

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

December 3, 2018

Meeting Convened: 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Auditorium

Meeting Adjourned: 7:46 p.m.

City Councilmembers present: Councilmembers Bennett Boeschstein, Chris Kennedy, Duncan McArthur, Phyllis Norris, Rick Taggart, Duke Wortmann, and Mayor Barbara Traylor Smith.

Planning Commission Members present: Kathy Deppe-Spomer, Dr. George Gatseos, Steve Tolle, William Wade, and Andrew Teske.

Staff present: City Manager Greg Caton, City Attorney John Shaver, Finance Director Jodi Romero, Director of Internal Services Jay Valentine, Community Services Manager Kathy Portner, Principal Planner David Thornton, Development Engineer Rick Doris, Public Works Director Trent Prall, Fire Chief Ken Watkins, Police Chief Doug Shoemaker, Assistant to the City Manager Greg LeBlanc, and City Clerk Wanda Winkelmann.

Mayor Traylor Smith called the meeting to order.

Agenda Topic 1. Discussion Topics

a. Growth and Development Policy/Transportation Impact Fees

City Manager Caton introduced the topic and welcomed members of the Planning Commission.

The current Transportation Capacity Payment (TCP) program and the associated Growth Management and Streets Policy have been in place since 2004. City staff has been working with the development community on updating the Growth Management and Streets policy and has a number of potential changes to discuss. TCP fees, also known as Transportation Impact Fees, are currently being reviewed and updated based on a process that is being led by the Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (GVMPO).

Consultant Clancy Mullen of Duncan and Associates reviewed the draft of the Transportation Impact Fee study, including the basic legal principles when setting fees:

- Don't charge for existing deficiencies
- Avoid double payment
- Maintain proportionality to impact

Major changes that impact the fees:

- Excludes right-of-way costs
- Charges only for capacity directly consumed
- Modifies categories in fee schedule

The 2018 update includes:

- Continue to exclude cost of major structures
- Excludes ROW cost
- Reduces VMT (vehicle miles traveled) ratio from 1.50 to 1.00
- Use weight cost of urban and rural projects
- Cost per VMT updated by about the same rate of inflation

Mr. Mullen reviewed the comparison of road fees among Colorado jurisdictions.

Discussion ensued about the other fees included in transportation fees for other municipalities.

The next steps include direction to staff. Support was expressed to keep up with inflation. Concern was stated over the recommendation to double the fees. This item will first go to the Planning Commission for a recommendation and then to City Council for formal action.

Mr. Prall reviewed the road and intersection improvements that will be forthcoming.

A break was called at 6:43 p.m. The workshop resumed at 6:49 p.m.

b. First Responder Needs/Update on Service and Funding Options

Mr. Caton introduced the topic. As detailed in previous memorandums, presentations and discussions, the needs of the first responders of the Fire and Police Departments far exceed existing resources. In a 2008 study it was identified that three additional fire stations (Stations #6, #7, #8) were needed immediately to provide acceptable response times according to national standards. Currently the Fire Department is meeting those standards on only 52% of emergency calls. Each station requires 21 positions each to provide 24 hour/365 day coverage with a fire unit and ambulance. It has not been possible to fund either the capital or operational costs of the stations within current revenues. Police national and international standards state that for every hour a police officer works, a minimum of 22 minutes should be available to conduct proactive policing efforts which has a direct impact on reducing criminal activity. Currently, due to understaffing, the police officers only have an average of 6 minutes per hour for these proactive efforts. It would take an additional 18 sworn positions to meet the standard. Additional civilian positions are also need in the Communication Center and to support police operations.

The Fire Department estimates operational needs of \$6.3 million to staff the three new fire stations, add a fire inspector, and two civilian positions. The capital needs for three stations is estimated at \$17 million. The operational needs of the Police Department were originally estimated to cost \$3.8 million for sworn officers and civilian personnel. Because of the ability to fund eight positions for the Police Department in the 2019 recommended budget the estimated costs are reduced. Also, based on input received during the budget process, a position for an additional code enforcement officer has been added bringing the estimated needs for the Police Department to \$3.3 million per year.

Despite adding positions in the Fire and Police Departments in each of the last three budget cycles, both departments are understaffed and struggling to provide first responder services to this community. Between the two departments a total of 88 positions are needed. Fire and Police operations are largely funded by the City's 2% sales tax and that revenue stream is just back to pre-recession levels without taking inflation into account. As a result, existing resources are only sufficient to add one to two first responder positions each year. City staff has continued to evaluate these needs as well as potential new funding sources.

Mr. Caton reviewed specific funding options, including 1) various scenarios to increase sales tax and 2) eliminating property tax and fund first responder and transportation needs with a 1.25% sales tax increase.

A community survey has been sent out that included questions about an increase in sales tax for first responder needs. Staff anticipates receiving the results of that survey in several weeks.

Staff is seeking direction regarding the funding options for first responder and transportation needs. This topic will be discussed further at the December 17 workshop.

Agenda Topic 2. Next Workshop Topics

At the December 17 workshop, the Community Center ballot question will be discussed.

3. Other Business

Mr. Caton discussed possible Charter amendments and stated more information will be forthcoming at the next workshop.

Adjournment

The Workshop adjourned at 7:46 p.m.