

ARCHIVES GAZETTE



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Legislative Department

Out of the Archives

Here at SMA we always welcome opportunities to share the archives with students of all ages. We thought we'd share just a couple of recent examples of how materials in the archives have both inspired and informed local students.

In early June, a 5th grade class from Maple Elementary School took a field trip to visit the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches of Seattle's municipal government. As part of their tour of the Legislative Department, the students visited our research room to learn about records and services offered by the City Clerk's Office and the Archives. Information Services Supervisor Janet Polata and City Archivist Anne Frantilla shared records from the collections and the stories behind them, and explained how city staff preserve and provide access to public records. The students and teachers were able to view a variety of original materials—including maps, handwritten letters, photos, and legislation on microfiche—and get a fun behind the scenes look at what we do.

Also in June, SMA attended The City as Character screening at the Northwest Film Forum. Since 2019, SMA has partnered with Professor Minda Martin and her students at UW-Bothell on the course The City as Character, exploring the history of Seattle through archived materials. Drawing from public hearing excerpts highlighted in [SMA's Seattle Voices exhibits](#), students in the class research and produce short videos on historical events and make connections with the contemporary moment, mixing past and present newspaper clippings, photos, audio, and moving images. The assignments emphasize active and experiential learning by asking students to edit real experiences and voices from their communities about an issue that they care about at this moment, such as rent control, discrimination, environmental injustice, transportation, and more.

The screening was very well attended and we were happy to be there to support the students and their work!



Maple Elementary students attending a tour of the research room.

(Archives, cont'd)

Professor Minda Martin and UW-Bothell student filmmakers answer questions from the audience at The City as Character screening, hosted by the Northwest Film Forum.



New: P-Patch Voices Exhibit

A new Voices exhibit on [Seattle's P-Patches](#) is now available on SMA's website.

Inspired by this year's 50th anniversary of the popular community gardening program, the exhibit highlights public testimony given at a special Public Safety and Health Committee meeting held on August 26, 1983. The meeting was called to discuss the future of the P-Patch program, which was run by the Department of Human Resources at that time. Points of discussion focused on who should administer the program, what services should be provided for the gardeners, and how the program should be funded.

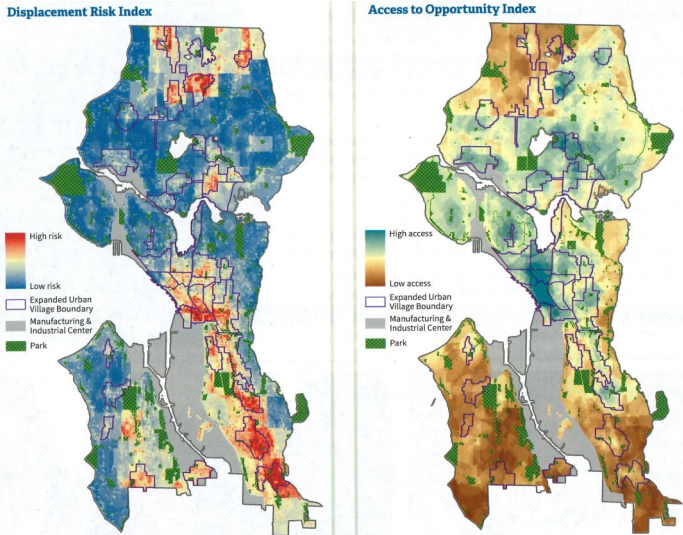
The exhibit's highlighted testimony includes a historical overview of the city's involvement in the P-Patch program up to that point, and gives first-hand accounts of how the program was benefiting the Seattle community, particularly refugees for whom the gardens provided a valuable resource. Speakers also advocated for lowering participation costs and hiring more staff to monitor the plots and support the gardeners.



Gardener at the Rainier Vista P-Patch, 1990. [Image 195950](#), Series 5750-08, SMA.

Newly Processed Collections

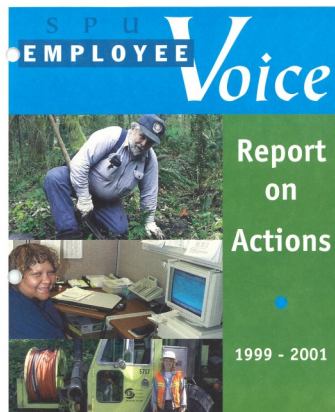
Now available for research at SMA are **Office of Policy and Innovation Records (Series 5257-04)**. The office was established within Mayor Ed Murray's office to work on policy development and lead major mayoral initiatives. Records in this series document OPI's work on many of the major policy issues of Murray's term in office, including homelessness, marijuana policy, affordable housing, transportation, land use and development, industrial lands, the new arena, parks, and neighborhoods.



Displacement Risk Index and Access to Opportunity Index maps, from "Is Seattle Equitable Today?" study. Box 2, Folder 9, Series 5257-04.

Another newly processed collection is the **Pike Place Market Litigation Records (Series 4402-05)** covering the years 1970-1991 with the majority of records found within 1990-91. Materials document the litigation between the City and New York-based company the Urban Group surrounding ownership and use of eleven historic buildings in the Market. The files have been scanned and are [available in Digital Collections](#). An [index](#), also scanned, lists most of the documents in the boxes, and folder titles include the corresponding section of the index.

Also newly available are **Seattle Public Utilities Joint Labor Management Committee Records (Series 7120-01)**, including meeting notes covering the years 1997-2010. Notes contain departmental updates, staffing opportunities, workplace training, safety protocol and policies, as well as programs and events information and flyers.



SPU Employee Voice, 1999-2001. Box 2, Folder 11, Series 7120-01.

51 Years Ago: Rolling Stones Concerts

The Rolling Stones announced that they would play two shows at the Seattle Center Coliseum on June 4, 1972, one at 4:00 and the other at 10:30. All tickets were to be sold at Memorial Stadium on a day in early May for \$6 each, with a limit of four tickets per person.

Ticket sales did not go smoothly. Fans started gathering the day before and about 2000 slept overnight at Seattle Center. By the time the sale started, thousands of people were mobbing the two ticket booths and some were fainting and panicking in the crush. Eventually police were called to manage the crowd and were able to organize the lines. In response to a query from the Times Troubleshooter, the police chief explained that having tickets sold first-come-first-served in one location was stipulated in the band's contract. He added that "the ticket agency acted in good faith by having eight off-duty police officers for crowd control. Unfortunately, the fervor of the crowd was more than the officers could handle very effectively."

Given the chaos of ticket sales and the difficulties inherent in holding two large concerts in short succession, much thought was given by Seattle Center staff to the logistics of the day. A few days after the shows, Seattle Center's director wrote up [a report](#). First he described the seating strategy: "It has been our experience that at Rock Shows it has become nearly impossible to keep avid rock-fans from leaving their seats, pressing toward the stage and jamming the aisles. Consequently, for safety sake, we use what we call "Festival Seating." All chairs have been removed to allow for free flow of the people on the flat floor."

For security, "fifty-eight large athletic type personnel (football players, etc.) dressed in green ROLLING STONES T-SHIRTS (some with long hair) were effectively stationed across the front of the stage and other areas inside the building." He praised the band's crew as "most cooperative and very professional."

Seattle Center staff used newspapers, radio, and TV ahead of the event to publicize their security and crowd control measures to set expectations and "reliev[e] the minds of parents who are concerned." They made clear that alcohol and drugs would not be allowed into the venue, and that those attending the first show would need to clear out quickly in preparation for the evening concert. The director felt this publicity was an important element in the ultimate success of the day: "Handling 28,000 people is not easy. Be patient, let the people know what is going on and what you expect of them, they will respond. But, DON'T spring in on them all of a sudden – THEY WILL REBEL!! Smile, then everyone will 'HAVE A HAPPY DAY.'"

Soon after sharing this story as a recent [Find of the Month](#), we were excited to hear a first-hand account from a concert-goer, the mother of one of our colleagues in the City Clerk's Office! She recalled the chaos on the day of the show and how she and her friends thought they would get crushed by the crowd when the concert gates opened. Having these additional details makes it even easier to imagine the scene on the day of the shows. It was great to get this unexpected postscript from someone who was there!

Recently Processed Photos

Slides from the **Historic Building Survey Photograph Collection (Series 1629-01)** continue to be scanned and cataloged, with recent additions covering the [Central Business District](#). The images show both residential and commercial buildings and span the 20th century, with most dating from the 1970s. Included are photos of department stores, theaters, public art, and restaurants; aerials showing downtown streets, buildings, plazas, and parks; and scenes of street traffic and pedestrians.



Paramount Theater, 1970s.
[Image 204977](#), Series 1629-01, SMA.



Aerial showing Freeway Park under construction, circa 1975.
[Image 203829](#), Series 1629-01, SMA.



Coliseum Theatre at 5th Ave & Pike St.
[Image 205648](#), Series 1629-01, SMA.



The Old Spaghetti Factory restaurant, 1970s.
[Image 204859](#), Series 1629-01, SMA.

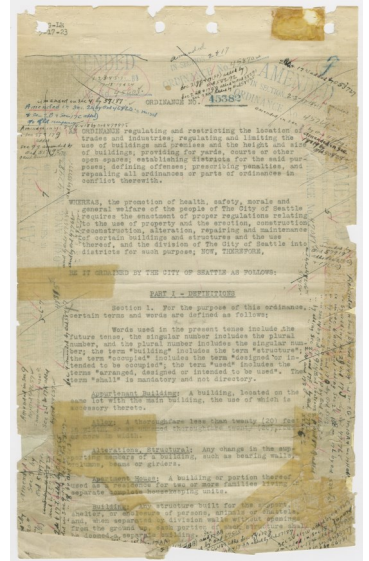
(Recently processed, cont'd)



Fourth Ave. and Pine St., 1970s.
[Image 203850](#), 1629-01, SMA.

100 Years Ago: Seattle's First Zoning Code

On June 28, 1923, Mayor Edwin J. Brown signed [Ordinance 45382](#), creating Seattle's first zoning code. The well-used copy seen here is crowded with handwritten notes showing the many times it was amended in later years until it was repealed and replaced in 1957. Zoning maps included with the ordinance illustrated how the land could be used. The areas along streetcar lines were designated for intensive commercial development, and apartment buildings could take advantage of the zone's higher height allowances. Residences elsewhere followed height, setback, and density regulations.



The ordinance was the result of work done by the city's [Zoning Commission](#), established in 1920 to study and recommend land use regulation in a rapidly growing Seattle. Regulation was considered necessary to prevent conflicting land use. However, the relationship between zoning laws, neighborhood development, and housing prices would play an important role in reinforcing racial and economic segregation patterns in the city. Today Seattle's approach to land use and zoning has shifted and the most recent [Comprehensive Plan](#) pledges to address housing injustices and advance racial equity in the city's growth strategy.

SMA has materials documenting the work of the Zoning Commission, including meeting minutes from 1920-1925 which are [fully digitized and available online](#) in Digital Collections. Learn more about the history of Seattle's zoning laws at our online guide for [Researching Historic Land Use and Zoning](#).

YouTube and Flickr News

A popular image recently posted to [SMA's Flickr](#) site is this circa 1958 photo showing downtown Seattle at night looking north from the Smith Tower. The new City Light building can be seen lighted in the center of the photo.



[Image 199079](#), City Light Negatives (Series 1204-01), SMA.

A popular video recently posted to [SMA's YouTube channel](#) is a 2001 television segment on a WPA mural at West Seattle High School painted in 1937 by Jacob Elshin. The mural depicts the landing of the Denny Party at Alki Point and was rediscovered in 2000 by Seattle Public Schools Archivist Eleanor Toews and restored by conservator Chiara Carcano.



[Lesson from the Past: The Lost Elshin Mural](#), 2001.
Event 13195, Series 3902-01, SMA.

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SMA in the News

A [KUOW piece](#) on the 50th anniversary of Seattle's [Fair Employment Practices Ordinance](#) was informed by materials and audio recordings in our exhibit on [Gay Rights in the 1970s](#). Also, a [KOMO News feature](#) about the Denny Hill regrade includes photos, maps, and film from the archives, and was partially filmed in SMA's research room with the assistance of archivist Julie Kerssen. A [KING 5 story](#) on how Seattle's CID residents are working to protect their neighborhood is illustrated with SMA photos. Other recent articles using images from the archives include: a [KIRO News piece](#) about the "mysterious" origins of the name of the Aurora Bridge; a recent [Crosscut article](#) on Seattle's Coliseum Theater and its new incarnation as an arts space; a [Seattle Times article](#) on the totem poles in Victor Steinbrueck Park, and a [KNKX piece](#) on Pike Place Market's "spirit of chaos."



SMA archivist Julie Kerssen unrolls a map showing property assessments for the Denny Hill regrade project.

30 Years Ago: Rainer Vista Field Dedication

On June 25, 1993, Mayor Norm Rice participated in the Families Together Summer Arts Project Kick Off and the Boys and Girls Club sports field dedication at Rainier Vista. The festivities included music, face painting, barbeque, and activities such as kickball and soccer. [Image 197395](#), Series 5272-07, SMA.



Upcoming Events

July 26-29 [Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting](#)

Sept 20 [History Café: Building More Inclusive Community Collections](#)
MOHAI, 6:30-8pm.