

CITY OF BOSTON
Archives and Records Advisory Commission
Archivist's Report, March 2020 - June 2021
(and selective relevant updates to the present)

Since the last meeting of the Commission, the Archives and Records Management Division has continued to maintain and strengthen its program, facilitating the City's statutory obligations for managing records and archives, preserving the City's historical documentary legacy, and maximizing the utility of official archives as a critical information asset for City government and the public. The high quality of the City's archives services is due to the professionalism and dedication of the Division's senior archivists, Kristen Lafferty, Marta Crilly, Kayla Skillin, and Assistant Archivist Meghan Pipp. The accomplishments of the Division outlined in this report are the product of their work.

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Arrangements under COVID-19

In March 2020 the Archives office at Rivermoor closed down to the public for in-person reference visits, while office work shifted mainly to remote operations. At-home work projects were established including digital records processing; format migration; hard copy processing; ArchivesSpace maintenance; social media posting; digital repository maintenance; virtual supervision of interns, volunteers and students; and remote reference servicing both City departments and the public. One staff member made weekly trips into Rivermoor for physical retrieval of hard copy records to scan and transmit for remote reference requests. In August 2020, the City's COVID-19 response team approved the Archives plan for partial re-opening:

- The Archives reading room opened to the public on Mondays and Wednesdays, from 9:30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m., by appointment only.
- The number of readers in the reading room was limited to two persons per party, with no more than two parties at the same time.
- Parties were required to be separated by a twenty-foot distance in the reading room.
- Reading room visitors were required to sign in at the front entrance security desk and be escorted to the reading room by Archives staff.
- Reading room patrons were to be monitored by the reference archivist at a twenty-foot distance.
- Visitors were required to wear masks, with masks and hand sanitizer available at the security desk.

Two pairs of Archives employees staffed the office twice weekly, alternating respectively between Monday and Wednesday, and Tuesday and Thursday, and working remotely on the remaining days.

These arrangements remained in force until 6 July 2021 when all City workers were directed to physically return to work locations during their regular work schedule. (Masks are still required for staff and visitors.)

Reference, Access and Outreach

Reference and Access

For a tabular breakdown of Reference, Access and Outreach activity see the appended report, "Boston City Archives Research and Access FY 2021".

During the pandemic closure, reference work mainly pivoted to remote reference and scanning work in order to provide City records to patrons without necessitating their presence in the reading room. Archivists performed an increased number of lookups, and spent increased hours doing remote research for patrons so that patrons did not need to visit the physical archives space during the pandemic. As noted above, the reading room was operating 2 days a week at a limited capacity.

Reference requests for FY21 (2,179) were slightly lower than FY20 (2,280) due to the pandemic. However FY21 numbers were still above FY19 (1,860). In pre-pandemic FY20, research requests and appointments were rising dramatically before dropping sharply in late March 2020. The cessation of our project with the Jeremiah Burke School due to the pandemic reflected much of FY21's lower reference activity. This project represented about 60 student researchers, who regularly accessed the digital repository (Preservica), and submitted reference requests via email. The loss of this project alone resulted in many fewer visits to Preservica and fewer email reference requests. Also, with international

and domestic travel restrictions, we had no international researchers and few out-of-state researchers for much of the year. Finally, we lost our ability to do large numbers of scans for a period of time when we lost access to a shared book scanner halfway through FY 2021. (See "*Bookeye 4 Scanner*" below).

Despite these challenges, the Archives successfully pivoted to providing remote reference services, including robust scanning services. Thanks to the scanner acquisition in the spring, the number of pages scanned for researchers rose exponentially from 5,886 in FY20, to 14,562 in FY21. In the first trimester of FY22 (July-October), we have scanned 5,178 pages of material for researchers.

We expect that our in-person research numbers will rise in FY22, but we continue to see many researchers choosing remote research, and asking for large numbers of scans. We also continue to see the effects of international travel restrictions and universities paring down their travel funding. Thus far in FY22, we've hosted 114 in-person researchers, compared with 138 researchers in July-October of 2019.

We have also seen shifts in the type of research being done. Permit plans have been an outsized proportion of our requests this year, as academic research and genealogy dropped, while plans requests rose. This is likely due to the increase in home construction projects and a decrease in graduate students, faculty, and writers being able to travel for research. We are interested to see if and how this proportion changes in this fiscal year as we have fewer restrictions on the reading room and are able to do more scanning with the new book scanner.

Digital Outreach and Virtual Programming

During the pandemic, we focused on digital outreach and virtual programming. We made virtual visits to BPS virtual and hybrid classrooms and participated in virtual lecture series and events. We found that virtual programming frequently drew larger audiences than in-person programming, for example, virtual talks for the Boston Public Library's Family and Local History series brought in more than 50 people when previous in-person talks for the same series have attracted 10-15 audience members.

We've increased our collaboration with DoIT during the Covid-19 pandemic, working with DoIT staff to provide historic content to the City's Instagram account. During the pandemic, we have worked with DoIT to provide content about public health history, and to support City messaging around the pandemic. The City Archives' Twitter following has continued to grow and currently has 14,100 followers. Our Facebook account has 5,770 followers.

The pandemic brought us volunteers and fieldwork students interested in remote volunteer opportunities. Volunteers not only worked on description of digital records, but also contributed to our outreach programming by writing blog posts and local history twitter threads. Under the direction of the Archivist for Reference and Outreach, two fieldwork students and five volunteers contributed content to the City Archives blog and twitter account.

Bookeye 4 Scanner

In November 2020, scanning production was suddenly dealt a blow when BPL, as a precautionary measure against Covid, was abruptly prevented from sharing its KIC Bookeye 4 scanner at Rivermoor with the Archives. The Archives has an acute need for a book scanner enabling scan jobs of 50-200 pages, and for large, oversized volumes. Fortunately, budget funds were found to procure such a

machine, which finally arrived in May 2021. The new machine has enabled the Archives to remotely service large numbers of patron requests for building permit plans and other heavily used items, avoid the necessity for many on-site patron visits, minimize time and labor, and eliminate a Covid-19 health risk. Reference turnaround capacity and speed has increased significantly with the acquisition of this new and sophisticated scanning equipment.

External Collaboration - The Mary Eliza Grant Project

In 1920, when the 19th Amendment passed, the City of Boston registered over 82,000 women to vote. These voter rolls contain valuable and detailed information about Boston's first women voters, including age, occupation, place of birth, naturalization information, and closest male relative. However, the original hand-written registers are difficult to use since they are not searchable or sortable. In the summer of 2021, the City Archives collaborated with Simmons University on a pilot project transcribing a section of the 1920 City of Boston Women's Voter Registers into searchable, sortable datasets.

Named after pioneering African American nurse, suffragist, and civil rights activist, Mary Eliza Mahoney, the Simmons collaboration began in the summer of 2021 with Simmons professor Dr. Laura Prieto and a team of three graduate students working with the Archivist for Reference and Outreach to transcribe the registers of ward 6, then in the South End, where Mary Eliza was discovered. The pilot revealed information about black suffragists, recently naturalized immigrant women, and women's occupations and places of work. While archives documenting women's political activity normally comes from activists and women involved in various organizations, this is one of the few historical resources that documents the political engagement and action by everyday women.

To continue and complete the project, the Archives is applying for a \$78,000 Community Preservation Act (CPA) grant, which over a period of two years would fund transcription of the entire 1920 Women's Voter Registers into searchable and sortable datasets. The 1920 Women Voters Register datasets will be stored in the City Archives digital repository to ensure long term preservation. Users will be able to access the dataset in the City's analytics portal (data.boston.gov) as well as the digital repository's public access portal. More information about the project can be found [here](#).

External Collaboration - the Boston Commemoration Commission

Under the lead sponsorship of Councilor Bok, the City Council has drafted an ordinance to create the Boston Commemoration Commission, whose purpose is "to develop a plan to celebrate upcoming historical anniversaries, including, but not limited to the United States Sestercentennial and the 400th anniversary of Boston, while investing in Boston's historical resources." The Commission will aspire "to ensure that celebrations and anniversaries of historical events are inclusive, historically accurate, and celebrate the diverse history of Boston." The ordinance provides for twenty-one mayoral appointees representing an extraordinarily diverse array of stakeholders running from entities in the tourism industry, to historical and preservation societies, to individuals with specialist historical expertise in a wide and inclusive spectrum of social, racial and ethnic populations. Once appointed, these individuals would be assigned among three subcommittees ("Events and Trails"; "Timelines, Exhibits, and Curricula"; and "Legislation and Preservation Tools") formed from the Commission's twelve ex-officio members representing pertinent City agencies. The Chief Academic Officer of the Boston Public Schools, City

Archivist, and President of the Boston Public Library, or their designees, are assigned by the ordinance as core members of the “Timelines, Exhibits, and Curricula” subcommittee. The Archives eagerly looks forward to working with the Commission and subcommittee colleagues in planning inclusive and creative commemorations that not only memorialize Boston’s role in the nation’s narrative, but also promote exploration of the experience of Boston’s neighborhoods and diverse communities as an integral part of city and national history.

Collections Management

Analog Processing

The Archives continues to process and bring under finding aid control important and compellingly interesting archives of several departments and City officials. Archives staff have invested literally thousands of hours processing analog collections. The following list of project work undertaken in the reporting period affords some idea of the volume of labor entailed:

- Law Department files circa 1920-1960 (reducing size of series by 7 cubic feet)
- Conservation Commission public hearing files
- Landmarks Commission reference plans, appraised, weeded and described
- Fire Department reports circa 1920-1986, 8 cubic feet of microfilm reels organized and cataloged
- Mayor Walsh speeches and remarks, 2 cubic feet processed and cataloged
- Katherine Kane (Deputy Mayor, Kevin White administration), collection survey initiated
- City Council Docket documents, ongoing processing project continued
- Location work, identifying materials without locations in Archives Space and working on updating physical location data
- ISD building permit plans, item level indexing - completing 90 bins so far.

The care and use of ISD building permit plans deserve special mention. Building permit plans are of inestimable value in documenting the built environment of Boston. They form a vital core of the combined archives of that environment, documenting as they do, the residential and commercial structures built or destroyed in the city ca 1902-1969. Property owners, developers and other researchers regularly consult these records. As noted above, there has been a notable uptick in their use during the pandemic. In the 1970s, Boston Public Library staff heroically rescued the plans from the brink of being flung into dumpsters, to which they were about to be summarily dispatched in the wake of office moves following construction of the new City Hall. For the next four decades, the Library serviced the public with access to copies of these plans on behalf of the Inspectional Services Department. In 2019, consequent to discussion among ISD, BPL and the Archives, the Library transferred the plans (150,000 sets of rolled blueprints), along with Building Inspector reports (1879-1903) and City Surveyor maps and plans (1840-1920), to the Archives. While at the Library, heat, dryness and dust took a toll over the years leaving many items brittle, easily torn and sometimes fragmenting. While stored overall in roughly chronological sequence, expedient access is tempered by an idiosyncratic system of “bin numbers”, wherein individual plans lay in bins among dozens of other unrelated plans without unique identifiers. Over the years, unearthing individual plans has often required time- and labor-intensive quarries and extra wear and tear on other items handled during the search. In their curation at the Archives since 2019, Collections Management staff have undertaken item level indexing, the return of misplaced items to their appropriate bins, and the provision of protective housing for fragile items. As plans are scanned

for patron use, a digital copy is maintained for future reference, eliminating the need for manual searches for those items.

Digital Archives

The City Archives *Digital Archives Initiative* preserves and makes born-digital and digitized public records and information easily discoverable and available. The Archives preserves the City's born digital public records by:

- Migrating at-risk public records from obsolete media formats into stable, preservation formats;
- Harvesting and preserving city websites; and
- Ingesting the City's legally permanent digital records into the City Archives digital preservation system (Preservica).

The yearly number of records and photos digitized rose from 2,506 in FY20 to nearly 4,000 in FY21. This includes **sixteen years of City Council recordings (1996; 2003-2017)** successfully migrated to stable preservation formats. We also created and cleaned up metadata for digital records already in Preservica, but which had lacked descriptive information. Since the beginning of the Digital Archives Initiative, the Division has made over **38,000 records (both digitized and born-digital) digitally available and searchable**, including historic photographs, documents, and public meeting records. Digital records cataloged, described, migrated, ingested and uploaded to Preservica include

- Mayor John F. Collins series, 1,100 digitized photos
- Liquor License master record cards, 1960-1979
- City Council Meeting records 1996; 2003-2017
- Ordinances, 1908-2014
- Boston 200 oral history transcripts
- Landmarks Commission Beacon Hill photographs
- BRA New York Streets photographs
- School Building photographs, 366 digitized photographs
- "We are Boston" oral history project records
- Press Office videos, 2017-2021
- Ordinances, 1908-2014
- Selected City Department reports, 1826-1853
- Selected School Committee reports, 1845-1846
- City Council Dockets documenting Veterans' Squares, 1918-1923

The Archives collaborates with Digital Commonwealth and Digital Public Library of America to increase the digital visibility of Boston's historic public records and reach a wider audience. To further enhance the City's public image, the Archives also continues to work closely with the City's social media team to provide historical content for the City's social media feeds.

Preservation - Grant Projects

In 2020, the Archives closed out the \$10,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. This award enabled the purchase of new flat files and rolled plans storage boxes. The former have been

utilized for storage of flat oversized materials, including all flat marathon memorial items and large panoramic photos previously stored exposed on shelves; the latter for City Surveyor maps and plans, 1840-1920 (transferred from BPL in 2019 along with ISD permit plans).

The Archives is currently developing a second proposal for a Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) "Recordings at Risk" grant. In April 2021 we learned that our application submitted in January was not accepted for award, notwithstanding uniform praise from CLIR's reviewers for its significance, potential for scholarship and public impact, design, personnel, and its digital preservation plan. CLIR strongly encouraged resubmittal with additional information regarding oral history permissions and privacy. After conducting more research about the oral history permissions and finding and interviewing one of the original interviewees, we are once again submitting our application. If successful, a potential award of \$40,000 will enable the Archives to digitize 184 audio cassettes containing about 227 hours of oral history recordings collected during the Boston 200 bicentennial celebration. The oral histories were collected across Boston neighborhoods, and include a diverse range of community members. The transcripts show interview subjects discussing immigration, the Great Migration, labor movements, the Boston Police Strike, the Great Depression, both World Wars, the Civil Rights Movement, housing issues, and the effect of urban renewal on Boston's neighborhoods. Saving these recordings and making them available will be invaluable for scholarly research as well as public history initiatives in Boston. These historical resources would be particularly pertinent for the nation's Sestercentennial celebrations to be planned by the Commemorations Commission for 2026.

Accessions

In consequence of both the pandemic and space shortage, only 112.1 cubic feet of hard copy permanent records were accessioned into Archives custody from January 2020 to the present. However, this included important accessions from several departments including Mayor's Office, City Clerk, Auditing, DND, Age Strong, Assessing Department, Law Department (depositing portraits of past Corporation Counsels), and BFD Fire Alarm Headquarters depositing both hard copy and a large series on microfilm. Also, the Archives accessioned 2.43 terabytes of permanent digital records, including videos of City Council meetings and Mayoral events, files of departing executive officials of the Walsh administration, and 1.15 terabytes of the City's harvested websites.

Accessions - City Records in Boston Public Library

Following upon similar entreaties in the past, the Archives has requested the cooperation of the Library Department in planning and executing the transfer of certain public records belonging in the statutory custody of the City Clerk, but still maintained in BPL notwithstanding the creation of the City Archives in 1989. To its credit, Boston Public Library preserved enormous quantities of Boston's official public records, in the period when the City Clerk and other departments lacked adequately protective resources for their storage and access. In subsequent years, the Library transferred most of these records to the Archives. Between 1992 and 2019, the Library remitted to the Archives well over 16,000 cubic feet of the City's public records in 45 transfers. However, there remain in BPL custody City records significant in quantity and historical importance. Some of these the Library has processed, digitized, and absorbed among their own collections without appropriate permissions from or reference to their originating agencies, and without regard to the consequences of artificially separating groups and series of public records.

Records appropriate for early transfer include pre-1822 Boston town records and records of the annexed cities and towns. Division of these records, documenting the founding and early development of Boston, compromises the structural integrity and evidentiary value of Boston's most historical records group. Moreover, Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 66 clearly require the legal custodian of such records to assume physical custody. The Archives has thus proposed to BPL a collaboration between the two agencies to redress the statutory and archival anomalies of alienated and divided collections, by way of planned repatriation of official City records. Timely planning for this transfer is urgent, as these records are particularly relevant to commemoration plans for both the sescentennial of national independence and the bicentennial of Boston's incorporation as a city on 1 May 1822.

Records Management

The Archives continues to assist City departments in carrying out their records management responsibilities. The Division aims to raise City agency awareness of records management and to assist departments in eliminating obsolete records consuming valuable office space in City Hall and other locations. It facilitates departments with State-authorized disposition and inactive records transfer off-site or to the Archives, and employs software tools streamlining both retention schedule development and procedure for obtaining State authorization to dispose of records. Services include consultation by email and phone, in-person records surveys, and assistance with coordinating proper retention and disposition of municipal records.

In the past year, we have

- Advised the BPD Internal Affairs Division on best records management practices for their specific types of records, providing the Deputy Superintendent of the department with written recommendations and links to proper retention schedules. These meetings continued via Zoom during the pandemic, but ultimately the lawyers and legal advisors needed to discuss the issues further before any RM actions could be taken;
- Surveyed records at the Environment Department at City Hall to determine which records needed to be kept permanently and which records can be sent to outsourced off-site storage
- Assisted all department heads in the transition from Apex (off-site storage) back to Access by verifying which department contacts needed access to the system, and providing new credentials to all department liaisons; we also served as point of contact for departments when they had trouble retrieving boxes from off-site storage
- Initiated discussions with colleagues in DoIT to discuss retention management of digital records and onboarding training in basic records management practices.
- Worked with the Boston Fire HR department to determine which records in their storage areas would be eligible for destruction - they ended up being approved to dispose of 313 cu ft of obsolete records
- In Feb 2021, we started multiple conversations with various stakeholders on what should happen when Mayor Walsh resigned re: records management (this is still ongoing as we continue to receive records)
- May 2021, video conference with members of the Workers' Compensation Department to discuss digitization of records and proper retention management. Advised on proper procedures for destruction of obsolete records

- Continued regular disposition action approvals with various departments across the City and provided advice and recommendations to department contacts. 410 cubic feet of obsolete City records have been approved for destruction since January 2020.

Facility Issues

The secondary priority, with which the City administration appears to hold its investment in the City Archives facility at Rivermoor, poses the most problematic obstacle facing the Archives. Predicaments of space depletion, hazardous shelving, and substandard environmental controls may go unaddressed for years: Yet the facility needs of a department new to Rivermoor - with goals totally unrelated to those of the Archives and other Rivermoor tenants (preserving Boston's historical and cultural heritage) - take precedence over the facility needs of these existing tenant departments. The new tenant, with an unrelated mission, is relocated into the building with consideration neither for functional compatibility with fellow tenants, nor the City's original intent for use of the building.

Space Depletion and Environment

Storage space for the preservation of the City's non-current permanent records at the Rivermoor facility is now depleted. This is a critical situation preventing the accessioning, preservation, archival processing and public access of thousands of cubic feet of non-current, permanent City records expensively and unproductively retained in department custody. At the same time, quarterly environmental data logger reports have for several years indicated uneven and, in some cases, damaging impact on records due to inadequate environmental controls and consequent fluctuations of temperature and humidity.

These issues could by now have been well on their way to resolution had there been timely implementation of the City's "Archives Preservation Needs" study, begun in early 2016. The study report, not completed until 2019, recommended (1) a mobile shelving solution to meet storage capacity needs for the foreseeable future, and (2) mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) upgrades to ensure a more protective environment for document preservation. Funding for the design phase of the project (becoming known as the "Rivermoor Archives Center Capital Project") made it into the FY20 capital budget, but no work was done in FY20. In May 2020, the Capital Budget Office assured the Archives that "PFD will begin design in FY21 for the high-density shelving systems and related environmental controls and improvements that are needed in the City Archives space." If this had happened, the City would then have had a cost estimate in this year's budget that would "reflect the total project cost." Unfortunately, the project plan for FY21 did not happen. Design and engineering funding was held over for the present (FY22) fiscal year budget, and the total expected project cost will now not be known prior to FY23. Happily, we have been recently informed by the City's Operations Chief that design and engineering scheduling is imminent, thus creating the possibility for construction getting under way in FY23.

Shelving Hazard and Antiquated HVAC

The City's procrastination in the Rivermoor upgrade has not only disrupted City Archives responsibilities in the accession, preservation and processing of the City's historical records. Delayed action has also resulted in expensive emergency replacement of worn-out shelving and HVAC equipment.

Since 2017, Archives staff had brought to the City's attention evidence of shelving instability and thus

hazardous conditions in records storage areas. Not until the Commonwealth's Department of Labor Standards identified safety violations in records storage areas in October 2019 and issued a "Written Warning and Order" to correct them, was the City forced to act. Working with the City's Property Management Department, the Archives initiated a project to correct shelving hazards discovered by the State inspection. In the following months, shelving stability was duly reinforced with cross-aisle bracing; damaged uprights were replaced; and down-aisle guard rails were installed where needed. The State confirmed the City's compliance with its order in November 2020.

Also, earlier this year, an HVAC system breakdown left the records storage area without air conditioning for several months because an essential part needed to repair the building's antiquated equipment has been unavailable due to COVID-related supply chain issues. Delivery and installation are tentatively scheduled for mid-November 2021.

Would these remediation projects have been necessary had the City moved more expediently to install high-density shelving and upgrade Rivermoor's MEP facilities?

EMT Training Center Construction

While the Archives has for several years awaited critical facility improvements, PFD has been planning the construction of an Emergency Medical Technician training center on the second floor of the Rivermoor building head house.

Because the project involves transferring the Archaeology unit to the first floor, PFD has conducted several meetings for the building's City agency tenants (Archives, BPL, Archaeology) to plan consequent space reconfiguration. Space loss for the Archives will be relatively minimal, and mostly in areas currently shared with other tenants, viz, conference room, digitization lab, cleaning room, and part of the reference room. The Archives receiving room will become a supply closet off the processing room, since it will be shut off from the corridor that leads from the dock. The Archives will also be sharing exhibit space with Archaeology and has cleared records and equipment from the Processing Room and the digitization lab, creating space to accommodate the new configuration. During construction, a temporary reference area will be located in the foyer to accommodate necessary construction operations in the reference room. As of this writing, construction is expected to begin in early 2022.

The EMT Training Center project has had its own share of delays. However, its scheduling for construction in early 2022 - jumping the queue in front of the Rivermoor Archives project - presents a clear example of the Archives' secondary status in a facility originally slated for agencies preserving the City's heritage. Nor is it clear how the incongruity of EMT Training Center functions with those of the Archives and other present tenants may affect operations in the future.



BOSTON CITY
ARCHIVES

Research and Access FY 2021

Research and Access at a Glance

13,239 visitors to Preservica

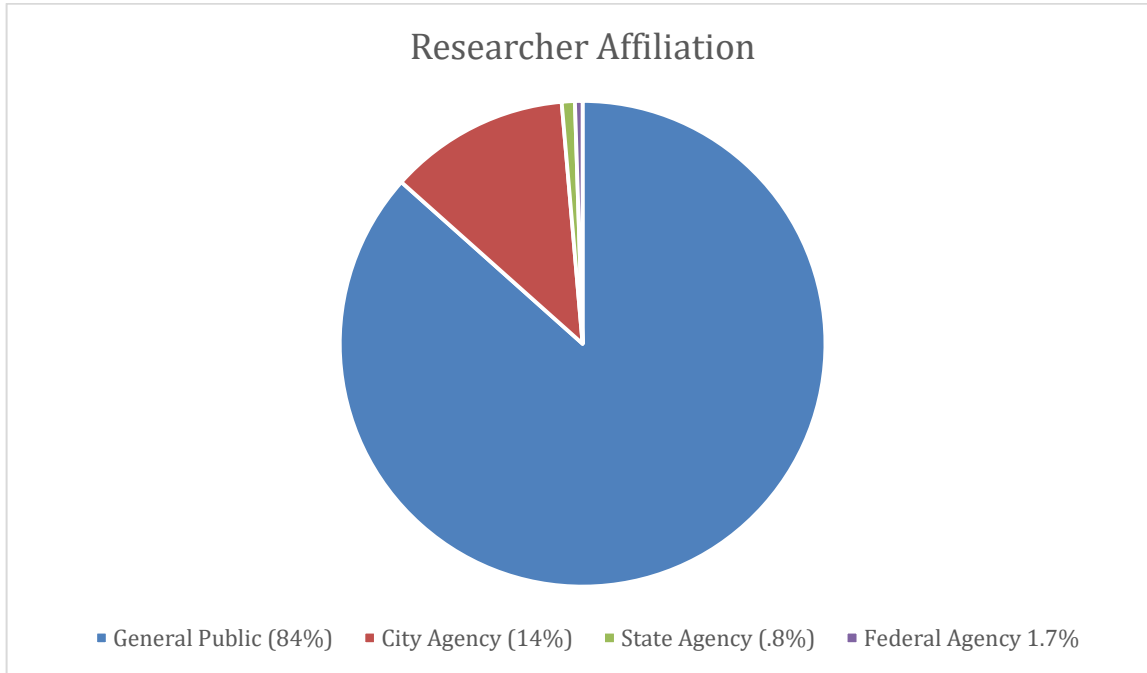
2179 total research requests

323 requests from city agencies

317 reading room visitors



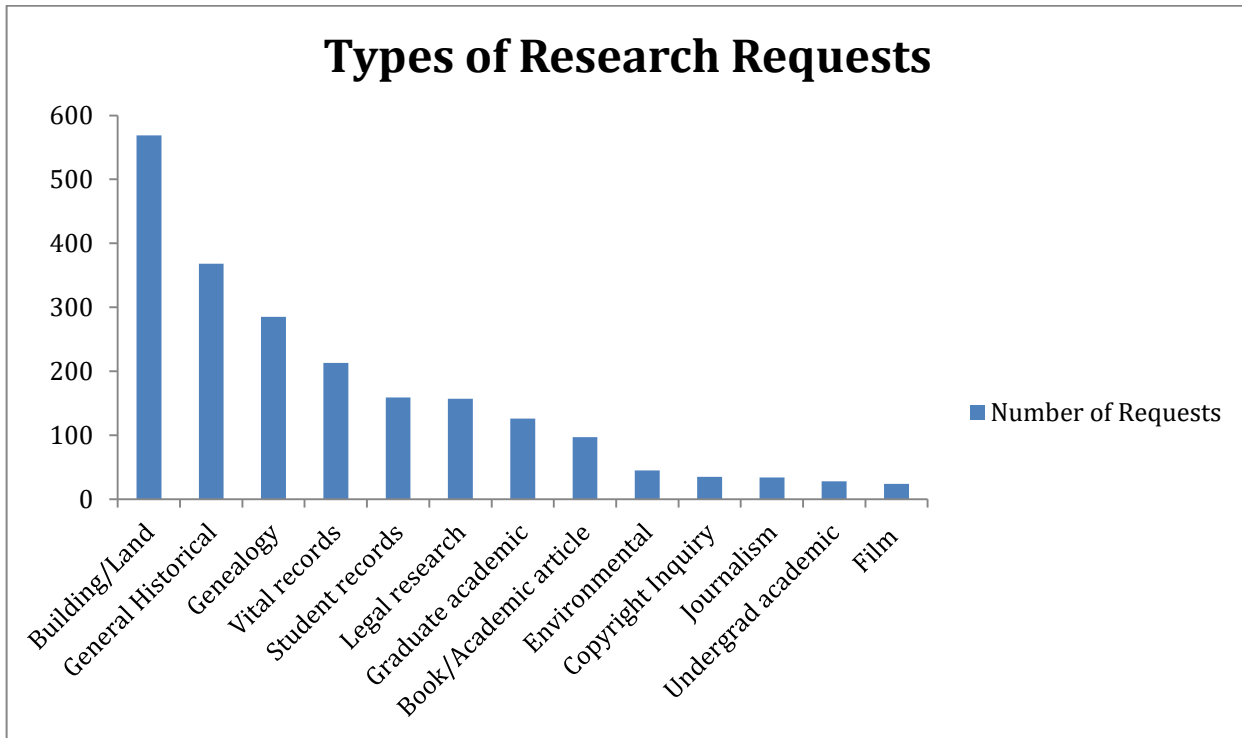
Who Contacted Us in FY 2021?



Type of Researcher	Number of Requests
General Public	1886
City Department	262
State Government Agency	19
Federal Government Agency	11



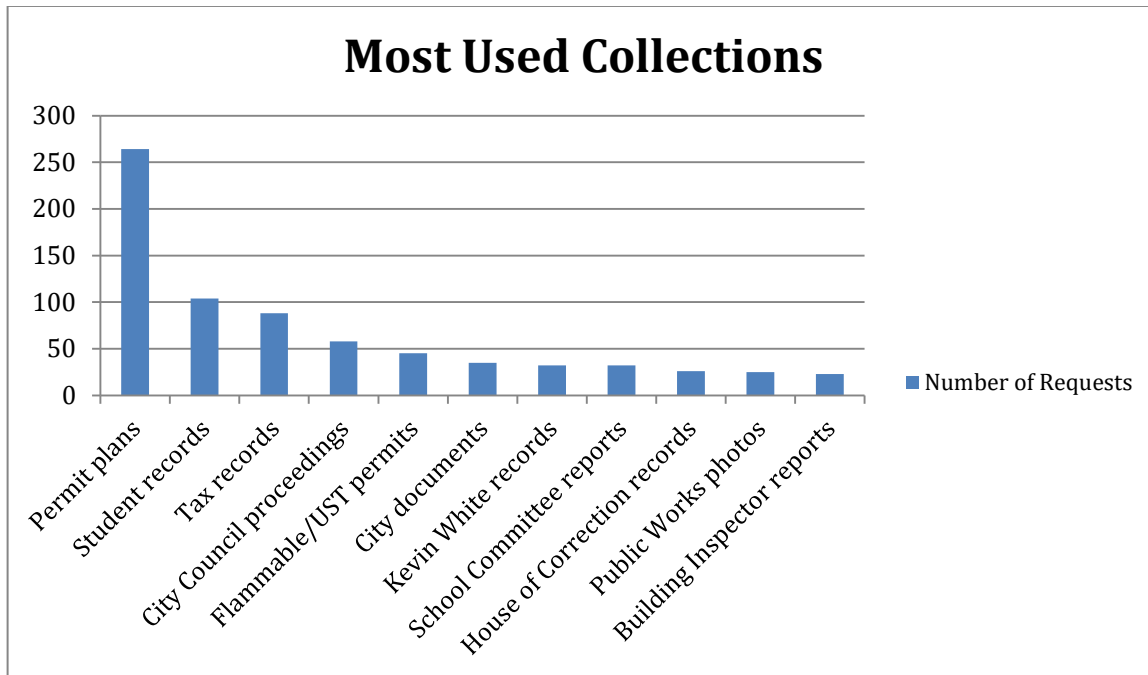
What Kind of Research Did They Do?



Type of Research	Number of Requests
Building/Land research	569
General historical	368
Genealogy	285
Vital records	213
Student records	159
Legal research	157
Graduate academic	126
Book/Academic article	97
Environmental research	45
Copyright inquiry	35
Journalism	34
Undergraduate academic	28
Film (documentary or feature)	24
Secondary school academic	0



Most Used Collections FY 2021

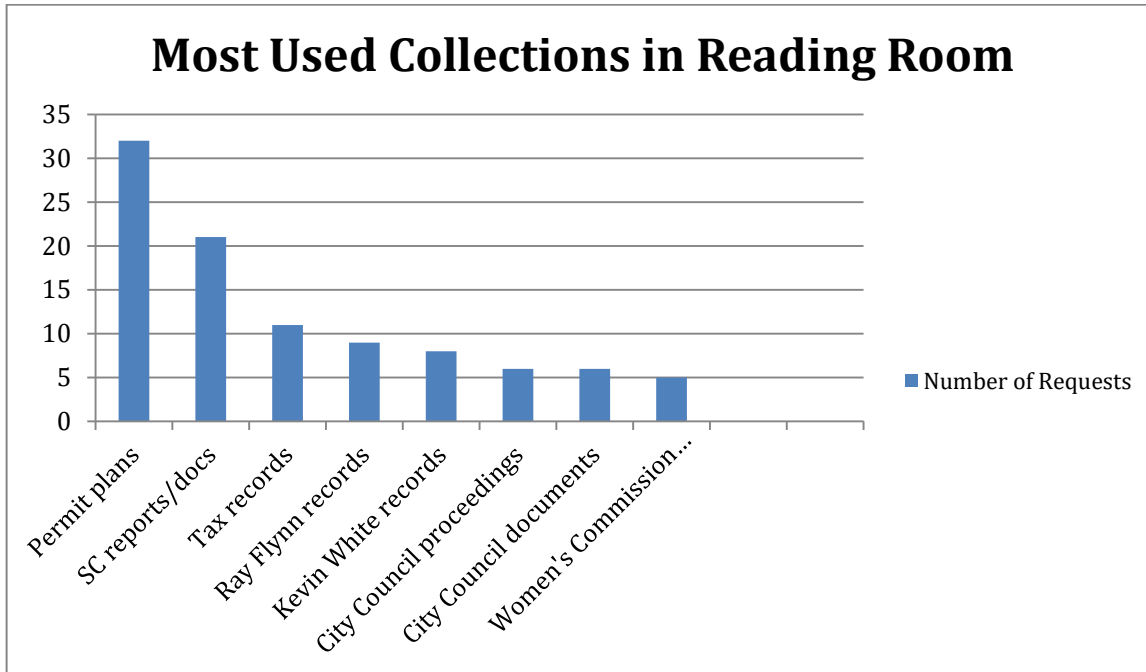


Collection	Number of Requests
Permit Plans	264
Student records	104
Tax records	88
City Council proceedings	58
Flammable/UST permits	45
City documents	35
Mayor Kevin White records	32
School Committee reports and documents	32
House of Correction records	26
Public Works photographs	25
Building Inspector reports	25



Most Used Collections in Reading Room

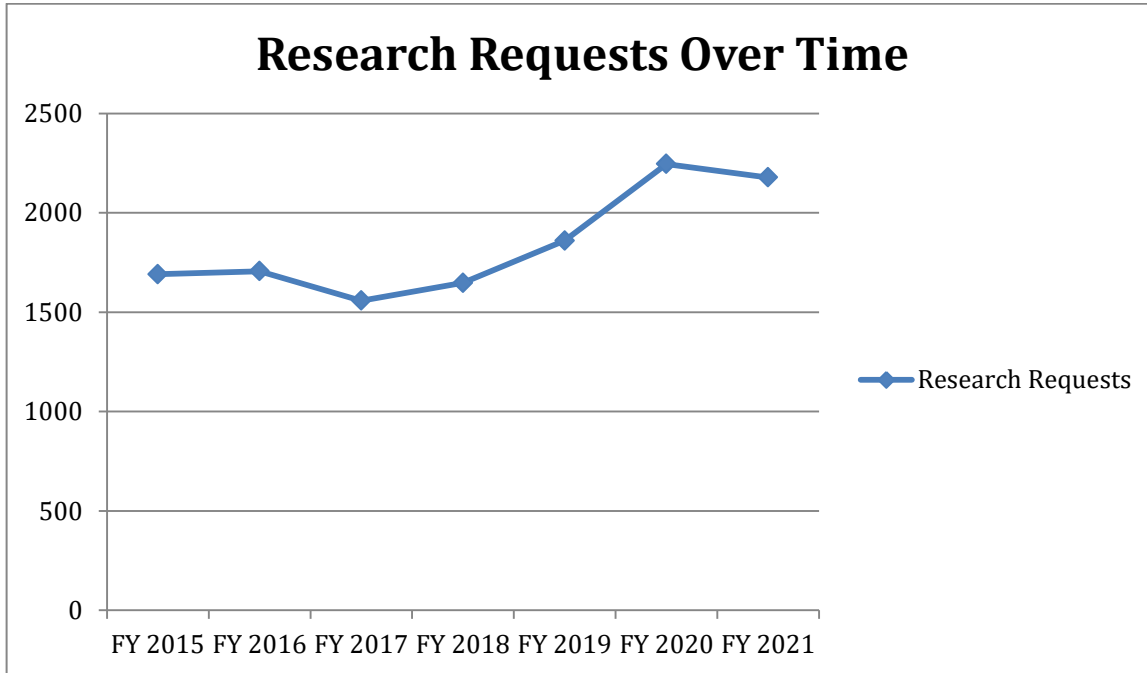
FY 2021



Collection	Number of Requests
Permit Plans	32
School Committee reports and documents	21
Tax records	11
Mayor Raymond Flynn records	9
Mayor Kevin White records	8
City Council proceedings	6
City Council documents	6
Women's Commission records	5



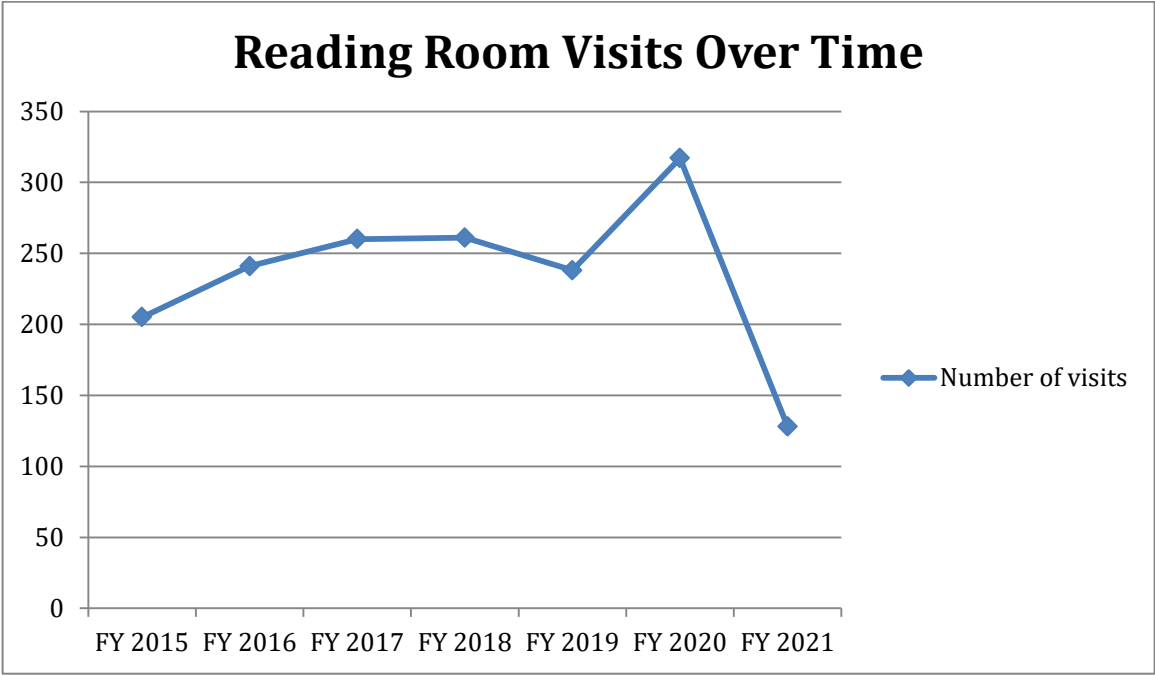
Research Requests Over Time



Fiscal Year	Number of Requests
2015	1691
2016	1706
2017	1558
2018	1647
2019	1860
2020	2245
2021	2178



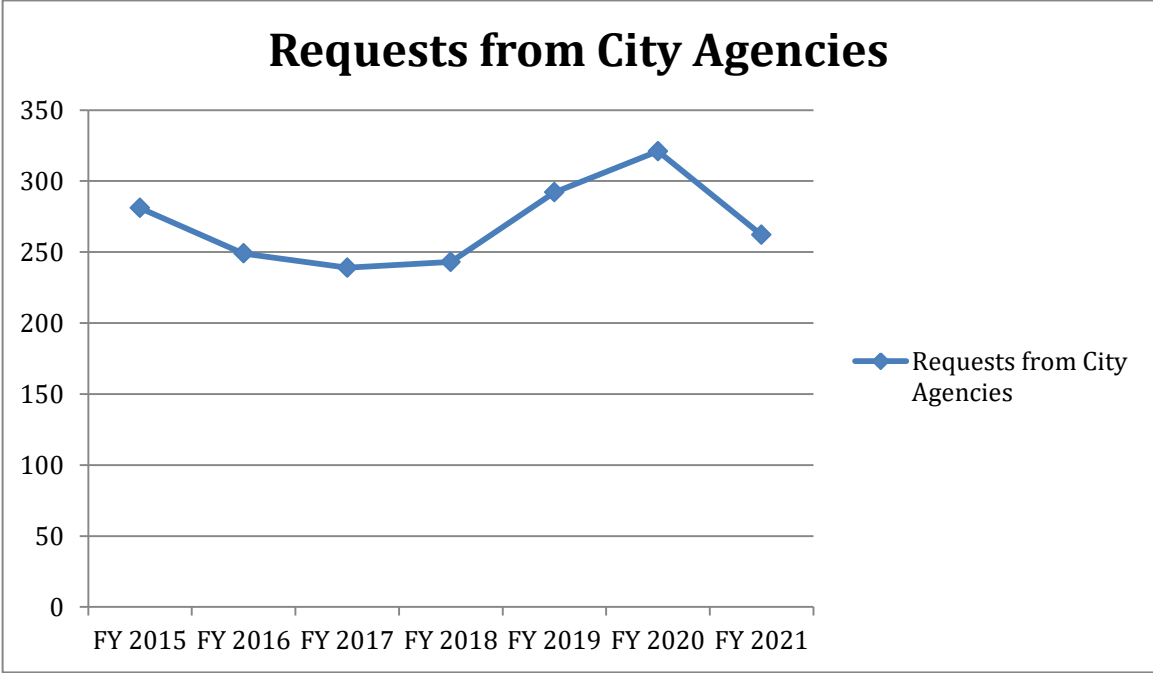
Reading Room Visits Over Time



Fiscal Year	Reading Room Visits
2015	205
2016	241
2017	260
2018	261
2019	238
2020	317
2021	128



Engagement with City Departments Over Time



Requests from City Agencies by Year

Year	Number of Requests
FY 2015	281
FY 2016	249
FY 2017	239
FY 2018	243
FY 2019	292
FY 2020	321
FY 2021	262



Digital Engagement

Quick Numbers for FY 2021

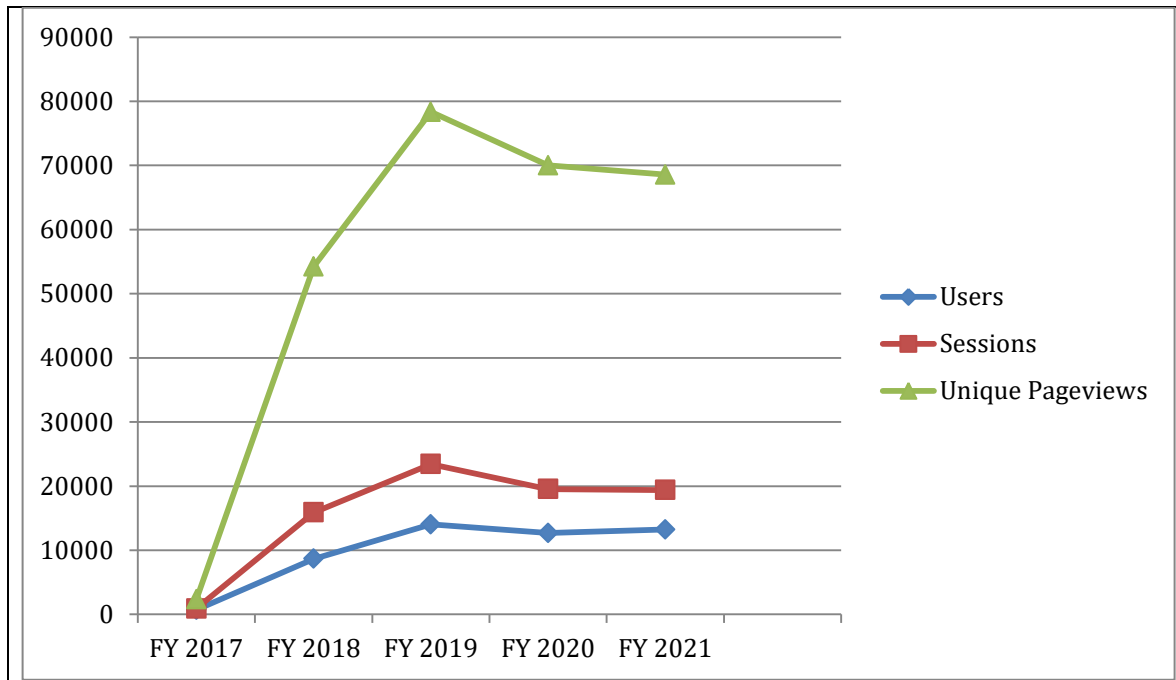
13,239 Unique Visitors to
Preservica

19,385 Sessions (Visits)

68,571 Unique Page Views



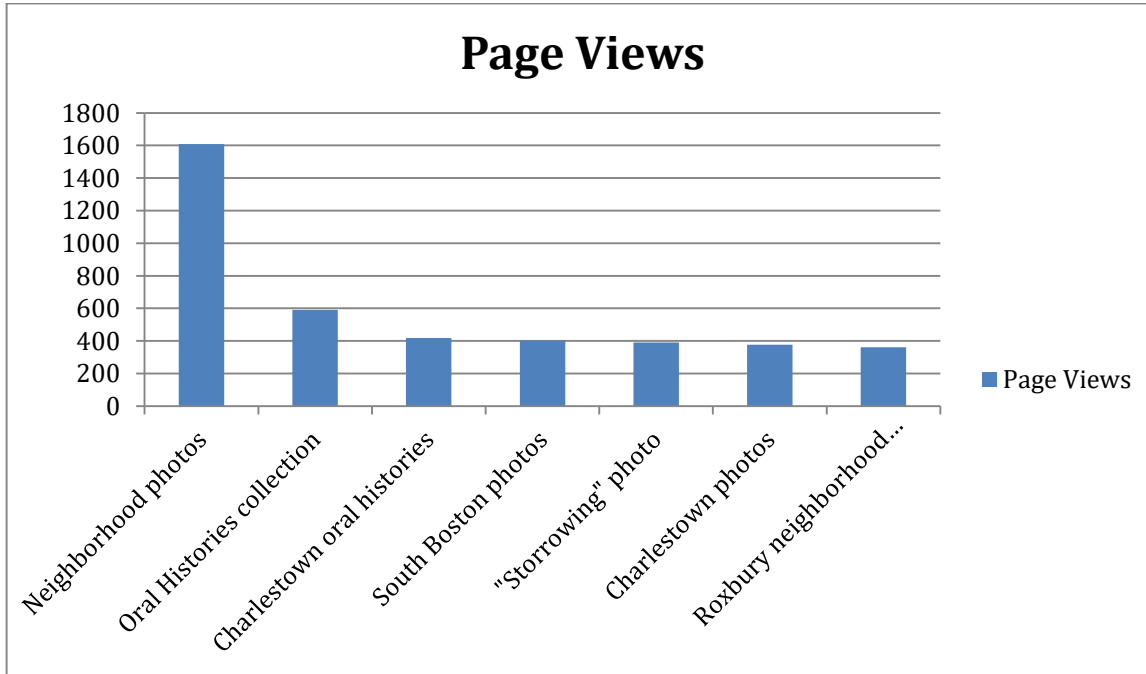
Digital Engagement Over Time



Year	Users	Sessions	Unique Page Views
FY 2017	703	916	2,332
FY 2018	8,668	15,894	54,237
FY 2019	14,037	23,433	78,340
FY 2020	12,685	19,553	70,005
FY 2021	13,239	19,385	68,571



Most Popular Digital Records in 2021

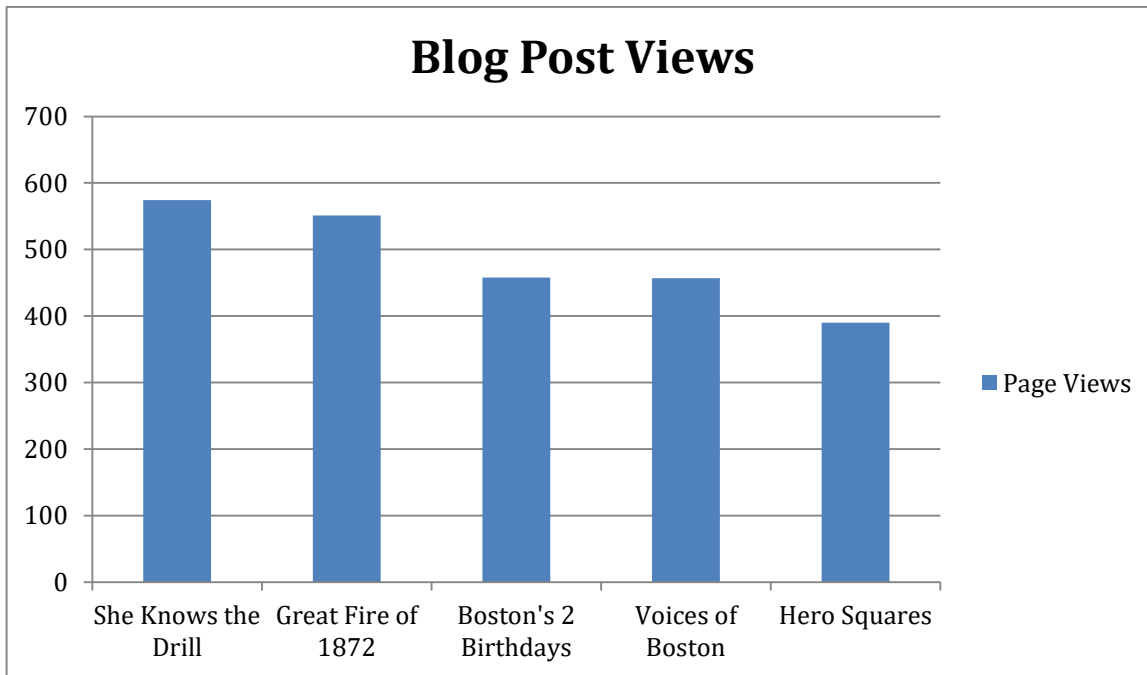


Item/Series/Collection	Number of page views
Neighborhood Photographs collection	1609
Oral Histories collection	590
Charlestown oral histories	417
South Boston neighborhood photographs	403
Washington St at Guild St photo, showing truck stuck on wire, 1906, Boston Elevated photographs ("storrowing") photo	391
Charlestown neighborhood photographs	377
Roxbury neighborhood photographs	361



Most Popular Blog Posts in 2021

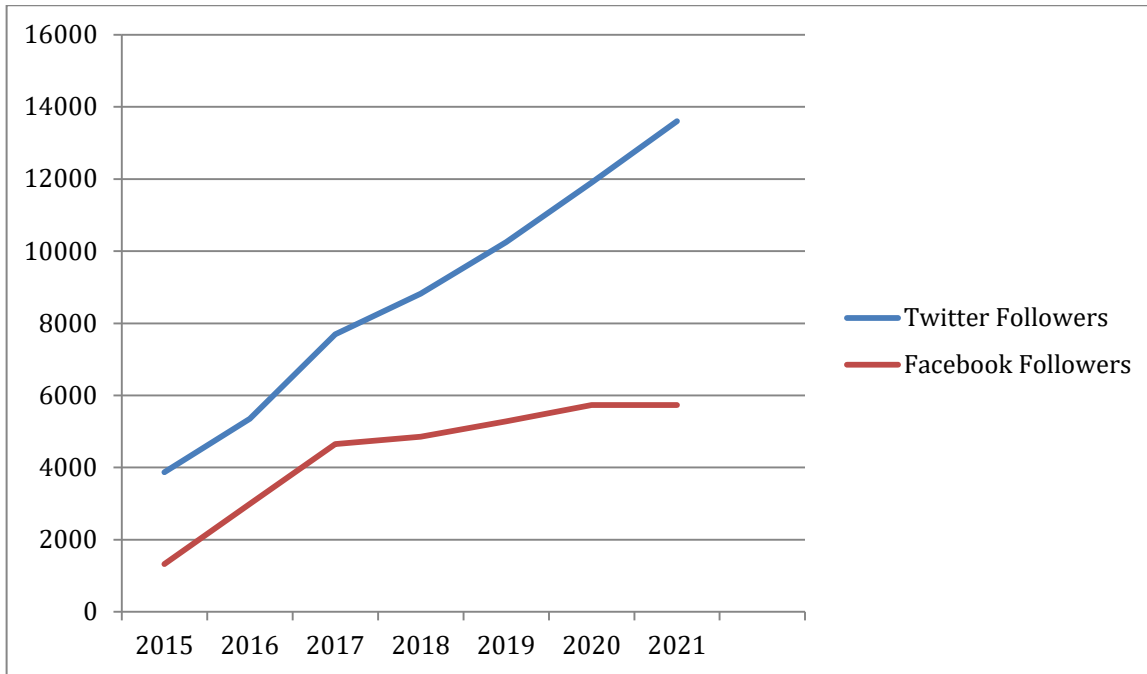
Total Blog Post visits: 3,572



Blog post	Number of views
She Knows the Drill: Boston's First Female African American Dentist	574
Notes from the Archives: The Great Fire of 1872	551
Notes from the Archives: Boston's 2 Birthdays	458
Voices of Boston: Louise and Miss Ives discuss education and innovation in Roslindale	457
Digging into the Digitizing of Boston's Hero Squares	390



Social Media Engagement Over Time



	Twitter Followers	Facebook Followers
July 2015	3874	1321
July 2016	5348	2991
July 2017	7692	4652
July 2018	8821	4858
July 2019	10248	5277
July 2020	11900	5733
July 2021	13,600	5732

