

Grand Junction City Council
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
May 7, 2025

Reorganization of City Council

A Resolution Appointing an Acting President Pro Tempore of the City Council

Councilmember Stout called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Councilmember Ballard moved to adopt Resolution No. 22-25, a resolution appointing Councilmember Kennedy as acting President Pro Tempore of the City Council, seconded by Councilmember Nguyen. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence

The City Council of the City of Grand Junction convened into regular session on the 7th day of May, at 5:33 p.m. Those present were Councilmembers Robert Ballard, Scott Beilfuss, Laurel Cole, Jason Nguyen, Anna Stout, Ben Van Dyke, and President Pro Tem Cody Kennedy.

Also present were City Manager Mike Bennett, City Attorney John Shaver, Engineering and Transportation Director Trent Prall, Principal Planner Tim Lehrbach, Zoning Supervisor Jessica Johnsen, City Clerk Selestina Sandoval, and Deputy City Clerk Krystle Koehler.

President Pro Tem Kennedy called the meeting to order. Councilmember Ballard led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence.

Election of Council President/Ex -Officio Mayor and Council President Pro Tem/Ex-Officio Mayor Pro Tem

President Pro Tem Kennedy opened the floor for nominations for the office of Council President/ Ex-Officio Mayor.

Councilmember Van Dyke moved to nominate Councilmember Kennedy for Mayor, and Councilmember Ballard seconded the motion. The motion carried 6-1 by voice vote, with Councilmember Stout voting no.

Councilmember Ballard moved to nominate Councilmember Cole for Mayor Pro Tem, and Councilmember Nguyen seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Proclamations

Proclaiming May 11-17, 2025, as National Police Week in the City of Grand Junction

Council President Kennedy read the proclamation, which Police Chief Matt Smith accepted, and introduced colleagues, Division Chief Art Smith from the Mesa County Sheriff's Office and Officer Arnold Naik from the Grand Junction Police Department.

Appointments

To the Downtown Development Authority Business Improvement District

Councilmember Stout moved and Councilmember Nguyen seconded to appoint Dustin Anzures to the Downtown Development Authority Business Improvement District for a partial term ending June 2026. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Public Comments

Public comments were heard from Ruth Kinnett, Jeff Zimmerman and Steve Lightfoot.

City Manager Report

City Manager Mike Bennett had no report.

Boards and Commission Liaison Reports

Councilmember Stout gave an update on the Colorado Municipal League.

Councilmember Beilfuss provided updates on the Business Incubator and Historic Preservation Board.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes

- a. Minutes of April 10, 2025, Special Meeting
- b. Minutes of April 16, 2025, Regular Meeting
- c. Minutes of April 21, 2025, Special Meeting

2. Set Public Hearings

a. Quasi-judicial

- i. A Resolution Referring a Petition to the City Council for the Annexation of Lands to the City of Grand Junction, Colorado, Setting a Hearing on Such Annexation, Exercising Land Use Control, and Introducing Proposed Annexation Ordinance for the Wendi Gechter IRA Annexation of 5.0 acres, Located at 377 28 Road and to set a Public Hearing for June 18, 2025

3. Resolutions

- a. A Resolution Appointing and Assigning City Councilmembers to Represent the City on Various Boards, Committees, Commissions, Authorities, and Organizations
- b. Resolution Directing Certain Actions Regarding the Design and Construction of Improvements to 4th and 5th Streets and Ratifying Actions in Connection Therewith – **MOVED TO REGULAR AGENDA**

Councilmember Ballard moved to remove item 3.b. from the consent agenda, seconded by Councilmember Van Dyke. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote.

Councilmember Nguyen moved to adopt Consent Agenda Items 1 through 3, excluding item 3.b., seconded by Councilmember Stout. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote.

REGULAR AGENDA

3.b. Resolution Directing Certain Actions Regarding the Design and Construction of Improvements to 4th and 5th Streets and Ratifying Actions in Connection Therewith

Addressing concerns and perceptions from downtown business owners and the community, City staff presented to City Council at the May 5 workshop proposed changes for possible implementation this spring, including 1) reviewing and further refinement of sight distances at various intersections and 2) relocating the bike lane to be adjacent to the through-lane (buffered from angled parking where possible), referred to as Version 2.0. City Council discussed various options and alternatives for 4th and 5th Streets during the workshop and ultimately directed staff to bring forward Version 2.0 for a vote of the City Council at the May 7, 2025, City Council meeting. Included in this direction was to implement the Version 2.0 changes as soon as possible (estimated to begin in the next 2-3 weeks), conduct a public engagement and outreach plan to

evaluate the implementation of 4th-5th Pilot Version 2.0, present City Council with long-term options in addition to Version 2.0 which include two-lane configurations, and gather feedback from the community and business stakeholders.

The proposed resolution authorizes City staff to move forward with 4th-5th Pilot Version 2.0 and conduct public outreach and engagement to develop a final corridor vision.

The public hearing was opened at 6:00 p.m.

Public comments were heard from Debbie Buchely, John Hodge, Karthik Vishwamitra, Niki Hunn, Thomas Steffens, Kathy Crane, Carlee Dietrich, Adam Dietrich, Terry Porter, Kevin Bray, Joel Sholtes, Carol Rathberg, Mark McAllister, Louann Hara, Mike Grumbly, Jullian Minter, Jack Byrnum, Ash Zorton, Ryan Fleming, Ian Hamilton, Tom Freeman, Ian Moore, Nova Tucker, David Lehman, Thomas Copp, Mckay Moline, Tanner Speis, Diane Schwenke, Alexander Speis, George Prizer, and Mary McAllister.

The public hearing closed at 7:10 p.m.

City Manager Mike Bennet and Engineering and Transportation Director Trent Prall gave a short summary of this item and were available to answer questions from Council.

Council took a short break at 7:20 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 7:30 p.m.

Councilmembers addressed ongoing concerns related to the downtown traffic pilot, key issues included reducing traffic flow, the impact of configurations on emergency response times, and limited speed enforcement on 4th and 5th Streets. Seasonal weather was cited as a constraint, delaying any significant changes until warmer conditions allow for implementation. Budget considerations remained central to the discussion, noting that advancing to Phase 2.0 would be more cost-effective than reverting to the previous design, and emphasized the need to stay within financial limits. Economic impacts were also noted as a concern; downtown business owners stated that the current configuration may further reduce foot traffic and, if left unaddressed, could lead to business closures. Council acknowledged these risks while also recognizing that the public debate has mistakenly framed the issue as a battle between cars and bikes. Comments were made stating that the intent is to improve overall accessibility and safety, not to prioritize one mode of transportation over another. The discussion highlighted the importance of remaining responsive to community feedback, considering alternative solutions, and maintaining flexibility to adapt based on results. Despite differing viewpoints, there was agreement on the need for a clear, timely decision that balances safety, economic health, and long-term downtown vitality.

Councilmember Van Dyke moved, and Councilmember Ballard seconded, to revert 4th and 5th Street to pre-pilot status, allowing staff latitude to adjust lane widths in

accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and engineering design standards moving forward. The motion carried 4-3 by roll call vote, with Councilmembers Beilfuss, Nguyen, and Stout voting no.

Council took a short break at 8:23 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 8:30 p.m.

4.a.i. An Ordinance Amending Title 21 Zoning and Development Code to Modify and Clarify Various Provisions Regarding Zone District and Dimensional Standards, Use Standards, Sign Standards, and Measurements and Definitions

When the Zoning and Development Code was repealed and replaced on December 20, 2023, it was anticipated that there would be necessary revisions to provide clarity and alleviate practical issues with implementation. Staff have identified items pertaining to the Mixed-Use Neighborhood (MU-1) zone district that require clarification or modification to appropriately regulate allowed uses and signs within the district. Additionally, staff have identified two provisions pertaining to the Mixed-Use Downtown (MU-3) zone district that may restrict appropriate development and merit reconsideration.

Principal Planner Tim Lehrbach presented this item and was available to answer questions from Council.

There was no council discussion.

The public hearing was opened at 8:42 p.m.

There were no comments.

The public hearing closed at 8:42 p.m.

Councilmember Stout moved and Councilmember Van Dyke seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 5260, an ordinance amending Title 21 Zoning and Development Code to modify and clarify various provisions regarding zone district and dimensional standards, use standards, sign standards, and measurements and definitions on final passage and ordered final publication in pamphlet form. The motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

4.b.i. An Ordinance for Zoning Approximately 1.91 Acres from PD (Planned Development) to MU-2 (Mixed Use Light Commercial) I located at 651 S. Highway 50

The Applicant requested a rezone to Mixed Use Light Commercial (MU-2) for approximately 1.91 acres of land located at 651 S. Highway 50. The zone district of MU-2 implements the Residential Land Use category of the Comprehensive Plan.

Community Development Zoning Supervisor Jessica Johnsen presented this item and was available to answer questions from Council.

Council acknowledged the area's need for revitalization and recognized the proposed development would bring affordable housing. It was also reiterated that Council's role is to determine whether the proposal meets the rezoning criteria, and it does.

The public hearing was opened at 8:49 p.m.

There were no comments.

The public hearing was closed at 8:49 p.m.

Councilmember Stout moved, and Council President Pro Tem Cole, seconded, to adopt Ordinance No. 5261, an ordinance to rezone 1.91 acres from a Planned Development (PD) zone district to an MU-2 (Mixed Use Light Commercial) zone district for the property located at 651 S. Highway 50, City File Number RZN-2024-711 on final passage and ordered final publication in pamphlet form. The motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

5. Non-Scheduled Comments

There were no comments.

6. Other Business

There was none.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Selestina Sandoval, MMC
City Clerk

