the benefit of run-off contained in the pond. He suggests putting an MOU through for expediency with details being completed by legal, Department of Public Works, and city engineers to follow. He said that in concept this all makes sense and will be reported to the entirety of City Council.

Community Development Director Boulard questioned the drawings presented, asking if the Civic Center will lose parking. Mr. VanKirk stated no, that is was still a loose conceptual drawing and Civic Center won't be effected – they recognize parking is sacred. Ms. Beaudoin asked if the City had a concept of their new building or parking that could be provided. Mayor Fischer stated that no, it was still very early in the discussion stage and the full Council would need to be involved, that said he suggested that Plante Moran could probably draw up something very basic to give an idea.

Mr. Mainka said that the second item for discussion is Novi Way. He stated that they know one of the “crown jewels” of the City are the Power Park Fields and that they don't want to impact them. However, they do need access to Novi Way so that they can reach the south point of the facility and so they want an easement to access Novi Way. He also said that they may want to spec so that school buses can temporarily park there for drop-off and pick-up. The Schools would take on any costs associated with improvements and maintenance due to the bus traffic. It won't be a main thoroughfare, but they would assume any cost associated with rebuilding to necessary specs and maintenance. Mr. VanKirk noted that this is not fully designed at this stage as it was only recently decided by the school board, they know they cannot encroach on the fields.

Councilmember Staudt asked if the schools also plan on rebuilding the ball field fences to be higher so that balls don't hit buses or other property. Ms. Mainka agreed that, if needed, it would be on the schools to raise the fences. PRCS Director Muck pointed out that there is already an ongoing issue with students and school event attendees using the city lots. Mr. Mainka understands the concern and empathizes with event parking difficulty but noted that the main entrance to the field house and natatorium would be on the north and west sides of the building so trying to access from Novi Road would be burdensome and not easy, stressing that the road would only be used as an auxiliary. He also pointed out that there is an expansion of High school parking planned and that there would be no student lots on the City side. Mr. VanKirk noted that use of Novi Way would be primarily intended for visiting teams to allow safer flow and a separation for greater cohesion, he also again emphasized that the design is preliminary and not yet fully rendered, they will still need to do a traffic study.

Mr. Mainka agreed that there will need to be ongoing conversations between the City, Schools, and Library regarding traffic but that the Schools do need road access to Novi Way. He also again noted that the schools would take on any costs of rebuilding and maintenance. Mr. Mainka and Ms. Beaudoin both briefly spoke on student and public parking access and that the new building was designed to be separated from the current Highschool in part so that the community could have greater access to it while the schools maintain necessary higher security for the main building. Mayor Fischer agreed that ongoing maintenance would need to be a discussion given the increased usage and how that would effect the road over time. Mr. Mainka agreed, noting that as primary users the school would most likely be maintaining it but that there is more dialogue needed. Mayor Pro Tem Casey expressed concern that the plan did not include a bus turn-around area. Mr. VanKirk stated that the turn-around area was still being determined. Mayor Pro Tem Casey

then stated that giving the Schools an easement was one thing but asked if expansion of the road would be taking place on the City property, Mr. Mainka and Mr. VanKirk both said that, as currently planned, yes about five feet on the City side. Councilmember Staudt expressed concern about students and parents parking there and that he also doesn't love the idea of buses being there, he also shared Mayor Pro Tem Casey's concerns about the bus turn around and overall competition for space. Mr. Mainka acknowledged their concerns and said that bus parking is less of a concern for them currently than having the easement as space for the fieldhouse is at a premium. He said that, with the buses being such a concern they could take that off consideration and just get the easement.

Mayor Fischer stated that he thinks an easement makes sense, and that he personally has less concern regarding the buses provided the school takes ownership over any damage to the road. He also wondered if there might be something the City can do (on the School District's dollar) to help such as reconfiguring the Civic Center and Power Park lots. He also said that as far as road construction goes it needs to go west (towards the school) and not east (towards the City property) as there is already very little space between the road and sport fields. Mayor Fischer further stressed that more than the retention pond, City staff and engineers would need to be included and fully comfortable with any new proposed traffic flow before they make a decision – it would also be key to his own vote.

Mr. VanKirk asked if the City had a preferred traffic consultant and Mr. Cardenas noted that AECOM is the current City Traffic Consultant and would most likely be who was used. Dr. Ruskin asked if there was a timeframe on this, the School board wouldn't want to pay more than once for plans if they can avoid it, Mr. VanKirk said that it is not needed until later on but that they're trying to understand what is available from the City to make the job easier, he also isn't worried about redesign fees at this stage. Ms. Beaudoin said that the question then is if City Council would be comfortable with the NCSD using the road. Mr. Boulard said it would be important to know if the school construction would prevent use of the road to which Mr. Mainka and Mr. VanKirk both said no. Mr. Muck noted that the construction timeline would impact multiple City events so that they would need to carefully plan around it, but as long as the parking lots remain for large community events he is fine.

Dr. Ruskin said that she is hearing then that more discussion is needed, Mayor Pro Tem Casey agreed. Mayor Fischer agreed too, noting that this meeting was for a high level understanding and that ultimately everything being discussed will need to go before the full City Council for a decision. Mr. Mainka briefly summarized that there seems to be support the drainage pond, with details to be worked on quickly, and that there is willingness to work on the easement and that will take some more time but he appreciates the spirit of willingness to work together and thanked everyone present for their support. Mayor Fischer suggested that it would be a good idea to submit the material to City Council and for the School to be present at the meeting for any questions or discussion in anticipation of a letter of intent or MOU. Mr. VanKirk asked if the two issues should be separated for presentation, Mayor said that his initial thought would be to bring the pond issue forward as soon as it is prepared but that they should still introduce the topic of the easement at the same meeting, even if it

needs to be worked on more for a later decision. Both groups thanked each other for participating in the meeting and the NCSD team departed.

**2. Approval of February 12, 2025 Capital Improvement Program Minutes**

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

**3. Discussion of proposed Capital Improvement Program projects for FY26/27  
With Planning Commissioners Pehrson and Verma**

Mayor Fischer thanked the Planning Commissioners for attending and invited City Manager Cardenas to begin. Mr. Cardenas started the presentation and stated that, as in years past, all of the area experts are in the room to answer any questions. The three big item categories are Roads, Water/Sewer, and PARCS this year, and they've also included Public Safety. He briefly noted that the totals are by fiscal year and the red box items are what is presented to City Council in the annual budget. Significant projects include: the 12 Mile Road Widening (tentatively slated for summer 2027), which will be a boulevard all the way through and does include the railroad crossing; the Napier/Nine Mile Road Roundabout; a new elevated water tank (Engineering planned for FY 26/27 and construction in 27/28). He noted that the new projects worksheet was provided based on comments from the prior year and asked if there were any questions.

Commissioner Pehrson asked how the CIP aligns with City Council and the citizens. Mr. Cardenas said he'd defer to "his bosses" (Councilmembers) but that he believes they are on the right track, they've removed "zombie projects" from the list since they were old, lofty goals that had been continually pushed out with no plans for implementation at this stage and weren't being funded. Mayor Fischer said that they didn't have a lot of CIP goals for the current CIP and that most of these projects are necessary items to keep the City moving and so it underlines goals in that way.

Councilmember asked what the purpose of an elevated water tank is over a ground one. Mr. Herczeg said that the planned pressurized cistern provides better water pressure (there are already water pressure issues in the SW part of the City) and more fire protection, he also noted that a ground level tank would require the construction of a new pump station in addition to the tank. This new water tank will cover any further development in that section of the City including any potential development at the Links of Novi. It is an operational need.

Councilmember Staudt then asked why there was no further development of the ITC parkland on the plan. Mr. Muck said that any such plans would hinge on the passing of a new CIP. Mayor Fischer also noted that it was removed based on prior comments, he doesn't like to see the document filled up with things that can't be funded under the current program. Councilmember Staudt stated that he was concerned that larger plans (like for ITC, Bosco Fields, or a potential Community Center) aren't in the CIP plan when they are going to be approaching voters for a renewal. Mr. Cardenas said that the plans are still present but just not included in this current CIP. Mayor Fischer also noted that he thinks the inclusion of such plans would actually create more of a liability for the City on the vote, this allows them more

flexibility for a new, renewed CIP but also fulfills the requirement for the current CIP plan to be put together as part of the budget.

Follow a brief discussion of fire trucks the group made the following motion:

*Motion to recommend the CIP plan as presented to the Planning Commission and set a Public Hearing date.*

*Motion: Staudt; Seconded: Casey, Approved 5:0*

#### **4. Plante Moran Realpoint**

Mr. Weber stated that they were here with a two-fold purpose, to put an end to the old March numbers and excel spreadsheet that had been in circulation now that everything has been updated and uploaded into the eBuilder. Mr. VanKirk stated that eBuilder is their project management information system that allows for workflows to be automated and for everything to all be in one place, it is the "central nervous system" where everyone can access the information but that still maintains necessary safety gates where needed. Mr. Weber went over the baseline numbers, showing how it will track any committed dollars, any projected budget changes, etc. He also showed how the information can be sorted in various ways visually, such as by building or by cost code. It is very adaptable and customizable, and also has the benefit of being able to download/import to the City's GL. Mr. VanKirk also noted the customization options and that they can do monthly or quarterly reconciliation process/reports to ensure the PMR and City books match. Mr. Weber then briefly went over the delineation between the building and roads portion, asking if everyone was satisfied with the current setup and "buckets".

Mayor Fischer said that he likes the current "by building" view as he thinks it makes the most sense, is the most approachable and easy to explain to residents. He then asked at what level does PMR bring any changes to this budget to the Committee or Council. There was some back and forth discussion on this point between the representatives from PMR and the Mayor, Mr. VanKirk expressed that he wants to come to the Committee on a regular basis but not a daily basis if it can be helped. Mayor Fischer expressed that he thinks any funds being moved between buildings or other big budget lines would be a hard line that need to come before the Committee, in addition to the already discussed movement of contingency that would automatically trigger the Committee and Council needing to know. Mr. Weber said that he thinks there is a clear delineation between what Mr. VanKirk and Mayor Fischer are talking about – that when they are in the design process or allocating money to it they will establish that budget, go out to bid and approve a contingency then they are now active with that money, not coming back from ever change order within that approved contingency but that it is the overall budget to get to that point, approved for bid. The early phase is establishing that they are okay with going to bid with that. Councilmember Staudt suggested that early on to error on the side of too much information, they can then decide if they like what they're seeing PMR doing early on. Mr. VanKirk agreed, noting that he just wants to ensure that it isn't to the detriment of the process. Councilmember Staudt noted that all of these decisions are made months ahead of actual purchase, also stating that he doesn't especially care about individual line items so much as the overall success of

the project and any use of contingency. He also asked if they will get to see everything in advance, Mr. VanKirk said yes, you'll see the floor plan, site plan, renderings, etc. but that they won't present the Committee with the exact construction plans going into exacting detail about, for instance, where individual structural steel beams are. Ms. O'Neill stated that they also have a monthly report for any budget changes they can send out monthly if that would help. Mr. VanKirk confirmed that the Committee wants to be contacted if any monies are moved between buildings and for any contingency use and Mayor Fischer and Councilmember Staudt both affirmed yes. Mayor Fischer noted that he still thinks there should be a threshold within line items that should trigger the Committee/Council being informed.

Mr. VanKirk said that he's generally concerned with the varying the schematic plans while they are taking bids. He noted that they've uncoupled Fire Stations #2 & 3 from the Public Safety Building so that they are on a faster track. Stating that, once shovels hit dirt it is all change orders for which they already have a policy in place and asking when Council wants to know. Mr. Cardenas asked for clarification – if Mr. VanKirk is saying that once we go to bid it locks a design in place? But once we go to bid if there is excess money then PMR will come to us? Mr. VanKirk said yes. Councilmember Staudt asked if changes are made to designs by staff is it run by Council, and if so when? Mr. Cardenas said that until we come back in April with a more fine tuned plan, after that any larger plan changes would have to come to Committee/Council once a plan has been presented. Councilmember Staudt said that he is largely concerned about larger items like different types of parking (structure vs. lot), and it was confirmed that those would go before the Committee. Mr. Weber stated that that is all part of the design schematic presentation, the Committee and then Council will have the opportunity to weigh in during April. More refined renderings will than be made based on their input, following that construction documents will be made, they'll go to bid, and then that plan will be used for shovels in the ground per the RASIC chart previously approved and they follow the change order policy. Councilmember Staudt asked when we suggest suitable vendors to be considered and Mr. VanKirk said probably the summer.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey stated that she was feeling a little more comfortable now than before they had this conversation. Mayor Fischer asked that, ultimately, what is the method for informing Council and the threshold for direction? Mr. Fenton said that they can do a dollar amount or percentage amount. Mayor Pro Tem Casey noted that she likes knowing about changes, even if it isn't something they need to approve and that they noted monthly report helps. She said that they should err on the side of overcommunicating and refine if they think they are receiving too much. They may need to test it out and see how they feel in order to make the final choice.

Councilmember Staudt noted that change orders are something that happens during construction, with architecture and design he wants to be sure they know what they have come up with, what was considered, and what was or wasn't chosen and why. Mr. VanKirk said he understands that but just needs to know the severity level or interest. Mr. Weber said that he thinks the first big test will be the upcoming schematic package which will allow them to better understand how far the budget will go and how that effects the scope. He thinks they are in a good spot,

they'll refine it, and overcommunicate for now with the understanding with the understanding that adjustment may be needed in the future to avoid overburden or delay. Councilmember Staudt noted that he thinks that, with the Christman firm, they will have a very accurate estimate for pricing out of the gate. Mr. VanKirk also noted that they won't move forward with a schematic unless it is within 10% of the projected budget, realistically the range of tolerance is more like 3%.

Mayor Fischer clarified for overall alignment that the PMR and the consultant firms cannot move monies between project "buckets" without this Committee's approval, that touching any contingency requires Committee approval, and that any other changes they should receive the monthly report. As far as the buckets and dollar amount he thinks they are currently good.

Mr. Fenton briefly went over a project update, that a tech firm recommendation was going to go before Council at their next meeting and that they would expect concept and schematic design in April. A high level City Council presentation is planned for 3/23/26 and the 4/20/26 meeting is targeted for HED/BRW to present the Fire Station #2 & 3 schematic design and the conceptual design for the public safety building. This Committee will meet before the April Council meeting, up to a week prior, in order to preview everything and have early input.

## **5. Novi Ice Arena**

Mr. VanKirk said that Mr. Cardenas and Mr. Muck had sent an email asking if Plant Moran Realpoint would be engaged if something else was done with the Ice arena and so PMR prepared a proposed scope of work including two potential phases:

1. a due diligence facility assessment, review of the current agreement, and appraisal
2. An operational and ownership analysis as well as a benchmark study

Councilmember Staudt asked if the process would include an interview with the current operator and Mr. VanKirk said it could. Councilmember Staudt stated that he would be most interested in options for if someone wants to buy the facility. Mayor Fischer said that he does not think that they are interested in the proposed phase one, but rather just the scope of work shown in phase 2. He wants to see a playbook of options they have to think about the future of the arena. If they did phase 2 then that would allow them to have the discussion and make decisions that could then potentially lead to what was described in phase 1. Mr. VanKirk affirmed that they could just do phase 2 at this time.

Mayor Fischer asked if staff had heard back from any of the other firms they reached out to and Mr. Muck replied no, only PMR had responded to date. Mayor Fischer said that they should have a discussion at an upcoming City Council meeting to see if the other Councilmembers have an appetite to move forward with this. If there is not enough support, they'll drop it without spending any City funds but if there is interest, they can then take the next steps forward. He then asked Mr. VanKirk if \$45,000 is the final amount and Mr. VanKirk said it was *not to exceed* \$45,000.

Mr. Cardenas confirmed that the Committee wanted to see the Ice Arena discussion as a Matter for Consideration on a future City Council agenda. Mayor said yes, to pull out the prior memo on the Ice Arena as well to remind the other Councilmembers of the existing issues, it should be framed as a discussion about “the art of the possible”. It is an educational opportunity for Council to understand all the options and discuss. Mr. VanKirk asked if the Committee wanted a more formal proposal and Mayor Fischer said no, the current document is sufficient currently.

Mr. Muck noted some bullet points for the Committee: Suburban did a cash analysis, some potential unknowns, that there may be a new 3-sheet arena opening in Farmington that would impact the region and our area, that 31% of ice users of Novi residents, there is \$400,000 in cash (do we want to use it towards the study?), and if we move forward with a sale how might we want to spend those funds.

Mayor Fischer thanked everyone for pulling the materials together. He wanted to see from a financial perspective that it can't be a for-profit and he would love to monetize it to fund the PRCS budget. The Arena has been kept up but it will keep getting more costly. He wants Council to have the discussion and time to opine while they still have the window open to do so.

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:** 7:30 p.m.

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