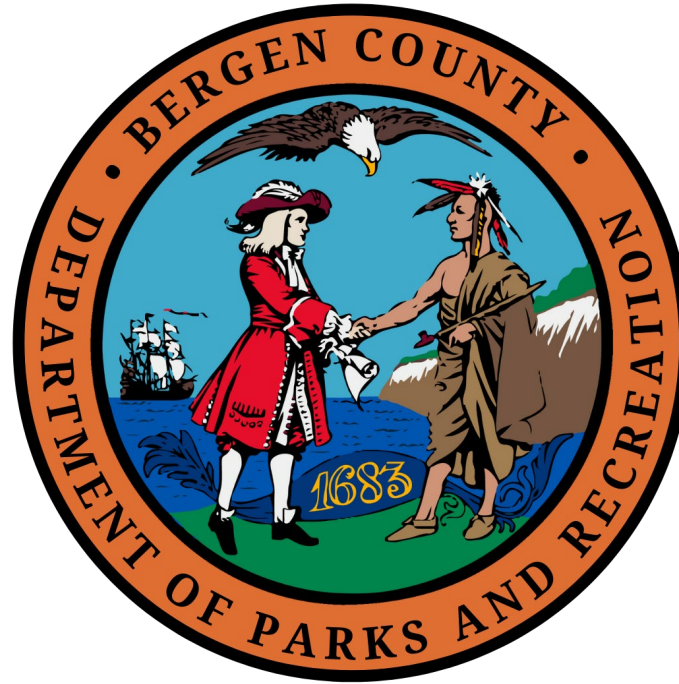
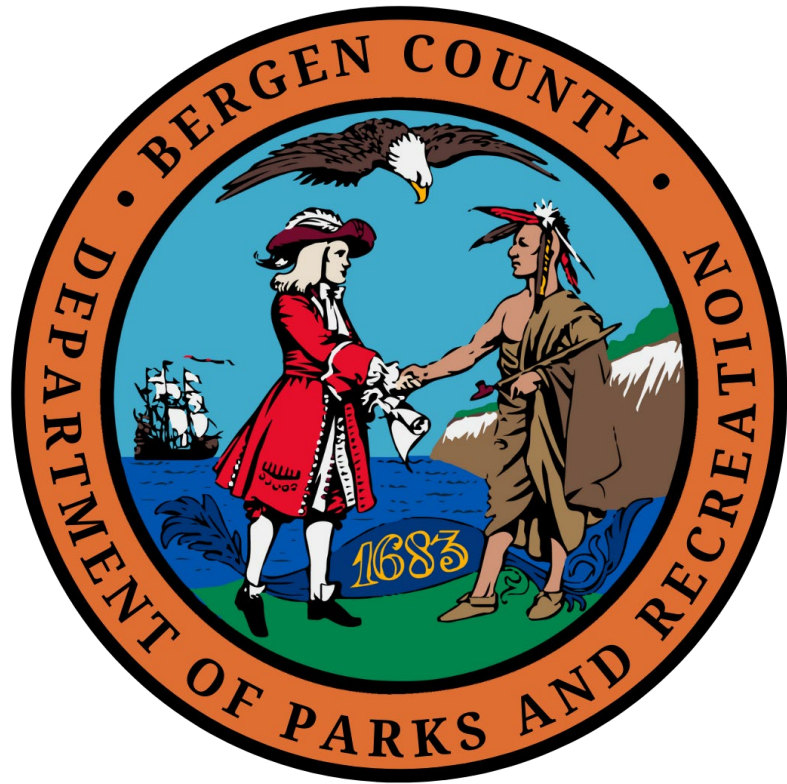




THE 2026 BERGEN COUNTY HISTORY GRANT PROGRAM
INFORMATION SESSION

OCTOBER 9, 2025



The Bergen County History Grant Program is administered by the Division of Cultural & Historic Affairs, Bergen County Department of Parks, and is funded by an Operating Support Grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, a Division of the Department of State.



Overview

- Flow through grant from New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC)
 - Funded by legislative appropriation
 - Counties re-apply every 3 years
 - Success of our regrantees has helped to increase Bergen County's overall funding from NJHC by 50%
 - Bergen County now receiving the 5th largest amount from NJHC
- Awarding grant funding since 2002
- Total amount awarded since inception: \$850,000
- For 2026: \$81,600 available for regranting

Types of Grants

TWO TYPES OF FUNDING AVAILABLE. ORGANIZATIONS MAY ONLY CHOOSE ONE

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT (GOS):

ASSISTS ESTABLISHED NON-PROFIT HISTORICAL ORGANIZATIONS WITH THEIR OVERALL EXPENSES.

THESE INCLUDE:

UTILITIES, INSURANCE, TRAVEL, STAFF TRAINING, ETC.

Types of Grants

SPECIAL PROJECT (SP):

SUPPORTS SPECIFIC HISTORY PROJECTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE BERGEN COUNTY HISTORICAL RECORD

PROMOTE LOCAL HISTORY AND HELP MAKE IT AVAILABLE TO A DIVERSE AUDIENCE

ASSIST AND ENCOURAGE LOCAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION EFFORTS

THESE INCLUDE:

FINDING AIDS, ORAL HISTORIES, EXHIBITIONS, RESTORATION OF ARTIFACTS, ETC.

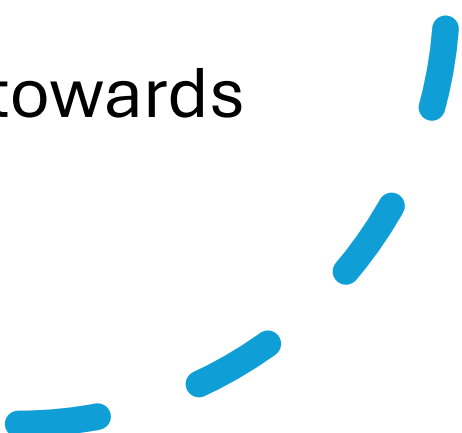
General Operating Support (GOS)



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Eligible Applicants

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT (GOS)

- Non-profit organizations based in Bergen County whose primary mission is New Jersey History
 - Have been in existence for at least two years
 - Be ADA compliant or demonstrate a plan for such compliance
 - Submit or demonstrate efforts towards developing a long-range plan
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Ineligible Applicants

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT (GOS)

- Units of local, State or Federal Government
- Public School Districts
- Public Libraries
- Individuals and local businesses
- Organizations receiving GOS support directly from the New Jersey Historical Commission
- Organizations that have not submitted final reports on previously funded grants (2024 or earlier)

Eligible General Operating Support (GOS) Expenses

- Salaries and wages
- Contracted services/outside fees and services
- Printing, publicity, marketing
- Postage and telephone
- Fundraising and development
- Staff Training
- Lease expenses
- Mortgage interest
- Equipment Purchase, installation and lease (e.g. computers, office furnishing, files)
- Utilities and HVAC (purchase, installation and operational costs of heating, ventilation and air conditioning)

Eligible General Operating Support (GOS) Expenses

- Maintenance of collections and the interiors of structures (i.e., most routine maintenance)
- Basic grounds maintenance
- Travel and transportation (automobile travel @\$.47/mile, train, or air coach travel)
- Insurance
- Licensing and registration fees (e.g., New Jersey charities registration)
- Planning for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Long-term and strategic planning , including disaster planning



Ineligible General Operation Support (GOS) Expenses

- Capital improvements, including the construction of structures and work such as:
 - roofing,
 - replacement of gutters, windows or doors
 - the removal or addition of interior walls
 - major landscaping projects
- Exterior maintenance
- Purchase of real estate, motor vehicles, or leasehold improvements



Ineligible General Operation Support (GOS) Expenses

- Acquisitions (including artifacts and collections)
- Hospitality
- Deficits and debt service
- Retroactive funding
- Endowment
- Mortgage or loan principal

SPECIAL PROJECTS (SP)



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Eligible Applicants

SPECIAL PROJECTS (SP)

- Eligible applicants include a wide variety of organizations, both public and private.
 - If the mission of an organization does not exclusively focus on New Jersey history, it must:
 - Demonstrate the existence of and a commitment to an historical mission
 - Have a viable program of public service to New Jersey history
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Eligible Applicants

SPECIAL PROJECTS (SP)

- Non-profit Bergen County organizations that have been in existence for at least two years, including museums and historic societies
 - Scouts/Youth Organization
 - Local Government Agencies
 - Ethnic Organizations
 - Historic Preservation Commissions
 - Civic Organizations
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Eligible Applicants

SPECIAL PROJECTS (SP)

- Schools
- Religious institutions*
- Libraries
- Veterans Organizations
- Fraternal Organization
- Men's/Women's Clubs
- Individuals**



Religious Organizations

Due to the recent New Jersey State Supreme Court decision in Freedom from Religion Foundation v. Morris County Board of Chosen Freeholders (A-71-16) (079277) argued on October 23, 2017, and decided on April 18, 2019, applications from religious organizations will be reviewed by the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, to determine if the use of funds is prohibited by state and/or federal law.

Individuals

Must be a qualified historian:

NJHC definition: someone who has received professional training in the field of history and someone who is actively engaged in the field of history. Social studies or history teachers, librarians, county historians, or individuals whose profession focuses on history.

Special Project areas:

- Educational Initiatives
- Research
- Publications
- Film, Video, Radio, Podcasts



Ineligible Applicants

SPECIAL PROJECTS (SP)

Applicants' ineligible for project grant funding include:

- Units of state or federal government.
- Past grant recipients who have failed to fulfill the reporting requirements as stated in their executed grant contract.
- Applicants receiving FY 2025 grant funds directly from the NJHC are not eligible for Bergen County Special Project support in calendar year 2026.

Eligible Expenses

- Archival folders, boxes, and other materials for conservation of historical materials such as manuscripts, books, costumes, and photographs
- Archival or research library user fees
- Equipment purchases with the following restrictions:
 - only institutions and organizations may use grant funds to purchase major items, such as computers or video cameras.
 - All grant recipients, however, may use grant funds to purchase items such as inexpensive recording devices and computer software.
- Equipment rental
- Materials for fabricating and installing exhibitions
- Microfilming
- Oral history tape transcription

Eligible Expenses

- Payment of exhibition loan fees and shipping costs
- Photography and photocopying
- Production of promotional or advertising materials
- Travel and maintenance for speakers and honoraria for speakers in the following amounts:
 - Keynote speaker, up to \$1,000; one keynote speaker per program
 - Main speaker, up to \$500
 - Chairperson or moderator, up to \$250
 - Panelist, up to \$175
 - Additional funds for higher honoraria may be requested if you can demonstrate the speaker's particular merits

Eligible Expenses

- Supplies to be used in the project (such as storage materials, office supplies, display materials, and materials for educational projects)
- Travel and/or maintenance while conducting research
- Travel expenses with the following limits:
 - Automobile travel: \$.47 per mile
 - Train or airplane fares (coach only; not first class)
 - Food and accommodations: up to \$150 per day
- Publication costs, such as typesetting, printing, copyright permission fees, and binding
- Wages or stipends for project personnel, such as conservators, curators, educational consultants, and researchers



Ineligible Expenses

- Field trips if that is the only component of the project
- Purchase of books or prepackaged instructional materials
- Purchase of items for collections
- Purchase of refreshments for the project's audience
- Retroactive funding
 - e.g., an exhibition proposal may not include a request for funding for exhibition research completed before the submission of the application



Ineligible Projects

- Projects that do not relate to New Jersey history
- Projects that were funded for the three (3) previous fiscal years
- Project work that is completed before the grant is awarded
- Conservation of collections of unidentified photographs
- Conservation of materials owned by federal, county, or municipal governments
- Construction, restoration, preservation of gravestones, commemorative statues, historical markers, and other non-interpretive items
- Genealogical projects such as genealogies of specific families (unless applicants can demonstrate the usefulness of the projects to the understanding of New Jersey history)



Ineligible Projects

- Fiction and poetry
- Projects of federal or state government agencies
- Projects that are not accessible to the public
- Publication of coloring books, cookbooks, and calendars
- Purchase of collections, furniture, costumes, artifacts, or other items for collections
- Restoration or preservation of structures
- Recordings of public programs or oral history interviews without the production of transcripts that are accessible to the public
- Projects that do not comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act

SPECIAL PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

Arts organizations

- Eligible for history funding with a qualified historian overseeing the project.

The NJHC defines a qualified historian as someone who has received professional training in the field of history and someone who is actively engaged in the field of history. This may include history and social studies teachers, librarians, county historians, or individuals whose profession focuses on history.

Signage

- All outdoor and indoor interpretive signage must meet the established standards for presenting inclusive history.
 - American Alliance of Museums (AAM)
 - The Inclusive Historian's Handbook.

SPECIAL PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS



Indigenous History

- Research and design phases of proposals dealing with Indigenous history must include consultation and input from the representative groups whose history is to be presented.

SPECIAL PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

Archeology

- Work must be undertaken by personnel who meet the National Park Service's Professional Qualifications Standards (36 CFR 61).
- Written permission from the site owner must be included with the application.
- Archaeological surveys on publicly owned historic property that is listed on the NJ Register of Historic Places requires prior authorization
- Please be aware the archeological sites have sensitive information and need to be protected. Signage should also not provide detailed location(s) of the archeology site that could lead to subsequent looting or risk of vandalism

Funding Levels & Grant Period

Funding:

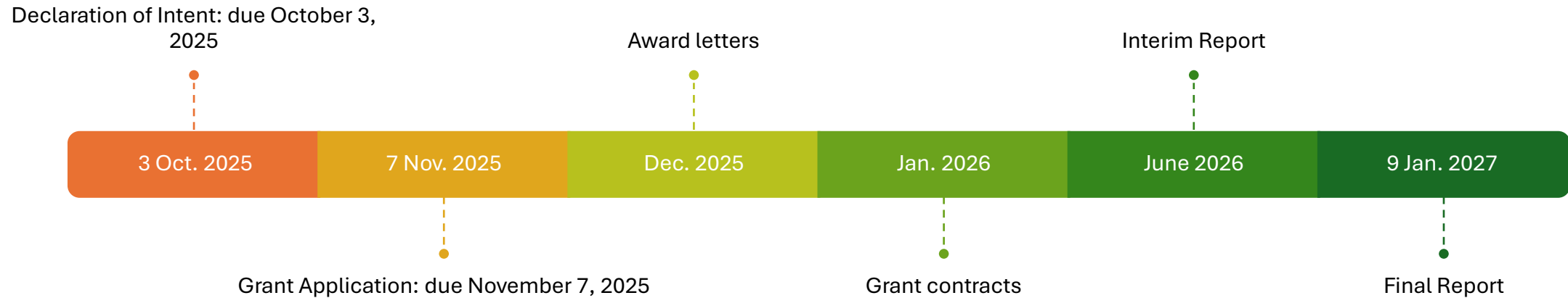
General Operating Support (GOS) maximum
\$10,000

Special Project (SP) maximum \$3000

Grant Period:

- One calendar year: January to December
- Interim report due in June
- Final Report due early January 9, 2027

Deadlines & Grant Timeline



Application Overview

General Information

- Only one (1) application per grant year
- The grant period is January to December – no extensions
- Original signatures in blue ink, but e-signatures are acceptable
- Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted
- Handwritten applications are permitted but must be legible to be accepted

General Information

- Please use the Application Checklist as your application Cover Page
- One Application with original signatures.
- Application may be stapled, banker clips or in a pocket folder.
 - Please do not staple excessively
 - No binders
 - No 3-hole folders

Both GOS and SP Grant Applications

COMMUNICATION

- Include contact information – communications and contracts will be sent via email only
- Please identify a lead contact for the grant
- If you have a grant writer, make sure you communicate with them

Both GOS and SP Grant Applications

BUDGET

- Make sure your grant budget makes sense and adds up (Form A)
 - All the better if you have estimates
- Budget forms B-1 and B-2 (Income and Expenses) are preferred.
 - You can use your own, but please don't provide 40 pages of budget information.
- Audience participation numbers are important
 - NJHC asks me for these; it contributes to our funding levels.

Narrative: Special Project

- Answer questions 1 – 13 thoroughly
- Review Questions 14-18 and answer if applicable
- Reviewers often give more weight to questions 7, 10 – 13
- Provide supplementary information if relevant (limit 5)
 - Archival assessments
 - Educational rubric
 - Brochures, catalogues, study guides, or pamphlets

Narrative: GOS

- Answer all questions thoroughly
- Reviewers often give more weight to Questions 2, 4, 7, 12, 14
- Illustrative material that supports your narrative
 - Resumes of key staff, annual reports
 - buttress arguments made for the organization's value and service to the New Jersey history community

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law in 1990 and requires that all providers of public programs and services make those offerings equally accessible to all people regardless of any physical and mental disabilities.

- Accessibility is a high priority
- Include copy of ADA Plan
- If the plans are in draft form, attach the draft.
- Organizations without must explain their absence and measures they are taking to makes spaces and programs accessible.

ADA Plan: Barrier Removal Priorities

- Access to space
 - Entrance ramp, accessible parking spaces
- Goods and Services
 - Layout of exhibits, installing interior ramps, large print, Brail or audio recording of exhibit material
- Restroom facilities
 - Removing barriers (furniture, vending machines), installing grab bars, accessible signage
- Additional measures
 - Video tours of inaccessible areas (2nd floor spaces, rooms too small), temporary ramps



Long Range Plan

- Spans 5-10 years,
 - Guides organization's future by establishing a vision
 - Outlines SMART goals
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Achievable
 - Relevant
 - Time-based
 - Develop detailed action plans for key areas:
 - Collections
 - Education
 - Community engagement
- 

Long Range Plan

Components Long-Range Plan

- **Strategic Vision:**
 - A clear articulation of what the organization aims to achieve in the long term.
- **Key Priority Areas:**
 - Broad themes or areas of focus, such as collections, visitor experience, or community engagement.
- **Actionable Initiatives:**
 - Specific projects, programs, or operational improvements designed to achieve the goals.
- **Resource Management:**
 - Plans for acquiring and allocating financial and human resources to implement strategies.
- **Performance Indicators:**
 - Measures to track progress and evaluate the success of the plan's implementation.
- **Implementation & Oversight:**
 - Designated individuals or teams responsible for steering the execution of the strategies.

Disaster &
Emergency
Preparedness

Provide a copy if available

Consider drafting one if not
available

Disaster & Emergency Preparedness

Required elements

- Includes preparedness and response plans for all relevant emergencies and threats (natural, mechanical, biological, and human)
- Addresses the needs of staff, visitors, structures, and collections
- Specifies how to protect, evacuate, and recover collections in the event of a disaster
- Includes evacuation routes and assembly areas for people
- Assigns individual responsibilities for implementation during emergencies
- Lists contact information for relevant emergency and recovery services
- Includes floorplans
- Date of last revision

Grant Awards

- \$81,600 in funding available: \$117,747 in requests
- Applicant pool is large and competitive
- Be complete and thorough
 - I will review for technical errors, but Review Panel gauges content
- Notifications by mid-January 2026
- Declining funding – let me know ASAP
- Grant agreement & Vendor Packet – critical to payment
- Interim report – critical to Bergen County's standing with NJHC
- Final Report – 2027 grant program relies on timely receipt
 - If not received by deadline, final payment may not be available

Other Programs to Consider

- Free service
- Assessment and recommendations of archival collections
- Available to:
 - Libraries
 - Historical societies
 - Agencies
 - Other non-profits



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Caucus Archival Projects Evaluation Service (CAPES) - New Jersey Caucus

The Caucus Archival Projects Evaluation Service (CAPES) offers free professional assessments by consultants from the New Jersey Caucus of historical paper collections held by New Jersey archives, libraries, historical societies, agencies, and other non-profit organizations free of charge. New Jersey Caucus members have assisted [hundreds of repositories](#) through the CAPES program since 1989. CAPES is supported by a generous grant from New Jersey Historical Commission.

If you are interested in receiving a CAPES survey, please see the [additional information and the application form](#) from the New Jersey Historical Commission.

CAPES consultants are members of the New Jersey Caucus with a working knowledge of the archival functions of appraisal, accessioning, arrangement, description, security, preservation, and reformatting of materials. They provide an invaluable service to institutions throughout New Jersey, many of which use the report to receive further grant assistance. In recognition, consultants receive a stipend upon completion of

Other Programs to Consider

- Free service
- Rolling deadline – apply anytime
- Assessment and recommendations physical collections
- Available to:
 - non-profits who hold artifacts in public trust
 - Make their collections available to the public

New Jersey Association of Museums

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Artifact Assessment Program

The New Jersey Association of Museums is pleased to offer the Artifact Assessment Program (AAP).

A **FREE** service for non-profit history, museum, and science organizations in New Jersey that collect and care for the artifacts that help tell our unique history.

AAP is funded by the **New Jersey Historical Commission** and managed by NJAM.

Other Programs to Consider

- Stabilization grant
- Alternates with Arts and Cultural Organizations
- Pre-qualification process to determine eligibility



About Cultural Trust Grants

Below is general information about the Cultural Trust's grant programs. For information about current grant opportunities, go to the [Current and Recent Grant Opportunities page](#).

The Cultural Trust's grant programs further the Trust's mission of ensuring a stable and healthy nonprofit cultural industry in New Jersey by supporting projects that build organizations' financial and institutional stability and capacity, and by funding important capital projects.

The Cultural Trust offers three different grant programs:

- Institutional and Financial Stabilization Grants for Arts Organizations (IFS Arts)
- Institutional and Financial Stabilization Grants for History/Humanities Organizations (IFS History/Humanities)
- Capital Historic Preservation Grants for Arts, History, and Humanities Organizations (Capital Historic Preservation)

Typically, one grant program is offered each fiscal year in the following rotation:

- Year 1: IFS Arts
- Year 2: IFS History/Humanities
- Year 3: IFS Arts
- Year 4: Capital Historic Preservation

Cultural Access Network (CAN)

The Cultural Access Network Project was established in 1992 to assist New Jersey's cultural arts organizations with compliance with ADA

[About](#) [Roundtables & Trainings](#) [Resources](#) [ADA Planning](#) [Summit](#) [Access Calendar Posting Account Request](#) [Committee](#)



About

The Cultural Access Network Project is a program of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and New Jersey Theatre Alliance. The Project provides a wide range of services and programs to assist theatres and cultural organizations in making their programs and facilities accessible to seniors and people with disabilities.

Questions?

Elaine Kiernan Gold

Historic Preservation Specialist

egold@bergencountynj.gov

201-336-7294

