

**Routt County Museum and Heritage Fund Advisory Board**

**Capacity Building Grant Application Form**

**APPLICATION for Tread of Pioneers Museum – *Steamboat Pilot* Archive Project – 9-30-22**

**1. Applicant Organization**

Organization Name: Tread of Pioneers Museum

Mailing Address: PO Box 772372

City: Steamboat Springs State: CO Zip Code: 80477

Telephone Number: 970.879.2214

Signature of Legally Authorized Representative



**2. Grant Recipient Contact Person**

Contact First Name: Candice Contact Last Name: Bannister

Title: Executive Director

Organization (if different from applicant organization):

Mailing Address:

City: State: Zip Code:

Telephone Number:

Email: [cbannister@treadofpioneers.org](mailto:cbannister@treadofpioneers.org)

**3. Grant Cycle**

Spring  Fall

**4. Project Type (choose one that reflects the majority of the proposed project):**

Acquisition & Development Those projects that involve excavation, stabilization, restoration, reconstruction, or acquisition of a designated property or site.

Survey & Planning Those projects that involve identification, recording, evaluation, designation and planning for the protection of significant historic buildings, structures, sites and districts.

Education Those projects that provide historic preservation information or information about historic sites to the public.

**5. Project Title: *Steamboat Pilot* Archive Project**

**6. Brief Summary of Project:** Our project entails the preservation, sharing and celebrating of our history and heritage through the *Steamboat Pilot* newspaper archive project. The project aims to continue to sort the collection by subject and biography files, clean and re-house the images in archival materials, scan priority images and add them to our online

photo database for public access, and create finding aids for collections. The museum already makes accessible over 8,000 photos through our searchable online photo database. We are now also able to add finding aids to our website and an online portal for our digital archives created by the Bud Werner Memorial Library through Marmot Library Consortium.

## **7. Grant Request and Cash Match:**

Grant Request: \$5,000                      Cash Match: In Kind: \$5,000

Total Project Budget: \$10,000

## **8. Narrative**

A vital part of Steamboat Springs' history has been saved through the efforts of the Tread of Pioneers Museum and the *Steamboat Pilot & Today* newspaper. In 2018, the Tread of Pioneers Museum received the historic photograph collection and archive of *The Steamboat Pilot* newspaper--Steamboat Springs' longest running newspaper and oldest local business, since 1885.

Once we became aware of the downsizing of the *Steamboat Pilot* offices, and the need to preserve and store this incredible piece of our history, the museum stepped up and offered to take the substantial collection of approximately 10,000 photographs, digital images, slides, negatives, reporter notes, newspaper clippings, and contact sheets. The organization and scanning of the massive photograph collection is a multi-year project for the museum, and fundraising efforts have been underway to support the efforts.

We believe that the newspaper's photographic lens has created an extremely valuable collection that must be preserved and made accessible through the museum's digitization efforts. We knew it would be a lot of work, and would require a major shift in projects and attention for our staff and resources over many years, but this is an incredible opportunity, and this priceless collection warrants our focus and efforts.

In August of 2018, the museum immediately hired and worked with a professional photo archivist to review, assess, and plan for the project. Museum staff began sorting the materials before scanning the images, researching and documenting associated information, and adding all of the information into the museum's online searchable photo database ([treadofpioneers.org/photos](http://treadofpioneers.org/photos)). The collection is joined with over 8,000 images that the museum has already digitized and preserved since 2002 that are accessible to all users online.

The Tread of Pioneers Museum hosts the largest and perhaps only online photo database in Northwest Colorado, and has spent over 20 years and hundreds of thousands of dollars on photographic preservation and digitization. Not only did we receive high quality photographs from trained photojournalists, but we also received reporter notes and copy material, as well as associated printed newspaper articles. This provides the museum and the public with background information and photograph identifications that deepen the collection and its value.

The *Pilot's* collection shows us how much we have yet to collect and preserve to thoroughly chronicle the history of our region. Initially, museum staff focused on early photos of Steamboat history (1881-circa 1969). However, the majority of the collection dates from the 1970s-1990s, which is an exciting addition to the museum's archives. More recent photo subjects include:

- Denver's failed bid for the 1976 Winter Olympics, 1970-1972
- Ski area gondola accident, January 1972
- Stagecoach Ski Area, 1972-1974
- Yampa River flood, 1974
- Rocky Mountain Airways crash on Buffalo Pass, December 1978

- Snow drought, 1976-77 and 1980
- Twenty Mile Coal Company opening, 1983
- Good News Building explosion, February 1993
- Gerald Boggs murder trial, 1993-1994
- Lake Catamount ski resort controversy, 1993-1995
- Mount Zirkel Wilderness tree blowdown, 1997

Roles of newspapers in communities cannot be overstated. The *Steamboat Pilot* newspaper, from its earliest days, was a critical communication vehicle that helped to connect isolated homesteads, ranches, and community members with neighborhood happenings and news from around the region, state, and country. For over 130 years, *The Steamboat Pilot* has chronicled and captured the local business, promotion, development, daily activities, major events, significant people, births, deaths, marriages, and milestones that capture the history and heritage of our region.

For two years, the Tread of Pioneers Museum staff worked with the editor Lisa Schlichtman of *Steamboat Pilot/Today* to print significant and unusual photographs from collection in the current newspaper to keep the community informed of the project and unveil the treasures in the collection. We continue to feature these images on social media and with various written content.

Preservation is achieved through cleaning and re-housing the images so that they are in safe conditions and storage environment. Scanning preserves them in perpetuity. Now, an online portal for the museum archive has been created by the Bud Werner Library through the Marmot Library Consortium, so we can add finding aids and other materials to this online searchable access point for our digital archive materials. With subject and biography finding aids, and digitized photographs available on our online photo database, the public can gain access to this incredible collection of images, newspaper clippings, reporter notes, and more, from the *Steamboat Pilot* newspaper archive.

Since the museum received the collection in 2018, it has posed great challenges to the Tread of Pioneers Museum, both in size and scope. Throughout this time, we have gained a greater understanding of the work and completed a great deal. Work over the past four years, including grant scope of 2020-2021 CHAB grant funds, allowed for us to complete about 95% of the first phase of work, which includes: preserving, rehousing, organizing, and providing basic accessibility as well as physical stabilization. Much of the second phase of creating finding aids has been completed as well.

We are now seeking funds for our third phase of the project: digitization. Funding will support our final completion of the first two phases as well as in digitization and digital access of select photographs, and finding aids added to an online new digital archive portal.

Our Curator and assistants have been working on the digitization phase since 2020. To date, she has sorted, sleeved, and labeled approximately 2,000 images into alphabetical people files, added 1,475 into the Master list, scanned 156 images in four file formats, and entered 28 images into the Access database, which marks those 28 images as fully final. With that initial work completed, 1,500 total digital images with associated data and finding tools in the Access database remains our end goal, with the potential for up to 2,500 images to be added.

The museum's financial needs for this phase of the project include personnel time both for our Curator and Assistant Curator, who holds a Masters in Archive Management.

**A. Applicant Capacity: Write a brief introduction to the applicant organization and its experience with similar projects. This category demonstrates the applicant's ability and commitment to successfully complete the proposed project.**

*See above.* The museum has completed dozens of grant funded projects, including MAHFAB, and the *Steamboat Pilot* Archive project funded by the Colorado Records Advisory Board in 2020. We have continued to work on this project successfully for the past four years. Its massive size and scope is the reason for continued to work and the need for grant funding from MAHFAB.

**B. Property or Project History: Write a brief history and description of the property or a description of the project and its relationship to historic preservation. This category tells us why this preservation project is important.**

Since 1959, the museum has served the community through collections, preservation, exhibits, programming, research, events, archive, digitization and more. We have grown substantially both in space and in capacity, and have full time, professionally trained museum staff that provide museum services and activities in our community. The museum is housed in two historic homes and one museum quality collections care facility. The content and themes in the photos chronicle the history of our region including the built environment which substantiates historic preservation projects.

**C. Project Description: Provide a detailed description of the project.** This section demonstrates the appropriateness of the project and your knowledge of what is needed to complete it.

*See above.*

We created a scope of work with the assistance of Megan Friedel, Assistant Professor and Head of Archives at CU Boulder. Based on her assessment and scope we have followed over the past four years, the museum will continue to scan select images and add them to the museum's in-house Access photo database as well as the online photo database. This database already offers both historical photos and data descriptions for over 8,000 images from Routt County and Northwest Colorado. Further, we have worked with the Bud Werner Library, and they have created an online searchable portal for our digital archive collections through the Marmot Library Consortium. We will add finding aids to collections into this searchable portal for even greater access to scanned and non-scanned items.

The goals of this plan are to: (1) preserve, re-house, organize, and make accessible the physical collection and stabilize it against further deterioration; (2) create a finding aid to provide broad accessibility to the entire collection; (3) select 1,500 representative images from the collection for an initial digitization project to provide a visible web presence for the collection; and (4) identify future processing and digitization priorities for the collection, including potential collaborations with other community partners and external digital projects; (5) add finding aids to the online portal for digital collections.

We have been working on these goals on the collection for the past four years, and seek grant funding from your source to continue the work.

**D. Timeline:** Create a list with key project milestones and corresponding month/year showing how your project will be carried out. This category shows you have adequately considered how to complete your project within a 24-month period.

Quarter	Activity, Phase, or Major Step	Tasks Involved
Quarter 1: <i>October 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022</i>	Sorting, cleaning, re-housing of photographs, creating finding aids for collections; scanning select items and adding them to the museum's online photo and in-house databases. Add finding aids to digital archive portal.	Sorting, cleaning, re-housing of photographs, creating finding aids for collections; scanning select items and adding them to the museum's online photo and in-house databases. Add finding aids to digital archive portal.
Quarter 2: <i>January 1, 2023 - March 31, 2023</i>	Sorting, cleaning, re-housing of photographs, creating finding aids for collections; scanning select items and adding them to the museum's online photo and in-house databases. Add finding aids to digital archive portal.	Sorting, cleaning, re-housing of photographs, creating finding aids for collections; scanning select items and adding them to the museum's online photo and in-house databases. Add finding aids to digital archive portal.
Quarter 3: <i>April 1, 2023 = June 30, 2023</i>	Sorting, cleaning, re-housing of photographs, creating finding aids for collections; scanning select items and adding them to the museum's online photo and in-house databases. Add finding aids to digital archive portal.	Sorting, cleaning, re-housing of photographs, creating finding aids for collections; scanning select items and adding them to the museum's online photo and in-house databases. Add finding aids to digital archive portal.

**E. Public Benefit: Tell us how/why the community supports and benefits from this project.** This category shows the overall benefit of the project to the community.

The collection will be available for all and is especially important for researchers, genealogists, schools, writers, journalists, historians, local museums, the local newspaper, City and County governments, and more. With our staff assisted research archive and online photo database, and new library portal, the goal of this project is digital preservation and public access.

**9. Proposed Scope of Work & Budget**

**A. Combined Scope of Work and Budget: Write a detailed outline of the work you propose to accomplish in this grant, with corresponding costs for each task.**

*Scope of Work:* See above.

*Budget:* Staff member time to complete described scope of work above -> 400 hours X an average of \$25/hr. = \$10,000

**10. Application Checklist: Use this checklist to ensure you have included necessary copies and attachments.**

- Original, completed application. Double-sided is acceptable.
- Attachments
- Clear, readable photographs with informative captions (color if possible). No matter what the project type, photographs aid the reviewer in understanding the resource(s) under consideration. Photos should show current views

of the resource, both overall and in detail, and should demonstrate the need for the proposed work and its urgency. Historic photos are also helpful.

- Bids or estimates to show how you determined your costs.
- Maps, site plans, or enlightening drawing



July 16, 2020

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to indicate my support for the Tread of Pioneers Museum's project to preserve, arrange, describe, and digitize the Steamboat Pilot photo archive. Since 2017, I have consulted with and assisted the Museum's staff on matters related to archiving, digitizing, and making accessible the Museum's photograph collections, including the Steamboat Pilot archive. I am currently Head of Archives at the University of Colorado Boulder Libraries and have been in the archival profession since 2002, previously working as a photo archivist and curator at organizations such as the Massachusetts Historical Society, Oregon Historical Society, and History Colorado. My family have also been in the Steamboat area since 1982. I feel very deep ties to Routt County's history, as well as a personal responsibility to provide professional assistance to the county's heritage organizations to help them preserve their history in situ.

Candice Bannister, executive director of the Museum, first asked me to consult on the acquisition of the Pilot collection in April 2017. From that point onwards, I have been impressed by the Museum's understanding of the need to consult with archival professionals regarding planning and implementation of proper preservation, re-housing, arrangement, and description for and access to this significant collection. The Pilot archive is the most substantial known collection of images documenting Routt County history from the mid- to late twentieth century; in essence, it functions as the visual memory vault for the people, places, and events of contemporary Steamboat and the surrounding area. Both Candice and Museum curator Katie Adams have demonstrated a nuanced understanding of how important the Museum's role is and will be in preserving that visual memory in perpetuity, especially in light of their current staffing and financial resources.

Both the size of the collection (currently estimated at over 10,000 images but likely much higher) and its original condition (approximately 60 linear feet of mostly unorganized loose prints, contact sheets, and negatives) pose great challenges to the Tread of Pioneers Museum. To resolve those challenges, I worked with curator Katie Adams in 2018 to develop a phased plan that maximizes access to the collection and also addresses the pressing physical concerns. The goals of this plan were to: (1) preserve, re-house, organize, and make accessible the physical collection and stabilize it against further deterioration; (2) create a finding aid to provide broad accessibility to the entire collection; (3) select representative images from the collection for an initial digitization project to provide a visible web presence for the collection; and (4) identify future processing and digitization priorities for the collection, including potential collaborations with other community partners and external digital projects. The Museum started this work in fall of 2018, but, due to the size of the Steamboat Pilot archive and the Museum's small staff, it is an ongoing project that requires additional support.

I am confident that the Tread of Pioneers Museum will do right by the Steamboat Pilot archive, both in making the collection broadly accessible to the public, following professional archival best practices, and preserving it in perpetuity. I continue to consult with the Museum in whatever capacity they require in order to help them achieve these goals. As an archivist and fellow cultural heritage professional, I give my full support to the Tread of Pioneers Museum's project to preserve this important piece of Routt County history.

Respectfully,

**Megan K. Friedel, Head of Archives**  
University of Colorado Boulder Libraries  
Ph: 303-735-4846  
Email: [megan.k.friedel@colorado.edu](mailto:megan.k.friedel@colorado.edu)