

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY November 14, 2022

Meeting Convened: 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held in person at the Fire Department Training Room, 625 Ute Avenue, and live streamed via GoToWebinar.

City Councilmembers Present: Councilmembers Chuck McDaniel, Randall Reitz, Dennis Simpson, Rick Taggart, Mayor Pro Tem Abe Herman and Mayor Anna Stout.

Staff present: City Manager Greg Caton, City Attorney John Shaver, Assistant to the City Manager Johnny McFarland, Community Development Director Tamra Allen, Housing Manager Ashley Chambers, Housing Specialist Sherry Price, Finance Director Jodi Welch, Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou, Fire Chief Ken Watkins, Deputy Fire Chiefs Chris Angermuller and Gus Hendricks, City Clerk Amy Phillips, and Deputy Clerk Janet Harrell

(Clerk's Note: Technological difficulties took place during the meeting resulting in poor audio and/or video connections.)

1. Discussion Topics

a. Community Recreation Center Planning

Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou and Dr. William Findlay the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board gave a brief overview of the Community Recreation Center (CRC) planning process. The process began with a statistically valid survey indicating strong support for a CRC. Council then provided further direction to assemble a potential plan and proposal to bring a CRC to fruition. Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture (BRS) was selected to facilitate the Community Recreation Center (CRC) study building from previous studies and reforming plans. City Council charged the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) with guiding the process and reporting their findings and recommendations back to Council.

At the July 6, 2022 City Council meeting, Council approved the recommended site for the CRC at Matchett Park. At its August 17, 2022 City Council meeting, Council approved PRAB's recommendation to proceed with a plan to build an 83,000 square foot facility and fund the construction and operations with a combination of the cannabis tax revenue already secured for Parks and Recreation with a small sales tax increase of 0.15 percent.

On September 19 & 20, 2022 work session #3 was held including six focus groups and a community forum. Following those meetings, PRAB again reviewed a significant amount of public feedback. PRAB held a special meeting on September 26, 2022 and recommended approving the operational plan.

On November 1, the CRC PRAB Subcommittee met to evaluate and discuss the draft report. Changes from members of PRAB were incorporated into the document to accurately capture the full plan. In a letter to Council dated November 1, 2022, Dr. Findlay stated PRAB voted unanimously "to recommend official adoption of the plan by City Council and to direct staff to draft ballot language for the April 4, 2023 election."

Craig Bouck and Jenna Katsaros of Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture (BRS) gave a presentation celebrating the work that PRAB had completed. The presentation showed the concept design, site plan, operations, costs, fees, projected revenues, and key elements of the first phase which will include the recreation center, parking lot and access drives.

Discussion ensued regarding assumptions, calculations of the CRC total project cost with escalations, how the 0.15% increase differs from a previously proposed increase denied by the voters, increases in interest rates affecting the financing calculations and timeline for completion.

Mr. Bauck explained in depth their systematic process for calculating project costs in a conservative manner. This includes getting construction cost information from CRC contractors and escalating those costs to the middle point of construction. This cost escalation for the 2022 CRC plan is calculated at 22% above current 2022 prices. As for the timeline for completion, he stated that there is an extra measure of conservatism built into the escalation calculations and were reflected in the schedule. The goal is to be completed by the end of 2025.

Concluding discussion, Council gave direction to place the adoption of the CRC plan on the agenda for the November 16th City Council meeting.

The Mayor called for a 10-minute recess.

b. Housing Strategy Implementation

Community Development Director Tamra Allen reported that staff has been working with community housing partners, the housing and homeless coalitions, and Root Policy to advance the implementation of strategies adopted in the Grand Junction Housing Strategy. Staff provided a brief review of the 12 housing strategies previously adopted and focused discussion on next steps for Strategies #5 and #6. In addition, Staff requested direction regarding the potential of a 13th housing strategy focused on Community Education and Information. (Please note the following discussions and updates for each strategy were not in numeric order.)

Housing Manager Ashley Chambers began the presentation by introducing Housing Specialist Sherry Price and Root Policy consultant Molly Fitzpatrick. They reviewed the following Strategies and their status.

Strategy 1: Participate in Regional Collaborations regarding housing/homeless needs and services – *Staff meets monthly with community partners*
Status: On-Going

Strategy 2: Adopt Local Affordable Housing Goal(s)
Status: Completed, On-going tracking In Process

Strategy 3: Implement Land Use Code Changes that Facilitate Attainable Housing Development and Housing Diversity – *working on Code and development revisions currently in process*
Status: In process

Strategy 4: Encourage Development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) – working on finalizing toolkit – *changes in parking regulations, entry points, minimum lot size, limit short term rental, and allowing second ADU - will be in front of Council by year end for consideration*
Status: In process

Strategy 7: Create a Dedicated Revenue Source to Address Housing Challenges - *Proposition 123 passed (municipalities must adhere to state requirements)*
Status: Ballot Question 2a & 2b failed

Strategy 8: Provide Financial Support to Existing Housing and Homelessness Services and Promote Resident Access to Services – *staff is seeking community development block grants (CDBG) which are now in process, discussions with Homeward Bound, completion of 2 emergency family shelters, and searching for a men's location*
Status: In process

Strategy 9: Support Acquisition/Rehabilitation that Creates or Preserves Affordable Housing – *Application submitted for \$2.25M in grant funds*
Status: In process

Strategy 10: Consider Implementation of an Inclusionary Housing/Linkage Fee Ordinance
Status: Seeking Direction

Strategy 11: Explore Designation of Urban Renewal Areas (URA) and Utilization of Tax Increment Financing for Affordable Housing and **Strategy 12:** Consider Adoption of a Voluntary Rental Registry Program in Conjunction with Landlord Incentives
Status: Recommended Timeline for Implementation 4-6 years; No updates at this time

Strategy 6: Allocate City Owned Land (and/or Strategically Acquire Vacant and Underutilized Properties) for Affordable and Mixed-Income Housing - *Staff provided*

a report that included Land Banking that could be considered for this strategy. Those options were:

- *Option A: Buy & Sell,*
- *Option B: Buy for a Specific Purpose,*
- *Option C: Buy & Lease,*
- *Option D: Buy & Sell (by a separate board)*

Status: In Process; Ballot 2c failed

Strategy 13: Provide Community Engagement and Education Opportunities to Address Housing Challenges and Promote Community Participation – *Strategy to bring full communication to the community*

Benefits:

- *Build Relationships with Community Members & Local Groups*
- *Provides Factual Information about Issues*
- *Provides Information and Engagement between Departments*
- *Coordinates Communication between Community Members and City Leaders*

Expected Outcomes:

- *Play a neutral role between stakeholders*
- *Ensures communication flows consistently*
- *Contributes expertise to housing conversation*
- *Ensures community participation in goal implementation*
- *Provides awareness of issues*
- *Builds support for implementation of strategies*
- *Develops trust within the community*

Some Methods:

- *Housing Newsletter*
- *Local Business Outreach and Education*
- *Focus Groups*
- *Regular Housing Updates to Council and Internal Depts*
- *Public Education Efforts and Campaigns to end NIMBYism*
- *Educational Sessions with Developers*
- *Poverty Simulation*

Discussion regarding Strategy 6 and consideration of each option and short-term rentals (STR) ensued. Regarding STR, discussion centered on the different types of STR, how many STRs are in the City, how does the City bring them into compliance, the possibility of a cap on the number of STRs and the assessment of additional lodging tax.

Regarding Strategy 6 Council will continue to review the options and will entertain additional recommendations from staff and Planning Commission after the next public feedback session.

Ms. Allen reviewed **Strategy 5:** Formalize Existing Incentives and Consider Additional Incentives for Affordable Housing Development and modifications to this incentive. The modifications presented to Council on September 7, 2022, were to encourage affordable housing units anywhere within the City, by waiving development fees and

plan investment fees for sale and rental units, as well as increasing 80% AMI for sale units to 120%, and continuing with the approved 60% AMI for rental units due to rising costs for housing. Two other modifications would be expediting the review process and limiting deed restrictions.

Deliberations concluded with direction to move forward with expedited review, tabling financial incentives, and moving forward with **Strategy 13**.

c. Fire Department Consultant Study

Rich Buchanan Senior Project Manager with AP Triton reported that the primary intent of the Cooperative Services Study was to determine the feasibility of combining the service areas for the Grand Junction and Clifton Fire Departments. The study evaluated both departments' service demands, organizational structures, adequate finances and response resources, feasibility of a cooperative service agreement between the Grand Junction Fire Department and the Clifton Fire Protection District and if it would result in more efficient service delivery overall.

The study provided a baseline assessment of both agencies regarding staffing certifications, schedules, salaries and possible pros and cons of a cooperative service agreement, resulting in the consultant's recommendation to continue exploration of an *Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement* (IGA) or joint operating agreement (JOA). These agreements are enabled through *Colorado Revised Statute* Title 32 §§32-1-1001, while evaluating and determining feasibility of a merger, District, or other permanent relationship between the Grand Junction Fire Department and the Clifton Fire Protection District for the long-term mutual benefit of Clifton and Grand Junction.

Discussion concluded with Chief Watkins explaining that the City has been working on a mutual aid agreement for 2 years and with the recent resignations of Clifton's Fire Department's top two positions as well as a request for management assistance, a formal management agreement could help better serve both communities. With that Council directed staff to proceed with an IGA and feasibility of a permanent relationship.

2. City Council Communication

None

3. Adjournment

There being no Council Communication or further business, the Workshop adjourned at 9:08 p.m.