

Visit Grand Junction
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting
March 11, 2025, 3 pm - 5 pm

The meeting was held at Hotel Maverick, 840 Kennedy Ave., Grand Junction, CO.

Presiding: Elizabeth Fortushniak, Chair

Visit Grand Junction Board Members Present: Brenda Greene, Joe Burtard, Theresa Horvat, Manon Desrosiers, Tevfik Demirciftci, Tammy Anderson

Absent: Pat Nichols-Perrin, Julie Shafer

City of Grand Junction and Visit Grand Junction Staff Present: Elizabeth Fogarty, Director; Kim Machado, Administrative Specialist; Teagan McLennan, Visit Grand Junction Intern

Guests: Curtis Englehart, Executive Director, Grand Junction Economic Partnership

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Board Chair Elizabeth Fortushniak.

Minutes from the February 11, 2025, advisory board meeting: Tammy Anderson motioned to approve the minutes as written; Monon Desrosiers seconded. Motion passed.

Community Updates and Q&A – Grand Junction Economic Partnership

Curtis Englehart, Executive Director of the Grand Junction Economic Partnership (GJEP), provided an update on GJEP's recent programs, initiatives, and goals. He shared that the main goals of GJEP are to create primary jobs, including a wage threshold; promote Mesa County's business assets and industries through proactive recruitment; assist in business relocation and expansion; and collaborate to build and maintain strong connections throughout the community. Curtis also outlined state and local incentives that GJEP helps businesses secure and highlighted key business successes, including Morgan Mining's expansion to Mesa County, Goose Gear's relocation, and the development of the OakStar Bank facility, which integrates Class A office space with ground-floor restaurant and retail space. He concluded by sharing economic impact data.

Elizabeth Fogarty thanked Curtis for the update and asked how Visit Grand Junction could further support or improve its partnership with GJEP. Curtis commended Visit Grand Junction for its marketing efforts, particularly with elevating the brand and creating awareness of the area.

Visit Grand Junction Updates

Elizabeth shared an update on Grand Junction's lodging tax collections and hotel performance metrics for the year 2024 and January 2025's business activity.

For 2024, Grand Junction's lodging tax collections were 2.0% above 2023's collections. 2024 hotel occupancy was 63.2%, average daily rate (ADR) was \$108.49, and revenue per available room (RevPAR) was \$70.77. Notable highlights for 2024 hotel metrics include:

- 2024's ADR of \$108.49 was the highest in Grand Junction's history, 4.6% above 2023's ADR of \$103.69, and outpaced the U.S., as well as Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.
- The months of January, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November and December recorded the highest ADR for those particular months, with May 2024 ADR of \$134.79 being the highest ADR recorded in Grand Junction's history.
- 2024's RevPAR of \$70.77 was the highest yearly RevPAR in Grand Junction's history, 1.4% above 2023's RevPAR of \$69.80, and outpaced Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.

For January 2025's business, Grand Junction's lodging tax collections were 3.4% below January 2024. January 2025 hotel occupancy was 44.1%, ADR was \$85.69, and RevPAR was \$37.80. Notable highlights for January 2025 hotel metrics include:

- January 2025's occupancy outpaced Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.
- January 2025's ADR of \$85.69 was the highest recorded for the month of January, 3.6% above January 2024 ADR of \$82.70, and outpaced Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.

- January 2025's RevPAR of \$69.80 was the highest recorded for the month of January, 4.3% above January 2024 RevPAR of \$36.24, and outpaced Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.

A discussion began about what was causing the reduction of lodging tax despite all significant KPI metrics being up, including what was specifically the issue(s) and what potential solutions Visit Grand Junction was strategizing. It was shared that despite Grand Junction overperforming, there are now a significant number of lodging stays that are 30 days or more. For any stay 30 days or more, no lodging tax or sales tax are collected. So, despite lodging business revenue being up (the amount lodging keeps), lodging tax is down.

Other updates include:

- The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Grand Junction Regional Air Service Alliance remains under development.
- 2024 enplanement and deplanement data was shared.
- Visit Grand Junction's January Stakeholder eNewsletter had a record open rate of 65%.
- A video from Skift's founder, Rafat Ali, was shown highlighting the evolution and recent decline of traditional travel media. Visit Grand Junction will continue investing in PR and has adapted to this shift by creating engaging content and leveraging Ad Tech and AI-driven innovations for precise targeting, real-time adjustments, and personalized messaging. Advisory board members expressed appreciation for the insights and for Visit Grand Junction's PR efforts and future strategy that accommodates the PR challenges.

There being no further business, Elizabeth Fortushniak motioned to adjourn; Theresa Horvat seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.