



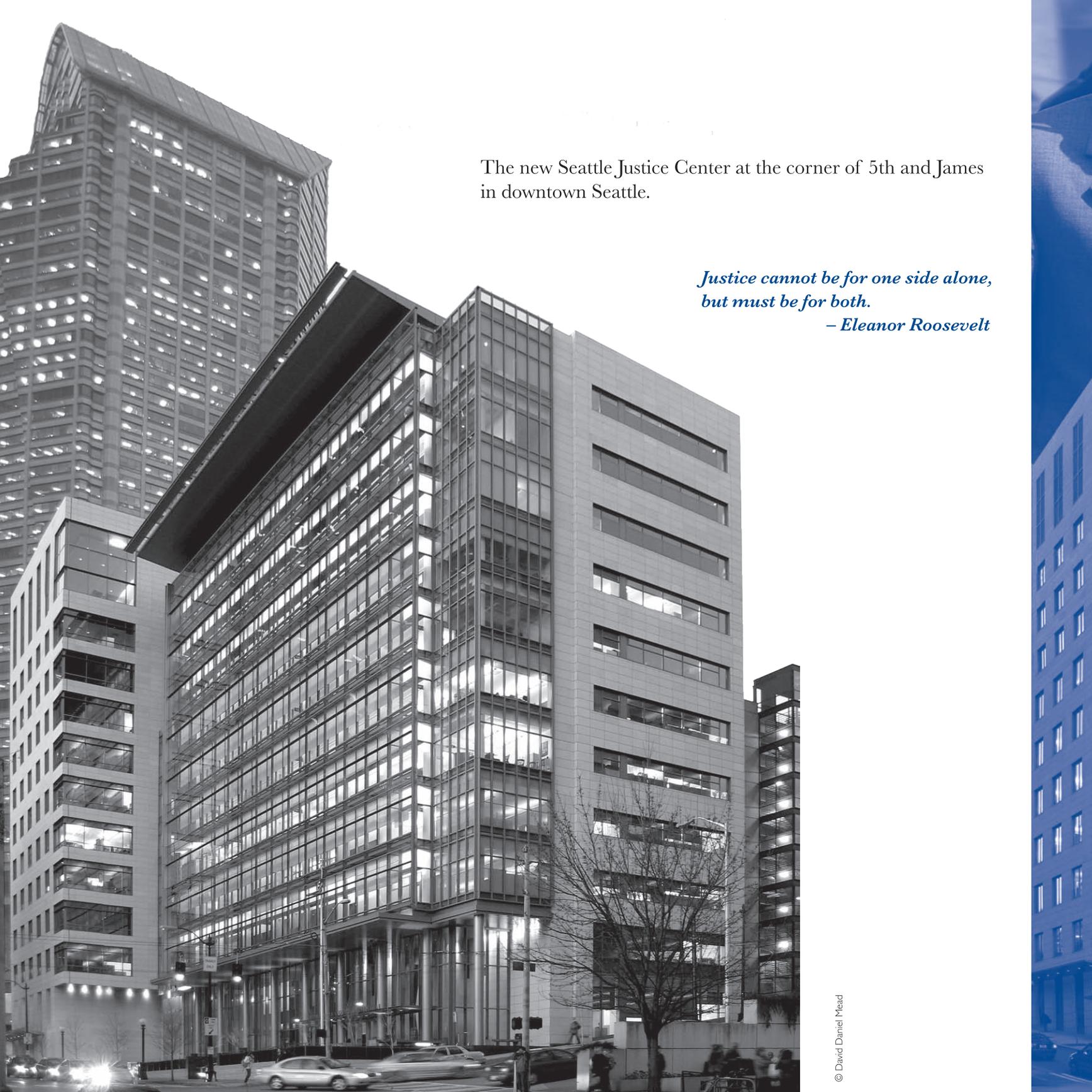
your guide to...

The Municipal Court of Seattle



600 Fifth Avenue Seattle, WA 98104





The new Seattle Justice Center at the corner of 5th and James
in downtown Seattle.

*Justice cannot be for one side alone,
but must be for both.*

– Eleanor Roosevelt

WELCOME

Welcome to the Municipal Court of Seattle, the judicial branch of your city's government.

In 2002 we moved into the Seattle Justice Center, a wonderful new facility on Fifth and James that we share with the Seattle Police Department. In this guide you can learn about the many ways this new home is making it easier for us to do our job better.

What is that job? Simple. The Court exists to resolve alleged violations of the Seattle Municipal Code. That means everything from domestic violence and DUI to traffic infractions, parking tickets and littering.

We are committed to doing this work fairly and quickly. And we are committed to developing and maintaining an atmosphere of respect for the public, our employees, defendants and the various government and private agencies with which we work.

This is your Court, and 'our' beautiful new building is really your beautiful new building.

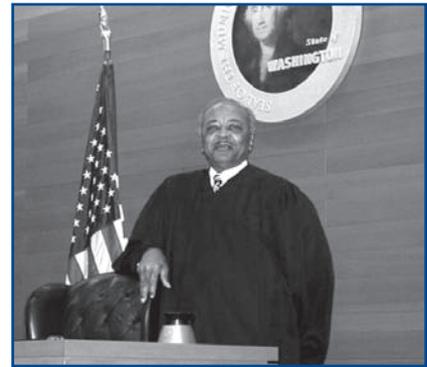
Whether you come here as a juror, an attorney or a citizen paying a ticket, I hope this guide will help you get the most out of it. You can find out more at our website: www.seattle.gov/courts.

My overriding priority for the Court can be summed up in one word: justice. In a democracy, justice begins with respect. Respect for the law, and respect for you, the citizens, who are ultimately responsible for making the law.

Once again, welcome!



Fred Bonner,
Presiding Judge



SEATTLE JUSTICE CENTER

Why Move?

The Court's old home, the Public Safety Building at 600 Third Ave, was over 50 years old. It was expensive to maintain, tough to heat and cool adequately, and impossible to retrofit for earthquake safety at a reasonable cost. It was also too small: the Court's operations were split between it and the Dexter Horton building.

The new Seattle Justice Center was constructed within its original \$92 million budget—less than it would have cost to renovate the much smaller Public Safety Building. The various new buildings of the Civic Center Plaza are much more efficient than the old ones, and will save the City \$3 million a year in operating costs.



The Court Administrator

As Administrator, I work closely with the judges in managing court operations and developing programs that support the administration of justice. The Seattle Justice Center provides an opportunity to include non-traditional court services within this building. This report highlights some of these services, and I invite you to visit us at any time to tour the building and learn more about the Seattle Municipal Court.

Yolande E. Williams

Yolande Williams,
Court Administrator

BIGGEST CONSTRUCTION PROBLEM

A feature of the building that most people never see is the tunnel that snakes under James Street, connecting the Center's basement with the King County Jail.

While building it, engineers ran into an old skid road: 4-foot diameter logs embedded in the mud. They had to cut right through the logs.

The Seattle Justice Center

The Seattle Justice Center, which houses both the Court and the Seattle Police Department, opened in 2002. It is located on Fifth Avenue, right across from the new City Hall, home of the Mayor's office and the City Council, which opened in 2003.

The entrance to the Court is via a small plaza on Fifth Avenue at the south end of the building. It is highlighted by flags, steps and a running water pool. (The entrance to the Seattle Police Department is also on Fifth Avenue, at the north end of the building.)



© David Daniel Mead

THE FACTS

Architect: NBBJ

Groundbreaking: July 2000

Opening Day: November 2002

The Court has moved all its operations out of the Public Safety and Dexter Horton Buildings. It still operates one courtroom and all Personal Recognizance services in the King County Jail, across the road on the south side of James St.

The Court also provides magistrates for traffic and parking hearings in the four Neighborhood Service Centers (Columbia City, West Seattle, Ballard and Lake City).

A Building So Green it's Silver

As befits a new Seattle institution, the Justice Center incorporates so many energy- and resource-efficient features that it received a Silver rating using the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Rating System.

Office lights are controlled by motion sensors. A rainwater retention system reuses runoff, and the roof is planted with vegetation to improve insulation and reduce runoff and pollution. Recycled and natural materials are extensively used.

The thermal buffer wall on the west side, facing Fifth Avenue, is a key feature of the building. Two layers of glass are separated by a thirty-inch space. The gap captures air during the winter for insulation; during the summer, vents open



at the top and bottom, turning the wall into a hot-air chimney. This type of thermal wall is common in Europe but has rarely been used in the U.S. until now.



© Kheng Guan Toh

Technology

Need information? You'll see computer terminals near the elevators on nearly every floor: just walk up to one and check out our special Court website.

In the Jury Waiting Area, and the jury assembly rooms, there are also computers where jurors can do work, access the internet and keep up with e-mail.

THE FACTS

How Tall?

*The 12th-floor Jury
Waiting Area and roof terrace
are about 170 feet above
5th Avenue*



*Justice has nothing to do with what goes on in a Courtroom.
Justice is what comes out of a Courtroom.*

—Clarence Darrow

NEW FEATURES

Quick Payment Window

The Quick Payment Window can be found just inside the front entrance. You can get many things done here near the entrance to the building.



© Galina Barskaya

Child Care Center for the Court. The ongoing operation of the Center will be funded through grants and donations. Jurors will have an opportunity to support the



Dreamstime.com

drop-in center through the direct donation of their fees to CHSW. The Court and CHSW anticipate opening the Center for 20 hours per week in the Summer of 2006.

Advanced Security

Weapons screening, closed circuit monitoring of the lobby and courtrooms, key card access to employee-only areas and a dedicated prisoner elevator are just a few of the building's extensive security features.

Attorney/Client Interview Booths

To make confidentiality and privacy more than just a principle, these are provided on all courtroom floors and in the prisoner holding area.

Original Artwork

The courthouse is a new Seattle art gallery in its own right, with original work by area artists on display throughout the building.

7

Jury Deliberation Rooms

These are located near each courtroom and have their own private bathroom facilities.

The Children's Waiting Room Center

We are pleased to announce that the Municipal Court, in partnership with Children's Home Society of Washington (CHSW), will soon offer a licensed drop-in childcare service for families conducting court business. CHSW, a non-profit corporation, successfully led fund-raising efforts to staff and operate the drop-in

COURT RESOURCE CENTER

Court Resource Center

The Court belongs to the people of Seattle, and a key part of its mission is to make the justice system more effective, by nurturing links between the criminal justice system and the wider community.



© Theresa Martinez

The Court Resource Center, on the 2nd floor of the Seattle Justice Center, makes it possible to deliver key social services and treatment programs on site. Services run or coordinated by the Center include:

- Help for Working Families (direct phone link to the Human Services Department: 206.684.0355)
- Seattle Mental Health
- Western State Hospital

- Dept. of Corrections Moral Reconciliation Therapy
- Linkage to Childcare and Family Resources
- Giving Real Options to Women (GROW) Domestic Violence Education
- Department of Health and Social Services (including applications for public benefits such as food stamps, general and medical assistance, treatment under the Alcohol and Drug Action Treatment and Support Act)
- Seattle Mental Health (including substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence treatment, housing vouchers)

The Resource Center is staffed by citizen volunteers and interns from local programs including AmeriCorps, AARP, the YWCA Community Jobs Program, and the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens.

THE FACTS

How Big?

The Justice Center is 300,000 sq. ft. That's five football fields!

The Municipal Court alone covers 165,000 sq. ft., or nearly three football fields

THE COURTS

Problem Solving Courts

Over the past decade, leaders in the criminal justice system have begun to rethink the way they do business. Across the country, courts—in concert with both government and community partners—have been experimenting with new ways to deliver justice. This wave of innovation goes by many names and takes many forms, with each specialized court targeting different kinds of concern. And yet they all share a basic organizing theme—a desire to make courts more problem-solving and to improve the kinds of results that courts achieve for victims, litigants, defendants and communities.

The successful operation of specialized courts is enhanced by the availability of the Court Resource Center (*details on page 8*).

Community Court

Community Court, the first of its kind in Washington State and only the 27th in the nation, is a collaboration between Municipal Court, the City Attorney and the Associated Council for the Accused’s Public Defense Agency.



© Jostein Hauge



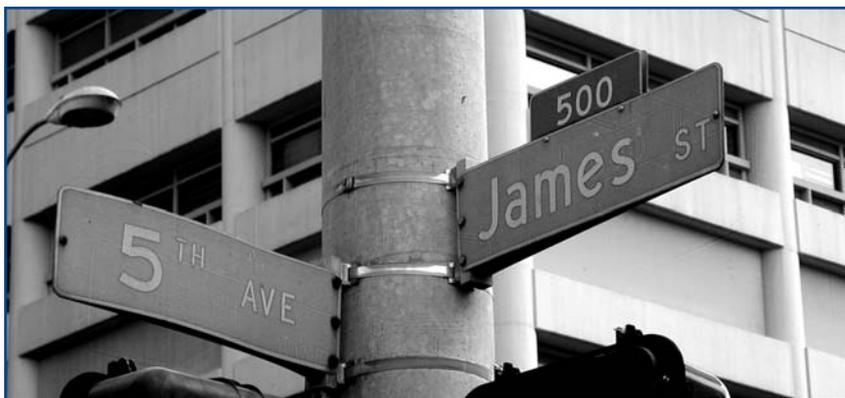
SMC’s Community Court hears cases related to low-level “quality of life” crimes, such as criminal trespass and shoplifting. It links defendants to services that address underlying issues like substance abuse, homelessness and learning disabilities. Defendants who commit these crimes often are not “criminals” in the typical sense. They are instead individuals with severe

I consider trial by jury as the only anchor yet imagined by man by which a government can hold to the principles of its constitution.

—Thomas Jefferson

problems such as drug or alcohol addiction or mental health issues, which challenge our system. Focusing on guilt or innocence and relying on jail as the sole sanction does little or nothing to reduce recidivism (repeat offending) by this defendant population. By relying on problem-solving models, community courts are much more effective at reducing the incidence of quality of life crimes, and making a positive impact on communities harmed by their criminal conduct.

Community Court offenders are held accountable to the community, the community gets involved in the justice system, and offenders get a chance to correct their behavior. Community Court recognizes that communities can be victims of crimes just as individuals are. In trying to encourage a problem solving rather than a strictly punitive approach to crime, community court imposes sentences that offer offenders an opportunity to repay their community by becoming involved with it. These community sentences contribute thousands of hours of valuable work; they also save tax dollars by limiting incarceration.



THE FACTS

How Many?

JUSTICE CENTER

12 Floors

7 Elevators

MUNICIPAL COURT

240 Employees

11 Courtrooms

400 Seattle Police personnel

Domestic Violence Court

Judges who specialize in domestic violence issues serve the Domestic Violence Court. The Court organizes special calendars for domestic violence cases and ‘no contact’ order motion hearings, and has a special domestic violence probation unit.

A problem with domestic violence cases in the past was that multiple judges, prosecutors and defense



© Tomislav Birtic

lawyers were often involved in the same case. The Domestic Violence Court ensures that all hearings and reviews are heard before the same judge, and the Court also seeks actively to assign the same prosecutor and defense attorney throughout a case.

The Domestic Violence Court seeks to hold domestic violence perpetrators more consistently accountable and improve the safety of victims, while managing cases more efficiently.



Mental Health Court

In Mental Health Court, the key issue is whether alleged criminal activity is related to or caused by mental illness.

Staffed by a mental health professional and by probation staff with mental health expertise, it seeks to ensure that mentally ill offenders get treatment rather than punishment, and works actively to connect the mentally ill with the services they need.

As a result, Mental Health Court also improves public safety, and reduces the number of repeat interactions with the criminal justice system. It is one of fewer than a dozen such courts in the nation.

*True Peace is not merely the absence of tensions:
it is the presence of justice.*

—Martin Luther King Jr.

THE PEOPLE

The Judges

The Court has eight elected judges and one commissioner who preside over courtroom trials.

Just as the eight court judges are elected by the people of Seattle, the Presiding Judge is elected for a two-year term by his or her colleagues on the bench.



Hon. Ron A. Mamiya, Hon. Fred Bonner, Hon. Michael S. Hurtado, Hon. Judith Hightower, Hon. George W. Holifield, Hon. Edsonya Charles, Hon. C. Kimi Kondo, and Hon. Jean Rietschel.

The Court Commissioner

Like the magistrates, the Court Commissioner, *Adam Eisenberg*, is appointed by the judges. The Commissioner may hear and rule on both jury and bench trials, in the same manner as elected judges, and also conducts hearings for a variety of traffic, parking and Seattle City Ordinance violations.



Francis DeVilla, Shirley Wilson, Park Eng

The Magistrates

The Court's four magistrates are appointed by the judges. Their job is to take pressure off the courts by seeking non-trial solutions in some types of case.

JURY DUTY

Jury Waiting Area

If you wonder how seriously the Court takes juries, check out the Jury Waiting Area on the 12th Floor—it is the most spectacular space in the building.

This space reflects the idea that juries are the keystone of our system of justice, and that jurors, who are taking on one of a citizen's most demanding duties, should be treated with great respect. The United States Constitution and the Washington State Constitution guarantee all people the right to trial by an impartial jury. Justice depends on citizens serving as jurors in our courts.

Eligibility

You cannot serve on a jury if you have been convicted of a felony and your civil rights have not been restored. If you are in doubt about your eligibility for jury service, you may call, email or write to the Jury Assembly Clerk.

Jury Assembly Clerk
Municipal Court of Seattle
Seattle Justice Center
600 Fifth Avenue
PO Box 34987
Seattle, WA 98124-4987
206.684.5688
smcjuryduty@seattle.gov

Rescheduling

Bad timing? If jury duty will be especially inconvenient at the time for which you have been called, you can ask to have it rescheduled. You will have to identify three other weeks within the next twelve months that would work better for you.

Reschedule online at <http://seattle.gov/courts/jury/reschedule.htm>, or write to the Jury Assembly Clerk at the address given.

For more information, parking directions, and payment for jury services go to smcjuryduty@seattle.gov

View to the southwest from the rooftop garden next to the Jury Waiting Area.



HOW DO I...



...pay a ticket?

Any of five different ways:



Go to www.seattle.gov/courts



Call 206.233.7000



Mail your payment to Seattle Municipal Court (P. O. Box 34987, Seattle, WA 98124-4987)



Pay in person at the front desk in the Justice Center



Pay in person at one of the City's Neighborhood Service Centers
(see www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/nsc/locations.htm for participating locations)

It takes up to 72 hours after a violation for your ticket or case to be recorded in our system. If you still cannot locate your ticket or case after the 72-hour period, please call the number given above.

...get a "mail-in" mitigation hearing?

Sometimes people admit that they committed an offense but believe there are special "mitigating" circumstances the Court should know about. These circumstances can be presented to a Magistrate in person by following these steps:

- Request a Hearing within 15 days of the date your ticket was issued by either calling the Court or submitting a request in writing to "Municipal Court of Seattle, Attn: Correspondence Clerk."
- Follow the instructions on the back of the ticket and indicate the hearing location that you prefer. If you do not receive a hearing notice within 20 days, contact the Court again.

Instructions for participating in a mail-in hearing are mailed to citizens once they request a magistrate hearing. The Magistrate makes a determination and notifies you of the decision by mail.

...volunteer?

The Volunteer Program of the Seattle Municipal Court provides great opportunities for getting involved in the justice process. Volunteers come from all segments of our community including the community colleges and universities.

Some volunteers just want to give back to the community or learn more about the Court system; Others also benefit personally by gaining valuable work experience that makes them more competitive in the work force.

To volunteer, contact:

Volunteer Coordinator
206.684.7803

or check out our website;
www.seattle.gov/courts/prob/volopp.htm.

THE FACTS

How Many Per Year?

Half a million court filings

*Approx 60,000 magistrate
hearings.*

*Around 2,500 citizens
appearing for jury service*

*Over 50,000 community
services hours worked by
offenders*

Over 10,000 work crew hours

Over 40 languages interpreted

...visit someone in jail?

Most people who are convicted in Municipal Court are housed in the King County Jail system. The Court also uses jail facilities in Yakima County and (for short duration) Renton City Jail. To get information on visiting a prisoner please call 206.296.1281.

...get married at the Court?

Judges perform marriage ceremonies upon request. If you would like to request a marriage ceremony, please call 206.684.8709.

Unless otherwise noted, the phone number for all services listed here is 206.684.5600

Justice in the life and conduct of the State is possible only if it first resides in the hearts and souls of the citizens.

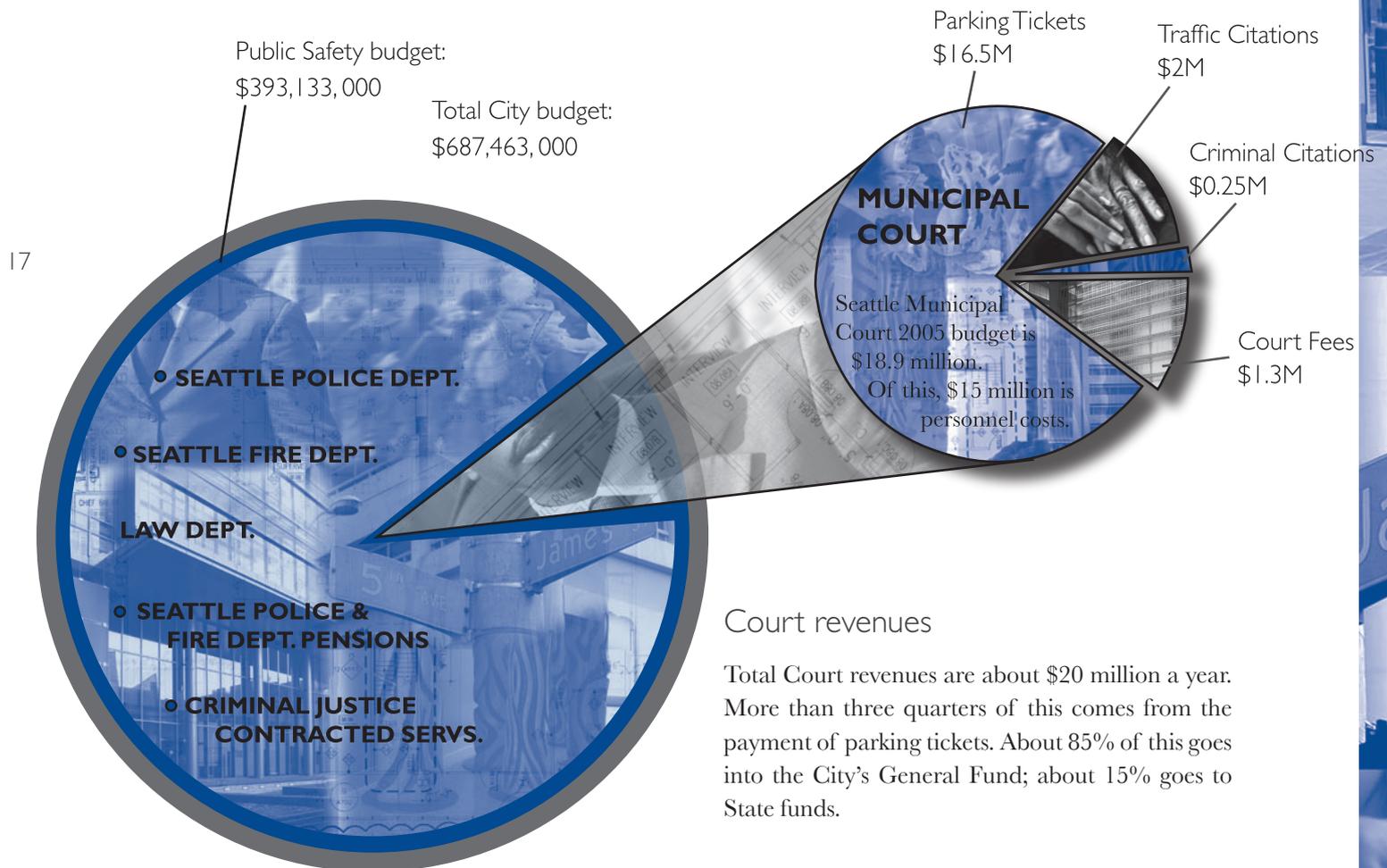
—Plato

MY MONEY FACTS

The Court both generates revenue and costs money to run. But it is not a business: the revenues are independent of the expenses and do not directly pay the expenses. The Court's expenses are part of Seattle's Public Safety budget; its revenues (from traffic tickets, for example), go back into the City's General Fund.

City of Seattle 2005 adopted budget - \$687,463,000

The Municipal Court is part of the City's Public Safety budget. In 2005, the budget looked roughly like this:



Court revenues

Total Court revenues are about \$20 million a year. More than three quarters of this comes from the payment of parking tickets. About 85% of this goes into the City's General Fund; about 15% goes to State funds.

For more information, you can go to the website of the City Finance Department at www.seattle.gov/finance.

Quick Guide to Numbers and Information

600 Fifth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104,
(between James St. & Cherry St.)
tel: 206.684.5600
www.seattle.gov/courts

Jury Service Questions:
206.684.5688
smcjury@seattle.gov

Prison visitation Questions:
206.296.1281

Volunteer Questions:
206.684.7803

Public Defender Office:
206.624.8105

To Get Married:
206.684.8709

5 Ways to Pay your Ticket:

online at
www.seattle.gov/courts



Call 206.233.7000

Mail payment to Municipal
Court of Seattle, P.O. Box
34987, Seattle WA 98124-4987



In person at the front desk in
the Justice Center



In person at one of the Neigh-
borhood Service Centers



Disability access to the court is provided on the first floor of the Seapark parking garage.

Acknowledgements: Inside cover photograph David Daniel Mead. Copywriting & editing: Richard Farr, ECATGroup, www.ecatgroup.com, tel: 206.371.7828
Design & layout: Sarah Slater, sslaterdesign@yahoo.com. © Photographs on pages 5, 7, 8, 9, 11 provided by Dreamstime.com.
Printed on Recycled Paper.

HOW TO GET TO THE MUNICIPAL COURT AND THE SEATTLE JUSTICE CENTER

The Seattle Justice Center is located at 600 Fifth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104, tel: 206.684.5600

The entrance to the Court is on Fifth Avenue between James St. and Cherry St. in downtown Seattle.

The King County Correctional Facility (Jail) is also on Fifth Avenue, on the south side of the Fifth/James intersection.



Traveling by car

Take I-5 to the James Street exit in downtown Seattle (Exit 164A northbound / Exit 165A southbound). If traveling north, you will turn left onto James Street; if traveling south, you will turn right onto James Street.

The Court does not provide public parking. There is metered parking on the surrounding streets, and many public pay lots are available within walking distance.



Traveling by bus

To find the best bus route using Metro's Trip Planner, go to <http://triplanner.metrokc.gov> and enter "Fifth Avenue & Cherry Street" or "Fifth Avenue & James Street" as your destination point.

