

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

January 26, 2026

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 (virtual), 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, Assistant to the City Manager Johnny McFarland, Community Development Director Tamra Allen, Housing Manager Ashley Chambers, Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou, Communications and Engagement Manager Kelsy Coleman, Deputy City Clerk Krystle Koehler, and City Clerk Selestina Sandoval.

1. Discussion Topics

a. Housing Needs Assessment and Action Plan Update

This update was provided to inform City Council on the status and overall approach to the City's Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) and Housing Action Plan (HAP) work being undertaken in response to Colorado Senate Bill 24-174 and the City Council's Strategic Framework. The City is currently completing the required Housing Needs Assessment, followed by development of a Housing Action Plan to identify actionable strategies to improve housing affordability, availability, and stability. This effort is being coordinated with Mesa County through a joint regional assessment and is aligned with preparation of the City's 2026–2030 CDBG 5-Year Consolidated Plan, a required document for HUD entitlement communities. To improve efficiency and ensure consistency across local, state, and federal planning requirements, these efforts are being developed concurrently, with completion anticipated by Summer/Early Fall 2026.

- Community Development Director Tamra Allen and Housing Manager Ashley Chambers introduced this item, and consultant Mollie Fitzpatrick with Root Policy Research provided an update on the Housing Needs Assessment and the evolving Action Plan.
- Discussion focused on housing affordability, availability of multi-family units, and strategies to meet projected population growth.
- Councilmembers raised concerns about how to incentivize affordable housing developments while balancing neighborhood character.
- There was general support for pursuing zoning reform and public-private partnerships.

b. 2026 Communications and Engagement Overview

In the spirit of one of the City's core values, continuous improvement, and in alignment with the Strategic Plan pillar of Government Transparency and Accountability, staff presented an overview of the City's 2026 communications and engagement approach focused on improving clear, consistent communication with the community. This includes a reimagined City Update, updates to the Sales & Use Tax Report to improve clarity, the City Manager's 2026 Engagement Plan, and continued planning for Meet You There events to expand opportunities for public connection with City leadership.

- The Communications team outlined goals for increased community engagement in 2026.
- Plans include expanded digital outreach, improved feedback loops for public input, and targeted messaging for underserved populations.
- Council emphasized the importance of transparency and proactive outreach, especially regarding large capital projects and policy changes.

c. Stadium 2026 Summer Use Agreement with Pecos League

In the fall of 2025, news broke that the Grand Junction Jackalopes would not be returning to Suplizio Field at the Lincoln Park Sports Complex. Following that, several organizations contacted the City, indicating interest. To ensure a fair and transparent process, a Request for Proposals was released. Following interviews, the review committee opted to enter negotiations with the Pecos League. The terms offered are favorable to the City and provide activity during a time of year when most Stadiums of its kind are often dark. This item was for staff to update the City Council on the results of the recent Request for Proposals and next steps.

- Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou introduced the item and Andrew Dunn with Pecos League presented a draft summer use agreement with the Pecos League for the 2026 season.
- The proposal includes shared maintenance responsibilities, scheduling details, and revenue-sharing components.
- Councilmembers asked about long-term plans for stadium upgrades and community access during the season.
- General consensus supported moving forward with the agreement, with further legal and logistical review.

d. City Council Board and Commission Liaison Reports and Other Business During Regular City Council Meetings

This item was requested by Mayor Cody Kennedy to have a group discussion about how City Council utilizes the agenda items at regular City Council meetings for Boards and Commissions Liaison Reports and items discussed under Other Business.

- Council discussed the purpose and parameters of only providing updates of the City's Boards and Commissions during this time.

2. Council Communication

Open discussion by councilmembers included:

- A future workshop to discuss moving forward with recording Visit GJ Board meetings.
- Councilmember Stout provided a legislative update.
- The Mutual Aid Partners event is available to two councilmembers only.
- Possible workshop on second-hand tax consideration.

3. Next Workshop Topics

City Manager Bennett gave a summary of upcoming Workshop topics, which included: Orchard Mesa Pool Next Steps, Water Enterprise Loan to Fund Waterline Replacements, and Process for Hiring the City Attorney.

4. Other Business

There was none.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the workshop was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.