



**DOUGLAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING AGENDA
Tuesday, September 23, 2025 – 11:00 a.m.
(In Office)**

A G E N D A

- I. Historic Preservation & Douglas County Library Exhibit Partnership**
- II. Boards and Commissions Discussion**

Memorandum

Date: September 23, 2025

To: Douglas County Board of County Commissioners

Through: Douglas J. DeBord, County Manager

From: Terence T. Quinn, AICP, Director of Community Development *TQ*

CC: Brittany Cassell, Curator
Todd McMahon, Interpret Site, LLC
Lauren Pulver, Planning Resources Supervisor
Kati Carter, AICP, Assistant Director of Planning Resources

Subject: **Historic Preservation & Douglas County Library Exhibit Partnership**

SUMMARY

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update to the Board of County Commissioners (Board) on a partnership with Douglas County Libraries (DCL) to develop three exhibits at the Castle Rock, Highlands Ranch, and Parker branches.

DISCUSSION

At this time, DCL is prepared to provide space for more substantial stand-alone exhibits in partnership with the Douglas County History Repository (DCHR). As a result, the County's consultant for the DCHR, Interpret Site, LLC, has prepared a three-phased approach to developing exhibits in 2026 at the Castle Rock, Highlands Ranch, and Parker branches, the three most utilized branches in the County.

The exhibit development plan is attached and would result in an estimated \$95,000 financial investment from the County, alongside planned investments from DCL to develop interpretive and way-finding signage, purchase exhibit cases, and provide dedicated space in its facilities. The plan includes County funded investment in exhibit infrastructure, consultant time for interpretive exhibit planning, and development of interactive aspects for greater exhibit accessibility.

BACKGROUND

Over the past year, staff has been coordinating with the DCL archives and community engagement staff to plan opportunities for collaborative exhibits that also allow for public education and viewing of DCHR artifacts. DCL's traditional approach to their space is to reprogram it throughout the year so that staff can conduct reading programs, develop temporary exhibits, and develop interactive displays. For instance, during the winter season, a

forest of trees is built in potential exhibit space where each tree is themed from a popular book.

Staff from both organizations have coordinated over the past year to develop pop-up exhibits. This has resulted in two recent exhibits, photos of both are attached: “Murder, Mayhem and Moonshine”, featuring artifacts from the Douglas County Sheriff’s Office and the DCHR; and “A History of Competition”, featuring DCHR artifacts related to football, basketball, baseball, golf and equestrian competition in the County.

Coordination and planning has also started for a Veteran’s Day exhibit at the Highlands Ranch branch and for a collaborative exhibit in 2026 in recognition of the 150th anniversary of Colorado’s statehood and the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

NEXT STEPS

Staff is preparing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to develop the exhibits with DCL.

ATTACHMENTS

Interpret Site, LLC – DCL Exhibit Development Prospectus
DCL Exhibits Photos

Interpretive Vision Prospectus

9/01/2025



For the

Douglas County Libraries

And Douglas County History Repository

Douglas County Libraries  by



DOUGLAS COUNTY
COLORADO

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

 **INTERPRET SITE** TM
ARCHAEOLOGY COLLECTIONS & INTERPRETATION CONSULTANTS **LLC.**

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Vision Prospectus: Douglas County Libraries – Douglas County History Repository Collaborative Exhibit Initiative

Prepared by Interpret Site LLC

Introduction

Douglas County Libraries (DCL) and the Douglas County History Repository (DCHR), with the professional interpretive guidance of Interpret Site LLC, are exploring a visionary collaboration to bring dedicated historical exhibits into three of Douglas County’s most prominent library branches: Castle Rock, Highlands Ranch, and Parker based on the visitation numbers listed below.

Libraries serve as community anchors—accessible, welcoming, and well-frequented spaces where residents seek knowledge, inspiration, and connection. Yet, within Douglas County, there remains an untapped opportunity to bring the County’s rich archival collections into public view. The History Repository, while serving as the official steward of the County’s artifacts, currently lacks permanent exhibition spaces of its own. This prospectus outlines a strategic, phased vision to address that gap by integrating carefully designed historical exhibits into DCL’s most visible library branch spaces.

With Interpret Site LLC’s expertise in interpretive planning, and by following standards established by the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) and the National Park Service (NPS), this project will connect residents with Douglas County’s heritage in ways that are engaging, accessible, and meaningful.

Door Count by DCL Branch	2024
Castle Pines	96,040
Castle Rock	323,334
Highlands Ranch	306,942
Lone Tree	234,000
Parker	369,086
Roxborough	68,709
Total	1,398,111

2024 Visitation Numbers per Douglas County Library Branches

The Role of Interpretation

Interpretation, as defined by NAI and NPS, is not simply the presentation of information. It is the practice of facilitating connections—between people and place, between audiences and

stories, between artifacts and the broader human experience. Interpreters connect visitors to important natural, cultural, and historical resources at parks, nature centers, historical sites, aquariums, zoos, and anywhere that people come to learn about places. NAI defines interpretation as "a purposeful approach to communication that facilitates meaningful, relevant, and inclusive experiences that deepen understanding, broaden perspectives, and inspire engagement with the world around us."

Core interpretive steps relevant to this project include:

Theme and Subtheme Development – Establishing “the big idea” of each exhibit and breaking it into clear, compelling messages.

Research and Content Development – Grounding exhibits in archival sources, oral histories, and material culture.

Design and Spatial Layout – Using floor plans and casework to maximize visitor flow, accessibility, and interpretive clarity.

Media Development and Fabrication – Text, labels, graphics, audiovisual components, and object mounts.

Installation and Evaluation – Testing exhibit effectiveness, ensuring ADA compliance, and revising based on audience feedback.

By grounding this project in these standards, the exhibits will go beyond static displays to offer authentic interpretive experiences that resonate with diverse audiences.

Why This Partnership Matters



This collaboration represents the best use of shared strengths:

Douglas County Libraries bring high-traffic public spaces, trusted reputations, and a mission aligned with lifelong learning.

The Douglas County History Repository provides authentic collections and stewardship responsibilities for local heritage.



Interpret Site LLC contributes interpretive planning and project management with the goal of reaching national best practice standards.

Together, the partners can accomplish what none could achieve alone: the creation of professional, substantial museum-quality exhibits that meet the County's need for accessible history presentation.

Proposed Exhibit Spaces Castle Rock Branch – Phase One (2025)



► Location: Second floor, near the Archives and History Department section.

Rationale: Proximity to staff and collections allows for convenient rotation and care of materials.

Features: Installation of MEYVAERT brand exhibit cases, matching those to be purchased by DCL for their temporary exhibit program.

Opportunity: Serve as a pilot project to refine interpretive approaches and establish workflows.

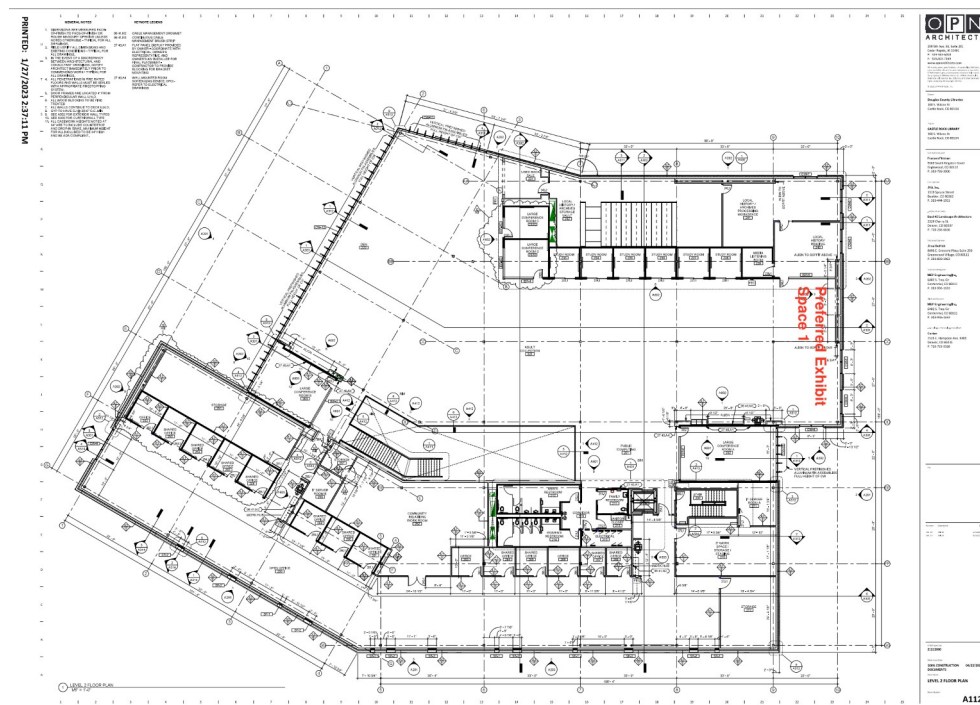


Figure 1: Castle Rock branch optimal exhibit space 2nd floor near Archives and History Department.





Figure 2: Castle Rock preferred exhibit space with rendered possible exhibit cases placements.

Highlands Ranch Branch – Phase Two



Location: Identified second-floor space suitable for exhibit installation.



Rationale: Expands reach to the northern part of the County, engaging a distinct and growing population.

Features: Consistent MEYVAERT casework, with way-finding integrated into the library's design.



Parker Branch – Phase Three



Location: First floor lobby space.

Rationale: High visibility within one of the County's most heavily used library branches on the eastern side of the County.

Features: Emphasis on audiovisual interactives and dynamic storytelling to draw in a wide cross-section of visitors.

Opportunity: Culminating site for the phased roll-out, reinforcing Parker's role as a community hub.

Two locations have been identified as optimal, 1) near the front entrance, 2) recessed area further south along the wall near the young adult section. Either may work dependent on content and targeted audiences



Figure 5: Parker branch preferred exhibit space with optional expansion for certain exhibits.





Figure 6: Parker branch preferred option 1 for exhibits cases with rendered cases.



Figure 7: Optional exhibit space with exhibit space rendered.

Cost Range Estimates



The project's target budget is \$100,000, distributed across categories such as:

Exhibit Materials: \$50,500 – including casework, way-finding signage, text panels, labels, mounts, and exhibit fabrication

Interpretive Planning & Research (Interpret Site LLC): \$19,500 – including exhibit planning and content development based on NAI/NPS standards (based on a \$65/hour rate with 100 hours of planning for each branch location)*

Audiovisual/Interactive Development: \$30,000 – funding for outside consultants specializing in interactive engagement and accessibility.

DCL and DCHR staff will partner to develop marketing and promotion plans, that align with each organization's standards, ensuring visibility through both library and countywide communications.

This initial budget overview accommodates flexibility in scope while ensuring that quality and interpretive impact remain paramount.

*Interpret Site LLC is currently under contract for a range of collections and interpretive services; this can be bundled as part of future County collections/interpretation services with the existing multi-year RFP awarded contract.

Path Forward



Implementation Phases:

Castle Rock Branch (1st quarter FY 2026) – Launch pilot installation.

Highlands Ranch Branch – Expand following Castle Rock evaluation (2nd/3rd quarter FY 2026)

Parker Branch – Final, high-visibility roll-out (4th quarter FY 2026).



Next Steps for Collaboration:

Confirm exhibit site allocations in consultation with DCL administration.

Secure funding commitments and establish budget management protocols.

Initiate design development for Castle Rock, with floor plan finalization and renderings.

Schedule evaluation benchmarks for visitor engagement and community benefit.

Conclusion

The Vision Prospectus offers a road map for innovation in community history presentation. By situating exhibits within Douglas County Libraries, the Repository will achieve visible and accessible exhibition space. By adhering to professional interpretive standards, the exhibits will engage audiences not only with information but with memorable, thematic experiences that connect them deeply to the history of their County.

This collaborative venture is designed to grow in phased, sustainable steps—beginning with Castle Rock, expanding to Highlands Ranch, and culminating at Parker—building both momentum and capacity along the way.

With shared commitment, adequate funding, and a clear interpretive vision, this project will establish a new standard for public history engagement in Douglas County.

Douglas County Library Exhibits

Staff and volunteers at the Douglas County History Repository worked in partnership with the Douglas County Libraries for the past few months to provide artifacts for the Libraries' exhibit featuring historic and notable criminal activity in the area. The Repository provided a belt buckle from "Diamond Jack" for display at the Lone Tree Branch. Repository staff also helped organize artifacts owned by the Douglas County Sheriff's Office, including sheriff badges and hats, to be incorporated in the display. The exhibit runs from August 12-September 8 at the Castle Rock, Highlands Ranch, Lone Tree, and Parker Library Branches.



