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MEMORANDUM

Date: May 15, 2026
To: Deadwood Historic Preservation Commission
From: Kevin Kuchenbecker, Historic Preservation Officer
Re: Digitization of Oral History Cassettes, PHASE I of III

The City Archives is requesting permission to hire Airshow Mastering of Boulder, Colorado to digitize 50 of the 148 oral history recordings from the 1990s and 2000s on audio cassettes housed at the City Archives and Deadwood Public Library. Since 2002, the City Archives has collected 206 oral histories. The interviews and their content encompass a broad spectrum of topics including longtime residents, former city and historic preservation commissioners, past Deadwood mayors, members of the Deadwood U-Bet committee, and employees of the Homestake Slime Plant. For a complete list of oral histories, please see the attachment to this memorandum.

Prior to 2010, the oral history audio recordings were captured on magnetic audiotape cassettes. This technology has been replaced with digital recordings. To preserve and provide access to these early audio recordings, the City Archives would like to digitize its assemblage of audio cassettes.

Due to the number of audio recordings and cost of this project, the City Archives will divide the project into three parts. Phase I will digitize 14 cassette tapes from the Deadwood Public Library and 36 cassette tapes from the City Archives. The Deadwood Public Library will contribute \$2,000 to the project.

The Historic Preservation Commission reviewed this request at their May 13, 2026 meeting and recommend approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

Move to hire Airshow Mastering of Boulder, Colorado to digitize 50 of the 148 oral history recordings from the 1990s and 2000s on audio cassettes housed at the City Archives and Deadwood Public Library. The cost will not exceed the amount of \$7,300.00 and will come out of the 2026 Archives budget. The Deadwood Public Library will contribute \$2,000 to the project, reducing the City Archives cost to \$5,300.00. This project is a 2026 City Archives budgeted project.