



## *Grand Junction Forestry Advisory Board Minutes*

*February 6, 2025*

### Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Joseph Chandler  
Bill Cooper  
Mollie Freilicher  
Dan Komlo  
Kamie Long  
Tanya Travis

Board Members Absent:

Scott Beilfuss  
Earl Perry

City Staff Present:

Rob Davis, Parks Supervisor, Forestry and Open Space  
Henry Brown, Mobility Specialist  
Sarah Kennedy, Communications Specialist  
Allison Little Administrative Specialist

Guest Present

John Nettle

**Meeting called to order by Kamie Long at 8:34AM.**

### **Approval of the January Minutes**

Joseph Chandler made a motion to approve the minutes of the January meeting. The motion was seconded by Mollie Freilicher and were accepted by acclamation.

### **Public Comments**

Mr. Nettle shared with the board that he's a retired Master Arborist who has moved here from Tennessee. He's dropping in to the meeting to see where he can help out.

### **New Business**

#### **7<sup>th</sup> Street Active Transportation Corridor Feasibility Study Update**

Henry Brown, Mobility Planner for the City, talked with the board about a feasibility study on 7<sup>th</sup> Street active transportation corridor. Henry shared that active transportation is called out in the One GJ Comprehensive Plan, the 2023 Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan and in a 2024 community survey. While there is a portion of the community happy to use vehicles for all their transportation, there does seem to be a large portion of the community who might use active transportation if it were more accessible.

7<sup>th</sup> street is being investigated because it is a high demand corridor which connects horizon drive to a number of schools, Intermountain Health St. Mary's Regional Hospital, Colorado Mesa University, Downtown, the RiverFront Trail, commercial and employment centers, and high residential proximity.

Horizon Drive to Riverfront trail is the study area. Options include reallocating existing roadway, repurpose non-roadway portions of right of way, acquire additional right of way, and utilize nearby/parallel corridors. After the initial study was done it was presented to stakeholder groups who expressed concern about emergency access, general community perceived a risk to their existing travel habits.

Staff recommended City Council extend the contract, so that modifications could be made to help address concerns, gather more community input, before coming back to Council for consideration and adoption.

Board members wondered who sits on the steering committee. Henry Brown shared that folks from Historic Preservation board, the Chamber, the Downtown Development Authority, 7<sup>th</sup> Street property owners, business owners, and 2 at-large community members. Rob Davis wondered if a member of the Forestry Board could be added to the steering committee to help inform the feedback associated with impact to trees and landscaping. Henry Brown advised the board that initially there was an option that doubled the width of the east side sidewalks, but no one on the steering committee was happy with the impacts to historic trees with that option. That option was removed. There are still options which affect the current center grass median.

The revised concept includes maintaining 4 travel lanes, and creating a multi use trail on the east side (in new right of way) from Horizon to Wellington, maintaining 4 travel lanes and creating a multi use trail in existing right of way Wellington to North Avenue, reconfiguring the cross section of the 7<sup>th</sup> street greenway (impacting the existing center medians using existing right of way), or creating an alternate route using 9<sup>th</sup> Street from North Avenue to Grand Avenue, and no changes from Grand Avenue to Struthers.

The reconfiguring of 7<sup>th</sup> Street would shift existing center median so that there are three lanes on the west, a median, and a bike lane (at roadway level) between the two tree lawns. The median would be different style of landscaping (rather than grass medians) which could still be aesthetic, but safer for staff to maintain. This is an expensive option – this is basically reconstructing the corridor from grand to north.

The alternate route on 9<sup>th</sup> Street would include new trail at Washington Park and is dependent on CMU master planning which suggests moving the signal at 10<sup>th</sup> street to 9<sup>th</sup> street, to change access to CMU.

## **IRA GRANT**

Kamie Long shared that funding for this grant is up in the air. The State Forest Service hasn't received a stop order, but still might. Rob shared that the City could still submit reimbursement requests but it seems like a lot of risk for the City if that stop order were to come through. There are a lot of unknowns right now. All the bids have gone through and are completed. Nursery stock is under contract, watering is almost complete and under contract, private irrigation is on hold, the intern has been hired but could be shifted to regular forestry work. Work was supposed to begin in March and all the pieces depend on each other. The City has to front the money and is cautious about doing that because if the stop order comes through and the funds disappear then the City will not be reimbursed. There is a meeting tomorrow with the State Forest Service to understand the federal stance better. Tanya Travis thinks that the community outreach part can still be undertaken with volunteers to make use of existing positive energy in the community around tree education and awareness.

### **Contractor Day of Service**

Rob shared with the board that Tom Ziola reached out with the suggestion that the board create a day of service opportunity for the licensed contractors to participate in and give back to the community. Ken and Randy are supportive and want to ensure that the event be truly beneficial and not just centered around advertising private businesses. Board members shared that this event could be a positive event with a champion willing to do some ground work. The first of the year is really busy for contractors and City staff. A fall event, planned with enough separation from Saluting Branches or even an early spring event targeted in late February could be really successful. Using a park space is better for exposure, and having the public see the contractors give back to the community. Mollie Freilicher shared that in a previous place she lived there was a state-wide arbor day, day of service.

### **Central Library Presentation**

Rob shared with the board that he is still moving forward with this even if the IRA funding drops out. Rob's last presentation was really well received, and it will be an overview of tree care, why to hire a professional, trees in Grand Junction. He also plans to move forward with Arbor Day activities for Chipeta Elementary. Rob shared that Visit Grand Junction is willing to put out a call for volunteers to help with seedling delivery which should take place on April 22 and 23 if necessary.

### **Chap 8 subcommittee meeting on February 21 from 10 – 11am**

#### **Other items to discuss**

Rob advised the board that the Forestry Intern job posting closes Sunday.

Rob is scheduling Tree Plotter Canopy Software training for staff and the Forestry Board (if they are interested) so that folks can understand the tools and tricks available in the software.

Staff are working on removals and cemetery pruning. Rob also worked with the vendor providing contracted tree work to address all the Siberian elms along Gunnison on the golf course.

Staff are working on a transition to Cartegraph from Lucity. This software was chosen based on its applicability system wide versus a PlanIt Geo solution which was really more focused on tree functionality.

Dan reached out to the nurseries and they do seem to be interested in the tree planting education class. One of the nurseries would like to see what content will be before they promote it since they warranty the trees. The Board is targeting a May 16 date for the event. Kamie and Mollie will come up with content, and the event will take place at Canyon View. Folks will receive a certificate of participation. The board plans to offer demonstrations of both b&b and containerized trees.

**The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 10:40.**

**Next Meeting – March 6, 8:30 am**

Respectfully submitted,  
Ali Little, Administrative Specialist