

Colorado Chautauqua Association

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Colorado Chautauqua Association Strategic Overview

- Mission and Values 3
- Areas of Strategic Focus 4-12
- A View of Chautauqua in 2030 13

Colorado Chautauqua Association

MISSION

The Colorado Chautauqua preserves, perpetuates and improves the historic site and spirit of Chautauqua by enhancing its community and values through cultural, educational, social and recreational experiences.

VALUES

The Chautauqua experience is based on lifelong learning, love of nature, voluntary simplicity, and music, oration and the arts. Historic significance, traditions, cultural relevance, respite and enrichment are among the community benefits provided by the Colorado Chautauqua.

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW - INTRODUCTION

The Colorado Chautauqua Association's (CCA) Strategic Overview is meant to guide future CCA Boards of Directors and Staff and to communicate CCA's strategic priorities to Chautauqua's stakeholders. The overview is organized around eight ongoing areas of strategic focus. Supporting each area of strategic focus are broad strategies designed to support CCA's ongoing vision, mission and values.

Areas of Strategic Focus

- HISTORIC PRESERVATION
- EDUCATION AND OUTREACH
- CULTURAL RELEVANCE
- COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
- FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP
- OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE
- ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP
- WORKPLACE CULTURE

While not a “strategic plan” in the traditional sense, these eight categories, along with the broad strategies that support them, are meant to help keep Chautauqua on course, while also organizing the Board's and Staff's thinking around shorter term strategic initiatives and annual budget priorities. In this way, CCA's strategic objectives are continually evolving, guided by its overall objectives, but also responsive to current issues, market conditions and Board priorities, which are reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors each year.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Preserve and protect the historic character of the buildings and grounds

- Continuously improve infrastructure to address sustainability and resiliency, as well as safety and access
- Make external alterations consistent with:
 - *Chautauqua Design Guidelines* (1989)
 - *Chautauqua Park Historic District Cultural Landscape Assessment and Plan* (2004)
 - *Chautauqua Landscape Design Guidelines* (2012)
 - *U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Treatment of Historic Properties*

Cultivate visitor awareness of Chautauqua's heritage

- Improve interpretation of Chautauqua in venues and grounds, as well as website, social media and publications
- Improve access to archived materials (e.g., digitization, web-access, etc.)
- Communicate interpretation opportunities (e.g., lectures, exhibits, self-guided tours)
- Establish campus house museum to share the experience of early days at Chautauqua

Perpetuate the cultural residency traditions of Chautauqua

- Foster sense of community between newcomers and long-time Chautauquans
- Preserve year-round curfew, seasonal quiet hours and seasonal no-construction period to support quiet enjoyment
- Continue non-summer resident self-programming

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Educate the broader community about the Chautauqua experience and its ongoing commitment to literature, the arts, and civil discourse

- Continue to communicate availability of interpretation opportunities (e.g., lectures, exhibits, self-guided tour, audio tour, historic walking tours, etc.)
- Adapt communications/content to digital distribution channels

Seek opportunities to increase diversity of visitors to Chautauqua

- Ensure programming appeals to a diverse range of interests
- Ensure Chautauqua is welcoming and accessible to all (i.e., physically, logistically, economically, etc.)
- Create programming for diverse communities (e.g., festivals, school programs, etc.)
- Reach out to targeted organizations (e.g., Latino Chamber of Commerce, Title I schools, etc.)

CULTURAL RELEVANCE

Provide “only at Chautauqua” year-round experiences

- Emphasize Chautauqua’s uniqueness (i.e., natural beauty, historical roots, simple accommodations, cultural offerings, respite from technology, sense of community, voluntary simplicity)
- Capitalize on Chautauqua’s unique venues to produce rich, multi-layered experiences for patrons
- Provide programming that aligns with the traditional Chautauqua “experience”

Compete successfully with other lodging, dining, private event and entertainment venues

- Provide high-quality hospitality and programming experiences for visitors and patrons
- Ensure positive first impressions and reasons to return to Chautauqua again and again

Encourage diversity in all aspects of CCA’s governance, operations and programming

- Continually work to expand diverse perspectives on the Board and among Staff members
- Provide more diverse programming to attract patrons and guests from minority and underserved communities
- Cultivate new and diverse patrons/visitors through use of CCA venues for meetings, retreats, etc.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Work collaboratively with existing partners to ensure mutually beneficial objectives

- City of Boulder, the Boulder Chamber, and the broader Boulder community
- Colorado Music Festival and Z2 Entertainment, Inc.
- 3 Leaf Concepts
- Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD)
- University of Colorado
- Preservation community
- Educational and arts organizations
- Residential community

Actively foster new relationships in support of CCA mission/goals

- Strategic outreach to targeted organizations (e.g., Latino Chamber of Commerce, outdoor and adventure industries, environmental groups, etc.)
- Use CCA venues to increase visibility and meet outreach goals

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Manage resources wisely to ensure long-term financial sustainability

- Generate adequate revenue to cover operating expenses, capital expenditures, and other strategic priorities
- Manage operating and capital expenditures to accommodate both budgeted and unexpected expenses
- Comply with *Financial Planning and Asset Management Policy* regarding financial planning, budgeting, asset management and protection, and internal controls
- Actively oversee CCA's *Investment Management Policy* and associated investments
- Maintain Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) Tier II eligibility

Maintain adequate reserves

- Support planned long-term capital improvements, including infrastructure spending
- Fund strategic opportunities and key strategic planning initiatives
- Protect against prolonged economic downturns
- Hedge against business disruptions not covered by insurance (e.g., infrastructure projects, etc.)

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Optimize organizational capacity

- Cultivate a culture of operational excellence in all CCA functions
- Provide needed systems and technology to facilitate efficient operations and support the guest experience
- Educate Board in best practices from *Principles for Nonprofit Excellence in Colorado*

Actively sustain capital and non-capital investments

- Maintain and adhere to schedule of routine maintenance and capital replacements
- Invest in cottage interiors (i.e., furniture, fixtures, tile, etc.) to remain competitive

Balance use vs. overuse of buildings and grounds

- Actively seek ways to reduce traffic circulation and parking impacts
- Review and revise *Use Management Policy* as needed
- Ensure a year-round quality experience for patrons and guests

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

Implement best practices in sustainability across all operations

- Exhibit and share best practices in sustainability and preservation
- Continue to use Learning Lab concept for on-site and virtual education opportunities

Optimize building performance to reduce resource consumption

- Reduce energy usage while ensuring guest comfort, operational efficiency and staff productivity
- Evolve with changing water conservation practices related to both domestic water and irrigation
- Strive to be a zero-waste operation

Explore opportunities for producing energy

- Support renewable energy sources (e.g., solar, geothermal, etc.) to power CCA campus
- Explore district heating and cooling systems to replace current unsustainable cooling approaches
- Amend *Chautauqua Design Guidelines* as required to reflect current realities and to enable energy production on campus

WORKPLACE CULTURE

Attract, develop and retain high quality staff

- Be a place where talented individuals want to work
- Engage all employees in decision making at appropriate levels
- Fairly compensate all staff based on their capabilities and performance
- Encourage work/life balance

Create a diverse and inclusive workforce where different perspectives are encouraged and respected

- Intentionally hire talented people from a wide variety of backgrounds
- Encourage diverse viewpoints when making strategic and/or operational decisions
- Adhere to all equal opportunity employment and fair employment practices

A View of Chautauqua in 2030

Spirit - The camp-like character and sense of community that is a part of Chautauqua's enduring spirit is alive and well. New generations of Chautauquans cherish this reminder of a by-gone time, seeking respite in a serene natural setting, while also celebrating a world of ideas generated at the intellectual crossroads of great literature, the arts, lively civil discourse, and the latest in cultural entertainment.

Resiliency - Chautauqua is physically, environmentally and financially resilient. Careful fiscal planning allows for continuous reinvestment in Chautauqua's historic buildings, beautiful grounds and critical infrastructure. Care is devoted to increasingly sustainable practices, including fire and flood prevention, energy and water conservation, and waste management. Alternative energy sources fuel the cottages and public buildings, most people come to Chautauqua by free and frequent transit, and the pedestrian-friendly grounds are safe, accessible and welcoming to all.

Heritage - Children are regularly introduced to Chautauqua's place in Boulder's history through field trips, entertainment, and educational programs, and visitors can tour a pristinely preserved cottage museum. Cottage owners, long-time renters, and short-term visitors all blend seamlessly into a lively and welcoming community. The traditions and multi-generational friendships of the summer community, developed over more than a hundred summers, remain a valued component of Chautauqua's heritage.