



City Councilmembers Doug Thomason, Gregg Palmer, Linda Romer Todd, Mayor Jim Doody, Mayor Pro Tem Bonnie Beckstein, Teresa Coons and Bruce Hill

A message from the Mayor...

It's a wonderful privilege to serve as Mayor for another year in this city I affectionately refer to as "The Garden of the Rockies". Our City Calendar and Annual Report is very popular with the citizens of Grand Junction, and it gives me an opportunity to speak to some of our accomplishments of 2007. It also allows me to address some of the great projects on our horizon. First, though, I would like to talk to you about the organization and the people that serve you. I am very proud of the great team of employees that work for the City of Grand Junction on a daily basis. They dedicate themselves to serving our community in many ways. From our nationally recognized Parks and Recreation Department to our team at the Persigo Wastewater Plant who earned the highest Environmental Protection Agency honor – these dedicated individuals help make our quality of life one of the best in the nation. You have assembled a very professional and effective City Council as well. This group of elected officials will help us look into the future and will work with you to help create our new Comprehensive Plan. Dealing with all of the growth issues has been challenging – and will continue to be in the foreseeable future – and it's my belief the Comprehensive Plan will give us the tools we need to address the challenges ahead of us.

In 2007, you voted favorably for a debt reduction ballot issue to pay off the bonds early on the Riverside Parkway. This initiative will enable us to save millions of dollars in interest payments, and several years of debt payment will be relieved. Also in 2007, we saw some great accomplishments such as completion of the 7th Street reconstruction project and the downtown parking garage. We marked the anniversary of one full year of very successful ambulance transport service, and we worked with the Town of Palisade to develop a plan to guide drilling in our watersheds. All this as we celebrated our 125th year as a city. In 2008, we will continue to be challenged to get new projects underway and funded, such as our much-needed Public Safety Facility and the 29 Road and I-70B interchange. We also will celebrate the completion of the Riverside Parkway construction, the single largest capital improvement project this city has ever seen.

I have always thought of Grand Junction as an "island" between Salt Lake City and Denver. To accomplish our goals, we need to continue to work in partnership with others Valleywide so we not only raise our raft on the river, but we also end up in the best position as a result of rowing as a team with our friends in Fruita, Palisade, and the rest of Mesa County.

Best regards,

Mayor Jim Doody

Year 2007 Highlights ...

- During 2007, the City's **Administration Department** welcomed a new **City Manager, Laurie Kadrach**, whose philosophies of transparency and inclusion will further strengthen the City organization's focus on outstanding customer service, partnerships, and keeping Grand Junction a wonderful place to live, work and play. Administration also saw **Jim Doody and Bonnie Beckstein** once again sworn in as Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem of this great city. Early in 2007, several **City departments were reorganized** in an effort to further improve customer service and streamline some of the processes that directly affect our customers. A **debt reduction ballot question** was brought to the voters, and it succeeded. This, coupled with continued increases in sales tax revenue, created a situation under which the **Riverside Parkway bonds will be paid off early** and millions of dollars in interest will be saved. In the summer, we celebrated 125 years since our incorporation as a city with music, food, and the unveiling of a statue of our founder, **George Crawford**. Also in 2007, as a result of the dramatic growth in the area and new employment opportunities arising, the City faced new **challenges in recruiting employees**. City Council made a change to the format of their meetings and moved to a two-a-week schedule in an effort to create more time for discussion and deliberation of important items. Finally, this fall – as part of our continuing focus on energy conservation – ground was broken on an **E-85 tank** that will serve as the fueling site for a large number of flex-fuel City fleet vehicles.

- In 2007, the **Public Works Department** merged with the **Planning Department** creating the **Public Works and Planning Department**. Under the direction of new Department Director, **Tim Moore**, many notable events took place. The **7th Street reconstruction project** was completed resulting in a beautiful and pedestrian-friendly extension to the existing Main Street area. A **new downtown parking garage** was built on Rood Avenue between 4th and 5th Streets, opening up hundreds of new parking spaces in the downtown area. The **Independent Ranchmen's Ditch Flood Control Project** (or "Big Pipe" as it is affectionately called) got underway. The end result of this large and very visible project will be to mitigate flooding and remove 382 properties from the 100-year floodplain that currently exists near the Independent Ranchmen's Ditch. The gateway to Grand Junction at the **Horizon Drive** exit was beautified with new landscaping, a beautiful mosaic mural, lighting, and sidewalks. Dramatic and apparent progress was made on the **Riverside Parkway project** with four bridges under construction and the 5th Street interchange taking shape. This fall, the Planning Division kicked off the effort to develop a **Comprehensive Plan** for Grand Junction. When completed, the Plan – which will be based on the community's values and vision for the future – will serve as a guide for making future land use decisions and will incorporate all aspects of City planning and all existing plans. The Planning Division continued their focus on **improving service** and making the planning and development processes more customer friendly, and open houses were held to gather public feedback on plans for the future of both the **North Avenue** corridor and the **South Downtown** area.

- During 2007, the **Grand Junction Police Department**, under the leadership of Chief **Bill Gardner**, embarked on a new approach to policing by implementing **Neighborhood Area Command**. This system divides Grand Junction into four separate police service areas. Officers are assigned to each area and work with residents in those areas to identify and address ongoing problems, and coordinate prevention programs including Neighborhood Watch and National Night Out. Each team includes a Liaison Officer who is the key contact for non-emergency, long-term problem-solving needs, and a team of Area Patrol Officers. Also in 2007, the PD undertook efforts focused on dealing with **deficient space and facility issues**. Modular housing units were located on Police Department grounds to provide additional office space for officers and the 9-1-1 Communications Center. The modulars really only offer a short-term and marginal solution, so efforts to identify a long-term solution began. A consultant was hired to assess the long-term needs of the organization and to develop a plan and design for a new **Public Safety Facility**. As of this writing, the needs assessment is being conducted. In 2007, we also saw the Police Department partner with **Mesa County and Mesa State College** in creating the first **Western Colorado Peace Officers Academy** in Mesa County. Nine of the first graduates of the academy were hired by the Grand Junction Police Department, so the clear benefit of this partnership was immediately seen. Finally, at year's end, the PD rolled out a **new paint scheme for their vehicles** – introducing a retro-futuristic black and white style.

- In 2007, the **Grand Junction Fire Department** welcomed a new Chief aboard, Colorado native **Ken Watkins**. Ken brought with him a new vision for the Department and a desire to work as a team with Fire personnel, City Administration and City

Council and continue building upon an already strong Fire Department. On July 1, 2007, a significant milestone was met by the Fire Department - **one full successful year providing ambulance transport service** to Grand Junction, Glade Park and the desert areas north and south of town. Although the Fire Department was confident the ambulance transport service would be a success, local skeptics challenged them. Changes to the EMS system upgraded fire engine staffing to four personnel in order to meet service demands and national response standards. As a result, big benefits in the Department's ability to respond to fire and other emergencies were realized. Financially, the expectation is to **operate the EMS system as an enterprise fund**, or like a stand-alone business, by aligning costs to the users of the program. The Department exceeded their own expectations by **meeting revenue goals and keeping costs below projections**. Also during 2007, the Fire Department worked successfully with the Mesa County Medical Director to **meet all goals for clinical standards**. The Department has met and exceeded Mesa County's response time standards and successfully partnered with other county agencies for mutual aid. Finally, the Fire Department has been, and will continue to partner with the Police Department in planning for a **future Public Safety Facility**.

- The **Grand Junction Visitor and Convention Bureau (VCB)** experienced a brisk 2007! Led by Director **Debbie Kovalik**, the VCB's marketing efforts continued to help boost travel traffic to the Grand Valley with hotel occupancy rates jumping up to over 92% in June; this **presented last minute visitors with fewer lodging options**. A Residence Inn and Courtyard by Marriott both opened bringing an additional 240 rooms to Grand Junction which took some of the pressure off the tight market. In 2007, the VCB continued to host the sought-after **Wine Trains**, which brought more than 200 wine enthusiasts to Colorado's Wine Country from Denver. The VCB hosted four Wine Trains in 2007, and plans are to increase that number in 2008. In the fall, the VCB hosted the **Governor's Conference on Tourism**, an event which is rarely held outside of the Front Range. Over 500 statewide tourism professionals attended the conference and had plenty of time to see firsthand why Grand Junction is such a great place not only for visitors, but also for those of us who call it home.

- During 2007, the **Utility and Street Systems Department**, led by Director **Greg Trainor**, basked in the successes of their hard work as the **Persigo Wastewater Treatment Facility** was honored with two of the most prestigious national awards available to such a facility - a 1st place award by the United States Environmental Protection Agency in the Operation and Maintenance category and 2nd place in the Industrial Pretreatment Program category. Likewise, the **Grand Junction Water Treatment Plant**, in their tradition of providing superior drinking water to Grand Junction, was the recipient of a **bronze award** from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. The Department also focused their energy on **protecting the quality of our water in the future** as they participated in the development of the Palisade/Grand Junction Watershed Plan with Genesis Gas and Oil and developed regulations that will serve to protect our watershed as gas drilling occurs. Finally, as growth continued and street miles continued to increase within the city limits, the Streets division stayed busy keeping up with **new roads to plow and maintain** and new residences to serve through the ever-popular **Spring Clean-Up and Leaf Pick-Up programs**.

- In 2007, under the direction of Director **Joe Stevens**, the **Grand Junction Parks and Recreation Department** stayed just as busy and involved in the community as they always do. In spring 2007, the Parks and Recreation Department brought a new look to an old friend as the **Lincoln Park Barn** was re-sided. The new siding, which most agree gives the Barn a much more "barnlike" look, was combined with new windows, which also improved the energy efficiency of the building. Parks and Recreation's **focus on community partnerships** continued in 2007 as they broke ground on yet another collaborative project with Mesa County School District #51. The new **downtown elementary school**, which will be located just to the east of the old Columbine elementary school, will replace Columbine Elementary and Lincoln Park Elementary. When complete, it will also offer community recreation programs through the Parks and Recreation Department. Finally, in the fall of 2007, another significant partnership brought about the replacement of the turf in Stocker Stadium with **new synthetic turf**. The new turf was jointly funded by the City, the NFL, Mesa State College, JUCO, and Mesa County School District #51 – a true example of community collaboration. The new turf brought a professional-grade playing surface to all high school and Mesa State College football games for the fall 2007 season.

The Riverside Parkway

2008 will mark the completion of the much-anticipated Riverside Parkway, many months ahead of the original projected completion date. The seven-mile project has been financed in part by a bond issue that was passed overwhelmingly by Grand Junction voters in 2003. The Parkway will provide motorists an alternative to the Highway 6 and 50 corridor and is part of a "loop" that will eventually connect with Interstate 70 at a proposed interchange at 29 Road.



The Riverside Parkway is a comprehensive transportation project designed to improve the flow of traffic and quality of life for Grand Junction residents and visitors alike. It's much more than just asphalt. It's a vision shared by members of the Grand Junction community. The Parkway will relieve traffic congestion, increase driver safety, eliminate at-grade railroad crossings and improve access to city attractions such as Mesa Mall, the Botanical Gardens, and downtown.

Along with improved traffic flow, the Riverside Parkway offers new recreation amenities and architectural beauty to Grand Junction. Everything from sidewalks, pedestrian bridges, riverside trail links and bicycle lanes to colorful median landscaping and drainage improvements makes this project a boon for business and community alike.

Our sincere thanks to all citizens and businesses who have been so very patient during the construction process. We are confident that you'll find it was worth the inconvenience.

The following pictures were taken during construction, and they showcase the dramatic changes and improvements that have resulted from this project. Photos courtesy of Kristin Winn and Riverside Parkway staff.



East of 9th Street,
looking to the east -
before and after
construction



South of the
Broadway bridge,
looking north - before
and during
construction





**25 Road at Highway
6 & 50 – before and
after
construction**



**9th and Struthers, facing
west – before and during
construction**



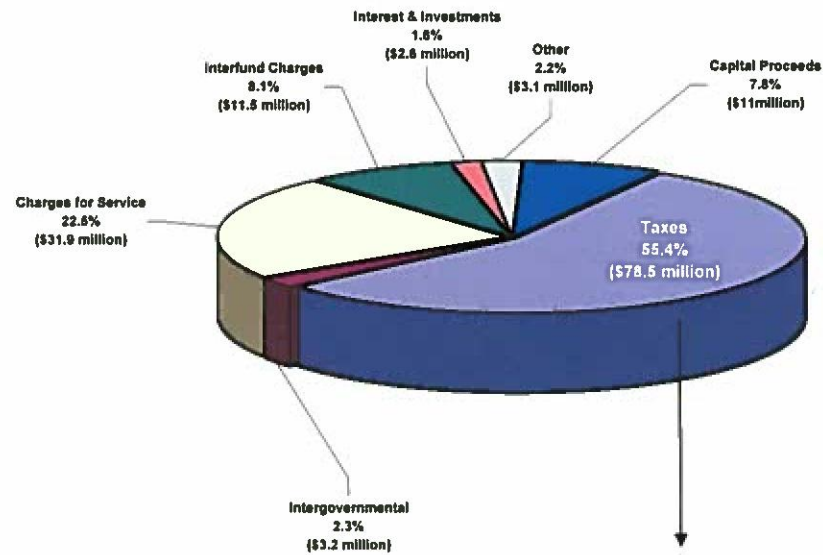
**Near the 5th Street
bridge –
before and during
construction**



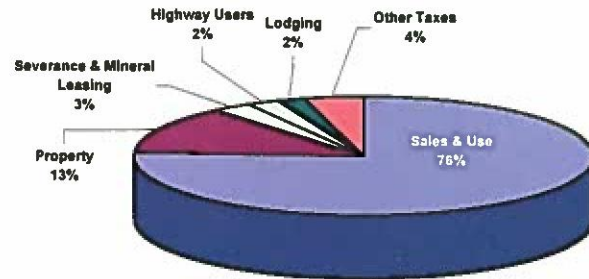
City of Grand Junction Budget

Where the Money Comes From....

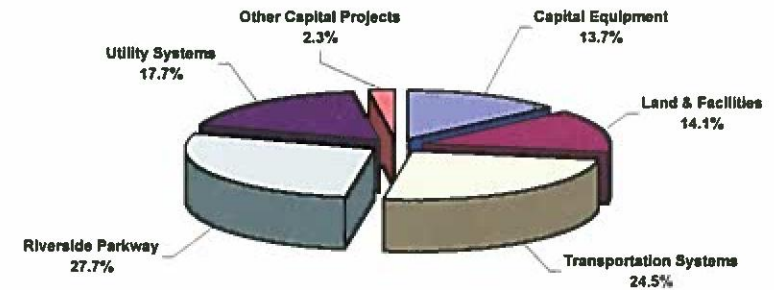
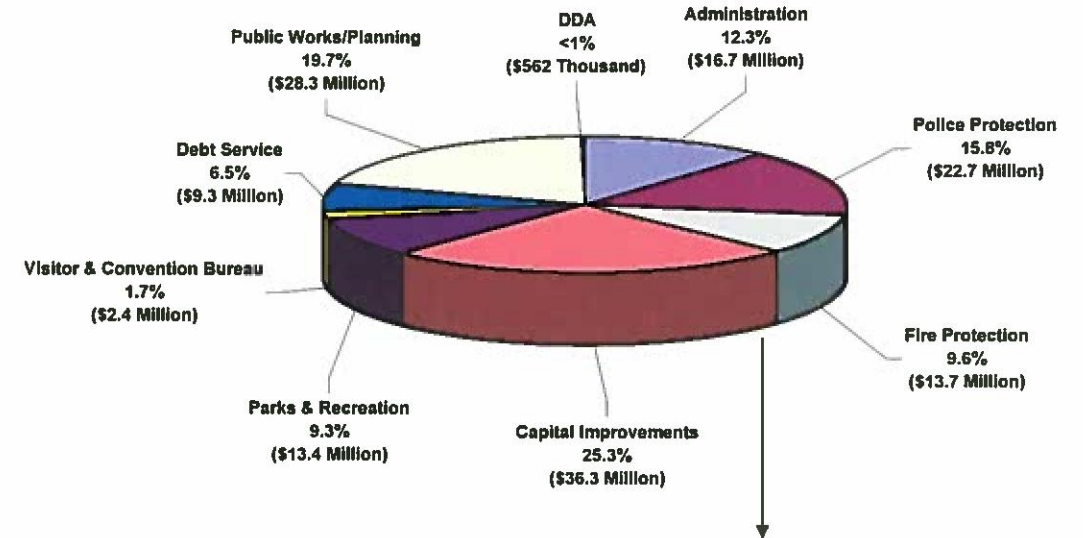
The main source of revenue the City will use for general government operations in 2008 is generated from taxes. Of the projected \$78.5 million in tax revenue collected, 76% will be in the form of sales and use tax with only 18% of that amount being paid by Grand Junction residents.



Property tax rates per \$1,000 of assessed valuation (mill levy) for the City of Grand Junction have actually declined by 8.7% over the last ten fiscal years.



Where the Money Goes....



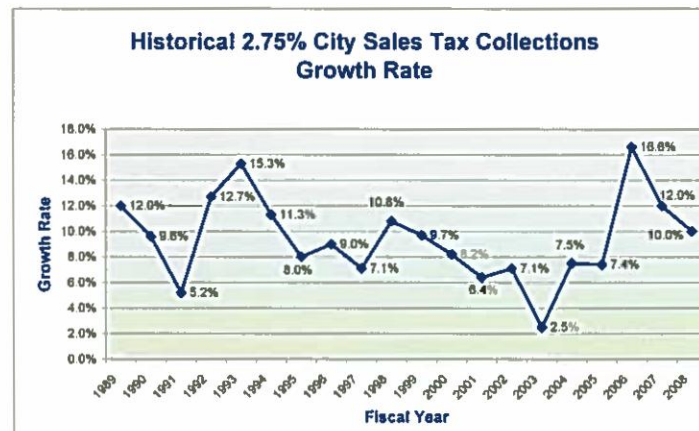
Capital improvements of streets, parks and other infrastructure continue to be a major category of expenditure, accounting for 25% of the total general government expenditures. Of the \$36.3 million in capital improvements, 27.7% is budgeted for the Riverside Parkway Project.

BUDGET YEAR

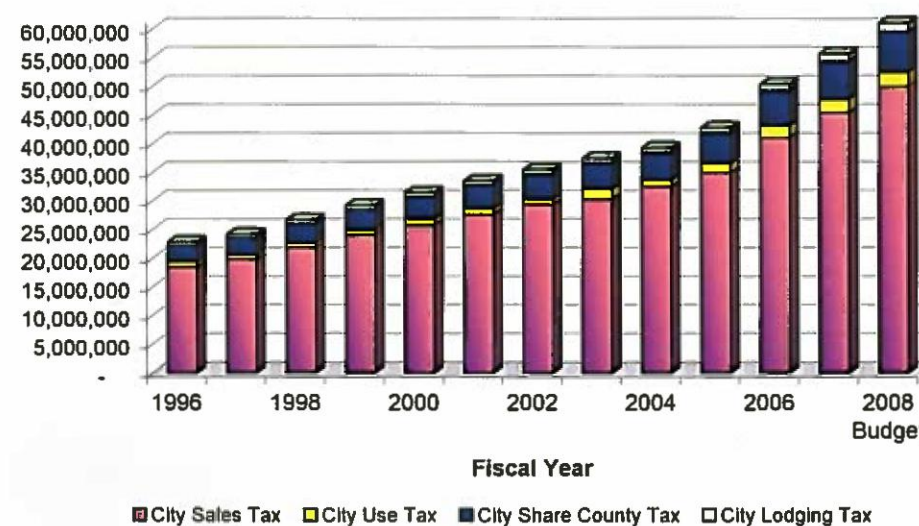
Major Capital Improvement Projects

| | 2007 | 2008 | 2-Year Total |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 7th Street Improvements-Pitkin to Grand | \$ 3,545,401 | \$ - | \$ 3,545,401 |
| Public Safety Facility | \$ 2,255,562 | \$ 1,600,000 | \$ 3,855,562 |
| Downtown Parking Garage | \$ 5,500,000 | \$ - | \$ 5,500,000 |
| E-911 Communications Center Equipment | \$ 3,389,484 | \$ 567,000 | \$ 3,956,484 |
| Facilities Fund | \$ 2,262,100 | \$ 172,820 | \$ 2,434,920 |
| Riverside Parkway | \$ 38,000,000 | \$ 10,500,000 | \$ 48,500,000 |
| Sewer System Improvements | \$ 7,053,976 | \$ 3,808,349 | \$ 10,862,325 |
| Storm Drainage Improvements | \$ 9,386,700 | \$ 1,722,300 | \$ 11,109,000 |
| Street Overlay/Maintenance Program | \$ 1,700,418 | \$ 1,850,000 | \$ 3,550,418 |
| Canyon View Park Improvements | \$ - | \$ 716,000 | \$ 716,000 |
| Colorado Avenue Improvements | \$ 100,000 | \$ 3,000,000 | \$ 3,100,000 |
| Vehicle Replacement Program | \$ 1,535,000 | \$ 1,200,000 | \$ 2,735,000 |
| Water System Improvements | \$ 2,439,000 | \$ 2,055,783 | \$ 4,494,783 |

Continues Beyond 2007



Sales and Use Tax Collections (\$)



Monthly Cost of Service



The average homeowner will pay \$755 in annual taxes, or \$63 per month, in support of all general government services provided by the City of Grand

Sales Tax Revenue By Major Industry Type

