

Fiscal Year 2023-24 Capital Construction Request

Colorado Historical Society (History Colorado)
Collections Care Facility

PROGRAM PLAN STATUS

2024-028

Approved Program Plan

Yes

Date Approved:

July 1, 2022

PRIORITY NUMBERS

Prioritized By	Priority
HC	1 of 1
OSPB	Not Prioritized
Not recommended for funding.	

PRIOR APPROPRIATIONS AND REQUEST INFORMATION

Fund Source	Prior Approp.	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	Future Requests	Total Costs
CCF	\$0	\$42,324,142	\$0	\$0	\$42,324,142
CF	\$0	\$10,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$10,000,000
Total	\$0	\$52,324,142	\$0	\$0	\$52,324,142

ITEMIZED COST INFORMATION

Cost Item	Prior Approp.	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	Future Requests	Total Cost
Land Acquisition	\$0	\$30,240,000	\$0	\$0	\$30,240,000
Professional Services	\$0	\$1,110,548	\$0	\$0	\$1,110,548
Construction	\$0	\$15,548,435	\$0	\$0	\$15,548,435
Equipment	\$0	\$1,662,524	\$0	\$0	\$1,662,524
Miscellaneous	\$0	\$1,930,484	\$0	\$0	\$1,930,484
Contingency	\$0	\$1,832,151	\$0	\$0	\$1,832,151
Total	\$0	\$52,324,142	\$0	\$0	\$52,324,142

PROJECT STATUS

This is a new, never-before-requested project.

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION / SCOPE OF WORK

The Colorado Historical Society (History Colorado) is seeking a combination of state funds and cash funds spending authority to purchase a warehouse in the Denver metropolitan area with over 150,000 GSF to store portions of its collection not on display, and for use by the State Archives. The current facilities for both agencies are insufficient in terms of size, location, deferred maintenance issues, safety, and security, and are not supportive for fulfilling their statutory responsibilities. If no suitable warehouse becomes available, History Colorado will build one.

The new facility will be retrofitted to feature storage for the sensitive collections of both History Colorado and the State Archives, including accessible, compact shelving; climate-controlled storage rooms; and facilities and equipment for collections and conservation practices. The facility will include offices and office-support space for both agencies. Space will also be allotted for public education and outreach, including research space, display space, and a multi-purpose room for classes and demonstrations. History Colorado has also identified a need for cool and cold storage among peer organizations, particularly for digital material production and storage, and may lease a portion of its space in the warehouse to such organizations.

To help facilitate the project, History Colorado will sell its Lowry and Pueblo Storage Warehouses and its North Denver Storage Facility. The State Archives will vacate leased space in Capitol Hill, North Denver, and Simla.

Cost assumption. History Colorado contracted with an architecture and design firm for program planning, which determined that purchasing an existing facility is the best option, with the understanding that suitable warehouse space in Denver is limited. The cost per square foot is \$310, and inflation is factored at a rate of 10.0 percent. The project meets the High Performance Certification Program requirements, and is exempt from the Art in Public Places Program requirement.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

History Colorado says its North Storage Facility does not meet standards for preserving and conserving collections, and thus risks losing its accreditation with the American Association of Museums (AAM). Accreditation makes History Colorado eligible for traveling exhibits and national museum partnerships, which drive programming and revenue. Factors negatively impacting accreditation status include HVAC and air-handling systems that do not properly set temperature, humidity, and air quality, nor do they adjust to Colorado's swift changes in temperatures. This leaves the department's collections vulnerable to corrosion, expansion, mold, cracking, and hazardous particulates such as dust, fibers, and soot. These factors can damage irreplaceable historic artifacts beyond repair, or drive restoration costs. Other issues include roof leaks that damage artifacts and conditions that affect the efficiency and safety of operations, space utilization, public perception, and staff retention.

The Colorado State Archives currently occupies four levels of the Centennial Building in the Capitol Complex, which are inadequate in terms of space needs, storage standards, safety, and security. The space has suffered numerous, serious water leaks since 2015, damaging portions of the collections. Cameras and door locks are insufficient. Temperature and humidity regulation is limited and inconsistent. Archive retrieval can be inaccessible or dangerous due to high shelving, and the archives do not meet ADA accessibility standards.

Failure to fund the project will continue to endanger the collections of both agencies, and the agencies will not be able to preserve them as required by statute. Further, the agencies will no longer be able to expand their collections, which grow daily.

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PROGRAM INFORMATION

History Colorado was established in 1879 as the State Historical Society of Colorado, and operates as a nonprofit organization under the Department of Higher Education. The agency operates seven museums and four historic sites throughout the state, including the History Colorado Center. History Colorado is responsible for the collection and preservation of items of historical significance and has the following statutory charges:

- under Section 24-80-202, C.R.S., "...the Society shall be the trustee of the state... and shall hold its present and future collections and property for the state..."; and
- under Section 24-80-210, C.R.S., "Collections of a scientific or historical nature shall be properly classed and cataloged and shall be at all reasonable hours open for public inspection and examination..."

The Colorado State Archives exists to preserve the state's permanent legal records and information and to promote their use by the residents of the state. The State Archives are the legal repository for selected historical and contemporary records and information generated by state and local governments.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

	Start Date	Completion Date
Design	July 2023	November 2023
Construction	November 2023	May 2024
Equipment	May 2024	July 2024
Occupancy	July 2024	July 2024

SOURCE OF CASH FUNDS

The source of cash funds for the project is proceeds from the sale of three History Colorado-owned storage facilities.

OPERATING BUDGET

History Colorado says it and the State Archives expect to realize cost savings from the project due to consolidation of operating and maintenance functions, along with vacating currently leased space.

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STAFF QUESTIONS AND ISSUES

1. If it receives an appropriation and does not find a suitable warehouse for purchase, will History Colorado pivot to the build option? If so, how long will it seek to purchase a warehouse before it decides to build one?

History Colorado's preference is to find an existing building that will require few modifications. As part of our facility program plan that was used to develop our capital request and determine that the most cost-efficient option is the requested purchase/retrofit option, History Colorado worked with our vendor and did a market scan, which showed potential properties that meet our needs. History Colorado is working to refresh this scan and we believe that there are facilities available in the size we need within 45 minutes of Denver. If a suitable property cannot be found, we would rather move into a smaller existing building rather than go the full build route. The driver of this decision is how long we believe we can continue to patch the existing North facility without facing additional risks.

2. Why is the project exempt from the Art in Public Places program?

The Collections Care Facility will not be public facing and the desired solution is to find a suitable property that already exists. If the project is not exempt from the Art in Public Places Program, then the additional figure would be \$155,484 or 1 percent of the \$15,548,435 identified for construction costs if we needed to retrofit an existing building.

3. What will be the operating agreement between History Colorado and the State Archives? Will History Colorado own the building and lease space to the State Archives?

We have not worked through the details, but what is envisioned is a cost-neutral outcome for the State Archives. Whether that means that the State Archives lease the space back from History Colorado or a different approach is used is still to be determined.

4. Is the Joint Budget Committee aware of the State Archives' plans to apply avoided operating costs (leased space savings) toward the operating costs of the new facility?

We have not had any conversations or discussions with JBC about the details of this project.