

**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2009 7:45 P.M. (APPROXIMATELY)
MUNICIPAL HEARING ROOM
1ST FLOOR CITY HALL
250 N. 5TH STREET**

PUBLIC SAFETY INITIATIVE DISCUSSION

[Attach W-1](#)

Public Safety Initiative 2008 Data



**City of Grand Junction
Public Safety Initiative
City Council Workshop
June 3rd, 2009**



**City of Grand Junction
Public Safety Initiative
City Council Workshop
June 3rd, 2009**

Section I—Post Election Analysis

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**City of Grand Junction
Post-Election Analysis**

*A review of the November 4, 2008 election
results relative to public safety ballot questions
2A and 2B*

December 10, 2008

City of Grand Junction Post-Election Analysis

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Introduction and Overview

November 4, 2008 was a national Election Day. It was also an important local Election Day for the City of Grand Junction. Two local measures, questions 2A and 2B, were placed on the ballot in hopes of constructing seven new public safety buildings in what came to be known as the 'Public Safety Initiative' or the 'PSI'. The questions posed the possibility of a new sales tax as well as the future removal of the revenue restriction component of the Tax Payers Bill of Rights (TABOR). Both questions failed to gain sufficient voter support to prevail.

On November 5, 2008 during a leadership team meeting, the Grand Junction City Manager directed the Deputy City Manager to lead a team of City staff members (see Appendix G) in collecting information and conducting analysis related to the outcome of the election. According to the City Manager, the information produced during this process would be one of a number of tools to be used in assessing how best to move forward in addressing the City's public safety needs.

This report and the information contained within were provided on a voluntary basis by citizens, stakeholders, community members and City employees. Statements, correspondence, and information collected during this process were taken at face value, have been documented in good faith and without the purposeful interference of any individual.

The post-election team established the following mission statement to help guide them through the process of completing the project:

To collect information about the November 4, 2008 election for the Public Safety Initiative that will be reliable and useful for future analysis and decision making. Our team will identify Strengths, Weaknesses and Threats to produce actionable information for the City Manager to use in assessing how best to move forward and address our community's public safety needs. To accomplish this mission our team will engage community stakeholders in a myriad of feedback methods and review data related to elections.

The goal of this process and ultimately this report was to create "actionable information" from which decisions could be made. It includes information from personal communications, focus groups, correspondence from community members, online and telephone surveys, data from past elections and the current (2008) election. Using this information and after conducting extensive analysis, key trends or themes were identified.

Executive Summary

On November 5, 2008, City staff members began the process of collecting information and conducting analysis related to the outcome of the local Public Safety Initiative election. The team took a comprehensive approach to gathering as much information as possible over a three-week period. Specifically, the process was designed to allow as many people as possible to contribute information about what happened during the November 4, 2008 election and offer their personal perspective and insight as to how the City may consider proceeding in the future.

The November 2008 election results were analyzed including a review of voter turnout, demographics, TABOR questions and ballot language. The nature and demographic of the voters in Grand Junction and Mesa County continue to remain conservative Republicans over the age of 45.

- Registered voters in Mesa County increased 39% from 2007 to 2008
- Voter turnout exceeded 80%
- The number of voters under the age of 25 increased from 3,203 to 10,460 between 2007 and 2008
- *Pre*-election polling indicated that 72% of voters over the age of 65 supported the initiative
- *Post*-election polling indicated that only 41% of voters over the age of 65 supported the initiative

The team took a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) approach in analyzing the information. The SWOT analysis assumes that an effective strategy derives from a sound “fit” between internal resources and the external situation. This assumption can have powerful implications for the design of a successful strategy. The team was asked specifically not to analyze opportunities during this process, but collect and report them. The opportunities have been provided in an appendix to this report in order to assist the City Manager in developing strategies for the future.

The six primary data collection methods utilized were:

- Focus groups
- Phone survey
- Unsolicited comments
- Online/handwritten survey
- “Main Street” survey
- Personally solicited comments

Well over **1,500 people** articulated their impressions on the reasons for the vote outcome. Because of the different methods utilized to collect information, the volume produced and the need for candid feedback, the team did not maintain identifying information on the responses.

Based on the input from all sources, there were a **number of themes** that developed:

- **The downturn in the national economy**
- **Vote “NO” mood**
- **Connection/relationship with TABOR question**
- **Lack of information/understanding about the proposed solution**
- **The scope of the project: too expensive, too big, too extravagant**
- **Confusing, complex ballot language**
- **Lack of trust in the City**

Although respondents indicated an **understanding of the need for public safety facilities**, the data reveals that the factors listed above appear to have led to the majority of voters rejecting the solutions proposed in Questions 2A & 2B. Although the factors did lead to the defeat of both questions, they do create solid opportunities to consider.

Election Analysis

The purpose of this section is to compare trends in previous elections to the November 2008 election in order to make observations of factors contributing to the failure of Questions 2A and 2B, and to provide election data for the various elections held within Mesa County and the City of Grand Junction since 1992.

Mesa County conducts an election every November (even years are either Presidential or Gubernatorial elections), and the City of Grand Junction holds an election in April of every odd year to elect City Council members. The City Council can place a question on either an April or November ballot.

<i>Results of November 2008 Election 2A & 2B Ballot Questions</i>	2A- ¼ cent sales tax	2B-remove TABOR revenue limitation
Yes	43%	37%
No	51%	54%
Undervote <small>(cast ballot but did not vote on this particular issue)</small>	5%	8%

Based on the history reviewed, the largest turnout (number of actual voters) is realized for a Presidential Election, typically exceeding 80%. Elections for Governor (every other even year) have the next highest turnout, in the 60%-70% range. Municipal (April) elections and odd year November elections have a similar turnout between 40% and 60% depending on the specific issues and the current political climate. **Note: Since 1999, the City has conducted all of its municipal elections by mail ballot, however prior to that those municipal elections had very low turnout at under 20%.**

Although the number of registered voters increased during the 2008 Presidential campaign year, the turnout was consistent at over 80%

Voter demographic in Mesa County has not changed dramatically in the last decade. Registered voters are predominately Republican (2 to 1 Democratic) with a large unaffiliated/independent contingent numbering more than the Democratic voters.

Those that turnout to vote in both Mesa County elections and in municipal elections are predominately Republican over the age of 45, with more females than males. **The number of voters under age 45 is under 40% in Mesa County elections and falls to under 20% for municipal elections.**

Mesa County registration surged 39% with the number of registered voters increasing from 54,752 in November 2007 to 75,926 for the 2008 election with the number of voters under the age of 25 significantly increasing. However, the voting percentages in all of the categories, age and party, nearly matched the results of the 2004 Presidential election. Even though there are more registered voters, the voting enthusiasm of those under the age of 45 seems only to materialize at Presidential Elections and does not typically carry through to the municipal election in April or to the same extent in an off year November election.

TABOR Questions and Mesa County Voters

TABOR questions include tax questions, debt questions, or retaining excess revenue. Since TABOR was adopted in 1992, the City has gone to the voters five times (including 2008) with TABOR questions. All but one question was put on the ballot by the City Council. The recreation center question in 1999 was a citizen's initiative which failed. The four other times voters were asked for authorizations under TABOR, two were successful and two were unsuccessful. The 2008 ballot contained two questions and both failed.

Mesa County has taken TABOR questions to the voters four times since 1992 and has had only one issue pass (the "de-brucing" of the railroad revenue). The School District has taken questions to the voters six times since 1992. Three times the School District has been successful. The Library has been on the ballot three times and has succeeded only once.

Ballot Language

The Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR) has certain language requirements which complicate the wording of a ballot. Questions asking for a tax increase must include certain language by State Law such as "SHALL (DISTRICT) TAXES BE INCREASED (first, or if phased in, final, full fiscal year dollar increase) ANNUALLY...?" Ballot titles for bonded debt increases shall begin, "SHALL (DISTRICT) DEBT BE INCREASED (principal amount), WITH A REPAYMENT COST OF (maximum total district cost), ...?" Ballot titles not including the proper language can lead to law suits and invalidation of votes. It is the City's obligation and practice to have qualified bond counsel review ballot language to ensure the question precisely meets the requirements of the law.

The City Attorney also reviews the wording of any ballot question to ensure the verbiage is proper in the legal sense. The City has flexibility in the use of words to convey to the voters the need, the use for the funding and outlining any restrictions on the use of the funds.

Historically successful ballot issues in Mesa County have been very specific in nature, assuring the voters of fiscal responsibility and contain limiting or restrictive language to ease voters' concerns that they are providing a "blank check" to the local government.

The City's bond question on the Riverside Parkway was successful in 2003 and contained specific project language. The campaign focused on completing the project in six years at current prices versus over the course of twenty years at increasing costs. The second Riverside Parkway question, the early repayment of those bonds, was successful in 2007 and contained language that included "debt paid in full". It was for a specific purpose that was presented and viewed as fiscally prudent. Likewise the County's successful TABOR question in 2002 allowing them to retain railroad revenues for the 30 Road underpass was for a very specific purpose and was limited to a two-year period.

There were successful and unsuccessful TABOR questions during the 2008 election in other communities. Successful taxing questions in Akron, Salida and Silverton included specific project language and in Salida's case eliminated property tax in exchange for increasing sales tax (see Appendix A).

El Paso County placed an extremely long question on the ballot, also relative to public safety, but it contained many of the elements discussed here. It was specific, it contained restrictions as to what the funds would not be spent on and it addressed improved service in the area of public safety and emergency services (see Appendix B). Although unsuccessful, the specificity and the restrictions contained in their ballot question could be considered in the analysis of a possible future question for the City.

Any consideration of posing another Public Safety question to the voters that includes a tax increase will of course have to contain the specific TABOR language “SHALL (DISTRICT) TAXES BE INCREASED (first, or if phased in, final, full fiscal year dollar increase) ANNUALLY...?”, but the City has the option of including specific project language and restrictions on the use of the funds in the ballot question.

Observations

The nature and demographic of the voters in Grand Junction and Mesa County continue to remain conservative Republicans over the age of 45. As was indicated in the City Auditor’s analysis (see Appendix D), the conservative demographic tends to vote “no” on change without a very strong argument to change the status quo. The measures that proved successful were project specific and were sold to the citizens as making good fiscal sense (i.e., Riverside Parkway – build now, pay today’s prices and be done in six years versus build over 20 years with escalating costs; “de-Bruce” to pay off the bonds – saving millions of dollars in interest to pay off a specific project).

History has shown that successful ballot questions had specificity and support by a campaign leaning heavily on fiscal responsibility, strong local government with proven ethical fiduciary behavior, community leadership, and media support.

Methodology of Data Collection/Analysis

The team took a comprehensive approach in gathering as much information as possible over a three week period. Specifically, the process was designed to allow as many people as possible to contribute information about what happened during the November 4, 2008 election and offer their personal perspective and insight as to how the City may consider proceeding in the future. While this process was primarily designed to gain information about an event that had already occurred (the election) it also began to look forward by soliciting information about how the project maybe more successful in the future.

Because of the different methods utilized to collect information, the volume of information collected and the overwhelming need for the community to provide candid feedback, the team decided to not collect, maintain or attribute identifying information to the responses provided during the data collection phase of the team's work. The team believes that it is necessary and important to this process that the respondents not be inhibited in their feedback. To that end the team concluded that a nameless process would produce the most accurate, complete and credible information.

The table below describes the primary data collection methods utilized during this process and some of the groups who participated in contributing information.

Focus Groups	Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC)
	Chiefs' Advisory Council (CAC)
	Police Department employees
	Fire Department employees
	Western Colorado Contractors' Association (WCCA)
	Downtown Development Authority Board (DDA)
	Utilities & Streets leadership group
Online and Handwritten Surveys	Visitor and Convention Bureau volunteers
	Associated Members of Growth and Development (AMGD)
	Chamber of Commerce membership
	Grand Junction Economic Partnership (GJEP)
	Grand Junction Senior Center
	Incident Management Group
	Mesa County Sheriff's Office Employees
	Business Incubator
	Grand Junction Kiwanis
	Grand Valley Young Professionals
	Mesa County Communication Officers' Association
	City of Grand Junction employees
	Community members
'Main Street' Surveys	217 randomly selected community members
Phone Surveys	400 randomly selected community members
Solicited and Unsolicited Comments	Numerous

SWOT Analysis

SWOT is an acronym for the internal Strengths and Weaknesses of a company and the environmental Opportunities and Threats facing the company. SWOT analysis is a widely-used technique through which managers can create a quick overview of a company's strategic situation. The SWOT analysis assumes that an effective strategy derives from a sound "fit" between internal resources and the external situation. This assumption can have powerful implications for the design of a successful strategy (Pearce/Robinson, 2000).

Knowing the information collected during this process would be utilized to assist in the formulation of future strategy, the SWOT analysis was selected as the primary methodology for grouping the data collected during this process. The team was asked specifically not to analyze opportunities during this process. This decision was made based upon the primary goal of this effort which was to collect information about what happened during the recent election knowing the City Manager would take this report, analyze the information and consider the opportunities separately (see Opportunity Comments in Appendix E).

Focus Groups/Citizen Comments

The City of Grand Junction conducted interviews with the specific focus groups identified on page 9 of this report. In addition, general comments were provided to the City shortly after the election offering advice and observations to the City about the election's outcome.

Over 250 comments were received, both solicited and unsolicited, by the City of Grand Junction. All comments received from both the focus groups and the general citizenry were grouped into three broad categories: ***Strengths, Weaknesses, and Threats***. *Opportunities* were also captured to help guide future decision making with regard to public safety. The statements within the *Strength, Weakness, and Threat* categories were further grouped into 24 specific categories that represented a summarized version of the issues on people's minds.

The broad category of *Strengths* consists of those statements that describe what people feel are strong, positive points of the City's election campaign, how it was communicated, and whether electors understood the issues. The category of *Weaknesses* includes statements that describe what people feel were not strong points of the campaign, confusing messages, misunderstandings, and critical elements that drove the public election "defeat" decision. The category of *Threats* includes those statements that described organic issues that affected the election decision regardless of the strengths put forth. Examples of threats might be the poor state of the economy or that the ballot was so long.

General Findings

The five most frequently mentioned broad categories of *Weaknesses and Threats* are summarized below. These represent 47% of all the responses. The balance of the responses was distributed in small numbers across numerous other categories. The %'s indicated below represent the individual category's percentage of total responses.

Weaknesses and Threats

- **Misunderstood Project Pieces/Solution: 13.7%** - Comments generally pertained to misunderstanding of the need for seven buildings; how buildings improve public safety; the need to move Municipal Court; and the need for a parking garage for staff and Police and Fire vehicles.
- **TABOR: 9.6%** - Tying question 2B and TABOR to the project added a level of confusion and raised red flags for voters who seemed to prefer TABOR relief being tied to specific projects and not being permanent.
- **City has the Money/Trust: 8.9%** - There exists a perception that the public safety facilities will be built despite the election results. Land purchases and building demolition before the election were cited as examples that make it appear as though the project will be built regardless.
- **Economy in Bad Shape: 7.8%** - Although Grand Junction's economy is relatively better than most, the downturn in the national economy was cited as a reason voters did not support additional taxes.
- **City Capital Improvement Priorities: 6.7%** - These comments related to questions about the judgment used in setting priorities for past CIP (capital improvement plan) projects. Specifically cited were the 7th Street and Colorado Avenue reconstructions along with construction of roundabouts. The belief seemed to be that these could have been postponed to pay for the Public Safety Initiative.

Strengths generally can be categorized into the following:

- **The Need is Clear: 57.5%** - Felt the City had adequately communicated what the problem was and that the existing facilities are inadequate.
- **Communication was well done: 22.5%** - Tools used to communicate the need were good including the Chiefs' Advisory Council, service club presentations, facility tours, and the door-to-door education effort.
- **City has done well on CIP priorities: 12.5%** - Riverside Parkway and planning efforts with the Public Safety Initiative were cited as examples of the City's good work in implementing projects.

Online and Handwritten Surveys

The City created an online survey which was designed to gather feedback about what the reasons were that voters did not support questions 2A and 2B. The online survey was launched on November 12 and remained active until December 3. The survey was also administered in paper form to several different groups as outlined on page 9 of this report.

The survey consisted of the following four questions:

1. **Ballot question 2A (the ¼ cent sales tax to pay for seven new public safety facilities) did not pass. In your opinion, what are the top beliefs people held that caused them to vote against 2A?**

2. Ballot question 2B (remove the City from TABOR revenue limitations – rescind the sales tax proposed in 2A after the Riverside Parkway debt is paid off) did not pass. In your opinion, what are the top beliefs people held that caused them to vote against 2B?

3. In your opinion, what could the City have done differently to pass ballot question 2A?

4. In your opinion, what could the City have done differently to pass ballot question 2B?

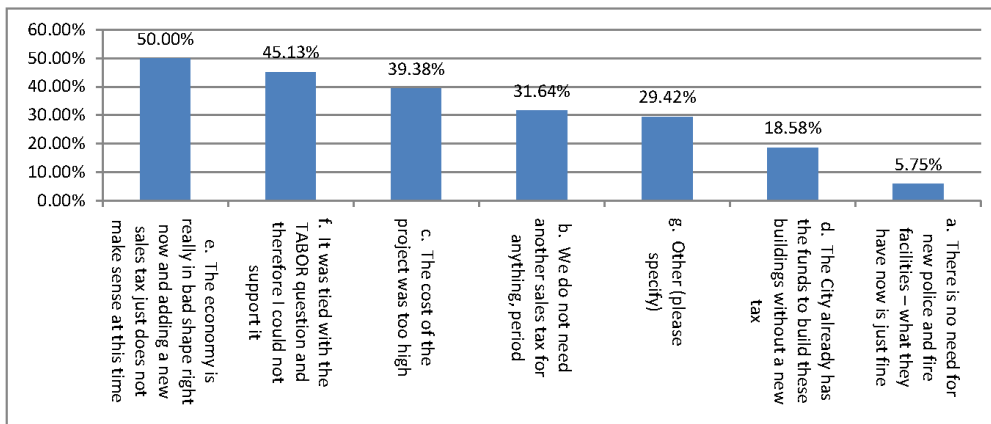
Each question provided a variety of possible responses and respondents were asked to select up to three options. The responses also included the “Other” option in which comments could be entered. The survey document may be viewed in Appendix F.

The online survey was taken by 351 respondents and an additional 100 respondents completed it in paper form for a **total of 451 respondents**. The results of the survey are not considered to be statistically valid due to the inability to have full control over who responded, but it is believed that a wide cross section of the community responded to the survey based on the diversity of groups to whom the survey link and the paper version were distributed.

General Findings

Question #1: Ballot question 2A (the ¼ cent sales tax to pay for seven new public safety facilities) did not pass. In your opinion, what are the top beliefs people held that caused them to vote against 2A?

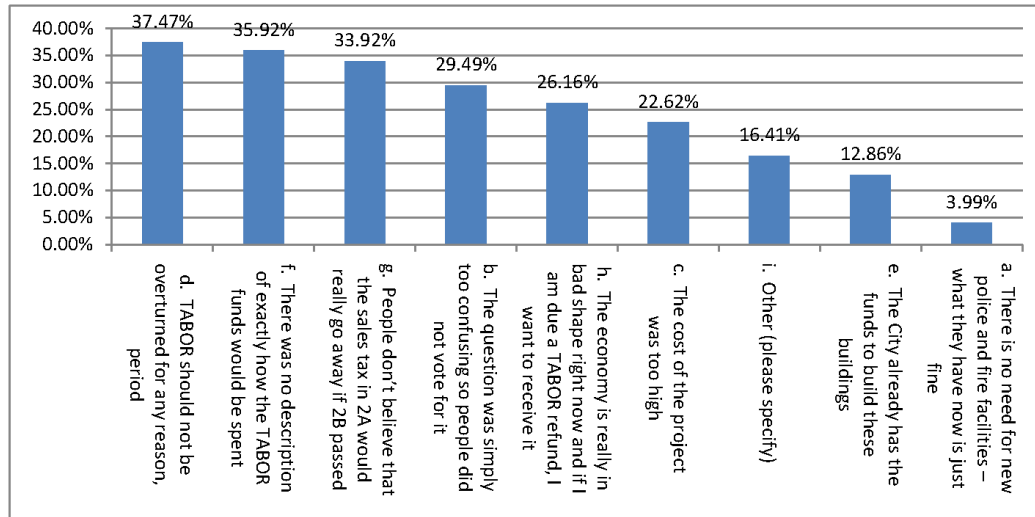
The three most common responses reflected the downturn in the economy, the link of 2A to a TABOR question, and the high cost of the project as the top reasons for the failure of question 2A.



NOTE: Percentages sum to greater than 100% because respondents were allowed to select more than one response.

Question #2: Ballot question 2B (remove the City from TABOR revenue limitations – rescind the sales tax proposed in 2A after the Riverside Parkway debt is paid off) did not pass. In your opinion, what are the top beliefs people held that caused them to vote against 2B?

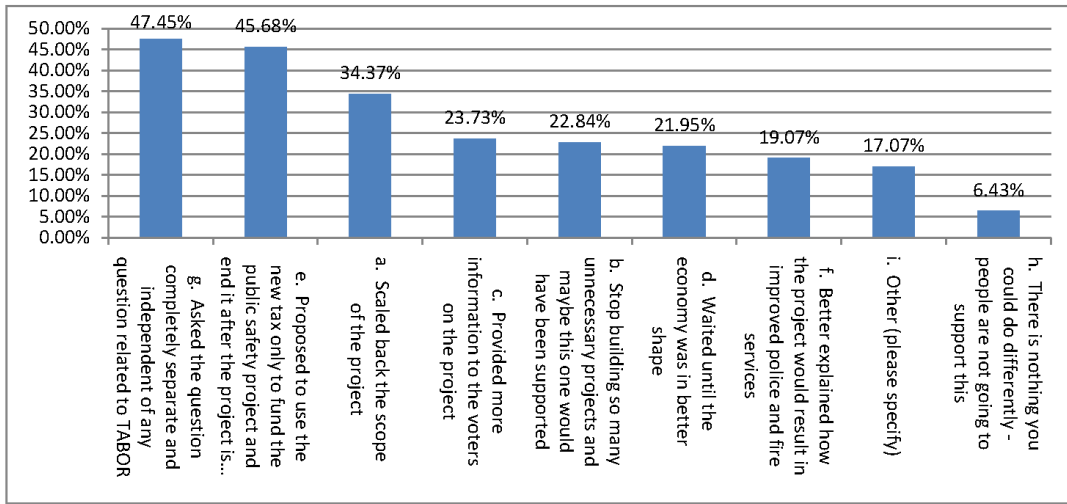
The three most common responses reflected the desire to leave TABOR restrictions in place, the lack of description for exactly how the TABOR funds would be used, and the disbelief that the passage of 2B would result in the lifting of the sales tax referenced in question 2A as the top reasons for the failure of question 2B.



NOTE: Percentages sum to greater than 100% because respondents were allowed to select more than one response.

Question #3: In your opinion, what could the City have done differently to pass ballot question 2A?

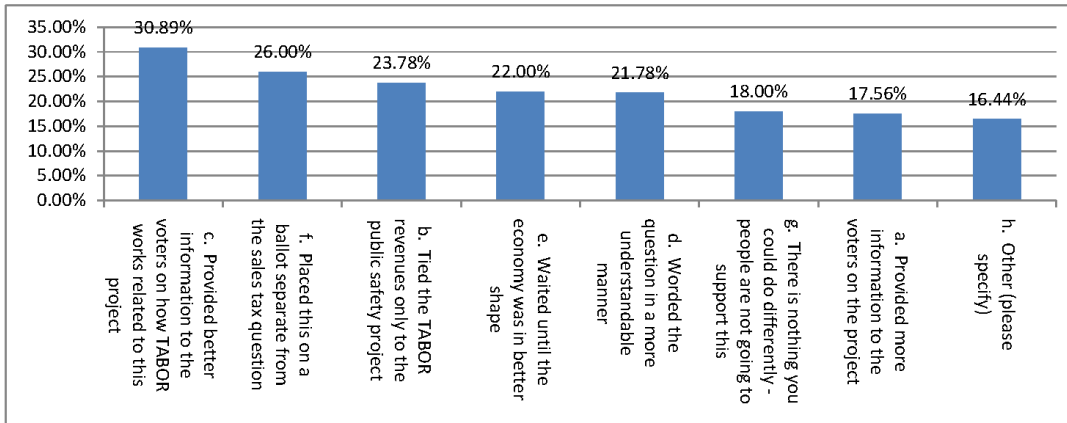
The three most common responses reflect that asking the sales tax question independent of the TABOR question, tying the new sales tax specifically to public safety, and scaling back the project could have potentially aided the effort to pass question 2A.



NOTE: Percentages sum to greater than 100% because respondents were allowed to select more than one response.

Question #4: In your opinion, what could the City have done differently to pass ballot question 2B?

The three most common responses reflect that providing more information on TABOR, asking the TABOR question separate from the sales tax question, and typing the TABOR revenues exclusively to public safety could potentially have aided the effort to pass question 2B. The responses to this question were more evenly spread and did not provide strong support for any one response.



NOTE: Percentages sum to greater than 100% because respondents were allowed to select more than one response.

'Other' Comments

The final option on all four questions was for respondents to provide feedback on other possible responses. While some respondents chose to reiterate one or more of the options that were already provided, most respondents did take the opportunity to provide new or different responses or general commentary. Those making the "Other" selection ranged from around 17% in questions #2, #3, and #4 to just over 30% in #1. Because the 30% response rate only was seen in question #1, it is possible that this may have been used as an 'outlet' to provide written feedback and once done, the rest of the survey was completed with the choices provided. The comments did take on themes and were relatively easy to categorize. The following is a recap of the themes that were presented in the "Other" sections in each question.

Question #1: Ballot question 2A (the ¼ cent sales tax to pay for seven new public safety facilities) did not pass. In your opinion, what are the top beliefs people held that caused them to vote against 2A?

The most frequently mentioned themes that emerged relative to question #1 include the scope of the project being too large; the ballot language being too confusing or complex; and dissatisfaction about the City's use of funds or priority setting practices relative to projects such as roundabouts, Colorado Avenue and 7th Street.

Question #2: Ballot question 2B (remove the City from TABOR revenue limitations – rescind the sales tax proposed in 2A after the Riverside Parkway debt is paid off) did not pass. In your opinion, what are the top beliefs people held that caused them to vote against 2B?

The most frequently mentioned themes that emerged relative to question #2 include a strong sentiment toward leaving TABOR as it is (although this was one of the options provided in the question); and dissatisfaction about the City's use of funds or priority setting practices relative to projects such as roundabouts, Colorado Avenue and 7th Street.

Question #3: In your opinion, what could the City have done differently to pass ballot question 2A?

The most frequently mentioned themes that emerged relative to question #3 include the belief that more marketing needed to be done and more information disseminated; and dissatisfaction about the City's use of funds or priority setting practices relative to projects such as roundabouts, Colorado Avenue and 7th Street.

Question #4: In your opinion, what could the City have done differently to pass ballot question 2B?

The most frequently mentioned themes that emerged relative to question #4 include a strong sentiment toward leaving TABOR as it is; the belief that more marketing needed to be done and more information

disseminated; the belief that any removal of the TABOR revenue limitation should not be permanent; and dislike of the City's use of funds or priority setting practices relative to projects such as roundabouts, Colorado Avenue and 7th Street.

Observations

Based on the results of this survey, there is no evidence to support the belief that the need for the Public Safety Initiative is not supported by the community. What the survey results do appear to indicate though is that the cost of the project, the economy at the time of the election, a strong commitment to retaining TABOR restrictions, and a sense of disbelief that the sales tax in 2A would end may have been contributing factors to the failure of 2A and 2B during the election. All of these are areas in which opportunities can be identified moving forward.

"Main Street" Survey

The City of Grand Junction contracted with Third Sector Innovations, Inc. in November 2008 to conduct a "man on the street" survey regarding failed City ballot initiatives 2A and 2B to provide funding for Police and Fire facilities and services. City residents – whether or not they had voted, and whether they had voted "yes" or "no" – were asked to respond to four open-ended questions regarding their perceptions of 2A and 2B, and the respective campaign leading to Election Day.

Contact was made either face-to face, by telephone or by e-mail interviews. **There were 217 participants of the survey.** Responses have been compiled, tallied and are presented below in illustration of prevalent and common themes. Full survey results are provided in Appendix C

Recurring responses to all four questions reflect general unease regarding the current national economy, and a reluctance to raise taxes in this environment. Many express concern with the "grandiosity" of the proposed new facilities, indicating that the City is not working to build energy- and cost-efficient buildings, but rather a "Taj Mahal." Residents are uncomfortable with a plan that, to them, does not seem frugal or even financially prudent in a time of economic crisis.

Reported more frequently than issues of cost and economy is the sentiment that there was a lack of information provided to and education of the general citizenry regarding the proposed safety facilities and the need for such facilities. Feedback indicates that the City could have done more to make city residents aware of plans, needs, purpose, implications and alternatives. Many survey participants offer suggestions – television exposure, public meetings, Farmers' Market booths, emotionally-charged advertising, etc. A notably large percentage of respondents cite a general ignorance on the part of voters, and lack of outreach on the part of the City, as the most significant shortcoming of the 2A and 2B campaign.

Responses to all four questions had similar undertones, and participants generally respond to the third and fourth questions conjunctively. This may suggest that voters generally did not consider the issues separately, but rather as a "packaged deal." Again, this lends itself to a lack of education and knowledge regarding the ballot measures and their provisions. A few participants expressed the desire to have information on the initiatives in languages other than English.

Additional frequent responses:

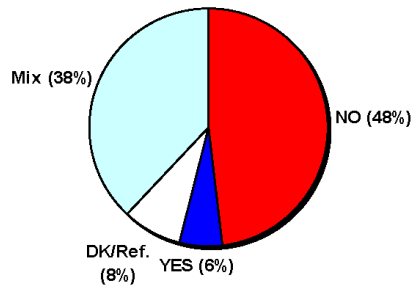
- Unclear language on the ballot
- Too many "competing" issues on the ballot (i.e., school bond)

Also worth noting is that, in conducting the surveys, representatives of Third Sector Innovations found an alarming number of participants unfamiliar with the specific details of 2A and 2B, and particularly unfamiliar with TABOR. Finally, there were a number of responses that indicate concerns regarding the (high) number of police employed by the GJPD, the focus of police (too much on traffic vs. too little on crime), and curiosity/confusion as to why police and fire are so closely linked (and require co-located facilities).

Phone Survey Findings

The City of Grand Junction contracted with Frederick Polls to conduct a post-election telephone survey. Four hundred individuals were surveyed during the course of the research. Findings show that a combination of factors, in addition to the ever-present anti-tax skepticism of the conservative Grand Junction electorate, appears to have defeated 2A and 2B including:

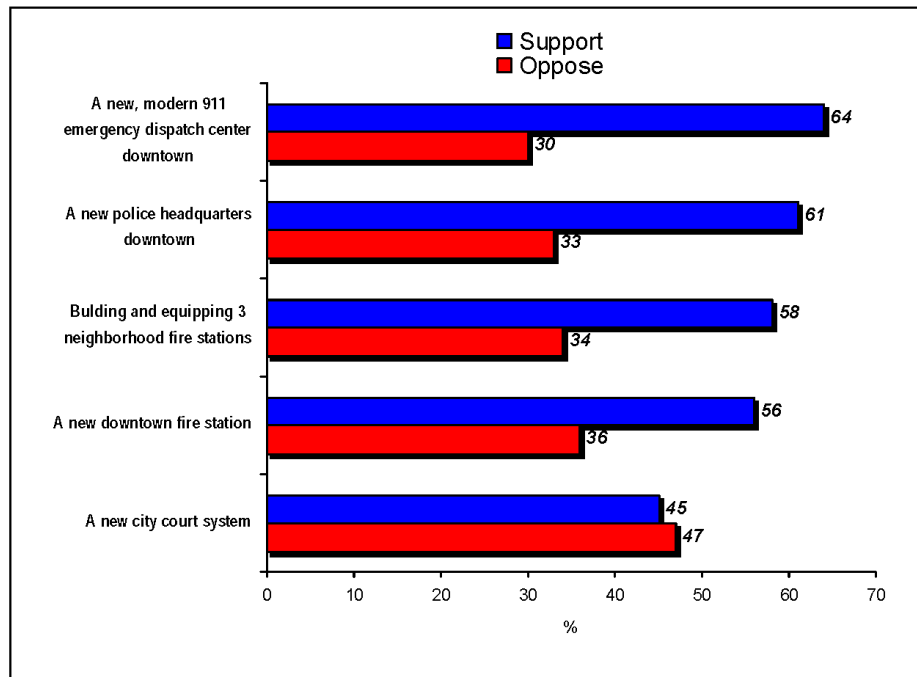
- Softening economy - while voters remain generally positive about conditions in Grand Junction, Sixty-five percent (65%) agrees that “with the economy hurting and the price of oil and gas dropping, now is not the time for a tax increase.”
- A statewide Amendment-inspired “vote NO” mood - The millions of cumulative dollars spent statewide prompting Colorado voters to reject various statewide ballot Amendments took its toll. Nearly half (48%) of Grand Junction voters say they voted a straight NO ballot on the statewide ballot issues.



- Unpopular local school tax increase ballots - In addition to the statewide ballot negative mood, Mesa 51 schools’ twin tax measures generated their own “anti-tax” boost. This post-election poll reports majorities voting against each of 3A and 3B with a remarkable 49% voting NO on both. The correlation between Mesa schools vote and 2A/2B vote was strong – three-quarters of those voting NO on both schools measures were also voting NO on 2A and 2B.
- Confusing legalistic ballot language - Despite the clear preference for the core projects, voters rejected both 2A and 2B in the poll based on a ballot language test – just as they did Election Day. Follow-up open-end comments on “why vote NO?” included several comments about either not understanding the ballot wording or feeling the wording implied broad taxing power.
- Reasons for a No Vote on 2A -When given a choice to select the reason for an anti-2A vote, the top choices are: anti-tax (31%), cost of projects too high/buildings too extravagant (22%), lack of trust in the city (18%), and weak economy (18%).

- The TABOR component of 2B - Voters were well aware of the TABOR tie-in of using monies now dedicated to the payment of the Riverside Parkway to be applied to the new public safety buildings – 73% say they know about this. More (44%) said this was more of a negative than positive (39%) factor. As expected, those voting NO on 2B said this was a negative factor by 70% to 16%.
- Even in the wake of defeat of 2A and 2B, majorities of Grand Junction voters still support the fire and police projects....

“Would you be likely to support or oppose an increase in the City’s sales tax of a quarter cent to pay for...?”



Additional Observations

- **Pre**-election polling indicated that 72% of voters over the age of 65 supported the initiative
- **Post**-election polling indicated that only 41% of voters over the age of 65 supported the initiative
- **Pre**-election polling indicated that support was consistent across party lines
- **Post**-election polling indicated that support was lost within all party lines but most significantly in the Republican party

Themes and Contributing Factors Identified From the Analysis

The following are the major themes and factors contributing to those themes that were heard repeatedly throughout the course of this analysis.

- ✓ **Majority understand the “need” for the core components of the project**
- ✓ **The downturn in the national economy**
 - Lack of support for additional taxes
 - Concern about City’s prioritization of projects
- ✓ **The scope of the project: too expensive, too big, too extravagant**
 - Parking garage for employees
 - Price tag too high
 - Why Municipal Court involved
 - Project should be phased
- ✓ **Lack of information/understanding about the project**
 - More information out
 - More marketing/advertising
 - More compelling/memorable themes
 - Information came too late
- ✓ **Confusing, complex ballot language**
 - Perception that it was deliberately confusing
 - Two questions’ inter-connectivity added to confusion
- ✓ **Lack of trust in the City**
 - ‘You already have the money’
 - ‘You are going to build it anyway’
 - Perception that City does not spend or prioritize wisely
 - Perception that City did not respect sunset on CIP sales tax
- ✓ **Vote “NO” mood**
 - Competing school district issue
 - Length of ballot
 - State funding requests
- ✓ **Connection/relationship with TABOR question**
 - Strong local sentiment to retain TABOR provisions
 - Lack of support for permanent removal of TABOR restrictions

Although respondents indicated an **understanding of the need for public safety facilities**, the data reveals that the factors listed above appear to have led to the majority of voters rejecting the solutions proposed in Questions 2A & 2B. Although the factors did lead to the defeat of both questions, they do create solid opportunities to consider.

Appendix A: Akron, CO TABOR Ballot Question

.5% Sales Tax Increase and 4.4 Mill Levy Increase

Shall the Town of Akron sales taxes be increased by \$70,000 annually in the first full fiscal year, and by whatever additional amounts are raised annually in each subsequent year through a .5% (one-half of one percent) sales tax;

and in addition, shall the Town of Akron property taxes be increased by \$29,926 annually in the first full fiscal year, and by whatever additional amounts are raised annually in each subsequent year through a 4.4 mill increase to the mill levy;

and in connection therewith, shall an ordinance be approved to provide for a .5% (one-half of one percent) sales tax increase and a 4.4 mill increase to the mill levy, such changes to be effective as of January 1, 2009, and shall the revenue change in every year caused by such increased sales tax rate and mill levy rate be approved, permitting all of the proceeds to be used for recreation and swimming pool programs and recreation and swimming pool capital projects, without limiting the collection and spending of any other revenues or funds by the town under Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution, Colorado Revised Statutes Section 29-1-301, et seq., or any other law?

Appendix B: El Paso County Public Safety TABOR Question

1A - COUNTY QUESTION

SHALL EL PASO COUNTY TAXES BE INCREASED BY \$75 MILLION ANNUALLY IN 2009 AND BY WHATEVER AMOUNTS ARE RAISED ANNUALLY THEREAFTER BY INCREASING THE COUNTY'S SALES AND USE TAX RATE BY ONE CENT PER DOLLAR IN ORDER TO PROTECT PUBLIC SAFETY AND PUBLIC HEALTH BY IMPROVING THE ABILITY OF THE SHERIFF, POLICE AND FIREFIGHTERS TO PROTECT CITIZENS, THE ABILITY OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM TO PROSECUTE AND INCARCERATE CRIMINAL OFFENDERS, AND THE ABILITY OF PUBLIC HEALTH WORKERS TO INVESTIGATE, PROTECT AGAINST AND PREVENT THE SPREAD OF DANGEROUS INFECTIOUS DISEASES, AND EXEMPTING GROCERY FOOD ITEMS, PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS, FUELS FOR RESIDENTIAL UTILITIES (SIMILARLY, GASOLINE AND DIESEL FUELS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THIS TAX), AND WITH OTHER EXEMPTIONS FROM THIS SALES AND USE TAX INCREASE AS SET FORTH IN BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER RESOLUTION 08-375, WITH ALL REVENUES GENERATED TO BE RESTRICTED TO THE FOLLOWING:

A. EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2009 AND CONTINUING THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2010, THE COUNTY SHALL EXPEND FIFTY PERCENT (50%) OF ALL REVENUES GENERATED FROM THIS SALES AND USE TAX INCREASE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF MEDIUM AND MAXIMUM SECURITY FACILITIES AT THE EL PASO COUNTY REGIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE CENTER (JAIL), INCLUDING THE COSTS OF EQUIPPING AND FURNISHING THE PROJECT, AND EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2011, AND CONTINUING UNTIL THE EARLIER OF COMPLETION OF ALL OF THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC SAFETY CAPITAL PROJECTS OR JANUARY 1, 2026, THE COUNTY SHALL EXPEND TEN PERCENT (10%) OF ALL REVENUES GENERATED FROM THIS SALES AND USE TAX INCREASE FOR THE FOLLOWING REGIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY CAPITAL

IMPROVEMENTS, INCLUDING THE COSTS OF EQUIPPING AND FURNISHING OF THE IMPROVEMENTS, AND WITH THE REVENUES FROM THIS SALES AND USE TAX INCREASE TO BE HELD BY THE COUNTY TREASURER IN RESTRICTED ACCOUNTS THAT MAY ONLY BE USED TO CARRY OUT THE VOTERS' INTENT AS EXPRESSED IN THIS BALLOT ISSUE, AND FOR NO OTHER PURPOSES:

1. THE REGIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE CENTER (JAIL), MAXIMUM AND MEDIUM SECURITY FACILITIES, EL PASO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, ESTIMATED TO COST \$75,500,000 (IF NOT COMPLETED DURING THE PERIOD FROM JANUARY 1, 2009 TO JANUARY 1, 2011);
2. REGIONAL SHERIFF'S OPERATIONS, TRAINING AND CORONER'S OFFICE MEDICAL EXAMINER-LABORATORY FACILITY, EL PASO COUNTY SHERIFF'S AND CORONER'S OFFICE,

ESTIMATED TO COST \$26,000,000;

3. EMERGENCY OPERATIONS/SECURED INFORMATION CENTER, CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS FIRE AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS, ESTIMATED TO COST \$10,500,000;
4. NORTHERN REGION JOINT PUBLIC SAFETY SUBSTATION, CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT AND EL PASO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, **ESTIMATED TO COST \$6,300,000;**
5. REGIONAL WORK RELEASE FACILITY, EL PASO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, ESTIMATED TO COST \$7,000,000;
6. SOUTHERN REGION JOINT PUBLIC SAFETY SUBSTATION, EL PASO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, ESTIMATED TO COST \$6,300,000;
7. 4TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT FACILITY NEEDS ARISING FROM UNFUNDED STATE MANDATES, DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, ESTIMATED TO COST \$15,900,000;
8. REGIONAL JUDICIAL COMPLEX SECURITY SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS, 4TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT, ESTIMATED TO COST \$2,500,000;
9. SHERIFF'S OFFICE EMERGENCY AND WILDLAND FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLE STORAGE FACILITY, EL PASO COUNTY

SHERIFF'S OFFICE, ESTIMATED TO COST \$3,000,000;

B. THE COUNTY SHALL EXPEND THE REMAINDER OF THE REVENUES GENERATED EACH YEAR FROM THIS SALES AND USE TAX INCREASE TO FUND PUBLIC SAFETY AND PUBLIC HEALTH OPERATIONAL AND CAPITAL NEEDS AND IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDING THE HIRING, TRAINING, COMPENSATION AND EQUIPPING OF POLICE OFFICERS, SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES, FIRE FIGHTERS, EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS/PARAMEDICS, DISTRICT ATTORNEY EMPLOYEES, CORONER EMPLOYEES, PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS, AND OTHER SWORN AND NON-SWORN PERSONNEL OF THESE PUBLIC SAFETY AND PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCIES, WITH SUCH FUNDS TO BE HELD BY THE COUNTY TREASURER IN RESTRICTED ACCOUNTS THAT SHALL ONLY BE USED TO CARRY OUT THE VOTERS' INTENT AS EXPRESSED IN THIS BALLOT ISSUE, AND THE COUNTY SHALL DISTRIBUTE THESE FUNDS ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING PERCENTAGES, AND ONLY FOR THE FOLLOWING, AND FOR NO OTHER, PURPOSES:

1. REGIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE CENTER (JAIL), EL PASO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, 17.5%;
2. REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES, EL PASO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT, 20%;
3. PUBLIC SAFETY AND PUBLIC HEALTH FUNCTIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES, 47.5%. THE COUNTY SHALL DISTRIBUTE THE AMOUNTS BASED ON POPULATION, WHICH SHALL BE CALCULATED ANNUALLY BASED ON THE MOST CURRENT POPULATION DATA AVAILABLE FROM THE COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL AFFAIRS:
 - i. CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS,
 - ii. EL PASO COUNTY (POPULATION IN UNINCORPORATED AREAS ONLY),
 - iii. CITY OF FOUNTAIN,
 - iv. CITY OF MANITOU SPRINGS,
 - v. TOWN OF MONUMENT,

vi. TOWN OF PALMER LAKE,
vii. TOWN OF CALHAN,
viii. TOWN OF GREEN MOUNTAIN FALLS,
ix. TOWN OF RAMAH;
4. PROGRAM FOR EMERGENCY ALCOHOL AND
DRUG ABUSE ENFORCEMENT, 2.5%;
5. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, 5%;
6. REGIONAL CORONER'S OFFICE MEDICAL
EXAMINER- LABORATORY FACILITY, EL PASO
COUNTY CORONER'S OFFICE, 2.5%;
7. REGIONAL OFFICE OF EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT, EL PASO COUNTY OFFICE OF
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND COLORADO
SPRINGS OFFICE OF EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT, 2%;
8. REGIONAL CHILD AND ADULT PROTECTION
PROGRAMS WHICH SHALL BE USED TO
INVESTIGATE, PROSECUTE, TREAT AND
PREVENT ABUSE AND NEGLECT OF CHILDREN
AND OF ADULTS WHO ARE ELDERLY AND/OR
DISABLED, EL PASO COUNTY, 3%;
C. EFFECTIVE THE EARLIER OF COMPLETION
OF THE CAPITAL PROJECTS SET FORTH IN
PARAGRAPH A OF THIS BALLOT ISSUE OR
JANUARY 1, 2026, WHICHEVER OCCURS FIRST,
THE PORTION OF THIS SALES AND USE TAX
RATE INCREASE THAT IS BEING USED
SPECIFICALLY FOR REGIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AS SET FORTH IN
PART A, ABOVE, SHALL TERMINATE WITHOUT
THE NEED FOR ANY ACTION ON THE PART OF
THE COUNTY, AND THE SALES AND USE TAX
RATE INCREASE IN THIS BALLOT ISSUE SHALL
BE REDUCED BY 0.1% (1/10TH CENT PER
DOLLAR);
D. IN ADDITION TO THE AMOUNTS PROVIDED
TO THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE FROM THE SALES
AND USE TAX RATE INCREASE IN THIS BALLOT
ISSUE, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2009, AND FOR
EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, THE
COUNTY SHALL BUDGET AND APPROPRIATE
FOR THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE NOT LESS THAN
THE AMOUNTS BUDGETED AND APPROPRIATED
FOR THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE AS STATED IN THE
COUNTY'S FISCAL YEAR 2008 REVISED
BUDGET AS THE REVISED BUDGET EXISTED

ON JULY 31, 2008;
E. AND WITH ALL REVENUES GENERATED FROM THIS SALES AND USE TAX INCREASE AND THE EARNINGS ON SUCH REVENUES TO CONSTITUTE VOTER APPROVED REVENUE AND SPENDING CHANGES OF THE COUNTY AND THE MUNICIPALITIES IDENTIFIED HEREIN, TO BE COLLECTED AND SPENT EACH YEAR BY THE COUNTY AND THE MUNICIPALITIES IDENTIFIED HEREIN WITHOUT LIMITATION BY THE REVENUE AND SPENDING LIMITS OF, AND WITHOUT AFFECTING THE COUNTY'S ABILITY OR THE ABILITY OF THE MUNICIPALITIES IDENTIFIED HEREIN TO COLLECT AND SPEND OTHER REVENUES OR FUNDS UNDER, ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION OR ANY OTHER LAW OR, FOR THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS, THE REVENUE AND SPENDING PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE VII, § 7-90 OF THE COLORADO SPRINGS CITY CHARTER, WITH THE SALES AND USE TAX INCREASE TO BE ADMINISTERED, COLLECTED AND ENFORCED ACCORDING TO BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER RESOLUTION 08-375, AND TO BE SUBJECT TO AN ANNUAL INDEPENDENT AUDIT;
F. AND FURTHER PROVIDED THAT IN NO EVENT SHALL THE COUNTY USE ANY REVENUES GENERATED FROM THIS SALES AND USE TAX INCREASE AS A PLEDGE OR SECURITY FOR ANY BONDED INDEBTEDNESS, ANY CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION OR ANY MULTI-YEAR FINANCIAL OBLIGATION WITHOUT SPECIFIC VOTER APPROVAL?

Appendix C: “Main Street” Survey Data

Did you vote on Questions 2A and 2B in the recent election?

Yes (voted) 134, or 62%

No (did not vote) 83, or 38%

1. Ballot question 2A did not pass. Whether you voted for or against the question, or even if you did not vote, can you give me the reasons why you voted no, or would be inclined to not support this request?

Response	# of Responses	% of Participants	Most Prevalent Theme of Comments
The economy is unsure right now and therefore this is a bad time to add new sales taxes or begin any new projects.	64	29%	This was simply bad timing.
We don't need any new taxes.	45	21%	Our community is not generally supportive of increased taxes.
We don't need new facilities.	33	15%	Why do they need new facilities?
This project is too expensive. The proposed facilities are too luxurious and are not cost-nor energy-efficient.	23	11%	The project needs to be designed to be efficient, not a “Taj Mahal.”

2. Ballot question 2B did not pass. Whether you voted for or against the question, or even if you did not vote, can you give me the reasons why you voted no, or would be inclined to not support this request?

Response	# of Responses	% of Participants	Most Prevalent Theme of Comments
We don't need any new taxes.	52	24%	Our community is not generally supportive of increased taxes.

3. In your opinion, what could the City have done differently to pass ballot question 2A?

Response	# of Responses	% of Participants	Most Prevalent Theme of Comments
Provided more information on the proposal to the voters.	79	36%	The City did not do enough to help the citizenry understand the need for the facilities and plans for their use. Voters also needed general information about the ballot measures.
Waited for a time with a better economic outlook.	57	26%	This is not the right time to try to pass this.
Better explained how the project will impact the community and how it would result in improved services.	27	12%	The City should have taken a more emotionally-appealing approach to advertising.

4. In your opinion, what could the City have done differently to pass ballot question 2B?

Response	# of Responses	% of Participants	Most Prevalent Theme of Comments
Provided more information on the proposal to the voters.	79	36%	Not enough voters understand TABOR, nor the general meaning of this ballot measure.
Waited for a time with a better economic outlook.	54	25%	This is not the right time to try to pass this.

Appendix D: Summary of Opinion Submitted by Grand Junction City Auditor

Mesa County election results were detrimentally influenced by the national political climate. It is my opinion that the combination of a local conservative demographic and a strong national wave of support for the Democratic Party creates a strong polarity in the voting public. Voters in the Grand Valley rode the political pendulum to the far right and consistently voted conservatively. A conservative demographic will consistently vote more conservative during times of national "left-leaning."

That said, the election results cannot rest solely on the influence of the national political climate: evidenced by the passing of the Fruita Recreation Center and the Clifton Fire Department. For the purpose of focusing on the prospective argument, I offer the following comments:

Mesa County Voters demonstrate precondition in voting behavior

There is an inherent amount of preconditioning of response to ballot questions. Unfortunately, this behavior pattern did not work in our favor for this election.

For this, I offer two pieces of evidence from the 2008 election results:

1. Mesa County voters are more likely to cast a "no" vote for amendments, referred measures and referendums¹.

I believe that there is a strong argument that voters from a conservative demographic are more likely to vote against changing the status quo: demonstrated in the pattern of "No" votes for amendments and referendums and supported by evidence number 2, detailed below.

Any initiative, referendum, referred measure, or amendment that asks change of voters requires significantly more resources and outreach to compel the electorate to circumvent the preconditioned response of voting "no."

Furthermore, it is important to take into consideration the extent to which this preconditioning dominates. When comparing 2006 and 2008 election results², it is evidenced that voting preconditioning had significantly more influence in the 2008 election.

2. Mesa County voters are more likely to cast a "yes" vote for retaining Justices and Judges³

Although this occurrence does not affect the Public Safety Initiative, I offer this piece of evidence because it is indicative the existence of preconditioned voting behavior and the hesitancy of voters to vote for change.

¹ Referenced by attached "Election Worksheet," page 3

² Referenced by attached "Election Worksheet," page 3

³ " "

The Exceptions

Because the PSI initiative requires voters to go against pre-conditioned behavior, it is important to examine the instances of exception.

Referendum M, N: I believe that it is noteworthy to examine the language utilized in the two referendums that passed. Specifically, the presence of the following words, similar in character: “obsolete,” “outdated,” “elimination.”

It is my contention that the usage of these this verbatim served to attract and engage the voter and was successful. Perhaps we could employ a similar tactic: to repair “outdated” facilities; to correct or to mitigate against “insufficiencies,” to prevent “inadequacies.”

Amendments 50, 54: Based upon Mesa County election results for the Amendments to the State Constitution, I offer the following observations. I would argue that Mesa County voters demonstrated fiscal conservatism, but not social conservatism⁴. The two amendments receiving “yes” votes from Mesa County voters are 50 and 54.

It is therefore my opinion that Mesa County voters are especially concerned with: ¹⁾ Fiscal conservatism and ethical fiduciary behavior; and ²⁾ Local decision making ability, decentralized from the state. To ensure the public’s endorsement of the PSI, we need to prove our ethical fiduciary conduct. The Sentinel attacked us on this point several times during the election season and perhaps a more aggressive defense could have mitigated the affect of “Sentinel Mud-Slinging.” Bottom line: it is my opinion that the PSI initiative needs to stress the need for stronger local government in concurrence with the City’s fiscal responsibility. Since I have started working for the City, I have only witness strongly ethical, fiscal behavior and the voters need to see that as well. The difficulty lies in the method of this communication.

City of Fruita Referred Measure 2C: I would like to comment on two aspects of the City of Fruita’s Referred Measure that I believe significantly aided its passing:

Measure 2C included a detailed description of what the sales tax revenues would provide:

“Constructing and equipping a community center, to include among other things, aquatics facilities, pool party rooms, a gymnasium, a senior meeting room, multi-use meeting rooms, a group exercise studio, fitness/wellness areas, child care facilities, locker rooms, family changing rooms, updating of the existing Fruita outdoor pool, lobby spaces, and staff office spaced.”

Specificity reassures voters and facilitates a “yes” vote by providing a level of assurance of fiscal responsibility.

Measure 2C utilized specific wording that demonstrates fiscal restraint: “which shall be deposited into a City Community Center Fund and **used solely** for the purpose of constructing, improving, equipping, operating and maintaining a community center...”

⁴ As indicated by Mesa County votes against Amendments 46, 47, 48.

Economic Concerns: Black Monday Fears

Mesa County Election results are indicative of the community's fears and apprehensions regarding the economy and the possibility of a reoccurrence of Black Monday. It is impossible to drive on 1-70 and not see the presence of the oil industry in Western Colorado. Mesa County residents voted to protect the interests of the oil and gas industry, but not the City of Grand Junction. Why? 2A and 2B were falsely viewed as threats to the local economy.

For 2A and 2B to have passed, there needed to be more communication, information and outreach to press the following examples of why it benefits the economy and Grand Junction residents.

The City of Grand Junction is the fourth largest employer for Mesa County⁵. The City provides more jobs than Halliburton or Schlumberger. Local jobs are essential for our economy. Investing in the City of Grand Junction = Investing in our residents!

Investing in the Public Safety Initiative would have stimulated our economy, created more local jobs, benefited local businesses, and increased the level of safety for Grand Junction residents.

Grand Junction residents only account for 18% of the sales tax revenue. Therefore, 82% of sales tax revenue is generated by non-residents⁶. The funding burden, therefore, does not fall significantly on our residents; the benefit of the PSI, however, is substantially ours.

The need for the public safety initiative needs to be more clearly and consistently communicated. I was under the, perhaps false, impression that Grand Junction is experiencing an increase in violent crime. The front page of a recent Daily Sentinel headlines: "Unlucky 11: The 11th days of September, October and November this year have been marked by inexplicable violence in Western Colorado."

⁵ Obtained from: www.gjep.org/business_environment/industry_base.php

⁶ Non-residents include businesses, Mesa County residents, and visitors.

Appendix E: Opportunity Comments

NOTE: These comments have been provided in their raw form.

Comments related to Economy, Timing, Financing or TABOR

- Wait until after April, don't go back too fast.
- Don't compete with School District, who will likely go back to the voters in November
- April ballot will not have the distractions (amendments) of this past Nov. ballot
- Go back in April, fresh in people's minds
- April is not too quick with the "right" question
- Four Council Members could generate talk about the project among candidates and create positive discussion during the election.
- I hope you find a way to get this done since to me it is the most important issue facing the City and the citizens. Nothing else should take precedence!
- Time is running out on the communication center, time and money has already been wasted.
- Need to establish fiscal credibility on financial management before you ask for TABOR relief.
- Next time, put this on a ballot by itself even if it costs more to do that.
- Take a hard look at allocating resources where they are needed most.
- Stay away from TABOR.
- Build some financial credibility with the voters before you ask for such a ballot again.
- Leave TABOR alone, we like it.
- Keep going time after time if you really need it, however make the needed changes as you evaluate it further.
- Need to tease out what negative emotional baggage we have surrounding the PSI and find a way to move past it.
- Put yourselves in an aggressive timetable to sponsor and hold public hearings on the PSI. Present the dilemma, i.e. the facilities are direly needed and then listen to citizen feedback.
- It is felt that the citizens will not vote for a 98 million project in these economic times. Need to find a compromise which the citizens find palatable and will support.
- The police and fire departments will get their new buildings in time but I wouldn't be in rush to put together another proposition on the ballot until we see what a year of so brings as far as a recession is concerned.
- Remove Tabor 2B question from ballot.
- Economy is in bad shape, but in times of uncertainty public security is important. There is a correlation between economy and crime.
- Need to take TABOR off the table if you try again.
- Separate 2a from 2b and it may be successful.
- Do a quarter cent sales tax, sunset, and no TABOR.
- Combine funding sources with ¼ cent. Energy impact, capital campaign, county participation
- Voters in Mesa County feel differently about TABOR than the other 250 communities and this should be recognized between now and when the city decides to try again.

Comments related to Project Scope

- Why not build one at a time to save money?
- City Council needs to be prepared to start cutting the fat out of the \$98 million or the tax payers will throw it back at them.
- Don't bring back the SAME project to the voters, scale it down some and show we have compromised.
- Ask only 2A with sunset, no 2B
- Don't cut down the project, means we didn't need \$98 million to begin with
- Ask to pay it off early like the Parkway
- Need the "right" question: Clear in scope and needs an end date, solely make it about the tax
- Scale down the project
- County needs to be putting \$ into this project – they get a benefit and need to pay.
- Highlight the phased construction aspect of the project to combat seven buildings all at once.
- 10-15 years for scope
- Try for the building itself.
- Just build a sized down downtown police and fire building working with the current budget with no new tax increase.
- Go to Rifle and see how they paid for theirs, Homeland Security dollars?
- Involve Fire and Police in decisions of just what is needed.
- Look at leaving things as is at the current locations as sub stations and build new buildings as close by on property that can house an administrative fire and police building.
- Need to carve into phases, but find a balance to not cut it too much giving up future growth.
- It will be short sided to cut the project back from a long-term need standpoint to much since it will cost more in the long run.
- Numbers may drop now due to lower construction material costs since this was first proposed.
- Work with the architect on a phasing program.
- Need to recognize that even just a ¼ % increase is just too much for those who are not meeting the daily expenses. If there are other funding mechanisms available those need to be explored.
- I didn't vote for either 2a or 2b. If it were proposed in the same fashion next year I won't vote for it and doubt if I would vote for it in 10 years, if proposed the same way.
- Don't spend as much time overcoming individual bias to win people over. Stay goal and outcome oriented.
- Build it on land that the city already owned at West Street and Broadway. If so then you don't have to find temporary locations during construction.
- Rethink the grandeur dreams and build a very basic efficient building. No fancy parking garages for all the employees and gardens.
- The land you already have should be sold, hopefully for a profit, and converted into commercial residential units. Use it with other programs to boost much needed residential

downtown development. Then use the funds to off-set building on land the city already owns.

- Can city look at a private construction with a lease back by government.
- Downsize garage to hold cars for security and then add on as needed.
- Cut off the courts piece and fund a security device for city hall.
- I would favor as pay as you go approach.
- Need to phase it in.
- Build new in another location and use the old station as sub-stations for fire and police.
- Would support a project that will include the new public safety building, a new fire station No.1 and a reduced size annex building that is devoted to evidence storage. With this reduction would support a ¼ % sales tax increase as long as it sunset upon payoff of the facility costs.
- Look into regionalization or consolidation of police and fire services borrowing from the current 911 center.
- Why can't the police station be built to house both city and county to save tremendous building costs and ongoing costs.
- We will continue to vote no and encourage a no vote until we see real changes.
- I will only vote yes if additional fire stations come later on separate ballot initiatives.
- Separate fire from police.
- Keep with the ¼ penny only, after 30 years of paying bonds the landscape will change and we will have de-bruced. Keep question of payment simple next time.
- 911 board, sale of city property, etc.
- Architectural rendering may have looked too "big," too expensive; get design that is more in keeping with downtown historical themes (red brick, long arched windows, less glass, less steel, etc.).
- Any effort to examine alternatives (and thus costs) would be appreciated by voters, but reductions should not be solicitous ("window dressing.."); substantive; even small reductions would be okay, if linked to serious design changes or building alternatives.

Comments Related to Lack of Information/Questions & Ideas

- Think about putting the new facility where people can see them.
- Get more media attention from employees and citizens, put a "face" to the cause. Citizens have more trust in fire/police employees than managers.
- Don't call it "2A and 2B" or PSI, refer to it as "community pride" or something to that effect.
- Talk about how it directly affects citizens and cops/fire.
- Hold public meetings to allow citizens to vent over more taxes. Helps them understand we don't want to raise sales tax, but we need to do this. Let them beat on the bearers of bad news. It is an emotional issue, not just factual.
- Explain and educate the people about the purchase/acquisition of the land.
- Use digital media to reach out- TV/internet
- Have a 1) Clear project and 2) Clear goal

- Use Parkway as evidence of trust, we did what we said, government is responsible and stewards of tax dollars.
- Use the "Parkway" method and efforts of reaching out and engaging the public.
- Make the project visual, people think simplistically. Show how it will impact them and where they live.
- Get more citizen input on the project, ore citizen contribution to the conecpt, more citizen involvement
- Start earlier for early voting
- More tours
- Utilize public forums
- Connect the issue with citizen safety
- Get more citizen input.
- Contactors offered to help with ballot language, but was turned down.
- Need to capture the need for the new fire stations.
- Go out again but frame the language to be simple and clear ie: What is the project, How much money will it take, How long will you need the money.
- Need to convince those who claim you should cut back by educating them on how expensive it will be to do so in the long run.
- Need to think like tax payers.
- Might support another fire station through convincing data.
- Next go round include some citizens to "sit on the back bench" and listen to discussions.
- Create a citizens advisory board to assist with specifically public safety.
- Put together a group of businesses and business leaders, who like Mesa State, committed dollars to promoting facilities, advertising.
- Public education with ice cream socials, active outreach at the Malls, neighborhood meetings in homes, etc.
- Need to connect safety with the buildings. Easier with fire, because they have a place to live.
- With early voting and mail in ballots need to get bulk of work done before.
- Work with Daily Sentinel writers, ride-a-longs, work in 911 center, tours with editorial board, tell stories of everyday police and fire work.
- Don't sell the ballot question too early so City Fathers can campaign more, explain in their own words.
- Better explain the early research regarding others and facilities around the state.
- Better educate by using water and trash billing system.
- Learn from past TABOR language, be specific to use of funds, amount and the time required.
- Did we look at other cities our size and if not should prior to next time if so mail out that information so all can see the research.
- Be straight forward.
- Form a citizens committee that has building community representation and have them get engaged, highly visible and dealing directly with Council.
- Contact those in the community that have wide spread political ties both democratic and republicans prior to going out again.

- Open the next go round up to a citizens group willing to get out in front of the project.
- The City should have and show a long term plan to support police and fire.
- Try decentralizing some of the services like evidence, communications, administration and courts.
- In the future maybe spend some time educating the public on how this affects all of the city departments.
- Should consider a conservative, phased in approach.
- Get Council involved, even if it means going again in April. The city needs to show them off supporting it in the press.
- Don't need to get into all the details like a weight room, technology etc. these are givens in a project like this.
- Put mockups of the proposal on display in public places.
- Although it is recognized that specific ballot language is required, the ballot could include simple, summary statements, like: "Approve ¼ penny for thirty years to pay bonds."
- Explain how *buildings* improve public safety. Parse out and list, individually, on ballot, campaign literature, and communications as to how that specific element improves safety. Fire stations, for example, may be easy for people to relate to safety; admin offices may not be as easy to relate.

Appendix F: Survey Instruments
Grand Junction Post-Election Survey

If you voted in the November 4 election, please take a brief moment to share your answers to four questions to help us analyze the community's perception of the outcome. We have compiled a list of possible responses based on feedback we have received from the community, but if you have an answer that is different than those listed, please provide us with your answer under "Other".

- 1. Ballot question 2A (the ¼ cent sales tax to pay for seven new public safety facilities) did not pass. In your opinion, what are the top beliefs people held that caused them to vote against 2A? PLEASE SELECT UP TO THREE.**
 - a. There is no need for new police and fire facilities – what they have now is just fine
 - b. We do not need another sales tax for anything, period
 - c. The cost of the project was too high
 - d. The City already has the funds to build these buildings without a new tax
 - e. The economy is really in bad shape right now and adding a new sales tax just does not make sense at this time
 - f. It was tied with the TABOR question and therefore I could not support it
 - g. Other (please specify) _____

- 2. Ballot question 2B (remove the City from TABOR revenue limitations – rescind the sales tax proposed in 2A after the Riverside Parkway debt is paid off) did not pass. In your opinion, what are the top beliefs people held that caused them to vote against 2B? PLEASE SELECT UP TO THREE.**
 - a. There is no need for new police and fire facilities – what they have now is just fine
 - b. The question was simply too confusing so people did not vote for it
 - c. The cost of the project was too high
 - d. TABOR should not be overturned for any reason, period
 - e. The City already has the funds to build these buildings
 - f. There was no description of exactly how the TABOR funds would be spent
 - g. People don't believe that the sales tax in 2A would really go away if 2B passed
 - h. The economy is really in bad shape right now and if I am due a TABOR refund, I want to receive it
 - i. Other (please specify) _____

- 3. In your opinion, what could the City have done differently to pass ballot question 2A? PLEASE SELECT UP TO THREE.**
 - a. Scaled back the scope of the project
 - b. Stop building so many unnecessary projects and maybe this one would have been supported
 - c. Provided more information to the voters on the project
 - d. Waited until the economy was in better shape
 - e. Proposed to use the new tax only to fund the public safety project and end it after the project is paid for
 - f. Better explained how the project would result in improved police and fire services
 - g. Asked the question completely separate and independent of any question related to TABOR
 - h. There is nothing you could do differently - people are not going to support this
 - i. Other (please specify) _____

- 4. In your opinion, what could the City have done differently to pass ballot question 2B? PLEASE SELECT UP TO THREE.**
 - a. Provided more information to the voters on the project
 - b. Tied the TABOR revenues only to the public safety project
 - c. Provided better information to the voters on how TABOR works related to this project
 - d. Worded the question in a more understandable manner
 - e. Waited until the economy was in better shape
 - f. Placed this on a ballot separate from the sales tax question
 - g. There is nothing you could do differently - people are not going to support this
 - h. Other (please specify) _____

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this survey!

Appendix G: Post-Election Analysis Team Members

Rich Englehart, Deputy City Manager ~ Team/Project Leader
Jodi Romero, Financial Operations Manager
Troy Smith, Deputy Police Chief
Greg Trainor, Utilities & Street Systems Director
Tim Moore, Public Works & Planning Director
Debbie Kovalik, Economic Development and Visitor Services Director
Sam Rainguet, Communications and Community Relations Coordinator
Stephanie Tuin, City Clerk
Angela Harness, Management Analyst

November 2008 Ballot Questions

Question 2A

AND GRAND JUNCTION TAXES BE INCREASED \$5,129,091 IN 2009 AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER BY SUCH ADDITIONAL AMOUNT AS IS GENERATED BY INCREASING THE CITY'S SALES AND USE TAX FROM 2.75% TO 3.00% FOR THE PURPOSE OF FINANCING THE COSTS OF CONSTRUCTING AND OPERATING PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITIES AND ACQUIRING EQUIPMENT FOR THE FACILITIES PROVIDED THAT SUCH TAX INCREASE SHALL TERMINATE IF QUESTION 2B PASSES AT THIS ELECTION AND WHEN THE RIVERSIDE PARKWAY BONDS HAVE BEEN DEFEASED OR ARE OTHERWISE LEGALLY PAID IN FULL; AND SHALL THE CITY BE AUTHORIZED TO COLLECT, RETAIN AND SPEND SUCH REVENUES AND ANY INVESTMENT EARNINGS AND INTEREST ON SUCH REVENUES, AS A VOTER APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE UNDER ARTICLE X, SECTION 20, OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION?

Question 2B

COMMENCING NO LATER THAN THE 90TH DAY AFTER THE CITY HAS DEFEASED OR OTHERWISE LEGALLY PAID IN FULL ALL CITY DEBT ISSUED FOR RIVERSIDE PARKWAY SHALL THE CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION BE AUTHORIZED TO COLLECT, RETAIN AND SPEND ALL CITY REVENUES FROM WHATEVER SOURCE, AS A VOTER APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE UNDER ARTICLE X, SECTION 20, OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION?

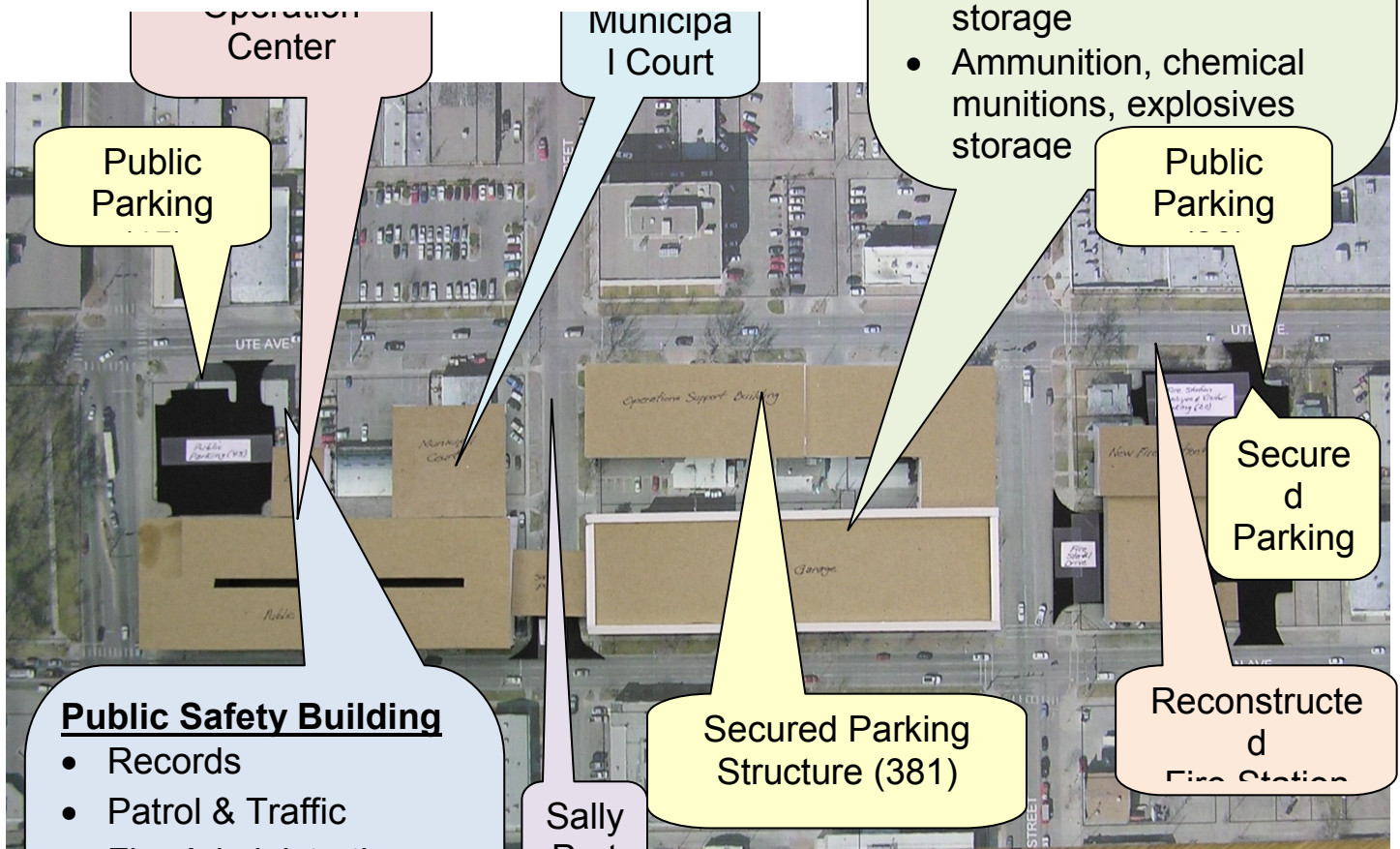
City of Grand Junction Public Safety Initiative

Use of Existing Ute Avenue Property

- **Public Safety Building**
- **Fire Station #1**

Operations Support Building

- Property Evidence Storage & Public Release
- Digital lab, forensic processing bay
- Specialized large vehicle storage
- Ammunition, chemical munitions, explosives storage



Public Safety Building

- Records
- Patrol & Traffic
- Fire Administration
- Investigations
- Police Administration
- Training
- E-911 Regional Communication Center

Sally Port

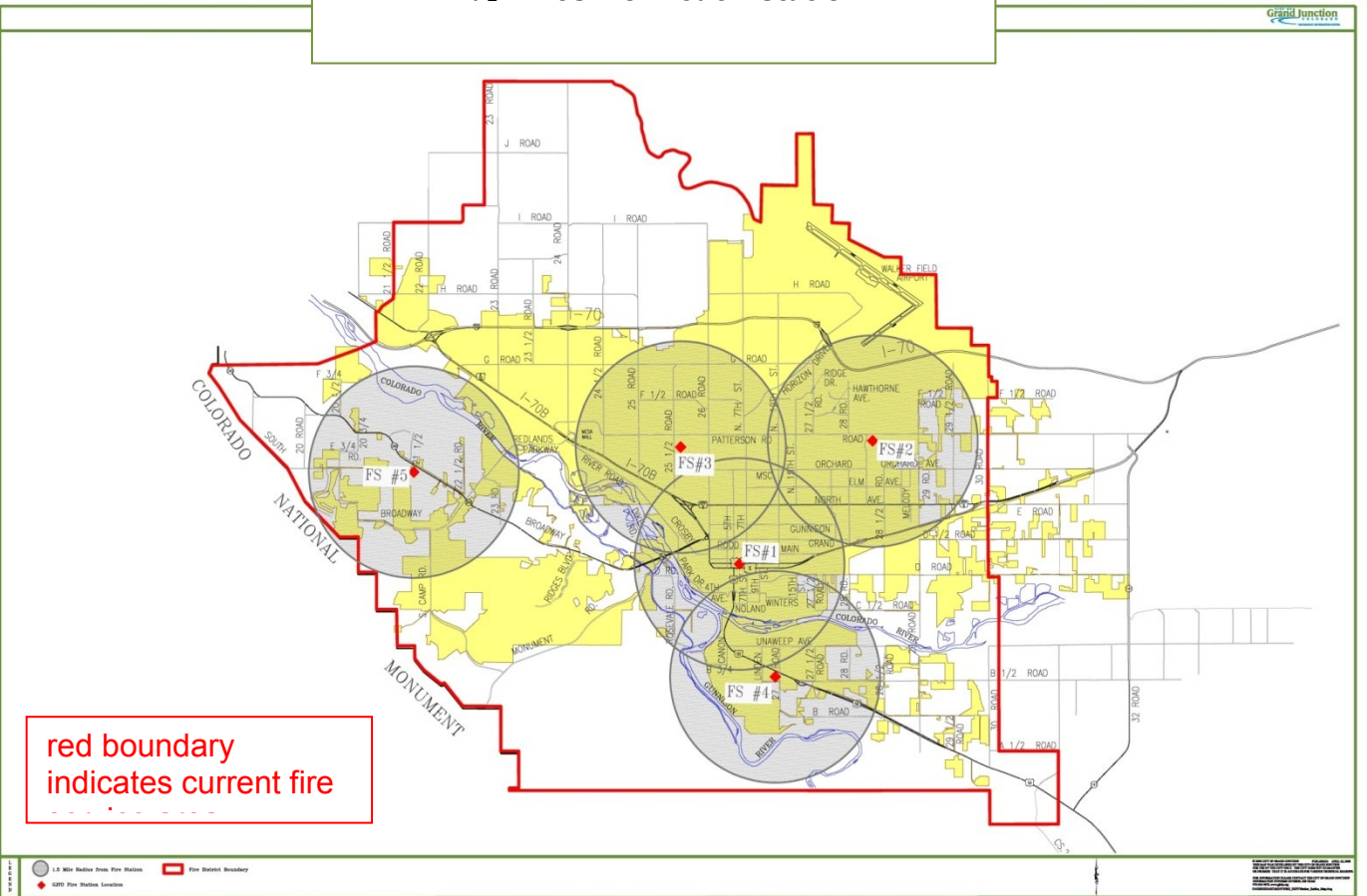
Secured Parking Structure (381)

Reconstructed Fire Station

464 Total Parking Spaces

Land Use With Parking Structure = 8.24 acres

Insurance Service Organization's (ISO) Recommended Fire Response Radius 1 1/2 miles from each station

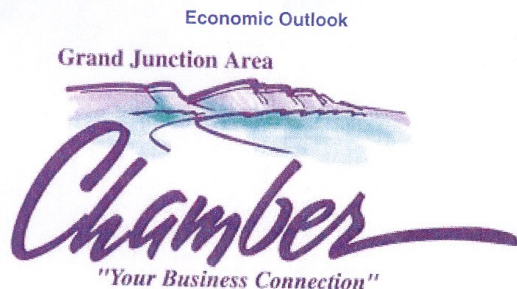


red boundary
indicates current fire

1.5 Mile Radius from Fire Station
Fire Station Location
Fire Service Boundary

Grand Junction, Colorado
Map Date: 10/15/2014
Map Time: 10:00 AM
Map Author: [Name]
Map Reviewer: [Name]

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[View Individual Responses](#)

Survey Results

1. What is your current perspective on the Grand Valley economy?






Strong		2	1%
Stable		102	38%
Weak		147	54%
Extremely Weak		8	3%
Other, please specify View Responses		26	10%

2. As you look at the next six months what factor do you think will most significantly impact your business?








Perception of a weak economy		79	29%
What is happening with the national economy		105	39%
Regulatory Environment		49	18%
Consumer confidence		109	40%
Other, please specify View Responses		29	11%

3. In terms of the local business environment, which of these proposed local strategies could have a positive impact on your business? (check all that apply)

Waiving of tap and permit fees for construction projects for a period of time		43	16%
Waiving of TCP and other development fees for a period of time		50	19%

Developing a method to balance prudent use of taxpayer money with giving more business to locally based companies		118	45%
Expediting various permitting processes to speed up projects		77	29%
More public funding for local infrastructure and capital projects		82	31%
A "think positive" media campaign to bolster local consumer confidence		136	51%
Other, please specify View Responses		46	17%

4. Realizing that public funding may be limited for some time which ONE of these proposed capital projects should be a top priority for the community?

Public Safety Facilities		101	38%
Schools		85	32%
29 Road and the Interstate Interchange		49	18%
Recreation Center		6	2%
Central library		5	2%
None of them		32	12%
Other, please specify View Responses		21	8%

5. When do you expect that the local economic conditions will begin to improve?

Third Quarter, 2009		43	16%
Fourth Quarter 2009		44	16%
Early 2010		77	28%
Mid to late 2010		85	31%
Other, please specify View Responses		31	11%

6. As we look at ways to stimulate the local economy from a policy and practical viewpoint what suggestions do you have for the Chamber Board and other community leaders?

[View 149 Responses](#)

