

# Museum of Northwest Colorado

## 5 Year Plan – 2021-2025

### Executive Summary-

Following 5 years of financial uncertainty, The Museum of Northwest Colorado is finally poised to resume its status as one of the main attractions in Northwest Colorado. Over the next 5 years we plan to not only showcase our area's fascinating history, but be an integral player in helping ensure that Craig and Moffat County have an equally fascinating future.

The Museum of Northwest Colorado is a major source of pride for our local community by going above and beyond a typical small town museum. In fact, The Colorado Board of Tourism has named it as one of the top museums in Colorado and several national publications have gone as far as placing the museum as one of the top museums in the entire West. In addition, TripAdvisor, the largest travel website in the world, lists our museum as the “#1 thing to do in Craig”. These accolades have not been accidental – they come from not only a sincere passion for our area's history, but also from the financial resources that have allowed us to properly display our history in a way that generates interest and excitement.

The City of Craig's main goal over the next 5 years is to help lessen the blow, and actually thrive, during a major economic transition. This will require introducing and attracting new businesses and residents to Craig, Colorado.

As the biggest year-round attraction in Craig, the Museum of Northwest Colorado is a major economic driver and will be instrumental in this transition. With the thousands of visitors who visit the museum every year, combined with a strong social media presence, the museum already introduces Craig and Moffat County to roughly half a million people every year. In addition, the museum is the anchor of Downtown Craig and major resource for referrals of “other things to do” in the City of Craig.

The museum's focus over the next 5 years will be to tailor all programming (exhibits, social media posts etc.) to a broader audience. The goal is to highlight the more significant historical aspects of the area in an effort to generate recognition and excitement of the area as a whole. The focus will also be to help cement the identity of our community during a time when people are worried about a new population losing sight of what truly sets Craig apart from the rest of Colorado.

**All of this, however, will require additional funding above the museum's current budget. The museum is currently funded \$300,000 per year from the City of Craig with additional funding stemming from museum operations & fundraising. In order to remain a significant economic driver for the City of Craig and Moffat County, the museum will need to secure \$400,000 per year from the City as well as increasing in-house funding from operations & fundraising.**

### New Annual Expenses

**1. 1 FTE – Office/Operations Manager. Roughly \$75,000/yr. when including fringe benefits.**

The museum has remained shorthanded for the last 5 years. This has caused a growing backlog of work that is beginning to take a toll on existing employees and is impeding on other major goals. The museum feels a new full-time employee is essential in remaining a museum of significance going forward. In addition, with the planned retirement of Dan Davidson in 5 years, and with the anticipated transfer of

the position of Director to Paul Knowles, it is imperative that Dan and Paul begin transitioning relationships and knowledge of the area outside of the museum. This will require significant time traveling and visiting contacts around NW Colorado and surrounding areas. A full-time employee will be essential in “holding down the fort” while this occurs as well as seeking-out and acquiring new grants.

## **2. Expanding Exhibit Budget - \$15,000 yr.**

Over the last 5 years the museum has greatly reduced the number of new exhibits due to the lack of funding. However, new exhibits are absolutely essential in creating and maintaining interest in the museum, and thus bring visitors to Craig, Colorado. Our museum became known for putting out some of the most impactful exhibits in the entire state of Colorado. With one of the top collections of any small town museum, it's time to get back to showing it off.

## **Capital Projects**

### **- Update the Cowboy and Gunfighter exhibit - \$100,000**

The Cowboy and Gunfighter exhibit is a nationally-recognized collection and is by far the most popular exhibit in the museum that draws tourists from all-around to specifically view. However, it has not been significantly updated in 30 years. This upgrade will give new life and meaning into a collection from which the museum has been built and gained its notoriety.

### **- New Roof - \$35,000**

With the Armory turning 100 years old in 2021, and with a nearly \$3,000,000 collection under its roof, it is essential that the roof be updated and sealed. While the main portion of the roof is currently stable, the front section is in need of repairs in the very near future.

### **- Equipment replacement - \$15,000**

Currently every one of the museum's computers is past the 5 year mark (some significantly past) and are in need being upgraded. In addition, security cameras are beginning to fail and large paper items are at risk of damage without being digitized with a large format scanner.

### **- New Carpet - \$25,000**

The museum's current carpet, despite thousands of visitors every year, is 30 years old and in need of replacement.

### **- Marcia Car Maintenance and Upgrades - \$10,000**

With the anticipated acquisition of the Marcia Car, David Moffat's personal private Pullman car, the museum will be taking perhaps its most valuable artifact. However, it is currently in need of consistent minor maintenance before current minor issues become major and irreversible.

### **- Handicap Ramp to Back Rooms - \$15,000**

With the repeated failure of a mechanical handicap ramp into the back display rooms, the museum is currently not ADA compliant. However, one of our most important demographics are the elderly and those seeking-out non-impact entertainment.

## **Capital Projects needing substantial grant dollars:**

### **- Charcoal Kiln restoration - \$325,000**

### **- Historic Newspaper digitization - \$35,000**

## **New Operational/Fundraising Income**

### **Planned Giving:**

In 2021 the museum will begin a planned giving program aimed at estate planning. This year alone the museum has the possibility of \$40,000+ from an unsolicited estate fund – though this size of estate gifting is currently more the exception than the norm. In the past, the museum's Mineral Program solicited mineral rights as its unique form of planned giving. While this once produced hundreds of thousands of dollars per year, it now produced roughly \$10,000. With the goodwill the museum has created over the past few decades we are certain that there are major opportunities to place the museum at the top of the list for many local estate planners. A brochure will be produced and distributed to every attorney and financial planner in NW Colorado. Knowing that planned giving typically takes years to bear fruit, we are being conservative with roughly \$1,000/year for the first five years while implementing our extensive campaign with estate attorneys and financial planners. The anticipation is of a steady and significant (albeit unpredictable) yearly increase thereafter.

### **Minerals:**

This number, which once produced hundreds of thousands of additional funding every year, has stagnated to roughly \$10,000. We anticipate no change in this going forward.

### **Gift Shop:**

Since 2015 (excluding the COVID year of 2020) the museum increased gift shop income 75% to over \$21,000/year. By continuing to add new and a greater variety of goods we plan on seeing this number continue to increase to over \$30,000/yr by 2026.

### **Walk-in Donations:**

Since 2004 the museum has increased donations per visitor by over 300% from \$0.49 per visitor to \$2.04 per visitor. This trend represents a focus on better marketing and soliciting of visitors. Unfortunately, at the same time that our donation-per-visitor has increased, our total number of visitors has decreased due to a lack of funding. Even so, total walk in donations have increased from \$4300 in 2013 to \$9300 in 2019. Going forward, with an expected increase in visitors over the next 5-years, we will expect the total income to increase to roughly \$13,000 per year by 2026

### **Grants:**

With the addition of a new full-time Office Manager position, one of the new duties assigned will be to seek out and acquire grants for the museum. Depending on the success of such an endeavor, we expect to find thousands of dollars a year in new funding. With grants being a moving and unpredictable target, we are setting a "best guess" goal of \$25,000 per year in successful grants.

### **Fundraising/Memberships:**

Over the next couple years the museum will explore the possibility of creating a membership program. Currently, without a membership program, the museum is able to generate roughly \$35,000/yr. in donations and annual sponsorships. The goal of a membership program, of course, will be to increase and annualize yearly donation income. However, this will need to be balanced with the increase cost of such a program as well as the increase employee time dedicated to such a program. A membership program would need to bring in an additional \$15,000/year to make financial sense.

MUSEUM OF NORTHWEST COLORADO 5-Year Plan						
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Notes
<b>Museum Revenues</b>						
City Contribution	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	
Planned Giving	\$1,000	\$1,100	\$1,210	\$1,331	\$1,464	
Minerals	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	
Gift Shop Sales	\$21,000	\$23,100	\$25,410	\$27,951	\$30,746	10%
Walk-in Donations	\$9,300	\$10,230	\$11,253	\$12,378	\$13,616	10%
Grants	\$8,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	
Fundraising	\$25,000	\$26,250	\$27,563	\$28,941	\$30,388	5%
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$374,300</b>	<b>\$395,680</b>	<b>\$400,436</b>	<b>\$405,601</b>	<b>\$411,214</b>	
<b>Museum Expenses</b>						
Personnel Services	\$278,070	\$361,412	\$372,254	\$383,422	\$394,925	3%
Supplies/Exhibits	\$29,800	\$30,694	\$46,615	\$48,013	\$49,454	3%
Purchased Services	\$34,500	\$35,535	\$36,601	\$37,699	\$38,830	3%
Fixed and Capital	\$15,800	\$115,000	\$25,000	\$35,000	\$25,000	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$358,170</b>	<b>\$542,641</b>	<b>\$480,470</b>	<b>\$504,134</b>	<b>\$508,208</b>	
<b>Net Reserve Contribution</b>	<b>\$16,130</b>	<b>-\$146,961</b>	<b>-\$80,035</b>	<b>-\$98,533</b>	<b>-\$96,994</b>	
<b>Notes</b>	<b>Add 1 FTE - \$75k</b>	<b>New ADA Ramp - 15k</b>	<b>Roof Maintenance - 35k</b>	<b>New Carpet 25k</b>		
	Revamp Cowboy Exhibit - \$100k	Marcial Car Maintenance - 10k				
	Replace failing hardware 15k	Annual Exhibit Budget - 15k				