

Welcome to our electronic newsletter, which is based on the printed version we mail each month.

**\*\*Special Note\*\*** Due to measures in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, *Teamwork* is only being distributed electronically. Our print edition will resume when appropriate.

## Onward and upward: EDB stays on course

We've been at this for more than four decades. And despite the challenges of the COVID-19 outbreak and the changing nature of economic development going forward, the [Economic Development Board for Tacoma-Pierce County](#) is as committed as ever to bringing new firms to Pierce County, keeping existing companies here and profitable, and helping all expand operations and grow jobs. We're open for business in Pierce County.

### Businesses want to come here

"Since April, we have responded to nine new recruitment projects," said Sarah Bonds, EDB Vice President for Business Recruitment. "The recruitment activity, even during a pandemic, is a true testament to Pierce County's competitive location, diverse economy and desirable workforce."

Recruitment projects in the pipeline include:

- **Project Booster.** A bio-tech company is currently looking for 100,000 square feet of manufacturing space in Pierce County. (\$200 million expected capital expenditure; 120, primarily blue-collar jobs with expected wages between \$65,000-\$85,000.)
- **Project Command.** This company is on the hunt for 20 acres to locate their headquarters. Details of this highly confidential project are sensitive and not available for disclosure at this time.
- **Project West.** An out-of-state paper cardboard recycler/manufacturer is seeking 400,000 square feet of space. (\$200 million expected capital expenditure; 200 family wage jobs.)

To learn more about the EDB's Business Recruitment program, contact Bonds at 253.284.5892 or [sarah@edbtacomapierce.org](mailto:sarah@edbtacomapierce.org).

### Local companies growing

In June, a Tacoma-based business looking to acquire a building in the Nalley Valley reached out the [EDB](#), [City of Tacoma](#), [Impact Washington](#) and the [Minority Business Development Agency](#) for information about permitting, grants, financing programs and tax incentives. Dubbed "Project Fiesta," the company is a returning EDB customer that completed an expansion project just last year. The current project is in the due diligence phase and awaiting phase 2 environmental results. (Capital investment around \$2 million for the building and new equipment; 45 jobs retained.)

"This company is committed to and continues to invest in Tacoma-

## BRIEFS

### Does your organization want COVID-19 mobile testing?

Mobile stations make it easy to provide free COVID-19 testing in the community. If your organization is interested in having a testing station, contact the **Pierce County Emergency Operations Center** at [PCEOC@piercescountywa.gov](mailto:PCEOC@piercescountywa.gov) or 253.798.6595.

More information about [mobile testing](#) is available on the Pierce County website.

### All aboard the Pierce Transit Runner

If you live or work in "the zone," or you own a businesses that depend on transit services to get their employees to work, [Pierce Transit](#) now offers a great option for traveling between the Tacoma Dome, downtown and Ruston Way.

The [Pierce Transit Runner](#) offers flexible, on-demand service, eliminating parking hassles along the corridor and at the Tacoma Dome transit center. Just download the app and request a ride. (Call 253.270.1340 if you don't have a smartphone.)

The service is similar to Uber and Lyft, without the potentially hefty rates. Fares are the same as on a Pierce Transit bus.

Pierce County," said Maddie Merton, EDB Vice President for Business Retention and Expansion. "We are delighted to have the opportunity to help them access what they need to succeed here."

For more information about the EDB's Business Retention and Expansion work, contact Merton at 253.284.5891 or [maddie@edbtacomapierce.org](mailto:maddie@edbtacomapierce.org).

### Leaders seek solutions

The EDB's important cluster acceleration work continues. Each group of 15-20 local leaders from their respective industries work collaboratively to identify ways to enhance, support and expand the reach of all members of a sector, making each part of a stronger ecosystem.

Pierce County and the world have changed immeasurably in light of the COVID-19 outbreak and the Black Lives Matter movement. In early August the [Technology Cluster Acceleration Team](#) met and relaunched its revised five-year strategic plan, updated to respond to current business and social issues facing Tacoma-Pierce County. The updated plan, available on the [EDB website](#), zeroes in on three goals based on the needs and opportunities within the tech community:

- Raise the profile of the South Sound as an emerging technology leader.
- Develop local talent and recruit new talent nationally and internationally.
- Retain, expand and recruit specific technology firms.

The **Trade-Logistics Cluster Team** is currently recruiting members and is expected to launch in October 2020.

"Through listening and creative partnerships, these teams help create dynamic solutions to problems that inhibit the growth of Pierce County businesses," said Jacqueline Moffo, EDB Vice President for Business Development. "Now more than ever, these teams are invaluable in helping us meet new challenges and respond to a changing business climate."

For more information on cluster acceleration teams, contact Moffo at 253.284.5889 or [jacqueline@edbtacomapierce.org](mailto:jacqueline@edbtacomapierce.org).

## Business leaders weigh in on COVID-19 impact and recovery

Results of a recent [Pierce County Economic Development Department](#) survey offer great insight into the impact of COVID-19 on local businesses and the support and services they need to recover.

More than 1,400 Pierce County business leaders representing businesses across all sectors completed the survey. Their responses show that:

- The top areas of impact were loss of revenue, forced shutdowns, employee layoffs, change of product/service or delivery methods, and supply chain disruptions.
- The program used most by businesses was Pierce County's free personal protective equipment (PPE) program, followed by Small Business Administration loan programs.

## COVID-19 resources

What's the latest on COVID-19 and businesses resources? The EDB continually updates our website to reflect the most current [COVID-19 information and resources](#).

[edbtacomapierce.org](http://edbtacomapierce.org)



- Funding programs are most important when it comes to recovery, followed by supplies/PPE and consumer-confidence programs or campaigns.

"Survey feedback will guide decisions regarding the most effective ways to facilitate business recovery in Pierce County," said Pierce County Economic Development Director Betty Capestany.

Complete survey results are available on the Pierce County website at [piercecountywa.gov/CovidBusinessSurvey](http://piercecountywa.gov/CovidBusinessSurvey).

## Major Employers List 2020: Give us your numbers



The compilation is underway!

Each year, the EDB collects and publishes its **Major Employers List** of companies with 100 or more full-time employees working in Pierce County. The list also includes organizations with 50 to 99 employees that are on the verge of crossing over the 100-employee threshold.

The Major Employers List is the most requested document produced by the EDB and is an essential part of the data provided to site selectors and prospective businesses. Last year's list identified 272 major employers, representing 172,415 jobs.

Earlier this month, the EDB started reaching out via email to Pierce County companies to request employee numbers.

### Providing data is easy

We aim to make it as simple as possible to submit your information for the 2020 Major Employers List. Choose from one of three quick and easy options:

1. Complete a [two-minute survey](#) to submit your FTE information.
2. Respond to the email you received requesting your FTE count. Simply click "reply" and provide your FTE count and contact information.
3. Forward the email you received to the right person in your organization who can provide the current FTE count.

If you're a major employer, you'll want to tout it. Companies with 100+ FTEs who provide their employment numbers will receive a digital Major Employers badge and marketing kit.

More information, including a full breakdown of the 2019 Major Employers List, is available on the EDB website at [edbtacomapierce.org/MajorEmployers2020](http://edbtacomapierce.org/MajorEmployers2020). More information is available on the [EDB website](#).

If you have questions, contact Jacqueline Moffo, EDB Vice President of Business Development, at 253.383.5889 or [jacqueline@edbtacomapierce.org](mailto:jacqueline@edbtacomapierce.org).

## COVID-19 relief flowing to Pierce County businesses

From food services and fitness centers to recreation and retail, Pierce County small businesses have been severely shaken by the COVID-19 outbreak. Fortunately, they're getting some much-needed relief in the form of grants and loans from Pierce County and local municipalities.

## County steps up big

"The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc across almost every industry, and Pierce County is working hard to help businesses stabilize and recover," said [Pierce County Economic Development](#) Director Betty Capestany. "Our [Pierce County CARES businesses relief programs](#) provide aid in the areas businesses need most, providing working capital, help with unforeseen expenses, and assistance with ongoing expenses such as monthly rent and mortgage payments."

While programs continue to accept applications, funds and assistance have been provided to thousands of Pierce County businesses to date:

- More than 2.2 million masks have been distributed to over 6,600 businesses, representing nearly 120,000 employees through the [Free PPE for Business Program](#).
- 503 businesses have received a forgivable [Pierce County COVID-19 Emergency Small Business Relief Loan](#), totaling over \$2.9 million.
- 192 businesses have been approved or funded for a [Pierce County COVID-19 Adaptation Grant](#), totaling over \$540,000. In early August, the Pierce County Council authorized higher reimbursements for larger companies.

In addition, businesses hardest hit by the COVID-19 outbreak can get up to three months of [commercial rent or mortgage assistance](#). This grant is specifically for Pierce County businesses affected by additional operating restrictions under Phase 2 or prohibited from opening until Phase 3 or 4 of Washington's Safe Start reopening plan.

All programs have available funding, and applications are being accepting while funds last. Learn more and apply at [piercecounitywa.gov/CARESBusiness](http://piercecounitywa.gov/CARESBusiness). The Pierce County Council allocated funding for these programs through the federal [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act](#).

## Tacoma, Lakewood, Puyallup and others provide critical help

- [City of Tacoma](#). CARES Act funding enabled the city to act quickly. In March, the [Community and Economic Development Department](#) established the [COVID-19 Stabilization Loan Program](#), which offered loans for working capital up to \$15,000 to Tacoma businesses with 10 or fewer employees. A total of \$978,500 was distributed to 68 businesses. The city also offers [COVID-19 tax relief for Tacoma businesses](#), including due-date extensions for B&O and monthly gambling tax returns; deferral of quarterly B&O taxes for small businesses; and job tax credits for qualifying businesses. More about the city's COVID-19 response and other resources are available on the [Make It Tacoma](#) website.
- [City of Lakewood](#). The [City of Lakewood Small Business Emergency Coronavirus Relief Fund Grant](#) was funded with \$626,535 from a portion of the city's CARES Act stimulus package distribution. Grant applications were accepted through July 17, 2020. Maximum awards were \$10,000. To date, \$622,400 has been awarded to 66 City of

Lakewood small businesses. Lakewood also offers a [Small Business Assistance Grant](#). The program was initially established as a loan program and converted to a grant as of Aug. 3, 2020. The city expects to award approximately \$351,000 in grants to 30-35 local companies. Maximum grant amount is \$10,000. To date, 10 City of Lakewood small businesses have applied for a total of \$87,500. This program will remain open until all funds are exhausted.

- [City of Puyallup](#). A total of \$114,000 in assistance is on the way for 57 Puyallup businesses that closed or dramatically limited operations due to the COVID-19 crisis. Through its [Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant](#), Puyallup city was able to give one-time grants up to \$2,000 to all eligible businesses that applied.
- [City of University Place](#). The city's two-tiered, \$400,000 [Business Relief Program](#) assists University Place businesses and eligible nonprofits with both immediate re-entry and longer-term economic recovery. Depending on business type, FTEs and years of operation, 67 grant recipients have been awarded between \$1,000 and \$20,000 for a total of \$351,000.
- [Tacoma Public Utilities](#). Along with the March launch of an emergency assistance program that earmarked \$2.4 million to help eligible households experiencing immediate financial crisis as a result of COVID-19, TPU offers businesses extended payment plans and late-fee waivers. It has also suspended disconnections for all customers, including businesses. Read more about TPU's [COVID-19 response](#).
- [City of Gig Harbor](#). After receiving funds from the federal CARES Act stimulus package, city council and staff worked quickly to create a fair and equitable application program and grant distribution process for its [Small Business Stabilization Grant Program](#). Of the 130 businesses that applied, 111 each received \$2,774.77.

We still have miles to go to get back to business as usual. As long as there is need for COVID-19 assistance within our business community, Pierce County will keep responding. We're all in this together.

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*Teamwork is a service of the EDB, a non-profit corporation focused on recruitment and retention of primary businesses in Tacoma and Pierce County. Telephone: 253-383-4726. Website: [edbtacomapierce.org](http://edbtacomapierce.org)*