

City of Greeley, Colorado
City Council Work Session Proceedings
Tuesday, July 28, 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 Heidi Leatherwood called the roll.

The following were present:

Councilmember Craig Huddleston

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

Mayor Hall reported that the Colorado Department of Transportation had recently completed a traffic study on 10th Street between 43rd Avenue and 71st Avenue, resulting in speed limit reductions. The previously posted 55 mph zone was reduced to 50 mph, and the 45-mph zone was reduced to 40 mph.

Councilmember Roth recognized outgoing University of Northern Colorado (UNC) President Andy Feinstein for his eight years of service, noting a celebratory dinner and the ribbon cutting for the new Osteopathic Medicine School. He thanked the Parks and Recreation for the Arts Picnic, and the Water Department for a prompt response to water system issues.

Councilmember Rudy attended a ride along with the Greeley Police Department thanking Chief Turk and Officer Julian Vasquez for their professionalism.

Councilmember Huddleston attended the Weld County Fair, highlighting the participation of young people and the community's strong agricultural heritage.

5. Landscape Code Update

Interim Planning Manager Caleb Jackson and Senior Manager of Code Compliance Buxton Demers introduced the item at 6:04 p.m.

Mr. Jackson presented a draft landscape code update and outlined recommended compliance strategies. Staff sought council feedback.

Draft Code Update — Front Yard Landscaping Standards

Mr. Jackson explained that the proposed code amendments were primarily clarifications rather than wholesale changes.

The existing standard required a maximum of 50% hardscape in front yards. A key proposed change would clarify that the required 50% live planting coverage must consist of perennial plants; annual plantings would remain permitted but would not count toward the live coverage requirement. The draft recodified tree mitigation provisions that had been inadvertently omitted from prior code updates.

Council supported the proposed clarifications to the front yard landscaping standard.

Councilmember Olson asked if ground cover requirements would apply in the off-season. Mr. Jackson confirmed that appropriate ground cover such as mulch would still be required year-round in those areas.

Discussion arose around whether properties with all-rock or low-water landscaping that look attractive but do not technically meet the 50% live planting standard should face the same enforcement as neglected properties. Multiple councilmembers acknowledged the difficulty in applying a uniform standard when the result varies significantly in appearance.

Mr. Jackson explained that Greeley had previously held a 75% live planting standard before reducing it to 50%, and that reducing it further would move the look similar to communities such as Pueblo. He also noted that rock landscapes often appear well-maintained initially but can deteriorate over time without proper upkeep.

Council direction was given for staff to explore alternative compliance or minor variance pathways for properties seeking to go below the 50% live planting threshold.

Artificial Turf in Front Yards — Council Initiative 11-2023

Mr. Jackson presented the staff recommendation to allow artificial turf in front yards of single-family homes by permit, requiring installation by a licensed or certified installer using appropriate materials and drainage methods, while still mandating that live planting and tree requirements be met.

Councilmember DeBoutez spoke against artificial turf, explaining the impervious surface detrimental to stormwater management, contribution to urban heat, composition from degrading plastic materials, and its negative effects on trees.

Councilmember Olson acknowledged some reservations about turf but noted environmental advantages including elimination of lawn mowers and grass clippings. He supported allowing artificial turf with strict standards, including a permit requirement and adherence to the existing landscape code.

Councilmember Rudy supported allowing it if proper standards were followed, acknowledging that it does conserve water. He asked for context on the original council initiative.

Councilmember Roth support for allowing artificial turf provided that compliance standards.

Councilmember Huddleston supported allowing artificial turf if product and installation standards were clearly defined, with drainage and permeable installation required.

Mayor Hall stated he wished to review what specific code language would look like before committing to approval.

Staff indicated the draft would be refined based on council feedback, reviewed by the Planning Commission for a recommendation, and returned to Council for formal adoption.

Compliance Strategy

Mr. Demers presented a priority-based compliance approach for staff enforcement of existing landscape standards.

He noted that 200 landscape cases were opened in 2025, with 99 scheduled for hearing, and that 66 cases had already been opened through June of 2026. He stated that full compliance can be costly for residents and that staff resources are limited, making prioritization necessary.

Mr. Demers outlined available tools including education, early communication, referrals to assistance programs and phased compliance timelines for property owners making genuine progress.

Council indicated general support for the priority-based approach.

Councilmember Olson raised the issue of city-owned properties that themselves do not meet landscape standards, stating that enforcement credibility is undermined when the city does not hold itself to the same expectations. He also suggested a schedule of escalating fines for property owners unwilling to cooperate.

Mayor Hall summarized council direction for staff.

- High Priority: focusing enforcement on bare dirt, erosion, tall weeds, dead landscaping, and abandoned yards,
- Lower priority: maintained but technically “noncompliant” yards

Mayor Hall thanked staff for their work on the presentation.

6. 2027 Capital Improvement Plan Budget Review

Deputy Director of Budget and Policy Kalen Myers introduced the item at 6:39 p.m.

Ms. Myers presented the proposed 2027 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), joined by Director of Budget and Policy Nathan Mosley, Facilities Manager Jason Maas, and Deputy Director of Culture, Parks, and Recreation Daniel Lawrence. Ms.

Myers noted that the evening's discussion was intended as a high-level overview, with a more detailed review scheduled for the September 11th work session retreat.

CIP Development Process

Ms. Myers described the collaborative, multi-department process used to develop the proposed CIP. Projects were submitted in the spring from master plans, strategic plans, and field-identified safety concerns. They were scored against a framework using criteria including community need, business growth opportunity, alignment with strategic priorities and master plans, and regulatory compliance.

A cross-departmental steering committee met in June to evaluate and prioritize projects from a city-wide perspective. Ms. Myers noted that scoring served as a starting point and that the final recommendation must also account for community and council input, project readiness, cash flow, and long-term financial sustainability.

Financial Constraints Shaping the 2027 CIP

Ms. Myers stated that the proposed 2027 CIP is more constrained than in prior years due to three major simultaneous capital commitments:

- the West Greeley project with a 20-year debt repayment obligation;
- the downtown revitalization effort, including the new city hall financed through a Certificates of Participation issuance and significant utility work; and
- the MERGE project involving Highway 34 interchange improvements.

These three commitments consume a substantial portion of the city's most flexible funding sources leaving limited discretionary capacity for other priorities.

Representative Projects

Ms. Myers highlighted representative projects within each CIP category.

Deferred Projects and Trade-offs

Ms. Myers identified categories of deferred projects including HVAC replacements, facility upgrades, irrigation systems, playground replacements, and a water and sewer facility campus. She stressed that these items were not removed from the capital program but deferred based on available financial capacity, and staff will actively monitor asset conditions.

Councilmember Olson said he would like to see deferred maintenance moved up in priority, at least through 2028 or 2029, before major debt repayments begin. He suggested ending fund balances across the food tax, quality of life, and other funds, stating that tax dollars sitting as cash balance while deferred maintenance goes unaddressed is problematic.

Ms. Myers explained that the cash balances in quality-of-life funds were being conserved to meet future debt obligations as West Greeley repayments grow. She noted that the food tax fund is more fully programmed and there may be opportunities to free up capacity and appropriate additional funds as more firm cost figures become available.

Councilmember Huddleston asked about lead times for critical equipment such as transformers and ice rink refrigeration systems. Mr. Maas confirmed that staff works proactively with lead times, using down payment structures to begin procurement. Ms. Myers added that the asset management framework being developed by staff would bring greater intelligence to prioritization and would be presented to council.

Councilmember Huddleston suggested that the irrigation system replacement at Highland Hills Golf Course, estimated at \$6.5 million, be approached in phases. Ms. Myers stated that staff had already discussed phasing as part of the plan for that replacement.

Councilmember DeBoutez noted that several smaller, dedicated funds were carrying significant balances and wondered if those could be redirected.

She asked about the September 11th retreat, as it felt late for making major budget changes. Mr. Mosley clarified that the extended timeline this year provided was within statutory deadlines.

Mayor Hall thanked staff for the presentation.

7. Scheduling of Meetings, Other Events

None.

8. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Approved:

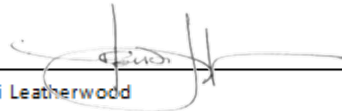
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Dale Hall
Mayor

Attested:

X



Heidi Leatherwood
City Clerk