

A Strategic Stewardship Plan for the State of New Jersey

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New Jersey's collecting institutions are the stewards of a wealth of treasures encompassing a rich history, a strong artistic culture, a remarkably varied natural environment, and a physical record of industrial and technological advances that started in New Jersey and literally changed the world. As stewards of these collections, New Jersey's museums, libraries, archives, and historic sites have an exceptional responsibility to ensure their long-term preservation and accessibility. Institutions have the commitment and dedication needed for the tasks of preservation, but they need training in collections care strategies, assistance in fundraising, help in creating financial stability, and aid in advocating on behalf of their preservation priorities.

The Collections Care Consortium of New Jersey (C3NJ) was formed in 2008 to examine the state of preservation activities at collecting institutions throughout New Jersey. It brings together leaders from some of the state's most important institutions, including the Newark Museum, the New Jersey State Archives, the New Jersey State Library, Rutgers University Special Collections, the New Jersey State Museum, the New Jersey Historical Society, the Princeton Theological Seminary, The Stickley Museum, and the Monmouth County Historical Association.

A twelve-month process involving a comprehensive electronic survey and regional focus groups resulted in conclusions that New Jersey collections are at risk of loss due to security issues such as the lack of inventories of collection items, the absence of emergency or disaster plans, sub-standard storage conditions, and inadequate staff training in preservation "best practices." While there is an undeniable need for additional resources to address these issues, there is also deep concern that the private sector, funders, and legislators do not sufficiently value New Jersey's artistic and historic heritage.

This preservation plan proposes a five-year program to address preservation problems in the state of New Jersey. Every effort has been made to create a plan with achievable goals, a realistic timetable, and responsibilities designated to guarantee implementation. From this point forward, there is much work to be done.

The Collections Care Consortium of New Jersey (C3NJ) has adopted the following mission statement to guide the process:

Mission Statement: The Collections Care Consortium of New Jersey (C3NJ) is committed to implementing a five-year plan to address preservation needs at New Jersey collecting institutions through:

- Education and assistance to ensure the long-term preservation of collections, as well as the stability of the institutions that care for them;
- Improved access to quality collections care information and resources;
- The development of new models for service delivery; and
- The development of marketing and advocacy strategies to raise awareness of the value and needs of New Jersey collections.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) launched *Connecting to Collections: The IMLS Conservation Initiative* in fall 2006, based on findings from *A Public Trust at Risk: A Report of the Heritage Health Index*, a study conducted by Heritage Preservation in partnership with IMLS. Based on a comprehensive nationwide survey, the Heritage Health Index study identified serious concerns affecting the historic and cultural collections at institutions throughout the country. Sounding a national alarm, the report concluded:

“The Heritage Health Index data points to environmental and storage conditions, emergency planning, staffing, and funding as the aspects of collections stewardship with the greatest needs. If these are not addressed, many collections are at higher risk for damage or loss.”

The IMLS *Connecting to Collections* initiative was launched with a national conservation summit followed by regional summits, a “conservation bookshelf” for distribution to targeted institutions, and a *Connecting to Collections* grant program to provide funding to address collections care issues in each state.

In New Jersey, the Newark Museum accepted leadership responsibility for writing the *Connecting to Collections* planning grant request, receiving the IMLS grant award in 2008. The Museum assembled a consortium, initially comprised of representatives from the New Jersey State Archives, the New Jersey State Library, Rutgers University Special Collections, and the New Jersey State Museum, to oversee the development of a comprehensive preservation plan for collecting institutions in New Jersey. The envisioned plan would include a comprehensive assessment of conservation needs within the state and the development of strategies to address identified short- and long-term collections care priorities.

In April 2009, the consortium entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) to implement the core tasks outlined in the planning grant. In addition to CCAHA staff, Tom Clareson, Senior Consultant for New Initiatives at LYRASIS, was assigned the role of project manager and nonprofit management consultant Diane Mataraza was retained to lead the focus groups.

On April 21, 2009, the consortium met with the consultants to review proposed planning strategies. Consortium members at this meeting included: Rebecca Buck (Newark Museum), Karl Niederer (New Jersey State Archives), Linda Caldwell Epps (New Jersey Historical Society), Joseph Klett (New Jersey State Archives), Michele Stricker (New Jersey State Library), Deborah Mercer (New Jersey State Library), Jennifer Martin (New Jersey State Museum), Bob Golon (Princeton Theological Seminary), Farideh Tehrani (Rutgers University Special Collections), Tim Corlis (Rutgers University Special Collections), Ron Becker (Rutgers University Special Collections), Daniel Linke (Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library), Jeffrey Moy (Newark Museum), and Heather Stivison

(The Stickley Museum). In addition to approving consultant responsibilities and the proposed task schedule, the consortium officially adopted the name of the Collections Care Consortium of New Jersey (or C3NJ) at this meeting.

Officially beginning the work of implementing the plan in spring 2009, CCAHA prepared an electronic survey based on the Heritage Health Index survey, with a special emphasis on areas of particular concern to the C3NJ members. These areas of concern included collections storage, disaster preparedness, and the overall level of professional staffing at sites. With additional funding provided through a National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) State and National Archival Partnership grant administered by the New Jersey State Archives, a special section was added to the survey specifically focused on the needs of government-related (municipality, city, and county) archives.

The final version of the survey consisted of approximately 100 questions organized into ten sections:

- Type of Institution
- Institution's Collections
- Institution's Environmental Systems
- Institution's Collections Storage
- Institution's Preservation Activities
- Funding for Conservation and Preservation Projects
- Staffing and Use of Outside Expertise/Services
- Information for Statewide Preservation Planning
- General Institution Information
- Respondent Information

The questions were arranged to allow organizations to easily skip questions that were irrelevant to their type of collections, making for a more streamlined survey experience. Questions included multiple choice, lists for ranking, and open-ended questions. A database of e-mail contacts at 627 New Jersey collecting institutions was prepared by Newark Museum staff. Every effort was made to direct the survey to an appropriate "professional with collection management responsibilities" (curators, librarians, archivists, executive directors, etc.) at the institution.

Technical consultant Jamie Pelley launched the survey through Survey Monkey on May 12, 2009, and it remained open for nine weeks. Questions regarding the survey were directed to CCAHA. Copies of the survey in Microsoft Word format were available through CCAHA on request. By the close of the survey on July 15, a total of 243 institutions had responded for a 39% response rate, which compares favorably with the Heritage Health Index overall response rate of 24%.

The survey data was stored in an Excel spreadsheet. It was imported into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences); both data sources served as platforms for

the data cleaning process. All comments made under the optional areas requesting anecdotal comments were copied and inserted verbatim into the raw data.

CCAHA Director of Development Lee Price and technical consultant Jamie Pelley worked together on selecting material to analyze through additional cross-tabulations, creating tables that examined the responses by type of organization, size of organization, and region.

From June 23 to June 26, CCAHA led a series of regional focus groups organized by Tom Clareson and CCAHA Executive Director Ingrid Bogel and facilitated by consultant Diane Mataraza. A total of six focus groups were held at five locations: two focus groups at Rutgers University in New Brunswick and one focus group each at Cherry Hill Public Library, Richard Stockton College in Pomona, the Morris Museum in Morristown, and the Newark Museum. The 90-minute focus groups offered opportunities to discuss challenging issues and perceived greatest needs at sites, thoughts on strategies that should be present in a state-wide preservation plan, and suggestions on stakeholders and potential partners who could be brought into the process. Eighty-six (86) collections care professionals participated in these focus groups, representing a broad cross section of collecting institutions in the state. Following the focus groups, Ms. Mataraza created a synthesis of representative key comments in an Excel document, sortable by subject matter or focus group location.

CCAHA staff performed an analysis of the survey data, examined in the light of focus group comments. A survey analysis document was circulated among C3NJ Task Force members for comment. On November 30, the C3NJ Task Force reconvened to discuss the findings, as well as potential strategies for addressing the identified collections care needs at sites throughout the state. Consensus was reached on a broad range of issues.

The final preservation plan was written and designed by Lee Price, CCAHA Director of Development. Digital images of key collections items from New Jersey organizations were solicited. Their presence in this document gives a small indication of the diverse objects that are located in the special collections of New Jersey's libraries, museums, archives, and historic sites.

SNAPSHOT OF NEW JERSEY COLLECTING INSTITUTIONS

The C3NJ “Connecting to Collections” survey offered a rare opportunity to appreciate the breadth of collecting institutions that operate throughout the state of New Jersey. A list was compiled of 627 collecting institutions thought to be operating in the state, and 243 of these institutions responded to the survey (a 39% response rate). The responding institutions range from tiny volunteer-run sites to world-class museums, and they are located in areas that range from remote rural locations to the hearts of cities. But despite their considerable differences, these collecting institutions are united in a shared concern for preserving their history and culture.

To a large degree, each type of institution that responded to the survey had little interaction with other types of institution. As one example, public libraries are represented by entirely different associations than art museums. This means that there are no annual meetings where the people in charge of special collections at libraries can network with the people in charge of special collections at art museums. Although their collections care needs are often similar, there are few convenient avenues for communication. In many cases, this initiative’s focus groups offered first-time opportunities for staff people at nearby collecting institutions to meet and share opinions and information. An oft-stated hope at these focus groups would be that there would be more opportunities offered like this in the future.

Of the 225 responding institutions, there were 101 public libraries, 37 historical societies, 23 government-related archives, 21 historical houses or sites, 18 academic libraries, 11 history museums, 10 independent non-profit archives, 8 art museums, 5 general museums, 4 academic archives, 4 special libraries, and 1 science technology museum. For the cross-tabulations based on type of organization, it was decided to combine several of the above categories into single categories in order to limit those where the number of respondents would be too small to be statistically significant. Special libraries, academic libraries, and academic archives were combined into a single category with 26 respondents. History and science museums were combined to form a category with 12 respondents.

With 101 responses, public libraries accounted for more than twice the number of responses than any other “type of institution.” There are many factors that may have led to this high percentage (41.6% of total respondents). The e-mail lists maintained by the New Jersey State Library may simply be of higher quality than similar e-mail lists for other types of organizations. Also, the recent stellar work of the State Library in promoting education programs on preservation may have prompted greater interest in the subject matter of the survey.

There was a mild concern that the public library respondents might not limit their responses to factors affecting the special collections (and would therefore include information on the circulating and reference collections). Fortunately, spot checks of library responses indicated that most public library responses did indeed limit the scope of their responses to their special collections. Nevertheless, the high percentage of public

library responses could have unduly influenced some of the overall averages, making it all the more critical to note the differences in the cross-tabulations that were done by “type of institution.”

The history-focused organizations of New Jersey were well represented in the survey by 37 historical societies (15.2% of respondents) and 21 historical houses/sites (8.6%). Three categories relating to academic collections were combined into the single category of “Special and Academic Libraries and Archives.” This tactic may have slightly distorted the responses of the four responding special libraries – which are not necessarily university-related – but the low number of respondents made the combination a statistically attractive compromise.

The total of 25 responding museums appears to cover nearly all the known museums in New Jersey. Since the needs of the art museums, history and science museums, and general museums that responded seem to show considerable variation according to “type of institution,” the categories were kept largely separate for analysis, even though the resulting numbers are low for accurate statistical analysis.

There are collecting institutions active in every one of the 21 New Jersey counties. Seven counties provided more than 15 responses apiece, with the largest number of responses coming from Essex County (29 responses), closely followed by 27 from Bergen County. The average number of responses came to 11.6 per county, with 13 of the 21 counties sending less than 10 responses. The lowest number of responses came from Somerset County (2 responses), followed by Cumberland (3) and Salem (3) Counties.

The counties were divided into four regions for analysis:

SOUTH: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem Counties.

METROPOLITAN AREA: Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, and Union Counties.

NORTH: Bergen, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex and Warren Counties.

CENTRAL: Mercer, Monmouth, and Ocean Counties.

Of these four regions, the Metropolitan area accounted for the most responses (80) immediately followed by the North with 79 responses. The Central and South areas were relatively close to each other in the number of responses, with 44 coming from the Central area and 41 from the South. These divisions were used for the cross-tabulations by region.

Since so many respondents are members of the New Jersey Library Network system, the survey asked for the institution’s network region (although these divisions were not used for subsequent analysis purposes). The results were that 52 respondents were members of Interlink, 48 respondents were from the Highlands Regional Library Cooperative, 30 were from the Central Jersey Regional Library Cooperative, and 26 were from the South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative. These responses did not include many of the

responding museums, historic sites, and historical societies, simply because they are not eligible to participate in this system.

The sizes of annual operating budgets similarly showed considerable variety, with responding institutions ranging from very small volunteer-led operations to large metropolitan museums. The smallest organizations – comprising those with annual operating budgets less than \$100,000 – account for 70 (or 34.5%) of the respondents. If this group is combined with the next smallest size (\$100,000 - \$499,999) which had 40 respondents (19.7%), the total of small organizations represented was nearly 55% of all respondents. This is neither surprising nor necessarily a matter of concern. New Jersey is a state with many local and small, often volunteer-led, collecting institutions, and the survey results are more accurate for effectively reaching this group.

Institutions with larger budgets are also well-represented in the survey, and it appears that all the largest New Jersey collecting institutions responded to the survey. The total number of 19 institutions (9.4% of respondents) with annual operating budgets of \$5 million or more could be considered artificially high by the inclusion of 5 public libraries (where the vast percentage of the operating budget would be dedicated to activities entirely separate from the special collections). But this still leaves 14 institutions with large operating budgets, and these include archives and special libraries, historical societies, historical sites and houses, art museums, history and science museums, and general museums – an impressively wide variety of institutions that appropriately suggests the breadth of New Jersey collections.

SUMMARY: KEY PRESERVATION PLAN GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The New Jersey Preservation Plan, 2011-2015, proposes intensive work in five key areas: stewardship, stabilization, communications, marketing and advocacy, and facilities. Within each area, the plan identifies one or more strategies that can be implemented to move New Jersey's collecting institutions toward achieving the ambitious goals. The full preservation plan document is included as Appendix A, where the strategies are further broken down into manageable tasks with timelines, responsible entities, and measurements of success.

1. Stewardship

Goal: *Improve collections care environments and practices at collecting institutions throughout the state.*

Stewardship Strategy I: Offer basic collections care training programs in all four regions in state.

Stewardship Strategy II: Offer environmental management education program in each of four regions of state.

Stewardship Strategy III: Offer an Emergency Plan and Response Program in each of four regions of state.

Stewardship Strategy IV: Offer assistance with preservation planning to selected collecting institutions.

Stewardship Strategy V: Develop program to offer assistance with inventory projects at collecting institutions.

2. Stabilization

Goal: *Improve fiscal and management strategies at collecting institutions to ensure long-term stability.*

Stabilization Strategy I: Offer assistance in institutional fiscal assessments to targeted organizations to better address long-term organizational stability and build institutional capacity.

Stabilization Strategy II: Offer workshops in integrating financial planning into strategic planning for collections.

3. Communications

Goal: *Offer easy access to up-to-date information on activities and resources related to collections care.*

Communications Strategy I: Develop a centralized website to share current information on activities and resources available to New Jersey collecting institutions.

Communications Strategy II: Offer program for providing immediate informational response on preservation questions.

4. Marketing and Advocacy

Goal: *Effectively communicate the value of New Jersey's collections and the need for investment in collections care.*

Marketing Strategy I: Raise awareness of collections and their needs to a variety of constituencies, including institutional boards, members, general public, funders, and legislators.

Marketing Strategy II: Advocate for increased funding through both private and public channels.

5. Facilities

Goal: *Explore opportunities to create statewide or regional centers to address preservation issues.*

Facilities Strategy I: Establish a pilot regional collections storage facility to serve Newark area.

Facilities Strategy II: Explore the need for of establishing an in-state facility for conservation and training.

Facilities Strategy III: Seek out new partnerships to develop collaborative projects.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS: STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship Strategies

Stewardship Strategy I: Offer basic collections care training programs in all four regions in state.

Stewardship Strategy II: Offer environmental management education program in each of four regions of state.

Stewardship Strategy III: Offer an Emergency Plan and Response Program in each of four regions of state.

Stewardship Strategy IV: Offer assistance with preservation planning to selected collecting institutions.

Stewardship Strategy V: Develop program to offer assistance with inventory projects at collecting institutions.

The Need to Improve Stewardship

The stewardship goal is very wide-ranging and ambitious in its scope, encompassing three out of four of the primary recommendations made in *A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America's Collections*:

- Institutions must give priority to providing safe conditions for the collections they hold in trust.
- Every collecting institution must develop an emergency plan to protect its collections and train staff to carry it out.
- Every institution must assign responsibility for caring for collections to members of its staff.

While this preservation plan's subsequent four goals will contain vital strategies needed for successful implementation, this first goal must be considered the heart of the plan. Ultimately, the long-term preservation of New Jersey's collections can only be ensured if there are site-by-site improvements in collections care environments and practices.

For the purposes of this plan, the category of stewardship includes: basic collections care skills for staff and volunteers involved with collections, basic knowledge of environmental management by staff, appropriate emergency planning at each site, a commitment to a process of preservation planning at each site, and a commitment to following standard archival policies and procedures for inventorying and cataloging.

The survey and focus groups identified strong needs within all five of these stewardship areas. For a disturbingly large proportion of the collecting institutions surveyed, environmental conditions and practices at their sites could be considered rudimentary,

poor, or even non-existent. If these areas are not reasonably addressed, the items in their collections are at serious risk of deteriorating and possibly being lost forever.

Collections Care: There are many diverse skill areas that apply to collections care, and very few people can claim to be masters of them all. Basic knowledge of a range of skills is essential for the leaders at small institutions, and mid-sized to larger institutions benefit most from expanding on the skill sets of their existing staff and volunteers. Examples of collections care skills include knowledge of proper handling and storage of objects, integrated pest management techniques, housekeeping, archival matting and framing standards, basic book repair, and caring for specialized collections such as photographs or textiles.

Survey and focus group comments indicated a widespread feeling that their staff and volunteers needed training in basic collection care skills. Representative comments included:

“I think one of the keys (to a successful preservation plan) would be intensive training for staff. One of the hurdles that I find in instituting a preservation project is that I have no staff that is trained in this field, and little possibility of being able to hire a dedicated preservationist. If there were a multi-session program that I could send a staff member to, I would.”

“Some staff are not at all familiar with how to do preservation work and need basic training to start.”

“A series of workshops and training programs on practical preservation techniques might be useful.”

Environmental Management: Environmental conditions are a concern throughout New Jersey, with many institutions indicating that there is little-to-no environmental monitoring performed at their sites. The survey specifically inquired about environmental controls to meet temperature and relative humidity specifications. More than 40% of responding institutions stated that they have no environmental controls to meet temperature specifications and 47.2% lacked any controls for relative humidity. Only 27.1% indicated that they maintained an environmental monitoring program in all or some areas. Nearly 60% stated that no environmental monitoring program existed at their institution.

The level of this dissatisfaction regarding environmental conditions is most evident in the statistics concerning on-site storage, where 56.9% of respondents said that more than half of their collections were stored or exhibited in areas with inadequate environmental controls (including 34.5% indicating that their *entire* collections were in areas without environmental controls). Only 32.8% of respondents believed that 76% to 100% of their collections were in areas with adequate environmental controls.

Of the types of collecting institutions that were most likely to indicate environmental problems, public libraries indicated the greatest need, followed by historical sites/houses, history and science museums, and historical societies. These figures correlate with the responses to the environmental programming question, where 75.2% of public libraries indicated no environmental monitoring in collection areas, followed by 58.3% of history and science museums, and 56.8% of historical societies.

Typical survey comments included:

“Most pressing conservation/preservation need is temperature/humidity controlled storage.”

“Collections storage areas are overcrowded and lack appropriate environmental controls for collections preservation.”

Emergency Planning: Emergency (or disaster) plans emerged as one of the most critical nationwide needs in the Heritage Health Index report. They concluded: “In this context, it is particularly alarming that the Heritage Health Index finds that 80% of U.S. collecting institutions do not have a written emergency/disaster plan that includes collections with staff trained to carry it out.” The New Jersey statistics are very close to the Heritage Health Index figure. Only 14.2% of responding institutions claimed to have an up-to-date emergency/disaster plan. On a slightly more positive note, an additional 38.6% of respondents stated either that a plan was being developed or that one existed but was not up-to-date. But this still leaves 47.1% of respondents with no emergency/disaster plan in place to provide guidelines in the case of a critical threat to the collections. Historical societies and independent (non-government) archives are the least likely types of organization to have emergency plans.

New Jersey collecting institutions appear to be very aware that there is an urgent need for them to address disaster planning. When asked to rank their need for a variety of services, the top two survey choices (determined by combining the “very useful” and “useful” responses) were “training for staff in emergency response” and “preparing an emergency plan.” Similarly, the second most requested workshop topic out of 23 choices was “Emergency Preparedness and Response.”

Preservation Planning: Over the past three decades, a preservation planning process has been embraced by leading libraries, museums, and organizations such as the American Museum Association and the American Library Association. This is a process that begins with a needs assessment survey, basically equivalent to an IMLS Conservation Assessment Program (CAP) survey. These surveys are prepared by trained preservation professionals or conservators and address the collections care environment and practices, disaster preparedness, and other collections care issues. After an organization has a needs assessment survey, it can be developed into a preservation plan, which is a strategic plan focused on collections. A preservation plan places the unprioritized recommendations of the needs assessment survey into a framework that includes goals, timetables, and assigned responsibilities. Both the needs assessment

survey and the preservation plan are of greatest value in the years immediately following their preparation, and will need updating as the institution changes over time.

According to the survey, 51.8% of New Jersey collecting institutions have never developed a needs assessment survey (the first step in the process) and 63.3% have never received a preservation plan (the second step). In addition to these figures, an additional 25.7% reported that their preservation needs assessment was out-of-date, and 22.7% indicated their preservation plan needed to be updated. Only 15.5% reported that they had an up-to-date needs assessment and 5% said their preservation plan was up-to-date.

Collections surveys differ from needs assessment surveys in that they are prepared by professional conservators and are tightly focused on the condition of items in the collection as well as immediate environmental factors affecting their condition. Unless an organization has a professional conservator on staff (less than 10% of respondents), the condition of the collections should be considered “unknown” until they are professionally examined via a collections survey. Most of the country’s major funders of conservation treatment projects require a collections survey before they will seriously consider grant requests for conservation treatment.

In New Jersey, 72.3% of responding institutions reported that they have no up-to-date collection surveys for even a part of their collections. Without these surveys, it can be assumed that these institutions cannot effectively raise significant funding for conservation treatment projects.

Somewhat related to the low number of collection surveys – and equally concerning –are the findings regarding the percentage of collections that institutions consider in “Unknown” condition. The respondents were asked to assign percentages, ultimately equaling 100%, as to what percentage of their collection was in known or unknown condition. Obviously, this was a subjective question, so one respondent’s definition of “known condition” should not be assumed to match another’s. Most of the collection types showed similar results, with the percentage in unknown condition in the 20-35% range. The highest percentages in unknown condition were in the areas of film, recorded sound, unbound sheets, and historic and ethnographic objects.

The next set of questions provided more insight into the state of collection items in “Known” condition. In determining the number of at-risk items in New Jersey collections, this set of questions should be considered alongside the information regarding unknown condition. For instance with Rare Books and Volumes, 25.4% of collections are in “Unknown Condition” and should therefore be viewed as at-risk. Of the remaining 74.6% of rare books, 18.5% are in Urgent Need of Treatment or Rehousing and 29% are in Need of Treatment or Rehousing. Based on these figures, it can reasonably be stated that 60.8% of Rare Books and Volumes are at-risk, as they are either in unknown condition or in “need” or in “urgent need” of attention. (The 52.5% figure for rare books “in good condition” is mildly deceptive because it is only drawn from the universe of New Jersey rare books that are in “known” condition – the real percentage of rare books in good condition must be assumed to be considerably lower.)

Inventory: There is yet another area that raises even more concern than any of the others because it is so fundamental to collections care. In the area of inventory, a large percentage of New Jersey collecting institutions have no records concerning the contents of their collections. They do not have inventories of their collections and therefore do not know what they have. If there was a disaster, there would be no records concerning what was lost. In addition, security must be considered essentially non-existent at these sites.

Survey respondents were asked to estimate the percentage of their collections that have not been inventoried. For the purposes of this analysis, institutions with inventory percentages of 50% or less were considered in critical need. By this standard, 41.7% of respondents are in critical need, as they have not conducted the very first task that should be undertaken in providing effective collections care. Subsequent archival tasks such as accessioning and cataloging are also disturbingly low, but the inventory figures highlight the greatest need as the other tasks build upon it.

Respondents to the survey were asked to comment on their most pressing conservation or preservation need. A significant number noted that inventorying or cataloging needs ranked as most critical for their institution, with responses such as:

- “Fully accessioning/cataloging collection”
- “Help in identifying, accessioning, and storing the photography collection and preparing a finding aid”
- “Catalog and organize approximately the last five years or so of material received”
- “Cataloging what we have”
- “Resources to access collection”
- “Time and staff and training to inventory and house collection”
- “Care and organization of our local history collection”
- “Inventory and assessment of current collection”

Implementation of the Stewardship Strategies

There are two primary ways through which help and guidance can be offered to collecting institutions: 1) direct assistance and 2) educational programs. While providing direct assistance to sites generally yields greater improvements in a shorter period of time, these programs are considerably more expensive to implement and manage. They require professional management, site visits by expert consultants, and customized program delivery. In contrast, educational programs can reach out to many sites at a time, providing the tools needed to make improvements on-site. Following the educational program, the impetus falls upon the individual sites to make effective use of the training and resources. Educational programs have been demonstratively effective (as measured by long-term follow-up surveys) at initiating improvements at institutions.

Nevertheless, their average effectiveness will necessarily be less than that offered by direct assistance programs.

In recent years, on-line tutorials have emerged as an inexpensive mode of education program delivery. Because of this, a question was included in the survey asking for the preferred delivery method for educational programs, offering choices of full-day on-site training, half-day at urban regional location, full-day at urban regional location, and on-line tutorial. This particular format was soundly rejected by survey respondents who rated it by far the lowest of the choices. Due to the clear preference for live trainings, on-line tutorial programs have not been included as a delivery strategy in this plan.

Balancing the need for wide-scale improvements with cost-effectiveness, this preservation plan includes both educational and direct assistance programs. Funding should initially be pursued for educational programs, but there should be secondary movement toward the funding of pilot programs to provide direct assistance in targeted key areas.

A strong and clear message was delivered at the focus groups that strategies should conscientiously include rural areas of the state as well as institutions with small operating budgets. For this reason, Stewardship Strategies 1 through 3 are for educational programs that will be offered in four regions of the state. While the survey analysis divided the state into four regions (South, Metropolitan, North, and Central) based on regional economic similarities, this plan proposes dividing the state differently, this time following the realistic probability of drawing the most people to the programs. Since the New Jersey State Library has been effective in attracting audiences throughout the state to its educational programs, this plan follows their recommendation, using the following division:

South: Educational programs offered in the Cherry Hill and Mount Laurel areas
Central: Programs offered in East Brunswick, Old Bridge, Princeton, and Plainfield area
Northeast: Programs offered in Bergen County
North Central/West: Programs offered in Morris County

Survey respondents were asked to rank their interest in 23 potential workshop topics. Most of the top choices fall naturally under the basic collections care training programs listed under Stewardship Strategy I. The exceptions will be addressed through programs offered under the environmental management training program in Stewardship Strategy II and the Emergency Plan and Response Program in Stewardship Strategy III.

Examples of potential basic collections care training programs, ranked in order of need indicated in the survey are:

Best Practices for Preserving Collections (#1 ranked choice on the survey)
Emergency Preparedness and Response (#2 ranked choice)
Housing Solutions for Paper-Based Collections (#3)
Promoting Your Collections (#4)

Preservation Planning/Writing a Preservation Plan (#5)
Managing Digital Collections (#6)
Fundraising for Preservation and Conservation (tied for #7)
Writing a Disaster Plan (tied for #7)
Advances in Collections Management (#9)
Caring for Photographs (#10)

Evaluation of educational programs of this kind should be done through outcome-based pre- and post-evaluation forms that measure knowledge learned and changes in attitude. Long-term evaluation of targeted programs can be achieved through six- or twelve-month follow-up interviews with randomly selected participants.

The educational programs should operate under a C3NJ Education Committee, and they should be led by respected experts and leaders in the fields covered by the specific programs. Day-to-day management (which includes publicity, marketing, registration, and on-site troubleshooting) of these programs should be assigned to professional staff as the logistics of offering full-day educational programs at a variety of sites are demanding and time-consuming. In addition, evaluation of these programs should be professionally administered.

The survey revealed a strong need for improvements in environmental monitoring and management at collecting institutions throughout the state. The environmental management education program of Stewardship Strategy II has been separated from the Strategy I programs because it offers a slightly different educational approach, presenting a panel of national experts rather than a single leader. Nationally recognized environmental experts in this field – such as the staff at the Image Permanence Institute in Rochester, NY – are very effective presenters in this type of program. Due to the higher expense involved in organizing a program of this sort, the plan recommends presenting it in only two locations over a four-year period, with more intensive marketing designed to capitalize on the special nature and importance of this program.

Stewardship Strategy III addresses the need for emergency planning and training by offering a combined educational and direct assistance program modeled on the very successful WESTPAS program developed in the western U.S. by the WESTPAS regional libraries and archives preservation service. The WESTPAS model consists of two small group workshops. At the first workshop, participants receive instructions on writing disaster plans, training staff in disaster protocols, setting pre- and post-disaster action priorities, and implementing salvage procedures. Between the first and second workshops (generally held 5-10 weeks apart), the participants work on developing a draft disaster plan for their institution. At the second workshop, these plans are reviewed and discussed, and opportunities are explored for cooperation between the participating institutions on disaster response. Evaluation is conducted through review of the completed disaster plans, pre- and post-evaluation forms, and long-term follow-up by phone interview.

Stewardship Strategies IV and V represent fairly ambitious direct assistance programs, probably best developed as pilot projects. Flexibility is called for in developing these programs, with factors such as the funding source possibly determining whether they are offered on a regional or state-wide basis. Programs that offer direct assistance with preservation planning (Stewardship Strategy IV) have been very effectively implemented in Camden County and neighboring Pennsylvania counties by the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts, but these programs require intensive one-on-one work with institutions to be fully effective. A program of this kind leads organizations through the needs assessment process and then to the development of long-term preservation plans with benchmarks for success, a timetable, and the assignment of responsible entities. The CAPES (Caucus Archival Projects Evaluation Service) Program of the New Jersey Historical Commission and the New Jersey Caucus of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference offers assessments at libraries, archives, and historical societies, but is limited to paper collections. An expansion of either the CAPES or the Conservation Center program – or the development of a complementary program through another channel – could significantly address preservation planning issues in the state.

Stewardship Strategy V calls for the development of an entirely new direct assistance program in the fundamentally important area of inventory. The need for assistance with inventorying important New Jersey collections is strongly demonstrated by the survey. The challenge will be to find a suitable funder to support this type of innovative program.

Stewardship Plan, 2011-2015

Goal: Improve collections care environments and practices at collecting institutions throughout the state.

Stewardship Strategy I: Offer basic collections care training programs in all four regions in state. (Responsible entities: Education Task Force and Newark Museum)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success
2011	Offer 3 full-day educational programs on basic collections care topics in each of four regions in state (total of 12 programs).	Set goal of average of 12 attendees per program, for a total 2011 attendance of 144 (including repeat attendees). Use outcome-based pre- and post-evaluation forms to measure changes in participant’s knowledge and attitude.

2012	Offer 3 full-day educational programs in each of four regions in state (total of 12 programs).	Minimum total attendance of 144. Use outcome-based evaluation forms to measure changes in knowledge and attitude.
2013	Offer 3 full-day educational programs in each of four regions in state (total of 12 programs).	Minimum total attendance of 144. Use outcome-based evaluation forms to measure changes in knowledge and attitude.
2014	Offer 3 full-day educational programs in each of four regions in state (total of 12 programs).	Minimum total attendance of 144. Use outcome-based evaluation forms to measure changes in knowledge and attitude.
2015	Offer 3 full-day educational programs in each of four regions in state (total of 12 programs).	Minimum total attendance of 144. Use outcome-based evaluation forms to measure changes in knowledge and attitude.
Stewardship Strategy II: Offer environmental management education program in each of four regions of state. (Responsible entities: Education Task Force and Newark Museum)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success
2011-2012	Offer a full-day environmental management education program featuring national experts.	Minimum total attendance of 60. Use outcome-based evaluation forms to measure changes in knowledge and attitude.
2013-2014	Offer a full-day environmental management education program featuring national experts (at a venue in a different state region than the 2011-2012 program).	Minimum total attendance of 60. Use outcomes-based evaluation forms to measure changes in knowledge and attitude.
Stewardship Strategy III: Offer an Emergency Plan and Response Program in each of four regions of state. (Responsible entities: Education Task Force and Newark Museum)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success

2011	Present a two-part emergency planning series (modeled on WESTPAS) in two regions of state.	Offered to 12 attendees in 2 regions, for a total of 24 participants. Review completed emergency plans.
2012	Present a two-part emergency planning series in other two regions of state.	Offered to 12 attendees in 2 regions, for a total of 24 participants. Review completed emergency plans.
2013	Return to first two regions to present a two-part emergency planning series.	Offered to 12 attendees in 2 regions, for a total of 24 participants. Review completed emergency plans.
2014	Return to other two regions of state to present a two-part emergency planning series.	Offered to 12 attendees in 2 regions, for a total of 24 participants. Review completed emergency plans.

Stewardship Strategy IV: Offer assistance with preservation planning to selected collecting institutions. (Responsible entities: Education Task Force and Newark Museum)

When	Task	Measurements of Success
2011	Offer assistance with development of long-term preservation plans at five competitively selected collecting institutions.	Oversee completion of 5 preservation plans.
2012	Offer assistance with development of long-term preservation plans at five competitively selected collecting institutions.	Oversee completion of 5 preservation plans. Follow-up with previous year's institutions regarding successes and challenges.
2013	Offer assistance with development of long-term preservation plans at five competitively selected collecting institutions.	Oversee completion of 5 preservation plans. Follow-up with previous year's institutions regarding successes and challenges.

2014	Offer assistance with development of long-term preservation plans at five competitively selected collecting institutions.	Oversee completion of 5 preservation plans. Follow-up with previous year's institutions regarding successes and challenges.
2015	Offer assistance with development of long-term preservation plans at five competitively selected collecting institutions.	Oversee completion of 5 preservation plans. Follow-up with previous year's institutions regarding successes and challenges.
Stewardship Strategy V: Develop program to offer assistance with inventory projects at collecting institutions. (Responsible entities: Education Task Force and Newark Museum)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success
2011-2012	Develop collaborative program with a private or government funder to implement an inventory assistance project in New Jersey.	Public or private funder agrees to support program.
2013-2015	Implement program to offer assistance with short-term inventory projects at collecting institutions.	Mutually agreed-upon measures are achieved for inventory projects at collecting institutions.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS: STABILIZATION

Stabilization Strategy

Stabilization Strategy I: Offer targeted strategic and financial planning assistance to address long-term organizational stability.

Stabilization Strategy II: Offer workshops in integrating financial planning into strategic planning for collections.

The Need to Improve Institutional Stability

Most New Jersey collecting institutions are underfunded and understaffed. Frustration with this situation is palpable. In the focus groups, participations described the difficulty of addressing preservation needs when the entire institution is concerned with raising funds for basic general operating support. Even in institutions where collections care is a high priority, there is still an internal lack of staff and financial resources to move ahead with preservation priorities.

Even though there were only limited opportunities on the survey to express concerns about the institution as a whole, a number of respondents added comments in the “greatest need” section that clearly addressed the need for institutional stabilization:

“We have to fund all Museum expenses and maintenance -- oil, electricity, etc. There is little time left over to fund raise for preservation.”

“Get permanent paid, trained, and experienced staff...”

“Money, space, people.”

Many of these institutions may significantly benefit from the communications and marketing strategies proposed in this plan. The communications strategies may be very helpful in streamlining staff work and identifying potential funding sources; the marketing strategies may increase fundraising opportunities. But these strategies are probably not sufficient to fully address the need for solutions to complex on-site problems of institutional stability.

The most fundamental tool for thoughtful institutional growth and change is the strategic plan. All collecting institutions should have one, as it is vitally important in leading the institution through ongoing decision-making processes, as well as serving as an essential fundraising document. While the C3NJ survey did not address whether collecting institutions had up-to-date strategic plans, anecdotal evidence suggests that strategic planning has either been deferred or neglected at many sites. Most institutions understand the importance of strategic planning and consider it a priority, even if they have difficulties with launching or implementing the process.

Sound financial management is critical to an institution's long-term stability. Using existing and anticipated funding to achieve the goals of the institution to maximize impact is key. Within institutions that are significantly understaffed, there is rarely a bookkeeper or accountant available to keep an eye on all-important financial movements and trends. An institutional financial crisis can wipe out all hopes of initiating strategies for improving collections care. Such a crisis can put a vital collection at-risk, threatening its long-term preservation and accessibility.

Implementation of the Stabilization Strategies

While New Jersey's collecting institutions should embrace strategic planning, this particular need falls outside the scope of this plan. Strategic planning should be encouraged by the leaders of the educational programs and other preservation planning consultants whenever possible. Strategic planning makes stronger institutions, and establishes a framework that can lead to increases in the funding, staffing, and resources that are necessary in addressing preservation concerns.

Investment in education in financial management is an area where a relatively small investment in training and direct assistance may directly result in improved collections care. By including it within this plan, the C3NJ Task Force hopes to highlight the importance of building a strong organizational infrastructure at New Jersey's collecting institutions. It is included in this plan to stress the need for long-term fiscal stability at these institutions.

The C3NJ Task Force will search for appropriate collaborators skilled in the details of nonprofit financial management in order to develop initiatives that address institutional fiscal health. Discussions are currently underway with the Nonprofit Finance Fund, a national nonprofit service organization with a sophisticated understanding of these issues. While creativity will be needed to develop a pilot program that offers direct assistance to New Jersey collecting institutions, it is anticipated that such a program will include strategies for institutional fiscal assessment, the integration of financial planning into strategic planning, and the long-term allocation of funding for collections care needs, including capital improvements needed to improve storage environments. The C3NJ Task Force will form a Finance and Sustainability Committee to oversee the development of appropriate strategies for addressing institutional financial health at New Jersey's collecting institutions.

Stabilization Plan, 2011-2015

Goal: Improve fiscal and management strategies at collecting institutions to ensure long-term stability.

Stabilization Strategy I: Offer assistance in institutional fiscal assessments to targeted organizations to better address long-term organizational stability and build institutional capacity. (Responsible entities: Stabilization Task Force and Newark Museum)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success
2010-2011	Develop tools for collecting institutions to assess their financial strength.	Complete stabilization projects at 15 institutions (2010-2014).
2011	Address financial and management needs at 10 competitively selected collecting institutions.	Oversee completion of 10 sustainability plans.
2012	Address financial and management needs at 10 competitively selected collecting institutions.	Oversee completion of 10 sustainability plans. Follow-up with previous year's institutions regarding successes and challenges.
2013-2015	Promote field-tested tools to NJ collecting institutions.	Information on new financial and management assessment tools successfully disseminated. Track use of the tools, and emerging successes and challenges.
Stabilization Strategy II: Offer workshops in integrating financial planning into strategic planning for collections. (Responsible entities: Stabilization Task Force and Newark Museum)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success
2011-2012	Offer a full-day educational program in each of four regions in state (total of 4 programs).	Minimum total attendance of 100. Use outcome-based evaluation forms to measure changes in knowledge and attitude.
2013-2014	Offer a second round of full-day educational program in each of four regions in state (total of 4 programs).	Minimum total attendance of 100. Use outcome-based evaluation forms to measure changes in knowledge and attitude.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS: COMMUNICATIONS

“We commonly get an F on communication. Address it.”

New Brunswick focus group participant

Communications Strategies

Communications Strategy I: Develop a centralized website to share current information on activities and resources available to New Jersey collecting institutions.

Communications Strategy II: Offer a program for providing immediate informational response on preservation questions.

The Need to Improve Communications

The Focus Group Synthesis summarizes this particular need as “coordinate-collaborate-communicate,” and comments from participants include: “Increase communications,” “Strengthen communication and networking,” and “Enhance communication among groups.” The desire for improved communications emerged more strongly in the focus groups than in the survey, where the questions were not tailored to provide information on this need..

In discussions at the C3NJ Task Force meetings, the importance of improved communications kept emerging as a common solution to a breadth of concerns. Collecting institutions are interested in increased training and education, but there is no single centralized location for them to learn of educational opportunities. Similarly, there are a number of significant collections care resources and preservation consultants in the New Jersey area, but there is no single clearinghouse location where they can easily be identified.

A centralized information network would remove the burden from individual sites to locate information on preservation resources. Institutions that feel understaffed and overworked are easily frustrated when basic education and resource information is not readily available. When time and resources are limited, it is difficult to invest time in locating and evaluating scattered information. Many specific requests emerged at the focus groups, including:

“Central Brain Trust/Air Traffic Control in this state for all collection care resources is needed.”

“New Jersey needs an annual schedule of events, activities, and better communication.”

“A central coordinator of local responders is needed for disaster and, really, just basic information.”

“One website with all institutions for Newark (and the state) would be useful: One go-to site.”

Implementation of the Communications Strategies

The New Jersey State Library has developed an excellent website section on preservation resources for public libraries. The attractive page, located at www.njstatelib.org/LDB/Preservation/, offers links to national preservation initiatives, state and regional preservation organizations, regional conservation centers, conservation and preservation online resources, planning documents, grant opportunities, archival supply vendors, digitization and reformatting vendors, emergency responders, and sample forms. The main concern with this site is simply its limited audience – it is targeted only for public libraries, whereas this preservation plan is targeted for a much broader audience that includes historical societies, history and art museums, and historic sites. Nevertheless, this website section offers a fine template for the type of communications clearinghouse envisioned by the C3NJ Task Force.

When the issue of preservation questions arose at a C3NJ meeting, another New Jersey State Library program was cited as a potential model. It was proposed that their popular “Ask a Librarian” program, located at www.njstatelib.org/Ask_a_Librarian/, could be adapted as a model for providing prompt answers to preservation and conservation questions. Since a service of this kind requires the daily availability of preservation professionals or conservators, an appropriate funding source will need to be identified and solicited in order to offer the service on an ongoing basis.

Communications Plan, 2011-2015

Goal: Offer easy access to up-to-date information on activities and resources related to collections care.

Communications Strategy I: Develop a centralized website to share current information on activities and resources available to New Jersey collecting institutions. (Responsible entities: Communications Task Force, Newark Museum, and New Jersey State Library)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success
2011-2012	Expand existing New Jersey State Library preservation section on website to include disaster planning resources for all collecting institutions.	Maintain records of information entered on website. Track visitation statistics on expanded website.
2011-2012	Expand existing New Jersey State Library preservation section on website to include preservation planning resources for all collecting institutions.	Maintain records of information entered on website. Track visitation statistics on expanded website.

2011-2015	Expand existing New Jersey State Library preservation section on website to include collections care resources for all collecting institutions.	Maintain records of information entered on website. Track visitation statistics on expanded website.
2011-2015	Expand existing New Jersey State Library preservation section on website to include up-to-date information on education programs related to collections care issues.	Maintain records of information entered on website. Track visitation statistics on expanded website.
Communications Strategy II: Offer program for providing immediate informational response on preservation questions. (Responsible entities: Education Task Force and Newark Museum)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success
2013-2015	Develop a program based on successful “Ask a Librarian” model for immediate response to preservation questions.	Track number of questions directed to site. Track number of successfully completed reference transactions.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS: MARKETING AND ADVOCACY

“We must figure out how to increase our value to the residents in our communities.”

Cherry Hill Focus Group participant

Marketing and Advocacy Strategies

Marketing Strategy I: Raise awareness of collections and their needs to a variety of constituencies, including institutional boards, members, general public, funders, and legislators.

Marketing Strategy II: Advocate for increased funding through both private and public channels.

The Need for Marketing and Advocacy

Requests for increased marketing and advocacy consistently run through the survey responses and the focus group synthesis. In almost all of these comments, marketing is not suggested as a stand-alone activity – the purpose of the marketing and advocacy activities is inevitably related to the need for increased funding opportunities. There is a widely held assumption that New Jersey’s state government, as well as private foundation, corporations, and individuals, could give more to preservation projects if they more fully understood and valued the behind-the-scenes work needed to preserve important collections.

In both the survey and the focus groups, there were very few positive comments regarding the current funding environment in New Jersey. There are numerous mentions of abandoned funding programs, discouraging assumptions that there is a public and private disinterest in preservation, and despair over the absence of a unified voice from the collecting institutions community. The following is a representative sampling of comments regarding the need for more advocacy:

“Loss of preservation grants from the NJ State Library greatly cut into preservation projects.”

“Grants are few and far between and our success rate has not been high.”

“It is regrettable that state agencies in New Jersey provide very little funding support for preservation projects. Public libraries hold the crown jewels of local history but lack funding to preserve them properly.”

“Planning is fine, but implementation requires FUNDING & preservation isn’t ‘sexy.’”

“I think the biggest challenge is to get people to recognize the historical value of these collections, and to see that preservation efforts are worth funding.”

Proposed solutions include “(a)n effective PR campaign to promote the financial & cultural/social benefits of preservation to New Jersey/local communities” and “(a) marketing campaign along the lines of that for the national bicentenary in the mid-1970s to raise public and political consciousness and interest.”

The lack of funding opportunities in New Jersey may be reflected in the high placement of fundraising topics on the survey’s workshop and direct assistance questions. Fundraising assistance was the third highest service selected as “very useful” by survey respondents, and “Fundraising for Preservation and Conservation” was the seventh most requested workshop topic out of 23. The workshop topic of “Promoting Your Collections” placed even higher – in fourth place – further demonstrating the strong desire for increased marketing muscle in the state.

At the focus groups, there was much talk about the need for the collecting community to become more visible at the local level, as well as at the higher level of state government. There was much interest in grassroots public relations assistance to increase value in the local community. As one Pomona focus group participant expressed it: “We need to better link to tourism, economic development and other agendas important to the vitality of our communities.”

Implementation of the Marketing and Advocacy Strategies

It takes professional skill and money to develop and implement quality marketing and advocacy campaigns. The competition for the public’s attention, as well as the attention of specialized sectors such as state government, is intense. But nearly every other sector of society has realized the necessity of investment in this area, and the cultural community may be suffering from lagging behind on a full commitment to developing a coherent and exciting public image.

The C3NJ Task Force will appoint a Marketing and Advocacy Committee to oversee work in this area. They will interview and select a marketing consultant (or consulting organization) to develop a strategy that has clear and achievable goals. It may be possible to create a cost-efficient campaign that can be used individually by the hundreds of collecting institutions in New Jersey, creating state-wide momentum by using their existing connections. Other approaches will be considered, as well.

Much of the more abstract discussion about marketing at the focus groups might incorrectly suggest that a unified marketing campaign is needed. However, closer examination of the needs expressed reveals a variety of different target audiences, each of whom might need a different marketing strategy. The local community is one audience, private foundations are another audience, and legislators yet a third. There is a significant and important difference between marketing for grassroots awareness and marketing for new funding opportunities. Both approaches were clearly requested in the focus groups.

The plan’s first marketing strategy addresses the grassroots approach. The second strategy is focused on advocating for both new funding programs and increased commitment to existing programs. The same marketing professionals may be appropriate for developing both kinds of strategies, but they should be considered independently. The success of the first strategy will develop stronger community advocates. Success of the second strategy will be critical for raising long-term funding for continued implementation of many of the programs proposed in this preservation plan.

Marketing and Advocacy Plan, 2011-2015

Goal: *Effectively communicate the value of New Jersey’s collections and the need for investment in collections care.*

Marketing Strategy I: Raise awareness of collections and their needs to a variety of constituencies, including institutional boards, members, general public, funders, and legislators. (Responsible entities: Marketing Task Force and Newark Museum)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success
2011-2012	Develop marketing program to spread a common shared message on value of New Jersey collections.	Marketing Task Force approves plan followed by launching of marketing strategies.
2012-2015	Implement recommended marketing strategies.	Work with marketing professionals to identify appropriate measures of success for each strategy. Maintain records of anecdotal successes and challenges.
Marketing Strategy II: Advocate for increased funding through both private and public channels. (Responsible entities: Marketing Task Force and Newark Museum)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success
2011-2012	Develop communications program with state lawmakers to inform them of needs. Identify collections care areas that would benefit from increased public funding and set targets.	Marketing Task Force approves plan followed by launching of communications strategies.

2011-2012	Develop communications program with state lawmakers to inform them of needs. Identify collections care areas that would benefit from increased private funding and set targets.	Marketing Task Force approves plan followed by launching of communications strategies.
2011-2015	Implement recommended communications strategies.	<p>Maintain records of successes and challenges in securing new channels of public and private funding.</p> <p>Collect feedback regarding private foundation and corporate giving to preservation projects.</p>

AREAS OF EMPHASIS: FACILITIES

“A New Jersey-based conservation center would help us all.”

Cherry Hill focus group participant

Facilities Strategies

Facilities Strategy I: Establish a pilot regional collections storage facility to serve Newark area.

Facilities Strategy II: Explore the need for of establishing an in-state facility for conservation and training.

Facilities Strategy III: Develop new partnerships and collaborative projects.

The Need for Facilities

The lack of quality storage in New Jersey is clearly a significant problem, with institutions describing on-site and off-site storage conditions that will inevitably result in long-term losses to collections. Over 25% of survey respondents reported that their current on-site storage room was either overcrowded or at capacity, and an additional 50.9% indicated there was only limited room for collection growth.

But alongside this demonstrably strong need, there is comparatively limited interest in the state-wide development of shared collaborative storage centers. Over half (53.5%) of survey respondents stated that they would not be interested in participating in any form of shared storage arrangement at this time. Of the storage options presented, 17.3% said they would only be interested on shared storage on a county basis (an expensive approach with 21 counties in New Jersey), 11.9% said they would be interested in either a county or regional approach, and 12.4% indicated a desire for any option, including a centralized state facility. Given these relatively unenthusiastic responses, it is probably not surprising that “Storage Planning for Cultural Collections” was third from last (#21 out of 23 choices) as a requested workshop topic.

However, solutions will be required as the storage problems are real. The difficulty facing the New Jersey cultural community will lie in finding some consensus on next steps. At the moment, it could be assumed that the popular choice is for each institution to work out its own locally-based storage solution. But the fear is that this approach will result in a glut of capital campaigns for on-site expansion at best and continued storage in failing environmental conditions at worst.

While there were no questions on the survey specifically pertaining to the idea of creating a centralized in-state facility for both conservation and training, some of the survey comments suggested that this option should be thoughtfully pursued. There were proposals for a:

- “Centralized repository of statewide preservation resources available for regional and local use.”
- “(P)ivate non-profit or public conservation center with either a single administrator or a small group of influential co-sponsors.”
- “(C)entral entity with a professional staff that will coordinate the implementation, encourage cross-institutional cooperation, share resources, and lobby for further funding for conservation/preservation planning and implementation.”

At each of the focus groups, time was allotted for discussion of ideas that should be included in the preservation plan. Proposals for centralized facilities were strongly forwarded at the Newark and New Brunswick focus groups. Comments included:

“Create a central treatment resource for New Jersey. We don’t have a lot in New Jersey for objects.”

“Consider one central place to service state with transportation fleet.”

“Consider New York model. Provide a state center with half floor of building staffed with conservation and the other for storage.”

“Cultivate stimulus money for startup of state center.”

Implementation of the Facilities Strategies

Given the lack of consensus on storage solutions, New Jersey is fortunate that the Newark Museum is taking the lead on developing a regional collections storage facility for the Newark area. If funded, this new facility could serve as a pilot to assess the potential for creating additional regional facilities. Also, this project can offer state-wide educational opportunities to introduce small collecting institutions to the ways that they could use – and benefit from – regional storage facilities.

The focus group proposals to create a centralized facility for collections care training and conservation treatment suggest a project that would need to be large in scope. An organization would need to be identified or formed to manage the facility. Funding for administrative and professional staff would be needed. And, of course, a building would need to be built or retrofitted, either of which requires a considerable investment in funds.

The recommended strategy for developing a project of this kind begins with a feasibility study to carefully examine the demand for the project and the fundraising environment. These studies should be implemented by an outside consultant, and the process would generally include a targeted survey and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and potential donors. The C3NJ Task Force should appoint a Facilities Committee to oversee this feasibility assessment process. The findings of the study would determine the viability of moving ahead with the project and identify potential partners.

Facilities Plan, 2011-2015

Goal: Explore opportunities to create statewide or regional centers to address preservation issues.

Facilities Strategy I: Establish a pilot regional collections storage facility to serve Newark area. (Responsible entities: Newark Museum)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success
2010-2012	Develop plans to build or retrofit a facility to serve as a regional collections storage facility to serve the Newark area.	Approve plans with all appropriate committees and organizations.
2012-2015	Either build or retrofit a facility to serve as a regional collections storage facility to serve the Newark area.	Maintain records on number of institutions that use the facility and the amount of material safely and securely stored at the facility.
Facilities Strategy II: Explore the need for of establishing an in-state facility for conservation and training. (Responsible entities: Facilities Task Force, New Jersey State Archives, and Newark Museum)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success
2011-2013	Conduct feasibility study to examine demand and fundraising potential for the establishment of an in-state facility for conservation and preservation training.	Complete feasibility study.
2013-2015	Based on findings of feasibility study, develop plans to address needs for centralized in-state conservation and preservation training.	Approve plans with all appropriate committees and organizations.
Facilities Strategy III: Seek out new partnerships to develop collaborative projects. (Responsible entities: C3NJ Task Force)		
When	Task	Measurements of Success
2011-2015	Reach out to other sectors to develop collaborative projects.	Maintain records concerning project planning discussions.

CONCLUSION

There are consequences for deferring work, as every house owner knows. Simple repairs, indefinitely postponed, suddenly become expensive problems. Incremental losses may at first appear to be manageable, but reach a tipping point where resulting losses can be catastrophic.

For many years, work has been deferred on New Jersey's great collections. There have been inadequate resources available for the tasks of preservation, and the collecting institutions themselves have never developed the needed networks for sharing information or collaborative marketing. The people on the front lines – the directors, curators, librarians, archivists, and volunteers – are eager for assistance in caring for their collections. They keenly value the rare books, manuscripts, artwork, photographs, films, and textiles that they safeguard, and fear for their long-term preservation. The situation is critical—the need for resources is urgent.

This strategic stewardship plan has been developed to reverse current trends and enter a new period of pro-active work centered on preserving New Jersey's heritage. It calls for new investments, but more importantly it calls for raised awareness and appreciation, both public and private, of the value of New Jersey's great treasures. We cannot afford to lose the physical records of New Jersey's great inventors and artists, politicians and sports figures; the daguerreotypes and early films; the documents of progress and industry; and the archaeological and fossil record – collection items that tell the story of New Jersey from life in the primordial seas to the technological savvy of today.

This five-year plan calls for education and assistance programs to ensure the long-term preservation of collections, improved access to collections care information and resources, the development of new models for service delivery, and new marketing and advocacy strategies to raise public support for preserving New Jersey's collections. If the plan succeeds, future generations will be able to appreciate and enjoy a rich heritage that was once at risk of being lost forever.