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AR.2001.011
SHEA (Brigid) PAPERS

Collection Summary

Creator: Shea, Brigid
Title: Shea (Brigid) Papers
Inclusive Dates: 1980 [1991-1996] 1997
Bulk Dates: 1991-1996
Quantity: 1776 items; 6 linear feet
Call number: AR.2001.011

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation:
Shea (Brigid) Papers (AR.2001.011), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, Texas.

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Restrictions

Restrictions on Access: None.

Restrictions on Use: None.

Index Terms

Persons: Arnold, Mary; Bradley, Gary; Bunch, Bill; Garza, Jesus; Kitchen, Ann; Reynolds, Ronney; Shea, Brigid; Todd, Bruce

Organizations: Austin City Council, Bergstrom Housing Reuse Task Force, Better Austin Tomorrow, FM Properties, Freeport McMoRan, International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives, Texas Municipal League, Save Our Springs (SOS) Coalition, Texas State Legislature

Subjects: AAA Baseball Franchise and Stadium Environment, "Austin-Bashing" bills, Austin Bergstrom International Airport, Austin Community College, Austin Sports Development Authority, Barton Creek Community Plan Agreement, Barton Creek Watershed, Bergstrom Housing, Campaign Finance Reform, Circle C Subdivision, Deregulation of Public Utilities, Extraterritorial Jurisdiction, Global Warming, Holly Power Plant, Joint Use, Lantana Subdivision, Municipal Utility Districts,

Neighborhood Development Phased Annexation, Scattered Cooperative Infill Program, Sustainable Development, Water quality

Places: Austin, Texas

Document Types: Correspondence, memoranda, legal documents, notes, reports, printed materials, agendas, maps, photographs

Biography of Brigid Shea

Brigid Shea was born in Minot, North Dakota in 1961. In 1982, she earned a B.A. in Liberal Studies with concentrations in Government, Journalism, and German from St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota. She was a Rockefeller Foundation Journalism Fellow at the University of North Carolina in 1983 and a research fellow at Yale Divinity School from 1984 to 1985.

Shea began her professional career as a radio journalist with National Public Radio, working in Minnesota from 1978 to 1984 and in Philadelphia from 1986 to 1987. She moved to Austin, Texas in 1988 to serve as Program Director for Texas Clean Water Action, where she worked with legislators towards governmental and environmental reform. In 1990, Shea was hired as press and environmental advisor to Texas Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower.

In 1991, Shea co-founded the Save Our Springs (S. O. S.) Coalition with several other prominent Austinites, including Mary Arnold, Bill Bunch, and Ann Kitchen. Shea was named the Coalition's first director. In this capacity, she helped lead the campaign for the S.O.S. Initiative to protect Barton Springs, which Austin citizens voted to support in an August 1992 election. In 1993, the Austin Professional Chapter of Women in Communication awarded Shea "Outstanding Austin Communicator of the Year."

Shea ran for Austin City Council, Place #4, in 1993. Her campaign was endorsed by the Austin Women's Political Caucus, the Save Our Springs Coalition, Save Austin's Neighborhoods and Environment, Texas Citizen Action, the Austin Progressive Coalition, the Black Women's Political Caucus, the Austin chapter of the AFL-CIO, the Sierra Club, Clean Water Action, and several Democratic organizations in the Austin area. In her campaign, she emphasized environmental issues, responsible economic development, and city council campaign finance reform. She was elected in May 1993.

Shea served on the Austin City Council from 1993 to 1996. The achievements of which she was most proud include legislating campaign finance reform; opposing property tax rate increases; protecting the environment, especially Barton Springs; advocating on behalf of her constituents for specific street repairs; acquiring affordable housing for the city via the Bergstrom Housing Re-use Task Force; and developing a program to save civic funds by sharing facilities among schools, libraries, colleges, and health service providers. While on the Council, Shea was frequently frustrated by the divisiveness of city government. This frustration—along with the birth of her first child—contributed to her decision not to seek reelection in 1996.

After leaving the Council, Shea served for a year as co-director of Texas Citizen Action, a consumer watchdog group. In 1997, she returned to S.O.S. as Executive Director and remained with the organization until 1999, when she resigned because the organization refused to support Mayor Kirk

Watson's re-election campaign. In 2000, Shea founded a business consulting firm, Brigid Shea & Associates.

Scope and Contents of the Records

Correspondence, memoranda, legal documents, notes, reports, printed materials, and agendas primarily comprise the records of Brigid Shea (1980 [1991-1996] 1997; 1776 items), which focus on Austin environmental issues of the 1990s (with particular emphasis on the Barton Creek watershed) as well as issues in which Shea was engaged during her tenure on the Austin City Council from 1993 to 1996. The six linear feet of records are organized into three series: General (1994-1996; 19 items), Austin Environmental Advocacy (1991-1995, n.d.; 225 items) and Austin City Council (1980, 1991-1997, n.d.; 1532 items). The records address central issues in Austin life and politics in the 1990s, including property development in the Barton Creek watershed, the creation of low-income housing, the construction of Bergstrom airport, deregulation of public utilities, and "Austin-bashing" legislation proposed in the 1995 Texas State Legislature. The records also document Shea's commitment to environmental issues beyond central Texas.

In general, the records within each file vary in form yet all pertain to a particular topic or purpose such that they form an organic whole. Creative works include annotated reports, drafts, notes, and lists of tasks to do and questions to ask. One notable record is "Brigid Shea's Economic Development Plan: From the Micro-chip to the Taco Chip," a flyer created during her 1993 campaign for Austin City Council. The flyer offers a sense of Shea's firm commitment both to progressive causes and local governmental reform.

The Save Our Springs Coalition (SOS), Barton Springs, Freeport McMoRan, FM Properties, Austin Bergstrom International Airport, and the Circle C Subdivision are frequently referred to in the records. People featured prominently include Mary Arnold, Bill Bunch, Jesus Garza, Ronney Reynolds, and Bruce Todd.

Detailed Description of the Records

Box Folder I. GENERAL (1994-1996; 19 items)

Biographical materials (1994-1996; 19 items) [Box 12?]

1 II. AUSTIN ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY (1991-1995, n.d.; 225 items)

Save Our Springs Coalition (SOS) (1991-1994, n.d.; 146 items)

SOS History and Biographies (n.d.; 5 items)

Publications (1991-1992, n.d.; 54 items)

Legal Motions (1992-1994, n.d.; 28 items)

1992 Election (1992; 5 items)

SOS Composite Ordinance (1991; 2 items)

Financial Records (1992; 4 items)

News Clippings (1991-1992; 48 items)

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- Other Central Texas Environmental Concerns (1991-1995; 79 items)
 - Barton Creek (1991-1995; 51 items)
 - Watershed Ordinance (1991; 14 items)
 - Properties Development Agreement (1993-1995; 23 items)
 - News Clippings (1991; 14 items) [?]
 - Organizations (1992-1993; 27 items)
 - Citizens for Responsible Planning (1992; 9 items)
 - Texas Society of Professional Engineers (1992; 12 items)
 - Campaign for Responsible Technology (1992; 4 items)
 - City of Austin, Texas (1993; 1 item)
 - Center for the New West (1993; 1 item)
 - ~~Strategic Partnerships (1993)~~
 - ~~Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive (1980)~~

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III. AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL (1980, 1991-1997, n.d.; 1532 items)

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- General (1993-1995, n.d.; 99 items)
 - Campaign Literature (1993, n.d.; 3 items)
 - Correspondence, General (1994-1995; 24 items)
 - Correspondence with City Manager Jesus Garza (1994-1995; 35 items)
 - Correspondence with Councilmember Ronney Reynolds (1994; 10 items)
 - City Council Records, General (1993-1995; 6 items)
 - Clippings related to City Politics (1995; 21 items)

Box 1

- Areas of Activity (1991-1996, n.d.; 1203 items)
 - Bergstrom Airport and Housing (1991-1996, n.d.; 147 items)
 - Bergstrom Housing (1991-1994; 46 items)
 - Bergstrom Housing Reuse Task Force (1994; 3 items)
 - Bergstrom Commercial Re-Use (1994; 29 items)
 - Bergstrom Revenues (1994; 15 items)
 - Bergstrom Terminal and Landing Fees (1994-1996, n.d.; 10 items)
 - Bid Information (1994-1996; 39 items)
 - Concrete Recycling (n.d.; 5 items)

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Working files

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- Barton Creek Community Plan Agreement (1993-1994; 143 items)
 - Barton Creek Community Plan Agreement (1993; 33 items)
 - Barton Creek Development Agreement (1993-1994; 110 items)
- AAA Baseball Franchise and Stadium (1994-1995; 53 items)
 - Baseball Franchise (1994-1995; 26 items)
 - Austin Sports Development Authority (1995; 27 items)

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- Barton Creek and Barton Springs (1994-1995; 52 items)
 - Outstanding National Resource Waters Designation (1994; 47 items)

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Working files

Barton Springs Contributing Zone Retrofit Master Plan Study, vols. I-III (1995; 5 items)

Campaign Finance Reform (1994-1996, n.d.; 78 items)

Joint Use (1994-1995; 59 items)

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Austin-Related Bills in the 74th Texas State Legislature (1995; 216 items)

Calendar of Important Legislative Dates (1995; 4 items)

Tracking Lists of Legislative Bills (1995; 13 items)

Correspondence (1995; 9 items)

Notes (1995; 4 items)

Pro-Austin Lobbying Groups

Better Austin Tomorrow (1995; 15 items)

Texas Municipal League (1995; 20 items)

Issues and Bills

Circle C/Gary Bradley-related bills (1995; 18 items)

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction bills (1995; 7 items)

FM Properties bills (1995; 32 items)

Municipal Utility Districts bills (1995; 9 items)

Phased Annexation (1995; 26 items)

"Takings" bills (1995; 26 items)

Water quality bills (1995; 5 items)

Assorted Legislative Materials (1995; 16 items)

Clippings (1995; 12 items)

Series

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Freeport McMoran and FM Properties (1995-1996, n.d.; 62 items)

Freeport McMoran (1995-1996, n.d.; 18 items)

FM Properties and SOS (1995-1996; 38 items)

Land Swap with FM Properties (1995; 6 items)

Global Warming (1995-1996; 83 items)

General (1995-1996; 29 items)

Berlin Municipal Leaders Summit on Climate Change (1995; 13 items)

International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives (1995; 12 items)

Town Hall Meeting on Global Climate Change (1996; 20 items)

TU Shareholder Resolution (1996-1997; 9 items)

Lantana Water Services (1995; 25 items)

Public Utilities (1995-1996; 100 items)

General (1995-1996; 10 items)

Holly Power Plant (1995; 27 items)

Utility Rate Decrease Proposal (1996; 63 items)

added to working files

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Working
files

Other Issues (1980, 1992-1996, n.d.; 185 items)
Sustainable Development (1980, 1995; 5 items)
Zilker Park Legal Settlement (1992; 3 items)
Youth Apprenticeships (1993-1995; 9 items)
Advisory Policy Council (1994; 6 items)
Circle C Annexation (1994-1996; 6 items)
Neighborhood Development (1994-1995; 18 items)
Radioactive Waste (1994; 2 items)
Renewable Energy (1994-1996; 5 items)
South Austin Outfall (1994-1995; 11 items)
Tourism and Quality of Life (1994; 18 items)
ACC Land Deal (1995; 20 items)
Audit of City by LBJ School (1995; 17 items)
Austin City Government Web Site (1995; 22 items)
East Austin Issues (1995; 5 items)
Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (1995; 8 items)
Lobby Ordinance Reform (1995; 1 item)
Transportation (1995-1997, n.d.; 13 items)
Ethics Ordinance Revisions (1996, n.d.; 3 items)
Scattered Cooperative Infill Program (1996; 6 items)
Grants (1997; 3 items)
International Visitors (1997; 2 items)
Multimedia Lab Projects (n.d.; 2 items)

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Box 2+3

City Council Campaign Finances (1992-1996, n.d.; 55 items)
Campaign Donors and Donations (1992, n.d.; 4 items)
Campaign Finance Records (1992-1993; 21 items)
Official Report of Campaign Contributions and Expenditures (1993-1996; 23 items)
Ethics Complaints Brought Against Shea Campaign Financing (1993; 7 items)

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Box 1+2

Austin City Council Agendas and Minutes (1993-1996; 175 items)
1993 Agendas and Minutes (1993; 20 items)
1994 Agendas and Minutes (1994; 102 items)
1995 Agendas and Minutes (1995; 37 items) 1 of 2
1996 Agendas and Minutes (1996; 16 items)

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1995 Agendas and Minutes 2 of 2

Working
files

Eric and Ronny's Sierra Questions.
Ada Harden (1994-1995)
Religious Right (1993)
American Power Association. 1992-1993