



ARCHIVES GAZETTE

Seattle Municipal Archives

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Legislative Department

SPECIAL ISSUES ON PHOTOGRAPHS

The next two issues of the Archives Gazette will be devoted to major photographic collections in the Seattle Municipal Archives. Dating from the early 1900s to the present, photographic images document public works, public utilities, parks, City employees, and many aspects of working and living in the City of Seattle. This issue will focus on photographs of public utilities and public works.

To date, nearly 40,000 images are available digitally on the Seattle Municipal Archives website. Because the majority of images are original negatives, with no reference prints, digitizing the images provides access previously not available. The images are scanned and indexed; users can browse the images by neighborhood, time period or key word. Major collections include those from the Engineering Department, City Light, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Pike Place Market, the Department of Streets and Sewers, and the Water Department.

All of the photographs are public records and are available for public use. To acquire better quality copies of the images than are available on the web site, please contact the Archives at (206) 233-7807 or (206) 684-8353.

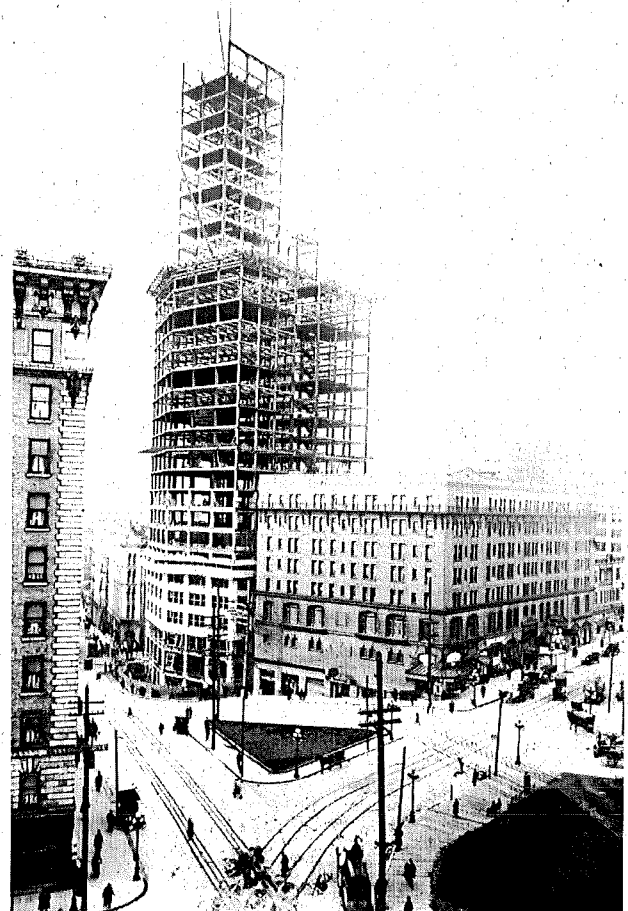
Seattle Engineering Department Photographs

The images taken by the Engineering Department date from 1912 to 1996 and number approximately one million. To date, images through 1939 are scanned and available on-line. Partial indexes in hard copy are available in the Archives for the remaining images.



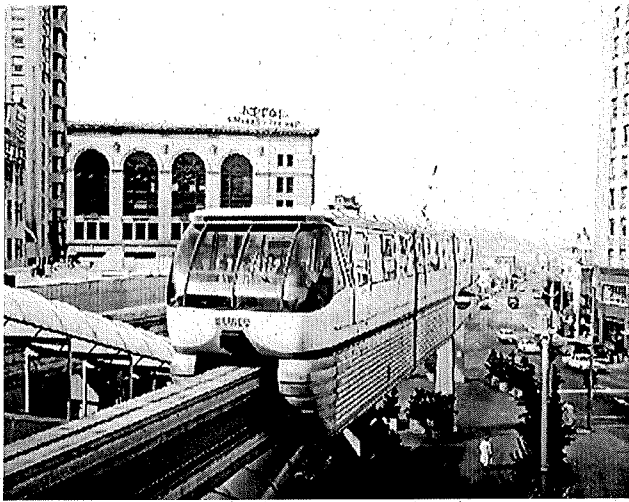
West Garfield Street Bridge [Bridge opening], Dec. 6, 1930
Engineering Dept. Photographic Negatives, Item No. 4582

Photographic negatives shot by the Engineering Department photographers document public works, municipal facilities, damage to streets and buildings by earthquakes and slides, and natural features. Included in the collection are images of the Cedar River Watershed, Skagit River power development, bridge and freeway construction, sanitary landfills, Seattle's waterfront, and pipeline construction, among others. Of particular interest are images of the Smith Tower construction and general shots of the Firland Sanitarium.



Smith Tower Construction, February 1913
Engineering Dept. Photographic Negatives, Item No. 11929

Through 1965, the Engineering Department negatives are black and white; after 1965, they are predominantly color negatives. Approximately 1200 images taken between 1910 and 1920 are glass plate negatives. In addition to negatives, the collection contains approximately 50,000 slides which have not been digitized.



Monorail at Westlake Terminal, October 9, 1967
Engineering Dept. Negatives, Neg. No. 23565

Department of Streets and Sewers Photographs

The Department of Streets and Sewers was responsible for the planning, construction, repair and cleaning of the City's streets, sidewalks, and sewers. The position of Superintendent of Streets, Sewers and Parks was established in 1896, although authority over Parks was removed in 1904. The department was abolished in 1936 and became the Maintenance Division of the Engineering Department.



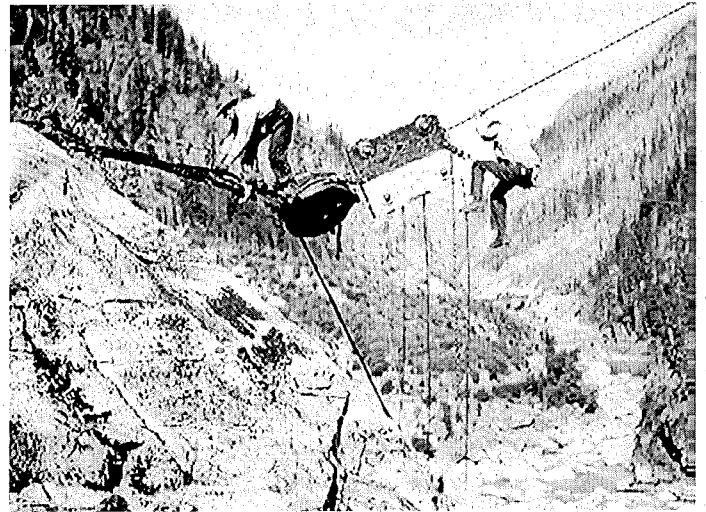
53rd Ave. S.W. Outfall [lawing sewer pipe at low tide], Sept. 20, 1934
Dept. of Streets and Sewers Photographs, Item No. 38615

Photographs in the Department of Streets and Sewers date from 1915 to 1937 and include over 4,000 images, all of which are not yet scanned and available on the website. These images document slides, sewer construction, water mains, Pike Place Market and other issues associated with streets and sewers.

Seattle City Light Photographic Images

City Light images include photographic negatives, glass lantern slides, prints, and slides documenting the development of Seattle's public electric utility. The images document dam construction in the Cedar River Watershed and the Skagit, and the Boundary Project; transmission lines, substations; City Light facilities; and employees. There are large groups of images relating to Boundary Dam, Gorge High Dam, and Ross Dam. Other generating facilities depicted are Cedar Falls, Diablo Dam, Lake Union and Georgetown Steam plants, and the Newhalem hydroelectric plant.

The slides relate to the development of public power in Seattle and include landscapes at Cedar Falls and the Skagit; promotional materials comparing City Light facilities to private companies; examples of electrical appliances and applications of electricity; and views of Diablo Dam, the Skagit River Railway, Cedar Falls Power Plant, and the Denny Hill Regrade.



Riggers on bull block - Tower #16 [Transmission line construction], Sept. 5, 1935
Seattle City Light Photographic Negatives, Item No. 17670

City Light images date from 1903 to 1995. Scanning of the over 180,000 negatives and slides continues on an ongoing basis as resources allow.

Seattle Municipal Archives

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