



Seattle Center

Economic Impact Analysis

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Prepared by:





*Community Attributes Inc. tells data-rich stories about communities
that are important to decision makers.*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Seattle Center is one of the most active, recognizable, and economically vibrant civic spaces in the Pacific Northwest. The campus ecosystem is home to more than 30 cultural, educational, and entertainment organizations, anchored by assets such as the Space Needle, Climate Pledge Arena, Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, the Museum of Pop Culture (MOPOP), and the Seattle Center Armory. Collectively, these venues attracted nearly **12 million visitors in 2024**, generating nearly **\$3.3 billion dollars in economic activity** through ticket sales, tourism spending, jobs, and wages.

Seattle Center has been the cultural gathering place for the greater Seattle region for decades, hosting a diverse range of events and attractions. Artistic programming thrives through organizations like Pacific Northwest Ballet and Seattle Opera performances at McCaw Hall. Sports and large-scale entertainment draw regional and national audiences, led by the Seattle Kraken at Climate Pledge Arena alongside concerts and touring shows. Seattle Center itself produces and hosts programs and events in its campus facilities that alone attracted more than one million visitors in 2024. Museums and educational attractions, including the Museum of Pop Culture (MOPOP) and the Pacific Science Center, serve families, students, and curious visitors year-round. Festivals, cultural celebrations, and community events reinforce Seattle Center's role as a place where the region comes together across generations, backgrounds, and interests.

Seattle Center's impact extends well beyond its campus into the surrounding Uptown neighborhood, the northern portions of Downtown, and citywide, creating a relationship between campus activity and local vitality. Restaurants, hotels, retail businesses, and housing benefit from consistent foot traffic generated by events and daily visitors. The Seattle Center Monorail strengthens this connection by directly linking the campus to Downtown Seattle. Together, the campus and the surrounding neighborhoods function as a cohesive urban ecosystem in which Seattle Center visitors **spent nearly \$1.5 billion in 2024**.

Seattle Center represents one of the largest concentrations of cultural, entertainment, and civic activity in the Pacific Northwest. In 2024 alone, the campus ecosystem generated nearly **\$3.3 billion in economic output, supported 19,400 jobs, nearly \$1.1 billion in labor income, and contributed more than \$37 million in local tax revenues**.

As Seattle prepares for major global moments such as FIFA World Cup 2026™, possible return of NBA's Seattle Sonics and continued growth in arts, sports, and innovation sectors, strategic investment in Seattle Center's infrastructure and campus modernization presents a high-leverage opportunity. Strengthening Seattle Center strengthens Seattle's competitiveness as a destination city and reinforces its role as a cultural heart of the Pacific Northwest.

CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Who's Included in This Economic Impact Analysis	3
Seattle Center Campus Visitation & Activities	7
Seattle Center Economic & Fiscal Impacts	14
Conclusion	20
Technical Appendix	21

INTRODUCTION

Background & Purpose

Seattle Center is a 74-acre civic, arts, and cultural gathering place in the heart of Seattle and home to more than 30 partner organizations, including Climate Pledge Arena, KEXP, MOPOP, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Seattle Opera, Pacific Science Center, Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF), and many others. Anchored by world-class attractions, historic venues, public art, and a dynamic calendar of free and affordable events centered around the iconic International Fountain, Seattle Center serves residents and visitors of all ages year-round.

As a department of the City of Seattle and anchor of the Uptown Arts and Cultural District, Seattle Center is an inclusive destination where community comes together through arts, culture, and public life—serving residents from across Seattle and the Puget Sound region alongside visitors from around the world. In partnership with Friends of Waterfront Park, Seattle Center also provides operations, maintenance, and public safety services for Waterfront Park¹, while Friends leads park experience, programming, and stewardship along Seattle’s downtown waterfront.

Seattle Center and its campus partners generate a meaningful regional economic impact. Its venues attract millions of visitors annually, supporting jobs in tourism, hospitality, entertainment, and retail. Major events, festivals, and concerts draw spending to local businesses, and Climate Pledge Arena anchors a thriving sports and touring entertainment sector. Seattle Center’s ability to host large-scale gatherings contributes to Seattle’s competitiveness as a destination city and helps sustain economic activity and vibrancy. Through its cultural offerings, community functions, and economic contributions, Seattle Center is an asset to both the city and the broader Pacific Northwest region.

This report presents an analysis of Seattle Center’s economic and fiscal benefits to King County and as a result, the State of Washington.

Methods

In support of Seattle Center’s Strategic Vision and 10-Year Action Plan (June 2025), data provided by Seattle Center on employment, revenues, wages, attendance and other indicators are analyzed herein to offer a clear picture of Seattle Center’s direct economic activities within the region. Additional data sources are leveraged

¹ Please note, the visitation and economic impacts presented in this report reflect activity occurring on the 74-acre Seattle Center campus and do not include Waterfront Park.

as necessary, including a business survey, data from state and federal agencies, and existing research on tourism and visitor spending.

This report examines the economic impacts of Seattle Center as a City department and of the Seattle Center campus as a whole, capturing direct, indirect, and induced impacts generated by operations and visitor spending. Each impact is presented as the total jobs, business revenues, and labor income supported by each impact type.

In general terms, each impact type is summarized below:

- **Direct impacts** related to an organization’s operations represent the activity directly conducted or undertaken by the organization (direct revenues, expenditures, wages, and more), including all businesses, organizations, and events on campus. Visitor spending direct impacts represent the impact generated by visitors spending on lodging, food, beverage, and more off campus before and after their visit to Seattle Center.
- **Indirect impacts** refer to the additional economic activity generated by supply chain and business-to-business purchases supported by the operation or visitor spending associated with an organization.
- **Induced Impacts** represent the additional business revenues, jobs, and labor income generated by the spending of wages by the direct and indirect jobs supported by an organization and its activities.

Additionally, the report presents local fiscal impacts, including applicable tax revenues derived from Seattle Center and its campus organizations and activities.

Organization of the Report

The remainder of this report is organized as follows:

- **Who’s Included in This Economic Impact Analysis.** An overview of the multi-sector civic campus ecosystem that comprises Seattle Center and was analyzed in this study.
- **Seattle Center Campus Visitation & Activities.** Insights into activities taking place across the Seattle Center campus ecosystem.
- **Seattle Center Economic & Fiscal Impacts.** An analysis of operational and visitor impacts, and fiscal impacts generated by Seattle Center.
- **Conclusion.**
- **Technical Appendix.**

WHO'S INCLUDED IN THIS ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

Seattle Center's economic impact reflects the **combined activity of a multi-sector civic campus ecosystem**, rather than the operations of a single venue or event. The impacts presented in this report include the aggregated economic activity generated by the following groups of organizations, programs, and partners located on or operating within the Seattle Center campus or produced by Seattle Center itself (**Exhibit 1**).

Resident Arts, Cultural, and Educational Organizations

These organizations operate year-round and contribute economic activity through payroll, operations, ticketed programming, education, and visitor engagement:

- Pacific Northwest Ballet
- Seattle Opera
- Seattle Repertory Theatre
- Seattle Children's Theatre
- Museum of Pop Culture
- Seattle International Film Festival
- Chihuly Garden and Glass
- Pacific Science Center
- Seattle Children's Museum
- The Center School
- Academy of Interactive Entertainment (AIE)
- Classical KING FM
- KEXP 90.3 FM

Anchor Attractions and Professional Sports

These venues and teams generate high-volume visitation, regional draw, and destination travel:

- Climate Pledge Arena, home to:
 - Seattle Kraken (NHL)
 - Seattle Storm (WNBA)
 - Seattle Torrent (PWHL)
- Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, the performing arts home of Pacific Northwest Ballet and Seattle Opera
- Space Needle
- International Fountain

Community-Based and Sector-Support Organizations

These partners support access, workforce development, cultural participation, and community engagement:

- Seattle Center Foundation - the nonprofit philanthropic partner of Seattle Center, which raises private support for free cultural programming, capital improvements, and community access initiatives.
- Path With Art
- TeenTix
- The Vera Project
- Theatre Puget Sound

Independent Event Producers and Festivals

These producers activate the campus seasonally and annually, supporting extensive vendor participation, temporary employment, and visitor spending:

- Northwest Folklife Festival
- Seattle PrideFest
- Bite of Seattle
- Bumbershoot
- Seattle Christmas Market

Free, Civic, and Public-Serving Programs

Seattle Center produces and hosts a wide range of free and affordable programs that generate indirect economic activity and substantial public benefit:

- Festál Cultural Festivals
- Winterfest
- Movies at the Mural
- Artists at the Center
- Fitness and Wellness Programs
- Public Art Installations and Self-Guided Tours
- Seattle/King County Clinic
- Annual Naturalization Ceremony

Food, Beverage, and Small Business Activity

On-site food and beverage vendors and rotating event-based vendors support local employment and capture visitor spending associated with performances, festivals, and daily campus use. These include permanent vendors located in the **Armory Food & Event Hall**, campus eateries such as **Culture Kitchen at MOPOP**, **Prelude at McCaw Hall**, and **Caffe Vita at KEXP**, and hundreds of small businesses participating in festivals and special events throughout the year.

Infrastructure, Transportation, and Corporate Partners

Economic activity across the campus is enabled by supporting infrastructure and private-sector investment, including:

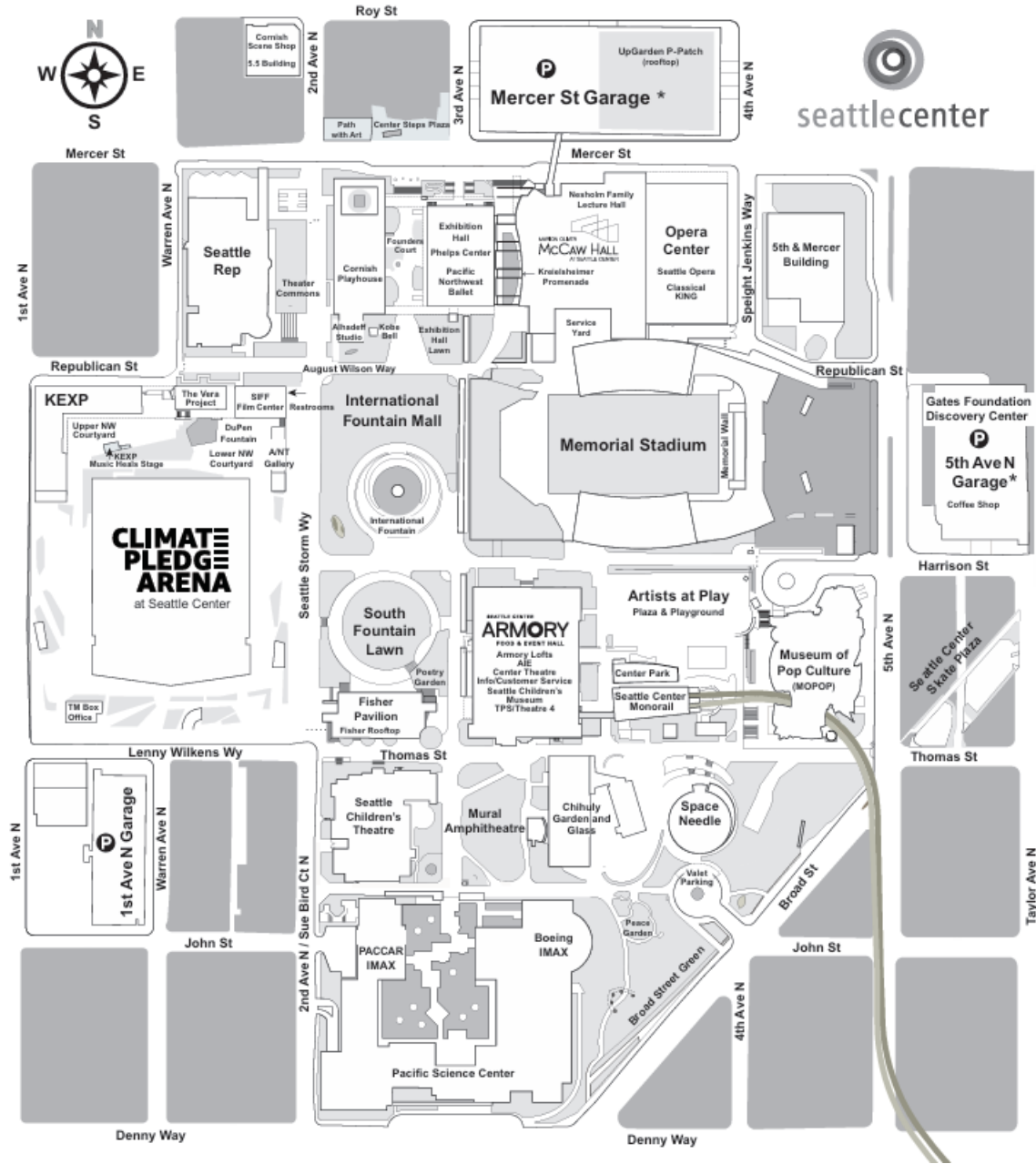
- **Seattle Center parking garages** and the **Seattle Center Monorail**
- Corporate partners such as **Alaska Airlines, Symetra, T-Mobile, Pepsi, Ticketmaster, Lyft**, and others
- Strategic infrastructure investments, including **Verizon-supported digital and connectivity improvements**, that enhance campus operations, broadcast capacity, and large-scale event readiness

How to Read the Results

The economic impacts presented in this report are **aggregated across these categories** and are not intended to represent individual results for each organization or program. Instead, they reflect the **collective economic contribution** of Seattle Center as a civic campus—where arts, sports, culture, education, public services, small businesses, and private investment intersect to generate jobs, visitor spending, and public benefit for Seattle and King County.

Collectively, these organizations, activities, and assets are important not only for their cultural and community value, but also for their role in driving visitation, spending, and broader economic and fiscal impacts. Seattle Center's concentration of iconic venues, partner organizations and programming strengthens Seattle's overall tourism offering, attracting visitors who may initially only come to the city for business travel, conventions, cruise departures, or other leisure activities. Seattle Center functions as a complementary destination that extends visitor stays, increases spending on lodging, food, transportation, and retail, and supports local employment. From a fiscal perspective, this activity contributes to sales, lodging, and admissions tax revenues. Seattle Center is a highly visible public asset that delivers returns greater than its physical footprint. In addition, public investment, private-sector partnership, and philanthropic support through Seattle Center Foundation together position the campus for sustained economic and cultural impact.

Exhibit 1. Seattle Center Campus



Source: Seattle Center, 2026.

SEATTLE CENTER CAMPUS VISITATION & ACTIVITIES

Overall Campus Visitation

Visitors to Seattle Center organizations, businesses, and activities hail from all corners of the U.S. Using Placer.ai, a location intelligence platform that tracks and anonymizes mobile device movements, Seattle Center can view information about visitors' origins and guest journeys. While the remainder of the report focuses on 2024 data, which represents the latest accurate financial data year available, Placer.ai allows for more real time insights into recent visitor trends for Seattle Center and a side-by-side comparison of 2024 and 2025 data.

Nearly 12 million people visited the campus throughout 2024, and an estimated 11.3 million people visited the campus in 2025, mostly from King County, Washington (**Exhibit 2**).

Exhibit 2. Visitor Origin Counties Representing More than 100,000 Visitors, 2024 and 2025

County	2024		2025	
	Visitors	% of Total	Visitors	% of Total
King	4,754,630	52.2%	4,596,960	52.3%
Snohomish	691,720	7.6%	680,830	7.7%
Pierce	504,200	5.5%	501,390	5.7%
Kitsap	157,580	1.7%	163,230	1.9%
Thurston	110,300	1.2%	109,960	1.3%

Source: Seattle Center, 2026; Placer.ai, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

Seattle Center draws millions of visitors residing outside of Washington State as well. More than 26% of campus guests arrived from other states in 2024, many from as far away as Florida and New York, demonstrating that distance is a weak barrier to tourism if the region provides interesting, inclusive, and engaging experiences. Seattle Center also estimates that approximately 5% of their visitors are international (**Exhibit 3**).

Exhibit 3. Visitor Origin States Outside Washington Representing more than 100,000 Visitors, 2024 and 2025

State	2024		2025	
	Visitors	% of Total	Visitors	% of Total
CA	587,000	6.4%	517,840	5.9%
OR	242,310	2.7%	241,920	2.8%
TX	162,130	1.8%	167,780	1.9%
FL	123,700	1.4%	113,320	1.3%

Source: Seattle Center, 2026; Placer.ai, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

The “journey” of Seattle Center visitors, or where guests arrive from and exit to following their time on campus, is a data point that demonstrates the integration of Seattle Center with the surrounding Uptown neighborhood. The most frequent location local or out-of-town guests visit are hotels, both before and after Seattle Center. However, the similar number of visitors who insert visits to Seattle Center between trips to work, shopping, and home, most likely local visitors, demonstrates that the campus is much more than a tourist destination. It is an active part of daily life in Seattle (**Exhibit 4**).

Exhibit 4. Visitor Journey, Seattle Center, 2024 and 2025

Location Type	2024		2025	
	Before	After	Before	After
Hotels & Casinos	20.1%	23.8%	19.8%	25.2%
Residential	17.3%	14.3%	18.9%	14.0%
Leisure	14.4%	13.3%	14.9%	10.6%
Workplace	13.5%	10.2%	13.9%	13.1%
Dining	12.6%	12.9%	12.1%	12.5%
Shopping Centers	8.1%	9.2%	6.7%	6.3%
Shops & Services	7.4%	6.4%	6.7%	8.6%
Travel	1.5%	2.3%	1.7%	2.1%
Groceries	1.3%	3.7%	1.4%	3.4%
Apparel	1.2%	0.5%	1.1%	1.1%
Education	1.1%	1.5%	1.1%	0.6%

Source: Seattle Center, 2026; Placer.ai, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

The visitor origin and journey data presented in **Exhibit 2** through **Exhibit 4** were used to inform and support the visitor spending impacts estimated as part of this study. Placer.ai data was used to estimate the total number of out-of-town visitors, defined as visitors to Seattle Center who reside outside of King County, and to classify these visitors as either overnight or day-trip visitors. Additional details regarding visitor classification are provided in the Technical Appendix.

Events Hosted or Produced by Seattle Center Itself

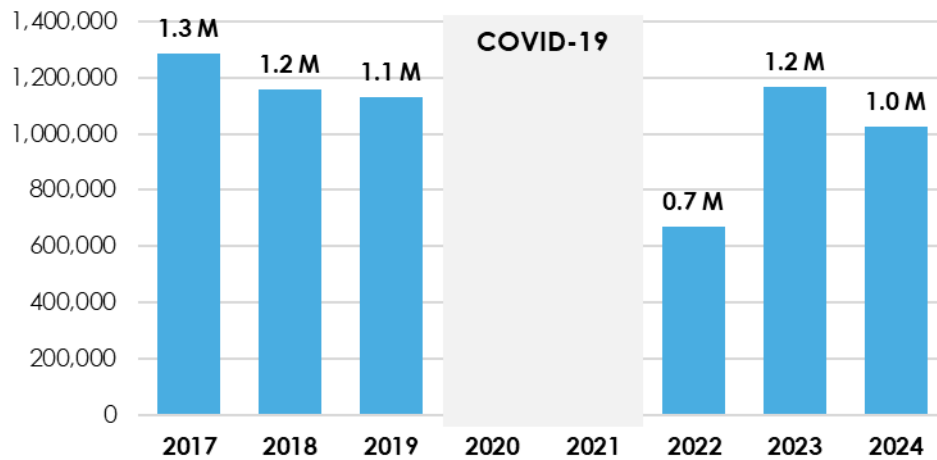
Contributing to the nearly 12 million annual visits to the campus are events that take place in Seattle Center’s owned-and-operated facilities, as part of the department’s business model. Seattle Center campus event facilities are used for external event bookings, the department’s internally produced free and affordable programs, and for spontaneous gatherings of civic expression. These events include conferences, exhibit shows, festivals, community programs, walks/runs, and local rallies and marches.

The facilities in Seattle Center’s campus event business portfolio include the Armory stage/dance floor, Armory Lofts meeting rooms, Fisher Pavilion, Exhibition Hall, and acres of outdoor gathering spaces including the International Fountain

Lawn and Mural Amphitheatre. Programming in these spaces benefits from the on-site event services provided by Seattle Center’s professional event and operations staff.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted Seattle Center’s event business and programs; however, attendance at these campus facilities rebounded to 2019 levels by 2023. In 2024, estimated event attendance (hosted or produced by Seattle Center itself) totaled approximately one million (**Exhibit 5**).

Exhibit 5. Estimated Seattle Center-produced/hosted Event Attendance by Year, 2017-2024

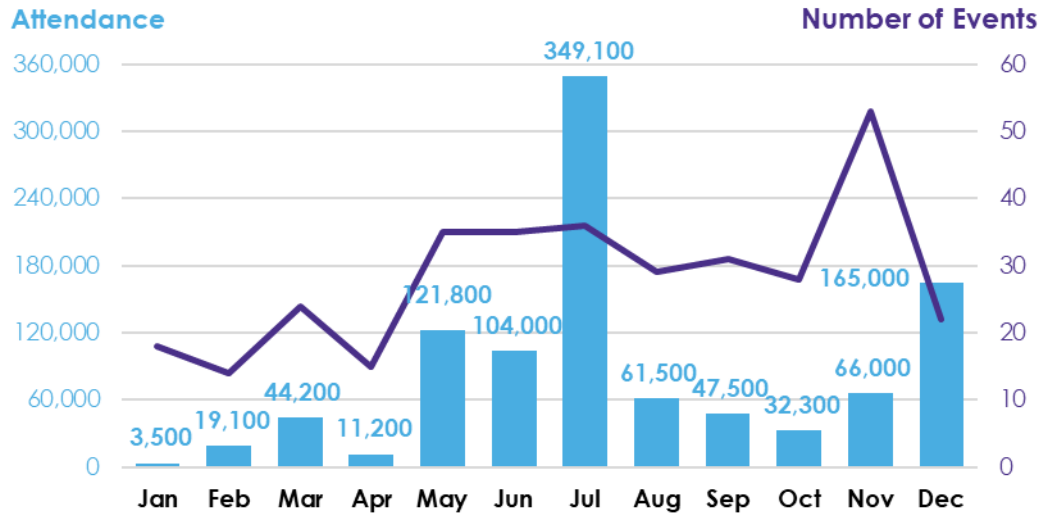


Source: Seattle Center, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

Please note, the above totals from Seattle Center campus event facilities do not include attendance at Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, Climate Pledge Arena, Space Needle, or other partner organization facilities and attractions such as Seattle Repertory Theatre, Museum of Pop Culture, and others.

Estimated campus event attendance displays a seasonal pattern, consistent with outdoor programming, tourism, and flagship summer festivals (**Exhibit 6**). These festivals include Seattle PrideFest, the largest single-day event produced at Seattle Center, with more than 150 vendors and more than 100,000 attendees throughout the day. Bite of Seattle is the largest festival in terms of total attendance over its three days, showcasing the culinary creativity and expertise of more than 250 vendors to residents and visitors alike.

Exhibit 6. Number of Seattle Center-produced/hosted Events and Estimated Attendance by Month, 2024



Source: Seattle Center, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

Fall, spring, and winter generally show lower volume compared to the summer months. However, the average dwell time at the Seattle Center campus is over two hours, demonstrating high engagement among visitors and high entertainment value of events.

Seattle Center’s readiness, infrastructure, logistics, safety, access, and transportation options provide an attractive event site to event producers and to attendees, including the support of Seattle Center’s professional event staff.

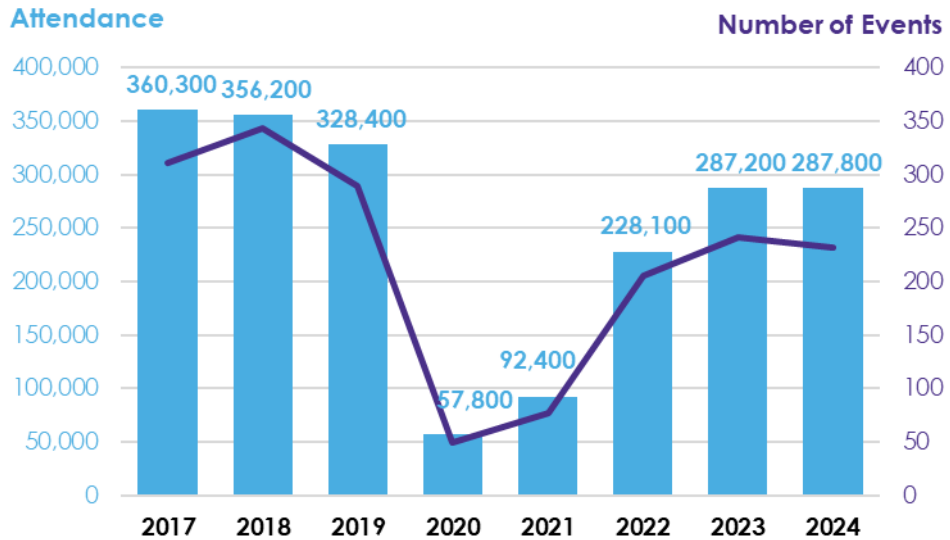
Marion Oliver McCaw Hall

In addition to the campus event spaces discussed above, Marion Oliver McCaw Hall is also a facility that is directly owned and operated by the Seattle Center department. McCaw Hall is the premier performing arts venue on campus, central to Seattle’s cultural vitality. Seattle Opera and Pacific Northwest Ballet are its two principal resident tenants, bringing public benefits of education, community access and cultural continuity in addition to their full seasons of opera and ballet productions throughout the year. McCaw Hall features a 2,900-seat main auditorium and a 380-seat lecture hall, and also hosts concerts, comedy performances, film premieres and corporate events.

McCaw Hall experienced relatively stable attendance between 2017 and 2019, ranging from 328,000 to 360,000 attendees annually and the number of events remaining steady between 325 and 350 annually (**Exhibit 7**). In 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a large decrease in events and attendance. In 2023

and 2024, attendance and events levels recovered to 80% of the attendance levels observed in the 2017 to 2019 period.

Exhibit 7. McCaw Hall Events Attendance, 2017-2024



Source: Seattle Center, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

Climate Pledge Arena

Originally constructed as the Seattle Center Coliseum for the 1962 World’s Fair and subsequently renovated as KeyArena in 1995, most recently the venue underwent a massive \$1.15 billion private redevelopment as Climate Pledge Arena (CPA), opening in 2021. CPA is the world’s first net-zero-carbon certified arena and is a partner and anchor tenant within the Seattle Center ecosystem. **Exhibit 8** presents CPA’s seating capacity for ice hockey, basketball, and concerts.²

Exhibit 8. Climate Pledge Seating Capacity

Event	Capacity
Hockey	17,100
Basketball	18,300
Concerts	17,200

Source: Climate Pledge Arena, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

Actual attendance data by match for the Kraken and Storm is available through ESPN (**Exhibit 9**). Combined, NHL (Kraken) and WNBA (Storm) games brought in more than 900,000 attendees over their regular season home games in 2024.

² <https://climatepledgearena.com/frequently-asked-questions/>

Exhibit 9. Climate Pledge Sporting Events Attendance, 2024

Assumption	Kraken	Storm
Home games in the 2024/25 regular season	41	20
Average attendance per home game	17,151	11,184
Total attendees	703,191	223,680

Source: ESPN, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

While professional sports anchor a portion of annual attendance, CPA’s economic impact extends well beyond NHL and WNBA games. It is one of the most significant economic drivers within the Seattle Center campus ecosystem – a national touring and destination engine.

In 2025, CPA welcomed approximately 1.73 million visitors across all events, including concerts, NCAA tournaments, family shows, comedy tours, and major limited-stop productions. The arena hosts more than 200 events annually, reflecting its continued strength as a national venue.

Concerts and nationally touring events in particular attract a higher proportion of out-of-county and out-of-state visitors, generating measurable hotel stays, restaurant spending, and transportation activity. These events often drive overnight visitation and extended stays in Seattle.

According to Climate Pledge Arena, regularly scheduled events, like Kraken and Storm games, draw attendees mostly from the King County area. Conversely, more unique and exclusive events, such as limited stop music tours and NCAA tournaments, tend to capture a much wider geographic audience. Events such as corporate conferences and graduation ceremonies also attract geographically diverse groups.

CPA’s integration within the Seattle Center campus ecosystem amplifies economic activity across transit, parking, food and beverage, and hospitality sectors.

Partner Organizations and Attractions

Beyond the facilities and organizations discussed above, Seattle Center’s 74- acre campus is home to a rich diversity of organizations and attractions that collectively contribute hundreds of thousands of annual visits to the campus and make Seattle Center the arts and cultural destination that it is.

As listed earlier, this diverse group of resident and affiliated organizations located on campus include major arts and cultural institutions and attractions such as Seattle Repertory Theatre, Seattle Children’s Theatre, Space Needle, MOPOP, SIFF, Chihuly Garden and Glass, and Pacific Science Center, as well as education and media organizations including The Center School, Academy of Interactive Entertainment, Classical KING FM, and KEXP. The Space Needle reports an annual

attendance of more than two million visitors, acting as a key attraction for Seattle Center visitors that spent nearly \$1.5 billion in King County in 2024. Community-focused organizations such as Path With Art, TeenTix, Theatre Puget Sound, and The Vera Project further contribute to year-round activity and public benefit. **In 2024, the operation of Seattle Center’s non-profit partner organizations alone supported nearly \$80 million in business output and nearly 1,200 jobs.**

Together, these organizations anchor Seattle Center as a multi-use civic campus supporting arts, education, culture, and community engagement.

Other Seattle Center Business Activity and Programs

Seattle Center Monorail

The Seattle Center Monorail plays a critical role in enabling campus-scale economic activity. In 2025, the Monorail carried almost 2.3 million passengers, reflecting strong event demand and tourism recovery and generating fare revenue of \$6.7 million.

Through bundled transit programs associated with Climate Pledge Arena events, attendees are encouraged to use public transportation, reducing congestion and improving event access, especially at peak periods. Without this infrastructure, Seattle Center’s ability to host events at current volumes would be constrained. The Monorail is both transportation infrastructure and a revenue-generating economic asset.

Food, Beverage and Small Business Activity

On-site food and beverage operations are an integral component of Seattle Center’s economic ecosystem. Permanent and seasonal vendors located in the Armory Food & Event Hall and across campus—including Big Mike’s Sandwich Co., Blue Water Taco, Ceres Roasting Company, Cool Guys Fry Bar, KABAB, Matt’s Fish Basket, MOD Pizza, Premier Meat Pies, Skillet, Wing Dome, Starbucks, Subway, Seattle Fudge, and campus venues such as Tom’s Watch Bar, Culture Kitchen at MOPOP, Prelude at McCaw Hall, Caffe Vita at KEXP, and others—support local employment and capture visitor spending associated with performances, festivals, and daily campus activity. In addition, many Seattle Center events support rotating food vendors and small businesses whose combined activity contributes to overall economic impact.

Seattle Center Cultural and Community Programs

As Seattle Center’s Mission states, Seattle Center operates vibrant gathering places and venues, creates exceptional events and experiences, and anchors our arts and cultural community.

Fulfilling this mission includes enabling a strong Seattle Center programming division, which partners with community to create year-round free and affordable

programs that celebrate culture and serve the public. These programs are not only a realization of Seattle Center’s mission, but they are also direct and indirect generators of economic activity. Seattle Center Foundation, the non-profit partner of Seattle Center, helps support these programs. Examples include:

- **Festál** is a year-round series of free cultural festivals celebrating global heritage communities. In 2026, the series includes more than 25 festivals that collectively attract hundreds of thousands of attendees. These events drive seasonal visitation, support small business vendors, activate Seattle Center venues, and reinforce the campus as a platform for inclusive economic and cultural participation.
- **Winterfest** activates Seattle Center during traditionally slower winter months, generating off-season foot traffic and supporting surrounding restaurants, retail, and attractions. Through free performances, exhibits, and family-oriented programming, Winterfest sustains cultural vibrancy and economic activity beyond the peak summer tourism season.
- The **Seattle/King County Clinic** transforms Seattle Center into one of the largest free healthcare delivery sites in the nation, drawing thousands of patients and volunteers annually. In addition to providing essential services and significant household cost savings, the Clinic demonstrates Seattle Center’s capacity to function as critical civic infrastructure during large-scale community initiatives.

SEATTLE CENTER ECONOMIC & FISCAL IMPACTS

In addition to being a cultural hub within the City of Seattle, the Seattle Center represents an economic hub by supporting a range of business activities and attracting visitors to the region through its cultural and commercial offerings. More than 30 non-profit and for-profit organizations operate on the Seattle Center campus. These organizations range from the Seattle Opera to Climate Pledge Arena, which helped attract nearly 12 million visitors in 2024.

Direct Impacts

Seattle Center contributes to the local economy in several ways. The operation and maintenance of the campus and the high demand locations for food and retail vendors, and space for large scale festivals is at the center of the economic impacts generated. Through the ongoing operation and maintenance of the campus, Seattle Center attracts millions of visitors per year that spend throughout Seattle and the Puget Sound Region and support the local and regional economy. Business outputs were provided by Seattle Center, their partner businesses and organizations, the Washington State Department of Revenue, and collected through Form 990s for non-profit organizations, whereas visitor spending was

estimated based on visitor data from Seattle Center, Visit Seattle and Placer.ai. **Exhibit 10** contextualizes direct impacts Seattle Center generated through business output, full-time jobs, and total compensation in 2024. The direct impacts are presented by major impact sources, which include Seattle Center non-profit operations, other business activities, and visitor spending. In total, the Seattle Center directly supported an estimated \$2.1 billion in business output, 12,670 jobs, and \$650 million in total compensation in 2024.

Exhibit 10. Seattle Center Direct Impacts, King County, 2024

	Business Output (mils 2024\$)	FTE Jobs	Total Compensation (mils 2024\$)
Non-profit Operations	\$79.8	1,160	\$91.8
Other Business Activities	\$513.4	1,910	\$149.8
Visitor Spending	\$1,495.4	9,600	\$408.6
Total	\$2,088.6	12,670	\$650.2

Sources: Seattle Center, 2026; Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2026; Visit Seattle, 2026; Washington State Department of Revenue, 2026; Form 990, Prorepublica.org, 2026; City of Seattle, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

Economic Impacts

Seattle Center’s annual operations generate billions of dollars within the local economy through vendor payments, visitor spending, employee compensation and other local transactions. These direct benefits create a ripple effect that produces indirect and induced effects. Indirect and induced effects are estimated using an Input-Output model, an economic analysis tool that quantifies the interconnectedness of business activity within an economy.

While direct effects are outputs stimulated by Seattle Center’s daily operations, indirect effects are outputs from within the supply chain such as contractors, media firms, and event staffing. Simply, indirect effects are generated through purchases made by Seattle Center’s suppliers in support of campus needs and activities.

Induced effects are more closely related to employment and compensation. The jobs supported by Seattle Center’s activities support additional jobs, and therefore wages, within the supply chain. These employees spend their wages with a variety of local businesses like childcare providers, restaurants, and salons/barbers, thus providing more investment in the region’s economy.

Including direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts, Seattle Center’s non-profit operations and other business activity in 2024 supported more than \$1.0 billion in business output, 5,350 jobs, and more than \$386 million in total compensation throughout King County (**Exhibit 11**).

Exhibit 11. Seattle Center Business Activity Economic Impacts, King County, 2024

	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
Jobs	3,060	760	1,520	5,350
Total Compensation (mils 2024 \$)	\$241.67	\$49.85	\$94.93	\$386.46
Business Output (mils 2024 \$)	\$593.23	\$137.69	\$270.71	\$1,001.63

Sources: Seattle Center, 2026; Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2026; Visit Seattle, 2026; Washington State Department of Revenue, 2026; City of Seattle, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

Total economic impacts can also be understood through economic multipliers (**Exhibit 12**). Economic multipliers represent the ratio of total economic impact generated relative to the initial direct activity. In an input–output framework, an initial activity generates direct impacts, which flows throughout the local economy in the form of indirect impacts (supply chain purchases) and induced impacts (households re-spending labor income). These ripple effects create additional business sales, jobs, and income beyond the direct activity. The size of the multiplier reflects how much of that spending stays within the region, rather than leaving the area to pay for goods and services produced elsewhere. For example, for every dollar in business output directly supported by Seattle Center’s business activity in 2024, an additional \$0.70 was supported throughout the King County economy.

Exhibit 12. Seattle Center Business Activity Economic Multipliers, King County, 2024

Type	Multiplier
Total Output per \$ Final Demand	1.7
Total jobs per direct job	1.7
Total Compensation per \$ direct income	1.6
Total jobs per \$ mil final Demand	10.3

Sources: Seattle Center, 2026; Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2026; Visit Seattle, 2026; Washington State Department of Revenue, 2026; City of Seattle, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

In addition to Seattle Center’s business activity, the spending of people attracted to the region by Seattle Center supports economic impacts. For example, the money spent by Seattle Center’s nearly 12 million visitors in 2024 on lodging, transportation, food and beverage, and retail and recreation outside of the Seattle Center campus is estimated to have supported nearly \$2.3 billion in business output, more than 14,000 jobs, and more than \$692 million in total compensation throughout King County in 2024 (**Exhibit 13**).

Exhibit 13. Seattle Center Visitor Spending Economic Impacts, King County, 2024

	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
Jobs	9,600	1,720	2,730	14,050
Total Compensation (mils 2024 \$)	\$408.60	\$113.60	\$170.06	\$692.26
Business Output (mils 2024 \$)	\$1,495.42	\$308.98	\$484.93	\$2,289.33

Sources: Seattle Center, 2026; Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2026; Visit Seattle, 2026; Washington State Department of Revenue, 2026; City of Seattle, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

For every dollar of business output supported by visitor spending attracted to the region by Seattle Center, an additional \$0.50 was generated throughout King County in 2024. Additionally, a total of 1.5 jobs were supported throughout King County for every direct job supported by visitor spending attracted to the region in 2024 (Exhibit 14).

Exhibit 14. Seattle Center Visitor Spending Economic Multipliers, King County, 2024

Type	Multiplier
Total Output per \$ Final Demand	1.5
Total jobs per direct job	1.5
Total Compensation per \$ direct income	1.7
Total jobs per \$ mil final Demand	10.7

Sources: Seattle Center, 2026; Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2026; Visit Seattle, 2026; Washington State Department of Revenue, 2026; City of Seattle, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

Exhibit 15 presents the total economic impact of Seattle Center, combining impacts generated by non-profit operations and other business activity at Seattle Center and the spending generated by visitors who visited Seattle Center. In total, it is estimated that Seattle Center supported 19,400 jobs paying nearly \$1.1 billion in wages, and nearly \$3.3 billion in total business output.

Exhibit 15. Seattle Center Total Economic Impacts, King County, 2024

	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
Jobs	12,660	2,480	4,250	19,400
Total Compensation (mils 2024 \$)	\$650.27	\$163.45	\$264.99	\$1,078.72
Business Output (mils 2024 \$)	\$2,088.64	\$446.67	\$755.65	\$3,290.96

Sources: Seattle Center, 2026; Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2026; Visit Seattle, 2026; Washington State Department of Revenue, 2026; City of Seattle, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

Economic Impacts Comparison

The last analysis of Seattle Center’s economic impacts was conducted in 2016. Both the 2016 economic impact study³ and the current study estimate economic impacts based on business activity plus visitor spending within King County. However, the previous study also includes analysis that separates “new money”, or spending from outside King County resulting from visitation to the Seattle Center. For comparison, it is methodologically consistent to compare this study’s economic impacts with the “total” impacts in the previous study and not the “new money” impacts. The inflation-adjusted impacts for the 2016 study are \$2.42 billion in economic output, 18,621 jobs, and \$820 million in total compensation. In 2024 total economic impacts are estimated at nearly \$3.3 billion in economic output, 19,400 jobs, and nearly \$1.1 billion in total compensation.

Fiscal Impacts

Seattle Center generates tens of millions of tax revenue for the City of Seattle through the diverse economic activity taking place on its campus. **Exhibit 16** summarizes estimated annual City of Seattle tax revenues attributable to direct activities at Seattle Center across select tax categories.

Sales and use tax and business and occupation (B&O) taxes were estimated using an Input-Output model and include direct and secondary tax impacts generated by Seattle Center. In total, Seattle Center’s business activity and visitor spending attraction helped generate an estimated nearly \$19.1 million in sales and use taxes and \$6.2 million in B&O taxes for the City of Seattle (**Exhibit 16**).

In addition to sales and use and B&O taxes, revenues from admissions, property taxes and leasehold excise, commercial parking, and utility taxes generated by activity taking place at Seattle Center were estimated. The primary source for these impacts includes revenue and expense data collected from Seattle Center organizations. In total, activity directly taking place within Seattle Center generated an estimated \$5.7 million in admissions tax, \$4.5 million in property and leasehold taxes, \$1.2 million in commercial parking taxes, and \$600,000 in utility taxes for the City of Seattle in 2024.

³ <https://www.seattlecenter.com/about/economic-impact>

Exhibit 16. Seattle Center Local Fiscal Impacts, Seattle, 2024

Local Tax	Estimated Revenues
Sales & Use	\$19,056,000
B&O	\$6,232,000
Admissions	\$5,739,000
Property & Leasehold Excise	\$4,555,000
Commercial Parking	\$1,241,000
Utility Taxes	\$619,000
Total	\$37,442,000

Sources: Seattle Center, 2026; Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2026; Washington State Department of Revenue, 2026; City of Seattle, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

Public Benefits

Seattle Center’s impact extends beyond social, economic and fiscal into the realm of education, equity, and inclusion. In addition to Seattle Center hosting public services such as the Seattle/King County Clinic, many of Seattle Center’s partner organizations offer public benefits like free or reduced admissions for first responders, educational outreach, scholarships, complimentary meeting spaces and even youth transportation stipends to ensure that every guest is able and welcome to their spaces. In 2024, selected partners of the Seattle Center Campus provided more than \$2.8 million in benefits to the public. **Exhibit 17** presents these benefits by partner organization.

Exhibit 17. Selected Organization Public Benefits

Organization	Discounted Tickets	Other Public Support	Total
Pacific Northwest Ballet	\$903,900	\$123,900	\$1,027,800
Museum of Popular Culture	\$667,100	\$19,000	\$686,100
Chihuly Garden and Glass	\$425,000	\$205,000	\$630,000
Seattle Children's Museum	\$459,500	\$46,600	\$506,100
Total	\$2,455,500	\$394,500	\$2,850,000

Sources: Seattle Children's Museum Public Benefits Report, 2024; Museum of Popular Culture Public Benefits Report, 2024; Pacific Northwest Ballet Public Benefits Report, 2024; Chihuly Garden and Glass Public Benefits Report, 2024; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

Beyond the impacts presented in **Exhibit 17**, Seattle Center provides community benefits that are not easily quantified. As one stakeholder noted, thriving and prosperous cities rely on gathering spaces that foster cultural expression and social connection. Seattle Center serves as one of these essential hubs. Additional information regarding Seattle Center’s broader community impacts can be found in its annual community impact report.

CONCLUSION

Seattle Center is more than a collection of venues — it is an integrated civic campus ecosystem that drives cultural vitality and regional economic performance.

In 2024, campus activity supported **nearly \$3.3 billion in business output, 19,400 jobs**, and **more than \$37 million in local tax revenues**. These impacts extend well beyond the 74-acre campus footprint into surrounding neighborhoods, Downtown Seattle, and the broader King County economy. The nearly 12 million visitors in 2024 were estimated to generate **nearly \$2.3 billion in business output** and support **more than 14,000 jobs**.

Seattle is poised to host games for the FIFA World Cup 2026™, during which time Seattle Center will continue to attract the visitors that have come from all over the world to support their country. Sustained and strategic investment in Seattle Center will enhance its ability to host major events, expand partnerships, grow the arts, and continue to serve the community and the region.

TECHNICAL APPENDIX

Non-Profit Operations and Other Business Activity

Analysis of direct economic impacts associated with nonprofit and for-profit operations at Seattle Center started with a comprehensive inventory of organizations operating on campus, provided by Seattle Center. **Exhibit 18** provides the full list of entities included in the Seattle Center economic impact analysis.

Exhibit 18. Seattle Center Organizations

Academy of Interactive Entertainment	Pacific Science Center
Matt's Fish Basket	Path with Art
Big Mike's Sandwich Co	Popcornacopia
Biringer's Shortcake	Premier Meat Pies
Bite of Seattle	Seattle Center Foundation
Blue Water Taco Grill	Seattle Children's Museum
Bumbershoot	Seattle Children's Theatre
Ceres Roasting Company	Seattle Fudge
Chihuly Garden and Glass	Seattle Kraken
Classical KING FM	Seattle Monorail Services
Climate Pledge Arena	Seattle Opera
Cornish College of the Arts	Seattle Repertory Theatre
Dog in the Park	Shishkaberry's
KEXP 90.3 FM	SIFF
Gates Foundation	Skate Like a Girl
KABAB	Skillet Counter
Kornman Seattle	Space Needle
Kraken Team Store	Starbucks
Marion Oliver McCaw Hall	Subway
Mehndi Madness Henna	TeenTix
MOD Pizza	The Center School
Museum of Pop Culture	The Model T Popcorn Truck
Northwest Folklife Festival	The Vera Project
One Roof Foundation	Theatre Puget Sound
Over the Line Art	Wingdome
Pacific Northwest Ballet	Wok

Sources: Seattle Center, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

For nonprofit organizations, IRS Form 990 filings provide detailed information on annual revenues, expenditures, and employment. These data were used to estimate direct business output, employment, and total compensation associated with each organization's operations.

A business survey and stakeholder interviews combined with data shared by Seattle Center served as the primary source of organization-specific data on 2024 revenues (business output), employment, and total compensation, particularly for for-profit entities. Where direct responses were unavailable or incomplete, supplemental desk research was used to fill data gaps. In instances where only revenue data were available, employment and compensation were estimated using industry-specific ratios of output per worker and wages per worker. Wage estimates were subsequently adjusted to account for employer-paid benefits in order to estimate total compensation. **Exhibit 19** summarizes the revenue and wage ratio assumptions applied by industry.

Exhibit 19. Revenue and Wage Ratio Assumptions

Industry	Per Job (2024\$)	
	Business Output	Total Wages
General Merchandise Retailers	\$221,800	\$43,000
Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries	\$231,900	\$90,400
Food Services and Drinking Places	\$96,500	\$32,800

Sources: Washington State Department of Revenue, 2026; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2026; Community Attributes Inc., 2026.

These steps ensured a consistent and comprehensive estimation of direct operational impacts across all Seattle Center organizations.

Visitor Spending

To estimate total visitation to Seattle Center in 2024, Seattle Center provided Placer.ai location intelligence data, which aggregates anonymized mobile device information to generate detailed insights into physical visitation patterns. In addition to total visit counts, the dataset provides information on visitors' county and state of residence, allowing the analysis to distinguish between local and non-local visitation and to derive assumptions regarding daytrip versus overnight visitors.

For purposes of this study, a visitor is defined as an individual residing outside of King County, Washington who visited Seattle Center. Placer.ai and Seattle Center data indicates that roughly 50% of total visits in 2024 originated from individuals residing outside King County. The analysis assumes that approximately 23% of these non-local visitors were day-trippers, with the remaining 77% classified as overnight visitors (or visitors residing outside of the King, Snohomish, Pierce, or Kitsap County), also informed by Placer.ai data.

To estimate off-campus spending by Seattle Center visitors, the analysis applied 2024 visitor spending data published by Visit Seattle to visitor counts. The Visit Seattle data was used to construct per-trip spending profiles for day and overnight

visitors across key expenditure categories, including lodging (overnight visitors only), food and beverage, transportation and gas, arts, entertainment and recreation, and retail purchases. Category-level spending shares for day and overnight visitors were also informed by the Visit Seattle data.

Average per-trip spending assumptions applied in the analysis are as follows:

- Day visitors: \$63 per trip
- Overnight visitors: \$334 per trip

These assumptions form the basis for estimating total visitor-related spending and associated economic impacts generated by Seattle Center in 2024.