

MANUFACTURING BOOM TOWN

Things are booming in Pierce County's **Frederickson Industrial Center**, one of the largest industrial development sites in the Puget Sound area. This major hub for industry, manufacturing and distribution has seen an explosion in growth in recent years. It's become a place where businesses come to thrive—and create thousands of jobs in the process.

Big gamble, big payoff

The Frederickson Industrial Area has been years in the making, and it all started with speculation, faith and vision. In 1968, the **Port of Tacoma** bought 500 acres in Frederickson for \$1.6 million to provide a place outside of the **Tacoma Tideflats** for non-water-dependent industrial uses. Private land owners and developers followed. Today, the Frederickson Industrial Area covers 2,200 acres, and nearly half that area is still undeveloped. According to Rob Allen, **Pierce County** senior economic development specialist, in 2017 the Frederickson Industrial Area was home to around 4,500 jobs, and building space totaled about 7.3 million square feet.

“Economic development is a long-game,” said **Economic Development Board for Tacoma-Pierce County** President and CEO Bruce Kendall. “The Port of Tacoma’s gamble to establish Frederickson as a place of industry has paid off in a big way, with a vibrant and vigorous manufacturing sector providing family-wage jobs.”

Mike Avila, broker and principal for **Pacific Rim Real Estate Group**, has been involved with Frederickson as a developer and broker for two decades. He came on the scene in 1998 when **James Hardie**, a leader in fiber cement siding and a major Pierce County employer, set up shop in Frederickson. It's no surprise, Avila said, that the area is such a draw. Flexible zoning eases the obstacles of getting up and running. And the region offers a quality skilled labor force within easy commuting distance. That's just not the case in other industrial areas.

“The partnerships between the Port, **Pierce County**, the EDB and the private sector have been key,” Avila said. “And kudos to developers that have taken risks and provided the space for businesses to move in and grow.”

The latest big doings in the area illustrate how those partnerships and risks are paying off. **Best Buy** is building a 400,000-square-foot warehouse on about 35 acres, and **Logistics Property Company**, a Chicago-headquartered logistics real estate platform, is making its first foray into real estate development in the region. LPC recently purchased a 210-acre site and plans to build a 2.5 million-square-foot industrial park called **Frederickson One**. The first phase is slated to open in spring 2020. Avila and the team at Pacific Rim Real Estate Group are listing agents for the new development, as well as many more Frederickson Industrial Area properties.

Flourishing neighborhood

You're likely familiar with Frederickson's heavy hitters. It's where **The Boeing Company** builds the tails for 787 jets and wing structures for its other airliners. **Toray Composite Materials America, Inc.** produces raw carbon fiber used in Boeing planes around the world at its Frederickson facility. Other household names you might recognize are **IKEA**, **Whirlpool Corporation**, **Medallion Foods**, **Niagara Bottling** and **Oldcastle Infrastructure**. Every one of these companies represents a successful EDB recruitment case.

Long-time Frederickson neighbor and Pierce County success story **Carlson Paving Products** is a leading manufacturer of asphalt paving machinery, most noted for its industry-standout asphalt screeds, critical components of the road-paving process that flatten and compact asphalt. An **Astec Industries Company**, Carlson also produces class-leading commercial pavers and attachments that enhance road and worker safety.

When the company outgrew its Tacoma location in the 1980s, it set its sights on Frederickson.

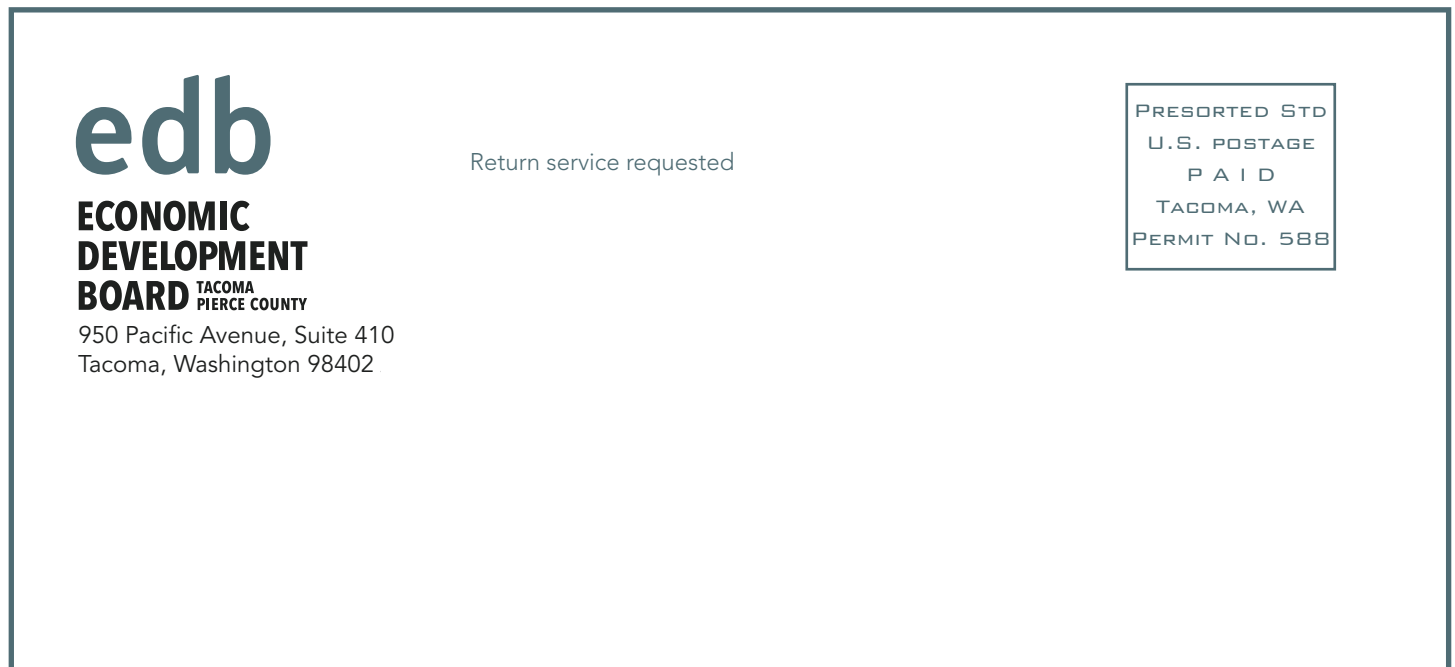
“We needed to address our initial growth and meet future demand,” said Travis Colwell, Carlson marketing and communications coordinator. “Frederickson allowed us to do that.” Carlson bought adjoining properties, opened a manufacturing plant on one site in 1999 and will complete a state-of-the-art facility expansion in 2020.

Pierce County has been key to Carlson’s growth. County Executive Bruce Dammeier, then a Washington State legislator, took a strong interest in the company. When it came time to expand, the County Executive’s office helped move the project along. “They had faith in what we were doing and knew the role we would play in Frederickson’s growth,” Colwell said. “Our expansion meant more family-wage jobs and more people employed locally.”

Retail development serves growing need

When Herb Simon, EDB board member and co-founding partner of **Simon Johnson, LLC**, began considering development of a retail center at the intersection of 176th and Canyon Road, the need for additional services in Frederickson quickly became obvious. The junction is the second-most-traveled intersection in Pierce County. Existing nearby retail space was at capacity and 1,000 apartments within an eighth of a mile from the location were newly completed or under construction. It was the ideal location for **Frederickson Place**.

“There’s nothing but growth out there,” Simon said. “That translates to lots of jobs and the need for more retail



options to serve the growing area.” Today, about 55 percent of the Frederickson Place lots are sold. Among the tenants are **AutoZone**, **Carl’s Jr.**, **Taco Bell** and a gas station and market owned by the **Nisqually Indian Tribe**. Simon said all the businesses are way beyond their projections. A 10,000-square-foot retail center is 45 percent preleased, and the popular restaurant **Hops and Drops** (formerly Hop Jacks) is slated to open in 2019.

Infrastructure key to area’s evolution

Pierce County has made significant investment in the area’s infrastructure and plans to continue that investment into the future. After funding enhancements to the Canyon Road corridor to improve freight access for Frederickson, Pierce County is now working to improve the road north of SR-512 and connect it to Fife and the Port of Tacoma. Other improvements will make streets safer, brighter and more accessible to street and foot traffic.

If you’d like to know more about what’s available there, contact Sarah Bonds, EDB VP of business recruitment, at sarah@edbtacomapierce.org, or Maddie Merton, EDB VP of business retention and expansion, at maddie@edbtacomapierce.org. See our electronic newsletter for additional information about Frederickson.

Teamwork is a service of the EDB, a non-profit corporation focused on recruitment and retention of primary businesses in Tacoma and Pierce County, Washington, USA.

950 Pacific Avenue, Suite 410 / Tacoma, Washington 98402 / 253.383.4726