Chautauqua 2020—and beyond

partnership for the 21st century

A Joint Proposal by City of Boulder and the Colorado Chautauqua Association / May 2011

The Colorado Chautauqua in Boulder is a cherished community asset that serves many functions. It is a significant national and local historic landmark district; a hub of cultural activity; a lodging facility; a neighbor; a park; a tourist attraction; and a gateway to open space.

Its multiple functions are overseen by the Colorado Chautauqua Association (CCA) and the city. The CCA is a nonprofit that serves as primary steward for the historic district's buildings and grounds pursuant to a series of leases with the City going back to 1898, keeping alive the Chautauqua's mission as an active center for culture, education and recreation. Two city departments also play key roles in Chautauqua's use, care and management (Parks and Recreation, and Open Space and Mountain Parks), with support provided as needed by the city's Historic Preservation Program, Public Works departments, the City Manager's Office and the City Attorney's Office. The city and CCA have a strong history of partnership. .

In recent months, CCA has brought forth key components of its "Chautauqua 2020 Plan" for consideration by the city and community, most notably its desire to construct a new multi-use building within its leasehold area and relocate the existing historic picnic shelter structure. This proposal has evoked a range of responses from the community, and raised questions regarding the appropriate framework and process by which the proposal should be considered. It has also brought forward a number of issues related to overall management of the Chautauqua area, including questions about its "carrying capacity," and the impacts of its multiple, overlapping uses. Concerns have been raised about how to strike an appropriate balance, to ensure that the Chautauqua area is not "loved to death."

On April 12, 2011, City Council had a study session focused on Chautauqua, providing a comprehensive overview of existing conditions and key issues across the full range of Chautauqua operations and concerns. The presentation also outlined several potential options for responding to CCA's request for review of a new building proposal. CCA similarly outlined a process proposal, and Council indicated a desire for a modified approach that would provide for timely consideration of CCA's request but also respond to concerns related to access, parking and program coordination.

The following proposal was developed jointly by the City of Boulder and CCA following the April study session. It outlines a collaborative and efficient approach to establishing a shared framework for Chautauqua's stewardship, including a process by which potential expansion to facilities in the historic district and adjacent area could be considered. Rather than focus solely on CCA's building proposal, it seeks to lay the foundation for continued success of the Colorado Chautauqua through better coordination of use and stewardship efforts between the city and CCA.

Guiding Principles

1 **Work collaboratively.** While CCA and the various city departments each have specific areas of focus and specific constituencies they serve, they all are committed to the long-term success and stewardship of Chautauqua. Addressing the challenge of multiple uses and needs requires continuation—and strengthening—of the partnership that already exists.

2 **Build on the work that has already been done.** CCA has done an extraordinary job of improving and caring for the historic buildings and grounds at Chautauqua while continuing to to attract annual visitors and provide community-serving programs, per its original 1898

agreement with the city. The work completed for CCA's Cultural Landscape Assessment as well as other efforts provide a strong foundation for collaborative planning. There is no need to start from scratch.

3 **Engage the community.** Chautauqua is a place of strong emotional attachment for many in the Boulder community. Whether cottage owners, immediate neighbors, preservationists, concert-goers, trail users or seasonal visitors, it is a place that is much loved. Any discussion about its future necessitates an open process and opportunities for education, input and dialog.

4 **Take a broad view, and balance needs.** Any discussion of a proposal to expand or construct a new facility at Chautauqua quickly goes to other issues: namely access, parking and program management. An expansion of use in one area needs to be balanced with other uses and needs, and appropriately managed. A first step should be to establish the necessary process and criteria for consideration of any expansion. It does not need to be a "master plan," but it does need to provide a framework to balance multiple interests and needs.

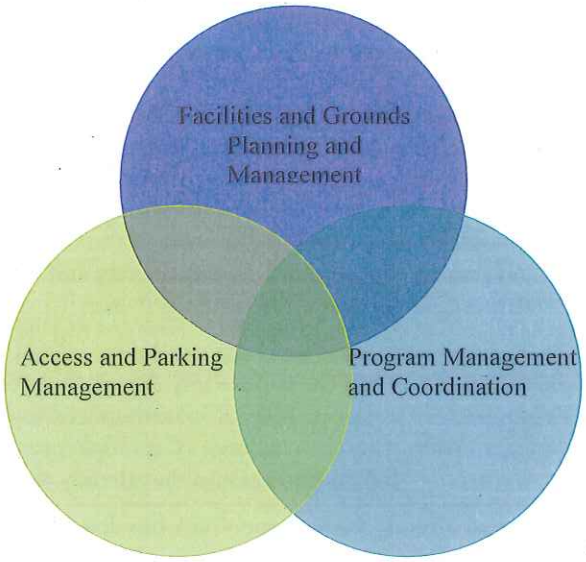
5 **Understand trade-offs, and mitigate impacts.** One of the core needs for any planning or development review effort is to have good information on existing conditions and reliable projections about potential impacts. The process should create a shared database of information that can inform the community's discussion of benefits and impacts related to key decisions, and provide the basis for strategies to manage and mitigate those impacts appropriately.

6 **Be efficient.** The collaborative process should be time-efficient, appropriately scoped and thoughtfully designed.

7 **Develop a framework for shared stewardship.** The current planning effort should address near-term decision needs and also establish a clear set of mechanisms and operating agreements by which the Chautauqua area's care and management is commonly understood, committed to and coordinated in a shared stewardship model.

Areas of Focus

The proposed process will focus on three overlapping areas of interest that are critical to the long-term success and stewardship of Chautauqua. All three areas will be considered and addressed in the streamlined planning effort, as decisions made in any one area affect, or are affected by, the others.



Process Proposal

Based on the guiding principles and key areas of focus articulated on the first two pages of this document, the city and CCA propose a collaborative process consisting of four steps, that will establish a shared database and agreed upon review process for consideration of CCA's facility proposals at Chautauqua. Importantly, these work tasks will also establish a shared "Chautauqua 2020 Stewardship Framework" to guide ongoing collaboration between the city and CCA in meeting the needs of the Chautauqua area as a whole, keeping the public trust, and ensuring the Colorado Chautauqua's ongoing preservation and vitality.

1 **Data Collection and Analysis** *(Summer/Fall 2011)*

1a **Access Survey and Parking Inventory.** CCA and the city have already entered into a collaborative agreement for consultant services to collect access/parking data, including a user intercept survey to be conducted this summer and evaluation of the Baseline corridor adjacent to Chautauqua. Results will be available in Fall 2011.

1b **Program Inventory and Needs Assessment.** CCA and the city will collaborate to develop an inventory and assessment of current programs and operations that impact facility and grounds use and maintenance at Chautauqua. This will occur concurrently with the access/parking data collection being completed in Summer/Fall 2012. It is anticipated that this information will be compiled and evaluated by a consultant, pending further discussion between CCA and the city.

1c **Facilities and Grounds Assessment.** CCA has previously completed a Cultural Landscape Assessment and Plan (the CLA) that will serve as the basis for this work task. Using the CLA as base data, the assessment will focus specifically on potential physical changes at Chautauqua to accommodate program needs. CCA has defined its 2020 facility needs based on its program assessment to include new bathrooms to serve the Auditorium; relocation of back-office functions out of the Primrose building; and creation of additional multi-use space. The aim of this work task will be to assess these needs and opportunities as well as other city-related program needs in the Chautauqua area, including assessment of potential facility reuse or additions; potential sites for new construction and potential relocation of the picnic shelter consistent with National/Local Historic District designation. This will occur concurrently with tasks 1a and 1b in Summer/Fall 2012, and will be completed by a consultant under a collaborative agreement between the city and CCA.

2 **Community Outreach and Input** *(Summer/Fall 2011)*

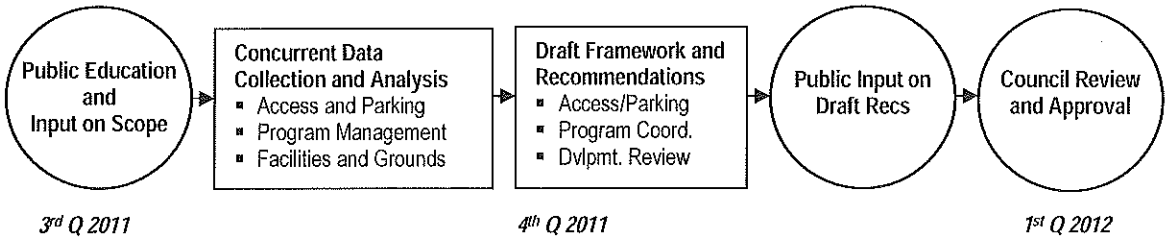
CCA and the city will coordinate efforts for community outreach and jointly facilitate opportunities for public input. At this time, two key input opportunities are envisioned, although the specific format has yet to be determined:

2a **Community Presentation of CCA 2020 Plan / Public Input on Assessment Scope and Process.** This will provide an opportunity for the community to understand the work already completed by CCA in developing its 2020 plan recommendations; and to provide an opportunity for input regarding the Summer/Fall 2011 assessment activities regarding parking/access; programs; and facilities.

2b **Community Input on Draft 2020 Stewardship Framework and Recommended Review Process.** The public will be presented with results from the assessments (Task 1) and draft recommendations from Task 3 (below), providing an opportunity for input and comment prior to presentation of the results and recommendations to boards and Council.

3 **2020 Stewardship Framework and Recommended Review Process**
(Fall 2011)
The consultants retained by the city and CCA to complete tasks 1a, 1b and 1c, will develop a concise set of recommendations to guide ongoing collaboration between the city and CCA across the three key areas of focus: access and parking management; program management and coordination; and facilities and grounds planning and management. Development and review of the recommendations will be overseen jointly by the city and CCA, and presented for review and comment by relevant city advisory boards, the CCA board and the general public. The recommendations will include mechanisms to ensure appropriate program coordination; access and parking management (including mitigation of peak period parking impacts) and a recommended process for consideration of potential facility expansion, including recommended process steps; review criteria (such as design guidelines) and mitigation standards. If deemed necessary, the recommendation may also include potential revisions to the city's lease agreement with CCA in order to incorporate key components of the Stewardship Framework into that agreement.

4 **Council Review and Adoption** *(Winter 2012)*
The results and recommendations from Tasks 1, 2 and 3 will be presented to Council for consideration and potential adoption.

5 **Next Steps** *(Spring/Summer 2012)*
Based on the outcome of the assessment and recommendations, next steps may include initiation of a review process to consider proposed facility expansion, relocation and/or construction; implementation of identified coordination mechanisms or strategies; and other stewardship actions intended to preserve the unique character and function of the Colorado Chautauqua through 2020 and beyond.

Draft Process Diagram