

Seattle Design Commission

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Legislative

The Seattle Design Commission was established in 1968, with the passage of Forward Thrust, a bond measure approved by voters that allocated millions of dollars to various capital improvement projects throughout the city. The intended goal of the Design Commission was to help the city achieve “design excellence” and to insure the City’s dollars were being well-spent.

The current Commission is a body of professionals that advises the Mayor, City Council and various city departments on the design of numerous projects that influence the city’s public realm. The commission’s jurisdiction includes Capital as well as other projects and policies. It generally reviews public projects although it may see private projects when they have large impacts over the public realm such as the recent sky bridge proposed for Safeco Corp. in the University District. The Design Commission is composed of

- 2 architects
- 2 landscape architects
- 1 engineer
- 1 urban planner
- 1 urban designer
- 1 artist
- 1 at-large representative

The Seattle Design Commission was one of the first such municipal organizations commissions in the country.



The Seattle Design Commission has influenced thousands of treasured city projects since its inception. Pictured above: The Beacon Hill Library, the Seattle Center Fisher Pavilion and the Grass Blades Gateway Sculpture at Seattle Center.

Sources:

- www.ci.seattle.wa.us/dpd/planning/design_commission
- www.seattle.gov/DPD/CityDesign/ProjectReview/SDC/2004annualreport-web.pdf

Capital Improvement Projects

- Parks & community centers
- Libraries
- Fire & police stations
- Road improvements
- Public utility structures

Right of Way Projects

- Street use permits
- Skybridge permits
- Street & alley vacations
- Objects in the right-of-way

Major City Projects

- Seattle Monorail Project
- 5 commissioners sat on the Monorail Review Panel
- Sound Transit Light Rail
- 3 commissioners sit on the Light Rail Review Panel
- Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement
- Central Waterfront Plan
- Streetcar
- State Route 520 Bridge

Advise Elected Officials

- Waterfront Plan
- City Hall
- AK Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement
- Monorail