

# ARCHIVES GAZETTE



City of Seattle  
Seattle Municipal Archives

Number 51 Spring 2015

Office of the City Clerk  
Legislative Department

## Message from the City Archivist

The Archives' highest value is providing unfettered access to City records in all formats. Our goal is to make as much as possible available via our website and other venues such as Flickr and YouTube. This includes over 110,000 photographic images, approximately 2000 maps, and coming soon is a digital collection of all of our Olmsted parks records.

As part of this effort to make records available in digital form, the Archives is undertaking two large digitization projects, both starting in early April. With generous funding from Seattle City Light, project staff will appraise 117 records center boxes jammed with videotape in various formats and digitize the material that is deemed to have archival value. This work builds on a successful proof-of-concept project undertaken in 2014 in which we digitized 152 titles of City Light video.

The video covers a broad array of City Light programs and activities including marketing and advertising, capital construction, Skagit tours, employee awards ceremonies, PCB cleanup, and a host of other topics. Many of the 2014 project videos can be viewed on our YouTube site and more will be added during the current project.

The work will be done using the Moving Image Preservation of Puget Sound (MIPOPS) equipment currently housed at the Archives under an agreement between the Office of the City Clerk and MIPOPS. The City Light video project will be completed in 2016.

The second project is a systematic approach to digitizing audiotape recordings of City Council meetings, including full Council, committees, and public hearings. The Archives has been digitizing this material for several years, but the work was dependent on surplus funds being available at the end of a given year. The Archives is now receiving an annual budget allocation earmarked for project. We estimate that it will take eleven years to complete.

The audio, which reaches back into the early 1960s, is the best record of these meetings. It documents discussions of proposed legislation, City programs, and projects, and includes the voices of past Council members, community leaders, activists, and ordinary citizens who chose to take part in the civic process.

The Archives website includes many Seattle Voices mini-exhibits with audio clips and background information on a variety of topics. Page three of this *Gazette* describes the newest addition to Seattle Voices, a look at community efforts to stop the discriminatory practice of redlining.

We are excited to be enhancing access to these important records, and to be making the actions and activities of the City readily available to the public.

—Scott Cline

## Electronic Records Search

The Electronic Records Search Interface provides onsite access to processed textual electronic records in the Seattle Municipal Archives through a full-text search interface. The born-digital correspondence and subject files of nine former City Councilmembers are currently available, and more records will be added.



Seattle Municipal Archives  
Electronic Records Search

[Go directly to the Electronic Records Search](#)

Researchers can bring a thumb drive to the research room and save both searches and documents to their removable media. To see a list of all available descriptions with electronic records available, go to the [Seattle Municipal Archives Guide](#) search page and search for "digital files." Included are records for Councilmembers Jim Compton, Richard Conlin, David Della, Jan Drago, Richard McIver, Judy Nicastro, Margaret Pageler, Peter Steinbrueck and Heidi Wills. Paper textual records of these Councilmembers are also available in the SMA. Additionally, official websites and related social media sites for Councilmember Conlin are available through [Archive-It](#). Researchers using the Electronic Records Search Interface for the first time are advised to schedule an appointment with an archivist for an introduction to the search capabilities of the system.

## City Archivist Receives Advocacy Award

City Archivist Scott Cline has been selected to receive the 2015 Charles Payton Award for Heritage Advocacy, given annually by the Association of King County Historical Organizations.

The Payton Award is presented to an individual or organization for initiating, developing, or presenting a plan to raise public awareness of heritage issues and/or collections.

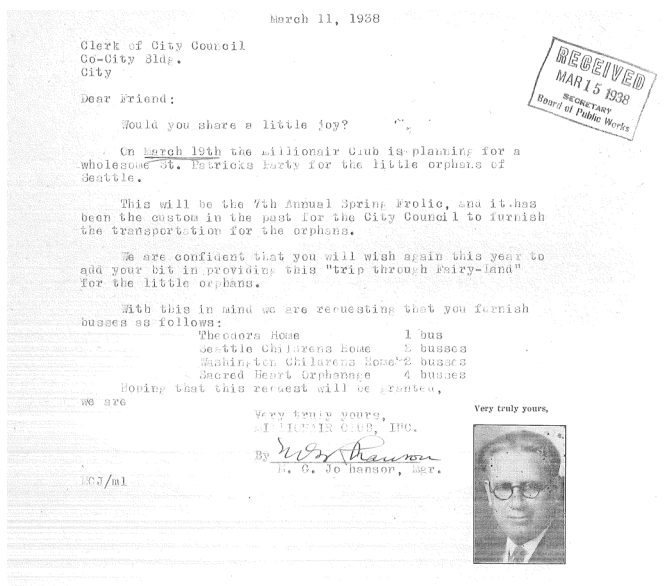
Cline has been City Archivist since the program was established in 1985. Since then, the Archives has developed a national reputation as a model for local government archives and records management programs, and is renowned for the amount of records and information it makes available via its website.

## 77 Years Ago: Seattle's Millionair Club

In 1938, the head of Seattle's Millionair Club [wrote to City Council](#) requesting free bus transportation to enable the city's orphans to attend the club's St. Patrick's Day party. The letter from M.G. Johanson began, "Would you share a little joy?" He compares the "wholesome" party to a "trip through Fairy-Land" for the little orphans."

Johanson was not afraid to ask for community support for the organization he founded in Pioneer Square in 1921. He sent out tens of thousands of letters each year to solicit contributions for the club's work in helping Seattle's homeless and unemployed citizens.

The wordy letterhead on the 1938 letter sums up the charity's work and philosophy ("Object: Relief without embarrassment...Endorsed: By every force for good") while also appealing for monetary contributions, job opportunities, and donations of food, clothing, and household supplies.



[CF 158335](#), Record Series 1802-01, Seattle Municipal Archives

The petition for free transportation was denied by the Board of Public Works. Johanson led the Millionair Club for 53 years, waiting to retire until he was 86 years old. The organization – now in Belltown – continues today with a professional staff and expanded services for Seattle's neediest citizens.

## New Images in the Photo Database

Images recently uploaded in the Seattle Municipal Archives Database include Mercer Corridor construction from 2011, Seattle Dept. of Transportation photos, historical Boundary and Gorge Dam images from Seattle City Light, and City Council events from 2006 to 2014 including oaths of office, visits to the state legislature, and various other events.



Mercer East construction, August 19, 2011  
[Item 174642](#),  
Seattle  
Municipal  
Archives



Boundary Dam, undated.

[Item 175027](#), Seattle Municipal Archives



(Photos cont.)



Seattle Center and Mt Rainier, undated  
[Item 175095](#), *Seattle Municipal Archives*



Unveiling of Alki Beach Statue of Liberty, September 6, 2008  
[Item 175166](#), *Seattle Municipal Archives*



Budget Town Hall at Garfield High School, October 23, 2013  
[Item 175185](#), *Seattle Municipal Archives*

## New *Seattle Voices*: Redlining

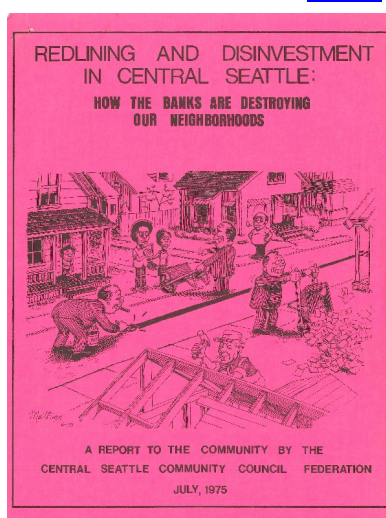
In 1976, Seattle City Council took a stand against redlining, a discriminatory practice targeted at African-Americans and others of color, by which banks, insurance companies, and other institutions, refused or limited loans, mortgages, and insurance within specific geographic areas. Redlining also included the practice of banks not reinvesting funds they received from low income neighborhoods back into those communities. A six-month study by the Central Seattle Community Council Federation released in July 1975, "Redlining and Disinvestment in Central Seattle," examined 1,150 property transactions in Seattle.

The study found that eight major banking institutions did not make more than two loans each in the Central Area and Rainier Valley from 1970 to 1974. Prompted by this report, the Mayor established a Reinvestment Task Force to propose policies to eliminate redlining, or disinvestment, as it was also called.

Public hearings and meetings of the Planning and Urban Development Committee were held during the fall of 1976, and the Public Reinvestment Board was established by Ordinance 105987 that November to help reverse discriminatory practices in lending.

At the September 1, 1976, meeting of the Planning and Urban Development Committee, several people spoke about the proposed Public Reinvestment Board. Listen to some of those [voices](#) here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/cityarchives/exhibits-and-education/seattle-voices/redlining>



"Redlining and Disinvestment in Central Seattle: How the Banks are Destroying Our Neighborhoods". July, 1975. *Central Seattle Community Council Records*. Accession no. 1803-003. Box 1, folder 13. *University of Washington Libraries Special Collections*.

Seattle City Council

DISCUSSION DRAFT



### AGENDA

Sam Smith  
President of the Council  
625-2455

George E. Benson  
Chairman  
Transportation  
Committee  
625-2441

Tim Hill  
Chairman  
Finance Committee  
625-2438

Paul Krabbel  
Chairman  
Planning & Urban  
Development Committee  
625-2447

Planning and Urban Development Committee

Wednesday, September 1, 1976

Topic: Reinvestment

2:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Public Reinvestment Board (5 mins. each)

Planning and Urban Development Committee Agenda, September 1, 1976. *Central Subject Reference File (Record Series 4601-02)*, *Seattle Municipal Archives*

## YouTube and Flickr News

SMA's YouTube channel has over 100 videos and almost 200 subscribers. Five videos from a set of Mayor's Nickels' press conferences have been loaded; many more are available offline.



Mayor  
Nickels  
announces  
unveiling  
of Edgar  
Martinez  
Drive  
street signs,  
2005.

Item 3698.

Seattle  
Municipal  
Archives

The most popular Flickr images in the past three months are of a 1994 skyline and a 1938 Seattle City Light Float labeled “Mothers on a Sitdown Strike.”



Skyline at sunset, circa 1983

Item 149346, *Seattle Municipal Archives*



Mothers on a sitdown strike (City light parade float), 1938

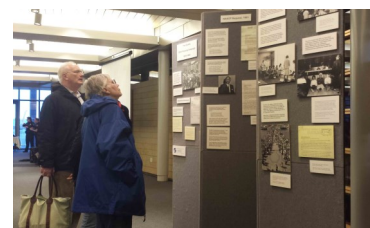
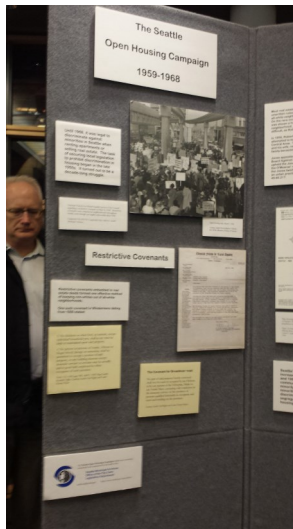
Item 18408, *Seattle Municipal Archives*

## Seattle Municipal Archives

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PO Box 94728 Seattle, WA 98124-4728  
206 233-7807 or 206 684-8353  
archives@seattle.gov  
<http://www.seattle.gov/CityArchives>

# Martin Luther King Jr. Unity Day

SMA's Open Housing exhibit was on display at Mayor Ed Murray's first Unity Day on January 16 at City Hall.



## Interns and Volunteers

Cierra Cooper, a work study student from Seattle University, continues her good work at SMA.

Volunteer Maris Sovold continues working on an inventory of Woodland Park Zoo photographs.

Jennifer Woodfield started volunteering with SMA this fall and is working with digital photographs.

Volunteer Rosemary Carroll is working on moving images from Seattle Channel and other projects.

Johanna Kiciman began volunteering earlier this year and is working with audio recordings and performing various research projects.

Hailey Galper continues her volunteer work, processing textual collections and working with photos.

Alicia Schofield recently began volunteering at SMA, where she will be working on processing records and cataloging publications.

Jessica Jones will continue work she began last year on Seattle City Light videotape which includes appraisal, cataloging, indexing and digitizing.

Libby Hopfauf begins work on digital audio files of City Council meetings in April.

## Upcoming Events

April 16, 6:30 - MOHAI History Café - Shirin Bridges

## “Through the Eyes of Seattle’s First Chinese Resident”

April 30 - SAA Workshop “Digital Forensics”

## Seattle Municipal Tower

May 27-30 - Northwest Archivists Conference/Western Roundup  
Denver, Colorado

November 18-21 - Association of Moving Images Conference  
Portland