

# Seattle

Pierce Howell

Alicia Silk

Ben Floyd



# History (Pierce Howell)

## Historic Preservation:

Seattle has 7 historic districts:

1. Ballard Avenue- this district embodies the architecture and feeling that was the 1890s through the 1940s. Designated as a historic district in 1976. Visitors will find boutiques, galleries and artist studios side by side with manufacturers of fishing equipment and a television studio.
2. Columbia City- a collection of commercial buildings, churches, apartments and houses. At its center is the village green with a 1914 Andrew Carnegie library branch of the Seattle Public Library. This area preserves the small-town atmosphere of its roots. This district was designated in 1978.
3. Fort Lawton- occupies most of Seattle's magnolia bluff offers a commanding view of entrance to Puget sound. In 1896 the Secretary for War ordered an artillery battery be constructed here. In 1974 this fort was designated to be a historic district.
4. Harvard-Belmont- located on the west slope of the Capitol Hill. Identified as a well-preserved residential neighborhood which retains its identity as an area of fine homes built by the city's elite in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Designated to be a historic district in 1980.
5. International District- the collection of diverse early 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial and hotel buildings serves as the center of Seattle's diverse Asian-American community. Designated to be one of the seven historic districts in 1973.
6. Pike Place Market- was established in 1907, the Pike Place Market is the oldest continuously operating public market in the country. In 1971, citizens voted to make it of historic preservation authority to avoid demolition.
7. Pioneer Square- marks Seattle's original downtown dating back to 1852. One of the nation's last collections of Romanesque Revival style urban architecture. Designated a historic district in 1970.

## Planning Seattle:

It is suspected that the area around Seattle has been occupied for at least 4000 years. George Vancouver was the first European to visit the Pacific Northwest, and after that white settlers became a mainstay around the 1830s. The official founding of Seattle is dated back to the arrival of the Denny Party in 1851. They had traveled north from Portland, Oregon up to Puget Sound and founded Seattle on Elliot Bay. The first plats for Seattle were filed on May 23, 1853.

## City on a hill:

There are 7 hills that Seattle was built on and around. Rome and Constantinople are examples of other cities that are built in proximity to hills. There are First Hill, Yesler Hill, Renton Hill, Denny Hill, Capitol Hill, Queen Anne Hill and Beacon Hill.

## Climate:

Seattle and the Pacific Northwest generally have a wet climate. Normal precipitation for the year is around 37 inches of rain, compared to the 45 of Rhode Island. Something that deserves to be taken note of is that the Pacific Northwest does not get that much rain, but it always appears to be raining. That is because most rain that hits Seattle is slow, light rain. The heaviest rain periods are between January and May and between October and December. During these times it is raining almost 50% of the time. Temperatures in the summer hover at about 75 degrees.

## Importance:

Seattle is important to the US for a variety of reasons:

1. Seattle is the largest seaport on the west coast
2. Computer science, biotech, and aerospace are important industries based here for the whole country.
3. Seattle has the headquarters for several major national corporations.
4. Seattle has provided unique cultural phenomena to the country, from coffee culture to grunge music.
5. The proximity of nature (mountains, lakes and Puget Sound) to the packed urban living are important in proving that it's possible to live in a large urban environment while still being close to/having respect for and protecting the natural beauty around.



## Urban Parks (Ben Floyd)

**“You can neither lie to a neighbourhood park, nor reason with it. 'Artist's conceptions' and persuasive renderings can put pictures of life into proposed neighbourhood parks or park malls, and verbal rationalizations can conjure up users who ought to appreciate them, but in real life only diverse surroundings have the practical power of inducing a natural, continuing flow of life and use.”**

According to the author Jane Jacobs, in her book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, an urban park is majorly defined by its context (what surrounds it). A good urban park has a context of mixed uses, which will create diversity around a park and influence the use of the park itself. Many different types of buildings, businesses, and shops surrounding a park will cause a diverse group of people to use the park at different times during the day, depending on their schedules. With people flowing in and out of a park all day, a safe environment is created, which is a key aspect of a good park. Parks in bad economic locations are often visited infrequently, which creates a potentially dangerous feeling environment. Another key characteristic of a good park is that it is very usable, meaning that it is easy to access and move through. Therefore, isolation, whether meaning hard to access or in a distant location, is not good for a park. Parks should be pleasing to the eye and aesthetically interesting in order to lure people into them and ensure that they are comfortable while in them. A center or a focal point which people are drawn and attracted to is another good characteristic. Finally, Jacobs explains that while good parks are necessary, too many parks in a city can be fatal. With a high density of parks in a concentrated urban area, people will spread their use across all of them, causing each park to be used very infrequently.



# Victor Steinbrueck Park (GOOD)

Victor Steinbrueck Park is placed at the north end of Pike Place Market. On a nice afternoon, the park is filled with a lively combination of neighborhood residents, visitors, tourists, and people who work in the area. Picnicking, sunbathing, playing and relaxing on the park's lawn, benches, and tables are all options.

## Jane Jacobs Comparison:

- The park is very open and spacious with good visibility all around, which increases safety and comfort in the park.
- One side of the park views streets, but other than that it is surrounded by offices, shops, restaurants, and apartments. There is a good mix of buildings and people.
- The park is in a high density area, so it is constantly in use. This also adds to the safety.
- There is no center in the park, but there is a focal point.
- The park is not isolated in any way.
- It is located in a good economic location.

**Jane Jacobs would consider Victor Steinbrueck Park to be a good park.**



# Waterfront Park (BAD)

Waterfront Park stretches the area from Pier 57 to Pier 59. It is lined with railings, lamps, and benches. It offers great views of the city skyline, the water, docked ships, the West Seattle Bridge, Blake Island, and the Olympic Mountains. The north end of the park runs into the Seattle Aquarium.

## Jane Jacobs Comparison:

- The park is not surrounded by much activity. The Seattle Aquarium and a highway are the main surrounding features. There is not a good mixture of buildings.
- Other than aquarium visitors and occasional sight seers, nobody else has reason to visit the park. There is not a good mixture of people using the park. This decreases the safety.
- There is a low level of use
- The park does not have a center or focal point in it.
- It is in a very isolated location with a highway on one side and the water on another.

**Jane Jacobs would consider Waterfront Park to be a bad urban park.**



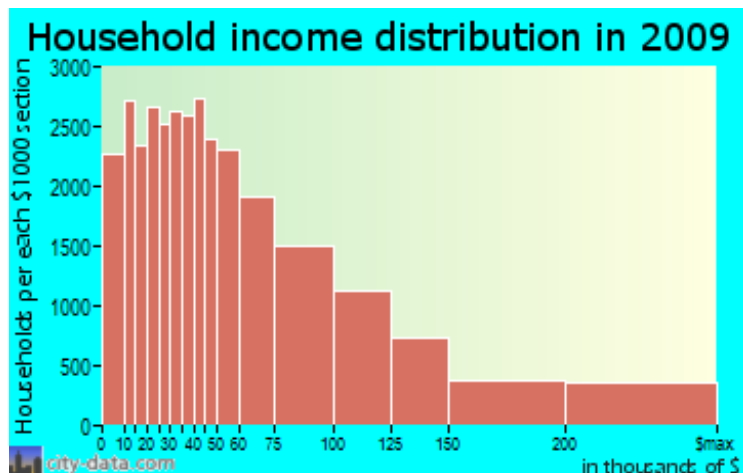
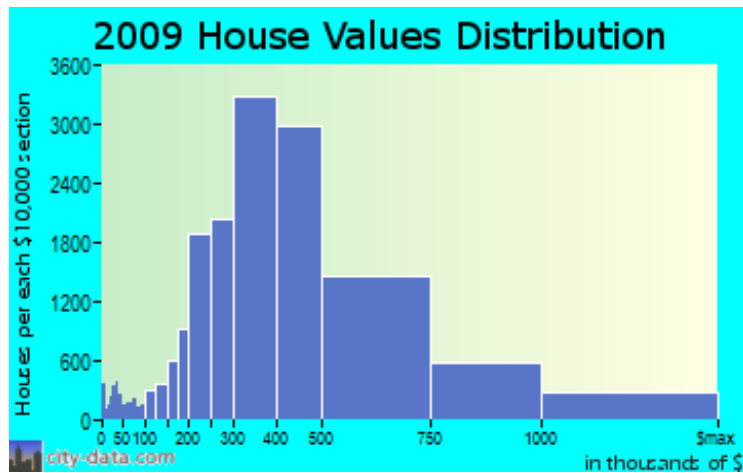
# Demographics (Alicia Silk)

## 2010 Census

Housing Units: 308,516  
Owner-occupied: 136,362 (48.1%)  
Renter-occupied: 147,148 (51.9%)  
Vacant Housing Units: 25,006 (8.1%)  
Households: 283,510  
Average Household Size: 2.06  
Average Family size: 2.87

## 2006-2010 American Community Survey

Median household income: \$60,665  
Percent population below poverty level: 12.7%  
Median gross rent: \$958  
Percent population 25 years with a college degree: 61.9%  
Percent workers commuting by transit, carpool, biking or walking: 41.2%



## Where Are The People?

- 10,642 people in college dormitories (includes college quarters off campus)
- 5,024 people in other noninstitutional group quarters
- 3,124 people in local jails and other confinement facilities (including police lockups)
- 2,951 people in nursing homes
- 2,084 people in other group homes
- 478 people in homes or halfway houses for drug/alcohol abuse
- 460 people in homes for the mentally ill
- 310 people in crews of maritime vessels
- 258 people in other nonhousehold living situations
- 225 people in military ships
- 167 people in hospitals/wards and hospices for chronically ill
- 167 people in other hospitals or wards for chronically ill
- 154 people in short-term care, detention or diagnostic centers for delinquent children
- 135 people in other types of correctional institutions
- 112 people in homes for the physically handicapped
- 88 people in religious group quarters
- 84 people in homes for the mentally retarded
- 68 people in unknown juvenile institutions
- 61 people in wards in general hospitals for patients who have no usual home elsewhere
- 52 people in federal prisons and detention centers
- 51 people in halfway houses
- 32 people in state prisons
- 27 people in mental (psychiatric) hospitals or wards
- 23 people in job corps and vocational training facilities
- 21 people in residential treatment centers for emotionally disturbed children
- 17 people in orthopedic wards and institutions for the physically handicapped
- 4 people in military barracks, etc.
- 3 people in military transient quarters for temporary residents