

## GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

### September 29, 2025

**Meeting Convened:** 5:29 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, Laurel Lutz (formerly Cole), Jason Nguyen, Anna Stout, Ben Van Dyke, and Mayor Cody Kennedy.

**Staff present:** City Manager Mike Bennett, City Attorney John Shaver, Assistant to the City Manager Johnny McFarland, Community Development Director Tamra Allen, Housing Manager Ashley Chambers, Chief Financial Officer Jay Valentine, Deputy City Clerk Misty Williams, and City Clerk Selestina Sandoval.

### 1. Discussion Topics

#### a. Grand Valley Outdoor Recreation Coalition (GVORC) Master Plan Letter of Support

Chandler Smith, Executive Director of the Grand Valley Outdoor Recreation Coalition (GVORC), provided a brief presentation and requested a letter of support from City Council for the GVORC to conduct, at its own expense, a comprehensive, county-wide Outdoor Recreation Master Plan and Feasibility Study. There was a general consensus to support the request and add this to the October 1, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting Agenda for formal approval.

#### b. Unhoused Needs and Strategy

Housing Manager Ashley Chambers, along with participants in the Mesa County Collaborative for the Unhoused (MCCUH), presented an overview of the Unhoused Needs Assessment (UHNA), the Unhoused Strategy & Implementation Plan, and progress on implementation. The plan builds on survey data and community input to create a coordinated roadmap for addressing homelessness, with MCCUH now leading collaborative efforts to move the community toward functional zero homelessness. City Council adopted the plan as a participant in July 2024. This workshop item was added at the direction of City Council after the August 4th workshop, whereby Council discussed the desire to revisit strategies related to the unhoused.

Key points included:

- The 2025 point-in-time count showed a 12% increase in individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness compared to 2024.
- The greatest needs remain transitional housing, mental health care, and daytime services.

- City staff noted ongoing collaboration with Mesa County, HomewardBound, and United Way of Mesa County to align services and avoid duplication.

**c. Funding Discussion on the Request for Proposals for Comprehensive Community Solutions for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness**

The purpose of this discussion item was to review and discuss staff and committee recommendations for funding allocations under the City's RFP for Comprehensive Community Solutions for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness, which was issued in May 2025 in response to the need for a more sustainable, coordinated system of services. The RFP sought proposals that advance the City's goals by addressing gaps in sheltering, housing stabilization, prevention, and supportive services. Of the nine proposals submitted, staff are recommending funding three projects—Grand Valley Catholic Outreach, Hilltop Family Resource Center, and The Joseph Center—based on their strong alignment with City goals, measurable outcomes, and capacity to deliver critical services. These recommendations are designed to ensure continuity of resources during a period of transition while positioning the City and its partners to make progress toward long-term homelessness reduction strategies. This item was presented by Community Development Director Tamra Allen and Housing Manager Ashley Chambers.

Key points included:

- There are no dedicated funds for this. Any funding would come out of the unreserved fund balance and one-time funds.
- Staff was seeking direction on whether the RFP hit the mark and should move forward or not.
- The three applications that staff chose for consideration to fund, if the Council should choose to move forward, are:
  - Grand Valley Catholic Outreach – Requested \$75,000 per year for three years, totaling \$225,000 to go directly to a rental assistance and eviction prevention program and specifically for survivors of domestic violence (\$61,152 from the current CDBG budget, and \$13,847 from the general fund reserves with one-time funding requests).
  - Hilltop Community Resources – Requested \$500,000 over three years to stabilize recent expansion efforts for emergency and transitional sheltering programs for young adults and domestic violence victims (staff recommended funding \$250,000 from general fund reserves).
  - Joseph Center – Requested \$200,000 each year for three years to expand and sustain its continuum of services, including continued funding for its emergency family shelter, day services, workforce programs, childcare, and case management, as well as combining housing and supportive services with behavioral health recovery (staff recommended funding \$100,000 which would also come from general fund reserves).

- There was discussion about budget implications and annual appropriation based on the City's ability and resources to fund requests.
- There will be more discussion regarding this in the budget workshops.

#### **d. Comprehensive Plan Amendment Discussion**

At the August 4 City Council workshop, the City Council expressed its interest in updating certain sections of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan. The Plan provides two update processes depending upon the extent of the amendment. Staff used the time allotted during this work session to discuss and receive direction on possible amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

Key points included:

- Staff recommended a 12–18 month process review to begin after 2026, once the strategic plan and budget have been finalized and approved.
- The importance of community engagement through several avenues in considering amendments was discussed.
- Staff highlighted the differences between Comprehensive Plan updates and Minor Plan Amendments that can be made without a new plan.

#### **e. Urban Trails Committee Letter**

The purpose of this discussion was for Council to discuss the draft letter to be delivered to the Urban Trails Committee, clarifying the purpose and role of the UTC at the next UTC meeting.

Key points included:

- A board and/or commission has a role in making recommendations to Council, but Council has the final say as the policy makers.
- The importance of committees being familiar with their bylaws and reviewing them for changes annually.
- Committees recording their meetings going forward, starting with a few pilot committees to test the process and equipment.
- Councilmembers' role to communicate their expectations to the boards and commissions that they liaise with in lieu of a formal letter to any one committee.

## **2. Council Communication**

There was a discussion on the Colorado River District presentation and the Persigo workshop.

### **3. Next Workshop Topics**

City Manager Mike Bennett outlined future workshop topics that focus on the 2026 budget and strategic plan.

### **4. Other Business**

There was none.

### **5. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the workshop adjourned at 9:29 p.m.