

SKAGIT edasc

Economic Development
Alliance of Skagit County

BUSINESS GUIDE 2026



**Pacific Rim Tonewoods:
Rural for a reason**



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Letter from the outgoing Board Chair

It has been an honor to serve as the EDASC Board Chair in 2025; thank you so much for all your support for the business community and economic development in Skagit County.

EDASC plays a vital role in Skagit County, and 2025 was a year for quietly achieving progress toward the mission of business attraction, retention, and expansion and collaborative engagement to achieve a prosperous, sustainable, and equitable community while maintaining Skagit County's natural beauty and quality of life.

What did that mean for the past year? Multiple workshops and events to help local businesses understand procurement, L&I regulations, and attract workforce; another great year of Leadership Skagit, connecting leaders with the economic ecosystem of our community; engaging with the Skagit Council of Governments to advance the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy so we have a common vision and action for our economic future; working with the Department of Commerce to help companies looking to move into the area find potential sites; providing support and guidance to entrepreneurs in English and Spanish; facilitating meetings with state and federal lawmakers and local businesses; and representing the business community at events and meetings throughout Skagit County and the nation. Phew! When we start adding it all up, it's amazing what EDASC's team of talented economic developers can do!



These accomplishments may not always make front-page news, but they matter deeply to the economic prosperity of Skagit County. As we look to 2026 and prepare for decreased budgets from our government partners, I urge you to consider increasing your investment in EDASC. Our support as business leaders can help create a brighter economic future for Skagit County. I, for one, am proud to have the professional team at EDASC working on our behalf.

As I leave the role of EDASC Board Chair, I am delighted to introduce Nikki Wegner, CEO of Chinook Enterprises, as the new Chair. Her thoughtful, strategic mindset will serve EDASC's Board of Directors and the organization well.

Thank you,
Amelia Cook
2025 EDASC Board Chair

Letter from the CEO

The new year always presents an opportunity for reflection, and for planning. In economic development, our activities are constantly evolving because the needs of our constituents change with the world. Just when you think you have things set, other factors or conditions change. Our business climate survey from March 2025 gave us the opportunity to clarify perceptions of the challenges faced by Skagit County employers, and that refines our activities to address those needs.

EDASC's activities range from support of existing employers' expansions to recruiting new employers to facilitating home-grown entrepreneurial activity. Equally important, EDASC serves as connective tissue to address thorny issues such as workforce, housing, child care, and other challenges affecting community prosperity and well-being.

These activities only happen through important partnerships with sister organizations such as chambers of commerce, downtown associations and other nonprofits, municipal governments, K-16+ education, and local businesses. EDASC plays important supporting roles in such diverse topics as tourism, agriculture, land use, hospitality, education, public health, disaster recovery, and many more.

We are also proud of our Leadership Skagit program, run in partnership with Skagit Valley College, now nearing the quarter-century mark. We truly believe that this civic connection is part of the "secret sauce" that makes Skagit County work so well and provides invaluable social support for so many of us.

Much of our work this year will be devoted to coordinating the implementation of Skagit County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. We also continue to work to diversify our revenue sources as state and local governments are forced to tighten their belts. As always, we appreciate your public support to keep up with ever-increasing costs.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated board of directors and staff who keep this organization running at top quality. I am fortunate to spend my days with such wonderful humans. To our community, we say thank you, and let us know how we can support your efforts as we collectively work "to achieve a prosperous, sustainable, and equitable community while maintaining our natural beauty and quality of life."

John Sternlicht, CEO



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On the cover: Business partners Steve McMinn and Eric Warner of Pacific Rim Tonewoods in Concrete, Washington. Photo by Ben Bender



MEET THE 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Nikki Wegner
EDASC Chair
Chinook Enterprises



Nathan Wolfe
EDASC Vice Chair
TRICO Companies



Dr. Paul Pitre
EDASC Secretary
Washington State
University Everett



Matt Roetcisoender
EDASC Treasurer
VSH Certified Public
Accountants



Matthew Paxton
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Law



Amelia Cook
EDASC Immediate
Past Chair
Goodwinds
Composites



Ryan Sakuma
Sakuma Bros Farms



John Dumas
Port of Anacortes



Rod Cann
SaviBank/
Harborstone CU



Amy Hong
Barrett Financial



JJ Wilbur
Swinomish Tribal
Senate



Kristen Keltz
Skagit Tourism
Bureau



Sara Young
Port of Skagit



Peter Browning
Skagit County
Commissioner



Viry Delgado
COA Mexican
Eatery



Steve Lang
HF Sinclair



Mandi Rothman
Helping Hands Food
Bank



Elizabeth Stout
Dakota Creek
Industries



Tom Keegan
Skagit Valley
College



**Mayor Marna
Hanneman**
City of La Conner



Sam Riley
Allixo



Rich Fowles
Scratch & Peck
Feeds



Nate Scott
Windermere North
Sound

Get to know the EDASC staff

John Sternlicht
CEO

With EDASC since 2015

EDASC role: Responsible for the overall direction of EDASC, executing the strategic plan, managing the staff and operations. In a more informal way, John serves as the voice and representation of economic development in the community: what it is, why it's important, and how it relates to a variety of issues.



Ken Huste
Deputy Director

With EDASC since 2025

EDASC role: Supports the CEO by managing internal operations and key initiatives that drive business recruitment and retention. Provides strategic leadership and community representation, helping to set the direction for EDASC, and acts on behalf of the CEO in meetings with the community and private partners.



Hilary Parker
Communications Manager
With EDASC since 2022

EDASC role: As communications manager Hilary's role at its core is to tell EDASC's story – how economic development gets done in Skagit County and what it means to our communities. She supports every department within EDASC, sharing our newsletters, social media and this annual Skagit Business Guide.



Juan Morales
Equitable Economic Development Manager
With EDASC since 2025

EDASC role: Supports entrepreneurs and small businesses with technical assistance and finding resources, with a focus on underserved groups. Juan is an intuitive and dedicated professional who listens intently to identify solutions. He is bilingual in English and Spanish and is ready to help you.



Gina Eakin
Community Relations Associate
With EDASC since 2024

EDASC role: Gina's responsibilities revolve around facilitating the Leadership Skagit program to ensure participants have the best experience possible; recruiting participants and sponsors for future cohorts; and serving as a liaison between EDASC and Skagit Valley College, our partner in offering Leadership Skagit.



Melena Peitersen
Office Operations Specialist
With EDASC since 2025

EDASC role: Melena provides administrative support to the CEO and team, supports programs with planning and logistics, and bookkeeping.





Pacific Rim Tonewoods: Rural for a reason

BY HILARY PARKER
PHOTOS BY BEN BENDER

Heading east on Highway 20, grey-green foothills provide the backdrop to Big Leaf Maples presenting their rust-and-gold autumn finery, brilliant against the early November scene.

The maples serve as a fitting welcome to Pacific Rim Tonewoods, maker of fine wooden components for stringed instruments – mostly guitars – that include the Fiddlehead Maple among the wood varieties they work with.

Steve McMinn, founder of Pacific Rim Tonewoods, discovered the 20-acre property in Birdview in eastern Skagit County more than 30 years ago with the help of then-executive director of EDASC, Don Wick.

In the ensuing years, PRT has grown from four employees to 28 (numbering as many as 35 employees), partnered with notable guitar makers including Taylor and Martin, started sustainable forestry projects, and, most recently, began carving out a niche in wooden bowls.

It's a business that couldn't easily exist in an urban setting, and McMinn values his rural location for its inherent advantages.

Defining rural

Even with its bustling hub cities, Skagit County is considered rural. Washington state officially designates 29 of Washington's 39 counties as rural, including Skagit. Rural counties are defined by state code having a population density of less than 100 people per square mile, or a county

smaller than 225 square miles.

This definition was outlined as part of legislation that established a funding mechanism for rural counties to use 0.09% of sales tax collected for economic development and affordable housing.

The state's economic development efforts are championed by the Department of Commerce, which oversees the network of Associate Development Organizations (ADOs) throughout the state that carry out economic development work at the county level. Each county has an entity responsible for serving as its ADO. EDASC is the ADO for Skagit County.

Economic development is defined by the state as "purposes which facilitate the creation or retention of businesses and jobs," but exactly how



Steve McMinn and Eric Warner

each ADO goes about that in their communities looks different based on local resources and needs.

"Nowadays, most economic developers recognize the importance of addressing systemic challenges that particularly rural communities face," EDASC CEO John Sternlicht said. "That is why, over the last several years, EDASC has focused to an increasing extent on housing, workforce, and childcare as economic development issues on top of business expansion and attraction."

Sternlicht points to a recent International Economic Development Council (IEDC) survey of rural communities, where respondents highlighted concerns over the housing shortage, declining downtowns, young people leaving, and lack of childcare.

Similar to what EDASC has found in its surveys, respondents to the IEDC survey stated rural small-business concerns focus primarily on the lack of appropriately skilled workers and suitable buildings, as well as the lack of public and private support.

In Skagit County, "we are constrained as to available land for development," Sternlicht said. "Once you eliminate flood plains and agricultural land from consideration, available commercial/industrial properties with improvements are even more rare."

Availability of adequate electric power and, in some parts of the county, availability of water could present challenges for a business wishing to expand or relocate here.

With a tight labor market and the need for local talent trained for the jobs of the future, employers are concerned about workforce development as well.

"But all this should not be taken as discouraging – merely as refinements to any economic development strategy," Sternlicht said. "Both home-grown and new businesses could thrive here even within those limitations, if we customize our efforts."

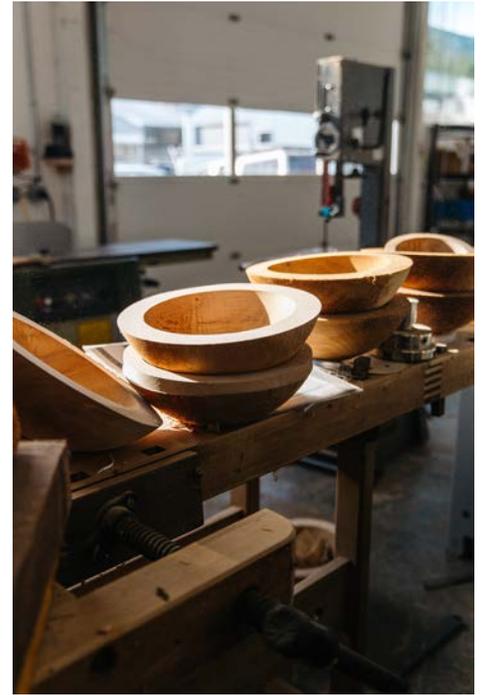
Looking past the challenges, Skagit County counts its natural beauty and small-town support of local enterprises among the advantages of living and doing business here.

EDASC works to accentuate those advantages while fostering growth opportunities to meet its challenges.

More than place – people

Rural businesses are as varied as the people who live in these communities. Logging and agriculture may immediately come to mind, but it's just as likely to be the local auto repair shop or a river tour guide. A throughline for rural small businesses is an ethos of resourceful owners who are connected to the land via occupation or lifestyle.

Practically, McMinn says his business producing soundboards and sides for guitars couldn't easily exist in an urban setting – land costs would



be much higher, and the business wouldn't be as close to its source material in miles or in inspiration.

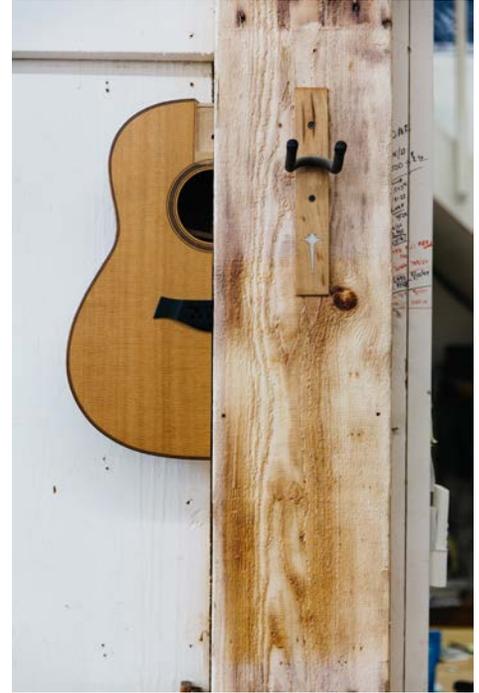
A benefit of rural communities is that payroll costs are typically lower than in urban areas, although McMinn notes having the refineries and big aerospace employers in Skagit County skews the overall pay rate for manufacturing jobs here.

Manufacturing is a strong presence in Skagit County. According to state Employment Security Department numbers, manufacturing is the top employer by industry here, with 803 firms paying \$1.8 billion in wages in the first quarter of 2025.

PRT employees come from Rockport, Concrete, Lyman, Sedro-Woolley, and as far afield as Bellingham and Marysville. They range in experience from new college grads to employees with decades with the company.

"I love that we have got all these multiple generations. People are so very skilled," McMinn said.

Eric Warner is one of the team members who's been with PRT for years, three decades to be exact.



McMinn said Warner started with the company when he was 18 and today is McMinn's business partner.

While PRT employees often use machining technology, robotics and sonic measurement tools, McMinn classifies his employees as "handy" folks who lean on their rural roots and practical problem-solving skills.

He sees this as a strength that some urban dwellers might not exhibit.

Unfortunately, tariffs established in 2025 put pressure on both production and sales, causing PRT to lay off employees.

McMinn said tariffs affect equipment purchased overseas, such as a specialized sawmill from Italy that was installed in February 2025, as well as tariffs on spruce sourced from Canada. Canadian spruce had a 10% tariff as of November 2025.

And consumers are more cautious as well, causing sales to soften.

"Consumer confidence just plays into everything," he said.

Due to these economic pressures, McMinn estimated 2025 revenue would be about 80% of 2024's total.

Betting on bowls

Being located in a rural county,

PRT has been able to take advantage of grant programs targeted to rural communities.

For instance, a \$400,000 U.S. Forest Service grant enabled the company to install a solar array atop one of its buildings. The array went online late last year, and now it produces one-half to two-thirds of the energy PRT uses. This is welcome relief as energy costs continue to rise, McMinn said.

A second Forest Service grant for \$300,000 is helping them to develop a new line of business, manufacturing "bowl cores" from wood that would otherwise be a waste product in the operation.

As a business owner, McMinn says, "[I'm] always looking – Where are there more opportunities? What else can we do?"

McMinn said the matching grant funds helped to pay in part for engineering salaries, research and development, and general startup costs.

The bowl cores come from wood unusable for soundboards due to size, knots or other imperfections but are perfectly suited for artisan woodworkers. The bowls make use

of wood that before would have been scrap or even left to rot on the forest floor, McMinn said.

Sustainability is woven into the work at PRT, where forestry meets manufacturing, so it seems like a natural move to diversify by creating a new revenue stream from the wood that doesn't make it into a guitar soundboard.

After the bowl cores are cut using a robot, they are dried for a week in the same kiln used for curing soundboards. The cores are then ready to become finished bowls in the hands of wood turners or carvers.

PRT plans to go to market with the bowls in spring, both selling to retailers and directly online.

Fine musical instrument components and home goods are an unlikely pairing, but resourceful rural people have made the practice of using everything they can long before sustainability was a buzzword. With this mindset, McMinn and the entire team at Pacific Rim Tonewoods have built a culture of ingenuity and adaptability.

EDASC Top 10 of 2025



2025 saw new faces, systems, and a new logo at EDASC. While all these things happened behind the scenes, EDASC continued to engage with its partners and the community to advance a prosperous, equitable and sustainable Skagit County.

Noted economist makes return engagement at Economic Forecast Night

Back by popular demand, Beacon Economics' Founding Partner Chris Thornberg delivered his take on the national economy during EDASC's annual Economic Forecast Night. Thornberg told the 300-plus business leaders and community members gathered for the annual forecast dinner that the numbers showed a strong economy but the sentiment from everyday Americans tells a different story.

"You have to pay attention to both the narrative and the data," Thornberg said.

On the local front, Thornberg said the county's employers need more workers, and that becomes challenging for those attempting to move into this tight real estate market.

"Skagit County desperately needs people and that is a conversation about housing," Thornberg said.

County CEDS plan to be facilitated by EDASC

EDASC leads the implementation and tracking of Skagit County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), a federally recognized plan that guides long-term economic growth. EDASC coordinates with local governments, businesses, and community partners to identify priorities, set measurable goals, and track progress. EDASC facilitates the CEDS steering committee and work groups, ensuring that diverse voices are included in shaping the county's economic future. The CEDS framework helps align local initiatives with state and federal funding opportunities, strengthening regional competitiveness. By driving this collaborative process, EDASC ensures that Skagit's economic development efforts are strategic, inclusive and forward-looking.

New team members join EDASC

EDASC welcomed three new team members in 2025: Deputy Director Ken Huste, Equitable Economic Development Manager Juan Morales, and Business Operations Associate Melena Peitersen.

Ken Huste is an accomplished economic developer and business development manager who most recently worked for Innovation Norway for 12 years as a Senior Advisor, Maritime. As EDASC's deputy director, Huste is responsible for a range of activities in addition to business recruitment, retention and expansion, including strategic planning, program implementation, project management and cultivating relationships with key stakeholders. A native of Norway who spent his childhood in a number of countries, Ken and his family moved to Anacortes in 2025 from Texas.

Juan Morales is a former member of the Mount Vernon City Council and previously worked as the program coordinator for the Northwest Agriculture Business Center. At EDASC, he primarily works with aspiring entrepreneurs and established small businesses, with a particular focus on underserved communities throughout the county. Juan is bilingual in English and Spanish and is a Skagit County native.

Melena Peitersen is the Office Operations Associate at EDASC. She has more than 15 years' experience working in office administration with local businesses, including Regence. Melena was born and raised in Skagit County.

Business Climate Survey guides EDASC programs, partnerships

EDASC's 2025 Business Climate Survey revealed that hiring and retaining workforce remains the most pressing challenge for Skagit County employers, cited by nearly 60% of respondents. Businesses also pointed to permitting and land-use regulations, supply chain constraints, and the high cost of development as significant barriers. Access to childcare for employees emerged as a recurring concern, reflecting its importance in workforce participation and retention. Many respondents also noted difficulties accessing capital and planning for succession. These insights guided EDASC's programs and partnerships, helping ensure that local employers have the resources and support they need to grow and thrive.



Continued work with partners

EDASC partners with a wide range of agencies and organizations to advocate for Skagit County's economic interests and provide tailored assistance to businesses.

These include, but are not limited to, municipal, county, state and federal lawmakers; the Washington Economic Development Association and Washington State Department of Commerce; business advising organizations such as the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Washington APEX Accelerator, Impact Washington and the Northwest Innovation Resource Center; downtown associations and local chambers of commerce; workforce development partners such as Northwest Career & Technical Academy, Northwest Educational Service District 189, regional institutions of higher education, the Northwest Workforce Council, and WorkSource; the ports of Anacortes and Skagit for business attraction and expansion projects; the Skagit Tourism Bureau; and our partner in Leadership Skagit, Skagit Valley College.



EDASC logo gets a refresh

EDASC introduced its new logo this summer.

This is the first major rebranding of the organization in more than a decade. The logo's new look is a modernization of the past logo, notes EDASC CEO John Sternlicht, and represents how EDASC continues to modernize its approaches and programs to fit ever-evolving circumstances.

"The new logo reflects the complexity and diversity of Skagit County," he says. "It is multidimensional, like most issues we engage with, and the shapes appear to move upward, representing progress."

Sternlicht marks 10 years at EDASC's helm

EDASC CEO John Sternlicht celebrated 10 years with the organization this summer. During that time, EDASC has changed from inside to out – the name, logo, location, technology, accounting and systems – as well as a renewed emphasis on mission-related programming. Instead of a focus on events that tend to compete with other community organizations, the organization regularly surveys its constituency to identify business and community needs that can be met through purposeful programming. EDASC's Board of Directors has also changed: only two on Sternlicht's hiring committee remain. Read more from Sternlicht reflecting on the last 10 years on page 14.

Startup School completes second successful year

Startup School, EDASC's entrepreneurial training program, completed its second successful year in 2025, offering a 12-week course to aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners. Startup School is offered twice per year, once in Spanish and once in English, with curriculum in both languages from the My Own Business Institute at Santa Clara University. This year, 40 participants successfully completed the course. Startup School has been recognized with an Education First grant from WECU.



EDASC seeks to understand childcare need

EDASC's Childcare Impact Report highlighted how limited childcare access directly affects Skagit County businesses, with employers reporting challenges in recruitment, retention, and employee productivity. Many businesses noted that lack of reliable childcare forces parents out of the workforce or restricts their hours, reducing the available talent pool. The report also found that employers are increasingly recognizing childcare as a key workforce issue, not just a family concern. By documenting these impacts, the report underscores the need for creative solutions and stronger partnerships between businesses, providers, and policymakers.

New CRM improves operations, communications

Behind the scenes, EDASC rolled out a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database. While it streamlines internal operations for EDASC, it also benefits investors via more accurate company data, quick online billing, and targeted contacts to ensure EDASC communications arrive in the right inbox.

A Decade of Economic Development: Reflecting on my tenure at EDASC

BY JOHN STERNLICHT

Last summer marked my 10th anniversary as CEO of EDASC. Reflecting on this decade, I see our work in three distinct phases: initial innovation, the Covid-19 pivot, and our current “new reality.” Throughout, we’ve balanced internal management improvements with external programmatic shifts – though the two are inextricably linked.

Phase 1: Innovation and Strategy (2015–2019)

I joined EDASC in 2015 with a mandate for “fresh eyes.” I likened the task to renovating a beautiful but dated home; the “floor plan” needed to evolve for modern needs. A 30-member steering committee and broad community input shaped our first-ever Strategic Plan, introduced in January 2016. It focused on three classic pillars of economic development: business recruitment, business retention and expansion, and capacity building.

Another change in these early days, we traded “Association” for “Alliance” in our name, emphasizing the collaborative engagement with the community and particularly EDASC Investors, formerly known as “members.” This change also distinguished EDASC’s economic development and capacity building work from the business-support roles of local chambers of commerce.

Key milestones included:

Business Retention and Expansion: Initiating a program assisting existing Skagit businesses in growing here.

Inclusive Outreach: Reinstating the Latino Business Retention & Expansion program.

Infrastructure & Collaboration: Convening efforts for county-wide fiber, facilitating creation of a Tourism Promotion Area, developing the Anacortes Maritime Strategy, and developing the value-added agriculture Innovation Partnership Zone.

Soon after I was hired, I discovered a second nonprofit under my care: the EDASC Foundation, which the organization originally created to direct Leadership Skagit. This meant managing two of everything – from boards to books. Moving EDASC from 501c6 status to 501c3 would consolidate the two entities and give the organization greater flexibility in funding channels with the added benefit of ensuring Leadership Skagit was



EDASC CEO John Sternlicht (L), presents the IEDC Advocacy Award to U.S. Rep. Rick Larsen.

fully under the EDASC umbrella.

On Jan. 1, 2020, we merged EDASC with its Foundation, which would soon prove fortuitous as the world shifted with the appearance of Covid-19.

Phase 2: The Covid Pivot (2020)

Two months after our merger, the world changed. We transitioned to remote work overnight, eventually moved to a more efficient office upon returning to in-person work in 2021, and actually increased revenue and small-business support during the shutdown. Our new 501c3 status allowed us to access PPP and EIDL loans and distribute state grants to local chambers and downtown associations. Despite the pandemic, we facilitated the new Skagit location and expansion of Silfab Solar and kept Leadership Skagit thriving virtually.

EDASC maintained communications during the shutdown, meeting regularly with Congressman

Larsen and local government and business leaders. We connected the community with recovery resources and hosted well-attended virtual events.

In light of national events, the EDASC board affirmed the importance of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion and redoubled efforts to reflect that in our programming. In concert with the county's six chambers of commerce, EDASC began the online JEDI lecture series, featuring speakers bringing concepts and data to light making the business case for justice, equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace. As a result, EDASC received the inaugural Washington Economic Development Association DEI award, recognizing us as a leader in this statewide and national effort.

Phase 3: The New Reality (2021–Present)

Armed with the County's Economic Recovery Plan that EDASC penned, we entered the post-pandemic era with renewed energy, bringing about new programs while continuously improving our core pillars.

We hired a bilingual business advisor to assist Spanish-speaking business owners and a community relations associate to manage the Leadership Skagit program's operations. We partnered with the state's Labor & Industries to conduct outreach to small businesses. New grant and contract funding reaffirmed the work we do is meaningful and necessary.

Some of this work included:

Emphasis on workforce development: Coming out of the pandemic, employers faced challenges finding local workers with the right skills for the work they do. To aid employers, we leaned into developing a workforce pipeline from the region's educational institutions, helping to build an



Sternlicht helps a Skagit business owner navigate hurdles in her business.



Sternlicht, a member of the WSU-Everett advisory committee, visits NWREC staff.

apprenticeship program connecting students in technical programs to employers. Additionally, EDASC hosted regional job fairs with WorkSource and created an online job board.

New Consortia: EDASC acted as the fiscal agent to launch both the Skagit Tourism Bureau and the Skagit Housing Consortium.

Focus on entrepreneurship: A partnership with RAIN Catalysts as well as EDASC's own Startup School program have helped to grow the ecosystem of support for entrepreneurs. Startup School, offered in both English and Spanish, has been a vital part of supporting entrepreneurs in the county's Latino community.

In recent years, EDASC has had plenty to celebrate, including the organization's 50th anniversary in 2022, Leadership Skagit's 20th anniversary in 2024, and becoming the first Accredited Economic Development Organization (AEDO) in the Pacific Northwest. This "seal of approval" from the International Economic Development Council – held by fewer than 100 organizations globally – proves our operations are world-class.

I consider the accreditation process an important first step in the journey of succession planning. The exercise alone of applying was useful in exposing any gaps.

As we look forward, our task remains simple but significant: keep the work fresh, the team ready, and the community united in the belief that we all have a stake in Skagit County's future.



Sternlicht and EDASC helped to guide transition to new owners for Eddline Kayaks in 2017.

Top 20 Skagit County Employers

EDASC compiled a list of the top employers in Skagit County. Research was conducted through outreach to businesses, organizations and institutions in Skagit County for an estimated number of current permanent full-time employees.

Business	Marathon.....	410
Skagit Regional Health.....	Burlington Edison School District.....	398
Janicki Industries, Inc.	Swinomish Casino & Lounge.....	374
Skagit Valley College	PeaceHealth United General Medical Center	318
Mount Vernon School District	Hexcel Corporation	276
Skagit County	City Of Mount Vernon.....	230
Paccar Technical Center	Sierra Pacific Industries.....	230
Island Health.....	Northwest Educational Service District 189.....	225
Sedro-Woolley School District	City Of Anacortes.....	222
Draper Valley Farms.....	Pacific Woodtech Corporation	220
HF Sinclair		
Silfab Solar, Inc.....		

This data reflects FTEs; collected winter 2025-26.

Economic Forecast Night 2025





Leadership Skagit graduates broaden understanding of community needs

Since 2004, the Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County's Leadership Skagit program has graduated over 600 alumni, inspiring professionals at every level of their career to deepen their knowledge of community development.

"I had recently started a new position with the Skagit County Fair and wanted to learn more about the community in which I work and meet other leaders in the county," said graduate Frances Negranza, assistant manager of the Skagit County Fairgrounds. "The Fair is a community-based event, therefore it's

vital to get to know and understand the community as a whole. I'm very thankful that I had the support from my place of work to participate."

Graduates of the nine-month intensive program learn key insights into the interconnection of important county-wide strengths and needs, are educated on various aspects of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, and also enjoy an expansion of their personal and professional networks.

"Participating in the program was a game changer," said Michele Metcalf, housing project director for Community Action of Skagit County. "Having mostly worked within Tribal

communities since I moved to Skagit County in 2009, I was not well networked in the community until I joined the program. Now, there isn't a social gathering that I've participated in where I don't recognize a friendly face. Leadership Skagit has helped me create lasting partnerships (and friendships)."

A DEEPER INSIGHT

Since its inception, Leadership Skagit has been recognized with multiple awards. These include Volunteers of the Year by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (2020), the Community Leadership

Award from Brigid Collins (2018), the Governor's Leadership Award and Washington State University Hall of Champions Award. But it's also received countless accolades from those who have completed the program.

"It provided me with deeper insights into the region's challenges and opportunities while fostering strong connections with a network of dedicated leaders," said Jason Wells, the new executive director of Skagit Friendship House.

"Professionally, it has enhanced my ability to collaborate across sectors, and personally, it has reinforced my commitment to driving meaningful community impact, particularly in areas like housing and economic development."

The program's curriculum is capped off with a team project that addresses a need in the community with grads receiving 17 academic credits from Skagit Valley College. In the past, these projects have included:

- Skagit Game Nights
- East Skagit County Community Resource Fair
- Triumph Teen Center Garden
- Anacortes Waterfront Alliance Family Day

"I thoroughly enjoyed my experience in the program. Through challenge days over the course of nine months, I had the opportunity to set aside dedicated time to be in the same room with other leaders in the community with the expectation to be curious, ask hard questions and challenge my perceptions of the many different aspects of the county," said Negranza. "I am thankful that I had the opportunity to listen and meet face-to-face with civic leaders, community organizations and local businesses while learning about local history, ecology,



community-wide health factors, local politics, economic vitality, arts, and community service, which has broadened my understanding of Skagit County as a place, its people and the community as a whole."

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

With an eye toward supporting constructive community progress, alumni are encouraged to serve on committees, boards, in professional organizations throughout the county and region, and on task forces. They're also encouraged to think about serving in elected or appointed offices.

"I have volunteered as an advisor since I graduated from the program in 2023. I enjoy mentoring teams as they make their way through this exciting journey," said Metcalf. "I am constantly sharing about my experiences with the program and looking for other folks in the community who would benefit from building these connections."

For the graduates, it's been an

experience that's proven invaluable.

"I'm a firm believer that what you get from the program is a direct result from the effort you put in. My cohort was filled with top tier individuals and through learning and working with each other over the course of the program, I now have 30 people from across the county who I can call on for advice, new ideas and even create new potential partnerships between our respective organizations," said Negranza.

"It provides a unique opportunity to develop leadership skills, build meaningful connections, and gain a deeper understanding of the region's needs and opportunities," said Wells. "Whether you're looking to expand your impact, collaborate across sectors, or drive positive change in the community, this program equips you with the tools and network to make a real difference."



A conversation with Lisa Janicki

EDASC CEO interviews outgoing Skagit County Commissioner

BY JOHN STERNLICHT

Ten years can bring a great deal of change. After my first few months as EDASC's CEO, Skagit County Commissioner Lisa Janicki, who had previously served two terms as president of the EDASC Board of Directors, interviewed me for the 2016 Skagit Business Guide. Ten years later, it seemed only natural that I interviewed her as she prepared to step down from her 11-year tenure as a Skagit County Commissioner.

By any measure, Janicki's time as a commissioner was immensely successful.

I asked Janicki for some reflections on her tenure off the top of her head. "Well, a lot has changed in 10 years," she began.

Referring to her previous 30 years as CFO of a notable Skagit-based business, she said "the growth at Janicki Industries has been phenomenal."

Her work at Janicki Industries and with Janicki Logging, both family companies, informed her decision making as a commissioner: "Throughout my term, I thought it important for government to walk alongside industry."

Fellow Commissioner Ron Wesen said Janicki's life experience with business, technology and the timber industry made her well-suited to be a Skagit County commissioner. Indeed, many areas of county government and the County itself have benefited from Janicki's expertise, work ethic and determination.

When I asked Janicki what she was proudest of during her time as commissioner, she didn't hesitate to mention the CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy), adopted in December 2024.

"We put a system in place to outlive all of us," Janicki said. "The thoughtfulness of the project made it a more useful document because it

put assignments in place. It maps the future and is truly comprehensive because of the wide-ranging inputs."

Janicki said her initial reason for running for office was to put technology in place to provide better service to the public and make county jobs easier and more effective. Once in office, she discovered she hadn't fully realized the level of need.

"Planning and elections software were obsolete; case files were all paper and attorneys were carting



suitcases full of documents around," she recalls.

Janicki started with the election software, which was running on Windows 95, and ensured it was customized for Skagit County and the 2016 presidential and local elections.

Further, the County lacked a comprehensive database for county-owned properties – each property was listed separately by the responsible department. The County now has a robust asset management database of all county-owned properties. To evaluate surplus, development possibilities or improvements, county decision-makers now have a valuable tool.

Janicki has been key in initiating the County's strategic planning process and linking it to the budgeting process. The County's process began by engaging with more than 40 department heads and distilling its strategic plan into five goals, leading to annual plans for each individual goal. Staff provide quarterly updates, and about 100 employees participate in this robust process in getting things done.

When I asked what thorny challenges remain for her successor and the county, Janicki mentioned that while more housing is coming,

it will remain a challenge. She also added, "Water treatment upriver remains a challenge – how does Hamilton deal with the county's largest private employer and hundreds of workers coming in daily?"

Janicki's tireless work to combat and treat addiction, homelessness and behavioral health issues have been recognized on many occasions. She championed the North Star initiative, a coalition of county and city leaders, organizational representatives, and community members working to address homelessness and behavioral health issues across the county. Janicki noted efficiency comes from working collectively and hopes those relationships will continue in a productive way, even as leadership roles change.

She has been involved in the settlement between opioid manufacturers and then Attorney General (now Governor) Ferguson, and she has served boards including the Association of Washington Business, Washington Association of Counties, and Gonzaga University.

Janicki's kindness and generosity are evident as she mentored many younger leaders, especially women, at the County and anywhere she

went. She has been recognized as a Community Changemaker, a SWAN Woman of the Year (and lifetime award recipient), and many more too numerous to recount. More importantly, she is a thoughtful, generous example of servant leadership and a proud Leadership Skagit Class of 2005 graduate who contributes wisely and energetically in every situation.

I was curious how such an active leader planned to manage retirement. Lisa, now married 44 years to Mike Janicki, enjoys proximity to their children and 10 – soon 11 – grandchildren, and she wants to enjoy time with family. She also will still have responsibility for some aspects of their family businesses. And she is actively thinking about how to be productive in public-facing roles without stepping on the toes of new leadership.

Clearly, Janicki still cares a great deal about the community and will always be involved. We look forward to her continued contributions for decades to come.

Thank you for your dedicated service, Commissioner Lisa Janicki!





Getting to know the SWIFT Center

BY LINDA TYLER, PORT OF SKAGIT

Many people know of Northern State Hospital, the former mental hospital in Sedro-Woolley that operated from 1912 to 1973. The landscape of the campus and the architecture of the buildings are rich with as much history as beauty. Today, the campus is brimming with activity of a different kind, and the Port of Skagit invites you to get to know the SWIFT Center.

SWIFT Center, an acronym for Sedro-Woolley Innovation for Tomorrow, is undergoing a major revitalization effort. The Port of Skagit, which took over ownership of the property from the state in July 2018, has been planning and

implementing key initiatives that include public, private and community partners.

After becoming new stewards of the campus, the Port of Skagit prioritized its initial work based on immediate priorities and feedback from community meetings. Since 2018, the Port has invested nearly \$4 million in deferred maintenance to address needs around the campus and in occupied buildings.

The Port created a public access program, opening the campus to the community through informal use and organized events. The development of the self-guided historic route and interpretive signs welcome and educate visitors, while Public History Days and Music in the Park @ SWIFT events provide opportunities for

people to gather, enjoy and further connect with the campus.

Environmental cleanup efforts continue in areas where legacy contamination has been identified, stemming from decades of hospital and maintenance operations on the campus. Rewarding work is under way in partnership with Skagit Trail Builders to build, repair and/or reclaim trails to offer more access and connection to the county's Northern State Recreation Area and the Port's SWIFT Center. Additional amenities like refurbished historic benches and signage help to enhance the user experience, turning curious visitors into regular patrons of the outdoor spaces.

As public access work continues, the Port is focusing on the next

phase of redevelopment of the SWIFT Center – creating economic opportunities through public, private and community investment. The Port has built a new SWIFT Center website (www.swiftcenterskagit.com) geared toward businesses and developers who are looking for a unique footprint in the Pacific Northwest. The website provides a one-stop-shop of information about the campus, existing buildings, build-to-suit options and creative funding programs available to developers, such as historic tax credits. The Port is actively marketing opportunities to lease existing buildings as well as developable land.

The most impactful initiative underway at the SWIFT Center right now is the work to renovate the historic Hub building. Built in 1916, the Hub served as a gathering space on the campus, for music, movies, church services, special events and more. Located in the center of campus, the Hub welcomed patients, hospital staff and the community, fostering the deep connection that residents had, and continue to have, to this campus. Renovating the Hub building into a community gathering space would provide a “full circle” achievement and could serve as the catalyst for further redevelopment and investment from the private sector.

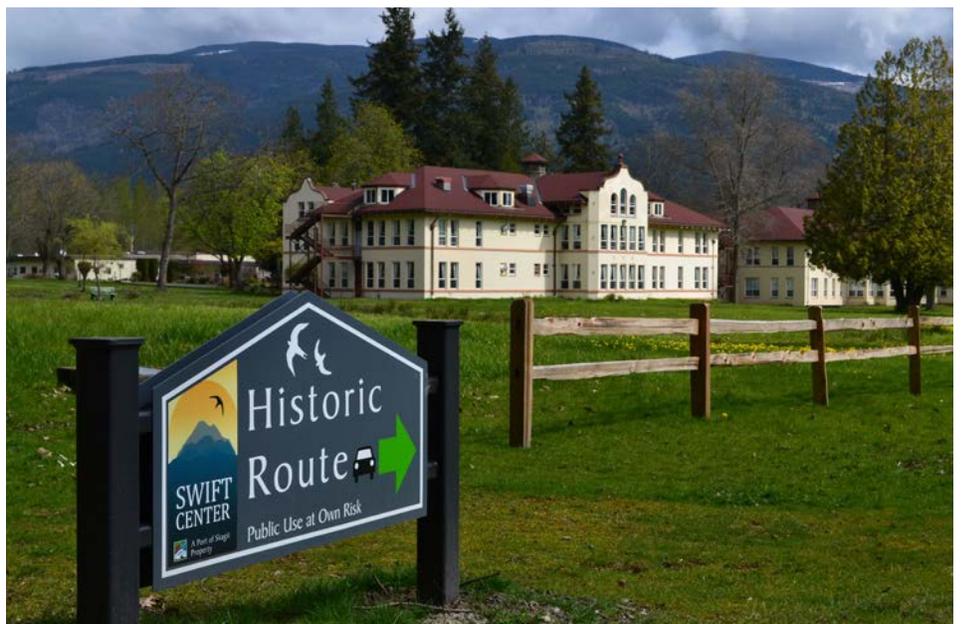
Since the early stages of transitioning the property to local ownership, the vision was to redevelop this property into a destination mixed use campus accommodating education, research and development, manufacturing, hospitality and commercial venues, all within the historic character and great public spaces of the center. Opportunities to realize that vision are at hand now, and the Port welcomes ideas, projects and conversations

from prospective partners on how to meet the needs of business, while building economic opportunities for our community, and ultimately accomplishing the collective goals and vision for this incredible property.



PROPERTY OVERVIEW:

- 210-acre campus
- 200,000 square feet of historic buildings for adaptive reuse
- 34+ acres of contiguous land for ground-up development
- Heavy utility access
- Workforce partners on site
- Competitive lease terms
- Suite of incentives





Don't Lose Out on DoD Work: New Level 1 CMMC cybersecurity rules now in contracts

Late last year, the Department of Defense (DoD) implemented new cybersecurity requirements that directly impact contractors across the Defense Industrial Base (DIB). Known as CMMC Level 1, these rules are now being integrated into DoD contracts, and the message is clear: If your company does not meet Level 1 standards, it will not be eligible to work on contracts that require them.

Who is affected now and in the future?

CMMC Level 1 applies to 60%-70% of all DoD contractors, including prime contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers who handle Federal Contract Information (FCI). While some exemptions exist, such as companies selling Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) items without modification or contracts valued under \$15,000, the majority of DIB organizations will need to comply. Looking ahead, adherence to these standards is expected to become increasingly critical as the DoD expands cybersecurity requirements across higher levels of CMMC, affecting more contracts and more suppliers.

Advanced CMMC Levels 2 and 3 will be phased in over 2026 and 2027 and require additional safeguards for companies that handle Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI). CUI is sensitive information that the U.S. federal government wants protected but that is not classified as Confidential, Secret or Top Secret. In other words, it's important information that could cause problems if it fell into the wrong hands, but it doesn't rise to the level of classified procurements.

Common examples of CUI are technical information or drawings for defense equipment or systems, contract information that includes sensitive business, or pricing data and export-controlled information.

Understanding CMMC Level 1 requirements

CMMC Level 1 is designed to ensure basic cyber hygiene for protecting sensitive information. It consists of 17 fundamental security practices, including the use of unique user IDs, strong passwords, limiting system access, maintaining basic device configurations, and



WASHINGTON APEX ACCELERATOR

ensuring proper media handling. These practices expand into 59 specific controls that a company must address.

While Level 1 is the least burdensome CMMC tier, achieving compliance still requires careful planning and documentation. For organizations with existing security measures, the process can take as little as 30 to 90 days. Small to medium-sized firms may require four to eight weeks for assessment and SPRS entry, while companies that need significant new controls or cloud-based solutions should anticipate three to six months or longer to fully close gaps and document evidence.

Cohorts, workshops and resources

Support for achieving CMMC Level 1 compliance is becoming widely available. Programs such as Washington APEX Accelerator provide guidance, workshops and cohort-based learning opportunities to help contractors navigate requirements efficiently. Below are two resources to consider:

- APEX Accelerator CMMC Cohorts** – washingtonapex.org/cmmc-2026-cohorts
- Project Spectrum** – www.projectspectrum.io/#

Act now, stay competitive

CMMC Level 1 is no longer a future concern: It is here, and the DoD is enforcing it through new contract requirements. Contractors who fail to meet these cybersecurity standards risk losing access to valuable work. By understanding the requirements, documenting processes and leveraging available resources, businesses can secure compliance and maintain eligibility for contracts within the DIB. Acting now ensures you stay competitive in a landscape where cybersecurity is becoming a baseline expectation rather than an optional practice.

About Washington APEX Accelerator

Washington APEX Accelerator (APEX) advises businesses on how to win government contracts and subcontracts. The one-on-one no cost technical assistance includes advising, bid reviews, marketing assistance, contract performance, and small business certifications. APEX also hosts procurement training classes and seminars and helps businesses register with the correct databases to compete for government contracts.

Skagit County businesses are served by two APEX advisors, Cara Buckingham and Mark Johnson, who also partner with EDASC to bring programming to the area. They are based at Economic Alliance Snohomish County and serve a five-county region. Buckingham conducts monthly office hours in Skagit County at the EDASC office.

Register to become a client by visiting washingtonapex.org and clicking the button on the top right of the home page.



Cara Buckingham is one of two APEX advisors serving Skagit County businesses.

Washington SBDC: The assistance you need at a price you can afford



The Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC) offers confidential advising, group training and diverse tools and resources to help you achieve your goals. One-to-one, confidential technical assistance, and nearly all SBDC services are provided at no cost to the business owner.

Typical areas of advising include assisting with cashflow management, applying for a loan, improving profits, setting up business systems, creating and understanding spreadsheets, government contracting, and export readiness. The SBDC also offers no-cost classes on how to start a business.

Steve McCaslin, the SBDC business advisor serving Skagit County, has more than 45 years of demonstrated leadership in public, private and nonprofit sectors and was a small business owner for more than a decade.

In addition to meeting one-on-one with small business owners to help them reach their goals, McCaslin also works with the Mount Vernon

Chamber of Commerce to present monthly webinars on a variety of business issues, including how to hire employees, how to get funding for your business and why succession planning matters.

The Washington SBDC is a network of more than 40 business advisors located in communities around the state. SBDC advisors have been providing expert, no-cost, confidential business advising to small business owners in Washington state since 1980.

When a business owner works with one SBDC advisor, they have access to the expertise and experiences of the entire network. Several of our advisors are bilingual in English and Spanish, and we are committed to finding translation services or interpreters so that language is not a barrier to service.

The program is hosted by Washington State University (WSU) and is administered through a cooperative agreement between WSU and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). Funding is



Steve McCaslin, SBDC business advisor

provided by WSU, other institutions of higher education, economic development associations and civic and business groups. These state and local funds are then matched on a one-to-one basis with federal money from the SBA.

You are the expert on your business, but we are business experts. We look forward to helping you build your business, make more money, and contribute to your community.

To find out more, you can go to our website at wsbdc.org or call 833-492-7232.

2025 in Photos



EDASC's Aaron Weinberg and John Sternlicht visited the governor's mansion in early 2025 as part of a delegation from the Washington Economic Development Association.



EDASC staff members with Madison Price Zender and Matt Roetcisoender of VSH CPAs for October's Signature Investor Roundtable.



Members of neighboring economic development organizations from Island, San Juan and Whatcom counties visit EDASC.



EDASC's Gina Eakin was honored with the Burlington Chamber of Commerce Ambassador of the Year award.



Gov. Bob Ferguson visited Mount Vernon after December's historic flooding.



"Team SKAGIT Best" celebrates their graduation from the Leadership Skagit program in June.



Skagit Tourism Bureau CEO Kristen Keltz facilitates the bureau's visioning process with stakeholders from around Skagit County.



The EDASC team celebrated a successful year with a holiday tea at Willowbrook Manor.



More than 30 employers participated in the April job fair hosted by EDASC and WorkSource.

Financial focus remains on responsible, transparent stewardship of resources

As the first (and still the only) Accredited Economic Development Organization in the Pacific Northwest, EDASC has consistently demonstrated a commitment to operational excellence, impactful programs and strong community partnerships. We are proud of this achievement, which reflects the vision of our board of directors and the dedication, expertise and hard work of our staff, as well as the quality and impact of our programs.

Our accreditation from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) underscores our dedication to financial transparency and accountability. This recognition affirms our responsible stewardship of resources and reinforces our mission to drive sustainable economic growth and create lasting positive change in the region.

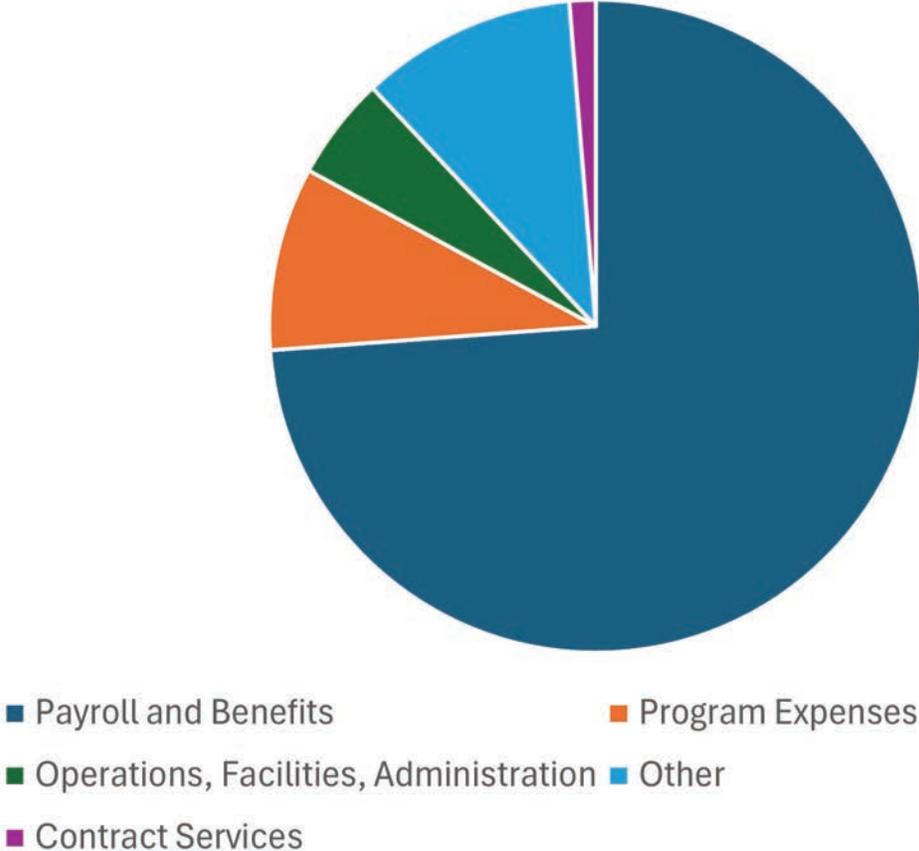
EDASC maintains strong financial health with a solid balance sheet, supported by sound financial practices and oversight from the Board of Directors and

its Finance & Audit Committee. To ensure long-term sustainability and scalability, EDASC has prioritized diversifying its revenue streams. This includes shifting focus from events to securing grants and contracts that align closely with our mission, while continuing to host mission-related events that directly benefit local business owners and entrepreneurs.

EDASC is a countywide public-private partnership. Public revenue sources include Skagit County, Port of Skagit, Port of Anacortes, local cities and towns, Skagit PUD, and the Washington Department of Commerce.

EDASC expenses focus on program delivery: Most spending is allocated toward economic development and Leadership Skagit activities, while taking a lean approach to operations, administration and fundraising. As typically occurs with nonprofit organizations, the vast majority of expenditures support the staff carrying out program activities.

2025 Expenses



Review of Fiscal Year Ending Dec. 31, 2025

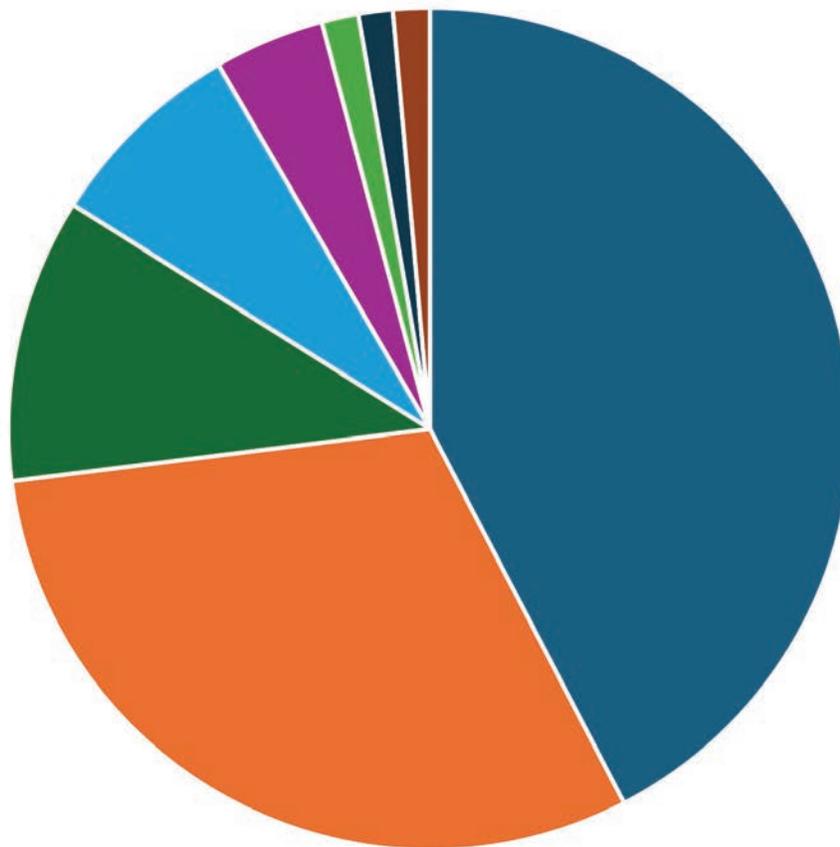
In 2025, EDASC continued to prioritize revenue diversification and mission-driven investments. Government contracts remained the largest funding source at 45.1% (down almost 5% from 2024), with direct public support providing 32.6%. Government grants contributed 11.6%, and program income, including Leadership Skagit tuition and fees, accounted for 8.2%. Grants and contributions made up 4.5%, interest income 1.5%, sponsorships 1.4%, and advertising and miscellaneous revenue 0.9%.

Expenses in 2025 reflected our ongoing commitment to operational excellence and impactful programming. Payroll and benefits comprised 73.9% of total expenses, supporting our dedicated staff.

Program expenses for economic development and Leadership Skagit activities represented 9.1%. Operations, facilities and administration were 5.1%, other expenses including marketing, insurance and staff development were 10.7%, and contract services accounted for 1.3%.

EDASC's financial stewardship, as reviewed by independent CPAs, continues to reflect the vision of our board and the dedication of our staff. Our commitment to transparency, accountability and mission-driven impact remains unwavering, even as we navigate the evolving landscape of economic development funding and community needs.

2025 Funding Sources



- Government Contracts
- Direct Public Support
- Government Grants
- Program Income
- Grants and Contributions
- Interest Income
- Sponsorships
- Advertising and Misc.

SIGNATURE INVESTORS

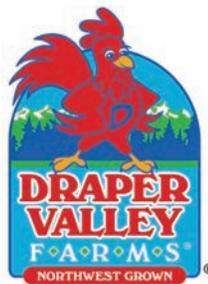
Foundational



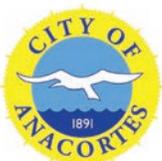
Progress



Prosperity



Public Partners



BECOME AN EDASC INVESTOR

Enterprise Investor
\$20,000

SIGNATURE INVESTORS

EDASC Signature Investors – those who invest at least \$5,000 annually – recognize the importance of ensuring ongoing support for economic development activities. Signature Investors receive additional benefits beyond those received by Investors.

- Special recognition at all EDASC events
- Preferential placement in the EDASC Business Guide
- Logo placement on EDASC’s home page
- Complimentary tickets to Economic Forecast Night
- Exclusive invitation to semi-annual economic development roundtables
- First to know about special EDASC events and projects

Advancement Investor
\$15,000

Foundational Investor
\$10,000

Progress Investor
\$7,500

Prosperity Investor
\$5,000

Community Investor
\$2,500

INVESTORS

As an **EDASC Investor**, your annual investment will fuel innovative and collaborative economic development. Along with ensuring a sustainable Skagit County economy while preserving what we love about the county, Investors receive exclusive benefits as a special thank you from EDASC.

- Networking and sponsorship opportunities
- Listing in EDASC’s Investor Directory – online and print
- Access to periodic research, resources and opportunities
- Unlimited job postings to EDASC’s Skagit Job Board

Equity Investor
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Venture Investor
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Small Business Investor
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**Nonprofit/
Microenterprise**
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Sam Bowhay

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103 N Township St
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284
360-856-2068
mjanicki@janickilogging.com
www.janickilogging.com
Mike Janicki

Northwest Agriculture Business Center

Non-Profit

419 S 1st St Ste 207
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mike@agbizcenter.org
www.agbizcenter.org
Mike Peroni

Puget Sound Food Hub Cooperative

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www.pugetsoundfoodhub.com
Andrew Yokom

Sakuma Bros. Farms, Inc.

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Ryan Sakuma

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www.scratchandpeck.com
Rich Fowles

Skagit Farmers Supply

Equity

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ryann@skagitfarmers.com
www.skagitfarmers.com
Ryan Nootenboom

Skagit Organics

Small Business

16915 State Route 20 Unit B
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-627-1555
skagitorganics@gmail.com
www.SkagitOrganics.net
Matthew Friedlander

2026 INVESTOR PROFILES

Q&A with Genuine Skagit Valley

Tell us about the history of your business and how it got started.

In October of 2013, Washington State Department of Commerce designated Skagit Valley as an Innovation Partnership Zone (IPZ) focusing on value-added agriculture. The IPZ facilitated public and private industry partnerships between the Northwest Agriculture Business Center, Port of Skagit, Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County, researchers at Washington State University, Skagit County, City of Mount Vernon, Skagit Valley College, Northwest Innovation Resource Center, farmers, and entrepreneurs. The Genuine Skagit Valley (GSV) initiative was born of this collaboration to enhance the Skagit Valley's agricultural region's perception and reputation as a premier, preferred, and distinctive point-of-origin brand. In the spring of 2021, the Port of Skagit was granted federal trademark registration for the Genuine Skagit Valley Certification Mark. That same spring Skagit County approved a resolution in support of the program. Currently GSV supports over 100 Skagit growers, food producers, and organizations allied to agriculture.

What products or services do you offer, and where do you see the company's future market?

As a place-based marketing initiative, Genuine Skagit Valley offers collective marketing and branding services to farmers and food producers via use of its federally registered certification mark. As a community builder, GSV works to connect members in order to strengthen networks within the food and ag sector. The program's future market sees worldwide recognition of Skagit-grown agricultural products.

How would you describe your company's mission or core values?

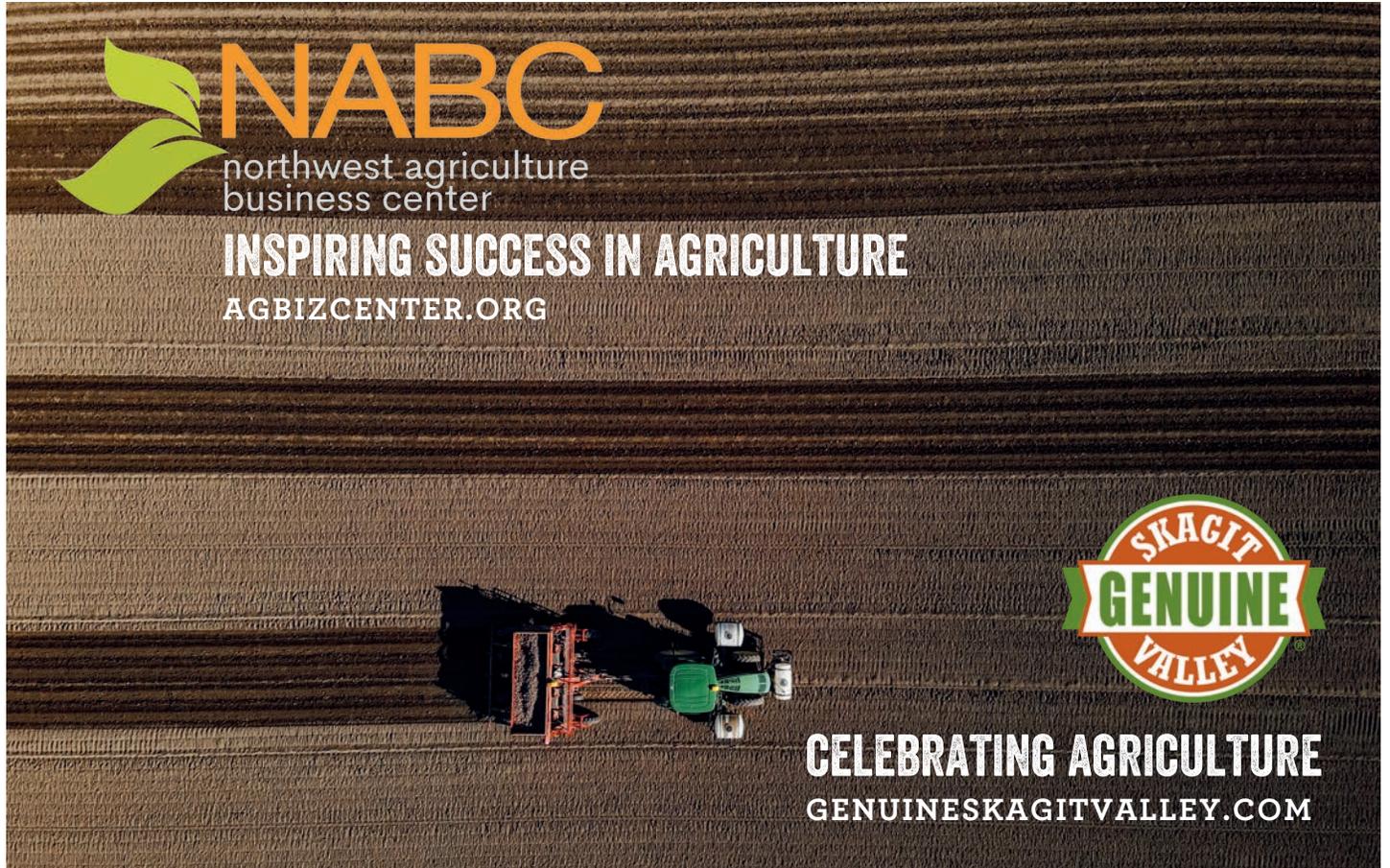
Genuine Skagit Valley heightens consumer awareness of, and connection to, authentically local Skagit farms and farm products. Over 80 commercial crops are produced on 90,000 acres of the last remaining agricultural valley in the Puget Sound Region. By promoting our distinctive farm-raised flavors, culture, and heritage to the region and the world, we aim to sustain farming for generations to come.

What is your target customer demographic, and how do you cater to their needs?

Genuine Skagit Valley has both an internal, local market in addition to an external, consumer market. B2B and B2C audiences inform the internal and external markets. Brand awareness is a big tent. Within Skagit our goal is to integrate with and support our agricultural producers while increasing awareness and sales of Skagit-grown foods to local residents, visitors, and regional consumers.

Can you share some success stories or notable achievements your business has had in the community? (How do you engage with the community?)

In the spring of 2022, EDASC forged a connection for GSV with the retailer, Made in Washington. The result has been a successful partnership with Made in Washington to market and distribute the GSV Savor Skagit Gift Box. The gift box features Skagit-made artisan foods that are now distributed nationally, bringing a taste of Skagit into so many homes. Not only do the Savor Skagit gift boxes enhance the notoriety of our award-winning foods, it also supports the economic viability of value-added agriculture. It's a win-win for everyone.



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northwest agriculture
business center

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aafdirector@anacortesartsfestival.com
www.anacortesartsfestival.com
Meredith McIlmoyle

Avalon Golf Links *Small Business*

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360-757-1900
avalon@avalonlinks.com
www.avalonlinks.com
Ron Hass

Fairfield Inn & Suites By Marriott Burlington *Small Business*

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www.marriott.com/otsfs
Sandy Kish

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 360-293-5353
 valeri@fidalgobay.com
 www.fidalgobay.com
 Valeri Teela

Majestic Inn & Spa *Small Business*
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 gm@majesticinnandspa.com
 www.majesticinnandspa.com
 Travis Sherman

McIntyre Hall - Performing Arts Center *Non-Profit*
 2501 E College Way
 Mount Vernon WA 98273
 360-416-7727
 nida.tautvydas@skagit.edu
 www.mcintyrehall.org
 Nida Tautvydas

Museum of Northwest Art *Non-Profit*
 121 S 1st St
 La Conner, WA 98257
 360-466-4446
 stefanoc@museumofnwart.org
 www.monamuseum.org
 Stefano Catalani

Riverside Health Club *Small Business*
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 360-424-4200
 karen@riversidehealthclub.com
 www.riversidehealthclub.com
 Karen Westra

Scott Milo Gallery *Micro-Enterprise*
 420 Commercial Ave
 Anacortes, WA 98221
 360-293-6938
 gallery@scottmilo.com
 www.scottmilo.com
 Katherine Khile

Skagit Valley Tulip Festival *Non-Profit*
 311 Kincaid St
 Mount Vernon, WA 98273
 360-428-5959
 nicole@tulipfestival.org
 www.tulipfestival.org
 Nicole Roozen

Swinomish Casino & Lodge *Prosperity*
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2026 INVESTOR PROFILES

Q&A with Swinomish Casino & Lodge

Q: Tell us about the history of your business and how it got started.

A: The story of Swinomish Casino & Lodge starts with the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community opening a small bingo operation in 1985. This community of Coast Salish peoples descends from groups and bands originating in the Skagit and Samish River valleys and the surrounding coastal areas and islands.

After five years of running an esteemed bingo hall, the tribe began negotiations for a gaming license in 1990 and signed a gaming compact with the state of Washington on December 21, 1992. Built directly next to the bingo hall, Swinomish Casino opened its doors to the public on July 15, 1994. We officially became Swinomish Casino & Lodge in 2012 with the addition of our 98-room luxury hotel.

Q: What is your long-term vision for your business, and how do you plan to achieve it?

A: Swinomish Casino & Lodge strives to be the friendliest casino in the area while maintaining and upholding the cultural identity of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community. We ensure that our team members are focused on providing exceptional

customer service to all of our guests as they enjoy a luxuriant, state-of-the-art experience. The cultural identity of the tribal community is woven throughout the property, from the artwork in the Lodge to the menu at 13moons, our fine dining restaurant. We aim to continue increasing revenue to support the tribal community and team members. To accomplish this, we keep current guests engaged with frequent events and promotions and attract new business with recent additions to the property.

In January of 2025, we partnered with Rush Street Interactive, Inc. to open the BetRivers at Swinomish Sportsbook. The accompanying BetRivers at Swinomish Sportsbook Lounge has hosted several meet-and-greets with professional athletes and viewing parties for Seattle sports games.

Q: How do you stay innovative and stay ahead of the competition in your industry?

A: We continuously revitalize the gaming floor with the latest titles and newest slot machines, and we strive to be an early adopter of exciting new gaming amenities. In 2024, we were one of the first tribal casinos in the state to introduce Electronic Table Games as a supplement to live tables, allowing guests to try classic games in



a new way. We continue to integrate advanced technology and first-to-market products, enhancing the gaming experience for our players. In addition, the spacious design of our gaming floor offers a balance of high-energy social spaces and quiet alcoves, ensuring that the atmosphere is a fit for every player.

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www.martinmarietta.com
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Ryan.Lemos@miles.rocks
www.miles.rocks | Ryan Lemos

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360-293-0656 | mikeb@quantumci.com
www.quantumci.com | Mike Baldwin

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Burlington, WA 98233
360-707-2048 | jravnik@ravnik.net
www.ravnik.net | John Ravnik

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360-826-3077
stevend.dahl@gmail.com
www.skagitaggregates.com
Steven Dahl

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360-661-1021
GregH@Smokeypointconcrete.com
www.SkagitReadymix.com
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nate@tricocompanies.com
www.tricocompanies.com
Nate Wolfe

2026 INVESTOR PROFILES

Q&A with Chad Fisher Construction

Tell us about the history of your business and how it got started.

Chad Fisher and his family have worked for generations to build a better life and future for families and businesses in Skagit County. As a commercial contractor, Chad helped his father build one of the leading construction firms in the Pacific Northwest. In 2010, Chad founded a new company - Chad Fisher Construction - with his sons, Dan and Duke Fisher.

How would you describe your company's mission or core values?

Chad Fisher Construction (CFC) believes hard work, honesty, and integrity are required when working with clients. Our team strives to maintain our "signature quality" in service, quality, and project completion. We are committed to building lasting relationships with our clients and partners and giving back to our community. CFC will always follow through with what we pledge to deliver, with no exceptions.

Describe your company culture and what you value most in your employees.

Our culture is deeply rooted in treating everyone - employees, subcontractors, and

clients - like family. Our employees uphold this belief by treating everyone with respect. And their industry knowledge is incredible!

How do you encourage a healthy work-life balance among your employees?

Family and employee health come first, and work is second. CFC has always committed to working closely with our employees to create a healthy work/life balance. We operate an open-door policy to listen to our employees' needs to continue developing a solid foundation for everyone.

What steps do you take to ensure the quality of your products or services?

From pre-construction services to project completion, CFC provides a single point of contact for all responsibility and communication at every step. We carefully follow an effective,



systematic process for monitoring and managing all factors to ensure that a project flows smoothly.



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Q&A with TRICO Companies, LLC

Tell us about the history of your business and how it got started.

TRICO has strong roots in the Skagit Valley and was built on decades of hands-on construction experience serving regional infrastructure needs. The company initially focused on regional civil projects throughout the Skagit Valley, with notable early work including the widening of Riverside Drive and College Way, construction of the Cascade Mall, and the installation of tens of thousands of miles of underground utilities across the county and surrounding region. TRICO also supported regional oil refineries through shutdowns and expansion projects throughout the 1990s.

Over time, TRICO evolved in response to client needs, expanding beyond heavy civil construction to include vertical construction and fully integrated design-build delivery. This evolution positioned the company for long-term, sustainable growth and an expanded leadership structure.

Today, TRICO is led by a collaborative leadership team consisting of Nate Wolfe (Principal | CEO), Andy Conner (Principal | Civil Lead), Jason Solie (Principal | Vertical Lead), Dan Petrzelka (Vice President of Operations), Margaret Simpson (Director of Human Resources), and Nick Bates (Director of Finance), providing integrated leadership across strategy, operations, finance, and workforce development. Central to this approach is a strong commitment to our highly skilled and dedicated workforce. TRICO focuses on creating clear career pathways and long-term opportunity for our people by investing in skills development, leadership training, and internal advancement. Programs such as TRICOTech education, structured Project Manager and Project Engineer training, and partnerships with Northwest Career & Technical Academy (NCTA) strengthen regional talent, expand workforce capacity, and support sustainable growth for both the company and the communities we serve.

While TRICO remains firmly grounded in the Skagit Valley, the company now serves clients throughout the Pacific Northwest and across the country, delivering projects in healthcare, food processing, agriculture, advanced manufacturing, emerging energy technologies, commercial, and community-based facilities. Across all markets, TRICO is known for transparent pricing, collaborative delivery, and a commitment to long-term relationships. This investment in people and process directly supports predictable project delivery, reliable schedules, and consistent outcomes for our clients.

What products or services do you offer, and where do you see the company's future market?

TRICO is a full-service Design-Build general contractor and construction company that delivers innovative, timely, creative, and cost-effective solutions enabling our clients to successfully



grow their business. We provide expertise and resources across a wide range of industries, including food processing and cold storage, agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare, industrial, commercial, professional office buildings, and civil site development.

Looking ahead, TRICO sees continued opportunity in markets that value early collaboration, transparent pricing, and integrated delivery—particularly in healthcare, advanced manufacturing, food and agriculture, and emerging technologies—where strong planning, skilled teams, and disciplined execution are critical to success.

How would you describe your company's mission or core values?

At TRICO, we are driven by a mission of Building Beyond the Building—for deeper collaboration, healthier neighborhoods, and stronger businesses. This mission reflects our belief that construction is about more than structures; it is about creating lasting value for our customers, coworkers, and communities.

Our promise is to Thrill the Customer! This means delivering exceptional results and an experience that matters, from how we collaborate and communicate to how we steward budgets, schedules, and outcomes.

Our actions are guided by these core values:

Safety – Prioritizing the safety and well-being of employees, clients, and communities through the highest standards and continuous improvement.

Entrepreneurial Spirit – Embracing innovation, adaptability, and responsible growth.

Speed of Delivery – Executing work with urgency, clarity, and accountability while maintaining quality and safety.

Build Meaningful Projects – Delivering projects that create lasting impact for clients and communities.

Investing Where We Live, Work, and Play – Supporting local businesses, workforce development, and community organizations.

These values also guide how we recruit, develop, and retain our workforce, ensuring our teams are well-trained, supported, and empowered to succeed.

What is your target customer demographic, and how do you cater to their needs?

TRICO serves a diverse range of clients and project sizes, from smaller-scale repairs and building services to Design-Build construction of facilities exceeding \$40+ million. Our Service and Special Projects team supports commercial repairs, renovations, and tenant improvements, while our Commercial, Civil, Food Processing, Agriculture, and Manufacturing teams deliver complex, mission-critical projects.

Across all markets, our clients share a desire to work collaboratively with a dedicated team that delivers on a promise to Thrill the Customer. At the core of these relationships is early engagement and the Design-Build process, which allows for transparent pricing, proactive risk management, and aligned decision-making. Our continued investment in workforce development—through structured internal training, regional education partnerships, and clear career pathways—enables us to deliver consistent teams, reliable schedules, and outcomes that support both client success and regional economic growth.



2026 INVESTOR PROFILES

Q&A with Skagit Valley College

Why should my business consider customized training from SVC?

Customized training from SVC ensures your business stays competitive and profitable, while equipping your employees with the up-to-date knowledge and skills they need to excel in their roles. Our instructors are industry experts with years of experience, delivering tailored training solutions designed to meet the unique needs of businesses of all sizes.

What types of training does SVC offer?

SVC offers a variety of training options, including short and long term programs, workshops, and courses. These trainings are designed to help improve employee performance, increase productivity, and keep your business competitive. Whether you're looking to enhance the skills of current employees or train new hires, SVC has solutions to fit your goals.

What topics are available for training?

Our training programs cover a wide range of topics, including leadership and management, team development, marketing, lean manufacturing, diversity and inclusion,

project management, communication skills, customer service, and basic computer skills. We also offer training in English and Spanish for professionals and Microsoft programs like Word and Excel. If you need training on a specific topic, we're happy to create a custom program just for you.

How flexible are the training programs?

SVC's training solutions are designed to be as flexible and responsive as possible. We offer free consultations to help identify your needs and set learning goals. Classes are available for college credit or non-credit, and they can be delivered on-site at your business, online, or in a hybrid format. Training can also be conducted at one of SVC's campuses, with schedules tailored to fit the demands of your business. For eligible businesses, funding options may be available to offset costs.

How do I get started with customized training at SVC?

Getting started is simple. Contact us for a free consultation to discuss your needs and learn more about how we can support your organization. Call us at 360.416.7750, email us



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Skagit Valley College is an equal opportunity institution. Information about our non-discrimination policies is available at: skagit.edu/non-discrimination, 360.416.7794, or 2405 E. College Way, Mount Vernon, WA 98273. If you need disability accommodation at an SVC event, please contact Disability Access Services at das@skagit.edu. 25-26-248

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www.be.wednet.edu
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360-299-4068
jveltri@nwesd.org
www.nwesd.org
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360-428-6110
vvergara@mvsd320.org
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360-855-3500
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www.sbsd.k12.wa.us
Brian Isakson

Skagit Preschool and Resource Center

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Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-416-7570
amanda@sparckids.org
www.sparckids.org
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Skagit Valley College

Prosperity

2405 E College Way
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-416-7600
pam.davis@skagit.edu
www.skagit.edu
Pam Davis

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360-650-2153
Chris.Roselli@wwu.edu
www.wwu.edu
Chris Roselli

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www.bannerbank.com

Josh Anfinson
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Anacortes, WA 98221
360-293-6287
amy@barrettfinancialtd.com
www.barrettfinancialtd.com
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info@c3cpa.cpa
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travis@flexuregroup.com
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360-603-7358
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www.larsongross.com
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360-395-4087
jgischer@northcoastcu.com
www.northcoastcu.com
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Non-Profit

11410 NE 124th St # 502
Kirkland, WA 98034
425-505-3263
crouillard@nwbusiness.org
www.nwbusiness.org
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360-848-0348
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rcann@savibank.com
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1508 Riverside Dr
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360-639 3401
timothy.schofield@usbank.com
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200 E George Hopper Rd
Burlington, WA 98233
360-707-4290
mattr@vshcpa.com
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2026 INVESTOR PROFILES

Q&A with Savi Powered by Harborstone Credit Union

Tell us about the history of your business and how it started.

Savi originally opened in 2005, with the mission of serving Skagit Valley businesses and professionals. Its first branch in Burlington served as the headquarters until 2019, when operations moved to Mount Vernon. Today, Savi serves Skagit, Whatcom, Island, and San Juan Counties with 10 full-service branches and two loan offices — all while remaining deeply committed to supporting the communities they call home.

In March 2024, we announced the merger with Harborstone Credit Union, and in September 2025, all Savi branches opened as “Savi, Powered by Harborstone Credit Union.” As we work toward fully operating as Harborstone Credit Union, we’re excited for the expanded opportunities this partnership brings to our members. Both Savi and Harborstone share a strong commitment to community, local service, and helping our members achieve their financial goals — making this partnership a natural fit.

Harborstone Credit Union began in 1955, serving airmen at McChord Air Force Base with a \$5 share. In 1996, it opened membership to all Washington residents. Since then, Harborstone has grown through partnerships with other credit

unions and now operates 15 branches across the Puget Sound.

What products or services do you offer, and where do you see the company’s future market?

We offer a wide range of business and consumer products with competitive rates, business and consumer credit cards, and consumer loans. We’re also a preferred lender with the Small Business Administration.

Savi understands how much a community relies on its local branches — from businesses handling their deposits and obtaining cash supplies to economic development to residents who prefer to bank in-person.

How would you describe your company’s mission or core values?

It’s our mission to create thriving communities. We do this by helping our members achieve their full potential through trusted relationships.

We believe our members, regardless of income level, can achieve financial prosperity with the right support, tools, and resources. We’re here to help our members feel empowered — giving them confidence that they can thrive and achieve success in their own unique financial situation.



We believe in relationships; establishing trust; and following through with consistent, exceptional service to our members. That’s our mission.

Do you have any future expansion plans, and how will they align with your business philosophy?

In September 2026, all Savi branches will fully transition to Harborstone Credit Union branches, increasing our footprint to 30 branches in the Pacific Northwest. Harborstone members will gain access to all Harborstone’s products and services, support through our branch network and extended Co-Op Shared Branching and ATM network, and over-the-phone support through our dedicated Contact Center.

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2026 INVESTOR PROFILES

Q&A with VSH Certified Public Accountants

How would you describe VSH CPAs' mission and what makes your approach different?

At VSH CPAs, our mission is to help businesses and their owners grow with clarity and confidence. We go beyond compliance to deliver strategic insight, proactive guidance, and year-round engagement that empowers better decisions. Clients rely on us to navigate complexity and unlock opportunity locally and across borders.

What makes us different is our people-first mindset. We take time to understand each client's goals, families, and teams, allowing us to bring the right mix of tax, advisory, and business insight to every situation. Clients receive the sophistication of a larger firm with the responsiveness of a close and committed local team.

Who do you serve, and how do you help them make better decisions?

We serve growth-focused businesses, cross-border enterprises, and high-net-worth individuals seeking more than transactional support. Many come to VSH after feeling underserved by firms that focused only on year-end filings.

Our clients include mid-sized and closely held companies, often with multistate or international

operations, as well as those preparing for transition or expansion. We help leadership teams see the full picture, from cash flow and tax exposure to valuations and long-term planning, so they can make timely, informed decisions aligned with their goals.

What products or services do you offer, and where do you see the company's future market?

VSH CPAs is an advisory-first firm dedicated to helping businesses and their owners thrive through clarity, strategy, and confidence. Our services go beyond compliance to support long-term growth, complex transitions, and cross-border operations.

We offer specialized support in business valuations, exit and transition planning, client accounting and advisory services (CAAS), state and local tax (SALT), transfer pricing, international tax and compliance, as well as audit and assurance, serving clients across key industries.

As more organizations seek advisory relationships that align financial results with long-term goals, we see growing demand for strategic insight that helps leaders respond to complexity, assess risk, and plan what's next with confidence.

How does VSH CPAs stay proactive and innovative in a changing business environment?

At VSH, we take an active role in helping clients anticipate change, not just respond to it. Our approach includes regular, year-round touchpoints to review performance, adjust projections, and stay ahead of tax and regulatory shifts, helping clients stay positioned for what's next.

We closely monitor legislative changes, such as the One Big Beautiful Bill passed in July 2025 and evolving Washington state guidance on capital gains, and proactively advise clients on how these developments may impact their businesses. By translating policy into actionable strategies and pairing it with the right tools and national insights through the BDO Alliance USA, we help leaders move forward with clarity and confidence.



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Q&A with WECU

Discover Skagit County's Best Credit Union for Your Business Banking Needs

In sleepy northwest Washington, WECU has grown to be one of the state's fastest-growing credit unions. The reason? Unrelenting focus on providing the best possible solutions for its membership. With 10 branches, including branches in Mount Vernon and Sedro-Woolley, WECU is the area's credit union of choice.

Unlike other banking institutions that simply claim to be the best, WECU's reputation is backed by accolades. In 2025 alone Forbes, and several regional awards—including Best of Skagit Valley, Cascade's Best Awards, and Best of the Northwest by Bellingham Alive—recognized WECU as a top-tier banking choice.

More importantly, the business community has spoken: over 3,500 small businesses in Whatcom and Skagit counties have chosen WECU as their financial partner.

What sets WECU apart? A personalized approach to business banking. WECU's team goes above and beyond, doing everything we can to provide tailored advice. By understanding the unique challenges and opportunities of each business, WECU offers strategic, cost-effective solutions to help members thrive.

Comprehensive Business Banking Solutions

WECU delivers robust products designed to meet the diverse needs of local businesses:

- **Business Credit Cards:** Featuring low interest rates and local underwriting, these cards are ideal for businesses that rely on credit.
- **Minimal or No Fees:** All business products are designed to reduce costs for members.
- **Interest-Earning Accounts:** Simple and Savvy business checking accounts stand out by offering interest, a rare benefit among local financial institutions.
- **Smart Business Accounts:** With a high earnings credit rate (ECR), members can offset fees effectively.

Local Leadership, Expert Service

In Skagit County, WECU's Business Banking initiatives are led by Brenden Jones. With deep expertise and a relentless focus on member satisfaction, Brenden and his team are dedicated to supporting the region's businesses. From lending and cash management to merchant services and business checking solutions, WECU is here to help you succeed.



Brenden Jones, Business Banking Loan Officer III

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HUB was founded in Canada in 1998 with the merger of 11 privately held insurance brokerages. Shortly after, in 1999, HUB expanded to the United States. Today, HUB is one of the largest insurance brokers in the world, with a vast network of experts skilled in risk services, claims management, and compliance support to help you reach your goals.



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Donnie Keltz

Senior Vice President, Commercial Insurance
Office Phone: 360-755-6451
Email: donnie.keltz@hubinternational.com

Chris Eisses

Senior Vice President, Commercial Insurance
Office Phone: 360-755-6453
Email: chris.eisses@hubinternational.com



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360-336-3107
brenda@calicocupboardcafe.com
www.calicocupboardcafe.com
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Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-419-7877
penny.roodzant@DVFMV.com
www.drapervalleyfarms.com

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202 S 1st St
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360-336-9777
LeahS@skagitfoodcoop.com
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2060 Powerhouse Dr
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284
360-854-2134
watson.kendra@jobcorps.org
www.cascades.jobcorps.gov
Kendra Watson

City of Anacortes

904 6th St
Anacortes, WA 98221
360-299-1950
ryanw@cityofanacortes.org
www.cityofanacortes.org
Ryan Walters

City of Burlington

833 S Spruce St
Burlington, WA 98233
360-755-0531
billa@burlingtonwa.gov
www.burlingtonwa.gov

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Bill Aslett

City of Mount Vernon

910 Cleveland Ave
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-336-0623
peterd@mountvernonwa.gov
www.mountvernonwa.gov
Peter Donovan

City of Sedro-Woolley

325 Metcalf St
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284
360-855-3160
jjohnson@sedro-woolley.gov
www.ci.sedro-woolley.wa.us
Julia Johnson

Port of Anacortes

317 Commercial Ave
Anacortes, WA 98221
360-293-3134
john.dumas@portofanacortes.com
www.portofanacortes.com

Public

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John Dumas

Port of Skagit

15400 Airport Drive
Burlington, WA 98233
360-757-0011
saray@portofskagit.com
www.portofskagit.com
Sara Young

Skagit Council of Governments

315 S 3rd St Ste 100
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-416-7876
jillb@scog.net
www.scog.net
Jill Boudreau

Skagit County

1800 Continental Pl
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-416-1300
trishal@co.skagit.wa.us
www.skagitcounty.net

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2026 INVESTOR PROFILES

Q&A with John Dumas, Port of Anacortes, Executive Director



What makes the Port of Anacortes unique?

The Port of Anacortes is a dynamic public port with a strategic location on Fidalgo Island in Skagit County, Washington. Serving as a key gateway to the San Juan Islands and British Columbia, the Port offers diverse properties and facilities tailored to meet the needs of various tenants. Its naturally deep-water harbor makes it an ideal hub for a variety of shipping, logistics, and marine industries. The Port also offers a regional airport and world-class facilities and services at its award-winning Cap Sante Marina.

What types of properties and facilities does the Port offer?

Whether it's waterfront properties for maritime industries or industrial spaces for manufacturing and logistics, the Port provides a wide range of options for businesses. Port facilities include space for manufacturing, warehousing, seafood landing and processing, bulk and breakbulk cargo handling, dry dock, commercial boat ramp and

low-cost public launch, an RV park, and public event space at Seafarers' Memorial Park.

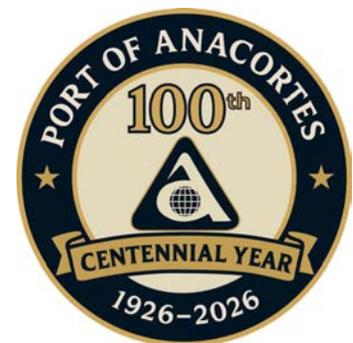
What advantages do tenants and customers enjoy at the Port of Anacortes?

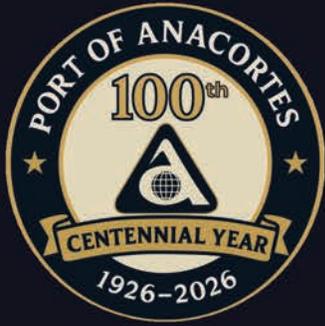
Port tenants and customers benefit not only from its strategic location and facilities but also from the region's desirable quality of life. Surrounded by natural beauty, the Port supports opportunities for outdoor events and activities, and the city of Anacortes offers a welcoming community atmosphere.

How does the Port contribute to economic development in the region?

Recognized for its commitment to sustainable practices and environmental stewardship, the Port plays a vital role in supporting economic development for the region, with over 50 tenants generating a year-round average of over one thousand jobs. Businesses that call the Port home enjoy a collaborative community that values both

economic vitality and ecological responsibility. With a focus on economic development, sustainability, and community connections, the Port of Anacortes is an attractive destination for businesses seeking a well-connected and environmentally conscious home.





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Q&A with Port of Skagit

Tell us about the history of the Port and how it got started.

The Port of Skagit was created in 1964 by a vote of the people, who recognized the need for an entity that would serve the economic needs of Skagit County by helping to create jobs in the natural resource fields of agriculture, wood products, fisheries and mineral extraction. Our focus has broadened over the years, and today the Port's essential purpose is to contribute to the economic vitality of Skagit County through the development of facilities and infrastructure that support local commerce, trade and tourism.

How would you describe the Port's mission or core values?

The Port of Skagit's mission is "Working together for the greater good of the Skagit Valley." The Port of Skagit leads efforts and provides economic and transportation infrastructure to promote the growth of a strong economy in Skagit County while valuing the area's natural assets and quality of life.

Describe the Port's culture and what you value most in your employees.

The Port of Skagit prioritizes our staff team and the culture we have built over the years. Part of building that culture was developing our "Promise" to our community and to each other. We promise excellence in public service and leadership within a business landscape that inspires success and enhances the quality of life in Skagit County.

How many Port Districts does Washington have?

The Port of Skagit is one of 75 Port Districts in Washington state, all of which have a state mandate of job creation. Ports are the only public agencies whose primary purpose is economic development.

Can you share some success stories or notable achievements the Port has had in the community?

The Port of Skagit has a strong focus on Value-Added Agriculture and has invested significant resources in infrastructure and business recruitment to support the local agricultural industry and economy. It is rare for a Port district to have such a strong presence in the agricultural industry, but there is tremendous potential here in the "Magic Skagit" to capitalize on value-added opportunities through publicly owned infrastructure.

What steps do you take to ensure the results of your efforts?

Maximizing the job producing potential of our industrially zoned land in Skagit County is a key strategy in our effort to promote prosperity and create opportunities in the Skagit Valley. The Port of Skagit is known for its ability to meet



the needs of current and prospective tenants to empower their success and plan for their growth, by implementing strategies that employ creative solutions, strategic planning and strong partnerships.

Can you describe any partnerships or collaborations that have been essential to your business's growth?

A large part of the Port's success is directly related to our strategic partnerships, public and private. The Port of Skagit works hard to leverage funding opportunities for projects that will enhance job creation and business growth in our community. Working with organizations and agencies at the local, state and federal levels has led to the completion of infrastructure projects that support rural broadband deployment, marine manufacturing, airport operations, agriculture and more.

Do you have any future expansion plans, and how will they align with your business philosophy?

The Port is working on long range plans at several of our properties, including the redevelopment of the south basin at La Conner Marina, starting the design phase of an Agricultural Innovation Center at Bayview Business Park, launching a capital campaign effort to support historic building renovation at the SWIFT Center, as well as continued trail development through the campus, completion

of fiber optic projects, and completing the infrastructure work at our newest property, Watershed Business Park.

What are some traditions or rituals that are unique to your company culture?

We have staff meetings twice a month with our entire Port team to share updates—both personally and professionally—which gives us a great opportunity to stay up to date on projects, recognize accomplishments, and celebrate special happenings within our Port family.

Can you share stories or examples of how the Port's culture has positively impacted your outcomes?

We have a culture at the Port of Skagit where we strive to find ways to help. This includes how we interact within our team to support one another, and how we serve our business tenants and community. The right answer is rarely the easy answer, and the Port team works diligently to find the win-win scenario that will provide the most prudent use of Port resources and a positive outcome for our Port businesses.



**Port of
Skagit**

Trisha Logue

Skagit Public Utility District *Public*

1415 Freeway Dr
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-848-4436
sidhu@skagitpud.org
www.skagitpud.org
George Sidhu

Town of Concrete *Public*

7855 Ronald Ave
Concrete, WA 98237
360-391-2589
jeremya@concretewa.gov
www.townofconcrete.com

Jeremy Akers

Town of Hamilton *Public*

584 Maple St, Hamilton, WA 98255
360-826-3027
hamilton.wa.mayor@gmail.com
www.townofhamiltonwa.com
Mandy Bates

Town of La Conner *Public*

204 Douglas St
La Conner, WA 98257
360-466-3125
mayor@townoflaconner.org
www.townoflaconner.org

Marna Hanneman

Town of Lyman *Public*

8405 S Main St, Lyman, WA 98263
360-826-3033
info@townoflyman.com
www.townoflyman.com
Eddie Hills

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www.peacehealth.org/united-general-

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Q&A with PeaceHealth United General Medical Center



Tell us about the history of your hospital and how it got started.

United General's story began in 1965, following a merger of Sedro-Woolley's Memorial Hospital and Burlington's Matthews Hospital. It opened with 97 beds and multiple specialties, and in the 70s developed an innovative oncology program that has continued to flourish and grow ever since. In the early 1990s United General affiliated with Skagit Hospital, with both hospitals continuing operations. The two split apart again in 2003; United General scaled back services. Ten years later, United General began discussions with PeaceHealth, collaborating on some specialty care services. In 2014, Hospital District 304 commissioners determined that aligning with PeaceHealth would best ensure the community's access to high-quality, comprehensive healthcare for many years to come.

What services do you offer?

With ancillary clinics in Burlington and Sedro-Woolley, PeaceHealth provides a wide range of services, including:

- 24/7 Emergency Department providing Level IV trauma care
- Cancer Center, including medical and radiation oncology, infusion and a new leading-edge linear accelerator (LINAC) to provide the most advanced radiation therapy treatment available
- Comprehensive Breast Cancer Program providing screening, treatment and support under one roof

- Surgical center, nationally recognized for highest safety standards
- Outpatient rehabilitation therapies, including physical, occupational and speech therapies, as well as a specialized program for Parkinson's disease
- 25-bed acute care and swing bed medical unit
- 10-bed inpatient Acute Rehabilitation Center, featuring a full range of therapies and support for patients recovering from surgery or dealing with an acute injury or illness
- State-of-the-art imaging, including 3D mammography, a mobile magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) coach; CT scanner; CT simulator; and nuclear medicine camera for cardiac imaging
- Six-day-a-week Sleep Medicine Center, offering studies and treatments for sleep disorders
- An adjacent clinic offering family medicine, same-day care, obstetrics/gynecology, orthopedics, gastroenterology, neurology, cardiology, imaging and laboratory services

What does United General do to promote community health and wellness beyond the walls of the hospital and clinics?

PeaceHealth works collaboratively with other healthcare partners and community-based organizations, such as Community Action of Skagit County, Children of the Valley, Boys & Girls Clubs of Skagit County, Tri-Parish Food Bank and United General District 304. Over the last two years, PeaceHealth has invested \$632,000 in community benefit grants dedicated to improving the lives of Skagit County residents. Four community health pillars inform the purpose of these efforts, which aim to protect the most vulnerable and underserved:

Home: Improve access to service-enriched housing

Hope: Increase education and access to treatment and prevention of dependence

Care: Expand knowledge, access and engagement with community caregivers

Nourish: Address food insecurities to enhance family and child well-being



PeaceHealth



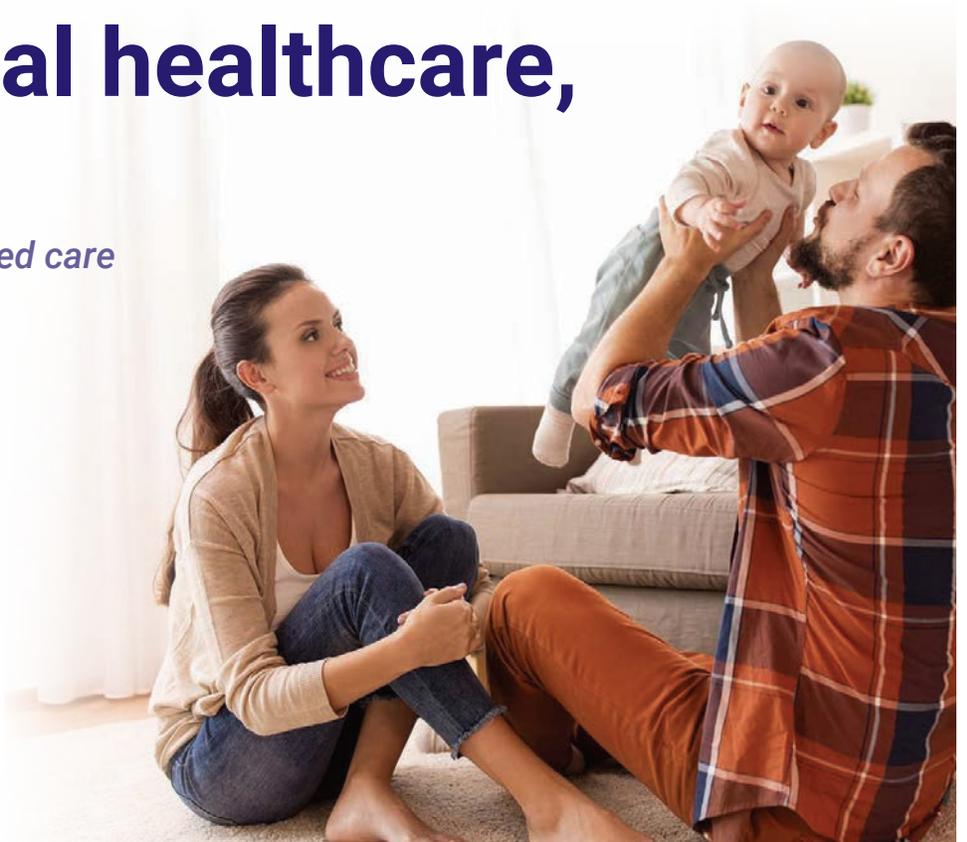
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Mount Vernon, WA 98274
360-424-6164
ryanh@dimensional.net
www.dimensional.net
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1309 Bouslog Road Ste 103
Burlington, WA 98233
360-298-6746
sean@sierramicroproducts.com
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Sean Gallagher

Small Business

2026 INVESTOR PROFILES

Q&A with Allixo

What products or services do you offer, and where do you see the company's future market?

Allixo is an I.T. Managed Service Provider specializing in helping businesses operate securely in the cloud. From white-gloved service to advanced technical expertise, we have it covered. We see a future in maintaining stability for our clients while also helping them grow and enhance their organizations through technology.

How would you describe your company's mission or core values?

Understanding cybersecurity and constantly changing technologies is only getting more difficult each year. Our mission is to help small and medium-sized businesses navigate these areas by making enterprise-grade IT and security solutions accessible to them, with the end goal of giving them peace of mind and more time to focus on running their business.

How has your business evolved or adapted to changing market trends and consumer preferences?

All eyes are on AI, but most businesses we talk to have not figured out how to both effectively

and securely implement it in their organizations. We are now constantly working to dig through the AI hype and provide our clients with meaningful AI solutions.

What are some traditions or rituals that are unique to your company culture?

Monthly mini-golf tournaments in the office!

How do you encourage a healthy work-life balance among your employees?

We would be nothing without our team, and we do everything we can to take care of our employees. Our current team is amazing, and we have the lowest turnover rate in our 17-year history, with an average employee tenure of over 7 years! We have prioritized providing fully funded medical benefits, competitive wages, flexible schedules, paid training and certification, weekly company lunches, and plenty of office snacks to help our staff maintain a high quality of life.



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www.bayviewcomposites.com
Arturo Espinoza

Chinook Enterprises *Non-Profit*
2026 N LaVenture Rd
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-639-8834
nwegner@chinookenterprises.org
www.chinookenterprises.org
Nikki Wegner

Dakota Creek Industries, Inc. *Community*
820 4th St, Anacortes, WA 98221
360-293-9575
lstout@dakotacreek.com
www.dakotacreek.com
Elizabeth Stout

EDCO, INC *Small Business*
14508 Ovenell Rd
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-410-9239
leslie@edcometalfabricators.com
www.edcometalfabricators.com
Leslie Smith

Goodwinds Composites *Small Business*
1829 Railroad Ave
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-588-4785
amelia@goodwinds.com
www.goodwinds.com
Amelia Cook

Hexcel Corporation *Equity*
15062 Steele Rd
Burlington, WA 98233
360-757-7212
steve.henkel@hexcel.com
www.hexcel.com
Steve Henkel

Legend Brands, Inc *Venture*
15180 Josh Wilson Rd
Burlington, WA 98233
360-757-7776
marcian@legendbrands.com
www.Legendbrands.com
Marcia Neu

PACCAR Technical Center *Foundational*
12479 Farm to Market Rd
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-757-5200
phil.stephenson@paccar.com
www.paccar.com
Philip Stephenson

Silfab Solar *Prosperity*
1770 Port Dr
Burlington, WA 98233
360-540-0391
s.calkins@silfabsolar.com
www.silfabsolar.com
Samantha Caulkins

Team Corporation *Equity*
11591 Water Tank Rd
Burlington, WA 98233
360-209-7251
debbie.eaton@teamcorporation.com
www.teamcorporation.com
Debbie Eaton

VT Volant Aerospace, LLC *Small Business*
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Burlington, WA 98233
360-757-2376
garyneisigner@vtvolant.com
www.vtvolant.com
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Q&A with Team Corporation

Tell us about the history of your business and how it got started

Since 1954 Team Corporation has specialized in the design and manufacture of hydraulic vibration test systems. Our systems have been used for pre-launch testing on NASA's Apollo and Saturn programs, Orion / Artemis program, James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), and the soon-to-be launched Sierra Space Dream Chaser – the world's only commercial space plane.

What products or services do you offer?

We design, manufacture, and support vibration testing systems and components. A vibration shaker system is a machine that typically vibrates up and down or side to side. Placing a product on the machine and shaking it helps engineers determine if the product is designed well enough to perform as intended in real life conditions.

How would you describe your company's mission or core values?

As pioneers and innovators within the vibration testing industry, Team Corporation is driven to push the limits of test system engineering and performance. Our mission is to fuel our customers' success, striving to help them exceed their testing and development goals.

What is your target customer demographic, and how do you cater to their needs?

Team Corporation works together with leading organizations across various industries, including aerospace, defense, automotive, electronics, and oil field. Customers appreciate our highly customized, high-performance test systems, and their inherent performance advantages.

How do you engage with the community?

Over the years, Team has regularly volunteered crews to help with the cleanup, and overall beautification of Jack Doyle Memorial Park, and more recently, Whitmarsh Park. Team has participated in the EDASC annual golf tournament. In 2023, Team hosted a holiday toy drive. We are currently sponsoring the Mount Vernon High School Robotics Team.

If you'd like to learn more about Team Corporation, please visit: <https://teamcorporation.com>



Pete Shumway, President and CEO

Team



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Dakota Creek Industries, Inc. *Community*
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www.dakotacreek.com
Elizabeth Stout

La Conner Maritime Service / Smiley's Pro Service *Small Business*
920 W Pearl Jensen Way
La Conner, WA 98257
360-466-3629
isaaco@laconnermaritime.com
www.laconnermaritime.com
Isaac Oczkewicz

Seattle Yachts
3116 V Pl Ste A
Anacortes, WA 98221
360-299-0777
peter@seattleyachts.com
www.seattleyachts.com
Peter Whiting

Equity **Transpac Marinas INC** *Small Business*
702 R Ave
Anacortes, WA 98221
360-293-8888
tracis@transpacmarinas.com
www.transpacmarinas.com
Traci Stark



INVESTORS

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Anacortes Chamber of Commerce

Non-Profit

819 Commercial Ave Ste F
Anacortes, WA 98221
360-293-7911
jesica@anacortes.org
www.anacortes.org
Jessica Kiser

Boys & Girls Clubs of Skagit County

Non-Profit

3302 Cedardale Rd Ste A100
Mount Vernon, WA 98274
509-301-3920
rmchenry@skagitclubs.org
www.skagitclubs.org
Ron McHenry

Burlington Chamber of Commerce

Non-Profit

520 E Fairhaven Ave
Burlington, WA 98233
360-757-0994
steph@burlington-chamber.com
www.burlington-chamber.com
Steph Rees

Children's Museum of Skagit County

Non-Profit

432 Fashion Way
Burlington, WA 98233
360-757-8888
cate@skagitchm.org
www.skagitchildrensmuseum.org
Cate Anderson

Community Action of Skagit County

Non-Profit

330 Pacific Pl
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-416-7585
billh@communityactionskagit.org
www.communityactionskagit.org
Bill Henkel

Concrete Chamber of Commerce

Non-Profit

45770 Main St, Concrete WA 98237
360-853-8784
chamber@concrete-wa.com
www.concrete-wa.com
Valerie Stafford

GSBA

Non-Profit

400 E Pine St Ste 322
Seattle, WA 98122
206-363-9188
ilonal@thegsba.org
www.thegsba.org
Ilona Lohrey

Helping Hands Food Bank

Non-Profit

9386 Fruitdale Rd
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284
360-856-2211
mandi@helpinghandsfoodbank.org
www.helpinghandsfoodbank.org
Mandi Rothman

Housing Authority of Skagit County

Non-Profit

1650 Port Dr
Burlington, WA 98233
360-428-1959
bsarchet@skagitcountyha.org
www.skagitcountyha.org
Beverly Sarchet

La Conner Chamber of Commerce

Non-Profit

210 Morris St
La Conner, WA 98257
360-466-4778
director@laconnerchamber.com
www.lovelaconner.com
Mark Hulst

Mount Vernon Downtown Association

Non-Profit

223 S 1st St Ste B
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-336-3801
director@mountvernondowntown.org
www.mountvernondowntown.org
Ellen Gamson

North Cascades Institute

Non-Profit

810 State Route 20
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284
360-854-2599
sarah_meyer@ncascades.org
www.ncascades.org
Sarah Meyer

2026 INVESTOR PROFILES

Q&A with Burlington Chamber of Commerce

Can you describe any partnerships or collaborations that have been essential to your organization's growth?

Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do. Over the years, partnerships with the City of Burlington, the Skagit/Island County Builders Association, and the Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County have been invaluable. These relationships allow us to provide advocacy, training, and resources that help our members thrive. Locally, we also collaborate with small businesses such as Fidalgo Coffee and Panera Bread for events and networking, as well as groups like WINGS (Women in Networking Group) to foster community engagement.

What is your long-term vision for the Burlington Chamber, and how do you plan to achieve it?

Our vision is simple but ambitious: to be the trusted catalyst that empowers local businesses while enriching Burlington's quality of life. We achieve this by creating meaningful networking opportunities, hosting workshops, advocating for business-friendly policies, and connecting leaders across industries. It's all about giving our members the tools and relationships they need to succeed while strengthening the community as a whole.

How would you describe your mission or core values?

Our mission is to champion local businesses, provide resources and support, and strengthen community involvement and year-round tourism. Integrity, collaboration, empowerment, innovation, and community focus guide every decision we make. These values aren't just words—they're embedded in everything from our events to our advocacy work, shaping the culture of both our Chamber and our broader business community.

What products or services do you offer, and where do you see your future market?

We provide services designed to help businesses grow and connect. That includes networking events, marketing opportunities such as online directories and social media features, professional development workshops, and advocacy for local business interests. Our future market is focused on strengthening the Burlington business ecosystem, making the area a destination for both entrepreneurs and visitors, and supporting local businesses as they expand and innovate.

Do you have any future expansion plans, and how will they align with your philosophy?

Absolutely. Our expansion plans focus on

broadening collaboration, enhancing member value, and increasing engagement opportunities. Whether through new workshops, improved advocacy tools, or community events, everything we do is designed to align with our philosophy: business growth and community enrichment go hand in hand.

What traditions or rituals are unique to the Burlington Chamber culture?

Traditions are a big part of our identity. Berry Dairy Days, our annual festival, is a highlight, celebrating local agriculture with parades, food, and family fun. Monthly luncheons and networking mixers serve as ongoing rituals where local leaders gather, share insights, and support one another. Peer groups and ambassador programs further cultivate a sense of connection and recognition among members. These traditions help maintain the warmth and energy that define our Chamber culture.

Conclusion

The Burlington Chamber of Commerce is more than an organization—it's a community builder, a connector, and a champion of local business. Through partnerships, advocacy, and a deep commitment to tradition, it continues to strengthen Burlington's economy while celebrating the community it serves.



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360-855-1841
director@sedro-woolley.com
www.sedro-woolley.com
Monique Bringham

Skagit Community Foundation *Non-Profit*
1220 Memorial Hwy Ste C
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-419-3181
maddy@skagitcf.org
www.skagitcf.org
Maddy MacKenzie

Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group *Non-Profit*
1202 S 2nd St Ste C
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360-336-0172
astudley@skagitfisheries.org
www.skagitfisheries.org
Alison Studley

Skagit Friendship House *Non-Profit*
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Mount Vernon WA 98273
360-336-6138
jason@skagitfriendshiphouse.org
www.skagitfriendshiphouse.org
Jason Wells

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360-708-2144
t.tate@skagithabitat.com
www.skagithabitat.com
Tina Tate

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360-428-8547
andy@skagitvalleychamber.com
www.skagitvalleychamber.com
Andy Mayer

Skagit-Island Human Resource Management Association (SHRMA) *Non-Profit*
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Anacortes, WA 98221
206-353-2528
info@sihirma.org
www.sihirma.org
Erin Kuusela

Skagit Valley College Foundation *Non-Profit*
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Mount Vernon, WA 98273
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www.skagitfoundation.org
Kathleen Petrzelka

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Dean Snider

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amcbride@skagitwatershed.org
www.skagitwatershed.org
Aundrea McBride

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Jason Powers

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