

Whatcom County / Bellingham Economic Profile

Cost of Living / Living Wage

Regional Cost of Living 2017							
	Composite	Grocery Items	Housing	Utilities	Transportation	Health Care	Misc Goods and Service
San Juan	143.6	134.9	154.4	93.2	167.9	121.8	148.6
Bellingham	115.3	106.7	126.6	75	116.6	112.4	121.4
Skagit	109.4	118.1	105.3	75	116	120.8	115.4
Seattle Area	152.8	123.8	206.6	127.9	137.6	123.5	136.5

The cost of living is generally similar in Whatcom and Skagit counties and within the City of Everett. (Everett data is not available for this time period.)

The cost of living in Seattle continues to be increasingly higher from these locations. Some of these higher costs are off-set by higher overall wages in the Seattle area.

Small differences in this table should be considered not significant due to data collection methodologies.

Living Wage			
	Rate	Required Household Hourly Wage	Required Household Weekly Wage
Rent 1 bedroom	\$ 768	\$ 13.31	\$ 532.22
Rent 2 bedroom	\$ 945	\$ 16.37	\$ 654.89
Median home mortgage	\$ 1,219	\$ 21.12	\$ 844.77

Source: UW Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies & CEBR

The Center defines a living wage as the household earning point that adheres to a conventional banking formula dictating that a maximum of 33.3 percent of household income be allocated to housing expenses – whether mortgage or rent.

In Whatcom County the average hourly wage is \$20.79. For 14% of the workforce, the average wage does not support a housing option. An additional 29% of the workforce may require two wage earners in a household for desired housing.

Note: Home purchase assumes 20% as down payment, 4% interest and is displayed as principal and interest only.

About This Report

This report has been prepared by the Center of Economic and Business Research (The Center) located within the College of Business and Economics at Western Washington University (WWU). The Center works in partnership with businesses, government entities and non-profits to bridge the resources of WWU students, faculty and staff from throughout the WWU Community to create high quality analysis and proposed solutions to challenges. From answering the simple question, creating understandable and thorough analysis documents, creating internships, class projects, to faculty projects, we assist in creating an informed path to help business owners and policy shapers make decisions to move forward.

Learn more at:
<https://cbe.wvu.edu/cebr/center-economic-and-business-research>
 You can reach us at cebr@wwu.edu or 360-650-3909



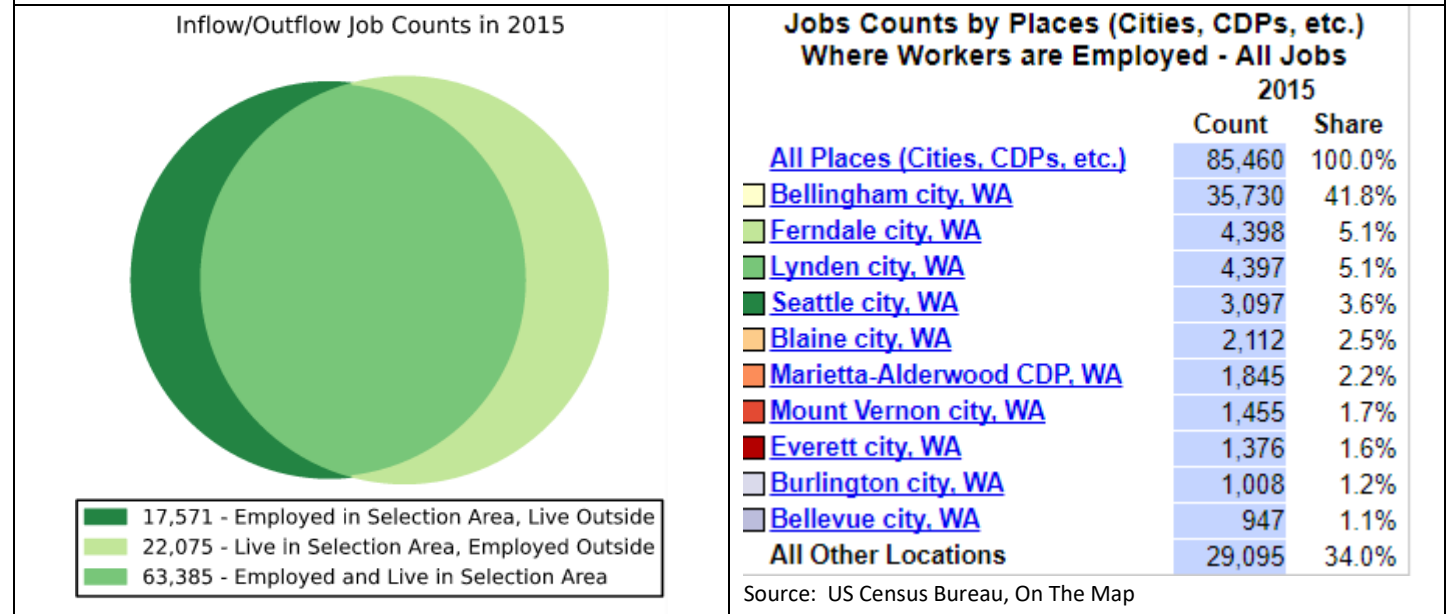
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Wage and Salary (Whatcom County – sorted by Average Weekly Wage)

Industry description	Avg. Firms	Total 2016 wages paid	Average annual employment	Average annual wage	Average weekly wage
TOTAL	6,932	\$3,808,796,517	88,087	\$43,239	\$832
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	383	\$116,214,953	4,083	\$28,463	\$547
Construction	762	\$362,459,406	6,041	\$60,000	\$1,154
Manufacturing	342	\$587,179,658	9,770	\$60,100	\$1,156
Wholesale trade	364	\$135,320,128	2,577	\$52,511	\$1,010
Retail trade	700	\$313,621,557	10,889	\$28,802	\$554
Transportation and warehousing	196	\$95,486,837	2,258	\$42,288	\$813
Information	106	\$64,695,224	1,182	\$54,734	\$1,053
Finance and insurance	178	\$138,461,992	2,085	\$66,409	\$1,277
Real estate and rental and leasing	232	\$31,038,171	968	\$32,064	\$617
Professional and technical services	643	\$192,227,338	3,082	\$62,371	\$1,199
Management of companies and enterprises	27	\$26,558,512	533	\$49,828	\$958
Administrative and waste services	376	\$135,849,305	4,102	\$33,118	\$637
Educational services	100	\$20,216,260	930	\$21,738	\$418
Health care and social assistance	1,306	\$523,547,880	11,650	\$44,940	\$864
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	96	\$25,814,344	1,665	\$15,504	\$298
Accommodation and food services	470	\$152,161,446	8,678	\$17,534	\$337
Other services, except public administration	517	\$88,174,042	2,593	\$34,005	\$654
GOVERNMENT	113	\$775,138,212	14,724	\$52,645	\$1,012

Note: Government sector includes all tribal businesses and businesses located within recognized tribal land.
 Source: Washington Employment Security Department

Work / Home Shed

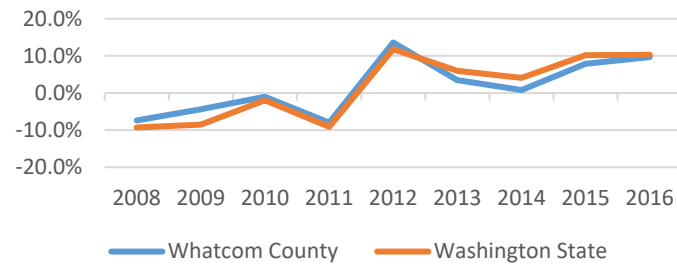


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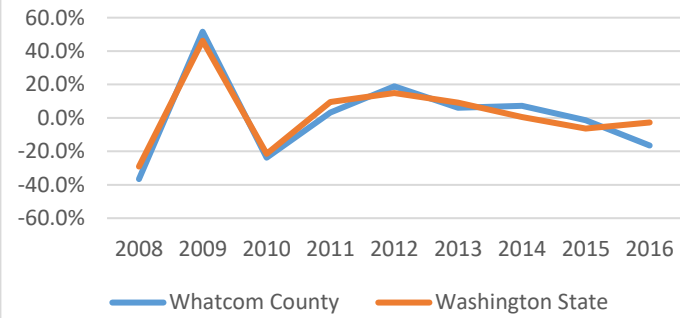
Housing Indicators

Median Resale Price Annual % Change



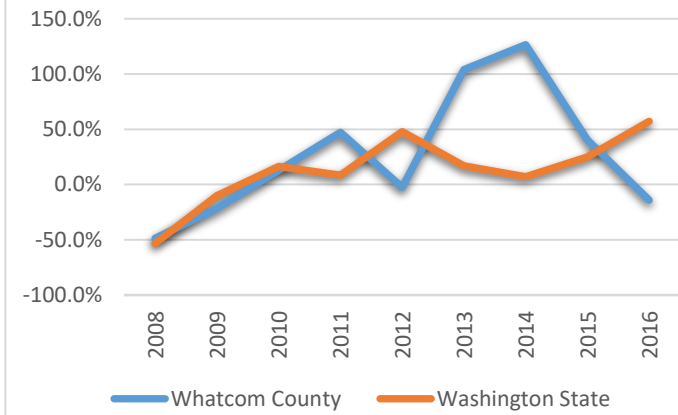
Source: UW Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies

Sales Annual % Change



Source: UW Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies

Building Permits Annual % Change

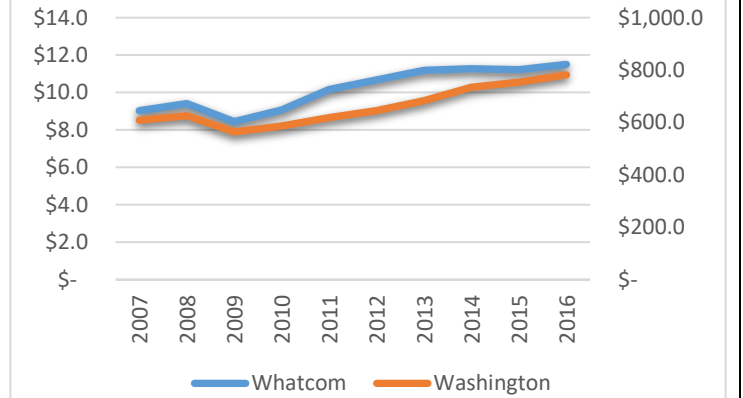


Source: UW Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies

Gross Business Income*

*As reported by business filing address, shown in billions

Gross Business Income

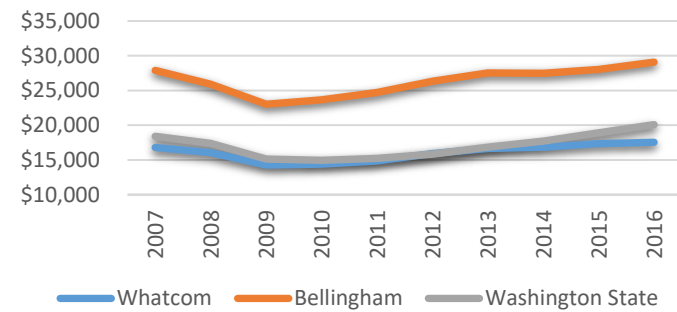


Source: Washington Department of Revenue

Taxable Retail Sales*

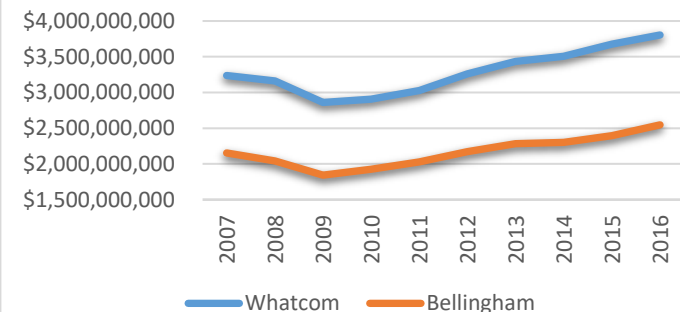
*Taxes collected are reported by destination and may include sales for other jurisdictions but delivered within Whatcom County.

Taxable Sales Per Capita



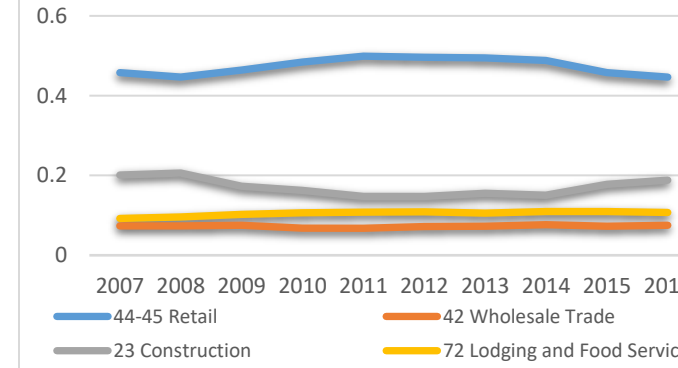
Source: Washington State Department of Revenue

Taxable Retail Sales



Source: Washington State Department of Revenue

Taxable Sales in Top Sectors

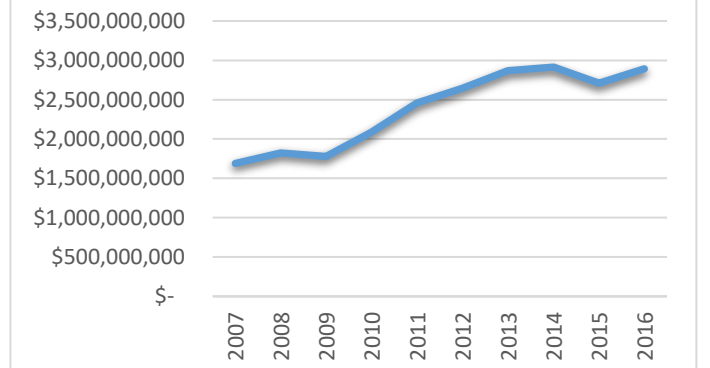


Source: Washington State Department of Revenue

Out of State Sales*

*As reported by business filing address

Out of State / Foreign Sales



Source: Washington Department of Revenue

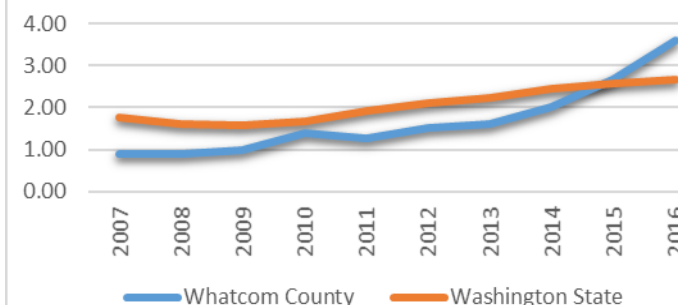
P – 20 Performance

District	Washington					Out of State					Total	
	Total	Public 4yr	Private 4yr	Public 2yr	Private 2yr	Total	Public 4yr	Private 4yr	Public 2yr	Private 2yr	HS Graduates	% Going to College
Bellingham	80%	33%	7%	41%	0-1%	20%	9%	9%	2%	0-1%	772	73%
Blaine	85-89%	25-29%	0-5%	55-59%	0-5%	15-19%	6-9%	6-9%	0-5%	0-5%	146	50-54%
Ferndale	90-94%	25-29%	5-9%	55-59%	0-2%	10-14%	5-9%	5-9%	0-2%	0-2%	303	63%
Lynden	80-84%	25-29%	0-2%	55-59%	0-2%	15-19%	5-9%	5-9%	0-2%	0-2%	203	50%
Meridian	85-89%	35-39%	0-5%	50-54%	0-5%	10-14%	0-5%	6-9%	0-5%	0-5%	96	65-69%
Mount Baker	90-94%	30-34%	0-5%	55-59%	0-5%	6-9%	0-5%	0-5%	0-5%	0-5%	120	55-59%
Nooksack Valley	80-84%	10-14%	0-5%	65-69%	0-5%	15-19%	0-5%	0-5%	10-14%	0-5%	96	45-49%
Statewide	82%	32%	5%	44%	0-1%	18%	7%	8%	3%	0-1%	67841	60%

Source: ERDC

Beer Production per Capita

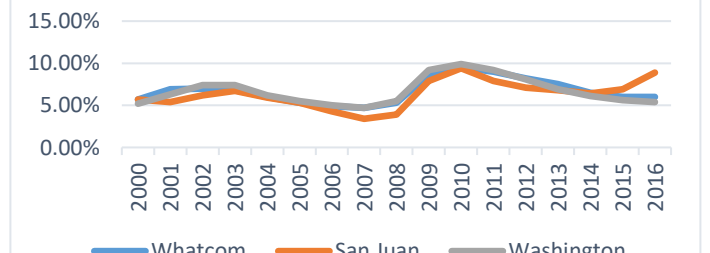
Gallons Per Capita



Source: Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board

Unemployment

Seasonally adjusted unemployment



Source: Washington Employment Security Department