

Estes Park Area Historical Museum 2002-2006 Strategic Plan

Key Components

The Museum's current strategic plan covers the years 2002-2006. The Museum is a department of the Town of Estes Park, which has a vision and mission statement. During the strategic planning process we review the Museum's mission statement to ensure that it is still consistent with the Town of Estes Park and with our basic philosophy. We also take into account possible trends by doing an external and internal scan, resulting in a SWOT chart (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats), a snapshot of our current organization. We identify performance areas, such as Management, Facilities, Operations, Programs and Exhibits, Marketing/Participation, Funding, and Collections. Each performance area has goals (our major targets for carrying out our purposes). Each goal has a set of objectives and action plan items. These are specifics by which the goal is achieved; they are measurable, practical and time-sensitive.

Under the Facilities performance area, we identified two goals: to develop a plan for facility maintenance and expansion (including meeting room space and foyer, revamped office space and work space), and to complete restoration and interpretation work on the Cobb-Macdonald Cabin, located on the Museum's campus.

Under the Education Programs Performance Area we identified the goals of preparing the new multi-purpose room space and making the community aware of it, developing a joint committee of Advisory and Friends Board members to provide community input in developing and preparing programs, and to continue our efforts to create networking partnerships and resource sharing with other local museums, schools, libraries, civic and special interest groups, for the purpose of efficiency, the elimination of duplication, and the continuation of the Estes Park Area Historical Museum's role as the leading museum in the Estes Valley.

Under the Exhibits Performance Area, our goals are to develop and present attractive and innovative exhibits on a regular basis, which will focus on areas of special interest based on major themes identified in the Museum's interpretive plan, and to have a plan in place to raise funds for special and traveling exhibits, to broaden the spectrum of offerings available to the public.

Under the Marketing Performance Area, our goal is to develop a marketing plan to extend the Museum's education programs and exhibits into the community.

Under the Funding Performance Area, we will use our existing planning tools to get endowment and estate giving programs underway, thus broadening our funding base.

Under the Collections Performance Area, Museum staff and volunteers will continue the on-going work to have the collections records computerized, as per the collections care long-range plan (see attached), and Museum staff will emphasize processing the collections record keeping backlog, again as per the collections care long-range plan.

Here is an example of an action plan item: *Under staff supervision, volunteers will continue to enter existing records into the PastPerfect system. They will enter 10,000 records by the end of 2003, and approximately 3000 records each year until project is completed.*

Methods Used to Develop the Plan

EPAHM follows the AAM Accreditation Commission's Expectations document regarding institutional planning, emphasizing an ongoing, reflective planning process in which both staff and governing authority actively engage. To develop the plan, EP AHM uses a strategic planning model taught at the Rocky Mountain Program for the Improvement of Public Management. This model includes stakeholder analysis, review of the Town's vision and mission statements and the Museum's mission statement, an environmental scan, development of key performance areas, followed by objectives and action plans, and opportunity for evaluation and feedback. Data used in the analysis includes customer demo graphical analysis, trends affecting municipal government, museums and nonprofits, organizational charts, number and quality of volunteers, identification of competitors and partners, and staff strengths and weaknesses. Museum MAP, CAP, and other surveys, including audience surveys, are used. The strategic plan is supplemented by implementation plans such as for facility design and development and collections care, exhibits, and interpretation.

The Museum's first strategic plan was developed during the winter and spring of 1995, when the director, the Town administrator, and the Friends and Advisory Boards developed a revised mission statement

and strategic plan, approved by the Town Board in August 1995. These efforts followed the development of Town-wide vision and mission statements and goals, and the introduction of a Total Quality Management Program, emphasizing the continual improvement of the Town's services to its customers. The revised mission statement and strategic plan focused the Museum on working smarter and making the most of available resources. Since then, the plan is developed during a series of retreats with members of both Boards, the museum director and staff, the assistant Town administrator, and community members such as the Chamber Resort Association director. Last year we began to use outside facilitators to aid the process. Techniques we have employed include grounding, brainstorming, small group discussion, completing a matrix to determine which objectives are practical, meet our customers' needs, and meet our organizational responsibilities, and deciding on a champion for each objective who will ensure that the item is accomplished by the deadline agreed on in the plan.

How the Plan is Evaluated and Updated

Strategic plan elements for each year are incorporated in the Museum department's action plan, which is created by the Museum Director and reviewed with the Town Administrator, Assistant Administrator and Department Heads to clarify points at which the assistance of other departments is needed (such as use of the Town's construction manager for facility expansion). The Museum Director evaluates progress on the plan with the Assistant Town Administrator twice a year; with the Advisory and Friends Boards each month; and with staff each month. The plan is updated annually (see above) to address changes in our organization and environment. The plan helps us allot our resources (human, financial, and physical) in ways that advance our mission.

The Role of Trustees, Staff, Consultants, Members of the Community and Others in Developing the Plan

Our original planning process in 1995 was done in-house with the Town Administrator as leader, and involved only board members and staff. We now consider a number of factors when deciding who should get involved in the strategic planning process: Who has the relevant expertise? Who is responsible for decisionmaking? Who is crucial to plan implementation? Who is affected by the problems addressed? Are all possible points of view represented? We now include relevant stakeholders who may not be on the board or staff, such as the school superintendent, the chamber of commerce director, and a major Museum fundraiser. This year we will broaden the stakeholder base to include others, teachers and parents, for example. Last year we used outside consultants for the first time. In December 2002 we initiated a new one-evening strategic direction planning exercise for our Advisory and Friends Boards and staff. We addressed the following questions: What does our organization do well (What are our key competencies?); What concerns do we have about the organization (our shortcomings); What would be the characteristics of our organization if it were ideal (strategic vision)? Our goal was not to develop action plans too fast, rather, to allow staff to work on the specifics over several weeks, with feedback from board members.

Discuss the Institution's Success in Meeting Goals Established in the Plan

After our second year of the current 5-year plan, we have accomplished about 1/2 of our goals. Our next comprehensive update is scheduled for December 2004.

PROJECT DESIGN

The EP ARM is requesting IMLS support for a temporary data conversion technician to complete the transfer of a card-based collections management system to an electronic system. The Museum acquired the PastPerfect data management system in 1999. To date, staff and volunteers have converted 10,500 catalog records out of approximately 24,000. Efforts to complete the conversion have relied on available staff time, computer availability and on volunteers, who work intermittently and are not always consistent in quality. A temporary position, computer, printer and software wholly dedicated to the completion of the conversion will assure quality, consistency, and completion in a timely manner. Data conversion is also a major step in a multiyear plan to improve the care and recordkeeping associated with the objects stored at the Museum's off-site storage area.

A completed electronic collections system will benefit Museum staff, researchers, and visitors. For researchers interested in the history of the Estes Park area, the Museum's collections are vitally important. No other institution comprehensively collects the materials that tell our history—a history tied to the development of the national park system and to the rise of automobile tourism. Presently our ability to match a researcher with relevant materials in our collection is inhibited by the fact that information is difficult to retrieve on many levels: Catalog worksheets that have not been entered into the database can only be retrieved by catalog number; misfiled records are difficult to locate; and some object locations have not been recorded.

Conversion of collections records to an electronic database improves intellectual access dramatically by allowing key word, object, and other types of searches. It is also the first step in a process to reconnect unmarked objects with their accompanying records. The Museum was founded in 1962 and run by volunteers until 1978. This history means that some object records are incomplete, or have become confused or misplaced. Once the conversion to PastPerfect is complete, staff can begin an inventory reconciliation of our off-site storage area (not part of this grant), and uncataloged objects (estimated at about 500) can be identified for processing. The systematic and accurate entry of all catalog worksheets will therefore give the staff a solid basis for intellectual access and professional care.

In 2003 the Museum began a successful partnership with the graduate program in Library Science at Emporia State University in Kansas. Six graduate students and an instructor spent a week at the Museum cataloging reference library books into the PastPerfect system for class credit. In September 2005 the students will return to our facility to computerize 500 of the Museum's archival records. In doing so, the students will gain valuable experience with archival materials. The combination of the data conversion technician's work with that of the graduate students will bring the Museum's database up to date, where it can be easily sustained using the Museum's existing resources.

The Museum is in an ideal position to take advantage of the electronic system because it will have completed an expansion in June 2004 including a multi-purpose room and research station. The data conversion technician will work at this station. Should the multi-purpose room be in use, the database will be available at an alternative computer in the main office. The station will allow comfortable, secure access to the collections database by our constituents whenever the Museum is open to the public or staff are at work in the facility, usually seven days a week. The room will be used for on-site training workshops for area professionals and the general public.

Currently, researchers must search the Museum's collections database using the computer in the Museum's main collections storage room. This arrangement is a security risk, displaces collections staff, and requires constant staff supervision during research visits. The new research station, with a Friends of the Museum-purchased computer, networked version of the collections database, and printer, will allow researchers increased and comfortable computer access while reducing the staff time required for such visits. Surveillance cameras (purchased by the Friends group) will allow supervision without requiring constant staff presence in the multi-purpose room. The research station will lock, so computer equipment can be secured during programs or meetings. Two adjacent bookcases will house the most frequently requested volumes from our reference collection for researcher use.

This project directly addresses the Museum's strategic plan in the collections performance area: To continue on-going work to computerize the collections records and process the collections record keeping backlog. Completing the Museum's collections records conversion will give the collections curator the ability to concentrate on new acquisitions, care of objects, and assistance to researchers. It also serves as the crucial

step in a multi-year plan to improve intellectual access to and physical care of the collection. Due to its impact on the ability of staff members to access collections information, the project will address the Museum's strategic goal of developing attractive and innovative exhibits on subjects related to the area's past.

2. GRANT PROGRAM GOALS

Securing a Museums for America Grant will enable the Estes Park Area Historical Museum (EP ARM) to address the **Sustaining Cultural Heritage** strategic goal via investing in a major collections care and management activity. In the Museum's Long-Range Collections Management Plan (attached), transferring card-based collections records to an electronic collections management system is recognized as a priority. Resources to devote to the project have, however, been scarce. The IMLS grant, in conjunction with the Museum's own resources and partnerships, will make these records much more readily available to staff and the public.

This project will serve to sustain Estes Park's cultural heritage through the conversion of object information from a paper-based format to an electronic one, leading to improved intellectual access to the Museum's collection with a number of corollary benefits: 1) More efficient and effective service for researchers; 2) Improvement of internally developed exhibits (average of four per year); and 3) Enhanced ability of collections staff to care for and protect the material culture entrusted to the Museum for safekeeping. While the focus is on behind-the-scenes activity, we plan to publicize the project through a kick-off event, which will communicate the project goals to key stakeholder groups (Town trustees and administration, media, major supporters, etc.), and through ongoing publicity at task milestones.

Researcher-driven computer access will allow for more timely and efficient access to collections information. In other words, the project will lead to an increased capacity for serving internal and external researchers. Two workshops, one for area archives, library and museum staff, and a second for the general public, held in the Museum's new on-site meeting space, will educate area professionals and potential or amateur researchers about this new resource. In addition, the professional workshop will demonstrate how at least some of the components of this model can be applied to other settings in our area. We will use both our website and our quarterly newsletter to post project updates and advertise the availability of the resource.

The Museum has a collections management policy that was most recently updated in April 2003 (attached). The IMLS investment in collections records computerization clearly supports and enhances the core collections objectives, policies, documentation, care and loan activities outlined in the policy.

While our collections may not be important on a national scale, their care and accessibility are no less crucial. Steve Olson, quoted in the American Association of Museum's March/ April 2002 edition of *Museum News* remarked, "If you added up all the collections in the country, numerically, most of the artifacts would be found in small museums. . . if we don't help the small museums, we're literally risking the fabric of our own heritage."

3. HOW THE PROJECT FITS INTO STRATEGIC PLAN AND MISSION

Conversion of collections records into an electronic format has been identified as an important step for the EP ARM in the strategic plan and long-range collections management plan. It is a goal that, once met, will further the Museum's mission of collecting, interpreting, and preserving local history.

The IMLS grant will be an investment in our institution by funding the computerization of object records, thus supporting an increased capacity to serve internal and external researchers and an enhanced ability to care for the objects entrusted to us. The EP AHM internally researches and mounts an average of four temporary exhibits per year, based primarily on the EP AHM's collections. The computerization of collections records will dramatically improve our ability to prepare quality, thoroughly researched, creatively illustrated exhibits. The Museum's current strategic plan includes a goal to "develop and present attractive and innovative exhibits on a regular basis, which will focus on areas of special interest based on major themes identified in the Museum's interpretive plan."

In 2003-2004 the Museum accomplished the top goal of the 2002-2006 strategic plan for the Estes Park Area Historical Museum, an expansion of the Museum including multi-purpose room space, foyer and two new restrooms, kitchen, storage and mechanical space. The new space has enabled installation of a station for public research, funded by the Museum's Friends organization. The research station within the multi-

purpose space will give the general public computer access to the Museum's collections and reference library. Many visitors enjoy genealogy research on the Estes family and other local topics. This new, welcoming, public space will encourage casual use of our collections, since visitors will not feel that they must formally request access to Museum records. Researchers will use the computer to identify objects or photographs from the Museum's collection that they are interested in. This serves the dual purpose of giving the public more access to Museum resources, and allowing Museum staff more time for assisting in intensive research. Security features of the Museum's database will be used to limit access to sensitive information, while making basic information more accessible to both casual and serious researchers. With IMLS support for the conversion of all remaining collections records, we will be able to make the switch to an electronic collections management system, virtually eliminating the need for duplicate searches of multiple paper filing systems. The completeness of the electronic information will make this research station viable.

After IMLS funding ends, the project results will be easily sustainable using the Museum's own resources. In 2003 the Museum acquired 24 accessions totaling 141 items, a level consistent with previous years. That year, the collections curator and volunteers entered the new acquisitions into the PastPerfect system, along with 2250 other records. With less time required to devote to data entry, and with a more accessible system, the curator will be able to devote more time to addressing the anticipated increase in research use due to the project, to physically caring for the collection, and to reconciling inventory. Collections records computerization is viewed by the EP AHM as a major step in its long-term commitment to improving intellectual access to and physical care of the collection. Once the data has been converted to electronic format, inventory and reconciliation can begin. Some objects which were collected in the 1960s and 1970s were never physically marked and have since become separated from their records. The searching capabilities of an electronic database will allow reconciliation of many of these objects with their provenance and identification information. The inventory will also yield accurate location information for our objects (currently incomplete) Following the inventory and reconciliation phase, uncatalogued objects can be identified and processed. This work will ultimately prepare the collection for a future move, once an alternative can be identified to replace our current offsite storage area.

4. STRATEGIC PLAN: PROCESS AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Planning proceeds from the Museum's mission statement to collect, interpret and preserve local history, as well as to present exhibits, programs and events for the education and benefit of residents and visitors of all ages. The Museum's current strategic plan covers the years 2002-2006. Our original strategic planning process in 1995 was done in-house with the Town administrator as leader, and involved board members and staff. Strategic planning sessions have evolved over the past eight years. Our current plan was developed with the guidance of outside consultants, who facilitated a status check to make sure we were still meeting Museum and community needs. We now consider a number of factors when deciding who should get involved in the strategic planning process: Who has the relevant expertise? Who is responsible for decision making? Who is crucial to plan implementation? Who is affected by the problems addressed? Are all possible points of view represented? Town administrators, Friends Board members, Advisory Board members, staff, and other stakeholders all participate. We have recently included relevant stakeholders from the community, such as the school superintendent and the chamber of commerce director. In the future we will include local teachers, parents and others.

The Museum's current strategic plan identifies major performance areas. Each performance area has goals with a set of objectives and action plan items to help us achieve those goals (see the strategic planning summary for a more detailed overview of our planning process). Our current goals include developing a plan for facility expansion (done); creating and marketing a new multipurpose room to the community (underway); continuing to create partnerships and share resources with other local institutions; developing a marketing plan to extend our education programs and exhibits into the community; creating an endowment and estate giving programs (endowment fund has been created; planning for estate giving is underway); and continuing to computerize our collections records to make them easily available to the public and to protect objects from unnecessary handling.

These major goals illustrate that our planning activities will ensure the long-term stability of the Museum. In the past we have worked hard to create partnerships with local institutions to combine our

audiences and draw upon other resources. With the new space we can now bring many more researchers, colleagues, potential members, donors and volunteers into our building. Becoming a Town of Estes Park department in 1992 greatly enhanced the Museum's long-term financial stability. In 1991 the Museum's operating budget was \$76,277. In 2003 it was \$191,763 (not including an additional facility, the Fall River Hydroplant, which had a 2003 budget of \$33,924). The Town allocated \$350,000 in 2003/2004 for the facility expansion. The Friends support group is a second stable source of revenue. In the eleven years that the Friends group has been in existence, their operating support has increased from \$11,155 in 1992 to \$25,376 in 2003. In addition, the Friends group created a building fund of \$75,000 that is currently being used for the new multi-purpose space and research station. They have set up an endowment, and are working on establishing estate giving.

5. APPROPRIATENESS OF PROJECT FOR INSTITUTION, AUDIENCE

This project has been designed to serve an audience of researchers, staff and (indirectly) visitors.

Researchers: In 2003, the Museum had 68 research requests, by telephone, mail, email, and in person, which required 114 hours of staff time. These totals are significantly higher than 2002's figures of 43 research requests and 50 hours and reflect a recent trend toward more intensive use of the collection by researchers. Most researchers are local and regional residents. One of the Estes Park Area Historical Museum's main strategic goals is to better serve locals. Though local and regional residents often participate in the program and exhibit development process, they only represent 41 % of the Museum's annual visitors. This audience is currently underserved because of the Museum's inability to provide programs and research services for the size of this audience. Program needs will be met with the new multi-purpose meeting room. This project addresses the need for improved research services.

The local population has 6089 people, with another 3681 in the immediate area (2000 census data). They are very well educated (4530 have a greater than high school education), financially well off (with a median household income of \$49,422) and older (median age 45). The Museum has undertaken an informal assessment of researcher needs based on requests of the past several years. From this feedback, we anticipate increasing requests for research due to more awareness of the Museum's collection from the Museum's website, increased use of internet research leading people to the Museum, and a growing awareness that the Museum has the most coherent body of research materials pertaining to Estes Park in the area. The Museum Friends group has recently begun a publishing program, issuing two volumes of local history written by a Colorado Endowment for the Humanities award-winning author in 2003. These books demonstrate and fuel the growing interest in Estes Park area history and the importance of the Museum's collections, which formed the basis for both books.

Staff: Complete and accurate electronic records will assist with the safety and preservation of the objects and photographs, as the computer program allows for searches without the handling of delicate and irreplaceable objects. Staff will continue to accommodate requests to view objects per currently established procedures. Exhibits and programs will be planned and executed more efficiently with increased intellectual access to collections. Exhibits will also be more complete since objects that might have been misplaced or "missed" will now be easily located using the database. Researchers will have a dedicated space, rather than sharing staff computers, resulting in increased workspace security and fewer scheduling conflicts between internal and external research. Software security features will be used to limit research access to sensitive information such as object location and valuation. In addition, current staff time dedicated to the conversion will be refocused after completion of the project, allowing EP ARM to tackle a much-needed inventory of its off-site collection storage area.

Visitors: The Museum had 9722 visitors in 2003, up from 9524 in 2002. Of these, 14% were from Estes Park, 27% were from Colorado and 59% were from out of state or out of the country. Twenty-five thousand more visited our website in 2003. All will benefit from better exhibits and programs resulting from improved intellectual access to collections.

The Museum has undertaken numerous formal and informal audience assessments, including Museum Assessment Program, Conservation Assessment Program, and Conservation Project Support surveys to help staff determine facility and programming needs. The most recent assessment was a December 2002 facilitated session of the mayoral-appointed Advisory Board, community-elected Friends Board, and staff

members, to discuss, envision and plan for the Museum's future (attached). Long-term collections management needs, including records computerization and a concerted effort to make the collections more available to the public, emerged as group priorities. To help determine community support for expanded services, the Town funded a statistically accurate survey of our primary audience, the local community. The survey determined that 54% of those polled supported a Museum expansion, while only 26% did not support an expansion.

6. PROJECT RESOURCES: TIME AND BUDGET

Conversion of collections records into an electronic format has long been identified as an important step for EP ARM. Work began in earnest toward that end in 1999 and over the last five years EP ARM has developed a system for ensuring accurate, complete, and efficient data transfer. More than one third of the collections records have been converted. Quality control, evaluation of existing records, and training for data conversion personnel have all been streamlined and fine-tuned. We have a clear understanding of how long it will take to accomplish our goal and what resources will be required. We simply cannot free enough staff time or recruit enough dedicated volunteers to finish the task, and are looking to the IMLS for support to complete this critical step toward more professional care of our collection.

The Museum has been computerizing collections records since 1999, as time allows. Staff and volunteers enter records at every opportunity, but the process is slow. The EP ARM has 10,500 object records entered into its database, PastPerfect, with an estimated 13,500 more to complete. Our experience over the past five years shows that computerization averages 11 records per hour. We anticipate that a dedicated temporary employee, funded by the IMLS, will be able to complete about 13,000 records, the majority of the task, in approximately 1182 hours. We have factored in an additional 56 hours for training, meetings, etc. In total, we are requesting support for 1238 hours of work over the period from February to November 2005 (about 31 hours a week for 40 weeks). The rate of pay (\$14/hr) is comparable to what other Colorado institutions pay for similar projects. Fringe benefit percentages for both the permanent staff and technician wages came from the Town of Estes Park's finance department.

Based on our 2003 experience with the Emporia State University graduate students, we anticipate that there will be six students working 40 hours each at \$14/hour to enter archival materials into the PastPerfect system, at an in-kind cost of \$3360. We anticipate that they will enter about 500 records during their stay. Housing for the Emporia State graduate students will be provided by the Friends of the Museum in private homes. In-kind housing costs listed in the budget are based on two rooms, two double beds per room, for 5 days at a local hotel. The Monday -Thursday cost equivalent was \$93.46/day; the Friday cost equivalent is \$101.96/day, without tax. The total in-kind housing cost is \$951.60.

Dedicated computer equipment for the data conversion technician and the network version of our current collections management software will eliminate one of the current bottlenecks in the conversion process. Computer and printer specifications were developed in consultation with the Town's IT manager and specifications obtained from similar records computerization programs. The desktop computer for the data entry station is a PC with a DCRW/DVD drive for backup and archiving, 1 GB Ram, 2.8 GHz Pentium processor, 1289 MB Video RAM, 120 GB hard drive and 20 inch monitor, for \$2900. The printer is a monochrome laser printer with 17 -ppm speed, 8 MB memory, and 2400 x 600 dpi print quality, for \$229 (municipal government prices). For collections conversion we will need an upgrade to the network version of Past Perfect for \$360. The annual network support contract is \$374. This will allow the data conversion technician and Museum staff to access the database simultaneously from different locations.

Time is allotted near the end of the project for two public workshops given by Museum staff providing on-site training to introduce our audience to the computerized records system.

The Museum director and staff have accomplished several large projects over the past five years by building on Town and Friends support. These include a 1997 exhibit renovation (\$70,000) which won an AASLH Certificate of Commendation, a 1998 Conservation Project Support project for collections storage renovation (\$104,000), and a 2002 hydroplant renovation (\$600,000+) which won several state and national awards. The Museum's financial position is strong. The Town recognizes the importance of providing financial backing and has increased its annual transfer from \$57,992 in 1990 to \$141,787 in 2002. Museum funds are accounted for within the Town's accounting system as a special revenue fund. An unexpended fund

balance at year's end is carried to the following year, not transferred back to the General Fund where it would disappear. The Town's finance officer monitors expenditure levels. For the past fourteen years the Town's accounting department has won the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, a prestigious national award. At the close of each fiscal year, an independent accounting firm, as required by state law, conducts a comprehensive audit.

7. PROJECT RESOURCES: PERSONNEL AND TECHNOLOGY

The project team is well qualified to accomplish project goals and activities. Each EPAHM staff member has a master's degree in a relevant field. In addition, all staff members participated in the very successful renovation of a hydroplant into a museum from 1998-2002 (a \$600,000+ project that required significant staff time), and in a 2500 s.f. facility expansion in 2003-2004. Now that these projects are complete, the staff has the time for new challenges.

The director, who will oversee the project, joined the staff as a curator in 1992 and was promoted to director in 1993. She has an MA in Public Historical Studies from UC-Santa Barbara and over 17 years of museum experience, 13 as an administrator. She has overseen major exhibit and facility renovations, including a \$104,000 Conservation Project Support (CPS) project for collections storage renovation. She manages the Museum, Hydroplant and Senior Center budgets (totaling \$450,000 in 2003), performs MAP surveys and is an IMLS grant reviewer. She is a department head. The curator of collections joined the staff in 1998 and holds an MA in Anthropology (Museum Studies concentration) from the University of Denver. Her experience includes program assistant at a municipal museum, curatorial assistant at a heritage center, museum associate at the Univ. of Denver Museum, and several internships in collections and programming at large museums in Denver and Minnesota. She implemented the IMLS CPS project, rehousing 5,000 objects and renovating the Museum's main storage area. She has led the five-year effort to computerize collections records at the EP ARM. For this project she will oversee the data conversion technician: training, providing quality control, answering questions, etc., conducting training workshops, and assisting with project tracking.

The education coordinator joined the staff in 2001. She has an MS in the Science, Museum and Field Studies Program at the University of Colorado-Boulder, including coursework in project evaluation methods. Prior to joining the staff, she was a Park Service interpreter, a collections assistant at the Colorado Historical Society, and a high school social studies teacher. In this project she will be in charge of the communication strategy, planning the kickoff event, serving as the media contact, updating the website and otherwise coordinating publicity, particularly during project milestones. She will also work with consultant Dr. Ross Loomis to develop and implement the project's outcomes evaluation process. The network support specialist joined the Town staff in 2002. He has 19 years of networking, troubleshooting and software and hardware maintenance experience. For this project he will assist with purchasing the equipment and hiring the technician, and will troubleshoot any technical difficulties that may arise.

The project is designed to take place when the Museum has no other large projects in the works. It is limited in scope. Time-intensive startup and end phases are scheduled to occur during the Museum's off-season, when demands on the staff from the public are not as great. Of this 19month project, only 5 of the months, May-September 2005, are during the prime visitation period.

The technician's salary of \$ 14/hr is standard within the industry. This person will work under the collections curator's immediate supervision. Job functions include entering a variety of data from documents into a computer, verifying the data for accuracy, identifying and resolving discrepancies arising from input data, and preparing reports. The technician will perform general clerical duties in support and maintenance of the database system. (S)he must be a high school graduate or equivalent with one year of related experience. Classes in history, museum studies or computer science are desirable. (S)he must have knowledge of English language, spelling, grammar and punctuation, office methods and practices, the ability to exert up to 25 pounds of force to move objects, the ability to enter data accurately into a computer at a speed of not less than 40 words per minute, the ability to use a variety of computer files, to communicate effectively, and to follow instructions. Experience with Windows operating system, the PastPerfect database management system, database report writing, United States and Colorado material culture and history, and the principles, practices and philosophy of the museum profession, including collections management and artifact handling, are desired.

The digitization project consists of completing conversion of catalog worksheets to electronic entries in the PastPerfect database. It does not include creating digital images of accessioned objects. Computerization began in 1999 with the most recent records and is proceeding backward in time. In addition, current accession records are entered as they come in. The systematic and accurate entry of all catalog worksheets will give the staff a solid basis for intellectual access and professional care. Data conversion is part of a multi-year plan to improve the care and record keeping associated with the objects stored in the Museum's off-site storage area. The completed conversion will help Museum staff, researchers, and visitors by consolidating the data into one complete and accurate database, accessible in a comfortable research station. Since accessibility to our collection will be available only onsite, reporting to a national level registry of digital resources is not appropriate at this time. Staff will continue to access the database from collections and office areas.

Estes Park Area Historical Museum Budget Justification

SALARIES AND WAGES (PERMANENT STAFF)

The detailed budget includes a portion of the permanent staffs wages during the grant period as a project match. These numbers reflect the average estimated hours per week of staff involvement. The museum director will spend one and one-half hours a week overseeing and administering the grant project. The collections curator will spend four hours a week on training, oversight and quality control of the data conversion technician, conduct two training workshops, and assist with project tracking and reporting. The education curator will spend thirty hours publicizing the project to the community, and working with consultant Dr. Ross Loomis to develop the project's outcomes evaluation. The network support specialist will spend 20 hours assisting with hiring the technician, ordering the equipment, and troubleshooting technical difficulties.

The project is designed to take place during a time when the Museum has no other large projects in the works. It is limited in scope and is timed primarily for the Museum's off-season, when demands on the staff from the public are not as great. Of this 19-month project, only five of the months are during the prime visitation period (May - September 2005).

SALARIES AND WAGES (TEMPORARY STAFF)

The budget includes a data conversion technician for 1238 hours at \$14 per hour. This figure is based on the number of objects already entered into the database (10,500 out of 24,000) at an average of **11** records per hour (based on previous years' averages). There are 13,500 records left to enter. We anticipate that the employee will be able to complete about 13,000 records, the majority of the task, in approximately 1182 hours. We have factored in 56 hours for training, meetings, etc., for a total of 1238 hours. The rate of pay is comparable to what other Colorado institutions pay for similar projects. Fringe benefit percentages for both the permanent staff and technician wages are per Town of Estes Park standards obtained from the finance department.

CONSULTANT FEES

Consultant Dr. Ross Loomis was chosen to help the Museum determine the project's outcomes evaluation because of his extensive expertise in museum evaluation and his proximity to Estes Park. Dr. Loomis teaches at Colorado State University, a distance to Estes Park of 93 miles round-trip. The project travel/per diem expense of \$124 reflects two visits by Dr. Loomis to the Museum site to meet with staff, once at the beginning of the project and once during the project, at .365 per mile and \$30 per day (Town of Estes Park rates). Dr. Loomis estimated 10 hours would be needed for the evaluation plan, at his standard nonprofit consulting fee of \$60 per hour.

MATERIALS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

Project materials, supplies and equipment include a computer, the network version of the PastPerfect software, and paper for brochures and other publicity.

Specifications for desktop computer and printer for the data entry/research station were developed in consultation with the Town of Estes Park's IT manager and using specifications from similar records computerization programs. It is a PC with a DC-RW/DVD drive for backup and archiving, 1 GB RAM, 2.8 GHz Pentium processor, 128 MB Video RAM, 120 GB hard drive, and 20 inch monitor, for \$2900. The printer is a monochrome laser printer with 17 ppm speed, 8 MB memory, and 2400x600 dpi print quality, for \$229 (municipal government prices).

For collections data entry we will need an upgrade to the network version of Past Perfect for \$360. The Friends of the Museum will provide \$50 in paper for brochures advertising two informational workshops and to let customers know about the resource on an ongoing basis. The brochures will be designed and produced in-house.

SERVICES

The annual PastPerfect network support contract will be \$374 (part of the Museum's project match). An in-kind partnership with the graduate program in Library Science at Emporia State University in Kansas

will complete data entry (500 records) for the project, in return for class credit. This partnership repeats a successful program conducted in 2003, wherein six graduate students and an instructor organized and cataloged the Museum's reference library. The rate of pay is valued at \$14/hr for 40 hours for six students. The pay is comparable to what other Colorado institutions pay for similar projects.

OTHER COSTS

The majority of the Museum's artifact collections storage is located off-site in a warehouse. The 4000 s.f. space contains 3500 s.f. of collections storage and 500 s.f. of noncollections area (for workspace, props, etc.). The fair market value for the entire area is \$3000 a month. Pro-rated for the collections storage area only, it is \$2624/month or \$656/week. The space was organized with the help of a 1992 Conservation Project Support grant. The records conversion performed by the technician will allow us to proceed with the next step of conducting a physical inventory of objects at the warehouse, and will greatly improve intellectual access to these under-utilized objects.

As in 2003, housing for the Emporia State graduate students will be provided by the Friends of the Museum in private homes. In-kind housing costs listed in the budget are based on two rooms, two double beds per room, for 5 days at a local hotel. The Monday -Thursday cost equivalent was \$93.46/day; the Friday cost equivalent was \$101.96/day. The total in-kind housing cost is **\$951.60**.