

**Preliminary
Report**



A Shared Archival Facility for the City of Westminster

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**Submitted to J.R. Clanton
City of Westminster, Colorado**

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Sponsors

City of Westminster Parks, Recreation and Libraries

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I want to thank Jason Genck, Michelle Parker, J.R. Clanton, and Kira Kloser for their guidance and support with this important project. I sincerely thank the staffs of the City Departments, the Front Range College Library, the members of the Westminster Historical Society, and other community representatives for giving their time and input to assist in developing this report.

I am always happy to answer any questions about this report and about best practices in archives management, shared archival facilities and programs.

Best, *Michele Pacifico*

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Section 1: Executive Summary

Below is a summary of the report's sections 2 through 10.

Section 2: Project Overview

Westminster, Colorado has a long and rich history. Much of the records of its past can only be found in the City's official records and in other community organizations with archival holdings. Westminster's archival records span from the early 1900's to the present, and they document the history of the City, its government, and its citizens. Included are its laws, agreements, land records, judicial records, maps, newspapers, photographs, art, artifacts, and furniture.

In 2007, the City of Westminster was awarded the 21st Annual Stephen H. Hart Award for Historic Preservation by Colorado History for the City's "commitment to preserving their heritage." A 2013 planning report, *Westminster History Center*, completed by Denver City Restorations, proposed a phased project whereby the Adams County School District 50 would share the DeSpain building with the Westminster Historical Society to create a joint venture for a Westminster History Center that would provide archival storage and community history programs. This study continues these efforts to preserve the City's history and review options for combining resources to provide for a shared archival facility for the City of Westminster.

Archival collections are permanent and irreplaceable and should be stored and accessed in a facility that provides them with the necessary care, security and storage that ensures their preservation and access. Without adequate housing these records are at risk of deterioration and may be difficult for researchers and citizens to find and use.

The City of Westminster, Colorado have taken steps to determine the requirements to establish a City Archives and evaluate the requirements and logistics to establish a shared archival facility for a citywide repository for the City of Westminster's historical collections. The archival study is divided into two phases:

1. A report that details the quantitative and qualitative information about the City's archival holdings and their current and future requirements: *Preliminary Program of Requirements for the City of Westminster Archives and Appendices*
2. A report that outlines the requirements and logistics to establish a shared archival facility for the City's records and the historical collections of community organizations: *A Shared Archival Facility for the City of Westminster and Appendices*.

In May 2018, the City of Westminster hired archival consultant Michele F. Pacifico to conduct the two archival studies. After background research, Michele made her first visit to Westminster from July 17 to July 19, 2018. She met with City Departments and managers, the Westminster Public Library leadership staff, the Library Director of the Front Range College Library, community representatives, members of the Westminster Historical Society, and presented an overview of the project for the Westminster Historical Society at their monthly meeting.

This is the second preliminary report of the project that outlines the requirements and considerations for the development of a shared archival facility that would include both the City's records and the historical collections of community organizations. Most of the same facility requirements and

considerations addressed in the first report also apply to the development of a shared archival facility. As the project develops, both reports should be reviewed and evaluated as the Westminster archival project develops.

Section 3: Cooperation as an Archival Strategy

Cooperation and collaboration among American archival institutions have increased over the last several decades. More typical areas of cooperation have included the development of standards for archival description and the creation of digital collections that allow researchers to view collections from multiple institutions online.

Cooperation has more recently expanded to include the sharing of archival facilities. This trend is likely to continue. Because of the specialized nature of archival facilities and their high initial and operational costs, building sharing is a viable alternative for archives located within a town, city or geographic region.

Westminster is wise to consider a shared facility to preserve and make accessible their invaluable historic collections. At a lower cost, a single shared facility offers energy efficiencies, an environmentally sustainable structure, cohesive access to the collections, and can result in a transformative collaboration for the City's archival institutions.

Section 4: Case Studies - Cooperative Archival Facilities

The project consultant interviewed or researched a number of existing cooperative archival facilities, ranging from solely public archives to shared public/private archival programs located throughout the United States and Canada. Partnerships in these studies ranged from one room archives to shared buildings that included archives, museum, and library holdings. A selection of case studies is presented in this report. Sample agreements and collection policies are provided in the Appendices

Studies of existing cooperative archival facilities offer insights into many of the issues and concerns that the City will encounter when developing a shared facility, including agreements, funding, management, and operations. These studies illustrate the many decisions, compromises and agreements that are required for a successful partnership.

Section 5: Potential Partners/Potential Collections

The various archival institutions of Westminster hold a variety of historical materials, including textual records, architectural drawings, maps, photographs, posters, recordings, films, microfilms, art, artifacts and furniture. Westminster's archival records date from the early 1900's, and they document the history of the City, its government, its organizations, its churches, and its citizens.

At this stage of the project, members of the Westminster Historical Society (WHS) and interested community members were interviewed about the historical collections of Westminster. The consultant, Michele Pacifico, J. R. Clanton, and Kira Kloser met with WHS members, reviewed WHS's collections and their storage areas, and took photographs. They also met with community representatives Marilyn Flachman, Bill Christopher and Michele Kelley to discuss the City's historical collections and review the 2013 planning report, *Westminster History Center*, completed by Denver City Restorations. This report proposed a phased project whereby the Adams County School District 50 would share the DeSpain

building with the Westminster Historical Society to create a joint venture for a Westminster History Center that would provide archival storage and community history programs. Lastly, they met with the Jeff Wahl, the Library Director of the Front Range College Library to review the college's archives.

Section 6: Characteristics of Shared Facilities

Shared archival facilities require enlightened leaders and a shared vision. The proposed Westminster Partnership reflects the mutual needs for more and better storage space, better access, and improvements in preservation and service. A cooperative building offers the opportunity for expanded functions and services. Successful shared buildings are the result of active and enthusiastic leaders, boards, committees, staff members and the City's citizens.

Communication and early planning are key components in creating a common vision and must be a central value for all of the partners. Collaboration, respect, support and commitment should take place at all organizational levels for the entire planning project.

Section 7: Sharing Facility Spaces

The goal of a shared building is to develop efficiencies and tangible benefits for all partners. Commonly shared spaces are divided into public and non-public areas. While partners may be concerned about keeping collections separate and secure, these spaces can be shared while still maintaining collection identity and security. Individual collection concerns should be balanced against the goals for an efficiently designed and operational facility.

Section 8: Agreements and Organizational Planning

The consultant's surveys of shared archival facilities uncovered a variety of agreements that reflect the relationship of the partners and the types of shared spaces. Some agreements are annual while others are valid for up to twenty-five years. The Westminster partners need to establish critical agreements in their early planning stages. The first agreement will determine the potential partners and project participants. Further agreements are needed for facility ownership, facility management, funding, archival policies and procedures, services, staffing, terms of custody, and access of the collections. Broad support and decisive plans and agreements are important if the City wishes to pursue grant funding and educational resources for the project.

Section 9: Issues and Questions

Developing any new facility challenges operations, procedures, and assumptions and requires rethinking the way institutions work. The prospects of sharing a facility and programs raise many issues and questions that the Westminster partners need to evaluate, discuss and resolve. Policies, procedures, rules and unwritten rules will suddenly be open to questions and debate. However, with good communication, the outcome will be new ideas and consensus for improvements and solutions that result in a successful partnership and a shared facility.

The City and its partners should begin to discuss and develop the common policies and procedures needed to guide the facility's design and operation. This section will help the partners to look ahead to the many questions that require discussion and decisions.

Section 10: Recommendations and Next Steps

All of the Westminster historical institutions participating in this project could benefit from an appropriate, permanent facility that is designed to archival standards and that meets the functional requirements for archives and special collections storage and access. Such a facility must support archival best practices, develop operations and programs that preserve the records of Westminster, and serve and involve the citizens of Westminster. A shared archival facility provides the partners the best opportunity to address collections preservation and provide access to their records.

There are a number of critical steps that must be taken early in the planning process for this project to move forward and to be successful. The first steps are to establish partners, terms of agreements, policies and procedures, the quantity of current and future records and collections to be stored and serviced, potential sites, and how the facility will be funded and managed. Once these agreements are developed, organized planning can move forward. Without participation from key partners, a community archive cannot move forward.

Good communication is a key element in the success of this partnership. Early planning meetings are important for building a common vision for the facility and its operations. Finally, there must be a strong and equal commitment from all of the partners.

Section 2: Project Overview

Westminster, Colorado has a long and rich history. Much of the records of its past can only be found in the City's official records and in other community organizations with archival holdings. Westminster's archival records span from early 1900's to the present, and they document the history of the city, its government, and its citizens.

Archival collections are permanent and irreplaceable and should be stored and accessed in a facility that provides them with the necessary care, security and storage that ensures their preservation and access. Without adequate housing these records are at risk of deterioration and may be difficult for researchers and citizens to find and use.

The City of Westminster, Colorado have taken the first steps to determine the requirements to establish a City Archives and evaluate the requirements and logistics to establish a shared archival facility for a city-wide repository for the City of Westminster's historical collections. The archival study is divided into two phases:

1. A report that details the quantitative and qualitative information about the City's archival holdings and their current and future requirements. A preliminary draft of this report was submitted on August 10, 2018.
2. A report that outlines the requirements and logistics to establish a shared archival facility for the City's records and the historical collections of community organizations.

In May 2018, the City of Westminster hired archival consultant Michele F. Pacifico to conduct the two archival studies. After background research, Michele made her first visit to Westminster from July 17 to July 19, 2018. She met with numerous City Departments and managers, the Westminster Public Library leadership staff, the Library Director of the Front Range College Library, community representatives, members of the Westminster Historical Society, and presented an overview of the project for the Westminster Historical Society at their monthly meeting.

The first report of this project, *Preliminary Program of Requirements for the City of Westminster Archives*, was issued in draft on August 10, 2018. It included the following:

- Considerations for a City Archives
 - Case Studies of other City Archives
 - Colorado and Outside Resources for grants and educational support for a City Archives
 - Funding Sources
- Preliminary Evaluation of City Holdings
- Storage Options for Archival Collections
- Archival Facility Requirements
- Archival Facility Design Standards
- Recommendations and Next Steps
- Appendices
 - Archival Facility Standards
 - Prohibited Materials List
 - Photographic Examples of Research Rooms, Processing Rooms, and Collections Storage Shelving and Equipment.

This is the second preliminary report of the project that outlines the requirements and considerations for the development of a shared archival facility that would include both the City's records and the historical collections of community organizations. Many of the same requirements and considerations addressed in the first report also apply to the development of a shared archival facility. As the project develops, both reports should be reviewed and evaluated together.

This preliminary report includes an overview of the consultant's meetings with potential Westminster contributing institutions, her preliminary findings on the historic collections to be considered for this project, an overview of what other institutions have done with shared facilities, and a discussion of the issues that must be considered in a public/private shared archival facility.

Section 3: Cooperation as an Archival Strategy

Sharing facilities is a growing trend in archives and other cultural organizations. As budgets shrink and administrators seek greater efficiency and a more effective return on their investment, shared staff and shared facilities are becoming more common.

Archival facilities are inherently expensive because of their specialized nature and the high costs for preservation environments, security, and storage equipment. Westminster is wise to be considering a shared Archives to preserve and make accessible the City's invaluable historical collections. With lower costs, a single shared facility offers energy efficiencies, an environmentally sustainable structure, cohesive access to the collections, and results in a transformative collaboration for the City's archival institutions.

A shared archival facility should consolidate current collections in one location and anticipate the ongoing needs for space and support services. Archives require spaces with specialized building systems that provide the controlled and secure environments necessary for the long-term preservation and access of the collections. There are many benefits to developing a shared archival facility for Westminster, including better preservation, access, security, and public programs. Efficiencies accomplished in one facility result in cost savings for the City and its historical institutions, and in a better future for the historical collections of Westminster.

Benefits of a Shared Facility for Westminster

A shared archival facility benefits the partners, the public, and the research community. The benefits can include:

Partners

- Ability to house the collections of Westminster in appropriately sized and environmentally precise storage spaces.
- Ability to perform processing, preservation, and digital operations to preserve and access the City's records under optimum conditions.
- Savings in site development, site servicing, and project administration costs.
- Greater operational and maintenance efficiencies for each partner institution.
- Improved security for the collections.
- Expanded and improved staff and volunteer processing and work spaces.
- Expanded and improved digitization facilities.
- Provisions for future expansion of the partner collections.

Public

- Dedicated spaces to educate and enhance the public's knowledge about Westminster history.
- Collaborative public programs.
- Ability to host research and training programs.

Researchers

- Expanded and enhanced access, services, and programs for Westminster's citizens and for researchers from around the country and the world.
- Central location to access Westminster's historical records.

- Central access to staff members with in-depth knowledge of the collections and their relationship to Westminster history.
- Improved research room facilities that offer reference materials, microfilm and copy equipment, and finding aids for multiple collections in one location.
- Access to Wi-Fi and to one or more on-site computer terminals.
- Coordinated online public access and outreach.

Cooperation among archival organizations and programs is a relatively recent phenomenon. Traditionally, archives/special collections are smaller in size and fewer in number compared to other cultural institutions such as libraries and museums. Archival collections contain unique and one-of-a-kind materials that inhibit archivists from developing common descriptive standards or physically sharing collections as libraries do through inter-library loan. Funding for archives facilities has been limited, and real or perceived boundaries in governance, staffing and funding has discouraged collaboration.

One of the earliest archival cooperative efforts was the initiation of Area Research Centers in Wisconsin. Developed during the 1960s, the state was divided into 14 regions headquartered in University Libraries and managed by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Each center was responsible for collecting state and local records, as well as private papers generated within their region, and promoting public education. This model was adopted by other Midwest states, including Ohio, Illinois, and Minnesota.

The development of the computer and the Internet had an enormous impact on archives and special collections and has been a catalyst toward greater cooperation. Nationally accepted descriptive standards and the adoption of cataloging descriptors were established to parallel the library community and ensure standardization for improved researcher access to collection information.

Digitization of collections and the delivery of collection material online have further encouraged cooperation among archival institutions. Bringing disparate collections together from multiple locations to a single website addressed concerns about collection preservation and the physical distance between collections. The resulting increase in the use of collections and researcher demand for online access has encouraged archives to move even faster in this direction.

The capability to commonly describe and digitize materials has encouraged a number of state and local efforts to combine collections online. History Colorado's portal provide virtual access to archival records and exhibits on Colorado state and local history. Some historical materials from Westminster are represented on this state-wide research website. <https://www.historycolorado.org>

The Denver Public Library's Western History/Genealogy Department collection of digitized photographs (formerly Photoswest) chronicles the people, places and events that shaped the settlement and growth of the Western United States. There are photographs of Westminster and community members on this website. <http://digital.denverlibrary.org/cdm/photographs/>

Other Colorado digital resources include:

- [Colorado Encyclopedia](#)
Colorado Humanities, in collaboration with Colorado State University Libraries, the University Press of Colorado, and History Colorado launched this scholar-reviewed resource. Features are developed to be relevant to a range of users--students, educators, scholars, researchers.

- Colorado Virtual Library (CVL)
The Colorado State Library and the Colorado library community provide access to the information resources of Colorado libraries and other cultural institutions. Through features such as Colorado Histories, historical narratives and digital collections such as those available from the Denver Public Library are linked.

An example of local digital cooperation is in Fort Collins, Colorado, which has a shared portal called Fort Collins History Connection. It is an online collaboration between the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery and the Poudre River Public Library District. The growth of such efforts has encouraged communication and cooperation within local archival communities and they are inspiring additional collective efforts. <https://history.fcgov.com/explore/city-history>

The growing need for space to preserve archival collections and make them accessible to researchers is a logical area for archives to develop cooperative efforts and leverage their resources. However, archives are often underfunded and many are not given high funding priority within their parent organizations. Often smaller size, modest positions, and larger fiscal pressures within the organizational structure make it difficult to advocate for an investment in specialized facilities. Governmental archival institutions, such as town and city archives, often seek to build their storage spaces or share space with another government agencies, and do not have as strong a history of sharing with non-government organizations.

A shared archival facility should consolidate current collections in one location and anticipate the ongoing needs for space and support services. Archives require facilities with specialized building systems that provide controlled and secure environments necessary for the long-term preservation and access of the collections. There are many benefits to developing a shared archival facility for Westminster including better preservation, access, security, and public programs. Efficiencies accomplished in one facility result in cost savings for the City and its historical institutions and in a better future for the historic records and collections of Westminster.

Creating a facility for archival collections from a variety of organizations that have their own sense of identity and institutional focus results in a process that quickly that meets a number of complicated issues: terms of agreements, custody and policy issues surrounding the storage and access of the records, the size and the sources of funding, finding an appropriate site, management of the facility, and operational policies. However, as the cooperative facilities and programs discussed in section 4 illustrate, this is a changing landscape and archival facility sharing has been particularly successful in the last two decades.

Section 4: Case Studies – Shared Archival Facilities

As part of the shared Westminster archival facility study, the City requested options and recommendations for the potential public-private partnerships. The City asked the project consultant to compile and review information on existing shared archival facilities that could serve as models for Westminster. The consultant was familiar with a number of shared facilities from past facilities planning work. However, she also sought out additional examples of city archival facilities more similar in scope to Westminster.

Representatives from archival programs were interviewed by telephone and email for this and other similar projects. The institutions were a mixture of public and private institutions. Some have shared facilities or programs, while others do not have any kind of partnerships. The consultant also researched other shared facility websites.

A useful resource for this project is *Cultural Heritage Collaborators: A Manual for Community Documentation* by Melissa Mannon. She offers strong arguments for collaboration to preserve town and city histories.¹

To illustrate the variety of cooperative arrangements, this section describes different cooperative situations. These examples provide insights into programs and facilities that are single and multi-functional, as well as programs with partners from the private sector, the public sector and a mixture of public and private cooperation.

The decision to share a facility or a portion of a facility varied from partner to partner. In some cases, it was driven by a town or city administrator or by an Historical Society board member. In other cases, there was a pre-existing relationship that brought the partners together, or a grant or endowment prompted cooperation.

As part of this early planning, Westminster should review these model partnerships and their agreements, and in some cases, consider doing their own follow-up conversations. In addition, a great deal could be learned by visiting other shared facilities to get a better understanding of the issues and challenges that must be addressed in a shared facility.

The Appendices to this report provide examples of a “Letter of Intent,” collection policies, and cooperative agreements.

Longmont Museum, CO

The Longmont Museum is a municipal museum and archives and is department of the City of Longmont, Colorado. Below is a summary from its website.

The Longmont Museum was founded in 1936. In 1940, the first exhibits opened to the public in the carriage house at the Callahan House. The Museum outgrew that space, and, in 1954, moved to the basement of the Memorial Building in Roosevelt Park.

¹ Mannon, Melissa. *Cultural Heritage Collaborators: A Manual for Community Documentation*. New Hampshire: ArchivesInfo Press. 2010.

The Museum became more officially structured with the incorporation of the Longmont Museum, Inc., on October 4, 1961.

In 1970, the Museum changed from a private, nonprofit organization to a department of the City of Longmont. Shortly after that, the Museum moved again, this time to a converted Sorenson garage at 3rd and Kimbark. The new space opened its doors on September 13, 1970. In 1973, the garage was torn down and the Museum moved to a converted City warehouse and garage at 375 Kimbark Street.

In November 1999, Longmont voters approved \$5 million in a bond issue to build a new museum. The bond issue was approved by over 77 percent of voters. The Longmont Museum & Cultural Center was further enhanced by a \$1 million gift from the Bill and Lila Stewart family. Now located at 400 Quail Road, just east of Main Street in south Longmont, the Longmont Museum invites visitors to come and see our regularly changing exhibits, experience our education programs, and enjoy the views from our Longs Peak Room tower.

In 2015, the Museum opened the Stewart Auditorium, an 11,000 square foot expansion made possible by a \$4.5 million capital campaign. The expansion includes the 250-seat Stewart auditorium and Cone-Shortall stage, the glass-walled Swan Atrium, and the Kaiser Permanente Education Center, which greatly expands the Museum's classroom space.

The Longmont Museum's collection includes more than 17,000 objects, 10,000 photographs, and thousands of documents relating to Longmont and the St. Vrain Valley. They document everyday life - farmers working in their fields, ordinary workers in local factories, traveling businessmen, and much more.

In 2017, the Museum completed construction on a new, permanent Collections Center for our 3-D historic artifacts. Relocation, rehousing, and recording of the full collection will take place over the next three years. This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The photograph and document collections are accessible to researchers - contact Curator of History Erik Mason for an appointment. At this time the majority of the Museum's three-dimensional collections are being moved into our new permanent storage Collections Center and are not accessible to research.

The Museum collects to both preserve for future generations, and to exhibit. While the Museum is committed to regular displays from our collections, like most museums we cannot display more than a small fraction of our collection at any one time.

Agreements and General Policies:

- The *Longmont Museum Strategic Plan, 2016-2019* identifies 7 primary goals including a future collections storage space, improved collection policies, exhibits and programs, and strategic partnerships.
- <https://www.longmontcolorado.gov/home/showdocument?id=17439>

Finding Aids:

- There is an online catalog using Past Perfect software
- There are collection specific archival finding aids available online.
- Some photographs are available on the Rocky Mountain Online Archive.
 - [Longmont Museum collections on the Rocky Mountain Online Archive](#)

Funding:

- Funded by the City and grants.

Museum Advisory Board:

- The Museum Advisory Board consists of nine (9) members who are appointed to serve three (3) year terms with the Museum Manager serving as an ex-officio member. The board's purpose is to advise City Council in the development and use of the municipal museum, the Longmont Museum

Staff:

- 14 staff members, including a director, curators, registrar and program managers.

Lessons Learned:

- A city supported municipal Archives and Museum in Colorado is achievable.
- Community support, donations, and grants are critical to advancing a municipal shared facility.
- Important to continually advocate for the Archives and communicate the importance of proper care of the City's historical collections.

Danvers Archival Center, MA

The Danvers Archival Center was started in the early 1970's to encourage cooperation among all institutions holding historical records in Danvers, Massachusetts. The Center was started with little formal documentation and more with the hope that with a proper facility and a supervising professional the records would follow. The Archival Center houses both Town records and private collections.

The Danvers Archival Center is a department of the Peabody Institute Library, the Town's public library. It was initially housed in the Danvers Historical Society Headquarters. In 1981, the Town appropriated funds for a renovation of the library that included a newly constructed archival facility. The Archival Center houses a reading room, a manuscript storage room, and a vault. It is secure, has climate-controlled storage and a fire protection system. (Danvers is now working to upgrade its fire protection system from a sprinkler system to a clean agent.)

Richard Trask has been the Archivist since the Center was founded and was instrumental in its formation. The idea emerged from his 1970 research paper titled: *A Plan for the Development of Danvers History*.

He is a department head of the Library and is also an appointed Assistant Town Clerk in order to have custody of municipal records.

Agreements and General Policies:

- Deeds of Gift used for donations
- Does accept permanent deposit/physical custody of some organizational records.
- Records on permanent deposit may be borrowed back for exhibits or special reasons.
- Reproduction and Copyright – all depositors abide by the same policy.

Collections Policy:

“The Danvers Archival Center is a repository for information relating to the history and development of the geographical area encompassing Salem Village and Danvers, Massachusetts. The Archival Center performs its mission by gathering and collection flat, informational materials through gifts and purchases, and through permanent deposits in cases where the material is owned by functioning corporate organizations.”

- Holds Town records, including Town Council, Fire and Police Departments.
- Keeps newspapers and microfilm – received a grant to microfilm newspapers and keeps originals stored off site.
- Collects materials relating to Witchcraft.
- Trask believes he has strict collection policy – he does not take active records.
- Does not take “questionable” materials.
- Collects only “significant” Danvers family collections
- Does not collect genealogical records – sends researchers to the Peabody.
- Businesses in Danvers generally do not participate.
- Does not compete with Historical Society – most paper records go to Archives; Historical Society does not have a reading room.

Finding Aids: There is a description of the holdings on its website.

<https://www.danverslibrary.org/archive/>

Funding:

- Archives has a budget as a Library Department.
- Archives Special Fund was established to accept monetary donations to acquire important manuscripts and books relating to the Center’s collection areas. The Archives does not receive the interest – only the principle.
- Generates funds from certified copies and copies of images.
- Able to purchase some historic materials from Library Trustees’ fund.

Staff:

- 1 paid Archivist – Richard Trask
- 1 paid Clerical – 6 hours a week (was cut from 8 hours a week)
- Volunteers – Trask finds it works best with one or two committed and trained volunteers

Lessons Learned:

- Trask believes it is important to only accession non-active records.
- It took some organizations years to participate. Have to patient and build up trust.
- After the Congregational Church put its records on permanent deposit, other churches followed their example.
- Even though some organizations offered solely physical custody to the Archives, as time progressed they saw the value and importance of keeping the records in a central repository. No organization has asked for the return of their records.
- Was critical for Trask to serve the Town in many capacities and continually advocate for its history and archives.

Many other town archives have looked at Danvers as a model for a Town Archives. Mannon cites Danvers as one her case studies in her book on community documentation. The 2017 annual report for Danvers cites some of the recent inquiries about their set up, policies and operations



Danvers Archival Center Reading Room

Lincoln Town Archival Center, MA

From the website:

Mission Statement

The mission of the Lincoln Town Archives is to collect, preserve, and provide access to the history and culture of the town of Lincoln, Massachusetts. Collections include municipal records, manuscripts, books, photographs, audio-visual materials, and other ephemera documenting the history of Lincoln from 1746 to the present.

About the Archives

The Lincoln Town Archives is a unique partnership between the Lincoln Library and the Office of the Town Clerk, governed pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding between the two entities and endorsed by Town Meeting in 2008. The collaboration has enabled an integration of the town's historic cultural, private and public documents into a single inventoried collection, housed at both Town Hall and the Library. Management responsibilities for the Town Archives are shared by Library Director, Barbara Myles, and Town Clerk, Susan F. Brooks. Archivist Marie Wasnock, on board since 2008, splits her time between the two sites.

Town Archives Advisory Council: advises the Archival Center. Below is information from their website, <https://www.lincolntown.org/695/Town-Archives>:

The Town Archives Advisory Council (TAAC) brings designees of each of twelve local historic preservation entities together twice yearly to seek opportunities to collaborate and amplify their individual efforts, as well as to learn from one another, and build a network of professional peers.

Mission Statement

The Town Archives Advisory Council's principal purposes are as follows:

- 1. To consider and make policy recommendations concerning the acquisition, preservation, and access to the town's collection of archival materials.*
- 2. To make practical recommendations concerning the integration of both private and public records into a single collection housed in part at the Library and in part at Town Offices.*
- 3. To engage in public education efforts to raise awareness of the existence, extent and value of the town's various public and private historical assets.*
- 4. To provide opportunities for productive collaboration among its members and their institutions.*

After severe water damage to the Library's vault, the Clerk was asked to participate in a long-range planning study for the Library and its historical records. Seeing mutual benefits, as both were charged with information management, the Librarian and Town Clerk jointly pitched the idea of a Town Archives. In 2007, Town Clerk Susan Brooks and Librarian Barbara Miles produced a PowerPoint presentation titled *Archival Survival* that they used to advocate for the formation of the Town Archives. They continue to work closely together to advocate and support the Town Archives and its successes.

The formation of the Advisory Council made up of representatives from Town organizations of historical stewardship, residents who are "archives and preservation professions, and professionals from the wider State region provided valuable support for the project. It was formed before any policies were in place but it was important to gain the trust of organizations who might feel threatened. There were other professional archivists on the Council who helped develop the early policies.

There is a formal MOU between the Office of the Town Clerk and the Library Board of Trustees, but the daily administration of the Town Archives is shared by the Clerk and the Librarian. Brooks and Miles are listed as Co-Directors and meet every month. The Librarian is appointed as an Assistant Town Clerk, with no addition of salary. There was a roving archivist at the start but in 2008, Marie Wasnock was hired as the part-time Archivist. She works out of both the Town Hall and the Library. Marie assisted with developing additional policies and procedures, and has worked to process the collections and create finding aids. The Archivist is knowledgeable about the State's records laws, follows the State's records schedules, and identifies critical Town records.

The town has renovated and expanded the vaults in both the Town Hall and in the Library.² As a joint facility, they have improved research and security, obtained funding for preservation projects, created finding aids, and have started a digital program to improve online access to the records.

Agreements and General Policies:

- Both Brooks and Miles felt strongly that that the Memorandum of Understanding be simple and straightforward.
- See Appendix B for Lincoln's Memorandum of Understanding.
- See Appendix B for policies on Use of Materials and Reproductions.

Collections Policy:

² For more information about the Lincoln Town Archives also see: <https://www.nedcc.org/newsletters/lincoln-town-archives>

- Lincoln’s collection policy is clear about what records it will consider for inclusion in the archives.
- Lincoln’s Gifts Policy requires that all rights to donated collections are turned over to the Archives. It does not allow for permanent deposit or physical custody.
- See Appendix B for the Collections and Deaccessioning policies and the Deed of Gift.

Finding Aids:

- There are finding aids to the collections that are available online and in paper copies in the Archives.
- In addition, Town Archives is in the process of adding searchable local historical items to the [Internet Archive](#) and [Digital Commonwealth](#).

Funding:

- Early years - was a line item in the budget.
- MOU – semi-annual meeting between the Clerk’s office and the Library Trustees to set the budget. Now has its own department budget.
- Received grants for an assessment and roving archivist early in the project.
- Used Community Preservation Act and its surtax model to raise funds for its joint archives project.

Staff:

- 1 paid part-time Archivist
- Co-Directors: Town Clerk and Librarian

Lessons Learned:

- “Key to success – all participants were witness and had a voice.”
- Formation of Advisory Council of locals and professionals was critical to success and continues to provide a network and an opportunity to coordinate programs on local history– meets 2 times/annually.
- Important to continually advocate for the Archives and communicate the importance of proper care of the Town’s historical records.
- Important to collaborate with the Historical Society and all other town organizations.
- Has a strict collection policy – Donors cannot have “free access” to records, especially since public funds are being used for preservation and processing. The Archives is willing to loan materials for specific purposes and for specific periods of time. (This policy has kept some Town organizations from donating their records.)
- Volunteers must abide by the processing policies of the Archivist.



The Town Offices vault houses municipal records such as the 1921 General Register of Voters – Women Only, a World War Two ration book, and a letter from President John F. Kennedy concerning the establishment of Minute Man National Historical Park.

Lincoln Town Archives, Lincoln, MA

The Library vault before renovation.

The Lincoln Public Library vault after renovation and installation of compact shelving.



Lexington Archives, MA

The Town of Lexington currently does not have a shared archives facility, although a new “Archives Center” for the Historical Society has been planned and the exterior design has been developed. Below is the email that I received from the Archivist at the Lexington Historical Society.

“As far as the new archival building, we are in a bit of a holding pattern due to legal concerns, so we aren't totally sure what the timeline on that facility will look like. I can also tell you that in Lexington we have archives at the Historical Society with us, we have a town archivist, and we have some archival materials in the town library. We all overlap a bit, but all kind of have our own niche.”

Lexington has a large historical society and currently stores its records in a climate-controlled storage area in the basement of a historical house. The storage area is almost full. The proposed new facility will be an addition to the historic tavern and will include climate-controlled storage on 2 floors, a volunteer/intern processing room and a public research space on the first floor. The proposed building will house “non-governmental historic records.”

Meanwhile, the Town of Lexington is sharing its records information digitally with a shared portal called [Lexingtonheritage.org](http://lexingtonheritage.org) that is sponsored by the Town. *“The Lexington Heritage Resources portal provides virtual access to a selection of records and information regarding Lexington’s history. These records come from the three main repositories in the town – the Town of Lexington Archives, the Cary Memorial Library, and the Lexington Historical Society Archives.”* <http://lexingtonheritage.org>

Lessons Learned:

- Historical Society’s Deed of Gift provides the Society with ownership of all donations.
- The Deed of Gift provides a clause to scan the originals and keep the copyright, with the originals being returned to the owner. (example is WWII family photos)

Winchester Archival Center, MA

The Winchester Archival Center opened in 1975. It is a collaboration of the Winchester Historical Society, the Winchester Public Library, and the Winchester Town government. It is a department of the Town.

The Archival Center does not hold the official records of the Town – they remain under the care of the Town Clerk. However, it does take in select deaccessioned records of the Town Clerk. Other town departments such as the Building Department keep their own records. In addition, art and artifacts are held by the Winchester Historical Society. There is an Archives Advisory Committee consisting of three people.

There was discussion of creating a climate controlled, secure facility for the Town and Historical Society records in an historic structure, but the costs were too high. The records are currently stored in a vault in the Town Hall.

The mission statement from its website: <https://www.winchester.us/130/Archival-Center>

Mission

Collect and preserve materials that document all aspects of Winchester history and the lives of its residents

Assist research into Winchester history by facilitating public access to the information contained within the collections

Provide historical information to other municipal departments and town officials

Collaborate with the public library, Town Clerk, Historical Society, and Historical Commission in promoting community awareness and participation in documenting local history.

Agreements and General Policies:

- Donors must abide by reproduction and copyright provisions.
- Local organizations are able to add the capability to check out documents in the future by using the “restrictions” line on the Deed of Gift.
- See Appendix C for Winchester’s Deed of Gift and Reproduction forms.

Collections Policy:

“Our collections are the result of generous donations from individuals, organizations, and businesses. Gifts relating to local history are gladly received, as are electronic copies of scanned photos or documents.”

- Photographs go to the Archives.
- Objects go to the Historical Society.
- See Appendix C for Winchester’s Collections Policy.

Finding Aids:

- The Winchester Archival Center has an online catalog using Past Perfect.
- Some collections are described at the item level while others have a general description.

Funding:

- Originally salary was split between the Historical Society and the Town.

- Is now funded by the Town, and the Archivist reports to the Assistant Town Manager.
- Established a revolving fund from monies earned through reproductions and the sale of publications. Uses money earned to buy historical items from eBay or similar sites.
- Has considered charging for genealogical research.
- Received grant money to purchase the Past Perfect software.

Below are summaries of the other grants received for the Winchester historical records programs.

2003: Massachusetts Historic Records Advisory Board. \$5000

- *To the Town of Winchester for a survey of the archival collections in Town Hall, Sanborn House, and Library; also training for volunteers and staff in how to organize and catalog archives.*

2005: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Preservation Planning Grant (MHRAB). \$15,000, matched by \$15,000 from the Town of Winchester and \$15,000 from the Winchester Historical Society

- *To the Town of Winchester for a Feasibility Study for the Reuse of the Sanborn House and Grounds. [was to consider adapting the historic building for use by the Historical Society].*

2005: National Endowment for the Humanities Preservation Assistance Grant. \$6,000

- *To the Town of Winchester to conduct preservation needs assessment of collections in the Archival Center, Town Hall, Library, and Sanborn House. [This also provided a consultant and for a draft manual to be prepared by the Archivist.]*

2009: Enka Society. \$5,000

- *To train Winchester organizations in archival preservation and management.*

2011: National Endowment for the Humanities, Sustaining Cultural Heritage Collections Planning Grant, \$35,000

- *In collaboration with the Town of Winchester*
- *To develop plans for archival storage and a history study center in the basement of the Sanborn House, using new technologies for sustainable architecture and applying new standards for storage of heritage collections.*
- *The 2011 NEH grant deals specifically with the feasibility of putting a Town Archives, meeting state requirements for permanent local records, in the basement of the Sanborn House. The conclusion was that it would be prohibitively expensive. It does provide information about guidelines to state requirements for public access.*

Staff:

- 1 paid part-time Archivist (12 hours/week)

Lessons Learned:

- Online catalog helps with the advocacy for the Archives.
- Grant money to train volunteers in archival standards and techniques was helpful in processing and in allowing more citizens to learn the importance of archives.
- Possibility that when Archivist retires the Town Clerk will take over administration of the Archives.

- Archivist spends too much time helping with genealogy and has consider charging a fee for lengthy research tasks.

Ottawa City Archives, Ottawa Canada

The Ottawa City Archives shares its facility with the Ottawa City Library Distribution and Cataloging Departments. In addition, it offers storage space, processing spaces, and reference services to “partner archives” and “partner libraries,” provides workspaces for the Friends of the Archives, and shares online collections with other Ottawa cultural institutions. <https://ottawa.ca/en/residents/arts-heritage-and-culture/city-ottawa-archives>

Below is a summary of the institutions sharing with the Ottawa City Archives.

1. Ottawa City Library
2. Partner Archives (since 1999)
 - United Church Archives
 - Township Archives
 - Rideau Township Historical Society
3. Examples: Partner Libraries (stored and serviced in reference room; some archival holding included with collections)
 - Ottawa Genealogical Society, Ottawa Chapter
 - United Empire Loyalists, Ottawa Chapter
 - British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa
 - C. Robert Craig Memorial Library
4. Friends of Archives: Volunteers; have workstations in archives portion of joint facility.
5. Shares online collections with Ottawa Museum Network – OMAC – Ottawa Museums and Archives Collections- city archives, community archives, and museum records.

Agreements: See Appendix D

- Partners have 90 day withdraw clause. The Franco/Ontarian Society withdrew its records when it merged with the French Genealogical society and set up its own cultural center.

Staffing for Partners:

- Separate staffs for Archives and Library
- Township Archives: Ottawa “community archivist” works with them 1 day per week
- United Church Archives – private; pays Archivist to work on collections
- Rideau Historical: Ottawa City Archives is the official repository for largest historical society: 1 FTE works on private sector side

Lessons Learned

- Communication is critical for long-term operations.
- Need to consider the budget as more community institutions request space and services. Ottawa City Archives is now shifting away from taking on additional partner archives because of budget concerns.



Ottawa City Archives Archival Storage



Ottawa City Archives Processing

College of Charleston Library/South Carolina Historical Society

While this example is not a shared city archives, it has some useful lessons for the Westminster project. The South Carolina Historical Society's (SCHS) Manuscript Collections joined the College of Charleston's (COC) Special Collections Department in January 2015. The SCHS's 1855 historic Fireproof Building lacked space and could not be retrofitted for a modern heating, air conditioning and ventilation system, which prompted the development of a shared manuscript repository and research room.

The public/private partnership resulted in the move of all the SCHS's processed collections and its reference staff to the recently constructed and remodeled college library. Prior to the move, the two institutions shared a common collection database for their special collections materials.

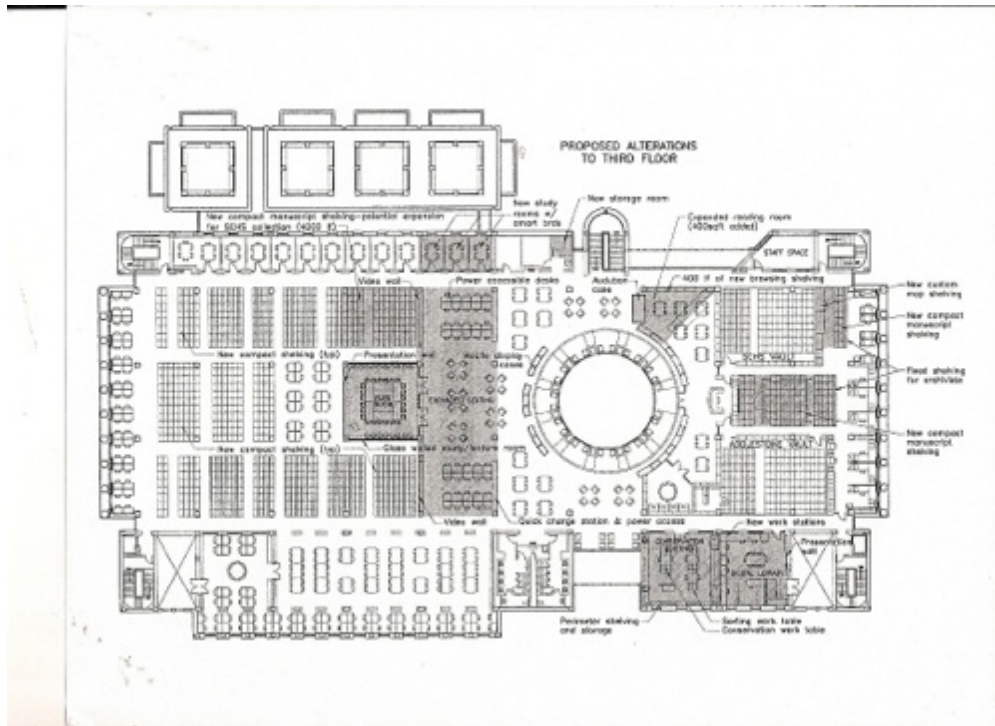
<https://library.cofc.edu>

<https://schistory.org/archives/>

Construction and On-Going Costs:

In negotiations between the SCHS and the College of Charleston, the college agreed to carry out extensive renovations to the Library's Special Collections area. This included an expansion of the research room, office cubicles for 4 SCHS staff and 2 volunteers, and a vault that can store 5,000 cubic feet of records. The costs of the building renovations were borne by the college. In return, the SCHS agreed to donate \$50,000 annually for a total of \$500,000 to the College Foundation for a fund to support the COC library. In addition, the SCHS also paid \$40,000 for supplies, paid for their move preparation, and paid \$40,000 for the move.

The COC provides all copiers that are used in the library and retains all copying income. The SCHS and the library each do their own scanning and retain that income in their own individual accounts.



Renovation Plan for COS Special Coll.

Agreements: See Appendix D

- There is a written agreement outlining operations, renovation requirements, expectations, and costs. The agreement is for a twenty-five-year period but can be cancelled earlier.

Administration:

- The College of Charleston’s Special Collection and the SCHS staffs share space but remain separate entities, each reporting to their own administration.
 - The head of Special Collections supervises the college staff, while the SCHS reference archivist leads the SCHS staff. They see each other and communicate regularly.
- The groups have both separate and joint staff meetings.
- The SCHS staff’s administration is located outside the library building requiring travel to go to institution-wide meetings.
- Sometimes the SCHS staff is called upon to assist in the headquarter SCHS building.
- The COC-SCHS partnership is just over a year old but appears to be succeeding.
 - SCHS staff felt that the college staff was very welcoming and that the two collections complement each other in subject matter and time periods.

Operations:

- The research room desk schedule is designed to have one person from each partner on duty at all times.
 - The addition of SCHS collections has significantly increased the number of researchers using the library.

- SCHS collections are stored in a separate vault in the library's storage area. However, staff from either institution may pull collections from both the college and the SCHS vault during research room hours.
- When the two programs were brought together, the SCHS had more stringent research room rules and these were accepted and adopted by the library. However, the library allowed researchers to copy materials using a cellphone and the SCHS accepted this policy into their procedures.
- All copying is done on the library's copying machines, with income going to the college. Each unit does its own scanning of materials and charges different rates.
- The SCHS has access to a number of library areas.
 - They can use the library meeting and teaching rooms for staff meetings and for introducing groups of researchers to their collections.
 - The SCHS staff has access to the Library's digitization lab to digitizing materials for researchers or to copy materials for online projects.
 - The SCHS can use the library loading dock.
- The SCHS has expanded their staffing capacity by employing COC student interns.
- The COC and the SCHS have a shared database of their collections, which allows researchers to easily access both collections in a single location.
- The College's Special Collections has a small exhibit space and it provides the SCHS with three annual exhibit time periods.

Cooperation Issues and Lessons Learned:

- There is a high level of cooperation between the two institutions and staff comments were very positive about the arrangements.
- There was some collection familiarity before the co-location as the two partners had been working together on a common database and cooperative digitization projects.
- Although the SCHS staff works in the college library, they are not college employees. As a result, they do not have staff parking privileges and must either park off-campus or pay daily parking fees. This can result in long and time-consuming walks, especially when they are called to larger staff meetings at the SCHS headquarters buildings.
 - Also, the SCHS mail is delivered to their headquarters building resulting in delayed deliveries.
- The transition to a shared space has gone smoothly.
 - A willingness to cooperate and communicate regularly has made this a positive experience benefiting both partners.

Section 5: Potential Partners/Potential Collections

General

This section summarizes the findings to date about the potential partner's archival collections for the City of Westminster. Complete information about holdings will be determined later in the study after the project partners' participation has been confirmed with Letter of Intent.

Collection Policies – Impact on Size and Operations of Facility

It is presumed that all City departments will participate and eventually have their historical records stored in the contemplated archival facility. An overview and discussion of the holding of the City's archives are discussed in the report, *Preliminary Program of Requirements for the City of Westminster Archives*. While the consultant viewed the holdings of some of the potential partners, she did not inventory the holdings or provide collections' estimates during this initial review.

Each partner institution holds a variety of archival records types, some of which require special storage equipment and environmental conditions. Most of the potential partners' collection storage areas are too small and at capacity, or are in conditions not conducive for archival preservation. Some have no room to take in additional records. Some collections are stored offsite or in individuals' homes. Other archival records are still in City department spaces or are unknown. A next step in the planning process for a shared archival facility is to determine the types and quantities of collections that would be stored in a future shared facility.

Archives use digitization as a tool to improve access. However, digitization does not eliminate the need to keep and store original archival records. Furthermore, the preparation complexities and the high costs to digitize allow only a small portion of records to be digitized. Currently only a small amount of any of the city's historical collections has been digitized.

Ideally collections are stored in environmental conditions that match their media type. For example, black and white photographs will last longer in cooler conditions than is necessary for paper records, while color film can best be preserved in cold storage.

The potential collections include a wide range of materials:

- Textual records
- Volumes and Ledgers
- Books and pamphlets
- Oversized records (maps, architectural drawings, blueprints, etc.)
- Black and white photographic prints, slides, film, glass plate negatives
- Color photographic prints, slides, and film
- Magnetic tapes, glass plates, DVDs, etc.
- Digital/Electronic records
- Art/Paintings
- 3D Artifacts
- Textiles
- Furniture

As part of its future planning, the City will need to establish a Collection Policy that defines the scope of a shared facility. The future collection policy directly effects the size of the archival holdings and the operation and staffing of the facility. It is presumed that all City departments' historical records and the 3D artifacts not on display will be housed in the City Archives and be supported financially and operationally by the City. It is still not decided what the collection policy scope will be for the collections of the community organizations and their varied holdings. Some of the City's organizations hold both archival records and museum-type collections that can require oversized storage shelving and cabinets, and different processing and storage conditions. The collection policy issue is further complicated by the future provisions regarding deeds of gifts, ownership, and access.

The Westminster Historical Society presents the best example of the issues surrounding a shared public/private archives and it has the largest collections to consider for participation. The Society was initially not interested in exploring a shared archival facility, but has recently expressed a willingness to continue into explorations of a jointly operated archives. If the Society were to participate in a community archive in the future, its vast holdings of 3D objects would be a complicating issue because of the quantity, size and variety of objects, including furniture, tools, art, ceramics, dolls, and textiles. Decisions would have to be made on whether the new shared facility stores and provides access to the more traditional archival holdings of textual and electronic records or whether it will plan for all collections. It raises important decisions regarding funding, copyright, and insurance.

If this project progresses and the Westminster Historical Society is interested in partnering with the City, the City must determine if the new archival facility will have the capacity to accept and/or store some or all of the Society's object collections (or for any other community organization), and the legal arrangements that accompany that decision. There are many possible considerations including:

- The City allows the Museum to store some of its collections in the future growth space established within the archival facility. This would be courtesy storage with a loan agreement, and the archives staff would not be responsible for processing or managing the collections. When needed for new accessions the Society would have to move its collections out of the Archives.
- "Rent" storage space to the Society if they do not wish to deed the museum collection materials.

Potential Partners/Collections

In addition to reviewing many of the records of the City, the consultant reviewed the collections of the Westminster Historical Society and the Front Range College Library. She also met with community representatives Marilyn Flachman, Bill Christopher and Michele Kelley to discuss the city's historical collections and review a 2013 planning report, *Westminster History Center*, completed by Denver City Restorations. This report proposed a phased project whereby the Adams County School District 50 would share the DeSpain building with the Westminster Historical Society to create a joint venture for a Westminster History Center that would provide archival storage and community history programs.

Other city collections and institutions that could be considered for inclusion were determined during discussions and with a review of their websites.

1. City of Westminster Records

An overview and discussion of the holding of the City's records are discussed in the report, *Preliminary Program of Requirements for the City of Westminster Archives*.

2. Westminster Historical Society

The Westminster Historical Society (WHS) is a private non-profit organization founded in 1962 *to promote and preserve local Westminster history*. The Society maintains historical materials relating to the City of Westminster, assists researchers, maintains a museum facility in the Bowles House, and assists with preservation planning for the City's historic buildings.

- The Bowles House Museum is located in Westminster, Colorado at **3924 West 72nd Avenue**.
- The Westminster History Center is located at **7200 Lowell Boulevard**.
- The Westminster Historical Society office is located at **4350 W. 76th Avenue**.

Finding Aids:

Records and objects are cataloged in Past Perfect. Information can be accessed on-line through the WHS website. Cataloging of WHS holdings is ongoing using volunteers.

<https://westminster.pastperfectonline.com>

The Museums' holdings of 3D objects are a complicating issue because of the quantity, size and variety of objects. These objects potentially require different environmental conditions and oversized storage shelving and cabinets. As the project progresses, the City must determine if the new archival facility will have the capacity to store some or all of the Museum's objects and artifact collections.

Archival Records/Museum Collections – Westminster History Center:

The archival records and some museum collections of the WHS are primarily stored at the Westminster History Center, a City owned building. Records are stored on shelves, cabinets, bookcases, and file cabinets. Objects are stored on the floor and on shelves in basement store rooms. Some records are processed and stored in archival boxes. Other materials are unprocessed. The building is air conditioned and provides some climate controls.

Other archival records are held in the "Ambulance Building" on 76th Avenue in the WHS offices. This building is also owned by the City and does not have climate controls.

Records dating from 1800's include:

- Documents regarding early City institutions, City administration, City businesses, City properties, local citizens, community activities, schools, churches, etc.

Record types include:

- Textual records
- Volumes and Ledgers
- Books and pamphlets
- Oversized records
- Photographs
- 3D Artifacts





Museum Collections- Bowles House:

Many of the WHS museum collections are exhibited in the 1871 Bowles House and include a wide variety of framed photographs and art, 3D objects, textiles, and furniture. Collections are stored on all floors of the house. The historic house is owned by the city and operated by the WHS. It has no fire protection and no set environmental conditions.

Collections include:

- Photographs and Paintings
- Wood furniture
- Metal Pots and Tools
- Dolls and Doll House
- Ceramics
- Textiles
- Pump Organ
- Phonograph
- Signs
- Fossils





Museum Collections - Schoenberg Farm:

The WHS also stores 3D collections in the Schoenberg Farm, owned by the city. It has no fire protection and no set environmental conditions.





3. Front Range College Library and Archives

Front Range College stores its college archives in the Library. Library Director, Jeff Wahl, provided an overview. Front Range's archival records date back to the 1960's and include:

- administrative records
- photographs
- some faculty papers

The college is in the process of digitizing its archival records. With the city's history of collaboration with Front Range College, it would be a natural progression to also cooperate on future archival programs.

Other Community Organizations – not reviewed to date

There are a number of other City organizations whose records and collections have not been reviewed and could be considered for inclusion in a future archival facility. Included are:

1. Westminster Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber advocates business growth and development and supports those programs that make this city an attractive choice for both new and relocating companies, opportunities and more! A single voice can go unheard. However, the collective, united voice of the Chamber is effective and beneficial to business.

2. Westminster Rotary

Rotary is an organization of business and professional leaders united worldwide who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world.

3. Westminster Legacy Foundation

Established as a community foundation in 2001, the Westminster Legacy Foundation serves as the leader, catalyst and resource for philanthropy in our community. We provide donors with flexible means of making gifts and bequests to support the charitable causes that make the City of Westminster an outstanding community in which to live, work and play.

4. Collections held by private citizens

- Westminster Window
- Background research materials for history book on the City of Westminster

Section 6: Characteristics of Shared Facilities

Leadership and Vision

Shared facilities require enlightened leadership and a shared vision. Building partnerships occur for a variety of reasons. They can be benefactor's vision, come from common needs, or result from close working relationships where one partner can offer space in return for expanded collections that support a common mission. To be successful, leadership and a common vision are essential.

Mannon makes the argument in her book on Community archives that to be a successful collaborative "one individual must take responsibility to be the driving force toward initial development."³ The successful case studies discussed in Section 5 were initiated and developed by a few dedicated individuals who were good communicators and who responded to the concerns of the different potential partners.

Joint projects take effort, good communication and well-defined goals. The potential partners in Westminster should begin to examine how a joint facility will affect their mission, collections, and audiences. Agreement and acceptance of a common vision will assist each of the partners to gain support from the City leaders, parent organizations, boards, staff, friends, and the public.

A project of this size and duration requires commitment at all levels. There will be additional work, new responsibilities and stress. While it is a wonderful outcome when the facility is completed, it can be a long process and strong and united leadership group is essential. The leadership must be prepared to support their staffs and ensure that they have time to give needed attention to a collaborative archival project.

To begin the collaborative process, it is essential to determine the committed partners for a future facility and to develop a united leadership group, a "Steering Committee" or "Advisory Committee" that can determine the project's overall scope and parameters. A cohesive steering committee of City and community representatives can communicate the vision, establish funding strategies, and determine the best ways to garner legislative and public support.

Sections 7, 8 and 9 discuss in more detail potential agreements, issues and questions to be addressed, and the next steps to guide the process.

Recommendation: Establish a "Steering Committee" or "Advisory Committee" to begin the discussions and planning for a shared archival facility.

Common Needs

Archival building partnerships generally grow out of common needs. With an appropriate facility and staff, archives can gain improved storage conditions, expanded collection use, future expansion space, and access to a wider range of services such as digitization, conservation, exhibits, and public programs. Partnerships seek tangible benefits, shared resources, collaborative programs, and synergies to enhance

³ Mannon, p. 50

shared and individual programs. A shared building offers the partners one project with many benefits and cost savings.

In Westminster there is a need for expanded and improved storage and better access to the City's archival collections. With complimentary collections and a common location, a shared facility could benefit and enhance all the institutions. Whether its mission is a building to improve storage and access, to create a comprehensive Westminster History Center, or a hybrid facility that falls in-between, the partners can maintain their individual institutional identities while improving common needs.

Communication

While the common needs are evident, the partners have diverse backgrounds and experiences. Potential partners include City government agencies, private non-profits organizations, churches and synagogues, and private citizens. Their structural differences and the resulting experiences and viewpoints will play a role in building a cohesive group tasked with planning and executing the design and operation of a shared facility. Creating a new facility requires many decisions, and getting input and resolution from different constituencies adds time and complexity to the process. Structured management and organized communication are essential to a well-managed building project.

To be successful, the partners need to focus on communication, planning, and their joint mission. Initial meetings should begin to formulate a common vision and identify critical areas of agreement and disagreement. Letters of Intent should be signed by all City institutions that are interested in moving forward with the archives project.

Partner communication should be encouraged at all levels and should begin long before the facility is planned, built and occupied. As the project progresses, the partners should hold regular meetings and share decisions and news on a regular basis. In-person meetings build support and encourage camaraderie. However, regular electronic communication is easy and also valuable. Bulletins, newsletters, and minutes of meetings relay information immediately to all participants and avoid rumors and misinformation.

Recommendation: Begin the planning process with dedicated leadership, a common mission, and enhanced communications.

Early Planning

It may be useful to start the planning process with facilitated meetings that solicited and share all ideas and concerns without censure. A "charrette," or early planning workshop, is an inclusive, holistic and integrated approach involving all of the building's stakeholders at the beginning of the process. A "charrette" brings the key players together for a collective brainstorming session that clearly articulates the goals, major issues, and required decisions. It establishes follow up responsibilities, creates a time line, and identifies the keeper of the process. A neutral facilitator can assist the partners in seeking common solutions and outcomes.

Charrette: It's all about learning.

- Huddle Up Early
- Mutual Authors

- All participants are ACTIVE and key players
- Collaborative Brainstorming
 - Expose collective ideas and solutions at the beginning of the planning process
 - Identify the “form shapers” – the major factors that influence the project
 - Establish consensus on the objectives
 - Set the goals and strategies
- Identify decisions and responsibilities
- Create the time line – outline the steps
- Identify the keeper of the process

The most important lesson learned from the consultant’s interviews with other shared archival facility staff was the value and importance of early planning. Collaboration, respect and commitment should take place at all organizational levels and must be modeled by the institutional leaders.

Recommendation: Begin the planning process with a facilitated charrette.

Section 7: Sharing Facility Spaces

The companion report to the Westminster archival study project, *Preliminary Program of Requirements for the City of Westminster Archives* and its *Appendices* provide detailed descriptions and photographic examples of the storage options for archival collections, archival facility requirements, and archival facility design standards. These discussions and descriptions also apply to a shared or joint archival facility and will not be repeated in this report.

All archival facilities have primary spaces whether they are for a single institution or a shared facility. Spaces include:

- Public spaces including lobby and security/reception
 - Multi-purpose room (for meetings, training, educational programs)
 - Exhibit space(s)
- Research Room(s)
- Processing Rooms
- Imaging/Digital Laboratory
- Conservation Laboratory
- Archival Supply and Disaster Preparedness Supplies
- Collections Storage
- Administration/Office Area(s)
 - Break Room
- Receiving Area/Loading Dock

During planning, the details of how the facility is used and shared needs to be determined and codified in agreements.

Public Spaces

The goal of a shared building is to develop efficiencies and tangible benefits for all the partners. Certain building areas lend themselves to collective use. Generally, the public spaces are easy to share among archival and museum institutions.

Public spaces include:

- Lobby/Reception
 - Security/reception desk
 - Exhibit gallery(s)
 - Visitor services/gift shop
 - Multi-use meeting space(s)
 - Catering kitchen
 - Vending area
 - Researcher/patron lockers/lounge
 - Public restrooms



Ex: Exhibit Gallery

- The Research Center
 - Registration/Consultation
 - Finding Aids/Public Computer Terminals for Finding Aids and Digital Records
 - Research Room - Main Research Room
 - Research Room Central Desk
 - Microfilm Research/AV Research
 - Reference Library
 - Scanners & Photocopiers
 - Holding Area for Carts of Records



Ex: Research Room

Non-Public Spaces

There are a variety of non-public spaces that can and ought to be shared within an archival building. Some of the critical areas are described below.

Non-Public shared spaces include:

- Records and Collections Storage
- Collections Processing
- Imaging/Digital Laboratory
- Conservation Laboratory
- Exhibit preparation/storage
- Offices and Administration
 - Offices
 - Conference room
 - Files room
 - Quiet room
 - Staff lounge/lockers
- Records and Material Receiving
 - Dock management office
 - Receiving room
 - Secure Isolation/Quarantine room
 - Building supply and janitor storage
 - Trash/recycle room
 - Freight elevator(s) if multi-story building
 - Washer/dryer
 - Restroom
- Systems and support, including the central plant

Recommendation: Share the public and non-public building spaces that offer efficient collective use.

Records and Collections Storage

Records and collection storage areas are critical areas of any archival building and house collections of irreplaceable value. Archival and museum collections are stored by media-type in optimum environmental conditions with controlled security. These high value materials are at risk for theft, destruction, and alteration and consequently storage access is traditionally limited to authorized staff.

Some partners have concerns about sharing collection storage spaces in a shared facility. However, maintaining separate storage spaces for each institution will significantly increase the facility's size and construction costs. In addition, the long-term operational, energy, and equipment costs will be higher with decreased efficiencies.

It is possible for each partner's collections to remain separate and secure from the other institutional collections. However, there are valuable efficiencies that are possible if all "like" materials are stored in the same environmental conditions in larger shared storage (or stack) areas. Further discussion is necessary to determine the best solution for Westminster's needs in a shared archival facility.

There are design solutions that can accommodate discrete and secure collections within one stack area. Solutions include:

- If using fixed shelving, open “caged” fencing can be used to separate each institution’s collections.
- If using electric powered compact mobile shelving, each collection’s modules can be locked and accessed using the facility’s security access system (i.e. card readers).
- Locked cabinets or a vault can be used for smaller valuable or restricted materials.



Ex: Collections Storage

Westminster should continue to review alternatives as the facility planning progresses, shelving equipment is selected, and operations are finalized. Security consultants may have additional suggestions or alternatives for securing collections with different owners. As archives thefts at single tenant buildings have shown, archivists must always be vigilant. There is no evidence, however, that collections will be safer with single tenant storage areas. If good security systems are in place and staff are appropriately vetted and trained, shared storage areas can be successful. In all cases, different storage and security alternatives should always be balanced against overall building, maintenance and operational costs.

Recommendation: Share records and collections storage areas. Take appropriate security and identification measures to delineate and protect each partner’s collections.

Collections Processing

Processing rooms provide secure workspaces separate from collections storage and office areas. Staff can work individually or in groups to examine, sort, arrange, rehouse and describe archival materials. These rooms are flexible spaces that can be rearranged depending on project size, complexity and processing needs. Some materials may be stored in processing rooms for extended periods of time.

Arguments similar to those for shared storage can be made for shared processing rooms. Similarly, cost savings as well as greater efficiencies can be achieved with shared records processing areas. Larger spaces allow for efficient air handling systems, fewer doors to secure, and can provide more flexibility for future uses. One option to consider is to provide smaller processing spaces for individual collections use and one or more larger spaces for shared use. At a minimum, cost savings can be gained with uniform design and equipment purchases.





Ex: Collections Processing/Scanning

Recommendation: Consider ways to share processing spaces such as providing discrete areas within larger processing spaces. Explore ways of achieving greater efficiencies while still ensuring collections' security.

Imaging/Digital Lab

The preservation-imaging lab provides space for staff to digitize archival records for preservation and researcher access. Staff work with original records at digitizing stations that are similar in size to a small office workstation, and security and environmental conditions are the same as processing rooms. This

kind of operation is easily shared, as each digitizing station can be discrete and individualized for each partner's equipment and work needs. In addition, one imaging lab allows for sharing expensive equipment and promotes future cooperative projects.

Recommendation: Share a preservation imaging lab. Provide partners with their own digitization station(s) within the shared space. Design with flexibility for shared equipment and joint projects.



Ex: Digital Workstation

Offices and Administration

The benefits of shared office space include greater communication among partner staff members, efficient use of the building space, less costly office space, and less duplication of office equipment and office support spaces.

Some of the partners may prefer that their office space remains unified and discrete. There are a number of design solutions that can be offered to provide privacy and confidentiality while sharing an office suite. For example, an open office with cubicles could be arranged and separated by partner groups. Individual offices and meeting rooms could provide privacy for managers and for group meetings. Lockable cabinets or rooms can secure confidential records and office supplies.

Recommendation: Share an administrative office suite. Explore alternatives that provide a mixture of efficiency and security for institutional administration and information.

Section 8: Agreements and Organizational Planning

The consultant's survey of shared archival facilities uncovered a variety of agreements. They generally reflected the relationship of the partners and the types of records and spaces being shared. The Westminster partners need to establish critical agreements in their early planning stages. Letters of Intent, Memorandums of Understanding, and any other needed Agreements should be developed for the archival facility's management, operations, collections, and research policies. See Appendix B and D for copies of sample agreements.

Partnership/Letter of Intent

The first and most critical decision will be to determine those partners that are ready commit to pursuing and participating in a shared facility for Westminster's historic collections. The partnerships should be defined and resolved before moving forward with detailed requirements, cost estimates, site selection, and design/construction. As the first step in Westminster's Archival study, Letters of Intent (LOI) should be drafted and signed. Those partners interested in moving forward with the project will sign the Letters. Below is a sample LOI for this project. A copy also appears in Appendix A.

Recommendation: Develop and finalize the list of partners who are interested in sharing a Westminster archival facility. Only proceed if list of partners warrants it.

Draft Letter of Intent – Westminster Archival Facility Project

Date:

To: Organization Name

Subject: Westminster Archival Facility – Letter of Intent

Dear xx:

Westminster has a long and rich history. Much of the record of the City's past can only be found in the records held by the City Clerk and other City departments, the Westminster Historical Society, and in other City organizations with historical collections. However, without adequate housing those records are at risk of deterioration and may be hard for researchers to find and to use.

Archival and special collections are permanent and irreplaceable and should be stored and accessed in facilities that provide them with the necessary care, security and storage that ensures their preservation and access. Without adequate housing these records are at risk of deterioration and may be difficult for researchers to find and use.

Each of the potential partner archives/museum institutions in Westminster are in facilities that do not have the appropriate spaces or systems to preserve and service the collections of the City. Storage spaces are limited or completely filled, processing and preservation spaces are missing or are too small, and access is often compromised. Current facilities make it difficult to preserve the City's historical collections and make them accessible to the City's citizens. There are many benefits to developing a shared archival facility for Westminster, including better preservation,

access, security, and public programs. Efficiencies accomplished in one facility result in cost savings for the City and its historical institutions and in a better future for the collections of Westminster.

The City of Westminster has taken the first steps to determine the requirements and logistics to establish a shared City archival facility to preserve and make accessible these invaluable resources. The City of Westminster commits our support to the development of a City Archival facility and acknowledges our shared interest in the multi- phase project. We agree to work together with [organization name] to develop the project.

[Organization] agrees to participate in the archival study and the development of shared archives. By agreeing, the [Organization] will participate in meetings and presentations on the project and provide information and data about its Collections to the project coordinator.

A future governance structure and defined policy and procedures will be evaluated and pursued as the project evolves. [Organization] acknowledges this important benefit, along with the many other project benefits described in this letter. [Organization] is committed to advancing the Westminster Archives project, realizing its benefits, and actively engaging in the development of the project.

[Organization Name]
[Signing Authority]

City of Westminster
[Signing Authority]

[Date]

[Date]

Building Ownership, Funding and Administration

Critical issues for cooperative facilities are funding, ownership and administration. Partners must agree on a funding structure for the design, construction and operation of the building. Archival facilities are special facilities that have fire protection, mechanical and security systems and may require special floor loads.

One common option is for a single organization to be the “owner” that builds the facility and invites partners to share the space and either pay rent or make in kind contributions. City appropriations, special tax or bond efforts, and donations are all funding methods to consider for a City managed shared Archives. Sometimes there is a bequest or endowment to assist with expenses.

Depending on its set up, it may be important for the partners to determine how each partner contributes to the central decision-making. Facility oversight could come in the form of a “Partner Board” or an expansion or change to the “Steering Committee.” Other successful shared facilities make their facility management decisions by board votes or committee consensus.

It is essential for the Westminster shared archives to hire at least one professional archivist. A project of this size and scope should have an autonomous professional archivist to manage the day-to-day operations of the facility, oversee policies, procedures and collection development, and coordinate reference, processing, outreach, and volunteers. If City Clerk records are included, the City may consider deputizing the Archivist as was done in Danvers and Lincoln, Massachusetts.

Building Administration and Operations

Building administration and operations, including facility management, security, maintenance, and disaster planning should be addressed early in the process. They can be addressed in a number of ways. Building ownership could determine the oversight and responsibility of the facility. Partner representatives or a contract manager are options used by other cooperative facilities. Funding options or the budget may steer the partners toward one type of management model. Regardless of the choice, it will assist the design effort to know how the facility will be cared for and managed.

Recommendation: Develop agreements for building ownership, funding, management, operation, agreement duration and conditions for withdraw.

Facility Operation Costs

It is important to develop operational cost estimates for the facility. Estimates of facility operational costs should be calculated as early as possible in the building planning cycle so that the partners can know and plan for their future budget commitments.

Operational expenses include:

- Building utilities
- Security
- General maintenance and building upkeep
- Equipment service contracts
- Grounds maintenance

The partners must decide how they will divide the ongoing operational costs. Options include:

- One Partner covers the operational expenses and other partners offer “in kind” or other services as part of their share of maintaining the facility.
- Partners will share and pay equally for operations costs.
- Partners will pay for operational costs based on the square footage of the building they occupy, with shared space being divided equally.
- One or more partners may take responsibility for a particular building function and have those costs deducted from their share of operational costs (ex: hiring and paying for a building manager, planning and installation of exhibits, digitization of collections).

Recommendation: Estimate costs for building operations early in the planning process. Negotiate an agreement on the division of costs and the payment process.

Shared Spaces/Facility Program Requirements

An agreement or understanding of how spaces in the facility will be shared could be part of the overall partnership funding agreement or as a separate agreement. Consensus about shared and non-shared building spaces is equally time-sensitive and these decisions must be made before any serious facility planning can begin. While some flexibility can be incorporated in the planning and design, early consensus on shared and non-shared spaces will avoid confusion and result in a clear and efficient planning and design process with fewer costly changes in the future.

The partners also need to develop and finalize the building program requirements. Partners must begin to make the numerous joint decisions regarding the facility's physical and operational requirements. At the start, the partners should agree on those requirements that are most important for a successful joint facility.

Examples of decisions to be made include:

- Collections storage shelving: How much shelving is needed? What kind? How high? Fixed or Mobile? What are the shelving options that partners do not want to use in the joint facility?
- Research Center: Number of desks and stations? Security procedures?
- Environmental Criteria: Design to what standard?
- Security: Levels of security?

Some of the facility requirement decisions will depend on the site and the budget although the partners should strive to develop and agree on the baseline requirements for the building. Adjustments and compromises can and will be made during the design process and the future design team will assist in making appropriate decisions.

Recommendation: Determine shared and non-shared building spaces and the building's program requirements before beginning site selection and design.

Facility Name and Partner Recognition

Along with decisions of building ownership and funding, the partners must determine what the facility will be named. Agreements must be made on the facility's name and how all partners are recognized in the signage, publications, website, and publicity.

Recommendation: Determine the future facility's name and how the partner institutions will be recognized.

Funding Sources

The Westminster partnership should investigate government and foundation grants for planning and functional needs. Funding agencies often favor collaborative projects with multiple partners. Broad support, and decisive plans and agreements that are made early in the process, are important if the City wishes to pursue grants for the shared archival project.⁴

Federal funding:

- The National Endowment for the Humanities provides funding for facility planning, design and construction, and installing equipment that improves the preservation of archival, museum and library collections.
 - <http://www.neh.gov/grants/preservation/sustaining-cultural-heritage-collections>

⁴ Section 2 of the first draft report for this project, *Preliminary Program of Requirements for the City of Westminster Archives*, outlines funding sources and educational resources for a City Archives.

- <https://www.neh.gov/grants/preservation/infrastructure-and-capacity-building-challenge-grants>

State Funding: The State of Colorado has funding and grant programs.

- The Colorado Historical Records Advisory Board (CHRAB)'s grant program is the state level review body for the grant proposals submitted to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/archives/CHRAB>
 - 2017/2018 grant to **City of Leadville** – To digitize early (1882-1910) city police records which capture the history of the American West with detailed accounts of the Colorado Gold Rush and the boom and bust of mining towns. The city is collaborating with the Leadville/Lake County Library for online hosting of the digitized images.
- History Colorado provides grants for archaeology and historic preservation projects from two major funds.
 - The Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation administers the U.S. Department of Interior's Historic Preservation Fund Program in cooperation with the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Under this program the NPS has specified that at least ten percent (10%) of Colorado's annual program funds be granted to Certified Local Governments.
 - The State Historical Preservation Fund is a statewide grants program that was created by the 1990 constitutional amendment allowing limited gaming in the towns of Cripple Creek, Central City, and Black Hawk. The amendment directs that a portion of the gaming tax revenues be used for historic preservation throughout the state.
- In addition to these grants federal and state tax laws provide tax incentives for historic preservation projects that follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. These credits allow taxpayers to reduce, on a dollar-for-dollar basis, the amount of income tax they owe to the government.
 - <https://www.historycolorado.org/grants-financial-incentives>

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS):

The mission of IMLS is to advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development.

- IMLS provides grants for assessments, preservation projects, professional development, and community collaborative initiatives.
- <https://www.imls.gov/grants/grant-programs>

Private Funding:

Private foundations, other granting agencies, and local businesses and individuals might also offer support for the City's shared archival facility project.

- For example, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation supported the cooperative facility planning for the shared archives and library storage facility for Princeton, Columbia, and the New York Public Library.
- Possible funding opportunities could aid in developing a common website/collection search engine, for collections assessments and preservation efforts, or for facility planning or move preparation efforts.
- The Internet Archives will digitize bound volumes and other archival records for free if you allow them to post them on the internet.

- *Internet Archive has regional digitization centers in 32 locations and 8 countries. Our teams digitize over 1500 eBooks per day. We also have the capability to digitize archival items, bound and single sheet items, thesis, periodicals, microform and other items with our non-destructive, color process. We have worked with over a thousand library partners who have allowed their content to be digitized.*
- Westminster Businesses and Individuals
 - Westminster businesses that are interested in naming opportunities or a sponsored exhibit could provide funding for preservation projects or exhibits. Businesses and other public entities favor this kind of corporate outreach and might support construction of a research center, an exhibit gallery, specific preservation initiatives or programs, or special equipment.
 - Specific fundraisers for the project could be held within the Westminster community.

Recommendation: Investigate outside funding sources for the Westminster shared archival facility.

Educational and Development Resources

In addition to some of the grant-making agencies described above, there are numerous other resources that can assist the City and its community partners in its archival planning and development.

CHRAMB: In addition to its grant making coordination, the Colorado Historical Records Advisory Board also serves as central advisory body within Colorado for historical records planning and coordination. The CHRAMB offers education programs and workshops.

Consultations: There are a number of archivists who would be willing to discuss their cooperative archival and records management operations by phone.

Archives Document Reviews: In addition to the institutions cited in section 4, many shared archives post their mission statements, their organizational structure, and their policies and procedures on their websites. These can be used as guidance for planning Westminster’s shared archives.

Society of American Archivists’ (SAA) Local Government Section is a good resource for background materials and for contacts who operate local archives programs.

- <https://www2.archivists.org/groups/local-government-records-section>
- <https://www.facebook.com/saalgr>

The Council of State Archivists (CoSA) provides resources for local archives on its website.

- <https://www.statearchivists.org/programs/local-government/local-government-records-resources/>
 - [Valuing and Protecting Local Government Records: Making the Case for Local Government Archives](#)
 - [A Call to Action: Doing Your Part for Records That Are Closest to Home and Closest to You](#)

The Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists (SRMA) provides educational resources and conferences for archivists. It currently offers classes in preserving digital archives and electronic records. Its next

conference will be on Audiovisual Archives.

Managing Local Government Archives by John H. Slate and Kaye Lanning Minchew is an excellent guide for developing and sustaining a local archives program. While focused on town and city archives, it covers the many topics related to a shared archives program. A detailed description of this resource can be found at <https://saa.archivists.org/store/managing-local-government-archives/5412/>.

Future Agreements

There are numerous issues that must be considered before entering into final agreements or Memorandums of Understanding (MOU). Collection ownership and custody are critical matters, which can have a significant impact on operations. Reference, reproduction, copyright, and future gift policies also need to be discussed and codified. Section 9 addresses the many issues and questions that must be tackled as this project moves forward.

Section 9: Issues and Questions

Building any new facility challenges operations, procedures and assumptions and requires rethinking the way institutions work. The prospects of sharing a facility raises many issues and questions that the Westminster partners need to evaluate, discuss and resolve. Policies, procedures, rules and unwritten rules will suddenly be open to questions and debate. However, with good communication and a sense of humor, the outcome will be new ideas and consensus for improvements and solutions that result in a successful partnership and shared facility.

As the archives project progresses, the “Steering Committee,” should begin to draft the common policies and procedures that will guide the facilities design and operation. The Committee should discuss and recommend joint operational and functional decisions and ensure that the many requirements are addressed and resolved. The committee can start these discussions by sharing current written policies and procedures pertaining to Westminster’s historical collections and review those in other shared public/private archives. Often a peer institution will have an operational procedure or a ready solution that works for all the partners.

After discussion with the partners, final policies and procedures should be codified in a Memorandum of Understanding and signed by all partners.

This section will help the partners to look ahead to the many questions that require discussion and decisions

General Policy and Procedures

One of the most central issues to be determined are the overall terms of partnership for the shared City Archives/Special Collections. For a successful shared City Archives, the appropriate terms of understanding that will accomplish the mission of the City Archives are listed below.

- What is the Collection Development policy? What will be the scope of the collection?
- How do you plan for growth? For late-coming organizations?
- What are the terms for accessioning records?
 - Deed of Gift?
 - Permanent Deposit?
 - Physical Custody?
- What are the loan provisions? For partner organizations? For exhibits?
- What is the access policy for partner organizations?
- How do policies relate to the use of public funds for preservation?
- What is the deaccession policy?
- What are the staffing requirements?
- Volunteer policy?

Internal Spaces

Collections Storage

Archival storage is the largest part of the facility and its requirements should be determined early in the planning process.

- Will all collections be kept separate and discrete? Will there be any intermixing of collections?
- Will storage be available for the museum's objects?
- What are the desired security systems and procedures?
- Who has access to the storage areas?
- How will collection storage equipment be numbered?
 - Single numbering system (range and shelf number) for all of the storage equipment in the building.
 - Partners decide on the type of numbering system for their shelving areas.
- Will a building-wide location register system using bar coding or radio frequency identification (RFID) be introduced to track storage locations and item movements?
 - Will this information be available online to all partners?
- Who will be responsible for monitoring collection storage conditions?
- Who will be responsible for contacting facilities management staff about abnormal conditions?

Collections Processing

How will processing of collections be addressed?

- Will there be one uniform method of processing?
- Will uniform supplies be used in all future processing?

Collection Preservation

One of the primary roles of an archival facility is the protection and preservation of its collections.

- Who will assume the management of preservation issues?
- Will there be a conservation committee made up of partner members?
- How will preservation tasks be prioritized?

Digitization

- Will there be a digitization committee made up of representatives to coordinate digital policy and programs?
- What issues need to be considered?
 - Coordinate digital planning and develop a cohesive digital strategy that meets the needs and demands of online researchers.
 - Establish digitizing standards so that projects are coordinated and delivery and preservation are similar for all partner projects.

Collection Inventories/Cataloging

Current collection descriptions reflect each partner's history and their varying description policies. Descriptive systems include card indexes, printed finding aids, and online finding aids and catalogs. Each partner's finding aids will move to the new facility and continue to be used by staff and researchers.

With the advent of the new facility, researchers will expect to go to a single source to find information about the partner's collections. Developing a new system will be time-consuming and should begin well before the building opens.

- Will there be a single, dedicated public online access system that allows researchers to search all partner collections simultaneously?
- How will decisions be made about developing access systems for the new building?

- Characteristics of Collections Access System?
 - Will the software be selected from a system currently used by one of the partners or be an entirely new system? (Ex. Past Perfect)
 - Will the system be robust enough to provide access to collection level descriptions, finding aids, and digital resources?
 - Will the system have the capability of managing accessioning data, circulation data, user information, and collection locations?

Public Spaces and Services

Reference Services

The Historical Society currently provides telephone, in-person and/or online reference services. While there are certain agreed-upon processes and procedures when offering reference services, there are differences that need to be resolved prior final agreement.

Assuming that a professional archivist will be hired to direct reference and processing of the collections:

- Will there be a single set of Research Center rules or different rules depending on the material being used?
 - Are there legal statues or rules that affect the City's records that are not applicable to other partners?
 - How will the rules be established and agreed upon?
- How will reference questions arriving by mail, telephone or electronically be prioritized and answered?
- What will be the standard Research Center hours?
 - Will there be weekend hours?
- What are the security procedures?
- Will self-copying be allowed?
 - Will the facility provide a publicly accessible copier/scanner?
 - Can researchers make copies using personal devices?
 - Personal phone
 - Camera
 - Hand-held or regular scanner
- What are the copying charges?
 - What is the copying money used for?
 - Who does the accounting?
- What are the copyright issues?

Online services

The Historical Society currently maintains a separate website that delivers collection information and/or digital content. With the opening of a new facility, researchers and visitors will seek information about collections, hours, researcher guidelines, and events. The partners need to address how they will move forward in communicating online information about services and their collections.

- Will there be a single web page for the shared facility describing public services: collections, access, use, and collection searches?
 - Will each partner offer their own website in addition to a main building website?
- If there is a joint website, who will develop and maintain it?
- Where will online sources reside – joint server or single shared server?

- Will there be an on-line access/cataloging system providing access to all collections from a single search engine?
- Will there be a single set of digital resources created from partner collections?

Exhibits

Exhibits that tell the story of Westminster have the potential to bring wider support for a new archival facility, as well as make the facility a destination for families and student groups. The Historical Society already has exhibit spaces and programs. Online exhibits are becoming increasingly popular.

- How will future exhibits be organized and planned?
 - By a partner committee?
 - One or two partners take a leading responsibility?
- What coordination is necessary to incorporate materials from the varied partner collections?
- What is the policy for lending materials from the Archives to organizations with materials on permanent deposit?
- What is the policy for lending materials from the Archives to outside organizations?

Section 10: Recommendations and Next Steps

All of the Westminster archival/museum institutions who might participate in this project require an appropriate, permanent facility that is designed to archival standards and that meets the functional requirements for archives storage and access. The facility must support archival best practices, develop operations and programs that preserve the records of Westminster, and serve and involve the citizens of Westminster. A shared archival facility provides the partners the best opportunity to address collections preservation and provide access to their records.

There are a number of critical steps that must be taken for this project to move forward and to be successful. The first step is to establish with certainty the facility partners, the quantity of current and future collections to be stored and serviced, potential sites, and how the facility will be funded and managed. Once these agreements are made, organized planning can move forward. See sections 7 and 8 for further discussion regarding the recommendations for initial and future planning. The Westminster Historical Society is a critical partner for the operation of a City of Westminster community archives.

Planning a shared facility will require many meetings to establish common goal and build a strong sense of commitment. Funding, staff resources, management agendas, false expectations, and unclear goals can inhibit a collaborative project of this scope and size. The leadership for this project must determine how they will operate as a group, prepare a preliminary agenda, and begin to promote the value of a shared archival facility for Westminster.

Listed below are the next steps of the planning process.

Establish a Steering Committee:

Begin the planning process by establishing a group of City and community leaders who are committed to developing a shared archival facility, who can focus on the project's overall scope and parameters, and who can identify the critical areas of agreement and variances. Consider a facilitated charrette to assist with the first steps in planning. A cohesive steering committee of City and community representatives can communicate the vision, establish funding strategies, and determine the best ways to garner legislative and public support.

Partner Letter of Intent (LOI):

Finalize the list of partners who are interested in participating in a Westminster shared archival facility. Obtain signed Letters of Intent from those partners who want to be included in the next steps of the Westminster archival project. If the list of partners is sufficient to justify creating an archive, continue the project.

Archives Visits:

Steering Committee members should visit comparable sized shared archival facilities to review best practices for the design and operational options for a shared facility.

Establish Critical Agreements:

The Steering Committee should begin early in the project to develop the governance and management structure for the City's shared archival facility. Critical areas to discuss and define are facility ownership, funding, staffing, administration, and operations.

Partner Discussions to Develop Policies and Procedures:

The Steering Committee should begin to draft critical policies and procedures regarding the organizational requirements, operations, and the management of a shared archival facility. Critical discussions regarding future policies and procedures should be developed by the potential partner institutions early in the planning process. Defined policies and procedures will assist in leading the many discussions about the scope and nature of the archival facility and help develop an appropriate Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The many issues are discussed in sections 7, 8 and 9. Some of the more immediate policies to be discussed are the scope of the project and the collections, terms of partnership, custody of records, and the future access of the records.

Storage Capacity Requirements:

Determine the estimated quantities of holdings of the committed partners. Further survey work is needed to obtain more accurate estimates of the various types and sizes of collections and their storage requirements.

Site Selection:

The Steering Committee needs to identify a site or sites that can accommodate the shared facility requirements and allow for future growth. Are there existing buildings that can successfully be adapted for the archival program? Is there vacant land available that meets the requirement for the construction of a new archives building? The City's Building Inspection Department should be enlisted in assisting with the identification of candidate sites to determine the best options and relative costs.

Funding, Costs and Funding Opportunities.

Determine how the shared facility will be funded. Estimate costs for project development and for future operational costs early in the planning process. As part of this process, investigate individual partner and joint venture grants and funding opportunities.

Master Plan:

Focus on developing a master plan that defines the organizations to be included in the new archival facility, their unique conditions and constraints, and a program of requirements for a shared Westminster Archives.

Conclusion

Building any new archival facility is an exacting and complex task. Creating a new archives facility for multiple partners with specialized requirements adds another layer of intricacy. Yet it is not only possible as illustrated by other successful shared archival buildings, but is increasingly more common. Faced with greater demands on shrinking resources, joint collaborations are optimal strategies for the future of archives.

There are many challenges ahead. To be successful, identified partners must employ a systematic and team approach that values clear communication and compromise. They need to examine best practices but also be willing to consider different approaches that respond to a changing world and that can lead to new opportunities.

With this study, the City of Westminster shows their commitment to protecting the historical records of their City. It is truly an exciting opportunity for Westminster to build a permanent home for their archives and special collections.