

Transit Company Collection Part IV: San Diego Transit System Collection

Special Collections San Diego Public Library

Collection Information

MS.057

Inclusive dates: 1951-1959

Extent: 2 box, 2.6 cu. ft.

Processed: Matthew Nye, Dustin Vogel, and Kayla Beard, 2025

Donor: San Diego Transit System, City Transit System

Abstract

After 56 years in the Spreckels family, Jesse Haugh's Western Transit Company bought San Diego Electric Railway for \$5.5 million, July 26, 1948. According to public records, SDER had a net loss of more than \$1.7 million during Spreckels' ownership. While the company was not a moneymaker, it more than adequately served the people.

Haugh retooled the company, declaring streetcars were too expensive, too slow, too noisy and caused traffic jams. First on the agenda was a name-change to San Diego Transit, then an application to the Public Utilities Commission to end streetcar service. New buses were ordered and on the way. The last day of rail service was Sunday, April 24, 1949. San Diego held many "firsts" when it came to public transit. Now it was the first major California city to eliminate streetcars.

Even under new ownership and with a new name, San Diego Transit continued to struggle. By 1963 Haugh said he'd be out of business within two years if things didn't improve and suggested a public takeover of the transit system. The City Council of San Diego presented a ballot proposition that provided for city ownership of San Diego Transit. Upon voter approval in 1966, the city paid Haugh \$2 million for the bus company.

Scope and Content

This collection consists of printed Spot Announcements and newspaper clippings of advertisements for the San Diego Transit System and the Transit News.

Container List

Box	File	Contents
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Dates

Box	File	Contents	Dates
1	1	Item # 4154 Advertising, Public Relations, and Publicity Program for SDTS	1951
		Advertising clippings, Spot Announcements	Sept. 1951-Dec. 1951
	2	Advertising clippings, Spot Announcements	Jan. 1952-April 1952
	3	Advertising clippings, Spot Announcements	May. 1952-July 1952
	4	Advertising clippings, Spot Announcements	Aug. 1952-Dec. 1952
	5	Advertising Budget – First 6 Months	1953
		Publicity Record, Transit-Union Negotiation	1953
	6	Advertising clippings, Spot Announcements	Jan. 1953-April 1953
	7	Advertising clippings, Spot Announcements	May. 1953-Aug. 1953
	8	Advertising clippings, Spot Announcements	Sept. 1953-Dec. 1953
	9	Advertising clippings, Spot Announcements	Jan. 1954-April 1954
	10	Advertising clippings, Spot Announcements	May 1954-June 1954
2	1	Advertising and Newspaper Clippings, Spot Announcements	July 1954–Dec. 1954
	2	Advertising for San Diego Transit and Coronado Ferry Co.	Feb. 1955
		Advertising Clippings	Feb. 1955-June 1955
	3	Advertising Clippings, Transit News	July 1955-Dec. 1955
	4	Advertising Clippings, Transit News	Jan. 1956-July 1956
	5	Advertising Clippings, Transit News	Aug. 1956-Dec. 1956
	6	Advertising Clippings, Transit News	Jan. 1957-June 1957
	7	Advertising Clippings, Transit News	July 1957-Dec. 1957
	8	Advertising Clippings, Transit News	Jan. 1958-July 1958

Box	File	Contents	Dates
	9	Advertising Clippings, Transit News	Aug. 1958-Feb. 1959
	10	Advertising Clippings, Transit News	March 1959-July 1959
	11	Advertising Clippings, Transit News	Aug. 1959-Dec. 1959