



CITY OF NOVI
Administrative ePacket
January 08, 2026

Council Action/Attention

[Plante Moran Realpoint Update](#)

[Shockey Consulting Novi 2050 Strategic Plan Update](#)

[Shawood Lake Island - Muck](#)

[Data Centers - McBeth](#)

Departmental Updates

[The Buzz Report](#)

[Meadowbrook Commons 2025 STAR Community of the Year Award](#)

For Your Information

[Our Next Energy Inc. shifts to trains and defense](#)

Meeting Agenda and Minutes

CLIENT:	City of Novi		
PROJECT:	Public Safety Program		
SUBJECT:	Owner's Meeting #3		
DATE & TIME:	1/5/26 @11am		
LOCATION:	Virtual		
ATTENDEES:	Victor Cardenas	City of Novi	City Manager
	Police Chief Erick Zinser	Novi Public Safety	Public Safety Director
	Chief John Martin	Novi Fire Department	Fire Chief
	Robert Petty	City of Novi	CIO
	Charles Boulard	City of Novi	Comm. Development Dir.
	Greg VanKirk	PMR	Partner
	Robert Stempien	PMR	Senior Vice President
	Brian Weber	PMR	Senior Vice President
	Todd Fenton	PMR	Vice President

1. HED Design Update (R. Stempien)

a. Takeaways from Dallas site tours (CoN)

Chiefs Zinser and Martin discussed insights from their tours, highlighting design features such as **natural lighting, bifolding bay doors, indoor parking**, and the importance of **functional layouts**. There was no desire for a parking structure, per se, but a covered and temperature-controlled facility for vehicles (not below 30 degrees or higher than 80 degrees) is a desired design element. The potential use of **outbuildings** was also discussed. All of these needs will have to be balanced against the project's budget. The team also discussed **assessing the sizing of Fire Stations 2 & 3** as compared to Redstone's reports to provide opportunities for efficiencies and allow for the potential to prioritize needs at the PSB.

PMR and the Chiefs discussed the scale and subtlety of memorials in the Texas buildings, such as memory walls or small displays. They agreed that while some form of tribute is important, it should not dominate the design or budget.

Feedback from staff and observations from the tours led to a consensus **against co-ed locker rooms**, despite some cost savings. Zinser shared that most employees preferred

separate men's, women's, and alternate locker rooms, and that this preference was communicated to the design team.

PMR communicated the need for **a clear design schedule**, regular meetings, and milestone tracking to ensure project momentum and avoid delays, with plans to communicate progress to council and stakeholders. A detailed design schedule covering the next four months will include:

- City Council meeting schedule
- FAC meeting schedule
- Owner's Meeting schedule
- OAC Meeting schedule
- Design/Site schedule

- b. Confirm CoN Attendees and available dates for tour of Christman's Lansing project.

Attendees and dates TBD. Cardenas to provide a list of attendees and options for availability.

2. Technology RFP (R. Stempien)

- a. Issued 12/17/25. Mandatory pre-proposal meeting 1/6/26. Proposals due 1/20/26.
- b. Invited firms: Guidepost Solutions, Commtech Design, Howell Design Group, Bluewater Technologies, Convergent, I2G Systems

PMR confirmed that the FAC would **not** be involved in interviews for the technology RFP, with the decision to be made by Petty and the Chiefs (with PMR to provide recommendation/analysis) and then taken to Council for approval.

3. Finance and Administration Meeting: January 2025 (T. Fenton)

- a. PMR to provide project update, review of Governance documents and RASIC, and budget template.
- b. HED to provide design update

The design team will be in Novi the week of 1/26, but the FAC meeting will take place in February to discuss PMR items. PMR expressed that was fine, but the FAC meeting should not be delayed further. Topics to be discussed include the transition from conceptual to finalized budgets, governance, the handling of contingency funds, and the importance of transparent reporting to council, with a focus on infrastructure over furnishings. Fenton will reach out to Mayor Pro Tem Casey again to make sure her questions have been answered satisfactorily.

4. Site Due Diligence / Utilities Update (B. Weber and CoN)

Weber and Cardenas discussed ongoing communication with HED, OHM, and DTE to ensure utilities and site work are progressing in sync with the building project, including the need for timely work orders and applications. Cardenas confirmed that topographic surveys for FS 2&3 were being arranged with Spaulding. Zinser related that drone imagery from the PD was being used to document site progress as dirt work and tree clearing are currently being completed. Baselines topographic surveys will be updated as dirt work and tree clearing are completed.

5. Budget Update / Dashboard (B. Weber)

Weber shared that a new budget template was developed to show the evolution from conceptual to current numbers, with plans to present this to council and the FAC. The template includes a summary of budget adjustments and the rationale behind them. Weber will reach out to the mayor to confirm whether the template is approved to allow upload into eBuilder.

Cardenas preferred **Dashboard Option B** with alternations. A high-level, public-facing dashboard would be created for the public and council, while PMR would maintain more detailed internal tracking for each building to monitor progress and prevent budget overruns that can be accessed by the city. Weber will update the template and re-send for approval.

6. Open Items

Future Planning and Wish List Items:

CoN discussed potential future additions such as a training facility, mat room, maze room, and relocating the recycling center, noting that these items depend on available contingency funds and council approval.

CoN to obtain the Mayor's signature on the Christman contract as soon as possible to finalize contractual status.

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Public Safety Buildings Project (continued)

In addition to the activities reported by PMR, please see the additional updates:

Public Safety HQ Site

January 5, 2025





City of Novi – Strategic Plan Status Update

As of: 1/8/2026

Launch	Discovery	Visioning	Scenarios / Strategies	Crafting the Plan
Completed	Underway	Mar-Apr	May-Jun	Jul-Oct

Recent Progress	Upcoming Efforts / Engagements
- Began selection of digital engagement platform - Reviewed timing and outline for first in-person visit	- Review environmental scan draft - Draft engagement plan - Draft workshop agendas - Invitations to Pulse Panel Members - Draft Questionnaire for key stakeholders and general public

Input Needed
Finalized dates for first in-person engagement (likely week of February 9th)

MEMORANDUM



TO: VICTOR CARDENAS, CITY MANAGER
FROM: JEFF MUCK, PRCS DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: 329 ELM CT / SHAWOOD LAKE ISLAND
DATE: JANUARY 5, 2026

On August 25, 2025, City Council directed the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services (PRCS) Commission to "provide plan options for Shawood Lake and the island for City Council to discuss during the initial budget planning meeting in February 2026."

At the December 18, 2025 PRCS Commission meeting, commissioners reviewed the history of the property, discussed challenges associated with developing the island and/or access to Shawood Lake, and evaluated potential future options in response to Council's direction. The presentation that served as the basis for the Commission's discussion is included with this memo.

The 5.43-acre island property was acquired in 2025 through a Council-initiated action at a cost of \$210,000. The Pavilion Shore Conservancy contributed \$17,500 to the purchase which included a grant of \$8,750 from the Novi Parks Foundation.

The Commission identified and discussed several challenges related to developing the island as a park property, including:

- Limited water and sewer access
- Significant aquatic vegetation surrounding the island and along Lakeshore Park
- Location within a floodplain
- ADA accessibility requirements
- Shallow lake depth (estimated at approximately six feet)
- The equalization canal and access to Walled Lake
- Lack of parking and pedestrian access via Elm Court
- Condition and status of the bridge to the island
- Potential human impacts on the lake ecosystem
- Migratory bird nesting areas and patterns
- Public safety considerations
- The impact of adding amenities to an already heavily used Lakeshore Park during peak summer months

Commissioners were also informed of discussions with EGLE (Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy) regarding historical vegetation patterns in Shawood Lake. EGLE advised against any alteration of the lake through bioaugmentation efforts such as dredging, aquatic vegetation removal, or chemical treatments. Instead, EGLE encouraged educational outreach to residents about the

wetland complex and lake ecology, as well as the promotion of passive recreation opportunities such as birdwatching and kayaking.

Funding and budget considerations were also discussed, including the potential need for consultants and contractors to prepare studies, plans, and environmental assessments related to any proposed projects or lake impacts.

In addition, the Commission discussed the relative priority of Shawood Lake compared to other park projects, including the ITC Community Sports Park, indoor recreation facility needs, paving the Bosco Fields parking lot, and renovations to the Wildlife Woods fields in light of the anticipated loss of the Suburban/Grand River soccer fields due to the City West project.

Future options for the island, Shawood Lake, and/or Lakeshore Park that were discussed included:

- A passive park featuring pathways, benches, and interpretive signage
- Scenic overlook(s)
- A canoe/kayak launch at Lakeshore Park
- A boardwalk connection between the island and Lakeshore Park
- An osprey nesting platform
- Designation as a nature preserve

Based on these discussions, the PRCS Commission developed the following recommendations for City Council:

1. Maintain the island and lake as a nature preserve in the short term.
2. Prioritize currently scheduled park CIP projects (ITC Community Sports Park redevelopment, Bosco Fields parking lot paving, and Wildlife Woods field renovations) over Shawood Lake-related improvements due to their broader benefit and impact on residents.
3. Consider a future boardwalk connection between Lakeshore Park and the island, scenic overlook(s), and/or an osprey nesting platform.
4. A canoe/kayak launch is not supported by the Commission and should not be a future planning priority.
5. An allocation of \$75,000 or more for consultant services is not recommended at this time, as those funds would be better directed toward existing or future CIP projects.

The motion to approve these recommendations passed unanimously (6–0).

Commissioners commented that the property is a unique and beautiful asset with significant potential but also presents substantial challenges that would need to be addressed.

Currently, demolition of the existing building on the property is still in progress. Delays related to coordination between a utility company and the contractor are expected to be resolved soon. Additionally, an issue has arisen during the abatement process, and City staff are actively working with multiple parties to resolve it as quickly as possible so demolition work may proceed.

MEMORANDUM



TO: VICTOR CARDENAS, CITY MANAGER
FROM: DANIELLE MAHONEY, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT: SHAWOOD LAKE STAKEHOLDER MEETING
DATE: SEPTEMBER 17, 2025

Mayor and Council –

Please see the following summary from a recent meeting held with staff and ELGL, along with members of Council, regarding Shawood Lake and possible/allowable options for changes to it.

- Victor

Key Highlights

- Stakeholders, led by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), met with City staff and council members of the Environmental Sustainability Committee to discuss Shawood Lake's ecological health and recreation potential.
- An on-site meeting was held at Shawood Lake in October 2024 to address these same issues, and staff have been awaiting a clear, written recommendation from EGLE since that time.
- The City's 2022 purchase of the Shawood Lake island increased City ownership of the lake area from ~75% to ~95% and spurred conversation about programming and non-motorized recreation opportunities.
- Council's August 2025 motion directed the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Commission to develop plan options for Shawood Lake and the island for discussion during the FY 2026 budget planning process.
- EGLE emphasized that historical vegetation patterns in Shawood Lake have been consistent since the 1930s and cautioned against the use of aeration and bio-augmentation.

Background

In January 2022, City Council approved the purchase of two properties on Shawood Lake, including an island parcel, for \$175,000. The purchase increased City ownership of the lake from approximately 75% to 95%, including ownership of the island itself. The existing home on the island was deemed unusable, with the City's intent to remove it and restore the site for passive and recreational purposes.

This acquisition sparked renewed conversations about Shawood Lake's recreational potential, particularly opportunities for non-motorized uses such as kayaking. City staff envisioned limited vegetation removal to support lake access, while intentionally avoiding wholesale dredging or the elimination of lily pads.

Building on this momentum, in August 2025 Council unanimously approved Motion CM 25-08-114, directing the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Commission to develop programming options for Shawood Lake and the island. These options will be presented to the Council for discussion during the initial budget planning session in January 2026.

Against this backdrop, a stakeholder meeting was convened by EGLE (facilitated by Sue Tepatti) to provide technical input on the lake's condition and appropriate management practices. The meeting included EGLE staff, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, City staff, and members of the Environmental Sustainability Committee.

Discussion Summary

The discussion began with EGLE staff sharing historical imagery of Shawood Lake, which showed that the lake's vegetation patterns have remained largely unchanged since the 1930s. They noted that natural oxygen levels in the lake are already sufficient, making aeration unnecessary, and they raised concerns about the long-term effectiveness of bio-augmentation. From their perspective, the most important factor in maintaining lake health is addressing nutrient inputs, which if left unmanaged could accelerate cultural eutrophication (the human-accelerated process of nutrient enrichment in a body of water, such as a lake or river).

Council members and staff emphasized that the City's recent purchase of the island has created new opportunities to enhance Shawood Lake for residents, particularly for passive and non-motorized recreational activities, such as kayaking. The conversation explored how limited vegetation clearing might support access, while also recognizing the ecological value of maintaining native vegetation such as lily pads. Balancing environmental health with recreation potential emerged as a central theme of the discussion.

In addition to ecological and recreation considerations, EGLE representatives reminded participants of the legal requirements that must be met before any physical interventions can occur. Riparian rights and bottomland ownership must be clearly documented, as permits for vegetation management or structural improvements cannot be issued without proper authorization.

Conclusion and Action Items

Ultimately, EGLE advised the City against altering the lake through bio-augmentation and instead encouraged the City to provide education outreach to residents while encouraging passive recreation opportunities (such as kayaking and bird watching). Additionally, the following action items were noted:

- Ownership/Riparian Rights: City of Novi to further investigate riparian rights around Shawood Lake to clarify permitting requirements.

- Recreation Access Planning: City of Novi to explore access points and other amenities tied to the island purchase to support kayaking and non-motorized recreation.
- Resident Education: City of Novi to consider outreach on fertilizer use and nutrient management practices.
- EGLE Guidance: EGLE to provide a clear, updated summary of recommended practices for Shawood Lake.
- Parks & Recreation Commission Planning: As directed by Council's August 2025 motion, and now with clear guidance from EGLE, the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Commission will develop plan options for Shawood Lake and the island for discussion at the January 2026 budget planning session.

329 Elm Ct.

A.k.a.

Shawwood Island

Property

History & Details

- City Council purchased in February 2025 for \$210,000.
- Approximately 5.43 acres total.
- No water or sewer to site.
- Lies in flood plain which means submitting an application to EGLE/FEMA for any future structure (pavilion, picnic shelter, or canoe/kayak launch).
- Per EGLE, historical vegetation patterns in Shawood Lake have been consistent since the 1930s.
- EGLE advised the City against altering the lake through bio-augmentation and instead encouraged the City to provide education outreach to residents while encouraging passive recreation opportunities (such as kayaking and bird watching).



View to North



View West to Lakeshore



View South to Shawood Lake



Overhead of "canals"

Challenges

- No parking
- Elm Court
- Shallow lake depth – approximately 6 ft
- Lake vegetation
- Flood Plain Restrictions
- Human Impact on Ecosystem
- Migratory Bird Patterns
- Public Safety Concerns
- Funding
- Priority level versus other park projects



Options?

- Passive park w. pathway, benches and interpretive signage
 - Scenic Overlook(s)
 - Canoe/Kayak Launch at Lakeshore Park
 - Boardwalk from Island to Lakeshore
 - Osprey Nest Platform
 - Designated Nature Preserve
-
- Consultant for design and cost estimates approximately \$75,000+

MEMORANDUM



TO: VICTOR CARDENAS, CITY MANAGER
FROM: BARBARA MCBETH, AICP, CITY PLANNER
SUBJECT: DATA CENTERS
DATE: JANUARY 8, 2026

Mayor and Council –

I've heard from most of you regarding the "hot topic" of Data Centers, especially with the added attention of an approval for a new one in Lyon Township. To that end, please see a brief memo from our Planning Division on the matter.

- Victor

The question was raised regarding whether data centers are permitted in the City of Novi. The short answer is likely "yes," but with the caveat that the Zoning Ordinance has a land use referred to as *Data Processing and Computer Centers* that could be identified as consistent with (or at least similar to) the term *Data Centers* of the type that are currently showing increased interest and development.

The City of Novi's Zoning Ordinance allows *Data Processing and Computer Centers* in the I-1, Light Industrial, I-2, General Industrial and OST, Office Service Technology Districts. In the I-1 District, such uses are a Principal Permitted Use when property does not abut a residential districts, and a Special Land Use if the property abuts a residential district. *Data Processing and Computer Centers* are a Principal Permitted Use in the I-2 and OST districts.

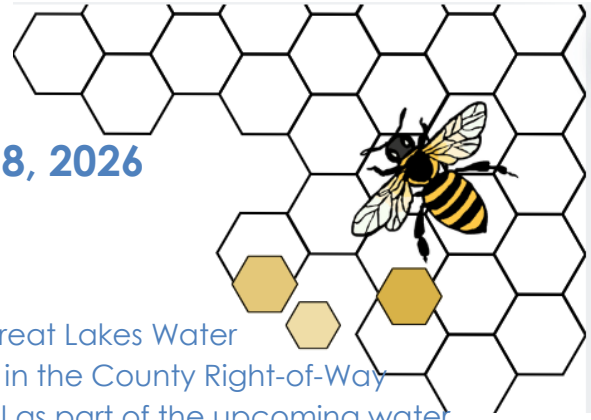
However, the term *Data Processing and Computer Centers* is not specifically defined in Novi's Zoning Ordinance. Staff would apply the generally understood meaning of the term and depending on the details and scope of the actual proposed use the term *Data Processing and Computer Centers* could very well be found to encompass a proposed use described by the more recent term *Data Center*.

If proposed in Novi, and assuming that the interpretation would be that the proposed *Data Center* would fall under Novi's term *Data Processing and Computer Centers*, the typical Zoning Ordinance standards would apply for building setback, landscaping, engineering, façade, etc. The Planning Commission would review and potentially approve a Preliminary Site Plan for such uses. A public hearing would be required only if the property is in the I-1 District and abuts a residential district or if the plan impacts regulated woodlands and/or wetlands. City Council approval would not be necessary under the current ordinance standards, unless the request is part of a rezoning, Planned Rezoning Overlay, or similar request.

If directed, staff and the City Attorney's office would be able to provide a more in-depth review of the different types of data centers that are currently being built in other communities and potentially recommend updated Zoning Ordinance standards based on best practices and updated ordinance standards from similar communities.

Buzz Report

January 8, 2026



Hot Topics:

- **Tree Removals on 14 Mile Rd**

We have received some resident concerns regarding the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) has marked a large number of large trees in the County Right-of-Way along the south side of 14 Mile Road west of M-5 for removal as part of the upcoming water main project. Our [Woodland Protection Ordinance Section 37-27\(9\)](#), exempts them from the usual tree replacement requirement as the work is in connection with an essential utility. Additionally, Oakland County has purview over the permitting of this Right-of-Way.

- **GLWA – Road Closure**

Ric-Man Construction, on behalf of GLWA, will be closing EB 14 Mile Road w/o Novi/Decker Road after 9 AM on this coming Monday, 1/12. They have had message boards in place indicating an EB closure in January, but the exact date will now be Monday. The closure is expected to last into mid-February, after which point the job will continue eastward to a point shortly west of M-5. This is the replacement of the 42" water main that ruptured in late September. These main supplies water to several communities and needs to be up and running by peak use season beginning in April.

- **Priority Waste – Collection issues**

We've been receiving communications from Priority Waste stating they're unable to complete their daily collection. This has occurred Monday – Wednesday. Each day, they provide us with the reasoning of *"due to equipment issues and high volume after the holidays."* We have seen similar collection issues in Rochester Hills and Farmington Hills. Staff is reviewing the contract provisions to ensure Priority is meeting its obligations.

- **Emergency Assistance Food Distribution**

The City of Novi serves as a front-line distribution site for emergency food assistance through organizations like Focus: HOPE and the USDA's TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program). Food assistance programs overall have been significantly impacted by the recent federal government shutdown. Staffing reductions, transportation disruptions, and delivery delays have slowed operations. In addition, the federally allocated program budget has decreased, despite rising food costs and increased community need. As a result, sites (including Novi) are receiving fewer food items per distribution. This is a widespread issue affecting all participating locations.

- **Eight Mile Bridge over CSX Railroad**

City staff recently attended a virtual pre-construction conference with the Wayne County Department of Public Services (WCDPS) and their contractor, E. C. Korneffel Company, regarding the \$3M bridge deck replacement project on 8 Mile Road over the CSX Railroad. The tentative schedule is to close the bridge completely on March 2, 2026, and to reopen for traffic on August 15, 2026 (5 ½ months). Access from Novi Road and to Brickscape Drive will remain open throughout the construction.

Development Project Updates:

[Map of Development projects](#)

- **Former Bar Louie**

The space recently vacated by Bar Louie is set to become a new revolving sushi restaurant, called **Supra Revolving Sushi**. The developers of this space continue to work with Community Development personnel to obtain the necessary permits for this new use, [currently non-structural interior demolition only is approved and underway](#). No timeline for when they plan to open.

- **Central Park South – Beck Road, South of Grand River Ave**

The former Central Park Estates project has been redesigned and is being treated as a new project by planning. New multiple-family development with 106 units in a single 5-story building. The site improvements include parking on the first level of part of the building, garages, and related open spaces. Undergoing preliminary plan review.

- **Providence Meadows – Grand River Ave, West of Providence Parkway**

Proposed rezoning of 31 acres from Light Industrial to High Density Multiple Family to develop 161 townhome units. Next steps will be initial PRO Plan consideration by Planning Commission and City Council.

- **Grand-Beck Development – Grand River east of Beck Road**

Fuel station, convenience store, and Clean Express car wash to be built on a vacant parcel. Preliminary Site Plan has been approved by the Planning Commission. Next steps are Zoning Board of Appeals for building height and loading zone variance, then Final Site Plan submittal. Estimated Completion Date: Unknown

- **Taft Knolls III – Taft Rd, north of 10 Mile Rd**

The Site plan for a Single-Family Residential Development of 13 new homes is now under construction. <https://cityofnovi.org/media/ryra1v4p/241211jsp19-34.pdf>

- **Culvers** - Novi Road and West Oaks

Temporary Certificate of Occupancy issued 11/26/25. **Now Open**

- **North Eight Kitchen & Cocktails** (Former Border Cantina) – Novi Road north of Eight Mile

New restaurant by the owners of Benstein Grille in Commerce. Modified site plan with building additions and remodel has been approved by Planning Commission and Zoning Board. Interior Demolition work has commenced as of September. [A Foundation only permit has been issued for the exterior additions.](#)

Estimated Completion Date: Unknown

- **Novi 10 (10 Mile and Novi Road)**

Similarly, the applicant for the proposed development at 10 Mile and Novi Road has also returned with a revised concept for their proposal.

<https://cityofnovi.org/media/y4nju5wq/241216matter5.pdf>

<https://eweb.cityofnovi.org/media/5hinzayn/251016pro.pdf>

- **Novi Acres (FKA Station Flats)**

The owners of the property in between Target and Sam's recently submitted a new Preliminary Site Plan, under the new name of Novi Acres. The previously planned project, known as Station Flats, has been scuttled.

- **Camelot Parc/Avalon** by Village of Stonebrook

Townhomes for sale with garages, fewer units (currently zoned PSLR so a special land use approval will come before council for a decision). A memo was included in the 11/20/25 Packet.

- **El Car Wash** (Former PNC Bank) – Grand River Ave/12 Mile Rd
Complete and now open.

- **El Car Wash # 2** (former Original \$6 Car Wash) - Novi Road and 96
Permits have been issued

- **Cantaritos Fiesta Mexican Restaurant** (Former Chili's Grill & Bar) – 8 Mile/Haggerty Road
The former Chili's location in the City's southeast corner is planned to soon become a new Mexican restaurant following necessary renovations and upgrades to the interior of the building. *Estimated Completion Date: **Winter/early spring 2026***

- **Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers** (Former Wendy's) – Novi Rd/Grand River Ave
The Louisiana-based fast food chain Raising Cane's is planning to take over the space in the near future. Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals case are both now complete, finishing up final site plan. Anticipating a 2026 start and completion later in the year.
*Estimated Completion Date: **Late 2026***

- **Primrose School** (Former Whitehall nursing home) – 10 Mile/Novi Road
The former Whitehall nursing home at 43455 Ten Mile Rd has been demolished and Primrose School, a 13,586 square feet private preschool and daycare center, is **now completed**.

- **Transformco (Former Sears at Twelve Oaks)**

Spaces for [a Dicks House of Sport, Round 1 Arcade and Bowling, and Primark](#). Nearly all the external work has been completed. [A Revised Structural package has been received for review](#). *Estimated Completion Date: **Spring/Summer 2026***

Ordinance Enforcement Updates:

- **121 Faywood:** [Permits have been issued with conditions](#)
- **DICE (24555 Novi Rd):** Community Development continues to work with them to clean up graffiti on the back of the building. Their plans for a car wash are set to expire very soon.
- **11/11 Burger and Crispy Chicken (Grand River/Haggerty)** has closed; the new business has painted its half of the building without façade approval. Community Development is addressing the matter accordingly.

Frequently Asked Questions:

None at current



Mayor and Council –

A rather significant award was collected by the contractor who manages Meadowbrook Commons.

- Victor

January 5, 2026

The KMG Prestige team is excited to share that **Meadowbrook Commons** has been selected as the **2025 STAR Community of the Year award recipient** by the **Detroit Metropolitan Apartment Association (DMAA)**.

The DMAA is a 501(c)(6) nonprofit trade association representing apartment communities across Oakland, Wayne, Macomb, Lapeer, and St. Clair counties. As an affiliate of the National Apartment Association and the largest multifamily housing association in Michigan, DMAA represents more than 102,000 apartment units statewide.

The STAR Community of the Year award is one of DMAA's most comprehensive and competitive recognitions, **honoring excellence across all segments of the apartment housing industry** in Southeast Michigan, including conventional, mixed-use, luxury, affordable, and senior housing communities. Meadowbrook Commons was evaluated alongside a diverse range of apartment communities throughout the region.

Communities are assessed through a rigorous, multi-category evaluation process that includes:

- Overall property management and operational performance
- Financial stewardship and budget management
- Maintenance standards and physical condition
- Resident services, engagement, and satisfaction
- Compliance, safety, and organizational best practices

Under KMG Management's oversight, Meadowbrook Commons demonstrated **consistent operational stability, sound financial management, proactive maintenance practices, and strong resident engagement**, contributing to its high evaluation scores.

This recognition reflects sustained excellence in management and operations and underscores the strength of the partnership between **KMG Management, the City of Novi, and the Meadowbrook Commons community**. Being selected among all apartment housing types in Southeast Michigan positions Meadowbrook Commons as a model for well-managed housing in the region. KMG Management has expressed pride in serving the City of Novi residents through this collaboration, and the recognition reinforces the City's commitment to high-quality housing and responsible community management.

Regards,

Ginny Hallam



Detroit Metropolitan Apartment Association Prism STAR Community of the Year Award – Meadowbrook Commons KMG Prestige 2025



KMG Prestige Meadowbrook Commons staff on their Ugly Holiday Sweater Day, 2025

Embattled battery maker abandons automotive, shifts to trains and defense

By [Dustin Walsh](#)

<https://www.crainsdetroit.com/manufacturing/our-next-energy-abandons-auto-batteries-rail-and-defense>



January 7, 2026

After failing to break into the electric vehicle market successfully, Our Next Energy Inc. is pivoting to rail and defense.

The Novi-based battery manufacturer suspended its passenger EV plan last year and has secured \$35 million in new purchase orders as it continues to seek profitability.

Founder and CEO Mujeeb Ijaz told Crain's that the move is to produce a slower-moving, cash-generating company built less on a speculative market and more on traditional pathways.

"If we look at electrification, we were building a market as we were building new products and a new company," Ijaz said. "Our company grew very fast around what looked like a big movement toward EVs. Now we've retreated from that idea and have had to take a more modest plan for growth."

Ijaz declined to name the new companies with which ONE has secured contracts, but noted they are in three product lines: locomotive, defense and grid-scale energy storage systems.

While it's already secured \$35 million in new contracts, ONE needs to reach \$60 million in 2026 to break even, which Ijaz said the company expects to do.

Abandoning the automotive sector, however, is not without casualties. The company has reduced its workforce by 45%, down to just 100 employees.

"It's been tough, parting with our employees," Ijaz said. "We know every person and every name. But we have this really important job and it's generating a lot of hope, in my mind. What we are doing is going to result in a healthy business. We're not out of the woods, but moving in a direction that looks like a stable business."



Credit: Nic Antaya/Crain's Detroit Business

Our Next Energy founder and CEO Mujeeb Ijaz as seen in the Van Buren Township space in 2023.

ONE [made a major splash](#) in fall 2022 with plans to be the first U.S.-based company to establish a domestic lithium iron phosphate battery plant. The factory — backed by \$237 million in taxpayer subsidies — was to feed EV-focused automakers with a less costly, more sustainable battery than the standard nickel-manganese-cobalt chemistry.

But demand for EVs failed to launch, automakers pulled back investment dramatically and the business case for battery plants imploded. The Trump administration's rollback of EV tax credits and fuel emission regulations has further chilled electrification in the auto industry.

ONE has been treading water [since its Series C fundraising round fell through](#) at the end of 2023 when U.K. investor Just Climate pulled out of the financing.

The company had [raised \\$300 million in a Series B round](#) that valued the business at \$1.2 billion, but was under a cash crunch. Following the Series C collapse, Ijaz [stepped down as CEO](#), becoming CTO.

But notably, the company has avoided total collapse — a fate that has befallen many EV companies and projects over the past couple of years.

[Ijaz returned as CEO](#) in March and set out to put ONE on a different path, one not without massive cuts.

In September, the company announced it planned to [vacate part of its factory space](#) in Van Buren Township in Wayne County, where it [planned to invest \\$1.6 billion and create 2,112 jobs](#) that didn't come to fruition.

The Michigan Economic Development Corp., which has so far [disbursed \\$70.2 million of taxpayer funds](#) to the company, said in September that no further payments would be made under its current agreement to support the project.

The company now occupies about 40% of the 600,000-square-foot plant in Van Buren Township, about 240,000 square feet, and maintains its Novi plant and headquarters.

As part of its deal to vacate space in Van Buren Township with landlord Ashley Capital, ONE has a first-right of refusal deal to lease space at new buildings being erected in the industrial park in Van Buren Township, Ijaz said.

“We are not giving up needing space in Van Buren, but the space and that building just doesn’t make sense,” Ijaz said. “Where we are finding ourselves moving forward is in new industries that are moving away from foreign-made parts.”

Ijaz said the company has produced batteries for use in yard engines, or switcher locomotives, that move railcars from one train to another. Those vehicles run often and require short bursts of acceleration and deceleration. ONE has achieved a 50% diesel fuel savings using a hybrid system, Ijaz said, leading to more than 20 orders.

Ijaz said the company has no plan to return to automotive in the near term, the next three-plus years, instead squarely focused on tangible markets.

“We’ve pulled back in areas that are not productive to revenue, using factories that are already built that we have a book of business for,” Ijaz said. “With \$35 million already booked, we think we can break even with this company footprint, lowering our OP EX (operational expenditures) and increasing our revenue and margin cover costs.”