

City of Greeley, Colorado
City Council Work Session Proceedings
Tuesday, October 28, 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
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 the employee 5K noting that over 200 employees participated in costumes. She thanked Human Resources for organizing the event.

Councilmember Butler attended the Weld Community Foundation Luncheon and reminded the audience of “Council in the Community” event on November 12th at 6:00 p.m. at the downtown recreation center.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall attended the second annual Freedom Fest benefitting the High Plains Honor Flight. The event supports veterans by providing trips to visit memorials in Washington, DC at no cost to the veterans.

5. City of Greeley Urban Forest Strategic Plan

Director of Culture, Parks, and Recreation Diana Frick, introduced the item at 6:03 p.m.

Ms. Frick highlighted that the project represented months of collaboration among the forestry, parks, community development, water, and sewer teams. She recognized Forestry Manager Shiloh Hatcher, forestry staff, Parks Manager Eric Bloomer, and Deputy Director Jill Krantz for leading the effort, and thanked residents who provided feedback throughout the process.

Ms. Frick explained that urban forestry refers to trees and vegetation within the city, forming the tree canopy that provides environmental, social, and economic benefits. She noted that Greeley has been recognized as a Tree City USA for over 30 years, and the forestry program maintains trees and shrubs across parks and public grounds,

monitors for insects and disease threats, and enforces city code for tree maintenance and planting.

Dana Karcher, Project Developer and Urban and Community Forestry Specialist with Davie Resource Group, presented the details of the plan, which represented Greeley's first comprehensive urban forest assessment since 2009. The study showed the tree canopy had grown to 8.2%, an average increase of less than 2% over 14 years. The plan identified areas where canopy was strongest and where investment was most needed, especially in neighborhoods with limited shade and high heat exposure.

Ms. Karcher shared findings from community engagement activities, noting that most citizens want a cooler Greeley with more shade. Over 90% of survey respondents considered it important to have trees in neighborhoods. She explained that approximately one-twelfth of Greeley was shaded by trees, and that the city faces challenges in building a forest that's resilient to droughts, extreme storms, pests, and diseases, including the emerald ash borer threat.

Forestry Manager Shiloh Hatcher explained that the strategic plan provided a roadmap for the next 20 years and a baseline for where the city currently stands. He highlighted that the forestry department maintains parkway trees (between sidewalks and curbs) on behalf of homeowners, a significant change from previous years when homeowners were responsible. He noted that the department's workload had increased by 62% with the addition of approximately 8,000 trees to care for.

Mr. Hatcher described the Share the Shade program, which had planted 470 trees in 2025 (260 in fall and 210 in spring). He invited everyone to view the forestry dashboard on the city's website, which shows the department's daily work. He also mentioned Greeley's role in providing education opportunities for the arborist industry, hosting national workshops and serving as one of the few testing sites for arborist certification.

Councilmember DeBoutez asked about tree loss in older parts of the city, particularly in rental properties, and asked about requirements for landlords. Mr. Hatcher acknowledged this as a significant challenge, noting that abandoned landscapes make it difficult to regrow trees. Councilmember DeBoutez suggested exploring a landscape code that would require a tree per property.

Councilmember Butler asked about recent tree removals along 10th Street. Mr. Hatcher explained that these trees were removed due to hazardous conditions, not emerald ash borer, though he noted that Greeley's ash trees are in poor condition due to age and environmental stresses. Councilmember Butler advocated for addressing heat islands around downtown by planting more trees during redevelopment.

Mayor Gates commended Mr. Hatcher for his expertise and dedication to Greeley's urban forest. Council gave consensus to move forward with the plan.

Mayor Gates thanked staff for the information.

6. Development Code Text Amendment for Affordable Housing

Planning Supervisor Caleb Jackson introduced the item at 6:41 p.m. Housing Director Deb Callies was also present.

Mr. Jackson presented proposed amendments to the Development Code related to affordable housing. He explained that "affordable" refers to housing that costs no more than 30% of a household's income, whether for rental or ownership.

Mr. Jackson outlined two key reasons for the code amendments:

- 1) to comply with Proposition 123 requirements, as the city had opted in to access affordable housing funds, which required implementing a fast-track review process; and
- 2) to support the recently adopted Housing for All Strategic Plan by creating incentives for affordable housing development.

The proposed fast-track review process would commit to reviewing affordable housing projects within 90 days, providing certainty for developers. Extensions would be possible if public hearings or meetings were required, or if applicants needed more time to address city comments.

Mr. Jackson also described potential relaxed development standards for affordable housing projects, including reduced requirements for park land dedication when projects are located near existing parks, and fewer on-site amenity requirements when developments are situated near public amenities like recreation centers. These adjustments would help make affordable housing projects more financially viable, particularly for infill development on unique sites.

Councilmember DeBoutez asked about park dedication requirements and expressed concern about older neighborhoods like Arlington that lack parks. Mr. Jackson explained that developments in areas not served by an existing park (defined as within a half mile walk without crossing highways) would still be required to provide park land dedication or pay cash in lieu, which goes into a city fund to purchase park land.

Councilmember Butler appreciated the proposed standards, noting they represented common sense approaches for infill affordable housing projects that would help these projects "pencil out" financially.

Council supported staff proceeding with developing an ordinance based on the presented framework.

Mayor Gates thanked staff for the information.

7. Motion to go into Executive Session to receive legal advice regarding personnel matters

A motion to go into an Executive Session to discuss the following matter as provided under C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(b) and Greeley Municipal Code Section 2-151(a)(2): To receive legal advice regarding personnel matters.

Councilmember McDonald moved to approve the motion. Councilmember Olson seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0 at 6:48 p.m.

8. Scheduling of Meetings, Other Events

None.

9. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Gates adjourned the meeting at 6:49 p.m.

7. Motion to go into Executive Session to receive legal advice regarding personnel matters

Mayor John Gates started the Executive Session at 6:54 p.m. in the Executive Room. The meeting was electronically recorded as required by Colorado Open Meetings Law.

All Councilmembers were present along with City Attorney Stacey Aurzada and Human Resources Director Martha Lanaghen.

The executive session was for the purpose of receiving legal advice related to personnel matters as provided for under C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(b) and Greeley Municipal Code Section 2-151(a)(2).

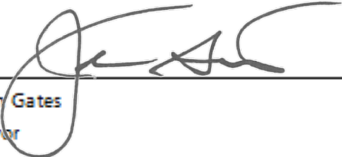
Mayor Gates cautioned each participant in the executive session to confine discussion to the stated purpose, and reminded everyone that no formal action may occur in executive session. He asked if at any point in the executive session any participant believes that the discussion was going outside the proper scope of the executive session, to please interrupt the discussion and raise an objection.

The City Attorney made an announcement regarding privileged communication. The recorder was turned off during the confidential attorney-client privileged conversation.

The Executive Session concluded at 8:30 p.m.

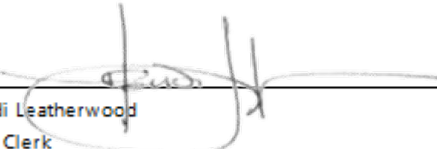
The recording of this executive session will be retained as provided in the City's records retention policy and in conformity with the Colorado Open Meetings Law for a period of 90 days.

Approved

X 

John Gates
Mayor

Attest

X 

Heidi Leatherwood
City Clerk