

2016 - 2019

# LONGMONT MUSEUM STRATEGIC PLAN

Approved by the Longmont Museum Advisory Board, March 16, 2016



LONGMONT  
**MUSEUM**  
*A Division of Community Services*

# MISSION STATEMENT

The Longmont Museum is a center for culture in Northern Colorado where people of all ages explore history, experience art, and discover new ideas through dynamic programs, exhibitions, and events.

# VISION STATEMENT

The Longmont Museum fosters a community that is culturally aware and creatively inspired.

# BACKGROUND

The Longmont Museum is a division of the City of Longmont. It has a long history of innovation and excellence, and is a key part of Longmont's cultural community. The Museum is a part of Longmont's arts & entertainment district, a state-recognized Creative District. Since 1936 the Museum has been collecting and preserving Longmont's history, creating one of the largest historic collections in northern Colorado. It has won national and statewide recognition for excellence in its exhibitions, and hosts the largest Day of the Dead celebration in Colorado. The 250-seat, state-of-the-art Stewart Auditorium opened in 2015 and provides a premier performance space for small musical ensembles, dance, films, lectures and more.





## The Museum has identified seven primary goals to guide its next three years:

- The Longmont Museum will prepare its collections for the future by building a permanent storage facility and establishing a robust framework for its development and use.
- The Longmont Museum's special exhibitions will be mission-related, high quality, with broad appeal, relevant to the community, and provide opportunities for multi-modal learning.
- The Longmont Museum will re-envision existing interpretive spaces so that they better meet the needs of our audience.
- The Longmont Museum will focus on strategic partnerships that benefit all parties.
- The Longmont Museum will provide unified and cohesive services to the public in all aspects of its operations.
- The Longmont Museum will offer unique and compelling educational programming for all ages.
- Develop the Stewart Auditorium's programs, policies and procedures in a way that fulfills the Museum's mission while balancing community needs and financial sustainability benchmarks.

# COLLECTIONS



The Longmont Museum will prepare its collections for the future by building a permanent storage facility and establishing a robust framework for its development and use.

## ACTION STEPS:

### **Design, build, equip, and move into new off-site collections storage facility (2016-2018)**

- Needs analysis (Spring 2016)
- Design phase (Spring 2016)
- Storage equipment vendor final selection (2017)
- Contractor selection (2017)
- Construction phase (2017)
- Collections move (first half 2018)

### **Continue to support the Museum's exhibitions with the collections that are accessible.**

- Support small collections-based exhibitions in the Swan Atrium and the Kaiser Permanente Education Center (ongoing)
- Support potential renovation of the Longs Peak Room and *Front Range Rising* (2017-2018)

### **Develop a long-term collecting plan.**

- Identify objects outside of the collecting plan and follow established process for their deaccession and disposition (2016-2017)
- Inventory collections
  - Textiles and furniture (2016-2017)
  - Other collections during unpacking (2018-2019)
- Identify gaps in the current collection and focus areas for future collecting
  - Discussion with Museum Advisory Board
  - Input from Exhibits and Programming staff
- Target opportunities for active solicitation of materials in key areas

### **Museum capacity considerations**

- Capital Improvement Project funding is required for new storage facility, which could be supplemented by grant funds
- Additional temporary staff, possibly grant-funded, will be required in 2017-2018 for collections move

# EXHIBITIONS



The Longmont Museum's exhibitions will be mission-related, high quality, with broad appeal, relevant to the community, and provide opportunities for multi-modal learning.

## ACTION STEPS:

### Special exhibition spaces

- Continue Day of the Dead in the Atrium each October (ongoing)
- Continue the Portal Gallery exhibitions (ongoing)
- Shift exhibition schedule in main gallery to feature a variety of topics from January to April, and primarily hands-on, family-oriented exhibits from May to December. (2017 and after)
- Add exhibitions in the Swan Atrium (2 per year) and Room C of the Kaiser Permanente Education Center (1 per year).

### Criteria for selection of exhibitions

- Exhibitions should offer a unique experience
- Marketing messages should be easily understandable
- Exhibitions focusing on a single artist must have name recognition
- Prior to selection, evaluate the resources required, such as staff, time, and money
- Financial considerations
  - Cost/benefit
  - Attendance/revenue
  - Repeat visitation
  - Membership sales

### Integration

- Programming should be able to be easily integrated into exhibitions
- Utilize the Museum's collection in exhibitions where appropriate

### Community Involvement

- Involve untapped parts of the community
- Identify clubs/content specialists early in the process
- Put a step in the exhibition development process to involve the community before too many decisions are made
- Look for relevant local sponsors
- Seek partnerships with other Community Services divisions as appropriate

### Museum Capacity considerations

- Prior to creating another in-house hands-on exhibition, secure funding for additional exhibit staff time (2017)
- Adding exhibitions in Kaiser and atrium must be weighed against impact on other exhibition programs.
- Exhibition schedule shift will allow more time to develop in-house exhibitions, have them up for longer periods of time.

# EXISTING FACILITY



The Longmont Museum will re-envision existing interpretive spaces so that they better meet the needs of our audience.

## ACTION STEPS

### 3rd floor / Longs Peak Room

- Develop plan for replacement of existing exhibition with new hands-on exhibition geared towards families and repeat visitation (2016)
- Gather resources to implement plan – money, staffing, contractors (2017)
- Install exhibition (2018)

### 2nd floor

- Plan & budget for the future use of current Textile Storage room (2017)
- Move moon rock display into *Front Range Rising* (2018)

### Courtyard

- Develop master plan for courtyard (2016-17), addressing these issues
  - Solve water problem in courtyard
  - Possible enlargement to expand uses
  - Future use as rental and/or outdoor exhibition space

### Front Range Rising gallery

- Develop long term plan (2016)
- Replace brush shelter (2017)
- Replace worn components (2017)
- Address acoustical issues (2017)
- Move moon rock display into ending section (2018)

### Spaces in Stewart Auditorium addition

- Evaluate public use and challenges of spaces in Kaiser Permanente Education Center room C and Swan Atrium (2016)
- Based upon evaluation results, set longer term schedule for exhibitions in those spaces (2017)

### Museum capacity considerations

- Renovation of 3rd Floor and Front Range Rising will require additional funding sources.
- Re-use of Textile Storage space as public space would require additional staff to support

# PARTNERSHIP & COLLABORATION



The Longmont Museum will focus on strategic partnerships that benefit all parties.

## ACTION STEPS

### **Build partnership development into processes throughout the Museum's operation.**

- Encourage all areas of the Museum to explore partnerships. (ongoing)
- Build consideration of potential partnerships into the early part of the museum's exhibition and program development process. (ongoing)
- Continue partnership with Tinkermill and increase membership to the "group" level (2016)

### **Partner with City finance staff to make case for SCFD Tier II status**

- Provide accounting to reflect full costs of City of Longmont support of Museum.
- Apply for Tier II once Museum can demonstrate we meet the threshold requirements.

### **Evaluate partnerships on an ongoing basis.**

- Maximize value of partnerships between Community Services divisions (ongoing)
- Develop an evaluation tool for partnerships that measures the benefit of the partnership to all parties (2016)
- Evaluate existing and new proposed partnerships (2017)
  - Continue working with beneficial partners
  - Eliminate partnerships that are not beneficial
  - Cultivate new partnerships that are mutually beneficial and support our mission

# INTEGRATION



The Longmont Museum will provide unified and cohesive services to the public in all aspects of its operations.

## ACTION STEPS

### **Move front line personnel from a receptionist model to a Visitor Services model.**

- Provide regular avenues of communication between curatorial/management staff and front line staff (ongoing)
- Define roles and responsibilities of all front line staff, including ticketing and box office, bartending, temporary gallery staff, temporary security staff, member services, program registration, and self-guided group visit booking (2016)
- Assess staffing needs, including a Visitor Services manager to provide oversight and backup (2017 budget)
- As auditorium event staff and contractors increase, explore where they fit in the organization's structure
- Assess security and visitor experience needs for an ongoing staff/volunteer presence in the gallery

### **Museum capacity considerations**

- Front-line positions have experienced a significant increase in responsibilities in the last few years. Adding a Visitor Services manager would address this area of under-capacity to provide better service to all our customers
- Program evaluation and criteria creation would be upfront work that could reduce workload long-term

### **Ensure that the Stewart Auditorium is operationally and programmatically integrated with other Museum functions**

- Develop criteria for Museum-produced programs; programs produced with partners; and pure rental events
- Determine marketing/branding of the Stewart Auditorium
- Continue program of exhibitions in the new space
- Evaluate the experience for attendees for Museum and Partner programs
- For rentals, evaluate organizer's satisfaction, staff satisfaction, and revenue goal
- Create a collaborative programming process with other staff members

### **Continue to integrate the Art in Public Places program and the Museum**

- Build on successful collaborations such as the Shock Art voting and bicycle summer camps (ongoing)
- Collaborate on outreach programs and festivals (ongoing)
- Add a link between the Museum's webpage and the AIPP webpage (2016)
- Explore exhibitions based upon AIPP art
- Evaluate public perception of public art in Longmont and its connection to the Museum



# PROGRAMMING



The Longmont Museum will offer unique and compelling educational programming for all ages.

## ACTION STEPS:

### Shift in focus

- Museum education staff will directly plan and coordinate education programs for children, youth and families
- Museum staff will collaborate with department and community partners to strengthen exhibition-related and other educational programming for adults

### Evaluation

- Create rubric to analyze existing and new programs (use these goals and objectives as a guide)
  - Our programming will be mission and vision based with an eye on the long view
  - Our programming will be relevant to our current exhibition offerings
  - Our programming will be relevant
  - Our programming will be culturally competent
  - Our programming will be compelling, fun, entertaining, educational, and unique
  - Our programming will drive attendance
  - Our programming will generate revenue
  - Our programming will be sustainable
  - Our programming will be achievable
  - Analyze existing programs based upon this rubric

### Planning

- Continue to work with and evolve a planning schedule with exhibits and marketing that outlines deadlines and workplan
- Come up with a plan to fund new projects and support existing ones, that could involve increased grant writing by programming staff

### Museum Capacity considerations

- Define staff responsibilities as they relate to programming
- Explore level of programming that can be supported by existing marketing resources, and how are those resources allocated
- Define other critical decision points
  - What staff resources are required to support successful programs
  - What amount of one-off/special programming will the Museum offer
  - How much time will RecTrac require for programming

# STEWART AUDITORIUM



Develop the Stewart Auditorium's programs, policies and procedures in a way that fulfills the Museum's mission while balancing community needs and financial sustainability benchmarks.

## PROGRAMS

**Move from the experimentation phase of programming into a regular routine of proven, successful programs and partnerships**

- Hold regular programming meetings to vet proposed programs in the auditorium for connection to museum, marketing appeal, etc. (ongoing)
- Evaluate auditorium programs based upon quality, audience interest, and financial sustainability (2016)
- Programs created with a partnering organization must be able to show they have an established audience
- Shape programs based upon the results of the evaluation (2017)
- Find balance between museum-produced programs, partnership programs, and pure rentals

## POLICIES

**Create a task force to set policies, communicate with staff, and review as needed, in the following areas**

- Alcohol / Food
- Ticketing / POS
- Rental
- Staffing
- Safety
- Marketing Standards

## MUSEUM

### CAPACITY IMPACT

**Development of programs at the Stewart Auditorium has wide-ranging capacity and financial sustainability implications.**

**They include:**

- Current operations are resource-intense and impact staff throughout the Museum. Over the long term, the Auditorium must shift to a more sustainable operations model.
- We must quantify the current use of non-auditorium staff (front desk, administration, curatorial, program) for auditorium programs, so we can understand and justify future staffing requests.
- Administration – need for staff to respond to all inquiries, generate contracts and invoices, and work with all programs and event staff
- Event staffing – staff for front desk, house management, a/v, and bar
- Box office staffing – relief for front desk at peak times
- Custodial / maintenance – evening & weekend custodial