



Cultural Resource Element

A Community

discussion

Seattle is a city of communities. Some communities are defined as an identifiable place (neighborhoods) with particular physical conditions, tradition or history. Other communities are not geographically based, but rather are defined by people sharing a common identity, heritage or experience. Within a community, people learn about themselves and customs, and traditions are kept alive.

Communities provide a place for people to meet and share experiences. By exploring the culture, heritage and customs of other communities, people learn how they fit into the larger Seattle community and beyond. Celebrating the diversity of our communities encourages civil behavior among citizens. By teaching tolerance, fueling natural inquisitiveness, and expanding understanding, cultural resources contribute to conditions that make it possible for people from different backgrounds to live together with mutual respect.

celebrating diversity & strengthening a sense of belonging goals

- CRG1** A city that welcomes diversity; works to raise awareness and understanding of the city and its peoples; and nurtures the ethnic and cultural traditions of its diverse citizenry.
- CRG2** A city where the sense of community is strong, opportunities for people to interact with each other are many, and conditions that contribute to isolation and segregation are discouraged.

celebrating diversity & strengthening a sense of belonging policies

- CR1** Encourage and support communities in celebrating, preserving, and transmitting their traditions through cultural and heritage activities, the arts, education, publishing and reading, and public events.
- CR2** Involve neighborhoods in public projects, including publicly-sponsored art and cultural events, so that the projects reflect the values of, and have relevance and meaning to, the neighborhoods in which they are located. Encourage projects that are challenging and thought provoking, as well as beautiful, fun and entertaining.
- CR3** Use cultural resources to promote cross-cultural awareness and depict differing points of view in order to foster open and intentional exploration of the issues and conditions that tend to divide communities, so that actions can be taken to confront and overcome these conditions.

fostering a sense of place goals

- CRG3** A city that values, maintains and enhances the resources that establish the public realm, including schools, libraries, museums and other cultural facilities, streets and public rights-of-way, government facilities and public open spaces, and promotes the use of these places for public gathering and cultural expression.
- CRG4** A city that uses public projects and activities to help define Seattle's identity, especially civic spaces that provide residents and visitors with strong symbols of the city or neighborhood identity.



Seattle's identity is also tied to its function as a commercial city, with origins as a frontier port and rail terminus exporting the region's resources. In the past, the city's somewhat isolated location lessened the impact of trends influencing other parts of the country, allowing more of its own identity to show through. More recently, Seattle's position as a gateway to the Pacific, global commercial center and transportation hub has dramatically increased exposure to and influence from the outside world.

Today, Seattle has a distinct and prominent place in the culture of the Puget Sound region. A vibrant arts community and a concentration of cultural institutions within Seattle have given the city a national reputation as a cultural center.

Seattle remains a work in progress. One of the few constant characteristics of this city is that it is always changing. So, in addition to the challenge of defining who we are, we also have the challenge of expressing what we want this city to become.

providing a sense of continuity & community through our historic legacy goals

CRG6 A city that celebrates and strives to protect its cultural legacy and heritage, to preserve and protect historic neighborhoods and to preserve, restore and re-use its built resources of cultural, heritage, architectural, or social significance in order to maintain its unique sense of place and adapt to change gracefully.

CRG7 A city that preserves the integrity of the cultural resources under City control, including public art and archaeological and historic resources, and fosters in the community a sense of personal responsibility and stewardship for all cultural resources.

providing a sense of continuity & community through our historic legacy policies

CR11 Identify and protect landmarks and historic districts that define Seattle's identity and represent its history, and strive to reduce barriers to preservation. As appropriate, offer incentives for rehabilitating and adapting historic buildings for new uses.

CR12 Preserve and enhance the City Archives as a unique cultural resource for documenting the human experience in Seattle.

CR13 Promote partnerships among cultural heritage agencies in City government — e.g., the City Archives, Seattle Public Library, Urban Conservation — and community organizations to develop interpretative and educational programming about Seattle's heritage.

CR14 Increase awareness of the community's heritage by promoting cultural preservation programs or activities, and by encouraging public participation in documenting Seattle's history, especially the participation of the elderly who provide the most direct connection with the past.

CR15 Identify and work with others to explore ways to preserve Seattle's archaeological resources. Initiate and support efforts to educate Seattle citizens about these resources.

CR16 Set an example by maintaining a high standard for the care of City-owned cultural resources to encourage owners of properties having value as cultural resources to do the same.