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**PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP AGENDA
HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING ROOM
CITY HALL, 250 N 5TH STREET
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025 - 12:00 PM
Attend virtually: bit.ly/GJ-PCW-2025**

Call to Order - 12:00 PM

Other Business

1. Discussion concerning Certified Irrigation Designer requirement.
2. Discussion concerning pedestrian connection requirements.
3. Discussion on Detention Ponds Landscaping code amendments

Adjournment



Grand Junction Planning Commission

Workshop Session

Item #1.

Meeting Date: November 20, 2025

Presented By: Tim Lehrbach, Principal Planner

Department: Community Development

Submitted By:

Information

SUBJECT:

Discussion concerning Certified Irrigation Designer requirement.

RECOMMENDATION:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

BACKGROUND OR DETAILED INFORMATION:

SUGGESTED MOTION:

Attachments

1. HACTF Recommendation No. 7 CID

Recommendation Form

Task Force Proposal Template and Reporting Guide

Each member preparing a proposal for the Task Force should complete the following outline to ensure consistent structure and adequate depth. The intent is not to require perfect code-writing or legal formatting, but to:

- Clearly define the problem;
- Describe the desired outcome;
- Offer a specific and implementable change (code, policy, or procedure);
- Explain how it will improve housing affordability (time, cost, or risk reduction);
- Identify impacts, alignment, and next steps for Council action.

Please keep your written submission concise (2–3 pages) but complete enough that a code-writing professional can translate it into legislative or procedural language.

1. Problem Statement

Describe the issue clearly and specifically. Identify where in the process or what code/policy creates the problem. Include examples, data points, or anecdotes that demonstrate the real-world impact on cost, time, or efficiency.

Example: The following code requirement is currently in the landscape code:

- **Code Section:** *Section 21.06.040* of the Grand Junction Municipal Code
- **Purpose:** Ensures that landscape irrigation systems are designed efficiently and sustainably, minimizing water waste and supporting healthy plant growth.
- **Certification Requirement:**
 - Irrigation systems must be designed by a *certified irrigation designer* or a *licensed professional* with expertise in landscape irrigation.
 - Certification may include credentials from recognized organizations such as the Irrigation Association or similar bodies.

There are four main problems with this requirement: 1) Very few professionals on the western slope have these credentials and the bodies that issue these credentials barely function, 2) There are no specific building code or code references that would provide guidance for these credentials, 3) The design and inspection requirement would add a cost of \$1,500-\$7,500 in consulting fees, in addition to 2-3 weeks of design time during plan development, and 4) There is no long term enforcement mechanism for ensuring “healthy plant” growth rendering the requirement and cost useless. In essence this adds a regulatory burden under the guise of good intentions when property owners and HOA’s are incentivized to maintain their landscaping to maintain value.

2. Outcome Statement (Goal / Objective)

Define the ideal condition or result you seek. Phrase it in measurable or observable terms.

Example: Remove *Section 21.06.040* from the code.

3. Proposed Change (Draft Concept)

Indicate whether this is a code amendment, policy change, or procedural/administrative improvement. Write out your idea as clearly as possible, even if not in final legal form. Cite or quote relevant code sections when possible.

Example: Remove Section *21.06.040* from the code.

4. Cost / Benefit Analysis (Housing Cost Impact)

Quantify, if possible, how this change affects housing costs:

- Depending on the project size, reduces soft cost/consulting fees by approximately \$1,500-\$7,500
- • As this design cannot be completed until after the landscape design is complete, removing this requirement will save 2-3 weeks minimum per project if the consulting expertise was available. Given the shortage in the market, this time could extend to 6-8 weeks.

5. Summary for Council and Public Messaging

Provide a 2-3 sentence plain-language summary suitable for public presentation.

Example: "This change will reduce the cost of housing by saving \$1,500-\$7,500 in fees and in shorten the time and cost of carry but 6-8 weeks by eliminating the design process. In addition, the current requirement implies that property owners and HOA's do not maintain their landscaping, while market forces dictate that most property owners are incentivized to maintain the landscaping to hold their market value. Regulatory burdens and associated costs/delays are not needed for this specific issue.



Grand Junction Planning Commission

Workshop Session

Item #2.

Meeting Date: November 20, 2025

Presented By:

Department: Community Development

Submitted By:

Information

SUBJECT:

Discussion concerning pedestrian connection requirements.

RECOMMENDATION:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

BACKGROUND OR DETAILED INFORMATION:

SUGGESTED MOTION:

Attachments

1. HACTF Recommendation No. 6 Pedestrian Access

Connecting Commercial and Industrial Code Amendments to Housing Affordability

1. The Broader Definition of 'Affordability' in Grand Junction

The Grand Junction Housing Strategy (Resolution 74-24) defines affordability broadly—not just as reducing direct housing costs, but also as removing regulatory and procedural barriers, and fiscal cost shift that increase total development costs that are ultimately borne by home buyers and renters.

The strategy specifically encourages changes that reduce fiscal cost burden, improve land-use efficiency, streamline development approvals, and reduce indirect costs that affect the overall cost of housing. Therefore, even amendments to commercial or industrial codes can play a meaningful role in achieving housing affordability goals.

2. How Each Proposed Code Amendment Supports Housing Affordability

Drive-Through Standards (§21.04.040(E)(2))

In Grand Junction, sales and use taxes from retail development are the largest source of the City's operating revenues. Sales and use taxes are the primary source of the City's General Fund which supports the core city functions and capital improvement projects that underpin the development of housing.

Returning primary function to retail drive-through will maintain the sales tax revenue that is necessary to support public infrastructure and services that are necessary for cost effective housing. Allowing drive-through retail development to continue also underpins mixed-use projects that include both retail commercial and residential components where commercial components carry a greater proportionate share of the cost of the land and infrastructure that are necessary to support housing.

Talking point: "The City of Grand Junction is discouraging small retail development through overly burdensome drive through design criteria and by doing so more infrastructure and service cost burden will be shifted to housing. Amending the zoning code to allow retail drive-through development will contribute substantially to the financial feasibility of housing development in general and attainable housing in particular."

Required Pedestrian Access and Bicycle Parking in Industrial Zones (§21.08.020(A–C))

While it is important to consider safety for multimodal access and circulation in high traffic settings frequented by the general public it is also important to bike and ped requirements for property uses that are not oriented toward the general public where low traffic living and work functions require design forms that don't necessitate exclusive pedestrian and bicycle design criteria that negate other primary uses by reducing valuable indoor area and interrupting on site circulation. The proposed code changes are intended to recognize bike and pedestrian use without comprising other uses. Those that are using property should be

able to design them to serve the function of residential and non-residential tenants alike to derive the highest and best property use at the lowest possible cost.

The imposition of exclusive pedestrian access and specific indoor bike storage requirements on non-retail commercial and industrial zoned properties limits their functional efficiency and the resultant lack of usable space and hindered site circulation from these requirements ultimately reduces business expansion and the resultant wage growth that is a primary component of housing affordability.

In addition to maintaining employment growth, it is important to understand that residential builders and contractors, and their suppliers are primary users of commercial and industrial spaces and maintaining the design functionality of the spaces that builders and building material suppliers utilize ultimately reduces the construction costs that ripple into the housing market through higher material and labor prices.

Thus, it is important to recognize that the proposed zoning amendments support housing affordability both by increasing employment and maintaining the operating efficiency of housing providers.

Talking point: "Right-sizing exclusive pedestrian access and bike-parking requirements increases business expansion and wage growth to increase consumer funding for housing while improving builder and supplier operating efficiencies to reduce housing costs."

Non-Structural Change of Use (§21.02.040(C)(2)(i) B)

Amend §21.02.040(C)(2)(i)(B) to exempt non-structural change-of-use projects from Administrative Review when there are no exterior site or utility changes and the change-of-use is in the same General Use Category (Residential, Public, Commercial, Industrial) as the proceeding/historical use.

Currently a Change of Use Permit process is required whenever a property changes from a nonresidential use to a residential one, or between certain use categories—even if there are no structural modifications, site layout changes, or utility adjustments. This requirement adds time and cost to zoning compliant business expansions that could otherwise proceed under standard zoning guidelines. Just as importantly this process uses up staff resources that could be better utilized to process residential subdivision and site plan applications.

Talking point: "Reducing staff time spent reviewing zoning compliant change of uses in existing buildings will increase the pace and predictability of business expansion and resultant employment growth while allocating more staff time to expedite residential site plan subdivision applications. Expediting job and wage growth will improve consumer funds available for housing and allocating more staff time to residential projects will reduce entitlement delays to increase the rate of housing production."

3. Affordability Through Efficiency

The Task Force's mission is to identify and remove regulatory barriers that make housing more expensive. Commercial and industrial efficiencies directly support that mission by

(i)

Required Pedestrian Access.

- (A) Each non-industrial zoned development with one or more buildings, except individual lot development of a single-unit detached or duplex dwelling, shall provide ~~reasonably-reasonable direct-paved~~ pedestrian sidewalk connections from the front of principal building main entrances to abutting public streets, ~~between all principal buildings, between buildings and~~ outlying parking areas, ~~between buildings and~~ transit facilities, ~~and between the development~~ and any abutting Active Transportation Corridor.

~~(B) Pedestrian circulation shall be given equal consideration to motor vehicle traffic.~~

(ii)

Design Requirements.

- (i) Each pedestrian ~~sidewalk~~ connection shall be a minimum of ~~six-four~~ feet wide ~~and shall be constructed of concrete~~.
- (ii) At least one pedestrian ~~sidewalk~~ connection between a principal building and an abutting street shall provide access to an existing contiguous public sidewalk allowing continuous travel to all abutting streets if available. ~~The connection shall be separated from motor vehicle areas by a curb or other physical barrier approved by the Director, except that The pedestrian connection to an abutting street may crossing cross~~ a motor vehicle area is allowed when the following standards are met for each such crossing:
- The crossing shall be as close to a perpendicular angle to the vehicular path of travel as possible.
 - ~~The crossing shall be raised to a minimum of three inches above the height of the adjacent pavement.~~
 - The crossing shall be ~~constructed of concrete~~ stripped on a polymer surface which contrasts in color and/or texture with the pavement of the motor vehicle area.
 - ~~The distance of the crossing shall be the minimum necessary. No crossing shall exceed 20 feet.~~
 - ~~Curb extensions shall be used to minimize crossing distance and maximize visibility.~~
 - ~~Vehicle turning movements shall be spaced as far as possible from the crossing.~~
 - Advance warning signage and striping shall be provided.

~~(iii) All other pedestrian sidewalk connections shall meet the following standards:~~

- ~~The connection shall be clearly visible and provide adequate lighting.~~
- ~~Where connections cross motor vehicle areas, each such crossing shall be constructed of concrete which contrasts in color and/or texture with~~

~~the pavement of the motor vehicle area.~~

~~e.h. Advance warning signage and striping shall be provided as necessary to facilitate circulation and improve public safety and awareness.~~

(9)

Access.

Site layout and access design shall minimize the number of traffic conflict points into and out of a development by defining and consolidating driveways or access points and designing shared access between/among businesses.

(Ord. 5267, 7/16/2025; Ord. 5263, 6/18/2025; Ord. No. 5250, 4/2/2025; Ord. No. 5241, 12/4/2024; Ord. No. 5228, 8/7/2024; Ord. 5190, 12/20/2023)

§ 21.05.030. Parks, open space, and trails.

(a) (Reserved)

(b)

Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails.

(1) Trails shall be constructed in accordance with applicable City standards.

(2) **Trail Construction for Transportation Impact Fee Credit.**

If a required Active Transportation Corridor is constructed for any purpose other than replacing a required sidewalk (pursuant to § 29.68.020(f) Pedestrian Facilities), then the developer/owner may request a credit for the cost of construction of the trail(s) against the project's Transportation Impact Fee in an amount not to exceed the total transportation fee. The amount of the credit will be determined by the City using established and uniform cost for labor and materials for the specific type and width of the trail(s) constructed.

(Ord. No. 5250, 4/2/2025; Ord. 5190, 12/20/2023)

§ 21.05.040. Residential compatibility standards.

(a)

Purpose.

The purpose of this section is to protect existing Residential zone districts, neighborhoods, and uses from the potentially adverse impacts arising from the development of taller or more intense structures in close proximity to residences.

(b)

Applicability.

(1) The residential compatibility standards in this subsection apply when single-unit attached of three units or more, multi-unit residential, mixed-use development, or nonresidential development is proposed adjacent to structures in an R-R, R-ER, R-1R, R-2R, RL-4, or RL-5 zone district (protected residential districts).

(2) In cases where multiple structure types are contained on the same lot, residential adjacency shall apply to the area within that lot which encompasses the protected



Grand Junction Planning Commission

Workshop Session

Item #3.

Meeting Date: November 20, 2025
Presented By:
Department: Community Development
Submitted By:

Information

SUBJECT:

Discussion on Detention Ponds Landscaping code amendments

RECOMMENDATION:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

BACKGROUND OR DETAILED INFORMATION:

SUGGESTED MOTION:

Attachments

None