City of Greeley, Colorado

City Council Work Session Proceedings

Tuesday, January 27, 2026

1. **Call to Order**
   Mayor Hall 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 Hall 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 Melissa McDonald
   Councilmember Johnny Olson
   Councilmember Brian Rudy
   Councilmember Ryan Roth
   Mayor Dale Hall

4. **Reports from Mayor and Councilmembers**
   Councilmember Olson reported meeting with the Federal Highway Administration, CDOT, city staff, and consultants regarding the MERGE project. He shared that the city would be direct recipients of funding but would work through an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) to pass the money to CDOT for construction and owner's representation. Councilmember Olson highlighted that CDOT would be providing management of the project, and an executive oversight committee would be established to control budget and scope.

   Councilmember Butler inquired about the timeline for the TIFIA loan finalization. Acting City Manager Brian McBroom indicated he would get that information to the Council.

   Councilmember Olson shared his priorities for the upcoming Council retreat, which he would be unable to attend. These included budget foundations, safety and security, deferred maintenance, the US 34 MERGE project, downtown stormwater project, catalyst project, and downtown civic center.

   Mayor Pro Tem McDonald attended a meeting with Pam Erbacher from “Wreaths Across America”, who successfully raised enough money to place wreaths on every veteran's grave in December. Mayor Pro Tem met with Director of Water and Sewer, Sean Chambers and Deputy Director of Water Resource Treatment and Supply, Leah Hubbard on upcoming plans for Poudre River restoration.

   Councilmember Roth presented at the District 6 Success Foundation Awards event, showcasing 154 nominees; all staff members, teachers, or administrators.

5. **Culture Parks & Recreation Department (CPRD) Culture Board Consolidation**
Diana Frick and Megan Weiler introduced the item at 6:11 p.m.

Ms. Frick presented a proposal to consolidate three existing culture boards (Museum Board, Union Colony Civic Center Board, and Art Commission) into a single Arts and Culture Commission.

Ms. Frick explained that the purpose was to ensure boards meet consistently, provide meaningful advice, and advance council-adopted plans. She emphasized that this was not about reducing arts and cultural voices but strengthening them through a better-functioning structure. The current boards have experienced repeated quorum failures and canceled meetings.

Ms. Weiler noted that both the CPRD comprehensive plan and the Arts and Culture Strategic Master Plan and a single commission would align advisory work directly with Council-approved plans in a more streamlined manner.

The presenters shared that they had met with each board twice to discuss the proposal and solicit input. Some board members were concerned about decreased focus on specific programs and facilities, while others recognized the potential to elevate cultural advocacy.

Councilmember DeBoutez asked how board members would be selected for the new Arts and Culture Commission. Staff explained that those interested in remaining active could transition to the new board, suggesting working initially with the most engaged current members to create a realistic transition plan.

Councilmember Butler requested a survey of current members to gauge their support for the consolidation. Ms. Frick noted they had already held two discussions with boards and promised to provide further feedback, mentioning that operational changes would be refined and shared in subsequent communications with Council.

There was consensus from Council to move forward with Option 3 (consolidation of the three boards). Staff will develop and return with a plan for the consolidation, new membership process and proposed code changes for Council approval.

6. **Westside Area Plan & Form-Based Code**
Interim Planning Manager Caleb Jackson introduced the item at 6:41 p.m.

Consultants Speck Dempsey Partner, Jeff Speck and Able City Partner, Jason King presented the West Side Area Plan and Form Based Code.

Mr. Speck outlined three main components of a proper regional plan:
- preserving land that needs preservation,
- identifying and enhancing corridors, and
- establishing a neighborhood structure to build complete walkable communities.

The plan incorporated the existing "green print" for preservation areas and identified both existing and potential future transportation corridors to create a more robust network rather than concentrating traffic on a few major routes. Mr. Speck emphasized the importance of building complete neighborhoods with mixed uses rather than single-use pods.

Mr. Speck presented examples of the difference between suburban sprawl development (large areas of single use) and traditional neighborhood development (mixed use, small blocks). He highlighted Bradburn Village in Westminster as a successful local example of a mixed-use neighborhood where all elements (retail, housing, schools, community facilities) exist in one walkable area.

Jason King explained that the plan area covered 22 square miles, most of which is agricultural but becoming more suburban. He noted high public interest in the project, with 200 attendees at the kickoff meeting and over 120 people at the plan unveiling. The plan considers both current conditions and projections to 2055, when Greeley's population is expected to reach 200,000.

Mr. King included illustrative master plans showing lot and block layouts for walkable mixed-use neighborhoods with local main streets, plazas, and public spaces.

Mayor Hall noted that feedback was positive with many residents eager to implement the plan but wondered if developers were on board. Mr. Speck responded that walkable communities are more profitable for developers, but it required shifting away from their current practices.

Councilmember Olson asked about overly emphasizing density, noting that not everyone wants to live in higher-density area. He also questioned the viability of transit elements in the plan, citing low ridership statistics from other Front Range transit systems. Mr. Speck acknowledged that walkable urbanism isn't for everyone but explained that polls show 50% of Americans would prefer it, and it is not readily available in many areas.

Councilmember Butler supported the form-based code approach, particularly allowing more uses by right without requiring PUD processes.

Councilmember DeBoutez encouraged council members to visit Bradburn, describing it as a cohesive neighborhood with impressive pedestrian activity.

Councilmember Rudy asked about the viability of restaurants in these neighborhood centers, wondering if they would only attract residents or draw customers from other areas. Speck explained that successful neighborhoods place retail along visible corridors to attract both residents and visitors.

Acting City Manager McBroom thanked staff and consultants for their work and acknowledged former Deputy City Manager Rachel Flynn's role in bringing the consultants to Greeley.

7. **2025 Grant Update, 2025 Financial Review, and 2027 Budget Update**
Division Treasurer Robert Miller introduced the item at 7:10 p.m.

Mr. Miller presented financial updates, reporting that the 2024 Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards was completed on December 31, 2025. The City spent approximately $9.5 million in federal grant funds in 2025 and has 81 open grants.

Mr. Miller reported that sales tax growth was slower than anticipated, growing at only 1.8% compared to the budgeted 5% growth. New construction revenues were $5.9 million below the 2025 budget. While severance tax revenues were down $2 million from the budget, the city realized some operational savings, additional oil and gas revenues, and interest earnings to offset declines in other areas.

Cash and investments totaled $394 million at the end of 2025, exceeding the adopted budget of $300 million. This was largely due to the issuance of 2025 Certificates of Participation and interest earnings of $14.3 million exceeding the budget by $6 million.

Mr. Miller outlined key variances in the general fund, noting that while sales and use taxes were $2 million lower than projected, the City expects to realize $4.8 million in expenditure savings. Projections anticipate a $2.8 million surplus at the end of 2025, which can be used for the 2026 or 2027 budgets.

Director of Budget and Policy Nathan Mosley continued the presentation by discussing the 2027 budget process, highlighting the structural deficit. He explained that the 2026 budget had a $21 million gap that was closed using 2024 carryover funds, departmental realignments, and transfers from the public improvement fund. However, these stopgap measures would not be available for 2027, with only about $3 million in carryover funds expected from 2025.

To address these challenges, Mr. Mosley announced a target-based budgeting approach for 2027 rather than the traditional incremental approach. This method starts with realistic revenue projections and requires departments to make trade-offs within fixed targets.

Mr. Mosley outlined the timeline for the 2027 budget development process, with Councilmembers to receive preparatory materials for the upcoming strategic planning retreat. The retreat on February 12-13 would focus on establishing priorities that will guide the budget development process.

Councilmember discussion included revenue limitations, spending priorities, identifying one-time programs that became permanent, focusing on core functions, and beginning the ballot initiative process early if that route is chosen.

8. **Wildfire Resiliency Adoption**
Fire Chief Brian Kuznik introduced the item at 7:45 p.m.

He presented the Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code, which was created as a result of Senate Bill 23-166. The state law requires each local jurisdiction to adopt the new code by April 1, 2026.

Chief Kuznik explained that the code applies to new construction and significant exterior alterations of existing structures within designated Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas. He noted that wildfires have become increasingly destructive, with more than 4,000 homes and structures destroyed by wildfires in Colorado since 2010.

The code had three key elements:

- identification and designation of WUI areas classified into low, moderate, or high fire intensity categories;
- structure hardening requirements using fire-resistant materials; and
- defensible space requirements around structures.

Chief Kuznik clarified that the code would apply to new construction within WUI areas and to existing structures with significant alterations (those that increase the footprint by more than 500 square feet or repairs affecting 25% or more of the structure). He emphasized that it is not a retrofit code, so existing structures don't need to be brought into compliance unless they undergo major alterations.

Using maps, Chief Kuznik showed areas of Greeley affected by the code, including parts of West Greeley, Promontory, Poudre River Ranch, and portions of the airport property.

Chief Building Official Matthew Wagy provided cost estimates for materials required by the code, noting that cement-based siding would cost about 16% more than standard OSB lap siding, while metal soffits would cost about 32% more than standard materials.

Councilmember McDonald questioned the criteria used to designate areas as WUI zones and wondered about the impact on insurance costs. Interim Deputy Director of Community Development Brittany Hathaway explained a "ground truthing" process to potentially exempt new developments once they are graded and built, though the state has not yet established a clear process for amending the maps.

Councilmember Olson asked about unfunded state mandates to increase housing costs and the impact on Greeley's status as a "tree city."

Several councilmembers questioned the mapping criteria, noting that areas marked for development were included based solely on current vegetation without considering future development plans.

City Attorney Bobbier Cranston explained that if the City does not adopt the code, the state would still enforce it, but the City would lose the ability to modify the code or implement local mapping and ground truthing processes.

9. Scheduling Meetings, Other Events

None.

10. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Hall adjourned the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

Approved:

X

Dale Hall
Mayor

Attested:

X

Heidi Leatherwood
City Clerk