City of Greeley, Colorado

City Council Work Session Proceedings

Tuesday, September 23, 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**
   City Clerk Heid Leatherwood called the roll.
   The following were present:

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

4. **Reports from Mayor and Councilmembers**
   Councilmember DeBoutez attended "In Their Shoes" hosted by the Homeless Outreach Team. Over 200 people attended with Mayor Gates serving as one of the panelists to discuss solutions to homelessness from cities like Houston and Milwaukee, successfully addressing chronic homelessness. She thanked staff for their efforts.

   Councilmember McDonald attended High Mountain Water Tour. She was impressed by the Grand Ditch, located about 2-2.5 hours from Greeley, and the historical efforts using mules to dig the ditch. Councilmember McDonald also attended Prairie Heights' 10-year anniversary celebration, visiting with Dr. Pilch, who had overseen this project as her first major initiative as Greeley Superintendent.

   Mayor Gates thanked Dr. Andy Feinstein for his presentation at the “State of the University” event held earlier in the day, noting that residents should know the university is in great hands under his leadership.

5. **Update on Civic Campus Project – Predevelopment Progress, Funding, and Next Steps**
   Assistant City Manager Kelli Johnson introduced the item at 6:05 p.m.

   Ms. Johnson presented an update on the Civic Campus project, emphasizing that the project represented an opportunity to transform downtown and advance the vision for Greeley's future as outlined in the Downtown 2032 Master Plan.

Ms. Johnson explained that the project emerged from conversations between the City, Weld County, and School District 6 about their aging facilities. Instead of solving individual challenges, they pursued a collaborative solution aligning with the City's economic development strategic plan to maintain downtown as the community core.

The Civic Campus would help achieve key priorities:

- capitalize on facility replacement timing,
- consolidate fragmented land ownership,
- leverage private investment,
- revitalize downtown by converting non-taxable public land into taxable development, and
- strengthen partnerships that fuel downtown momentum.

Ms. Johnson reviewed the project timeline, noting that in August, Council approved the predevelopment agreement and budget. Since then, staff and partners have advanced critical steps:

- naming Richmark Vertical as development managers,
- engaging contractors for project assessment,
- placing two key properties under contract with closing set for October 7,
- completing City Hall programming to determine square footage and department needs,
- drafting land swap agreements with attorneys, and
- developing cost estimates and initial funding plans.

Adam Frazier with Richmark Vertikal presented the development plans, showing a diagram that represented a year of work to coordinate the needs of three government entities. The plan included moving City Hall and District 6 to the Juror Lot with a new hotel and future multifamily housing across the street.

The west block would house the Justice Center and future County Administration building, bringing 450-500 employees from O Street to downtown. A 1,000-stall shared parking garage was planned for the existing District 6 location, primarily serving government employees during the day with potential nighttime uses.

Mr. Frazier provided preliminary information for the Civic Campus project. The new City Hall was planned to be between 95,000 and 107,000 square feet. The construction timeline was expected to begin in winter 2026, with an estimated duration of approximately two years. The construction of the hotel and facilities for District 6 was anticipated to start around the same time. Additionally, the garage would be completed after the relocation of District 6.

Walker Thrash with Richmark Vertikal explained the design concept for the Juror Block, emphasizing the goal was to set an example for future downtown growth through density and integration of public and private development. He noted that while the scale of the project had not changed, the architecture would evolve through several iterations. The design included public plazas to tie the buildings together and create activation areas within the block. The buildings were designed to have multiple "front elevations" facing different streets and the interior plaza, avoiding "back of house" areas that would detract from the public domain.

Chief Financial Officer Allena Portis provided an overview of the funding and financing plan for the project. The total project cost was estimated at approximately $103 million, although this figure was subject to change as the design progresses.

Currently, $10.7 million was available. The proposed financing option comprises $92 million in certificates of participation (COPs). The possibility of establishing a municipal property authority to allow extended payment terms was being explored, as the current Greeley Charter restricts COPs to 20 years. Longer payment terms would reduce annual debt service payments, with $6.3 million required annually for 30 years compared to $7.7 million annually for 20 years.

Ms. Portis explained that based on Council's May 27 directive to seek funding options without imposing new taxes, several potential sources were identified. These included the general fund, food tax, a potential public facilities impact fee (currently under review by a third-party consultant), and existing tax increment funds.

Councilmember Olson asked about the interest rate assumptions (5.5%) and suggested evaluating scenarios with a 5-year lease followed by COP financing to potentially capture lower interest rates. Ms. Portis confirmed the 5.5% assumption was accurate and noted they could run a model to determine payments if rates dropped by a full point.

Councilmember Butler asked about parking adequacy during construction phases. Ms. Johnson and Mr. Frazier confirmed they were developing phased parking plans to address the 13-month gap between District 6 relocating and the garage completion, including multiple scenarios under consideration to ensure effective parking management.

Mayor Gates thanked staff and the consultant for the information.

6. **West Greeley Entertainment District Update**

Managing Director Paul Trombino introduced the item at 6:32 p.m.
Mr. Trombino introduced Rachel Klasey with Legends Global Team, who presented an update. Ms. Klasey reviewed the project schedule, noting that schematic design was completed and submitted on August 15. The team was now beginning design development while PCL works on cost estimate, expected by the end of September. Additionally, RLB, the independent cost consultant, was being integrated into the project and would provide an independent cost evaluation by the end of October. Ms. Klasey presented progress dashboards to be published on Speak Up Greeley, highlighting key milestones such as the completion of the PUD and the 544 agreement. She noted that the project was progressing according to plan, with current spending at approximately $10 million, representing 9% of the overall budget. Regarding ongoing studies, Ms. Klasey detailed the involvement of several consultants:

- DTA conducting the impact fee study and the GID study,
- Zonda focusing on the residential component,
- EPS analyzing the retail/commercial aspects, and
- HLNA examining the entertainment district reliability.

These studies would provide critical data for the bond issuance, and coordination meetings are scheduled through October to ensure consistent baseline assumptions across all studies.

Councilmember DeBoutez asked about contracts. Mr. Trombino explained that the City initially purchased a concept plan and subsequently refined it for the project. Contracts were structured between Water Valley and PCL, with PCL holding all relationships with design contractors. Bills typically included over 300 pages of detailed documentation for all charges, and multiple review levels were in place, involving Legends (as the owner's representative), project management, and finance. All invoices provided a detailed breakdown of services, hourly charges, and reimbursable expenses.

Councilmember Olson asked about risk transfer to PCL. Mr. Trombino explained that the risk would shift to PCL at the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) stage, anticipated to occur in February when the project reaches 75% planning and 30% construction documents. This would be followed by a 6–8-week review process and then 6–8-week period in the bond market, with a target of mid-May for the first draw of proceeds to pay off the COPs.

Mayor Gates thanked staff and the consultant for the information.

7. **Real Time Information Center (RTIC) Update**

Police Chief Adam Turk introduced the item at 6:56 p.m.

Chief Turk and Commander Tanya Gutierrez provided an update on the Real Time Information Center (RTIC), marking its one-year anniversary. The center, located at Fire Station 6, is staffed by four full-time civilian technicians working 7 a.m. to 1 a.m. daily, seven days a week, supplemented by three sworn officers who serve in a collateral duty capacity.

Commander Gutierrez presented statistics showing the RTIC had been involved in over 5,000 police calls for service since September 2024, including approximately 1,500 priority 1 or 2 calls involving weapons or high probability of injury. The RTIC was virtually on scene before officers 2,600 times (51% of calls), contributing to 76 felony arrests and 85 misdemeanor arrests, and exporting 309 videos for evidence or public records requests.

The presentation included videos demonstrating RTIC successes:

- A traffic accident where the RTIC quickly determined which vehicle had the red light
- A traffic stop where RTIC staff observed concerning behavior, live-streamed the officer's body camera, and called for backup without the officer having to request it
- An incident where a rock was thrown at a photo radar van, with RTIC providing video evidence that led to an arrest within four minutes

Chief Turk introduced Andrew Warren from Skydio Drones, who explained their partnership on a "drones as first responders" testing program. Using call data from the previous year, Warren demonstrated how 26 drones in seven locations across Greeley could respond to 96% of calls within 90 seconds. He cited Lakewood Police Department's success with a similar program.

Chief Turk noted that the RTIC's current home at Fire Station 6 was intended to be temporary. While plans to remodel the annex building next to the police department had been postponed due to space needs of other departments, they were optimistic about eventually creating a permanent home for the center.

Councilmember Olson supported the drone program, asking when it might be implemented. Chief Turk explained that the budget request for 2026 was not funded, so they had explored grants and other funding opportunities. He noted that while the drones themselves are expensive, the greater cost was staffing qualified pilots.

Mayor Gates acknowledged the RTIC for being on the cutting edge of law enforcement technology.

Mayor Gates thanked staff and the vendor for the information.

8. Council Review of Procurement Contracts

Chief Financial Officer Allena Portis introduced the item at 7:24 p.m.

Ms. Portis presented a follow-up from the August 12 meeting regarding Council review of procurement contracts. Currently, the City Charter and code do not require Council approval of contracts for goods, services, or construction. Ms. Portis reviewed the requirements related to contracts and provided detailed explanations of contract categories.

Ms. Portis explained that professional services encompassed licensed or registered professionals such as financial, health, legal, and medical services. Consulting services involved expert advice and strategic guidance, including advertising design, business development, and market research. Other services included advertising, building restoration, entertainment, and printing. The supplies/goods/commodities category covered equipment, materials, furniture, and police equipment, while the CIP-related category included construction, planning management, engineering, and demolition.

Ms. Portis presented options for council review based on dollar thresholds. Contract types or procurement methods such as ITBs, cooperative purchases, RFPs, and RFQs were also discussed. She noted that adding council review would extend the procurement timeline from 4-18 weeks to 10-23 weeks.

During the discussion, Mayor Pro Tem Hall, said that his intention was not to bog down the process, instead he wanted to focus on studies and assessments rather than all contracts over a certain threshold. Ms. Portis explained they were exploring establishing more robust criteria for scope and deliverables to minimize unnecessary delays.

Councilmember Butler proposed reviewing contracts over $200,000 specifically for professional and consulting services. Ms. Portis replied that this threshold could help focus efforts where council scrutiny may be most beneficial.

Councilmember Olson cautioned about potentially deterring quality consultants and delaying projects. Ms. Portis acknowledged the concern and reiterated the importance of transparency and accountability.

Councilmember DeBoutez asked about the nebulous nature of consulting fees. Ms. Portis highlighted ongoing efforts to streamline consulting contracts delivering clearer billing and outcomes.

Councilmember McDonald advocated for stricter oversight initially, which then could be relaxed later.

Council gave consensus on bringing this item back to a regular meeting for potential code changes.

Mayor Gates thanked staff for the information.

9. Scheduling of Meetings, Other Events
None.

10. Adjournment
With no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Gates adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Approved

X

John Gates
Mayor

Attest

X

Heidi Leatherwood
City Clerk