August Strategic Planning Work Session Notes
Grand Junction Housing Authority ("GJHA")

Hilltop
359 Main Street, Grand Junction, CO 81501 **August 25, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

GJHA's Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m. by Bernie Buescher, Board Chair. Attendance was taken by roll call with the following present:

Board of Commissioners:	GJHA Staff:
Bernie Buescher, Chair	Scott Aker, CEO
Rich Krohn, Vice Chair	Krista Ubersox, COO
Ivan Geer	Jill Norris, General Counsel
Laurel Lutz	Sheila Brubacher, Controller
Karen Massey	Ashleigh O'Leary, HR Director
Julie Firl	
Jennifer Landini	

Illene Roggensack attended the meeting in person and facilitated the strategic planning session.
Rich Krohn left the meeting at 10:12 a.m.

2. Disclosure of Direct or Indirect Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were mentioned.

3. Mission, Vision, and Values

Bernie Buescher stated that while Staff and the Board are working through the Strategic Plan, they need to be mindful of their Mission, Vision, and Values.

4. Strategic Planning Session

Quick recap
The Grand Junction Housing Authority Board held a strategic planning session to review and discuss a new four-initiative strategic plan. The meeting focused on reviewing each strategic initiative in detail, with Scott Aker leading discussion on Initiative 1 (developing new affordable housing and preserving existing stock), Krista Ubersox covering Initiative 2 (portfolio operations and financial systems), Ashleigh O'Leary presenting Initiative 3 (organizational strength and stability), and Bernie Buescher and Scott Aker co-leading Initiative 4 (role clarification and board-staff communication). Board members provided feedback on each initiative, discussing topics such as land acquisition strategies, voucher programs, capital planning, organizational culture, and the appropriate balance between Board involvement and Staff decision-making authority. The group addressed concerns about maintaining strategic focus versus getting too tactical, discussed the evolving role of limited partnerships in development, and considered how to better structure Board and Committee responsibilities while ensuring effective oversight without micromanagement.

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Next steps – DRAFT action plans will be presented to the Board in December 2026.

- **Bernie Buescher:** Co-lead with Scott the development of the action plan for Strategic Initiative 4.
- **Krista Ubersox:** Lead the development of the action plan for Strategic Initiative 2.
- **Ashleigh O'Leary:** Lead the development of the action plan for Strategic Initiative 3.
- **Scott Aker:** Lead the development of the action plan and tracking mechanism for Strategic Initiative 1 and coordinate with Bernie for Initiative 4.
- The Real Estate Committee will be involved in crafting the plan for Strategic Initiative 1
- The Finance/Audit Committee will be involved in crafting the plans for Strategic Initiative 2

Other Action Items

- Staff: Develop a more detailed action plan for the voucher program to be included in the next iteration of the strategic plan.
- Staff: Develop a policy or guidelines on advocacy, including the distinction between advocacy and lobbying.
- Staff: Invite Molly Fitzpatrick from Root Policy to a future Board or Committee meeting to discuss the updated housing needs assessment.
- Board Members: Attend the September 8, 2026, board meeting, as it includes critical business items.
- Board Members: If possible, attend the Doors to Success "Evening of Gratitude" event on September 17, 2026, at Basecamp.
- Staff: Conduct Board member orientation for the new board member (to replace Ivan Geer) and bring them up to speed on the strategic planning process.

Summary

Board Member Strategic Planning Introductions

The meeting began with introductions and background sharing among Board members and Staff regarding their roles, tenure, and experiences with strategic planning. Participants discussed their personal motivations for joining the Housing Authority and their perspectives on strategic planning, with some viewing it as a roadmap for the future and others as a lighthouse for grounding the organization during times of change. The discussion emphasized the importance of mission-driven work and the unique culture of the Housing Authority in serving the community.

Illene Roggensack continued the discussion by setting expectations for active participation and forthright feedback on the proposed strategic direction. She emphasized that the session aims for consensus rather than majority rule and is focused on discussing the future direction of the organization without getting into specific action details. Scott Aker expressed gratitude for everyone's in-person attendance and shared his personal history with strategic planning, noting that the current discussion should remain strategic rather than focusing on implementation details.

Illene and staff emphasized that the plan should be a living document adaptable to changing conditions over the next 5-10 years. The group discussed the plan's timeline, suggesting possible

adoption at the combined November-December meeting and further development through Committee work prior to final adoption of the plan.

Initiative 1: Develop and work within an intentional strategy to address community needs while ensuring the organization's financial sustainability.
Scott opened the discussion focusing on the organization's land acquisition strategy and capital planning, emphasizing the importance of learning from past experiences with the Confluence development. He questioned whether the organization should prioritize seeking new land in the future and suggested revisiting capital strategy plans every two to four years to align tactical and capital strategies. The discussion also covered the role of vouchers in the organization's financial portfolio, with Scott explaining how project-based vouchers are currently limited and how this affects development opportunities, particularly for 30% AMI households on the waitlist.

The group also discussed the need for flexibility in their strategic approach to both limited partnerships and independent development projects, suggesting that GJHA should work collectively with other developers to maximize tax credit resources for the community.

The group discussed the challenges of determining housing needs without a complete understanding of supply and demand throughout the community, noting that the community's updated housing needs assessment will be finalized by October. The group discussed dialog involving key developers and nonprofit partners to better understand potential future projects, avoid competing applications for funding and maximize funding for the entire community. The group acknowledged the need for supportive services within the strategic plan's framework, emphasizing their importance for financial sustainability.

Initiative 2: Hone GJHA's operational, financial and compliance systems to maximize continuity and efficiencies, including effective asset management.
Krista Ubersox emphasized the importance of adapting to technological changes, particularly in AI and systems, and discussed the need for contingency planning and efficient capital allocation. She highlighted the necessity of controlling costs in an increasing expense landscape and addressed the reallocation of developer fees to cover ongoing operational costs associated with development. She highlighted the importance of the organization's compliance and quality assurance functions and the need to maintain those. The discussion also touched on the importance of developing a long-term financial and capital planning strategy to ensure the organization's sustainability.

Strategic Initiative 3: Engage best practices for organizational excellence to improve both internal and external supports and resources for ongoing sustainability of client programs and services delivery.
Ashleigh O'Leary led this discussion, focusing on positioning the housing authority for long-term organizational strength and stability. The initiative aims to ensure success is not dependent on a single person or funding source by developing shared knowledge, talent, and community relationships. Key

goals under this initiative include succession planning, talent development, knowledge sharing, and community engagement to ensure the organization's sustainability.

The group discussed the second goal in this section, which focuses on communications strategies, strengthening community awareness and the role of GJHA regarding advocacy. GJHA is a member of two statewide housing organizations, both of which advocate to the State Legislature, among other advocacy activities. This component of the plan will move underneath Initiative 1.

Initiative 4: Articulate and institutionalize discrete roles and responsibilities, including related communications, for GJHA Board and staff to maximize clarity, continuity and efficiencies.
Bernie Buescher and Scott Aker led the conversation for this Initiative. The dialog focused on desire to find a balance to share board member expertise in appropriate ways without the Board getting too involved in transaction details and document review. The group agreed that Staff should present summary information rather than detailed documents to board members, reserving detailed reviews for specific complex decisions like the Rural Homes project. Ashleigh O'Leary and Jill Norris clarified that while Board members can provide input when requested by Staff, it shouldn't be the expectation that every operational decision requires full Board review, with the Board serving as a resource for expertise when needed rather than being involved in every decision. The group agreed to revisit these topics when Rich Krohn returns, including a discussion about the evolving role of committees in the decision-making process.

Conclusion
The group agreed to strengthen the mention of the voucher program in the strategic plan and planned to involve both Finance and Real Estate Committees in developing action plans, with a full Board review scheduled for November-December.

5. <u>Adjourn</u>

With no further business or discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:25 p.m.

All Board packet documents and documents distributed
during the Board Meeting are retained at GJHA.