

# Whatcom County / Bellingham Economic Profile

## Cost of Living / Living Wage

Regional Cost of Living 2015							
	Composite	Grocery Items	Housing	Utilities	Transportation	Health Care	Misc Goods and services
Whatcom	113.4	108.2	128.9	82.2	120.1	117.0	109.4
Skagit	111.3	117.2	110.0	79.0	113.1	120.4	118.4
Everett	111.3	107.5	127.1	84.2	116.0	126.3	104.2
Seattle	140.3	124.6	183.9	107.7	121.1	120.5	128.9

The cost of living is similar in Whatcom and Skagit counties and within the City of Everett. The cost of living in Seattle is 18% higher from these locations.

Wages in Seattle are higher than those in the other locations resulting in a equalizing scenario.

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

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 \$19.72. For 13% of the workforce, the average wage does not support a housing option. An additional 26% of the workforce may require two wage earners in a household for desired housing.

Living Wage			
	Rate	Required Household Hourly Wage	Required Household Weekly Wage
Rent 1 bedroom	\$ 724	\$ 12.54	\$ 501.73
Rent 2 bedroom	\$ 895	\$ 15.51	\$ 620.24
Rent 3 bedroom	\$ 1,023	\$ 17.72	\$ 708.94
Median home mortgage	\$ 1,124	\$ 19.47	\$ 778.93

Source: UW Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies & CEBR

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](mailto:cebr@wwu.edu) or 360-650-3909



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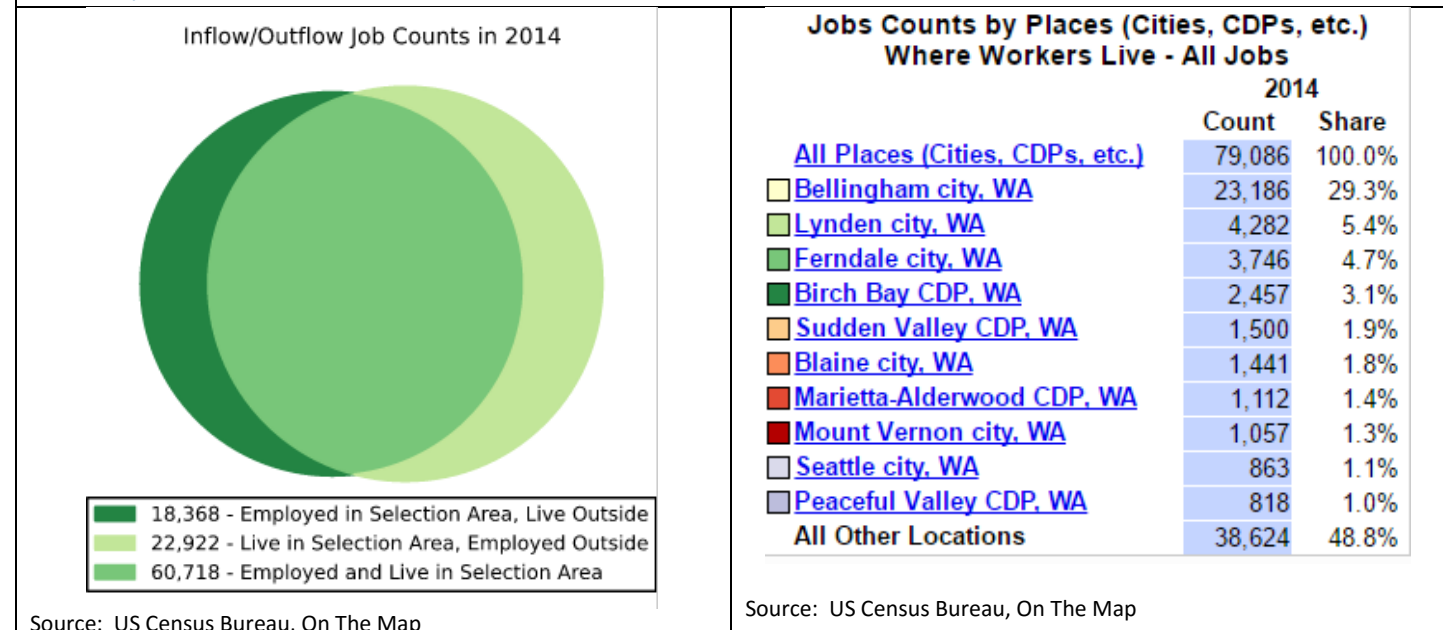
## Wage and Salary (Whatcom County – sorted by Average Weekly Wage)

Industry description	Avg. Firms	Total 2014 wages paid	Average annual employment	Average annual wage	Average weekly wage
Professional and technical services	593	\$198,040,578	3,130	\$63,272	\$1,217
Finance and insurance	170	\$124,699,092	2,045	\$60,978	\$1,173
Manufacturing	327	\$537,173,477	9,011	\$59,613	\$1,146
Construction	711	\$289,663,527	5,150	\$56,245	\$1,082
Management of companies and enterprises	27	\$26,182,644	482	\$54,321	\$1,045
Government	113	\$713,122,773	14,428	\$49,426	\$951
Information	93	\$64,014,774	1,297	\$49,356	\$949
Wholesale trade	379	\$127,533,090	2,592	\$49,203	\$946
Transportation and warehousing	179	\$86,146,121	2,091	\$41,199	\$792
Health care and social assistance	1,484	\$457,526,462	11,126	\$41,122	\$791
Other services, except public administration	505	\$77,356,725	2,413	\$32,058	\$617
Real estate and rental and leasing	219	\$31,136,030	979	\$31,804	\$612
Administrative and waste services	338	\$114,316,353	3,723	\$30,705	\$590
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	372	\$97,827,958	3,512	\$27,855	\$536
Retail trade	708	\$292,287,509	10,946	\$26,703	\$514
Educational services	93	\$17,511,907	816	\$21,461	\$413
Accommodation and food services	460	\$136,097,377	8,195	\$16,607	\$319
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	98	\$23,987,340	1,514	\$15,844	\$305
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,889</b>	<b>\$3,433,520,308</b>	<b>83,688</b>	<b>\$41,028</b>	<b>\$789</b>

Note: Government sector includes all tribal businesses and businesses located within recognized tribal land.

Source: Washington Employment Security Department

## Work / Home Shed



Source: US Census Bureau, On The Map

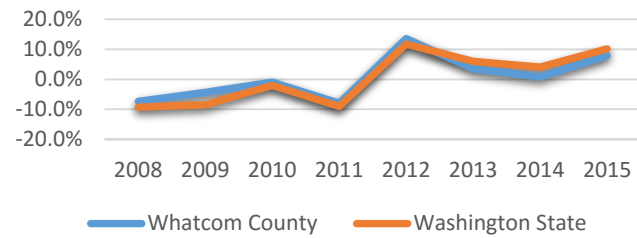
Source: US Census Bureau, On The Map

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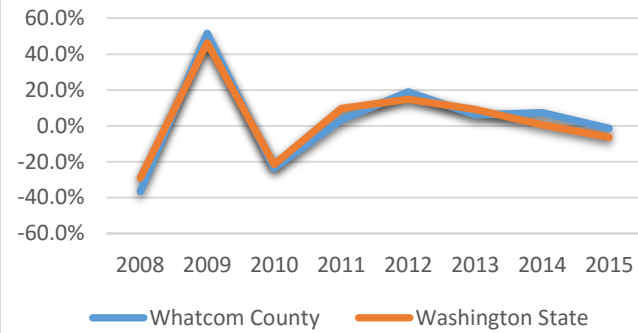
## Housing Indicators

### Median Resale Price Annual % Change



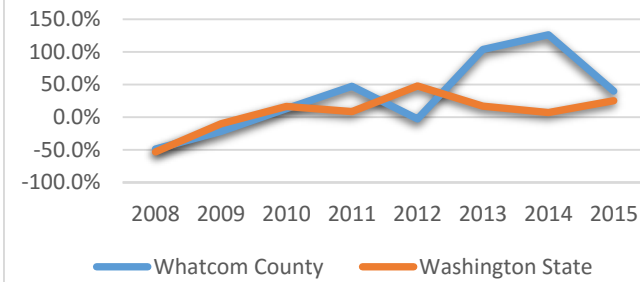
Source: UW Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies

### Sales Annual % Change



Source: UW Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies

### Building Permits Annual % Change

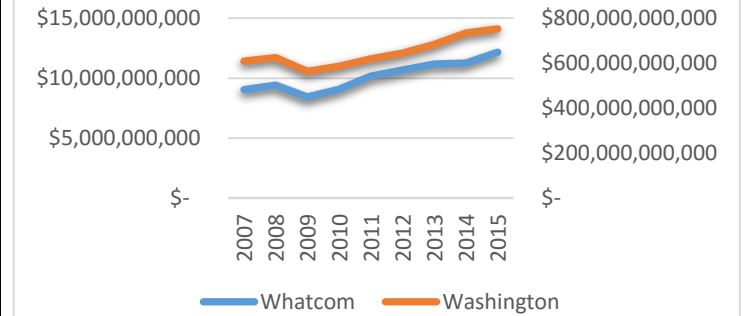


Source: UW Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies

## Gross Business Income\*

\*As reported by business filing address

### Gross Business Income

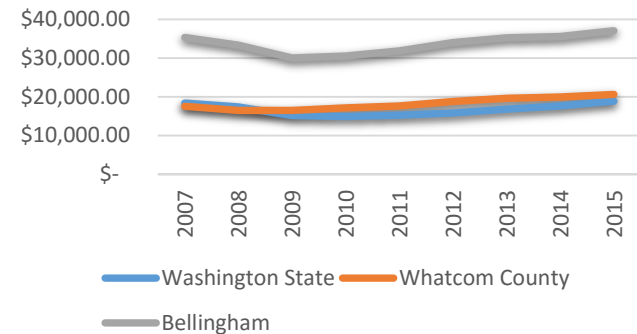


Source: Washington Department of Revenue

## Taxable Retail Sales\*

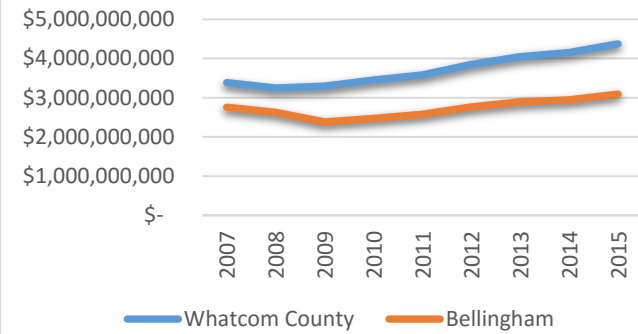
\*Taxes collected are reported by destination and may include sales for other jurisdictions but delivered within Whatcom County.

### Taxable Sales Per Capita



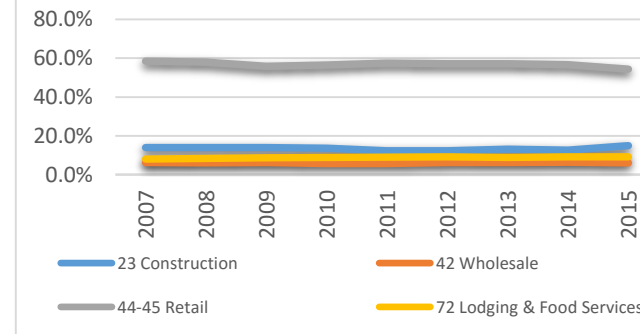
Source: Washington State Department of Revenue

### Taxable Retail Sales



Source: Washington State Department of Revenue

### Taxable Sales in Top Sectors

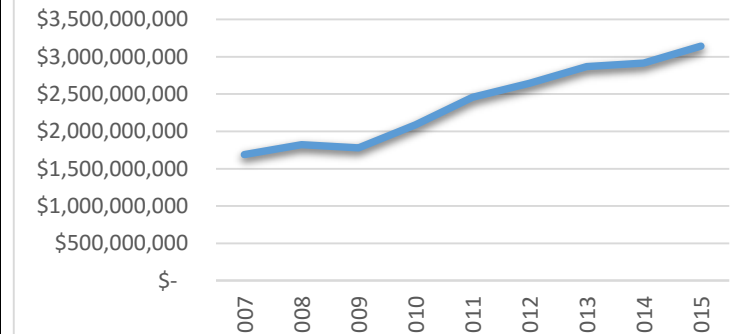


Source: Washington State Department of Revenue

## Out of State Sales\*

\*As reported by business filing address

### Out of State / Foreign Sales



Source: Washington Department of Revenue

## P – 20 Performance

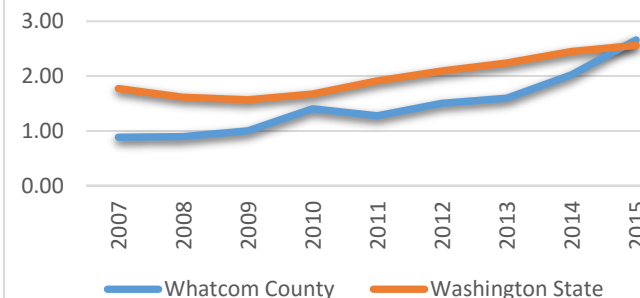
Table 1. Student enrollment by type of institution Enrolled in Postsecondary Ed

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	78%	32%	5%	41%	0-1%	22%	9%	11%	2%	0-1%	751	71%
Blaine	90-94%	40-44%	0-5%	45-49%	0-5%	10-14%	0-5%	6-9%	0-5%	0-5%	120	50-54%
Ferndale	85-89%	25-29%	0-2%	55-59%	0-2%	10-14%	3-4%	5-9%	0-2%	0-2%	268	59%
Lynden	80-84%	25-29%	3-4%	50-54%	0-2%	15-19%	5-9%	5-9%	0-2%	0-2%	196	55-59%
Meridian	95-100%	25-29%	6-9%	55-59%	0-5%	0-5%	0-5%	0-5%	0-5%	0-5%	96	60-64%
Mount Baker	85-89%	20-24%	0-5%	55-59%	0-5%	10-14%	0-5%	6-9%	0-5%	0-5%	139	55-59%
Nooksack Valley	90-94%	25-29%	0-5%	60-64%	0-5%	6-9%	0-5%	6-9%	0-5%	0-5%	89	55-59%
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>0-1%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0-1%</b>	<b>65881</b>	<b>61%</b>

Source: ERDC

## Beer Production per Capita

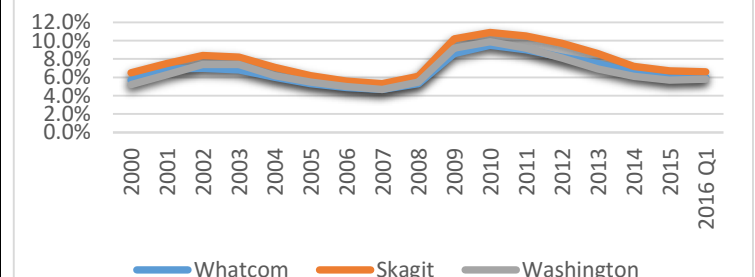
### Gallons Per Capita



Source: Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board

## Unemployment

### Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment



Source: Washington Employment Security Department