

Visit Grand Junction
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting
January 13, 2026, 3 pm - 5 pm

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

Presiding: Pat Nichols-Perrin, Board Chair

Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board Members Present: Julie Shafer, Dora Fang, Christina Schultz, Theresa Horvat, Tevfik Demirciftci

Absent: Brenda Greene, Manon Desrosiers, Elizabeth Fortushniak

City Council Members Present: Mayor Pro Tem Laurel Lutz

Visit Grand Junction Staff Present: Elizabeth Fogarty, Director; Teagan McLennan, Content Specialist

Guests: Sandra Zoldowski, Executive Director, Horizon Drive District

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. by Board Chair Pat Nichols-Perrin.

Minutes from the December 9, 2025, advisory board meeting: Theresa Horvat motioned to approve the minutes as written; Julie Shafer seconded. Motion passed.

Community Updates and Q&A – Horizon Drive District

Sandra Zoldowski, Executive Director of the Horizon Drive District, provided updates on 2025 projects and initiatives for 2026. She distributed the Horizon Drive Discovery Guide to Advisory Board members, which was printed and distributed in 2025. For 2026, Sandra outlined several planned initiatives, including adding the Discovery Guide to their website; installing two lighted crosswalks at the east and west on-ramps to I-70 to improve pedestrian safety; creating a contingency fund to help keep the district free of graffiti, weeds, and trash; and working with Horizon Drive businesses to install EV chargers. She also noted that efforts are underway to include businesses located beyond G Road in the district. She added that the Southwest Loop of the Horizon Trail is regularly maintained and that the district is involved in discussions regarding the unhoused population in the area.

A discussion took place regarding the Horizon Drive District's participation as a transportation sponsor for the Palisade Peach Festival. Additional conversation addressed graffiti concerns, during which Sandra explained that the district is taking a proactive approach to deter any tagging.

Sandra expressed gratitude for Visit Grand Junction and complimented the organization's efforts to promote the area.

Elizabeth Fogarty thanked Sandra for the update and asked if there was anything Visit Grand Junction could do to further assist or improve the partnership with the Horizon Drive District. Sandra replied that she refers guests to Visit Grand Junction often and complimented Visit Grand Junction's work and strategies.

Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board Business

Roundtable introductions took place for the two new advisory board members, Christina Schultz and Dora Fang.

Official meeting notice designation for 2026: Julie Shafer moved to approve the following motion, and Theresa Horvat seconded:

"I make a motion to designate VisitGrandJunction.com and GJCity.org as the official meeting notice locations of the Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board of Directors for 2026. In the event of a disruption in internet service, the Visitor Center entrance door at 740 Horizon Drive and the glassed-in exterior notice board at City Hall, 250 N. 5th St., are the designated posting locations."

The motion was approved unanimously.

Visit Grand Junction Updates

Elizabeth Fogarty shared an update on Grand Junction's lodging tax collections and key hotel performance metrics for November 2025's business activity, including YTD.

For November 2025's business, Grand Junction's lodging tax collections were 6.1% above November 2024. November 2025 hotel occupancy was 53.7%, average daily rate (ADR) was \$95.14, and revenue per available room (RevPAR) was \$51.12. Year-to-date lodging tax collections are 0.5% above through November 2025's business compared to the same eleven-month period in 2024. Notable hotel metrics include:

- November 2025's Occupancy of 53.7% was 8.5% above November 2024, and outpaced Colorado (including and excluding ski towns) and the U.S. This is the seventh consecutive month that Grand Junction has paced ahead of Colorado, including and excluding ski resorts, and the U.S.
- November 2025's ADR of \$95.14 was 2.9% above November 2024, and outpaced Colorado (including and excluding ski towns), and the U.S. It was the highest recorded ADR for any month of November in Grand Junction's history.
- November 2025 RevPAR of \$51.12 was 11.7% above November 2024, and outpaced Colorado (including and excluding ski towns), and the U.S. It was the highest recorded RevPAR for any month of November in Grand Junction's history.

Other updates include:

- A brief update was provided regarding the decline in lodging tax revenue resulting from 30 or more day stays, along with the resulting reduction in available hotel rooms and the ongoing impacts on the lodging sector. Fogarty shared data highlighting destinations with similar populations, visitation, and economic structure. The comparison highlighted that these destinations have over 2,000 more hotel rooms compared to Grand Junction.
- An update was provided regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Grand Junction Regional Air Service Alliance (GJRASA). City Council will vote on an extension during the January 21, 2026, regular meeting. Visit Grand Junction continues to update monthly the proprietary data worksheet to assist the GJRASA with its strategies.
- A brief discussion occurred regarding events in Grand Junction commemorating America's 250th and Colorado's 150th anniversaries. Fogarty explained that Visit Grand Junction will support annual events by assisting them in incorporating elements of the 250 – 150 celebrations to commemorate the year. She also outlined other initiatives Visit Grand Junction will champion, funded partly through a marketing grant with the Colorado Tourism Office. Visit Grand Junction secured drone shows for Arbor Fest in 2026.
- Fogarty shared updates on hospitality employment as outlined by ADP and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), which show that Leisure & Hospitality jobs rank in the top two industries for job gains across both reports. She also provided updates related to national economics, and average retail gasoline prices in Colorado. 2026 trends were shared, including town-sizing and slowcations. Fogarty explained how Visit Grand Junction's strategies align with the trends.
- A discussion occurred regarding the increase in November 2025 lodging tax revenue. Fogarty explained that the growth is attributed to Visit Grand Junction's efforts, along with community and stakeholder involvement, and the implementation of shared strategies. She added that a destination in Colorado has reached out to Visit Grand Junction to learn more about the DMOs strategies, noting that Grand Junction is currently the only destination in the state showing a consistent upward trend.
- Fogarty provided an update related to potential changes to the City of Grand Junction's Boards & Commissions processes. A discussion followed regarding possible impacts and considerations for Visit Grand Junction. Board members provided feedback and offered input on next steps.

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

The meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.