

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

December 1, 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, 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 City Attorney Jeremiah Boies, Deputy City Manager Kimberly Bullen, Chief Financial Officer Jay Valentine, Assistant to the City Manager Johnny McFarland, Deputy City Clerk Misty Williams, and City Clerk Selestina Sandoval.

1. Discussion Topics

a. HomewardBound of the Grand Valley Funding Request

Following the City Council discussion at the October 13, 2025, Workshop, Council requested Homeward Bound of the Grand Valley (HBGV) to attend the next regularly scheduled Workshop on November 3, 2025, to present their request for funding. HBGV requested that this meeting be postponed until the completion of their review of their next steps as an organization. Specifically, Council requested information on the amount of funding being requested, information regarding all requests to other entities and pending funding amounts, a complete picture of the financial gap HBGV is facing, funding calculations that determined the closure(s), and how many weekends the North Ave. shelter would be closed prior to opening in the winter months. Also requested were financials, including revenues, expenditures, payroll structure, cash flow projections, and burn rate, and the number of people served at the shelter, daily costs, and how many were served elsewhere during the closure. Since this time, HBGV has reopened the shelter seven days a week, and the HBGV Board has voted to permanently close the shelter in early 2026.

Interim Executive Director Dan Prinster and Chair of the Board of Directors Brittany Bear were present to answer questions.

Key points included:

- Capacity and Staffing:
 - North Avenue: Licensed for 150 beds but operating at 90 due to staffing and safety.
 - Pathways: Licensed for 134, operating at 100 for flexibility and safety.

- Closure Impacts:
 - Data shows fluctuating occupancy during closures. Some individuals did not return immediately.
 - New admission criteria have led to some individuals being turned away (e.g., for substance use).
- Length of Stay and Efficiency Goals:
 - Many clients exceed 90-day stays.
 - A goal to enforce stay limits and improve case management to increase shelter turnover and help more people.
- Financial Overview:
 - Monthly operating costs (current): North Avenue – \$60K; Pathways – \$80K.
 - Past budget: \$2.3M; new lean budget goal: \$1.5M.
 - Bray Real Estate & anonymous donor raised \$150K for North Ave (Oct–Dec).
 - Pathways needs \$40K more for December; total fundraising gap through February is ~\$300K.
- Strategic Plan:
 - Consolidate operations into Pathways shelter only (effective Feb 27, 2026).
 - Goal: One 100-bed facility with improved case management.
 - Recommendation: Sell North Avenue property to pay debt and reinvest in operations.

Council Discussion:

- Broad concern about winter shelter availability and downstream impacts of consolidation.
- General support for HomewardBound's strategic pivot.
- Recognition that the funding crisis is systemic and not unique to HomewardBound.
- Council supported releasing \$185K in remaining 2025 funds to HomewardBound for use at their discretion (likely prioritizing Pathways).
- Future discussion in early 2026 to consider additional funding, especially if new contributions fall short.
- County has tentatively earmarked \$30K for early 2026 support.
- Ongoing coordination with other municipalities and agencies was encouraged.

b. Museums of Western Colorado – Continued to December 15, 2025

c. Proclamation Review

The regularly scheduled Civic Proclamations were shared with Council for review and feedback.

- Council reviewed the standard list of recurring proclamations.
- Proclamations serve as statements of support or acknowledgment by Council.
- Councilmembers can still bring forward other requests at any time.
- No objections or changes to the list were raised.

d. City Council 2025–2026 Legislative Policy

This item was for the City Council to review the City Council's Legislative Policy (Policy) and consider adoption of its 2025-2026 legislative priorities. The Policy is intended to establish the roles of staff and Council with regard to legislative tracking, advocacy, and communication. The Policy also includes the annual adoption of the Council legislative priorities to position the City for advocacy on relevant legislative matters. Resolution No. 85-24 was adopted by City Council in November 2024, which established a Council Legislative Policy and established the City Council's general support for the CML 2024-2025 Legislative Statement, which guided the City's legislative work through the 2025 General Assembly Regular Session.

Assistant to the City Manager Johnny McFarland presented this item.

- Reviewed and reaffirmed legislative engagement policy and process.
- Council typically aligns with Colorado Municipal League (CML) positions.
- Council retains the ability to take independent positions if needed.
- Staff provides weekly legislative updates during the session.
- Policy reaffirmed without changes.
- Consensus to improve Council communication and updates during the legislative session via workshops.

2. Council Communication

Open discussion by councilmembers included:

- Support for regional planning discussions on homelessness with Mesa County and other municipalities.
- Suggestion to organize an appreciation/send-off for departing City Attorney John.

3. Next Workshop Topics

City Manager Bennett gave a summary of upcoming Workshop topics, which included: Museums of Western Colorado, Colorado Mesa University update and the Parks Fee Discussion (tentative).

4. Other Business

There was none.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the workshop was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.