In its overhanging eaves and projecting low-pitched gables, the front elevation shows the Swiss influence. The upward curve at the ridge is reminiscent of architectural treatment very common in Japan.

Image Source: Bungalow Magazine, May 1915, p. 325
The Seattle Public Library

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1000 Fourth Ave, Seattle WA 98104

Special Collections Hours - http://www.spl.org/locations/central-library/cen-plan-a-visit/cen-special-collections

Special Collections Services

Library website: http://www.spl.org
“Ask a Librarian” contact for reference questions: http://www.spl.org/default.asp?pageID=info_help_ask
Phone: 206-386-4636

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Overview

Why research the history of a building?
Houses, commercial buildings, parks and gardens, roads, bridges, churches, and clubs all have a history. You can find information that will help you understand when they were built and who occupied them. Learning how the building or structure was used and valued in the past can help us appreciate our communities, their growth and changes.

What sources are available for building history research?
Gather all the information you already have. If the building you’re researching is your own, you may have documents such as deeds, tax assessments, articles, photographs, information from previous owners and memories from neighbors. Make copies of important documents and keep your originals at home.

Information about a building will be found in a wide variety of documents including secondary and primary materials; in various formats including print, electronic, photographic, archival, oral history, and even artifacts from the building itself. Historical records and materials are distributed among many agencies in the area, and you may need to make multiple visits as you uncover new details about your building. There may be classes offered locally that address areas of your research. Learning how to access these records and how to incorporate the information into your research in an orderly manner will save you time and improve your research.

Many good sources are available for free online. Many of these are listed in the Websites and Online Resources section of this guide. In addition to these specific resources, general web search engines (e.g., Google) can uncover a wealth of information about buildings. Search for everything you know about the building: the building itself as well as names of people associated with the building, nearby businesses, streets, events, etc. As you discover more details throughout your search continue to search online to uncover more.

Don’t be afraid to talk to people. In addition to formal records, residents and neighbors often know a great deal about the history of buildings, some of which may not be written down anywhere. And don’t hesitate to ask a librarian at any point along the way! Stop by the Seattle Room of the Seattle Public Library during open hours or contact us with questions.

How to use this guide
This resource guide presents the basic steps for conducting research on buildings in Seattle. Each section contains tips and suggestions for different aspects in the process of building history research. Resources are mentioned briefly in the text of the guide, and full descriptions of resources with contact information and web URLs are contained in the Directory section at the end of the guide. The directory is divided into three categories:
• **Agencies**: Local agencies with services or collections that are of use to building history researchers. Contact information and websites are provided. Many agencies have excellent websites, although in many cases, not everything will be available online.

• **Websites and Online Resources**: Full addresses and descriptions of all websites mentioned in this guide. Some agency websites that are particularly useful on their own are listed in both the Agencies and Websites sections of the directory.

• **Print and other Resources**: Particularly useful print resources which can be found in local libraries or other collections, with descriptions of where to find them and how to use them.

When an agency, a website, or a print resource is mentioned in the text of the guide, a link will take you directly to the appropriate section of the directory. (In the case of websites, links within the document will take you directly to the website; however, you may wish to view the directory entry for websites to see the full URL and a description of what resources can be found there.)

**Keeping records**
Keeping accurate records of your research with full citations will make your work much more useful to you—and to future historians of the building you are researching.

**Workbooks and Checklists**
The **Workbooks and Checklists** section of this guide has forms that will help you organize the information you collect and help you use that information as you further your search.

**Photograph Log**
During the course of your research you’ll uncover (and possibly create) many interesting photographs that you’ll want to consult. Having a “research” copy will help you go back and “look again” at an image with new information you have uncovered. Keep a low resolution copy for this purpose and record the full citation for the image.
Legal Records

Legal records are generated by government agencies during the course of their work. These records are public documents, and can give you a good starting point for collecting information about a building.

Parcel Viewer

The King County Parcel Viewer is an excellent place to collect some of the basic legal information about a piece of property. Search by address, street intersection, or parcel number to bring up a parcel, and select “Get Property Report” to view the property report with more detailed information. When the property report loads, click “Property Detail” to show the detailed report. Several key sections of the property report are particularly useful for building research.

Example Parcel Viewer Property Report

1. Parcel number: This is the numeric identifier for the property. You need this (plus the legal description) to get property records, including property record cards from Puget Sound Regional Archives, and tax records from the King County Assessor’s Office.

2. Street address: This is useful for research in city directories and for finding your property on maps. Keep in mind that the street address, street name, and street designations may have
changed over time—see the Streets section of this guide for more information about researching streets.

3. Legal description:
   a. Quarter, Section, Township, Range: The township-range system describes land in relation to a specific baseline and principal meridian. The township-range legal description is useful for finding early land records—such as survey notes, original land transfers, and homesteads—prior to when property was incorporated into the city. The description on the Parcel Viewer example above can be read as “the northeast quarter of Section 11, Township 24 North, Range 3 East.” Townships and ranges always have a directional designation, but land in Seattle will always be in a north township and an east range, so these directions may be left off the descriptions on the parcel viewer. For more information on understanding township-range descriptions, see About.com’s webpage on land records, or E. Wade Hone’s Land and property research in the United States.
   b. Plat Name, Plat Block, and Plat Lot: This is the more detailed legal description of property that has been incorporated into a city. This description is important because parcel numbers and addresses may have changed over time. You can use this description to find your property on historic real estate maps and to obtain a property record card from the Puget Sound Regional Archives. The plat name is the first part of the “legal description” on the property report—in the example above, Walnut Terrace Addition. The plat block and lot numbers are labeled as such.

4. Scanned images of plats: This link will take you to the King County Recorder’s Office website with images of plat maps, which show the date the property was platted, original street names, and names of property owners.

Other helpful information accessible on the parcel viewer’s property report (but not pictured in the above example) includes:

- Year built: This is a good starting point for determining the date of construction. In many cases this date will be accurate, but it may also be an estimate based on various factors. It’s always a good idea to verify the year built using additional sources, such as Seattle city directories; building permits; deeds and mortgages; Sanborn and real estate atlases; and tax assessment rolls.
- Current and historic photos
- Tax roll and sale history going back about twenty years, including names of property owners/taxpayers
- Other property details, including square footage, zoning information, and basic floor plans

Other Records
Several other sources will help you find other important legal records beyond what the parcel viewer covers.
Financial records of the property
The assessed value of the property is listed on property record cards and in assessor’s books and records at the Puget Sound Regional Archives. Sales over time are recorded on deeds accessible in the King County Recorder’s Office. The financial history of a property can be interesting; for example, a sudden increase in assessments may tell you the year the building was built or when other significant improvements were made on the property. Probate records for owners may also reveal other aspects of a property’s financial history.

Building permits
Building permits are available at the Seattle Department of Planning and Development. Original building permits might give you such information as the architect, builder/contractor, and date of construction; later permits will tell you about additions, remolds, etc.

Property owners
There are various sources you can consult to find the names of property owners:

- Property deeds and indexes are located at the King County Recorder’s Office, and are indexed by date and owner’s name.
- Assessment records are also helpful, because the person assessed for tax is typically the property owner: Assessment rolls (1892–1941) and property record cards (1937–1972) are held by the Puget Sound Regional Archives.
- Seattle tract books, held by the Seattle Department of Planning and Development (1907–ca. 1990) list owners by legal description.
- City directories list residents, who may or may not be property owners, but beginning in 1938 the R.L. Polk Seattle city directories include a reverse directory that uses a circle-within-a-circle symbol (©) to show that a building is owner-occupied.
- Census records show occupancy but may also indicate whether the occupants are renters or owners.
- Real estate atlases and subdivision maps will tell you who owned particular pieces of property at certain times.
- Searching Bureau of Land Management (BLM) General Land Office (GLO) Records by township-range legal description will show you the first recorded private owners of a piece of property, and how the property was obtained from the federal government (homestead, donation land claim, etc.)
- The back side of Side Sewer Cards, available from the Department of Planning and Development’s website, list property owners when side sewers were installed or maintained.
Land Records
The land on which a building sits also has a rich history that can be uncovered. Seattle’s landscape has undergone enormous changes throughout its history. Many parts of the city have been raised, lowered, or otherwise engineered to create more developable land. Questions to investigate include: What was on the property before the building you’re researching? How has the land changed over time? How has it been developed and divided?

Native American Settlements
Most written records begin with cadastral surveys and donation land claims. However, Native American settlements can be documented in this region and make an interesting starting point for land research. Two sources for an overview of Native history in what is now Seattle are Tom Dailey’s Coast Salish Map and Coll Thrush’s Native Seattle.

Cadastral Surveys
Cadastral surveys are the origins of township-range legal descriptions of land, and were used to define boundaries for describing individual ownership. Original survey plats and field notes are available online from the Bureau of Land Management. Survey plats are maps showing any land ownership prior to the survey; survey plats use township-range designations. Field notes are what were used to create the survey plats. Field notes show detailed information about the land prior to development: for example, trees, creeks, other physical features, and existing land owners at the time of the survey.

Transfers of Land
The Bureau of Land Management General Land Office Records website allows you to find the original transfer of land from the federal government to an individual owner. The records show how the land was first acquired and the date of legal transfer. Different types of transfers (e.g., donation land claims, homestead grants, cash sales, and scrip/warrants) have different requirements and may produce additional records. You can order the land entry case files or surrendered military bounty land warrants from the National Archives using Form Number NATF 84.

There have probably been many transfers of land between individuals since the original transfer of federal land. The King County Recorder’s Office has indexes and deed books, which show land transfers, on microfilm. The Puget Sound Regional Archives has original deed indexes, and the King County Archives has the original deed books.

Platting and Selling Lots
Scanned images of the plats filed when land was first incorporated into the city are available online through the King County Parcel Viewer Property Report. Copies are also available at the King County Recorder’s Office. These plats include maps showing the date of platting, original street names, and names of the property owners filing the plat. Additional plat maps show subsequent subdivisions.

Environmental Impact Statements
Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) for nearby properties can provide a wealth of historical information about land and property, if your property is near a project for which an EIS was generated.
The Seattle Public Library has many draft and final EISs regarding construction projects, and many can also be found online by searching for the name of the project. Drafts often have more history than final statements, so be sure to look at both if available. EISs are created when the use of a property is changing significantly—especially after the 1970s. Search for nearby properties such as parks, redevelopment of industrial areas, cleanup sites, civic improvement projects, etc.

Maps and Atlases
Maps and atlases can tell you a great deal about your property and the surrounding area. Look at changes over time, and different maps of the same property. Maps can show you clearly when street names and addresses change, when buildings appear, and some information about construction. For more information about maps and atlases and where to find them, see the Maps and Atlases section of the Directory in this guide.
People
Buildings are more than just structures. From architects to builders to owners to residents to neighbors, many people are associated with any building. As Kyvig and Marty put it in *Nearby History*: “People walk around them, go into them, move up and down and about in them; look at them from the outside and out of them from the inside; work, play, eat, sleep, relax, entertain, make love, worry, and squabble in them. Buildings interact with the economic, social, aesthetic, and physical lives of those who use them. People and buildings exist in an organic relationship.”

This section provides some tips and suggestions for tracking down the people associated with a building and researching their histories. The genealogy librarians at the Seattle Public Library can also help you with your research. Other area genealogical societies and libraries, such as the Seattle Genealogical Society and the Fiske Genealogical Library, have additional genealogy and local history materials.

City Directories
Seattle City Directories published primarily by R.L. Polk Co. are available from the late 1800s through 1996 on an annual basis with a few exceptions. City directories typically include the names, occupations, and addresses of residents. Starting in 1938, the Polk directories include reverse listings by address, making it relatively easy to find out who was living at a particular address. For earlier reverse listings (the first in 1928) there are “house and street” directories, which typically only include households with telephones. Cole’s/Cole directories published from 1969 to date continue to provide reverse listings by address and later also by telephone number.

Census Records
U.S., Territorial, and State Census records for Washington, King County, and Seattle can provide useful information about individuals and their families. The amount of information varies from year to year, but typically includes names of everyone living in the household along with their occupations. Starting in 1880 the U.S. Census lists family relationships, parents’ birthplaces, and street names for urban residents. Later U.S. Census records from 1900, 1910, 1920, & 1930 also provide the full street address for urban residents. These records are available online through free (familysearch.org and the Washington Digital Archives) and subscription (Ancestry Library Edition & HeritageQuest) databases and are searchable by name, age, birthplace, etc. If you don’t have the name of the resident, you can determine the Census Enumeration District for a particular address using the E.D. Finder search tool at Stevemorse.org. You can then browse the U.S. Census by Enumeration District to find the street name, address, and residents. It’s important to note that the street may be listed on multiple pages and even and odd numbered houses are often listed separately.

Death Records
Locating the date of death for an individual is standard genealogy work. Official death records for Seattle and King County start in 1881 and 1891, respectfully. These early death records are available in print, microfilm, and online depending on the time period. From 1907 to the present, death records are kept by the state and indexes are available on microfilm and online. Once you have the date of death you can
request a death certificate, search for an obituary, and check for probate records, each of which can provide useful information about an individual and his/her family.

Indexes (see Directory for full citations):

- 1881–1907. Seattle death records, 1881–1907, by South King County Genealogical Society.
- 1891–1907. King County, Washington deaths, 1891–1907, by South King County Genealogical Society.
- 1907–1964. Washington Death Index on microfilm. Separate films by decade or 5-year period. Names are organized by Soundex Code and first name. (To find Soundex codes for particular names, use RootsWeb’s Soundex Converter.)

Obituaries & News Articles

If you know the name and date of death of an individual, you may find an obituary published in a local newspaper within a week to ten days following the date of death. Obituaries often provide information about an individual’s life, career, and surviving family members. News article obituaries (non-paid) or other news items may be indexed in the Seattle Public Library’s Northwest Index and the University of Washington’s Pacific Northwest Index. For more comprehensive coverage of Seattle newspapers you can check America’s Genealogy Bank, which currently includes the Seattle Times from 1923 through July 1979, or World Newspaper Archive, which includes the Seattle Times from 1900 through 1979. For more recent obituaries from the Seattle Times, you can check Legacy.com, which provides the date of publication along with the beginning text of the obituary. You can order the full obituary directly for $1.95 or contact The Seattle Public Library to ask about getting a copy from the microfilm. Historical issues of the Seattle Times and Post-Intelligencer, as well as a number of other historical newspapers, are available on Level 6 of the Seattle Public Library’s Central Library.

The website Find a Grave can also be an excellent source for death information. In addition to death dates and locations of gravesites, this website also often includes photos and biographical information. Users can add records and information to the site, so it is growing daily.

Marriage Records

There is no single comprehensive index of marriage records in King County. Various records are held at the King County Archives, the Puget Sound Regional Archives, and the King County Recorder’s Office.
The King County Archives has a helpful webpage on determining how to find different types of records by date range.

Some marriage records have been digitized and are available online. The Washington State Digital Archives includes many King County Marriage Certificates from 1855–1990 and Marriage Returns from 1891–1947. The digitization of these records is in process, and records are being added as they are scanned. Familysearch.org also includes Washington State Marriage Records 1858–1950 (Incomplete, and does not include King County).

**Court Records, Divorce Records, Wills & Probate Records**

King County court records, divorce records, wills and probate records are held by the King County Superior Court Clerk. For information on ways to obtain King County court records see the King County Archives’ website on finding court and legal records.

**Divorce Records**

For divorce decrees in King County for all years, contact the Superior Court Clerk. For historical divorce records in King County from 1853–1983, contact the Puget Sound Regional Archives. For additional information about online divorce indexes and searching tools see the King County Archives’ website on frequently requested records.

**Wills and probate records**

Probate is the process of validating wills and distributing estates, when supervised by a court. For current case files, contact the King County Superior Court Clerk’s Office. For historic probate records (including probate case files, 1854–1961, and case file indexes 1854–1977) contact the Puget Sound Regional Archives. For early probate records, you can check the Index of probate court records, 1854–1917, King County, Washington published by the Eastside Genealogical Society. For additional information on locating probate records, see the King County Archives’ website on frequently requested records.

**Locating Living People**

Living descendants and relatives can often provide a wealth of information about the people associated with a building, from personal recollections to records and family histories. Some tips for finding living people:

- Obituaries for surviving family members
- Wills and probate records for heirs
- The Reference USA subscription database, available to Seattle Public Library cardholders, provides current listings by name, address, and phone number for the United States.
- Local telephone directories
- Local city directories
- Local Cole’s reverse directories with listings by address and telephone number
• Sound Politics Washington State Voter Database provides information on currently registered voters.
• Finding birthdays & related persons in one step on the Stevemorse.org website provides a one-step form for searching multiple online public records search databases. Most of the public records sites charge a fee for a full report, but there are usually enough details provided for free that will help you locate the people you’re looking for.
• The King County Law Library has a public sleuthing webpage of links to public record websites.
• Searching on Facebook and other social networking sites can often turn up information about living people—including contact information.
• If the house or building you are interested in is not your own, go talk to the people who live there. Tenants, even, may know things, and certainly the building owners do. Likely they'll even take you on a tour if you ask politely.

Structure and Style of the Building
Now you can take a closer look at the building itself. What materials is it made of? Are they original? Does the building represent a particular architectural style, or is it a hodgepodge of different styles? Understanding the details of the physical building is helpful both for historical context and for preservation.

The Structure of the Building
Understanding the construction and materials of your building helps you get to know your building well. Historical clues can be hidden within the physical materials. For example, bricks manufactured before a certain date were often made locally, and may be stamped with the name or symbol of the producer. Crawl spaces were often excavated after a house was built; over time, people brought bucketfuls of dirt up through the kitchen. You may be able find the actual soil in the backyard.

What to Look For
The building’s structure can help you to date the building and its component parts, and to understand the methodology used to make it. What tools were used? What materials were available? Where did they come from? What did builders have to do to make the building? Looking at the specific components of the structure also helps you to develop a vocabulary when comparing your building to others. For preservation and restoration work, familiarity with the physical structure of the building will help you to decide whether to save, restore, or replace certain elements.

Every element of the structure can tell you something about the history of the building, and you can learn more about each of them. Here are some suggestions for questions to ask and details to pay attention to:
**Construction**

In the majority of residential buildings, there was no architect or design professional. So locating the “original” blueprints for a house will be impossible. However, a close examination of the physical structure can reveal a number of important details about the construction of the building. The foundation materials may include brick, concrete, concrete block, or stone. The inside walls of the foundation may contain clues about the uses of the cellar area as a food storage area or additional living space. In some instances houses were built over a spring and supplied potable water for the household. There may be water stains or marks in the basement indicating the possibility that the cold water from the spring was used as an ad hoc refrigerator. The chimney most likely will originate in the basement and may have been converted to a furnace heating system at a later date. The foundation may not be as large as the building above it and this could indicate an addition was constructed after the original building. By comparing the location of the building with the diagram on fire insurance and real estate atlases, you might discover if it had been moved on the site, perhaps reoriented.

Many houses in the Seattle area are framed in wood purchased from local mills. Commercial buildings will most likely be made from brick, masonry, and stone with metal or wood framing. During a remodel you might be able to find a mark or stamp on the wood that will give the name of the local sawmill or dealer. In the case of a brick building, you might be able to find the name of the brick manufacturer. In either case additional research can be done to learn more about these companies, such as where they were located and how long they survived.

Most residential construction in this region uses “platform framing” in which shorter lumber pieces are used to build each floor (platform) of the building. However, there are some buildings that predate the widespread use of platform framing and in these you might find large old-growth lumber used as posts or other supports.

The exterior of the building may be covered with wood clapboards in one of several styles. Some clapboards are beveled and overlap. Their widths can vary. Some clapboards are called “shiplap” and form a smooth façade. It is not unusual to find a house where these original clapboards have been covered with asbestos or asphalt siding. In the original building the window trim would have protruded. The asbestos siding is installed over the clapboards and thus would protrude. The asbestos siding is installed over the clapboard and right up to the window trim.

The chimney may be a decorative part of the exterior of the building and have fieldstone, brick, cut stone, or masonry detailing.

Flooring in a building is attached over the floor joists (larger dimensional lumber that forms the skeleton of the floor). There is usually a subfloor which in older buildings can be tongue-and-groove Douglas fir; later, oak boards would be used. Some of the flooring can be wide fir boards. Generally the subfloor was covered by a hardwood floor often covered in houses with carpet. In bathrooms tile was usually installed on the floor. In kitchens you might find original linoleum hiding under vinyl titles.

Walls are made by attaching material to the studs. This material can be a lathe (a lattice) used to form a grid for plaster. The lathe and plaster walls will look uneven and be cracked. Some walls were covered
with panels of wood. Wallpaper coverings are common—in fact, you may find several layers of wallpaper. In some rooms, notably dining rooms, you may find a brocade wall covering. By the 1950s drywall or “sheetrock” was becoming more common.

Electric service in the house may have been added after the house was built. Early “knob and tube” wiring may be found in attic spaces but most of it has been replaced in residential architecture in this region. Light fixtures like sconces and ceiling mounts will probably be original to the house (or to the date when the electric service was installed.)

Water service to the building may have started out as a well and cistern in the yard. Soon a handpump in a large sink in the kitchen would have brought water directly into the house. Water to the bathroom along with “indoor plumbing” meaning either a sewer connection or a septic drain field would have been welcome improvements.

Most houses in Seattle had some form of central heating. Wood and, more importantly, coal were fuels used. The coal mines southeast of Lake Washington were important sources.

The doors in a house are often original, but may be covered with layers of paint from past remodeling. The hanging hardware and the door knobs and coverplates may also be original (and covered with paint). Try to locate the name of the manufacturer of the hardware and look for early manufacturers’ catalogs to see if you can find a picture of the original. The hardware on built-ins may prove interesting as well.

Insulation has had an interesting history. Many houses were not insulated at all while other builders tried to plug up the gaps with anything handy. Old heavy blotters used by newspaper printers to interleave the lead type of a page must have been free because they are very common as insulation. You may also find old newspapers and magazines. All of these artifacts contain interesting history of the day.

Changes to the physical structure of the building or the property can also be interesting to look at. For example, have additions been made since the structure was first built? Has the lot been subdivided? Have there been outbuildings (e.g., garage, shop, privy, chicken coop, barn)?

**Resources**

You can learn a great deal about the structure of a building simply by taking a close look at the building and the surrounding area. Take some photographs of the interior, exterior, and each floor. You might even want to engage in some backyard excavation, particularly around outbuildings—this may be the only way to find out how outbuildings were used. Take an archaeologist’s view of your yard: excavation can produce artifacts, and give you a better sense of what it was like to live day-to-day in the building.

You may unearth a potshard, a bottle or a long lost marble. Depending on what you find there may a catalog for the “collectible.” For example, the old marble may be in a catalog of children’s toys from that period. Bottles of all kinds have been documented by collectors who prize early specimens. Handle these discoveries carefully. You may want to consult a book such as Jane S. Long’s *Caring for your family treasures.*
Several other sources can tell you things about the structure that you might not be able to find through observation alone:

- **Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps** can provide much detail about the physical construction and uses of a building, the presence of outbuildings, changes in orientation, and changes in the landscape (e.g., streets and nearby buildings).
- Building permits, available at the [Seattle Department of Planning and Development](#), can tell you about original construction and later additions.
- Property record cards, held by the [Puget Sound Regional Archives](#), can tell you about building materials, additions, and other changes. Many also include photos (usually taken in 1935–1938).
- Historic photo collections may have a picture of your building, especially if it’s prominent or if it was constructed by a well-known architect. Even if your building is not particularly noteworthy, historic photos of nearby buildings (next door, across the street, etc.) or public works projects may have your building in the background. There are many excellent local digital photo collections, including University of Washington Libraries Digital Collections, Seattle Municipal Archives Photograph Collection, the Museum of History and Industry’s (MOHAI) Photo Archive and the Seattle Public Library’s Seattle Historical Photograph Collection. (Many of these collections also have numerous historical photos which have not yet been digitized. See the Directory section of this guide for more about specific collections, including contact information.) Former owners or residents of the building may also have photos. If your building existed in the 1930s, the property record card held at the Puget Sound Regional Archives likely also has a photo taken during that time. The property report available via the [King County Parcel Viewer](#) often has current and historic photos of buildings.
- Check lists of landmarked buildings to find a structure that is similar to yours. You may want to read more about the landmarked building for clues and ideas about additional research. The process to gain landmark status requires considerable research which can be helpful if you want to incorporate historic elements in updates, restorations, or remodels.
- Catalogs/pattern books were produced by architects and builders to advertise the types of buildings offered. Some manufacturers of building parts such as doors, windows, staircases, and hardware produced these catalogs which can be helpful in determining the look of the original installation.
- **Subdivision/Plat Maps** (of your building and neighboring buildings) show property when it was first incorporated into the city and subsequent subdivisions.

### The Style of the Building

Determining the architectural style of a building can be an exercise in frustration since many buildings were not designed to embody one particular genre. Elements from several styles are often used in the design of a building with varying degrees of success. Try to isolate the various elements by using a style guide, house “plan books,” or buildings that are similar to yours that have been identified as historic landmarks.
Style guides and plan books

Style guides for residential architecture include (full citations in Directory):

- McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A field guide to American houses*.
- Poppeliers, John C., S. Allen Chambers, Jr. *What style is it?: a guide to American architecture*.

House plan books can be good examples of pre- and post-World War Two architecture. Search for these in the Seattle Public Library catalog. From the main catalog screen, select “Subject” from the drop-down menu, and enter “Architecture, Domestic – United States – Designs and Plans” in the search box (you can leave out the punctuation marks). Look for plan books from the time or style period of your building. (Many such plan books/catalogs have been reprinted.) Examples include:

- Yoho, Judd and Merritt, Edward L. *Craftsman bungalows: design from the Pacific Northwest*.
- Radford, William A. *The Most Popular Homes of the Twenties*.
- Stickley, Gustav. *Craftsman houses: The 1913 catalog*.

Many other books about Seattle homes and architecture can be found by searching the Seattle Public Library catalog. From the main catalog screen, select “Subject” from the drop-down menu, and enter “Architecture, Domestic – Washington (State) – Seattle” in the search box (you can leave out the punctuation marks).

Architecture Websites

A number of helpful online resources exist for learning more about the style and architecture of a building (websites and descriptions are also listed in the “Websites & Online Resources” section of the Directory):

- University of Washington Libraries Digital Collections’ [Architecture of the Pacific Northwest Database](http://digital.lib.washington.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/pacificnorthwest/id/1104) is a database of architectural drawings representing regionally significant architects and designers from the 1880s to the 1980s. The [Building Styles](http://digital.lib.washington.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/pacificnorthwest/id/2042) section includes descriptions of styles with links to drawings representing each style.
- The Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation provides an [Architectural Description Guide](http://wadaph.wa.gov/archdes) for use in preparing nominations for state and national registers of historic places. It explains specific architectural details that can be found in historic buildings.
- [Old Houses Style Guide](http://www.ourhouses.com/oldhouses) features descriptions of different architectural styles with well-illustrated examples and further resources.
- [About.com: Architecture](http://architecture.about.com) includes house style guides with photos, diagrams, and building plans.
- The HistoryLink article “[Housebuilding in Seattle: A History](http://historylink.org/)” provides an overview of Seattle housebuilding, with explanations of styles and prominent examples.
• A Seattle Dream Homes page on Seattle Architecture includes information about Seattle architects and architecture. While this site is poorly organized and somewhat difficult to navigate, it has links to some useful resources for identifying the style of a house, including a guide to popular Seattle architectural styles by decade.

• The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Historical Sites Database includes detailed descriptions and photographs of many Seattle buildings, and is searchable by the architectural style of a property. Even if your building is not included on the survey, looking at other buildings can give you information about the style of your building.

Landmarks and historic building directories
Another way to learn how to identify your building’s style and materials is to study other historic structures that are listed on several landmarks inventories. Landmark nominations are extensively researched and may offer clues about your building or suggest additional avenues of research. Plus, you may be able to visit and tour these buildings and experience their historical significance firsthand. Each of the lists (city, county, and state) includes information about the landmarking process.

Official landmarks lists and designation information exist at city, county, state, and federal levels:

• Seattle Landmarks and Designation
• King County Historic Preservation Program
• National and State Register of Historic Sites, maintained by Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (includes National Register of Historic Places, new Heritage Barn Register, and the Washington Heritage Register)

Not all historic buildings have achieved landmark status. Many useful guides describe the histories and locations of Seattle’s historic buildings, including:

• Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Historical Sites Database.
• Historic Seattle Preservation and Development Authority. An urban resource inventory for Seattle [a visual inventory of buildings & urban design resources for Seattle].
• Crowley, Walt. National Trust guide Seattle: America’s guide for architecture and history travelers.
• Elenga, Maureen R. Seattle architecture: A walking guide to downtown.
• Aldredge, Lydia S., ed. Impressions of imagination: Terra-cotta Seattle.

Architects and Builders
In many cases you can research the specific architects and builders who designed and constructed your building. Some tips for researching these names:

• Building permits, available from the Seattle Department of Planning and Development, will tell you the names of architects and builders.
• If the building is included on the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods' Historical Site search, this page will generally list architects.

• Many of the suggestions in the People section of this guide are useful for finding out about the people who worked on your house.

• The Seattle Public Library Seattle Room has a card file and scrapbooks on architects and architecture, which references news articles and articles in architectural publications. The University of Washington Libraries' Pacific Coast Architecture Database has similar information in electronic form.

• Jeffrey Ochsner’s Shaping Seattle architecture is an excellent resource for learning about major Seattle architects.
**Historical Context**

Understanding the context means that you see how your building was a part of the general activities of the time. Was your property a farm or orchard? Was it close to a school, a church, or one of the early transportation lines? When did electricity and running water and indoor plumbing arrive in your neighborhood? What was it like when The Great War finally ended? What sort of lives did the people who lived in your house lead? Were there weddings in the living room?

It is helpful to have a basic understanding of the sequence of historical events—a timeline or chronology so that you can fit your house and people into the context of the times. HistoryLink has a brief [thumbnail history of Seattle](https://www.historylink.org/thumbnailhistories/seattle) you may find helpful. Other excellent sources of Seattle History include Clarence Bagley’s *History of Seattle*, Murray Morgan’s *Skid Road*, and Richard Berner’s *Seattle in the 20th Century*.

After you have developed a timeline and learned more about the structure, you’ll want to read about the context of your neighborhood. Neighborhoods are dynamic places where changes happen all the time. The old school is torn down to make way for a new library, the big house becomes a bed-and-breakfast, widening a street and changes in zoning create a more densely populated neighborhood. Maybe you have the last fruit tree from the old orchard of the original settlement. Reading about neighborhood history will put your building in context and make its history come alive for you.

**Neighborhood history**

Numerous sources are available to help you learn about the history of Seattle neighborhoods. Here are a few tips to get you started:

- Search the [Seattle Public Library catalog](https://www.spl.org/) for neighborhood histories. From the main catalog screen, select “Subject” from the drop-down menu and enter “[neighborhood name] (Seattle, Wash.) – History” in the search box (you can leave out the punctuation marks).
- Search the Northwest Index at the [Seattle Public Library Seattle Room](https://www.spl.org/branches/seattle-room) for “Seattle. Districts. [neighborhood name].” This index includes newspaper articles about the neighborhood and other neighborhood histories.
- Search the Pacific Northwest Index at [University of Washington Special Collections](https://www.lib.washington.edu/sps).
- [HistoryLink](https://www.historylink.org/) neighborhood thumbnail histories. From the main HistoryLink page, search for “[neighborhood name] thumbnail history.”
- [4Culture](https://www.4culture.com/) has an excellent bibliography of neighborhood history resources.
- The [Seattle Department of Neighborhoods’](https://www.seattle.gov/don) website has context statements about many Seattle neighborhoods, in addition to inventories of city-owned buildings, neighborhood commercial properties, and residential structures constructed prior to 1906. They are written by very well-credentialed local historians and architectural historians.
- The Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project’s [Segregated Seattle](https://www.seattlecivilrights.org) website has information about segregation and racially restrictive covenants in Seattle neighborhoods.
- Local historical societies may have additional historical research about a neighborhood. The [Museum of History and Industry](https://www.mhi.org/) is the Seattle and King County historical society. In addition,
many Seattle neighborhoods have their own historical organizations. Historic Seattle’s survey profiles of local historical organizations and the Association of King County Historical Organizations’ member list include contact information for many neighborhood historical societies.

- King County Archives includes some records relating to county services headquartered within Seattle city boundaries, and areas of Seattle that were once part of unincorporated King County.

**Physical features of the Neighborhood**
What did the neighborhood look like? What existed there at different times? What notable landmarks have changed or disappeared (e.g., highway construction, Century 21, Playland, Luna Park)? To learn more about physical features of the neighborhood—such as streets, churches, cemeteries, landmarks, parks, businesses, libraries, and schools—and how they have changed over time, look at city directories, the Seattle Public Library Special Collections’ Northwest Index, the University of Washington Special Collections Pacific Northwest Index, library catalogs, and maps and atlases. Some additional resources are useful for specific neighborhood features:

**Streets**
How did your street get its name? Why is your street wider or narrower than others in the neighborhood? Have street names or designations changed over time?

Maps and atlases can show how street layouts and names have changed. City directories also may list renaming or renumbering of streets.

Doug Cardle’s About those King County place-names includes the origins (some speculative) of many Seattle street names. Original research on street name origins can be quite challenging, but a good starting place is the Seattle Municipal Archives Council Bills and Ordinances database. Changing the name of a street typically involves a city ordinance, so a search for a street name in this database can give you an idea of when your street got its name. The Municipal Archives website also includes a map of street designation changes.

**Cemeteries**
The Seattle Public Library owns two books on the history of Seattle cemeteries (see Directory for full citations): *A History of the Cemeteries in the City of Seattle* by Laura C. Daly, and *Cemeteries of Seattle* by Robin Shannon. You’ll also find short histories of Seattle cemeteries on HistoryLink.

**Parks**
Longtime Seattle Parks’ employee Donald Sherwood compiled detailed histories of Seattle parks from 1972 until his death in 1981. Many of these histories are available online, and printed versions are available at the Seattle Public Library. Seattle Municipal Archives has a more thorough Sherwood Parks History Collection with additional information on Seattle parks.

**Schools**
See the Directory for a description of the Seattle Public Schools Archives, which houses records of school buildings, staff, and students. The Seattle Public Library has many school histories and other historic
school information; a good starting place is Nile Thompson and Carolyn Marr’s *Building for Learning*, available in print and online.

**Utilities and Services**

It can be interesting to find out when different utilities and services reached your building, to help understand what life was like for its residents. Myra Phelps’ *Public Works in Seattle* is an excellent starting point for the history of utilities and other projects of Seattle’s Engineering Department. The Seattle Department of Planning and Development’s *Side Sewer Cards* can show you the dates that side sewers were installed at a specific address and the surrounding neighborhood, as well as providing names of property owners and contractors.

Walt Crowley’s *Routes* and Leslie Blanchard’s *The street railway era in Seattle* are good overviews of the history of public transportation in Seattle. *City directories* also include descriptions of transit routes, and many public transit route maps are available at the Seattle Public Library and the Seattle Municipal Archives.

**Newspapers**

In addition to finding information about the building itself, searching through newspapers can give you a wealth of information about the building’s historical context. Try to search as broadly as possible to find out what was newsworthy. Historic newspaper indexes such as the Seattle Public Library’s Northwest Index, the University of Washington’s *Pacific Northwest Regional Newspaper and Periodical Index*, and databases such as America’s GenealogyBank, World Newspaper Archive, and Chronicling America allow you to perform a wide variety of searches. Look for mentions of the neighborhood, people, businesses, streets, addresses, etc. Even advertisements can contain interesting information! Anything that you already know about the building can lead you to articles that will uncover things you don’t know.

Searching through newspaper backfiles in print and on microfilm (which you can do at the Seattle Public Library and at the University of Washington Libraries – Microform and Newspapers Collection) is a bit more daunting but can be quite rewarding. Once you’ve narrowed down a date your building was built (or other important dates in the building’s history), it can be worth looking in newspapers published around that date to see what was going on or if there is any mention of your building or the neighborhood.
Directory of Agencies, Websites, and Print Resources

This section provides detailed information about the resources mentioned in the text of the guide. Agencies, websites, and print resources are all listed separately, in alphabetical order. Some resources may be listed in more than one category. For example, the Seattle Municipal Archives is listed as both an agency and a website because of its significant physical and online collections.

Agencies

The following agencies are places in or near Seattle that are of particular interest to building history researchers. Most provide services to researchers, and are worth contacting or making a visit to. This directory includes contact information and a description of the services provided.

4Culture

101 Prefontaine Place South
Seattle, WA 98104
Phone: 206-296-7580
Email: See website for individual email addresses
Website: http://www.4culture.org/

4Culture is King County’s cultural services agency and provides a variety of technical papers and historical papers regarding heritage and preservation in King County, which are available on the 4Culture website. Some publications of interest are

- **Technical papers** (http://www.4culture.org/heritage/resources/technical1a.htm):
  - Where to Find Things: Cultural Resource Links
  - Archival Resources
  - Landmark & Historic Site Information
  - Researching Historic Houses

- **Historical Papers** (http://www.4culture.org/heritage/resources/historical.htm):
  - Map & Place Name Resources
  - Seattle Neighborhood History (bibliography)
  - King County History (bibliography)
  - Business History in King County (bibliography)
  - Agricultural History in King County (bibliography)
  - King County Transportation History (bibliography)
  - The Evolution of 4Culture: A Chronology

4Culture’s blog, Blog4Culture (http://blog.4culture.org/), contains up-to-date information of interest to the heritage community.

The King County Historic Sites Inventory has information on about 1,400 historic properties in the greater King County area and these can be located with the help of the staff. The staff can offer technical assistance to citizens interested in historic properties.
Association of King County Historical Organizations (AKCHO)
P.O. Box 3257
Seattle, WA 98114
Website: http://www.akcho.org/
No office hours or location.

The Association of King County Historical Organizations (AKCHO) includes heritage organizations, museums, as well as individuals interested in the history of King County. The membership directory (http://www.akcho.org/members.php) on their website will connect researchers to additional collections of documents, photographs and realia as well as the holding organization’s website. AKCHO maintains a calendar of events (http://www.akcho.org/calendar/index.php) including lectures, workshops and exhibits.

Fiske Genealogical Library
1644 43rd Avenue E.
Seattle, WA 98112
Phone: 206-328-2716
Website: http://www.fiskelibrary.org/

The Fiske Library was founded in 1971 by Arthur Fiske and includes a variety of genealogy materials from Washington State and many other localities. Their website provides information on the Fiske Library holdings and lists programs in their quarterly online newsletter.

Historic Seattle
1117 Minor Ave
Seattle, WA 98101
Phone: 206-622-6952
Email: See website for individual email addresses
Website: http://www.historicseattle.org/

Historic Seattle is a public development authority set up by the City of Seattle. Although it does not receive city funding, its mission is “to support and enhance the city of Seattle architectural history.” Historic Seattle also manages a Foundation which provides additional support for preservation activities.

1. Historic Seattle did an early (1970) inventory of historic properties in selected neighborhoods. This inventory can be viewed at the Seattle Public Library Special Collections (Call # 917.972 H629U) to access information about a number of neighborhoods in Seattle.

2. Historic Seattle’s website has profiles of neighborhood historical organizations (http://www.historicseattle.org/nwcfp_hs/surveyprofiles.aspx), including contact information.

3. Landmark nomination workshops are offered each year.

4. Information on tax credits, financial advice concerning rehabilitation and restoration projects is available.

5. Educational programs during the year include house tours, lecture series, and membership activities.
6. Historic Seattle has a list of craftspersons who specialize in techniques and methods of construction from historic time periods.

King County Archives
1215 E. Fir St.
Seattle, WA 98122
Phone: 206-296-1538
Email: archives@kingcounty.gov
Website: http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/archives.aspx
Hours: By appointment

The King County Archives maintains original records for many county agencies that can prove useful when researching individuals. The collections of the King County Archives contain historic maps and photographs which may incidentally show buildings or property ownership in relation to such things as roads, bridges and shorelines. The archives have original aerial photographs of King County taken for tax purposes in 1936 and 1961 (incomplete). In addition, they have other historical photographs from public works projects that may include incidental images of houses and people. The 1936 aerial photographs have been digitized and are available via the King County Road Service Division’s Map Vault Database:


Road establishment maps, highway plans and survey records may also indicate the natural environment of land prior to its development by building. Researchers should clearly understand that there are no name or address indexes to specific structures, property owners, or land parcels. The most reliable access to these records is by township-range legal descriptions. In addition, the King County Archives also holds limited plans, photographs or site maps of some historic county government buildings.

The Archives website also features many useful guides for finding King County records, including:

- Court and legal records: http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/archives/court.aspx
- Frequently requested records: http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/archives/Frequent.aspx

These guides provide links to external agencies when appropriate. Plat records, and property records such as mortgages, deeds and liens, are held and indexed by the King County Recorder’s Office.

King County Assessor’s Office
500 Fourth Ave.
#ADM-AS-0708
Seattle, WA 98104
Phone: 206-296-7300
Email: http://info.kingcounty.gov/about/contact/default.aspx
Website: http://www.kingcounty.gov/Assessor.aspx

The King County Assessor’s office can provide you with the parcel number for a property when supplied the address. They can also provide information on recent tax assessments.

**King County Recorder’s Office**
King County Administration Building, Room 311
500 Fourth Ave.
Seattle, WA 98104
Phone: 206-296-1570
Website: http://www.kingcounty.gov/business/Recorders.aspx

The King County Recorder’s Office has the King County deed books and deed indexes on microfilm. From the 1980s to the present time, you’ll find recorded documents relating to land sales, mortgages, and marriages in the Records Search section of the Recorder’s website. You can also search for recent surveys and plat maps.

**King County Superior Court Clerk’s Office**
King County Courthouse
516 3rd Avenue, Room E-609
Seattle, WA 98104
Phone: 206-296-9300
Email: clerksofficecustomerservice@kingcounty.gov
Website: http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/Clerk/Records.aspx
Case Search: http://dw.courts.wa.gov/

Maintains King County Superior Court records, including probate and divorce records.

**Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI)**
2700 24th Ave E
Seattle, WA 98112-2099
Phone: 206-324-1126
Email: library@seattlehistory.org
Website: http://www.seattlehistory.org
Hours: By appointment.

The Museum of History and Industry, formerly the Seattle Historical Society, has artifacts, photographs, manuscripts and archival collections that span all of Seattle history. Of particular note are the over three million photographs in their photograph collection, several thousand of which are available online. The Museum is planning to move to the United States Naval Station at the south end of Lake Union in 2012 which may mean their collections will be unavailable during the time prior to the move.

**National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)**
Pacific Alaska Region
6125 Sand Point Way NE
Seattle, Washington 98115-7999
The National Archives holds records created by the federal government, including information on the original transfer of land from the government to individuals through homestead applications, donation land claims, land sales, land warrants, etc. These land records are available at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., but can be ordered online. The Archives also has a wide variety of other records of genealogical interest. Federal records created in Washington State along with the U.S. census and other microfilms are located at the Pacific Alaska Region headquarters in Seattle, WA.

Puget Sound Regional Branch of the Washington State Archives (aka Puget Sound Regional Archives)
3000 Landerholm Circle SE
Bellevue Community College Building N
Bellevue, WA 98007-6484
Phone: (425) 564-3940
Appointments recommended
Email: Archives@bellevuecollege.edu
Website: http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/archives_puget.aspx

The Puget Sound Regional Archives hold King County Assessor’s Property Record Cards, which include information on every parcel of land and nearly every building that existed from 1937 until 1972 and will tell when the building was constructed and provide a rough footprint of the building on the site. A property record card may include a photograph of the property. There also may be a list of owners of the property. This list may help you identify occupants of the building, but is typically incomplete. The Archives arranges these Property Record Cards by parcel number and legal description, so you will need this information when requesting copies. This information is usually included on any deeds or tax records that you might have. If not, you can find this information using the King County Parcel Viewer and associated property report or by contacting the King County Assessor's Office.

The assessment tax rolls (1892–1941) compiled by the King County Assessor’s Department gives information on ownership, who paid the property tax, and notes the existence of any buildings on the property. According to the Washington State Archives website, “there are limited years available before 1900 and only every fifth year between 1900–1941. Call first and plan to visit the archives to access this information.” They also show the growth of property ownership and development in subdivisions and can be used to document neighborhood growth.

Seattle Architectural Foundation (SAF)
Rainier Square, Atrium, 3rd Level
1333 5th Ave
Seattle, WA 98104
Phone: 206-667-9186
Website: http://www.seattlearchitecture.org/
Hours: 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
The Seattle Architectural Foundation is a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to promoting public awareness of the contribution of architecture and urban design to the quality of life. The Foundation funds projects, exhibits, programs, and tours of interest to the community. Tour calendars and brochures are available at the foundation and at the Seattle Public Library.

**Seattle City Clerk**
Office of the City Clerk  
600 4th Avenue, Floor 3  
PO Box 94728  
Seattle, Washington 98124-4728  
Phone: 206-684-8344  
Email: clerk@seattle.gov  
Website: [http://www.seattle.gov/LEG/CLERK/CLERK.HTM](http://www.seattle.gov/LEG/CLERK/CLERK.HTM)

The clerk’s office has several online indexes including, Council Bills/Ordinances, City Council Resolutions, Comptroller/Clerk Files. For additional information see the [Seattle Municipal Archives](http://www.seattle.gov/LEG/CLERK/CLERK.HTM).

**Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**
Historic Preservation Program  
700 5th Avenue, Suite 1700  
Seattle, WA 98104  
Phone: See website for individual phone numbers  
Email: See website for individual email addresses  

Information about historic districts and designated Seattle landmarks is available from the Historic Preservation Program. It is important to call ahead and make an appointment to find these materials and to receive help from the staff. The Historic Preservation Program has information about the process of landmark designation for the City of Seattle and keeps files of past nominations. Buildings that are listed as Seattle landmarks have City of Seattle ordinance numbers which means the City Council approved the designation. The City of Seattle ordinances are available at the City Clerk’s office and will contain supporting documentation about the building.

Website includes information about the ongoing Historic Resources Survey and provides a searchable database of historic properties in Seattle.

**Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD)**
Seattle Municipal Tower  
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000  
P.O. Box 34019  
Seattle, WA 98124-4019  
Phone: 206-684-8600  
Email: [dpd_microfilm@seattle.gov](mailto:dpd_microfilm@seattle.gov)  
Website: [http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/)
The Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has a collection of blueprints for permitted plans. The collection prior to 1970 includes only some commercial buildings and apartment houses.

Building permits are generally available from the 1890s to the present. Permitted plans for single family residences and duplexes are available starting in 1974. Prior to this time, plans were only kept for a couple of years before being destroyed. The later plans have been microfilmed and the public can view them during the hours listed above. Visit the microfilm library's website for more information at http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/PRC/MicrofilmLibrary/default.asp. Copies of the plans from the microfilm can be made but they will not be to scale. The department also has building permits that may include date issued/date completed, owner, architect, and builder.

The DPD provides a variety of resources including zoning information and a permit database that includes permits filed from 1983 to present. They also maintain a side-sewer card database that provides information on side-sewer permits including the date filed, the owner name, and contractor name. The database is searchable by address and parcel number.

http://web1.seattle.gov/dpd/sidesewercardsv2/

Seattle Genealogical Society
6200 Sand Point Way, NE
Seattle, Washington 98115-0329
Phone: 206-522-8658
Email: SeattleGenealogicalSociety@gmail.com
Website: http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~waseags/

The Seattle Genealogical Society’s library includes a variety of genealogy materials from Washington State and many other localities. They are the oldest genealogical society in Washington State and were founded in 1923. Their website provides information on library holdings and programs, and also provides links to genealogy related websites with emphasis on the Pacific Northwest.

Seattle Municipal Archives
Third Floor, City Hall
600 Fourth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98124-4728
Phone: 206-233-7807 or 206-684-8353
Email: archives@seattle.gov
Website: http://www.cityofseattle.net/cityarchives/
Website for building history: http://www.cityofseattle.net/CityArchives/Research/researchbldg.htm

In addition to city ordinances, City Council minutes, and administrative records, Seattle Municipal Archives has information about The Don Sherwood Parks History Collection (1884-1985) that includes documents, history, and photographs about nearly all Seattle parks. These can be helpful in understanding neighborhood histories. The Archives is compiling an inventory of blueprints from commercial properties in Seattle (1905-1960) from the Department of Construction and Land Use (now
the Department of Planning and Development or DPD). Microfilm copies of these blueprints are also available from the DPD. Items in the inventory can be found by searching in the Seattle Municipal Archives Subject Files online index for the record series number: 2004-03.

There are several online databases available on the archives website and on the City Clerk’s website that may be of interest. In particular, the Seattle Municipal Archives Photograph Collection ([http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~public/phot1.htm](http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~public/phot1.htm)) includes photographs of city projects (sewers, paving, etc.) that may include houses and buildings in the background.

Archives staff is small so be sure to call ahead to make an appointment for help. The Archives Gazette, which is published by the Seattle Municipal Archives and is available on their website, will help you learn more about the wealth of information in the archives.

Seattle Municipal Archives also houses information from other city departments about electrical service, transportation routes for early trolley cars, etc. These departments' archives may contain documents and photographs that have information about your property.

The Seattle Public Library: Special Collections
Central Library, Levels 9 & 10
1000 Fourth Ave.
Seattle, WA 98104
Phone: 206-386-4636
Website: [http://www.spl.org](http://www.spl.org)

The Seattle Public Library Special Collections Departments includes the Hugh and Jane Ferguson Seattle Room, the Genealogy Section, and the Aviation Room. In the Seattle Room, you’ll find Seattle City Directories, Baist’s and Kroll real estate atlases, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Flat maps of Seattle, the Northwest Index (biographical, subject, and architecture card files), clippings files and scrapbooks (including architecture), and a large selection of books and other materials relating to Seattle history. Genealogical materials relating to Seattle are also available in the Seattle Room. In the Genealogy collection, you’ll find additional materials from around the U.S. that can provide background information on individuals associated with your property. The library also provides several subscription databases that can be helpful, including the Digital Sanborn Maps, America’s Genealogy Bank, Ancestry Library Edition, and Heritage Quest Online.

Hugh and Jane Ferguson Seattle Room Hours:
Monday: 11 a.m. –8 p.m.
Tuesday - Friday: 11 a.m. –6 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. –6 p.m.
Sunday: noon –6 p.m.

Genealogy Desk Hours:
Monday: 11 a.m. –noon; 1 –3 p.m.
Tuesday: 2 –7 p.m.
Wednesday: 11 a.m. –3 p.m.
Thursday: noon –3 p.m.
Friday: 1–4 p.m.
Saturday: 11 a.m.–noon; 2–5 p.m.
Sunday: 2 –5 p.m.

**Seattle Public Utilities Engineering Records Vault**
Seattle Municipal Tower (formerly Key Tower)
700 Fifth Avenue, 47th Floor
Seattle, Washington 98104
Phone: 206-684-5132

Archive of Seattle City property information, including maps, aerial photographs, city plans and other publications, and survey information. The Records Vault is open to the public, but visitors should bring property parcel number (available from the King County Parcel Viewer or King County Assessor’s Office) and proof of property ownership.

**Seattle Public Schools Archives**
John Stanford Center for Educational Excellence
2445 3rd Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98134
Phone: 206-252-0795
Email: etoews@seattleschools.org
Website: [http://www.seattleschools.org/area/archives/index.xml](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/archives/index.xml)
Hours: by appointment

Call ahead for information and appointments to use the archives. The archives include records of school buildings, staff, and students. These records include photographs, the Seattle School census records from 1912-1934, school board minutes from 1882 to present, annual reports, and newspaper clippings from 1927 to present.

**University of Washington Libraries: Map Collection and Cartographic Information Services**
Suzzallo Library, Basement
Box 352900
University of Washington
Seattle, WA 98195-2900
Phone: 206-543-9392
Email: maplib@u.washington.edu
Website: [http://www.lib.washington.edu/Maps/](http://www.lib.washington.edu/Maps/)

The University of Washington Libraries Map Collection is the premier cartographic collection in Washington State, with over 267,000 map sheets, 80,000 aerial photographs, and 2,000 atlases. Historic map collection includes an extensive collection of topographic maps of Washington State.

**University of Washington Libraries: Microform and Newspaper Collections.**
Suzzallo Library, Ground floor
The Microform and Newspaper Collections include microform copies of the Washington State Cadastral Surveys and Field Books. They also have microform Newspapers from Seattle and around the state.

**University of Washington Libraries: Special Collections**

Special Collections Division  
University of Washington Libraries  
Allen Library South, Basement  
Box 352900  
Seattle, WA 98195-2900  
Phone: 206-543-1929  
Website: [http://www.lib.washington.edu/specialcoll/](http://www.lib.washington.edu/specialcoll/)

In addition to extensive research collections, Special Collections has many unique resources for the study of Seattle's architecture, including architectural plans; drawings and renderings; photographs; construction specifications; correspondence, books and pamphlets; advertising and promotion materials, and newspaper and periodical articles. The Pacific Northwest Index lists references for tens of thousands of sources for the study of local history. The work of more than 180 architects and architectural practices is represented in the collection. You’ll also find many online finding aids, databases, and digital collections on their website. Of particular interest are their large collection of digital photographs and their city directory inventory.

**Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation**

Suite 106  
1063 South Capitol Way  
Olympia WA 98501  
Phone: 360-586-3065  
Website: [http://www.dahp.wa.gov/](http://www.dahp.wa.gov/)

Washington’s primary agency for historic preservation. Website includes National Register of Historic Places, new Heritage Barn Register, and the Washington Heritage Register, as well as other resources for preservationists.

**Websites and Online Resources**

The following websites and online resources are useful for local building research. Some websites are maintained by agencies listed in the **Agencies** section of this directory, but are listed again here because they are of use on their own.
About.com: Architecture
http://architecture.about.com/

A good general introduction to architecture. Includes house style guides with photos, diagrams, and building plans.

About.com: Genealogy: Section, Township, Range
http://genealogy.about.com/cs/land/a/public_lands.htm

A good, clear description of the township-range system for describing land, as well as many other tips for finding land records and conducting genealogy research.

America's GenealogyBank

Historical Newspapers archive includes electronic, fully searchable Seattle Times articles. America’s GenealogyBank is available to Seattle Public Library cardholders and in any location of the Seattle Public Library. The library subscription currently includes Seattle Times articles from 1923 through July 1979. The personal subscription (http://www.genealogybank.com/) includes additional years prior to 1923. NewsBank, the database company that provides both of these subscriptions, is working to digitize the Seattle Times historic back file from 1895 through 1984 and plans to launch this as a separate product.

Remote access to this database is available for free to Seattle Public Library cardholders.

Once you have your library card, just scroll down on the library’s Databases and Websites page to "America's GenealogyBank":

A) Next choose "Historical Newspapers (1690 - 1977)"
B) In the "include keywords with search" box, put in any word or phrase. Phrases should be surrounded by double-quote marks. Also be sure and check the "Washington" State box, to be searching Washington State newspapers only.
C) Retrieve your results one at a time. Note that you can download the page images in PDF format.

Ancestry Library Edition

Genealogical information and records from around the world. For Washington State, this database includes a variety of birth, marriage, and death indexes; federal, state, and territorial census records; passenger and crew lists, naturalization indexes and passport applications; and public records indexes and historic telephone listings (1993–2002). Available at any Seattle Public Library location. A personal subscription to the site is also available at http://www.ancestry.com/.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) General Land Office (GLO) Records
http://www.glorecords.blm.gov/
Search for federal land patents (the original transfer of land ownership from the federal government to individuals).

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Land Status and Cadastral Records Viewer
http://www.blm.gov/or/landrecords/survey/srvy1.php

View cadastral surveys and field notes. Cadastral surveys are the origins of township-range legal descriptions of land, and were used to define boundaries for describing individual ownership. Survey plats are maps showing any land ownership prior to the survey. Field notes show detailed information about the land prior to development: for example, trees, creeks, other physical features, and existing land owners at the time of the survey. Includes help files to learn about and help navigate records.

Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers
http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/

This database of the Library of Congress provides electronic access to historic American newspapers, including many smaller historic Seattle and King County newspapers.

Coast Salish Map
http://coastsalishmap.org/start_page.htm

Includes map of permanent Coast Salish village sites in and near what is now Seattle, as well as sites around the Seattle area that were mentioned in stories.

Craftsman Homes Connection
http://www.crafthome.com/

Directory of décor products for restoring craftsman style homes.

Familysearch.org
http://www.familysearch.org/

FamilySearch is a genealogy organization and service provided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On this site, you can access a broad selection of genealogy databases and search the catalog of the largest genealogy library in the world. The pilot site includes U.S. Census records, Index of Washington State Death Certificates (1907-1960), Washington marriage records, and many other genealogy databases for the U.S. and other countries.

Find a Grave
http://www.findagrave.com/

User-maintained website with information about locations of gravesites. Often includes photos and other biographical information, and is updated daily.
Google Earth
http://earth.google.com/

View satellite imagery, maps, terrain, and buildings for any location.

HeritageQuest

Includes genealogy books and serials, primarily from the early 1900's and the complete U.S. Federal Census, 1790–1930. Also includes records of genealogical significance from the U.S. Serial Set. Digitized books are fully searchable and printable.

Historic Map Works
http://www.historicmapworks.com/

Historic Map Works is a database of historic maps, atlases, and gazetteers from around the United States. They have a strong collection of Metsker’s county maps for Washington State, having recently purchased the publishing arm of Metsker Maps (Note: The Metsker Maps of Seattle store at First and Pike is a separate retail entity affiliated with the Kroll Map Co. of Seattle, and was not part of the purchase). This is a subscription site, but allows free registration with limited viewing and searching abilities.

HistoryLink
http://historylink.org/ (Main page)

Online encyclopedia of Washington state history. Includes histories of Seattle neighborhoods, people, events, and other topics of historical interest. HistoryLink articles are well-researched and well-cited, so be sure to read the article bibliographies to find sources for further research.

King County iMap
http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/gis/Maps/iMAP.aspx

View King County geographic information in an interactive map display. Includes property information, natural features, political boundaries, planning information, and much more.

King County Parcel Viewer and associated property report:

Search by property address, intersection, or parcel number. Links to property report with information on the building, including current taxpayer name, legal description, parcel description, and year built. Property report then links to additional information such as original plats and surveys. The King County Assessor’s Office can also give you the information if you have the building address.
King County Road Services Map Vault
http://info.kingcounty.gov/transportation/kcdot/roads/mapandrecordscenter/mapvault/

Database of scanned images, including road construction plans, road establishment documents, survey drawings, and 1936 aerial photographs. Searchable by project name, road name, or township-range legal description.

Legacy.com
http://www.legacy.com

Legacy.com allows you to search for relatively recent obituaries “from more than 900 newspapers in the U.S. and around the world.” Their Obifinder allows you to search by first and last name, state, time period, newspaper, and keyword, and includes obituaries from the Seattle Times from about 2002 to present. Results typically provide the date of publication, the first 25 words of the obituary, and the total word count for the obituary. You can order the full obituary from legacy.com for $1.95 or contact the Seattle Public Library to ask about alternative sources.

http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/habs_haer/

Digitized images of drawings, photographs, and other information about historic buildings. National in scope, but you can search for “Seattle” or “Washington” to see local buildings.

Northwest Digital Archives
http://nwda.wsulibs.wsu.edu/index.shtml

Provides access to digitized archival and manuscript collections and finding aids for archives in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Alaska, and Washington.

Old Houses
http://www.oldhouses.com/
http://www.oldhouses.com/styleguide/ (Style guide)

Directory of current and archival real estate listings for historic homes. Additional resources include an old house style guide, preservation organizations, and suppliers and services for restoration.

Pacific Coast Architecture Database
https://digital.lib.washington.edu/architect/


PreserveNet
http://www.preservenet.cornell.edu/
A database of online information about preservation organizations and professional and educational opportunities.

**Reference USA**  

Phone book listings for U.S. businesses, U.S. residents, and Canadian businesses. Includes many ways to search: by address, phone number, business type or size, geographic area and more.

**RootsWeb**  

RootsWeb.com is the Internet's oldest and largest free genealogy community. Includes Social Security Death Index ~1962–present & a wide variety of tools and information for genealogy. Specific items of interest are genealogy message boards and mailing lists and user submitted family trees.

**San Marco Apartments**  
[http://dcollett.net/SanMarco/](http://dcollett.net/SanMarco/)

Great example of a building history of a 105-year-old apartment building in Seattle.

**Seattle Architecture (Seattle Dream Homes)**  
[http://www.seattledreamhomes.com/PageManager/Default.aspx/PageID=399251&NF=1](http://www.seattledreamhomes.com/PageManager/Default.aspx/PageID=399251&NF=1) (Main page)  
[http://www.seattledreamhomes.com/PageManager/Default.aspx/PageID=2079496&NF=1](http://www.seattledreamhomes.com/PageManager/Default.aspx/PageID=2079496&NF=1) (Architectural styles in Seattle through the decades)

Information about Seattle architects and architecture. While this site is poorly organized and somewhat difficult to navigate, it has links to some useful resources for identifying the style of a house, including a guide to popular Seattle architectural styles by decade.

**Seattle City Clerk**  

The clerk’s office has several online indexes including, Council Bills/Ordinances, City Council Resolutions, Comptroller/Clerk Files.

**Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project: Segregated Seattle**  
[http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/segregated.htm](http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/segregated.htm)

Information about segregation and racially restrictive covenants in Seattle neighborhoods.

**Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Historical Sites Database**  

Searchable database of sites in Department of Neighborhoods’ Historic Resources Survey. You can search by address, neighborhood, architect, etc. This is an ongoing project, and many areas of the City are yet to be surveyed. If there’s a record for your building on the survey, much work has already been
done. Information includes historic names, style, year built, significance, description of appearance, construction details, and a very complete bibliography.

Seattle Municipal Archives
http://www.seattle.gov/CityArchives/ (Home page)
http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~public/CBOR1.htm (Ordinance database)
http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~public/phot1.htm (Photograph collection)
http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~public/maps1.htm (Map index)

Seattle Municipal Archives has many useful online tools, including a database of city council bills and ordinances, a historic photo collection, and a digital map collection. Digital photos include photos of public works projects, City events, City sites and facilities, and elected officials. Over 110,000 photos are indexed, of which 95% are available digitally. The map index includes records for over 1,500 maps, of which about 75% are available digitally. Many of the Municipal Archives materials are only available in person at the Seattle Municipal Archives.

The Seattle Public Library
http://seattle.bibliocommons.com/ (Library catalog)
http://www.spl.org/default.asp?pageID=collection_db_list&dbPage=9 (Local History Databases and Websites)
http://www.spl.org/default.asp?pageID=collection_db_list&dbPage=7 (Genealogy Databases and Websites)

Search the library catalog by keyword, subject, title, and author for topics related to your research. Directories of local history and genealogy databases and websites provide access to databases mentioned in this guide, such as Ancestry Library Edition and America’s GenealogyBank. Some subscription databases require a Seattle Public Library card and four-digit PIN for use outside the library, others are available only at Seattle Public Library locations.

Historical Photograph Collection:

The Seattle Historical Photograph Collection contains more than 1,000 images that illuminate the early history of Seattle. This segment of over 100 photographs contains some of the earliest images in the collection. More photographs will be added as they are digitized. To view photographs that have not yet been digitized, visit the Seattle Room of the Seattle Public Library.

Sherwood Park History Files
http://www.cityofseattle.net/Parks/history/sherwood.htm

Historical information about many Seattle city parks. A print edition that may include additional information about certain parks is also available at the Seattle Room of the Seattle Public Library, and the Seattle Municipal Archives has a more thorough Don Sherwood Parks History Collection.

Side Sewer Cards and Maps (Department of Planning & Development)
http://web1.seattle.gov/dpd/sidesewercardsv2/
Side sewer cards show the dates that side sewers were installed at a specific address and the surrounding neighborhood, as well as providing names of property owners and contractors. They also include maps showing building outlines on the property along with locations of the side sewer.

**Soundex Converter**
http://resources.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/soundexconverter

The Washington Death Index on microfilm is arranged by Soundex, which is a “sounds like” coding system for surnames that brings similar names together in an index. When using records arranged by Soundex, you can find the appropriate code by using a Soundex Converter.

**Sound Politics Washington State Voter Database**
http://www.soundpolitics.com/voterlookup.html

Information about currently registered voters, including partial address, birthdate, and voting districts.

**Stevemorse.org**
http://www.stevemorse.org/
http://www.stevemorse.org/census/index.html (ED Finder)

This website provides a wide variety of “one-step” tools for searching various online resources, including public records databases, passenger list manifests, and census records. In many cases these tools provide a more robust search interface than provided by the sites being searched. Of specific interest is the 1900 to 1940 Census ED (Enumeration District) finder for large cities. This “one-step” tool provides an easy way to determine the ED for a given location using the cross streets of a nearby intersection. You can then use the ED to browse only the part of the U.S. Census that likely includes the property in question. This is useful because the U.S. Census for major cities during this time period typically include both the street name and address of the households being enumerated. Note: If you already have the name of residents for the property during census years, you can search by name using Ancestry Library Edition.

**University of Washington Libraries Digital Collections**
http://content.lib.washington.edu/

Online database of historic photos, maps, and other digitized materials from the University of Washington Libraries.

**Architecture of the Pacific Northwest Database**
http://content.lib.washington.edu/acweb/index.html (Main page)
http://content.lib.washington.edu/acweb/styles.html (Building Styles)

A database of architectural drawings representing regionally significant architects and designers from the 1880s to the 1980s. Building Styles section includes descriptions of styles with links to drawings representing each style.
Washington Digital Archives  
http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov/  
Searchable database of electronic records from Washington State and local governments. Records series include some birth records, Census records, death records, land records, and marriage records.

Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation  
http://www.dahp.wa.gov/default.htm (Main page)  
http://www.dahp.wa.gov/pages/HistoricSites/Register.htm (National and State Register)  
Washington’s primary agency for historic preservation. Includes National Register of Historic Places, new Heritage Barn Register, and the Washington Heritage Register, as well as other resources for preservationists.

Washington State Library: Historical Maps  
http://www.sos.wa.gov/history/maps.aspx  

Washington State University Libraries: Early Washington Maps  
http://content.wsulibs.wsu.edu/cdm-maps/  
Hundreds of digitized maps of Washington, including many of Seattle and surrounding areas.

World Newspaper Archive  
http://www.lib.washington.edu/types/enewspapers/  
Includes electronic coverage of the Seattle Times, 1900–1979. Remote access is available to University of Washington students and faculty, and access to any researchers is available in person at the University of Washington Libraries.

Print and Other Resources  
Resources mentioned in this section are generally not available online, but are available at the Seattle Public Library or other local agencies and repositories.

City Directories  
R. L. Polk & Co. Seattle City Directories are available at the Seattle Public Library Seattle Room from the late 1800s through 1996 and were published every year with few exceptions. (The University of Washington Libraries Special Collections, Puget Sound Regional Archives, and Seattle Municipal Archives also have city directory collections. A small, but growing, number of city directories have been digitized and are available online. You can view a listing of online city directories at http://sites.google.com/site/onlinedirectorysite/Home/usa/wa/king.)
City directories typically include the names, occupations, and addresses of residents. Starting in 1938, the Polk directories began reverse listings by address, making it relatively easy to find out who was living at a particular address. For earlier reverse listings (the first in 1928) there are ‘house and street’ directories, which typically only include households with telephones. The front matter of city directories also includes important contextual information about businesses, streets, and transportation.

Maps and Atlases
Maps are important sources of information about the region. Early maps tell us about beginning transportation routes, the original natural landforms, and even notes about early settlement. Later maps were made for more specific reasons. Some were made to document the materials used in the building for insurance purposes (Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps) and others were made to clearly delineate buying and selling real property (Kroll Atlases and other plat maps). The City of Seattle has annexed several large tracts of land around its borders and later maps reflect these increases.

There are numerous historic maps in the Seattle Public Library Seattle Room and other local map collections, and they generally serve two purposes for the building researcher. Some maps are useful for contextual information about the neighborhood and surrounding area, and others are useful for specific research about the building and property.

Large-Scale Maps

- Cadastral Survey Maps: (c. 1856). (See the Land Records section of this guide for a detailed description of cadastral surveys) Survey plats and field notes are available online from the Bureau of Land Management, and on microfilm at the University of Washington Libraries – Microform and Newspapers Collection.

- The Seattle Room of the Seattle Public Library also has a large collection of single-sheet maps of Seattle and surrounding areas. You can search the Seattle Public Library catalog for these maps: From the main catalog screen, select “Subject” from the drop-down menu, and enter “Seattle (Wash.). Maps” in the search box (you do not need to include punctuation marks).

- Aerial photographs of Seattle can be found online at the King County Road Services Map Vault (1936) and in person at the Seattle Public Utilities Engineering Records Vault (1929-1993).

- Many major historical map collections have been digitized and are available online. Useful mapping websites for local building and property research include: Seattle Municipal Archives Map Index; Washington State University’s Early Washington Maps; Washington State Library’s Historical Maps; Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project’s Segregation Maps; King County Road Services Map Vault; King County iMap; and Google Earth. (For more detailed descriptions of all these map collections and sites, see the Websites and Online Resources section of the Directory in this guide.)

Small-Scale Maps

- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (1884–1960s): Very detailed maps showing building footprints, construction, and use; distances between buildings; outbuildings; and streets, parks, and neighborhood features. Available in print at the Seattle Public Library Seattle Room, on microfilm at the University of Washington Libraries – Microform and Newspapers Collection,
and online from the Seattle Public Library’s Databases and Websites page (requires Seattle Public Library card for access). Sanborn atlases were released as a base book with updates pasted in periodically, so it can sometimes be difficult to pinpoint dates.

- Baist Real Estate Atlases (1905–1912); Kroll Real Estate Atlases (1912–present): Less detail than Sanborn maps, but some additional information, including property lines, plat names, and owners of unplatted property. Available in print at the Seattle Public Library Seattle Room and the University of Washington Libraries – Special Collections and on microfilm at the University of Washington Libraries – Microform and Newspapers Collection. The 1912 Kroll atlas is available via the U.S., Indexed County Land Ownership Maps, 1860–1918 section of the Ancestry Library Edition database.

- Subdivision (plat) maps: Maps filed with the county when land is first incorporated and when it is subsequently subdivided. Available online through the King County Parcel Viewer Property Report. Copies are also available at the King County Recorder’s Office. These plats include maps showing the date of platting, original street names, and names of property owners.

- Anderson Map Company atlases show early (c. 1880s) King County land ownership, primarily large tracts of land. One 1889 Anderson atlas is available in the Seattle Public Library Seattle Room, and several Anderson maps are available at the University of Washington Special Collections.

- Metzker Map Company’s county atlases are useful for areas outside city. Similar to the Kroll and Anderson atlases, these also show land ownership. 1926 and 1936 atlases are available in the Seattle Public Library Seattle Room and at the University of Washington Special Collections.

- Numerous city engineering maps, including engineering quarter section maps, aerial topography maps, sewerage and drainage topography maps, and basemaps are available from the Seattle Public Utilities Engineering Records Vault.

**Newspapers**

Historic newspaper indexes such as the Seattle Public Library’s Northwest Index, the University of Washington’s Pacific Northwest Regional Newspaper and Periodical Index, and databases such as America’s GenealogyBank, World Newspaper Archive, and Chronicling America can provide you with a wealth of information about buildings, people, and neighborhoods.

Both the Seattle Public Library and at the University of Washington Libraries – Microform and Newspapers Collection have extensive collections of local newspaper and magazine backfiles on print and microfilm. In addition to the Seattle Times, which is available on microfilm in addition to the electronic databases mentioned above, some of the most important local newspapers for information about historic buildings include:

- Seattle Post-Intelligencer
- Pacific Builder and Engineer

All these publications feature news and information about new construction and buildings, including houses. In addition, many smaller or more specific newspapers exist which can often provide interesting
context if not specific building information. Many historic newspapers are not indexed in any way, so searching can be painstaking, but is often well worth the effort.

Seattle was settled by people from everywhere, so it’s also worth checking newspapers from other areas. You may find information about early Seattleites in the Portland Oregonian, for instance, or the San Francisco papers, or even in the New York Times archives. This is also true of builders, architects, and supplies.

Other Books
Unless otherwise noted, all of the books listed below are available on Levels 9–10 of the Seattle Public Library, Central Library. Clicking on the title of the book in this list will link you to its entry in the Seattle Public Library catalog.


Bagley, Clarence B. *History of Seattle from the earliest settlement to the present time*. Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1916. Seattle Public Library Call Number: R979.72 B146H.


Cardle, Doug. *About those King County place-names*. Seattle: Coastal Press, 1989. Seattle Public Library Call Number: R979.777 C179A.


Daly, Laura C. *A history of the cemeteries in the city of Seattle; and, a history of Evergreen-Washelli Cemeteries*. Seattle, WA: Evergreen-Washelli Cemeteries and Funeral Home, 1984. Seattle Public Library Call Number: 929.57977 D177H.


A guide to Northwest architecture and design, with well-illustrated examples. The focus is on contemporary architecture, but the book begins with early Modernist styles.

Historic Seattle Preservation and Development Authority. *An urban resource inventory for Seattle: [a visual inventory of buildings & urban design resources for Seattle]*. Seattle Public Library Call Number: 917.972 H629U.


A history of historic preservation in Seattle and King County. Includes lists of designated landmarks (as of 1999) and historic districts as well as a timeline of historical influences on local architecture.


A guide to doing local history research. Chapter 9 (“Landscapes and Buildings”) is of particular interest for building researchers, but the techniques and theories of the rest of the book are also valuable.


Seattle (Wash.). Dept. of Parks and Recreation. *Data on history of Seattle Parks system: Compiled April 19, 1960, updated regularly to date*. Seattle, WA: D. Sherwood, 197-. Seattle Public Library Call Number: SEADOC P2.9 and 333.78097 Se18D.

A version of the Sherwood park histories are also available online at [http://www.cityofseattle.net/Parks/history/sherwood.htm](http://www.cityofseattle.net/Parks/history/sherwood.htm).


Also available online at [http://www.seattleschools.org/area/historybook/index.dxml](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/historybook/index.dxml).


Washington State Division of Archives and Records Management. *Index to vital records: Death records index, 1907 to 1979*. Olympia, WA: Division of Archives and Records Management, 1983. Seattle Public Library Call Number: R929.3797 In2m MICROFIL.

Washington Death Index on microfilm. Separate films by decade or 5-year period. Names are organized by Soundex Code and first name. (To find Soundex codes for particular names, use RootsWeb’s Soundex Converter.)


Reprint of 1920 house plan book.
## Workbooks and Checklists

### Legal Information

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## Structure of the Building

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## City/County Services

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## Photograph and Image Log

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