

CORTEZ CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2025

1. The meeting was called to order in the City Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m., with the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll Call was taken and the following Councilmembers were present: Mayor Rachel Medina, Mayor Pro Tem Dennis Spruell, Matthew Keefauver, Lydia DeHaven, Robert Dobry, and April Randle. Councilmember Bill Lewis was absent. Staff present included: Municipal Court Clerk Carla Odell, Interim Chief of Police Andy Brock, Director of General Services/Interim Director of Public Works Casey Simpson, Airport Director Jeremy Patton, IT Director Jay Rohrer, Community and Economic Development Specialist Helen West, Project Engineer Ian Roberson, City Clerk Danielle Wells, City Manager Drew Sanders, and City Attorney Patrick Coleman. There were four members of the public present in the audience.

Councilmember Dobry moved that the agenda for October 14, 2025 be approved. Councilmember DeHaven seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

2. The Consent Agenda items acted upon by Council were as follows:

- a. Approval of work session and meeting minutes from City Council on September 23, 2025.
- b. Approval of the Expenditure List for October 14, 2025
- c. Approval of a Tavern Liquor License Renewal for Purple Sage Rib Co & Saloon, LLC., DBA Purple Sage Rib Co, located at 2591 East Main Street, Cortez
- d. Approval of a Beer and Wine Liquor License Renewal and an Outdoor Dining Agreement from Jodi Jahrling, DBA Zu Gallery, located at 48 West Main Street, Cortez

Councilmember Dobry moved that Council approve the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Keefauver seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

James McGinley spoke to Council and emphasized the need for citizen-led efforts to support unhoused residents through meaningful work, reentry programs, and humane solutions, with a focus on facilitating—not imposing—community-driven action to foster growth in humanity.

4. PRESENTATIONS: None
5. PUBLIC HEARINGS: None
6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None
7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Bid Results for the Airport Perimeter Fence Project presented by Jeremy Patton, Airport Director

The north hangars currently face security, wildlife, and maintenance issues due to open roadway access and makeshift fencing. A project is underway to secure the north stretch of hangars on the landside while

improving airside access for tenants and crews. The decades-overdue replacement of the north emergency access gate will address safety concerns, as the existing gate is too narrow for fire equipment, requires frequent maintenance, and lacks proper security. Plans and specifications have been completed, and bids were advertised through the City's website, the Cortez Journal, and BidNet. The project includes installation of a chain link and barbed wire fence, with the driveway to the gate set back to accommodate cars and trailers. Funding will come from remaining ARPA grant money previously committed to the airport, which must be spent by year-end.

Councilmember Dobry moved that City Council award the contract for the 2025 Airport North Hangar Perimeter Fence and Emergency Gate Replacement Project to Hornet Fence LLC at its bid price of \$79,919.00 and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and sign a contract on behalf of the City for this purpose. Councilmember Spruell seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

- b. Letter of Support for a Historic Structure Assessment Grant for the Manaugh School Building, presented by Helen West, Community & Economic Development Specialist

The Montezuma-Cortez RE-1 School District is seeking a planning grant to assess potential uses for the Manaugh school building, with hopes of adding housing.

Councilmember DeHaven moved that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign on behalf of the City of Cortez the letter of support for the Montezuma-Cortez School District's State Historical Fund grant application for the Manaugh School Building. Councilmember Keefauver seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

- c. Resolution No. 12, Series 2025 presented by Casey Simpson, Interim Director of Public Works

Jones & DeMille Engineering began consulting with the City in 2023 with a vision to implement a vision zero safety plan and improve safety objectives in alignment with the City's master streets plan. McLain Farmer with Jones & DeMille Engineering presented the phased approach: Phase I involves submitting a project wish list to CDOT for the 2050 plan; Phase II included a full pavement assessment using AI technology, which rated Cortez streets at an average score of 3.29. The recommendation is to prioritize preservation by using micro surfacing rather than chip seal, as it lasts longer, reduces environmental impact, and is more cost-effective over time. Phase III focuses on surface type planning, traffic counts, crash data, bridges, and level of service mapping. While no roads are currently congested, projections show Mildred as the most impacted in the future. Phase IV was public involvement and input was gathered through meetings, open houses, and comment boxes, resulting in 115 responses.

Council discussion highlighted the need for collaboration with CDOT and the county, as many major intersections fall under CDOT's jurisdiction. Micro surfacing is scheduled for consideration in the 2026 budget. Council raised questions about bike lanes and active transportation planning, which will be further reviewed by the Parks and Recreation department. Councilmembers discussed the importance of public communication, value-based bid selection, and the differences between micro surfacing and other treatments.

Additional topics included the concept of "road diets" on Main Street, which falls under CDOT authority and would require their study and approval. Concerns were raised about congestion, pedestrian safety,

and speed control measures. The Council also discussed medians and how the plan interacts with the Highway 160 Access Control Plan. Overall, the plan provides a framework for long-term preservation, reconstruction, and collaboration with CDOT to improve safety and infrastructure in the community.

Councilmember DeHaven moved that the City Council approve Resolution No. 12, Series 2025, a resolution accepting and adopting the City of Cortez Transportation Plan as a guiding policy for the City of Cortez. Councilmember Keefauver seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

- d. Appointment of two Council Members for the Community Support Grant Selection Committee presented by Drew Sanders, City Manager

Each year, the City budgets for local grants of up to \$5,000 to support organizations focused on preserving or enriching the health, education, welfare, or fitness of the community. A committee of staff and two Council members oversees the process and will meet after the November 12 meeting, with times still to be determined. Councilmembers Lewis and Randle expressed interest in serving.

Councilmember Spruell moved to appoint Council Members Lewis and Randle to the community support grant selection committee. Councilmember Keefauver seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

- e. Ordinance No. 1350, Series 2025 presented by Drew Sanders, City Manager

In 2001, voters approved a 0.55% citywide sales tax to fund the Cortez Family Recreation Center, which was later reduced to 0.35% and extended indefinitely by voters in 2018. However, the required ordinance to officially lower the tax rate was never passed. This oversight was discovered by staff during FY2026 budget preparations in September 2025 and promptly reported to Council. An ordinance is now being presented to formally correct the issue and publicly acknowledge the omission.

Councilmember Keefauver moved to approve, on first reading, Ordinance No. 1350, Series 2025 an ordinance amending the Cortez, Colorado Code of Ordinances concerning the family recreation center sales tax, and set for second and final reading and public hearing on October 28, 2025. Councilmember Randle seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

DeHaven	Dobry	Lewis	Keefauver	Medina	Randle	Spruell
Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

8. DRAFT RESOLUTION/ORDINANCES: None

9. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT: City Attorney Patrick Coleman provided an update on the charter amendment process. The draft ordinance will be presented at the December 9 work session, with the first reading scheduled for January 13 and the second reading on January 27 to meet election timelines. The code amendment update will be postponed to February to allow full focus on the charter amendments for the ballot. Councilmembers emphasized the importance of clear public communication and encouraged opportunities for community input.

10. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

- a. The proposed Draft FY2026 Budget is on the website and open for public view and comment. City staff

has worked hard over the past several weeks to bring this budget into fruition. I encourage everyone to review the proposed budget and to comment as needed.

- b. The Cortez Police Fall Citizen's Academy is slated to start tomorrow, Wednesday, Oct 15; 2025 and will run for 6 weeks through November 19, 2025. This academy is intended to give residents a practical look at law enforcement and some of what they do.
- c. It is with sadness we report our Library Director, Beth Edson has submitted her resignation and will be returning to Kansas City for family matters. Her last day will be November 7, 2025. We will be working with Columbia, LTD and Mr. Drew Gorgey again for recruitment. The position opening went live on October 7, 2025 with a filing deadline of November 9, 2025. Finalist interviews will be held the first week of December, 2025 with an anticipated start date at the first of the year.
- d. The City is seeing an increase in the number and sophistication of 'phishing' attempts targeting our employees email. This heightened attack began in September, 2025 with a 400% increase in threats caught; October, 2025 is even worse. Our cyber security programs do work and catch the majority of the threats; however, our employees need to be vigilant and well trained in the identification of these communications and how to handle them.
- e. The City of Cortez Historic Preservation Board has been nominated as one of the 2026 People's Choice Award nominees by History Colorado staff for the Stephen H. Hart award for outstanding projects that preserve Colorado's meaningful past. Voting is open to the public through October 27, 2025 and can be accessed through the news release on the landing page of the Cortez website.
- f. The Cortez Recreation Center will be hosting a new free teen program with TeamUp Safe Spaces Action Team on Saturday nights this fall. Activities will be held at the rec center on the second Saturday of the month for middle school students and on the fourth Saturday of the month for high school students. Please check the Parks and Recreation page on the City of Cortez website for other locations and additional information.

11. CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Mayor's Report on Workshop: An update was provided on the municipal election, with discussion focused on long-term options. Council also highlighted the Homes Fund presentation, strongly encouraging the community to view it as a valuable resource for first-time homebuyers. The program offers loan assistance and advisement, with \$3.2 million from Proposition 123 supporting 65 homes in Cortez. More information is available at HomesFund.org.
- b. Other Board Reports
 - i. Library Advisory Board: Library Director Beth Edson announced her resignation, and interviews for new candidates will be held in November. The AspenCat system has significantly improved circulation, and the library received a \$10,000 LOR Foundation grant to purchase STEM equipment, including 3D printers and computers. Upcoming events include the Friends of the Library book sale (Oct. 30–Nov. 1), the “Library Libations” fundraiser with a Great Gatsby theme (November 14, 7–9 p.m.), and a presentation of *Navajo Kitchen* by author Allana Yazzie next Thursday, October 23, 2025. Some library programs have been canceled during the federal shutdown.
 - ii. Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Advisory Board: The original meeting was moved to November 7, 2025 because the scheduled meeting did not have a quorum.
 - iii. Public Arts Committee: The committee reviewed the 2025 work plan and reflected on its successful presence at Third Thursday, noting the table was well-received with supplies donated by individuals

and hopes to secure business sponsors next year. Funds are available through a grant, and Mesa Verde National Park has issued a call for muralists. The committee is working on compiling a local list for reference. Work has also begun on developing the 2026 plan, including an application for a marketing grant.

12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None
13. OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS: None
14. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Rachel B. Medina, Mayor

ATTEST:

Danielle Wells, City Clerk