

# Formation of Metro Government Files

## (Record Group 318)

### Collection Summary

**Title:** Formation of Metro Government Files

**Summary:** Administrative files, newspaper clippings, publications, reports, and speeches relating to the formation of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. Dates range from 1939-1997. Bulk dates: 1956-1974.

**Physical Description:** 6 full Hollinger boxes; 2.5 linear feet

**Language:** English

**Stack Location:** Section 4, shelf 18

**Repository:** Metropolitan Government Archives of Nashville-Davidson County, 615 Church St., Nashville, TN 37219

### Historical Note:

In a 1955 speech made before a Nashville civic club, County Judge C. Beverly Briley proposed the possibility of a consolidated government for Nashville and Davidson County. After a series of studies, the City of Nashville and Davidson County Planning Commissions released and recommended a report calling for the consolidation of the two governments in 1956. A charter commission was created in 1957 to establish a consolidation charter, which was voted upon and defeated in 1958. However, the idea of a consolidated government in Nashville and Davidson County did not die. After the annexation of two areas outside the limits of the City of Nashville - the 7<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> civil districts - and the extensive government service problems thereof, the possibility of city-county consolidation was raised again.

In the autumn of 1961, a second Metro Charter Commission was created, and the vote to approve the new Metro Charter was held on June 28, 1962. After receiving the necessary double majority inside and outside the City of Nashville, the new Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County came into effect on April 1, 1963 with Beverly Briley as the first Metropolitan Mayor. This establishment of Metro Government constituted one of the most complete consolidations of a city and county occurring within the United States, and it received national attention.

### Scope and Contents of the Collection:

This collection contains approximately 135 items, including administrative files, clippings, publications, reports, and speeches, relating to the formation and establishment of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. Dates range from 1939 to 1997; however, the bulk dates are from 1956-1974. The materials in this collection cover the first failed attempt at consolidation, the establishment of the Metro Charter Commission, the

successful vote for consolidation, and subsequent analyses of the financial, political, and economical effects of Metro Government.

**Index Terms:**

**Subjects:**

Annexation (County government)--Tennessee.

Briley, Beverly, 1914-1980

Metropolitan government.

Metropolitan government--America.

Metropolitan government--Tennessee.

Metropolitan government--United States.

Metropolitan government--United States--History.

Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County (Tenn.)

Municipal government.

**Related Collections:**

Dick Battle Papers

Ben West Mayoral Papers

C. Beverly Briley Clippings Files

C. Beverly Briley Mayoral Papers

Robert A. Horton Papers

Robert A. Horton Papers Addition

Seymour Samuels, Jr. Papers

**Arrangement:**

This collection is arranged into five series: *administrative files, clippings, publications, reports, and speeches.*

The *administrative files* series contains materials relating to the employee benefit system, elections, organization of government, and a 1958 resolution.

The *clippings* series contains newspaper clippings about the events leading up to city-county consolidation, the Metro Charter and activities of the Metro Charter Commission, and the national attention received as a result of the consolidation of Nashville and Davidson County in 1963.

The *publications* series contains various published materials relating to studies in municipal and metropolitan government, articles about Nashville's consolidation, and pamphlets. A large number of issues of *National Civic Review* and some published articles written by Mayor Beverly Briley are included.

The *reports* series contains various reports relating to studies of Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, including a report about the effects of Metro on

African-American politics, an analysis and evaluation of the first decade of consolidated government, and outlines of general policies, analyses, and plans for a Metro Charter and for Metropolitan Government.

The *speeches* series includes several speeches the need for a Metro Government, panel discussion, and financial issues. In several speeches, the speakers are not identified.

**Restrictions:**

**Restrictions on Access:** In-library use only.

**Restrictions on Use and Reproduction:** The Metropolitan Government Archives of Nashville-Davidson County owns the intellectual rights to these materials. Materials may be used for research purposes only, and cannot be used in a publication or reproduced.

**Administrative Information:**

**Copyright:** The Metropolitan Government Archives of Nashville-Davidson County retains intellectual property rights to this collection. Some restrictions may apply.

**Provenance:** These records were collected by Archivist Virginia Lyle from George Cate, Jr., Mayor Richard Fulton, Ferris Deep, and Robert Horton. The newspaper clippings come from the business section of the Ben West Library, transferred to the Metro Archives c.1984.

**Processing Information:** Processed by Kelley Sirko, June 2017. Originally arranged by Gordon T. Belt, July 2000.

**Accruals:** No further accruals expected.