



MEETING AGENDA

Location: Greeley City Council Chambers Overflow
 Date: June 17, 2026
 Time: 10:00 – 11:30 am
 Who: WG COC Communications Sub Committee

WG-COC Communications Sub-Committee					
X	Bob Locke	X	Jesse Allen	X	Nick Kenny
Ex-Officio					
X	John Hall, Sr. Strategic Advisor	X	Jaqueline Villegas, Interim Director – Communications & Engagement	X	Brian Rudy, City Council
X	John Herge, Sr. Strategic Advisor				

Meeting Notes Plaud (Reviewed by John)

Meeting Notes

Meeting Kick-off and Agenda Overview

- A council ex officio, Brian Rudy, thanked attendees and staff and praised forming a communications subcommittee.
- Agenda presented by John Herge for a 90-minute session:
 - History of communications for the project
 - Impact of the election and Fair Campaign Act on communications
 - Consultant support and termination of Sidecar; selection of a short-term replacement
 - Subcommittee role as “thinking partners” to distill complex information
 - Discussion of the Telluride ruling and implications
 - Action items and cadence for future meetings

- Introductions clarified roles; Jacqueline Villegas introduced herself as interim director of communication and engagement.

Termination of Consultant and New Communication Strategy

- The city terminated its relationship with Sidecar as of last week.
- A new 6–12 week communications consultant is being procured; interviews occurred on June 16, with one scheduled June 19; selection targeted by end of next week.
- The subcommittee will help fill the gap, acting as trusted thinking partners and ensuring cohesive, city-led messaging.
- Communication goals:
 - Distill complex information into accessible formats
 - Transparently present calculated risks supported by studies
 - Align messaging with strategic priorities for business growth
 - Emphasize that financing structures protect taxpayers from legal obligations even in low-revenue scenarios; acknowledge moral obligations.

History of Project Communications

- July 2024: Special council meeting on the project.
- November 2024: Three-hour council work session outlining the West Greeley project.
- 2025: Community engagement began with large meetings and smaller roadshows (e.g., Rotary), social media, newsletters defining COPs and GIDs, and a telephone town hall (initially reached ~4,000).
- March 2025: Two-hour work session presenting the initial funding structure; council authorized COP issuance; COP litigation challenging a public vote was dismissed (COPs not deemed debt).
- Late spring/summer 2025: COPs issued.
- September 2025: Ordinance 30 approved; groundbreaking for West Greeley Catalyst; referendum petition process began, constraining communications.
- “Speak Up Greeley” landing page hosted project information, funding details, FAQs, videos, and myth-vs-fact materials; now archived but accessible.

- Prior “myth vs. fact” content was pulled due to the special election; approach remains valuable though materials are outdated.

Challenges from the Fair Campaign Act

- Communications paused from September to February due to the Act triggered by the referendum petition.
- The Act limits municipal communications to pro/con statements and bars influencing ballot initiatives; staff could not discuss on city time.
- Restrictions hindered clarification of confusing ballot language and combating misinformation.
- Lessons: Prepare earlier for legal language and statutory timelines, and plan a compliant education strategy for future referendum scenarios.

Legal Context: Referendum, PUD, COPs, and Telluride

- The referendum was seen by some as a protest against the lack of a public COP vote; legal timelines forced a rapid move to a vote.
- COP financing challenge was dismissed; COPs not requiring a public vote.
- *Kavanaugh v. Telluride* (7–0) may limit using referendums to reverse administrative actions like zoning/PUD amendments, but applicability to this project remains under city attorney review.
- Nuance noted between PUDs and PUD amendments; opponents may focus on distinctions.
- The decision is a legal clarification, not a financial or perception shift; other avenues for challenge remain.

Current Project Status and Financial Narrative

- The project is paused, in assessment and evaluation mode; no financial partner secured.
- Long-horizon planning emphasized (decades to 2075), with early years expected to operate in the red and ramp to sufficiency over time.
- Economic development payments are intended to bridge early revenue gaps until revenues exceed costs; references include:
 - Potential ~\$12.5M per year allocation (clarification needed on purpose, e.g., moral obligation backstop)
 - HLA study indicates deficits (red) in years 7–9; mitigation strategies needed

- Committee references suggest a ~10-year horizon before strong revenue growth
- Recommendation to separate revenue projections for the arena vs. youth hockey center to avoid misleading combined figures.
- Establish a single source of truth for financial projections after a partner is secured and numbers are updated with Finance.

Catalyst Scope, GID, and Intentional Growth

- Catalyst extends beyond an arena, hotel, and water park; it anchors broader development.
- A General Improvement District (GID) would support infrastructure for residential, commercial, retail, and industrial growth; private development near the project is expected to help close funding gaps.
- Catalyst is a proactive tool for shaping growth and avoiding reactive, piecemeal development; need for shared vocabulary and geographic definitions (e.g., “East Greeley”).

Risk Management and Public Perception

- Use a risk register to monitor and manage project risks; distinguish future risks vs. current issues.
- Gain community buy-in through transparent education; acknowledge that factual rebuttals can be perceived as selling.
- Maintain transparent analysis and factual integrity; once policymakers decide, staff execute.

Communication Strategy and Deliverables

- Build a comprehensive, city-led communication plan with clear timelines and responsibilities; retain strong city control regardless of partner.
- Establish and publish a single source of truth (centralized portal) and ensure all outgoing communications reference it.
- Develop an audience-tested framework that translates COPs, nonprofit conduits (501(c)(3)), and debt coverage into everyday language and analogies.
- Create a 4–5 page public-facing summary document:
 - Editorial support to ensure appropriate reading level and factual accuracy
 - Answer core questions:

- What a resident needs to know in five minutes
 - The three most important facts
 - Valid concerns that merit acknowledgment
- Build a comprehensive public clarity package:
 - Simple front-facing page
 - FAQ addressing risks to the city and citizens
 - Myth vs. fact content
 - Hard copies at City Hall and an online portal
 - Remove or archive outdated information from prior sites
- Adopt a question-driven public meeting format:
 - Begin with resident questions
 - Use an indexed slide library to navigate answers in real time
 - Address core concerns: profitability, projection realism, worst-case risks, fallback options (e.g., asset sale), and early-year funding gaps
- Create accessible, chunked educational content (e.g., videos) and budget education (general fund vs. capital, how the budget works).
- Develop a “peace of mind” slide to address top community concerns; define content and dissemination.

Public/Private Partner Governance and Citizen Groups

- Evaluate public vs. private partner tradeoffs:
 - Public partners may add red tape; private partners can introduce cohesion challenges
 - Past private setups created fragmented communication; city should retain stronger control of communications
- Define partner engagement protocols for cohesive public messaging.
- Recognize roles of independent citizen groups in advocacy and potential miscommunication; officials should observe conflicts to avoid legal/ethical issues and maintain lawful boundaries.

Next Arrangements

- Make the presentation deck and meeting materials available on the oversight committee portal under “Communications.”
- Add communication artifacts to a special section on the portal for subcommittee reference.
- Select a new communications consultant by end of next week; publish a public notice that the city is seeking a provider (by June 18, 2026).
- Prepare transparent criteria, procurement steps, and evaluation metrics for selecting the provider; share publicly and follow standard processes.
- Develop and approve a comprehensive, city-led communication plan; define ownership, tools, and update cadence for the single source of truth.
- Coordinate early with legal counsel to prepare for referendum language challenges; assess statutory timelines and create a legal readiness checklist.
- Separate arena and youth hockey center financial projections; coordinate with Finance to update numbers once a partner is identified.
- Clarify the purpose and timeline of annual economic development payments and contingency plans for years 7–9 deficits.
- Build the FAQ, myth vs. fact content, and public clarity package; remove or replace outdated content on prior platforms.
- Design the question-driven public meeting format with an indexed slide library; create accessible videos and visuals.
- Define shared glossary and map-based definitions (e.g., “East Greeley”) for consistent communication.
- Schedule and confirm a meeting Monday evening, June 22, 2026, if feasible; maintain momentum ahead of July 4.
- Assign homework: draft 5–7 pages summarizing key studies in plain language for group feedback.
- Follow up on action items raised by [Speaker 1] from prior conversation with John.

PLAUD AI Generated Suggestions

- Establish a concrete plan to replace Sidecar’s services beyond subcommittee support; define scope for the short-term consultant and internal ownership.
- Develop a compliant communication playbook to mitigate Fair Campaign Act constraints in future referendums.

- Clarify legal strategy on PUD vs. PUD amendments and how Telluride applies; assign legal counsel to deliver guidance.
- Identify and proactively mitigate potential legal challenges beyond zoning and COPs.
- Define the three most important facts for the summary document and key messages for all channels.
- Separate and analyze arena vs. youth hockey financials; assign responsibility and timeline.
- Decide criteria for public vs. private partner selection, including governance and communication control.
- Define ownership, platform, and update cadence for the single source of truth.
- Create a workflow for monitoring and correcting misinformation across platforms, including responsibility and response timelines.
- Publish the economic development payment timeline, triggers for transition to revenue sufficiency, and contingencies for years 7–9 deficits.
- Clarify GID scope, governance, and integration with broader infrastructure plans.

Agenda Items:

1. Call to Order and Welcome (5 minutes)
2. West Greeley Project – History of Communication (15 minutes)
3. Special Elections and Fair Campaign Act for Ballot Initiatives (10 minutes)
4. Consultant Support for Committee Communications (20 minutes)
5. Committee Role and Providing Recommendations (20 minutes)
6. Action Items and Next Agenda Guidance (10 minutes)