

City of Greeley, Colorado
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
February 11, 2025

1. Call to Order

Mayor Gates called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at 1001 11th Ave, Greeley, Colorado, with hybrid participation available via the City's Zoom platform.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Gates led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Heid Leatherwood, City Clerk called the roll.

The following were present:

Councilmember Tommy Butler
Councilmember Deb DeBoutez via Zoom
Mayor Pro Tem Dale Hall
Councilmember Brett Payton
Councilmember Johnny Olson via Zoom
Councilmember Melissa McDonald
Mayor John Gates

4. Reports from Mayor and Councilmembers

Mayor Pro Tem Hall thanked Culture, Parks, and Recreation Director Diana Frick for providing each Councilmember with a presentation booklet on the history of the Poudre River.

5. Greeley Trails Master Plan Update

Culture, Parks, and Recreation Department Director Diana Frick introduced Natural Areas and Trails Division Manager Justin Scharton and Kristina Kachur Webb with Logan Simpson to present at 6:02 p.m.

Ms. Frick shared the vision and goals for the Trails Master Plan (TMP). The updated plan emphasized a robust, off-street trail system for recreation, transportation, and connectivity, incorporating things learned from the original Transportation Master Plan, Imagine Greeley Comprehensive Plan, and the Get Outdoors Greeley strategic plan. Ms. Frick said the TMP reflected community input gathered through public engagement and included insights from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

Ms. Kachur Webb spoke about two phases of public engagement, including pop up events, trailheads, farmers markets, libraries, recreation centers, and an online survey through Speak Up Greeley. Ms. Kachur Webb noted the 3 priority levels of trails,

although Priority 1 trails (16 miles) will be the focus of the 10-year plan. The plan also included trail design for regional trails, secondary trails, soft surface trails, and trailheads, which will provide guidelines such as width and surface type, particularly for continuity with regional trails. The plan identified costs of \$2.5-\$3.0 million per mile, depending on the need for bridges, topography, and river crossings.

Ms. Frick concluded the presentation saying the TMP would be a guiding strategy that would provide both long-term vision and the framework for short-term goals.

Councilmember Butler asked about the funding over the next ten years for the priority one trails. Mr. Scharton said their current tools were the Trail Development Impact Fees and grants with other choices included in the plan.

Councilmember DeBoutez asked how many people participated in the public engagement outreach. Ms. Kachur Webb said they received over 200 comments. Mr. Scharton said they could provide Council with a full report that reflected a significant amount of engagement.

Mayor Gates thanked staff for the information.

6. Poudre River Restoration Initiative (PRRI) Master Plan Update

Public Works Planning Manager, Victoria Leonhardt presented the item at 6:18 p.m. Public Works Director Paul Trombino was present for questions.

Ms. Leonhardt explained that the plan was an opportunity to look holistically at the Poudre River Corridor and understand how to balance the many opportunities of the natural resources it provides while also considering the complexities of an urban river.

- Phase 1 establishing the master plan principles was completed.
- Phase 2 would focus on a study area for design concepts and policy recommendations for the river corridor.

Ms. Leonhardt said many areas of the river showed signs of ecological degradation. She added that partners worked with the City to protect and revitalize the river, with the PRRI taking the next step to connect the dots between ecology, infrastructure, and recreation.

Phase two identified 7 study areas, and four areas were chosen as a focus. Ms. Leonhardt explained that private landownership was dominant and presented a challenge, as well as water rights. The areas chosen were prioritized based on the need for improvement and maximizing partnerships. A schedule for Phase 2 was shown to the Council, with public meetings and a digital survey planned for the end of June, and they anticipated bringing a complete plan for adoption in August.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall asked how the plan would be utilized. Ms. Leonhardt said at the end of Phase 2 they would have actionable items and long-term planning projects. Mr.

Trombino added there would be a financial strategy with the plan. Mayor Pro Tem Hall asked if there would be continued staff dedicated to the plan. Mr. Trombino said there would be a series of projects and priorities that will coalesce with other activities and development.

Councilmember DeBoutez asked for more information on funding and prioritization, particularly the downtown area. Ms. Leonhardt explained that the study areas numbers were just identifiers, not the prioritization order. She also said downtown connection helped direct the study areas.

Councilmember Olson asked if they had identified public and private partnerships. Ms. Leonhardt said that because private land ownership was a major component of the corridor, they were looking for opportunities to partner with developers and private landowners.

Mayor Gates thanked staff for the information.

7. Code Compliance Overview and Landscaping Standards

Code Compliance Manager Buxton Demers introduced the presentation at 6:34 p.m. Assistant City Manager Juliana Kitten was present to answer questions.

Mr. Demers explained that the Code Compliance Department was responsible for enforcement of private property violations with key areas of focus such as weeds, trash, refuse, and inoperable or unlicensed vehicles. Other enforcement issues are handled by other departments as noted in the presentation slides.

Landscaping standards were further covered by Mr. Demers, including requirements and prohibitions. Potential enhancements to the standards were presented including height requirements, clarification of agricultural versus ornamental, and strengthening ground cover requirements.

Mr. Demers showed a chart of the current code compliance process, with repeated or major violations resulting in an administrative hearing. Having consulted other jurisdictions on their processes, Mr. Demers was seeking council input. He proposed enhancing enforcement options by maintaining their current system and focusing on education and voluntary compliance with warning before enforcement or evaluating a ticketing system. He explained the pros and cons of a ticketing system, stating it would drive a faster enforcement process with more consistent outcomes and efficiency, but requiring a clear appeals process, equity considerations, and implementation costs.

Ms. Kitten explained they would like more guidance on the landscaping piece. There were some concerns about agriculture, and she asked if they should investigate that

further. She also said they currently have a culture of friendliness and want to maintain that, but there is also a need to speed the process up.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall was concerned that some people needed financial or physical help to keep up their yards. He wanted to know what was available, such as for older people who couldn't remove snow. Mr. Demers said they have a "Neighbor Labor" program for snow removal, but they do have trouble finding volunteers. There is also a "Share the Shade" program.

Councilmember DeBoutez asked about the 15% of properties that were not in compliance. She wanted to know if was related to absentee landlords. Mr. Demers said there was a mixture of many types of owners. Ms. Kitten said they could research the cases that went to hearing and collect the data.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall had concerns about landlords and how difficult it could be to contact them. He wanted to know if agents for the property owner could represent the owner at the hearings. Mr. Demers said the agent, owner, or tenant could respond to them. In the case no one responds, it goes back on the property owner.

Councilmember McDonald thanked Mr. Demers and his department. She asked for the percentage of persons with violations who were elderly and for information on the "Neighbor Labor" program. Mr. Demers noted that the program was connected to United Way and accessible through their website.

Councilmember Olson thought the programs were favorable and asked about if the City could provide weed killer. A concern he stated was for those owners trying to sell their homes with neighboring properties left unattended.

Mayor Gates noted that the council receives many calls on this topic, appreciated this information on programs and felt that enforcement was working. This was not a problem unique to Greeley, and he would like to see a hybrid solution before going to a straight ticketing system. He asked Ms. Kitten if she had the feedback she needed to move forward. Ms. Kitten replied that the department would collect the data on absentee landlords and look at who was having difficulty, such as the elderly population, as well as some landscape options so Council could make a more informed choice. Ms. Kitten added that Code Compliance would investigate options for increased voluntary compliance.

Mayor Gates and Council reached consensus on these tasks and thanked staff for their work.

8. Scheduling of Meetings, Other Events

None.

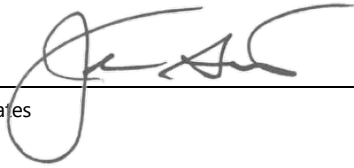
9. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Gates adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

Approved

X

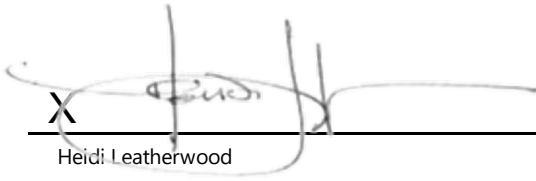
John Gates
Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Gates", written over a horizontal line.

Attest

X

Heidi Leatherwood
City Clerk

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heidi Leatherwood", written over a horizontal line.