

## Shuga's Project Statement

**History:** Established in 2001, Shuga's is a fashionable, moderately priced, fast-casual restaurant offering globally inspired food, craft cocktails, and espresso. In 20 years, Shuga's has grown from a humble and understated local meeting place into an iconic hotspot and Colorado Springs fixture, attracting the reverence of locals and tourists, alike. This cozy, unique locale is regularly redesigned and reimagined to capture and recapture the interest of people who want to surround themselves with art, cultural diversity, and music while enjoying great food and drink.

**Pandemic Response:** In May 2020, as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for socially distanced seating, we spread our service area out into the lots located to the west of the restaurant, and a beautiful downtown dining oasis was born. This included the creation of a young-but-growing garden area and the installation of a large-scale, commercial tipi fully furnished with infrared heating, cooling, and décor to fit the Shuga's context. This tipi and surrounding garden have since become a huge part of our brand. In the time that we have been using this space, we have fielded only positive feedback from our neighbors, the community, and out-of-state visitors, with many customers becoming infatuated. The story of a Colorado Springs restaurant offering tipi dining has even been picked up by several publications.

**Project Boundaries:** The expanded outdoor dining will remain within:

- 702 S. Cascade Avenue (6419203001): N 30 FT OF E 90 FT OF LOT 14 BLK 302 ADD 2 COLO SPGS
- 9 W. Rio Grande Street (6419203003): W 32 FT OF E 122 FT OF LOT 14 BLK 302 ADD 2 COLO SPGS
- 11 W. Rio Grande Street (6419203004): E 36 FT OF W 68 FT OF LOTS 13, 14 BLK 302 ADD 2 COLO SPGS
- 15 W. Rio Grande Street (6419203005): W 32 FT OF LOTS 13, 14 BLK 302 ADD 2 COLO SPGS

The expansion is approximately 1,100 square feet of additional customer seating with a total lot size of 12,800 square feet with beautiful, walkable gardens.

**Use Variance:** We are desiring permanent approval for the additional outdoor seating area in a residential zone. We hope to continue the use of the tipi as a small private dining option for winter and/or summer rainy weather into the coming years, post pandemic. When it comes to construction, there will be none; the work has been done and inspected by CSFD and the project has been fully functioning with a Temporary Use Variance.

**Access Control:** The expanded outdoor dining space is surrounded by both metal and rope fencing with one access point to the sidewalk and one access point into the restaurant. Customers are aware of these boundaries via signage and respect them while dining.

**Community:** Because we are located adjacent to residential housing, we have always been and will continue to be a respectful presence in our neighborhood. There are no plans to include amplified or live music. There are also no plans to accommodate giant catered receptions or offer any activities that could foster unwanted noise or rowdy behavior thus leading to a ruffling of neighborhood feathers. Smoking is also never allowed in any of Shuga's service areas. We simply intend to take what we have already been doing for years and spread it out in the manner consistent with what we have been doing since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Hours of operation for extended patio at this time are Friday and Saturday until 10pm, and Sunday until 9pm.

**Capacity:** Though we are looking to increase our service area permanently, we are not able to increase capacity by much. Our diminutive kitchen and bar will remain the same size, at least for the foreseeable future, and there is a clear limit to how much business we can successfully take on. Pre-pandemic, we had 28 available tables plus bar seating in the height of summer between the interior of the restaurant and the front and back patios. Historically, in winter, the patios go mostly unused, leaving us with 14 tables plus bar seating. The tipi would allow us to use those patio tables year-round. The expanded outdoor dining allows us to serve an additional 20 customers.

**Customer Comfort and Safety:** Our customers, we have learned, are a very COVID-conscious people and we have consistently honored their needs. We believe the trauma of the pandemic, plus the development of the delta variant, for most, will cause a great demand for continued social distancing and we will accommodate that. Allowing Shuga's to use these adjacent lots will make that possible and sustainable.

**Parking Variance:** We have not intercepted any issues or complaints since the pandemic expansion. Thirty-two percent of our current staff live downtown and do not drive to work. We are, of course, within close proximity to blocks and blocks of metered and non-metered public street parking, bike lanes and bus stops, and many of our local regulars bike or walk to Shuga's from previous downtown destinations to rendezvous for lunch. We also anticipate, with the growing number of housing being developed in the area, that the number of our neighborhood customers who elect to walk or bike to Shuga's will only increase. Additionally, there is more than adequate structured and lot parking within a ten-minute walk from the restaurant.