

METROPOLITAN DETROIT BUILDING FUND
COLLECTION

Papers, 1948-1971

8.25 linear feet

Accession Number 1289
L. C. Number MS

The papers of the Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund were placed in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs by H. Clay Howell, president of the United Way for Southeastern Michigan, in August of 1986 and April of 1987 and were opened for research in June of 1991.

The Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund was organized in August, 1953 to manage the collection and distribution of funds for capital improvements to hospitals and health and social service agencies in metropolitan Detroit. Its work was divided between a fund-raising apparatus and an allocations committee, assisted by professional consultants, responsible not only for evaluating agency requests and making recommendations to the board, but also for determining the community's long-range health and welfare needs.

Successor to the Greater Detroit Hospital Fund, which raised over \$20 million in the late '40s to finance construction at fourteen Detroit area hospitals, the Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund continued the practice of federated fund raising for health and welfare services proven so successful by Detroit's innovative Torch Drive, raising over \$30 million in two campaigns in 1955 and 1961 to finance dozens of construction and renovation projects. Unlike the Torch Drive, however, it solicited only from corporations, foundations, and a few wealthy individuals, not from rank and file workers, and gave contributors immunity from further solicitation for capital programs for five years.

These post-war building fund campaigns responded to the critical need for hospital beds and modernized agency facilities created both by shortages of funds and materials during the Depression and World War II and by demographic changes in the metropolitan Detroit area.

In 1962, the United Foundation agreed to take over the administration of MDBF affairs and, primarily because of the economic advantages to be gained, replaced it with its own Capital Fund Division a year later. The Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund was dissolved as a separate corporation in 1971.

Additional files relating to the Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund are contained in the United Foundation Office of the President: Walter C. Laidlaw Collection.

The papers of the Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund reflect charitable fund raising activity as well as community planning for health care and social welfare needs in post-war Detroit.

Important subjects covered in the collection are:

Charitable Fund Raising	Hospital Planning &
Community Centers/Settlements	Construction
Detroit Medical Center	Racial Discrimination
Greater Detroit Area Hospital Council	in Hospitals
Health Care	Social Welfare Planning

Among the important correspondents are:

James L. Blean	Walter C. Laidlaw
Jacques Cousin	Januarius A. Mullen
George Haggarty	Jerome H. Remick, Jr.
Stanley W. Hancock	Ramon Scruggs

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Correspondence, minutes, reports, clippings, press releases, forms, and publications produced by the various committees managing MDBF campaigns.

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Minutes, proceedings, correspondence, reports, and financial records relating to the administration of the Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund.

Non-manuscript Material:

About fifty photographs relating to Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund campaigns and agencies and two slide sets used in MDBF promotions and graphics production have been placed in the United Way for Southeastern Michigan Photograph Collection.

Series I
Board of Directors, 1953-1969
Box 1

Minutes, transcripts of proceedings, membership lists, correspondence and reports documenting Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings, covering, among other subjects, campaign activity, financial affairs, agency allocations, and the purposes and operating procedures of the organization. Files are arranged chronologically.

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Series II
 Allocations Committee, 1954-1961
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Minutes, transcripts of proceedings, membership lists, correspondence, reports of recommendations, and consultants' reports produced by the Allocations Committee and its panels and detailing their discussions of specific agency programs as well as overall capital needs for health care, welfare, and recreation in the metropolitan Detroit area. Files are arranged alphabetically by subject or type of material, and then chronologically.

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Series III
Agency Applications, 1953-1962
Boxes 4-12

Formal applications and supporting material from agencies seeking admission to the Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund.

This series is divided into the following three sub series:

Sub series A: 1955 Campaign - Approved, 1953-1960, Boxes 4-7

Completed applications, including annual reports, budgets, publicity, program histories and project descriptions, correspondence, transcripts of hearings, and consultants' reports regarding agencies admitted to the 1955 Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund. Only those agencies with names beginning with the letters "A" through "G" (except Girl Scouts) are documented. Files are arranged alphabetically by agency.

Sub series B: 1955 Campaign - Denied, 1953-1956, Boxes 7-10

Completed applications, including annual reports, budgets, publicity, program histories and project descriptions, correspondence, transcripts of hearings, and consultants' reports regarding agencies denied inclusion in the 1955 MDBF campaign. Of particular interest are the deliberations over the Parkside Hospital application, which raised the issue of segregated versus integrated hospital facilities. Files are arranged alphabetically by agency.

Sub series C: 1961 Campaign - Denied, 1959-1962, Boxes 10-12

Completed applications, including annual reports, budgets, publicity, program histories and project descriptions, correspondence, transcripts of hearings, and consultants' reports regarding agencies denied inclusion in the 1961 MDBF campaign. Only rejected hospital applicants are documented. Materials concerning the Detroit Medical Center development, land acquisition for which was provided by the MDBF, are located in Series V. Files are arranged alphabetically by agency.

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Committee minutes, correspondence, progress reports and form letters from divisions targeting special groups for solicitation, information on contributors, press releases, clippings, and promotional material (i.e., collateral) documenting the two fund-raising campaigns mounted by the MDBF in 1955 and 1961. Files are arranged alphabetically by subject or type of material, and then chronologically.

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Series V
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Transcripts of committee proceedings and minutes, correspondence and reports, financial records, and corporation papers detailing the history and administration of the Metropolitan Detroit Building Fund. Particularly well documented are the Detroit Medical Center project and the role of the Greater Detroit Area Hospital Council in planning for hospital construction in the metropolitan area. Files are arranged alphabetically by subject or type of material, and then chronologically.

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METROPOLITAN DETROIT BUILDING FUND
COLLECTION

Inventory of Closed Material
4 SB

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