In the Q+A section of the Basic Inventory webinar, someone asked if there is a general estimate for how long inventory work *should* take, even if it's "approximately x linear feet per hour." Unfortunately for a sense of clarity, the overarching answer is that traditional archives line for every task – "it depends." The amount of time it takes you to conduct a basic inventory at your organization will depend on the goals of the inventory and what information you are capturing, what types of materials you have, how those materials are organized, how many staff or volunteer members can commit time to doing the inventory, and what tools you are using.

The New York State Archives, with other statewide organizations, published a booklet in 2003 that is geared towards local government and state agencies, regarding inventorying in a records management context. While the booklet is generally talking about a more detailed inventory than the recent DHPSNY webinar addressed, and of a certain type of archival repository, this paragraph about planning can be taken as useful advice for a timeline:

> "Most organizations should plan about one hour of inventory for each 1 to 2 cubic feet of records. The larger the number of records involved, the faster the inventory rate should proceed. Most large organizations can easily inventory at a rate of 2 cubic feet per hour, since they will have a number of very large records series that take only a little bit longer to inventory than a small series. (You can quickly inventory even a large series by looking at a set of samples from the series; there is no need to review the whole series.) If your organization has few records (750 cubic feet or less), you will probably have many more smaller series, so you should estimate an inventory rate of 1 cubic foot per hour. Keep in mind that electronic records will usually take longer to inventory because estimates by cubic feet don't work with them. The scope and complexity of this timetable will vary from one organization to another, *but you should build in some review dates to monitor progress and adjust the schedule as needed.*" [emphasis added] (Page 2.)

> Suzanne Etherington and Ann Marie Przybyla*. Inventory and Planning: The First Steps in Records Management. (Publication Number 76.)* The University of the State of New York; The State Education Department; New York State Archives; Government Records Services . 2003. http://www.archives.nysed.gov/common/archives/files/mr_pub76.pdf

One more suggestion that builds off of the above advice, is that you can test and develop your own "estimated timeline" for inventorying within your collection, that will hopefully take into account your unique situation. Over the course of the first few hours of basic inventory work, carefully document how many boxes, or linear or cubic feet of materials that you inventory per hour. From these timings, you can assess your own average to carry forward throughout the project.

Lastly, a resource that could be helpful if your archive already has fairly standard archival boxes, and you decide that calculating the number of linear or cubic feet is important, is this handy online calculator from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Special Collections and Archives within the University Library. The Archives also wrote this "Behind the Scenes" guide to the calculator, developed in 2016.