

Kansas City Public Works Collection (SC163)

Introduction

This collection contains reports, correspondence, permits, regulations, blueprints, and notes concerning the operations of the Kansas City Public Works Department in the early to mid-20th century. The majority of the collection relates to the construction, operation, and maintenance of area sewers, water lines, and their infrastructure.

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Kansas City Public Works Department
Title: Kansas City Public Works Collection
Dates: 1905-1978 and n.d.
Size: 6.8 linear feet, 3 boxes, 1 map folder
Collection Number: SC163

Donor Information

Gift, 2008, David Teague.

Citation Note

Kansas City Public Works Collection (SC163), Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

Administrative Information

Related Collections: Additional items and information relating to the Kansas City Public Works Department may be found in the Missouri Valley Special Collections local history collections. These include: Vertical File - Kansas City--Public Works Department; "Public Works and Professionalism: Kansas City, 1850-1979" by Rita C. Lynch (Manuscript File: Lynch, Rita C.); as well as newspaper clippings, articles, and photographs concerning various projects and personnel. Department publications, studies, and reports may be found by searching the Kansas City Public Library Catalog.

Biographical/Historical Sketch

The Kansas City Public Works Department (also known as the Department of Public Works of Kansas City) has its origins in the appointment of the first City Engineer, Fred Breckinridge, for the Town of Kansas in 1855. As Kansas City developed and expanded during the 19th and 20th centuries, the duties of the City Engineer's office developed and expanded as well, transforming into the Standing Committee of Public Works, then the Board of Public Works, and eventually into the Public Works Department. The Public Works Department oversees city planning, construction,

maintenance, and engineering projects, including issues relating to roads, buildings and structures, sewers, waste disposal, water service, and utilities.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains reports, correspondence, permits, regulations, blueprints, and notes concerning the operations of the Kansas City Public Works Department in the early to mid-20th century. The majority of the collection relates to the construction, operation, and maintenance of area sewers, water lines, and their infrastructure. Much of the collection appears to have been part of the office files for O. M. Nichols, a sewer engineer for the city.

The collection is arranged primarily by department and subject, and therein by project, type, and date. Oversize blueprints, notes, and charts have been removed and stored in a 20 x 24 in. box and a map cabinet drawer.

Series 1: Engineering Department annual reports, 1915, 1916, and 1919

This series contains annual reports produced by the Public Works Engineering Department. The reports include details on street improvement work, contractors, project costs, highways, structural issues, and sewers. There are two copies of the 1919 report.

Series 2: Sewer reports and construction materials, 1905-1961 and n.d.

Materials in this series relate to the construction of sewers in both Jackson and Clay counties by the Kansas City Public Works Department. Reports include information and updates on various construction projects, including details of sewer mileage, costs, contractors, funding, and payments. Also included are law and regulatory information, applications, permits, and correspondence pertaining to the Missouri Water Pollution Board for sewer work along the Missouri River and Big Blue River. The applications were approved by the City Engineer of Kansas City and then submitted to the Missouri Water Pollution Board for review and approval. Many of the applications correlate to the permits contained in this series. Some of the permits also contain correspondence regarding details of projects under consideration.

Series 3: Sewer correspondence, operations, projects, and miscellaneous materials, 1918-1978 and n.d.

This series consists of items concerning the operations and functions of the Kansas City sewer system. Included are correspondence and reports relating to issues with sewers in and around the city. Specific areas discussed include the Kansas City Stockyards and the Blue River area. The series also contains miscellaneous items related to sewers and the Public Works Department, including a report of wells and cisterns, a chart of city toilet facilities, a Public Works newsletter, rock elevation lists, information on a traffic accident involving two employees from the City Engineer's office, and correspondence from the Missouri Bureau of Public Health Engineering.

Series 4: Manhole construction materials and list, 1947-1962 and n.d.

This series contains materials product specifications and pricing information, as well as construction blueprints, drawings, and notes relating to manholes built and used by the Public Works Department. Also included is a list of manholes used in snow removal.

Series 5: Pollution Control Department, 1961-1970

Materials in this series include correspondence, reports, a program summary, progress reports, and policy, regulation, and a fee schedule relating to the Pollution Control Department of Kansas City. Catch basin maintenance, joint sewage treatment facilities for Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas, industrial waste issues, and project bidding information are some of the topics discussed.

Series 6: Grandview Airport construction, 1940-1949 and n.d.

This series contains materials regarding the construction of the Grandview Airport in the 1940s. Included are newspaper clippings on the project and its role in the war effort, construction guidelines, reports, correspondence, materials product information, topography studies, cost and bidding information, proposals, blueprints, drawings, and notes. Most of these items relate to the airport's sewers and manhole construction. Correspondence and regulations for contracts with the Works Progress Administration (WPA) are also included.

Collection Inventory

The notation "MC" indicates the materials are located within a map cabinet. Items with an "OS" notation are located within an oversize box.

Series 1: Engineering Department annual reports, 1915, 1916, and 1919

- f. 1 Engineering Department annual reports, 1915, 1916, and 1919 (2 copies)

Series 2: Sewer reports and construction materials, 1905-1961 and n.d.

- f. 2 Engineer of Sewers reports, May and June 1919
- f. 3 Sewer Division statements, reports, and summaries of mileage, costs, and contracts, 1905-1930
- f. 4 Sewer Division Report, May 1, 1926-May 1, 1927 (OS)
- f. 5 Sewer Division estimates for piping from the Dickey Clay Mfg. Co., 1918-1921
- f. 6 Sewer Division work report for 1917, n.d. (4 copies)
- f. 7 Reports of sewers constructed in Kansas City, 1920-1926, 1928, and 1931
- f. 8 Reports of sewers constructed in Kansas City, 1932-1936 and 1939-1941
- f. 9 Reports of sewers constructed by Kansas City in Jackson and Clay counties, 1957-1960
- f. 10 Missouri Water Pollution Board law, regulations, and resolution, 1958-1959

- f. 11 Missouri Water Pollution Board sewer construction permit applications, 1958-1960
- f. 12 Missouri Water Pollution Board sewer construction permits and correspondence, 1958-1961
- f. 13 Pipe pricing information and quotations, 1958-1959
- f. 14 Tentative specifications for culverts, storm drains, sewer pipes, and manhole risers and tops, 1960 and n.d.
- f. 15 Memoranda and proposed application for permit to build privy vault, cesspool, or septic tank, November 30, 1925

Series 3: Sewer correspondence, operations, projects, and miscellaneous materials, 1918-1978 and n.d.

- f. 16 Correspondence and reports on sewer overloads, faults, and sanity conditions, 1945, 1951, and 1956
- f. 17 Stockyards sewer correspondence, 1918
- f. 18 Blue River sewer correspondence, newspaper clipping, and notes, 1936-1937, 1947, 1949, and n.d.
- f. 19 Ordinances and map for sewer districts 18 and 22, 1879 and 1978
- f. 20 Report of wells and cisterns in Blue Valley Addition, n.d.
- f. 21 "How Kansas City Lives," Many 19, 1935 (9 copies)
- f. 22 Public Works News Letter, June 4, 1956
- f. 23 Rock elevation lists, n.d.
- f. 24 Miscellaneous sewer materials, 1926, 1929, 1956, and n.d.

Series 4: Manhole construction materials and list, 1947-1962 and n.d.

- f. 25 Manhole materials product information, 1960 and 1962
- f. 26 Manhole construction blueprints and drawings, 1947, 1957-1962
- f. 27 Manhole construction blueprints and drawings, 1957 and 1962 (OS)
- f. 28 Manhole construction notes, n.d.
- f. 29 List of manholes used in snow removal, n.d.

Series 5: Pollution Control Department, 1961-1970

- f. 30 Pollution Control Department correspondence, reports, and program summary, 1961-1963
- f. 31 Pollution Control Department monthly reports, October 1961-December 1962
- f. 32 Pollution Control Department progress reports, January 1963-April 1964 and January-March 1966
- f. 33 Pollution Control Department monthly progress reports, February-November 1966
- f. 34 Pollution Control Department monthly progress reports, December 1966-June 1967
- f. 35 Pollution Control Department monthly progress reports, July-December 1967
- f. 36 Pollution Control Department policies, regulations, and fee schedule for sewers, 1968-1970

Series 6: Grandview Airport construction, 1940-1949 and n.d.

- f. 37 Grandview Airport newspaper clippings, 1941-1942
- f. 38 Grandview Airport construction guidelines and reports, 1941 and n.d.
- f. 39 Grandview Airport construction materials product information, 1941 and n.d.
- f. 40 Grandview Airport construction correspondence, 1941-1943 and 1946
- f. 41 Grandview Airport construction bidding materials, 1942-1944
- f. 42 Grandview Airport construction declarations of necessity, 1942
- f. 43 Grandview Airport construction proposals, 1942
- f. 44 Grandview Airport construction ordinances, 1942
- f. 45 Grandview Airport construction blueprints and drawings, 1940-1946 and n.d.
- f. 46 Grandview Airport construction blueprints and drawings, 1940-1942 and n.d. (OS)
- f. 47 Grandview Airport construction blueprints and drawings, 1943-1944 (OS)
- f. 48 Grandview Airport construction notes and sketches, 1939, 1941-1944, 1949, and n.d.
- f. 49 Grandview Airport construction notes and chart, 1942 and n.d. (OS)

- f. 50 Manhole pallets and headers blueprint, September 17, 1947; "Administration Building – Grandview Airports, Bids received March 29, 1944;" Manhole Casting for Auxiliary Municipal Airport, n.d. (MC)

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