

## **GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY January 9, 2023**

**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 (virtual), Phil Pe'a, Randall Reitz, Dennis Simpson, 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, Communications and Engagement Director Sara Spaulding, Finance Director Jodi Welch, Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou, Fire Chief Ken Watkins, Interim Police Chief Matt Smith, City Clerk Amy Phillips, and Deputy Clerk Selestina Sandoval

### **1. Discussion Topics**

#### **a. City of Grand Junction 2022 Community Satisfaction Survey**

Sara Spaulding, Communications and Engagement Director introduced Sean Maher representing RRC Associates, who were hired to conduct the City of Grand Junction's 2022 Community Satisfaction Survey. She reported that the survey was mailed to a random sample of 5,000 residents within City limits with the option to complete the survey on paper or online through a password protected website (1 response per household). The online survey was also available in Spanish. There were 658 invitation surveys completed with a response rate of 13.5 percent Response Rate and +/- 3.8 percent Margin of Error. Two weeks after mailing the statistically valid survey, the Open Link survey was made available to all Grand Junction stakeholders, including non-county residents (e.g. commuters, residents of nearby communities) and 258 Open Link surveys were completed. A response rate of 13.5 percent is extremely robust compared to a typical rate of 8-10 percent for community surveys. We received 658 responses to the statistically valid survey. The goal was 400.

The Community Satisfaction Survey is conducted every two years to obtain feedback from a representative sample of City of Grand Junction residents on multiple topics including:

- Satisfaction with City-provided services, facilities, and amenities
- Ratings of overall and specific quality-of-life factors in Grand Junction
- Priorities for issues to be addressed along with allocation of future City funding
- Level of satisfaction with specific neighborhoods and input on desired improvements
- An opportunity to provide comments on the quality of life in Grand Junction and ideas on needed improvements or policies in the City
- While planned for every two years to gather comparative data, the survey was not distributed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the most recent data available for comparison with the results from the 2022 survey was presented in a report to City Council in 2018. Weighted by age.

- With the delay in the survey from 2020 to 2022, questions with a focus on recent City initiatives were added, including affordable housing, homelessness, sustainable resource management, roadway infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and the pace of growth and development.

Mr. Maher reported on the key findings of the statistically valid survey.

- Overall sentiment on Grand Junction is quite positive with 60 percent saying the City is moving in the “right direction” compared to 22 percent reporting the opposite. Seventeen percent have no opinion about how the City is doing.
- Concerns about crime, homelessness and growth were the dominant concerns of those expressing negative sentiments on the direction of Grand Junction.
- Addressing public safety and crime was the top priority of residents followed closely by the need to manage resources, including the supply of water. Improving roads and dealing with homelessness also rated high as priorities.
- Regarding homelessness, residents strongly support funding for the GJPD co-responder program along with increased enforcement of the camping ban. Investing more in local nonprofits that are helping the homeless was also seen positively. There does not appear to be strong interest from residents in getting directly involved with the issue. Overall satisfaction with City services is positive with 61 percent giving a rating of 4 or 5. Twelve percent of respondents reported overall dissatisfaction. A significant portion (28 percent) were neutral.
- Public Works ratings were mostly positive. The only function of Public Works that received a negative rating was the condition of City streets. This correlates with the high priority given to improving roads in the City.
- On average, all categories related to Police services rated positively (3.4 and above) except for enforcement of violations against cars, cyclists, and pedestrians.
- There is strong support for a Community Recreation Center as well as additional trails in the City. Improved river access was also noted by more than half of respondents.
- Parks & Recreation facilities and programs all received net positive ratings from respondents. Staff friendliness, proximity of parks and City trails all rated very highly. While still positive, ratings for recreational facilities received the weakest feedback. This correlates with the support noted above for a new City Community Recreation Center.
- Residents are very satisfied with the neighborhoods where they live. Sixty-three percent say things are the same or better as when they moved in. Just 13 percent say conditions have declined.
- In terms of negative neighborhood attributes, the major issues are noise, traffic, and limited ability to walk and bike to frequent destinations in the City.
- When asked to rank priorities for Grand Junction, residents cited improving street safety, improving/building roads, access to high-speed internet and their desire for a Community Recreation Center.

- When asked about priorities in City funding, the top choices were adding more high-speed internet, expanding sustainability efforts, and improving streets and roads. The new Community Recreation Center also garnered support.
- Support for new housing was mixed. Adding apartments and condominiums showed the most support, while additional mobile homes was by far the least popular choice.

Discussion ensued regarding data collected showing an average decline in most areas but one, and how COVID could have affected outcomes, whether the survey was statistically valid, qualifications of RRC Associates and how many statisticians worked on the City's survey, the community's request for better broadband/fiber network and how to get more responses from all demographics.

**b. Moratorium to Prohibit the Establishment of any New or Relocation of Existing Gaming Establishments**

Police Chief Matt Smith and City Attorney John Shaver explained that gaming establishments are businesses engaged in gambling-type activities that use technology to operate in a "gray area" of the law that distinguishes between games of skill (legal) and games of chance (illegal). These establishments are in commercial and residential areas in the City with examples of locations ranging from garages to storefronts. Currently there are approximately 15 businesses, however, they often go out of business in one area and relocate to another very quickly, making them difficult to track. They primarily operate in the nighttime hours (8pm to 5am) and are attracting increased criminal activity including theft, assault, drug trafficking, and prostitution to the area. Residents are continually coming to staff explaining the negative impact this type of activity is having on their business and/or residential community.

Under HB22-1412, the State Gaming Commission has the power to investigate and prosecute crimes and enforce regulations pertaining to unlicensed gaming establishments throughout Colorado; however, the Colorado Division of Gaming Enforcement and Investigations Section has advised the City that the Division will not operate/provide enforcement outside of the cities authorized for limited gaming in Article XVIII, Section 9 of the Colorado Constitution (Blackhawk, Central City, and Cripple Creek).

Currently, there are no City laws to restrict these types of business and land uses, and due to the technology, the investigation and prosecution of tech businesses as illegal gambling (games of chance) is almost impossible. Accordingly, the businesses continue to operate in the City. Staff recommended a temporary (18 to 24 month) moratorium disallowing new skilled gaming businesses and the relocation of any existing skilled gaming businesses to allow the opportunity to evaluate potential regulation, licensure, and other options, including coordination with the State, to better limit the negative impact on the community. This temporary moratorium is narrowly tailored and will further the health, safety, and welfare of the people of the City of Grand Junction.

Discussion ensued, resulting in consensus to move the item forward to the January 18, 2023 City Council Meeting.

The Mayor called for a 10-minutes break at 6:43 p.m.

**c. Orchard Mesa Recreational Amenity**

Ken Sherbenou, Parks and Recreation Director, recognizing the need for additional recreational services in the Orchard Mesa area, presented this item. He stated that it is in alignment with the priorities set forth in the PROS Master Plan, staff would like direction on the concept of developing an indoor turf Field House on Orchard Mesa. This type of amenity would expand recreational opportunities for Orchard Mesa residents while providing access to indoor space for turf sports and other uses currently lacking in the community.

The 2021 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan has identified the Orchard Mesa community as having a lower level of service. To address this challenge, the idea of an alternative recreational amenity on Orchard Mesa surfaced. He reported the trajectory of indoor recreational facility development in communities often includes an indoor pool (usually phased out), followed by a multi-purpose indoor CRC, and then finally an indoor Field House to complement the CRC. Field Houses can offer a wide array of recreational amenities including, first and foremost, indoor turf for field sports such as soccer and lacrosse. Field Houses do not have an aquatic component. As such, they are less expensive to build and operate, and complement a multi-purpose CRC that is heavy on aquatics. Furthermore, field sports such as soccer and lacrosse, are on the rise with thousands of participants in Grand Junction. There is a lack of indoor space for these users, which has worsened with the recent closure of the privately run Skyline Sports next to Sam's Club, 2522 Highway 6 and 50.

As shown in the PROS Master Plan, the pursuit of a Field House in Orchard Mesa fits the PROS Master Plan vision. Should Council provide direction to pursue this opportunity, the next step would be to engage with an architectural firm to conduct a planning process to include site selection, concept design and an operational plan. Several sites should be considered but there is one leading contender given an initial examination: Burkey Park South.

Discussion revealed that Council was not supportive of the proposal at this time.

**2. City Council Communication**

Discussion regarding the Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration and the reading of the proclamation by Council, the recent Anti-Semitic event, and follow-up regarding the next ARPA discussion.

**3. Next Workshop Topics**

City Manager Caton stated that the next workshop items are Zoning and Development Code Update and ADU Incentives on January 30<sup>th</sup>, followed by Cannabis Cultivation / MIPs and ARPA on February 13<sup>th</sup>.

**4. Adjournment**

There being no Council Communication or further business, the Workshop adjourned at 7:29 p.m.