



THE NEW JERSEY ITALIAN AND ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION



International Relations Committee & Italian Cultural and Commercial Exchange Council

FINAL REPORT on

Programs to Increase Cultural and Commercial Exchanges Between New Jersey and Italy

April 1, 2005

Members of the Italian Cultural and Commercial Exchange Council

Commission

Joseph Alessi
Mauro Checcio
Rinaldo D'Argenio
N. Larry Paragano
Dr. Gilda Rorro
Dr. Laura White

Staff

Roger Marinzoli
Gina Pezzicola

Advisors

Dr. Robert Freda
Frank Gargione
Michael Genevrino
Daniella Puglieli

Community

Robert Bianchi
Marco Cangioli
Phylliss Cedola
Anna Cerene
Anthony Ciappina
Robert Costello
Jack DiPiazza
Rosemary Feteryk
Sam Fumosa
Augusto Sorriso

Table of Contents

I. Introduction.....	p. 3
II. Overview.....	p.4
III. Process of Organizational Phase	
A. Conceptualization of Project and Process.....	p.7
B. Commission Facilitation of Process.....	p.14
IV. Results of Exploratory Phase	
A. Exploratory Research.....	p.22
B. Possible Commercial Exchange Programs.....	p.25
C. Possible Cultural Exchange Programs.....	p.43
V. Next Steps.....	p.60

I. Introduction

All great community projects begin with ideas. These ideas are moved to the forefront of a community's agenda with an endorsement from leaders, policy-makers and institutions. The idea for increased commercial and cultural exchanges between New Jersey and Italy began with a summit between the Governor of New Jersey, representatives from the Italian government and leaders from the Italian American community. The call went out to the Italian American community to take the lead in developing these ideas, which would serve not only the Italian American community in New Jersey, but would benefit all citizens of New Jersey.

The New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission is pleased to present a Report on the development of commercial and cultural exchanges between New Jersey and Italy. This Report has taken the ideas, researched them and outlined the possible programs that could be developed.

The Commission would like to thank the numerous community individuals, New Jersey government officials, Italian government officials, organizations, institutions and groups that have contributed to this Report. The Commission would especially like to thank the members of the Italian Cultural and Commercial Exchange Council that generated ideas and reviewed the Report. This process began a year ago and the Italian American community, through the Commission, now has a series of plans and proposals to consider implementing.

The purpose of this Report is to catalog, memorialize, analyze and chronologically prioritize the ideas for programs and projects related to commercial and cultural exchange. The concepts came from a variety of different sources, some of which have been proposed by the Committees of the Commission, private sector sources, government agencies and community organizations.

This Report does not constitute the programs themselves, nor does it provide a detailed plan for each program. Rather, it is the beginning of a complex and labor-intensive process that outlines what could be done, how it could be done and an estimate of resources, funding and timetables required.

The Commission believes that all of these projects – whether cultural, educational or commercial in nature – are worthy of consideration. The selection of the projects to implement will depend on interest from the community and the resources available to execute the programs.

II. Overview

This Report summarizes approximately ten months of exploratory work conducted by the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission, and reviewed by the Commission's Italian Cultural and Commercial Exchange Council, for the purpose of assessing programs that would increase business and trade between Italy and New Jersey, as well as the possible initiation of large-scale, cultural exchanges.

This Report was developed in response to a request from former Governor McGreevey to the Italian American community to increase commercial and cultural exchanges between New Jersey and Italy.

During 2004, the project evolved through three major phases:

- Phase IA (Feb-March) – Conceptualization of process and projects;
- Phase IB (April-May) – Commission facilitation of process; and
- Phase II (June- Dec) – Exploratory research on possibilities and resources.

During **Phase I-A**, which began after an initial meeting with Governor McGreevey on February 18, 2004, the Commission held a series of internal meetings to ascertain the scope and nature of this process. Even though the fostering of commercial and cultural exchanges with Italy was not within the original mission and purpose of the Commission (which was initially established as an educational promoter of Italian Heritage), the Commission voted to participate in any planning process that the Italian American community was undertaking. In order to provide assistance to this process, the Commission took the initiative to invite the original non-government participants in the February 18th meeting to form an informal, voluntary Task Force to study the issue. The Commission also requested that its staff perform preliminary research on the issues in preparation for Task Force meetings.

Phase I-B took place during April and May 2004, when the Commission organized a series of three meetings with the participants in the Task Force to assess the possible programs that could be initiated and held several discussions with various private sector and government entities. As a result of these meetings and discussions, the Task Force members concluded that the nature of this project was of an enormous scale and would require significant organization, planning, resources, funding and time to enact. The Task Force, of which the Commission was at that time only a participant and facilitator,

moved to formally petition the Commission at the end of May to adopt the project, organize the process and provide staffing to explore the possibilities in greater detail.

Phase II commenced in June following the adoption of Commission Resolution R5004-1, which formed a subcommittee under the International Relations Committee of the Commission named the Italian Commercial and Cultural Exchange (ICCE) Council. This Council was staffed with six Commissioners and mandated to explore demand for possible programs, study the steps needed to implement such programs and prepare a possible timetable of actions and resources required. The ICCE Council was scheduled to complete its exploratory research and prepare a Report for the Commission, the Government of Italy and the Government of New Jersey. The Commission stipulated that no programs could be undertaken without organizational and financial support from the New Jersey or Italian Governments, due to the severe constraints on its state budget. The ICCE Council was to review the draft report and finalize its recommendations to the Commission for possible programs during the beginning quarter of 2005.

Of the many ideas presented to the Commission for consideration, the research during the exploratory phase narrowed the field to seventeen different programs. Some of these programs were discussed in great detail, while others were only sketched out. Each program was mapped out using the same template, to provide an analytical framework. While more time could be spent developing each of these ideas (and considering additional ones), enough information has been gathered to begin making decisions on the most feasible possibilities.

The major programs assessed in this Report include the following:

Programs for Commercial Exchanges

1. New Jersey Conference on Business Opportunities with Italy
2. Hosting Italian Seminars on Business Opportunities with New Jersey
3. Launching a NJ Trade and Culture Mission to Italy
4. Launching Italian Business Roadshow to New Jersey
5. New Jersey "Virtual Tour" on Business Process with Italy
6. Formation of Italian American Business Network in New Jersey
7. International Student Business Internships in Italy
8. Establishment of a New Jersey Trade Representative Office in Italy
9. Formation of a New Jersey Italy Trade Agency

Programs for Cultural Exchanges

1. Hosting “Rock Italia” Italian and Italian American Music Concert
2. Hosting “All Italy” Soccer Exhibition Match in New Jersey
3. Italian Summer Tours for Students
4. Sponsoring Seton Hall Conference on Italian Family Business
5. Sponsoring Italian Art Exchanges with New Jersey Museums
6. Italian Language Teacher Exchanges
7. Establishment of Vocational Program for Italian Artisan Skills
8. Creation of an Italian Art Wing

The possible timelines for the execution of these programs are as follows (italics indicate commercial-related):

2005	2006	2007	2008+
<i>NJ-Italy Business Conference</i>	<i>NJ Trade Mission to Italy</i>	Seton Hall History Conference	Italian Artisan Vocational School
	Rock Italia Concert in NJ	<i>Virtual Tour of Italy Conference</i>	Italian Art Wing in NJ Museum
	Student Summer Tours in Italy	Zimmerli Art Exhibition	<i>Formation of NJ Italy Agency</i>
<i>NJ Business Seminars in Italy</i>	All Italy Soccer Match in NJ	Italian Teacher Exchanges	
	<i>Italian Company Roadshows to NJ</i>	<i>Creation of NJ Trade Rep.</i>	
<i>Business Network Level 1</i>	<i>Business Network Level 2</i>	<i>Business Network Level 3</i>	
<i>Italian Internships Level 1</i>	<i>Italian Internships Level 2</i>	<i>Italian Internships Level 3</i>	

Upon issuance of this Report, the Commission will dissolve the ICCE Council and begin the process of coordinating with governmental agencies to plan and fund programs for the 2005-2008 calendar years.

These assessments are presented for analysis purposes only. Other than the hosting of a business conference in conjunction with the New Jersey World Trade Council, no decisions have been taken to pursue or not to pursue any of these projects. Any decision to move forward with any of these projects will be contingent on government and private sector interest, support and funding. At this juncture, the Commission does not have the resources to implement any of these programs (other than the aforementioned conference).

III. Process of Organizational Phases

A. Conceptualization of Project and Process (PHASE I-A)

February 18th: Project Proposal

On February 18, 2004 former Governor James McGreevey convened a meeting at the State House with representatives of the Government of Italy to discuss the possibilities of increasing commercial and cultural exchanges between New Jersey and Italy. The Consul General of the Republic of Italy in New York, Dott. Antonio Bandini, the Vice Consul the Republic of Italy in Newark, Dott. Mauro Lorenzini, and the Director of the Italian Cultural Institute of New York, Dott. Claudio Angelini were present. In addition, Senator Joseph Coniglio of the 38th District and Adam Zellner, the Executive Director of the Department of Community Affairs were in attendance. The former Governor also reached out to members of the New Jersey Italian American government, business and cultural, including the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Commission and the Italian American members of the Governor's Ethnic Advisory council. The roster of participants included:

Government of New Jersey	Government of Italy	Italian American Community
Gov. James McGreevey Sen. Joseph Coniglio Herb Gilsenberg* Michelle Kim* Adam Zellner N. Larry Paragano**	Antonio Bandini Mauro Lorenzini Claudio Angelini	Robert Bianchi*** Marco Cangioli Phyllis Cedola Anthony Ciappina Robert Costello Jack DiPiazza Rosemary Feteryk*** Sam Fumosa*** Sebastian Marchese*** Augusto Sorriso***
* Office of the Governor ** NJ Italian & Italian American Heritage Commission		*** Appointments to NJ Ethnic Advisory Council

The discussions at this meeting revolved around the mutual benefits for the New Jersey and Italian communities of increasing commercial and cultural exchanges. Both former Governor McGreevey and Consul General Bandini agreed in principle to support the development of program ideas, and then requested that the members of the Italian American community present address the issue.

February 18th: Commission Assessment of Project Request

The day of this meeting with Governor McGreevey and representatives of the Italian Government, the Chairman of the Commission, Mr. N. Larry Paragano brought this request to the attention of the Commission at a regular board meeting. As the 21-member Commission is an all-volunteer board with limited annual state appropriations of \$135,000, the Commission deliberated the feasibility of addressing this substantial task.

The Commission concluded its discussions on this project by tasking the Executive Committee, comprised of the officers of the Commission and select Commissioners, to assess whether the Commission had the resources to assist in this process and whether this project was consistent with the Commission's mission and legislative mandates. The Commission also directed the professional staff to study and outline possible elements of a commercial and cultural plan.

March 9th: Executive Committee Assessment of Project Request

The Executive Committee convened to assess this request in light of its mission, resources, and the amount of work required to achieve the goals of increasing commercial and cultural exchanges with Italy. On the first point, the Committee concluded that such a project would be consistent with its mission, supported by the facts that:

- The Commission was mandated to educate the New Jersey community about Italy (which could include the potential business opportunities that Italy offers);
- The Commission was mandated to build relationships with the Italian Government and the New Jersey Government (which could include assistance with promoting both New Jersey and Italy as investment opportunities); and
- The Commission was mandated to reach out to the Italian American community in order to strengthen community relationships (which could include the New Jersey business community).

On the second point of resources, the Committee concluded that the current level of state appropriations would be insufficient to mount such an extraordinary effort. Specifically, the Committee concluded that an assessment needed to be made of the type and scope of programs, before a budget could be determined. The Committee believed that – even with limited resources – the Commission could begin the assessment process with its board and professional staff and should reach out to the original attendees (as well as other interested parties) to develop a possible plan.

With respect to the tremendous effort involved, the Committee viewed this project as a multi-year, multi-program process that require a vision to be developed first. The Committee agreed to recommend to the Commission that the initial assessment of this project could be developed by year-end, if members of the Italian American community were brought together to conceptualize the project.

Following the Executive Committee's meeting, the staff contacted the non-Italian government participants via mail, inviting them meet on March 16th with members of the Executive Committee in order to discuss this project further. No quorum could be achieved, however, so the meeting was deferred until after the project could be discussed at the Commission's Board Meeting.

March 17th: Commission Support for Organizing Task Force

At the regular March board meeting of the Commission, the Commission agreed with the Executive Committee findings and directed the Executive Committee to again reach out to the February 17th participants in order to coalesce a Task Force. The Commission recognized that the participation on this Task Force was purely voluntary and subject to the interest of participants and their time available to commit to the development of the project. The Commission agreed to participate in such a Task Force, which the Commission believed should focus on the vision, scope and feasibility of the project.

The Commission appointed the Chairman of the Commission, N. Larry Paragano and Commissioner Joseph Alessi to represent the Commission on the Task Force. In addition, the Commissioners recommended that the Commission serve as the organizing body of the Task Force, in order to assist the group to organize. For the initial series of proposed meetings, the Commissioners recommended that some members of the New Jersey government be in attendance. The Commission also requested that the Community Advisory Council, a subcommittee of the

Commission, conduct a preliminary survey of the Italian American community to assess interest in helping to organize such a project.

The Commission also directed the professional staff to perform some basic research within a month's time on the level of trade between Italy and New Jersey, the organizations in New Jersey that deal with trade and foreign investment and the types of cultural exchanges that could be initiated between Italy and New Jersey.

March 27th: Survey Taken at Italian American Leadership Convocation

During the day-long Italian American leadership conference sponsored by the Community Advisory Council of the Commission at the Forsgate Club in Cranberry, ninety leading members of the Italian American community were surveyed. The promotion of commercial and cultural exchanges tied for 3rd in the Convocation's rankings of priority issues for the Commission to address, after the promotion of the Italian language in schools, the organization of statewide databases and calendars and the inventory of scholarships for Italian American students.

The "Top Three" Convocation recommendations regarding commercial and cultural exchanges included: a) Increased networking among Italian American and Italian businesses; b) Promotion of greater cross-cultural exchanges; and c) Increased promotion of networking between Italian American business professionals. Additional recommendations included:

- Formation of an Italian American Chamber of Commerce
- Identification of business opportunities for NJ businesses in Italy
- Development of government programs to foster international trade
- Development of exchange programs to bring Italian Artisans to NJ
- Establishment of business internships programs for university students

The Community Advisory Council invited Mr. Herb Gilsenberg of the Governor's Office (one of the participants in the original Governor's meeting) to attend the event. Mr. Gilsenberg introduced the Commissioners present to the Vice Chairman of the New Jersey Israel Commission, who offered to assist the Commission by identifying programs that stimulated commerce between Israel and New Jersey.

April 19th: Results of Staff Research Presented to Commission Chairman

During the first weeks in April, preliminary research was accumulated by the staff on the work of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, trade and investment levels between New Jersey and Italy and programs initiated by other organizations for the purpose of stimulating commercial exchanges. The initial findings are summarized below:

New Jersey Basic Data

NJ Economy (2003): \$397 billion economy
 U.S. Export Ranking: 9th among all states in volume of export markets
 Export Value: \$26 billion worth of goods worldwide
 Foreign Direct Investment: 8th largest state at \$35.4 billion

Source: NJ Commerce Commission

New Jersey Exports to Italy: 2000-2003					
Exports	2000	2001	2002	2003	Cumulative
Value	\$885.4 mm	\$546.0 mm	\$456.5 mm	\$470.4 mm	\$2,358 mm
% Share	4.8%	2.9%	2.7%	2.8%	2-3%

Source: Foreign Trade Division, U.S. Census Bureau 2003

Italy Ranking of Total New Jersey Export Partner Countries: 2000-2003					
Exports	2000	2001	2002	2003	Average
Ranking	4th	10 th	10th	11th	9th

Source: Foreign Trade Division, U.S. Census Bureau 2003

Note: Rankings are calculated from time series data

Comparison of Total New Jersey Exports by Country: 2000-2003			
Top 5 Countries		Top 10 Countries	
Country	Export Value	Country	Export Value
1. Canada	\$15.6 bn	6. Germany	\$ 3.6 bn
2. United Kingdom	\$ 6.1 bn	7. France	\$ 2.4 bn
3. Japan	\$ 4.8 bn	8. South Korea	\$ 2.4 bn
4. Mexico	\$ 3.9 bn	9. Italy	\$ 2.4 bn
5. Israel	\$ 3.7 bn	10. Belgium	\$ 2.1 bn

Source: Foreign Trade Division, U.S. Census Bureau 2003

Note: Rankings are calculated from time series data

Comparison of Total New Jersey Export Share by Country: 2000-2003			
Top 5 Countries (Average)		Top 10 Countries (Average)	
<i>Country</i>	<i>Share of Top 10</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Share of Top 10</i>
1. Canada	33.2%	6. Germany	7.7%
2. United Kingdom	13.0%	7. France	5.1%
3. Japan	10.2%	8. South Korea	5.1%
4. Mexico	8.3%	9. Italy	5.0%
5. Israel	7.9%	10. Belgium	4.5%

Source: Foreign Trade Division, U.S. Census Bureau 2003

Note: Rankings are calculated from time series data

U.S. Trade with Italy: 2000-2003				
	2001	2002	2003	Cumulative
Exports	\$ 9.9 bn	\$10.1 bn	\$10.6 bn	\$30.6 bn
Imports	\$23.8 bn	\$24.3 bn	\$25.5 bn	\$73.6 bn
Total Trade	\$33.7 bn	\$34.4 bn	\$36.1 bn	\$104.2 bn
Trade Deficit	-\$13.9 bn	-\$14.2 bn	-\$14.9 bn	\$43.0 bn

Source: Foreign Trade Division, U.S. Census Bureau 2003

Note: Exports and Imports are computed from Trade and Trade Deficit Data

U.S. "Top 10" Global Trading Partner

For the years analyzed (2001-2003), the Republic of Italy ranks in the Top 10 Trading Partners for the United States behind Canada, Mexico, Japan, China, Germany, United Kingdom, South Korea, Taiwan, and France.

Resources: Government Agencies Dealing with International Trade

New Jersey	U.S. Federal	Italy in U.S.
NJ Commerce Commission	US Department of Treasury	Italian Trade Commission
NJ Economic Development Authority	US Department of Commerce, US Commercial Service	Washington Embassy
NJ Department of Treasury	US Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration	New York Consulate
NJ District Export Council	US Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration	Philadelphia Consulate
NJ Chamber of Commerce	US Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration	Newark Consulate
NJ Business and Industry Association	US Department of State	
NJ Small Business Development Center	US Export-Import Bank	
Southern New Jersey Export Consortium	Overseas Private Investment Corp	
NJ Department of Agriculture, Division of Markets	US Department of Commerce, Newark Export Assistance Center	
NY-NJ Port Authority	US Trade and Development Agency	
	US Small Business Administration	

New Jersey Foreign Trade Zones

1. Foreign Trade Zone #44 -- Located in Morris County
2. Foreign Trade Zone #49 -- Port Newark/Port Elizabeth Marine Terminal
3. Foreign Trade Zone #142 -- Located in Salem County
4. Foreign Trade Zone #200 -- Located at Mercer County Airport off Rt. I-95
5. Foreign Trade Zone #235 -- Lakewood Development Corporation

New Jersey Foreign Trade Representatives

2005	Historical
Brazil Israel Japan (covering Asia) Mexico (covering Latin America)	United Kingdom (N. Europe) Greece (Mediterranean Europe) South Korea

B. Commission Facilitation of Process (PHASE I-B)

April 21st: Task Force Convenes

On the afternoon of April 21st, members of the initial February meeting convened at the State House. Senator Joseph Coniglio attended the meeting and urged the Task Force to develop programs rapidly for this project. Ms. Celeste Armenti of the Economic Development Authority attended and discussed possible programs, some of which were executed in the past by the New Jersey Government – such as trade missions – and some of which could be supported by the EDA and other government bodies. Commissioners Paragano and Alessi highlighted the benefits of such programs to the State of New Jersey and to Italy, which might include:

Commercial Exchange Benefits	Cultural Exchange Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased exports improve NJ economy and could stimulate job creation Increased imports to NJ through Port Elizabeth and airports New alliance formation between NJ and Italian companies that stimulate economy Increased foreign direct investment from Italy to NJ Long-term increase in business tax and tariff revenues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased promotion of arts and culture in NJ Increased attention to the contributions of Italian Heritage to the world Improves level of education and cultural understanding of NJ citizens Improves image of NJ in Italy

The professional staff highlighted the significance of the Italian commercial relationship to the State of New Jersey and summarized the results of the prior months initial research:

- NJ's commercial relationships with foreign countries has been enhanced through the execution of trade missions, business conferences, foreign company road-shows, company-to-company networking, vendor-consumer matching, the creation of "chambers of commerce", the establishment of New Jersey foreign trade representative offices and the codification of bilateral Memoranda of Understanding for specific industries and issues; and

- NJ's cultural relationships with foreign countries has been enhanced through the establishment of educational exchange programs, promotion of bilateral tourism, importation of museum artwork, importation of performing artists, hosting of international sporting events, importing foreign cuisine and foods, and international university conferences and events.

The Task Force deliberated the issue of the possible programs to develop and found that the possibilities were numerous and more information was required before deciding which programs were viable. The group also focused how best to organize this enormous project, which had to start with a vision of what could be done in the near-term, the medium-term and the long-term. Some of the consensus conclusions included:

- Massive Undertaking – Such a project was a massive undertaking, as it involved the research of possible programs, the organization of teams to determine the details of these programs, the selection of programs to be executed, solicitation of funding from government and private sector sources and the ultimate execution of these programs.
- Requires Organizing Body – Even to develop ideas, this project would require an organization willing to take on the project with a professional team needed to coordinate the participants.
- Focus on Feasible Programs – Of the multiple possibilities, the Task Force would have to select a few to develop from ideas into actionable plans.
- Significant Funding and Resources – Any project undertaking would require the dedication of significant and labor and capital resources, which were unavailable at present. The use of an all-volunteer team would be slow and ineffective.
- Participation from Private Sector – Any work for the stimulation of commercial exchanges would have to involve input and participation from the private sector, in the form of companies and entrepreneurs.
- Cooperation from Public Sector – The New Jersey and Italian Governments would have to participate in this project to ensure its commencement and success.

The meeting's participants endorsed the idea of organizing an informal Task Force dedicated to the study of this project and the Commission's representatives agreed to provide the organization for future meetings of the Task Force. Participation in the Task Force was open and voluntary. The generation of program ideas could be solely based on participants' interest, commitment and activity. The participants

also agreed that further research and brainstorming had to occur, before the Task Force could present any ideas or requests to either the Italian or New Jersey Government. The participants at this meeting agreed to convene again in order to flesh out the steps and processes that had to be addressed for this project.

April 24th: Governor Encouragement at Italian Liberation Day Commemoration

At the Italian Liberation Day Commemoration hosted by former Governor McGreevey at the Governor's Mansion, the Governor encouraged the Italian American community to support the enhancement of commercial and cultural opportunities with Italy. The Governor indicated his belief that strengthening these relationships would not only benefit the Italian American community, but would be good for all of New Jersey's citizens.

May 3rd: Task Force Convenes for Second Meeting

On the evening of May 3rd, the Commission invited the non-government members of the initial February meeting to meet at Rutgers University, where the Commission established an Institute for Italian and Italian American Studies. The Commission nominated additional Commissioners and Commission Advisors to assist in the Task Force's work (Commissioners Rorro, Checchio, D'Argenio, Marano and White, and Advisors Freda and Gargione).

The focus of this dinner meeting was to address the major process questions of this project, which included:

- What is the mission and purpose of the Task Force?
- What are the goals and objectives of the Task Force?
- How should the Task Force be structured and organized?
- Who should be involved on the Task Force?
- Where will the Task Force seek staffing, facilities and funding?
- What are the possible activities of the Task Force?
- How should the work process be organized?

In addressing these questions, the Task Force laid out the following priorities and criteria for the volunteers to explore:

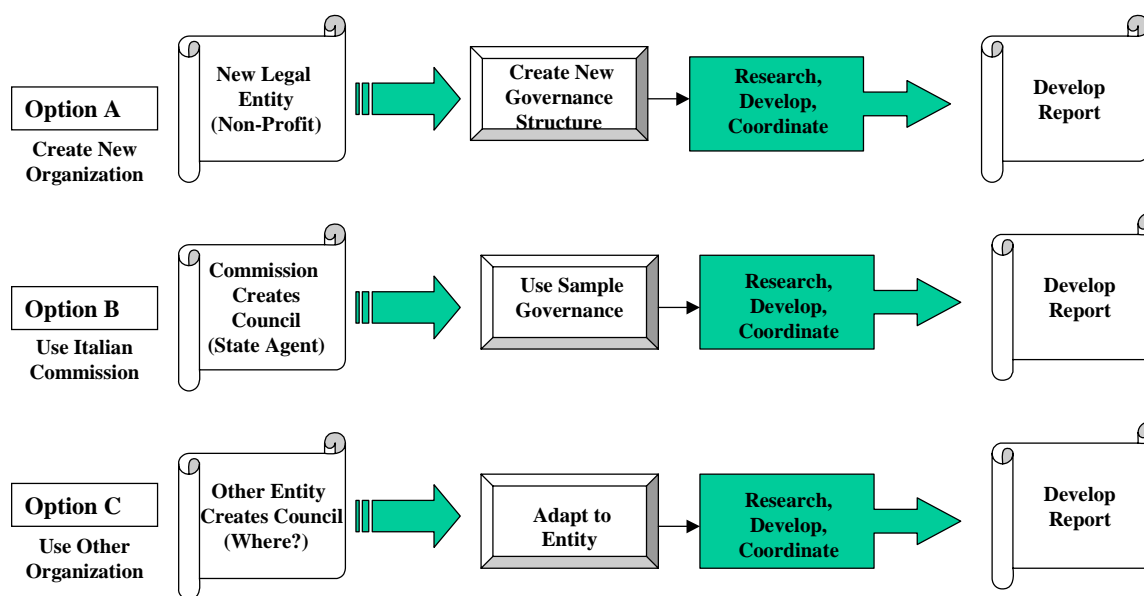
Priority Research Steps	
Cultural Exchanges	Commercial Exchanges
Possible ideas to explore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Music • Theater • Film • Cuisine • Fashion • Artisans • Literature • Sports • Educational 	Impact of New Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of Existing Programs • Awareness of Agencies • Private sector demand • Private vs. public driven • Ability to influence trade • Ability to affect investment • Private sector support • Public sector support • Where to begin?
Possible Hosting Facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NJ Museums • NJ Theaters/Concert Halls • NJ Universities • NJ Italian Restaurants 	Awareness of Issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tariff and tax incentives • Regulatory and legal issues • Accounting • Financing
Developing Contacts in Italy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Universities • Leads from Italian Consulates • Leads from Italian Community 	Developing Contacts in NJ and Italy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Italian firms in NJ • NJ firms in Italy • NJ firms trading with Italy
Funding for Projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NJ State • Italian Government • Profits from Commercial Exchanges • Donations from Private Sector • Grants 	Possible Initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferences • Trade Missions • NJ Trade Representative Office • NJ Italy Chamber of Commerce • Databases • Business consulting

In discussing the myriad of issues involved, the Task Force again concluded that the sheer effort needed to increase commercial and cultural exchanges required greater expertise, resources, professional personnel and funding.

The Task Force agreed that the first step in this mammoth undertaking was to explore each of these issues in detail and develop a strategic plan in the form of a Report. This process of planning would distill the issues into a series of possible programs that were not being duplicated by other programs.

The group concluded that even the exploration of these issues required a better organizational structure than an informal Task Force. The group considered three major structures:

Organizational Options for Exploratory Phase



Given that Option A required significant time and effort just to organize and that Option C required further work and discussions around the appropriate entity or group to approach, the Task Force voted unanimously to petition the Commission to organize and lead the effort. The Commission presented several natural advantages:

- The Commission had voted to assist in the project and expand its mission to cover the educational aspects of commercial and cultural exchanges;
- Several Commissioners were already participating in the Task Force;
- The Commission was an organized entity with over 100 volunteers already meeting and communicating for over two years;
- The Commission had professional staff and facilities;
- The Commission was a state agency dedicated to the promotion of the Italian Heritage.

The group agreed to petition the Commission to create a Council similar to the Community Advisory Council in order to develop a report for the Governor on the Commission's auspices regarding programs of a commercial and cultural nature.

In the interim, the Task Force voted to appoint Ms. Phyllis Cedola to take the lead on cultural research issues and Mr. Robert Bianchi to take the lead on commercial research issues.

May 13th: International Committee Considers Italian Business Conference

Members of the International Relations Committee of the Commission and the New Jersey World Trade Council (NJWTC) initiated a dialogue to possibly co-sponsor a conference on "Doing Business With Italy". These plans were considered in response to the Commission participation in the Task Force focusing on the promotion of increased cultural and commercial exchanges between NJ and Italy. Each year, the NJWTC hosted a statewide business and trade conference with a different host country, with the intention of increasing awareness of the business opportunities. The NJWTC proposed to the Executive Committee that Italy be selected as the next country for its annual conference. The International Relations Committee believed that such collaboration with an established institution such as the NJWTC (which has been holding these business and trade conferences for over 30 years) could create important opportunities for the Italian American business community and serve as one of the first focus projects for the Task Force.

Members of the International Relations Committee held an exploratory meeting with representatives from the NJWTC in New York on May 13, 2004. Issues discussed included the possible details of the conference, such as the panel discussions, trade exhibition displays and keynote speakers. In addition, collaboration and financing issues were addressed.

May 19th: Task Force Convenes for Third Meeting

In the afternoon of May 19th, the Commission invited the members of the Task Force to meet at Rutgers University, prior to the monthly Commission Board meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to review certain findings since the May 3rd meeting and to hold follow-up discussions on some of the recommendations of the Task Force for the Commission.

The findings and recommendations reviewed at this meeting included:

- Propose to the Commission to take formal leadership of the Task Force's work through the creation of a subcommittee under the Commission's

International Relations Committee, to be named the Italian Cultural and Commercial Exchange Council;

- Propose that the ICCE Council's objective be to prepare a Report that addresses the issues that the Task Force identified in order to move towards a defined list of programs and projects;
- Request that the Commission's Community Advisory Council continue to develop project ideas related to: a) development of international business internships for students; and b) adding Italian American and Italian businesses to its master database project of Italian American Organizations;
- Request that the Commission's Community Advisory Council host panel discussions regarding the promotion of business and cultural exchanges with Italy at its October Congress of Italian American Organizations to follow-up on its March 27 survey results;
- Request that the Commission's International Relations Committee continue to explore the possibility of co-sponsoring a business conference on Italy with the New Jersey World Trade Council;
- Request that the International Relations Committee of the Commission follow-up with the New Jersey Israel Commission to assess possible models and programs for commercial and cultural exchange;
- Request that the International Relations Committee of the Commission focus on exploring the possibility of a trade mission to Italy;
- Request that the Commission continue to research possible cultural exchanges, specifically focused on NJ-Italy museum artwork exchanges, NJ-Italy sporting events and NJ-Italy music performances.
- Request that the Commission assist the Italian American community in developing an Italian American Political Delegation, consisting of standing members of the Assembly and the Legislature, in order to develop the political support necessary to carry out large commercial and cultural exchange programs.

May 19th: Commission Adopts Resolution to Form ICCE Council

On May 19th at Rutgers University, the Commission adopted Resolution R6004-1 to organize a new Council under its auspices called the Italian Cultural and Commercial Exchange Council (ICCE Council). The purpose of the Council was

to assess possible programs that would contribute to increased cultural and commercial exchanges between New Jersey and Italy. The Commission initially instructed the Council to develop a Report by year-end. The Commission would provide logistical, organizational and research assistance to this project and the ICCE Council was to report to the International Relations Committee, co-chaired by Commission Chairman Larry Paragano and Commission Treasurer Ron D'Argenio. As a result of the formation of this subcommittee, the Commission would no longer participate as a member of the Task Force. The details of the Resolution as are listed below:

Be it Resolved,

- 1) *That the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission create a Council, under the direction of a Committee of the Commission to be determined, to undertake the exploration of the formation of an entity, designed to increase cultural and commercial exchanges between New Jersey and Italy;*
- 2) *That this Council be composed of the members of the Task Force, including, but not limited to, Commissioners, Community Advisory Council members, members of the New Jersey Ethnic Advisory Council and private citizens;*
- 3) *That this Council shall generate an exploratory Report for the Governor of New Jersey; and*
- 4) *That the implementation of any cultural or commercial exchange events or any work product or work process for the Council, shall be contingent upon receiving sponsorship, approval and funding from the Government of New Jersey and/or the Government of Italy.*

The Commission staffed this Council with six Commissioners and Advisors, and mandated them and the professional staff to explore demand for possible programs, study the steps needed to implement such programs and prepare a possible timetable of actions and resources required. This Report was to be initially prepared by the Commissioners and the professional staff, in consultation with the International Relations Committee, and then was to be presented to the ICCE Council members for review and amendments, prior to its distribution to the Government of Italy and the Government of New Jersey. The amount of time allocated for the initial draft of the Report was approximately 6 months.

The Commission also stipulated that no programs could be undertaken without organizational and financial support from the New Jersey or Italian Governments, due to the severe constraints on its state budget.

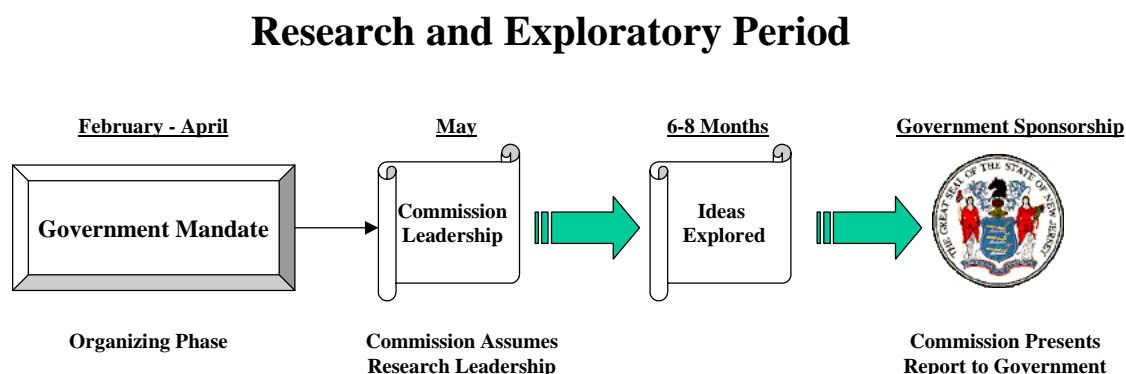
IV. Results of Exploratory Phase

A. Exploratory Research for ICCE Council Report (PHASE II)

Upon adoption of the Commission Resolution in May, the members of the International Relations Committee and the professional staff began to organize the work process regarding the research for the ICCE Council Report. The objectives established for this exploratory phase were as follows:

- To assess ways to assist the New Jersey and Italian business community to find increased opportunities for commercial exchanges; and
- To study opportunities for cultural exchanges between Italy and New Jersey;
- To estimate the time, funding and resources necessary to carry out this project.

The process for the Commission for the balance of 2004 was defined as follows:



During this phase, the Commission authorized the International Relations Committee to call upon various agencies and private sector sources to develop possible program ideas from the suggestions of the previous Task Force. As a result, Commissioners and the professional staff held numerous telephone conversations and small group discussion meetings for purposes of gathering information. No formal ICCE Council meetings were to be called until the staff and International Relations Committee gathered enough materials for discussion. Due to the sensitivity regarding the discussions of trade missions, multi-million dollar cultural exchanges and other such activities in a difficult financial year for

the NJ government, no formal discussions with the NJ Government were to be held, until further details were explored and developed.

Over 40 discussions were held during the period June - December 2004. Some of the entities and individuals contacted and approached during this period included the following:

- New York Italian Consulate
- Philadelphia Italian Consulate
- Newark Italian Consulate
- Rutgers University
- Seton Hall University
- NJ Economic Development Authority
- NJ Department of the Treasury
- New Jersey World Trade Council
- New Jersey Israel Commission
- U.S. Department of Commerce
- U.S. Export-Import Bank
- Overseas Private Investment Corporation
- Uniworld Business Publications
- Newark Museum
- Vorhees-Zimmerli Art Museum
- Various NJ firms engaged in doing business with Italy
- Various NJ and Italian law firms
- Various NY international finance firms
- Members of the Commission's Community Advisory Council
- Members of the Commission's Higher Education Committee
- Members of the New Jersey Italian American Heritage Foundation
- Members of UNICO National
- Members of the National Order of the Sons of Italy in America
- Members of NIAF

In addition, over 60 NJ businesspersons of Italian descent were surveyed during the 1st New Jersey Congress of Italian American Organizations on October 23, 2004.

The key issues explored with respect to the initial projects identified by the work of the Task Force revolved around the following major considerations:

1. What are the ideas in the community for commercial and cultural exchange?
2. Which ideas could be organized into programs?
3. What are the impacts and benefits to the Italian American community?
4. Are there any models on which these new programs could be based?
5. What is the work required to plan and implement these programs?
6. Who were the experts or institutions necessary to involve as a team?
7. What could the possible timing of these programs be?
8. What is the ballpark estimate of the funding needed for such programs?
9. Who would be the organizers and sponsors of these programs?
10. What is the possible follow-up for each program once implemented?

In its exploratory process, the Commission staff collected and collated numerous ideas, data and pieces of information related to the development of possible programs. Although the Commission allocated \$50,000 in its fiscal 2004-2005 non-State funding budget for the exploration and the design of this project, the funding was not available. In order to move from exploration to planning and implementation, funding beyond the Commission's state budget will be required to develop these programs. In addition, significant participation from the community will also be required.

B. Possible Business Programs Related to Commercial Exchanges

1. New Jersey Conference on Business Opportunities with Italy (2005)

Concept: In line with the Commission's mandate to educate the New Jersey population about Italy, the Commission could co-sponsor a statewide business conference on the economic and business opportunities that Italy offers. The purpose of this conference would be to host a general macro-economic summit of New Jersey and Italian firms, with participation from the New Jersey and Italian government representatives, which highlights the opportunities and issues with respect to the two markets. The conference would serve as a primer for those NJ businesses that have not yet invested or traded with Italy and as a forum to showcase a number of Italian firms.

Details: The conference could consist of panel discussions, featured speakers and a series of floor exhibitions. Attendance could be 300-600 persons.

Benefits/Impact: This conference would serve as an initial introduction to business between NJ and Italy. NJ and Italian agencies that assist with foreign trade and investment with Italy could outline their programs. This conference would serve to stimulate demand for investment and trade with Italy.

Prior Models: NJ World Trade Council Conferences

Work Required: Single-day conference organization, which requires: a) conference programming; b) securing of speakers; c) invitation of companies for floor exhibits; d) marketing and advertising; e) collation of invitee and participant lists; f) facilities and hospitality; g) mailings; h) publicity.

Team Required: Private sector experts with experience in developing international trade conferences, Commission.

Timing: Such a conference could be executed as early as May 2005.

Funding: \$30,000 for marketing, facilities, hospitality, publicity, invitations

Sponsors: NJ World Trade Council, Commission, 4 major business sponsors

Follow-Up: Such a conference could be used as the first of several conferences in NJ and in Italy and could stimulate demand for a trade mission.

Planning Discussions: Since the initial proposal of the development of a business conference on Italy by the Task Force, the Commission began meeting with representatives of the NJ World Trade Council in May. The NJ World Trade Council (NJWTC) is a 501.c.3 organization that promotes foreign trade and investment between New Jersey and other countries. For the past 25 years, the NJWTC has partnered with various governments to host business conferences that highlight the opportunities for doing business with New Jersey. The NJWTC is comprised of a Board of private sector business, finance and legal experts that have an interest in promoting foreign trade and investment.

The NJWTC proposed to the Commission that their 2004 conference be focused on Italy. Their recent conferences have been held at a major conference facility in Whippany, NJ, usually during the week. The format used includes featured speakers, panel discussions and floor exhibitions. The keynote speakers in the past have always included the Governor of New Jersey, the Ambassador of the host country and representatives of various NJ and foreign government agencies. Countries with successful conferences in the recent past included Canada, Mexico, Germany and China. Attendance has varied between 200-400 persons and the average cost of the conference has been \$30,000. Non-academic attendees pay an entry fee for the day-long conference, which includes a continental breakfast and a luncheon. Attendees have an opportunity to network, hear recent information about trade and investment opportunities and meet NJ and foreign government agency representatives. Proceeds from the conference have been used to fund future conferences and an annual diplomatic reception.

Due to the political uncertainty surrounding Governor McGreevey's resignation, the 2004 business conference was deferred until 2005. The NJWTC proposed to co-sponsor a 2005 conference on Italy with the Commission. The NJWTC would organize the conference in conjunction with the Commission and both entities would be responsible for raising \$30,000 from private and public sector sources for the upfront costs of the conference. Both entities would develop invitee lists and use their networks to sell tickets for the conference. An advertisement journal would also be developed for the conference. Proceeds from the event would be split 50-50, with the NJWTC using the proceeds for their 2006 conference and the Commission using the proceeds to fund educational and cultural programs.

The potential target timetable for this conference would be mid-May 2005.

2. Hosting Italian Seminars on Business Opportunities with New Jersey (2005)

Concept: In line with the Commission's mandate to strengthen relationships with Italy, the Commission could co-sponsor several regional business seminars in Italy on the economic and business opportunities that New Jersey offers. The purpose of these seminars would be to promote the opportunities and issues with respect to the two markets. The seminars would serve as a primer for those Italian businesses that have not yet invested or traded with New Jersey.

Details: The seminars could consist of a series of featured speakers from NJ government agencies and Italian service firms with expertise in doing business in NJ and the United States. The seminars could be organized as small evening or afternoon events, in various Italian cities. The initial focus could be on the regions targeted for the 2006 NJ Trade and Culture Mission.

Benefits/Impact: These seminars could serve as an initial introduction to business between NJ and Italy for Italian companies. NJ agencies that assist with foreign trade and investment could outline their programs. These seminars would serve to stimulate demand for investment and trade with NJ.

Prior Models: Italian law firm MRZP's business seminars on "Doing Business with the United States"

Work Required: Multiple-day seminar organization, which requires: a) seminar programming; b) securing of NJ speakers; c) invitation of companies; d) marketing and advertising; e) collation of invitee and participant lists; f) facilities and hospitality; g) mailings; h) publicity.

Team Required: MRZP, Commission, NJ Government agencies

Timing: Seminars could be executed in late 2005.

Funding: \$1,000 per seminar for marketing, facilities, hospitality, publicity, invitations, plus NJ government representative travel and lodging.

Sponsors: MRZP, NJ Government Agencies

Follow-Up: These seminars could be used to stimulate demand for an Italian roadshow to NJ.

Planning Discussions: In conjunction with the discussions held regarding the development of a NJ Business Conference on Italy and the 2006 NJ Trade and Culture Mission, the Commission held discussions with the Italian law firm MRZP. MRZP is a mid-sized, international law firm, based in Italy, with offices in the United States and European Union countries. Their specialization includes the support of international business development opportunities for Italian firms seeking overseas markets.

In the past, MRZP has held seminars and conferences for Italian firms in various Italian regions on doing business in the United States. These seminars have proven effective for MRZP's business, stimulating interest in the establishment of overseas export markets, international partnerships and alliances and overseas direct and portfolio investment opportunities. The seminars focus on the process of doing business in various countries, such as the United States.

Given the Commission's interest in exploring ways to promote NJ's investment and trade opportunities to Italian firms, the seminars offer a means of raising NJ's visibility in Italy. Participation from NJ government agencies could be used to enhance interest from Italian firms. These seminars could be planned prior to the 2006 NJ Trade and Culture Mission and could raise interest for an Italian trade roadshow to NJ.

3. Launching of a New Jersey Trade and Culture Mission to Italy (2006)

Concept: In line with the Commission's mission to educate the New Jersey population about Italy, the Commission could co-organize a trade and culture mission to Italy. The purpose of this mission would be to bring interested NJ businesspersons to selected regions of Italy, to meet with potential partners, vendors and regional government representatives. The idea is to foster a state-to-state model of operations, instead of a state-to-country model used in many past initiatives. If feasible, NJ government representatives should also go to advertise the opportunities of doing business in NJ for Italian firms. In addition, the Commission could invite a selected number of cultural representatives from NJ's universities, museums, and performing arts venues to meet with counterparts.

Details: This mission could involve a tour of three regions within 7-10 days. Such a mission could be timed to coincide with the February 2006 Winter Olympics to be held in the Piemonte region of Italy, which is home to many high technology, industrial and wine-producing firms. The Sicilian government has expressed an interest in receiving a NJ trade mission, due to the high growth opportunities in Sicily. The Lazio region, seat of the Italian federal government in Rome, is also a possibility. All three regions house important universities, museums and cultural venues.

Prior Models: From time to time, various public, not-for-profit and private sector entities organize trade missions to foreign countries. In 2005, the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce is organizing a mission to the Netherlands. Under former Governor DiFrancesco, a NJ trade mission to Italy was planned, but then cancelled due to 9/11. In 2000, a private sector initiative was organized to the Umbrian region of Italy for NJ furniture vendors.

Benefits/Impact: The unique aspect of this mission includes the combination of business and cultural meetings, developed around the Italian Winter Olympics in 2006. Aside from the benefits of site visits for businesses and cultural representatives, this would provide very high profile opportunity for the state of New Jersey to promote its own opportunities for trade and investment.

Work Required: This project would require several major components: a) survey of interested businesses in the three regions and New Jersey; b) establishment of regional and federal government meetings for mission; c)

establishment of on-site and conference meetings for businesses; d) establishment of on-site meetings for cultural representatives; e) air travel, hotel, ground transportation and facilities arrangements; and f) Olympic arrangements.

Team Required: NJ government and not-for-profit agencies with expertise in trade missions; private sector business participants; cultural representatives; Italian government agencies.

Timing: Mission takes place during the first week in February 2006.

Funding: Substantial budgeting required -- Costs of travel, lodging, hospitality and facilities could exceed \$10,000 per person.

Sponsors: Private sector firms involved; NJ and Italian governments

Follow-Up: Planning for Italian firms to visit NJ via an Italian trade mission

Planning Discussions: The mission concept was developed in consultation with information from the NJ Economic Development Authority, the U.S. Department of Commerce, several New Jersey law firms and several New Jersey businesses, including travel agencies. The initial surveys of interested businesses and industries would be coordinated with private sector, NJ public and non-profit and the Italian Trade Commission in New York. NJ Government participation would be welcomed, but due to constraints on the NJ budget, would not necessarily require major representation.

The Italian Vice Consul in Newark and the Italian Consul Generals in New York and Philadelphia have demonstrated an interest in developing such a executive-level business tour. Contacts have also been made with representatives of the regional government of Sicily, who have expressed a strong interest in deepening commercial and cultural ties with New Jersey (examples include Sicilian government discussions with NJ universities to develop Sicilian cultural centers, international school exchange programs between various Sicilian school districts and New Jersey school districts and sponsoring of Sicilian events in NJ for the Italian American community).

Premiums paid by the traveling executives could sponsor a small number of New Jersey cultural exchange ambassadors (such as museum directors) to travel on the mission and meet with counterparts in Italy.

4. Launching of an Italian Business Roadshow to New Jersey (2006)

Concept: In line with the Commission's mandate to strengthen relationships with Italy, the Commission could co-organize a trade roadshow for Italian firms coming to New Jersey. The purpose of this roadshow would be to bring interested Italian firms in selected industries to meet with potential partners, vendors and NJ government representatives. The idea is to foster a state-to-state model of operations, instead of a state-to-country model used in many past initiatives. Industries in NJ that may be of particular interest to Italian companies include the biotechnology, pharmaceutical, transportation, petrochemical, software technology, medical devices, financial services, manufacturing and agricultural sectors. The ultimate goals are to stimulate foreign direct investment in NJ from Italy and to increase the level of trade between NJ and Italy.

Details: This roadshow could involve a tour of major NJ industries, import facilities and NJ government agencies over a period of 3-5 days. While large firms are important, the roadshow could be targeted to middle market and smaller companies unfamiliar with doing business with NJ.

Prior Models: From time to time, various public, not-for-profit and private sector entities organize roadshows from foreign countries. Recently, the NJ Israel Commission co-organized a roadshow for high technology firms in Israel to come to NJ.

Benefits/Impact: By bringing Italian firms to NJ, the NJ government has the unique opportunity to market the advantages of NJ as an industry and transportation hub in the United States. Historical roadshows from other countries have stimulated foreign direct investment in NJ.

Work Required: This project would require several major components: a) survey of interested businesses in Italy and in NJ; b) establishment of NJ government meetings for roadshow; c) establishment of on-site and conference meetings for businesses; and, d) air travel, hotel, ground transportation and facilities arrangements.

Team Required: NJ government and not-for-profit agencies with expertise in trade missions; private sector business participants; Italian government agencies and Italian firms.

Timing: Roadshow could be targeted for the end of 2006.

Funding: Substantial budgeting required -- Costs of travel, lodging, hospitality and facilities could exceed \$10,000 per person.

Sponsors: Private sector firms involved; NJ and Italian governments

Follow-Up: Tracking system to assess effectiveness of project in stimulating foreign direct investment and trade.

Planning Discussions: The roadshow concept was developed in consultation with information from the NJ Economic Development Authority, the NJ Israel Commission and an Italian law firm. The initial surveys of interested businesses and industries would be coordinated with private sector, NJ public and non-profit and the Italian Trade Commission in New York.

5. “Virtual Tour” Conference on Business Process with Italy (2007)

Concept: In line with the Commission’s mandate to educate the New Jersey population about Italy, the Commission could co-sponsor a statewide business conference on the process of doing business in Italy. This conference would serve as a follow-up to the NJWTC-Commission conference on Italy’s opportunities, with participation from the New Jersey and regional Italian government representatives. The conference would serve as an advanced series of seminars for those NJ businesses specifically interested in Italy as an import/export market or as foreign direct investment opportunity. Italian firms would also be targeted, to provide a forum to showcase their products and services. The conference could be coupled with a “Virtual Tour” of the business and cultural opportunities with one or several of Italy’s regions.

Details: The conference could consist of panel discussions, featured speakers and a series of floor exhibitions. Attendance could be up to 1,000 persons.

Benefits/Impact: This conference would serve as an detailed exposition of the process and issues of doing business with Italy. NJ and Italian agencies that assist with foreign trade and investment with Italy could outline their programs. Private sector service firms from NJ and Italy could advertise their services to NJ businesses. This conference would serve to stimulate demand for investment and trade with Italy and highlight the cultural aspects of specific Italian regions.

Prior Models: Drawn from country business conferences, infused with cultural expositions

Work Required: Single or multiple-day conference organization, which requires: a) conference programming; b) securing of speakers; c) invitation of companies for floor exhibits; d) marketing and advertising; e) collation of invitee and participant lists; f) facilities and hospitality; g) mailings; h) publicity.

Team Required: Private sector experts with experience in developing international trade conferences, Commission, Italian regional governments.

Timing: Such a conference could be executed in early 2007.

Funding: \$50,000-\$75,000 for marketing, facilities, hospitality, publicity, invitations

Sponsors: Italian and NJ service firms

Follow-Up: Tracking system to assess effectiveness of project in stimulating foreign direct investment and trade.

Planning Discussions: Since the initial proposal of the development of a business conference on Italy by the Task Force, the Commission began to assess the needs of the NJ business community. While the conference proposed by the NJWTC highlights the macro-economic opportunities of doing business in Italy, many NJ businesspersons are seeking a more detailed conference wherein the process of doing business in Italy is addressed. For this type of conference, Italy's regional governments should be represented as well as a large number of NJ and Italian international service firms, with expertise in law, regulations, financing and government support.

In addition, ideas have been generated to combine the business conference with a cultural exposition of Italy's regions. The concept of a "Virtual Tour" of one or several of Italy's regions (possibly beginning with Sicily) have been discussed, where portions of the conference (or exhibitions) focus on the Italian region's cultural diversity and contributions. In particular, NJ travel agencies have expressed an interest in assisting with the development of the "Virtual Tour" concept, especially since it could stimulate tourism to Italy from NJ.

Such a conference would require considerable planning and funding to fuse the Italian regional government participation, the exposition of cultural aspects and the more detailed business process discussions. The conference could be open to both the business and general public and could be held over a weekend to maximize attendance.

6. Formation of a NJ Italian American Business Network (2005-2007)

Concept: In accordance with the Commission's mandate to work with the Italian American community, the Commission could serve as the catalyst to develop a network of New Jersey businesses that are either owned by Italian Americans, specialize in Italian products and services, or conduct trade with Italian firms and consumers. The purpose of this network would be to strengthen business relationships among the Italian American business community in New Jersey. In addition, members of the Italian American community seeking sponsorships for educational and cultural programs could use this network to seek funding and support.

Details: The business network could be developed over a multi-year period, beginning with the creation of a detailed database managed by the Commission. Over time, this network could develop into a formal business association with membership and services.

Prior Models: Industry associations; Greek American Chamber of Commerce

Benefits/Impact: This network could increase intra-Italian American business activity in NJ and provide an important organizational tool for the Italian American community. It would also serve as a resource center for issues related to doing business with Italy, especially with respect to tourism in Italy.

Work Required: Initially, the work entails the compilation of a database of businesses owned by Italian Americans, or that do business with Italy. This work could be handled by the Commission through a Committee.

Team Required: Commission

Timing: 2005

Funding: Minimal – part of the Commission's administrative budget.

Sponsors: Members of the Commission willing to organize the database

Follow-Up: Once a sizeable database is formed, this could be used to target participation in the commercial and cultural exchange programs being developed.

Planning Discussions: Strong support for this effort was registered by a large number of Italian American businesses, including a group of approximately 60 businesspersons that participated in a formal business and trade planning session at the October 23, 2004 1st New Jersey Congress of Italian American Organizations. This association could also house information on artists, art and performing artists in New Jersey that could network for sponsorship through the association.

The Commission's Community Advisory Council has demonstrated an interest in developing the database and eventually evolving it into a formal industry association. Surveys taken during the Community Advisory Council's Italian American Leadership Convocation in March 2004 and at the 1st NJ Congress of Italian American Organizations indicated strong interest among the Italian American business community for the formation of such an entity. Members of the Community Advisory Council have been informally developing organizational structure and action plans to implement this project.

7. International Student Business Internships in Italy (2005-2007)

Concept: In line with the Commission's mandate to promote educational programs, the Commission could assist in the organization of university business internships sponsored by Italian firms. The purpose of these internships would be to strengthen business relationships between future NJ business leaders and Italian firms. Since university students often have difficulty in finding foreign-based internships, this program could serve as a means to both promote the visibility of Italian companies and to assist NJ-based students in their career development.

Details: This program could be sponsored by Italian firms offering summer work opportunities in Italy, as well as in their NJ-based subsidiary offices. At present, there are approximately 15 major Italian subsidiaries with offices in New Jersey.

Benefits/Impact: As an educational program, this initiative would immediately benefit students seeking careers in international business. With respect to visibility, this program serves as a promotion for Italian companies.

Prior Models: Multinational internship programs with overseas positions.

Work Required: Canvassing Italian companies for internship opportunities and linking the opportunity to NJ universities.

Team Required: Commission, private sector firms in Italy, university departments, Italia Oggi organization.

Timing: This program could be developed between 2005 and 2007.

Funding: Corporate sponsorships would include a work stipend, travel to and from Italy and in-country housing.

Sponsors: Private sector Italian firms

Follow-Up: Students involved in this program could be required to work on research projects related to commerce between Italy and NJ. Additionally, students could be required to help establish the administration of these programs.

Planning Discussions: The Commission's Community Advisory initiated the exploration of this project during its initial meetings in 2004. The largest NJ-based Italian American young professionals group, Italia Oggi, is in the process of developing a network of young Italian American professionals. As part of that process, the organization is seeking to work with the Commission to establish a mentoring and internship program within the state of New Jersey for Italian American students.

The Commission's Board of Academic Advisors proposed to the Commission that the internship program could be linked to university programs. Specifically, Italian firms could be solicited to sponsor overseas internship opportunities for university students on a competitive basis. Each of the major universities in NJ with Italian language or Italian studies programs could potentially work with one or more Italian firms to create an annual internship program, similar to a grant or scholarship program.

In addition, private sector firms have suggested to the Commission that Italian firms would potentially be interested in sponsoring such programs as part of their corporate marketing and development programs.

8. Establishment of a New Jersey Trade Representative Office in Italy (2007)

Concept: In line with the Commission's mandate to build relationships with Italy, the Commission could assist the NJ government in establishing a NJ Trade Representative Office in Italy. Italy is the fourth largest economy and market in Europe and the largest economic and transportation hub in the Mediterranean basin (including Southern and Balkan Europe, the Middle East and North Africa). Italy ranks as New Jersey's tenth largest export destination for the years 2000-2003, and is in the top-10 import trading partners for the United States. In the past, New Jersey had established trade representative offices in the United Kingdom to cover Northern Europe and in Greece, to cover Southern Europe and the Mediterranean basin. The level of business activity and interest in the idea suggest strong community support for the establishment of a representative office in Italy to foster commercial and cultural exchanges.

Details: The establishment of a NJ Trade Representative Office is an initiative that would have to be executed by the NJ Commerce Commission, with strong legislative and gubernatorial support.

Benefits/Impact: Such an office could be used to stimulate commercial activity between NJ and Italy. It would serve as a direct NJ link to the Italian regions and demonstrate NJ's interest in Italian business opportunities.

Prior Models: Brazil, Israel, Japan, Greece, Mexico, U.K. and China

Work Required: Political support for the project would have to be fostered by the Italian government and the NJ Legislative and Executive Branches.

Team Required: NJ and Italian governments

Timing: Once significant interest is registered by the Italian and NJ business communities in the wake of the proposed business conferences and trade missions, the process for the establishment of such an office should be considered. The prospective timing for the establishment of such an office would not likely occur prior to 2007-2008.

Funding: The establishment of comparable offices indicate an annual consulting contract with a reputable local partner requiring approximately \$135,000 - \$200,000 per annum.

Sponsors: NJ and Italian governments

Follow-Up: This office would serve as the NJ government's direct liaison to Italy, a country from which approximately 25% of NJ's citizen's claim ancestry.

Planning Discussions: The idea of the establishment of a NJ Trade Representative Office in Italy originated through discussions with the NJ Economic Development Authority, the Office of the Governor and the NJ Israel Commission. Since the cost and process of the creation of such an entity is significant, the NJ government would likely require a demonstration of need for such an office.

While the level of trade between NJ and Italy is significant, the government of NJ has not established such an office for all of its other "Top Ten" trading partners. The important distinction in the case of Italy, however, is that approximately 2 million citizens of New Jersey claim full or partial Italian descent. The effective consumer base for Italian products, the need for an in-country organizational office for cultural and business events and the interest in the part of the Italian American community exceeds all other country-distinct ethnic groups.

In order for this symbolic and commercially efficacious process to begin, the Italian government will have to demonstrate significant support for the project. Given NJ's budgetary constraints, the Italian government should also consider contributing funding for this project.

The impact of the establishment of such an office would be highly significant for the Italian American community in NJ and the Italian government in Italy.

9. Formation of a New Jersey Italy Trade Agency (2008+)

Concept: While the Commission can serve the Italian American business community through the organization and promotion of educational-related business conferences, missions, internships and seminars, additional business consulting related assistance is beyond the scope of its mission and mandates. If the demand for increased commercial exchanges continues to grow and the Commission can execute a number of demonstrably successful programs, the need for additional scopes of services may become evident. In this case, the creation of a new entity with expertise in regulatory, tax, marketing, finance, and accounting services would be warranted.

Details: Following several years of successful programs and the demonstrable need for additional services provided by the public sector, the NJ Government may choose to create a new NJ Italy Trade Agency.

Benefits/Impact: Similar to the establishment of a NJ Trade Representative Office in Israel, the formation of a dedicated public sector entity in NJ related to commercial relations with Italy would enhance the organization of the delivery of products and services to the NJ business community. The direct impact would be the increase of commercial exchanges between NJ and Italy.

Prior Models: NJ Israel Commission

Work Required: Legislative or executive establishment of a business-dedicated public agency with competencies in business development services.

Team Required: NJ Government

Timing: 2008 and beyond

Funding: Unknown at present

Sponsors: Not applicable

Follow-Up: Tracking systems to measure impact of new entity on the promotion of foreign direct investment in NJ and the increase in imports/exports between Italy and NJ.

Planning Discussions: During the Commission's initial deliberations following the mandate provided to the Italian American community by Governor McGreevey, the possible need for a new agency was assessed. The initial conclusions indicated that the Commission could engage in the management, organization and development of business-related activities such as conferences, missions, seminars and internship programs, all of which are educational in nature. Further activities such as the provision of business development services, such as regulatory information, tax information, financing information or marketing information were assessed to be beyond the scope and capabilities of the current agency.

The Commission decided to proceed with the promotion of commercial and cultural exchanges, as limited to the aforementioned types of programs. If the demand and success of these programs warranted further development over a trial period of three or four years, the Commission would consider whether the formation of a new entity merited consideration. Any such initiative would require the strong support of both the NJ and the Italian governments.

C. Possible Programs Related to Cultural Exchanges

1. Hosting “Rock Italia” Italian and Italian American Music Concert (2006)

Concept: Given the global popularity of modern Italian rock and pop music, the Commission could assist in the organization of a “Rock Italia” benefits concert for the Tri-State area. By combining major Italian American performing artists with notable Italian artists, the concert would not only attract wide-scale interest for the youth of New Jersey, but make young Americans aware of the tremendous talent in the Italian music industry. Since the notion of Italian music for many young Italian Americans are the regional folk songs of the early twentieth and even 19th centuries, such a concert would have enormous educational and awareness value.

Details: The “Rock Italia” benefits concert could be hosted on a single day or over a weekend in one of New Jersey’s major concert venues. New Jersey’s Italian American anchor artists such as John Bon Giovi, Bruce Springsteen or Annie DiFranco could be combined with emerging NJ Italian American artists. From Italy, prominent performing artists such as Zucchero, Laura Pausini or Eros Ramazzotti could be invited to join together for a transatlantic concert. Proceeds from the benefits concert could be used to fund educational programs or scholarships for the Italian American community in New Jersey.

Benefits/Impact: The cultural benefit of such a concert would be to raise awareness among New Jersey’s youth of the dynamic and internationally recognized musical artists in 21st century Italy. By focusing the concert on rock and pop music, instead of opera or folk music, greater interest in Italian Heritage would be fostered among younger audiences.

Prior Models: International benefits concerts

Work Required: Initially organizational work to locate promoters, agents, and a venue. Once the appropriate promoters are retained, the process of assembling the concert would be handled by professionals.

Team Required: Interested parties with experience in the music industry.

Timing: Could be staged as early as September-October 2005, more likely April-May 2006.

Funding: Cost estimates of such a concert range from \$750,000 to \$1.5 million. Upfront commitment costs (prior to revenue generation) would average \$250,000. Significant funding could be procured from Italian firm promotions as well as New Jersey and New York businesses.

Sponsors: Private sector firms

Follow-Up: Additional tie-ins could include a simultaneous Italian American festival, concert products, a music video and a CD product.

Planning Discussions: The Commission has identified interested parties with significant experience in the music industry that would be interested in developing this project. A variety of venues, based on capacity and costs, have been identified. A survey of possible artists for the concert is planned for the first quarter of 2005. Additional assistance may be required from the Italian consulates in New York and Newark to orchestrate the Italian component.

The initial feasibility assessment will require the following elements:

- Possible Italian and Italian American artists
- Discussions to obtain venues at benefit-concert rates
- Solicitation for event promoters
- Possible funding interest from Italian and New Jersey firms
- Cost and budget estimates

The organization of such a project would require the Commission to coalesce a team of interested volunteers who have the knowledge to assist in the development of the concert. The program could consist of 10-15 artists, each performing a few pieces. Provided that certain anchor artists would agree to perform at this concert, demand for tickets would be extremely strong.

2. Hosting “All-Italian” Soccer Exhibition Match in NJ (2006)

Concept: Since the sport of soccer enjoys tremendous popularity in the State of New Jersey, the Commission could assist in the organization of an exhibition match between two prominent Italian soccer clubs at a venue such as the Meadowlands arena. The game would not only highlight the importance of soccer as a major cultural and recreational element of modern Italy, but could be structured as a benefits game to support Italian American educational programs, cultural activities and Italian American scholarships.

Details: Such as match would be coupled with a special reception for interested parties at the stadium. The game could be held during the off-season for the Italian teams, which would be during the mid-summer season in New Jersey.

Benefits/Impact: This sporting event would assist in the promotion of soccer in New Jersey. Given the high level of interest in soccer among the youth and older generations of Italian Americans, the event would be enjoyed by a wide range of age groups. The event would likely attract interest from other ethnic communities given the popularity of soccer as a global sport. Proceeds from the game would be used to support educational and cultural programs of the Commission.

Prior Models: This model could be patterned after the July 2004 exhibition match between United Manchester of England and AC Milan of Italy.

Work Required: Organization of team – above referenced match was a collaboration between the British Consulate in New York, the Meadowlands Arena, the NJ Economic Development Authority and the NJ Department of the Treasury.

Team Required: See above

Timing: Summer of 2006

Funding: Unknown at present

Sponsors: To be determined

Follow-Up: Significant interest in the match could generate additional interest among a smaller segment that may seek to travel to Italy to follow additional games during the year.

Planning Discussions: In June 2004, the NJ Economic Development Authority invited the Commission to a reception prior to the July 31 match. During the reception, members of the Commission discussed the project with the promoters of the match and ascertained the interest and feasibility in carrying out the project with an “All Italian” match.

3. Italian Summer Tours for Students (2006)

Concept: Given the difficulties that NJ's public schools face in organizing student tours to Italy, the Commission could organize a statewide program that sponsors student tours to Italy. Typically, instructors at the high school level contract with various travel agencies to arrange tours lasting between 7 and 30 days during the summer. The tours are designed by professional agents, which provide educational programming by way of historical tours of various Italian cities and cultural venues. Given the liability issues involved for Boards of Education, instructors usually organize the tours for their students outside of the classroom. The work involved in recruiting and managing students limits the number of participants to the school district in which the instructor serves. Students who are not within these active districts generally never have an opportunity to participate in an organized student tour. By helping to organize the instructors with experience in these tours, as well as assisting with the procurement of travel agency services and marketing the tours, the Commission can offer the opportunity to a much wider number of students.

Details: Through its Institute at Rutgers University, the Commission could recruit interested, experienced teachers throughout the state to serve as the tour organizers. The Commission could assist with the selection of a travel agency and the types of tour, and then reach out to the various school districts within the State of New Jersey. Using this approach, the Commission could organize a large number of tours during the summer season, enabling hundreds of students to experience the cultural richness of Italy.

Benefits/Impact: Wider student exposure to the Italian experience.

Prior Models: School district tours of Italy for high school students.

Work Required: Creating organizing committee for the coordination of 2006 summer tours; recruitment of Italian language teachers with tour experience; negotiation with travel agencies for student tour packages; coordination between Italian language school districts and teacher tour managers; publicity of Commission-sponsored tours.

Team Required: Commission, Italian Teachers Association of New Jersey, Travel Agencies

Timing: Summer of 2006

Funding: Minimal – administrative costs of the Commission

Sponsors: Commission and Italian Teachers Association of New Jersey

Follow-Up: Selected students may be asked to create project from their experiences in Italy.

Planning Discussions: Members of the Commission's Higher Education Committee, Curriculum Development Committee and the Community Advisory Council have identified this program as a relatively easy project to implement, which would have significant impact for Italian language students in the community. The Commission has also been approached by a number of travel agencies interested in organizing this project.

The standard tour packages for students range from \$1,700 - \$3,000 per student for air travel, hotel accommodations, breakfast and lunch, museum/venue admissions and excursions. Tours typically involved luxury bus transportation from city to city, with arrival and departure from one or two cities. Student groups range from around 10 to over 60, requiring at least 1 chaperone for every 10 students, plus a tour coordinator. Travel agencies arrange a single tour guide for the entire trip and arrange for specialists at each site visit. Chaperones and tour coordinators usually receive some combination of free packages and/or a daily stipend from the proceeds of the student ticket sales.

These tours typically focus on North, Central and part of South Italy, including Sicily. Cities often visited include Milan, Florence, Venice, Pisa, Assisi, Siena, Perugia, Rome, Naples, Sorrento and a number of Sicilian cities.

Various NJ Italian language teachers have indicated a willingness to organize and participate in such a program, while a number of Travel agencies have offered to provide tour packages.

4. Sponsoring Seton Hall Conference on Family Business in Italy (2007)

Concept: The Alberto Institute for Italian Studies of Seton Hall University is organizing a conference during the Spring of 2007 on the history of Italian family business formation and its analogs to New Jersey Italian American society. For this conference, Seton Hall is partnering with the prestigious Bocconi Business School, one of Europe's top 3 graduate business schools. While the program's theme is family business, the project is of a cultural nature, as it deals with the sociology, economics and history of family business formation.

Details: In 2004, the Commission and the New Jersey Italian American Heritage Foundation, together with UNICO National and the OneVoice Committee, collaborated with the Alberto Institute to host a conference on the history of Italian American discrimination and stereotyping. The event was a great success, with over 300 attendees and national press coverage. The NJ Foundation's generosity enabled a documentary to be created from the conference, and conference papers are scheduled to be published by Rutgers University Press this year. The newly proposed conference would be of a similar nature, adding international participation.

Benefits/Impact: This conference will be of particular interest to

Prior Models: Seton Hall Conference "Real Stories: History of Italian American Discrimination and Defamation"

Work Required: The Alberto Institute will be organizing the program, speakers and event details, while Seton Hall will provide the facilities. The Commission could assist with the marketing of the conference to the general public. Dr. William Connell, the Chairman of the Alberto Institute and a Commissioner, will chair this project.

Team Required: Alberto Institute of Seton Hall, Bocconi Business School, Commission, other Italian American organizations, other universities

Timing: This conference would be held during the Spring semester of 2007

Funding: While the budget has not been developed yet, the estimated hard costs of the prior Seton Hall discrimination conference ranged from \$60,000-

\$70,000. Expenses were related to facilities, food, honoraria, documentary funding and subventions for the book publication.

Sponsors: Seton Hall, Bocconi Business School, Commission, others

Follow-Up: The conference should yield a publication and a documentary

Planning Discussions: Dr. William Connell is in the process of retaining speakers for the conference and requesting papers from a variety of academic and private sector sources. Dr. Connell has raised this project with the Commission and is discussions with the Bocconi Business School.

5. Sponsoring Italian Art Exchanges with New Jersey Museums (2007)

Concept: From time to time, Italian museums place their artwork on loan to major Metropolitan area museums, such as the Frick Gallery, the Dahesh Museum of Art or the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Few exhibitions flow to New Jersey. In conjunction with the Vorhees-Zimmerli Museum at Rutgers University, plans have been suggested to sponsor a significant showing of Italian Baroque paintings in New Brunswick in 2007. Smaller exhibitions could be coordinated with other museums, which take a standard 2-3 year period to organize. In addition, other cultural exchanges could be developed in conjunction with the building of an Italian Art Wing, possibly at the Rutgers University Museum, which is among the top-5 largest university museums in the nation.

Details: The Rutgers University Zimmerli Museum in New Brunswick, which is the 5th largest university museum in the country (in terms of exhibition space and permanent collections) has been working on a project with the Commission to bring over from Italy a series of 17th century Italian Baroque paintings from Naples. This project began last summer and now the Zimmerli Museum has won the bid to be one of two museums in the country to host a renown collection of approximately 50 17th century paintings for the period January – April 2007. These paintings feature artists such as Gentileschi, Giordano, Rosa and Ribera from the Golden Age of Neapolitan Art. The Zimmerli Museum will be the only museum in the eastern half of the U.S. to display these never-before-released Italian works. One of the featured artists, Gentileschi, is the subject of a current New York Times Bestseller historical novel.

Benefits/Impact: The Commission is working on ideas on how to market this important collection to the NJ and TriState area public and to tie in its Public School Curriculum Program, its Higher Education programs and its community outreach programs.

Prior Models: Other Zimmerli Art Exchanges

Work Required: Show and educational programs being organized by the Zimmerli Museum and Rutgers University. The Commission has been asked to publicize and market the event to the NJ and Italian Governments, as well as the community at large. The Commission and the New Jersey Italian American Heritage Foundation have been asked to assist with the fund-raising process.

Team Required: Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, Commission

Timing: The initial down-payment on approximately 1/3 of the cost is due in March-April, which will be handled by the Zimmerli Museum. The details of the show will be developed during 2005-2006 and the first exhibition of these works in the United States will be held in Phoenix in the Fall of 2006.

Funding: The success of the project is contingent upon the Zimmerli receiving external funding of \$400,000 - \$500,000 to put on the show.

Sponsors: Zimmerli donors, Rutgers University, private sector, NJ Government, Italian Government, Commission

Follow-Up: Multiple educational programs and events can be developed for the January-April showing of the event in 2007.

Planning Discussions: A series of meetings between the Rutgers University art history department, the Italian department and the Commission have been held since the summer of 2005 related to this project. The planning discussions are now centered on how the Museum will independently cover the down-payment commitment and how the Commission can raise awareness of the program to the public, the schools and potential sponsors, such as the NJ Government, the Italian Government, Italian American organizations and the private sector.

6. Italian Language Teacher Exchanges (2007)

Concept: The work of the Higher Education Committee of the Commission is revealing that there is a high and growing demand for learning the Italian language among the students of New Jersey. In 2004, there were over 33,000 students studying Italian, ranking it as the third most popular foreign language in the school system. The demand is continuing to grow as 17,000 of those students are currently in the K-8 system. Anecdotal evidence is suggesting that the constraint on growth is not demand, but supply in the form of resources. While finances are always an issue at the local Board levels, the larger problem is the dearth of qualified Italian language teachers in NJ. Part of this issue is related to the inadequate resources at the higher education levels devoted to teaching university level Italian, where the number of professors are too few to keep up with growing demand by university students. The Italian Government has attempted to assist with the supply issue by codifying a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of New Jersey, in order to facilitate the process of enabling English-speaking Italian citizens to take professional positions in the NJ school system. In addition, the educational association established by the Italian Government, IACE, provides limited funding to the tune of \$200,000 [per annum?] to local school districts in New Jersey. These funds are used to partially pay for the retention of an Italian citizen to teach in the school district for up to one year.

Details: The current problem of the lack of qualified Italian language teachers can be addressed over the long-term through the attraction of teachers from other states and from increasing university resources to train more Italian language teachers. However, the Italian Government's effort to provide limited financial and regulatory assistance appears to be a reasonable stop-gap measure to meet growing demand in the near future. The Commission could bolster the effort to bring over English-speaking Italian teachers from Italy by forming an Italian Language Teacher Exchange Program, which would serve as a coordinating mechanism between interested school districts and interested Italian teachers in Italy.

Benefits/Impact: As NJ-based university student programs for training Italian language teachers grows, the establishment of the Italian Language Teacher Exchange Program (ILTEP) would enable a limited number of school districts to introduce the Italian language or assist in the growth of programs.

Prior Models: The Italian Government-sponsored IACE program and other state's foreign language teacher exchange programs.

Work Required: Coordination between the NJ Government, the Italian Government, the Commission and school districts. Initial work of identifying the high demand in school districts would fall to the Commission's Promotion of the Italian Language Committee/Council. The Higher Education Committee would coordinate with universities.

Team Required: Commission, Higher Education Committee, Promotion of the Italian Language Committee/Council, Department of Education, INS, IACE, and Italian Consulates.

Timing: The analysis for the demand will probably take a year to complete by the Promotion of the Italian Language Committee. The coordination with the various team members will also take a year. Finally, the establishment of the details and mechanics of the program will also take a year. The reasonable timetable is 2007 for the launch of a small pilot.

Funding: Unknown at present. The estimated cost for a school district to fund a full-time teacher (with salary, housing, transportation and legal fees) may range from \$50,000 - \$75,000 per teacher. Even the coordination of such a project would require hard and soft costs of \$50,000. The sources of funds would have to come from the school districts and the Italian Government.

Sponsors: Commission, Italian Government, school districts

Follow-Up: Increased Italian language course offerings in the public school system, which enables more students to study Italian at the university level. Additionally, universities in New Jersey would need to increase their financial and personnel resources to train more teachers.

Planning Discussions: The Higher Education Committee of the Commission has held several discussions over the viability and implementation of this program. Currently, the Promotion of the Italian Language Committee/Council is being formed to study the demand for the Italian language in the state of New Jersey. The Department of Education has released data collected in 2004 on the school districts teaching the Italian language, with the number of students currently enrolled. Ideas about housing, legal issues and costs of this program have been addressed, but need to be completed for a project proposal.

7. Establishment of Vocational Program for Italian Artisan Skills (2008)

Concept: The Community Advisory Council of the Commission has recognized the high demand and low supply of qualified artisans and craftsmen that specialize in Italian crafts in New Jersey. While many small consumer products, such as lacquered wood, gold-smithing, leather-working, glass-blowing, wine-making and others, are simply imported from Italy, there are very few opportunities for young Italian Americans to learn these specialized crafts in New Jersey. More importantly, the demand for Italian architecture, stonecraft, woodwork and frescos in homes of wealthy Italian Americans, churches and public facilities is growing. Very few specialists are available in this State. The training of young Italian Americans in these crafts would provide excellent career opportunities and would preserve these Italian crafts among future generations.

Details: The Community Advisory Council has proposed the development of a vocational program for training of Italian artisans and craftsmen. This program could be developed in stages, such as a series of demonstrations in the school systems and at public venues, followed up by the establishment of exchange programs, and leading to the establishment of a vocational charter school for the Italian Arts and Crafts.

Benefits/Impact: Such a program not only offers young Italian Americans the opportunity to develop new skills, but creates new job opportunities and business in New Jersey.

Prior Models: The school systems of New Jersey today offer specialized vocational training for general works such as carpentry, metal-working, automobile mechanics, architecture, electronics and others. These schools offer an alternative career path for many students interested in these trades. In addition charter and private schools in New Jersey sometimes offer introductory training in specialized arts such as carpet-weaving.

Work Required: Develop a staged program involving the three steps of Italian Artisan demonstrations (with participants from Italy), Italian Artisan Vocational Training Exchange Programs (sending New Jersey youth to Italy for a summer or school year), leading to the creation of an Italian Arts School in New Jersey

Team Required: Commission and interested community members to begin the development of the process.

Timing: The arrangement of Italian Artisan demonstrations from specific regions of Italy could begin in 2006. Planning for an exchange program and school should also begin in 2006.

Funding: Staged funding levels required: a) Artisan Demonstrations may cost up to \$10,000; b) Artisan Exchange Program may cost \$50,000 - \$100,000 to establish a program; and c) a summer school leading to a charter vocational school would range from \$500,00 – \$10,000,000.

Sponsors: Commission, community, private sector, NJ Government, Italian Government, grant organizations

Follow-Up: If the artisan programs prove to be a success, the next phase could involve the development of a Fine Arts Vocational Program.

Planning Discussions: This project is only in the very earliest stages of conceptualization. The Community Advisory Council has discussed it at several meetings and has surveyed a number of Italian American community members as to the community's interest. Currently, the community appetite for this program is low. However, the benefits to New Jersey's Italian American youth are high.

8. Creation of an Italian Art Wing (2010)

Concept: The Rutgers University Zimmerli Art Museum is the 5th largest university fine arts museum in the country, in terms of floor exhibition space and permanent collections. The Museum has been in discussions with the Indian immigrant community of central New Jersey to build a dedicated wing of ancient and modern Indian artwork. The community has organized art donors and funding for the long-term project and the Museum has indicated its willingness to construct an additional wing. The Commission is exploring the possibility of initiating a long-term project to build an Italian Art Wing.

Details: Given that the Museum is centrally located in a State with approximately 2 million Italian Americans, the Commission has held exploratory discussions with the Museum to assess the possibility of building an Italian Art Wing. This Museum would be an excellent site for an Italian Art Wing for a variety of important reasons: a) geographic centrality; b) affiliation with the State University; c) growing collection of approximately 14 pieces of Roman, Etruscan, 18th and 19th century paintings and sculpture and modern Italian American pieces; d) available space to build the wing; e) growing interest in Italian artwork shows at the Museum; f) largest Italian language program in the country; g) new Italian Studies program; h) 7 out of 13 art history professors with specialties in Italian artwork; and i) largest art history student enrollment in the Tri-State area.

Benefits/Impact: The development of the wing would create a permanent collection for the Italian American community that would be used by universities, schools and the public.

Prior Models: Development of Indian Art Wing at the Zimmerli Museum

Work Required: The process for such a massive project would be staged: a) hosting and support of the first of a series of Italian Art Exchanges with Italian museums; b) identification of potential New Jersey donors of collections ranging from Roman to modern Italian and Italian American artworks; and c) fund-raising campaign to raise funding for construction and art acquisition; and d) design and development of art wing.

Team Required: Commission, Rutgers University, private sector, Italian Government

Timing: This is a long-term multi-year project that will likely take 5 years to develop community and fund-raising support.

Funding: The estimated costs of the wing construction and funds for artwork acquisition is projected to be \$10,000,000. This assumes that a significant number of artwork would be donated or loaned to the museum by Italian American art collectors, the value of which is not computed.

Sponsors: Commission, Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, private sector

Follow-Up: The establishment of an Art Wing lends itself to numerous possibilities, including lectures, programs, tie-ins to the School Curriculum Project, event hosting, etc.

Planning Discussions: This project is only in the very earliest stages of discussion, which began last Fall with the Director of the Zimmerli Art Museum. Such a project would be contingent on generating fund-raising support and the success of the 1st Italian Art Exchange project in 2007.

V. Next Steps

This Report completes the work, as outlined by the Commission, for the Italian Cultural and Commercial Exchange Council. The process should now move to the planning stages for these programs, which will require the Commission and members of the Italian American community to select the most feasible programs for execution.

As of the date of this release, the Commission is moving forward with the first proposed commercial exchange program, which is the co-sponsored Business Conference on Italy, scheduled for May 17th, 2005, in conjunction with the New Jersey World Trade Council. The Commission is also continuing its discussions on a series of commercial and cultural exchange projects. While this is the only program for which the Commission has authorized funding and resource commitments, given its constraints, additional programs may move forward in the 2005-2006 fiscal year, depending on state and outside funding.

In order to execute these programs, the Commission or the Italian American community needs to organize around a project and follow the recommend stages of execution presented below:

Process for Implementation of Projects

1. Commission Review and Approval

- Program and Project Discussion
- Prioritization of Projects
- Establishment of Timelines
- Assignment to Committee
- Selection of Project Leadership

2. Creation of Volunteer Task Forces

- Assessment of Collaboration Possibilities
- Recruitment of volunteers and institutional participation

3. Design of Program

- Generation of Program design
- Outline of Tasks, Responsibilities, Action Plans and Timetables

4. *Budgeting of Program*

- Financial assessment of program costs
- Identification of sources of funding

5. *Preparation of Final Program Deign*

- Development of marketing materials for Program
- Identification of Program Fund-Raisers

6. *Fund-Raising Process*

- Contact and meetings with potential sponsors
- Selling Program to communities
- Coordination with NJ and Italian government agencies

7. *Development of Program*

- Executing program plans
- Retaining professional assistance

8. *Execution of Program*

- Implementing program design

Concluding Remarks

The Commission believes that all of these programs and projects would have a tremendously positive effect on not just the Italian American community, but for all citizens of the State. With the interest and participation from the very large Italian American community, these project ideas can become reality.