

[CHS 2009: Capitol Hill development year in review](#)

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By JoshMahar

2009 was a tumultuous year for development in our little neighborhood on the hill. Unlike previous years, when it felt like new condo projects would swallow up every piece of culture and art around, the Great Recession put many development projects on "indefinite hold." But there were some projects that did move forward, and others that were optimistically announced. Sound Transit also radically changed the cityscape along Broadway. In the spirit of Year End Reviews, here is a recap of development on Capitol Hill in 2009.

Victims of A Global Recession

<http://www.capitolhillseattle.com/2009/12/26/the-year-in-review-capitol-hill-development/vacantapartmentbuilding.jpg/medium>

Continuing a [trend of 2008](#), many Capitol Hill development projects struggled in 2009. [Brix Condos](#) went to auction in September and [The Summit](#) followed suit earlier this month. [25 on the Park](#), a townhome project just East of Cal Anderson Park, went into foreclosure and is still waiting to be completed. Other development projects which were expected to begin construction this year have been put on "indefinite hold" including: [1623 Bellevue](#), [2026 E. Madison](#), [401 E. Pike St.](#), [1605 Bellevue](#) (now a vacant apartment building), and let's not forget everyone's favorite, the 500 E. Pine block, now known as the [People's Parking Lot](#). Overall, not a single project broke ground this year.

Progress Amid the Storm

http://www.capitolhillseattle.com/2009/12/26/the-year-in-review-capitol-hill-development/building_inset.jpg/mediumEleven Eleven E. Pike

But development did not grind to a complete halt in 2009. Major projects such as the [Chloe Apartments](#) and the [Packard Building](#) continued construction, both opening earlier this month, and the Kundig-designed [1111 E. Pike](#) project opened over the summer. Work also continues on [Joule](#) and the [Broadway Building](#) as well as the unique townhomes at the [Church of Christ Scientists](#) on 16th. All of these projects are set to open in the first half of 2010.

We also saw a number of notable development projects announced this year. [224 Broadway](#), at Broadway and Thomas, was expanded to include nearly 2/3rds of the block, set to replace the buildings that house Bank of America, Noah's Bagels, Pho 900, Cafe Septieme and the CH Chamber of Commerce, as well as the parking lot where the Farmer's Market takes place. Plans for a new mixed-use project at [11th and Pine](#), current site of the Spray King/Sun Electric building, were announced this year, with a proposal to maintain the historic facade. The [Bullitt Foundation announced plans for a new headquarters](#) at 14th and Madison, current home of C.C. Attle's, which is set to be one of the city's first Living Building's. And finally, Seattle University gave us some details on their [big plans for 12th and Madison](#). All of these projects, though, are in the early stages of planning and only the Bullitt project is scheduled to break ground in 2010.

Broadway's Big Hole

<http://www.capitolhillseattle.com/2009/12/26/the-year-in-review-capitol-hill-development/jackintheboxdemolition.jpg/medium>Demolition of Jack in the Box

Perhaps the biggest development story this year was Sound Transit's work on the Capitol Hill Light Rail Station, which includes 3-acres of land surrounding the intersection of Broadway and Denny. After a [neat art display](#) at the end of 2008, the old buildings on the site were [relegated to the annals of history](#), with the [Broadway Jack in the Box](#) building being the last to fall in May. With staging, prepping, and utility relocation completed in 2009, Sound Transit will now move on to Phase 2 of the eight year process: [Excavation and Tunneling](#). In January [Denny St. will be closed](#) between Broadway and 10th for the next six years (if not permanently), and [16 foot high sound walls](#) should be going up in the next few months. The Capitol Hill Station, along with the University Station, is set to open at the end of 2016.

In addition to the actual station construction, work also commenced on planning for the Transit Oriented Development that will eventually sprout on the 3-acre lot. Sound Transit held three [TOD community meetings](#) and established a TOD stakeholders group which met monthly and is tasked with making recommendations to ST in the new year. Sound Transit also paved the way for [the extension of Nagle Place](#), which will possibly be the new home of the Broadway Farmer's Market. In September the Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce hired local design firm, Schemata Workshop to host a [TOD Design Charrette](#) which brought more than 70 community members together to discuss opportunities for the future site.

Looking Forward to the New Year

With some economists predicting an end to the Global Recession, we may see a slew of new development projects start up in 2010. But my guess is that things will remain pretty slow for the foreseeable future. But perhaps this isn't a bad thing. New buildings add to an already significant over-supply of retail space. Buildings such as John Court and Trace Lofts, which have been open for years, still have retail space that has yet to be filled. It will also give the community a much needed break from the traumatic displacement of popular businesses and character buildings. After a decade of nearly uninterrupted growth and change, maybe it's good that Capitol Hill will get a few years to breath and rediscover itself before light rail dramatically reshapes things once again.

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