

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

August 18, 2025

Meeting Convened: 5:30 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 Robert Ballard, Scott Beilfuss, Jason Nguyen, Anna Stout, Ben Van Dyke, and Mayor Cody Kennedy. Councilmember Laurel Cole was absent.

Staff present: City Manager Mike Bennett, City Attorney John Shaver, Community Development Director Tamra Allen, Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou, Chief Financial Officer Jay Valentine, Deputy City Clerk Misty Williams, and City Clerk Selestina Sandoval.

1. Discussion Topics

a. CMU Football Facility Proposal

President John Marshall from Colorado Mesa University (CMU) proposed a new two-story football facility at Lincoln Park.

- CMU would fully fund the project (no city tax dollars), using cash reserves and fundraising efforts.
- The facility would support CMU's Division II athletics and community engagement.
- Intent to honor existing high school and public use—no displacement expected.
- The facility would include locker rooms, meeting rooms, and potential multipurpose spaces.
- Council emphasized multi-use potential to avoid under-utilization.
- Discussion about branding, public access, and the need for coordinated upgrades (e.g., ticketing, scoreboard relocation).
- General consensus for staff to continue working with CMU toward a lease or agreement to move forward.
- CMU requested a resolution or draft agreement by October to aid with fundraising aligned with their centennial celebrations.

b. DDA/BID Overview

Brandon Stam (Executive Director) and Cole Hanson (Board Member) presented this item.

- Explained the distinct roles of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and Business Improvement District (BID).
- DDA: Focuses on capital improvements and economic redevelopment; funded through TIF (Tax Increment Financing) and a 5-mill levy.

- BID: Focuses on events, marketing, and commercial vibrancy; funded through special assessments and sponsorships.
- Highlighted significant DDA projects, including Las Colonias, Convention Center renovations, downtown housing, and various grant programs (facade improvement, restaurant conversions).
- Projects like The Terminal and connectivity improvements (Colorado to Main Street) were emphasized.
- Discussion about long-term needs like a grocery store and continued residential development downtown.

c. Initial Phase of Outdoor Facilities at Matchett Park

Presented by Parks and Recreation Director Ken Shenbeou and Craig Bouck with Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture.

- Part of the broader Community Recreation Center (CRC) development.
- Outdoor additions include:
 - Multipurpose artificial turf field
 - Burkey Pavilion (event space)
 - Parking and access improvements
- Funding sources include grants and donations:
 - Daniels Fund
 - GOCO (Great Outdoors Colorado)
 - GJ Plays
 - Burkey land sale proceeds

d. Request for City Contribution to Liberty Apartments Project (Aspire Residential, LLC)

Introduced by Community Development Director Tamra Allen and presented by John Gargas (virtual) with Aspire Residential, LLC.

- Project Summary:
 - 72-unit affordable housing project (Phase I of 192 units) near Dos Rios Elementary.
 - Will include units ranging from 60% to 100% AMI.
 - Applying for Prop 123 funding from the state.
- Funding Request:
 - Original commitment: \$885K (impact fee waivers and ditch relocation cost offset).
 - New request: City to cover \$287K in sewer tap fees and waive water connection fees.
- Council Discussion:
 - Staff clarified city policy: only city-managed utilities (like sewer) can be supported under the new affordable housing incentive policy.
 - Waiver of the water fee (from Ute Water) not permitted.

- Council emphasized fiscal caution but agreed to consider funding sewer tap fees (\$287K), using the already-budgeted \$234K for impact fee waivers and covering the remaining \$53K from general fund reserves.
- Staff directed to draft a resolution for formal consideration on September 17th.

2. Council Communication

- Updates from Councilmembers on recent meetings and board participation.
- Recognition of the Avalon Theater Foundation and board collaboration.
- Continued support voiced for downtown redevelopment and housing efforts.

3. Next Workshop Topics

City Manager Mike Bennett outlined future workshop topics.

4. Other Business

Proclamation Requests:

- October 2025 as Intimate Partner Violence Awareness Month – Approval for Social Proclamation
- PANDAS/PANS Awareness Day – Approval for Social Proclamation

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the workshop adjourned at 8:35 p.m.