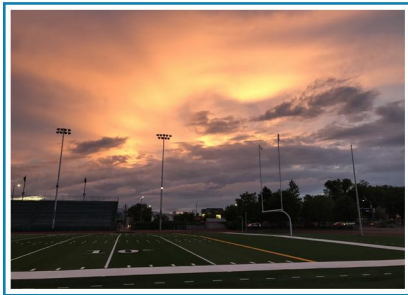


GRAND JUNCTION STRATEGIC PLAN



November 2019

INTRODUCTION

The central purpose of this undertaking was to provide the City of Grand Junction with a tool that can be used during the next two years by elected officials and city staff to guide goal setting and strategy. This plan incorporates the priorities identified as most important by City Council. To truly be effective, this plan must become part of how elected officials and city staff operate and think about programs and services. The test of this plan's usefulness will be defined by how effective it is in guiding decisions and how it aids in measuring success.

In the process of examining this strategic plan, the reader will encounter various terms and phrases associated with key elements of the plan. It is important that we place an understanding of the strategic plan within the context of what these elements are intended to contribute.

Guiding Principles

Four guiding principles have been added to the plan. They do not represent specific directives or action steps, but are intended instead to guide the way in which specific strategic directives and initiatives are implemented.

Strategic Directives

This plan contains four strategic directives. A strategic directive is a high-level priority that is articulated in a way that effectively describes a community priority and is not intended to describe specific initiatives, ideas, programs, or services. It merely summarizes what we believe is most important.

Key Initiatives

Each strategic directive is accompanied by a number of key initiatives which assist in bringing the directive to the level of application. In other words, key initiatives are more specific actions, programs, and ideas designed to bring about the realization of the strategic directives. We consider the directive to be the destination and the initiatives represent the path that will enable us to arrive at our destination.

What Does Success Look Like?

This section of each strategic directive is designed to describe some of the key indicators we will look to in evaluating the success of that directive. Specific actions are not outlined in this document, and city staff have internal mechanisms that will be used to implement this plan.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Partnerships & Intergovernmental Relationships

While some cities may be able to “go it alone” and find success, the City of Grand Junction must effectively partner with both public and private agencies. As a regional hub with urban challenges unique to a community of our size and composition, it will take collective action to succeed in advancing our most important initiatives. Partnerships may include, but are not limited to, organizations or agencies in these areas: government, education, economic development, transportation, and business development.

We view partnership in its broadest sense and not merely through the lens of delivering municipal services. Partnership with a common purpose is the key to success with public and private collaboration. Whether evaluating opportunities for shared services, partnering for economic development, or creating a shared vision for the future of our community, we recognize that our residents will be best served as we work together with other organizations to find solutions. We take every opportunity to celebrate past successful partnerships to build momentum for future collaboration.

Fiscal Responsibility

The foundation of effective local governance is trust. To continue to build the trust placed in us by our citizens, we must be responsible stewards of the resources entrusted to our care. Because of limited resources, we must be effective in prioritizing our spending to focus on the things that citizens have identified as most important.

As we establish plans and priorities, we do so with an eye to the future. It is not enough to merely find a way to fund a new project or amenity. We must also ensure that we are planning for long-term ongoing operations and maintenance with each item that we prioritize.

Communication & Engagement

We want to be a part of a community where residents are well informed about matters of local government and their involvement is encouraged. Expectations have changed over the years, and we as a City must adapt to share helpful information with our residents and stakeholders through channels that meet them where they are.

Communication is a two-way street. It is not enough for us to proclaim what we are doing and expect citizens to listen and follow along. We need to create channels for citizens to approach the city and communicate their priorities. This builds trust and ensures we continue to focus limited resources on our community’s highest priorities

Leadership

Grand Junction was founded by innovative leaders, ready to lead the way to a new future. Our city continues in that tradition of leadership today. We are not content to wait around for the future, but rather desire to actively shape it. Our City holds a key position in the region. We must be a driving force in issues of regional importance and play a leading role in the growth occurring on the Western Slope. We will do this by setting an example of how local government should operate – in our conduct, in our words, and in our ideas. The status quo will not satisfy us, nor will it work, as we continue to push ourselves outside of our comfort zone to be innovative leaders.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES

1. Public Safety

Grand Junction is geographically isolated from other population centers which creates unique public safety needs, especially for a community of our size. We are a stand-alone regional hub with urban challenges not found in other communities on the Western Slope. It is critical that we ensure our public safety efforts meet current needs as well as anticipate and adapt to future public safety challenges and opportunities.

This will require us to develop a framework to evaluate effective levels of service. To do this, we will consider modeling communities that share similar challenges. Because of our unique needs, we will also analyze best practices from other agencies and assess current workloads to develop an effective staffing model. In the spirit of partnership with surrounding communities, we should also evaluate regionalization opportunities. This will include a review of our current mutual aid agreements.

Lastly, we must establish clear policy direction for new funding. With the passage of a First Responder Sales Tax (Measure 2B) to fund the expansion of our police and fire emergency services, we must continue to ensure that policies and funding mechanisms align with our public safety model and service delivery standards. Over the coming years, we will move steadily to fill open positions at a pace that allows us to make best use of the resources while maintaining a high level of professionalism in our public safety departments.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES

1. Public Safety

KEY INITIATIVES:

- Establish community policing efforts as the heart of our service delivery function with an emphasis on proactive policing efforts
- Promote safety in our public spaces by working with community partners to address vagrancy, homelessness, and vandalism
- Plan for, build, and staff essential public safety infrastructure
- Active enforcement of city codes to improve the physical appearance of our community
- Community risk reduction through prevention and education efforts

SUCCESS METRICS:

- Consistent staffing levels appropriate for community needs through enhanced recruiting and retention efforts
- Response Times – meeting or exceeding national standards
- Feeling of safety – satisfaction survey results for both perceptions of safety and aesthetics
- Continue implementation of community education efforts addressing vagrancy



STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES

2. Planning & Infrastructure

To fully understand the values, vision and needs of the community, the City must seek robust input from the community and distill that input into a plan. This effort is being undertaken in the Comprehensive Plan 2020: One Grand Junction, a plan that will provide guidance to the City in all that we do for the next 10+ years. Further, to support future growth in our city, we must make plans to expand infrastructure in areas where that growth is most likely to occur. In order to ensure that we are making the right infrastructure investments, the Comprehensive plan adopted in 2009, will be reviewed and updated.

A core function of the City is to maintain and expand infrastructure as needed for future growth. The City will allocate fiscal resources consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and will ensure existing infrastructure is adequately maintained. The City will continue to evaluate the current state of its infrastructure, and actively work with funding partners to implement maintenance plans and construction of core infrastructure.

Infrastructure is defined as the fundamental facilities and systems serving the city such as water and sewer lines, roads, and sidewalks. Given the potential for significant growth in the community, we must also focus on planning for future infrastructure needs that can support quality of life, economic growth, and core municipal service delivery. Many people that have moved to this area have done so and chosen to stay because of the unique quality of life we enjoy. Careful planning will ensure that our lifestyle will be both preserved and enhanced. Building and maintaining infrastructure can be a key ingredient to both attracting businesses as well as attracting and retaining workforce talent.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES

2. Planning & Infrastructure

KEY INITIATIVES:

- Secure funding sources for maintenance of existing infrastructure, and building of essential new infrastructure
- Incorporate sustainable practices into City operations and encourage citizens to embrace sustainability practices
- Evaluate, construct and maintain a transportation system that supports citizen needs, including multi-modal transportation (cyclists, pedestrians, etc.)
- Develop, adopt, and implement community plans (parks, circulation, transportation, Comprehensive)
- Establish sustainable annexation criteria for new developments outside of the city and revise approach for annexing areas that are not quickly urbanizing
- Establish indices to monitor the condition of infrastructure assets (pavement condition, etc.) and build plans for maintenance of these assets

SUCCESS METRICS:

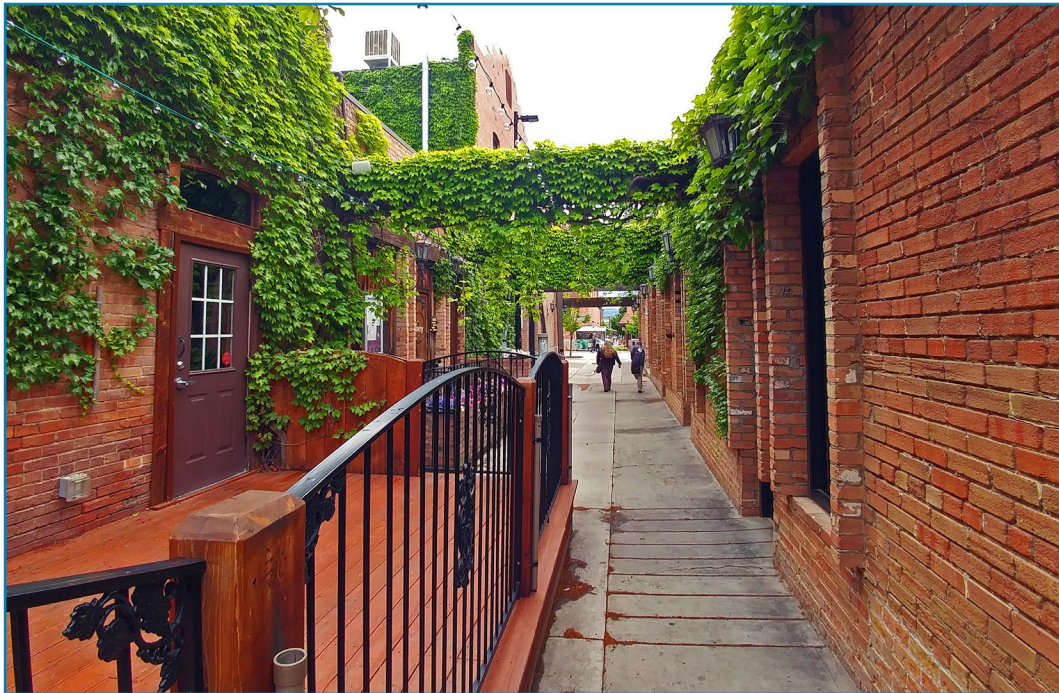
- Adoption of Comprehensive Plan 2020
- Completion and adoption of community plans
- Funding levels for needed infrastructure projects
- Substantial progress on riverfront developments in two years
- Infrastructure condition indices
- Become an AARP Age-Friendly Community



STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES

3. Diversification of our Economic Base

Throughout our history, we have experienced boom and bust cycles. In preceding decades, the boom and bust has tied to the fluctuations of volatile energy prices. Population in the Grand Valley has now grown to the point where greater economic diversity is not only possible, but imperative. We have begun to take proactive steps to diversify our economic base to moderate the peaks and valleys in economic activity that we have experienced in the past. We must continue those efforts. Because economic development is driven by factors well beyond the core services and functions of the city, we have made the choice to collaborate with other organizations and outsource the majority of our economic development activities. However, due to the importance of economic development to our community, ongoing support and monitoring of these activities is critical.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES

3. Diversification of our Economic Base

KEY INITIATIVES:

- Develop catalytic development projects such as Riverfront at Las Colonias and Riverfront at Dos Rios
- Build City Place Brand
- Continue partnerships with Economic Development partners and encourage regular reporting
- Continue to support the economic development efforts of Visit Grand Junction
- Expand student employment opportunities from Colorado Mesa University (CMU)
- Partner with Economic Development organizations to develop and implement plans of action
- Continue progress on a Foreign Trade Zone

SUCCESS METRICS:

- Job growth and employment rates
- Wage growth to close the gap with the state average
- Development, expansion, and retention of business
- Increased sales tax revenue
- Increased number of visitors as evidenced by lodging tax revenue
- Square feet developed in catalytic development projects
- Industry specific job growth - number of new business licenses and/or positions in manufacturing, tech, and other select industries
- Occupancy rate of commercial developments



STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES

4. Connectedness through Community Building

Bring People Together through Great Public Spaces – There is perhaps no greater way to build a community than by bringing people together for shared experiences. While the city is not the primary source of these experiences, we play a significant role in creating spaces where these experiences happen. Public parks, art exhibits, sporting competitions, and other public community events bring together individuals from every age, ethnicity, income level and background. Such activities build pride in our community, encourage volunteerism, and create a feeling of connectedness. We will invest in the resources that provide space for these shared experiences for our residents: establishing arts and culture, improving and building public parks, and hosting quality events for the public to enjoy.

Visibility & Engagement – To honor the trust placed in us by our citizens, we must continue to expand transparent sharing of information. We will communicate and celebrate our significant achievements and also share how we are actively learning from our mistakes. We will strive to ensure the accuracy of any information produced and distributed by the City. Lastly, communication is a two-way street. We need to create more opportunities for engagement with citizens. Rather than wait at City Hall to hear from our residents, we will look at ways to diversify our public outreach and expand our channels of two-way communication and engagement with members of our community.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES

4. Connectedness through Community Building

KEY INITIATIVES:

- Plan & develop public spaces and places to serve broad, yet diverse uses
- Increase community engagement in public processes by diversifying methods of public outreach
- Engage in public relations and place-branding campaign, involving the community in the process
- Increase use of and diversify citizen engagement platforms (social media, email, public meetings, etc.)
- Plan specific events with cross-generational appeal
- Rebuild the city's neighborhood program
- Partner in the success of the Downtown Creative District
- Support recruitment of sporting events through Greater Grand Junction Sports Commission

SUCCESS METRICS:

- Attendance levels for City-sponsored community events
- Participation levels in comprehensive planning process
- Social media engagement metrics
- Community satisfaction from citizen surveys
- Usage rates of parks and other public open space
- Enhancement of existing and creation of new public spaces

