



## **NEWS RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release*

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### **City of Grand Junction Begins Spring Maintenance in Parks**

**GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. April 15, 2024** – Spring has arrived in Grand Junction and that means city parks crews are ramping up all the maintenance activities necessary to keep the grass, plants, and trees healthy through the summer. While staff have been busy this winter on facility improvement projects, removing trees that were damaged by pests, and treating rights-of-way to prevent spring weed growth, maintenance priorities shift and duties expand when the grass begins to grow.

Sprinkler systems are being turned back on for all 35 developed parks and for the more than 500 acres of right-of-way where turf is critical for sports like soccer and lacrosse, and where landscaping enhances the beauty of the community. The city has embarked on program to convert turf to native plants in areas where turf isn't necessary for sports activities like medians along roadways. With irrigation being turned on, regular mowing begins and will continue until the late fall which requires coordination by staff. When maintenance equipment is in areas where residents or visitors are present, staff will ask those individuals to move to another location in order to safely operate the equipment.

For the second half of April, crews are spraying pesticide in parks to control or eliminate Japanese Beetles. These destructive pests begin in turf as larvae and once grown to the adult stage, will eat grass and plants. They pose a significant threat to crops, vineyards, and orchards, however are not a threat to trees. With city crews tackling the public spaces, residents are also encouraged to apply a pet and human-safe treatment called GrubEx to lawns in order to help control the beetles. In addition to pests, city park crews are also fighting weeds in public spaces. This winter, a systematic weed treatment program was implemented that greatly reduces weed growth as Grand Junction enters the growing season.

With the warmer weather arriving, city staff have also begun a rotation of cleaning and monitoring 16 city park restrooms that are available for drop-in use including facilities at Las Colonias, Dos Rios, Sherwood, and Hawthorne Parks, among others. In addition, another six parks including Duckpond, Rocket, Columbine, Riverside, Westlake, and Eagle Rim are open and available for reservation/rental of the shelters. These parks all have shelters with restroom facilities that are available for various events such as graduation and birthday parties, or neighborhood get togethers through an online reservation system at [GJCity.org](http://GJCity.org), under the Parks and Recreation Department. While there are porta potties available throughout the parks and recreation system, the six park restrooms mentioned are not available for broadly open drop-in use due to frequent vandalism that has included the destruction of sinks and toilet fixtures. Closing these restrooms for reservation only allows their availability for park uses like shelter rentals and programs. In addition to the restrooms available at all of the drop-in use and park shelter locations, in partnership with Downtown Grand Junction, the city is also installing a self-cleaning, vandal-resistant restroom in downtown this summer.

###