



# Feet First Walk Library

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## Central District Parks Walking Tour

### Description

This short walk through the Central District highlights a handful of the area's many parks. Although this walk contains a few hills, there are many places along the route to relax, including coffee shops, restaurants, and seating areas within parks. This route is a great choice for children as it meanders through multiple play areas that are accessible to a range of age groups. If you wish to visit more than just a few play areas, there are two possible side trips to other local playgrounds. On a clear day, both the Cascade Mountains and downtown Seattle are visible on the first section of the walk.

**Start at:** TT Minor Park and Playground, 17th Avenue and E Pike Street

**How to get there:** Accessible by Metro bus routes 2, 11, and 12. Plan your trip at the Metro trip planner: [tripplanner.kingcounty.gov](http://tripplanner.kingcounty.gov)

**Length:** Without side trips: 1.53 mile; with both side trips: 1.97 miles

**Estimated Time:** 60 minutes

**Difficulty:** Moderate, somewhat hilly

**Services:** Restrooms located at Garfield Playfield and Powell Barnett Park

**Restrictions:** Not ADA accessible

**Points of Interest:** TT Minor Playground, Temple de Hirsch Sinai, Immaculate Conception Church, Immaculate Conception P-Patch, Garfield High School, Garfield Community Center, Horace Mann Building, Alleycat Acres, Nora's Woods, Powell Barnett Park





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### Directions

**1. The route begins at TT Minor playfield and playground.**

This park was created as part of the “Grey to Green Initiative,” and is adjacent to what used to be TT Minor School and is now Hamlin Robinson School, a non-profit school for elementary and middle school students with language problems. The playground was created just a few years ago and features many fun and unique structures, as well as benches and drinking fountains. To the west there is a nice view of downtown Seattle as well as the Temple de Hirsch Sinai, which is the largest Reform Jewish congregation in the Pacific Northwest.

**2. Take the south exit onto Union Street, and then a left to reach 18th Avenue and Union Street.**

At this intersection be sure to look to the east and see the beautiful view of the Cascade Mountains. To the left, on 18th Avenue, there are some interesting independent businesses including Gallery 1412, Tougo Coffee, and New City Theater.

**3. Take a right on 18th Avenue and head south, if you are interested in exploring an extra park and play area, take a right on Spring Street and go down the hill three blocks to Spring and 15th Avenue.**

You will find Spring Street Mini Park with a play area geared towards younger children, drinking fountains, benches, and picnic tables. If you chose this route, you can continue south on 15th Avenue and take a left on Marion to reach Immaculate Conception Church.

**4. If you do not choose to visit Spring Street Mini Park, continue south on 18th Avenue to Marion Street, where you will see Immaculate Conception Church.**

Along the way, notice the beautiful and eclectic architecture; the Central District is home to some of the city’s oldest houses. Immaculate Conception was built in 1904 and is the oldest Catholic Church in Seattle.



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- 5. Continue down 18th Avenue and you will find the Immaculate Conception P-Patch, the stairs are located on the left, right past the Lake Washington Girls School.**

The P-Patch was created by neighborhood local, John Jeannot, and acts as a garden space for many community members who live in apartments and do not have access to a garden.

- 6. Further down 18th Avenue you will find the Firehouse Mini Park.**

This park is located next to an old historic fire station, and has lots of firehouse-themed structures including a fire truck! There is also a large picnic area, benches, and a drinking fountain. The Firehouse was constructed in 1909 and used only horses for about the first decade, it is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

- 7. Once you reach Cherry Avenue, take a right and go east down the hill. In front of you is James Tower, which was home to the first hospital in Seattle.**

It was founded in 1877 by the Sisters of Providence and is now a part of Swedish Medical Center. The hill is quite steep, so watch your step. This street has some very beautiful architectural features, including a colorful, painted garage between 19th and 20th Avenue and an old, Victorian house on the corner of 22nd Avenue and Cherry Street.

- 8. At the intersection of 23rd Avenue and Cherry, there are a few points of interest.**

On the left is Coyote Central, an organization that provides arts courses for teens taught by professionals in the community, and on the right is Garfield High School and Community Center. Both Jimi Hendrix and Quincy Jones attended Garfield High School. There are restrooms at Garfield Playfield on your right as you continue down Cherry Street.

- 9. Continue down Cherry and on your left will be the Horace Mann Building.**

This historic building is over 100 years old and now houses the Seattle Amistad School, an English and Spanish immersion school for elementary school students who are native speakers of either language. As you walk by, you will see a large mural and a copper sculpture of a flower.

- 10. Take a left on 25th Avenue. On your left is a building that was built as a Jewish day school but most recently housed the Seattle Islamic School, a private, Islamic Montessori school for 32 years that closed in 2012.**





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- 11. Take a right on E Columbia Street and continue until you reach MLK Way, keep an eye out for more interesting houses. Once you reach MLK Way, cross the street and walk a little to the right until you reach the P-Patch next to the Spiritual Israel Church.**

This garden is run by Alleycat Acres, a local organization that describes themselves as a “grassroots urban farming collective.” The focal point of this urban farm is the “sproket garden,” which is shaped like a bike wheel. In addition to a variety of vegetables and other edible plants, there is a chicken coop! Enter the garden and walk around, then exit through the back, into the alley.

- 12. Head towards the left (north) for a few dozen feet then get back onto E Columbia Street and go to the right to E Columbia Street and 29th Avenue.**

On the left (north) side of the street is a house with a large, beautiful sculpture garden that pours onto the sidewalk and has a bench built into its side. On the nearby lawn is a “Little Free Library,” a nation-wide project to spread literacy through building mini, community-based, lending libraries where people can take and leave books.

- 13. On the opposite side of the street is Nora’s Woods, a charming urban green space that occupies a small plot of land but contains walking paths, seating areas, and a diverse array of labeled flora.**

The park is named after Nora Wood, an active community member who purchased this plot of land in 1987, it was later converted into a public space by her family, community organizations, and the City of Seattle to help represent the native plants of the region.

- 14. Once you are done exploring Nora’s Woods, head to the left (south) on 29th Avenue and take a right on Cherry Street.**

On 29th Avenue, about halfway through the first block, if you look up the hill to the right you will be able to see Immaculate Conception Church.



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**15. Once you reach Cherry Street, walk back to Cherry Street and MLK Way. On the opposite side of the intersection is Gerber Park.**

This is a small, grassy plot that acts to brighten this chaotic intersection with its eight mosaic structures called “urban totems,” that were created by local children in 2002. The park pays homage Sidney Gerber, a Seattle businessman and art collector who died in the 1960s. If you are looking for a spot to sit and rest, there is a bench a little further along MLK Way.

**16. At this point you can either choose to end the walk and hop on a number 3, 8, or 84 bus (or walk to 23rd Avenue to catch the 48), head one block south on MLK Way to reach Powell Barnett Park, or stop in one of the great, local restaurants.**

Powell Barnett Park is a great stop for anyone walking with children, for there are excellent play structures, basketball courts, a huge playfield, picnic tables, grills, and restrooms. Here is some information about the nearby restaurants:

- Catfish Corner, E Cherry Street & MLK Way
- BBQ Pit, E Cherry Street between 25th Ave & 26th Ave
- Ezell's Chicken, 23rd Ave between E Jefferson St & E James St
- Ras Dashen, E Cherry Street between 28th Ave & 29th Ave



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