

# Maps at the Seattle Municipal Archives

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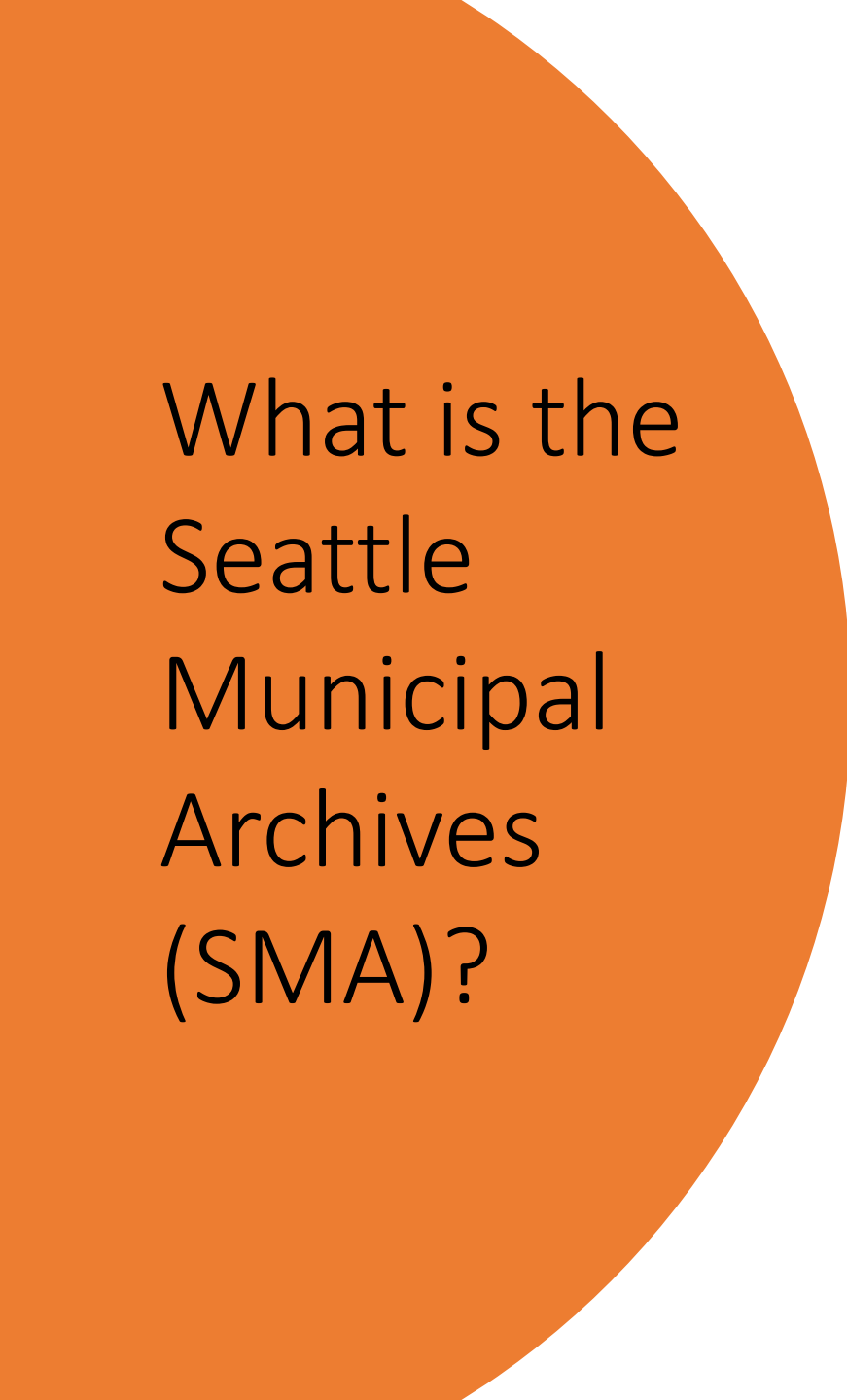
# What we'll cover

What kinds of maps are at SMA?

How do I search for maps?

Can I get copies?


Where else can I find Seattle maps?



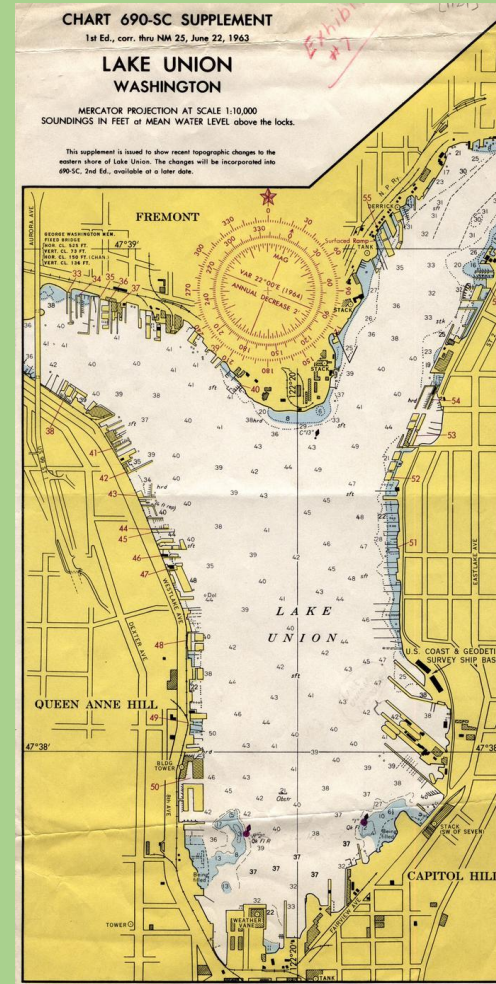
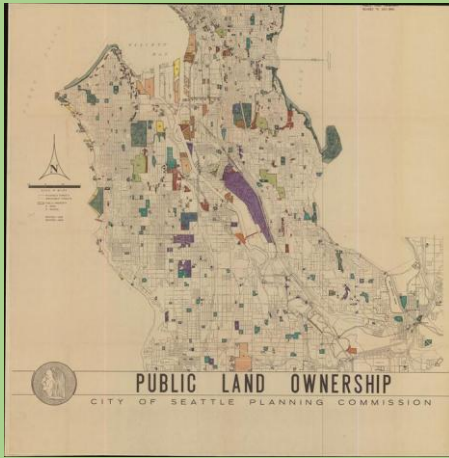
# What is the Seattle Municipal Archives (SMA)?

SMA's holdings document the history, development, and activities of the agencies and elected officials of the City of Seattle. (That is, records created by or received by City government.)

See our Introduction to the Archives course for more information if you're not familiar with SMA.



# What's in SMA's map collections?



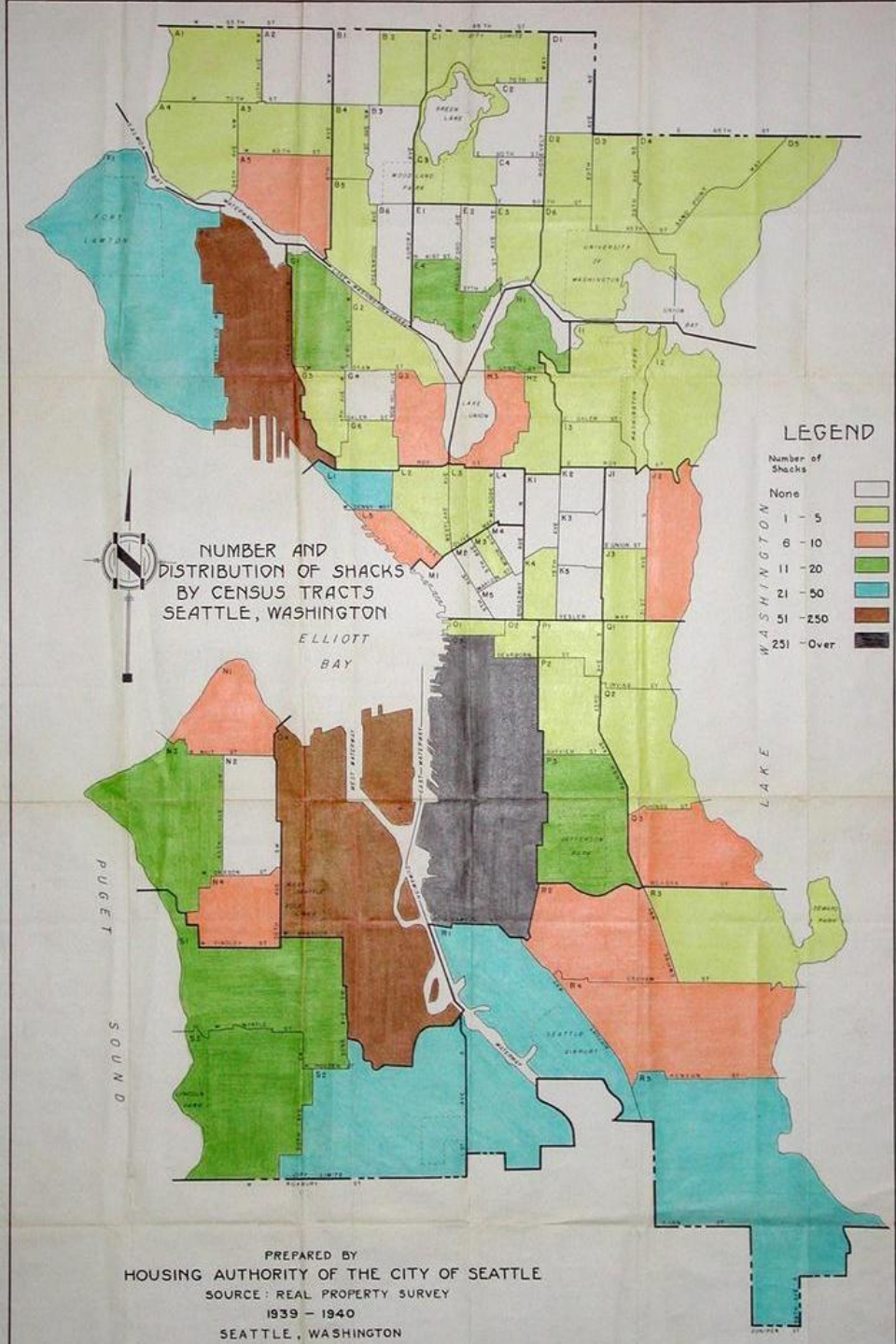
**INTERLAKEN**

**FOR HIGH-CLASS RESIDENCES ONLY**  
PRICE OF LOTS \$800 TO \$5,000  
BUILDING RESTRICTIONS \$2,500 to \$10,000

**INTERLAKEN LAND CO.**

Interlaken is a residential development located in the heart of Seattle, near the city center. The site plan shows a grid of streets and individual lots. The advertisement includes details about the high-class residences, lot prices, and building restrictions. It also mentions the company's name and contact information.





SMA holds maps and atlases of the Seattle area from the late 1800s to the present day. Maps from a variety of departments are included, such as Department of Community Development neighborhood study maps for the Central Area from the late 1950s and early 1960s, and Engineering maps from a wide range of time periods and on a variety of topics.

Not all SMA maps were created by the City of Seattle – some come from other organizations or individuals.



Significant map series

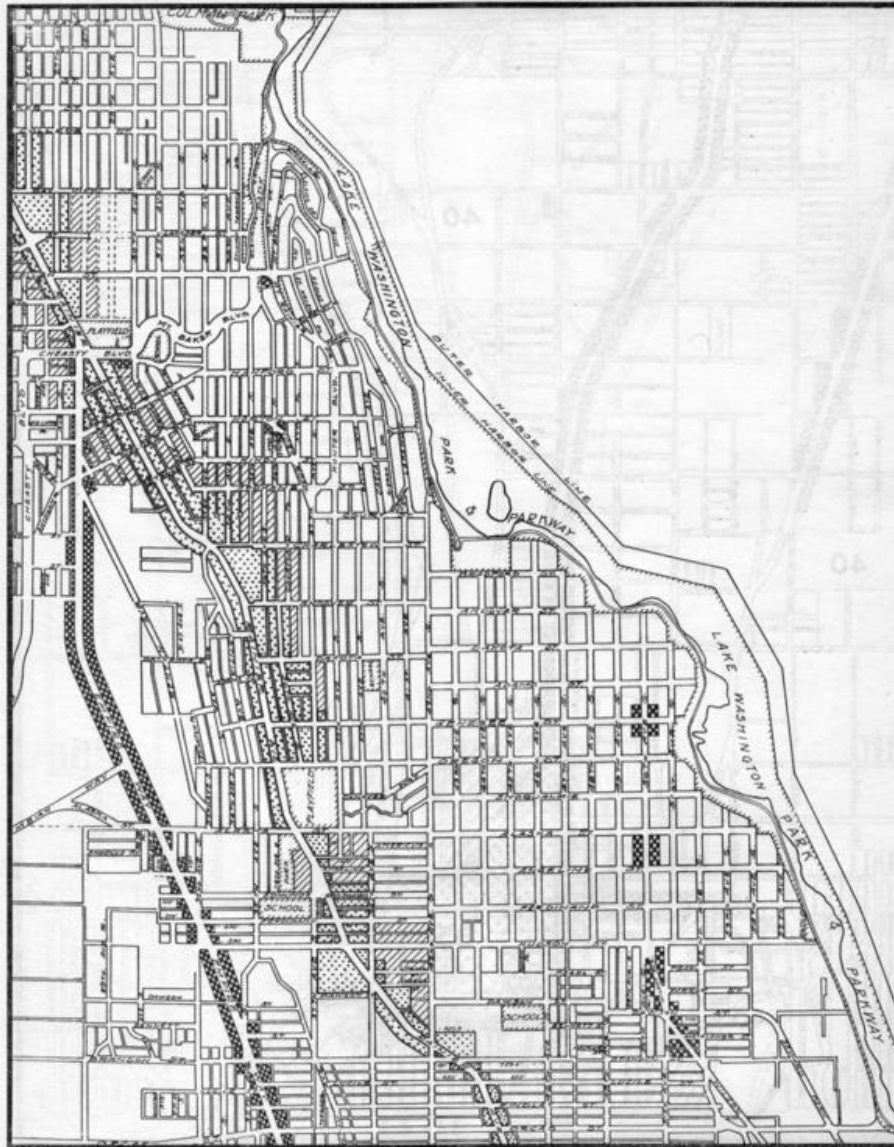
UNITED STATES  
 WASHINGTON STATE  
 NORTHERN PACIFIC  
 NEWSPAPERIST CO.

WEYERHAEUSER TIMBER CO.  
 SEATTLE - Land and Timber  
 SEATTLE - Land only  
 (Various tracts as marked by letters)  
 VARIOUS OTHERS (various)

DEPARTMENT

Where the land only is owned by the City, the timber owner is indicated by the letter on the area.  
 W - Weyerhaeuser Timber Co.  
 A - Northern Pacific  
 P - Pacific States Lumber Co.  
 C - Cascade Timber Co.

Ownership Map, April 1914  
 Compiled from Records of  
 the County Assessor



# Zoning maps

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SMA holds zoning maps for the years [1923](#), [1947](#), [1961](#), and [1973](#) that are snapshots of the zoning of the entire city in those years. These maps, in conjunction with legislative research, can help determine the zoning for a particular property at a specific point in time. See our [Researching Historic Land Use and Zoning guide](#) for more information.



# Other maps

[Puget Sound Traction, Light and Power Company Maps and Property Inventory](#) (record series 1802-D8): maps and drawings showing locations of street railway lines and infrastructure

[Department of Community Development Maps and Drawings](#) (record series 1600-05): maps and drawings for various planning studies related to zoning and land use, urban renewal, and neighborhood development

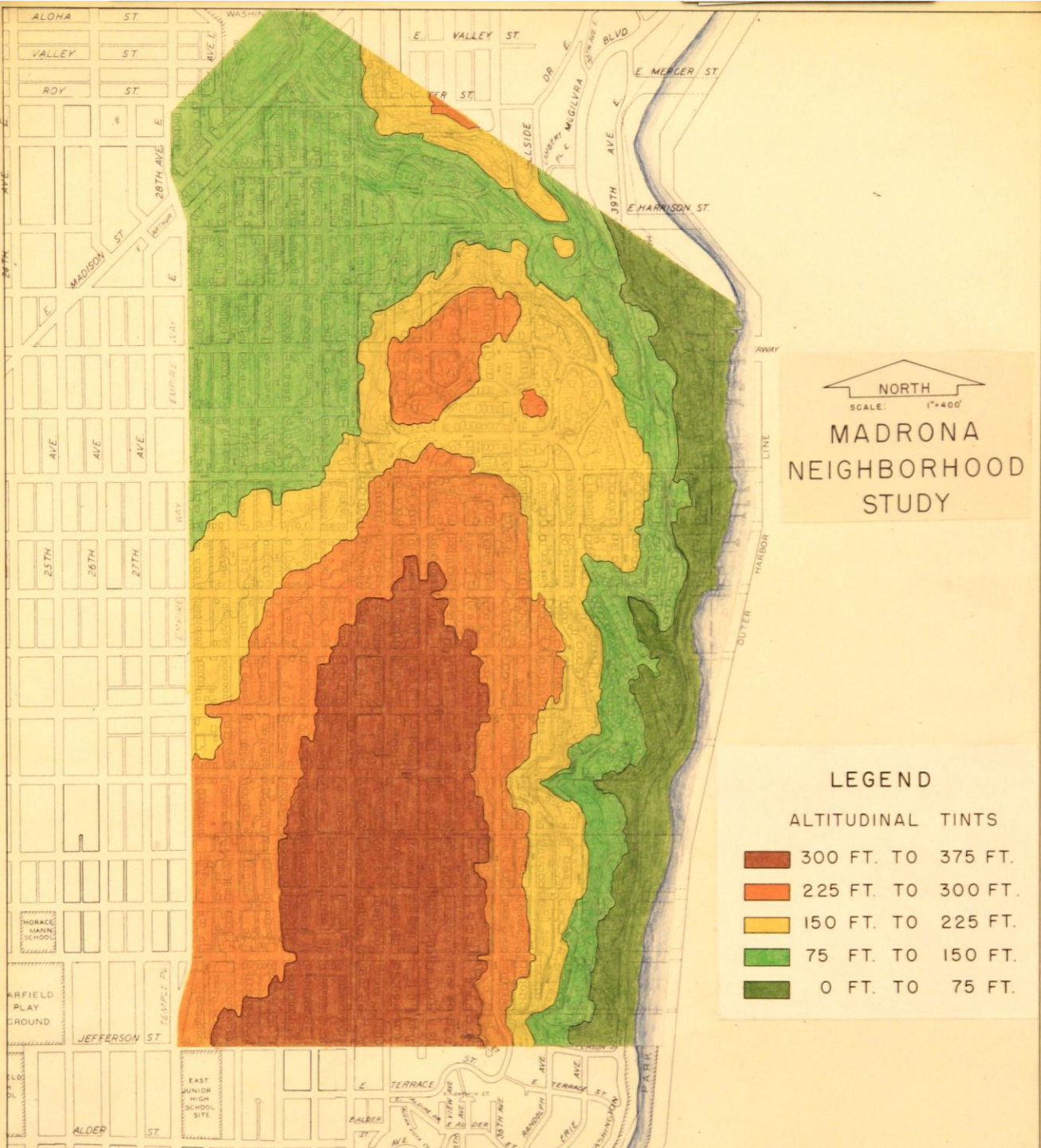
[Utility Pole Maps](#) (record series 1207-03): maps created by Seattle City Light to show the location of utility poles (no digital copies are available)

[Olmsted Brothers Maps and Drawings](#) (record series 5801-06): plans for several Olmsted projects in Seattle

And many more...

How do I  
search for  
maps?

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# Digital Collections

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Maps are individually cataloged in SMA's [Digital Collections](#). Not all maps are scanned, but if a digital copy is available, it will be included in the catalog record.



If you are not familiar with SMA's Digital Collections site, start with the Searching for Records course to learn the basics.

This course will dive a little deeper into search strategies specific to SMA's map collections.

A map's catalog record may contain many types of information.

Identifier

Description

Author

Scale

Dates

Scope

Physical  
Description

Subject



Click the map to look more closely at a catalog record.

There are two ways to search for a map in Digital Collections: Basic Search and Advanced Search. Basic Search (shown here) will cast a wide net, and search results will include more than maps.

The screenshot displays the Seattle Municipal Archives Digital Collections website. At the top left is the logo and the text "Seattle Municipal Archives Digital Collections". On the right is a search bar with the word "Search" and a magnifying glass icon, with an orange arrow pointing to it. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: "About", "Browse", "Gallery", "Advanced Search", "Finding Aids", "Collections Home", and "SMA Home". The main content area shows three search results:

- Map:** A detailed street map of Seattle, Washington, with an inset titled "TRAFFIC FLOW MAP" for the year 1949. The inset includes a legend and a line graph showing traffic volume over time. The main map is labeled "PUGET SOUND" and "THE WASHINGTON".
- Photograph:** A black and white landscape photograph showing a river or stream flowing through a wooded area. The photo is labeled with the number "20418-3" and the date "11-17-60".
- Photograph:** A black and white photograph of a utility worker on a power line tower. The photo is labeled with the number "20417".

At the bottom of the search results, there is a pagination control showing a series of dots, with the first dot filled, indicating the current page.

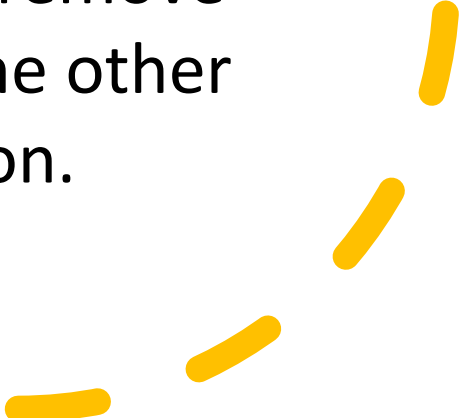


## Use filters to narrow your results

Results can be narrowed to include only maps by using the filters on the right side of the screen.

Further narrowing can be done by selecting dates, collections, scopes/themes, and names.

Give it a try – go to [these search results](#) and first select “maps” on the right to remove other types of records. Then try the other links to narrow by date or collection.




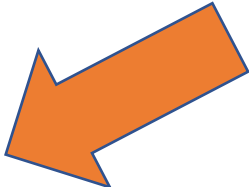
# Advanced search

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The [advanced search form](#) allows you to limit your search to maps only, and include or exclude the largest map collections from your results. There are also options to search by neighborhood, collection, and other fields.

127 OBJECT RESULTS 

SEARCH: delridge OBJECT TYPE: [MAP](#)  Share



COPY THE LINK TO THIS SEARCH:  [Copy](#) [Close](#)



6  
[Portion of Sec 31 T24 R4 Verdicts for land in Cedar River Watershed project]  
1917



7  
[Portion of Sec 31 T24 R4 L.I.D.4095 Assessments in West Seattle reservoir site]  
1925



8  
[Sec 6 T23 R4 Verdicts for land in Cedar River Watershed project]  
1917

Use the share button to create a link to send a set of results to yourself or someone else.

SCOPE OF INFORMATION ON MAP:

Parks

Topography

NOTE:

Handwritten notes show display locations for event

CONTEXT:

2/2

SUBJECT TERMS:

BUILDINGS

CAMP LONG

DELRIDGE

PARKS

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

TRAILS

WEST SEATTLE

DOWNLOAD AS  ▾



## How can I download maps?

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If a scan is available in Digital Collections, use the download link in the catalog record. Choose “original” for highest resolution.

What if  
there is no  
digital copy  
of a map?

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All maps can be viewed on site at the archives. Contact us at [archives@seattle.gov](mailto:archives@seattle.gov) to set up an appointment.

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Map scanning requests are considered on a case-by-case basis, depending on map size and condition and the availability of appropriate scanning equipment. Please contact an archivist for more information.

# Maps not in Digital Collections

While most maps are cataloged in Digital Collections, SMA also has a small number of Kroll, Sanborn, and Baist atlases that are not included. These can provide block-level information about building types, infrastructure, and other details. Contact [archives@seattle.gov](mailto:archives@seattle.gov) if you want to learn more about these atlases or view them in the research room. The Seattle Public Library also has these atlases.

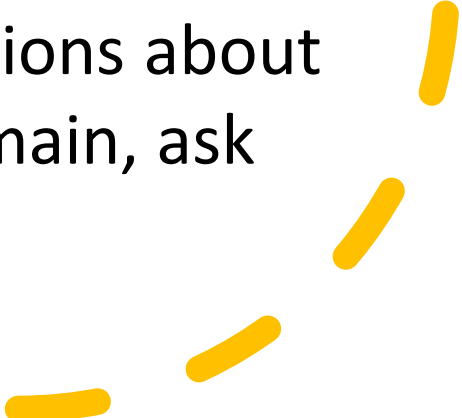
There are many more maps within published documents or in folders as part of textual record series. If you're looking for a particular type of map and don't see it in Digital Collections, ask an archivist for help.



## Use of SMA maps

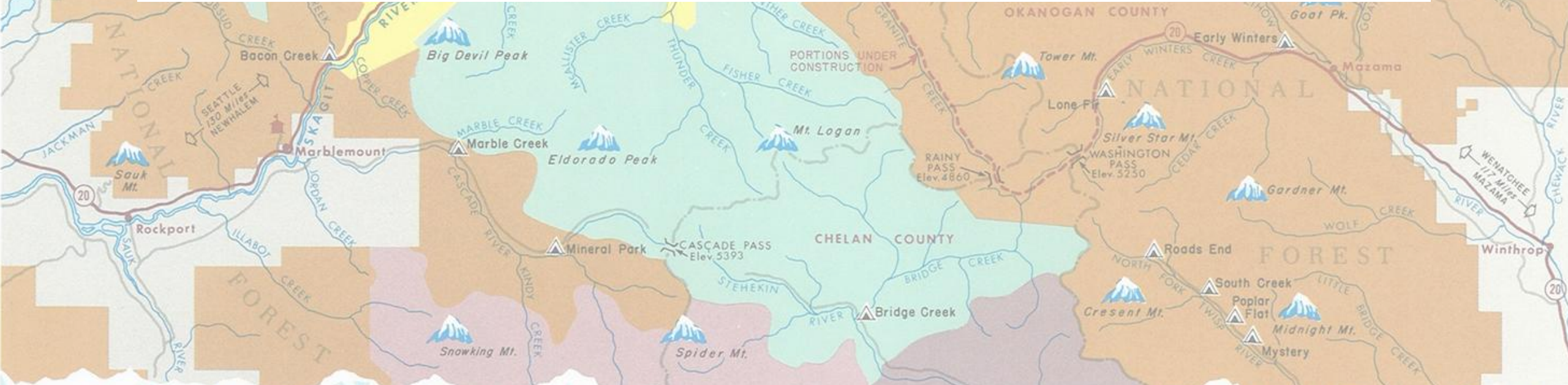
The majority of our maps are public record and are free for use. We ask that our maps are cited *Courtesy of the Seattle Municipal Archives* and that the item number is included.

Occasionally, the copyright will belong to an entity outside of the City. The user is responsible for obtaining permission from the copyright holder. If you have questions about whether a map is in the public domain, ask an archivist.





Where else can I find Seattle maps?



# Municipal maps

The best place to look for maps related to the city's infrastructure is the Seattle Public Utilities [Engineering Records Vault](#). Maps in the vault include aerial topography maps, engineering quarter section maps, shorelands and tidelands maps, and sewer and drainage topography maps. Other records include side sewer cards, street profiles, survey records, and aerial photography.

There is also a great deal of GIS information on the [Seattle GeoData site](#), including data related to streets, utilities, trees, transportation, and more.

# More maps

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Many local repositories also have map collections. Some of the most significant include:

- The University of Washington: over 270,000 map sheets, 86,000 aerial photographs, and 2,000 atlases.
- The Seattle Public Library: maps available on site as well as digitally, including Kroll and Baist atlases and Sanborn fire insurance maps.
- The King County GIS Center: includes maps from across King County government.

# SMA STAFF ARE HERE TO HELP!

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If you have questions or don't find what you're looking for, contact us at [archives@seattle.gov](mailto:archives@seattle.gov).

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