



City of Manchester Archives
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Collection Summary

Repository: Manchester City Archives. Office of the City Clerk. City of Manchester, NH.

Creator: Office of the City Clerk. City of Manchester, NH.

Title: Pole Petition Records

Collection Number: 0300.013

Accession Number: 1998.67

Dates: 1894 – current

Volume: 7 cubic feet; 19 linear feet; 6 oversized boxes

Languages: Collection materials are in English.

Related Collections: Board of Mayor and Aldermen Supporting Documents of Meetings (0100.001)

Access: Access to collection is open to the public. Please contact the archives for an appointment to view materials. Cite the collection number, box and folder numbers when making an appointment. Materials may be accessible online; please reference the digital note below.

Digital Note: Materials are not accessible online at this time.

Conservation Notes: Not applicable.

Finding Aid Prepared by: Mike Intranuovo, 2018.

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Historical Note

Street and utility poles were first introduced in the United States in the mid-19th Century for telegraph systems, when the United States Congress approved the 40-mile telegraph line between Baltimore, Maryland and Washington, DC. In Manchester, the local government formally began approving of the erection of street poles in the late 1800s. Poles were used to distribute electrical power throughout the city, and early petitioners included major corporations and entities located in Manchester, such as the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company, the New England Telephone and Telegraph Company, and the Manchester Street Railway.

Today, pole petitions are still brought before the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for approval, mostly from utility companies.

Collection Description

This collection consists entirely of a single record series of petitions requesting permission to erect power poles in the City of Manchester, most commonly known as Pole Petitions. Pole Petitions are administered by the Office of the City Clerk on behalf on the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, which ultimately approves or denies the petitions. The collection reflects the evolution of the city's physical history and infrastructure; it also gives insight into the activities of utility companies from the late 19th Century until today.

In some early cases, the petitions have maps or blueprints attached with the proposed pole locations, as well as letters from the City Clerk and City Engineer granting permission.

Companies frequently requesting permission to erect poles in the 19th and early 20th centuries include, but may not be limited to the following, some of which would occasionally petition the local government jointly:

Amoskeag Manufacturing Company (1918)
Citizens Telephone Company (1897-1899)
Commercial Union Telegraph Company (1911-1913)
Manchester Electric Company (1898-1901)
Manchester Electric Light (1897-1900)
Manchester Street Railway (1928-1930)
Manchester Traction, Light and Power Company (1901-1926)
Manchester Water Works (1940)
New England Telephone and Telegraph Company (1894-1941)
New England Telephone and Telegraph Company/Manchester Street Railway (1918, 1935)
New England Telephone and Telegraph/Manchester Traction, Light and Power (1918, 1923)
New England Telephone and Telegraph Company/Postal Cable Company (1939, 1940)
Postal Telegraph and Cable Company (1908, 1917)
Public Service Company of New Hampshire (1927-1941)
Union Electric Company (1897-1900)
Western Union Telegraph (1900)

Later records include correspondence and invoices, and some files may include an index for the year. Early records (1894-1940) are arranged alphabetically by company name. Later records (1940 - current) are arranged chronologically by year. The entire collection is paper-based, with some oversized records.

Inventory

Early Pole Petitions, 1894-1940

Arranged alphabetically by petitioner.

Description	Box Number	Folder Number
Amoskeag Manufacturing Company, 1918	57	04
Citizen's Telephone Company, 1897-1899	57	07
Commercial Union Telegraph Company, 1911-1913	57	08
Manchester Electric Company, 1898-1901	57	09
Manchester Electric Light Company, 1897-1900	57	10
Manchester Street Railway, 1928-1930	57	11
Manchester Traction, Light, and Power Company, 1901-1926	57 through 65	--
New England Telephone and Telegraph Company (NETTC), 1894-1941	57, 65 through 74	--
NETTC and Manchester Street Railway, 1918, 1935	75	--
NETTC and Manchester Traction, Light, and Power Company, 1918, 1923	75	--
NETTC and Postal Telegraph Cable Company, 1939-1940	75	--
NETTC and Public Service Company of New Hampshire, 1933-1941	75	--
New Hampshire Public Service Commission, 1922-1941	57	05
Postal Telegraph and Cable Company, 1908, 1917	75	--
Public Service Company of New Hampshire, 1927-1941	75	--
Union Electric Company, 1897-1900	75	--
Water Works, 1940	65	--
Western Union Telegraph Company, 1900	75	--

Later Pole Petitions, 1940-current

Arranged chronologically.

Description	Box Number	Folder Number
1940-1952	01	--
1952-1958	02	--
1959-1966	03	--
1967-1978	04	--
1979-1987	05	--
1988-1999	06	--
2000-2016	07	--

Oversized Pole Petitions, 1906-1985 (non-inclusive)

Arranged chronologically with some overlap between boxes.

Description	Box Number	Folder Number
1906-1940	Rines Map Case A8	--
1926-1935	Oversized 01	--
1938-1951	Oversized 02	--
1952	Oversized 03	--
1953-1965	Oversized 04	--
1966-1979	Oversized 05	--
1980-1985	Oversized 06	--