



Civic Progress, Incorporated Records

Collection Number: S0153

Collection Title: Civic Progress, Incorporated Records

Dates: 1953-1984

Creator: Civic Progress, Incorporated

Abstract: The collection contains articles of incorporation, agendas, histories, correspondence, and speeches documenting the organization's efforts to support long-range infrastructure and culture improvements in St. Louis City.

Collection Size: 0.01 cubic foot
(1 folder)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at stlouis@shsmo.org.

Restrictions on Use: The Donor has given and assigned to the University all rights of copyright, which the Donor has in the Materials and in such of the Donor's works as may be found among any collections of Materials received by the University from others.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Civic Progress, Incorporated Records* (S0153); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-St. Louis].

Donor Information: The records were donated to the University of Missouri by Harry Wilson on May 17, 1982 (Accession No. SA2464).

Related Material:

St. Louis Regional Chamber Records (S0162)
Downtown St. Louis Incorporated Records (S0342)

Processed by: Processed by AJ Medlock, March 2023.

Historical Note:

In January 1953, St. Louis City Mayor Joseph Darst appointed eight businesspeople and civic leaders to create a permanent civic organization to support long-range city improvements. Sidney R. Baer, Arthur A. Blumeyer, David R. Calhoun, Jr., James M. Douglas, Aloys P. Kaufmann, J.W. McAfee, Power B. McHaney, and Ethan A.H. Shepley incorporated Civic Progress on April 3, 1953, as a non-profit association, intended for the “benefit, health, and general welfare” of St. Louis and vicinity. The organization’s principal objective was to “assure the well-being and growth of St. Louis as a well-adjusted, healthy community capable of providing its citizens with conditions essential to good living.” The founders were to develop a plan for St. Louis, furnish leadership to implement it, and acquire or purchase property as necessary to fulfill their objectives.

The first formal meeting was held on September 10, 1953, and ten additional members were added: August A. Busch, Jr., Edwin M. Clark, Donald Danforth, Sidney Maestre, Morton D. May, William A. McDonnell, Edgar M. Queeny, Edgar H. Rand, Tom K. Smith, and Clarence M. Turley. Although Civic Progress’s leaders initially made plans to include representatives from labor, women’s groups, and other civic organizations, they dropped these plans in favor of a small, homogenous, informal group of the chief executive officers of local corporations plus the mayor, St. Louis County supervisor, and chancellors of St. Louis and Washington Universities. Fleishmann-Hillard, a St. Louis-based public relations firm, provided an office and staff; members committed operating funds from their respective companies.

Throughout its history, Civic Progress supported several endeavors, including bond issues for schools, airports, public improvements, sewers, city, water, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, and the St. Louis Zoo and St. Louis Art Museum. Civic Progress was instrumental in organizing and founding the United Way, Downtown Inc., the St. Louis Research Council, the Arts and Education Council, the Regional Commerce and Growth Association (RCGA), and the Regional Industrial Development Corporation. By the 1960s and 70s, the group began considering “Newer urban problems”, such as Civil Rights, housing, and poverty. As a result, they formed a Dialogue Committee to bring members into contact with African American community leaders. Together with the local National Alliance of Businessmen, they established a JOBS program for St. Louis’s Black community.

On December 2020, Civic Progress merged with Alliance STL, Downtown St. Louis, Incorporated, and Arch to Park to officially become Greater St. Louis Inc. This new organization focuses on “creating jobs, expanding equity, and improving St. Louis’ global competitiveness.”

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged in its original order in one folder.

Scope and Content Note:

The collection consists of histories, articles of incorporation, meeting minutes, correspondence, and one photograph chronicling Civic Progress’s history supporting regional planning and economic development in the St. Louis region. Topics of interest include funding for the arts, African American employment, mass transit, and public-school funding. Also in the collection is a letter from St. Louis Mayor Raymond R. Tucker to Powell B. McHaney, president of Civic Progress, Inc., affirming his belief in Civic Progress’s efficacy and his hope that the organization

would work with state, city, and county governments, as well as local social service and cultural organizations to solve community problems rather than supplant their efforts. The materials in this collection are arranged into one folder and date from 1953 to 1984.

Container List:

f. 1	Articles of incorporation, agendas, histories, correspondence, and speeches, 1953-1984
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Index:

Index Terms	Folders
African Americans--Employment--Missouri--Saint Louis	1
Baer, Sidney Raymond, 1891-1956	1
Blumeyer, Arthur Adolphus, 1886-1959	1
Busch, August Anheuser, Jr., 1899-1989	1
Calhoun, David Randolph, 1902-1974	1
Civic improvement--Missouri--Saint Louis Metropolitan Area	1
Civic Progress, Inc. (Saint Louis, Mo.)	1
Douglas, James M. (James Marsh), 1896-1974	1
Danforth, Donald, 1898-1973	1
Kaufmann, A.P. (Aloys P.), 1902-1984	1
McAfee, James Wesley, 1902-1986	1
McDonnell, William A., 1894-1988	1
McHaney, Powell B., 1905-1957	1
Queeney, Edgar M. (Edgar Monsanto), 1897-1968	1
Regional planning--Missouri--Saint Louis Metropolitan Area	1
Shepley, Ethan A.H. (Ethan Allen Hitchcock), 1896-1975	1
Tucker, Raymond R. (Raymond Roche), 1896-1970	1