The St. Louis Regional Commerce and Growth Association donated their records to the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-St. Louis on January 16 and February 16, 1983. Included are records from the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce, the Metropolitan Plan Commission, St. Louis Research Council, and the St. Louis Regional Industrial Development Corporation (RIDC). The oldest organization, the Chamber of Commerce, was established in 1837 by local merchants and traders. Both St. Louis city and county had chambers and by the early twentieth century, they were urging regional planning and approaches. The difficulties in governing and planning between the hundreds of area municipalities prompted the Chamber to support a 1920 state amendment to merge the city and county (the amendment was defeated by voters). The Chamber consistently supported efforts at planned development of the region across local governing lines, such as the formation the Metropolitan Sewer District in 1954. Following its own advice, the county and city chambers consolidated in 1963.

The Metropolitan Plan Association began in 1944. Chaired by Stuart Symington, it made a master plan for the metropolitan area to aid in public improvements and provide jobs for those who became unemployed after World War II. It also promoted planned development for the region until its demise in the 1960s.

1. For information on the early history of the Chamber, see History of St. Louis, J. Thomas Scharf, p. 1340, "Commercial Exchanges."

In 1963 the Chamber of Commerce and Civic Progress sponsored a voluntary Committee made up of members of the Chamber, Civic Progress, Washington U. and St. Louis U. to form the St. Louis Research Council. Its purpose was to aid the industrial, commercial, educational, and civic organizations of St. Louis in the development and promotion of the community as a major and nationally recognized scientific, educational and research center. In 1969 it affiliated with the Regional Industrial Development Corporation.

Citizens concerned with St. Louis' decline in industrial development after World War II felt the city was hampered by a myriad of geographic, economic, and political rivalries. Ninety-three organizations and agencies representing business, labor, government, education, and civic groups from St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and Franklin, Jefferson, St. Charles, Madison, Monroe and St. Clair counties, officially founded the St. Louis Regional Industrial Development Corporation in 1965. They claimed RIDC represented the first area-wide approach to the problem, apparently forgetting the Metropolitan Plan. RIDC had the commitment and financial support of labor, business, government, education, and civic leaders.
RIDC identified its task as coordinating the industrial promotion and development of the 4600 square mile area. It would define the problems, assemble the facts and present the results to "those who must hear it and heed it if the St. Louis region is to grow." In 1968 it defined nine goals for itself:

1) help provide jobs for region's growing work force and for unskilled to solve problems of both unemployment and the ghetto.

2) promote labor-management stability to create a climate in which industry can grow.

3) conduct economic research to identify business opportunities for new and existing firms and impediments to economic growth.

4) improve terminal and transhipment facilities.

5) improve the region's image.

6) encourage political unity to increase government efficiency.

7) provide labor training and retraining programs to make the work force responsive to technological change.

8) improve the region's total living environment.

9) create a pool of risk capital to be used as seed money for science-oriented industry.

In September 1971 the RIDC, the Chamber, and the Research Council merged to form the Regional Commerce and Growth Association. With Civic Progress as the overseer of civic and economic planning, RCGA has functioned as the "action arm"--implementing CP's goals, representing St. Louis business interests nationally, and collecting and publicizing information on the region.

SCOPE AND CONTENT
The St. Louis Regional Commerce and Growth Association records contain material from five other organizations, the City Plan Commission, Metropolitan Plan Association, St. Louis Research Council, Chamber of Commerce, and the Regional Industrial Development Corporation. Administrative files and reports and studies from each organization are the major types of records. Most of the records are from the RIDC, which preceded the RCGA. Earlier records of the Chamber of Commerce are located at Missouri Historical Society and the Washington University Archives.

All of these organizations promoted regional cooperation and planning for the development of the area's resources. Taken in sequence the records show how local businessmen increased their support for regional planning as the twentieth century progressed. RCGA and RIDC's reports and studies provided economic and sociological analyses of urban problems in transportation, public works, labor, the environment, capital investment, manufacturing, industrial education, and employment. They also provide statistical data on these problems.
SERIES DESCRIPTION

1. CITY PLAN COMMISSION, 1912-1916, FOLDERS 1-3
   Three reports on the Central Traffic Parkway and River Des Peres. Arranged chronologically.

2. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 1928-1975 FOLDERS 4-48
   Divided into four sub-series: administrative (arranged chronologically), financial records (arranged alphabetically), office files (arranged alphabetically), and reports (arranged alphabetically). Includes minutes of the executive committee and board of directors, audits, budgets, correspondence, newscclippings, and legal documents. Topics of reports are: Lambert Airport, Laclede's Landing, transportation, and the Trans Pacific Airline route case.

3. METROPOLITAN PLAN ASSOCIATION, 1945-1961, FOLDER 49
   Minutes, correspondence, annual reports, Arranged chronologically by form.

4. ST. LOUIS RESEARCH COUNCIL, 1962-1974, FOLDERS 50-56
   Minutes, correspondence, and material from merger with the Regional Development Industrial Corporation. Arranged alphabetically by folder.

5. ST LOUIS REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (RIDC), 1950-1974, FOLDERS 57-427
   Divided into two sub-series: administrative records and reference files, arranged alphabetically by folder. Annual reports, articles of incorporation, bylaws, budgets, correspondence, minutes, press releases, reports, studies, publications, newscclippings, proposals, surveys, and committee material. Reference topics include: auto parts capability, census information, congressional correspondence, East-West Gateway Coordinating Councils industrial education committee, jobs in the ghetto, labor skills survey, model cities, regional economic data bank, seminars and speaking engagements, and venture capital.

6. ST. LOUIS REGIONAL COMMERCE AND GROWTH ASSOCIATION (RCGA), 1971-1977, FOLDERS 428-440
   Administrative files and financial records, arranged chronologically by folder.

7. NON-RIDC STUDIES AND REPORTS, 1962-1980, FOLDERS 441-468
   Topics include: air transportation, East St. Louis, education, health, Lambert Airport, Meramec Industrial Park, Mississippi River, and St. Louis City and County. Arranged alphabetically by topic.

8. RIDC PUBLICATIONS, 1963-1972, FOLDERS 469-494
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2. Central Traffic Parkway, Prepared Amendment to the City Charter, 1913
3. The Riverfront, Possible Municipal Ownership of Terminals, 1913
4. River Des Peres Plan, 1916

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42. Should a Metropolitan Airport Authority be Established for the St. Louis Area, 1968

43. An Analysis of Airport Travel Demands, 1969
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144. Census Information Consortium, "Information Deficiencies," Master and Outline of Rules and Regulations - 12/72

146. Census Information Consortium, Progress Report 1971
147. Census Information Consortium, Press Conference, 6/10/71
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199. Economic Indications for St. Louis, 1968
200. Education Council - Proposal for Regional Library
203. Employment Growth (%), 1968
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205. Federal Executive Board Correspondence, 1968-1970
206. Firms wanting help to expand in RIDC area, 1966
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232. Input-Output Model of the St. Louis Region, 1967-1972
233. Inter-Industrial Structure Analysis: An Input-Output Study of the St. Louis Region, 1967

234. Outline for discussion on Application of I/O Tables, n.d.
235. Primer on Input-Output Economics, 1967
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351. RIDC, Regional Award, n.d.
352. RIDC, Structure Proposed by Chamber of Commerce, 1966
353. Riot, Newsclippings on St. Louis Race Relations, 1968
354. Regional, Voc-Tech Council, 1972
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380. Testimony in Support of a Second Major Airport for the Bi-State St. Louis Region by John Keydel, 1971

381. Transportation, 1973-1975
382. Transportation and Physical Distribution in the St. Louis Region, c.1970

383. Truck Rental, 1967-1968
384. Truss Feasibility Study with A.M.E. Church Extension, 1971
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A Study for a Union Station Convention Center Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis, June 1, 1966

443. **East St. Louis**
City of East St. Louis, 1973, Highway Act, Mayor James E. Williams, 1964

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444. Introduction to an Inventory and Analysis of Existing Data, Characteristics and Facilities in the Illinois Portion of the St. Louis Metropolitan Area, Southern Illinois Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, December 1965

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Education in Metropolitan St. Louis, Danforth Foundation, 1965

446. **Health**
Final Report of the Health Facilities Planning Committee, Volumes 1 and 2, Alliance for Regional Community Health, October 20, 1971

447. Hospital Facilities and Services for Acute Short-term Patient Care in the Metropolitan St. Louis Area, Metropolitan Hospital Planning Commission, October 1969

448. **Lambert - St. Louis International Airport**


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449. **Meramec Industrial Park**
Preliminary Report, Meramec Industrial Park, St. Louis County, Horner & Shifrin Consulting Engineers, November 1957

450. **Mining**
The Feasibility of Making Mining Equipment in St. Louis, September 16, 1966

451. **Mississippi River**

452. **Missouri**
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454. **St. Charles**

455. **St. Louis Army Ammunition Plant**
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462. Land-Use and Socio-Economic Projections, Technical Summary Report, EWGCC, Fiscal Year 1975

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