FREEWAY PARK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

Freeway Park should be a great downtown destination that brings people together: a tranquil place with an adventurous spirit.

The Freeway Park Improvements Project will repair, restore, and enhance original park features in support of the park's daily use, ongoing maintenance, and programming. The goal of the project is to make the park more welcoming, bring people back to the park, and restore its role as a centerpiece of Seattle's park system and an icon of landscape architecture.

Client
Seattle Parks & Recreation (SPR)

Design Team
Walker|Macy: Lead, Landscape Architecture

HDR (Civil & Structural Engineering, Irrigation); Bassetti (Architecture); Studio Matthews (Wayfinding); Watt (Lighting); Reyes Engineering (Electrical Engineering); ETM (Programming); 3 Square Blocks (Public Involvement); BOLA (Historic Preservation); DCW (Cost Estimating); BRH (Survey)

Project Partner
Freeway Park Association (FPA)

SCOPE

Repair and Restore
- planting
- furnishings
- paving
- comfort station
- lighting
- wayfinding

Potential Enhancements
- cafe infrastructure / information booth
- children's play area
- gateways
- infrastructure for events & daily programming

BUDGET

Total Project Budget
$10 million

Construction Budget
$6 million

The project is funded by the Washington State Convention Center Expansion Project

SCHEDULE

Design & Documentation
Fall 2019 - Spring 2021

Construction
Winter 2022 - Fall 2022 (estimated)

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FREEWAY PARK ASSOCIATION

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ORIGINAL DESIGN

1970 - 1976

looking north over Freeway Park, 1970s

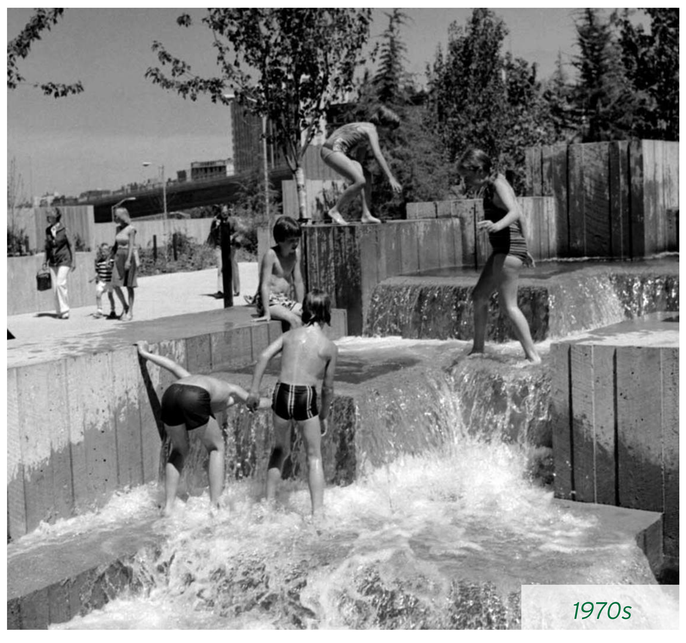
The park was designed to celebrate urban life and nature and create a new relationship between them.

Freeway Park is considered a ground breaking masterpiece of landscape architecture. It was the first park built over an interstate highway. Designed to be both an "exciting nature park" with an "adventurous atmosphere" and a respite from the city's traffic, smells, and noises, the park was created to mend the new freeway's scar on the city and reconnect people across it. It was the result of community activism, forward-thinking, and Seattle's civic process.

Did you know?

- Freeway Park is an iconic work of modernist landscape architecture by Lawrence Halprin & Associates. It has been nominated for the National Register of Historic Places and City of Seattle landmark status.
- At 5.2 acres, it is the largest public park in downtown Seattle.
- The waterfall helps to mask the noise of traffic below and surrounding the park.

1970s



1970s

1966 Downtown Seattle section of I-5 is completed

1968 Seattle voters pass "Forward Thrust" bonds that will fund a lid over the freeway

1970 Design begins

1976 Freeway Park opens

THE PARK TODAY

40 years of change have led to new challenges and opportunities.

Since it opened in 1976, the park has matured and evolved—so has the City around it. The trees and plantings have grown more than anticipated. The Convention Center was built and new buildings, public spaces and entrances were added on to the edges of the park. The park is now actively programmed with events and activities. Original park features are old and require repair.

Freeway Park Association (FPA)

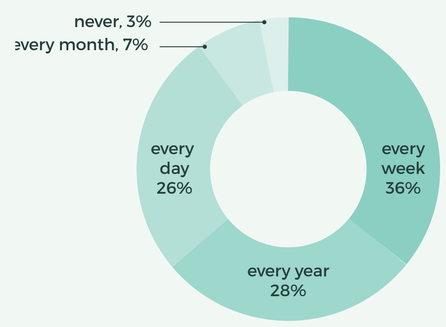
FPA was formed in 1993 and has built an enduring partnership with SPR to raise funds and awareness about Freeway Park and to advocate for the city's largest downtown public park as an essential space for community building. This model of public/private partnerships in urban public space management is growing in popularity and could signal a change for public parks as communities play a greater role in the stewardship of their places.

FPA's work includes advocacy, fundraising, partnership building, program design, activation, and community outreach.

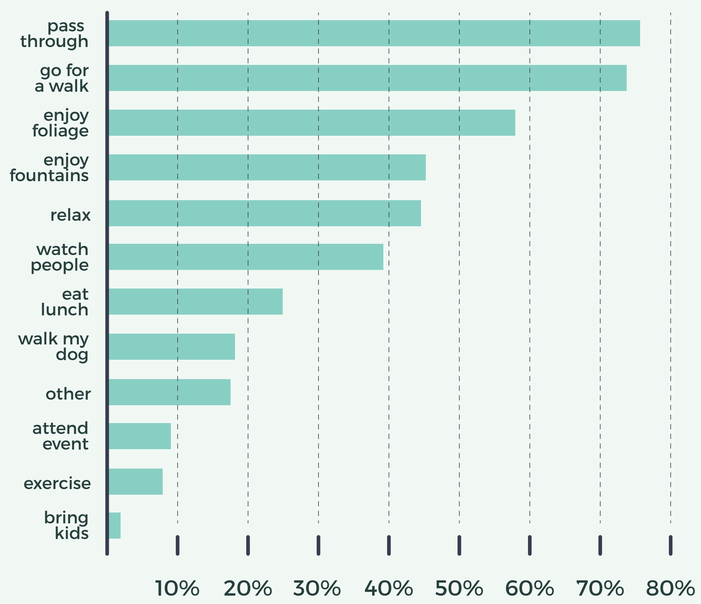
FPA's Programming & Activation Strategy layers 3 tiers of activation to provide a balance of passive and active opportunities: Daily Activations, Event Series, and Signature Events.

freewayparkassociation.org

How often do you visit the park?



What types of activities do you do in the park?



62 free special events

7,255 hours of activating the park

parkour destination

"dancing til dusk" event

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MOVING FORWARD

This project will build on the recommendations of the *Finding Freeway Park* project, a community based planning study led by the Freeway Park Association.

Messages from the Community

Community input for the *Finding Freeway Park* project was gathered several ways: 3 public meetings, directed outreach and interviews, online surveys, and on-site opportunities to provide feedback.

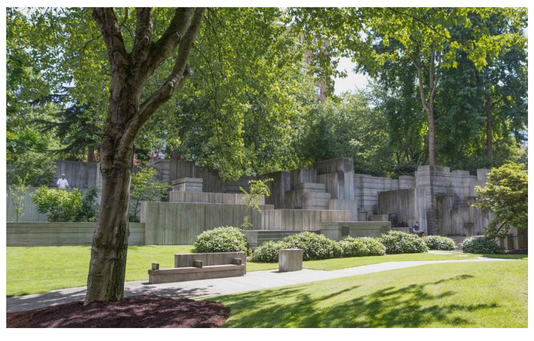
The following key messages emerged from the Finding Freeway Park project's outreach.

- We love the greenery, landscape, and variety of plants.
- We love the architecture and fountains.
- We want to see even more programming.
- We want functioning restrooms.
- We want more lighting and people in the park, so that it feels welcoming and safe all the time.
- We want more opportunities for recreation, play space for children and families, and art in the park.

How would you like to use the park?

as a **neighborhood park** for people of all ages, including children

as a **destination park** for programmed events and activities



as a **tranquil oasis**

DESIGN PROCESS

2019 - 2021

SCHEMATIC DESIGN	DESIGN DEVELOPMENT	CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTATION	PERMITTING & BID	CONSTRUCTION
Fall 2019	Winter - Spring 2020	Summer 2020 - Spring 2021	Spring - Fall 2021	Winter 2022 - Fall 2022

We are at the beginning of a two year process to study and design improvements to the park.

1. The project team is currently analyzing the park as it is today: What works well? What needs improvement? How can the park evolve to meet its potential?
2. We will develop preliminary design concepts that address the project's goals and park's needs, and gather input from the public, stakeholders, and City.
3. We will determine which improvements are most important and develop detailed design and restoration plans that meet the project's construction budget.
4. Once the project is approved and permitted, it will go to bid and construction.

Design review

- Seattle Parks & Recreation staff will oversee the design and technical documentation of the project.
- The Seattle Design Commission will review the design at the end of each phase.
- The park has been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

The work will comply with the *Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, as well as specific guidance for parks found in the *Secretary of Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.*

STAKEHOLDERS

The project team will meet regularly with an Advisory Group comprised of representatives of several stakeholders, including:

- Compass Housing Alliance
- Downtown Seattle Association
- First Hill Improvement Association
- Horizon House
- Lid I-5 Steering Committee
- Town Hall
- Visit Seattle
- Washington Holdings
- Washington State Convention Center
- Washington Department of Transportation

Additionally, the team may reach out to neighboring residents and businesses, people experiencing homelessness who use the park, childcare providers, Seattle Police Department, and others with a special interest in the park, to listen to their ideas and concerns.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The public will be able to provide input on preliminary design concepts at a public open house in October and online surveys posted on the project website. Check the website or join the project email group for periodic project updates at:

www.seattle.gov/parks/restorefreewaypark

Join us!

October 28, 6:30 pm, Town Hall

See and comment on preliminary design concepts and take part in a discussion with the design team and a panel of experts on the park's history and original design.

Go to **www.seattle.gov/parks/restorefreewaypark** for information.

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PARK MAP

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