



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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CITY TO REIMAGINE USE OF WHITMAN PARK AS LOCATION FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. September 11, 2023 – The City of Grand Junction has plans to reimagine Whitman Park with its new primary purpose as a location for special events by reservation only. As of Tuesday, September 12, the park will be closed to non-reservation use. This is the first step in a multi-phased approach to plan improvements to the park.

In addition to notices posted in the park, visitors to Whitman Park are being notified about the closure by city staff and Grand Junction Police Department Community Resource Officers who will also provide resources and/or housing information as well as contacts for local service providers and shelters. Following the closure on September 12, next steps for the park include a design process with public input planned for 2024.

For many years, Whitman Park was known as the “gem of the city” and was used as a community gathering place to meet friends and neighbors. Under what is now a 100-year-old tree canopy, live music was enjoyed from the bandstand built in 1899. The city has plans to reimagine this signature park and its use for the broader community. While the park remains closed, the city will review ways that other towns have successfully reimagined parks in downtown corridors for instance fencing the property and only opening through a permitting process for special events including parties, concerts, festivals, and other activities. As the city plans for future potential use of the park, community members will be invited to participate in the process of studying this downtown park with its rich history as a significant landmark for visitors entering the city from the east. Whitman Park has long served as a reflection of the beauty and unique character of the community and it is appropriate for its use to be broadened to include everyone who lives, works, visits, and recreates in Grand Junction.

Whitman Park was originally known as Maple Park and was part of Grand Junction’s original plat from 1881. Maple Park was one of four original parks in Grand Junction, and in the late 1800s, the name was changed to City Park. On August 1, 1917, the name was changed again to Whitman Park in honor of a missionary, Marcus Whitman, who traveled throughout the western U.S.

Whitman Park improvements are one of the city’s priorities identified in the Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan (PROS) as a capital priority for design and development.

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