

Municipal Art Commission Minutes, 1955-1969

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Seattle (Wash.). Municipal Art Commission
Title	Municipal Art Commission Minutes
Dates	1955-1969 (inclusive) 1955 1969
Quantity	0.4 cubic foot, (1 box)
Collection Number	1652-01
Summary	Proceedings of Municipal Art Commission meetings, 1955-1969.
Repository	Seattle Municipal Archives Seattle Municipal Archives Office of the City Clerk City of Seattle PO Box 94728 98124-4728 Seattle, WA Telephone: 206-233-7807 Fax: 206-386-9025 archives@seattle.gov
Access Restrictions	Records are open to the public.
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Historical Note

An Arts Commission was created in 1955 to advise City government regarding the artistic and cultural development of the City. The Commission had ten members (later increased by ordinance to fifteen), who represented the painting, sculpture, music, literature, architecture, and landscape architecture communities; members could be nominated for appointment to the Commission by their organizations.

The Commission was reorganized in 1957 as the Municipal Art Commission by Ordinance 86692. Its primary mission remained the same, and the composition of the Commission changed only slightly. Its fifteen members included two from each of the abovementioned categories as well as three "lay" members. The Commission's advisory responsibility was extended to recommendations regarding the purchase of artworks by the City or the donation of artworks to the City; each painting, sculpture, or fountain and its location had to be approved by the Commission, which also made recommendations on the removal of artworks. The Commission was also responsible for making recommendations on the design of new physical structures to be constructed in the City and could even advise private property owners at no charge.

In 1961, the Commission's responsibilities were broadened to include historic preservation recommendations. In 1971, the Municipal Art Commission, which was "no longer actively pursuing its responsibilities," was abolished by Ordinance 99982 and replaced by the Seattle Arts Commission. The new Commission acted in the same advisory capacity and had fifteen mayor-appointed members;

its actions served "to promote and encourage public programs to further the development and public awareness of and interest in the fine and performing arts."

Content Description

The minutes of the Municipal Art Commission report on the proceedings of Commission meetings, 1955-1969. Minutes discuss reports on events and projects, correspondence from citizens and organizations, delegation of members to work on projects, suggestions for programs, events, and actions, and budget needs. The Commission's committees included Architecture/Landscape/Gardening, Literature/Graphic Arts, Music/Theater Arts and Dance/Opera, and Painting/Sculpture/Crafts. Issues of interest include the placement of the Chief Seattle statue as well as artwork for the new library, Civic Center, and Century 21 Exposition; the medium of television is also stressed as an effective way of publicizing the arts. In the 1960s, the Commission's interest in historic sites and their preservation is reflected in the minutes; restoration of Pioneer Square, a 1960s target for urban renewal projects, is discussed frequently. Noted Seattle artists and architects such as Mark Tobey, Paul Thiry, Everett du Pen, and James Wehn are among the names that appear in the minutes.

Most minutes include a rough and final draft of the minutes as well as a copy of the meeting agenda.

Use of the Collection

Preferred Citation

[Item and date], Municipal Art Commission Minutes, Record Series 1652-01. Box [number], Folder [number]. Seattle Municipal Archives.

Administrative Information

Arrangement

Minutes are arranged chronologically by year.

Detailed Description of the Collection

The following section contains a detailed listing of the materials in the collection.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box		
1	Municipal Art Commission Minutes	1955-1969

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Architecture--Washington (State)--Seattle--Design and plans

Art commissions--Washington (State)--Seattle

Art, Municipal--Washington (State)--Seattle

City planning--Washington (State)--Seattle

Historic preservation--Washington (State)--Seattle

Public art--Washington (State)--Seattle

Public sculpture--Washington (State)--Seattle

Personal Names :

Seattle, Chief, 1790-1866--Statues

Geographical Names :

Seattle (Wash.)--Buildings, structures, etc.

Form or Genre Terms :

Minutes

Finding aid prepared by Scott Cline and Shannon B. Lynch
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