



CITY OF NOVI  
Public Safety Building Needs Committee  
**February 7, 2023, 5:00 p.m.**  
Mayor's Conference Room | Novi Civic Center | 45175 Ten Mile Road  
(248) 347-0445

**CALL TO ORDER** 4:57 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor Bob Gatt, Mayor Pro Tem Dave Staudt, Council Member Justin Fischer, Scott Olson, Ted Zuchlewski, David Landry, David Molloy

**PRESENT:** Mayor Bob Gatt, Mayor Pro Tem Dave Staudt, Council Member Justin Fischer, Scott Olson, Ted Zuchlewski

**ABSENT EXCUSED:** David Landry, David Molloy

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

**ALSO PRESENT:** Erick Zinser, Director of Public Safety and Police Chief  
Jeff Johnson, Fire Chief  
Rob Petty, Chief Information Officer (CIO)

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

### **PURPOSE OF THE MEETING**

#### 1. Introductions

Mayor Gatt thanked the group for coming and participating in the new committee and lead introductions of Committee members and City staff present.

#### 2. Purpose of Committee

Mayor Gatt expressed his desire for everyone to be able to support the goals of the Public Safety Building Needs Committee, and understand the needs of our Public Safety Officers to have all the appropriate resources, amenities, and modern infrastructure available. The current Police Department is over 40 years old and while it was ideally built at the time of its construction it is now outdated and overcrowded. Fire Stations 1, 2, and 3 also all need modernization.

He envisions a new Public Safety Headquarters with both the Police Department and Fire Station 1 sharing a large modern building including a lobby with a museum-like display honoring City of Novi Public Safety throughout the years. The Officers both present and future should be given the best amenities that we can offer and a building can "wow".

Mayor Gatt would also like to maintain the current Police Department building but do a significant renovation so that it can be re-purposed for new uses such as additional City administrative space, and Older Adults Community Center.

The main concerns of the Committee will be the locations and monetary needs for the project. He intends to have the Committee request a budget in the near future so that any necessary experts can be hired. Ideally the Committee, City Staff and any consultants will work together for a cohesive plan that can be brought before City of Novi residents to vote on in November.

### 3. Discussion of Next Steps

The Committee briefly discussed where they a new future Fire Station 3 and Police/Public Safety Headquarters but decided that going forward discussion of any property purchasing discussions would be instead deferred to City Council during executive sessions.

Interim City Manager, Victor Cardenas, referred to the existing Building Needs Assessments that were last researched and written in 2014 and indicated that while they are now a bit outdated that they still contain valuable information for the Committee to review and consider. Importantly these assessments did determine that it would not be feasible to further reconfigure or add onto the existing Police Department in order to meet their contemporaneous needs.

Councilmember Fischer agreed with the Mayor's statements in the purpose of the Committee though he differs somewhat on potential ideas for the repurposing of the old Police Department building and indicated that the specific planning regarding that repurposing may be outside of the scope of the Public Safety Building Needs Committee. He also wants further examination as to what the actual appropriate number of Fire Stations would be the right model for the City of Novi. Our current model utilizes four but we should look into other models and utilize field experts for the best recommendation. Chief Zinser said that the matter had been addressed internally to some degree and that he believes there should be two stations at the north end of the City and that one being closer to Fox Run would be a boon. He also suggested that there might be a need for one in the southwest of the City near Napier and 8 Mile given the community expansion and new subdivisions in that area.

The question of the overall phasing of the projects was brought up - whether the intent was to first build the new Public Safety Building and approach the other Fire Stations later or to arrange for the construction to occur concurrently. Mayor Gatt indicated that he intends for the full project to be put into motion at once and that it would be presented to Novi voters in that manner and would only push out aspects of the project if budget requirements necessitated it.

Mr. Zuchlewski spoke on the economy and indicated that in his experience that approaching the project as a whole may help with construction and material costs.

It would allow for buying all necessary materials in bulk and the hiring of a single General Contractor/Construction Supervisor for all buildings at once. He also suggested the Committee consider a single “cookie cutter” design that could be utilized for all Fire Stations thus lowering design costs and creating a cohesive look/identity to the buildings.

Mr. Olson also likes the Mayor's Vision. He is surprised that the current buildings are still serving the functional needs to the City staff and community given their age. HE affirmed the need for our Firefighters and Police Officers to be provided with top tier training and that providing facilities for such training could also be a draw for other organizations. He also expressed interest in see a map of the current Fire Stations, particularly in relation to those areas most served such as Senior Centers. Fire Chief Johnson indicated that there is an existing GIS map for this purpose and that it can be provided to the Committee members.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt suggested involving the City of Novi Building Authority which as been inactive for some time and Mayor Gatt agreed that this would be prudent. He also stressed that it would be important to consider not just the shell buildings for the new Police Department and Fire Stations but that the Committee must carefully consider and accommodate all necessary fittings and tech that would be required insides the buildings. It will be important to plan for the long term and avoid pigeon holing the community within a few decades. All of these considerations must also go into the budget for the project.

The Committee intends to meet again in early March where they will sketch out an intended timeline for the project and determine budgetary requests to make to City Council. They requested that City Staff prepare a list of resources including realtors, Bond Consultants, and Architects. It was also suggested that a centralized web page be made for the project.

## **AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

Residents Dorothy and Michel Duchesneau, residents of South Lake Drive, were both present for the meeting.

Ms. Duchesneau referenced her time in the Novi Ambassador program and how they learned that the Shooting Range is a large training draw for other law enforcement organizations and suggested that we endeavor to have a similar draw for fire training.

Mr. Duchesneau believes there should be more coordination with the current ambulance services. He has noted that the ambulances are frequently parked on random City properties and believe proper parking areas and facilities should be provided for them. He agrees with the Committee that Fire Station 2 is inadequate and should be replaced and suggested that medical incidents and high emergency call areas should determine any new locations for the stations. He believes that new buildings would also help with the recruitment of new Public Safety personnel.

Mayor Gatt thanked both for attending and expressed his hope for them to join City Staff in the positive promotion of the project. He knows that no one likes new tax proposals but that this project is a *need* for the City of Novi. He expressed his belief that the primary role of government is to keep citizens safe and that this project is an essential component of that mission.

**ADJOURNMENT**      6:07 p.m.