

= CenturyLink Field =

CenturyLink Field is a multi @-@ purpose stadium in Seattle , Washington , United States . It serves as the home field for the Seattle Seahawks of the National Football League (NFL) and Seattle Sounders FC of Major League Soccer (MLS) . Originally called Seahawks Stadium it became Qwest Field on June 23 , 2004 , when telecommunications carrier Qwest acquired the naming rights . It received its current name in June 2011 after the acquisition of Qwest by CenturyLink . The complex also includes the Event Center with the WaMu Theater , a parking garage , and a public plaza . The venue hosts concerts , trade shows , and consumer shows along with sporting events . Located within a mile (1 @.@ 6 km) of Seattle 's central business district , the venue is accessible by multiple freeways and forms of mass transit .

The stadium was built between 2000 and 2002 after voters approved funding for the construction in a statewide election held on June 17 , 1997 . This vote created the Washington State Public Stadium Authority to oversee public ownership of the venue . The owner of the Seahawks , Paul Allen , formed First & Goal Inc. to develop and operate the new facilities . Allen was closely involved in the design process and emphasized the importance of an open @-@ air venue with an intimate atmosphere . The stadium is a modern facility with views of the skyline of Downtown Seattle . The stadium can seat 69 @,@ 000 people .

The crowd at CenturyLink Field is notoriously loud during Seahawks games . On September 15 , 2013 , during a game against the San Francisco 49ers , the fans broke the Guinness World Record for loudest crowd roar at an outdoor stadium with 136 @.@ 6 decibels . The record was broken on October 13 , 2013 , at Kansas City 's Arrowhead Stadium , home of the NFL 's Kansas City Chiefs with a roar of 137 @.@ 5 dB , but fans reclaimed the title on December 2 , 2013 , during a Monday night game against the New Orleans Saints , with a roar of 137 @.@ 6 decibels . Arrowhead reclaimed the title on September 29 , 2014 reaching 142 @.@ 2 dB in a Monday Night Football game vs. the Patriots . The noise has contributed to the team 's home field advantage with an increase in false start (movement by an offensive player prior to the play) and delay of game (failure of the offense to snap the ball prior to the play clock expiring) penalties against visiting teams . The stadium was the first in the NFL to implement a FieldTurf artificial field . Numerous college and high school American football games have also been played at the stadium .

CenturyLink Field is also designed for soccer . The first sporting event held included a United Soccer Leagues (USL) Seattle Sounders match . The USL team began using the stadium regularly for home games in 2003 . The MLS expansion team Seattle Sounders FC , began its inaugural season in 2009 at the stadium . CenturyLink Field was the site of the MLS Cup in 2009 . The venue also hosted the 2010 and 2011 tournament finals for the U.S. Open Cup . Sounders FC won both times and new attendance records were set each year it was hosted at CenturyLink Field . On August 25 , 2013 , the Sounders broke a new home field attendance record when 67 @,@ 385 fans turned out to watch them play the Portland Timbers .

= = Funding = =

The Seahawks played their home games at the Kingdome from their 1976 inaugural season until 1999 . In 1995 a proposal was made to issue county bonds to fund a remodeling project of the facility . The proposal failed , and as a result , Seahawks ' owner Ken Behring threatened to sell or move the team . In 1997 local billionaire Paul Allen pledged to acquire the team if a new stadium could be built and said that the team could not be profitable until they left the Kingdome . He asked the state legislature to hold a special statewide referendum on a proposal to finance a new stadium . Allen also agreed to cover any cost overruns . With Allen agreeing to pay the \$ 4 million cost , the legislature agreed . The vote was scheduled to be held in June 1997 but in May a Seattle resident filed a lawsuit that claimed the legislature did not have authority to call for such a vote , since it would be paid for by a private party who could gain from the result . The case was delayed until after the vote . The proposal was pitched to voters as providing both a new home for the Seahawks and a venue for top @-@ level soccer . It passed on June 17 , 1997 , with 820 @,@ 364 (51 @.@ 1 %)

in favor and 783 @, @ 584 against . The vote was close in Seattle , but it received 60 % approval in Seattle 's northern and eastern suburbs . The public funding was unpopular farther away in the eastern portion of the state . In October , a Thurston County Superior Court judge ruled that the legislature acted properly and in the public 's interest , and he dismissed the pending lawsuit . The Washington Supreme Court upheld the decision that December .

Voter approval of the referendum created a public ? private partnership . The Washington State Public Stadium Authority was created to oversee public ownership of the stadium , exhibition center , and parking garage complex . Allen purchased the Seahawks and formed First & Goal Inc. to build and operate the facility . The budget for the project was \$ 430 million . Of this cost , \$ 44 million was allotted to build the Event Center , \$ 26 million for the parking garage , and \$ 360 million for the stadium . First & Goal was to cover cost overruns and pay up to \$ 130 million of the project while the contribution from the public was capped at \$ 300 million . The public funding package included new sports @-@ related state lottery games , taxes on the facility 's admissions and parking , sales tax credits and deferrals , and an eight @-@ year extension of the 2 % tax on hotel rooms in King County . The taxes on admissions and parking are set at 2 % to pay off the project 's tax @-@ exempt bonds . Those taxes will be kept below the authorized 10 % to preserve the tax @-@ exempt status , but the percentage will be increased to the full amount when the bonds are completely paid in 2021 . At such time , they will become dedicated funding sources for maintenance and modernization of the facilities .

In September 1998 First & Goal signed a 30 @-@ year stadium lease that includes options to extend for another 20 . Per the agreement , the Public Stadium Authority receives \$ 850 @, @ 000 a year from First and Goal (adjusted for inflation) , and First & Goal keeps all revenue from the stadium and parking garage . The company receives 80 % of the revenue from the exhibition center while the other twenty percent is allotted to a state education fund . First & Goal is responsible for all operating and maintenance costs , expected to be \$ 6 million a year , and must keep the facility in " first @-@ class " condition . Other details of the lease include the availability of affordable seats , a coordinated effort with neighboring Safeco Field to prevent gridlock , a provision for naming rights , the investment in public art at the stadium , and the giveaway of a luxury suite to a fan each Seahawks ' game .

= = Construction and layout = =

The architectural firm Ellerbe Becket , in association with Loschky Marquardt & Nesholm Architects of Seattle , designed the 1 @, @ 500 @, @ 000 sq ft (140 @, @ 000 m²) project . Allen was closely involved during the design process . While growing up he attended games at the University of Washington 's outdoor Husky Stadium . His goal was to create a similar experience and atmosphere at the new venue . The exhibition center portion of the project was designed over a period of 14 months by Loschky Marquardt & Nesholm Architects while First & Goal managed the construction . Town meetings were held to discuss the impact on the public , and the company created a \$ 6 million mitigation fund for nearby neighborhoods . In accordance with a program established by the building team , contracts totaling \$ 81 million were awarded to minority- and women @-@ owned businesses . Union apprentices made up 19 % of the workforce through another program with local trade unions .

In September 1998 construction began on the new exhibition center and parking garage . By October 1999 the exhibition center was open and hosting events . On March 26 , 2000 , to make way for the stadium , the Kingdome was demolished in the world 's largest implosion of a single concrete structure . Almost all of the Kingdome rubble was recycled with roughly half used for the new stadium . The designers were challenged by the soft soil at the site since it was a tidal marsh until public works projects in the early 20th century adjusted the waterline of nearby Elliott Bay . The top layer is a soft fill taken from the grading projects that had leveled portions of Seattle 's hills . To account for the soft soil , the complex sits on over 2 @, @ 200 pilings driven 50 to 70 ft (15 to 21 m) below the ground to form what is essentially a pier for the foundation . Eight individually connected sections were built to account for the soil concerns , temperature effects , and the potential for

earthquakes . The adjoining exhibition center and parking garage are separate structures and are not part of the eight @-@ section stadium .

The site of CenturyLink Field is the smallest of those developed for new NFL stadiums . The upper levels were cantilevered over the lower sections to fit within the limited space . Along with the angle of seats and the placement of the lower sections closer to the field , this provided a better view of the field than typically seen throughout the country and allowed for a 67 @,@ 000 @-@ seat capacity . Space is available to increase the total capacity to 72 @,@ 000 for special events . Included in the capacity are 111 suites and over 7 @,@ 000 club seats . The stadium has 1 @,@ 400 seats for those with disabilities and their companions located in various sections . In 2009 CenturyLink Field ranked 21st out of the 31 stadiums in the NFL for total seating capacity .

The configuration of CenturyLink Field is a U @-@ shape with an open north end to provide views of downtown Seattle and the large north plaza . The large retractable roof of Safeco Field along with Mount Rainier to the southeast can be seen from the partially open south end . The stadium 's concourses were built to be wide , and they provide additional views of the surrounding area . A 13 @-@ story tower was erected at the north end of the stadium that visually complements the Seattle skyline . The tower features a vertically oriented scoreboard which is the first of its kind in the NFL . At the base is bleacher seating for 3 @,@ 000 called the " Hawks ' Nest " . Another addition not previously seen in the NFL are field @-@ level luxury suites located directly behind the north end zone .

Allen rejected plans for a retractable roof during the early stages of the stadium 's design . The lack of a retractable roof made it open to the elements , provided better views , and reduced the total cost of the project . The roof , at 200 @,@ 000 sq ft (19 @,@ 000 m²) , covers 70 % of the seats but leaves the field open . The roof spans 720 ft (220 m) between concrete pylon supports at the north and south ends of the stadium . Its two expansive sections are held from below by trusses . From above , two arches with additional supports rise 200 ft (61 m) over the field . Post @-@ tensioned cables were used to achieve its final shape and positioning . To minimize damage in the event of an earthquake , the roof has a friction pendulum damper system . This disconnects the roof from the support pylons so that it can move independently of the structure . The technology had never been applied to a large @-@ scale roof before CenturyLink Field .

The roof was originally painted white to aesthetically distinguish it from both Safeco Field and the nearby industrial area . The east side of the stadium has a large glass curtain wall that faces the nearby International District . The exterior of the stadium also consists of salmon @-@ colored concrete , and the west side of the structure is partially clad with red brick . The coloring and facade were designed so the stadium would blend with the older buildings in neighboring Pioneer Square . To reduce costs , the exterior was not completed with brick or ornate steel work .

A 6 @.@ 8 @-@ magnitude earthquake struck the Seattle area during construction . The structure responded as expected by the designers , and there was minimal damage . The project was completed on budget and a month ahead of schedule .

In 2015 the stadium was expanded with the addition of the Toyota Fan Deck including a new 12 Flag raising platform . This expansion was privately funded by the Seahawks and the 1 @,@ 000 additional seats were made available to purchase by current season ticket holders the Blue Pride waiting list for season tickets . The additional seating pushed the capacity of the stadium to 69 @,@ 000 @-@ plus .

= = Surface = =

In 2002 , CenturyLink Field became the first stadium in the NFL to install a FieldTurf artificial field . The surface is made of plastic fibers rooted in a mixture of ground rubber and sand . The field was replaced in the spring of 2008 after tests showed that compression of the sand and rubber increased the risk of player injuries . FieldTurf won the bid for the second installation over Polytan . For the replacement surface , a one @-@ inch (two and one @-@ half centimeters) poured rubber foundation was added to prevent the compression from reoccurring . Under the naming rights agreement , Qwest paid \$ 500 @,@ 000 for the installation and First & Goal paid the remaining

amount , which was undisclosed . By 2010 the FieldTurf 's quality had decreased with the blades becoming matted down . It also failed FIFA 's quality testing to be ranked 2 Star . A new FieldTurf surface was laid down in 2012 and it met the requirements of a 2 Star field after testing .

The 1997 state referendum stated that the stadium would feature a natural grass surface , but FieldTurf was not an option when the stadium was originally presented to voters according to the Public Stadium Authority . Seahawks management reconsidered surface after the Seahawks played on FieldTurf at Husky Stadium during the 2000 and 2001 seasons . Artificial turf was installed because it was easier to maintain than natural grass . The potential damage to a natural grass field caused by Seattle 's frequent rain also made the surface an appropriate option . In order to keep a grass surface robust under heavy football use during late fall and early winter rains , a \$ 1 @. @ 8 million irrigation and heating system would have been required . The coach of the Seahawks at the time , Mike Holmgren , said FieldTurf installation was the right decision and stated that " the players love it , and I think this surface will offer a better product on the field for the fans . "

Local soccer fans were concerned that the lack of a natural grass field would hinder Seattle 's chances of receiving an MLS expansion franchise . They asserted that voters had approved the facility with the understanding that the new stadium was intended for soccer as well as football . In a compromise , First & Goal agreed to pay for grass to be installed for special events when needed .

There have been various opinions regarding both the artificial surface and temporary grass surfaces used for soccer matches . After the Brazilian national team defeated Canada 's side 3 ? 2 in 2008 , Brazil 's coach commented that one reason for his team 's unexpectedly poor performance was the loosely installed grass field . The Grenada national team struggled to cope with the artificial surface during their loss at the 2009 CONCACAF Gold Cup . In July 2009 , the U.S. Soccer Federation chose D.C. United 's RFK Stadium over CenturyLink Field for the U.S. Open Cup . The general manager of D.C. United speculated that RFK 's grass field was one of the reasons his team had a stronger bid . The general manager of the Sounders , Adrian Hanauer , told The Seattle Times in 2010 that replacement of the surface was a continuing conversation between the Sounders and Allen 's Vulcan Inc . When the Los Angeles Galaxy traveled to Seattle in May 2012 , the FieldTurf was noted as one of the reasons David Beckham and Robbie Keane were left out of the line @- @ up .

Between August and November both the Seahawks and Sounders FC host games at CenturyLink Field . Each team has emphasized the importance of playing their games without the other team 's painted lines on the field . Around 2003 , at the Seahawks ' request , local company EcoChemical developed for the field a new kind of paint " designed to fail . " The new paint is relatively easy to remove with a power washer and a special chemical solution , a process that the company describes as environmentally friendly . With the new paint , converting the field between American football and soccer takes 14 hours in dry weather , though painting logos and other colors takes additional time .

A new turf field , using the FieldTurf Revolution 360 , was installed in February 2016 ahead of the 2016 Sounders season .

= = American football = =

= = = Seahawks = = =

Prior to the stadium opening in 2002 , Allen and Bob Whitsitt said that they hoped the new stadium would help turn the Seahawks into a Super Bowl contender and that Seattle would be considered to host the championship game . The seating is expandable to 72 @, @ 000 for the purpose of holding the game , but the NFL typically does not consider cities with outdoor stadiums where the average temperature in February is below 50 ° F (10 ° C) . The number of season tickets available at Qwest was capped at 61 @, @ 000 following the Super Bowl appearance . The ensuing waiting list was the first for the Seahawks since the early 1990s .

The team 's first season at their new home was in 2002 . Their first game at the new facility was a

28 ? 10 preseason loss to the Indianapolis Colts on August 11 , 2002 . They went on to end their first season at the new field with a 7 ? 9 record . In the 2003 season , the team went undefeated at home and reached the playoffs . It was the first time the franchise had won 10 games in a single season in 17 years . The Seahawks again reached the postseason during the 2004 season and played their first playoff game at CenturyLink Field on January 8 , 2005 . In that game , they lost to the St. Louis Rams who had already defeated them twice that season . The following season , the Seahawks went undefeated at home for the second time in three years and won their first @-@ ever NFC Championship , but lost in Super Bowl XL . Between 2002 and 2005 , the Seahawks won 24 of their 32 regular season games at the stadium .

In 2006 the Seahawks had a 9 ? 7 record and hosted the Dallas Cowboys in the wild card round of the playoffs . The Seahawks trailed 20 ? 13 with less than 7 minutes remaining but came back to win 21 ? 20 . In 2007 , the team won seven of their eight home games and clinched their fourth consecutive division title . CenturyLink Field was again the site for their wild card game , and they defeated the Washington Redskins 35 ? 14 . In 2008 , the Seahawks went 4 ? 12 and had only two home wins . Holmgren left the organization after the season . When he was interviewed about memorable moments and the fans , he said that CenturyLink Field was " a remarkable place to compete in and to play professional football . " He called a game at the stadium " an experience . "

In 2010 , the Seahawks were the first NFL team with a losing record ever to win a division title in a season not shortened by a strike . Seattle earned its fifth consecutive home playoff victory with a 41 ? 36 win over the New Orleans Saints . " God bless the voters , " defensive tackle Craig Terrill said after the game in reference to the stadium 's importance to the franchise .

Under Pete Carroll , the Seahawks were undefeated at home during the 2012 season . Season tickets for 2013 sold @-@ out with a franchise @-@ record 98 % renewal rate .

CenturyLink Field often sells out for Seahawks games . Although the team struggled in 2008 and 2009 , the team maintained its base of season ticket holders . Before the 2008 season , the 14 @,@ 000 single game tickets not already allotted sold out less than 15 minutes after they became available . By the end of the 2009 season , the Seahawks had sold out 60 consecutive games . After going 9 ? 23 over two seasons in 2008 and 2009 , the number of available season tickets was increased to 62 @,@ 000 . The largest crowd to attend a Seahawks game at CenturyLink Field was 69 @,@ 055 vs the Pittsburgh Steelers on November 29 , 2015 .

= = = = Home field advantage = = = =

CenturyLink Field has earned a reputation as one of the loudest stadiums in the NFL . It was , at one point in time , in the Guinness World Record books for being the loudest stadium in the world . The seating decks and partial roof , both trap and amplify exceptional amounts of noise and reflect it back onto the field . This noise possibly contributes to increased false start penalties since opposing offenses can miss audibles and the snap count , as well as delay of game penalties due to the reduced efficiency of communicating plays to the offense . From 2002 through 2012 , there have been 143 false @-@ start penalties on visiting teams in Seattle , second only to the Minnesota Vikings . During that same time period , the Seahawks have accumulated a home win record of 59 @-@ 29 , with a simultaneous road record of 33 @-@ 55

When Tod Leiweke was hired as the Seahawks ' new CEO in 2003 , he had a large flagpole installed in the south end to fly the 12th Man Flag as a tribute to the team 's 12th man . The organization had retired the number in 1984 to honor the 12th man . A local celebrity , sometimes a former Seahawk , raises the flag during the network television pre @-@ game events . The Seahawks currently refer to their fans as the 12s .

In 2005 , the stadium gained national attention when the visiting New York Giants committed 11 false start penalties . Seahawks head coach Mike Holmgren attributed the penalties to the enthusiasm and noise from the crowd . He dedicated the ball used to make the game @-@ winning field goal to the fans , and it is now displayed at the stadium . The Giants ' general manager , Ernie Accorsi , asked an NFL senior vice president whether the Seahawks had broadcast artificial crowd noise over the public address system during this game . The NFL sent a memorandum early in the

2006 season about such complaints and sent officials to monitor two games . Holmgren denied the allegations , and the crowd responded by being even louder than usual when the Giants returned to CenturyLink Field . Since 2005 the Seahawks have tracked the number of false starts committed by visiting teams and display the statistic on a scoreboard to motivate the crowd . As of 2013 , the stadium has had a league @-@ high number of false starts since . In preparation for 2005 ? 06 NFC Championship Game at CenturyLink Field , the Carolina Panthers practiced with the recorded sounds of jet engines in the background to prepare for the volume of the crowd .

Kickers experience further disadvantages when attempting field goals at CenturyLink Field . Both the stadium 's proximity to Puget Sound and the open north end create winds that are challenging to gauge . Former Seahawks kicker Josh Brown adjusted to the winds , and he believed the moisture in the air caused trouble for others .

On September 15 , 2013 , Seattle Seahawks fans successfully broke the Guinness World Records for the loudest stadium in the world . The 131 @.@ 9 @-@ decibel record occurred during the sack of San Francisco 49er quarterback Colin Kaepernick in the first quarter . Fans then broke their new record during the third quarter of the same game when a level of 136 @.@ 6 decibels was achieved during a goal line stand by the Seahawks defense . The record was broken by the crowd at Arrowhead Stadium on October 13 , 2013 , with a sound pressure level of 137 @.@ 57 decibels . The record was later regained by the Seahawks fans on December 2 , 2013 with 137 @.@ 6 decibels against the New Orleans Saints , but lost once again to Arrowhead Stadium in a Monday Night Football game between the Kansas City Chiefs and New England Patriots on September 29 , 2014 , setting the record at 142 @.@ 2 decibels .

= = = College = = =

CenturyLink Field has hosted several college football games . The hometown Washington Huskies played their 2005 season opener against the Air Force Falcons at the stadium in Tyrone Willingham 's first game as head coach . In 2011 , the University of Washington began a \$ 250 million renovation to Husky Stadium , so the Huskies and the Washington State Cougars played the 2011 Apple Cup at CenturyLink Field . The Huskies also played their entire 2012 home football schedule at CenturyLink Field .

Except for in 2010 , the stadium hosted a Washington State Cougars non @-@ conference home game each season between 2002 and 2014 . This included the 86th " Battle of the Palouse " against the Idaho Vandals in 2003 . The Cougars were and their crowds ranged from 30 @,@ 927 to 63 @,@ 588 . CenturyLink Field is about 300 miles (500 km) from the university . The university 's athletic director said that 50 @,@ 000 need to attend to make it worth moving the game from Pullman . The Cougars went 6 ? 6 in the annual game . The games generated additional revenue that was invested in facilities for the football program while also increasing exposure to the western side of the state .

In April 2009 , it was proposed that the annual Apple Cup between the Seattle @-@ based Huskies and the Pullman @-@ based Cougars be hosted at CenturyLink Field for six years beginning in 2010 . The two programs could not reach an agreement on how to divide tickets . Pullman 's business community had expressed concerns that playing the game away from the area would be detrimental to the local economy .

Qwest Field hosted the 2002 Seattle Bowl , in which Wake Forest beat Oregon 38 ? 17 . The inaugural Seattle Bowl was played a year earlier at Safeco Field , but the game was discontinued when organizers could not secure financing before 2003 . Later attempts to revive the Seattle Bowl were unsuccessful . The Seattle Sports Commission is pushing for a proposal of a new bowl game . In 2008 a business plan was begun for a game in 2010 that would be a fundraiser for Seattle Children 's Hospital .

Lower division NCAA teams have played at the stadium throughout the years . From 2003 to 2008 , the Division II football teams from Western Washington University and Central Washington University met each year in a rivalry game called " The Battle in Seattle " . Central won all but the 2004 game , and each meeting attracted more than 11 @,@ 000 people . Western discontinued its

football program after the 2008 season , but Central came to an agreement to continue the series with Western Oregon University for games in 2009 and 2010 . " Battle in Seattle VII " saw Central make a comeback to win 23 ? 21 in front of 5 @, @ 374 .

On October 31 , 2009 , the Division I FCS Eastern Washington University Eagles played a home game in Seattle for the first time . Along with the goal of drawing alumni from the metropolitan area , the athletic directors from both Eastern Washington and Washington State had expressed the importance of connecting with alumni at receptions and other events on the western side of the state . Billed as the " Showdown on the Sound " , the game was a 47 ? 10 victory over the Portland State Vikings . According to Eastern 's athletic director , Qwest Field 's rental was \$ 50 @, @ 000 for the day .

= = = High school = = =

CenturyLink Field has been used for high school football . The Washington Interscholastic Activities Association puts on the annual Emerald City Kickoff Classic at the stadium . The event is a season @-@ opening series of games between some of the best teams in the state .

The stadium features a meeting between one of the best teams in Washington and one of the best from another state in the " Best of the West " game . On September 4 , 2004 , Washington 's Bellevue High School and California 's De La Salle High School played in front of over 25 @, @ 000 , a state high school event attendance record . Bellevue ended De La Salle 's national @-@ record 151 @-@ game winning streak in a 39 ? 20 win . On September 16 , 2009 , Bellevue defeated another highly regarded California school at Qwest Field in a 30 ? 16 victory over Long Beach Polytechnic . USA Today had recently rated both teams highly with Long Beach third and Bellevue at 16th in the nation .

After the organizer of the event announced a match @-@ up between Washington 's Skyline High School and Oregon 's Jesuit High School in 2009 , he said that he proposed the possibility of televising games to Fox Sports , but Fox did not televise the game . Skyline went on to shut out Jesuit 17 ? 0 during that year 's Emerald City Classic .

Within CenturyLink Field , there is a large art piece called The State of Football that pays tribute to high school football in the state of Washington . The piece features a depiction of Washington and holds replica football helmets from every high school football team in the state . The art is part of the nearly \$ 1 @. @ 75 million Stadium Art Program commissioned through First & Goal 's lease of the facility .

= = Soccer = =

CenturyLink Field is also designed for soccer . The stadium meets FIFA sight line requirements and provides separate locker rooms for soccer teams . Camera locations were chosen for optimal television coverage of the sport . Numerous exhibition games have taken place at CenturyLink Field , including high @-@ profile clubs such as Manchester United , Barcelona , Celtic , Real Madrid , Chelsea , Club América and Chivas de Guadalajara . These games have proved to be highly popular , and the first sell @-@ out of 66 @, @ 772 fans at CenturyLink Field was a soccer match between Manchester United and Celtic . National teams such as Brazil , Venezuela , Mexico , and China have played exhibition games at the stadium . The artificial turf has been temporarily overlaid with grass for international matches .

Seattle was the site of the 2005 CONCACAF Gold Cup Group B opening round between the national teams of the United States , Costa Rica , Canada , and Cuba . Two matches of the 2009 CONCACAF Gold Cup opening round were also played at the stadium on July 4 , 2009 . In the second match , the United States comfortably defeated Grenada , who were playing in their first major international competition , 4 ? 0 . The Gold Cup returned in 2013 with Panama beating Martinique and Mexico defeating Canada in opening group play matches .

CenturyLink Field was among the 58 facilities in the United States being considered for World Cup matches had the country hosted the tournament in 2018 or 2022 . When discussing Seattle as a

candidate , Sunil Gulati of the U.S. Soccer Federation called it " a world @-@ class facility . " Seattle finally hosted a qualifier in June 2013 ? only the city 's second with the first being over 3 decades earlier . The United States topped Panama 2 ? 0 in front of a raucous crowd .

On November 22 , 2009 , Seattle was the site of the 14th annual MLS Cup between Real Salt Lake and the Los Angeles Galaxy , where Salt Lake won the Cup on penalty kicks (5 ? 4) in front of 46 @, @ 011 . The stadium was the eighth stadium to host the event .

= = = Sounders (USL) = = =

The first sporting event at the stadium was a double @-@ header on July 28 , 2002 , that included both the Sounders Select Women and the men 's Seattle Sounders of the USL team . The women defeated the Vancouver Breakers 4 ? 3 , while the men beat the Vancouver Whitecaps 4 ? 1 in front of 25 @, @ 515 people . The USL team began using the facility regularly as their home field in 2003 . Although team management was concerned with the high rent and the underused seating capacity , they were drawn by the sponsorship opportunities and location . The Sounders increased their average attendance from 2 @, @ 583 at Seattle 's Memorial Stadium in 2002 to 3 @, @ 452 at the new stadium in 2003 . In 2005 , the Sounders beat the Richmond Kickers 2 ? 1 in a penalty shootout for the USL championship in front of 8 @, @ 011 . Scott Jenkins scored the final goal and announced his retirement after the game .

In 2008 , the MLS expansion franchise Sounders FC decided to develop the Starfire Sports Complex in nearby Tukwila , and the USL team played most of the season at that facility . At the time , team management thought that practicing and playing at Starfire could provide a better transition for those hoping to play for the new MLS team . The last match for the USL Sounders at Qwest Field was the 2008 season opener against the rival Portland Timbers . The game ended in a scoreless draw in front of 10 @, @ 184 .

= = = Sounders FC = = =

The potential to draw an MLS expansion team helped drive public support for building the stadium in 1997 . In 1996 , Seattle was considered for one of the 10 original MLS teams ; however , the region lacked an adequate outdoor stadium . In 2007 , it was announced that Seattle would be the home of an expansion team . The first Sounders FC regular season match was at the stadium on March 19 , 2009 . Fredy Montero scored the first goal in a 3 ? 0 Seattle victory .

Before the opening of their first season , the Sounders already had the highest number of season ticket holders in the MLS after they sold all 22 @, @ 000 of the offered season ticket packages . The team created a web site that was used to identify seating arrangements for season ticket holders based on personal interests including preferred method for watching a game and foreign team preference . For the first half of the inaugural season , the upper and lower sections were tarped off , limiting the seating capacity to 27 @, @ 700 . The club hoped to create an intimate environment as well as a supply @-@ and @-@ demand factor that would reward season ticket holders and encourage early purchase of seats . The stadium has continuously sold out league matches in the limited seating configuration . However , majority owner Joe Roth has said that he " won 't be happy " until the entire venue is open .

The stadium was designed to easily open seating sections in stages if needed . After repeated sellout crowds , additional sections were opened , increasing total capacity to 32 @, @ 400 . In the Sounders ' first year they set an MLS record with an average home attendance of 30 @, @ 943 people . Official capacity was increased to 35 @, @ 700 after the 2009 season . In 2011 , The Sounders continued to hold the highest average attendance in the league with 38 @, @ 496 . Official capacity was increased again to 38 @, @ 500 with the opening of the Hawk 's Nest for the 2012 season . The Sounders set the state 's single game soccer attendance record when they hosted Manchester United in front of 67 @, @ 052 in July 2011 . On October 15 , 2011 , additional seats were available for a record crowd of 64 @, @ 140 during the final regular season home match , a Sounders 2 ? 1 win followed by ceremonies honoring retiring goalkeeper Kasey Keller . And on

October 7 , 2012 , another attendance record was broken when 66 @, @ 452 fans were present for a 3 ? 0 win over the Portland Timbers , following a ceremony awarding retired Forward Roger Levesque a Golden Scarf .

CenturyLink Field has hosted two U.S. Open Cup tournament finals . On October 5 , 2010 , the tournament 's 81 @-@ year @-@ old attendance record was broken when Sounders FC defeated the Columbus Crew 2 ? 1 in front of 31 @, @ 311 . That record was broken one year later when CenturyLink Field again hosted the final on October 4 , 2011 as 36 @, @ 615 spectators watched Seattle defeat the Chicago Fire 2 ? 0 . Like the Seahawks , the Sounders have received attention for sellout crowds and boisterous fans . The Seattle Times reported that a " new standard for attendance and game @-@ day atmosphere has been set " due to the loud sellout crowds . The passionate Emerald City Supporters have dubbed the general admission sections behind the south goal the " Brougham End " for the street that runs along the south edge of the complex .

= = Other events = =

The stadium became a yearly site for Supercross races in 2005 . Seattle had been left out of the circuit since the Kingdome hosted the race in 1999 . It takes more than 650 truckloads of dirt to build the course for the event that around 50 @, @ 000 spectators attend .

The Rolling Stones , U2 , Metallica , Taylor Swift and other large acts have performed at CenturyLink Field . The stadium hosts both trade and consumer shows . A stadium record for attendance was set in June 2011 when U2 played in front of more than 70 @, @ 000 .

The CenturyLink Field Event Center connects to the stadium 's west field plaza and consists of two exhibition halls , a conference room , and a concourse . The center hosts pre @-@ game events for the Seahawks and Mariners . According to the Public Stadium Authority 's website , the event center contributes more than half a billion dollars to the region 's economy . The center was renamed the CenturyLink Field Event Center in June 2011 , following the acquisition of Qwest Communications by CenturyLink and the renaming of the stadium .

The Event Center had previously been called " the worst venue in town " for concerts , but in 2006 , AEG Live and First & Goal formed a partnership to create a new theater within the Event Center space . Washington Mutual obtained the naming rights to the new theater , calling it the " WaMu Theater . " The theater space can be assembled on an as @-@ needed basis within the building and equipment , including the 104 @-@ foot (32 m) wide stage , can be dismantled and stored in the stadium . The theater 's acoustics were improved by installing panels on the ceiling and a large curtain . Depending on the seating configuration , the capacity can be 3 @, @ 300 , 4 @, @ 000 , or 7 @, @ 000 . Seal performed the inaugural concert on November 6 , 2006 . Though the naming rights deal ended following the bankruptcy of Washington Mutual in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis , the space retained the WaMu Theater name , amending the abbreviation to now mean the " Washington Music Theater . "

The facilities have been used for public speaking engagements . For example , the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet , Tenzin Gyatso , delivered a 28 @-@ minute speech to 50 @, @ 817 people on April 12 , 2008 .

= = Football stadium shaking experiments = =

During a Seattle football game on January 8 , 2011 , the Pacific Northwest Seismic Network (PNSN) recorded what was dubbed a " Beast Quake " , for Marshawn " Beast Mode " Lynch , a player whose performance excited the (then @-@ named) Qwest Field stadium crowd enough for the resultant shaking to be recorded on PNSN instruments . In 2014 and 2015 additional sensors were added in and around the stadium . Motivations for the experiment included conducting a quick @-@ reaction exercise for the seismometer network team to install sensors and interpret results , and to test the ability to handle increased web traffic from interested visitors from the general public . Shaking was detected at the stadium after a 90 @-@ yard touchdown run during a January 10 , 2015 playoff game , dubbed a " Kam Quake " for the player making the run , Kam Chancellor . The

PNSN scientists say that the biggest event of all was the " Dance Quake " , which was caused by the all the jumping and dancing that followed Marshawn Lynch 's touchdown and 2 @-@ point conversion during 2014 ? 15 NFC Championship Game on January 18 , 2015 .

= = Facility contracts and naming rights = =

The stadium was originally named Seahawks Stadium . The name was changed to Qwest Field in June 2004 after the telecommunications carrier bought the naming rights for \$ 75 million for a period of 15 years . According to the agreement , the proceeds must be used for maintenance and upgrades . A portion of any profit then goes into a \$ 10 million fund Allen guaranteed for youth playfields . Due to CenturyLink 's recent acquisition of Qwest , the stadium was officially renamed CenturyLink Field on June 23 , 2011 . There is speculation as to if there will be a new nickname for the venue . An informal reader poll conducted by The Seattle Times showed that " The Clink " was a popular suggestion . During Sounders FC matches , the field has been entitled " The Xbox Pitch at CenturyLink Field " as part of a sponsorship deal with Microsoft .

In addition to its 48 concession stands , restaurants and lounges are located throughout the stadium . Along with typical fare , local Pacific salmon sandwiches , Dungeness crab cakes , and microbrews are served . In 2006 , Levy Restaurants replaced Aramark in a five @-@ year deal to provide the food and beverage service for the stadium and exhibition center . As of 2013 , Sportservice manages and operates all general concessions and premium dining in the stadium .

In May 2007 , Seattle @-@ based Jones Soda outbid Coca @-@ Cola to sign a five @-@ year contract for the pouring rights of non @-@ alcoholic beverages at the stadium , making it the only venue in the NFL that did not have a contract with either Coca @-@ Cola or Pepsi . Jones Soda , known for unusual and holiday @-@ themed soda flavors such as Blue Bubblegum and Turkey & Gravy , said it was working to develop football @-@ related soda flavors , such as " grass @-@ stain . " In June 2010 , the Seahawks and Jones Soda announced their mutual decision to end the Jones sponsorship , following which Coca @-@ Cola reclaimed the vending rights with a new five @-@ year agreement .

= = Transportation = =

CenturyLink Field is bordered by the Pioneer Square , International District , and Industrial District neighborhoods of Seattle . The stadium 's referendum approval required a transportation management program to coordinate transportation options . First & Goal 's facility lease agreement also included a provision to ease gridlock . A " Dual Event Agreement " with Safeco Field was established so that two events with a combined attendance of over 58 @,@ 000 would not occur within four hours of each other . The agreement was also implemented to coordinate mass transit to the stadiums on game days . Local and regional buses service the area with stops within three blocks of the stadium , and the county 's Metro bus service offers express routes from several area park and ride lots for games . Trains service the stadium through Seattle 's King Street Station and overflow tracks accommodate extra trains during events . Regional commuter trains operate on Sundays if the Seahawks have a home game . Trains also run for mid @-@ day Sounders FC games on Saturdays . In 2008 , the commuter trains carried 64 @,@ 000 event goers to the two nearby stadiums . Amtrak , primarily through the Pacific Northwest corridor 's Cascades route , also serves the station . On July 18 , 2009 , light rail service between SeaTac and downtown began in time for an exhibition match between the Sounders and Chelsea . The light rail connects to the baseball and football stadiums via the Stadium station . The International District / Chinatown station also offers convenient access .

CenturyLink Field is bordered by the junction of Interstates 5 and 90 to the east and State Route 99 to its west . The State Route 519 corridor connects I @-@ 90 to the neighborhood . Local governments compromised with both the Seahawks and Mariners on the location of new ramps over the train tracks that run along the east sides of CenturyLink and Safeco Fields . An overpass for S Royal Brougham Way , the road that borders the south edge of the CenturyLink Field complex , to

improve access and safety was completed in May 2010 . The stadium has 2 @, @ 000 parking spaces in its parking garage and 8 @, @ 400 in the surrounding lots to accommodate automobile traffic . Beginning in December 2011 , construction of the Stadium Place mixed @-@ use development project replaced much of the north lot . The developer must replace the 500 lost parking spots and turn over parking revenue to the Public Stadium Authority per an agreement with King County .