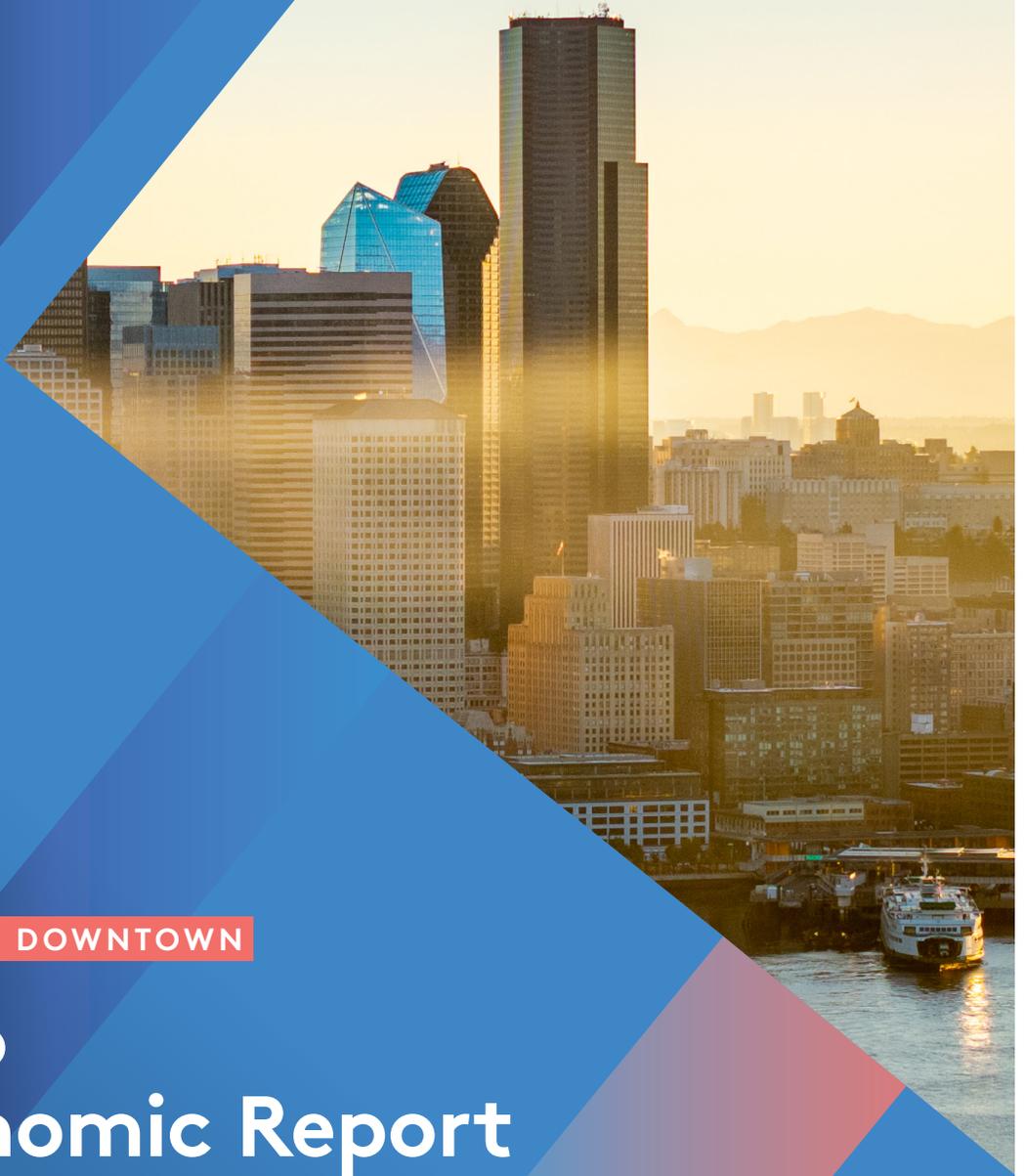




Downtown
Seattle
Association



STATE OF DOWNTOWN

2026 Economic Report

Topline Summary

Downtown Seattle continued to regain momentum in 2025. Residential population in the urban core has grown 80% since 2010, reaching an estimated 109,845 residents, while total jobs have climbed 45% over the same period to more than 317,000. Foot traffic from workers and local visitors increased year-over-year, and unique visitors once again surpassed pre-pandemic levels. Rising activity has coincided with improved public safety in the downtown core, and police hiring saw its biggest total in at least six years. While some sectors continue to face ongoing challenges, these trends and data show the ongoing revitalization of downtown.



To explore much more about these trends and data, check out our full 2026 Economic Report: downtownseattle.org/economicreport

Published by the Downtown Seattle Association in cooperation with the Metropolitan Improvement District.

1601 2nd Ave. Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98101
206.613.3200
info@downtownseattle.org
downtownseattle.org

This report was made possible with generous support from:

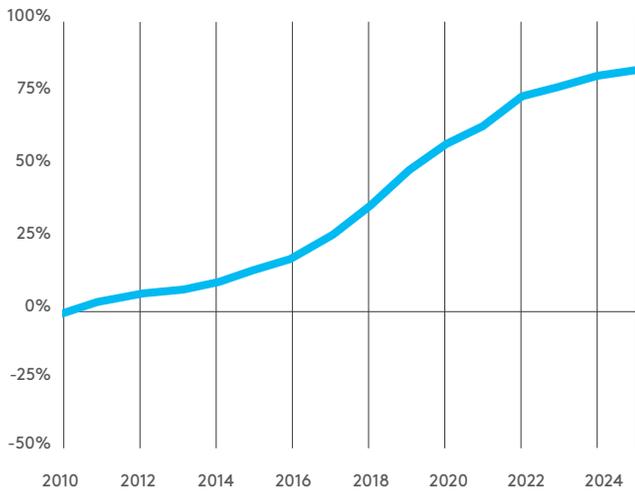


Downtown Seattle 2025 Report Card

LIVE

Residential Population

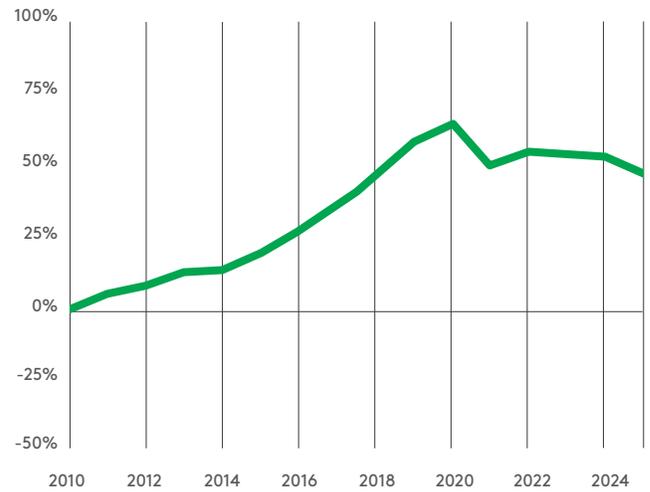
80% increase since 2010 / 2025 estimate: 109,845



WORK

Total Number of Jobs

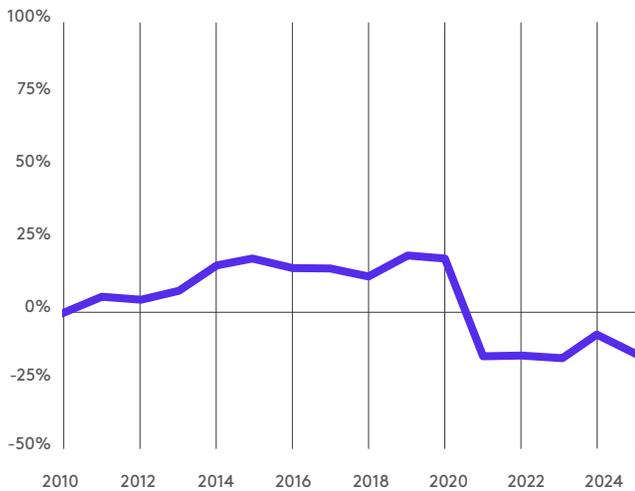
45% increase since 2010 / 2025 estimate: 317,579



SHOP

Brick-and-Mortar Retail Jobs

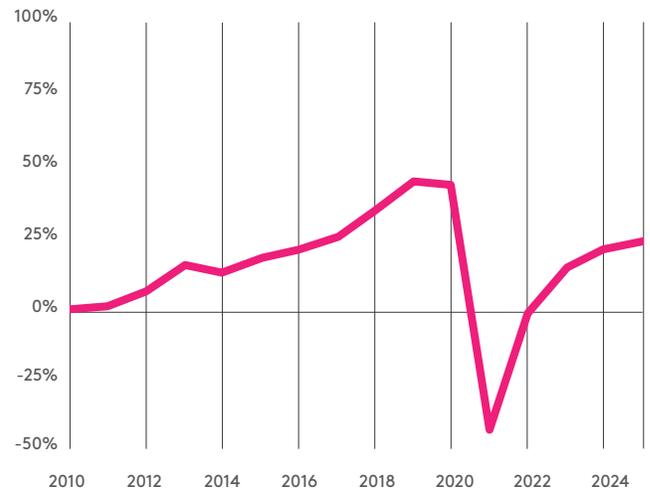
14% decrease since 2010 / 2025 estimate: 7,575



PLAY

Dining, Hotel, Recreation, Arts and Entertainment Jobs

23% increase since 2010 / 2025 estimate: 33,608



Sources: Esri Business Analyst, Puget Sound Regional Council and WA Employment Security Department. The 2025 jobs estimate was derived from data provided by PSRC and the Washington State Employment Security Department. Note that data here are for Q1 of each year. The 2013 jobs data were unavailable and were therefore interpolated.

2025 at a Glance

In 2025, downtown Seattle continued to make progress across key indicators. Return to office, local visitors (people who live within 10 miles), and light rail boardings increased year-over-year. Unique visitors once again exceeded pre-pandemic levels, with more frequent visits contributing to overall activity gains.

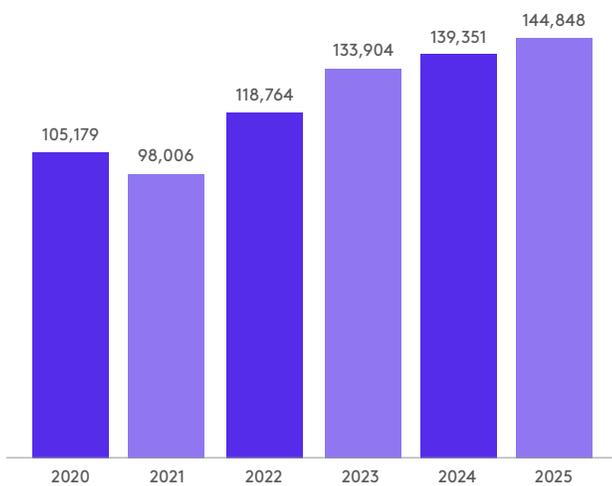
Rising foot traffic downtown was concurrent with a decrease in criminal activity in the heart of downtown. While public safety continued to see marked improvements in the downtown core, some center city neighborhoods saw increases in violent crime.

In 2025, hotel demand experienced a modest decline, reflecting continued softness in international visitors, convention and business travel. Multifamily development remained concentrated downtown, adding new housing and supporting the neighborhood's evolution into a denser, more balanced mixed-use center.



Return to Office

Average Weekday Worker Foot Traffic



Source: Placer.ai

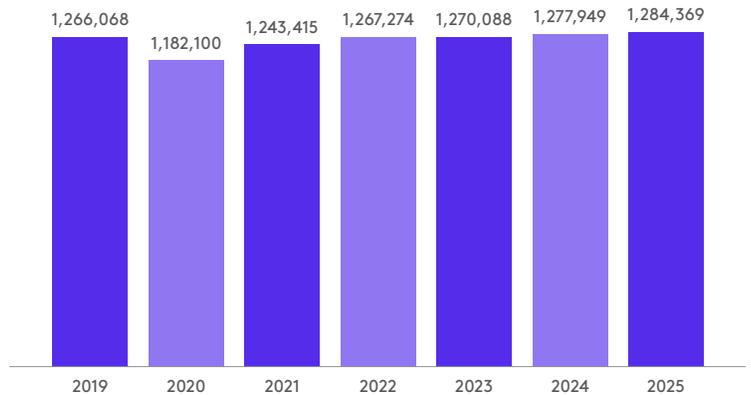
In 2025, daily average worker foot traffic was about 145,000, a nearly 4% increase compared to 2024.

This represented 64% of the average worker foot traffic seen in 2019.

Local Visitor Foot Traffic

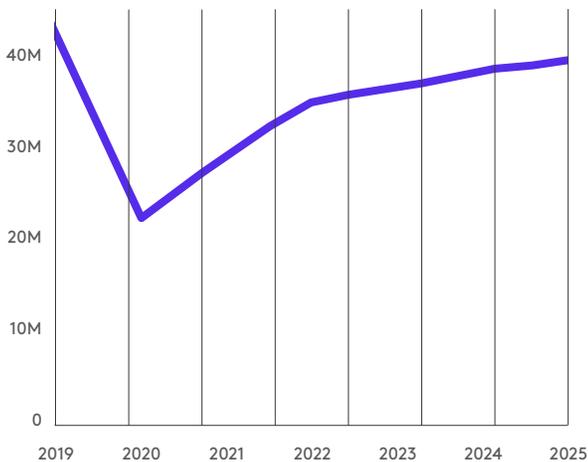
- The total number of unique local visitors continued to increase slightly, rising to 1.28 million in 2025.
- Increasing the number of local visitors coming downtown is a key focus for the Downtown Seattle Association as locals help support street-level vibrancy and support key downtown sectors such as arts & culture, retail and dining.

Unique Local Downtown Visitors



Note: Local visitors are those defined as living within 10 miles of downtown. Source: Placer.ai

Local Visitor Foot Traffic

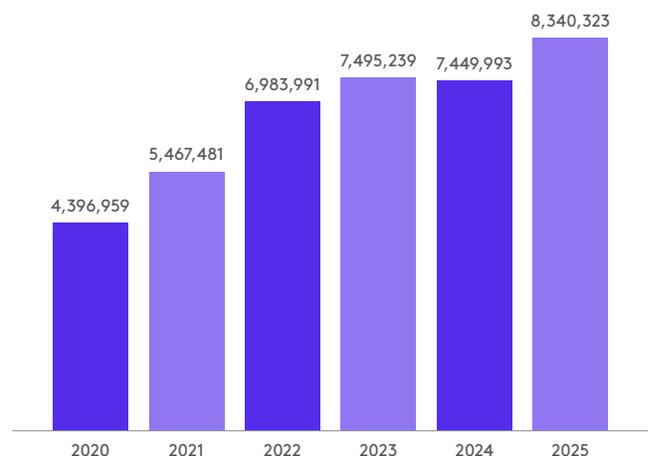


Source: Placer.ai

- While increasing the number of local visitors is important, increasing the frequency of downtown visits by locals is a critical metric for downtown’s economic health and vibrancy.
- Data indicate locals are continuing to increase the frequency of visits.
- In 2025, local visitor foot traffic increased nearly 3% compared to 2024 and was 92% of the local visitor foot traffic seen in 2019.

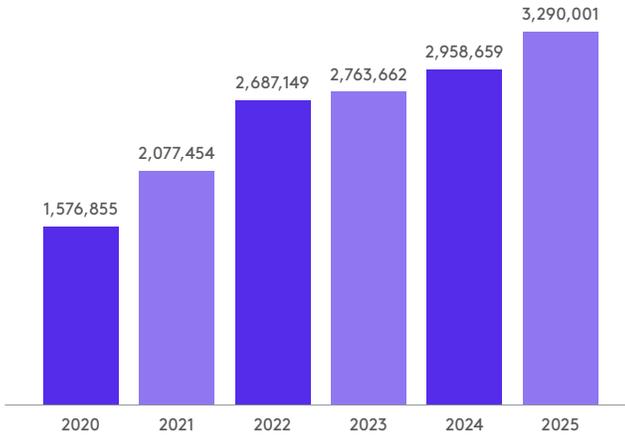
Pike Pine Local Visitor Foot Traffic

- As the main retail corridor downtown, bookended with Pike Place Market and the Seattle Convention Center Summit building, the vibrancy of the Pike/Pine corridor is a key indicator for downtown vitality.
- In 2025, locals made more than 8.3 million visits, an 11% increase over 2024, and nearly three-quarters of the local visitor foot traffic seen in 2019.
- In particular, locals were drawn to conventions like Sakura-Con and Emerald City Comic Con at the Convention Center, and celebrating the city’s Pride parade, as well as attending the No Kings protest in October.



Source: Placer.ai

Waterfront Local Visitor Foot Traffic

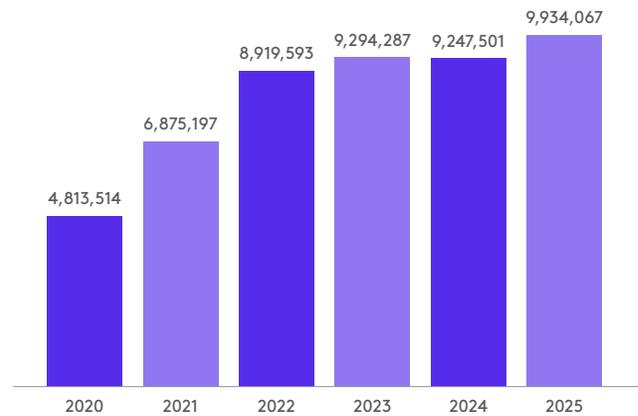


Source: Placer.ai

- A major draw – not only for tourists but for locals as well – is the new waterfront. As this project nears completion, data indicate the new waterfront is attracting local visitors in significant numbers.
- In 2025, local visitor foot traffic to the waterfront increased 11% year-over-year, reaching 97% of the foot traffic seen in 2019.
- On July 26, the waterfront saw its busiest day of foot traffic since at least 2019 with the return of the Alaska Airlines Seafair Torchlight Parade, and nearly 100,000 parade attendees.

Stadium Area Local Visitor Foot Traffic

- Lumen Field and T-Mobile Park generated significant foot traffic in the surrounding downtown neighborhoods of Pioneer Square and Chinatown-ID.
- In 2025, visitor foot traffic in the area around the stadiums increased more than 7% as the stadiums hosted major concerts, FIFA Club World Cup matches and Mariners, Seahawks, Sounders and Reign games.

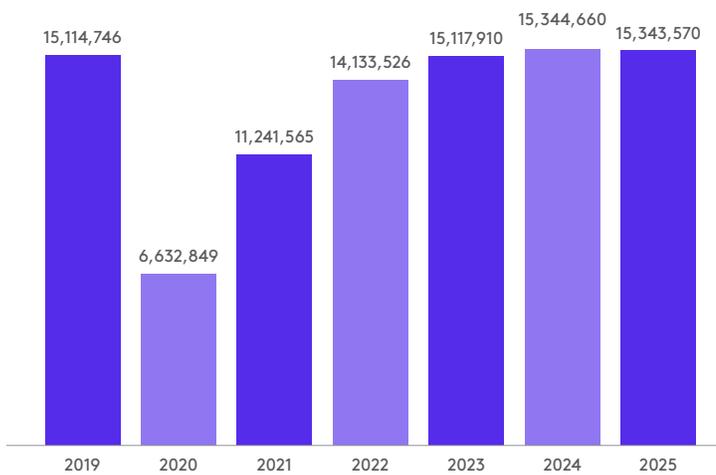


Source: Placer.ai





Unique Downtown Visitors

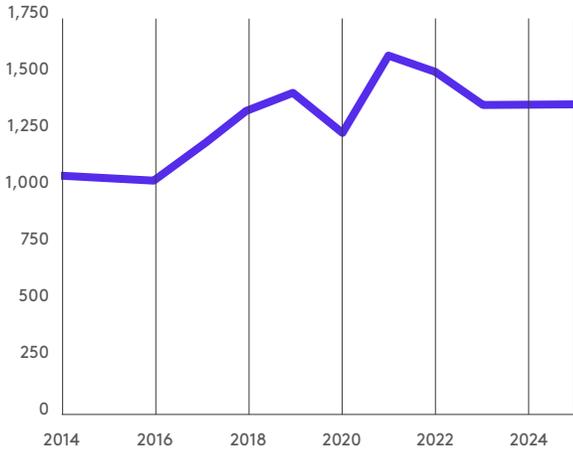


Source: Placer.ai

- The number of unique visitors was flat compared to 2025 but again surpassed 15 million visitors throughout the year.
- This figure represents 102% of the number of unique downtown visitors in 2019.
- The number of total visits rose by 3 million, suggesting that visit frequency is increasing (i.e., people coming downtown more often), leading to more overall visitor foot traffic year-over-year.

Downtown Public Safety

Downtown Violent Crime Incidents



Source: Seattle Police Department Crime Dashboard, 2026

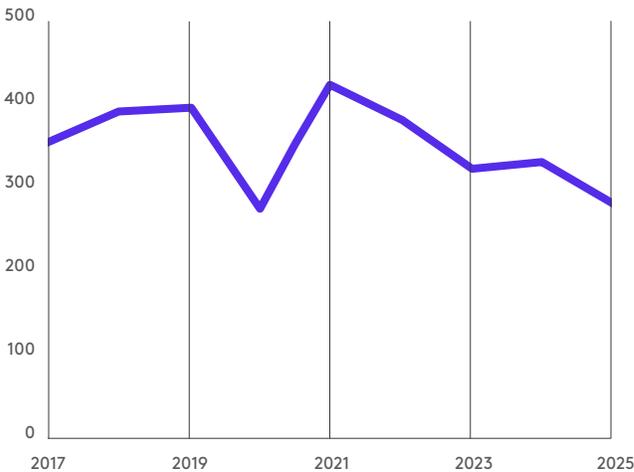
In 2025, the number of violent crime incidents downtown was basically flat compared to 2024.

This represents a 14% decline from the pandemic peak of nearly 1,600 incidents in 2021.



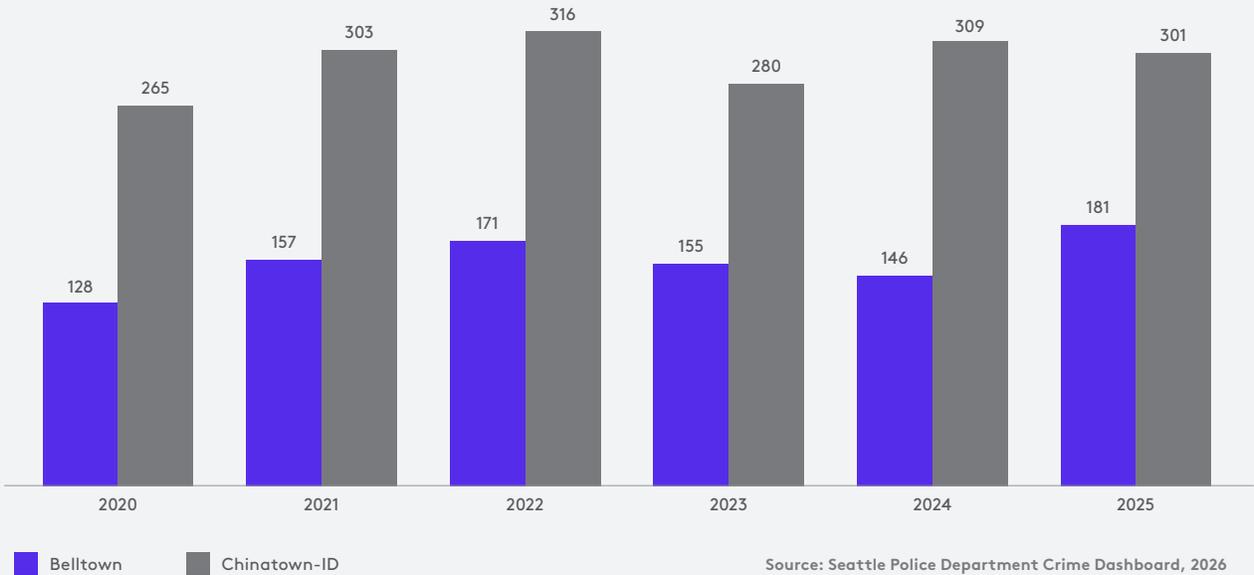
Violent Crime Incidents in Downtown Core SPD Beats M1-3

- While overall the total incidents were similar to 2024, an area that saw significant improvement was the downtown core.
- In 2025, the downtown core, excluding 2020, experienced the lowest number of violent crime incidents since at least 2017.
- The number of violent crime incidents declined 14% from 2024 and 33% from the post-pandemic peak of 412 in 2021.



Source: Seattle Police Department Crime Dashboard, 2026

Violent Crime Incidents in Belltown & Chinatown-Int'l District SPD Beats D1 (Belltown) & K3 (Chinatown-Int'l District)



Source: Seattle Police Department Crime Dashboard, 2026

- While public safety in the downtown core improved in 2025, other areas of downtown continue to face challenges.
- In 2025, Belltown saw the highest number of violent crime incidents since at least 2020, increasing 24% compared to 2024.
- While the number of violent incidents in Chinatown-ID fell slightly in 2025 relative to 2024, it continues to be much too high, again topping 300 incidents.
- These two SPD police beats (K3 and D1) in 2025 had more than a third (35%) of downtown’s total violent crime incidents.

Downtown Tomorrow

Looking ahead to 2026 and beyond, downtown Seattle is poised for a period of unprecedented opportunity driven by global events, transformative infrastructure and continued cultural investment. From hosting FIFA World Cup matches at Lumen Field and expanding regional light rail connections to completing the waterfront’s evolution along Elliott Bay, catalytic projects are set to elevate downtown’s national and international profile. Major reinvestments in civic venues, new arts institutions and a thriving professional sports ecosystem will further drive visitation and economic activity. Together, these milestones position downtown as the region’s cultural, economic and transit heart for years to come.

World Cup

In summer 2026, downtown Seattle will take the global stage as Lumen Field – temporarily rebranded as Seattle Stadium – hosts six men’s FIFA World Cup matches between June 15-July 6, including knockout-round games and an anticipated U.S. Men’s National Team matchup against Australia. The World Cup is projected to generate a \$929 million in economic impact regionally, draw approximately 750,000 visitors, support more than 20,000 jobs and produce over \$100 million in state and local tax revenue, according to Visit Seattle in late 2024. For downtown, the tournament represents a once-in-a-generation moment to showcase Seattle’s hospitality, cultural vibrancy and global connectivity while delivering a major boost to hotels, restaurants, retail and entertainment districts.

Light Rail Opening

On March 28, Sound Transit will open Link light rail service between Seattle and Bellevue, establishing a new Crosslake Connection between two of the region’s largest employment and activity centers. With service running through the International District/Chinatown Station, the 2 Line extension will strengthen downtown Seattle’s role as the region’s transit hub while improving access for workers, residents and visitors traveling across Lake Washington. This milestone represents a major step forward for downtown and regional mobility, supporting economic activity, reducing congestion and reinforcing transit-oriented growth as a foundation of the city’s long-term competitiveness.

Waterfront – Elliott Bay Connections

Seattle’s waterfront transformation continues to gain momentum, with Elliott Bay Connections emerging as one of downtown’s most impactful and exciting investments. Backed by more than \$45 million in private funding and strong public-private collaboration, the nearly-complete project will deliver new bike and pedestrian paths, expanded beaches, play areas, seating, lighting, wayfinding, restrooms and a new concession building – bringing Seattle closer to a fully connected waterfront experience. The 50-acre EBC will span 3.5 miles along Elliott Bay. Combined with the successful opening of Waterfront Park in September 2025, these improvements are already reshaping how residents and visitors experience downtown, driving foot traffic, supporting local businesses and reinforcing the waterfront as a premier civic and economic asset.



Courtesy of Sound Transit



Sports in Seattle

Seattle’s sports scene continues to be a powerful economic and cultural engine for downtown. Fresh off a Super Bowl victory in February, the Seahawks drew hundreds of thousands of fans for the championship parade along Fourth Avenue on Feb. 11, underscoring the unmatched passion of the city’s sports community. That energy extends across seven major professional teams anchored in the urban core: the Seahawks, Sounders and Reign at Lumen Field; the Mariners at T-Mobile Park; and the Storm, Kraken and the newly launched Seattle Torrent at Climate Pledge Arena. With the Torrent’s debut in the Professional Women’s Hockey League, Seattle became the first U.S. city home to three professional women’s sports teams – and all of them are in downtown. From fall weekends with packed bars and restaurants during Seahawks games, to the deepest Mariners postseason run ever reigniting SODO, to the Torrent averaging more than 11,000 fans per home game, sports continue to drive foot traffic, spending and civic pride throughout downtown.

Memorial Stadium

At Seattle Center, the transformation of historic Memorial Stadium marks a significant long-term investment in downtown’s civic and cultural infrastructure. The \$150 million project, led by Seattle Public Schools and the One Roof Stadium Partnership (a consortium of Seattle Kraken, One Roof Foundation and Climate Pledge Arena), has moved beyond demolition, with the new 6,500-seat, multi-purpose venue scheduled to open in fall 2027. Designed

to serve student athletics, community events and broader regional programming – while preserving the Memorial Wall – the rebuilt stadium will strengthen Seattle Center’s role as a year-round destination and contribute to downtown’s economic vitality for decades to come.

Arts & Culture

Downtown Seattle’s arts and culture sector – home to the Historic Theatre District – continues to be a key economic driver, fueling nightlife, visitation and small-business activity, led by the Seattle Theatre Group, which now includes the Paramount, Moore, Neptune and 5th Avenue theatres. Collectively, these venues host more than 700 events annually, from major Broadway touring productions to concerts, comedy and locally produced work. In 2026, downtown will welcome globally recognized shows such as “Les Misérables,” “The Phantom of the Opera” and “The Wiz,” alongside locally driven productions at the 5th Avenue Theatre and beyond. Cannonball Arts has quickly established itself as a major cultural anchor in downtown. The 66,000-square-foot, two-floor contemporary arts center at Third Avenue and Virginia Street – which launched in summer 2025 and is operated by the producers of Bumbershoot, in partnership with the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe – has expanded its programming, including unveiling an underground dance-music space and hosting immersive fashion shows.