Visit Grand Junction
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting
October 13, 2026, 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.

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

Presiding: Pat Nichols-Perrin, Chair
Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board Members Present: Manon Desrosiers, Theresa Horvat, Christina Schultz, Brenda Greene, Dora Fang, Julie Shafer, Elizabeth Fortushniak, Tevfik Demirciftci
Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board Members Absent: None
Grand Junction City Councilmember Present: Mayor Laurel Lutz
Visit Grand Junction Staff Present: Elizabeth Fogarty, Director; Kim Machado, Administrative Specialist; Daniel Short, Business Analyst; Matthew Hart, Visitor Center Manager and Administrative Coordinator; Shelby Edens, Colorado Mesa University Intern
Guests: Brandon Stam, Executive Director, Downtown Development Authority and Business Improvement District; Lee Borden, Executive Director, The Art Center of Western Colorado

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Pat Nichols-Perrin.

Minutes from the September 8, 2026, advisory board meeting: Christina Schultz moved to approve the minutes as written; Manon Desrosiers seconded. The motion passed.

2026 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference Recap and Attendee Comments
The 2026 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference was held in Breckenridge, CO, on September 23–25, 2026. Visit Grand Junction led a delegation of 14 attendees, including 6 staff members, 3 Advisory Board members, 4 community stakeholders, and 1 Grand Junction Visitor Center volunteer ambassador. Session topics included visitor services, emerging marketing and data trends, and responsible destination stewardship. Elizabeth Fogarty was invited by the Colorado Tourism Office to speak during a related breakout session highlighting the Grand Junction Outdoor Adventure Pass as an example of promoting responsible recreation while supporting local businesses and enhancing quality of life for residents.

Matthew Hart, Visitor Center Manager and Administrative Coordinator; Shelby Edens, Colorado Mesa University Intern; and Daniel Short, Business Analyst, shared key insights, explaining how Visit Grand Junction already applies many of the practices discussed and identifying opportunities for continued improvement. Advisory Board members who attended spoke positively about the conference and thanked Visit Grand Junction for sponsoring their attendance.

At the conference, Grand Junction representatives earned three awards:

- Visit Grand Junction received the Governor's Award for Exemplary Destination Stewardship Initiative for the Grand Junction Outdoor Adventure Pass.
- Grand Junction Visitor Center volunteer Rollee Smith received the Jack Snow Award for Outstanding Volunteer.
- Taryn Brooks, owner and operator of Cruise Control Kitchen & Cellar, received a Frontline Hospitality Tourism Worker Award.

Elizabeth acknowledged the Advisory Board's role in Visit Grand Junction's leadership and success. Cake was served to celebrate the board and local awards.

Community Updates and Q&A – Downtown Development Authority and Business Improvement District
Brandon Stam, Executive Director of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and Business Improvement District (BID), presented updates on Downtown Grand Junction's improvements, business and development activity, and events. He discussed the Main Street Uplift, a long-term plan for phased enhancements to downtown public spaces. Priorities include shade and cooling, lighting, wayfinding, public restrooms, flexible seating, event areas, and public art. The first completed phase transformed the former splash pad at Fifth and Main streets into a family-oriented gathering area.

Brandon reported that the downtown area maintains a low overall vacancy rate but would benefit from additional quality retail businesses. The former Greyhound building has been removed in preparation for The Terminal, a planned six-story mixed-use project with 107 workforce housing units and ground-floor creative and commercial space. Repairs are underway at the historic Grand Junction Union Depot. He briefly discussed potential redevelopment opportunities associated with the Museum of the West's planned consolidation at the Dinosaur Journey campus. Other updates included downtown partnerships and Farm to Tap nights during Market on Main. The DDA/BID's current strategy focuses on improving existing events and supporting partner-led programming.

Elizabeth thanked Brandon for the update and asked how Visit Grand Junction could further assist Downtown Grand Junction. Brandon mentioned the organizations are aligned and referenced productive conversations with Elizabeth regarding prospective hotel development.

Community Updates and Q&A – The Art Center of Western Colorado
Lee Borden, Executive Director of The Art Center of Western Colorado, presented an update on the organization's history, offerings, recent building projects, and long-term priorities. He emphasized The Art Center's longstanding role in making the arts accessible to the community. Its five galleries host approximately 30 exhibitions each year showcasing work by 450 nationwide artists, in addition to offering classes and workshops. Lee also highlighted youth programs and ArtAbility, which averages 250 participant visits each month. The TLC for TAC campaign raised nearly $350,000 for facility repairs and upgrades.

The organization's five-year goals include expanding educational opportunities, growing membership and regional reach, strengthening services for underserved populations, and enhancing staff resources. It is also exploring gallery and performance space in Grand Junction's downtown Creative District while continuing to invest in its existing building.

Elizabeth asked whether Visit Grand Junction could provide additional assistance or improve its support. Lee praised Visit Grand Junction's work and noted that its online events calendar provides a valuable resource for local arts and nonprofit organizations, eliminating the need to create separate calendars. He expressed appreciation for the partnership and looked forward to continued collaboration.

Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board Business
The Advisory Board discussed canceling the December 8, 2026, advisory board meeting. This would be the first and only board meeting cancellation for 2026. Brenda Greene moved to cancel the December 8, 2026, Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board meeting; Theresa Horvat seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The election of the 2027 Advisory Board Chair and Vice Chair is scheduled for the November 10, 2026, meeting. Board members were encouraged to consider both positions.

Visit Grand Junction Updates
Elizabeth provided Advisory Board members with her updated contact information.

Due to a lack of time, updates on lodging tax collections and hotel performance metrics for August 2026 business activity, as well as recent public relations activity, were not reviewed. Data is available via the monthly Visit Grand Junction eNewsletters. Data will also be presented at a future advisory board meeting.

There being no further business, Christina Schultz moved to adjourn; Brenda Greene seconded. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.