

DONATION GUIDE



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01 COLLECTION OVERVIEW

The Northwest Room preserves and provides access to materials related to the history, people, places, and built environment of Tacoma, Washington and the South Sound region. We welcome donations of information-rich resources that enhance the research value and expand the diversity of our collections. We collect materials from individuals, families, organizations, and businesses that reflect Tacoma's complex history.

Due to the time and resources necessary for properly caring for and providing access to these resources, we are very selective about what donations we accept. We only accept donations that have been arranged in advance. Please follow the instructions in this guide for more information about initiating a donation.



02 WHY DONATE?

The story of Tacoma is revealed through the records created by local individuals, families, organizations, and businesses. These unique materials give us valuable evidence and insight that we can draw upon to interpret and tell local stories. Not only do we seek to fill in gaps in our holdings related to Tacoma's history, but we also want to proactively collect to ensure materials being created now are preserved for future generations.

Materials donated to the Northwest Room will be available to users now and in the future, becoming part of our community's collective memory. These materials will be cared for by professionals who are responsible for organizing, protecting, preserving, and providing access to unique content.



03 WHAT WE ACCEPT

We are interested in preserving material with high informational value that provides evidence of the activities of individuals, families, businesses, and organizations with connections to Tacoma and the South Sound region. We always prefer to obtain the original material and avoid acquiring scanned or photocopied versions. Determinations are made on a case-by-case basis about what donations we accept. The specific type of content we choose to add to our holdings will vary based on a number of factors including context, condition, and anticipated research value for our users. This list is not comprehensive and is intended to provide a general overview.

FOR INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

(PAPER, AUDIOVISUAL, OR BORN DIGITAL)

- CORRESPONDENCE
- JOURNALS/DIARIES
- MANUSCRIPTS AND WRITINGS
- PHOTOGRAPHS
- IDENTIFIED SCRAPBOOKS

FOR BUSINESSES & ORGANIZATIONS

(PAPER, AUDIOVISUAL, OR BORN DIGITAL)

- GOVERNING DOCUMENTS (BY-LAWS, ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION, ETC.)
- MEETING MINUTES
- NEWSLETTERS AND PUBLICATIONS
- PHOTOGRAPHS
- REPORTS
- EVENT FLIERS AND PROGRAMS
- CORRESPONDENCE
- IDENTIFIED SCRAPBOOKS
- WEBSITES & SOCIAL MEDIA RECORDS
- ARCHITECTURAL PLANS

ACCEPTED ON A LIMITED BASIS

- BOOKS
- EPHEMERA
- RESEARCH FILES
- PHOTOCOPIED/SCANNED MATERIAL
- NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS
- ARTWORK
- MAPS

04 WHAT WE DO NOT ACCEPT

- 3 DIMENSIONAL ARTIFACTS
- PLAQUES, TROPHIES, AND AWARDS
- LARGE COLLECTIONS OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF UNIDENTIFIED PEOPLE
- DUPLICATE COPIES OF MATERIAL IN OUR HOLDINGS
- FRAMED MATERIAL
- WIDELY AVAILABLE PUBLICATIONS
- ITEMS THAT SHOW EVIDENCE OF ACTIVE MOLD OR PEST DAMAGE

05 HOW TO DONATE

We only accept donations that have been pre-arranged with a member of the Northwest Room staff. If you are interested in donating, contact the Northwest Room at nwr@acomalibrary.org or 253-280-2814. It is helpful for you to provide the following information:

- A description of the person, family, business, or organization that created or collected the material
- A description of the material (types of documentation, format, etc.)
- An estimate of the total extent (number of boxes or items)
- Information on the method by which you'd like to transfer the material (drop off at the library, mail to us, etc.)

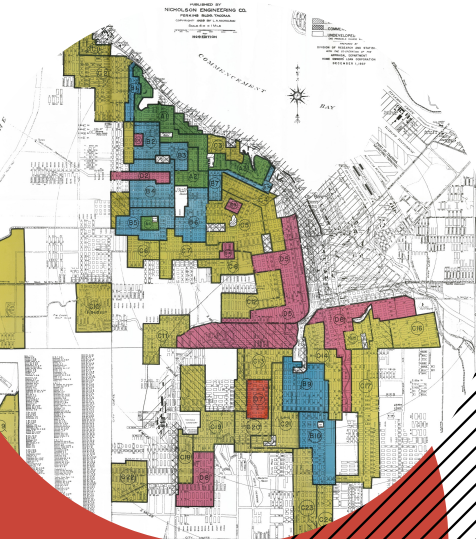
Northwest Room staff will contact you to let you know if we will be able to accept your donation and to provide additional details.

06 PREPARING YOUR MATERIALS FOR TRANSFER

Northwest Room staff will provide you with additional details about the best way to transfer your materials based on the size, condition, format, and other factors.

Unless otherwise directed, all donations should also include the following:

- A signed Deed of Gift provided by Northwest Room staff. This document transfers ownership of the material to the Tacoma Public Library.
- A brief description of the creating individual, family, business, or organization. This description should include key dates (for example, birth and death dates or founding date) and other details that help provide context to the material being transferred.
- An inventory of materials being transferred. The inventory should include an overall description of the materials, along with any additional information that may help us most accurately describe the collection. Depending on the content and format, we may ask you to provide additional details about the materials.
- If you have arranged with a Northwest Room staff member to mail content to the Northwest Room, please ensure that the materials are packed in such a way that they will not be damaged in transit.



07 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What happens to my collection once it is transferred to the Northwest Room?

Northwest Room staff will create an accession record in our internal database that provides a broad description of the material, when it arrived, and who donated it. We'll then place the material in our Northwest Room stacks shelving area. When staffing is available, the material will be more fully described in our database and rehoused in archival-quality storage containers. Donations of born-digital materials will be stored in multiple digital storage areas.

How long will it take for me to see my collection represented online?

We aim to make all collections in our holdings publicly accessible by providing a description of the materials in our online database and library catalog. However, this can be a time-consuming process. We establish priorities based on a number of factors including anticipated research value, staffing availability, complexity of the collection, and how the material fits into current initiatives and programs. We are typically unable to provide a specific timeline to donors but we aim to work as expeditiously as possible to provide some online representation of materials donated to us.

Will my collection be digitized?

It is extremely rare for us to digitize full collections. Many collections in our holdings will have no digital component immediately, but certain items may be digitized in the future based on research value and user demand. If material from your collection is digitized, it will be made publicly accessible in our database. We are unable to digitize materials and return them to the donor.

Who owns my collection once it is transferred to the Northwest Room?

We require a Deed of Gift to be signed with each donation. This document officially transfers the ownership of the donated material to the Tacoma Public Library. This transfer of ownership allows the Northwest Room to ensure long-term access to the material.

Can you tell me how much my donation is worth?

We are unable to appraise collections or materials. We can provide a blank receipt acknowledging the donation for tax purposes but we are unable to estimate a value.

Can I make a financial donation to the Northwest Room?

We appreciate financial donations of any size. Donated funds may be used to purchase supplies or equipment, digitize collections, or offset costs associated with making collections accessible. If you are interested in discussing the specifics of a financial gift, please contact the Northwest Room at nwretacomalibrary.org or 253-280-2814.