

## GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

### December 15, 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, Jason Nguyen, Anna Stout, Ben Van Dyke, and Mayor Cody Kennedy.

**Staff present:** City Manager Mike Bennett, Interim City Attorney Jeremiah Boies, Deputy City Manager Kimberly Bullen, Chief Financial Officer Jay Valentine, Community Development Director Tamra Allen, Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou, Deputy City Clerk Misty Williams, and City Clerk Selestina Sandoval.

#### 1. Discussion Topics

##### a. Colorado Mesa University Football Stadium Update

Since the last update to City Council, city staff and Colorado Mesa University (CMU) representatives have continued with discussions regarding potential enhancements to amenities at the Lincoln Park Sports Complex to support collegiate football. Based on feedback from the City, CMU is exploring a new concept that does not require the demolition of the Lincoln Park Barn, and provided an update to the Council on this new concept.

CMU President John Marshall presented this item and was available for questions.

- **Key Points:**
  - The revised concept preserves the historic barn and integrates it into a football facility expansion rather than demolishing it.
  - The university seeks a long-term lease from the City for both the barn and the footprint of the new facility.
  - CMU is proposing to make millions of dollars in capital improvements to the city-owned stadium complex at their own expense, including potential renovations of the west grandstands, tower upgrades, and branding.
- **Council Feedback:**
  - Council support was generally strong, especially for the responsiveness shown by CMU in preserving the barn.
  - Questions were raised about the value of the barn to the City, its current community uses, and whether there will be public access under CMU's lease.
  - CMU indicated they need exclusive use of the barn for football-related purposes, though they expressed willingness to collaborate for occasional special events.
  - Council requested a list of rental spaces available for the public, as well as historical uses, to gauge potential impacts of the barn not being available to the public.

### **b. Museums of Western Colorado**

The Museum of Western Colorado (MWC) operates three primary facilities: Dinosaur Journey, the Museum of the West, and Cross Orchards Historic Site. Museum leadership has been working to identify long-term strategies to stabilize operations and strengthen its role as a regional cultural asset. They presented an update to City Council on their ongoing sustainability planning and potential implications for the Museum's future.

Executive Director Sheena Hayden presented this item and was available for questions.

- **Key points included:**
  - The MWC operates three facilities: Cross Orchards, Dinosaur Journey, and Museum of the West.
  - MWC is exploring the creation of a unified museum campus to consolidate operations, increase efficiency, improve visitor experience, and strengthen financial sustainability.
  - A feasibility study funded by the DDA is underway to assess building conditions and long-term viability of a downtown campus.
  - MWC is pursuing community engagement through a State of the Museum event (Jan 13, 2026) and roundtable discussions.
- **Council Feedback:**
  - Council expressed strong support and praised recent progress and leadership.
  - Interest in keeping the museum in Grand Junction was high, especially given the economic and cultural benefits.

### **c. Parks Impact Fee Discussion**

The Grand Junction Municipal Code ("Code" or "GJMC") required the City to update its impact fee study once every five years. The City's last fee study for transportation, police, fire, parks, and municipal facilities was completed in 2019, which necessitated the need for the city to update its fee study in 2024/2025. The city contracted with TischlerBise to update its fee study, for which a new fee schedule and changes to the GJMC were adopted on April 2, 2025. The process for updating included a city-appointed stakeholder group, numerous workshops with the City Council and Planning Commission, community meetings, as well as a joint workshop between the City Council and the appointed stakeholder group. Information about the fee study, including all fees, was made available throughout the process on <https://engagegj.org/impact-fees-study>.

Staff received from the Housing and Building Association of Western Colorado a request that the City reconsider the adopted parks fee, including the calculation, collection, and tracking. The city has subsequently received a request from the HBA not to collect the increase to the adopted parks fees that are scheduled to become effective on January 1, 2025, until a thorough review has been completed and Council has made a decision on whether the fees should be adjusted.

Community Development Director Tamra Allen introduced this item and TischlerBise consultants Jule Herlands and Carson Bise presented the details.

- **Key Points Included:**
  - Key components of the fee (parkland acquisition, improvements, and open space).
  - Three new options were presented with adjusted assumptions:
    - Option 1: Remove downtown parcels → \$116K/acre
    - Option 2: Remove central city parcels → \$114K/acre
    - Option 3: Remove outliers (3 highest and 3 lowest sales) → \$108K/acre
- **Council Feedback:**
  - General consensus formed around Option 3 as the most defensible and balanced approach.
  - Several members emphasized the importance of impact fees in maintaining the current level of service for parks and shifting growth costs off the general fund.
  - Interim City Attorney clarified that Council could adopt less than 100% of the maximum defensible fee if it makes a clear, policy-based decision and documents its rationale after the question was asked if the City could adopt a percentage of the recommended fees.
  - Council directed staff to prepare an ordinance adopting Option 3 for first reading at the January 7, 2026, regular meeting for consideration.

## 2. Council Communication

Open discussion by councilmembers included:

- McDonald's letter of support.
- Colorado Municipal League Executive Board updates.
- Grand Junction Housing Authority reinterviews – direction to schedule interviews with Councilmembers Lutz and Van Dyke, volunteering for them.

## 3. Next Workshop Topics

City Manager Bennett will email the list to Councilmembers. Councilmember Stout requested that the boards and commissions' interview process be scheduled for a workshop. Councilmember Beilfuss requested that a workshop be held for the Mesa County Collaboration for the Unhoused to present.

## 4. Other Business

There was none.

## 5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the workshop was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

OpenAI. (2025). *ChatGPT* [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com>