

Research at a Glance

Technical Brief



Research Library Action Plan

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) engaged Cambridge Systematics (CS) to assist with the development of an action plan that will be used to transform and modernize their Research Library.

Research Problem Statement

The NJDOT Research Library serves New Jersey state government employees and members of the general public by providing reference and referral services. Materials may be used onsite or, for state government employees, by loan. Also, for NJDOT employees, they provide literature searches and notification of new materials. There are several key issues and needs, including matching library offerings to users' needs, operations and staffing considerations, and the assessing the role technology should play in content management and website functionality.

Research Objectives

The goal of the proposed research is to help NJDOT assess the Research Library's mission and goals, document the current state of the Research Library in relation to the mission and goals, understand how other states manage and operate their research libraries; and develop an action plan for improving the Research Library that defines roles, responsibilities, processes, and technologies that NJDOT can use to transform and modernize its Research Library to better meet the needs of its customers within and outside NJDOT.

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Methodology

This research utilized a customer survey to gather information from users and potential users of the Research Library's resources, a review of literature, and interviews with representatives from other states to learn about customer needs, best practices, and approaches to optimize the utility of the Research Library to its customers. The findings of this research were used to develop recommendations and an action plan consisting of two parts, the Procurement Strategy that outlines recommended procurement mechanisms, and the Summary Matrix that outlines priorities for advancing the mission and goals of NJDOT's Research Library.

Results

The Recommendations and Action Plan for the NJDOT Research Library were developed using the findings of the research and outreach. The Action Plan provides a Recommended Future State that revisits the Mission Statement and accompanying Goals and Objectives for the Research Library, a Summary of Gaps between the current state and desired future state, and an Action Plan that lays out specific guidance for modernizing the Research Library via a Procurement Strategy and Summary Implementation Matrix. The Action Plan contains near-term recommendations, including:

- Developing an outreach strategy to educate more stakeholders about the library's offerings;
- Developing a roles and responsibilities strategy and staffing plan; and
- Implementing annual performance reporting.

The Action Plan also includes long-term recommendations, including:

- Determining the necessary space requirements and optimal location for the library; and
- Taking steps to revitalize the Research Library's catalog.



This brief summarizes FHWA-NJ-2021-xx, "Research Library Action Plan", produced through the New Jersey Department of Transportation Bureau of Research, 1035 Parkway Avenue, P.O. Box 600, Ewing, NJ 08625 in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.