

Fact Sheet

Seattle United States Courthouse

Built in August 2004 (Gross square footage 679,752)



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The United States Courthouse in Seattle was designed in 1998, with construction completed by August 2004. It consists of a reinforced concrete foundation on drilled shaft piers with steel framing. At 390-feet-high, the building is taller than its 19 floors would suggest, since each of the courtroom floors encompass two levels. It also houses two levels of secured parking that provide 120 spaces. Several public parking garages lie within close proximity.

The Courthouse was constructed to meet the court's expanding needs that could not be met at the historic Nakamura U.S. Courthouse (seven blocks south). It is located near the northern end of Seattle's central business district. It borders with Seattle's South Lake Union tech/biotech center, which has recently become a development center, triggered in part by the Courthouse's construction. There are five other federal buildings located within the downtown area.

The 9th District Court operates out of the building, which houses a total of 18 courtrooms, including 12 district courtrooms, five bankruptcy courtrooms and one special proceedings courtroom. The 9th District Court serves California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Montana, Idaho, Nevada, Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands. The main court library resides on the 19th floor adjacent to a fully integrated IT conference suite.

The primary tenant, the Judicial Branch, includes the U.S. District Court, Bankruptcy Court, and Probation Services. In support of the court functions, the U.S. Attorneys, U.S. Marshals and the Trustees also share space.

The building occupies the entire two-acre block bounded by Seventh and Eighth Avenues, and Stewart and Virginia Streets. It straddles the northern edge of downtown and the southern edge of the Denny Triangle neighborhood. In the area, several buildings, including residential condos and high-rise office buildings have been built. The City expects growth with the advent of the construction of three Amazon.com office towers. In 2005 the City of Seattle added the South Lake Union Streetcar line one block west of the Courthouse. The building features a cafeteria with a separate entrance from the outside of the building for public access.

A one-acre plaza, landscaped with a grove of Himalayan birches and native ferns mark the main entrance. Decorative bollards as well as trees, park benches and artwork provide an unobtrusive security apron. Behind the birch grove, the stairs merge dynamically with the main courthouse procession, which terraces up the slope, the full width of the plaza to the portico. Seven slender columns support the portico's green copper patina canopy. Near the site's southwestern edge, an amphitheater-like space provides outdoor seating around a sculpture entitled; "Pillar Arc."

The building features a zero vacancy rate, which isn't expected to change in the future. The customer satisfaction survey in 2011 resulted in a score of 87 percent.

Sustainable Building Features:

- Under LEED certification review as part of a pilot, with several other large private property companies under the U.S. Green Building Council's "Volume Certification" program, which is intended to streamline the submittal process and save building owners thousands of dollars in fees.
- Participates as a Gold Level Partner with the Seattle City Light Renewable Energy Certificates.
- Will save up to \$300,000 from energy-efficient mechanical systems, water conservation, and the application of renewable energy technologies incorporated in building design.
- Replaced existing lighting with high-performance lighting and daylighting control (based on lighting analysis) with induction lighting to include main lobby, atrium, elevator entry, mural, staircase, metal sculpture and garage lighting
- Installed advanced metering: One data acquisition server meter, four electric, two natural gas, and one water meter.
- Entry door upgrade.
- Diverted more than 70 percent of landfill waste to recycling, composting and other reuse, which has resulted in moving from weekly trash pickups to one per month.
- Energy Star rating of 87, which will improve because of upgrades, and energy-saving projects and practices.