

OCE Spotlight: Overview of Events, Activities, and Upcoming Projects

Presentation to the Board of Regents
November 2024



Museum
Library
Archives

NEW YORK STATE Office of Cultural Education

OCE Immediate Priorities

- ❖ Enhance programming and rotating exhibits to bring more vitality to the building.
- ❖ Make substantial progress on the gallery renewal and storage facility projects.
- ❖ Focus on marketing—spread the word about the exciting initiatives we're undertaking.

Enhance Programming and Rotating Exhibits to Bring more Vitality to the Building

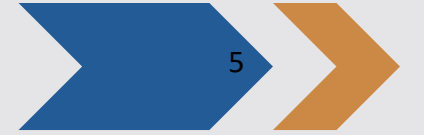


- New Exhibits
- Refreshed Spaces
- Family-Friendly Programming
- After-school Programming

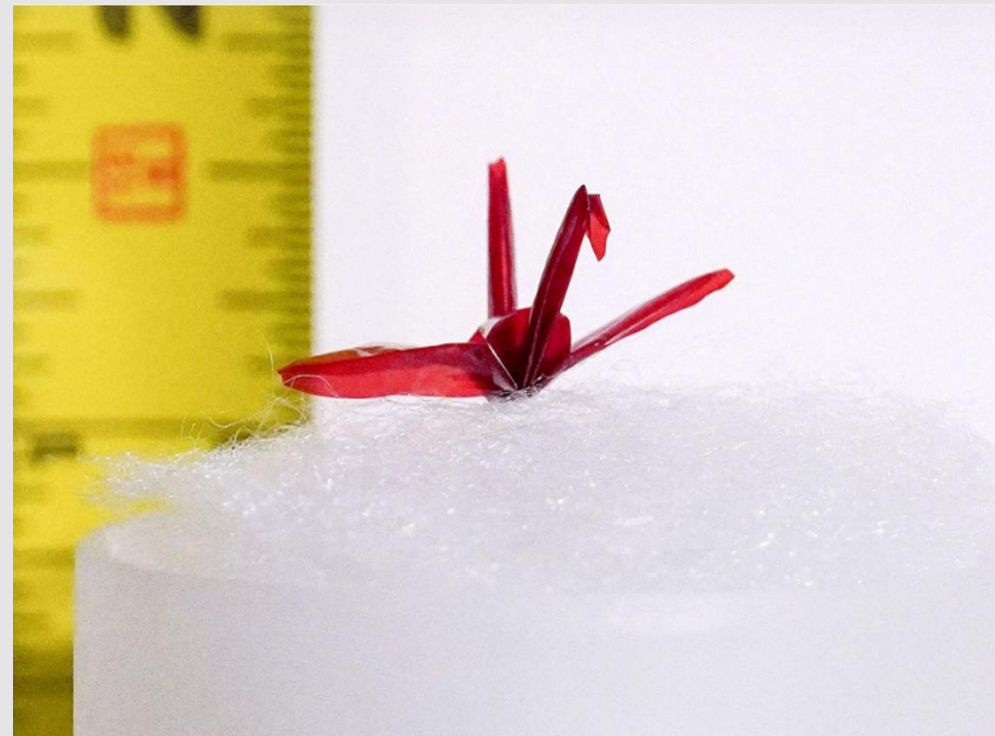


New Exhibits

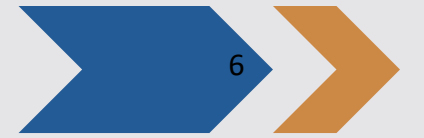
Sadako's Crane



On September 11, the museum unveiled a permanent new addition to the entrance of its 9/11 exhibit—*Sadako's Crane*. It tells the story of Sadako Sasaki and her determination to fold 1,000 origami cranes in hopes of recovering from her illness. Today, only a few of her cranes remain—one of which is now on permanent display in the State Museum. The origami crane on the museum floor was made from the Red Cross medicine bottle from which she took medicine. The installation of the exhibit was covered by two news outlets: WMHT and Kyodo News of Japan.



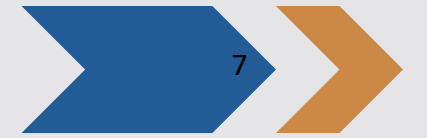
Treason of the Blackest Dye (Tarrytown, NY)



Beginning on September 25, the Museum, Archives, and Archives Partnership Trust launched a new exhibit in Tarrytown, NY, in collaboration with a Revolutionary War nonprofit. This exhibit highlights significant artifacts related to Benedict Arnold. Among the Museum and Archives collections are the "Andre Papers," which contain documents in Arnold's handwriting detailing his attempt to capture West Point for the British (i.e., the "smoking gun" of Benedict Arnold's treason). Also on display is the last existing Fidelity Medallion (there were originally three), awarded to the three men who uncovered Arnold's plot. This medal is the oldest decoration in the U.S. military.



Sojourner Truth: First Step to Freedom (Kingston, NY)



On September 28, the Archives, in partnership with the City of Kingston, unveiled a new exhibit on Sojourner Truth.

On display are the original New York State Supreme Court documents from her historic legal victory, in which she successfully sued a white man to secure her son's freedom after he was illegally sold into slavery.

The background story of these documents is remarkable; they were lost to history until our staff discovered them while cataloging 5,000 cubic feet of early New York Supreme Court records two years ago. Archives staff recognized Sojourner Truth's name in her court papers when she was still known as Isabella Van Wagenen. The exhibit will be open until August 2025.



Refreshed Spaces

Cohoes Mastodon Refresh



Enhanced Programming

Family-Friendly Programming



Family History Day. In October, the museum hosted its second annual Family History Day in which we welcomed 400 visitors. Along with hands-on activities for kids and families, this was a tabling event, where other organizations showcased their programs.



Hispanic Heritage Programming. This past weekend, we celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with a series of free events, including a live concert featuring Latin pop and traditional music by musician Bronte Roman, as well as a free screening of *Back to Las Villas*, followed by a panel discussion with the film's director.

Family-Friendly Programming

Halloween Spooktacular.

State Museum hosted its first Halloween Spooktacular since COVID. Our staff did an incredible job creating a fun, safe, and festive environment, and the Museum welcomed over 900 children, parents, and guests during the three-hour event. Highlights of the Halloween Spooktacular included:

- Creepy art projects
- Ghoulish games
- Spooky science specimens
- A dance floor
- A children's costume parade



11/17: Dr. Jim Aronson Talk—50th Anniversary of Lucy Discovery. To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the discovery of “Lucy”—the hominid skeleton found in Ethiopia and regarded as the “missing link” in evolution—we will be hosting a free talk by Dr. Aronson, a researcher from the team that made this groundbreaking discovery.

**Family-Friendly
Programming**

**OPPORTUNITIES OF DATING
AN OLDER WOMAN:**

LUCY

and the Beginnings
of Humankind

3.18 Million Years Ago



**A LECTURE WITH
DR. JIM ARONSON**



Family-Friendly Programming



11/10 Happy Birthday Sesame Street. On November 10, we are hosting a birthday celebration in honor of the 55th anniversary of Sesame Street. There will be videos, crafts and activities, stickers, coloring a 12' banner, etc.

11/16 Inclusive Day for Families. The following weekend, in collaboration with Bring on the Spectrum!, we are hosting a specialized museum experience for children on the autism spectrum.

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11/27 and 11/29: Thanksgiving Programming. As part of our Thanksgiving programming, we will offer turkey crafts and activities for children on Wednesday, November 27. On Black Friday, we will host family-friendly, turkey-themed tours of our bird collections.

11/30: Butterfly in the Sky Documentary Screening. In late November, we have tentatively scheduled a free screening of the documentary *Butterfly in the Sky*, which explores the history of the iconic Reading Rainbow series.

•Christmas Break: Reading of 'Twas the Night Before Christmas and Christmas Crafts (tentative). The weekend before Christmas, we will host a live reading of 'Twas the Night Before Christmas, as it was originally published in the Troy Sentinel 200 years ago. We also plan to offer family-friendly programming most days during winter break. In terms of visitorship, winter break is a busy time for the museum.

12/31: New Year's Eve Celebration. On New Year's Eve, we will host family-focused crafts, music, and "ball drops" throughout the day for children to enjoy as they celebrate.

After-School Programming



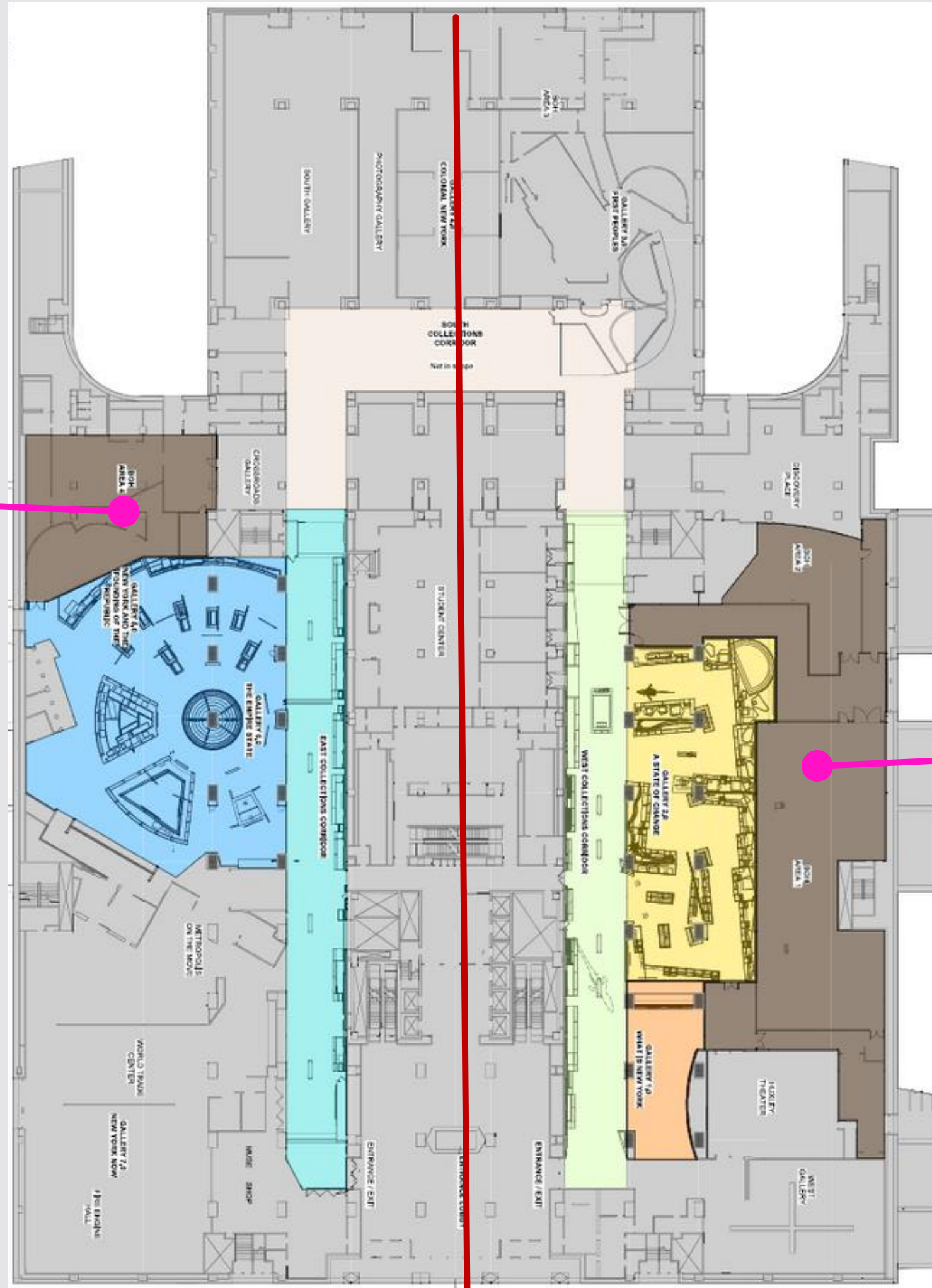
Gallery Renewal

Make Substantial Progress on the Gallery Renewal and Storage Facility Projects



- Museum Gallery Renewal (circa 2008; ~\$16-17M)
- New Storage Facility (circa 2007: \$60M)
- Childrens STEAM Interactive Floor (circa 2024: \$10M)

**Exhibit Space
Converted to
Storage/Storage
Egress**



**Exhibit Space
Converted to
Storage/Storage
Egress**

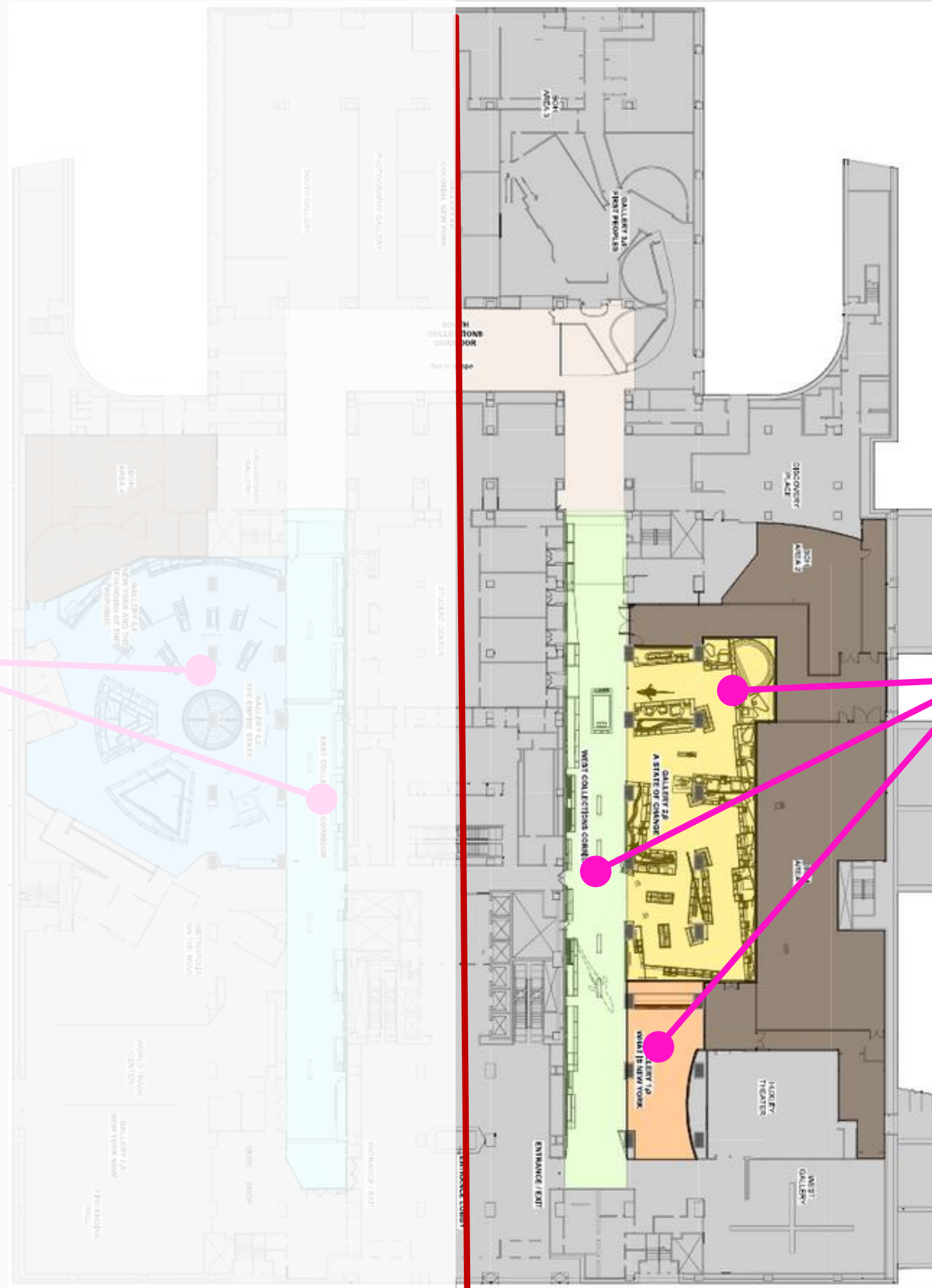
Madison Avenue Entrance

Gallery Renewal: Revised Plan

Phase One

Updated New York
Galleries:
The Dutch
Colonial New York
Slavery
Various Revolutions

Updated Natural History
Galleries:
Earth
Minerals
Fossils
Geology
Early Humans



Madison Avenue Entrance

New Cultural Education Storage Facility

- In 2007, the State appropriated \$60M for the construction of a new Cultural Education Storage Facility.
- There is no obvious barrier why this project hasn't moved forward in 17 years.
- OCE met with DASNY and our consultants on 9/4 to restart conversations on the facility.
- Following that meeting, we've collaborated with DASNY to prepare additional information to guide the search for potential sites/locations.
- On 9/6, OCE leadership toured the Museum's 90,000 sq ft leased storage facility in Rotterdam. Just to provide baseline context, any new facility will need to be significantly larger to accommodate the challenge of relocating the 90,000 sq ft of museum items.
- OCE's goal is to have a substantial update on the Storage Facility project by February.



Focus on Marketing



Spread the word about the exciting initiatives we are undertaking

Recent Event Press Releases



August

- State Museum Hosts Students From the City of Albany's Light Summer Youth Employment Program and Girls Inc. Eureka!
- State Archives Announces \$6.8 Million in Local Government Records Management Grants

September

- State Museum Announces Sadako's Crane Exhibit on Display in World Trade Center
- Revolutionary War Artifacts And Documents From The New York State Museum And State Archives On Display In Tarrytown
- Sojourner Truth's Historic Supreme Court Documents From the New York State Archives on Display in Kingston

October

- State Education Department Announces \$34 Million Awarded For 207 Public Library Construction Projects Statewide
- State Museum Celebrates New York State History Month And American Archives Month With Second Annual Family History Day On October 6th
- New York State Museum Announces Return of the Halloween Spooktacular

QUESTIONS?



New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity

