

Visit Grand Junction
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting
November 12, 2025, 3 pm - 5 pm

The meeting was held at Hotel Maverick, 840 Horizon Drive, Grand Junction, CO.

Presiding: Pat Nichols-Perrin, Vice-Chair

Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board Members Present: Tammy Anderson, Tevfik Demirciftci, Elizabeth Fortushniak, Julie Shafer, Brenda Greene, Joe Burtard, Manon Desrosiers

Absent: Theresa Horvat

City Council Members Present: Laurel Lutz

Visit Grand Junction Staff Present: Elizabeth Fogarty, Director; Teagan McLennan, Content Specialist; Daniel Short, Business Analyst; Matthew Hart, Visitor Center Manager & Administrative Coordinator; Dillon Chapman, Business Analyst; Rebecca Lawson, Marketing Intern

Guests: Bill Edwards, U.S. Forest Service

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 p.m. by Board Vice-Chair Pat Nichols-Perrin.

Minutes from the October 14, 2025, advisory board meeting: Tammy Anderson motioned to approve the minutes as written; Manon Desrosiers seconded. Motion passed.

Community Updates and Q&A – U.S. Forest Service

Bill Edwards, District Ranger with the U.S. Forest Service, provided an update on current trends, projects, and visitation patterns across the Grand Mesa. He noted that, through a partnership with the Rocky Mountain Conservancy, the Grand Mesa Visitor Center remained open through the summer season and achieved record visitation. Developed campgrounds performed strongly, maintaining 75% occupancy throughout the season. Bill outlined two construction projects currently underway. Little Bear Campground includes new restrooms, realignment of select campsites, some of which will be equipped with power. The project is expected to be completed in 2026. The second project, Trickle Park Road, includes road and subbase improvements, culverts repairs, and drainage systems. He also shared ongoing challenges impacting the forests, including low snowpack, water shortages, wildfires, and employee shortages.

Bill requested Visit Grand Junction's assistance in discouraging visitation to Island Lake Campground during the Little Bear Campground construction project, as the boat ramp and parking lots are inaccessible. Fogarty asked what alternative campgrounds were suggested to direct guests to. He suggested Cottonwood, Wier & Johnson, and Jumbo Campground.

A discussion followed regarding the number and popularity of developed and dispersed camping areas. Bill shared that a rough estimate is approximately over 300 developed campsites. Also, Jumbo Campground tends to be the most popular since it is open the longest compared to other sites. Also discussed was the low snowpack may impact reservoirs and Powderhorn Mountain Resort.

Elizabeth Fogarty asked Bill if there was anything Visit Grand Junction could do to further assist or improve the partnership with the U.S. Forest Service. Bill responded that he appreciates the proactive approach and also he would like to return to the Grand Junction Visitor Center in Spring or early Summer 2026 to meet the Volunteer Ambassadors and share updates so they can help spread the word. He expressed gratitude for the community support.

2025 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference Recap and Attendee Comments

The 2025 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference (Gov Con) was held in Colorado Springs, CO, on October 22-24, 2025. Representing Grand Junction were twelve attendees, consisting of five Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board members, the Mayor Pro Tem of City Council, and six Visit Grand Junction staff members. Gov Con sessions included artificial intelligence, emerging marketing and data trends, responsible destination management and stewardship, inclusivity, and visitor services.

The following Visit Grand Junction staff members shared their insights, learnings and applications from the sessions with particular focus on how Visit Grand Junction is already applying the teachings shared at the conference, and in some cases, significantly ahead of best practices shared. Presentations were made by: Daniel Short, Business Analyst; Matthew Hart, Visitor Center Manager & Administrative Coordinator; Teagan McLennan, Content Specialist; Dillon Chapman, Business Analyst; and Rebecca Lawson, Marketing Intern.

Joe Burtard, who attended Gov Con, expressed appreciation for how the Visit Grand Junction staff represented Grand Junction in such a professional manner throughout the conference.

Visit Grand Junction Updates

Other updates include:

- A brief update was provided regarding the decline in lodging tax revenue resulting from 30+ day stays, along with the reduction in available hotel rooms, noting the ongoing negative impacts on the lodging sector.
- Fogarty announced the appointment of Dora Fang, Christina Schultz, and Julie Shafer to the Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board. Julie Shafer is currently serving a partial term and is eligible for two full terms. The three-year terms will begin on January 1, 2026.
- The election for Chair and Vice Chair for the Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board is planned for the December 9, 2025, meeting.
- No significant update was provided regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Grand Junction Regional Air Service Alliance (GJRASA). Visit Grand Junction continues to update monthly the proprietary data worksheet to assist the GJRASA with its strategies.
- Distribution of Visitor Guides was discussed and the Advisory Board expressed appreciation for the Visitor Guide.
- Fogarty mentioned that the Ribbon Cutting for the new roundabout on Horizon Drive will be on November 20 at 12:00 pm and shared an invite with the Advisory Board. Advisory Board members expressed admiration for the new artwork that has been installed.
- Fogarty invited the Advisory Board to attend the West Slope Outdoor Recreation Industry Summit on November 13, 2025.

There being no further business, Julie Shafer motioned to adjourn; Manon Desrosiers seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:13 p.m.