

Apple says it plans to turn Seattle into 'key engineering hub' with 2,000 new workers

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Apple plans to add 2,000 software and hardware jobs in Seattle within the next five years, starting with 200 additional jobs this year, company officials said Monday at a news conference with Mayor Jenny Durkan.

The [company](#) is leasing all the office space at 333 Dexter Ave. N., a

complex of two 12-story buildings nearing completion at Dexter Avenue and Thomas Street, one block west of the core Amazon campus in South Lake Union.

The office space could accommodate more than 3,000 employees.

"If you look at where they've grown elsewhere in the country, their growth has been exponential to what they anticipated," Durkan said. "And so I think it's a really good sign."

Apple announced plans to establish new engineering hubs outside of its Silicon Valley home in 2018, including a new campus in Austin, Texas, and a growing presence in Seattle.

While Amazon was being courted by many cities and states hoping to be the site of its HQ2, dangling big packages of tax breaks and other lures, Durkan said, "We're able to have companies come locate here at this scale without us having to offer those kind of incentives."

Apple employs 500 people in the city in its [retail stores](#) and an office at Two Union Square, focused on machine learning.

With the expansion, "Seattle will become a key engineering hub for Apple with new positions distributed across many specialty engineering fields," said Apple's Vice President of Global Real Estate, Kristina Raspe. She declined to answer questions.

Developer Kilroy Realty is putting the two buildings on the former site of KING 5. The project is slated to include 635,000 square feet of office and retail space and 19,000 square feet of outdoor space and will open by the end of the year. Its future occupancy had been the subject of much speculation, with Amazon and Facebook mentioned as possible tenants.

Durkan acknowledged the rising cost of housing in Seattle—blamed by many on the boom in technology jobs—and vowed to respond to the problem as Apple and other [tech companies](#) build a larger presence in the city.

"We want to make sure that we are able to take advantage of some of the lessons San Francisco shows us," Durkan said.

Seattle has become one of the most expensive cities to hire technology workers. A recent study by the job-seeking platform Hired put the average salary for technology employees here at \$138,000, second only to the San Francisco area.

Marilyn Strickland, president of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, who also spoke at the event, stressed the need "to make sure that when we have companies like Apple who want to expand here that we have prosperity that can benefit the people who've called Seattle home for a very, very long time."

Apple's history in Seattle includes buying the Seattle startup Union Bay Networks, a cloud-networking company, in 2014. Two years later it nabbed another startup, Turi, that focused on machine learning.

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