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The facilities arms-race presents opportunities for intercollegiate football programs to envision state-of-the-art stadia to address various campus needs and stakeholder preferences. The present work utilizes a historiographic approach to review athletic playing grounds and stadia at Colorado State University (CSU) from 1892 through 2014 to provide insight on how modern venues like CSU's Canvas Stadium emerged within the National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA) Division I Football Bowl Subdivision. Using CSU as an archetype, the current study offers a rationale for why some schools may choose to move back to campus after playing in large off-campus stadiums. Within, key stakeholders, contexts, and resources are identified from and various patterns and institutional factors are revealed to help us understand what influenced the decision to move back to campus. Since, other institutions either began the process of or expressed interest in moving back to on-campus venues, the present study provides a framework for programs to follow in crafting a successful bid to build a new, on-campus facility. This includes: generating buy-in from invested stakeholders (e.g., students, alumni, and local community), positioning a new venue as a multi-purpose project capable of cultivating relationships and revenues, and demonstrating potential effectiveness and efficiency utilizing available resources.

Keywords: College Football, Stadiums, Colorado State University

Louis "Sonny" Lubick Field at Canvas Stadium, home of Colorado State University (CSU) football, opened in 2017 to offer an awe-inspiring fusion of athletics and interaction opportunities for the school's fan nation and partners (Canvas Stadium, 2021). Built in Fort Collins to fit within the aesthetic of existing CSU campus buildings, Canvas Stadium is unique when its 36,500-seat capacity is juxtaposed against the sight of its predecessor Hughes Stadium, formally a lower-tech and amenity-offering off-campus venue. More specifically, the modern $220.1 million facility offers a greater number of private suites, club seats, and loge seats (Canvas Stadium, 2021). Furthermore, in comparison to Hughes Stadium, Canvas Stadium provides significant upgrades for its student-athletes, media-personnel, institutional partners, and spectators (e.g., restrooms and concessions). Next, fan engagement, advertising and sponsorship activations, statistical information, and instant replays are advanced by way of a massive videoboard and LED ribbon boards that line the stadium. Finally, student-athlete safety is enhanced thru state-of-the-art artificial turf and medical facilities (Canvas Stadium, 2021).

Motivations to build Canvas Stadium as an on-campus venue and the emphasis on such amenities and enhanced services for various stakeholders likely centered on their expectations within the stadium 'arms race' and "discussion over several decades" about what makes for a proper stadium (Tutka & Seifried, 2020, p. 313). For CSU, the goal seemed connected to the need to remain competitive in the Mountain West Conference (MWC) in recruiting student-athletes, producing revenue, and matching the amenities and respect achieved by those peers. Supporting this assumption, MWC schools Boise State University, University of Nevada-Reno, University of New Mexico, Utah State University, and University of Wyoming, all renovated their own stadia during the 2000s to establish or maintain their legitimacy in higher education.

Notably, Canvas Stadium is distinct amongst MWC members because it is a new facility but the decision of CSU to move back to campus into a new venue is not exclusive. In recent years, institutions such as Baylor University (Seifried et al., 2021); Tulane University (Seifried et al., 2019), the University of Houston (Khan, Jr., 2012), University of Alabama- Birmingham (Kirshner, 2018), and the University of Southern Alabama (University of Southern, n.d.) all built new on-campus football stadia after previously playing in larger municipally-owned off-campus venues. Additional developments also show other schools are presently building or transitioning back to their own on-campus stadia. For instance, San Diego State University (SDSU), a MWC peer, will open a new 35,000-seat $310 million on-campus stadium in 2022 (Muret, 2021).

Like CSU, SDSU aims to return to campus to enhance their institution in several ways. First, the new building will be open all year to host other events beyond football, which should increase tourism to campus and benefit students from an educational perspective (Caulfield, 2021; Ireland, 2021). Second, the new stadium will enhance and/or cultivate new partnerships with area businesses (Caulfield, 2021; Ireland, 2021). Third, the facility will offer substantially better amenities to their fans, players, and media groups and do so in a more intimate atmosphere more accessible to its students in comparison to its predecessor the larger San Diego County Credit Union Stadium (Caulfield, 2021; Ireland, 2021). Collectively, these items and its beautiful aesthetics should produce an enhanced campus spirit and positive view of the institution.

Adding to the need for further study of the off-campus to on-campus venue movement, the University of Pittsburgh (Seifried et al., 2018), University of South Florida (ABC Action News, 2017), and Temple University (Romero, 2018) also publicly explored or expressed interest in building their own on-campus stadia in recent years, despite the fact all three schools

play in large professional sport stadia like SDSU. Finally, there are suggestions that some National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I Football Champion Subdivision (FCS) schools that recently joined the reformed Western Athletic Conference may look to study the possibility of reclassifying to the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) (Criswell, 2020). Inherent in any discussion of such reclassification is the need or opportunity to consider major stadium renovation or new construction to meet Division I FBS design requirements (Dunigan, 2011).

The present research employed an instrumental case study of CSU football grounds using a historiographic approach to help us understand how new facilities like Canvas Stadium emerged. We employed the historiographic approach because it is an effective way to study the evolution of organizations and helps understand how national or regional patterns influence in-house decisions (e.g., Mohr & Ventresca, 2002; Seifried et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2018). In this instrumental case, the historiographic approach required the researchers to show how stakeholder groups, contexts, and resources likely impacted the decision to build stadia both off and on-campus. Of note, few scholarly works provide insights into specific institutional histories in order to understand why some universities playing in large off-campus stadiums ultimately chose to move back to campus. The current research chose CSU as an instrumental archetype because many of the aforementioned schools that transitioned share a similar institutional profile (i.e., NCAA Division I FBS) and more precisely within the Group of Five (e.g., American Athletic Conference, Sun Belt Conference, Conference-USA, Mid-American Conference, and MWC) distinction.

We also recognize stadia construction and renovations frequently create substantial public debate, involve unique fundraising or financing approaches, and draw upon many different stakeholders to see them realized. Moreover, the decision to build or renovate stadia and where to build is often influenced by previous (i.e., historical) decisions and context, the activity of one's peers, and goals to cultivate revenues, alumni relationships, brand awareness, and institutional spirit (Ingrassia, 2012; Tutka & Seifried, 2020). Using history seems logical to identify what factors, motives, and resources contributed to recent decisions by some schools, like CSU, to bring football back to campus and to outline what future schools engaged in a similar debate should consider.

To complete the goals of the current study, we asked:

1: What stakeholders, contextual factors, and decisions influenced the construction of previous athletic grounds at CSU from 1893 to 2014?

2: How did CSU ultimately decide to build Canvas Stadium as opposed to continuing to play football off-campus?

3: How did CSU's football grounds impact the perception of the institution?

4: How did CSU's venues compare to other football-playing schools?

Method

To answer these questions, the current research offers a robust chronological account of football grounds at CSU using a historiographic approach. The present historiographic approach followed the historical research process laid out by Seifried (2010, 2017), Seifried et al. (2017),

Walker et al. (2018), and Williams, et al. (2019). To begin, an archival research visit was made to the CSU Morgan Library for the procurement of primary and secondary sources related to the history of the football program, playing surfaces, and facilities beginning in 1892 through 2014 when the decision to construct Canvas Stadium was made. University archivists and finding aids were utilized to select appropriate era-relevant information regarding decision-making processes, motivations, and external environments that individuals and groups faced (Decker, 2013).

Within the historiographic approach, it is important to search for, review, and utilize a wide variety of sources (Mohr & Ventresca, 2002; Seifried, 2010, 2017). Appropriately, several primary sources were preferred for our study that were found within athletic-oriented and other collections such as university facility services (e.g., vertical files) and various presidential records. Overall, these works included: memoranda and reports, letters of correspondence, newspaper clippings, and financing documents, among other documents.

Secondary sources included history books and newspaper articles. Such information was gathered from the CSU, newspapers.com, Google Scholar, and other databases such as HathiTrust Digital, JSTOR, and Avery Architectural Index. Newspapers, in particular, are respected within the historiographic approach because they are considered a potential legitimacy marker via firsthand accounts, for understanding organizational, industry, and other contextual norms (Seifried, 2010). Finally, by utilizing different primary and secondary documents, information was able to be triangulated and dissonant data identified (Vikstrom, 2012).

Next, because the historiographic approach involves such a large amount of reading and thus references, it was necessary to engage in a source criticism to test source reliability and analyze different accounts of the same events and situations to avoid adopting biased outcomes or conclusions (Decker, 2013; Mohr & Ventresca, 2002; Rowlinson et al., 2014; Seifried, 2010, 2017). An internal source criticism takes into account the validity of the author, their authority or experience with the subject, and the intended audience of each document (Seifried, 2010; 2017). An external source criticism is more concerned with the reliability of the document as authentic and the verifiability of facts and dates (Seifried, 2010; 2017).

For this project, utilizing sources that were created relatively close in time to the events discussed was critical to establishing an authentic and accurate historical study. Collected data emanating from sources was subsequently organized in a disciplined manner and placed in a timeline to help produce informed judgments (Mohr & Ventresca, 2002). This part of the process required extensive note-taking and the careful placement of collected information from a strategic approach to reading documents. In this instance, the reading and analysis of the sources occurred chronologically (i.e., oldest to most recent). The following sections of the papers were developed based on this organizational approach.

Lastly, the basic paradigmatic assumptions underlying this analysis on sport stadia make use of historical institutionalism. Historical institutionalism serves to help the present study because it compels scholars to identify the foundation of legacies (e.g., buildings, organizational practices, and decisions) and the emergence of innovations or new ideas to understand their impact on current events or practices (Fioretos, 2011). Within a historical institutionalism lens, scholars are frequently prompted to identify various pieces of discrete information and the sequence and timing of events to establish themes regarding the subject of study (Pierson, 2004). In the present study, comparison of CSU stadium-related activities to peers is necessary, "because the changing nature of constraints and opportunities imposed on institutions shapes decision-making" by organizations in the present (Seifried & Katz, 2015, p. 234). Furthermore, historical institutionalism favors comparisons due to the premise that individuals will "balance

evaluations of the costs and benefits of adapting to new circumstances with the costs and benefits of maintaining or losing their investments in past arrangements" (Fioretos, 2011, p. 373).

Origins of Colorado Agricultural College (CAC) Football

Football emerged at various institutions within the state of Colorado (e.g., Denver University [DU]; University of Colorado [CU], and Colorado School of the Mines [Colorado Mines]) during the 1880s and early 1890s when various townspeople and students created interclass competitions or engaged in spontaneous recreational play. The first intercollegiate team at Colorado Agricultural College (CAC), now CSU, surfaced in 1892 shortly after the school's first athletic council was formed. With aspirations to compete against other Colorado and regional schools, a group of CAC's 179 enrolled students, articulated that football was "first on their minds" (Hirn, 2009, p. 36). Faculty support was generally low by their initial portrayal of the sport as "degrading and treacherous," but CAC students were allowed to play two contests against Longmont Academy in January of 1893 ("History of Athletics at the," 1923, p. 6).

Students funded these games themselves in addition to other contests played in February and April against the CU and Colorado State Normal. Of note, the first CAC home game generated a crowd of 1,000 at the open grounds on the "east side of College Avenue between East Locust Street and East Plum Street" (Hirn, 2009, p. 36). CAC administrators took notice as did the student body. For example, an 1893 issue of the *Collegian* suggested "An interest in college athletics cannot fail but be a good advertisement for our institution" (Hirn, 2009, p. 37).

During 1893, CAC joined the Colorado Football Association (CFA) ("History of Athletics," 1923). The CFA, established in 1890, was attractive for a variety of reasons. For instance, it allowed for stable scheduling of games and shared gate receipts (Whiteside, 1999). Next, participation in the CFA could prompt fundraising endeavors on campus when regional rivals, invited guests, and alumni attended games (Whiteside, 1999). Yet, CAC's initial membership in the CFA was short-lived producing only five games from fall 1893 to 1894. A myriad of issues including the brutal nature of football, lack of rules, and deficient academic performances caused CAC to drop football as an intercollegiate sport although enrollment reached 205 and students enjoyed the sport (Hansen, 1977; "Local Snap-Shots," 1897).

CAC's president, Alston Ellis (1892-1899), did not favor competitive athletics and especially football. Specifically, Ellis felt like football distracted students from their studies, was violent, and often produced cheating which suggested that "worthy moral fiber is not cultivated by the game" ("Ohio University Notes," 1905, p. 1). Ellis also worried about the potential development of gambling thru football, as that was plaguing other institutions at this time (Hirn, 2009). Ellis eventually convinced other administrators to accept his recommendation to cancel football as an intercollegiate school activity in 1895 (Hansen, 1977). However, despite Ellis' declarations, students continued to take interest in football and rallied to restart the sport through the production of unsanctioned teams from 1896 through 1898 (Hirn, 2009).

With the burgeoning "football craze" in the Rocky Mountain region (Ricks, 1938) and as CAC enrollments surpassed 315, football formally reemerged in 1899 after a change in president from Ellis to Barton Aylesworth (1899-1909) ("History of Athletics," 1923). President Aylesworth supported football and generally viewed athletics as important to cultivating a positive campus image and spirit amongst students, alumni, and townsfolk ("History of Athletics," 1923). Still, without greater financial support for adequate playing grounds,

equipment, and a paid head coach, any organized football team was not likely to succeed. Furthermore, the potential promotion and reputation boost for CAC would be limited.

Durkee Field Rises From the Dirt

To better support athletics, the CAC Athletic Association was restructured to improve financial operations and to create a new athletic and military drill field on-campus and "on untilled ground between the chemical building and the agricultural hall" (Jacob, 1999, p. 4). It is likely that an on-campus location was preferred because, over the previous decade, many institutions of higher education throughout the country that played in off campus venues chose to move back to campus to avoid high rents, bring alumni back to campus, and improve the campus spirit to attract more enrollees (Ingrassia, 2012; "State Agricultural," 1899; Tutka & Seifried, 2020). The Colorado Board of Agriculture and Board of Control supported this decision and allowed male students to commit 2,000 hours of free labor and several female students to provide refreshments ("State Agricultural," 1899). These students worked together to clear the field of rocks, uproot vegetation in the swamp that bordered the west side of the field, and fill-in the wet marshland with ground excavated from a nearby mound ("Aggie Athletics," 1936; "Aggie Student Body," 1934; Hansen, 1977). Overall, several people on and off-campus donated a total of $1,800 ($60,000 in 2021) to keep the field on campus ("Aggie Athletics Were Not," 1926, p. 1).

CAC personnel argued and advertised that the new on-campus field would be "the best athletic field to be found among educational institutions of the West" (Jacob, 1899, p. 4). However, the new CAC field was unfortunately not the best in the West, as it remained susceptible to flooding, was poorly equipped, and generally described as a crude "bed of rocks in all seasons" (Hansen, 1977, p. 141). The setup of the new grounds also did not lend itself to generating gate-receipts from its small 1,000-seat capacity. For instance, the elevated location of a railroad line next to the field provided many spectators a free view of contests (Bills, 1901).

To help CAC collect gate receipts from football games, former student Charles C. Durkee, for whom the field was subsequently named, donated a sum of $650 (the equivalent of $19,363 in 2021) ("History of Athletics," 1923). This donation was the first private gift in CAC's athletic history, and it was used for: 1. supplies to erect a six-foot high wooden fence around three sides of the field; and 2. to replace the gravel-laden field with actual grass in 1901 (Hansen, 1977; "History of Athletics," 1923; Jones, 1901). Unfortunately, the train tracks remained an opportune spot for freeloading spectators on the open fourth side, which forced CAC to employ their ROTC cadets and volunteer policemen to police the tracks (Coen, 1907; Hirn, 2009).

The CAC Athletic Association lamented the small size and "unfulfilled promise" of the new athletic ground's gate receipts almost immediately as football enthusiasm across campus and Fort Collins soared with the improvement of local high schools, who also used Durkee Field. Their combined play at Durkee Field relegated it into a "mudhole" and a "source of great annoyance and expense" damaging the reputation of the institution and causing public condemnation ("Aggies Play Tie," 1907; Coen, 1907; "College Athletics Up," 1906, p. 7).

In 1907, a 200-seat, wooden and stone grandstand costing about $800 (the equivalent of $23,346 in 2021) was constructed to help improve accommodations. The new grandstand was financed primarily through the $1,119 in gate receipts brought in by CAC football that year. Positively, the new grandstand was branded by CAC as "the best of its kind in the state" and able to seat most paying customers comfortably ("Aggie-Colorado College Football," 1907). Still,

criticisms remained as rocks and mud damaged the grounds, freeloading spectators reigned on the train tracks, bleacher seats were weather-beaten, and the now ugly fencing diminished the aesthetic views of campus (Coen, 1907). The locker rooms at Durkee Field were also poor in comparison to regional schools like CU, Denver, and Colorado Mines. For instance, the locker room was in a "tiny red brick building west of Old Main on the west side of the railroad track" and did not provide space for the whole team to meet or use simultaneously (Hirn, 2009, p. 50).

In 1908, Durkee Field's one-year-old grandstands were "blown off of its foundation by heavy wind" and needed to be replaced ("College Notes," 1908, p. 4; "The New Athletic Field," 1912). CAC's new president, Charles Lory (1909-1940), argued that Durkee Field needed to be revitalized because its poor quality impacted play and the image of the school as a legitimate institution of higher education (Coen, 1907). The search for a new facility also emerged via prompts from new conference peers.

In 1910, CAC joined the newly formed Rocky Mountain Conference (RMC), which included regional schools such as CU, Colorado College, Colorado Mines, University of Utah, and DU. Their collective goal was to improve gate receipts for each and to ensure fairness between competitors (Constitution and Rules, 1914). Several of these rivals moved into larger facilities before joining the new league. As an example, DU built a 10,000-seat grandstand in 1909 at University Park because they were "tired of paying rent" at Broadway Park in downtown Denver (Fisher, 2006, para. 3). Elsewhere, the University of Utah renovated Cummings Field with the erection of new bleachers to better accommodate fans and to project a better image in their new conference ("Varsity Baseball," 1910). Finally, Fort Collins, provided a great opportunity to increase revenues because of local economic growth. For example, in addition to a new theatre, saloons, and residences for the wealthy, a National Guard armory emerged. Helping the growth, new streetcar lines also surfaced in Fort Collins during 1908 to make campus access easier ("Construction Work Foots," 1908).

Overall, such interest in changes to CAC athletic grounds and regional peers were almost expected. Before the turn of the century, America's most prestigious universities (e.g., Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Chicago) recognized football and athletics generally were to be permanent campus fixtures because of their popularity and ability to promote institutions (Ingrassia, 2012; Tutka & Seifried, 2020). Further, facilities needed regular upkeep and/or improvement to attract "downtown people", better control crowds, and produce more revenues for growing athletic expenditures like coaching salaries, equipment costs, and student aid (Ingrassia, 2012, p. 140).

The Development of Colorado Field

Calls for new campus grounds resurfaced in 1911 with the *Rocky Mountain Collegian* reporting that CAC was "badly in need of a new athletic field" ("Boost for a New," 1911, p. 7). The State Board of Agriculture denied the request for a new athletic field, citing a lack of funds; however, they did conditionally approve a new facility if CAC could find its own funding (Hirn, 2009). Members of the CAC Athletic Association petitioned "that the tract of land lying south of Agricultural Hall and east of the railroad tracks should be turned over" to help build a new athletic field ("The new athletic field," 1912, p. 2). This tract of land was preferred because it was elevated from lower lying soggier areas. At this meeting, fundraising was delegated to students who approved an increase in their athletic fee to fund the facility (Coen, 1908, p. 2).

Coach Harry Hughes (1911-1941, 1946) was also a catalyst for change and set the development of a new facility as condition for his agreeing to take the job in 1911 ("History of

Athletics at the," 1923). It should be noted that this was not uncommon across college football and head coach hiring practices. As one example, John Heisman required "Georgia Tech to build a permanent athletic field open to all students, and for the varsity football team" before agreeing to coach the institution (Seifried & Kellison, 2019, p. 97).

Located southwest of Durkee Field, the new Colorado Field was complete with a locker room noted to have "ample ventilation" and well-equipped with showers and space for 144 athletes (e.g., football, baseball, and track & field) ("Active Athletics," 1912, p. 11). In addition, the building was fashioned to provide a steam room, an athletic training room, and administrative offices. This "clubhouse" was built using recycled materials from the breakdown of the old Durkee Field and was stated to be "comparable to those at the best eastern colleges", with the complex as a whole considered the "best in a five-state radius" ("Active Athletics," 1912, p. 11) Overall, Colorado Field was a major change from Durkee Field, the worst facility in the region.

Details also show the new field included a one-third mile track for the track and field team and a 200-foot grandstand situated on the west side constructed of steel with wood seats that also served the baseball team. A major emphasis was placed on the field being rock free and available for campus educational, athletic, and recreational activities. Many faculty members were noted to approve of the design and its utility, including President Lory, Prof. Stuart L. MacDonald, head of the Department of Mathematics and Astronomy, and Mr. W. W. Parce, landscape architect in the Department of Horticulture and Forestry. The estimated cost for the new facility was about $2,500 ($70,698 in 2021). To pay for the facility, roughly $1,500 was collected from student fees, with some additional money donated by students working on the campus farm ("Aggies Athletics Were Not," 1936; "The New Athletic Field," 1912).

To support construction efforts and reduce potential costs, CAC approved a three-day campus holiday. The holiday provided time for students and faculty to help construct the 1,000-seat stands. Further, the students helped to move more than 2,500 cubic yards of dirt using horses and plows to grade and level the field, seed grass, and plant sod ("Active Athletics Slogan," 1912; "Move 2500 Cubic Yards," 1912). Local City Engineer, Mr. Arthur E. Lamb assisted the project and notably Dr. Henry Curtis, who was cited as an authority on athletic fields, was brought in as a consultant to help ensure the construction of the modern facility.

At the complex, an ornamental entrance gate donated by the class of 1912 welcomed spectators. Special attention was also paid to parking for automobiles as that innovation increased in popularity around the area. Professor Ralph Parshall of Physics and Engineering took over as the primary athletic faculty supervisor for the project. Parshall was selected because he understood the importance of the new complex as a training site for multiple campus athletic teams. After completion, Colorado Field was still small, but it was the first 100-yard field and the first fully sodded athletic grounds in the Rocky Mountain area ("Active Athletics Slogan," 1912; "Expert Advice on Athletic," 1912; "New Athletic Field," 1912).

Colorado Field's development evoked more support from Fort Collins businesses and locals, specifically a rise in paid attendance at games. This, in turn, led to more funds being available to help student-athlete financial-aid and meals (Hansen, 1977). Head coach Harry Hughes parlayed CAC's investment into his and others' visions for CAC into the school's first football championships in 1915 and 1916. The student body also reveled in "an excellent spirit of enthusiasm" throughout the campus, which added much to the school's growing regional respect and institutional significance ("History of Athletics at the Agricultural College,"1923, p. 6).

Increased town spirits, a new facility, and the winning culture of CAC eventually prompted several Fort Collins businessmen to come together and fund the erection of "an

automatic scoreboard" for the athletic complex (Hansen, 1977, pp. 269-271). It was noted that "the advantage of such a scoreboard has been observed by many fans and they will obtain the most pleasure and information from the board" ("Merchants Buy Aggie," 1915, p. 8). Local businesses also purchased advertising at the facility to show support and capitalize on the exposure that overcapacity crowds could provide. Businesses advertising in Colorado Field included: Smith's Candy Shop, Canon Ave. Grocery, J. E. Wilson, A. L. Rohling, and A.W. Scott Drug Company, Eaton & Scheuler (Men's and Boy's Clothing) and Murphy Ready Company, among others ("Merchants Buy Aggie," 1915).

Notably, the start of World War I and an outbreak of Spanish influenza shortened the 1917 season and cancelled the 1918 season. Campus football returned in 1919 after vigorous student petitions and noticeably so too did CAC's return to the championship with back-to-back titles in 1919 and 1920 ("History of Athletics at the," 1923; Hansen, 1977). Enrollment shrunk during WWI but recovered and grew at CAC at an unprecedented rate through the help of football's success pushing the school into the limelight and expanding the campus and Colorado Field (*Building Conditions,* 1926; Hansen, 1977). In the case of football, championship play (i.e., capturing four titles in six years) produced standing room crowds and public praise (Hirn, 2009).

Expansion of Colorado Field

By March 1921, the increased enrollments and interests in football at CAC caused Coach Hughes to formally make a proposal to the State Board of Agriculture to expand and improve Colorado Field (Hirn, 2009). The Governing Board of the college "favor[ed] the improvement and…signified its intentions of assisting in the financing" of the project ("Aggies May Have New," 1921, p. 8). A replacement of the west side stands, estimated to cost $18,000 ($275,842 in 2021) was a key feature of the renovation ("Aggies May Have New," 1921). It was noted the students, whose body had grown to 956, had helped to raise another $2,500 ($38,311 in 2021). In addition to student commitments, the classes of 1921 and 1922 donated funds to build the main brick ticket booth, while the 1915 class donated funds for another at the northeast entrance (Hirn, 2009). CAC again used the fencing around Colorado Field to sell as advertising space to increase revenues and to pay down some potential debt (Hirn, 2009).

While the project was stated to be "nothing elaborate" when compared to eastern schools, the new stands had a 5,000-seat capacity and functionally relieved "the crowded conditions which had existed at football games on Colorado Field" ("Aggies May Have New," 1921, p. 8; Hirn 2009). The venue did compare favorably to regional peers because it supported a small, enclosed press box for newsmen, two concession stands, and renovated restrooms which were touted as capable of producing revenues needed to attract high-profile schools to town ("New Grandstand Will," 1921). Once complete, by August of 1921, the *Fort Collins Courier* added that "Colorado Field is rapidly becoming the best athletic field in this section of the country" and now "looks like a million dollars" ("New Grandstand Nearly Up," 1921, p. 6).

In 1923, Colorado Field hosted the RMC championship but increased interest in the sport showed that the facility needed more seating to keep pace with national trends and the popularity of the program and enrollments which approached 1,000. After World War I concluded, most major institutions of higher education in the U.S. built permanent sport facilities as memorials to their veterans and fallen servicemen. Sport stadia were ideal because they offered opportunities for community engagement, demonstrations of unity, and chances to reconnect with prominent

alumni (Schmidt, 2007). Over the 1920s, fifty-eight new stadiums surfaced while sixty-seven existing venues received renovations primarily focused on expansion (Tutka & Seifried, 2020).

Regarding 1923, CAC hosted CU in a showdown for the RMC title in the last game of the regular season. Temporary bleachers were set up in the end-zone to accommodate the influx of fans, bringing the capacity to nearly 20,000 and producing final gate receipts totaling $24,050 ($385,799 in 2021)-the largest to date produced by the venue. Of note, the RMC title game drew fans from "western Nebraska, Wyoming, Colorado Springs, Denver, and…Boulder" delighting owners of filled hotels and restaurants (Hirn, 2009, pp. 100-101).

The following year, the CAC Athletic Association paid off its share of the west side grandstand and scheduled a large 3,000-seat grandstand to be built soon thereafter on the east side. In total, the Athletic Association funded another $18,596 ($298,308 in 2021) worth of construction for the expansion project, increasing the capacity of Colorado Field to 10,000. CAC believed that larger stands were important to continue the rivalry with CU and to attract high-quality opposition through the production of large gate receipts (Building Conditions, 1926; "Schedule Fight to Develop," 1924). As further evidence for the needed expansion, by 1925, both CU and DU had built new on-campus stadiums, causing Coach Hughes to believe that CAC could fall behind if additional renovations or new construction did not take place. Hughes and others recognized the importance of football toward producing record enrollments and attracting people from all over to campus (Colorado Agricultural College Bulletin, 1926; Hirn, 2009).

Prompted by the great success in football at CAC, the *Coloradoan* declared "Fort Collins the Athletic Capital of State of Colorado" in 1927. Within, the *Coloradoan* recognized the large crowds at Colorado Field and presented evidence that CAC should develop a new facility ("Fort Collins the Athletic," 1927, p. 11). Some improvements were made to Colorado Field to help it remain functional but a new facility did not emerge. Instead, a new press box modernized Colorado Field in 1929 (Cornelison, 1929). With space for announcers, the new press box allowed for CAC football games to be broadcast over the radio to the masses (Cornelison, 1930). Satiating alumni was important, as enrollment doubled at CAC from 504 in 1917 to 1,177 by 1926, and was expected to double again over the next ten years (Building Conditions, 1926).

In 1934, a windstorm caused significant damaged on Colorado Field's west side, which was weakened because of a lack of regular maintenance given to the facility during the Great Depression. CAC was not unique in its unwillingness to invest in annual maintenance of their facility. Schools all over the U.S. examined ways to reduce their expenditures as revenues shrunk during the Depression era (Ingrassia, 2012; Tutka & Seifried, 2020). In particular, gate receipts decreased nationally about 50 percent while average "attendance dropped over 30 percent" (Tunis, 1932, p. 682). Fortunately, at CAC, the storm prompted improvements in 1935 such as the construction of a new press box and ticket booth, and the installation of a new scoreboard clock. An extra 1,500 seats were also installed, increasing total capacity to roughly 12,500. Combined these additions cost about $8,000 ($160,181 in 2021). Moreover, as predicted, enrollment at CAC climbed to 1,861 in 1935 despite the Depression and the football team won the RMC championship during which CAC also became Colorado A&M (Hirn, 2009).

Another 1,000-seat expansion occurred in 1938 when Colorado A&M joined the Skyline Conference as a charter member with CU, DU, Utah State University, the University Wyoming, University of Utah, and Brigham Young University. Next, concession stands were improved and a new lighting system was installed at Colorado Field, positioning the field as "the best illuminated [field] for night football in the region" (Colorado College vs Colorado A&M Official Program, 1948, p. 2). Unfortunately, the football clubhouse fell into disrepair during World War

II as materials needed to fix the space went toward supporting the war effort and enrollment declined to 1,023 by 1945 (Hirn, 2009).

Post-World War II Colorado Field

After World War II, Colorado Field and A&M recovered as a result of the Servicemen Readjustment Act (i.e., G.I. Bill) (Hansen, 1977). The Servicemen Readjustment Act of 1944 provided thousands of returning soldiers from World War II the opportunity to attend college, thus flooding university campuses with new enrollments (Tutka & Seifried, 2020). Colorado A&M's enrollments skyrocketed to 3,518 by 1947 and prompted more construction through the rationalization that more students would want to attend games and that more students meant more alumni are produced (Hansen, 1977). As evidence, former Marine, Bill Simpson, led Colorado A&M's student government to petition the Board of Agriculture for increased investment into athletics. This request asked for an annual allotment of $60,000 ($738,054 in 2021) and called for the construction of a new stadium. The Alumni Association, also dissatisfied with Colorado Field, submitted their "own resolution to the Board" to petition for annual athletic support and a new stadium (Hansen, 1977, p. 359).

Eventually, the rise in enrollment and intense public outcry for bigger and better athletic facilities pushed the state of Colorado to approve funds for Colorado A&M, improve athletics, and other campus buildings in 1947 (Hansen, 1977). The class of 1949, in conjunction with the athletic department, helped fund a new electronic scoreboard in the meantime. This upgrade was in addition to a second 1,000-seat expansion completed in 1949 which increased capacity to just under 14,000 (Utah State vs Colorado A&M Official Program, 1949).

In 1952, President William Morgan (1949-1969) introduced his 30-year plan for A&M to facilitate more support for scientific research, procure federal money for sponsored projects, and improve graduate education to achieve university status (Hansen, 1977). Submitted to the Colorado State Planning Commission, the plan outlined numerous proposed projects for the campus, which included new academic buildings, laboratories, and a library because they should be at the forefront of any construction efforts (Hansen, 1977). President Morgan was a fan of spectator sports but called upon athletics to avoid taking monies and physical space away from other campus programs (Hansen, 1977). No timetable for planned construction was suggested within the plan but the growth occurring at A&M and the city of Fort Collins increased general interest in a larger more modern stadium to help Colorado A&M realize university status. The size of Colorado Field and poor conditions noticeably kept A&M behind other conference peers as A&M transitioned to state university status in 1957 (Hirn, 2009).

At Colorado State University (CSU), new campus buildings offered a rebranding opportunity to the school; yet, the poor performance of the football team in the 1950s and early 1960s after the retirement of Coach Hughes in 1946 did not help build enthusiasm for a new football facility. This decline was evident through a decrease in season ticket sales to just 500-600, even as the population of Fort Collins grew to 25,000. From 1956 to 1965, Colorado State's record in football was 31-69-1 (Colorado State University: Revenue, n.d.).

Colorado Field was known to peer institutions as "disastrous" and "deplorable" by 1960 and a blight for an institution whose enrollment now reached 6,100 (Hirn, 2009, p. 405). The restrooms were forty-eight years old and suffered from water leakage and a sewage system that often backed up. The wooden grandstand seats were defective and often warped or split due to their age and the on-campus facility location (Hirn, 2009). Most importantly, some members of

the press and alumni increasingly refused to attend games. In the case of the press, they viewed the press box as outdated while alumni increasingly saw the facility as an eyesore (Hirn, 2009). Alumni President Jasper French suggested there were more complaints made to him from alumni about the condition of the stadium than the poor play of the CSU teams (Hirn, 2009). Finally, Colorado Field hindered the production of athletics revenues, leaving the athletic department with annual debt and imposing unnecessary costs on the institution and students (Hirn, 2009).

Football in the 1960s was expensive and to be a big-time program you needed to have a budget of at least $400,000 ($3,633,425 in 2021) for football (Jackson, 1962). CSU football and its facility could not meet this expectation and thus its regional reputation suffered. The poor condition of Colorado Field and its revenue-generating capacity also resulted in a failed attempt to join the Western Athletic Conference (WAC). The WAC (established 1962) included schools such as the University of Arizona, Arizona State University, Brigham Young University, and the Universities of Utah, Wyoming, and New Mexico (Hirn, 2009). The WAC denied CSU initially because of poor football attendance and their facility ("Western Conference, 1966). President Morgan felt like this denial and label of poor facilities hurt the reputation of CSU. Furthermore, he felt the lack of sellouts at Colorado Field was problematic. Morgan was not alone as CSU alumni also viewed rejection by the WAC as difficult to accept because many equated institutional prestige with respect for athletic success and facilities (Hansen, 1977; Hirn, 2009).

Hughes Stadium

In 1964, as enrollment increased to 10,185, CSU administrators, including Coach Milo R. Lude, began to look at other recent and off-campus stadia construction as a means to investigate options for a new stadium and to avoid taking away space from emerging or planned campus buildings (Lude, 1964). Specifically, schools such as Georgia Tech, Air Force Academy, and the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) were examined. With respect to an off-campus location, CSU initially looked for a partnership with the local municipality as opposed to outright ownership of a new venue on-campus similar to that in El Paso, Texas during 1963 (Lude, 1964).

CSU Athletic Director Jim Williams recruited season ticket holders from all over Fort Collins and Colorado in 1965 to help gain support for the off-campus stadium initiative. In 1966, CSU approved a plan to build a new stadium around the same time an alumni group was formed to advocate for the project. Board President Arthur C. Sheely, a Fort Collins area automobile dealer, made the first financial gift to launch the off-campus stadium initiative. The State Board of Agriculture approved the plan in June and the Commission on Higher Education's approval came in September of the same year (Hansen, 1977; Hirn, 2009). Interestingly, at the time, CSU enrollment was 12,700 and 27.5% of the student body voted on the proposal. About 2,800 of the over 3,500 voting students were in favor of the off campus stadium proposal, with 2,357 of those also supporting the proposed financing plan. Specifically, students approved that they would fund 70% of the construction through student fees with the remaining 30% coming from gate receipts, event rentals, and gifts (Bush, 1969; "CSU Students Overwhelmingly," 1966).

A plot of land two miles southwest of campus was "acquired through the Bureau of Reclamation" following the development of the Colorado-Big Thompson Water Project, a 250 mile, trans-mountain water diversion operation that provided irrigation, hydroelectric power, and other water uses through the use of dams, dikes, pumps, pipes, and reservoirs (Fraser, 1968, p. E2). The land made was attractive because it offered ample space for parking and adequate utilities for a large expansive facility "commensurate with the growing stature of a university"

(Copeland, 1966, p. 1). The location was also enticing because Interstate 25 and Highway 287 were being constructed, providing improved access and a direct line to Denver (Fraser, 1968).

Similar to UTEP, the off-campus stadium site could seat 30,000 or more if expansion was in order and 7,000+ parking spaces because the site was not limited by campus buildings. Within, the stadium supported over 4,300 large chairback seats and a large 30-foot wide concourse that offered eight restrooms and four concession stands. Next, a two-level climate-controlled press box accommodating 70 newsmen and their equipment needs found a home in the venue. Of note, the press box offered space for home and away coaches, five radio booths, television production space, and several television camera locations (Hughes Stadium Dedication, 1968; More et al., n.d.). Other press box-related amenities included photography dark rooms, a press conference area, and a 150-person assembly room built to host events on football and non-football gamedays locations (Hughes Stadium Dedication, 1968; More et al., n.d.). Finally, the facility featured a President's box that could seat 152. President's boxes were large VIP areas setup to host important guests similar to the smaller luxury suites that became popular across the country in professional sport facilities beginning in the 1960s (Tutka & Seifried, 2020).

Final reports on the new facility suggested that the stadium would be "the most delightful, the most exciting football stadium facility in the west" **(**More et al., n.d., p. 7). The overall cost of the project settled at $3.139 million or $25,780,212 in 2021 dollars (Colorado State University Football, 1967; Stadium Construction Budget, 1967). To finance the project, $2.8 million ($22,996,048 in 2021) worth of revenue bonds were sold based on the income from the aforementioned student fees, gate receipts, event rentals, and gifts (Bush, 1969).

Enrollment at CSU in 1968 was 15,000 with a projected growth of roughly 1,000 students per year through 1975 to justify the size of the stadium. In addition to student enrollment at CSU and corresponding alumni growth, the Fort Collins population continued to expand, further justifying the size and off-campus location. Many believed the new venue would help CSU and Fort Collins capitalize on such growth through increased gate receipts and enhanced media exposure (Colorado State University Student, n.d.). Of note, the new facility and commitment shown by CSU landed them an opportunity to join the WAC, generating positive publicity for the school, city of Fort Collins, and increasing the likelihood that football would be more profitable in the future (Hansen, 1977).

As expected, enrollment at CSU exceeded 17,000 at the start of 1970 and as a result CSU believed paid attendance would increase along with season ticket sales in the new off-campus venue. Yet, attendance actually decreased and only averaged 6,689 from 1973 thru 1976 as CSU continued its poor play on the field (i.e., 29-46-1 from 1970-1976). The collected gate receipts and student attendance were low and far short of expectations as well. For example, 1973 produced $124,556 in gate receipts and total revenues of $331,468 fell far short of football expenditures ($1,016,196 or $6.278 million in 2021) (Report of the Secretary, 1977). In the end, mediocre teams and a location away from students on campus explained their poor attendance but also necessitated additional student fees to be assessed and fundraising to supplement the losses in a venue that lacked true campus spirit due to its setting (Report of the Secretary, 1977).

Similar losses near or over $500,000 also occurred for the 1974-1975 seasons when CSU brought in roughly $650,000 a year and lost almost $475,000 ($2,642,946 in 2021) annually. In 1974, more than half (i.e., $920,000) of the expected $1.742 million from CSU's athletic revenues came from student fees (Hansen, 1977). In 1976, the CSU athletics budget grew to $1.897 million ($9,145,274 in 2021) and fortunately football income grew from greater

contributions via television and radio, concessions and program sales, and road guarantees suggesting that brighter times might be ahead (Loveland, 1976). As evidence, television and radio revenues grew from $50,000 in 1973-1974 to $100,000 in 1976 while concessions and program sales improved from $18,337 to $35,000 and road guarantees increased from $173,019 to $239,359 (Colorado State, 1978). Student fees, although collected from CSU students and still large, were a lower percentage of the total revenues to support athletics (Colorado State, 1978).

The athletic debts produced at CSU during this time period were not unique. Many institutions of higher education faced money troubles as costs continued to rise and revenues failed to keep pace during the 1970s (Raiborn, 1978; Thelin, 1981). With respect to expenses, ballooning scholarship budgets from Title IX (i.e., addition of women's sports), increased coaching salaries, and new specialty jobs (e.g., marketing, compliance, event and facility management, recruiting) created debt (Block, 1976). Yet, this environment caused innovation as athletic departments developed fund raising associations to solicit donations and frequently invested in facility renovations to produce more revenues via concessions, expansion, parking, club seating, and television (Block, 1976).

Although the financial situation within CSU athletics was glum, membership in the WAC helped. Conference affiliation improved financial gains for all members and was responsible for doubling ticket sales (Statement from the, 1980). Income from television also increased substantially through conference membership (Statement from the, 1980). Moreover, television provided exposure not just for athletics, but did so for the entire institution, as advertising slots provided "an opportunity for thousands to see and hear of the excellence, progressiveness, and beauty of campus" (Statement from the, 1980, p. 1). Televised events also increased CSU alumni and boosters pride in their institution and simultaneously provided goodwill and important publicity capable of attracting prospective students to apply (Statement from the, 1980). As further evidence, for the 1980 season, television income was about $150,000 ($499,351 in 2021) and gate receipts exceeded $300,000 ($998,701 in 2021). Additional income came from concessions ($100,000), parking ($19,000), a game share of the Holiday Bowl ($14,000), away guarantees ($323,000), the Rams Sports Network ($25,000), and donations ($100,000). To keep up with conference and regional peers and improve revenue production, CSU athletics suggested facility upgrades should be considered in the near future (Statement from the, 1980).

Major Renovations at Hughes Stadium

On-field success remained a challenge causing many to stay away from Hughes Stadium and therefore, preventing its renovation (Donor Reception Speech, 1994). From 1977-1992, CSU produced a win-loss record of 71-110-4 and only one bowl appearance. However, Sonny Lubick took over as head coach in 1993, quickly turning around CSU and its fortunes in the stadium arms race. At the end of 1994, after a 10-2 WAC championship season, donors highlighted that Hughes Stadium received almost no attention since 1968 (Donor Reception Speech, 1994). The call to renovate was boosted by the fact that football helped organize events that supported the construction or renovation of other campus buildings over the previous 25 years (e.g., Morgan Library, Rockwell Hall, Lory Student Center) (Donor Reception Speech, 1994). Moreover, it was stated that football, "generates enthusiasm for the university as a whole; provides entrée to talk about other university programs; [and] provides opportunity to many students and builds a sense of espirit de corps" (Donor Reception Speech, 1994, p. 1).

The total goal for CSU around 1994 was to spend between $30.6 and $31.3 million ($56.6 million and $57.9 in 2021) on athletic facility improvements, funded through $8 million in gifts and donations, as well as athletics auxiliary revenues. Dick Ross, of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, suggested that CSU ranked last or "near the bottom of comparable facilities of the other nine universities in the ten school Western Athletic Conference" (Ross, 1995, p. 1). One of the most pressing or "urgent" needs within Hughes Stadium was health, life, and safety code improvements, for which the athletic department planned to allocate $3.2 million immediately. Second was the expansion of concession locations, a direct hindrance to revenue generation, and the number of restrooms available at Hughes Stadium, a comfort issue for spectators. Expansion of these facilities was expected to cost $1.637 million. Rounding out the stadium needs was a proposed renovation and expansion of the north seating area. Construction costs varied from $2.535 to $3.249 million based on different 6,320-seat and 9,000-seat construction plans (Ross, 1995). A new scoreboard was also constructed at Hughes Stadium for $450,000 (Phifer, 1995). These renovations and other maintenance projects were completed in 1995 for about $8.2 million (Gilchrist, 2003; Phifer, 1994).

The next major investment into Hughes Stadium came in 2000 when a lighting system was installed. At a cost of roughly $825,000 ($1.3 million in 2021), the new lights offered CSU football the ability to broadcast games on television and specifically ESPN (Gilchrist, 2003). The transition of CSU into the Mountain West Conference (MWC) in 1999 compelled the need for lights at Hughes Stadium. The WAC conference grew into a 16-team league by 1996 and produced several challenges, forcing CSU and other WAC members to charter the MWC. Specifically, the geographic size of the WAC imposed increased travel and the quality of schools and programs added to the WAC were not as competitive. This combination of factors produced decreased returns and the high number of WAC schools spread out the revenues earned from television and bowl shares and failed to produce a large television contract (Dienhart, 2011).

In 2003, Hughes Stadium featured the addition of 16 luxury suites, a club level, and a new videoboard. Schools all across the U.S. invested in the construction of luxury suites, club seats, and videoboards before the end of the 1990s because of the amount of revenues such premium seats generated (Seifried, et al., 2018). Universities saw suites and club seats as an "exclusive, high-dollar revenue stream that that flowed entirely to themselves; it was not diluted through NCAA control, conference revenue-sharing mechanisms, or the peculiarities of individual game contracts" (Seifried, et al., 2018, p. 65).

Completed by the start of the 2005 season, CSU projected that its annual suite sales could generate over $500,000 ($702,279 in 2021) (Blair, 2003). Regarding club seating and the videoboard, CSU looked to mimic that which CU installed at Folsom Field in 1999 (Blair, 2003). The club section at CU produced $2.5 million in revenue and the new CU videoboard increased replay and advertising abilities so that combined CU could produce $650,000 in 1999 and $740,000 by 2002 in revenues (Blair, 2003). Next, CSU announced the suites and club seating additions along with the expansion of the north stand bleachers would increase capacity to 35,453. Other improvements involved addressing needed Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations, the replacement of the playing field, and improved parking accommodations, concession space, and restroom quality (Harvey, 2003). Collectively, CSU believed the major upgrades would permit them to raise the price of tickets, generating additional revenue of approximately $40,000 ($56,182 in 2021) per home game (Blair, 2003).

In order to get the $14.2 million ($21.2 million in 2021) project rolling, in May of 2003 CSU approved an expenditure of $250,000 ($372,704 in 2021) for preliminary architecture plans

and engineering activities (Foster, 2003). The success of the football team under Coach Lubick was a major justification for the improvement of Hughes Stadium (Gilchrist, 2003). Over the previous ten years, Lubick's teams won six conference championships and appeared in seven bowl games as one of the nation's winningest programs.

In terms of exposure, CSU consistently appeared on regional and national television (i.e., 85 football total games over 10 years) which placed the program on "a highly visible stage on which to promote the excellence of the institution" and further showed the need to "maintain a level of parity with facilities available at Mountain West institutions" (Gilchrist, 2003, p. 3). As further justification, CSU football average attendance for the 2002 season was overcapacity at 30,462. Impressively, from 1994-2002, all football seasons surpassed 90% capacity with three seasons (i.e., 1994, 1998, and 2002) exceeding 100% capacity. Monetarily, the Bohemian Foundation donated over $13 million that made a significant dent in the necessary donations for the project (Gilchrist, 2003). The Bohemian Foundation was created in 2001 with the mission to offer grants and various programming initiatives that can promote economic stability and vibrancy thru the entertainment, education, and social bonding opportunities they can provide (About Bohemian Foundation, n.d.)

Aller-Lingle Architects, an award-winning Fort Collins based firm, served as the lead designers with HOK, a top-tier Kansas City based facility design firm, added to the design team. HOK worked with other college stadia such as those at the University of Oklahoma, Penn State University, University of Maryland, Georgia Institute of Technology, Kansas State University, and Virginia Polytechnic Institute (Gilchrist, 2003; Phifer, 2003). Lending further respect to CSU, in January of 2004, CSU named Turner Construction, arguably the top sport facility construction company in the country, as general contractor ("General Contractor Named", 2004). Other projects in the Turner portfolio included INVESCO Field at Mile High Stadium, home of the Denver Broncos. The funding gap for the Hughes Stadium renovation was covered by local philanthropist Pat Stryker, founder of the Bohemian Foundation, and not student fees ("General Contractor Named", 2004).

In September of 2005, the new venue was made available for a fan viewing at an event called "Rams Fan Fest" before the home opener against the University of Nevada. As a lead up to the event, Athletic Director Mark Driscoll stated, "We are excited for our loyal fans to see the changes and the improvements we've made to the stadium. Without question, this is now one of the finest facilities in the region, and will mean a great deal to our entire program and the university" ("Rams Fan Fest," 2005, p. 1). The final version of Hughes Stadium included more luxury suites, an expanded Rams Horn Level club seating area, an upgraded press box, and a new synthetic playing surface ("Fans Get Peak," 2005; "Gifts Put Rams Closer," 2006).

Back to Campus and into Canvas Stadium

Despite these improvements to Hughes Stadium, the facility would be heavily criticized by various members of the community for multiple reasons before a decade was over. For instance, CSU did not provide regular maintenance of Hughes Stadium and was considered a poor revenue-generator in comparison to MWC peers and CU (Stephens, 2014a). The poor revenue capacity of Hughes Stadium basically resulted in many damaged areas throughout the building including concourses, seating infrastructure, player locker rooms, and restrooms (Stephens, 2014a). Other criticisms included the presence of hazards for people with disabilities, a lack of environmental friendliness, and massive parking that created a "heat island" around

Hughes Stadium (Stephens, 2014a, A15). Next, it should be noted that the costs of the bulging deferred maintenance ultimately ballooned the next potential renovation of Hughes Stadium to be $30 million ($34.8 million in 2021) to keep the facility functional by 2020 (Stephens, 2014a, 2014b). Furthermore, according to the Cummings Corporation, who analyzed the facility, Hughes Stadium would require almost $150 million over the next 30-40 years to match conference or regional peer improvements during the 2010s (Stephens, 2014a, 2014b).

Many of CSU's Mountain West Conference peers renovated their own on-campus stadia by 2014 to produce more revenue and offer better accommodations to business partners, alumni, students, and participants than Hughes Stadium provided. Resultantly, students, administrators, and alumni worried that CSU could be viewed as a second-tier institution (Stephens, 2014b). Next, by 2014, a new on-campus facility was attractive because many university officials and alumni believed a new stadium could energize donors not just for a new stadium but also for other university projects (Lyell, 2014; Maxcy & Larson, 2015; White, 2015). Ensuing justification of that claim comes from the "State Your Purpose" campaign that generated roughly $1.28 billion over eight years and made use of football events to solicit gifts (Ferrier, 2020).

Additional pushes to move back to campus came from several other sources. For example, university officials were concerned about the lack of utility regarding the single-function Hughes Stadium and the poor quality of other CSU sport facilities ("Home field advantage," 2015). Developing a new on-campus facility capable of co-hosting CSU soccer and lacrosse teams was attractive to improve playing and spectating conditions for all in addition to providing extra meeting space for entertainment on non-gamedays ("Home field advantage," 2015; Phifer, 2018). Next, it was suggested that moving back to campus would improve CSU's institutional spirit making for a more attractive campus environment (Phifer, 2018; White, 2015).

The prospective increased connection to campus was also supported by a Stadium Advisory Committee. In their 2012 report, the Committee provided evidence of enhanced university connections established by other universities (e.g., University of Minnesota) that also moved into on-campus stadia ("Home field advantage," 2015). Several Group of Five peers throughout the country also moved back to campus from off-campus venues for similar reasons; thus, providing more points of reference and justification for CSU campus stadium advocates ("Home field advantage," 2015). As some examples, the University of Central Florida moved back to a new on-campus stadium in 2007, while the University of Akron and Florida Atlantic University opened new stadiums in 2009 and 2012 respectively (Maxcy & Larson, 2015).

Student and alumni attendance at CSU games in Hughes Stadium was increasingly problematic before 2013 as it was at Central Florida, Minnesota, Akron, and Florida Atlantic (Maxcy & Larson, 2015). Therefore, an on-campus stadium was viewed as constructive to build back student and alumni enthusiasm and potentially to recruit more out-of-state students to apply and enroll (Maxcy & Larson, 2015; White, 2015). Other points of emphasis raised during the debate suggested a new stadium could also, through campus spirit and additional CSU events (i.e., non-sport like graduation, concerts, and job fairs), improve retention rates, donations, and CSU's institutional ranking (Maxcy & Larson, 2015). CSU Athletic Director, Joe Parker, further promoted the idea the new facility would be more profitable and could serve the CSU fan nation and institution over the next 50 to 70 years while featuring the beauty of the campus to both live visitors and remote spectators of various CSU events (White, 2015).

Finally, with respect to financing, CSU President Tony Frank articulated that the school did not want to take from their own university general fund. Furthermore, President Frank viewed the financing of a new stadium as a minimal risk because of the potential for gifts and

various stadium-related revenue sources such as gate receipts, additional premium seating options, concessions, and non-gameday rentals ("Home field advantage," 2015). The improved play of CSU football under Coach Jim McElwain during 2013 and 2014 boosted CSU's average attendance to be 31,890. Resultantly, proponents were confident in the ability of the new facility to attract a corporate sponsor to help reduce the debt of the building and to flush CSU athletics with cash. In this instance, Canvas Credit Union promised $37.7 million "as one of the largest collegiate athletic venue naming agreements in history" (Phifer, 2018). The Canvas Credit Union was attracted to the facility as part of their own rebranding effort from their former name the Public Service Credit Union (Phifer, 2018).

Discussion/Conclusion

The present study employed an instrumental case study of CSU football grounds using a historiographic approach. The goal of this work was to help us better understand why institutions might bring football back to campus when they play in off-campus locations. We chose CSU as a unique instrumental archetype because recent construction activity shows that many Group of Five schools, like CSU, are looking to increase revenues and financial gifts, improve their campus environments, offer more educational opportunities, and advance or maintain their institutional status in comparison to peers. Furthermore, we recognize they might do so through new stadium or renovation initiatives because of previous success they enjoyed in on-campus venues. To achieve the goals of the present work, we aimed to better understand what stakeholders, contextual factors, and decisions influenced the construction of previous athletic grounds at CSU from 1893 to 2014. Next, we sought to determine how CSU ultimately decided to build Canvas Stadium on campus as opposed to continuing to play football off-campus.

With respect to the question about stakeholders, the current research shows that when schools show interest in moving back to campus, it is necessary to identify the key stakeholders and secure commitments of support from them. Key stakeholders revealed in the present study were students, student-athletes, administrators, alumni, business partners, and media personnel. Collectively, satiating the needs of these stakeholders can be important as a source of revenue, gifts, and publicity but also critical to cultivate a unique and attractive campus spirit, a necessary component presented in this work as a justification for renovation and new construction.

Students were often featured in the present study as contributing not just money via fees they paid but also through actual physical labor and voting referendums they approved. In essence, we confirm previous scholarship (e.g., Tutka & Seifried, 2020) that students are typically a strong motivating factor for new construction decisions. Moreover, students should be considered if university planners aim to increase or seek to accommodate increased enrollments. Next, we show alumni are critical because they frequently supported various stadium campaigns and constructions through gifts or donations. Overall, alumni should be acknowledged as important stakeholders because they desire for their institution to be well-respected but also capable of accommodating them more comfortably (Downs & Seifried, 2019). Similarly, media personnel are featured in the present work as impactful to stadium construction decisions based the ability to do their job suitably and comfortably. Generally, it is recognized that better accommodating the media will produce more positive coverage (Tutka & Seifried, 2020).

Local businesses and businessmen were also featured as impactful on new constructions, particularly when the football team was successful and as the population of the area continued to expand. Their interest, as provided in this study, shows their support of stadium construction

frequently aimed to capitalize on high attendance and interest in being associated or contributing to success. This interest also connects well to conference affiliation and the prospect of new conference business partners. In the case of CSU, the institution was very much influenced and impacted by conference participation (i.e., desire to join a conference or maintain status). As one example, the WAC rejected and then accepted CSU based on the status of its stadia. Participation in the WAC was considered an upgrade and a benefit to CSU's desire to improve their school reputation. Similarly, changes to Hughes Stadium occurred because of MWC conference affiliation and CSU's interest to capitalize on the financial and prestige opportunities it provided.

Regarding university administrators, the current study showed various presidents, faculty, and officials as impactful on the support of or lack thereof for stadium initiatives. Like prior literature showed (e.g., Ingrassia, 2012; Schmidt, 2007), the lack of support typically centered around the need to focus on better supporting academic programs through physical spaces or monies appropriated. In contrast, support for new grounds generally focused on efforts to reimagine and improve campus aesthetics, enhance the campus spirit, and advance educational opportunities and institutional status or prestige in the eyes of peers, students (current or potential), alumni, business partners, and the media (Ingrassia, 2012; Tutka & Seifried, 2020). Additional evidence provided by the present study shows the administration was interested in building a more dynamic and flexible multi-purpose venue and that they preferred to improve the access and use of the building to students who found problems attending Hughes Stadium. Furthermore, new facilities were often viewed by administrators as a launching pad for gift campaigns and in many instances an entertainment resource to use for non-athletic fundraising.

Practical Implications

To better understand what type of conditions and contextual factors are likely or necessary for institutions to consider a move back to campus and what institutions might lack in off campus venues, the present study offered several items to consider. First, we provided evidence that older facilities, particularly those that suffer from substantial deferred maintenance, are better off replaced rather than renovated. Patterns revealed in the present work showcase why there was such an interest in upgrading luxury accommodations, improving technology, and providing more amenities to various groups working or attending games. Older facilities typically have more problems accommodating substantial changes (Tutka & Seifried, 2012). This is particularly noticeable if too much time has passed and the accumulation of needed changes to make a facility functional versus being a dynamic asset is present (Tutka & Seifried, 2012). It does not take long in the facility arms race for a venue to fall behind other peers and this can be an effective reason to prompt construction (Ingrassia, 2012; Tutka & Seifried, 2012).

Second, it is imperative that schools position a new on-campus facility as multi-purpose. Justifying the renovation of older off-campus single-use facilities is problematic when compared to new on campus venues that serve multiple sport teams, campus programs, and community members. Furthermore, making on-campus facilities open during non-gamedays is critical to recruit support because it shows respect for the community (i.e., this is a community facility) and helps produce potential new revenue streams that a single-use facility cannot offer.

Third, it is critical for institutions who are considering an on-campus move to demonstrate they can secure gifts from the public and can produce substantially more revenue in a new facility rather than relying on student fees. Moreover, presenting to the campus community and alumni that a school can produce multiple financing sources and would be

interested in cutting costs is useful to gain support. The present research demonstrated several ways a school can reduce costs (e.g., student labor, recycled building materials, university personnel) and still develop a multi-functional facility that fits the campus architectural scheme.

Fourth, the timing of such fundraising campaigns should be aligned with high-performing teams. It appears a lot easier to generate public, alumni, and campus support if the team seems to be deserving and crowds are packing older facilities. Moreover, as an alternative, highlighting one's own facility as poor and a negative on the school's reputation could be an effective tool to evoke the start of a plan to move. Further, promoting plans to join a new conference or maintain status could be useful. All of the above were major features of CSU's strategy to gain support and to help communication to others that CSU was vibrant, modern, and full of attractive spirit.

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