

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

AUGUST 3, 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 (virtual), Scott Beilfuss, Cody Kennedy, Jason Nguyen, Ben Van Dyke, and Mayor Laurel Lutz. Councilmember Anna Stout was absent.

Staff present: City Manager Mike Bennett, Interim City Attorney Jeremiah Boies, Deputy City Manager Kimberly Bullen, Chief Financial Officer Jay Valentine, Community Development Housing Manager Ashley Chambers (virtual), Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou, Communications and Engagement Manager Kelsey Coleman, Deputy City Clerk Krystle Koehler, and City Clerk Selestina Sandoval.

1. Discussion Topics

a. Unhoused Services Request for Proposal Update and Funding Discussion

Key Points:

- Staff reviewed the unhoused services Request for Proposal process established following the closure of the resource center and other interim services. Nine proposals totaling approximately \$3.6 million were received, with three organizations ultimately selected for funding.
- Council was reminded that the workshop was intended to review program outcomes and ask questions of providers. No funding decisions were made; year-two requests will be considered during the upcoming budget process.
- **Hilltop Community Resources/United Way of Mesa County:**
 - Hilltop received \$250,000 in year one and is requesting \$300,000 for year two. City funding supported homelessness prevention, emergency and transitional shelter, bridge housing, case management, housing navigation, and outreach. Hilltop reported serving 229 unique individuals and expanding its young-adult shelter from five to 11 bedrooms, providing capacity for 11–33 beds. United Way discussed its mobile outreach, housing hotline, service coordination, and connections to health care, behavioral health, employment, benefits, and housing.
 - Council discussed the importance of ensuring outreach activities ultimately lead toward stabilization and permanent housing. Providers explained that limited basic-needs assistance during outreach is used as an entry point for connecting individuals with treatment, services, benefits, and housing.

- **Grand Valley Catholic Outreach:**
 - The organization received \$75,000 in year one and is requesting \$75,000 for year two for rental assistance and eviction prevention. From February through June, assistance supported 48 households representing 108 people, with 92% remaining housed one month after receiving assistance.
 - Catholic Outreach incorporates budgeting and financial education into its assistance program. Council discussed the growing vulnerability of seniors, people with disabilities, and households living on fixed incomes as housing costs increase.
- **Joseph Center:**
 - The organization received \$100,000 in year one and is requesting the same amount for year two. Funding supported expansion of transitional housing and related services, including the Golden Girls program, family shelter, day services, workforce readiness, childcare, and case management.
 - The Joseph Center expanded Golden Girls from four to 16 beds and opened a family center. The organization also identified an emerging need for shower facilities for unhoused families with children and is adding two showers.
 - Council expressed appreciation for measurable housing outcomes and emphasized permanent housing, stabilization, behavioral health services, and prevention of homelessness as important considerations for future funding.

b. Homeward Bound of the Grand Valley Update

Key Points:

- Homeward Bound provided an update on its restructured shelter model, which places increased emphasis on individualized case management and moving clients toward permanent housing.
- Approximately 95% of clients had completed work plans, case-management engagement was approximately 90%, and 225 housing applications were completed between March and June.
- Homeward Bound reported 57 housing placements since March and indicated that its housing-placement rate is the highest in the organization's history.
- The current 112-bed facility has generally averaged 60–90 occupants. Representatives attributed the lower occupancy partly to moving clients into housing more quickly, limitations involving upper bunks, and changes in the populations the shelter can safely accommodate.
- The organization described the current service model as more intensive, and consequently more expensive, than its previous North Avenue shelter model.
- Council asked about occupancy levels, operating costs, fundraising, service delivery, and the organization's increasing reliance on City funding.
- Homeward Bound discussed an increasingly difficult grant environment and the expiration of federal pass-through funding as significant financial challenges.
- The organization requested \$225,000 for 2026–27, with a potential future request of approximately \$260,000 discussed. Funding decisions will be addressed through the City's budget process.

c. Community Satisfaction Survey 2026

Key Points:

- RRC Associates presented results of the statistically valid 2026 Community Satisfaction Survey, which achieved a 16% response rate.
- Overall sentiment toward Grand Junction and City services remained positive, however, residents expressing concern about the City's direction increased from 22% in 2022 to 29% in 2026.
- Sustainable resource management, particularly water, was identified as a leading concern, along with homelessness, road conditions, and affordable housing.
- Dissatisfaction with City services declined to 11%, compared with 15% in 2024.
- Public safety results improved, with both feelings of safety and confidence in the Police Department reaching 66%.
- Support for the City's co-responder program increased.
- Parks, trails, and community connectivity continued to receive favorable ratings. Improving trails remained the highest parks-related priority.
- Council discussed the importance of continued community education regarding managed growth, infrastructure capacity, water resources, and maintenance of existing City assets.
- Council also discussed how survey findings can help inform future budget priorities and policy discussions.

d. Orchard Mesa Pool Community Satisfaction Survey Results Discussion

Key Points:

- Survey respondents were divided on increasing taxes and issuing debt to renovate Orchard Mesa Pool: 38% supported the proposal, 43% opposed it, and 19% were neutral.
- Despite the divided opinion on funding, 66% supported placing the question on the November ballot, while 16% opposed doing so.
- Council discussed the pool's aging infrastructure, renovation costs, operating subsidies, affordability, anticipated usage following completion of the new Community Recreation Center, and potential community partnerships.
- Staff noted that renovation estimates have increased from approximately \$6 million in an earlier study to roughly \$10 million with \$1.6 million in soft costs.
- Council discussed whether outside organizations could participate in operating or supporting the facility and the possibility of pursuing partnerships through an RFP if voters establish a path forward.
- The discussion indicated general Council support for allowing voters to determine the future of the facility.
- Staff reviewed the timeline required for a November ballot measure, including Council action during August, preparation of ballot language, and final submission in early September.

2. Council Communication

Key Points:

- Council expressed interest in a future workshop or public discussion focused on the City's water supply, infrastructure, rates, storage, and conservation.

3. Next Workshop Topics

City Manager Bennett summarized list of next workshop topics.

- August 17: Council norms of conduct workshop with CIRSA
- August 31: Overview of Budget Process and Financial Policies, Quarterly Financial Reports and Updates of Housing Action Plan
- September 14: Water Supply in regard to the Comprehensive Plan

4. Other Business

Interview teams were set for the Grand Junction Housing Authority and Planning Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the workshop was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.