

Capital Facilities



Introduction

Seattle has a comprehensive network of facilities that provide important services to the city. These are known as capital facilities. Maintaining and expanding them is critical for providing a high-quality of life as the city grows. These facilities include those owned and managed by the City, such as police and fire facilities, libraries, neighborhood service centers, City office space, and Seattle Center. Other capital facilities are ones that the City funds or otherwise supports, such as schools and health clinics. The City encourages non-City organizations, such as Seattle Public Schools and Public Health—Seattle & King County, to meet the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan. This section generally applies to buildings, and it does not apply to transportation infrastructure, utility infrastructure, or affordable-housing projects, which are discussed in other sections of this Plan.

Overall, the City's network of capital facilities is generally sufficient to accommodate forecasted housing and job growth through 2035. The **Capital Facilities Appendix** contains

information about City-owned facilities, including parks and libraries, as well as information about Seattle Public Schools. Unlike utilities and transportation, demand for capital facilities is determined largely by factors other than population, such as service areas or response times. However, the City continues to invest in existing and new facilities to improve the system and ensure that it remains relevant and useful to changing populations. Over the next twenty years, the City will aim to ensure that Seattle's capital facilities and programming

- *contribute to a high degree of personal and public health and safety;*
- *are equitably distributed based upon the different needs of individuals and communities;*
- *provide services that are relevant to neighborhoods throughout the city and are consistent with each community's priorities;*
- *support the City's goals of protecting and restoring the natural environment, in particular to reduce the impacts of and adapt to climate change;*
- *encourage the healthy physical, educational, and cultural development of children and adults;*
- *provide space for the city's growing population to gather, connect, and build community;*
- *respond to increasing diversity, changing technology, and additional demand on limited facilities; and*
- *are resilient to the effects of natural and human-made disasters.*

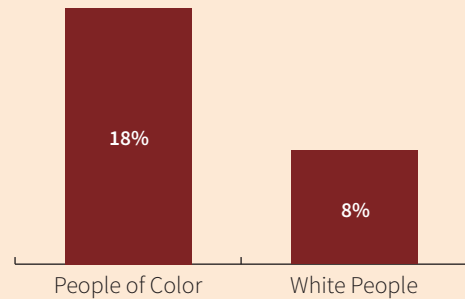
Achieving this vision will enable the City to create a capital facilities system that is an exceptional resource for all Seattleites. Part of the challenge in achieving the vision will be in recognizing and serving the disparate needs of different portions of the population.

People in different racial and ethnic groups and income segments vary in the extent and ways they use facilities provided by the City. Community Centers, for example, are used at a higher rate by residents of color than by other residents.

Community centers are designed to provide gathering spaces and recreational opportunities that are both culturally inclusive and affordable regardless of income.

The 2014 Parks Legacy Plan survey indicates that the Community Centers provided by the City are an especially important resource for persons of color. A greater share of respondents of color than whites said they visited a community center on a weekly basis.

Percentages of Survey Respondents in Each Group Who Visit a Community Center on a Weekly Basis



Source: September 2014 Parks Legacy Plan survey.

Strategic Investment

Discussion

The City has limited physical and financial resources available to maintain and improve our capital facilities network. The investment decisions we make will have long-term implications for our ability to serve a changing population. Consequently, Seattle must be strategic about investing these resources. This section describes the overarching goals and policies that apply to all aspects of capital facility development and management. These considerations will guide our actions through all aspects of working with capital facilities, including maintenance, acquisition, design, construction, and service-provision operations.

GOAL

- CF G1** Develop and manage capital facilities to provide long-term environmental, economic, social, and health benefits for all residents and communities when using public investments, land, and facilities.

POLICIES

- CF 1.1** Assess the policy and fiscal implications of potential major capital facility investments as part of the City's capital decision-making process. The evaluation should include consideration of a capital project's
- consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and functional plans;

- effects on Seattle’s environmental, social, economic, and human health over the lifetime of the investment;
- contributions to an equitable distribution of facilities and services;
- ability to support urban centers and villages that are experiencing or expecting high levels of residential and employment growth; and
- total costs of ownership over a project’s life, including construction, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning.

- CF 1.2** Prioritize the maintenance of existing facilities, making efficient use of limited financial and physical resources.
- CF 1.3** Provide capital facilities that are models of environmental, economic, and social stewardship and that serve as examples for private development.
- CF 1.4** Provide capital facilities, such as libraries and community centers, that will keep Seattle attractive to families with children.
- CF 1.5** Encourage the protection, enhancement, and adaptive reuse of City-owned historic facilities.
- CF 1.6** Develop resilient capital facilities by considering the potential impacts of changing demographics, conditions, and events—such as climate change, technological changes, and natural and human-made disasters—in planning and investment decisions.
- CF 1.7** Structure user fees and scholarships to mitigate disproportionate cost burdens on low-income households.
- CF 1.8** Leverage investments to create training and living wage job opportunities, particularly for marginalized populations and local residents.
- CF 1.9** Continue to invest in Seattle Public Library programs and resources so that they remain free and open to all.

Facility Operations and Maintenance

Discussion

Seattle has already made substantial investments in developing existing facilities. For this reason, the operation and maintenance of the facilities we already have is key to making efficient use of resources. This section applies to daily operations and monitoring of these facilities, as well as minor improvements to them.

GOAL

- CF G2** Reduce ongoing resource consumption and day-to-day costs of the City's capital facilities, and protect their long-term viability, while serving the needs of the people who use them.

POLICIES

- CF 2.1** Use maintenance plans for capital facilities to make efficient use of limited financial and physical resources.
- CF 2.2** Manage existing facilities with a resource-conservation approach and the specific aim of continuously reducing energy use, water use, and stormwater impacts, as well as lowering utility costs.
- CF 2.3** Seek to achieve 20 percent energy savings from a 2008 baseline across the City's portfolio of buildings by 2020 and to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.
- CF 2.4** Manage existing facilities to maintain healthy environments for occupants and users.

Facility Siting

Discussion

When the City builds new capital facilities, it's making substantial long-term investments. These are facilities that should serve the city for many decades to come. The location of these facilities can have major impacts on the long-term cost of providing services. They must be thoughtfully placed in order to provide the most benefits for local communities. As a result, Seattle must consider a wide range of questions in making these decisions. How will potential locations impact the efficiency of operations? Will services be provided equitably to all members of the community? What are the environmental consequences of each location, and how will they affect our ability to serve a growing population?

GOAL

- CF G3** Locate capital facilities to achieve efficient citywide delivery of services, support an equitable distribution of services, minimize environmental impacts, and maximize facilities' value to the communities in which they are located.

POLICIES

- CF 3.1** Encourage the location of new capital facilities in urban centers and villages to support future growth and attract both public and private investments.

- CF 3.2** Encourage the location of new capital facilities where they would support equitable distribution of services and address the needs of marginalized communities.
- CF 3.3** Locate capital facilities so that the majority of expected users can reach them by walking, bicycling, and/or taking public transit.
- CF 3.4** Seek to avoid siting new facilities in areas known to be prone to the effects of natural or human-made hazards, such as earthquake liquefaction-prone areas.
- CF 3.5** Encourage the joint use, reuse, and repurposing of existing City-owned land and buildings to further the City's long-range goals.
- CF 3.6** Consider future climate conditions during siting, particularly sea level, to help ensure capital facilities function as intended over their planned life cycle.
- CF 3.7** Consider alternate service delivery models that may be more resource efficient or that could better reach marginalized communities.

Facility Design and Construction

Discussion

As with location, the design and construction of capital facilities have a profound impact on how they are able to serve the city. The way the facilities are built affects the long-term cost of the services they provide, how well they serve the community, and their environmental impacts. By considering a range of perspectives, the City can design and build facilities that better suit the needs of Seattleites, now and in the future. The following policies address design and construction of the City's capital facilities, including major improvements and rehabilitation to existing facilities.

GOAL

- CF G4** Design and construct capital facilities so that they are considered assets to their communities and act as models of environmental, economic, and social stewardship.

POLICIES

- CF 4.1** Seek to make all capital facilities accessible and relevant to people of all abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, ages, and cultures.
- CF 4.2** Strive for high levels of energy and water efficiency in City-owned facilities.
- CF 4.3** Use materials efficiently, prioritize local and environmentally preferable products, and minimize waste.

- CF 4.4** Create healthy indoor and outdoor environments for both users and occupants.
- CF 4.5** Provide building-design strategies that promote active living through the placement and design of stairs, elevators, and indoor and outdoor spaces.
- CF 4.6** Encourage a wide range of transportation options by promoting car sharing and by providing bicycle, transit, and electric-car charging facilities for visitors to City facilities.
- CF 4.7** Consider future climate conditions during design, including changes in temperature, precipitation, and sea level, to help ensure capital facilities function as intended over their planned life cycle.

Non-City Service Providers

Discussion

In addition to directly providing services through its own capital facilities, the City works with other entities that serve Seattle. These include Seattle Public Schools, Public Health—Seattle & King County, Washington State, and King County, as well as other jurisdictions and nonprofit organizations. Working together—for instance, through joint planning, funding other service providers, and allowing other groups to use City-owned property—we can better provide services to Seattle’s residents.

GOAL

- CF G5** Make efficient use of resources when investing in facilities and service delivery that involve other agencies and organizations.

POLICIES

- CF 5.1** Collaborate with other public and nonprofit organizations to include location within urban villages as a major criterion for selecting sites for new or expanded community-based facilities or public amenities.
- CF 5.2** Work with other public or nonprofit agencies to identify and pursue new colocation and joint-use opportunities in public facilities for community programs, services, and meetings.
- CF 5.3** Partner with Seattle Public Schools to plan for expected growth in student population, encourage the siting of new school facilities in or near urban centers and villages, and make it easy for students and families to walk and bike to school.

- CF 5.4** Join with other jurisdictions in King, Snohomish, and Pierce Counties to explore regional funding strategies for capital facilities, especially those that serve or benefit citizens throughout the region.
- CF 5.5** Use nontraditional strategies for service delivery, such as the leasing of City-owned buildings or funding of non-City facilities, where they would provide greater benefit to the city.