



**CITY OF NOVI**  
**Administrative ePacket**  
**January 16, 2025**

**Council Action/Attention**

**Departmental Updates**

[PRCS 2024 Annual Highlights Report](#)

[The Buzz Report](#)

**For Your Information**

# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services





*Thank you for your interest in Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services. We're proud to share achievements that enhanced the experiences of our 2024 program participants, park visitors, volunteers, partners and sponsors.*

*Our accomplishments and customer service priorities are reflected in our core values of Team, Innovation, Commitment, and Trust.*

*This report is a quick look at the department's successes. As always, we encourage you to reach out with any questions, comments, or suggestions by emailing [noviparks@cityofnovi.org](mailto:noviparks@cityofnovi.org) or calling 248.347.0400.*

*Jeff Muck,  
Director, Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services*

# team

## A CAN-DO ATTITUDE

The "We Can Improve Our Parks" project, spearheaded by Village Oaks Elementary teacher Nick Weigel-Hubler, is an innovative way to bring life science education beyond the classroom and into the community. Students researched environmental topics connected to the natural features of Brookfarm Park and created detailed reports. To share their findings, they decorated park trash cans with QR codes linking to their projects, allowing park visitors to learn more about the environment while exploring the park. More decorated cans and projects will be added this spring!



*Village Oaks students and staff at the November Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Commission meeting.*

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director Jeff Muck was inducted into the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration. The Academy is a national organization of distinguished practitioners and educators who are leaders in the parks and recreation profession. To be elected to the Academy, individuals must have served for at least 15 years in a high level of administration in a park and recreation agency or as a recognized educator in parks and recreation administration. They also must have demonstrated outstanding leadership in professional organizations through service, writing or speaking and have displayed a deep interest in advancing public parks and recreation. The Academy is limited to 137 active members.

Jeff has served as director in Novi since 2014. During his tenure, more than 160 acres have been added to the parks system, the department achieved CAPRA national accreditation, the Novi dog park and R/C raceway opened, Lakeshore Park renovations were completed, key amenities were added to Pavilion Shore Park, the ITC Trail was completed and Jessica's Splashpad was constructed. Additionally, he has served mParks (Michigan Recreation and Park Association) as president and in other leadership roles.





# innovation

## NOVI PARKS SOCCER CLUB – A 3-5-2 FORMATION

The Novi Parks Soccer Club consists of **three** “leagues” – Tiny Tikes, Thunder Recreational, and Lightning Select, competing in the Western Suburban Soccer League and Michigan State Premier Soccer Program. The program puts emphasis on developing skills in a relaxed and affordable environment, with the opportunity to play additional sports. Coaches are all volunteer, required uniforms are reasonably priced, and select teams can decide to add tournaments to their schedule. Over the past **five** years of play, the program has grown by more than 35%, with the Lightning Select players doubling in the last four years, culminating in nearly 1,000 soccer players in spring 2024. The Novi Parks Soccer Club has highly successful teams that win tournaments and league divisions every year. In Spring 2024, the boys 2009 Lightning Gold team played in the state cup championship game. The soccer program is led by **two** members of the Novi Parks staff, with numerous part-time site supervisors who are on site each weekend.



### NOW OPEN

Novi now has 12 dedicated pickleball courts and four convertible courts. Eight new courts were completed this summer, four at Wildlife Woods Park and four at the Meadowbrook Activity Center.

Northwest Park officially opened in August, featuring a quarter-mile walking path and a custom nature-based playground crafted primarily from boulders and logs.

Swimsuits and sunscreen were en vogue this summer at Jessica’s Splashpad, which opened Memorial Day weekend. The splashpad was visited by more than 19,000 people before closing for the season on Labor Day.





# commitment



## THREE LITTLE WORDS WITH A BIG IMPACT: NATURE. NURTURE. NOVI

Each year, residents are invited to participate in a variety of interactive and educational programs under the N3 initiative. These include birdwatching, owl prowls, hiking events, invasive species removal, perennial exchanges, Arbor Day celebrations, and more.

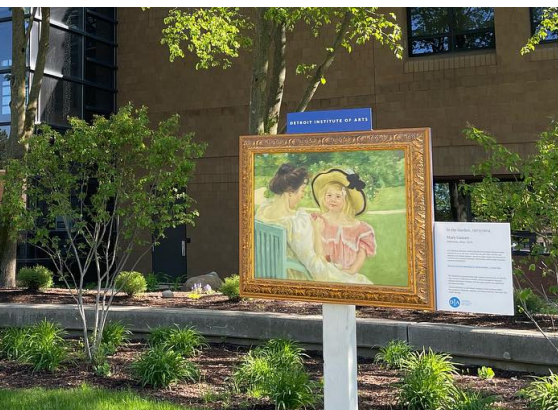
Have you noticed the “No Mow Zones” in our parks? These designated areas support wildlife habitats, including pollinators, and help reduce the community’s carbon footprint.

We’re dedicated to expanding N3 programs and events, with details available in future editions of the Engage guide and online at [cityofnovi.org](http://cityofnovi.org).

## TRANSPORTATION TRANSITION

Since July 1, 2024, People’s Express (PEX) has operated curb-to-curb public transportation in the City of Novi, replacing the former Novi Senior Transportation service. The City of Novi subsidizes fares for residents with disabilities and those aged 55 or older, allowing them to receive in-boundary rides at no cost. PEX operates within a larger geographic area compared to the former Novi Senior Transportation, offering residents, starting at age 14, access to more destinations. Operating hours have also significantly increased, with service available earlier in the morning and later in the evening and on Sundays.

Ridership has grown significantly, with nearly 95% year-over-year growth. This substantial increase demonstrates that the expanded service is effectively meeting a previously unmet need in the community. Resident reception of the expanded transportation services has been predominantly positive, with many expressing appreciation for the increased availability, extended hours, and broader service area.



## OUT(SIDE) IN

The city once again partnered with the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) to host the Inside I Out program. Eight replica pieces were displayed throughout Novi from May to September creating a vibrant outdoor gallery. Interactive programming included a bingo scavenger hunt. Novi is fortunate to have public art collections or sculptures at the Novi Public Library, Fuerst Park, Villa Barr Art Park, Pavilion Shore Park, ITC Community Sports Park, and the Novi Civic Center.

# trust

## SHAPING THE FUTURE

On November 25, City Council approved the 2025-29 Strategic Community Recreation and Master Park Plan. The Plan evaluates existing recreation opportunities, reviews public input regarding recreation, establishes recreational goals, and proposes a five-year schedule of improvements and other related items the City wishes to pursue. The plan also provides eligibility to apply for and be awarded State and Federal grant monies. The plan can be found at [cityofnovi.org/parks](http://cityofnovi.org/parks).



## 20 YEARS AND COUNTING

In 2024, the Novi Parks Foundation proudly celebrated 20 years of enhancing the community through its unwavering support of recreational, educational, and cultural initiatives. Dedicated to enriching the lives of Novi residents, the Foundation has played a vital role in funding and advocating for various projects. These include playgrounds, pickleball courts, soccer field improvements, gardens, public art installations, the development of Villa Barr Art Park and its artist-in-residence program, and, most recently, the creation of Jessica's Splashpad. The Foundation's efforts continue to leave a lasting impact on the Novi community. Learn more at [noviparksfoundation.org](http://noviparksfoundation.org).



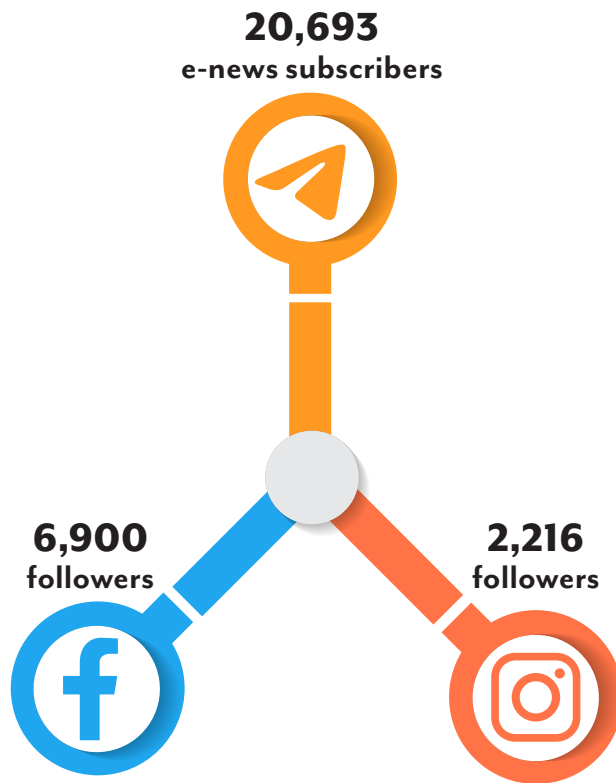
## TAKING PRIORITY

Over the past several years, Novi Parks has seen increased demand and participation across a variety of programs, including youth basketball, adult pickleball, and summer camps. While this growth highlights the popularity and quality of our offerings, it has also led to some participants being turned away due to space limitations. To address this, Novi Parks introduced resident priority registration for select programs this year. Residents may register one week ahead of non-residents. This change ensures that Novi Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services (PRCS) continues to prioritize serving Novi residents first and foremost.





# our digital reach



## CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Justin Fischer  
Mayor Pro Tem Laura Marie Casey  
David Staudt  
Brian Smith  
Ericka Thomas  
Matt Heintz  
Priya Gurumurthy

## PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Jay F. Dooley  
Swaminathan Gopalakrishnan  
Ryan Joseph  
Salene Riggins  
Joe Tolkacz  
Charles A. Staab  
Hideki "Harry" Torimoto

Student Representatives  
Pietro DiDomenico  
Ishaan Sid

# Buzz Report

January 16, 2025



## Hot Topics:

- **8 Mile Road Construction – Noises when you drive over it**

Many residents have reached out regarding the odd noise when you drive over the newly rehabilitated 8 Mile road. Per our fantastic Engineering team, the noise is due to “tining.” Tining is a road construction technique that involves using a metal rake or mechanical device to create grooves in concrete pavement. The grooves roughen the surface, improving skid resistance and reducing the risk of hydroplaning in wet weather. Tining is typically done as soon as possible after the concrete is finished but before it sets. Over time, the road will even out, and the noise should go away.

- **EV Charging Station Update**

The EV Chargers located at the Novi Public Library will be getting another refresh this week! Due to the recent closure/sale of [Enel X](#), the software for the chargers installed this past January are unfortunately no longer usable. The State Electric Company, who maintains our chargers, has luckily come up with a solution to keep everything powered up for the future and will be swapping out both stations for brand-new chargers this week. They anticipate that the new chargers will be installed and ready to go by the time Council receives this report. Updated directions for use will be on the new screens to assist users.

- **Liberty Park Speed Study**

At the request of citizens in Liberty Park neighborhood, Novi PD installed a speed sign on Declaration Drive (for northbound traffic) near Bartlett Drive from Monday, December 2 through Saturday, December 7 to gather speed data. A total of 4,032 cars traveled on Declaration during this time, with an average speed of 18.72 mph. Data indicates speeding is not an issue and staff have relayed the findings to our contact in Liberty Park. No further action is anticipated.

- **10 Mile/Novi Road Traffic Light**

There have been recent reports of the traffic light at Ten Mile and Novi Road malfunctioning, occasionally displaying a flashing red on all sides even at times of day when it shouldn't. The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) is responsible for this signal and have already been contacted. As their monitoring panel was reporting no errors, they sent out a crew to investigate the issue on Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. No further report has been given to our offices from RCOC on the matter at this time, but we expect the problem has been resolved or is in the process of being so.

- **Bristol Corners Sidewalks**

Residents of Bristol Corners have recently contacted the City requesting reimbursement for sidewalk repairs they undertook themselves. This matter was previously considered by the Mobility Committee and the following was determined:

*For the duration of the Pilot Program, the City will not provide reimbursement for sidewalk repair/replacement work performed outside of the NSRP; in other words, work completed*

*privately by a homeowner or Homeowners Association*). Additionally, the City will not consider repair/replacement of sidewalk panels due to ponding or pooling water, assuming the two previously mentioned conditions per state law do not exist.

**Update:** For further clarification as some residents from Bristol Corners continue to reach out; the Mobility Committee recommended against providing reimbursement as it was rather difficult to verify if replacement would have occurred under the policy. Specifically, the question was asked and ultimately assisted the committee in "drawing a line in the sand" as what if residents come forward who replaced their sidewalk 2 or 3 years prior to the program? Could they too receive reimbursement? Ultimately it was decided to adhere to the City's ordinance.

## Development Project Updates:

### Map of Development projects

- **Comau Sale**

As of late December, One Equity Partners (OEP) became the majority shareholder of Comau; Stellantis will remain an active minority shareholder of the company. This move is seen as a growth move that will see the company, including its local location on Grand River (near Novi Road), into the future.

- **Party City** (West Oaks)

[News](#) hit the press that Party City has filed Chapter 11 and will be closing all of their locations. We have one location in West Oaks located between the DSW and Gardner White.

- **Container Store** (West Oaks)

There has also been [news](#) that the Container Store has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. However, current press indicates that all store locations, including the one located in West Oaks (adjacent to Michaels and HomeGoods), are expected to stay open.

- **El Car Wash** (Former PNC Bank) – Grand River Ave/12 Mile Rd

The former PNC Bank located at 48648 Grand River Ave has been demolished and an El Car Wash will be being built on the site. The project has already received approvals from the Planning Commission (4/10/24) and Zoning Board of Appeals (5/14/24). Currently, a pre-construction meeting has been held and the building plans are in the final stages of review prior to permit issuance.

*Estimated Completion Date: Fall 2025*

- **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. The restaurant also has a location in Royal Oak that opened in May 2023. The building plans for the renovation were recently submitted and undergoing review.

*Estimated Completion Date: Late Spring or Summer 2025*

- **Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers** (Former Wendy's) – Novi Rd/Grand River Ave

The Novi Wendy's location at 26245 Novi Rd recently closed as part of a company plan to shutter 140 locations nationwide. The Louisiana-based fast food chain Raising Cane's is planning to take over the space in the near future. Raising Cane's specializes in chicken fingers, crinkle-cut fries and Texas toast.

*Estimated Completion Date: Currently Unknown (no submittals to date, project scope unclear)*

- **Porsche of Novi** – Grand River/Haggerty Road

Construction of an approx. 19,170 square foot, two-story Porsche car dealership (right next to the Audi Sales Center)

*Estimated Completion Date: February 2025*

- **Audi Sales Center** (Former Jaguar dealership) – 10 Mile/Haggerty Road  
The former Jaguar dealership located at 24295 Haggerty Rd is in the process of being converted to an Audi Sales Center. Currently the renovation is in full swing, and recently was approved for its “rough” building inspection.

*Estimated Completion Date: April 2025*

- **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 currently being built on the former site. When completed, is estimated to be able to have 202 children during its peak hours.

The construction was previously limited only to foundation/flatwork while a hydrant was installed to make water available at the site. As of December 4<sup>th</sup>, the full building permit has been issued which will allow them to proceed with “vertical” construction.

*Estimated Completion Date: Summer 2025*

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### **Q: Why is the gate on LeBost closed even though it is winter?**

A: In past years the breakaway gate on LeBost between Willowbrook Estates Subdivision and Willowbrook Farms No. 2 Subdivision was left open during Winter months for greater ease of access of snowplows and other winter maintenance equipment. However, following a renewal of interest (both for and against the gate) by residents late last winter it was decided that the gate would be kept closed all year long in order not to cause any confusion.

This is in keeping with what was contemplated by City Council when the Willowbrook Farms No. 2 plat was approved in the late 1990s, wherein a requirement for a “berm” was written into the subdivision restrictions recorded at the Oakland County Register of Deeds.

City of Novi Snowplow operators may temporarily open the gate to plow cleanly plow the street and will then close it before moving on to other areas.

### **Q: With the planned improvements to 9 Mile Road between Meadowbrook and Haggarty, when will the trees be removed?**

#### **Update**

A: Endangered species protections require the trees to be removed prior to March 31, 2025, to avoid disturbing bat nesting areas. [The City's tree contractor will remove the week of January 20th.](#)