



Grand Junction Forestry Advisory Board Minutes

August 25, 2026

Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Joseph Chandler
Bill Cooper
Mollie Freilicher
Dan Komlo
Kamie Long
Earl Perry
Anna Stout

Board Members Absent:

Tanya Travis

Guests Present:

City Staff Present:

Rob Davis, Parks Supervisor, Forestry and Open Space
Anna Wirth, Admin Specialist

Meeting called to order by Rob Davis at 2:37pm.

New Business

Discussion and development of Forestry Board recommendations regarding the potential elimination of the Significant Trees section of the Grand Junction Development Code

Rob Davis explained that he used AI to assist in drafting a letter to City Council with recommendations regarding the potential elimination of the Significant Trees section of the Grand Junction Development Code. The prompts incorporated comments from Board members as well as relevant information from City strategic documents, including the 2021 Comprehensive Plan, Parks and Recreation Open Space Master Plan, and Forestry Management Plan.

Board members then started discussing recommendations for city council and talked about guiding documents adopted by the City and their emphasis on the importance of trees and the need to protect the community's tree canopy. Strong public support for protecting trees within the community was also noted.

A board member asked whether data exists demonstrating the financial impact of significant trees on affordable housing and development. Anna Stout stated that she was not aware of data showing that significant trees have had a measurable impact on construction costs or affordable housing. She noted that the proposed elimination of the ordinance appears to be primarily focused on deregulation.

Anna Stout suggested that the Board consider proposing a middle-ground approach rather than simply opposing elimination of the Significant Tree Ordinance. She also suggested requesting that the matter be postponed and scheduled for discussion at a City Council Workshop before being considered on a regular Council agenda. A workshop would provide an opportunity for stakeholders and subject-matter experts, including the Forestry Board, to provide input and answer questions from Council members. Anna Stout noted that this approach would also be consistent with the City's strategic priority of transparency.

The numerous benefits provided by trees, including soil-moisture retention, improved physical and mental well-being, reduction of urban temperatures, and other environmental and community benefits were discussed and why these benefits support maintaining protections for significant trees.

The Board expressed the belief that the Significant Tree Ordinance can be improved to better accommodate affordable housing and development while continuing to protect significant trees. The Board's recommendation is to ask City Council to retain the Significant Tree Ordinance while its effectiveness is evaluated, additional data is collected, and potential alternatives or improvements are considered.

Drafting of a letter with Forestry Board recommendations to be included in the City Council Packet for the 9/2/2026 meeting

The Board discussed finalizing the letter outlining its recommendations to City Council for inclusion in the packet for the September 2, 2026, City Council meeting.

Anna Stout suggested that the letter be submitted by email to each City Council member, with copies to the City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk, and Rob Davis. She also suggested that paper copies be delivered.

As the City Council liaison, Anna Stout offered to assist the Board in ensuring that the letter is submitted for inclusion in the Council packet.

Motion

Kamie made a motion to accept the letter to City Council as written, with the ability to make minor changes for clarity and grammar. Dan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- Yes: 5
- No: 0
- Abstention: 1 - Anna Stout

Joe Chandler left the meeting early and did not participate in the vote.

The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 3:52pm.

Next Meeting – September 3 at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Wirth