



## BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION AGENDA

CITY OF NOVI

**September 10, 2025 | 6:00 PM**

Mayor's Conference Room  
Novi Civic Center | 45175 Ten Mile Road  
(248) 347-0460

### CALL TO ORDER

**ROLL CALL** - Gareth Crawford, Yogesh Kumar, Nicole Rumao, Dinesh Seksaria, Mary Angela Winter, Torry Yu

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[August](#) 13, 2025 Minutes

### PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

[Community](#) Development Block Grant

- a) [Novi Youth Assistance](#)
- b) Recommendation for Grant Request from Oakland County

[2026](#) Meeting Calendar

### ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

### PUBLIC COMMENT

### ADJOURNMENT

**UPCOMING MEETINGS** - 10/8, 11/12, 12/10

**UPCOMING EVENTS** - Perennial Exchange (Saturday, September 20<sup>th</sup> 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.)

**NOTICE:** *People with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk (248) 347-0456 at least two working days in advance of the meeting. An attempt will be made to make reasonable accommodations.*



CITY OF NOVI  
Beautification Commission  
**Wednesday, August 13, 2025 6:00 pm**  
Mayor's Conference Room  
Novi Civic Center | 45175 Ten Mile Road

**Call to Order:** 6:02 p.m.

**Roll Call** – Gareth Crawford, Yogesh Kumar, Nicole Rumao, Dinesh Seksaria, Mary Angela Winter, Torry Yu

**Present:** Yogesh Kumar, Dinesh Seksaria, Mary Angela Winter, Torry Yu  
\*\* Nicole Rumao arrived at 6:23p.m.

**Absent Excused:** Gareth Crawford

**Also Present:** Katherine Oppermann, Staff Liaison  
Sabrina Lilla, Deputy Finance Director  
Susan Erspamer, Hospitality House Executive Director  
Tiffany Atkinson, Hospitality House Development & Marketing Manager

**Approval of Agenda**

Motion: Yu; Seconded: Winter; Approved: 4:0

**Approval of Minutes** – July 23, 2025

Motion: Yu; Seconded: Winter; Approved: 4:0

**Chair** – Gareth Crawford

**Secretary** – Torry Yu

**City Liaison** – Kate Oppermann

**Purpose of the Meeting**

1. Community Development Block Grant
  - a. Hospitality House

Deputy Finance Director provided a summary of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to the Commissions. She shared that the former committee that handled the program was dissolved, and the associated task of administration was reassigned to the Beautification Commission. The City

receives around \$130,000 annually from Oakland County and, historically, the City is permitted to choose four different programs and how much is distributed to those programs within parameters the County sets (most recently stipulating 15% of funds being assigned to Public Service activities and 85% assigned to Minor Home Repair).

In the past the Commission has expressed interest in learning more about the individual projects the funds are dispersed to and so it has been arranged for them to appear before the Commission. Novi Youth Assistance will be at the September meeting, HAVEN has not yet responded, and Hospitality House is present today. Ms. Lilla then welcomed the representatives from Hospitality House and let them proceed.

Susan Erspamer, the Hospitality House Executive Director, and Tiffany Atkinson, the Hospitality House Development & Marketing Manager introduced themselves. Ms. Erspamer shared that Hospitality House is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and gave an overview of Hospitality House, especially their two main programs:

**Client-Choice Food Pantry**

This vital resource allows people to shop the mini store for food they truly need and want. The system allows for dignity and respect of the clients and reduces food waste. The store includes shelf stable foods, canned, fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables, frozen proteins, and dairy products. Food is sourced from Gleaners, Forgotten Harvest, donations, and “Rescued” from area restaurants and grocers.

**Weekend Food Program**

Program designed to feed school age children when school is out, filling the gap left by the state provision that provides free breakfast and lunch on school days. It started in the Walled Lake Consolidated School District and is newly in the Novi Community School District. They work in partnership with the schools to identify eligible students and to assist with discrete distribution.

Both programs heavily rely on volunteers, in addition to full-time Hospitality House staff. Hospitality House’s 2024 data shows them providing services to 5,000 individuals/2,000 families, 1.2 million pounds of food given out. Specifically Novi visits have increased 38% from 2024 to 2025, 2,800 visits from Novi residents alone, 176,207 pounds (roughly \$350,000 worth) to Novi residents. Novi is the number one City that they provide support to. She noted that the needs has grown, there are pockets in every community, and that food insecurity has no zip code or face. They anticipate that need will continue to rise. She also briefly reviewed some of their smaller and seasonal programs (Holiday House, Thanksgiving, school backpacks, etc.).

Commissioner Winter asked how people qualify for food assistance to which Ms. Erspamer explained that they follow state guidelines and that prospective clients fill out an application either online or in-person. It is very rare that they receive anyone that isn't qualified for the weekly program. That said, they look at anyone who comes to them as humans who need food and support. Commissioner also asked if people could go to more than one pantry to which Ms. Erspamer said that they can, but it is not typical. Commissioner Seksaria asked how they determine if someone is taking advantage of the system, Ms. Erspamer said that it is on the honor system, generally they sit down with people and believe them to be telling the truth. It is the goal to make a resource like this as accessible as possible, despite a small percentage of people that may take advantage. Commissioner Seksaria then asked what the average number of people who come to Hospitality House. Ms. Atkinson said it varies based on the hours they are open but that they see between 90 – 160 households each day, 900 families twice month (IE up to 1800 monthly visits). Commissioner Kumar asked what the amount of food per shopper is, Ms. Atkinson said that the quantities are set based on supply and that shoppers go around with a volunteer to help explain and monitor, as needed. Commissioner Seksaria also asked about the amount provided to Novi residents vs. the amount of funding provided via the CDBG program. Ms. Erspamer noted that the food provided to Novi residents is 176,207 pounds, or roughly \$350,000 worth based on \$1.97 per pound figure from Feeding America, not counting what is provided through the school program. Ms. Lilla said that CDBG gave them just shy of \$6,000 in the last year or about 17% of what is given.

Commissioner Winter then asked how food was distributed to schoolchildren for the Weekend Food Program so that it is not noticed or questions by other students? Ms. Erspamer stated that it varies by school but that it is provided in a non-descript bag. All students, regardless of age, receive the same meals for a given distribution period, they are all peanut-free and can accommodate other client allergies as needed. Commissioner Yu shared that, as a teacher in Walled Lake, he has personally witnessed the positive impact of the program. He also noted that a good chunk of Novi residents attend Walled Lake schools and therefore benefit from the program. Ms. Erspamer shared that the two schools that they provide the most assistance to are both located in Novi.

There was also discussion of need for additional volunteers for Hospitality House. Staff Liaison Oppermann said that she would note that and, as she often works with individuals looking for volunteer role, would be happy to share Hospitality House as a local avenue they could look into.

Ms. Erspamer thanked the Commission for their time and great questions, expressing that they would be welcome to come tour the pantry whenever they

like. The Commission thanked Ms. Erspamer and Ms. Atkinson for coming and speaking to them.

Ms. Lilla then briefly talked about how the County is changing how it is allocating funds, which was shared with her just yesterday (8/12/25). In the past they would tell Novi how much they were being given and give the parameters under which Novi could then choose how to split it amongst our chosen organizations. The City is now expected to request up front how much we want and for which programs. Following this request the County will decide if they will grant that amount. Currently the exact execution is still unclear, she will be closely following any new information so it can be shared with the Commission. The timeline is now changed so that the city's request/recommendation for funds is due no later than September 18<sup>th</sup> (this is a significant move up from the expected date). While we do not have to stick to our past numbers Ms. Lilla stressed that we have to be reasonable and realistic about what we can spend. Based on past years she estimates \$100,000 – 130,000. It is expected that the prior rule stipulating 15% of funds being assigned to Public Service activities and 85% assigned to Minor Home Repair is still in effect. Commissioner Seksaria asked that the Commission be provided with the last three years budgeted so that they can make an educated decision on what to request. Ms. Lilla affirmed that she would put the numbers together and provide them.

### **Roundtable Discussion**

Commissioner Winter spoke about having recently seen Beautification Award signs in Northville and that she thinks a similar program might be good for Novi. It was determined by the Commission that this could be a future program and requested that staff liaison Oppermann look into how much such signs would cost to design and print as well as gather information about other local area programs that might serve as an inspiration for Novi's efforts.

Commissioner Yu noted the upcoming "Buzz About Bees" event being run by the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services department wherein residents are invited to meet the new honeybees and hear from Beekeeper and Fire Captain Theisen. The event is on Wednesday, September 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. The commissioners may join in if it agrees with their schedule.

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment:** 7:13 p.m.

Motion: Yu; Seconded: Winter; Approved: 5:0

**Upcoming Meetings** – 9/10, 10/8, 11/12, 12/10

**Upcoming Events** – Perennial Exchange (Saturday, September 20<sup>th</sup> 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.)

| CDBG Project History  |                     |    |                 |    |                 |    |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------|----|-----------------|----|
|                       | Program Year        |    |                 |    |                 |    |
|                       | Recommended<br>2025 |    | Awarded<br>2024 |    | Awarded<br>2023 |    |
|                       |                     |    |                 |    | Awarded<br>2022 |    |
|                       |                     |    |                 |    | Awarded<br>2021 |    |
|                       |                     |    |                 |    | Awarded<br>2020 |    |
| Minor Home Repair     | 104,757             | \$ | 104,757         | \$ | 90,346          | \$ |
| Novi Youth Assistance | 8,000               |    | 8,000           |    | 102,603         | \$ |
| Haven                 | 5,243               |    | 5,243           |    | 100,603         | \$ |
| Emergency Services    | 5,243               |    | 5,243           |    | -               |    |
|                       |                     |    |                 |    | 8,000           |    |
|                       |                     |    |                 |    | 15,000          |    |
|                       |                     |    |                 |    | 13,000          |    |
|                       |                     |    |                 |    | 9,900           |    |
|                       | 123,243             |    | 123,243         |    | 125,246         |    |
|                       |                     |    |                 |    | 133,503         |    |
|                       |                     |    |                 |    | 125,503         |    |
|                       |                     |    |                 |    | 131,569         |    |

\*The public service was not specifically identified

| Limitations |                            |            |
|-------------|----------------------------|------------|
| 1)          | Limited to 4 Projects      |            |
| 2)          | Max 15% to Public Services |            |
|             | Total Award Est            | \$ 123,243 |
|             | 15% Max                    | 15%        |
|             | Max Public Service         | \$ 18,486  |

| Requests For Public Service Funds in the Prior Year |                                                      |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Organization                                        | Service                                              | Request     |
| Novi Youth Assistance                               | Child Care (camp scholarships, counseling, etc < 13) | \$ 9,000    |
| Haven                                               | Battered and Abused Spouses                          | 15,000      |
| Hospitality House                                   | Emergency Services                                   | 9,950       |
|                                                     |                                                      | 33,950      |
|                                                     | Max Public Service (from above)                      | \$ 18,486   |
|                                                     |                                                      | \$ (15,464) |

Deputy Finance Director Sabrina Lilla has provided this spreadsheet and following information regarding the Community Development Block Grant:

The spreadsheet is broken down into 3 sections. The first is a 5 year history of the funds the City has received and how they were allocated to the 4 programs. The second section are the limitations set by the County. The City can only allocate funds to a maximum of 4 programs. We do not need to allocate to 4, but that is the max. Public services are limited to 15% of the total funds received. Public services are Novi Youth Assistance, Hospitality House and Haven. The last section lists the amount of funds each organization requested during the prior year application process.

In the prior year, the commission also asked for the percent of funding Novi provided to the various organizations. Please note, these are prior year numbers.

Hospitality House, Novi's CDBG funds were .56% of gross revenue.

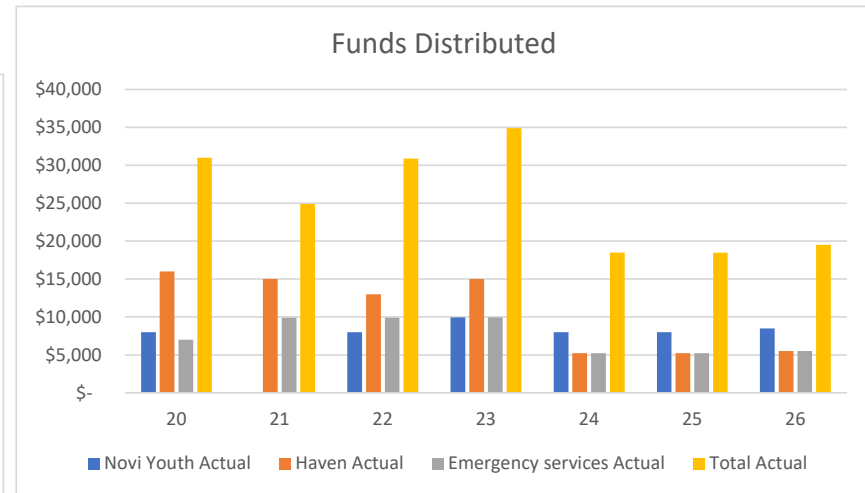
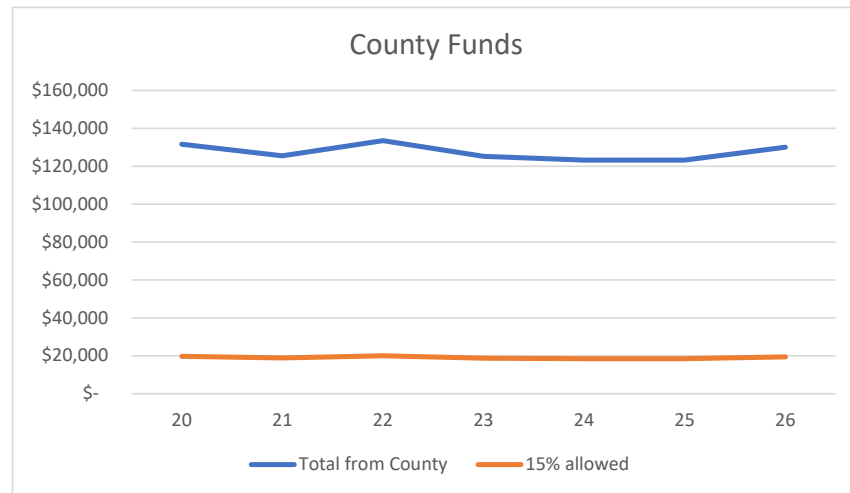
Haven, Novi's CDBG funds were .003% of overall gross revenue

Novi Youth Assistance, CDBG funds make up between 34%-40% of total income.

### CDBG Analysis and Recommendation from Commissioner Seksaria

| Year                      | 20         | 21         | 22         | 23         | 24         | 25         | 26                                    |
|---------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------------------------------|
| Total from County         | \$ 131,569 | \$ 125,503 | \$ 133,503 | \$ 125,246 | \$ 123,243 | \$ 123,243 | \$ 130,021.37 see note below for 2026 |
| 15% allowed               | \$ 19,735  | \$ 18,825  | \$ 20,025  | \$ 18,787  | \$ 18,486  | \$ 18,486  | 19500                                 |
| Novi Youth Actual         | \$ 8,000   | \$ -       | \$ 8,000   | \$ 9,950   | \$ 8,000   | \$ 8,000   | \$ 8,500                              |
| Haven Actual              | \$ 16,000  | \$ 15,000  | \$ 13,000  | \$ 15,000  | \$ 5,243   | \$ 5,243   | \$ 5,500                              |
| Emergency services Actual | \$ 7,000   | \$ 9,900   | \$ 9,900   | \$ 9,950   | \$ 5,243   | \$ 5,243   | \$ 5,500                              |
| Total Actual              | \$ 31,000  | \$ 24,900  | \$ 30,900  | \$ 34,900  | \$ 18,486  | \$ 18,486  | \$ 19,500                             |

**Given cost increases & inflation -Propose requesting  
\$130K from the County for year '26**



# MEMORANDUM



**TO:** CITY OF NOVI BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION  
**FROM:** KATHERINE OPPERMANN, STAFF LIASON  
**SUBJECT:** 2026 MEETING SCHEDULE  
**DATE:** SEPTEMBER 8, 2024

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Assuming we continue our current schedule, all Commission Meetings will take place the Second Wednesday of each month from 6:00 to 7:00pm in the Mayor's Conference Room at the Civic Center unless otherwise noted.

January 14, 2026 – Regular Meeting

February 11, 2026 – Regular Meeting

March 11, 2026 – Regular Meeting

April 8, 2026 – Regular Meeting

May 13, 2026 – Regular Meeting

June 10, 2026 – Regular Meeting

July 8, 2026 – Regular Meeting

August 12, 2026 – Regular Meeting

September 9, 2026 – Regular Meeting

October 14, 2026 – Regular Meeting

November 18, 2026 – Regular Meeting

\*\* Delayed date as City Offices are closed 11/11 in observance of Veteran's Day

December 9, 2026 – Regular Meeting

Should the Commission wish to arrange for a different schedule rotation (day of week, week of month, meeting time, etc.) it will need to be finalized at the September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting so as to appear accurately on the print edition of the City of Novi calendar.

Should you have any question or need to report an absence please contact the Beautification Commission Staff Liaison, Katherine Oppermann, at [koppermann@cityofnovi.org](mailto:koppermann@cityofnovi.org) or 248-347-0478.