



ArchivesSpace

Downtown Progress Records

An inventory of Downtown Progress at DC Public Library

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English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

People's Archive, MLK Library

901 G Street NW

Washington, DC

peoples.archive@dc.gov

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Summary Information

Repository:	People's Archive, MLK Library
Creator:	Downtown Progress
Creator:	National Capital Downtown Committee (Washington, D.C.)
Title:	Downtown Progress Records
ID:	025
Date [inclusive]:	1960-1977
Physical Description:	51.5 Linear feet
Physical Description:	104 Boxes
Language of the Material:	English
Language of the Material:	English

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Biographical / Historical

Downtown Progress, originally known as the National Capital Downtown Committee, was a non-profit organization of businesspeople formed in 1959 to revitalize the area from the United States Capitol to the White House. The downtown urban renewal area was bounded by 5th and 15th Streets NW, and Pennsylvania Avenue to Massachusetts Avenue NW. Among projects promoted by Downtown Progress were the construction of the Metro, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library, and the F Street Mall. The group also supported the preservation efforts of Ford's Theatre, the Old Patent Office, Old Post Office and the Willard Hotel. The organization was officially disbanded in 1977 and turned into a public sector of the government known as the National Capital Planning Commission.

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Scope and Contents

The collection contains correspondence, meeting minutes, committee reports, memoranda, legal papers, and general office files of Downtown Progress. Also included are photographs, sketches, maps, architectural drawings, street diagrams, and slides of buildings and streetscapes located in the downtown urban renewal area of Washington, D.C.

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Arrangement

Series 1: Action Plan, 1 linear ft. (1961-1968) This series provides background research, drafts, internal memoranda, sketches, meeting notes, and other materials regarding early planning resulting in the Action Plan for Downtown Progress prepared in 1962. Most notable is a discussion draft (not for publication) of the Plan, a joint report by the Washington Post and the Washington Star about the Plan, "Assumptions, Findings and Objectives" for the sketch plan, and the final version of the Plan. The Action Plan was an official publication of the Potomac Valley Chapter, American Institute of Architects. It also contains advisory committee meeting notes and membership lists as well as notes, street diagrams, maps, photographs, and sketches of squares in downtown. Folders are arranged chronologically followed by materials about the advisory committee and then maps and sketches. Series 2: Board of Directors, 1.25 linear ft. (1960-1977) The series contains correspondence, reports, internal memoranda, meeting minutes, agendas, testimony and other information used to prepare for the Board of Directors meetings. The folders are arranged chronologically. Series 3: Annual Membership and Board of Directors Meeting, 2.5 linear ft. (1960-1969) The series contains materials regarding the annual membership and Board of Directors meeting. It includes Board of Directors meeting minutes, committee reports, statements issued at annual meetings, meeting agendas, photographs, correspondence, and internal memoranda gathered or prepared for the meeting. The folders are arranged chronologically. Series 4: Annual Reports, .50 linear ft. (1971-1977) The series contains work folders for Downtown Progress' annual reports. The folders include the final annual report, "memoranda of contact", internal memoranda, correspondence, and notes. The folders are arranged chronologically. Series 5: Committee Files, 9.5 linear ft. (1964-1977) This series contains standing and ad hoc committee files. Included are committee reports, meeting agendas and minutes, notes, correspondence, and internal memoranda regarding the committees' work. Committees included in the series are budget review; development, environment, and preservation; executive; facilities; housing and relocation; legislative; nominating, planning, urban renewal, and relocation; transportation and services; zoning and codes. The folders are arranged alphabetically by name of committee with general files first. Series 6: General Office Files, 8.5 linear ft. (ca. 1960-1977) This series consists of subject files maintained in Downtown Progress' offices to track major projects and topics of interest. It includes correspondence, internal memoranda, forms to track telephone calls and meetings, reports, handwritten notes, maps, diagrams, testimony, and legislation. It covers a variety of topics affecting downtown development, including a rezoning study, historic landmark status, a proposed sports arena/convention and civic center, national visitors center at Union Station, transportation issues,

Design and Feasibility studies, and the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. It also contains background materials, public testimony and statements, reports, and internal memoranda/correspondence regarding U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Neighborhood Development Programs for the District proposed by the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) beginning in the 1970s, and information about squares slated for development. Folders are arranged alphabetically by title. Series 7: Legal Documents, 1.75 linear ft. (1971-1977) The series primarily contains pleadings in a case brought by Businessmen Against Second Year Action Plan (BASYAP) to stop proposed condemnation and redevelopment for certain sections of the downtown urban renewal area. The plaintiffs included 126 downtown business people affected by the Plan who sued the Redevelopment Land Agency, Downtown Progress, NCPC, the City Government, and others in federal court to stop the Plan. It also contains pleadings regarding a case brought against Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) for refusal to install a second elevator at the Gallery Place Metro stop in compliance with handicap access laws in the late 1970s. Series 8: Images, 5.25 linear ft. (ca. 1960-1970) The series contains photographs, slides and sketches of buildings and street scenes in the Downtown Progress corridor. It is further divided into subseries as follows: Subseries 1: Photographs and Sketches, 1.5 cu. ft. (ca. 1960s) Contains photographs from the 1960s before development began in the downtown area as well as a number of photographs of F Street stores and streetscapes. It also contains sketches of buildings, streets, and walkways proposed for the new downtown urban renewal area. Subseries 2: Slides, 3.75 linear ft. (ca. 1960-1970s) Consists primarily of slides of buildings located within squares 213-491 and 514-631. They are arranged by address and square. It also contains some slides of F Street stores and streetscapes.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

People's Archive, MLK Library

901 G Street NW

Washington, DC

peoples.archive@dc.gov

Revision Description

Revised by Faye Haskins. Finding aid revised to be more evergreen. 2001 2020-04-08

Custodial History

The collection was donated to the Library by Knox Banner, Executive Director of Downtown Progress in May 1977.

Processing Information

Basic archival processing procedures were applied to the collection when it was processed.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Urban renewal
 - Neighborhoods
 - Nonprofit organizations
 - Businesspeople
 - Correspondence
 - Minutes (Records)
 - Organizational Records
 - Legal documents
 - Photographs
 - Slides (Photography)
 - Maps
 - Downtown (Washington, D.C.)
-

Collection Inventory

Series 1: Action Plan, 1961-1968

Scope and Contents

This series provides background research, drafts, internal memoranda, sketches, meeting notes, and other materials regarding early planning which resulted in the Action Plan for Downtown Progress prepared in 1962. Most notably, it includes a discussion draft (not for publication) of the Plan, a joint report by the Washington Post and Star about the Plan, "Assumptions, Findings and Objectives" for the sketch plan, and the final version of the Plan. The Action Plan was an official publication of the Potomac Valley Chapter, American Institute of Architects. It also contains advisory committee meeting notes and membership lists as well as notes, street diagrams, maps, photographs, and sketches of squares in downtown. Folders are arranged chronologically followed by materials about the advisory committee and then maps and sketches.

The folders are arranged chronologically.

Title/Description	Instances	
"Development of Washington and Its Central City" by Paul D. Spreiregen, 1960	Box 1	Folder 1
"L'Enfant's Plan for Washington" by Paul D. Spreiregen, 1960	Box 1	Folder 2

Assumptions, Findings and Objectives, 1960	Box 1	Folder 3
Churches study, 1960	Box 1	Folder 4
Background, 1960-1961	Box 1	Folder 5
Sketch Plan for Action Plan, 1961	Box 1	Folder 6
A Report and Sketch Plan for Revitalization, 1961	Box 1	Folder 7
Discussion draft, 1961	Box 1	Folder 8
Discussion draft with annotations, 1961	Box 1	Folder 9
Action Plan comments, 1961-1963	Box 1	Folder 10
Presentation Material at annual meeting, 1961	Box 2	Folder 1
Statements re studies, 1961	Box 2	Folder 2
Publications, 1962	Box 2	Folder 3
Studies by consultants, 1962	Box 2	Folder 4
Action Plan for Downtown, 1962	Box 2	Folder 5
Newspapers (Post and Star) report on Plan, 1962	Box 2	Folder 6
Correspondence, 1968	Box 2	Folder 7
Advisory committee, 1960-1961	Box 2	Folder 8
Advisory committee, 1961-1962	Box 2	Folder 9
Maps and sketches, 1962	Box 3	Folder 1
Square diagrams, 1966	Box 3	Folder 2
Square diagrams, 1966	Box 3	Folder 3
Urban renewal base map, Undated	Box 3	Folder 4

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Series 2: Board of Directors, 1975-1977

Scope and Contents

The series contains correspondence, reports, internal memoranda, meeting minutes, agendas, testimony and other information used to prepare for the Board of Directors meetings. The folders are arranged chronologically.

Title/Description	Instances	
Untitled, 1960-1969	Box 4	Folder 1
Untitled, 1970-1971	Box 5	Folder 1
Untitled, 1972-1974	Box 6	Folder 1
Untitled, 1961-1964	Box 7	Folder 1

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Series 3: Annual Membership and Board of Directors Meeting, 1960-1969

Scope and Contents

The series contains materials regarding the annual membership and board of directors meeting. It includes board of directors meeting minutes, committee reports, statements issued at annual meetings, meeting agendas, photographs, correspondence, and internal memoranda gathered or prepared for the meeting. The folders are arranged chronologically.

Title/Description	Instances	
Untitled, 1961-1965	Box 8	Folder 1
Untitled, 1966-1968	Box 9	Folder 1
Untitled, 1969-73	Box 10	Folder 1
Untitled, 1971-1973	Box 11	Folder 1
Untitled, 1974-1975	Box 12	Folder 1
Untitled, 1975-1977	box 13	folder 1

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Series 4: Annual Reports, 1971-1977

Scope and Contents

The series contains work folders for Downtown Progress' annual reports. The folders include the final annual report, "memoranda of contact", internal memoranda, correspondence, and notes. The folders are arranged chronologically.

Title/Description	Instances	
General correspondence, 1971-1972	Box 14	Folder 1
Budget and Review, 1964-1977	Box 14	folder 2

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Series 5: Committee Files, 1964-1977

Scope and Contents

This series contains standing and ad hoc committee files. Included are committee reports, meeting agendas and minutes, notes, correspondence, and internal memoranda regarding the committees' work. Committees included in the series are budget review; development, environment, and preservation; executive; facilities; housing and

relocation; legislative; nominating, planning, urban renewal, and relocation; transportation and services; zoning and codes. The folders are arranged alphabetically by name of committee with general files first.

Title/Description	Instances	
General Correspondence, 1971-72	Box 15	Folder 1
Budget and Review, 1964-1977	Box 15	folder 2
Development, Environment, Preservation, 1963-1977	Box 16	Folder 1
Executive, 1960	Box 17	Folder 1
Executive, 1961-1962	Box 18	Folder 1
Executive, 1963-1964	Box 19	Folder 1
Executive, 1965-1966	Box 20	Folder 1
Executive, 1967	Box 21	Folder 1
Executive, 1968	Box 22	Folder 1
Executive, 1970	Box 23	Folder 1
Executive, 1971	Box 24	Folder 1
Executive, 1972-1973	Box 25	Folder 1
Executive, 1974, Parts 1 & 2	Box 26	Folder 1
Executive , 1975, Part 1 of 2	Box 26	folder 2
Executive, 1974, Parts 1 & 2	Box 27	Folder 1
Executive , 1975, Part 2 of 2	Box 27	folder 2
Executive, 1976	Box 27	folder 3
Executive, 1977	Box 28	Folder 1
Facilities, 1960-1977	Box 29	Folder 1
Housing and Relocation, 1963	Box 30	Folder 1
Legislative, 1964-1971	Box 30	Folder 2
Legislative, 1964-1971	Box 30	Folder 3
Nominating, 1971-1977	Box 30	Folder 4
Nominating, 1971-1977	Box 30	Folder 5
Nominating, 1971-1977	Box 30	Folder 6
Nominating, 1971-1977	Box 30	Folder 7
Nominating, 1971-1977	Box 30	Folder 8
Nominating, 1971-1977	Box 30	Folder 9
Nominating, 1971-1977	Box 30	Folder 10
Planning and urban renewal, 1962-1969	Box 31	Folder 1

Planning and urban renewal, 1970-1977	Box 32	Folder 1
Transportation and services, 1962-1965	Box 33	Folder 1
Transportation and services, 1966-1968	Box 34	Folder 1
Transportation and services, 1970-1976	Box 35	Folder 1
Zoning and codes, 1962-1972	Box 36	Folder 1
Zoning and codes, 1973-1977	Box 37	Folder 1
Mailing, 1963-1973	Box 37	Folder 2

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Series 6: General Office Files, ca. 1960-1977

Scope and Contents

This series consists of subject files maintained in Downtown Progress' offices to track major projects and topics of interest. It includes correspondence, internal memoranda, forms to track telephone calls and meetings, reports, handwritten notes, maps, diagrams, testimony, and legislation. It covers a variety of topics affecting downtown development, including a rezoning study, historic landmark status, a proposed sports arena/convention and civic center, national visitors center at Union Station, transportation issues, Design and Feasibility studies, and the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. It also contains background materials, public testimony and statements, reports, and internal memoranda/correspondence regarding HUD's Neighborhood Development Programs for the District proposed by the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) beginning in 1970s and information about squares slated for development. Folders are arranged alphabetically by title.

Title/Description	Instances	
Assessed Valuation by blocks, 1960-1965	Box 38	Folder 1
Biographical data-R. Gray, Undated	Box 38	Folder 2
Chinese Community, 1971-1977	Box 38	Folder 3
Cleveland Park, Undated	Box 38	Folder 4
Developers, 1975-1977	Box 38	Folder 5
Developers, 1975-1977	Box 38	Folder 6
Developers, 1975-1977	Box 38	Folder 7
Development, 1973-1977	Box 38	Folder 8
Development, 1973-1977	Box 38	Folder 9
Design and Feasibility Study - General, Undated	Box 39	Folder 1
Design and Feasibility Study - Combined use office/retail (Squares 344/345), 1962-1963	Box 39	Folder 2
Design and Feasibility Study - Center leg freeway and air rights, 1964	Box 39	Folder 3

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Design and Feasibility Study - Center leg freeway and air rights, 1964	Box 39	Folder 4
Development, 1970-1977	Box 39	Folder 5
Development, 1970-1977	Box 39	Folder 6
Development, 1972-1973	Box 40	Folder 1
D.C. Development Bank, 1972-1974	Box 40	Folder 2
Downtown Development Corporation, 1970-74	Box 40	Folder 3
Downtown Design and Development Program, 1967-1971	Box 40	Folder 4
Downtown Design and Development Program, Undated	Box 41	Folder 1
Downtown Feasibility Survey - Manufacturing/Wholesale study, 1967	Box 41	Folder 2
Downtown report, Undated	Box 41	Folder 3
Downtown structures, Undated	Box 41	Folder 4
Dupont Circle, Undated	Box 41	Folder 5
Dupont Circle property owners, Undated	Box 41	Folder 6
Employment studies, 1966-1967	Box 41	Folder 7
Employee Survey, 1960-1971	Box 42	Folder 1
Economic incentives task force, 1979	Box 43	Folder 1
Federal Triangle, 1979	Box 43	Folder 2
Fortune 500, 1972-1974	Box 43	Folder 3
Format, Undated	Box 43	Folder 4
Furniture stores, Undated	Box 43	Folder 5
Historic landmarks, 1963-1964	Box 43	Folder 6
Historic landmarks, 1978	Box 44	Folder 1
Historic landmark legislation, 1978	Box 44	Folder 2
Historic Preservation - American Institute of Planners conference, 1979	Box 44	Folder 3
Historic preservation - Newsclippings, Undated	Box 44	Folder 4
Historic preservation - Economic incentives, Undated	Box 44	Folder 5
Historic Preservation, Undated	Box 45	Folder 1
Home survey, Undated	Box 46	Folder 1
James Creek-Buzzard Point, Undated	Box 46	Folder 2
J-51, Undated	Box 46	Folder 3

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Lincoln Place, Undated	Box 46	Folder 4
Maps, Undated	Box 47	Folder 1
Boxes 48, Undated	Box 47	Folder 2
Maps, Undated	Box 47	Folder 3
Mount Vernon Square East, Undated	Box 47	Folder 4
Neighborhood Development Plan #3, Undated	Box 49	Folder 1
Neighborhood Development Plan #4, 1970-74	Box 49	Folder 2
Neighborhood Development Plan #4, 1970-74	Box 50	Folder 1
Neighborhood Development Plan #5, 1974	Box 51	Folder 1
Neighborhood Development Plan, 1971-1977	Box 52	Folder 1
National Visitors Center, 1960-1978	Box 53	Folder 1
National Visitors Center, 1960-1978	Box 54	Folder 1
National Visitors Center, Undated	Box 55	Folder 1
Nightlife study, Undated	Box 55	Folder 2
Pedestrian survey, Undated	Box 55	Folder 3
Pedestrians, Undated	Box 55	Folder 4
Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, 1973	Box 56	Folder 1
Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, 1973	Box 57	Folder 1
Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, 1973	Box 58	Folder 1
Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, 1974	Box 59	Folder 1
Performing Arts, 1962	Box 60	Folder 1
Permit, 1975	Box 60	Folder 2
Public and Private development draft, 1978	Box 60	Folder 3
Radio and T.V. spots, 1974-1977	Box 60	Folder 4
Speeches and remarks, Undated	Box 61	Folder 1
Sports Arena/Convention and Civic Center, 1963-1968	Box 61	Folder 2
Boxes 62-66, Undated	Box 61	Folder 3
Sports Arena/Convention and Civic Center, 1970-1977	Box 61	Folder 4
SA/CC, 1977-1978	Box 66	Folder 1
Street vending, 1971-1974	Box 67	Folder 1
Turner Construction Company EEO Plan, 1973	Box 67	Folder 2
Transportation and highways, 1970-71	Box 67	Folder 3

Transportation, Undated	Box 68	Folder 1
Union Station, Undated	Box 68	Folder 2
Visitors Survey, 1960	Box 68	Folder 3
YMCA site information, 1977-1978	Box 68	Folder 4
Sports Arena/Convention Center, Undated	Box 68	folder 5
Zoning, 1958-1979	Box 69	Folder 1
Zoning, 1958-1979	Box 70	Folder 1
Zoning, 1958-1979	Box 71	Folder 1
Zoning, 1958-1979	Box 72	Folder 1
Square 214-250, Undated	Box 73	Folder 1
Squares 251-284, Undated	Box 74	Folder 1
Squares 285-321, Undated	Box 75	Folder 1
Squares 322-377, Undated	Box 76	Folder 1
Squares 379-429, Undated	Box 77	Folder 1
Squares 451-491, Undated	Box 78	Folder 1
Squares 514-562, Undated	Box 79	Folder 1
Squares 564-630, Undated	Box 80	Folder 1

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Series 7: Legal Documents, 1971-1977

Scope and Contents

The series primarily contains pleadings in a case brought by Businessmen Against Second Year Action Plan (BASYAP) to stop proposed condemnation and redevelopment for certain sections of the downtown urban renewal area. The plaintiffs included 126 downtown businessman affected by the Plan who sued the Redevelopment Land Agency, Downtown Progress, NCPC, the City Government, and others in federal court to stop the Plan. It also contains pleadings regarding a case brought against WMATA for refusal to install a second elevator at the Gallery Place Metro stop in compliance with handicap access laws in the late 1970s.

Title/Description	Instances	
Gallery Place suit, Undated	Box 81	Folder 1
WMATA, Undated	Box 81	Folder 2
Businessmen Against Second Year Action Plan (BASYAP), 1970-1971	Box 82	Folder 1
BASYAP NDP#3, 1969-1972	Box 82	Folder 2
BASYAP, 1970-1971	Box 83	Folder 1

BASYAP, 1976-1977

Box 84

Folder 1

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The series contains photographs, slides and sketches of buildings and street scenes in the Downtown Progress corridor.

Subseries 1: Photographs and Sketches, ca. 1960s**Scope and Contents**

Contains photographs from the 1960s before development began in the downtown area as well as a number of photographs of F Street stores and streetscapes. It also contains sketches of buildings, streets, and walkways proposed for the new downtown urban renewal area.

Title/Description	Instances	
Photographs, 1960s	Box 85	Folder 1
Photographs, 1960s	Box 86	Folder 1
Sketches, 1960s	Box 87	Folder 1
Photographs of F Street, Undated	Box 88	Folder 1

Subseries 2: Slides, ca. 1960-1970s**Scope and Contents**

Consists primarily of slides of buildings located within squares 213-491 and 514-631. They are arranged by address and square. It also contains some slides of F Street stores and streetscapes.

Title/Description	Instances	
Slides of F Street, Undated	Box 89	Folder 1
Squares 213-223, Undated	Box 90	Folder 1
Squares 224-253, Undated	Box 91	Folder 1
Squares 254-290, Undated	Box 92	Folder 1
Squares 291-346, Undated	Box 93	Folder 1
Squares 347-401, Undated	Box 94	Folder 1
Squares 402-428, Undated	Box 95	Folder 1
Squares 429-458, Undated	Box 96	Folder 1
Squares 459-491, Undated	Box 97	Folder 1
Squares 514-529, Undated		

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	Box 98	Folder 1
Squares 530-631, Undated	Box 99	Folder 1
Unidentified slides, Undated	Box 100	Folder 1
Unidentified slides, Undated	Box 101	Folder 1
Unidentified slides, Undated	Box 102	Folder 1

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