

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

October 13, 2025

Meeting Convened: 4:00 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) was virtual, Jason Nguyen, Anna Stout, Ben Van Dyke, and Mayor Cody Kennedy.

Staff present: City Manager Mike Bennett, City Attorney John Shaver, Deputy City Manager Kimberly Bullen, Chief Financial Officer Jay Valentine, Assistant to the City Manager Johnny McFarland, Community Development Director Tamra Allen, Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou, Utilities Director Randi Kim, Police Chief Matt Smith, Engineering and Transportation Director Trent Prall, Deputy Human Resources Director Deletha Assenmacher, General Services Director Jerod Timothy, Visit Grand Junction Director Elizabeth Fogarty, Deputy City Clerk Misty Williams, City Clerk Selestina Sandoval and other supporting staff.

1. Discussion Topics

a. 2026 City Manager's Recommended Budget

The City Manager presented the City of Grand Junction 2026 Recommended Budget (the Budget) at the October 6, 2025, Council Workshop. At the conclusion of this presentation and discussion, it was decided that this Oct. 13 Council Workshop would continue discussion on (1) one-time funding requests, (2) capital projects, and (3) general questions of the Council.

The Budget reflects the City of Grand Junction's continued commitment to aligning financial resources with the strategic vision established by the City Council. Guided by the five pillars of the Strategic Plan, the Budget emphasizes both operational and capital investments that allow the City to maintain and strengthen its core service infrastructure following several years of significant growth and expansion. It also provides for ongoing investment in public safety personnel and equipment, ensuring the protection of our community remains a top priority. Additionally, the Budget advances the City's efforts to enhance transparency and improve service delivery efficiencies. The five pillars of the Strategic Plan include (1) Core Services, (2) Housing, (3) Fiscal Policy & Position, (4) Government Transparency & Accountability, and (5) Government Efficiency.

The Budget totals \$314.8 million. This is a \$44.3 million or 12.3 percent decrease from the 2025 Adopted Budget. This decrease is primarily due to the completion of Phase 1 of the Persigo Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion and rehabilitation as well as the major phase of the Community Recreation Center in 2025.

Through staff's dedicated and collaborative efforts the 2026 Budget is balanced, with a modest General Fund surplus of \$163,642. The projected ending General Fund balance for 2026 is \$47.5 million, including a minimum reserve of \$28.8 million, internal loans totaling just under \$1 million, and \$17.7 million remaining for future needs and one-time funding.

Key points:

- Total Proposed Budget: \$314.8 million, a 12.3% decrease (\$43M) from the previous year, due to progress on major capital projects like the wastewater treatment facility and Community Recreation Center.
- Operational Budget Cuts: 14% reduction across departments to maintain a balanced budget.
- Revenue Challenge: Expenses were outpacing revenues; tough decisions were made to ensure long-term fiscal health.
- One-Time Funding Requests (from \$17.5M in unrestricted fund balance)
 - Nonprofit Requests
 - Arts Commission:
 - Requested: \$100,000; Recommended: \$40,000
 - Avalon Theatre Foundation:
 - Requested: \$60,000 (to match \$40,000 they raised)
 - Project: Dressing room improvements in city-owned Avalon Theatre
 - Counseling and Education Center (CEC):
 - Requested: \$20,986 (non-2026 funds) to cover engineering/inspection fees
 - Previously received ~\$1M in ARPA funds
 - Council expressed concern about repeat requests and sought:
 1. Confirmation of current funding gap
 2. A project budget
 3. List of other funders approached (including county)
 4. Status of loan applications and pending requests
 5. Decision deferred pending additional info; possible November discussion
- Unhoused Services RFP – Staff Recommended Funding: Total Recommendation: \$363,847
 - Hilltop: \$250,000 – Emergency/transitional shelter, wraparound services, and possible use of Unity Church
 - Joseph Center: \$100,000 – Shelter and case management for vulnerable individuals
 - Catholic Outreach: \$13,847 – Remaining unfunded portion of their request
 - Council Direction: Supportive of recommendations; suggestion to revisit Joseph Center's funding if Homeward Bound services decrease

- Homeward Bound Shelter Request
 - Requested: \$531,000 for 2026
 - Funding has ranged from \$50k to \$225k annually
 - Navigation Center funding not continuing in 2026
 - Organizational changes, reduced service days, and uncertain long-term viability
 - Council requested Homeward Bound attend the November workshop to:
 - Provide financials, staffing info, funding gaps
 - Explain weekend closures and impact on emergency shelter availability
 - Explore reallocation of Navigation Center funds to shelter operations
- Affordable and Attainable Housing Initiatives:
 - ADU Incentive Program
 - 2025 Funding: \$125,000 (carried into 2026)
 - Grant Match (Pending): Would raise total to \$325,000
 - Program credited with helping spur 22 ADU applications in 2025
- Affordable Housing Production Incentives
 - Total projects could result in 409 new affordable units
 - City Share (Water/Sewer Fees): ~\$408,000 in 2026 after CDBG offsets
 - Projects include:
 - 62-unit Salt Flats senior/veteran housing
 - 144-unit Brickwell project
 - 48-unit modular homeownership (Rural Homes)
 - 6-unit Habitat for Humanity
 - 149-unit 9th Path infill project
- Capital Projects Discussion
 - 29 Road/I-70 interchange design: \$3.4M for final design; future construction grant-dependent
 - Lilac Park renovation: \$80K project (50% grant-funded); Council briefly discussed potential sale of underused park but opted to proceed with cost-saving xeriscaping
 - Streetlight Municipalization Study: Deferred due to staff capacity and budget; ROI expected within 8 years once implemented
 - CMU 12th Street crossing: Funded by CMU and city (\$200K); Council also discussed broader pedestrian safety upgrades (9th Street corridor, signalization)

2. Council Communication

There was discussion on the flooding in the Redlands area.

3. Next Workshop Topics

City Manager Bennett gave a summary of upcoming Workshop topics.

4. Other Business

There was none.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the workshop was adjourned at 6:51 p.m.