Richard H. Fulton Mayoral Papers

Collection Summary
Title: Richard H. Fulton Mayoral Papers
Summary: A collection of administrative records, clippings, correspondence, and speeches documenting Richard H. Fulton’s political career. Dates range from 1960-1993, with the bulk dates ranging from 1975-1987, when Fulton served as Mayor of Nashville.
Physical Description: 17 boxes; 7.08 linear feet
Language: English
Stack Location: S11-26 - S11-29
Repository: Metropolitan Government Archives of Nashville-Davidson County, 615 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37219

Biographical Note:
Born in Nashville, Tennessee on January 27, 1927, Richard Harmon “Dick” Fulton had a political year that spanned over 30 years, serving as a United States Senator (1958-1960), United States Congressman (1963-1975), and Mayor of Nashville (1975-1987). He attended the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, and served in the United States Navy from 1945-1946. His political career began in 1954, when he was elected to the Tennessee State Senate in place of his late brother, Lyle Fulton, who had passed away shortly before the general election. However, Fulton did not meet the state constitution’s 30-year minimum age requirement at the time, and relinquished his seat.

In 1958, Fulton ran for Senate again and was elected. He served a two-year term, worked in business and real estate, and then successfully ran for Congress in 1962. He served as Congressman for the 5th Congressional District until 1975, when he ran for Mayor of Nashville. After winning the mayoral election, Fulton served as Mayor for three terms. Unable to run for an additional term, he was succeeded by Bill Boner in 1987. After unsuccessfully running for Governor of Tennessee in 1978 and 1987, Fulton later dedicated his time to his family’s real estate business, as well as a governmental relations consulting firm.

Fulton oversaw many changes in Nashville during his twelve-years as Mayor. In addition to the opening of the new Convention Center, Riverfront Park, and the construction of Interstate 440, the Fulton administration also expanded the sewer and water lines in downtown Nashville in order to accommodate the growth of the city. He served as president of the Tennessee Municipal League in 1979, as well as president of the United States Conference of Mayors from 1983-1984.
Scope and Contents of the Collection:
This collection contains administrative records, clippings, correspondence, and speeches relating to the political career of Richard Harmon Fulton. The dates of the materials range between 1960 and 1993, but the vast majority range from 1975 to 1987, and detail Fulton’s twelve-years as Mayor of Nashville. Of particular interest are the newspaper clippings, which document Fulton’s policies and activities as a Senator, a Congressman, and as Mayor, as well as his activities after serving actively in politics. This collection also contains a number of speeches, including several “State of Metro” addresses, which shed light on the major issues and political atmosphere in Nashville at the time. Some materials are dated after Fulton’s time as Mayor, which focus on his continued involvement with sports initiatives in Nashville, including the bid for Nashville to host the 1996 Olympic Games and efforts to establish an NFL franchise.

Index Terms:
Names:
Fulton, Richard, 1927-

Subjects:
Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County (Tenn.)
Nashville and Davidson Co.
Nashville. Mayor
Nashville (Tenn.)--History--20th century.
Nashville (Tenn.)--Politics and government.
Nashville (Tenn.)--Politics and government 20th century
Olympics.
Urban development.

Related Collections:
C. Beverly Briley Mayoral Papers
Robert A. Horton Papers
William H. Boner Mayoral Papers

Arrangement:
This collection is arranged into six series: administrative records, boards & commissions, clippings, correspondence, speeches, and sports initiatives.

The administrative records series largely consists of metropolitan government personnel information, including disciplinary actions, employment applications and letters of reference, injuries, and resignations and retirements. Other materials include petitions regarding traffic problems on Gallatin and White Bridge Roads, a poem written by Richard H. Fulton in response to the assassination of John F. Kennedy, a press release regarding EPA sanctions imposed on Nashville, and reports from various hospitals.
The **boards & commissions** series contains meeting minutes, correspondence, and reports relating to various boards or commissions in metropolitan Nashville government. A large amount of this series consists of the records of the Mayor’s Task Force on Food Services, with particular emphasis on the development of a nutrition program for the elderly. Also included are minutes from the Electric Power Board, the Board of Health, and the Metro Beautification Bureau.

The **clippings** series contains a large collection of newspaper clippings relating to Fulton’s political career and afterward, ranging from 1960 to 1993. Other clippings include those regarding Fulton’s children, his first wife, Jewel Simpson Fulton, and his second wife, Sandra F. Fulton. Also included are clippings relating to Fulton's gubernatorial campaign in 1985 and 1986, the Youth Employment Service program, and magazine articles.

**Correspondence** includes general letters of assistance from (and regarding) Nashville citizens relating to public housing, hospital admissions, etc. Also included is correspondence with several metro government officials and correspondence about the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the Governor’s Conference on Families.

The **speeches** series contains typescripts of speeches given by Mayor Fulton, including “State of Metro” addresses, a response to the budget controversy in 1984, a speech introducing Fulton’s Greater Nashville Plan, and presidential addresses to the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

The **sports initiatives** series contains reports, correspondence, clippings, and other materials relating to sports-related proposals in Nashville. These include materials relating to collaboration with the World League of American Football to establish a professional football team in Nashville, proposals to bring a major league baseball team to the city, and efforts to be the host city for the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. The majority of these materials are dated after Fulton’s term as Mayor.

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**Accruals:** No further accruals expected.