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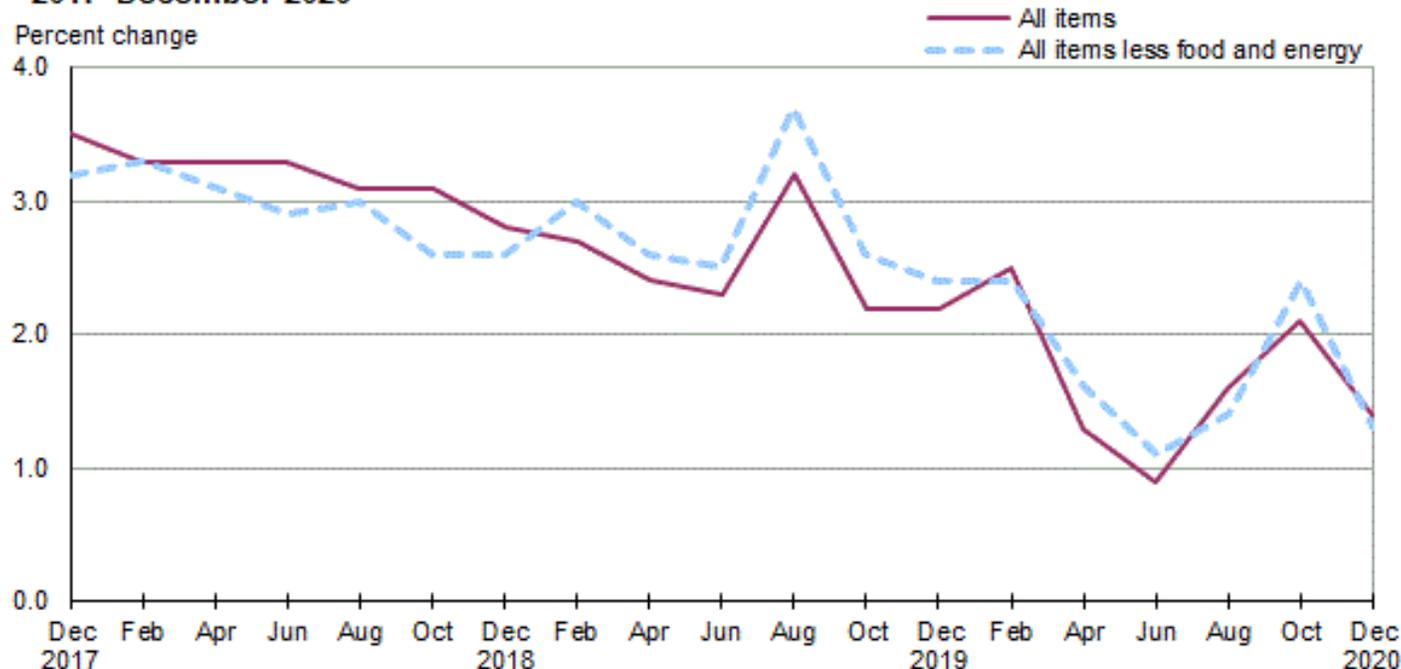
Consumer Price Index, Seattle area — December 2020

Area prices were down 0.4 percent over the past two months, up 1.4 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Seattle area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), decreased 0.4 percent for the two months ending in December 2020, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See [table A](#).) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the December decrease was influenced by lower prices for household furnishings and operations, apparel, and medical care. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U advanced 1.4 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) The index for all items less food and energy increased 1.3 percent over the year. Food prices rose 4.8 percent. Energy prices declined 6.7 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA, December 2017–December 2020



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices increased 0.5 percent for the two months ending in December. (See [table 1.](#)) Prices for food at home increased 0.9 percent largely due to price advances in dairy and related products (8.3 percent). Prices for food away from home were unchanged for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 4.8 percent. Prices for food away from home moved up 5.0 percent since a year ago, and prices for food at home advanced 4.6 percent.

Energy

The energy index increased 1.7 percent for the two months ending in December. The increase was mainly due to higher prices for natural gas service (7.6 percent). Prices for electricity rose 1.1 percent, and prices for gasoline moved up 0.8 percent for the same period.

Energy prices declined 6.7 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-14.0 percent). Prices paid for electricity rose 4.8 percent, and prices for natural gas service increased 3.4 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy decreased 0.7 percent in the latest two-month period. Lower prices for apparel (-3.0 percent), household furnishings and operations (-2.7 percent), and medical care (-1.4 percent) were partially offset by higher prices for new vehicles (1.9 percent), education and communication (0.6 percent), and shelter (0.3 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy increased 1.3 percent. Components contributing to the increase included household furnishings and operations (6.8 percent) and shelter (2.5 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price decreases in motor vehicle insurance (-11.6 percent), apparel (-1.5 percent), and recreation (-1.4 percent).

Table A. Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA, CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	2-month	12-month								
February	0.2	2.2	1.0	3.4	0.8	3.3	0.7	2.7	1.0	2.5
April	1.1	2.5	0.8	3.1	0.8	3.3	0.5	2.4	-0.6	1.3
June	0.9	1.8	0.8	3.0	0.8	3.3	0.7	2.3	0.2	0.9
August	0.3	2.1	-0.2	2.5	-0.3	3.1	0.6	3.2	1.4	1.6
October	0.0	2.4	0.5	3.0	0.4	3.1	-0.6	2.2	-0.1	2.1
December	0.0	2.6	0.5	3.5	0.2	2.8	0.3	2.2	-0.4	1.4

The February 2021 Consumer Price Index for the Seattle area is scheduled to be released on March 10, 2021.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Impact on December 2020 Consumer Price Index Data

Data collection by personal visit for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) program has been suspended since March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in December was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices considered temporarily unavailable and imputed.

While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month. Additional information is available at <https://www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-consumer-price-index.htm>.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 93 percent of the total U.S. population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 percent of the total U.S. population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments—department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date; for most of the CPI-U the reference base is 1982-84 equals 100. An increase of 7 percent from the reference base, for example, is shown as 107.000. Alternatively, that relationship can also be expressed as the price of a base period market basket of goods and services rising from \$100 to \$107. For further details see the CPI home page on the internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the CPI section of the BLS Handbook of Methods available on the internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/cpi/.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA. metropolitan area covered in this release is comprised of King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties in the State of Washington.

Information in this release will be made available to individuals with sensory impairments upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Oct. 2020	Nov. 2020	Dec. 2020	Dec. 2019	Oct. 2020	Nov. 2020
Expenditure category						
All items	284.505	-	283.409	1.4	-0.4	-
All items (1967=100)	867.281	-	863.940	-	-	-
Food and beverages	289.724	-	290.379	4.6	0.2	-
Food	292.258	-	293.595	4.8	0.5	-
Food at home	262.512	269.179	264.780	4.6	0.9	-1.6
Cereals and bakery products	303.710	-	299.146	-1.3	-1.5	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	223.190	-	224.998	6.8	0.8	-
Dairy and related products	225.928	-	244.629	7.8	8.3	-
Fruits and vegetables	409.268	-	419.686	6.3	2.5	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)	351.038	-	339.218	14.9	-3.4	-
Other food at home	214.166	-	213.953	-0.4	-0.1	-
Food away from home	337.641	-	337.641	5.0	0.0	-
Alcoholic beverages	259.056	-	253.775	2.3	-2.0	-
Housing	341.933	-	341.917	3.1	0.0	-
Shelter	394.036	393.051	395.061	2.5	0.3	0.5
Rent of primary residence(2)	405.000	403.364	405.554	2.8	0.1	0.5
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(2)(3)	417.166	416.560	418.944	2.4	0.4	0.6
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(1)(2)	417.166	416.560	418.944	2.4	0.4	0.6
Fuels and utilities	279.354	-	283.651	4.1	1.5	-
Household energy	247.919	252.994	254.518	4.3	2.7	0.6
Energy services(2)	293.242	299.044	300.895	4.4	2.6	0.6
Electricity(2)	322.962	323.876	326.525	4.8	1.1	0.8
Utility (piped) gas service(2)	162.731	175.147	175.147	3.4	7.6	0.0
Household furnishings and operations	185.202	-	180.133	6.8	-2.7	-
Apparel	126.898	-	123.089	-1.5	-3.0	-
Transportation	216.674	-	211.578	-4.7	-2.4	-
Private transportation	226.228	-	226.077	-4.0	-0.1	-
New and used motor vehicles(4)	101.050	-	100.810	3.1	-0.2	-
New vehicles(1)	187.688	-	191.341	-1.7	1.9	-
Used cars and trucks(1)	352.198	-	346.937	11.1	-1.5	-
Motor fuel	306.103	303.931	308.726	-14.1	0.9	1.6
Gasoline (all types)	312.626	310.317	315.034	-14.0	0.8	1.5
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4)	336.655	333.766	339.687	-14.3	0.9	1.8
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5)	260.147	258.708	257.223	-15.1	-1.1	-0.6
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4)	295.362	294.631	296.760	-12.8	0.5	0.7
Motor vehicle insurance(1)	509.658	-	509.658	-11.6	0.0	-
Medical care	415.061	-	409.420	-0.6	-1.4	-
Recreation(6)	99.765	-	100.304	-1.4	0.5	-
Education and communication(6)	145.009	-	145.897	2.4	0.6	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1) ..	1,730.993	-	1,731.814	2.1	0.0	-
Other goods and services	416.035	-	416.753	-0.4	0.2	-
Commodity and service group						
All items	284.505	-	283.409	1.4	-0.4	-
Commodities	198.281	-	197.533	2.7	-0.4	-
Commodities less food & beverages	154.405	-	153.038	1.1	-0.9	-
Nondurables less food & beverages	184.531	-	182.280	-4.0	-1.2	-
Durables	123.229	-	122.613	7.6	-0.5	-
Services	365.038	-	363.616	0.7	-0.4	-

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Oct. 2020	Nov. 2020	Dec. 2020	Dec. 2019	Oct. 2020	Nov. 2020
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	278.663	-	277.787	1.6	-0.3	-
All items less shelter.....	242.620	-	240.804	0.8	-0.7	-
Commodities less food	158.605	-	157.067	1.2	-1.0	-
Nondurables	235.209	-	234.419	1.1	-0.3	-
Nondurables less food.....	190.824	-	188.297	-3.2	-1.3	-
Services less rent of shelter(3).....	338.603	-	334.490	-1.4	-1.2	-
Services less medical care services.....	357.323	-	356.202	0.8	-0.3	-
Energy	283.491	284.964	288.202	-6.7	1.7	1.1
All items less energy	287.300	-	285.928	1.8	-0.5	-
All items less food and energy	286.656	-	284.791	1.3	-0.7	-

Footnotes

(1) Indexes on a November 1977=100 base.

(2) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(3) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

(6) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

- Data not available

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.