

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

February 3, 2025

Meeting Convened: 5:31 p.m. The meeting was in-person at the Fire Department Training Room, 625 Ute Avenue, and live-streamed via GoTo Webinar.

City Councilmembers Present: Councilmembers Scott Beilfuss, Cody Kennedy, Jason Nguyen, Dennis Simpson, Anna Stout, Mayor Pro Tem Randall Reitz, and Mayor Abram Herman.

Staff present: City Manager Mike Bennett, City Attorney John Shaver, Assistant to the City Manager Johnny McFarland, Community Development Director Tamra Allen, Transportation and Engineering Director Trent Prall, Deputy City Clerk Krystle Koehler, and City Clerk Selestina Sandoval.

1. Discussion Topics

a. Colorado Mesa University Campus Master Plan

Colorado Mesa University (CMU) President, John Marshall gave an update on the CMU Master Plan.

The key points included:

- Since 1999, the core boundaries remain unchanged: 12th Street, Orchard Avenue, 7th Street, and North Avenue, although this may change going forward.
- CMU has expanded opportunistically, including the purchase of Community Hospital, now serving as a health sciences complex.
- A new initiative, the Formation District, is planned as a mixed-use area with residential, academic, and commercial developments.
- Expansion plans include improving 9th Street for better campus access, enhancing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and building additional student housing (310 beds, with a potential phase two adding 200 more).
- Council members acknowledged CMU's role in local development and housing pressures.

b. 4th and 5th Street Update

The 2023 Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan (PBP) identified existing Levels of Traffic Stress and gaps along the City's sidewalk and Active Transportation Corridor networks, prioritizing projects to benefit sidewalk users and cyclists, respectively. Network gaps (i.e., missing sidewalks or no dedicated cycle facilities on higher-speed roadways) are generally prioritized over retrofitting existing facilities. Priority was assigned based on various criteria,

categorized into PBP objectives: Equitable, Safe, Connected, Multimodal Community, and Quality. Criteria include proximity to schools, bus stops, low-income neighborhoods, locations with frequent and severe crash history, and facilities providing access across barriers.

Based on this assessment, 7th Street was rated High Priority for sidewalk retrofits and High Priority for cycle facility gaps (north of Grand Avenue) and retrofits (south of Grand Avenue). Given its presence on the High Injury Network (including having intersections amongst the most dangerous in Mesa County), central proximity within the City, and direct access to key destinations (e.g., D51 schools and CMU, St. Mary's and Downtown employment hubs, and Riverfront Trail); as well as connectivity to existing and planned multimodal infrastructure on Horizon Drive and 26 1/2 Road to Summer Hill Way, respectively, 7th Street was selected as the first corridor to be evaluated coming out of the PBP.

Transportation and Engineering Director Trent Prall presented this item.

The key points included:

- A feasibility study was conducted to improve pedestrian and cycling infrastructure along 7th Street.
- Public Engagement: Online feedback and an in-person event at the Art Center attracted over 200 attendees.
- Key Changes Based on Feedback:
 - Staff recommends adding scope for the consultant to evaluate a limited number of alternatives for the two segments for which the study originally recommended could feasibly repurpose vehicle lanes for the multi-modal traveler, including these segments: Grand Avenue to North Avenue, and Patterson Road to Horizon Drive.
 - Continuing to progress the study to develop, evaluate, and render visualizations of a limited number of alternatives in these sections. The process would continue to be informed by input from stakeholders such as the Historic Preservation Board, Forestry Board, and Urban Trails Committee, as well as returning to the Steering Committee for assessment and feedback.
- An additional public outreach event would be held before presenting a final study to City Council.

c. Impact Fee and Linkage Fee Study

The Grand Junction Municipal Code ("Code" or "GJMC") requires the City to update its impact fee study once every five years. The City's last fee study for transportation, police, fire, parks, and municipal facilities was completed in 2019. The City contracted with TischlerBise to update its fee study and create a nexus study for an affordable housing linkage fee. TischlerBise has completed the Impact Fee Study Update, as well as the

Linkage Fee study, both of which were presented to the City Council at the December 16 workshop and to the stakeholders on December 2, 2024. The City Council met with the Stakeholder group to receive direct feedback at a workshop on January 14, 2025.

City Manager Mike Bennett and Community Development Director Tamra Allen presented this item.

Key points included:

- Cap impact fees for residential units at 3,501 square feet and above.
- Remove the Three Sisters Open Space from parks fee calculations to slightly reduce costs.
- Shift funding models for transportation infrastructure, including active transportation requirements for new developments.
- Public & Stakeholder Feedback: The Home Builders Association expressed concerns about rising fees but supported the overall methodology.
- There was a strong preference to avoid a new linkage fee but interest in exploring alternative funding sources for affordable housing.
- Council asked staff to move forward with an ordinance for first reading to be placed on the February 19, 2025 regular agenda.

2. Council Communication

There was none.

3. Next Workshop Topics

Mayor Herman outlined future workshop items.

4. Other Business

City Manager Bennett asked Council for volunteers to serve on the interview committees for the Urban Trails Committee and the Grand Junction Regional Airport Authority. Mayor Abe Herman and Councilmember Stout volunteered. City Manager Bennett also stated that a reduced \$15,000 budget was allocated for consultant facilitation and summary of feedback for the Strategic Plan. Council members were invited to participate in the RFP review process. Councilmember Stout and Beilfuss volunteered.

Mayor Herman informed Council that an item was added to the upcoming Wednesday agenda regarding extending the moratorium on skilled gaming facilities.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Workshop adjourned at 8:59 p.m.