

A letter from the Mayor...

Together we have made significant progress in Grand Junction over the past year. On behalf of the City Council and staff, I want to take this opportunity to thank the citizens of Grand Junction for their support and participation as we've moved forward.

The Strategic Plan adopted early in 2003 has provided the framework for much of that progress. Without the roadmap provided by the citizen-based Vision 2020 process, the Plan would not be focused on the goals you told us were important. The Riverside Parkway project is a direct reflection of your desire to resolve traffic issues. Other community visions recognized in the Strategic Plan are reflected in the formation of the new Youth Council, the developing Neighborhood Program, a fresh look at job development and a focus on maintaining Grand Junction's friendly, small town feel as we grow and prosper.

We will continue to work on other issues you helped us identify for our Strategic Plan, including affordable housing, infill and redevelopment, and community policing. I urge you to continue your active involvement in City issues and assure you the City Council welcomes and is grateful for your help.

Cordially,

Jim Spehar, Mayor

## **Highlights of 2003.....**

City Council spent much of the early part of 2003 working on their Strategic Plan for the City. The Plan identifies strategic directions and goals for the City for the next 10 years. The Plan was presented to residents in a series of neighborhood meetings and discussions with residents. Council members heard from residents that they also were concerned about issues of quality of life in their neighborhoods, transportation, and growth.

Progress toward addressing transportation issues took a giant leap forward in November when voters overwhelmingly approved issuing up to \$80 million in bonds to build the Riverside Parkway in six to eight years instead of 20 years. The Parkway is designed to move traffic from east to west in the lower downtown area, alleviating congestion at First and Grand and along the I-70B corridor out to Mesa Mall. The City is now proceeding with a required 1601 environmental review process to determine the exact location of the roadway through lower downtown, and its intersection with State Highway 50 at 5<sup>th</sup> Street. Completing the required permits through the Colorado Department of Transportation, design, and acquiring right-of-way will take much of the next two years before construction can begin.

Another goal of the Strategic Plan, to create opportunities for youth to become involved in community affairs, is moving forward with the creation of a Youth Council. Fifteen teens from local middle and high schools were appointed to the Council in the fall of 2003. The Youth Council will hold regular meetings throughout the school year.

In July of 2003, the City Council voted to establish a Smoking Ordinance that restricts smoking in most work places and public areas. The ordinance takes effect January 1 of 2004, although some existing businesses have until 2006 to comply.

Two members of the City Council, Janet Terry and Reford Theobald, faced term limitations and retired in April after receiving recognition and thanks for their long and dedicated service to the community. Voters elected two new Council members, Bruce Hill and Gregg Palmer, to fill those vacancies.

The economic fallout from 9-11 continues and has begun to affect Grand Junction, with a drop in sales tax and lodging tax revenues at the end of 2003. The local economy is still growing, but at a much slower pace than in previous years. The City began work on its 2004 budget with the intent of keeping operating expenses flat to accommodate this slower rate of growth. Projections for 2004 and 2005 are more encouraging, yet the City is taking a conservative approach in its budgeting for the next two years.

Future challenges to the community include managing storm water and planning for future Federal regulations on stormwater issues. A local steering committee spent much of 2003 looking at options to consolidate efforts valley-wide by creating a stormwater drainage authority. Their recommendations are being considered by the City and County governments and the various drainage districts in the valley.

Drought conditions of the past two years played a significant role in the establishment of a Drought Plan for the entire valley. This plan calls for a unified water conservation approach to future droughts, public education on the need to conserve water, and for the sharing of water resources in the event of future drought emergencies.

City Council continues to work on issues identified in the Strategic Plan, and to plan for a bright future for the residents of Grand Junction.

Department Information:

### **Police**

The Police Department has been working on a reorganization of their department with an emphasis on Community Policing. Police officers are now assigned to work neighborhoods, getting to know the businesses and residents in each neighborhood, and working together to solve neighborhood issues. Crime statistics for each neighborhood have been compiled to help the officers better understand the community issues they face. A new Police Substation was opened in Mesa Mall in January, providing a more convenient place for residents to fill out reports, get information on Crime Prevention, or ask questions of officers.

### **Did You Know?**

The Police department received the “Pioneer Policing Award” in 2003 from the Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police for its Neighborhood Beat System.

The new Mesa Mall police substation has a meeting room that may be used by community groups. Call 244-3587

Police officers are now assigned to 66 neighborhood beats.

In 2003, Grand Junction Police provided officers at the Walker Field Airport screening area 16 hours per day, 7 days per week.

### **Fire**

Groundbreaking for the new Fire Station Number 5 took place in November of 2003. Construction on the new station, located at 2155 Broadway, will continue throughout the winter. When the station opens in June of 2004, it will significantly shorten response times for residents of the Redlands. Fifteen new firefighters have been hired and trained to staff the station 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### **Did You Know...?**

October 3-9 is National Fire Prevention Week.

The Grand Junction Fire Department provides Advanced Life Support level emergency medical response on approximately 6,000 911 calls each year.

“Person Fallen” and “Vehicle Accident with Injuries” were the most common request for help through 911 in 2003.

The Fire Department conducts a Juvenile Fire Setter Program. If you are concerned about your child’s interest or involvement with fire, please call 244-1419.

### **Downtown**

The Downtown Development Authority is breathing new life into downtown with the addition of the Farmers Market on Thursday evenings in the summer and fall, and Cinema at the Avalon. The Farmers Market attracts residents downtown to purchase locally grown produce, listen to live entertainment, shop and dine. The Farmers Market featured live musical entertainment, fresh produce, activities for children, and a chance to meet your family, friends and neighbors downtown for shopping, fun, and socializing. Many people commented on the wonderful “small town feel” of the event, and it has quickly become popular.

The Avalon Theater is now showing movies almost daily at the theater, giving residents yet another reason to go downtown. When the Avalon is not being used by other organizations, Cinema at the Avalon will present classic and independent film on a daily basis.

### **Parks**

Progress continues on the completion of Canyon View Park with the construction of four new football fields, six tennis courts, and more parking and trails. Work continued through the fall of 2003 and the tennis courts will be playable for the summer of 2004. The Cultural Corner at 24 and G Roads was completed and dedicated in the fall of 2003, featuring the renovated Basque “fronton” or handball court, a new picnic shelter, and additional parking and landscaping.

### **Did You Know...?**

The Parks Department manages the Two Rivers Convention Center and the Avalon Theater.

The Parks Department will use proceeds from a \$270,000 grant from the US Dept. of Health and Human Services to expand fitness and nutrition education programs for both youth and seniors in 2005.

Two new neighborhood parks will be constructed by 2006, including Wingate and Phase I of Horizon Park. 9

### **Visitor and Convention Bureau**

The Grand Junction Visitor & Convention Bureau is the City’s liaison between potential visitors to the area and the businesses that will host them. It also acts as an information clearing house, convention management consultant and promotional agency for the City. The nine-member staff and the VCB Board of Directors coordinate and develop the

yearly marketing and sales strategies used to stimulate increases in the number of individual visitors and the number of meetings and conventions.

Tourism, wineries, and special events continue to contribute a significant amount to our local economy. The Visitor and Convention Bureau promotes Grand Junction as a destination for Front Range and out-of-state visitors, who are drawn by our scenery, recreation, wineries, music festivals, and local produce.

### **Did You Know...?**

In 2003, the VCB assisted over 27,000 visitors at the Visitor Center at I-70 and Horizon Drive.

The VCB Visitor Center has 79 active volunteers who donate nearly 10,000 hours annually to the community. At minimum wage, this represents a savings of over \$50,000.

For updated event information, check out the VCB website, [www.visitgrandjunction.com](http://www.visitgrandjunction.com).

### **Public Works**

Maintaining our streets and our transportation network, picking up the City's trash, leaf pickup in the fall and Spring Clean Up keep Public Works employees busy throughout the year. Over the next few years, the approval process, design and right of way acquisition for the Riverside Parkway will be a top priority. This \$80 million project is designed to create a loop around the City and ease traffic congestion on the Ute, Pitkin, First and Grand and I-70B roadways.

### **Did You Know....?**

The City will spend \$1.7 million each year between 2003 and 2005 to overlay asphalt and maintain the condition of City streets.

You can locate all free or 10-hour parking meters in the City through our online Geographic Information System (GIS) at [www.gjcity.org](http://www.gjcity.org). Click on the GIS logo on the front page of the website.

The GIS system also includes maps and information on zoning, development, utilities, transportation and so much more.

### **Utilities**

In 2003 and 2004, the City will spend over \$30 million each year for capital improvement projects. Much of the work involves separating storm water drainage from sewer lines in the downtown area. Construction will continue on this \$10 million project through 2005.

A local steering committee spent much of 2003 studying the issue of how to manage stormwater for the community. Recommendations will be made to elected officials that include creating a stormwater drainage authority.

**Did You Know...?**

Septic systems are being eliminated throughout the valley through Special Improvement Districts.

A new Drought Response Plan calls for cooperative efforts among the valley's drinking water providers in the case of future drought, and education on water conservation.

Debt incurred for the purchase of containers for the automated trash pick-up program will be retired in 2004, two years earlier than anticipated.

**Administrative Services**

Many of our residents come in contact with our Customer Service representatives to set up utility billing accounts and pay for City services such as water, sewer and trash. The department also includes the City Clerk's office, Information Systems, Human Resources and Purchasing

**Did You Know....?**

You may pay your utility bills with a credit card over the phone. You may also arrange to have your bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account. Call Customer Service at 256-4005.

You may check for City job openings online at [www.gjcity.org](http://www.gjcity.org) with a "Jobs" link from the front page, or call the Job Hotline at 244-1449.

The City Clerk's Office conducts Liquor Awareness Training classes for liquor licensees. Make sure you and your employees know the laws concerning your liquor license. Contact them at 244-1510 for dates and times.

**Community Development**

Development applications and plans are reviewed by this department prior to being submitted to the Planning Commission and City Council for decisions. Neighborhood plans, zoning and development code updates, code enforcement and historic preservation are also administered by this department.

**Did You Know...?**

One of City Council's Strategic Plan goals is to strengthen neighborhoods. The goal reads, "A vital, organized network of neighborhoods will exist throughout the City, linked with parks and schools and supported by City resources and active citizen volunteers."

The most common types of complaints received at Code Enforcement include junk, rubbish, and inoperable vehicles.

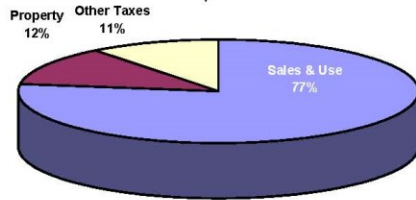
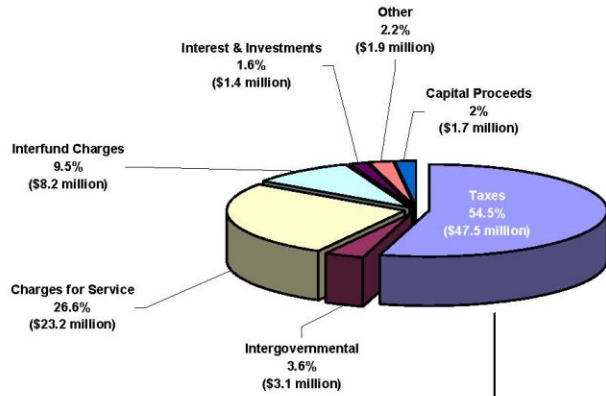
86% of property owners that receive a Weed Notice of Violation take care of the weeds. 14% of the properties are cut and billed by the City.

You can have graffiti removed for free from your business or residence. Call 242-6707 to file a police report and ask for removal information.



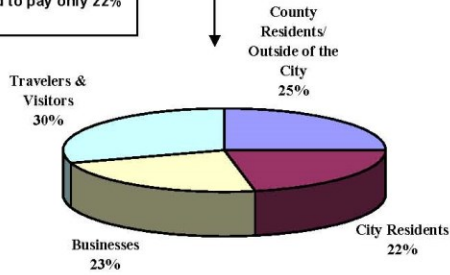
## Where the Money Comes From

The main source of revenue the City will use for general government operations in 2004 is generated from taxes. Of the projected \$47.5 million in tax revenue collected, 77% will be in the form of sales and use tax with only 22% of that amount being paid by Grand Junction residents.

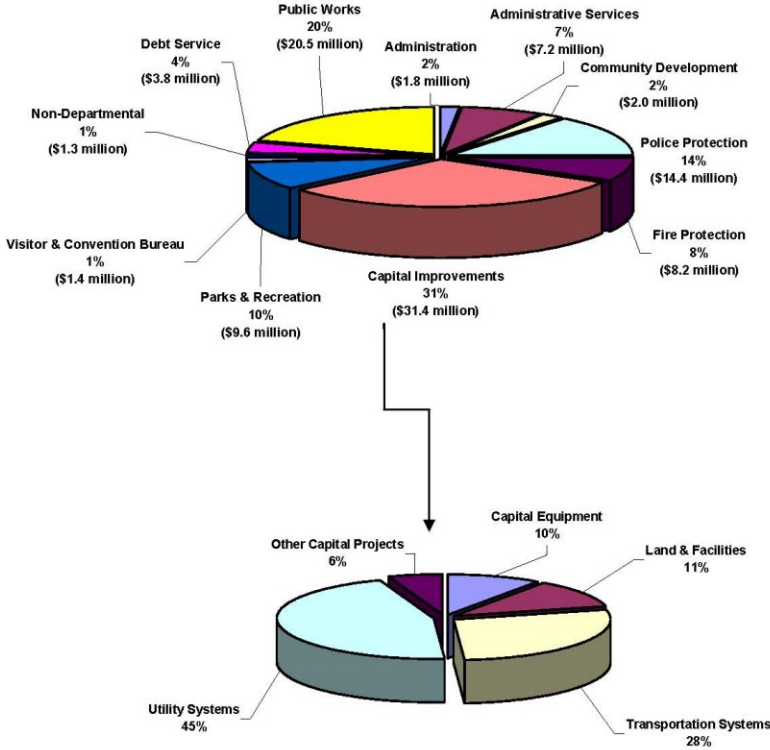


Property tax rates per \$1,000 of assessed valuation (mill levy) for the City of Grand Junction have actually declined by 5% over the last ten fiscal years.

The City of Grand Junction expects to receive approximately \$27.9 million in sales and use tax revenue in the year 2004. Because of the City's position as a regional economic center, the citizens of Grand Junction are expected to pay only 22% of this amount, about \$6.1 million.



# Where The Money Goes....



Capital improvements of streets, parks and other infrastructure continue to be the major category of expenditure, accounting for 31% of the total general government expenditures. Of the \$31.4 million in capital improvements, transportation and storm water systems account for approximately 73%.

## Monthly Cost of Service



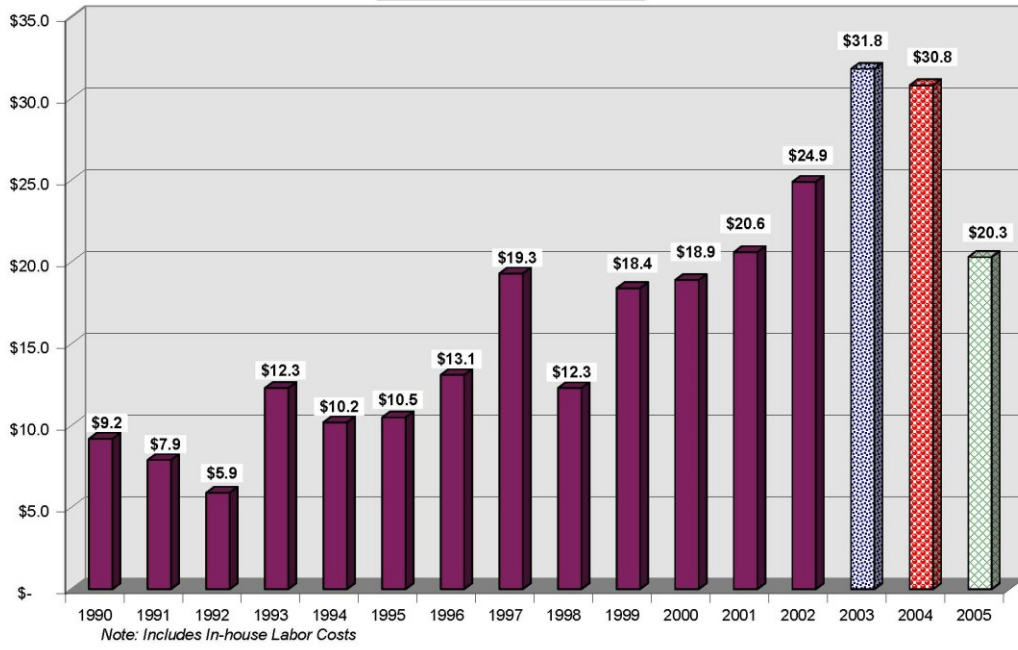
The average homeowner will pay \$638 in annual taxes received by the City, or \$53 per month, in support of all general government services provided by the City of Grand Junction.

**BUDGET YEAR**

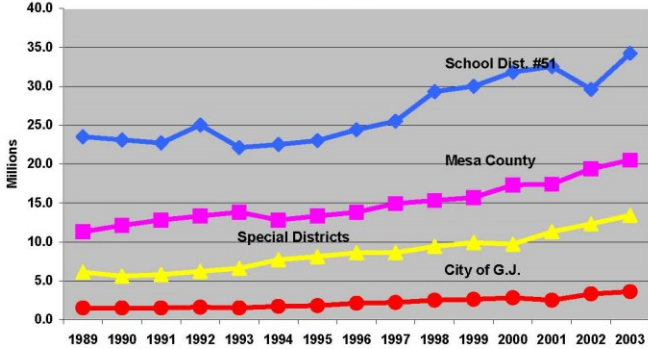
<b>Major Capital Improvement Projects</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>3-Year Total</b>
Sewer System Improvements	\$ 9,966,929	\$ 7,700,974	\$ 4,643,541	\$22,311,444
Storm Drainage Improvements	\$ 2,474,156	\$ 3,997,000	\$ 1,569,000	\$8,040,156
Riverside Parkway	\$ 1,099,388	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 3,250,000	\$6,349,388
Water System Improvements	\$ 2,577,079	\$ 3,233,630	\$ 470,970	\$6,281,679
Street Overlay/Maintenance Program	\$ 1,745,621	\$ 1,750,000	\$ 1,775,000	\$5,270,621
Vehicle Replacement Program	\$ 1,363,361	\$ 2,021,160	\$ 1,794,887	\$5,179,408
29 Road; I-70B to F Road	\$ 1,472,833	\$ 1,332,000	\$ -	\$2,804,833
E-911 Communications Center Equipment	\$ 1,734,523	\$ 440,000	\$ 600,000	\$2,774,523
Fire Station #5 Construction	\$ 1,050,000	\$ 963,923	\$ -	\$2,013,923
Canyon View Park/Area Improvements	\$ 1,844,367	\$ -	\$ -	\$1,844,367
25.5 Road; Independent to F Road	\$ -	\$ 75,000	\$ 1,332,000	\$1,407,000
City/County Parking Garage	\$ 500,000	\$ 600,387	\$ -	\$1,100,387
Wingate Park	\$ -	\$ 625,000	\$ -	\$625,000



**Historical Spending for Capital Investment  
City of Grand Junction**



### Historical Property Tax Levies



The City of Grand Junction receives less than 1/10th of the property tax paid by the homeowners.