

Visit Grand Junction  
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting  
October 14, 2025, 3 pm - 5 pm

The meeting was held at Residence Inn, 767 Horizon Drive, Grand Junction, CO.

**Presiding:** Elizabeth Fortushniak, Chair

**Visit Grand Junction Board Members Present:** Theresa Horvat, Tammy Anderson, Tevfik Demirciftci, Pat Nichols-Perrin, Julie Shafer, Brenda Greene, Joe Burtard

**Absent:** Manon Desrosiers

**Visit Grand Junction Staff Present:** Elizabeth Fogarty, Director; Kim Machado, Administrative Specialist

**Guests:** Brandon Stam, Executive Director, Downtown Development Authority and Business Improvement District

**Public:** Dora Fang

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Board Chair Elizabeth Fortushniak.

Minutes from the September 9, 2025, advisory board meeting: Theresa Horvat motioned to approve the minutes as written; Brenda Greene seconded. Motion passed.

**Community Updates and Q&A – Downtown Development Authority and Business Improvement District**

Brandon Stam, Executive Director of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and Business Improvement District (BID), presented updates on Downtown Grand Junction's development projects and organization initiatives. He outlined recent enhancements to DDA grant programs aimed at incentivizing both small and large property improvements. These include expanded facade and restaurant conversion grants and a new building activation grant to encourage mixed-use and upper-level activations. Brandon highlighted the continued vibrancy of Downtown, noting a surge in new business openings, unique retail additions, and food and beverage expansions. He shared progress on several significant programs, such as The Terminal, a mixed-use workforce housing development at the former Greyhound Bus Station. Restoration plans for the historic Grand Junction Union Depot, with Amtrak as a confirmed tenant, were also shared, as well as other infill residential projects and efforts to support third-party events instead of directly managing them.

Elizabeth Fogarty thanked Brandon for the partnership with the DDA/BID, asking if there was anything Visit Grand Junction could improve or do to further the partnership. Brandon responded that the support from Visit Grand Junction, particularly in providing data and pulling in boutique hotel or development leads, has been very helpful as Downtown attracts more sophisticated businesses. He indicated that people are recognizing where Grand Junction is due to the efforts of Visit Grand Junction and expressed appreciation for the ongoing support. He further encouraged continued sharing of relevant information and resources.

**Visit Grand Junction Updates**

Fogarty shared an update on Grand Junction's lodging tax collections and key hotel performance metrics for August 2025's business activity.

For August 2025's business, Grand Junction's lodging tax collections were 9.7% above August 2024. August 2025 hotel occupancy was 82.7%, average daily rate (ADR) was \$123.90, and revenue per available room (RevPAR) was \$102.43. Despite strong performance, year-to-date lodging tax collections are 2.8% below through August 2025's business compared to the same eight-month period in 2024. The reduction is primarily due to hotel cannibalization – rooms being rented for 30 or more day stays, rendering them non-taxable. Notable hotel metrics include:

- August 2025's RevPAR of \$102.43 was 14.0% above August 2024, and outpaced Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns, and the U.S. It was the highest recorded RevPAR for any month of August in Grand Junction's history.
- August 2025's ADR of \$123.90 was 2.0% above August 2024 and outpaced Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns, and the U.S. It was the highest recorded ADR for any month of August in Grand Junction's history.
- August 2025 occupancy was 11.8% above August 2024, and outpaced Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns, and the U.S. It was the highest recorded occupancy for any month of August in Grand Junction's history.

- The September 2024 through August 2025 rolling 12-month ADR pacing was 1.8% above the September 2023 through August 2024 rolling 12-month ADR, and outpaced the U.S., and Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.

Other updates include:

- Data was presented illustrating the decline in lodging tax revenue resulting from 30+ day stays, along with corresponding impacts on sales and lodging tax collections - noting the continued negative effects it causes.
- The November 11, 2025, a Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board meeting scheduled on a city holiday, has been rescheduled to November 12, 2025.
- Fogarty reminded the advisory board members of the seats expiring December 31, 2025, which include Joe Burtard, Tammy Anderson, and Julie Shafer. Burtard and Anderson are term-limited. Shafer, currently serving a partial term, is eligible to apply for a full term. Applications are due to the City Clerk's office by October 15, 2025.
- The election for Chair and Vice Chair for the Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board is planned for the December 9, 2025, meeting.
- Visit Grand Junction submitted a Colorado Tourism Office marketing grant. The project will support the launch of a marketing campaign celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States and the 150th anniversary of Colorado by showcasing the Grand Junction area's unique experiences. Both Palisade and Fruita were included by Visit Grand Junction, although no funding is required of either town.
- No significant update 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 their strategies.
- A delegation of 13 board members, staff, and Council Liaison will attend the Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference in Colorado Springs on October 22 – 24, 2025.
- Marketing strategies include optimizing the destination brand and VisitGrandJunction.com content to be accurately and favorably represented in AI-generated responses through large language models.
- Production is ongoing for Visit Grand Junction's workforce video campaign, filmed at local businesses showcasing authentic stories of tourism staff in the community, and for the tourism campaign video, filmed at significant areas throughout Mesa County.
- Recent media coverage of Grand Junction included NBC Daytime Tampa, Travel + Leisure Instagram takeover, and a series of stories and posts on Nos Curieux Voyageurs Instagram.
- ADP U.S. Industry data was highlighted comparing August 2025 to July 2025, noting that of the 54,000 jobs gained, 50,000 were in the leisure and hospitality sector. This highlights the strength of the industry nationwide.

There being no further business, Brenda Greene motioned to adjourn; Theresa Horvat seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.