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**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2026
WORKSHOP, 5:30 PM
FIRE DEPARTMENT TRAINING ROOM
625 UTE AVENUE**

1. Discussion Topics

- a. Water Supply Element - Comprehensive Plan Amendment
- b. Temporary Moratorium on Data Centers
- c. Local Preference for Procurements

2. City Council Communication

An unstructured time for Councilmembers to discuss current matters, share ideas for possible future consideration by Council, and provide information from board & commission participation.

3. Next Workshop Topics

4. Other Business

- a. Mayor's Alliance to End Childhood Hunger

What is the purpose of a Workshop?

The purpose of the Workshop is to facilitate City Council discussion through analyzing information, studying issues, and clarifying problems. The less formal setting of the Workshop promotes conversation regarding items and topics that may be considered at a future City Council meeting.

How can I provide my input about a topic on tonight's Workshop agenda?

Individuals wishing to provide input about Workshop topics can:

- 1. Send input by emailing a City Council member ([Council email addresses](#)) or call one or more

members of City Council (970-244-1504)

2. Provide information to the City Manager's Office (johnnym@gjcity.org) for dissemination to the City Council. If your information is submitted prior to 3 p.m. on the date of the Workshop, copies will be provided to Council that evening. Information provided after 3 p.m. will be disseminated the next business day.

3. Attend a Regular Council Meeting (generally held the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall) and provide comments during "Public Comments."



Grand Junction City Council

Workshop Session

Item #1.a.

Meeting Date: September 14, 2026

Presented By: Johnny McFarland, Assistant to the City Manager, Andrea Brush White, Sustainability Specialist

Department: City Manager's Office

Submitted By: Andrea Brush White, Management Analyst

Information

SUBJECT:

Water Supply Element - Comprehensive Plan Amendment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

By December 31, 2026, in alignment with Senate Bill 24-174, Grand Junction must adopt a water supply element in its comprehensive plan.

BACKGROUND OR DETAILED INFORMATION:

In alignment with Senate Bill 24-174, Colorado municipalities, counties, and regional planning commissions with a comprehensive plan must adopt a water supply element in their comprehensive plans. Any jurisdiction developing a new comprehensive plan must include a water supply element. The stated purpose of the water supply element is to help jurisdictions understand their water supply availability and constraints and apply that understanding to future land use and development decision-making. Additionally, the water supply element should lead to the implementation of water conservation policies and an understanding of water infrastructure needs. The City has undertaken much of this work through the Regional Water Efficiency Plan. Building off the Water Efficiency Plan and working with the City's Community Development and Utilities departments, staff have developed the Water Supply Element in accordance with the provisions of SB24-174 and with review from the Department of Local Affairs. Per state guidance, this element will be presented to the Planning Commission for approval in September, bringing the City into compliance with this element prior to the end-of-year deadline.

The Water Supply Element, alongside other required elements outlined in SB24-174, will be fully incorporated into the City's Comprehensive Plan through the 2027 update process.

FISCAL IMPACT:

For discussion only.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

This item is for discussion only.

Attachments

1. Water Supply Element Workshop Draft

City of Grand Junction

Water Supply Element

Scope and Water Provider Consultation

The purpose of the water supply element is to guide the City of Grand Junction to understand its water supply availability and constraints and apply that understanding to future land use and development decision making. Additionally, the water supply element is a supplemental tool for monitoring the implementation of water conservation policies and an understanding of water infrastructure needs when considering future growth. This addendum pulls information from the Grand Junction Regional Water Efficiency Plan and collaborative drought resources to support the growth envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan.

Historically, the City of Grand Junction has supported regional coordination of sustainable water management through effort and cooperation in the development of multiple plans, agreements, and initiatives. After drafting the Water Supply Element, this addendum will be sent to Ute Water Conservancy District and Clifton Water District, who provide domestic water to customers within the City limits in addition to the City's Water Services Division. Additionally, various communities within the City and Mesa County may benefit from one of six irrigation providers that work in conjunction with the domestic water providers to manage and support water quality and availability across the region.

The 2023 Grand Junction Regional Water Efficiency Plan (WEP), adopted by City Council on June 21, 2023, was developed collaboratively by the City of Grand Junction, Clifton Water District, and Ute Water Conservancy District. The plan identifies the four regional domestic water providers (Grand Junction, Clifton, Ute Water, and the Town of Palisade) and establishes an ongoing Steering Committee process under which annual reviews are conducted to evaluate water efficiency measures, conservation goals, and plan updates when applicable. The plan further states that updates necessary to meet additional State requirements will be completed through the Steering Committee process.

The WEP helps water purveyors improve their overall water use efficiency by addressing issues of supply and demand, areas of concern, and providing a defined method of solving problems and dealing with system inefficiencies. The plan provides both water suppliers and the local communities a means of using their water resources in a wise and prudent manner thus managing this precious exhaustible resource to its maximal responsible use. The WEP was funded, performed, and completed through a collaborative effort between the City of Grand Junction, the Clifton Water District, and Ute Water Conservancy District and is an update to the initial Water Conservation Plan adopted in 2012. Staff and water professionals from each entity provided insight to the content of the WEP and have reviewed this element of the Comprehensive Plan.

In addition to the WEP and as a result of the 2002-2003 drought, the City of Grand Junction, Clifton Water District, the Town of Palisade and Ute Water Conservancy District collectively embarked upon the development of a regional Drought Response Plan. The Drought Response Plan (DRP) was designed to provide Governing Boards and City Councils with a set of options to consider when dealing with a prolonged drought event. The DRP was updated in 2018, and more recently in 2026, reflecting variable factors and shifting circumstances in local hydrology and climate, water providers' operations, infrastructure, water supplies, and coordination efforts.

One of the key components of the DRP was to initiate a Drought Response Information Project (DRIP) to provide public education through all sources of media on why and how to reduce per capita consumption across all water use classes in the respective service areas. This is a long-standing partnership among the City of Grand Junction, Clifton Water District, Ute Water Conservancy District, and the Town of Palisade. The DRIP Committee includes domestic water providers, Colorado State University Extension, the National Weather Service, and local irrigation providers. Additionally, Domestic water managers meet monthly to discuss storage levels, drought conditions, water shortages, and regional water issues, while coordinating public education and conservation efforts across the Grand Valley.

Water Conservation Policies

The WEP establishes seven goals that provide the framework for the region's water efficiency efforts:

Goal	Description
Goal 1	Continue to educate the community, local and regional planning departments, construction and development businesses, landscape contractors, and customers regarding codes and ordinances that promote xeric landscapes and water conservation.
Goal 2	Continue to create public awareness of wise water use and conservation.
Goal 3	Continue efforts to reduce residential sector per-capita water demand in the Grand Junction Region and maintain a 1.4% reduction annually.
Goal 4	Promote water saving awareness in the commercial/industrial sectors.
Goal 5	Encourage implementation of the recently adopted Graywater Ordinance (2022).
Goal 6	Establish a valley-wide turf rebate program.
Goal 7	Reduce unaccounted water losses.

To achieve these goals, the WEP identifies foundational activities, including metering, data collection and billing systems, tiered water rates and tap fees that promote conservation and efficient water use, and system water loss management and control tools.

In addition to these foundational activities, targeted technical assistance and incentives are available to all water users. The WEP identifies municipal users in the top tier of consumption, and in alignment with the Plan's stated goals, the City's Parks and Recreation Department has evaluated greenspaces for irrigation efficiencies and water-wise and native landscape conversions, implementing infrastructure upgrades when possible and planning for phased approaches as resources become available.

Within the Utilities Department, the City has also invested in a full-time Water Conservation Specialist to develop, coordinate, and implement Water Conservation Programs. For water users served by the City's water system, rebates are available for turf conversion projects, smart irrigation components, and water efficient appliances. The Water Conservation Specialist also provides community education and outreach through workshops, classes, and other water conservation programming, including on-site irrigation audits. The City also promotes the Wyland's Mayor's Challenge to conserve water.

The City has also invested in Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). AMI is used to monitor customer water use and identify potential leaks or unusual consumption. More frequent water-use data allows the City to alert customers to suspected leaks, helping reduce water loss, avoid unexpectedly high bills, and conserve treated water. Customers can also use the City's CustomerConnect portal to monitor their own water use and receive leak alerts.

All three water providers, Grand Junction, Clifton, and Ute Water have implemented water-efficiency-oriented tiered rate structures and tap fees that promote conservation by linking costs to water use

Using 2022 water usage as a baseline, a 3-5% water savings from the ten largest users would result in 13.5-22.5 million gallons of water. Annually, the DRIP Committee recognizes customers that have made water conservation efforts that have led to successful water savings by presenting Tributary Awards and honoring them as Western Slope Water Conservation Leaders. The City also supports water efficiency activities with graywater regulations and incentives, turf replacement and smart irrigation rebates, rebates for water efficient fixtures, and educational programming.

The City has also taken a regulatory approach, including implementation of a landscaping code that dictates shrub reduction, tree reduction, turf reduction, and certified irrigation design. The City also met State regulation requirements to allow graywater treatment works, including laundry to landscape systems.

Water Demand and Supply, Facilities

Population Growth

In 2025 the population of Grand Junction and Mesa County are estimated at 71,827, and 162,845, respectively. Population projections predict by 2050, Mesa County will increase to 214,206 people, a rise of 37 percent, and the City is likely to grow proportionally, with substantial development and infill occurring outside of City limits as well. (Source: Grand Junction's Housing Strategy Update, DOLA). The Comprehensive Plan provides a policy framework for accommodating anticipated population growth while promoting responsible stewardship of the City's fiscal and natural resources.

Water Supplies

The City of Grand Junction's original Water Conservation Master Plan was developed in 1996, however, water planning for City officials dates back to the turn of the century when paramount water rights were secured on the Grand Mesa in 1911. Following the purchase of those Kannah Creek shares, the City continued to plan for development and sufficient water supply to this current day, including 19 reservoirs and alternative water rights on the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers.

More recently, the City completed a Demand and Firm Yield analysis to evaluate whether its existing water supplies can reliably meet demands associated with projected population growth under a range of hydrologic conditions. Following the results of that study, investments in infrastructure improvements were prioritized to maximize the reliability and availability of the City's existing water supplies. These include rehabilitation and replacement of major waterlines and conveyances, dam repairs, and reservoir storage projects that advance system reliability, reduce water loss, and maximize the City's ability to capture, store, convey, and use its existing water supplies.

Regionally, the City is interconnected with Ute Water and Clifton Water – both directly through valves within the distribution systems, and intricately through operational and long-term planning. The interconnects are important components for the water providers to maintain for emergencies to supply domestic water to each other in case of shortages, water breaks, water quality issues, or other unforeseen circumstances. They are also utilized during planned outages to maintain uninterrupted service, for example, during operational downtime for treatment plant repairs.

Ute Water, Clifton Water, and the City have independent water supply sources that can bolster the region's resiliency in the short and long-term. The Water Managers of each organization have historically met monthly to discuss shared priorities and coordinate infrastructure planning, system operations, regulatory compliance, and regional water supply management.

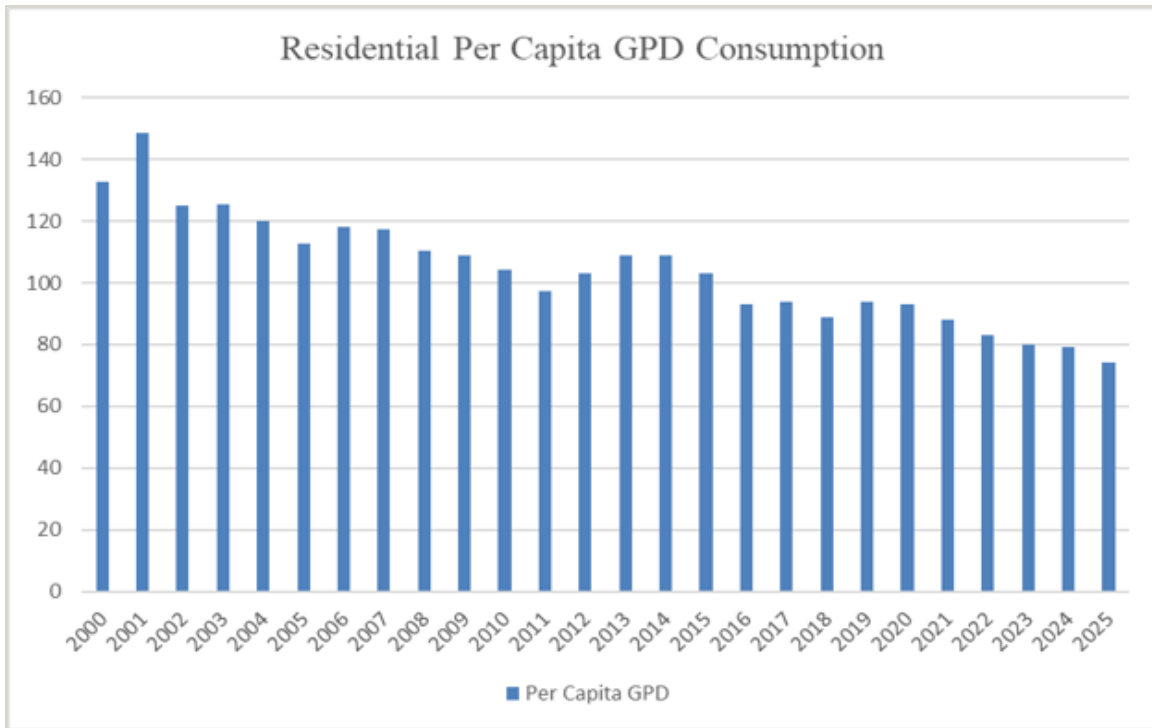
Water Supply Reliability and Future Needs

Year/District	2020 (actuals)	2025	2030	2035
City of Grand Junction	1,773	1,822	1,873	1,927
Clifton Water District	1,572	1,623	1,709	1,802
Ute Water Conservancy District	3,479	3,548	3,822	4,118
Totals:	6,284	6,993	7,404	7,847

The City of Grand Junction's primary municipal water supply originates in the Kannah Creek watershed, within the Gunnison River Basin. The City's water supply system includes senior water rights, reservoirs, raw water conveyance infrastructure, and treatment facilities that collectively provide a reliable municipal supply. Because the amount and timing of available water vary with snowpack, runoff, drought, and other hydrologic conditions, long-term planning focuses not only on the quantity of water rights held by the City, but also on the amount of water that can be reliably captured, stored, conveyed, and treated during critical drought conditions.

The City has conducted a series of water supply planning studies to evaluate the ability of its existing supplies to meet future demand. Firm yield represents the annual demand that can be reliably supplied through a recurrence of historical drought conditions while maintaining established storage reserves. The City's baseline firm yield was estimated at approximately 6,400 acre-feet per year, including potable and non-potable demands.

Water demand projections are influenced by both population growth and changes in how efficiently water is used. Updated analysis completed in 2024 found that annual demand had declined despite the continued addition of new water taps. This trend is also reflected in a long-term decline in residential per-capita water use, as shown below. Based on recent demand and current population-growth assumptions, the point at which projected demand would exceed the existing system's firm yield shifted from approximately 2039 to 2049. The long-term decline in per-capita water use demonstrates that population growth does not translate directly into an equivalent increase in water demand.



The City is also investing in its existing water supply system to improve reliability and make more effective use of existing water supplies. Significant sections of the Purdy Mesa and Kannah Creek raw water flowlines have been replaced, improving the reliability and efficiency of the City's primary raw water conveyance system. Additional improvements evaluated through the City's firm-yield modeling include piping the Juniata Enlarged Ditch, improvements to the use of Whitewater Creek supplies, and additional raw water storage. Piping the Juniata Enlarged Ditch alone is estimated to increase firm yield by approximately 150 acre-feet per year by reducing conveyance losses and allowing additional water to reach storage during critical drought conditions. When the modeled infrastructure improvements are considered together with updated demand projections, the City's analysis indicates that existing supplies could meet projected demands until approximately 2056, extending the planning horizon by approximately 17 years compared with the 2019 projection.

Continued water efficiency will also play an important role in extending the City's existing supplies. Tiered water rates, advanced metering and customer leak detection, water-efficient development standards, turf conversion programs, and public education help reduce avoidable water use. Continued monitoring of actual demand will be important because sustained reductions in per-capita water use could further extend the timeframe before additional supplies are needed. The 2024 analysis specifically notes that demand decreased while the number of new taps increased and recommends further evaluation of changing water-use patterns.

Over the long term, the City will continue evaluating additional supply and storage opportunities to provide flexibility beyond the capacity of the existing Kannah Creek system. The 2024 analysis notes that substantial water is available from the Gunnison River even during the historical critical drought period, although effective and economical treatment of that supply

remains an important consideration. Together, water efficiency, strategic infrastructure investment, protection of existing water rights, and development of future supply options provide a diversified approach to meeting the City's long-term water needs.

Alignment to the Colorado Water Plan

The City of Grand Junction's Water Supply Element aligns with the goals and priorities of the Colorado Water Plan. Grand Junction was founded at the confluence of the Colorado and Gunnison rivers, and the City's location within the Colorado River Basin underscores the importance of responsible water resource management. Local decisions related to water supply, conservation, and infrastructure contribute to the long-term sustainability of water resources both within the community and throughout the broader Colorado River Basin. Alignment with the Colorado Water Plan provides a framework for balancing local water supply needs with responsible stewardship of shared water resources. The Colorado Water Plan establishes a vision for greater resilience through four interconnected Action Areas: Vibrant Communities, Robust Agriculture, Thriving Watersheds, and Resilient Planning. The WEP was developed to improve water-use efficiency, address future supply and demand challenges, and promote sustainable water management throughout the Grand Junction region.

The Water Plan identifies Vibrant Communities as a core Action Area focused on ensuring reliable water supplies and reducing risk for Colorado communities. Regional demand projections and conservation measures are intended to offset future municipal water demand, which supports reliable municipal water supplies while accommodating future growth.

Additionally, the WEP's future water demand forecasting, water rights planning, conservation measures, and system management strategies directly address future water supply-demand challenges and meet future water needs. The established goals, conservation measures, performance metrics, annual review procedures, and implementation actions directly fulfill the Colorado Water Plan recommendations and is a Wise Water Use partner action. The DRIP regional partnership is also strongly aligned with effective engagement actions. Resilient Planning is illustrated by the Regional Drought Response Plan and DRIP resources. Promoting xeric landscapes supports the partner action: Healthy Lands. The Graywater Ordinance supports water reuse and conservation of potable water demand. The participation in the Colorado Water Loss initiative, meter testing, and infrastructure improvements supports statewide efficiency goals.

Colorado Water Plan Component	Colorado Water Plan Reference	WEP Reference	Relationship and Purpose
Vision: Greater Water Resilience by 2050	The Colorado Water Plan establishes a vision for greater resilience through four interconnected Action Areas: Vibrant Communities, Robust Agriculture, Thriving Watersheds, and Resilient Planning (p. 175).	The WEP was developed to improve water-use efficiency, address future supply and demand challenges, and promote sustainable water management throughout the Grand Junction region (p. 3).	Directly supports the Colorado Water Plan's long-term resilience vision through conservation, demand management, and regional coordination. Grand Junction is better situated to respond to a variable water supply.
Action Area: Vibrant Communities	The Water Plan identifies Vibrant Communities as a	Regional demand projections and conservation measures	Supports reliable municipal water supplies while

Colorado Water Plan Component	Colorado Water Plan Reference	WEP Reference	Relationship and Purpose
	core Action Area focused on ensuring reliable water supplies and reducing risk for Colorado communities (p. 175).	intended to offset future municipal water demand (pp. 54–55).	accommodating future growth.
Partner Action: Meeting Future Water Need	The Water Plan identifies "Meeting Future Water Need" as a Partner Action focused on providing supply, improving water management, and lowering risk for all sectors (p. 175).	Future water demand forecasting, water rights planning, conservation measures, and system management strategies (pp. 54–55, 65–67).	Directly addresses future water supply-demand challenges.
Partner Action: Wise Water Use	The Water Plan promotes water efficiency, conservation programs, and wise water use practices (pp. 175, 218–219).	Goal 2: Create public awareness of wise water use and conservation; Goal 3: Reduce residential per-capita demand; Goal 4: Promote commercial and industrial conservation (p. 66).	Direct implementation of Wise Water Use partner actions to conserve water over time for meaningful impact.
Partner Action: Water Efficiency and Drought Plans	The Water Plan states that actionable water efficiency and drought plans should be developed by every municipality and/or water provider and should include measurable metrics and implementable strategies (p. 218).	The WEP establishes goals, conservation measures, performance metrics, annual review procedures, and implementation actions (pp. 66–75).	Directly fulfills a specific Colorado Water Plan recommendation.
Partner Action: Effective Engagement	The Water Plan promotes information sharing, education, outreach, and innovation at the state and local level (pp. 175, 219–220).	DRIP outreach program, media campaigns, community presentations, farmers market outreach, public education efforts, and conservation messaging (pp. 57–58).	Strong alignment with Effective Engagement partner actions that give multiple opportunities for community members to contribute to water savings.
Action Area: Resilient Planning	The Water Plan promotes drought preparedness, adaptive management, collaboration, and resilience to future uncertainty (pp. 175–176, 218–220).	Regional Drought Response Plan and Drought Response Information Project (DRIP) (pp. 57–58; Appendix B).	Direct implementation of resilience planning concepts to support the local water system.
Partner Action: Healthy Lands	The Water Plan promotes landscapes that remain healthy and productive in a warmer and drier future (pp. 175, 217–218).	Goal 1 promotes xeric landscapes and water conservation through codes, ordinances, landscape professionals, and customer education (p. 66).	Strong alignment with Healthy Lands objectives that creates a resilient local landscape.
Conservation and Land Use Projects	The Water Plan identifies conservation and land-use projects as a major implementation category and links them to Wise Water Use and Healthy Lands (p. 175).	Xeric landscape requirements, outdoor water conservation measures, irrigation efficiency efforts, and landscape education programs (pp. 66–72).	Directly advances Colorado Water Plan conservation and land-use objectives by creating policies and programs to promote conservation.
Water Reuse and Alternative Supplies	The Colorado Water Plan promotes water conservation, efficiency, and drought	Goal 5: Encourage implementation of the recently adopted Graywater Ordinance	Directly supports Colorado Water Plan objectives related to water reuse, conservation,

Colorado Water Plan Component	Colorado Water Plan Reference	WEP Reference	Relationship and Purpose
	resilience through the Wise Water Use and Meeting Future Water Need Partner Actions (pp. 175, 218–219).	(p. 66).	and long-term water supply resilience by promoting beneficial reuse of water and reducing potable water demand.
Accessible Conservation Programs and Incentives	The Water Plan encourages conservation programs and incentives that increase participation and water savings and identifies water conservation as an adaptive measure for drought resilience (p. 218).	Goal 6: Establish a valley-wide turf rebate program; customer conservation programs; outreach and incentive-based conservation measures (pp. 66–70).	Direct implementation of Colorado Water Plan conservation incentives to promote water savings.
Water Loss Reduction	The Water Plan promotes maximizing existing water supplies through efficiency and improved water management (pp. 175, 218–219).	Goal 7: Reduce unaccounted water losses; participation in the Colorado Water Loss Initiative; meter testing; infrastructure improvements (pp. 66–68).	Supports statewide efficiency and conservation goals.
High-Impact Driver: Population Growth	The Water Plan identifies increasing population and growing water demand as major statewide planning challenges (pp. iv–v; 50–51).	Demand forecasts are based on projected future growth and water demand through the planning horizon (pp. 54–55).	Explicit consideration of a Colorado Water Plan High-Impact Driver of water consumption.
High-Impact Driver: Drought and Aridification	The Water Plan recognizes increasing drought risk, warming temperatures, changing hydrology, and a long-term trend toward aridification as major future challenges (pp. iv–v; 50–51).	Drought Response Plan, DRIP program, conservation goals, public education efforts, and supply reliability planning (pp. 57–75).	Explicit consideration of Colorado Water Plan High-Impact Drivers when planning for future water needs.

The WEP has substantial alignment with the Colorado Water Efficiency plan. However, the Water Supply Element additionally acknowledges that climate will play an increasing role in municipal water supply, affecting supply and hydrological flows within the watershed.

5 Year Update Cycle

The WEP includes annual monitoring and a seven-year WEP update schedule. The Water Supply Element will be reviewed and updated no less frequently than every five years by the Community Development Department in coordination with Utilities and water providers. During these updates, data will be reviewed to analyze the effects of conservation policies in conjunction with water supply area development.

Adoption

Staff are presenting the Water Supply Element to Planning Commission on a date to be scheduled.



Grand Junction City Council

Workshop Session

Item #1.b.

Meeting Date: September 14, 2026
Presented By: Mike Bennett, City Manager
Department: City Manager's Office
Submitted By: Kimberly Bullen

Information

SUBJECT:

Temporary Moratorium on Data Centers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City of Grand Junction has received inquiries regarding Data Centers and the City's current approach, regulations, or planned initiatives related to the approval and management of data centers within city limits. Communities considering data-center development often evaluate whether their land-use regulations adequately address the facilities' distinctive operational and infrastructure needs. Common regulatory tools may include defining data centers as a specific land use; identifying appropriate zoning districts; establishing use-specific standards; requiring utility coordination; setting standards for noise, screening, setbacks, lighting, water use, generator testing, fuel storage, and emissions; and requiring site-specific analysis of electrical, water, transportation, and emergency-service impacts.

The City of Grand Junction's current Land Use Code does not identify data centers as a distinct land use category. Therefore, staff recommends that City Council establish a one-year moratorium on new data center development, allowing staff time to evaluate potential land-use regulations.

BACKGROUND OR DETAILED INFORMATION:

A data center is a specialized facility that houses computing, storage, and networking equipment used to process, store, and manage digital information. Its operations depend on substantial supporting infrastructure, including electrical systems, uninterruptible power supplies, backup generators, ventilation and cooling equipment, fire suppression systems, water resources, and high-capacity network connections.

Because data centers operate continuously and require significant electrical and cooling capacity, they can place considerable demand on local utility systems. Potential

community and environmental impacts may include increased strain on the electrical grid, substantial water consumption, heat generation, noise from mechanical equipment and generators, and other environmental considerations.

The City of Grand Junction's current Land Use Code does not identify data centers as a distinct land use category. Chapter 21.04.010 establishes permitted land uses within City zone districts and sets standards for certain uses. Under the Code, uses not specifically identified in Table 21.04-1, The Principal Use Table, and approved pursuant to the Code are prohibited.

The City has recently received inquiries regarding potential data center development. In response to similar interest, communities throughout Colorado and across the country have adopted moratoriums while developing regulations tailored to the unique land-use, utility, infrastructure, and environmental impacts associated with these facilities.

Staff therefore recommends that City Council establish a one-year moratorium on new data center development. The moratorium would provide staff time to evaluate potential land-use regulations, licensing requirements, infrastructure standards, and other policy options; coordinate with utility providers; and develop measures intended to reduce potential adverse impacts on the Grand Junction community. A draft ordinance is attached for Council discussion.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for discussion purposes only.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Staff recommends Council favorably consider the moratorium ordinance prohibiting the establishment of any new data center within the City limits of Grand Junction.

Attachments

1. ORD-Data-Center-Moratorium-DRAFT

CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO
ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE ENACTING A TEMPORARY MORATORIUM ON THE ACCEPTANCE, PROCESSING AND APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS FOR DATA CENTERS WITHIN THE CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION; PROVIDING THAT THE MORATORIUM SHALL TERMINATE AT THE EARLIEST OF THE CITY'S ADOPTION OF AMENDMENT(S) TO TITLE 21 OF THE GRAND JUNCTION MUNICIPAL CODE ADDRESSING DATA CENTERS OR THE EXPIRATION OF THREE HUNDRED SIXTY-FIVE (365) DAYS FROM THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDINANCE; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS, INTENT AND PURPOSE; PROVIDING FOR DEFINITIONS; DIRECTING A CODE STUDY; AND PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY

RECITALS:

Data centers and comparable large-load computing facilities are expanding rapidly across the United States and in Colorado. Facilities of this type differ from conventional industrial development in kind and not merely in degree. A single medium or large facility may draw electrical load comparable to that of a small city, may consume substantial quantities of water for evaporative cooling, and may operate continuously with associated mechanical noise, standby generation, and security and site design requirements that have no close analogue among the land uses presently identified in the Grand Junction Municipal Code.

Title 21 of the Grand Junction Municipal Code, the Zoning and Development Code, does not define, identify or regulate a data center as a principal use. Table 21.04-1, the Principal Use Table set forth at GJMC § 21.04.020, does not list a data center in any use category or in any zone district. The nearest analogues in the Code were written for other purposes. "Industrial, light" and "Industrial, heavy," as defined at GJMC § 21.14.020, describe the assembly, fabrication or processing of goods and materials. "Utility facility, major," as defined at the same section, describes a facility providing an important regional utility service such as water, sewer or drainage. A data center is none of these. It assembles and fabricates nothing, and it consumes rather than provides utility service.

In the absence of a defined use, an application proposing a data center would be classified by analogy on a case-by-case basis. Classification by analogy would produce inconsistent review, would place the use in zone districts selected without deliberation by the City Council, and would leave the City without use-specific standards under GJMC § 21.04.030 addressing the impacts that distinguish this use, including electrical demand, water consumption for cooling, wastewater discharge, continuous noise, standby generator testing and emissions, heat rejection, site and building massing, screening, hazardous materials storage, decommissioning, and the fiscal and infrastructure consequences of concentrated demand on the systems serving the City.

The regulatory framework at the state level is unsettled. During the 2026 regular session the Colorado General Assembly considered two measures addressing data centers, House Bill 26-1030 and Senate Bill 26-102, and neither measure was enacted. The General Assembly may take up data center legislation again in the 2027 regular session. The scope of any state framework, and its effect on local land use authority, will not be known until such legislation is considered and acted upon. It is prudent for the City to establish its own regulations with the benefit of that information rather than to approve development in advance of it.

Other Colorado local governments have reached the same conclusion and have adopted temporary moratoria while they develop regulations, including the City and County of Broomfield

by Ordinance No. 2313 and the Town of Monument by Ordinance No. 18-2026. A temporary suspension of application acceptance while a code amendment is prepared is an accepted and measured exercise of municipal land use authority.

The City of Grand Junction is a home rule municipality organized under Article XX, Section 6 of the Colorado Constitution and the Charter of the City of Grand Junction. Zoning and land use regulation is a matter of local concern within the City's home rule authority. That authority is confirmed by C.R.S. § 29-20-104(1)(g), which authorizes each local government to regulate the use of land on the basis of the impact of the use on the community or surrounding areas, and by C.R.S. § 29-20-104(1)(f), which authorizes each local government to provide for phased development of services and facilities.

This Ordinance is not an anti-growth law within the meaning of C.R.S. § 29-20-104.2. It does not limit the growth of the population of the City, it does not limit the number of development permits or building permit applications for residential development or for the residential component of any mixed use development, and it does not decrease permitted residential density or residential uses. It applies solely to a nonresidential use.

A temporary moratorium is narrowly tailored, is temporary in nature, is necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare, and is adopted in good faith for the purpose of completing needed planning and regulatory work. The moratorium will allow the City Manager, by and through the Community Development Department, in conjunction with the City Attorney and such other departments as the City Manager designates, to study the impacts of data centers, to evaluate appropriate zone districts, use classifications, thresholds and use-specific standards, and to present recommended amendments to Title 21 to the City Council. The moratorium is limited in duration and terminates automatically upon the earlier of the City Council's adoption of such amendments or the expiration of 365 days.

This temporary moratorium will further the health, safety and welfare of the people of the City of Grand Junction.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION THAT:

- 1. Findings, Intent and Purpose.** The foregoing Recitals are incorporated by reference and serve as the findings of the City Council and state the City Council's intent and purpose for this Ordinance.
- 2. Definitions.** For purposes of this Ordinance only, the following definitions apply. These definitions are adopted for the administration of this Ordinance and do not amend Title 21 of the Grand Junction Municipal Code.
 - (a) "Data center" means a building, a group of buildings, or a portion of a building, together with associated electrical infrastructure, mechanical cooling equipment, and standby or backup electrical generation, that:
 - (i) houses information technology equipment used for data processing, data storage, or telecommunications;
 - (ii) has as a primary function the delivery of information technology services, including providing data storage, processing and transport services, supporting the delivery of cloud computing services, providing network connectivity services, supporting artificial intelligence, machine learning or

similar computational services, or performing cryptocurrency mining, blockchain validation or comparable computation; and

(iii) has a projected, designed or requested electrical load of ten (10) megawatts or more, measured as the aggregate load at full build-out of all phases identified in any application, site plan, utility service request, will-serve request or interconnection request, whether or not all phases are proposed for immediate construction.

(b) Aggregation. Two or more facilities that would each meet subsections (a)(i) and (a)(ii) of this Section, that are located on the same parcel or on contiguous parcels, and that are under common ownership or common control, shall be treated as a single data center and their projected electrical loads shall be aggregated for purposes of subsection (a)(iii).

(c) Exclusions. "Data center" does not include: (i) computer, server or network equipment rooms that are accessory to a lawfully established principal use on the same site and that serve the operations of that principal use; (ii) telecommunications facilities regulated under GJMC § 21.04.030(e)(5); (iii) a "utility facility, basic" as defined at GJMC § 21.14.020; or (iv) any facility that does not meet the electrical load threshold in subsection (a)(iii).

(d) "Application" means any application, submittal or request for City review, action or approval under Title 21 or any other title of the Grand Junction Municipal Code, including without limitation a pre-application or pre-submittal conference request, a request for an amendment to the Official Zoning Map, a rezoning, an annexation with an associated zoning request, a Planned Development, an outline development plan, a site plan, a site development plan, a conditional use permit, a Special Dimensional Permit, a subdivision or plat, a development permit, an administrative permit, a grading or engineering permit, a building permit, and any amendment to or renewal of any of the foregoing.

3. Imposition of Moratorium. A moratorium is hereby declared and imposed on the acceptance, processing, review, approval and issuance by the City of any Application that proposes a data center as a principal use, as an accessory use, or as any component of a proposed development. During the moratorium period the City Manager and all City departments shall not accept, process, review, act upon, approve or issue any such Application, and shall not conduct pre-application or pre-submittal activities concerning a data center.

4. Duration. The moratorium declared by this Ordinance shall commence on the effective date of this Ordinance, _____, and shall continue for a period of three hundred sixty-five (365) days to _____ (inclusive), or until the City Council's adoption of amendment(s) to Title 21 of the Grand Junction Municipal Code addressing data centers, or until further action of the City Council ending, modifying or extending this moratorium, whichever occurs first. Such further action shall be taken by ordinance of the City Council.

5. Applications On File. This Ordinance applies prospectively. An Application that was submitted to and accepted by the City as complete before the effective date of this Ordinance shall continue to be processed under the provisions of the Grand Junction Municipal Code in effect at the time the Application was accepted as complete. Nothing in this Section requires the City to approve any Application, and nothing in this

Ordinance creates, enlarges or recognizes any vested property right. A vested property right arises only upon approval of a site-specific development plan in accordance with GJMC § 21.02.050(r) and C.R.S. § 24-68-101 et seq.

6. **Lawfully Existing Uses.** This Ordinance does not apply to a data center lawfully established and in operation within the City as of the effective date of this Ordinance, provided that any Application to expand, enlarge or increase the electrical load of such a facility in a manner that would meet the definition in Section 2 is subject to the moratorium.
7. **Study and Code Amendments.** During the term of the moratorium the City Manager, by and through the Community Development Department and in conjunction with the City Attorney and such other departments as the City Manager designates, is directed to:
 - (a) study the impacts of data centers on the water, wastewater, electrical, transportation and public safety systems serving the City, and on adjacent land uses;
 - (b) evaluate appropriate zone districts, use categories, definitions and load or size thresholds for the use;
 - (c) develop use-specific standards and performance standards, including standards addressing noise, standby generation, water consumption and reuse, heat rejection, screening, lighting, hazardous materials, decommissioning and financial assurance;
 - (d) monitor and evaluate any data center legislation considered by the Colorado General Assembly and advise the City Council of the same; and
 - (e) present recommended amendments to Title 21 of the Grand Junction Municipal Code to the Planning Commission and the City Council.
8. **Limited Effect.** This moratorium does not suspend the enforcement of any section of the Grand Junction Municipal Code or of any other applicable law. All other provisions of the Grand Junction Municipal Code remain in full force and effect.
9. **Severability.** If any section, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance is held invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance, which can be given effect without the invalid portion.
10. **Effective Date.** This Ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days after its final passage and final publication in accordance with Section 136 of the Charter of the City of Grand Junction.

Introduced on first reading the _____ day of _____, 20____ and ordered published in pamphlet form.

Adopted on second reading the _____ day of _____, 20____ and ordered published in pamphlet form.

President of the City Council

Attest:

City Clerk



Grand Junction City Council

Workshop Session

Item #1.c.

Meeting Date: September 14, 2026
Presented By: Jay Valentine, Chief Financial Officer
Department: Finance
Submitted By: Jay Valentine

Information

SUBJECT:

Local Preference for Procurements

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This will be a discussion about local preference purchasing policies. Local preference purchasing policies give geographic preference when evaluating bids and proposals.

BACKGROUND OR DETAILED INFORMATION:

Grand Junction currently does not apply geographic or "local" preference in its competitive procurement processes as awards are evaluated on price, qualifications, and performance alone. Local vendor preference has been raised for Council discussion as a potential policy change.

Local preference programs direct procurement award decisions, in whole or in part, toward vendors based on their geographic location rather than the merits of the bid alone.

The Institute for Public Procurement, the leading professional association in this field, has taken a formal position against preference policies generally, on the grounds that they conflict with the core procurement principles of impartiality and full and open competition.

FISCAL IMPACT:

For discussion only.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

For discussion only

Attachments

None



August 6, 2026

The Honorable Laurel Lutz
Mayor of Grand Junction
Office of the Mayor and City Council
250 North 5th Street
Grand Junction, CO 81501

Dear Mayor Lutz,

We are writing as the leaders of the [Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger](#), a nonpartisan coalition representing more than 600 mayors across 49 states and Washington, DC, from large and medium cities to smaller communities and townships, working in partnership with Share Our Strength's [No Kid Hungry Campaign](#) to ensure that every child has the healthy food they need to thrive.

Across the United States, as many as 1 in 5 kids (more than 14 million) are living with hunger¹. Some of these children are missing meals, while others face hunger-related hardships as their families make tradeoffs between buying enough groceries or paying bills. As mayor, you see many of these struggling families in your own community, and you are best suited to address this solvable challenge. **Together, we have taken meaningful actions to end childhood hunger in cities nationwide, and we invite you to [join us](#) in this effort.**

According to estimates, **1 in 6 kids in Mesa County, Colorado, may face hunger this year**². Across the country, mayors like you are on the frontlines of responding to the short and long-term negative impacts of hunger in their communities. Mayors have led the way in supporting public-private partnerships and offering innovative solutions to address food insecurity. Mayors bring crucial national awareness to the systemic connections between poverty, racism, and hunger.

Since its launch in January 2022, the Mayors Alliance has already made an impact. The Mayors Alliance has launched an exclusive grant pool: the [Mayors Action Fund](#) which is investing in Mayors to drive practical and community-centered solutions

¹ USDA Economic Research Service. [Household Food Security in the United States in 2023](#)

² Gundersen, C., M. Hake, A. Dewey, E. Engelhard (2023). Map the Meal Gap 2023: An Analysis of County and Congressional District Food Insecurity and County Food Cost in the United States. Available from Feeding America

to end childhood hunger in cities nationwide. It engaged in collective advocacy at the federal level on critical issues related to child hunger, including SNAP, held a briefing with the US Department of Agriculture on new tools to combat summer hunger, took bold actions to launch mayor-led task forces and public-private partnerships to end child hunger in local communities, and offered virtual briefings on emerging topics such as new federal regulations and tax credits, and connected mayors to their peers who shared strategies to address child hunger in communities.

Under our leadership, the coalition is poised to advance its goal to end childhood hunger. The Mayors Alliance's former leaders include Mayor Levar Stoney of Richmond, VA; Mayor John Giles of Mesa, AZ; Mayor Mattie Parker of Fort Worth, TX; Mayor Paige Cagnetti of Scranton, PA; and Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome of Baton Rouge, LA. To find out more about the Mayors Alliance, we invite you to review its website, mayorshungeralliance.org, which features a brief [video](#) of member mayors describing why they joined the Mayors Alliance and took the pledge to end childhood hunger in their cities.

To join us in the fight against childhood hunger, please complete this [form](#), which includes the Mayors Alliance pledge and provides Share Our Strength staff with relevant contact information. If you have any questions about the Mayors Alliance, please contact Aaron Goldstein, Senior Manager, Local Government Relations, at agoldstein@strength.org.

Thank you again for your leadership. We can't wait to celebrate your successes as our newest member of the Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger.

Sincerely,



Mayor Daniel Rickenmann
Chair, Mayors Alliance
Columbia, South Carolina



Mayor Alyia Gaskins
Vice-Chair, Mayors Alliance
Alexandria, Virginia