



Compiled by The Seattle Times Company Strategic Research Department

JANUARY 2012



MARKET HIGHLIGHTS

- + Labor Market: King County unemployment rate falls to 7.6 percent
- Retail Market: Nordstrom Rack opens at new downtown Seattle location in March
- * Regional Development: UW, Seattle Children's hospital plan to build employee housing
- Travel: Seattle residents can save \$12,000 a year by using public transit
- Economy: Taxable retail sales rise in Washington State
- Real Estate Market: Office buildings filling up, rents increasing

Area Stores Opening

- Wal-Mart's second store in Bellevue to be in Factoria
- Room & Board will replace Barnes & Noble at U-Village (Seattle)

Area Stores Moving/Renovation/other

Nordstrom Rack moves to a new downtown Seattle location March 15

Area Stores Closing

- Toys R Us closing Northgate store (Seattle)
- Paper Zone closing stores, liquidating (Seattle, Shoreline, Bellevue, Tukwila)

Seattle second-best for office building-investment in 2012: Seattle will be among the top five markets nationally for investment in office and retail properties over the next five years, according to a new national report by real estate firm Grubb & Ellis is predicting a "continued sluggish recovery" for commercial real estate in 2012, with gradual improvement in leasing and sales of commercial properties. The growth of high-tech and biotech companies put Seattle second only to San Francisco among the U.S. markets predicted to be best for investment in office buildings.

Source: Puget Sound Business Journal, January 4, 2012

http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/morning_call/2012/01/seattle-second-best-for-office.html?ana=e_sea_rdup

Seattle ranks fourth in the U.S. in online giving: When it came to online giving, Seattle was the country's fourth most generous city in 2010, according to a report by Convio, an online software fundraising vendor. The next few days may have the biggest impact on Seattle's ranking for 2011. Local nonprofits count on last-minute giving at this time of year, because 22 percent of all online charitable gifts are made on Dec. 30 and 31, according to a seven-year study of online giving by Network for Good. Source: Puget Sound Business Journal, December 29, 2011

http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/news/2011/12/29/seattle-ranks-fourth-in-the-us-in.html?ed=2011-12-29&s=article_du&ana=e_du_pub

The U.S. Economy – Regions to Watch in 2012: 5. The Pacific Northwest. This is one blue region in the country with excellent prospects. For one thing, both Washington and Oregon enjoy considerable in-migration, in sharp contrast to New York, California and Illinois. They also have a more varied economy than Silicon Valley, with strong companies connected to retail (Amazon, Costco and Starbucks), aerospace (Boeing) and software (Microsoft).

Source: newgeography.com, January 4, 2012

The Best Run Cities in America: Seattle is ranked the 7th best city in America. Among the best-run cities, Seattle is easily the largest, with over 180,000 people more than the next largest city on our list. A large population often hinders a city's ability to manage resources well because it can create a higher cost of governance and more complicated logistics. Nevertheless, Seattle is one of the healthiest large cities in the U.S., with a poverty rate smaller than cities on our list with populations a third the size. *Source:* 247wallst.com, *January 5*, 2012 http://247wallst.com/2012/01/05/best-and-worst-run-cities-in-america/2/





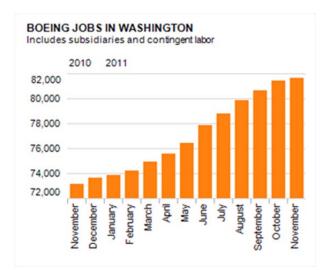
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LABOR MARKET





- King County unemployment rate falls to 7.6 percent: King County's unemployment rate dropped to 7.6 percent in November from a revised 8.0 percent in October, the state Employment Security Department reported Tuesday. Snohomish County saw its unemployment rate shrink by a smaller amount, falling to 8.6 percent from the prior month's revised level of 8.8 percent. Source: The Seattle Times, December 20, 2011 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017057592_countyjobless21.html
- Washington State's minimum wage rises 37 cents on Sunday: Washington State's minimum wage rises 37 cents an hour on Sunday, increasing to \$9.04 per hour. <u>The Associated Press reports</u> Washington state's minimum wage will be the highest state minimum wage in the country, but San Francisco will have the country's highest minimum wage, \$10.24 an hour, on Sunday. <u>Source: Puget Sound Business Journal, December 28, 2011</u> http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/morning_call/2011/12/washington-states-minimum-wage-rises.html?ana=e_sea_rdup
- Wichita closure to bring 100 Boeing jobs here: Kansas employees and politicians fumed Wednesday at Boeing's decision to close its defense plant in Wichita. And the move didn't meet expectations here, delivering fewer jobs in the Puget Sound region than anticipated when rumors of the closure first surfaced in November.
 Source: The Seattle Times, January 4, 2011 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/boeingaerospace/2017157214_wichita05.html
- Boeing fetes Renton workers for higher 737 output: Boeing 737 Vice President Beverly Wyse says Renton alone will add 600 or 700 workers this year and again next year. Boeing organized a party for its Renton plant employees Tuesday, celebrating their boosting of the 737 production rate to an unprecedented 35 jets every 20 work days.
 Source: The Seattle Times, January 11, 2012 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017205845_boeing11.html
- eBay expanding in Redmond: <u>eBay Inc.</u> is expected to double its presence at its Redmond office, jumping from 75 employees to 150. <u>The Wall Street Journal's All Things D reports</u> that eBay is looking to hire developers, testers, researchers, data miners and other positions at its Eastside location, just a few miles away from <u>Microsoft Corp.'s Redmond headquarters</u>. <u>Source: Puget Sound Business Journal, January 12, 2012 http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/morning_call/2012/01/ebay-expanding-in-redmond.html?ana=e_sea_rdup</u>
- Home Depot hiring up to 800 in Seattle: Home Depot will hire about 800 employees in the Seattle area as the hardware chain giant looks to hire 70,000 seasonal employees across the country. KOMO-TV reports Home Depot says up to 50 percent of seasonal employees are likely to remain in permanent positions as cashiers, sales associates, lot associates and garden associates. Source: Puget Sound Business Journal, January 13, 2012

 http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/morning_call/2012/01/home-depot-hiring-up-to-800-in-seattle.html?ana=e_sea_rdup



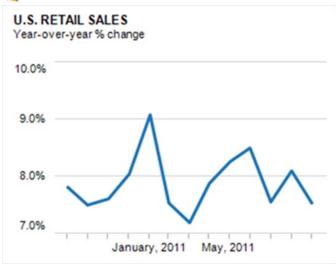


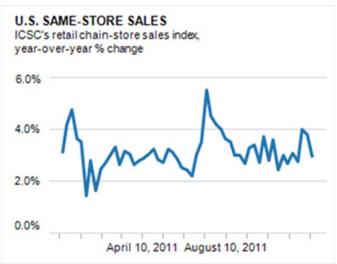
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RETAIL MARKET





- ◆ Nordstrom Rack opens at new downtown Seattle location March 15, 2012: Seattle-based Nordstrom has set March 15 as the opening date for its new downtown Rack store at Westlake Center. As previously announced, Nordstrom Rack will move from its longtime location in the Broadacres building at Second Avenue and Pine Street to Westlake Center, where it will occupy the underground level and some additional space for a street-level entrance.

 Source: The Seattle Times, December 28, 2011 (see figure A, map page 9)

 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017113518 bdignordstrom29.html
- ◆ Toys R Us closing Northgate store: New Jersey-based Toys R Us plans to close its Northgate store in Seattle at the end of January. Corporate spokeswoman Meghan Kennedy said the closure coincides with the end of the store's "lease term," also in late January. She said Toys R Us continues to look for nearby locations and will work to place as many employees as possible at other Seattle-area stores. *Source:* The Seattle Times, December 28, 2011 (See figure B, map page 9) http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017113322_bdigtoysrus29.html
- Paper Zone closing stores, liquidating: After more than 30 years of selling paper in the Northwest, Paper Zone plans to close all eight of its locations in Washington and Oregon as soon as they are liquidated. "Unfortunately, the business is losing money, so it's not sustainable," said Christina Waterhouse, regional manager in charge of all the stores. There are four stores in our area Seattle, Bellevue, Shoreline, Tukwila. (See figure C, map page 9)

 Source: The Seattle Times, December 29, 2011 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017121267_paperzone30.html
- Wal-Mart's second store in Bellevue to be in Factoria: Wal-Mart Stores announced Wednesday it plans to open a 76,000-square-foot store in Bellevue's Marketplace @ Factoria next year just five days after announcing it would open a 64-000-square-foot grocery in Bellevue's Kelsey Creek Center this year. The two new stores will be about four miles apart. Source: The Seattle Times, January 12, 2012 (See figure D, map page 9)

miles apart. Source: The Seattle Times, January 12, 2012 (See figure D, map page 9 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017216301_walmart12m.html

** Room & Board will replace Barnes & Noble at U-Village: Room & Board, a Midwest home-furnishings chain with 11 stores across the country, will replace Barnes & Noble at University Village in Seattle. Barnes & Noble recently closed its store at U-Village after 16 years as the shopping center's largest retail tenant, disappointing many customers who had come to regard it as a community gathering spot. Room & Board, of Golden Valley, Minn., will take 27,000 square feet on the second floor, or a little more than half of the space formerly occupied by Barnes & Noble. (See figure Ε, map page 9) Source: The Seattle Times, January 12, 2012 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017221285_uvillage13.html





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REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Regional transportation, growth management and economic development planning

- Sprint to upgrade 176 Washington state cell phone towers: Sprint Nextel Corp. has announced upgrades for dozens of its cell sites in the Seattle area, and the company is planning more upgrades in the next three months. TechFlash reports the 89 upgrades completed in the past 90 days increased capacity for 3G service, the company said in a statement. Sprint does have some 4G coverage in Washington, mostly between Everett and Tacoma along the I-5 corridor. In the next 90 days, Sprint is planning an additional 87 upgrades. The Sprint network covers users of Sprint, Nextel, <u>Boost Mobile</u> and <u>Virgin Mobile USA</u>. <u>Source:</u> Puget Sound Business Journ http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/morning call/2011/12/sprint-to-upgrade-176-washington-state.html?ana=e_sea_rdup Puget Sound Business Journal, December 23, 2011
- UW, Seattle Children's hospital plan to build employee housing: Two big Seattle employers are partnering with a developer to build something this region probably hasn't seen since the days of the "company town" a century or more ago: housing for their workers. Seattle Children's hospital and the University of Washington have proposed a 184-unit apartment complex in the University District at which their employees would have priority (See figure F, map page 9) Source: The Seattle Times, December 20, 2011 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017058160_childrens21.html
- Regence sells Seattle HQ building for \$76M: Regence Blue Shield has sold its 15-story Denny Triangle headquarters building for \$76.5 million and will lease back about 30 percent of the office space, brokers representing the health insurer said Tuesday. The new owner is a joint venture of Prudential Real Estate Investors and Talon Private Capital of Kirkland, a two-year-old real-estate investment company. Source: The Seattle Times, December 20, 2011 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017057644_regence21.html (See figure G, map page 9)
- Equity Residential buys W. Seattle Junction parcel: Equity Residential, the country's largest publicly traded apartment owner, has bought property in the heart of the West Seattle Junction where a 196-unit complex was approved earlier this year, property records show. Equity paid \$11.4 million this week for the site, more than an acre on Southwest Alaska Street between California Avenue Southwest and 42nd Avenue Southwest. It's now occupied by two aging retail buildings. Source: The Seattle Times, December 22, 2011 (see figure H, map page 9) http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017075323_junction23.html
- Eighty apartments for homeless adults to start soon in Ballard: Compass Housing Alliance will begin construction in February on 80 studio apartments for homeless adults in Ballard. The seven-story complex on NW 56th Street will be named Nyer Urness House after a deceased Compass Housing chaplain. Weinstein A|U designed the project and Walsh Construction will build it. The Ballard complex will have offices for outreach workers and Compass employees on the first floor and a medical clinic operated by Neighborcare Health along with Compass offices on the second. Above will be the apartments, offices for case managers and a rooftop deck and garden. Source: Daily Journal of Commerce, December 20, 2011 http://www.djc.com/news/re/12036271.html (See figure I, map page 9)
- City Council passes West Seattle Triangle rezoning: A unanimous vote from Seattle's City Council approved rezoning changes for West Seattle's Triangle on Dec. 19, leading the way for new developments and streetscapes to transform the area confined by Fauntleroy Ave to the northwest, 35th Ave to the east and Alaska St. to the south Source: westseattleherald.com, December 19, 2011 (See figure J, map page 9) http://www.westseattleherald.com/2011/12/19/news/city-council-passes-west-seattle-triangle-rezonin





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- Northgate 'Skate Spot' Bids Soon: The Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation is building a new "skate spot" at Northgate's Hubbard Homestead Park and will advertise for a contractor early next year. The site was one of the region's first park and rides, built in the 1950s. Before that, it was an urban farmstead for the Hubbard family, with an orchard, chicken coop, and a spring. The park's property is larger than two football fields, and has walking circuits, open space, and a half basketball court. Source: Daily Journal of Commerce, December 23, 2011 (See figure K, map page 9) http://www.dic.com/news/co/12036393.html
- Equity Residential buys Lake Union parcel: Equity Residential, the country's largest apartment owner, paid \$12.15 million this week for a half-block site in South Lake Union where it already has proposed a 275-unit complex. The bulk of the site, mostly parking lots on Minor Avenue North between John and Thomas streets, was owned by Seattle developer Touchstone, which acquired it in 2010 from Cascade Natural Gas. Touchstone still owns the building on the other half of the block, facing Fairview Avenue North that had been Cascade's headquarters. (See figure L, map page 9)
 Source: The Seattle Times, January 4, 2011 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017162143_minorapts05.html
- Bothell shopping center sold for \$35M: A California-based real estate firm has paid \$35 million for a shopping center in Bothell. Terramar Retail Centers LLC of Carlsbad, Calif., has purchased Canyon Park Place, a 130,786-square-foot neighborhood retail center located at the intersection of 228th Street and the Bothell-Everett Highway. The shopping center is anchored by a QFC grocery and a Bartell's drugstore. It is the sixth grocery-anchored retail center in the Pacific Northwest in Terramar's portfolio. The seller was a family-owned investment firm that was advised by broker Terry Moss of Commercial Realty Inc. Source: Puget Sound Business Journal, January 4, 2011 (see figure M, map page 9) http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/blog/2012/01/bothell-shopping-center-sold-for-35m.html?ed=2012-01-05&s=article_du&ana=e_du_pub
- Bullitt rebuilding Capitol Hill Park: The Bullitt Foundation is constructing Seattle's first commercial living building on Capitol Hill across from a small park called McGilvra Place Park, which the foundation will help to rebuild. Bullitt will be responsible for long term maintenance of the park. It is also seeking other funds in a partnership with the Seattle Parks Foundation for extra site furniture, public art, and education. Source: Daily Journal of Commerce, January 9, 2012 http://www.djc.com/news/re/12036784.html (See figure N, map page 9)
- Planners approve Greenwood apartment complex: A proposed 263-unit apartment complex on the site of the demolished Leilani Lanes bowling alley in Greenwood won city planners' approval Tuesday. The three-building complex, on Greenwood Avenue North between North 102nd and 103rd streets, would include underground parking for 212 vehicles and 4,000 square feet of retail space. Goodman Real Estate, one of Seattle's biggest apartment operators, is the developer. Source: The Seattle Times, January 17. 2012 (See figure 0, map page 9) http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017263057_leilani18.html
- Renovation of Western Building set to start this spring: The Western Building at 619 Western Avenue is getting ready to start a structural rehab this spring, and the work is expected to cost less than the initial estimates. Project architect Ron Wright of Ron Wright & Associates said the first phase of structural work is likely to cost between \$4 million and \$6 million. Last summer, representatives from the Washington State Department of Transportation estimated the cost at between \$15 million and \$20 million. Source: Daily Journal of Commerce, January 18, 2012 http://www.djc.com/news/co/12037095.html (See figure P, map page 9)

Seattle Media Maven



Understanding the Seattle Market and the Media That Deliver It!



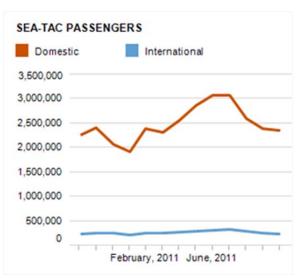


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TRAVFI MARKET





- Seattle residents can save \$12,000 a year by using public transit: Seattle residents can save an average of nearly \$12,000 a year by commuting via mass transit rather than by car, according to a report from the American Public Transportation Association. That makes Seattle the fourth-highest city in the nation in terms of savings. The figures are based on a two-person household living with one less car and buying a monthly transit pass.

 Source: Puget Sound Business Journal, December 20, 2011
 - http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/news/2011/12/20/report-seattle-residents-can-save.html?ed=2011-12-20&s=article_du&ana=e_du_pub_
- Will Greyhound find a new home at King Street? Greyhound is on the hunt for a new bus station after it received notice this fall that it will be evicted from its location at 811 Stewart St., where it has been located since 1928. The property owners there are making way for redevelopment. The bus company has until April 2013 to find a new home. Source: Puget Sound Business Journal, December 22, 2011

http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/news/2011/12/22/will-greyhound-find-a-new-home-at-king.html?ed=2011-12-22&s=article_du&ana=e_du_pub

All Nippon to serve Seattle with 787: Seattle will see the new Boeing 787 serving the area where it was designed and assembled. All Nippon Airways announced Wednesday in Tokyo it would begin nonstop service to the West Coast in fiscal 2012 from Narita airport to Sea-Tac Airport. ANA also will serve San Jose.
Source: The Seattle Times, December 21, 2011

http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017059024_apusboeing787seatac.html

Alaska Airlines No. 1 in annual performance analysis: Seattle-based <u>Alaska Airlines</u> finished on top in an analysis of operational data from Portland-based FlightStats.com and the <u>U.S. Department of Transportation</u>. The domestic airline analysis appears in The <u>Wall Street Journal</u> 's annual <u>"Middle Seat"</u> scorecard.
Source: Puget Sound Business Journal, January 6, 2012

Source: Puget Sourid Business Journal, January 6, 2012

http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/news/2012/01/06/alaska-airlines-no-1-in-annual.html?ed=2012-01-06&s=article_du&ana=e_du_pub

Alaska Airlines receives Air Transport World industry service award: <u>Alaska Airlines</u> has won an industry service award from Air Transport World magazine – the only North American airline to be honored by the magazine and the first U.S. carrier to win the service award. The award honors the Seattle-based airline for its public and community service, and it comes as part of the magazine's 38th Airline Industry Achievement Awards.

Source: Puget Sound Business Journal, January 10, 2012

http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/news/2012/01/10/alaska-airlines-receives-air-transport.html?ed=2012-01-10&s=article_du&ana=e_du_pub





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ECONOMY





- Region's economy shows signs of strength amid the weakness: Economist and forecaster Dick Conway, who has spent three decades tracking the national and local economies, doesn't mince words when asked about the state of the nation. "The economy is just a mess, and some people say it'll be a mess for another five years," Conway said. "I tend to be a little more optimistic, but so much depends on politics." That mess, unfortunately, is helping to hold back recovery here, and 2012 isn't likely to be much better than 2011. Source: The Seattle Times, December 27, 2011 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017105273 econoutlook28.html
- Seattle area bankruptcies decline 28.7 percent: Commercial bankruptcies filed in Seattle fell significantly in the first 11 months of 2011, dropping by nearly 30 percent from the same period the year before. "If you've made it through the past three years, you've probably weathered the storm," said Larry Feinstein, a Seattle bankruptcy lawyer with Vortman & Feinstein. Source: Puget Sound Business Journal, January 6, 2011
 http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/print-edition/2012/01/06/seattle-area-bankruptcies-decline-287.html?ana=e_ph
- Taxable retail sales rise in Washington State: As Washington state government explores tough cuts to education and other services due to a \$1.5 billion budget shortfall, there is a glimmer of good news: Taxable sales in the state are rising. Taxable retail sales in Washington State rose to \$27.3 billion in the third quarter of 2011, up 3.2 percent over a year earlier. Puget Sound Business Journal, January 6, 2012
 http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/news/2012/01/06/taxable-retail-sales-rise-in.html?ed=2012-01-06&s=article_du&ana=e_du_pub
- Seattle annual manufacturing payroll: \$8.3 billion: Seattle, with an annual manufacturing payroll of more than \$8.3 billion, was one of 19 U.S. markets that had manufacturing payrolls in excess of \$5 billion as of 2009, topped by Los Angeles at \$29.3 billion. According to data analyzed by American City Business Journals research division On Numbers, the Seattle/Tacoma/Bellevue area had 143,882 manufacturing workers who earned an average of \$58,000 per year. Source: Puget Sound Business Journal, January 12, 2012
 http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/morning call/2012/01/seattle-annual-manufacturing-payroll.html?ana=e_sea_rdup
- County gets \$800,000 for aerospace worker training: King County has secured \$800,000 in new federal grant money to train workers seeking jobs in aerospace manufacturing. The money will be disbursed to local community and technical colleges starting this spring quarter, for classes that train manufacturing technicians and airframe mechanics in aerospace manufacturing skills such as assembly and machining. Source: The Seattle Times, January 12, 2012 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017225133_aerospace13.html



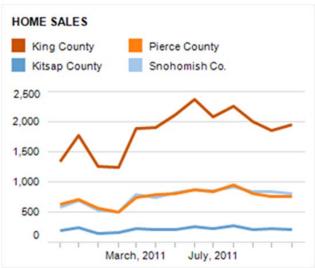


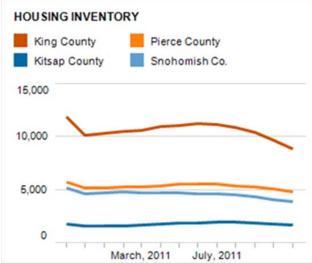
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REAL ESTATE MARKET





- Home prices keep falling in Seattle, October index shows: Any momentum that the beleaguered Seattle housing market might have built up over the summer seems to have evaporated, according to a closely watched index of home prices. The Standard & Poor's/Case-Shiller index, released Tuesday, showed that prices in Seattle slipped an additional 1 percent in October from September, bringing the local index back down to where it was this spring. The October decline was the third in a row for the Seattle index, which has dropped 6.2 percent from October 2010 to October 2011 and now stands close to its low point for the current slump. Source: The Seattle Times, December 27, 2011 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017102535 homeprices28.html
- King County median home price falls by double digits again: That's what the Seattle-area real-estate market looked like in December, according to statistics released Wednesday by the Northwest Multiple Listing Service. The picture hasn't changed much since October. Analysts say that's when "distressed properties" bank-repossessed homes and short sales began to influence the market as never before. They account for about one-third of all sales now, by most estimates. They're pushing prices down: The median price of houses sold in King County in December was \$320,000, down 13.5 percent from December 2010, according to the listing service.
 Source: The Seattle Times, January 4, 2011 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017157899 homesales05.html
- Office buildings filling up, rents increasing: With the exception of <u>Amazon.com</u>'s South Lake Union headquarters complex, it's been about four years since a developer broke ground on a big new office building in downtown Seattle or downtown Bellevue. But office vacancy rates are falling and rents are edging up again, according to fourth-quarter reports from several brokerages. Those trends have analysts talking once again about when and where some developer might pull the trigger on the next big new project. Source: The Seattle Times, January 13, 2012 http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2017234515 office14.html
- Bellevue and Seattle Area Real Estate Trends 2011 Year in Review: 2011 Looks to have gone down as a year of progress and transition for the Seattle and Bellevue estate market; many positive developments have occurred, yet there will still be some lingering issues to work through. On the positive side of things is that buyer demand has stayed consistently strong relative to supply, which has lent a hand in stabilizing home values. In Bellevue, for example, single family home sales grew again in 2011 and outpaced 2010 by 5.5%.

Source: prosperarealestate.com, January 9, 2012 http://www.prosperarealestate.com/myblog



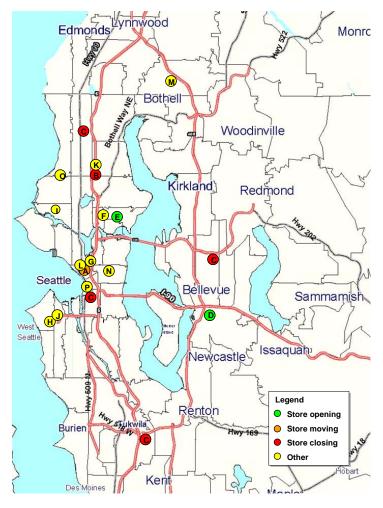


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- F) UW, Seattle Children's Hospital to build employee housing
- G) Regence sells Seattle HQ building for \$76M
- H) Equity Residential buys West Seattle Junction parcel
- I) Eighty Apartments for homeless adults to start in Ballard
- J) City Council passes West Seattle Triangle rezoning
- K) Northgate 'Skate Spot' bids soon
- L) Equity residential buy Lake Union parcel
- M) Bothell shopping center sold for \$35M
- N) Bullitt rebuilding Capitol Hill Park
- O) Planners approve Greenwood apartment complex
- P) Renovation of Western Building set to start this Spring

Note: All articles have been sourced; however, they are edited for brevity. Most articles are linked online, and all articles are available on request.

