

JOINT ANNUAL REPORT

ARCHIVAL REVIEW BOARD

+

ARCHIVES REFERENCE AND
RESEARCH ADVISORY BOARD



| FY2025

Archival Review Board

Jeffrey Lowell, Mayor's Office

Yasmin Ramirez

Chotsani Sackey

Archives Reference & Research Advisory Board

Marco Carrion

Jason Bauman

Brian Carlin

Alison Cornyn

Pamela Cruz

Sarah Gonzalez

Glenda Grace

Lillian Jean Baptiste

Richard Moylan

Rebecca Pou

Eric K. Washington

Eric Adams, Mayor

Pauline Toole, Commissioner

Kenneth R. Cobb, Assistant Commissioner

Sylvia Kollar, Director, Municipal Archives

Joint Annual Report of the Archival Review Board + Archives Reference & Research Advisory Board

In 2025, we were reminded that the Archives are not just collections of paper and photographs — they are the living heartbeat of New York City’s memory.

This year, staff worked to open more doors into that shared history: expanding digital access to vital documents and records, unveiling exhibitions that celebrate the city’s communities, and fostering partnerships that invite New Yorkers to see themselves reflected in the archives.

Each new project — each story rediscovered and made accessible — strengthens the thread that connects past and present. As we preserve the record of our city, we also preserve its promise: that every voice, every neighborhood, and every generation is part of New York’s enduring story.

--Marco Carrion, Chair, ARRAB

Acquisitions

The Department of Parks and Recreation's Art and Antiquities and the Document Services divisions transferred a second installment of the Photo Archive (the first transfer took place in 2006). The Parks photograph collections consist of over 100,000 images, in various formats, dating from 1857 to 1970. The collection, featured throughout this report, documents the acquisition, design, and use of New York City public parks. Landscape design, recreational activities, historic structures, monuments, and special events highlight the imagination and utility of shared public spaces in New York City.

FISCAL YEAR 2025 BY THE NUMBERS

Received:

1,100+ cubic ft. and 1.6 TB

Formally Acquired:

406.5 cubic ft. and 1.6 TB



Digital Programs

DIGITIZATION PROJECTS

Historical Vital Records Project

The Archives continues to digitize historical marriage licenses, and completed digitization, preservation, and publication of over 101,000 records on the [Historical Vital Records site](#).

Peck-Stacpoole Foundation Grant to digitize the 1890 Police Census

In December, 2024, Archives staff completed the digitization, rehousing, barcoding and archival description for 18 cubic ft. of ledgers. The Police Census [guide](#) and [digital collections](#) are published, and the ledgers are available on From the Page, a crowd-sourcing tool that allows users to transcribe the names and addresses in the 894 volume set.

Mayor David N. Dinkins Photograph Collection

The collection consists of approximately 70 cubic ft. of black-and-white and color negatives and prints highlighting the mayor's daily activities, meetings, press conferences and events. The administration's work to revitalize housing programs, improve accessibility, address racial tensions, and address crime are represented, and the mayoral photographers notes and selections provide greater context to the collection. The Municipal Archives also worked with former Dinkins Administration staff and photographers to identify individuals in the photographs.

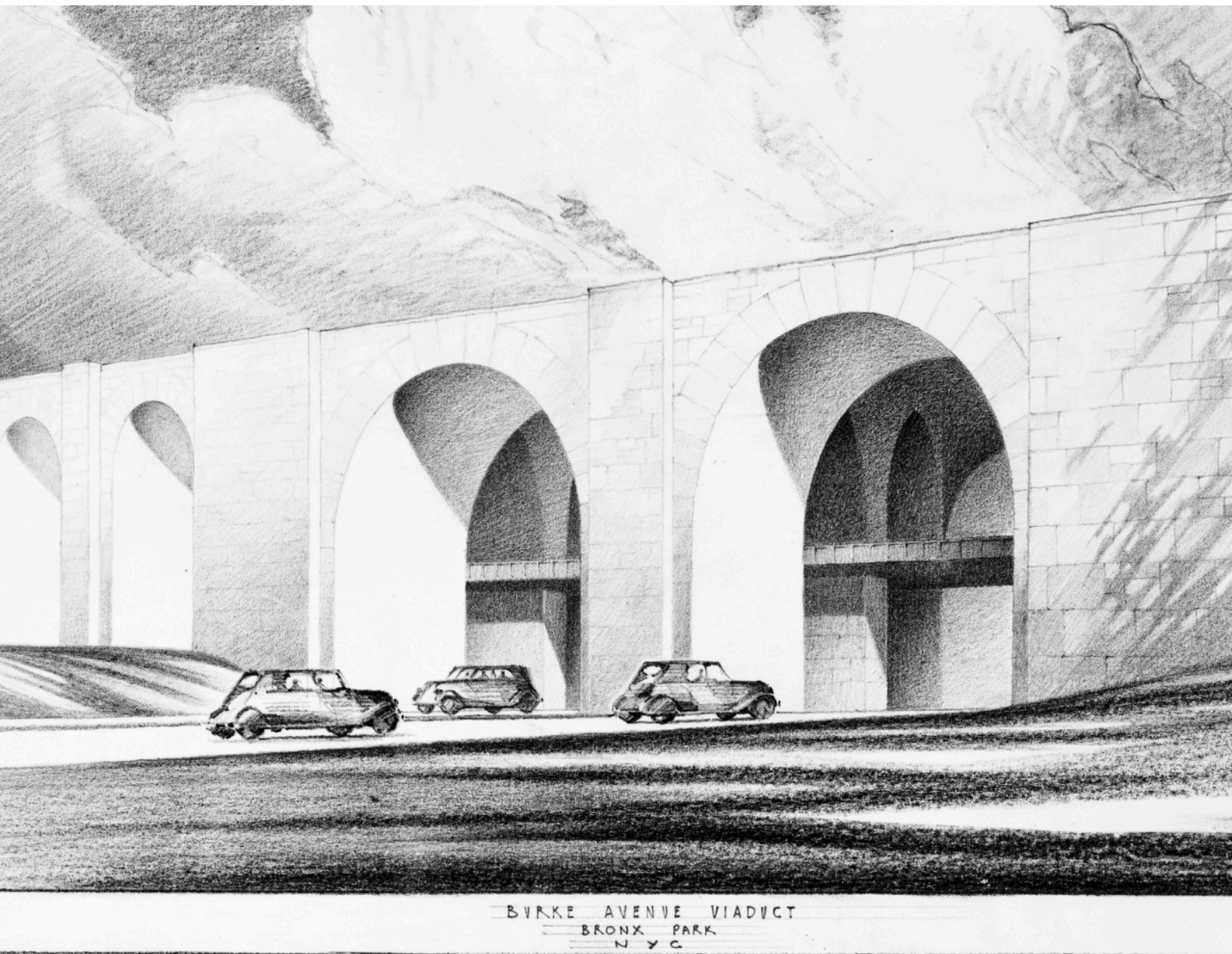


Digital Programs

DIGITAL PRESERVATION

Beginning in 2022, the Municipal Archives began researching digital preservation and improved public access platforms to host and manage over 1 million digitized images. Our goal was to establish a trusted digital repository- a sustainable model for growth, authenticity, and long-term access to digitized and born digital collections.

With a team of technologists, digital archivists, and metadata specialists, the archives began remediating digitized collections to standardize file-naming and metadata. Staff have completed remediation of over 1.7 million files since 2022. The team launched a public access component, [Digital Collections](#), in May, 2024, with over 2.3 million published records. The site received more than 124,000 visitors and 2.3 million page views in FY25.



Conservation and Preservation

INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES (IMLS) GRANT

Conservation staff completed the third and final year of a major project to conserve and photograph the Brooklyn Bridge drawings collection consisting of more than 11,000 drawing plans.

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

The Archives' Conservation Unit also began a collaboration with the Met's Scientific Research Department to conduct scientific analysis of a selection of the drawings to determine the composition of media and paper, causes of degradation, and to use infrared imaging to reveal faded writing and drawings in graphite.





NATIONAL
ARCHIVES

NATIONAL HISTORICAL
PUBLICATIONS
& RECORDS COMMISSION

NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION GRANT

New York City Commission on Human Rights Processing and Digitization Project,
1945- 1976

The New York City Municipal Archives received Commission support to expand public discovery of records created by the New York City Commission on Human Rights.

The records of the Commission include minutes, reports, speeches, correspondence, and planning files created to fulfill their mission and address systemic injustice. The records represent government responses to racial and socio-economic unrest, religious intolerance, and systemic discrimination practices from the World War Two-era through the 1960s and 1970s civil rights eras. The Archives anticipates diverse audiences accessing the collections, including students, social and legal scholars, advocacy organizations, and other government agencies working toward improving public services to populations facing discrimination.



Reference and Research Services

REFERENCE SERVICES

In-person and remote reference inquiries increased by 7% in the past year. Reference archivists continued instructional introductions and tours for students, public and private organizations, and other city agencies including ProPublica, the New York Times, Pace University, Packer Collegiate, the Municipal Arts Society, and the New York City Housing Authority.

PATRON REQUESTS

ON-DEMAND DIGITIZATION
(FILES DIGITIZED)
90,518

EMAIL/REMOTE INQUIRIES
7,050

ONSITE VISITORS
2,158

External Affairs

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

The External Affairs division hosted over 70 events, exhibitions, and educational engagements throughout fiscal year 2025 with over 6,200 participants.

Among the year's most attended events were:

Photoville Exhibition: 100 Years of WNYC: 2,300

17 Lunch and Learn virtual talks: 2,357

Tours of the Archives and Library: 326



Popular 2025 Programs

[Saving Radio City Music Hall](#)

Rosemary Novellino-Mearns, the former president of the Showpeople's Committee to Save Radio City Music Hall, shared her firsthand account of the three-month struggle to reverse Rockefeller Center's decision. Using archival media coverage and personal anecdotes, Rosemary detailed how she and the Showpeople's Committee won a David-and-Goliath battle to preserve the iconic theater for future generations.

[Taking Manhattan w/ Russell Shorto](#)

Russell Shorto recounted the 1664 English takeover that ended Dutch rule and marked the birth of New York. Drawing on newly translated sources, he explored the motivations behind the invasion, the roots of social polarization introduced under English rule, and the often-overlooked histories of religious refugees, Indigenous peoples, and free and enslaved Africans.

[You Have Unleashed a Storm](#)

David Viola explored the largely untold history of domestic terrorism and political radicalism in New York City during the 1960s and 1970s, drawing on newly declassified files, preserved court records, and archival collections, including the Municipal Archives' Handschu Collection.

[When the City Stopped](#)

When the City Stopped examined the inequalities laid bare by the pandemic, the workers who kept the city going, and the lessons learned from that moment. Through poems, first-person narratives, and oral histories, author Robert Snyder explored the experiences of immigrants, people of color, and low-income New Yorkers--capturing the fear and uncertainty of the early months, the risks faced by essential workers, and the solidarity that sustained the city.

External Affairs

SOCIAL MEDIA

The agency's social media accounts, Facebook, X, Instagram, and YouTube have a total of 47,828 followers, up 9% from last fiscal year.

Social Media

POSTS : 1,196

↑ 39.9%

Post Impressions: 601,715

↑ 14.2%

Post Reactions: 6,644

↑ 18%

SPECIAL PROJECTS

New Visions of Old New York

The Department of Records and Information Services and the New Amsterdam History Center commemorate the 400 year anniversary of the founding of City government with an exhibition entitled, *New Visions of Old New York*.

New Visions of Old New York featured historical maps, drawings, sketches, and official documents from the New York City Municipal Archives alongside newly imagined, digitally-generated content from the New Amsterdam History Center's Mapping Early New York project. The selections represented ways in which the lives of women, enslaved people, and Native Americans intersected with the settlement created by the Dutch West India Company.

The closing event featured a panel discussion moderated by Maria Iacullo-Bird, Assistant Provost for Research at Pace University, with Drew Shuptar-Rayvis, Algonkian Historical Consultant and Independent Researcher, Kamau Ware, Artist and Historian at the Black Gotham Experience, and Michael Lorenzini from the Department of Records and Information Services. The panel explored how archives, art, and digital technologies illuminate the communities that shaped 17th century New Amsterdam.



SPECIAL PROJECTS

1964-1965 World's Fair

The 1964-1965 World's Fair began as an idea floated by lawyer Robert Kopple in 1958. In 1959, New York City Mayor Robert Wagner petitioned the federal government for authorization to hold the Fair in Flushing Meadow Park, formerly the site of the 1939 World's Fair.

Speaking at the opening of the Fair in 1964, President Lyndon Baines Johnson addressed the Fair's theme: Peace Through Understanding.

"This fair represents the most promising of our hopes. It gathers together, from 80 countries, the achievements of industry, the wealth of nations, the creations of man. This fair shows us what man at his most creative and constructive is capable of doing.

But unless we can achieve the theme of this fair--'peace through understanding'-unless we can use our skill and our wisdom to conquer conflict as we have conquered science--then our hopes of today-these proud achievements-will go under in the devastation of tomorrow."

DORIS commemorated the 60th anniversary of the World's Fair with a gallery exhibition featuring maps, brochures, advertisements, and photographs.





NYC Department of Records and Information Services
31 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

