

# **Guide to the Downtown Brooklyn Development Association, Inc., Records 1979.021**

**Finding aid prepared by Katherine Christensen**

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

First Edition.

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Brooklyn Historical Society
<b>Creator</b>	Downtown Brooklyn Development Association, Inc.
<b>Title</b>	Downtown Brooklyn Development Association, Inc., Records
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1929-1971
<b>Extent</b>	3.75 Linear feet in 9 Document Boxes
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Language of Materials</b>	Materials in English.
<b>Abstract</b>	This collection comprises the subject files of the Downtown Brooklyn Development Association. The association was founded in 1929 as a civic group concerned with the problems of the business and shopping center in downtown Brooklyn. The papers are news clippings, correspondence, brochures, newsletters, pamphlets, legislative documents, photographs, city plans and maps, and other items relating to organizations and causes with which the association was involved. The majority of the documents were produced by external bodies or individuals but were integral the association's activities. The three subjects most comprehensively addressed are the development of the Brooklyn Civic Center (Cadman Plaza), the redevelopment of Fulton Street, and traffic and transportation.

### Preferred Citation

Identification of item, date (if known); Downtown Brooklyn Development Association, Inc., Records, 1979.21, Box and Folder number; Brooklyn Historical Society.

## Historical Note

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The Downtown Brooklyn Development Association was founded in 1929 as a civic group concerned with the problems of the business and shopping center in downtown Brooklyn. Their slogan was "In the interest of a better downtown Brooklyn." The association closely monitored legislative activities which would assist or hinder the businesses in the area and organized support or opposition where necessary. They focused on attracting business owners and shoppers to Brooklyn through improved traffic and transit, redevelopment of the governmental buildings at Cadman Plaza, and beautification projects. The directors and officers of the association were comprised of prominent local business owners and presidents, vice-presidents, and chairmen of businesses including The Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn, Abraham & Straus, Inc., the Brooklyn Eagle, Pyle-Gray Real Estate Co., the Brooklyn-Manhattan Transit Corp., the Brooklyn Union Gas Company, the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, and the New York Telephone Company.

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## Scope and Contents

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This collection comprises the subject files of the Downtown Brooklyn Development Association. The papers are news clippings, correspondence, brochures, newsletters, pamphlets, legislative documents, photographs, city plans and maps, and other items relating to organizations and causes with which the association was involved or which the association sponsored. The majority of the documents were produced by external bodies or individuals but were integral the association's activities. The only materials produced by the members of the association are copies of correspondence. The three subjects most comprehensively addressed are the development of the Brooklyn Civic Center (Cadman Plaza), the redevelopment of Fulton Street, and traffic and transportation.

With regard to the Civic Center, the documents cover the renovation and construction of Borough Hall and the court houses as well as other buildings and facilities in the area such as the Red Cross building, Brooklyn Law School, the public library, and parking structures. The papers discussing the redevelopment of Fulton Street primarily address the removal of the elevated train and the development of the area as a downtown Brooklyn shopping district. The papers regarding traffic and transportation issues are tied in with Robert Moses. He was influential in the development of the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel, the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, and the Verazano Narrows Bridge, all of which were concerns of the Downtown Brooklyn Development Association. There are also papers which address the three lines of the subway system: the Independent Subway System, the Interborough Rapid Transit Company, and the Brooklyn Manhattan Transit Corporation.

Although the main interest of the association was the Brooklyn Heights area, they were also concerned with other areas of Brooklyn. This is predominately shown in the traffic files, but there are also papers

concerning the redesign of the Pratt Institute Campus in Fort Green and information throughout multiple files on Prospect Park and the neighborhood of Park Slope. The only folder which is designated solely to the administrative concerns of the association is the Resignations folder. This contains correspondence from member businesses declining to continue their membership.

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## **Arrangement**

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Arranged alphabetically by subject.

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## **Administrative Information**

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### **Publication Information**

Brooklyn Historical Society July 2009

### **Conditions Governing Access**

Open to researchers without restriction. Many of the news clippings are fragile, please handle them with care.

### **Conditions Governing Use**

Copyright holder unknown. Published materials either within the public domain or expected to enter the public domain after 2018 dependant upon date of publication or date of author's death. Unpublished materials expected to enter the public domain between 2049 and 2092 dependant upon date of creation.

### **Custodial History**

These records were collected by the Downtown Brooklyn Development Association and maintained as their subject files until the Long Island Historical Society received them in October, 1975.

### **Processing Information**

Materials reviewed by Robert Sink in 1980 under the Brooklyn Rediscovery Project. Further processing by Katherine Christensen in 2009.

## Controlled Access Headings

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### Corporate Name(s)

- Abraham & Straus.
- American Red Cross.
- Better Business Bureau of New York City.
- Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce (Brooklyn, New York, N.Y.).
- Brooklyn daily eagle.
- Brooklyn Law School.
- Brooklyn Public Library.
- Brooklyn-Manhattan Transit Company.
- Citizens Budget Commission (New York, N.Y.).
- Citizens Union Foundation (New York, N.Y.).
- Citizens' Zoning Committee, Inc.
- Downtown Brooklyn Development Association, Inc.
- Independent Subway System.
- Interborough Rapid Transit Company.
- New York (N.Y.). City Planning Commission.
- New York (N.Y.). Dept. of Commerce and Industrial Development.
- New York (N.Y.). Dept. of Correction.
- New York (N.Y.). Dept. of Parks.
- New York (N.Y.). Dept. of Public Works.
- New York (N.Y.). Dept. of Traffic.
- New York (N.Y.). Landmarks Preservation Commission.
- New York Naval Shipyard.
- Pratt Institute.
- Regional Plan Association (New York, N.Y.) .
- Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority.

### Genre(s)

- blueprints (reprographic copies)
- brochures
- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Correspondence
- Legislative hearings
- Maps
- Negatives (photographic)

- newsletters
- pamphlets
- Photographs
- press releases
- resolutions (administrative records)
- speeches

### **Geographic Name(s)**

- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.)
- Brooklyn Heights (New York, N.Y.)
- Fulton Street (New York, N.Y.)
- Park Slope (New York, N.Y.)
- Prospect Park (New York, N.Y.)

### **Personal Name(s)**

- Blum, Robert E.
- Bourke-White, Margaret, 1904-1971
- Davenport, Henry J.
- Moses, Robert, 1888-1981
- Roscoe, Andrew S.
- Stamm, Godfrey A.
- Swift, Thomas A.

### **Subject(s)**

- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.)--Transit systems
- Brooklyn Battery Tunnel (New York, N.Y.)
- Brooklyn Borough Hall (New York, N.Y.)
- Brooklyn-Queens Expressway (New York, N.Y.)
- Central business districts
- City planning
- Community centers--New York (State)--New York
- Courthouses New York (State)
- Ebbets Field (New York, N.Y.)
- George Washington Bridge (New York, N.Y.)
- Holland Tunnel (New York, N.Y.)
- Lincoln Tunnel (New York, N. Y.)
- Local transit--New York (State)--New York

- Parks--New York (N.Y.)
- Post office buildings--New York (State)--New York
- Railroads, Elevated
- Throgs Neck Bridge (New York, N.Y.)
- Transportation
- Urban renewal--New York, N.Y.
- Verrazano-Narrows Bridge (New York, N.Y.)

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Brooklyn Baseball Club 1957

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Brooklyn Battery Tunnel 1950-1951

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