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Local memorials honoring Dr. King

Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park

Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park is a four-and-a-half acre City of Seattle park on the east side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, [between South Walker and South Bayview Streets](#). The park is designed around a black granite 'mountain' - a dramatic, thirty-foot sculpture inspired by the civil rights leader's *"I've Been to the Mountaintop"* speech, made the day before he was assassinated in 1968.

The idea of the monument originated with Seattle resident Charlie James in 1983. The sculpture was designed by the late Robert Kelly, an instructor at Edmonds Community College. The project was realized through organizing and fundraising efforts by the Martin Luther King Memorial Committee, chaired by Herman McKinney. The memorial was dedicated Nov. 16, 1991.

The sculpture is a symbolic memorial to Dr. King, made of three segments which represent both the Christian Trinity and the union of the family. The sculpture rises from an elliptical reflecting pool, surrounded by a low wall and walkway. Around its edge, positioned as the hours on the face of a clock, twelve bronze plaques recall events in King's life: his birth, his winning of the Nobel Peace Prize, his assassination, and the creation of the national holiday in his honor.



Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park with view of the mountain sculpture and the city



Black granite mountain sculpture designed by Robert Kelly at Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park

Martin Luther King, Jr. Way

In 1983, the City of Seattle changed the name of Empire Way to Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, within the city limits. Later, the

name change was extended beyond the city limits through unincorporated King County along an additional four miles of SR 900. This thoroughfare extends southward from the intersection of East Madison Street and 28th Avenue East in Seattle, along an approximately eight mile stretch through the Central Area and Rainier Valley, to Renton, where it becomes Sunset Boulevard.

Throughout Seattle's history, the Central Area has constituted the heart of the African American community in Seattle and King County, and includes numerous historic and cultural sites.



Martin Luther King Jr. Way

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